



***VILLAGE OF FOREST PARK
QUALIFICATION REPORT
CIRCLE HARLEM TIF DISTRICT***

A study to determine whether all or a portion of an area located in the Village of Forest Park qualifies as a conservation area as set forth in the definition in the Tax Increment Allocation Redevelopment Act of 65 ILCS Section 5/11-74.4-3, et seq., as amended.

Prepared For: Village of Forest Park, Illinois

Prepared By: Ryan, LLC

August 2023

**VILLAGE OF FOREST PARK
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I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In the context of planning for the proposed Circle Harlem Redevelopment Project Area (the “RPA”, or “Study Area”) under the provisions of the Illinois “Tax Increment Allocation Redevelopment Act”, Ch. 65 ILCS Section 5/11-74.4-1 et seq. of the Illinois Compiled Statutes, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the “Act”), the Village of Forest Park (the “Village”) has authorized the study of the RPA in its entirety to determine whether it qualifies for consideration as a Tax Increment Financing District (the “TIF” or “TIF District”). Ryan, LLC (the “Consultant”) has agreed to undertake the study of the RPA.

The RPA is located in the northeast portion of the Village and consists primarily of retail, commercial, industrial, and mixed uses. The RPA is a contiguous area which generally includes parcels on the west side of Harlem Avenue and the north Village boundary along the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)/Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) rail tracks. The proposed RPA is generally bounded by Madison Street to the south, the CTA/UPPR rail tracks and the Village boundary to the north, Harlem Avenue to the east, and Lathrop Avenue to the west. Adjacent rights of way to the centerline of Harlem Avenue – the Village boundary – are also included.

The RPA is approximately twenty-six (26) acres in size and contains approximately forty-six (46) tax parcels including approximately twenty-eight (28) buildings with approximately three (3) residential units. Ninety three percent (93%) of the structures within the RPA are in excess of thirty-five (35) years in age.

The RPA exhibits characteristics of deterioration that are often indicative of properties that are extended well into their useful lives. As examined in July of 2023 to the present, many of the surface improvements within the Study Area were found to have varying degrees of deterioration. Sidewalks, streets, driveways, and parking lots exhibited significant cracking and uneven surfaces. Some parking areas are unpaved consisting of loose gravel or severely deteriorated and crumbling asphalt. In addition, several buildings exhibited missing or cracked mortar, the need for tuck pointing, damaged and worn awnings, the need for repairs to exterior siding/fascia, damaged window and door frame components, and evidence of leaking drain structures or water damage on vertical wall surfaces.

Further, because much of the RPA was developed in an era before the Village adopted its Comprehensive Plan reflecting more modern land use planning, the RPA suffers from adverse impacts associated with a lack of community planning. The RPA did not have the benefit, over several decades, of developing under the guidelines of an economic development plan. The area is categorized by uses that were developed individually and in piecemeal fashion with no coordinated parking, internal circulation between sites, pedestrian enhancements or any unified features (signage, streetscape, etc.). Twenty-six (26) of the twenty-eight (28) structures in the RPA, or ninety three percent (93%), were built prior to the most recent version of the Comprehensive Plan was published in 2014.

The high volume of traffic along the Harlem Avenue corridor requires the coordination of future parking needs and planning for future ingress/egress. The RPA is also hindered by a lack of buffering between residential, retail, and commercial uses and the lack of modernized site improvements including internal circulation and available ingress/egress from Harlem Avenue. Both conditions are further examples of the detrimental effects of unguided development.

According to the Comprehensive Plan (2014), one of the major transportation needs is a new Harlem Avenue Multimodal Bridge over Harlem Avenue. This viaduct is part of the Harlem Avenue corridor improvement plan from the CTA Green Line Harlem stop to the CTA Blue Line Harlem stop. Funding for this project will be shared by neighboring communities of River Forest and Oak Park, and the Circle Harlem TIF is critical to meeting Forest Park's funding needs.

The RPA is also hindered by inadequate loading and unloading areas due to the size and configuration of many of the lots. While most of the commercial buildings are served by an alley loading and unloading may still be problematic because in most cases it would block the flow of traffic in the alley during the process. The RPA is also hindered by inadequate and undersized copper and lead water service lines, and combined storm as well as combined stormwater and sanitary sewers, which is reflected by deteriorating conditions of the infrastructure and insufficient capacity to serve existing development and certainly any proposed new redevelopment projects.

Finally, the growth of the equalized assessed valuation (EAV) of all the properties in the Study Area was found to: (i) have increased at an annual rate that is less than the EAV growth of the remainder of the Village for three (3) of the last five (5) tax years, and (ii) have increased at an annual rate that is less than the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for three (3) of the last five (5) tax years. The qualification factors discussed within this TIF Qualification Report (the "Report") qualify the RPA as a conservation area, as that term is hereinafter defined pursuant to the Act.

The Village believes that the RPA would be a candidate for redevelopment if the qualification factors discussed in this Report are mitigated. The Village believes that the use of TIF can mitigate these negative obstacles that currently impede redevelopment.

The Village does not plan to dislocate ten (10) or more inhabited residential units as part of this redevelopment effort. As such, pursuant to the Act, as amended, the Village is not required to prepare a housing impact study. If at some point in the future, the Village anticipates dislocating ten (10) or more inhabited residential units, then the Village must amend this document and complete a housing impact study.

Objectives

The Village's redevelopment objectives propose to ameliorate to the extent possible the negative impact of the qualification factors which are prevalent in much of the Study Area and enhance retail, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use opportunities where appropriate. To achieve these objectives the Village proposes the following guidelines:

- To encourage redevelopment within the RPA that will address the piecemeal development practices, older building conditions and attract new land uses which are consistent with the existing uses and provide an enhanced tax base to support the entire Village;
- To implement coordinated development/design practices as set forth in the Village's Comprehensive Plan;
- To assist site assembly and preparation in order to provide for the reuse of properties for this stated purpose;
- To coordinate area parking facilities;
- To install the necessary infrastructure improvements for improved ingress and egress, loading and unloading areas, and internal circulation; and
- To increase the appeal of the commercial corridors and expand pedestrian enhancements.

The Village's general economic development goals are to enhance retail, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use opportunities within the Village and the RPA. Given the Village's goals as well as the conditions described in this Report, the Village has made a determination that it is highly desirable to promote the redevelopment of the RPA. Without an implementation plan for redevelopment, Village officials believe current conditions will worsen. The Village intends to create and implement such a plan in order to restore, stabilize and increase the economic base associated with the RPA which will not only increase tax revenues associated with the RPA but also benefit the community as a whole.

Because of the conditions observed in the RPA and the required coordination of future land uses, the Village enthusiastically supports the foregoing redevelopment objectives. The Village has determined that redevelopment should take place through the benefit and guidance of comprehensive planning for economic development controlled by the Village. Through this coordinated effort, the RPA is expected to improve. Development barriers, inherent with current conditions within the RPA, which impede economic growth under existing market standards, are expected to be eliminated.

The Village has further determined that redevelopment currently planned for the RPA may only be feasible with public finance assistance. The creation and utilization of a TIF

redevelopment plan is intended by the Village to help provide the assistance required to eliminate conditions detrimental to successful redevelopment of the RPA.

The use of TIF relies upon leveraged private redevelopment in the RPA creating higher real estate value that would otherwise decline or stagnate without such investment. The result of such investment will lead to increased property taxes compared to the previous land-use (or lack of use). In this way the existing tax base for all tax districts is protected and a portion of future increased taxes are pledged to attract the needed private investment.

II. QUALIFICATION CRITERIA USED

With the assistance of Village staff, Ryan, LLC examined the RPA beginning in July of 2023 to the date of this Report, and reviewed information collected for the RPA to determine the presence or absence of appropriate qualifying factors listed in the Act. The relevant sections of the Act are found below.

The Act sets out specific procedures, which must be adhered to in designating a redevelopment project area. By definition, a redevelopment project area is:

“an area designated by the municipality, which is not less in the aggregate than 1 ½ acres and in respect to which the municipality has made a finding that there exist conditions which cause the area to be classified as a blighted area or a conservation area, or a combination of both a blighted area and conservation area.”

Under the Act, conservation area is defined as “any improved area within the boundaries of a redevelopment project area located within the territorial limits of the municipality in which fifty percent (50%) or more of the structures in the area have an age of thirty-five (35) years or more. Such an area is not yet a blighted area, but because of a combination of three (3) or more of the following factors is detrimental to the public safety, health, morals or welfare and such an area may become a blighted area:

(A) Dilapidation: An advanced state of disrepair or neglect of necessary repairs to the primary structural components of building or improvements in such a combination that a documented building condition analysis determines that major repair is required or the defects are so serious and so extensive that the buildings must be removed.

(B) Obsolescence: The condition or process of falling into disuse. Structures have become ill suited for the original use.

(C) Deterioration: With respect to buildings, defects including, but not limited to major defects in the secondary building components such as doors, windows, porches, gutters and downspouts and fascia. With respect to surface improvements, the condition of roadways, alleys, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, off-street parking and surface storage areas evidence deterioration, including, but not limited to, surface cracking, crumbling, potholes, depressions, loose paving material and weeds protruding through paved surfaces.

(D) Presence of Structures Below Minimum Code Standards: All structures that do not meet the standards of zoning, subdivision, building, fire and other governmental codes applicable to property, but not including housing and property maintenance codes.

(E) Illegal Use of Individual Structures: The use of structures in violation of applicable federal, State, or local laws, exclusive of those applicable to the presence of structures below minimum code standards.

(F) Excessive Vacancies: The presence of buildings that are unoccupied or under-utilized and that represent an adverse influence on the area because of the frequency, extent or duration of the vacancies.

(G) Lack of Ventilation, Light, or Sanitary Facilities: The absence of adequate ventilation for light or air circulation in spaces or rooms without windows, or that require the removal of dust, odor, gas, smoke or other noxious airborne materials. Inadequate natural light and ventilation means the absence of skylights or windows for interior spaces or rooms and improper window sizes and amounts by room area to window area ratios. Inadequate sanitary facilities refer to the absence or inadequacy of garbage storage and enclosure, bathroom facilities, hot water and kitchens and structural inadequacies preventing ingress and egress to and from all rooms and units within a building.

(H) Inadequate Utilities: Underground and overhead utilities such as storm sewers and storm drainage, sanitary sewers, water lines and gas, telephone and electrical services that are shown to be inadequate. Inadequate utilities are those that are: (i) of insufficient capacity to serve the uses in the redevelopment project area; (ii) deteriorated, antiquated, obsolete or in disrepair; or (iii) lacking within the redevelopment project area.

(I) Excessive Land Coverage and Overcrowding of Structures and Community Facilities: The over-intensive use of property and the crowding of buildings and accessory facilities onto a site. Examples of problem conditions warranting the designation of an area as one exhibiting excessive land coverage are: (i) the presence of buildings either improperly situated on parcels or located on parcels of inadequate size and shape in relation to present-day standards of development for health and safety and (ii) the presence of multiple buildings on a single parcel. For there to be a finding of excessive land coverage, these parcels must exhibit one or more of the following conditions: insufficient provision for light and air within or around buildings, increased threat of spread of fire due to the close proximity of buildings, lack of adequate or proper access to a public right-of-way, lack of reasonably required off-street parking or inadequate provision for loading service.

(J) Deleterious Land-Use or Layout: The existence of incompatible land-use relationships, buildings occupied by inappropriate mixed-uses or uses considered to be noxious, offensive or unsuitable for the surrounding area.

(K) Environmental Clean-Up: The proposed redevelopment project area has incurred Illinois Environmental Protection Agency or United States Environmental Protection Agency remediation costs for, or a study conducted by an independent consultant recognized as having expertise in environmental remediation has determined a need for the clean-up of hazardous waste, hazardous substances or underground storage tanks required by State or federal law, provided that the remediation costs constitute a material impediment to the development or redevelopment of the redevelopment project area.

(L) Lack of Community Planning: The proposed redevelopment project area was developed prior to or without the benefit or guidance of a community plan. This means

that the development occurred prior to the adoption by the municipality of a comprehensive or other community plan or that the plan was not followed at the time of the area's development. This factor must be documented by evidence of adverse or incompatible land-use relationships, inadequate street layout, improper subdivision, parcels of inadequate shape and size to meet contemporary development standards or other evidence demonstrating an absence of effective community planning.

(M) Lag in EAV: The total equalized assessed value of the proposed redevelopment project area has declined for three (3) of the last five (5) calendar years for which information is available, or is increasing at an annual rate that is less than the balance of the municipality for three (3) of the last five (5) calendar years for which information is available, or is increasing at an annual rate that is less than the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the United States Department of Labor or successor agency for three (3) of the last five (5) calendar years for which information is available.”

III. THE PROPOSED RPA

The RPA is located in the northeast portion of the Village and consists primarily of retail, commercial, industrial, and mixed uses. The RPA is a contiguous area which generally includes parcels on the west side of Harlem Avenue and the north Village boundary along the CTA/UPPR rail tracks. The proposed RPA is generally bounded by Madison Street to the south, the CTA/UPPR rail tracks and the Village boundary to the north, Harlem Avenue to the east, and Lathrop Avenue to the west. Adjacent rights of way to the centerline of Harlem Avenue and Village boundary are also included.

The RPA consists of approximately twenty-eight (28) buildings and approximately forty-six (46) tax parcels. The RPA is approximately twenty-six (26) acres in size and includes approximately three (3) residential units.

The RPA described herein meets the eligibility requirements for designation as a conservation area under the Act. All of the parcels were examined to determine the number of structures aged thirty-five (35) years or greater, as required under the conservation area criteria of the Act. It was determined by site surveys, Cook County Assessor data and Village input that ninety three percent (93%) of the structures in the RPA were thirty-five (35) years old or greater. Furthermore, the RPA as a whole was found to evidence five (5) qualification factors. The minimum required for a finding of a conservation area is that over fifty percent (50%) of the improved structures are thirty-five (35) years old or greater and the existence of three (3) qualification factors dictated by the Act.

It was further found that the required qualifying factors are reasonably distributed throughout the RPA. The Consultant and the Village reserve the right to make additional findings in connection with this Report prior to the adoption of the TIF District. Thus, the Report is subject to revisions to the extent such revisions are allowable prior to any action by the Village to adopt the TIF District, as permitted in accordance with the Act.

IV. METHODOLOGY OF EVALUATION

In evaluating the RPA's potential qualification as a TIF District, the following methodology was utilized:

- 1) Site surveys of the RPA were undertaken by representatives from the Consultant. Site surveys were completed for each parcel within a block (based upon Cook County map blocks), within the area.
- 2) Exterior evaluation of structures was completed noting such conditions as deterioration, obsolescence, and deleterious land use and layout, along with other factors contained in the TIF area. Additionally, 2016 through 2021 tax information from the Cook County Clerk's Office, Cook County parcel tax maps, site data, local history (discussions with Village staff), and an evaluation of area-wide factors that have affected the RPA's development (e.g., lack of community planning, and lag in equalized assessed value) were reviewed. The Consultant studied the RPA in its entirety. Village redevelopment goals and objectives for the RPA were also reviewed with Village staff. A photographic recording and analysis of the RPA was conducted and was used to aid this evaluation.
- 3) Existing structures and site conditions were initially surveyed only in the context of checking, to the best and most reasonable extent available, qualification factors of specific structures and site conditions on the parcels.
- 4) The RPA was examined to determine the applicability of age, plus the thirteen (13) other qualification factors for TIF designation as a conservation area under the Act. Evaluation was made by reviewing the information from the site surveys and other relevant information collected for the RPA and determining how it measured when evaluated against the qualification factors.

V. QUALIFICATION OF PROPOSED RPA/FINDINGS OF ELIGIBILITY

Based upon the Consultant’s evaluation of parcels in the Study Area and analysis of each of the eligibility factors summarized in Section II, the following factors are present to support qualification of the proposed TIF District as a conservation area. These factors are found to be clearly present and reasonably distributed throughout the Study Area, as required under the Act. In addition to age at least three other qualifying factors must be present to a meaningful extent throughout the RPA.

A. Threshold Qualification

Age. Based upon site surveys; and Cook County and Village data, approximately ninety three percent (93%) (26 of the 28) of the structures in the RPA were found to be thirty-five (35) years of age or older.

B. Other Conservation Factors (must include three or more factors)

1. Obsolescence. The Act states that obsolescence is the condition or process of falling into disuse or structures that have become “ill-suited” for their original use.

Obsolescence is exhibited in part by age of the existing structures, as well as the fact that many of the buildings have met or are exceeding their apparent useful life. Additionally, the fact that many tenant spaces along Harlem Avenue lack adequate access for separate loading and unloading areas, ingress and egress, and adequate parking contributes to this factor. While most of the commercial buildings are served by an alley on the west side of Harlem Avenue, loading and unloading may still be problematic because in most cases it would block the flow of traffic in the alley during the process.

The area suffers from area-wide obsolescence connected in part to the lack of community planning, the lag in the growth of EAV for the Study Area when compared with the rest of the Village and the CPI-U, and the age of many of the structures.

The combination of the above referenced factors could limit the ability of mid to large size retailers from locating in the corridor. Indeed, some larger tenants such as the CVS located at 7216 Circle Avenue and the Bed Bath & Beyond located at 215 North Harlem Avenue have closed, leaving significant vacancies.

Overall, these structures have a disproportionately negative “spill-over” effect on the area given the size of the properties (both the buildings and the associated land areas). Absent private and public sector reinvestment, such conditions may deter other property owners from reinvesting in their own properties. The obsolete conditions within the area thus hinder Village goals to promote a more suitable mix of retail, commercial, mixed use, and residential land uses.

2. Deterioration. The Act defines deterioration with respect to buildings defects, including but not limited to, major defects in the secondary building components such as doors, windows, porches, gutters and downspouts and fascia. With respect to surface improvements, the condition of roadways, alleys, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, off-street parking and surface storage areas may evidence deterioration, including, but not limited to, surface cracking, crumbling, potholes, depressions, loose paving material and weeds protruding through paved surfaces.

Many of the parcels displayed signs of deteriorated building conditions including, but not limited to, damaged fascia, doors, windows, and entryways, rotting wood, and missing mortar which require repairs, upgrades and replacement. In addition, evidence to support deteriorated surface conditions included, but was not limited to, cracking of pavement areas, potholes and depressions in roadway and parking areas, weeds protruding through paved and concrete areas and loose gravel in parking areas and driveways for many of the parcels.

3. Inadequate Utilities. The Act refers to underground and overhead utilities such as storm sewers and storm drainage, sanitary sewers, water lines and gas, telephone and electrical services that are shown to be inadequate. Inadequate utilities are those that are: (i) of insufficient capacity to serve the uses in the redevelopment project area; (ii) deteriorated, antiquated, obsolete or in disrepair; or (iii) lacking within the redevelopment project area.

Much of the Study Area suffers from deterioration to Infrastructure Components. Most of the existing sewer system in the Study Area is comprised of combined stormwater and sanitary sewer, is more than 90 years old, and was designed and constructed with outdated engineering standards. According to a Sewer Separation Report (2015), this outdated engineering combined with insufficient stormwater detention leads to sewer backups into basements as well as significant inundation after periods of heavy rainfall. This can result in not only interrupted pedestrian and vehicular travel, but businesses being closed because employees and customers cannot access the property. Modern sanitary sewer standards would dictate that the sanitary sewers within the Study Area be either replaced or lined to reduce inflow and infiltration. A new and separate storm sewer could also be constructed to provide stormwater detention and reduce the burden on the combined sewer system.

The watermain that currently serves the Study Area was replaced approximately 40 years ago and is up to current engineering standards. However, many service lines to structures in the study area are undersized and will need to be replaced. At least thirty six percent (36%), or ten of the twenty-eight structures in the study area, have two-inch (2") copper service lines that are substandard. Finally, at least twenty five percent (25%), or seven of the twenty-eight structures in the study area, have existing lead water service lines and need to be replaced to meet IEPA standards.

Photographs and site visits also support the finding of deterioration to public streets, sidewalks, and alleyways. The public streets, parkways, and alleys within the Study Area

are aging and were not all constructed to current Village standards. Additionally, much of the surface parking area contains cracked asphalt, pavement, some cracked curbs, and surface asphalt in need of resurfacing.

At the northeast corner of the study area lies the Harlem Avenue Multimodal Bridge. Originally constructed in 1911, the bridge structure includes a CTA boarding platform, two CTA tracks, and three UPRR tracks serving both UPRR freight and Metra commuter trains. In its current configuration, the bridge is functionally obsolete in addressing current traffic along Harlem Avenue. The Harlem Avenue Multimodal Bridge is a pinch point for automobiles, buses, and street level freight movement, and restricts access through the local retail corridor from Madison Street to Lake Street. In addition, the low clearance and pier columns of the bridge create a safety hazard due to narrow lane widths, obstructed sight lines, and incompatible roadway geometrics. Pedestrian facilities at the site are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The lack of adequate lighting under the bridge creates a safety issue for pedestrians and the deteriorated condition of the bridge and sidewalks discourages pedestrian activity. All of these deficiencies create a barrier between the commercially successful north side and the underdeveloped south side of the structure.

According to Village of Forest Park staff, the bridge itself is in poor condition with its component parts deteriorating. An inspection in 2009 found advanced deterioration in many of the structural components and cracking and spalling in the concrete abutments. Concrete pieces frequently fall from deteriorating sections of the abutment wall which must be temporarily secured each time. Structural steel members required repairs in 2014, and the need and frequency for such repairs will increase with time. Such repairs also require lane closures on Harlem Avenue for extended periods each time, causing significant traffic congestion for miles in each direction given the limited number of viaducts under the railroad. Replacing the entire bridge is the only option to resolve the current issues.

4. Lack of Community Planning. The Act refers to lack of community planning as the proposed redevelopment project area was developed prior to or without the benefit or guidance of a community plan. This means that the development occurred prior to the adoption by the municipality of a comprehensive or other community plan or that the plan was not followed at the time of the area's development. This factor must be documented by evidence of adverse or incompatible land-use relationships, inadequate street layout, improper subdivision, parcels of inadequate shape and size to meet contemporary development standards or other evidence demonstrating an absence of effective community planning.

According to Village staff and building age review, much of the development that has occurred within the Study Area took place in a period of time prior to the Village adopting its Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance and before the Village followed its existing comprehensive planning procedures. The Village adopted its first Village wide Comprehensive Plan in 2001.

Prior to 2001, effective and sustained economic development plans and strategies intended to address the coordinated redevelopment of the entire Study Area were lacking. This is not to say that improvements did not take place over the years, but that they were implemented without the guidance of a master plan directed toward long-term benefit for the Study Area. A lack of such efforts has contributed to the evolution of conservation area factors currently present within the Study Area.

All of the parcels fronting along the west side of Harlem Avenue have rather short depths and irregular shapes, limiting to a degree their usefulness and redevelopment potential. This is compounded by the lack of convenient parking and the inability of vehicles to access many of these parcels from Harlem Avenue. Much of the existing development along the street was developed without consideration given to convenient parking and internal circulation.

In addition, planning related efforts within the RPA and integration with frontage along Harlem Avenue is important in order to coordinate redevelopment efforts, and potentially increase valuations. Coordinated streetscape, pedestrian enhancements, signage, parking, and circulation efforts are also important throughout the area and could be facilitated through the use of TIF resources.

The Village's Comprehensive Plan (2014) identifies several strategies and recommendations to strengthen its commercial areas by creating physical improvements which enhance the appearance, appeal and utility of the mixed-use corridors. Specific excerpts relating to the Study Area are found below:

- a. **“Retain, expand, and attract a diverse mix of businesses and industries, thereby fostering investment and creating new jobs.”**
 - i. When appropriate, consider incentives to attract and retain commercial enterprises.
 - ii. Prioritize existing areas within commercial corridors and encourage responsible redevelopment.
 - iii. Revitalize existing commercial corridors by encouraging redevelopment.
 - iv. Structure land use and zoning regulations to encourage mixed use development and redevelopment.
 - v. Develop and implement corridor plans to enhance and promote the Village's major transportation corridors.
 - vi. Maintain a business-friendly environment by providing resources, services, and assistance to the business community.
 - vii. Increase economic vitality by promoting tourism and local visitor experiences.
 - viii. Maintain a diverse economic base.

- b. **“Strengthen the land use and transportation relationship in Forest Park.”**
 - i. Promote the Complete Streets policy to develop a comprehensive network of roadway, pedestrian and bikeway, and transit facilities. Implement this policy in coordination with the development/redevelopment of properties and roadways.

- ii. Integrate transportation projects and land use development/plans to support and strengthen each other.
 - iii. Encourage mixed use and transit-oriented development near transit stations and stops.
 - iv. Evaluate parking as necessary to respond to changing needs for new business and residential developments.
- c. **“Streetscape improvements, including the expansion of sidewalk widths, should be considered to improve walkability.** Sidewalks should be a minimum of ten feet wide when extended to the back of curb. Strategic locations should be identified to accommodate street furniture. Easements may be needed in order to accommodate the widened sidewalk and should be secured as part of the redevelopment process.”
- d. **“...any redevelopment along Harlem Avenue should include groups of properties.** The development pattern may be either at the front property line, or slightly stepped back in order to provide increased areas for wider sidewalks, parkways, and other pedestrian amenities that are needed to increase the safety of pedestrians walking along this busy corridor.”
- e. **“Parking should be developed to the rear or sides of buildings, except on intersecting street corners when possible, and lots should be screened with landscaped walls or fences to provide separation between cars and pedestrians.** Parking should be oriented to and accessed from the rear alley.”

5. Declining or Lagging EAV. The Act refers to lag in EAV as the total equalized assessed value of the proposed redevelopment project area has declined for three (3) of the last five (5) calendar years prior to the year in which the redevelopment project area is designated, or is increasing at an annual rate that is less than the balance of the municipality for three (3) of the last five (5) calendar years, for which information is available or increasing at an annual rate that is less than the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the United States Department of Labor or successor agency for three (3) of the last five (5) calendar years prior to the year in which the redevelopment project area is designated

The total EAV of the RPA has grown at an annual rate that is less than the growth for the balance of the Village’s EAV for three (3) of the last five (5) years. Additionally, the total EAV of the RPA has grown at an annual rate that is less than the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) in three (3) of the last five (5) years. A summary of this analysis is presented in the table below.

EAV Trends for Study Area

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total TIF Study Area	\$10,319,359	\$10,976,058	\$9,513,909	\$9,497,271	\$9,671,341	\$8,154,847
Annual % Change	-6.0%	15.4%	0.2%	-1.8%	18.6%	-----
Village of Forest Park	\$400,358,817	\$431,925,899	\$353,567,531	\$352,119,311	\$361,111,661	\$302,132,242
Village of Forest Park (Excluding TIF)	\$390,039,458	\$420,949,841	\$344,053,622	\$342,622,040	\$351,440,320	\$293,977,395
Annual % Change	-7.3%	22.4%	0.4%	-2.5%	19.5%	-----
CPI	4.70%	1.20%	1.80%	2.40%	2.10%	-----

Lagging/Declining years are indicated.

Source: Cook County and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

VI. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF QUALIFICATION

The following is a summary of relevant qualification findings as it relates to the potential designation of the RPA by the Village as a TIF District:

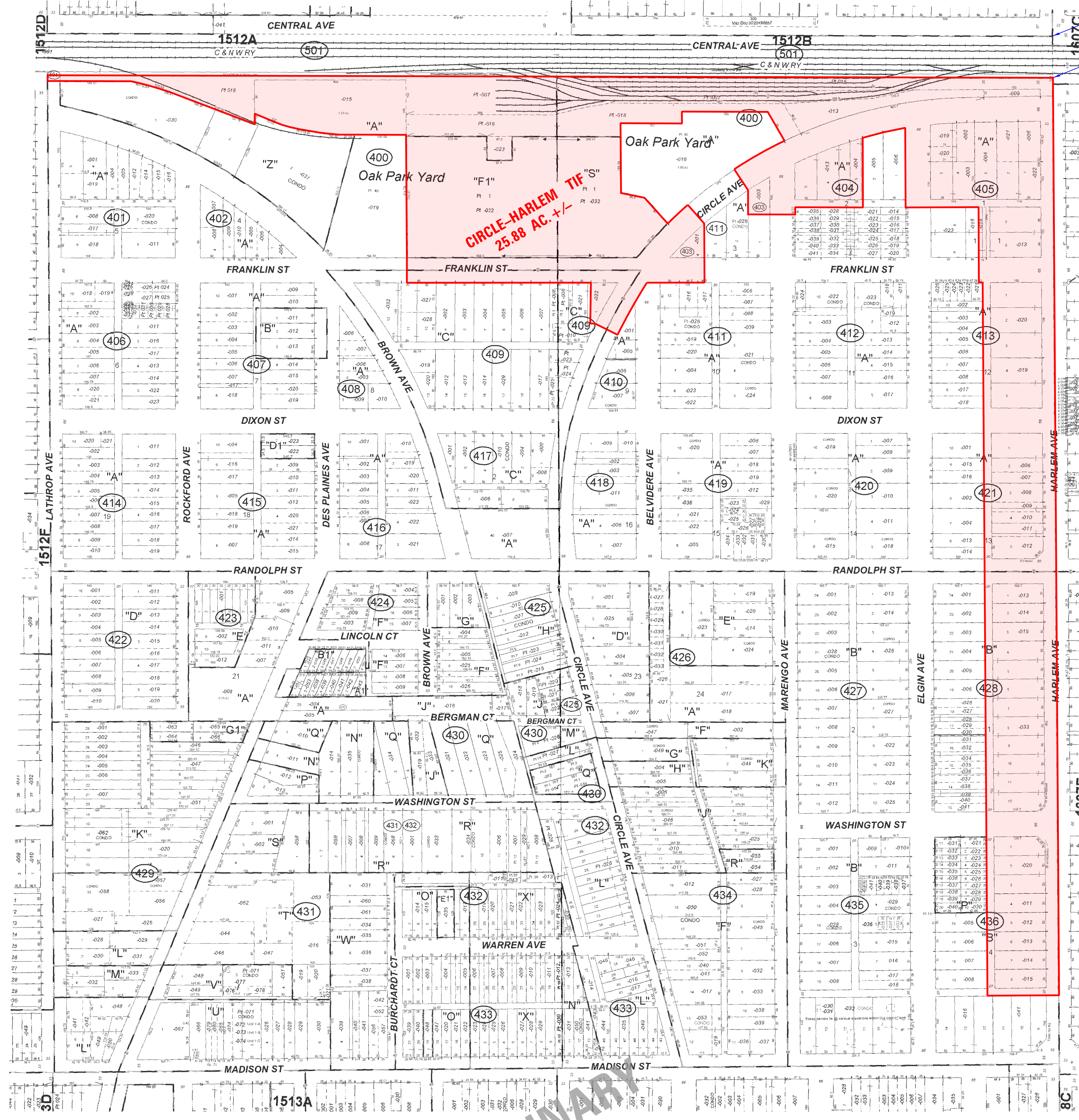
1. The RPA is contiguous and is greater than 1½ acres in size.
2. The RPA qualifies as a conservation area. A more detailed analysis of the qualification findings is outlined in Section V of this Report.
3. All property in the RPA would substantially benefit by the proposed redevelopment project improvements.
4. The sound growth of taxing districts applicable to the RPA, including the Village, has been impaired by the factors found present in the RPA.
5. The RPA would not be subject to redevelopment without the investment of public funds, including property tax increments.

These findings, in the judgment of the Consultant, provide the Village with sufficient justification to consider designation of the RPA as a TIF District.

The RPA has not benefited from coordinated planning efforts by either the public or private sectors. There is a need to focus redevelopment efforts relating to the improvement of infrastructure and property maintenance as well as the coordination of redevelopment efforts for modern uses. These efforts will be important to the RPA's continued improvement and preservation of tax base.

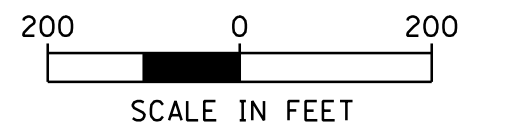
EXHIBIT 1

PROPOSED TIF BOUNDARY MAP



CIRCLE-HARLEM TIF
25.88 AC. +/-

POINT OF COMMENCEMENT
 POINT OF BEGINNING



CHRISTOPHER B. BURKE
 ENGINEERING, LTD.
 9575 West Higgins Road, Suite 600
 Rosemont, Illinois 60018
 (847) 823-0500

CIRCLE-HARLEM TIF
 IN
 VILLAGE OF FOREST PARK, ILLINOIS
 PREPARED FOR
 VILLAGE OF FOREST PARK

CALC.	JRM	PROJECT NO.
DWN.	AJK	000023.00116
CHKD.	KJR	SHEET 1 OF 1
SCALE:	1" = 200'	DRAWING NO.
DATE:	08-18-2023	TIF0023.116A

EXHIBIT 2

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

CIRCLE – HARLEM TIF DISTRICT

THAT PART OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 12, TOWNSHIP 39, RANGE 12 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 12; THENCE SOUTH ALONG THE EAST LINE OF SAID SOUTHEAST QUARTER TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF THE CHICAGO & NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY, FOR A POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE SOUTH ALONG SAID EAST LINE OF SAID SOUTHEAST QUARTER TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY EXTENSION OF THE SOUTH LINE OF AN EAST-WEST 20-FOOT-WIDE PUBLIC ALLEY LYING NORTH OF MADISON STREET; THENCE WEST ALONG SAID EASTERLY EXTENSION AND THE SOUTH LINE OF THE EAST-WEST 20-FOOT-WIDE PUBLIC ALLEY LYING NORTH OF MADISON STREET TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF THE WEST LINE OF A NORTH-SOUTH 20 FOOT PUBLIC ALLEY LYING WEST OF HARLEM AVENUE; THENCE NORTH ALONG SAID WEST LINE OF THE NORTH-SOUTH 20 FOOT PUBLIC ALLEY LYING WEST OF HARLEM AVENUE TO A POINT ON THE SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF FRANKLIN STREET; THENCE WEST ALONG SAID SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF FRANKLIN STREET TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF THE EAST LINE OF THE WEST 34 FEET OF THE EAST 53 FEET OF LOTS 6 AND 9 IN BLOCK 1 IN RAILROAD ADDITION TO HARLEM AS RECORDED NOVEMBER 26, 1858; THENCE NORTH ALONG SAID EAST LINE OF THE WEST 34 FEET OF THE EAST 53 FEET OF LOTS 6 AND 9 IN BLOCK 1 TO A POINT ON THE SOUTH LINE OF AN EAST-WEST 20-FOOT-WIDE PUBLIC ALLEY LYING NORTH OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET; THENCE WEST ALONG SAID SOUTH LINE OF THE EAST-WEST 20-FOOT-WIDE PUBLIC ALLEY LYING NORTH OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF ELGIN AVE; THENCE NORTH ALONG SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF ELGIN AVE TO A POINT ON THE SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY ALONG SAID SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE TO THE A POINT ON THE EAST LINE OF THE WEST 4 FEET OF LOT 2 IN BLOCK 2 IN SAID RAILROAD ADDITION TO HARLEM; THENCE SOUTH ALONG SAID EAST LINE OF THE WEST 4 FEET OF LOT 2 IN BLOCK 2 IN RAILROAD ADDITION TO HARLEM AND THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION THEREOF TO A POINT ON SAID SOUTH LINE OF THE EAST-WEST 20-FOOT-WIDE PUBLIC ALLEY LYING NORTH OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET; THENCE WEST ALONG SAID SOUTH LINE OF THE EAST-WEST 20-FOOT-WIDE PUBLIC ALLEY LYING NORTH OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET TO A POINT ON THE EAST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF MARENGO AVE; THENCE SOUTH ALONG SAID EAST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF MARENGO AVE TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE EASTERLY EXTENSION OF THE SOUTH LINE OF THE NORTH 100 FEET OF LOT 1 IN BLOCK 3 IN SAID RAILROAD ADDITION TO HARLEM; THENCE WEST ALONG SAID EASTERLY EXTENSION AND THE SOUTH LINE OF THE NORTH 100 FEET OF LOT 1 IN BLOCK 3 IN SAID RAILROAD ADDITION TO HARLEM TO A POINT ON THE WEST LINE OF SAID LOT 1 IN BLOCK 3; THENCE NORTH ALONG SAID WEST LINE OF LOT 1 IN BLOCK 3 TO A POINT ON THE SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE, SAID POINT ALSO BEING THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID LOT 1 IN BLOCK 3; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG A RADIAL LINE TO CIRCLE AVENUE TO A POINT OPPOSITE AND ADJACENT TO SAID NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID LOT 1 IN BLOCK 3, SAID POINT BEING ON THE NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SAID CIRCLE AVENUE; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH A LINE 50 FEET SOUTHWESTERLY OF (MEASURED PERPENDICULARLY) AND PARALLEL WITH THE SOUTHWESTERLY LINE OF THE TRACT OF LAND CONVEYED BY THE CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY TO MAX GOLDSTEIN, JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN, EVA GOLDSTEIN AND BESSIE GOLDSTEIN BY QUIT CLAIM DEED RECORDED AUGUST 23, 1963 AS DOCUMENT NO. 18893094; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG SAID LINE 50 FEET SOUTHWESTERLY OF (MEASURED PERPENDICULARLY) AND PARALLEL WITH THE

SOUTHWESTERLY LINE OF THE TRACT OF LAND CONVEYED BY THE CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY TO MAX GOLDSTEIN, JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN, EVA GOLDSTEIN AND BESSIE GOLDSTEIN TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH A LINE 102 FEET SOUTH OF AND PARALLEL WITH THE SOUTH BOUNDARY LINE OF THE CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY, EAST OF HARLEM AVENUE, EXTENDED WEST; THENCE WEST ALONG SAID LINE 102 FEET SOUTH OF AND PARALLEL WITH THE SOUTH BOUNDARY LINE OF THE CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY A DISTANCE OF 230 FEET, MORE OR LESS; THENCE SOUTH ALONG A LINE BEING AT RIGHT ANGLES FROM SAID SOUTH BOUNDARY LINE OF THE CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY, EAST OF HARLEM AVENUE, EXTENDED WEST TO A POINT ON A LINE BEING 8.50 FEET SOUTH OF AND PARALLEL WITH THE CENTERLINE OF SPUR TRACK I.C.C. NUMBER 367 OF SAID CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY; THENCE WEST ALONG SAID LINE BEING 8.50 FEET SOUTH OF AND PARALLEL WITH THE CENTERLINE OF SPUR TRACK I.C.C. NUMBER 367 OF THE CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY, 162 FEET TO A POINT ON A LINE DRAWN PERPENDICULAR TO THE NORTH LINE OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET THROUGH A POINT THEREIN WHICH IS 41.0 FEET WEST OF THE INTERSECTION OF THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET AND SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE; THENCE SOUTH ALONG SAID LINE DRAWN PERPENDICULAR TO THE NORTH LINE OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET THROUGH A POINT THEREIN WHICH IS 41.0 FEET WEST OF THE INTERSECTION OF THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET AND SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE, 187.30 FEET; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG A STRAIGHT LINE A DISTANCE OF 64.4 FEET TO A POINT 90 FEET NORTHWESTERLY OF AND MEASURED RADially TO THE NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SAID CIRCLE AVENUE ALONG A LINE DRAWN FROM A POINT ON SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE, 121.5 FEET CHORD DISTANCE FROM SAID INTERSECTION OF THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET AND SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG THE LAST DESCRIBED LINE TO SAID POINT BEING 121.5 FEET CHORD DISTANCE FROM SAID INTERSECTION OF THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET AND SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE TO A POINT BEING OPPOSITE AND ADJACENT TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 4 IN SAID BLOCK 3 IN RAILROAD ADDITION TO HARLEM; THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY ALONG A LINE TO SAID NORTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 4 IN SAID BLOCK 3 IN RAILROAD ADDITION TO HARLEM; THENCE SOUTH ALONG THE EAST LINE OF SAID LOT 4 IN SAID BLOCK 3 IN RAILROAD ADDITION TO HARLEM AND THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION THEREOF TO A POINT ON SAID SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF FRANKLIN STREET; THENCE WEST ALONG SAID SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF FRANKLIN STREET TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH SAID SOUTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY ALONG SAID SOUTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE TO A POINT BEING OPPOSITE AND ADJACENT TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION OF SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE AND THE SOUTH LINE OF THE NORTH 108 FEET OF LOT 1 IN BLOCK 1 IN THE SUBDIVISION BY THE CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY OF PART OF THE RESERVATION FOR RAILROAD PURPOSES, AS SHOWN ON THE PLAT OF RAILROAD ADDITION TO THE TOWN OF HARLEM, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED NOVEMBER 14, 1881 AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 358829; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG A LINE TO SAID POINT OF INTERSECTION; THENCE WEST ALONG SAID SOUTH LINE OF THE NORTH 108 FEET OF LOT 1 IN BLOCK 1 TO A POINT ON THE EAST LINE OF THE WEST 8.0 FEET OF SAID LOT 1 IN BLOCK 1; THENCE NORTH ALONG SAID EAST LINE OF THE WEST 8.0 FEET OF SAID LOT 1 IN BLOCK 1 TO A POINT ON SAID SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF FRANKLIN STREET; THENCE WEST ALONG SAID SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF FRANKLIN STREET TO A POINT OPPOSITE AND ADJACENT TO A POINT BEING 606.90 FEET WEST OF THE INTERSECTION OF THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET AND SAID NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE; THENCE

NORTH ALONG A LINE TO SAID POINT BEING 606.90 FEET WEST OF THE INTERSECTION OF THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET AND THE NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF CIRCLE AVENUE; THENCE NORTH ALONG A LINE AT RIGHT ANGLES FROM THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SAID FRANKLIN STREET, A DISTANCE OF 324.79 FEET TO A POINT 9 FEET NORTHERLY, AS MEASURED AT RIGHT ANGLES FROM THE CENTERLINE OF SPUR TRACK I.C.C. NO.760 OF THE CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY, AS NOW LOCATED AND ESTABLISHED; THENCE WESTERLY ALONG A LINE PARALLEL WITH SAID CENTERLINE OF THE SPUR TRACK, A DISTANCE OF 135.99 TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 3 IN "BROWN STREET STATION" RESUBDIVISION OF LOTS 1 AND 2 IN SILVER MOON SUBDIVISION, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED SEPTEMBER 20, 1996 AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 96-722111 AND RESUBDIVISION OF PLAT RECORDED AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 97833582; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG THE NORTHERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 3 TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER THEREOF; THENCE SOUTH ALONG THE WESTERLY LINE OF SAID LOT 3 TO A POINT ON THE NORTH LINE OF LOT 2 IN SAID "BROWN STREET STATION" RESUBDIVISION; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG SAID NORTH LINE OF LOT 2 TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID LOT 2, SAID NORTHWEST CORNER ALSO BEING THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 1 IN THE AFORESAID "BROWN STREET STATION" RESUBDIVISION OF LOTS 1 AND 2 IN SILVER MOON SUBDIVISION; THENCE NORTHWESTERLY ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID LOT 1 TO A POINT OF CURVATURE; THENCE CONTINUING ALONG SAID NORTH LINE ON A CURVE CONCAVE TO THE SOUTHWEST TO A POINT OF NON-TANGENCY; THENCE CONTINUING WESTERLY ALONG SAID NORTH LINE TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID LOT 1; THENCE WEST ALONG THE WESTERLY EXTENSION OF SAID NORTH LINE OF LOT 1 TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE WEST LINE OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 12; THENCE NORTH ALONG SAID WEST LINE OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 12 TO A POINT OF INTERSECTION WITH THE AFORESAID SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF THE CHICAGO & NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY; THENCE EASTERLY ALONG SAID SOUTHERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF THE CHICAGO & NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.