



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COUNCIL



NORTH LAWNDALE:

A SURVEY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

AUGUST 2005

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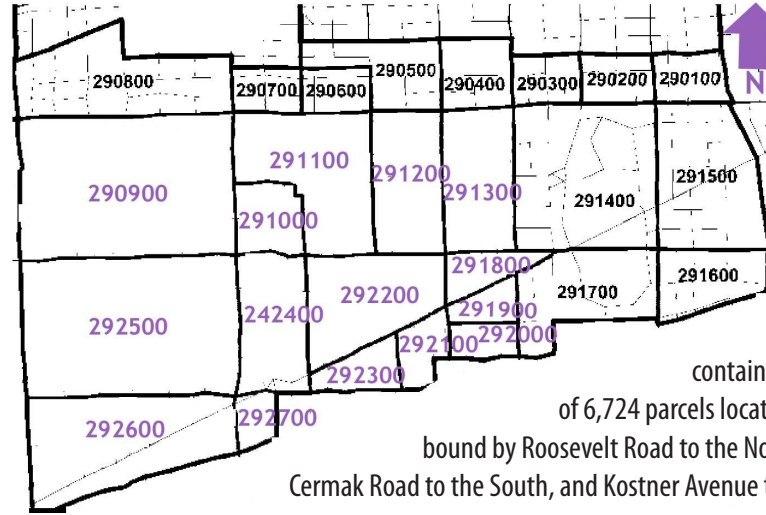
PURPOSE

North Lawndale, a community located on Chicago’s West Side, has long faced serious redevelopment challenges. Fortunately today, as a result of tremendous community initiative and public investment, long overdue neighborhood revitalization is underway. To aid these efforts, the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) conducted a comprehensive inventory of: land use, structure types, building heights, roof types, and vacancy of each parcel in a defined area of North Lawndale (see map 1). Local community groups and residents received training on the fundamentals of zoning and development which they then employed while conducting the inventory. Community groups and residents collaborated with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning’s Full Circle Project and MPC for 2 years to complete the comprehensive inventory. This inventory has created a tool for assessing current zoning and advancing community-based planning efforts that will encourage desirable development opportunities. This report details the findings for each of the traits collected for the parcels in the study area.

The Metropolitan Planning Council believes that city residents, especially those confronting redevelopment challenges should understand how zoning impacts their community. Outdated zoning that fails to reflect market realities can have deleterious impacts on communities like North Lawndale that are trying to advance redevelopment efforts. For example, a community may suffer from vacant storefronts because a market for retail in that area no longer exists. Zoning mandates that such areas remain as a business or commercial use rather than allowing alternate uses that the market demands, like housing. North Lawndale’s residents took a proactive approach to zoning by identifying community assets and challenges during the inventory process.

PROJECT PARAMETERS

In order to develop a comprehensive inventory, parcel level data was collected in a defined study area. According current data provided by the Cook County Assessor, there are 9,998 parcels in the entire North Lawndale community. In order to have effective, reliable data, and given the resources available, MPC identified a smaller study area. The study area consists of the parcels located in census tracts 290900, 291000, 291100, 291200, 291300, 291800, 291900, 292000, 292100, 292200, 292300, 292400, 292500, 292600, and 292700. The refined



study area contains 7,295 parcels. Approximately 7 percent or 511 parcels located in the study area were not logged due to difficulties matching the physical on-street address with Cook County Assessor’s address listings. Thus, the data

contained in this report is representative of 6,724 parcels located in an area approximately bound by Roosevelt Road to the North, Kedzie Avenue to the east, Cermak Road to the South, and Kostner Avenue to the west.

Throughout the inventory process residents identified issues that illustrated a need for redevelopment rather than challenges that would mandate an immediate need for zoning changes in North Lawndale

The goal of promoting redevelopment was repeated in North Lawndale’s Quality of Life Plan, *Faith Rewarded*, which was completed in 2005. Through this planning effort, Lawndale residents identified the strengthening of Ogden Avenue as Lawndale’s main commercial street a primary objective towards improving North Lawndale’s future. The comprehensive inventory can be used to support this community identified redevelopment effort, and many others, by providing residents, local officials and planners with the data

needed for the planning process to strengthen Ogden Avenue. Currently, the City of Chicago is conducting a tax increment financing (TIF) eligibility study. This analysis will help determine whether designating portions of Ogden Avenue as a TIF district would be advantageous to the community. Critical to this analysis is parcel level data which will help determine if the implementation of a TIF would advance development. Because of the North Lawndale community’s engaged residents who participated in the inventory process, residents now have a tool for communicating with their Alderman about the assets they would like preserved or the challenges they would like addressed in the redevelopment of Ogden Avenue.

REPORT OF FINDINGS

LAND USE

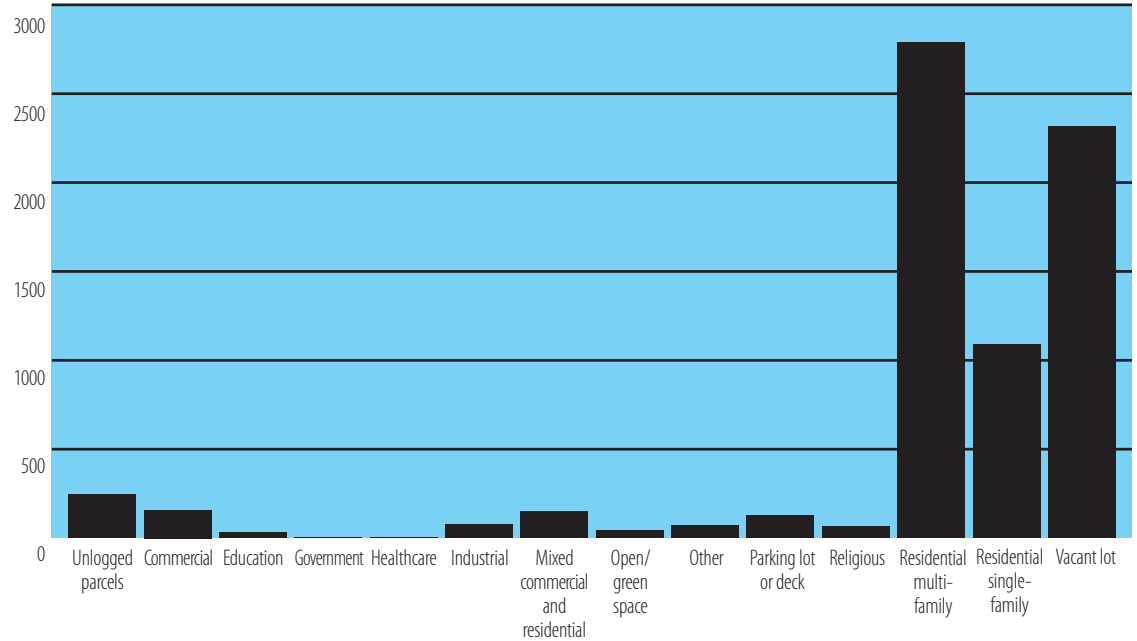
Within these boundaries, researchers identified land use as one of the following: education, government, healthcare, industrial, mixed use (commercial and residential), open/green space, parking lot or deck, religious, residential multifamily, residential single family, vacant lot, or other. Residents are empowered by knowing the existing land uses which provides them with the information needed to pursue community based initiatives. Of the 6,724 logged parcels over 2,000 multifamily dwellings were located within the study area making it the most frequent land use in the study area. Vacant lots accounted for 2,317 parcels and the second most frequent land use, while single family dwellings accounted for 1,091 parcels making it the third most frequent land use (see the land use distribution chart at right and map on page 4).

A significantly smaller proportion of land uses found in the study area included commercial (158), mixed use (149), parking (128), industrial (76), other (70), religious (64), open space (41), education (30), government (4) and healthcare (5) in rank order. See the drilldown view of the land use chart at right.

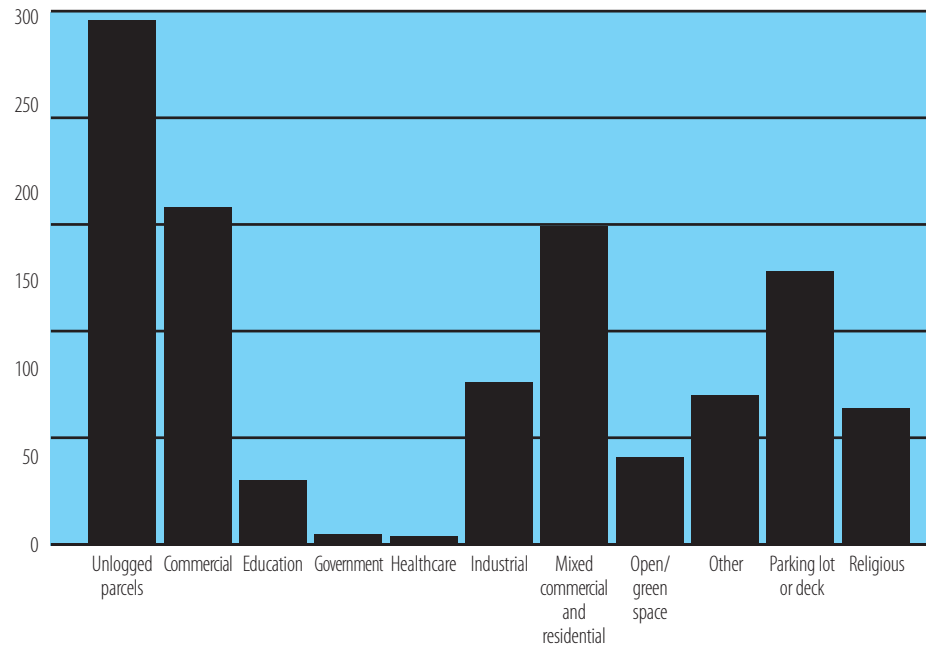
POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF LAND USE

DATA: Land use can be helpful when considering zoning changes. Prior to changing a properties zoning, planners must assess whether an unacceptable amount of non-conforming uses would be created. One key variable in defining non-conformity is land use. Land use can also guide redevelopment efforts by identifying vacant parcels more readily available for redevelopment opportunities. For example, several adjacent vacant parcels can mark the site for a new housing development.

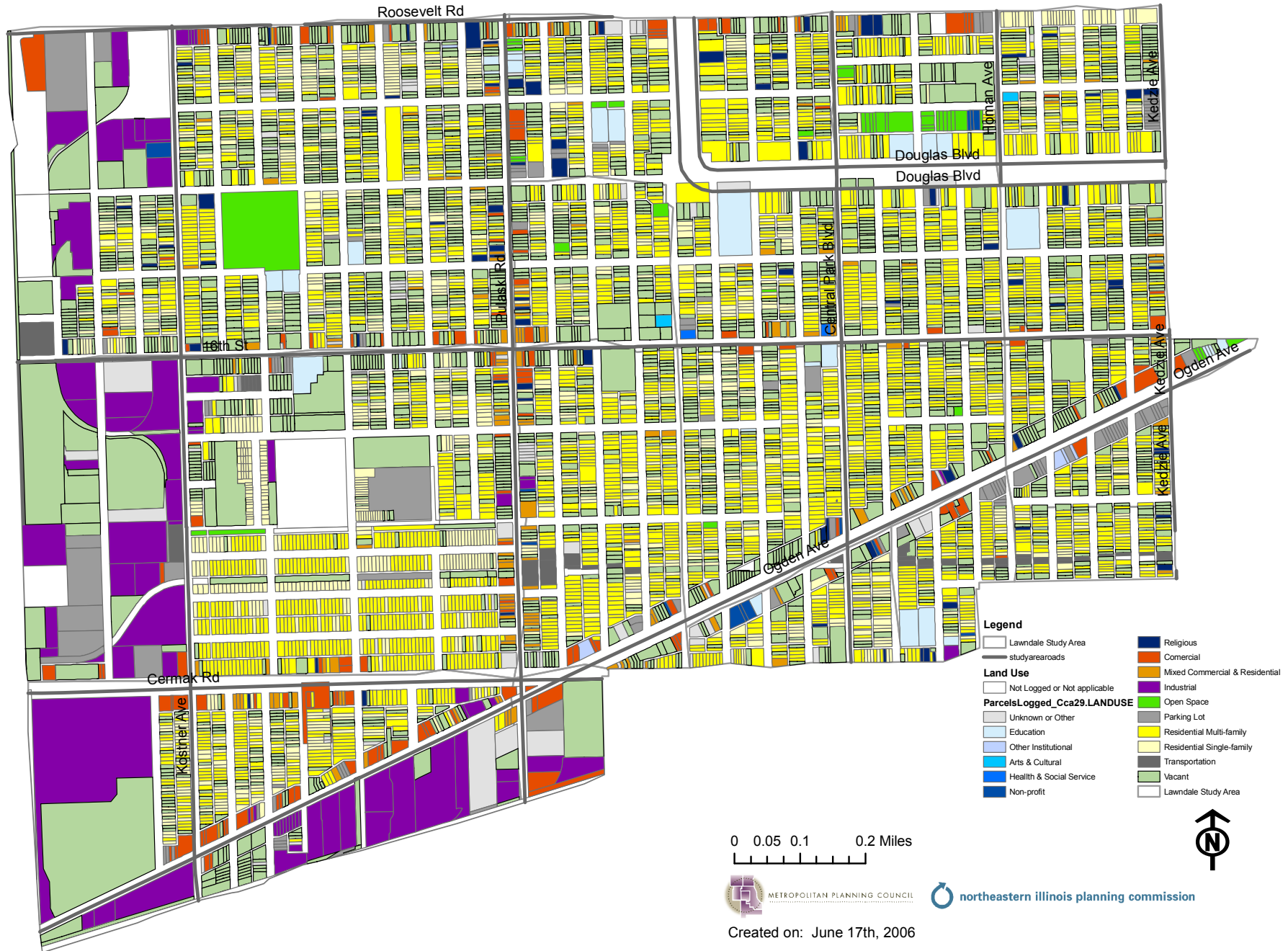
LAND USE



LAND USE DRILLDOWN VIEW, OUTLIERS OMITTED



LAND USE



0 0.05 0.1 0.2 Miles



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northeastern illinois planning commission

Created on: June 17th, 2006



STRUCTURE TYPE

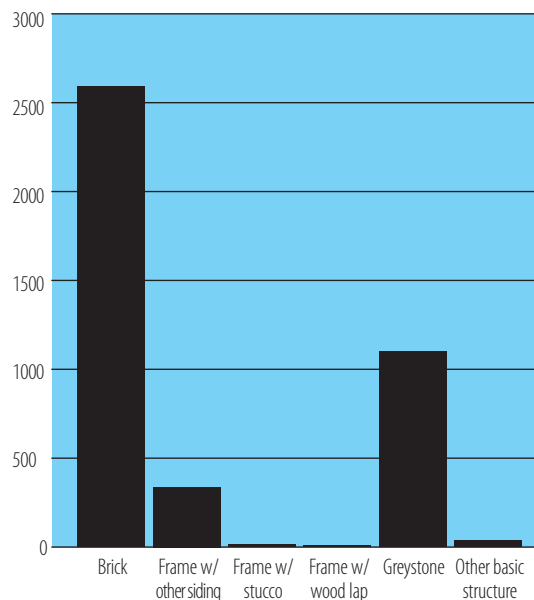
Structure types located within the study area boundaries are characterized as brick, frame with other siding, frame with stucco, frame with wood lap, greystone, and other basic structure. According to the data collected, brick is the most frequently used structure material (2,589), followed by greystone (1,100), frame with other siding (338), other basic structure (37), frame with stucco (14), and frame with wood lap (5). This data is illustrated in the chart at right and in a map on page 6.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF STRUCTURE TYPE DATA: Structure type is a significant characteristic because it communicates the character of the built environment. This data can be used as a guide to influence the character redevelopment efforts and as a tool for preservation measures. The recently introduced Greystone Initiative demonstrates the value of knowing structure type within the community.

GREYSTONE INITIATIVE

Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago (NHS) recently announced a new Initiative designed to help homeowners in Chicago’s North Lawndale community affordably rehab and preserve their 100-year-old greystones. North Lawndale is home to nearly 2,000 greystones (includes larger community area), more than any other Chicago community. The Historic Chicago Greystone Initiative® will build community pride in place, stimulate reinvestment, increase homeownership, and promote property improvement throughout North Lawndale.

STRUCTURE TYPE



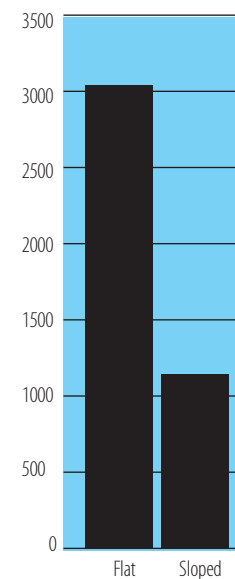
ROOF TYPE

Roof types are identified as flat or sloped and contribute to the character of the built environment of a community. Much of the study area contains structures with flat roofs. According to the data collected there are 3,041 flat roofs and 1,141 sloped roofs in the North Lawndale study area. The chart at right illustrates this data and map attachment 3 spatially depicts the distribution of roof types.

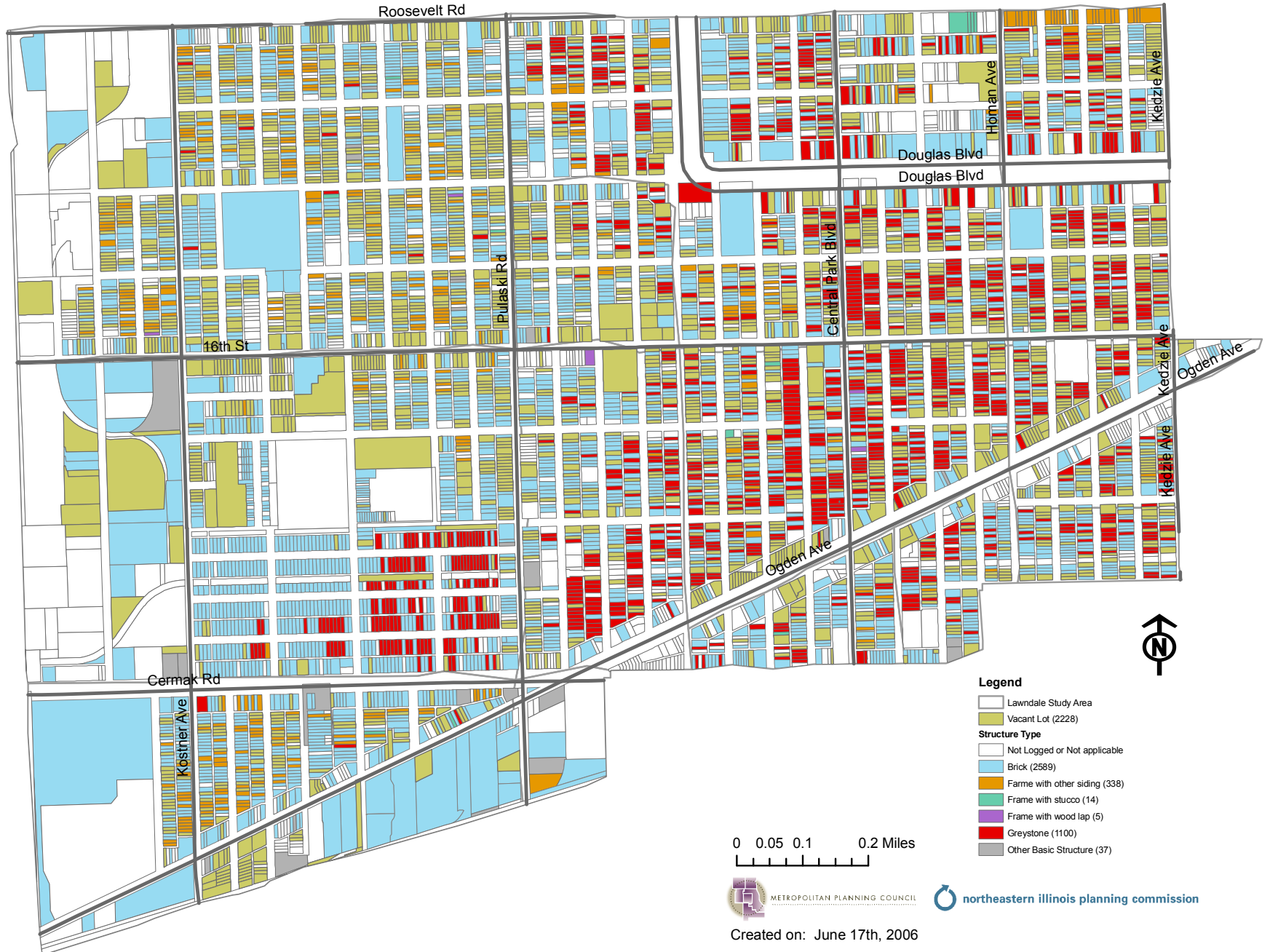
POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF ROOF TYPE DATA: The

North Lawndale community is in the process of drafting redevelopment design guidelines. Design guidelines are used to influence the shape and character of new development. Being able to identify the location of particular roof designs will better allow community groups to tailor their guidelines.

ROOF TYPE



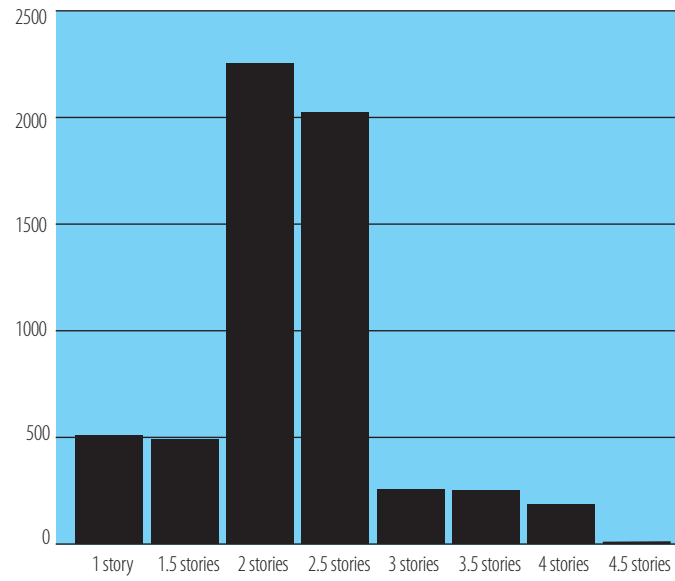
STRUCTURE TYPE



BUILDING HEIGHT

Traditionally, the estimated height of a building is calculated from the number of stories. For residential structures, each story is equivalent to 10 feet and for ground floor retail, the first level is generally equivalent to 12 feet. An overwhelming majority of the structures are between 1 and 4.5 stories tall or 10 to 47 feet tall. According to the data, 2,253 structures located within the study area boundaries are 2 stories high or 20 to 22 feet tall. 2,023 structures are 2.5 stories or 25 to 27 feet tall, 507 structures are 1 story tall or 10 to 12 feet tall, 491 structures are 1.5 or 15 to 17 feet tall, 255 structures are 3 stories tall or 30 to 32 feet tall, 251 structures are 3.5 or 35 to 37 feet tall, 184 structures are 4 stories or 40 to 42 feet tall, and 4 structures are 4.5 stories or 45 to 47 feet tall. The map on page 8 and the building height chart above illustrate the distribution of this data spatially and graphically.

NUMBER OF STORIES



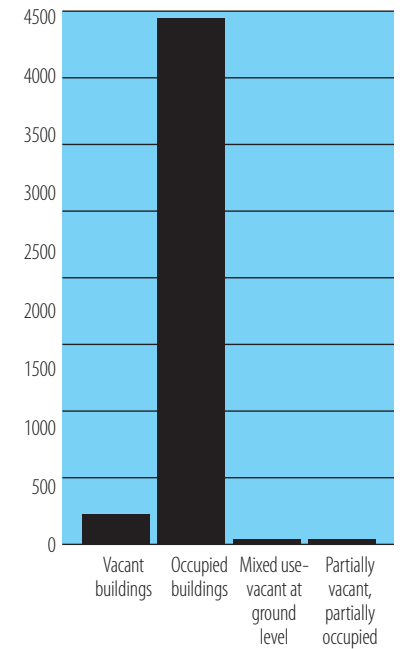
significant variable for two reasons. First, for the same reason land use helps to avoid non-conforming uses when undertaking a zoning change, building height is also one of the significant variables to consider in that calculation. Second, height is an important factor when determining the appropriate scale of new development and assisting in the drafting of redevelopment guidelines.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF BUILDING HEIGHT DATA: Building height is another

VACANCY STATUS

High commercial and residential vacancies are traditional indicators of a community facing economic development challenges. The vacancy status of structures in the study area was recorded as occupied, partially occupied, vacant at ground level, or vacant building. Out of the 6,724 parcels surveyed, 4,332 have a recorded vacancy status. The study area contained 84 parcels with structures that had an undetermined vacancy status. Of the determined vacancies 3,945 structures were reported as occupied, 226 were reported as vacant, 41 structures were vacant at the ground level, and 36 were reported as partially vacant/partially occupied. See the chart above and the map on page 9 for a detailed representation of this data.

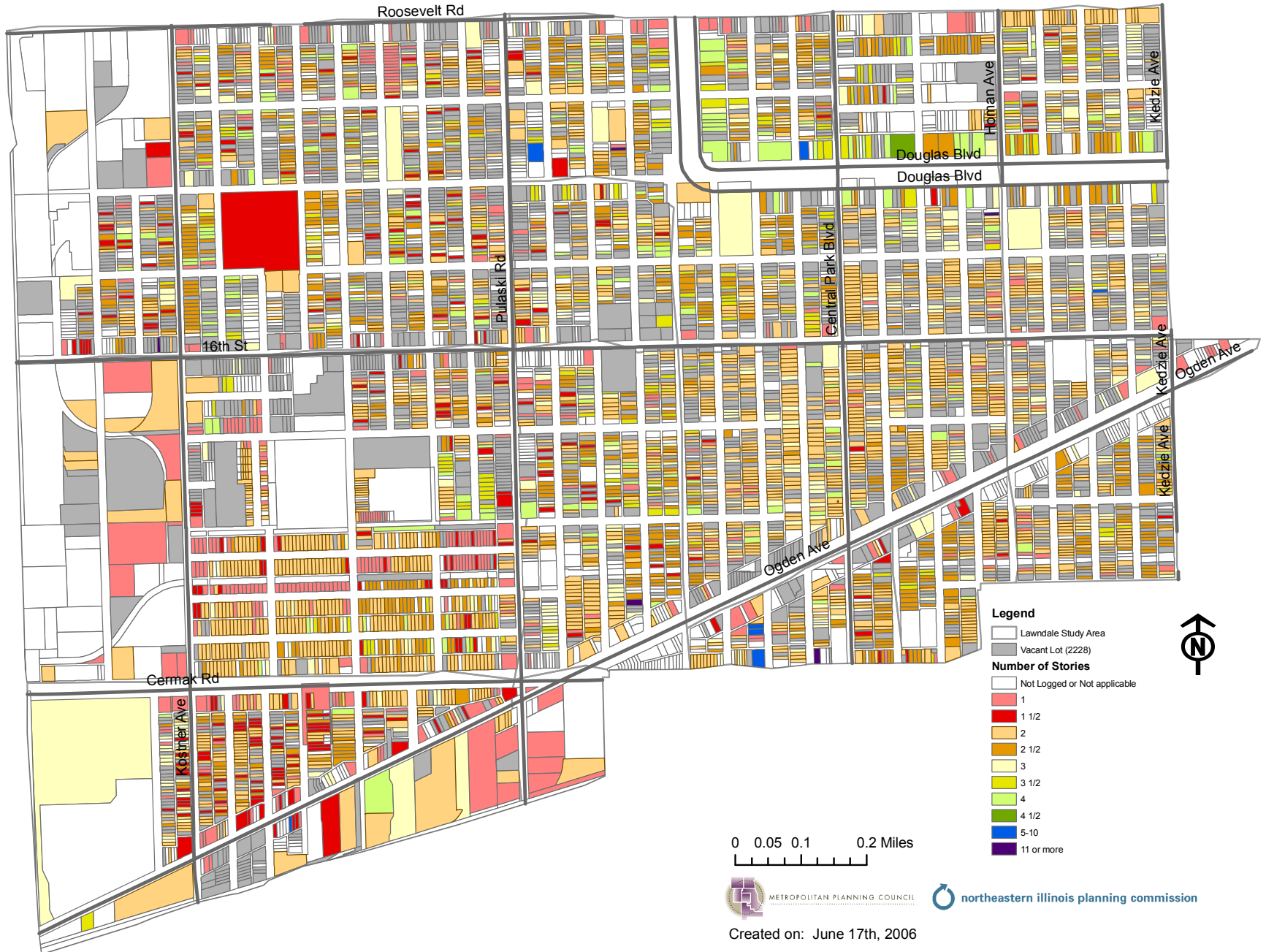
VACANCY STATUS



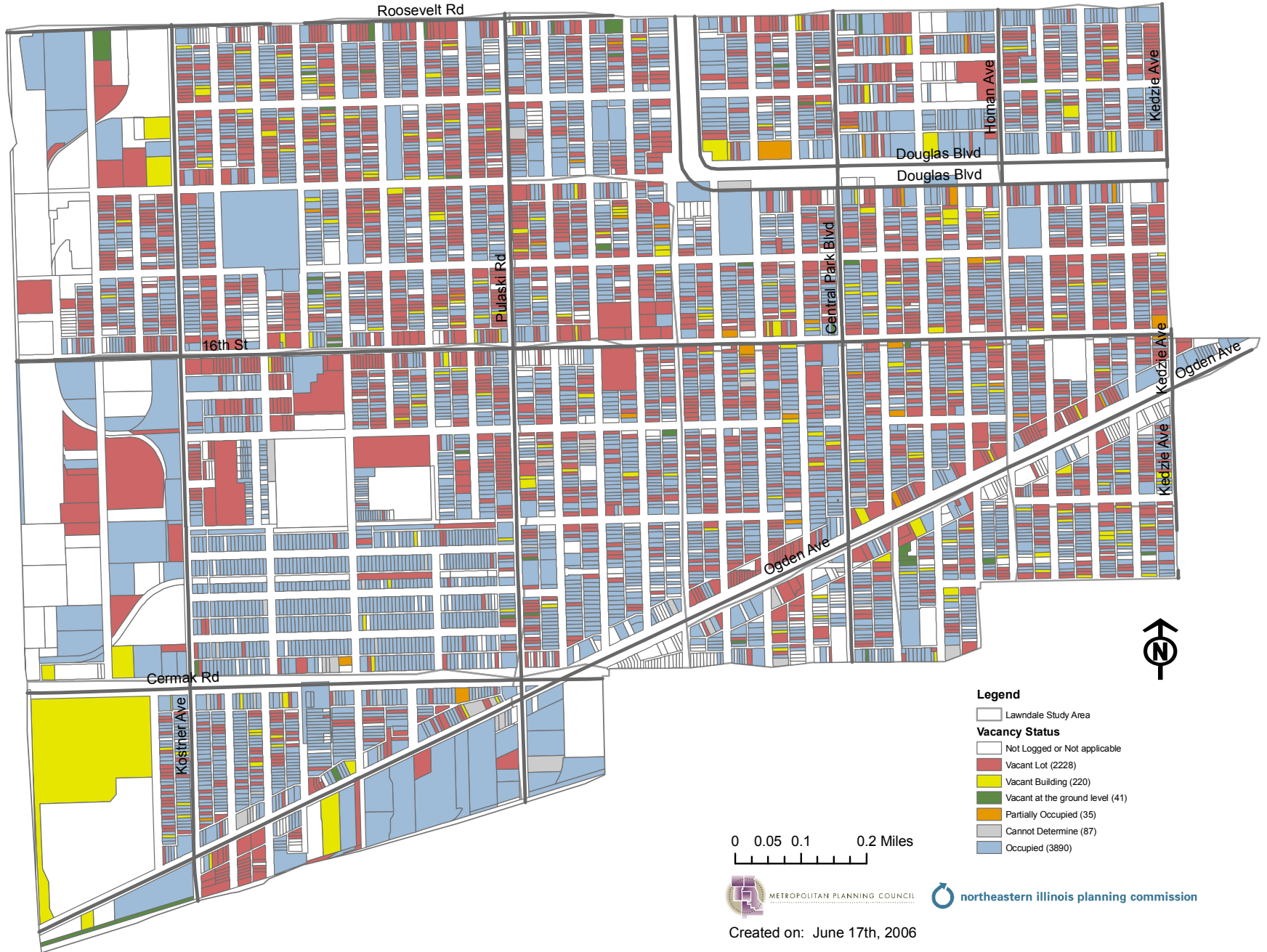
POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF VACANCY

DATA: Vacancy data can be used by community development organizations to identify areas to target for new commercial development or potential change of uses. For example, If a large portion of ground floor retail is vacant along a particular street, the Alderman and community groups could consider a zoning change to allow residential in that area.

BUILDING HEIGHT



VACANCY STATUS



FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

The data collected and the maps presented are available through CMAP's Full Circle database; they can be accessed at www.fulcir.net/FC/Index.htm (Please contact CMAP for login and user name). This database can be viewed and updated as needed providing information on current realities and aid the redevelopment process; it can continue to aid the direction of development as long

as residents remain engaged in renewing community life in North Lawndale. Whether there is a need to update zoning or promote a community based planning effort, the comprehensive inventory provides a powerful living document that enables the North Lawndale community to collaborate with local officials and influence the shape of their community for years to come.

ABOUT MPC

The Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) was founded in 1934 as the Metropolitan Housing Council, an association of business and civic leaders committed to developing quality affordable housing and revitalizing Chicago's poorest neighborhoods. Seventy-one years later, MPC continues to be a nonprofit, nonpartisan group of business and civic leaders committed to serving the public interest, but its mission has expanded to include the promotion and implementation of sensible planning and development policies



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necessary for a world-class Chicago region. MPC conducts policy analysis, outreach, and advocacy in partnership with public officials and community leaders to improve economic vitality, equity of opportunity and quality of life throughout metropolitan Chicago. MPC works in several interrelated areas of community development: housing, sensible growth, urban redevelopment, education and tax policy, and transportation. Visit www.metroplanning.org for more information.

ABOUT CMAP

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) was created recently to integrate planning for land use and transportation in the seven counties of northeastern Illinois. Metropolitan Chicago will have an additional 2 million residents and 1.2 million jobs by 2030, and CMAP is developing strategies to address this growth's



Chicago Metropolitan
Agency for Planning

serious implications for transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and natural resources. See www.cmap.illinois.gov for more information.