

# Promise & Potential

The Outlook for New Commercial Development in the Area of Cook and Martin Luther King, Jr. Streets in Springfield, Illinois



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## INTRODUCTION

While sections of east Springfield nearest to the city center have struggled with redevelopment for many years, promising efforts are underway, especially in the area bounded by Dirksen Parkway to the east, South Grand Avenue to the south, 11th Street to the west, and Cook Street to the north (see area marked in the map, below.) These redevelopment efforts include both commercial and residential projects that offer the potential to reshape the area.

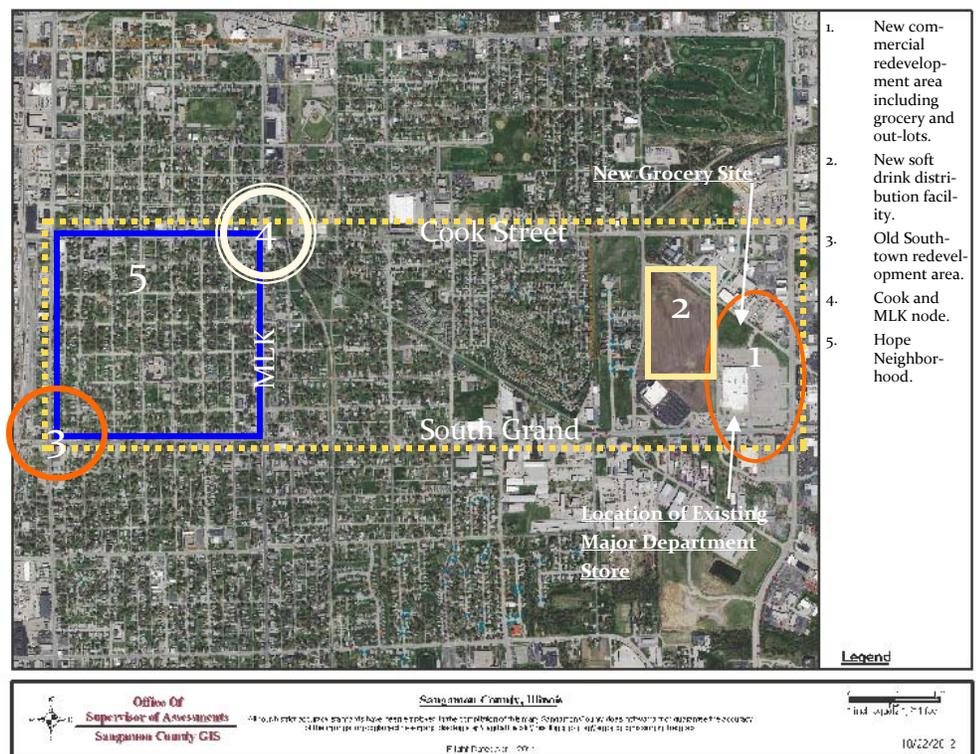
Major commercial projects in this area include redevelopment of an area along Dirksen Parkway bounded by Cook St. and South Grand Ave. that includes a new full-line grocery as well as facilities for additional commercial operations in the area (Area 1 on map), the anticipated development of out-lots adjacent to a major department store that fronts on Dirksen Parkway (also in Area 1), and the relocation of a soft drink distribution facility to the immediate west of this area (Area 2). The redevelopment of a commercial node to the west (Area 3), at the intersection of South Grand and 11th St., is also underway as part of the City of Springfield's "Old Southtown" project. This redevelopment offers the opportunity for a commercial linkage between Dirksen Parkway and 11th Street along the South Grand corridor.

In addition, significant residential redevelopment is planned and underway as part of the "Hope Neighborhood" plan to redevelop single family housing in the area (Area 5). This effort is intended to address a 49-block portion of the larger area, bounded by Cook St. on the north, Martin Luther King Jr. Drive on the east, South Grand Ave. on the south, and 11th St. on the west.

Because of the interplay of the new commercial and residential development underway, consideration is being given as to how intersections along the major east-west

transportation corridors — Cook St. and South Grand Ave. — might become nodes for additional commercial development that will strengthen and solidify the promise of additional new residential development.

Several nodes provide the potential for additional commercial redevelopment of some sort, including the intersection of Cook St. and Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave. (Area 4), which is the focus of this analysis and report.



To obtain a better understanding of the potential for redevelopment at and around this node, the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission (SSCRPC) was asked to provide an analysis of the area focused on the potential for commercial redevelopment at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Cook Street intersection: which will be called here the *MLK/Cook node*. Particular interest was focused on the potential for this hub to support plans for the Hope Neighborhood and the residential redevelopment it promises for the area.

## CONSIDERING THE LARGER TRADE AREA

To help consider the potential for commercial redevelopment at the MLK/Cook node, the SSCRPC wished to look at the location first in the larger context of the trade area. Fortunately this was done previously by PGAV Planners as part of that firm's work developing an *East Springfield Commercial Plan* (PGAV, 2012). Their review of the area also took into account two earlier studies of the area (PGAV, 2002; SSCRPC, 2010).

In the 2012 study, and using the corner of Singer Ave. and South Dirksen Parkway as the focal point, PGAV analyzed several different trade area geographies based upon a 15-minute drive time. Drive time was selected to determine the trade area radius because this is often the preferred methodology for national and regional retailers. While this focal point is several blocks to the east of the MLK/Cook node, the SSCRPC found it to still be representative of the larger trade area in which the MLK/Cook node is located.

Using the selected drive time as the trade area radius, one finds that the area encompasses nearly all of the City of Springfield, a majority of the population of Sangamon County, and a majority of the County's retail demand, making it an attractive target for commercial development.

This trade area analysis found that:

- Goods and services demand in the area will largely be influenced by that portion of the trade area existing to the east, which has a growing population.
- Population increases in the trade area represent positive figures from a retail sales perspective.
- The trade area includes nearly 80% of the total households in the county, with the 2010 median disposable income of those residing within the trade area being about 96% of that for the entire county.
- The trade area identified captures nearly 90% of all retail demand in the county and can be considered a "primary trade area" for the county as the majority of retail sales occurs within its boundary.
- This identification as a primary trade area is indicative of the efficient transportation network within and around Springfield as it allows for ease of access for quick and easy travel within the entire area.

Additional detail is available in the 2012 PGAV study.

The PGAV study also considered gaps in retail trade activity in the area. However, since the trade area identified accounts for nearly 90% of the county's retail activity, the SSCRPC did not believe that this was useful in assessing gaps in and around the MLK/Cook node. The identification of gaps is important because they represent retail opportunities that are "leaking" out to other areas that could be captured, and because these opportunities are useful in attracting new retailers to an area. This will be addressed further below.

## CONSIDERING THE MLK/COOK NODE

Even though the 2012 PGAV study focused on an area along Dirksen Parkway between Cook St. and South Grand Ave., PGAV was also asked to provide comments about land use and the development/redevelopment potential at four other locations in east Springfield (PGAV, 2011) a bit further to the west. One of these locations was the MLK/Cook node.

In this report PGAV noted that each of the areas considered, including MLK/Cook, was presently occupied by commercial or industrial uses of some type, and in some instances there were also vacant tracts of land and vacant buildings suitable for development and redevelopment. This was seen as a potential advantage for successful redevelopment. The consultants provided only three cautions about the redevelopment of these areas.

The first caution was that land uses at the intersections studied not include uses that would result in traffic congestion or turning movements that would create safety issues. The types of businesses that might cause such a concern are those normally considered "motor vehicle-oriented businesses", or MVOBs for short. MVOBs tend to generate a high number of entry and exit movements in a short period of time and are not located at intersections except diagonally across from one another. MVOBs include fast food establishments, gas and convenience store operations, banks with drive-up windows, and other like uses that operate based largely upon a high customer turnover rate.

The second caution is that a scenario not be promoted that would encourage commercial uses to "string out" along the Cook or South Grand corridors. While development at intersection nodes such as MLK/Cook might be useful, allowing commercial development to occur all along a corridor promotes the kind of traffic that results in the turning movements discussed above, and also negatively impacts the desirability of the area for abutting residential development and redevelopment.

The final caution about redevelopment in the areas reviewed is that viable commercial or industrial uses at any of the nodes should be encouraged to stay. This may require that consideration be given to publicly-supported financial incentives that would provide for façade improvements, landscaping, and parking area improvements. The SSCRPC believes that these improvements should also include pedestrian-ways to additionally link surrounding residential areas to the commercial node. The SSCRPC believes that making these improvements would help bolster redevelopment in the area, and would help weave existing businesses into any new commercial and residential development and redevelopment.

Of the nodes and areas considered in this analysis, PGAV found three that the firm believed to be primary sites for commercial activity. These include:

- A major node at South Grand Ave. and Dirksen Parkway, which was the subject of the East Springfield Commercial Plan;
- A node at the intersection of 11th St. and South Grand Ave., the current location of the City of Springfield's Old Southtown project; and
- The MLK/Cook node, which is the subject of this analysis.

PGAV noted that commercial development *other* than at these three nodes that targeted national or regional retail businesses would likely undermine the commercial area plan for east Springfield, including the three locations noted above. They suggested that while other areas might be considered for commercial development, they would largely be to provide goods and services to the surrounding neighborhoods. They point out, however, that the MLK/Cook node "has some potential to serve a market area that extends to neighborhoods to the north and may offer an opportunity to attract some larger neighborhood retailers" (PGAV, 2011, p. 3).

PGAV reported that this node presently consists of marginal and unattractive commercial land uses at each corner, as well as a large vacant tract next to the present location of the soft drink distribution facility that is moving further east, offering the area as a good candidate for redevelopment. PGAV says in its analysis of the MLK/Cook node:

The potential to develop a neighborhood retail focus for this area is enhanced by the fact that parcels are available in relatively usable sizes and configuration. This means that the potential to develop a small neighborhood retail cluster at this location may be achievable. (PGAV 2011b, p. 5)

## THE LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD MARKET AREA

While the PGAV analysis described above considered the larger trade area, the SSCRPC thought that it would also be useful to consider the MLK/Cook node in light of its local neighborhood market area. This area was defined as that within a half-mile radius of the intersection.

Even though the PGAV analysis indicates that the MLK/Cook node could support a wider commercial customer base, the SSCRPC selected a half-mile radius for this analysis as studies have show that one half-mile represents a fairly easy 10-minute walk for most people, so the distance is representative both of the neighborhood marketplace in the immediate area as well as the customer base that would be available at the start-up of development/redevelopment. All data provided in this section is drawn from ESRI based demographic and economic sources and projections, and is based upon US Census and other reliable sources.

## The Area's Population and Related Factors

According to the ESRI *Community Profile* for the area, there are 3,089 residents within the half-mile radius of the MLK/Cook node. Those over the age of 18 make up 66.2% of the population in the area, while 11.2% are over the age of 65. Median age in the area is 29.6, or relatively young in comparison to the larger population.

As of 2010, there were 1,017 households in the neighborhood market area, having an average household size of 2.96 persons. One person households accounted for 31.6% of all households, with households of two or more persons representing 68.4% in 2010. There were children in 41.1% of all households.

Occupied housing units comprising 81.2% of the housing stock in 2010. Renter-occupied units made up 38.8% of this housing stock. This, of course, could change depending upon the level of success of the Hope Neighborhood effort.

## Area Workforce

Of the 16-years and older residents of the area who were employed, the largest employment sector was in Services (61.6%), followed by Public Administration (10.1%), Retail Trade (9.6%), Transportation/Utilities (5.7%), Construction (3.8%), Finance/Insurance/Real Estate (3.7%) and Manufacturing (3.4%). All other sectors represented less than 3 percent.

By occupation, 43.7% were in White Collar occupations, with the two largest being Administrative Support positions (15.2%) and Sales (14.3%). As an occupation, 41.1% were in Services, while 15.3% were classified as being in Blue Collar jobs. The average travel time to work reported was 18.7 minutes.

## Income and Consumer Spending

Median household income within one-half mile of the MLK/Cook node was estimated at \$21,363 in 2010, and is expected to increase to \$24,359 by 2015. Median disposable income in 2010 was estimated to be \$17,662, increasing to \$24,808 in 2015.

In 2010 ESRI estimated the top ten areas of consumer spending within the half-mile radius of the node to be:

- Retail Goods: \$10,377,587.
- Shelter: \$6,648,014.
- Food at Home: \$2,092,290.
- Health Care: \$1,754,394.
- Food Away From Home: \$1,451,672.
- Entertainment and Recreation: \$1,371,950.
- Apparel and Services: \$741,272.
- Household Furnishing and Equipment: \$737,667.
- Travel: \$704,450.
- TV/Video/Audio: \$579,998.

## Market Potential in the Area

ESRI assesses market potential in part through the use of a Market Potential Index (MPI). The MPI measures the relative likelihood of adults in the market area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the U.S. as a whole. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average, therefore an index over 100 represents greater consumer demand than the U.S. as a whole and below 100 represents less demand.

The tables below indicate product and consumer behaviors within one-half mile of the MLK/Cook node near or above the U.S. average, suggesting market potential in the immediate area.

<b>MPI For Goods and Services in the Neighborhood Market Area Above or Near U.S. Average</b>	
<b>Product or Consumer Behavior</b>	<b>MPI</b>
Bought women's apparel in last 12 months	96
Bought apparel for children <13 in last 6 months	105
Bought costume jewelry in last 12 months	121
Bought any fine jewelry in last 12 months	112
Bought a watch in last 12 months	134
Drank bottled water/seltzer in last 6 months	97
Drank regular cola in last 6 months	130
Bought cigarettes at convenience store in last 30 days	128
5 or more DVDs purchased in last 30 days	139
Used beef (fresh/frozen) in last 6 months	93
Used bread in last 6 months	99
Used chicken/turkey (fresh/frozen) in last 6 months	97
Used fish/seafood (fresh/frozen) in last 6 months	105
Used fresh fruit/vegetables in last 6 months	91
Used fresh milk in last 6 months	95

<b>CONTINUED: MPI For Goods and Services in the Neighborhood Market Area</b>	
<b>Product or Consumer Behavior</b>	<b>MPI</b>
Visited doctor in last 12 months	97
Purchased bedding/bath goods in last 12 months	90
Heavy magazine reader	135
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant in last 6 months	95
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant 14+ times per month	125
Fast food/drive-in home delivery in last 6 months	101
Fast food/drive-in take-out or walk-in in the last 6 months	124
Household average monthly long-distance phone bill is \$60+	123
Household owns 1 TV	118
Household owns 2 TVs	96
Household subscribes to cable TV	90
Spent \$1000-\$2999 on foreign vacations during the last 12 months	102

### **Retail Leakage from the Neighborhood Market Area**

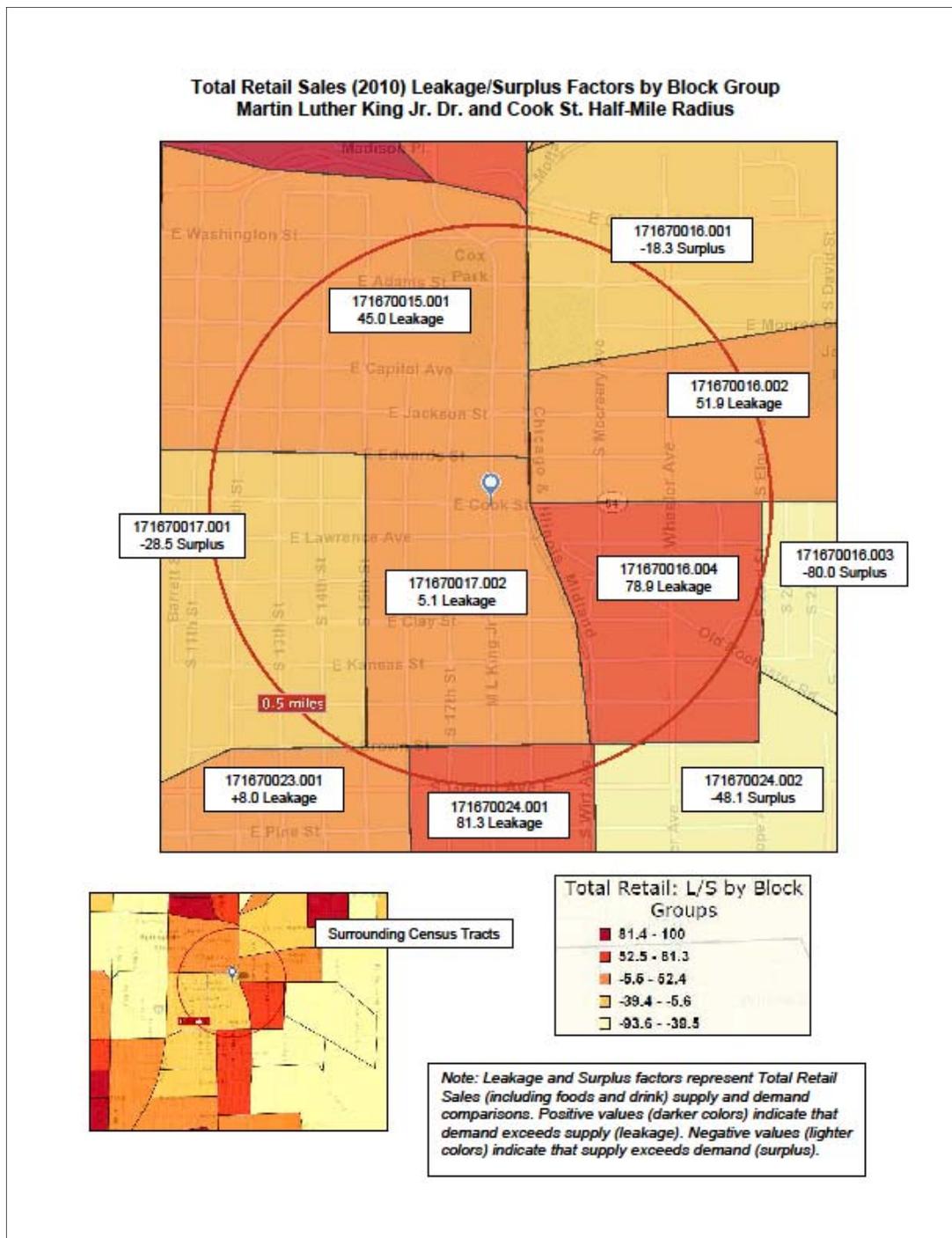
Another of the ways of estimating the retail market potential of an area is to consider its Leakage/Surplus Factor.

For this factor, supply (retail sales) is an estimate of sales to customers by establishments, with sales to businesses excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Therefore, ESRI indicates that the Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity and is a measure of supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus).

A positive value, then, represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside of the area being studied, while a negative value represents a surplus of retail sales. Therefore a negative value represents a market area where customers are drawn in from outside the market area.

When analysis is done that does not involve a radius, it is possible to determine the Leakage/Surplus Factor by specific NAICS or SIC industry code. Unfortunately analysis based upon a radius, such as the one-half mile area centered on the MLK/Cook node that this study considers, does not allow for this assessment as the area includes both whole and partial Census block groups. It is, however possible to obtain some broad assessment.

The map below shows the block groups surrounding the MLK/Cook node. The reader will note that the map shows retail leakage in all four of the Census blocks most immediate to the MLK/Cook node (with significant leakage in three of these), with some surplus areas further away. The reader should remember that the circle is based on a half-mile radius.



The table below shows the data used to create the map on the preceding page in a tabular form, providing Leakage/Surplus Factor values by block and the extent to which the block is entirely, substantially or partially within the neighborhood market area.

The x17.002 block, for example, is totally within the radius of the neighborhood market area and shows a leakage factor of 5.1. A negligible but noticeable amount of leakage. While values such as this one do not represent a true percentage of retail loss to the area, it does provide an indication of the degree of loss given that the factor is based upon an index of 100, as noted previously. Therefore one might presume that if the 5.1 had not been lost to the area, another \$159,665.91 in sales would have accrued to the neighborhood market area.

It is more difficult to make this assumption in the other blocks as they are not entirely within the radius. However, the leakage in three of the four block substantially in the market area are quite large, so retaining all or part of their leakage would be a significant boon to the MLK/Cook node market place.

The SSCRPC believes that this data bodes well for the viability of the MLK/Cook node as a retail commercial area.

<b>Total Retail Sales (2010) Leakage/Surplus Factors by Block Group</b> <b>Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. and Cook St. Half-Mile Radius</b>		
Block Group	Total Annual Retail Sales (2010)	Leakage (positive values)/ Surplus (negative values)
<b>Entirely in Radius</b>		
171670017.002	\$3,130,704	5.1
<b>Substantially in Radius</b> <i>(over ~1/3 of block group area within radius)</i>		
171670015.001	\$1,824,660	45.0
171670016.002	\$944,660	51.9
171670016.004	\$320,149	78.9
171670017.001	\$4,758,818	-28.5
<b>Partially in Radius</b> <i>(block groups with &lt;1 city block in radius excluded)</i>		
171670016.001	\$5,252,663	-18.3
171670024.001	\$774,361	81.3
<b>Average for all Block Groups</b>		
	<b>\$ 2,429,431</b>	<b>30.8 Average Leakage in Area</b>

## Businesses in the Neighborhood Market Area

The SSCRPC believed it to be useful to obtain a better understanding of the nature of the businesses already in the area of the MLK/Cook node. A one-half mile radius and a one mile radius were used to generate an ESRI *Business Summary*. The analysis was done using the larger radius as the smaller radius was used to gather some understanding of the immediate customer base, but the larger one-mile radius was thought to offer a better idea of existing business activity in the area.

ESRI estimates that in 2011 there were 123 businesses with 2,408 employees operating within one-half mile of the MLK/Cook node. At one mile, the estimate is 740 businesses operating and employing 12,391 employees. Since the one mile total includes the half-mile total, we subtracted the half-mile total from the one mile to get a better understand of the difference between the immediate neighborhood area and the surrounding area. The SSCRPC found 617 businesses with 9,983 employees operating between one-half and one mile of the MLK/ Cook node.

The tables below provide a breakdown by major Standard Industrial Code (SIC), first for businesses within one-half mile and then for businesses within one mile.

NUMBER OF BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYMENT BY SIC CODE:				
Within One-Half Mile of MLK/Cook Node				
SIC CODE	No. of Businesses	Percent	No. of Employees	Percent
<b>Agriculture &amp; Mining</b>	2	1.5	4	0.2
<b>Construction</b>	5	4.1	71	2.9
<b>Manufacturing</b>	3	2.8	80	3.3
<b>Transportation</b>	3	2.8	692	28.7
<b>Communication</b>	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Utility</b>	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	5	4.2	114	4.7
<b>Retail Trade Summary</b>	17	13.8	93	3.8
<b>Finance, Insurance, Real Estate Summary</b>	7	5.7	52	2.2
<b>Services Summary</b>	58	47.2	601	25.0
<b>Government</b>	3	2.2	11	0.5
<b>Other</b>	3	2.2	11	0.5

<b>NUMBER OF BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYMENT BY SIC CODE:</b>				
<b>Within One Mile of MLK/Cook Node</b>				
<b>SIC CODE</b>	<b>No. of Businesses</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>No. of Employees</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Agriculture &amp; Mining</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Construction</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>4.1</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>3.6</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>1,192</b>	<b>9.6</b>
<b>Communication</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0.3</b>
<b>Utility</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>2.4</b>
<b>Retail Trade Summary</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>1,069</b>	<b>8.6</b>
<b>Finance, Insurance, Real Estate Summary</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>1,706</b>	<b>13.8</b>
<b>Services Summary</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>3,704</b>	<b>29.9</b>
<b>Government</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>3,273</b>	<b>26.4</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>0.4</b>

## **VIABILITY OF THE NODE FOR COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT**

The SSCRPC concludes from this review that the area at and around the MLK/Cook node is viable for commercial development and redevelopment, agreeing with the earlier PGAV assessment in this regard. It is our expectation that the area's potential for successful commercial redevelopment will be assisted by two factors.

The first is the growth of the area around and south of the intersection of Cook St. and Dirksen Parkway, to the east of the node. Research and experience lead us to believe that this will ultimately lead to further stability and growth in the larger east Springfield area, encouraging new investors to consider the area and generating further public financial resources for additional improvements.

The second is the successful development of the Hope Neighborhood. Since this initiative is in the immediate vicinity of the MLK/Cook node, it seems to us intuitive that the success of this project would increase the customer-base available for new businesses to operate successfully in the area, and will additionally further stabilize the area for sustained growth.

The SSCRPC concludes that the area does have the potential to help achieve the promise of additional area stability and growth. Having come to this conclusion, the SSCRPC further considered the nature and look of development at the node.

## AN ILLUSTRATIVE DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT AT THE NODE

Having come to a conclusion similar to that of PGAV concerning the potential for commercial development and redevelopment at the MLK/Cook node, the SSCRPC's attention was drawn to the three cautions mentioned by PGAV concerning the area. They were that:

- Land uses at the intersection not include uses that would result in traffic congestion or turning movements that would create safety issues. Application of this caution would require the limiting of "motor vehicle-oriented businesses" that depend largely upon a high customer turnover rate.
- Scenarios not be promoted that would encourage commercial uses to "string out" along the Cook or South Grand corridors, as this might promote the kind of traffic that results in the turning movements discussed above, and also negatively impacts the desirability of the area for abutting residential development and redevelopment.
- Viable commercial or industrial uses at any of the nodes be encouraged to stay. This may require financial incentives for façade improvements, landscaping, parking area, and pedestrian movement and linkage improvements.

We were particularly receptive to these three cautions given the promise held by the Hope Neighborhood effort that is addressing a large area immediately adjacent to the node.

It was beyond the scope of this report to identify how much land area adjacent to the MLK/Cook node should be targeted for commercial development and redevelopment, but understandably it should not be such a large portion — particularly to the west and southwest — that it would negatively impact the planned residential development. Additionally, land use considerations for the area should include appropriate buffering so that the less intense residential development is effectively separated from the more intense uses that are likely to locate around the intersection itself.

And given the existing residential development in the area as well as the proposed and adjacent Hope Neighborhood development, we believe that special attention should be given to finding ways to connect the area to the surrounding neighborhoods, not just the intersection. How then might such a development look?

Since we were uncertain as to how large the commercial area might be, the SSCRPC focused simply on the immediate area of the intersection itself in order to provide some illustrative drawings as to how the intersection might be developed given the cautions noted above. These drawings are provided on the following pages.

We would caution the reader that these designs are extremely preliminary as many questions concerning the area and its development and redevelopment remain unanswered and are beyond the purpose and scope of this report. We offer them solely to heighten the imagination of the development community and local leaders as to the promise and potential of this area.

FIGURE 1: Aerial View Showing Some Uses for Illustrative Purposes



FIGURE 2: Birds Eye View of Intersection



In developing these illustrative renderings, attention was given to some existing buildings in the area. As this report notes in a previous section, vacant buildings and land exist at this node that would allow for some new construction. Consideration must be given, however, as to how large a land surface the commercial development area should cover before more accurate development planning and design can be done.

FIGURE 3: Lower Level View



**FIGURE 4: Street Level Partial Intersection View**



Given the nature of this node and its relationship to both the surrounding residential area and the proximity of the Hope Neighborhood project, the SSCRPC believes that significant attention should be given to making this commercial node "pedestrian friendly". This should not just include pedestrian-ways along the street fronts, but also pedestrian paths and ways that would better link the surrounding residential areas, particularly the Hope Neighborhood, to this node.

**FIGURE 5: Street Level Building Landscape View**



FIGURE 6: Streetscape View



One of the cautions mentioned earlier in the report is that while commercial development is appropriate at the MLK/Cook node, it would be counter-productive to allow commercial development to “string-out” all along the Cook corridor. This being the case, the illustrative streetscape drawings shown above and below attempt to provide a look that is simple and would not cause the urban look of this intersection to be out of place with locations along Cook that are not to be put to commercial use.

FIGURE 7: Streetscape Detail View



## REFERENCES

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## DATA

Data used in this report was obtained from ESRI community and business databases.

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