

Study deems Hazel Crest a ‘good value community’

A recent study concluded that Hazel Crest is a “good value” in terms of places to live and set up businesses.

The study was conducted by The Center for Neighborhood Technology, a highly respected advocacy and public policy organization headquartered in Chicago. The findings were based on an analysis of the Housing and Transportation Affordability Index, released by the Brookings Institute.

The H+T Index measures the “true affordability” of a community by adding together transportation and housing costs associated with living in a community. These two costs are the biggest expenses for most families.

According to the report, Hazel Crest provides above-average opportunity for households to reap the dual benefits of low community costs and solid housing value. The report also points out that commercial and residential developers sometimes miss the “good value” opportunities in communities like Hazel Crest in favor of newer areas and undeveloped farmland.

“Hazel Crest is a good investment because it offers travel choice—from sidewalks to bikeways to buses to trains to private vehicle use,” said Jan Metzger, senior project manager for The Center for Neighborhood Technology. “The benefits of communities like Hazel Crest—communities with walkable neighborhoods and transit access—are starting to be better understood.”

The study, which quantifies the assets of the community, demonstrates that people who are thinking about living farther out should consider moving closer in. And commercial developers should seriously consider Hazel Crest because of its many advantages from the standpoint of excellent transportation access and affordability of housing.

The study recommends Hazel Crest redevelop the area near the transit station at 170th Street and Park Avenue. Redeveloped downtown district could generate greater tax revenues, be a focal point for the village, and offer new condos and apartments with an affordable commute to downtown Chicago. It would also attract pedestrian-oriented businesses like restaurants with sidewalk cafes.

Meanwhile, Hazel Crest has been striving to create a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) near the Metra Station. A TOD study has already been completed. Village officials are currently working to implement the recommendations of the study, including a renovated station and more convenient parking.

Updates regarding the Metra Station will be posted on the Village’s website and in *The Villager* newsletter.