

# Riverside School District Geodemographic Study



## Final Report

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## Executive Summary

The Superintendent of Riverside School District authorized this study of geodemographic trends in the school district. The study is composed of three parts. The first part analyzes demographic trends (population and housing characteristics) for the District as a whole and by block group within the District. The second part uses a cohort component method and live births to project student enrollments by grade over the next five years. The third part of the study provides the results of interviews with several real estate professionals who have been working in the District for a number of years. The study concludes that the middle enrollment series is the better predictor of enrollment over the next 5 years. This series forecasts steady enrollment increases as the total number of students reaches a plateau in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

### Demographic Trends

1. Population has remained at roughly the same level between 1990 and 2000. The total population increased from 13,670 to 13,813 which represents a change of 1%.
2. Current population estimates (2006) and projections (2011) indicate a stable population base with a slight population decline (-1.0%) estimated since 2000 and a slight population increase (.5%) expected in 2011.
3. The preschool population (under 5 years) increased faster than the total population (9.3%).
4. The population between 5 and 18 increased dramatically, by over 25%, during the decade.
5. Households and families have declined by approximately .2 and 2.5%, respectively. Current household estimates indicate a decline of 1% since 2000. Household projections indicate little change expected in the total number of households through 2011.
6. Married-couple families without children decreased by about 34% while married-couple families with children more than doubled, increasing by over 107%.
7. The number of persons aged 3 years and older enrolled in school increased by more than 18%. The percentage of children attending K-12 public schools has increased by over 31% while the percentage attending private schools decreased by more than 12%.

### School Enrollment Projections

1. The recommended projections are provided below.

Grade	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
K	128	131	116	141	103
1	160	138	140	125	151
2	160	174	151	152	137
3	120	167	179	158	158
4	155	123	172	184	163
5	151	163	129	180	193
6	143	157	169	134	188
7	141	146	162	174	138
8	141	148	154	170	183
Total	1298	1347	1372	1419	1413

2. These projections do not include special education students either attending schools inside or outside of the District.
3. Given demographic findings from census tabulations, population and housing estimates and projections, and interviews with real estate professionals, the medium projection series appears to be the better forecast of near future enrollments.
4. The medium projection series forecasts an increase in enrollment of 11.0% by the start of the 2010-11 academic year. This represents an increase of 140 students.
5. The trend line of births over the last 10 years in the District is negative. However, there have been several years when births have increased. This has occurred in 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002. Births in 2003-2004 have hit a high watermark over the 10 year period. This will mean a larger Kindergarten class size in the 2009 academic year.
6. Births were considerably lower in the 2002-03 time frame which should mean lower Kindergarten cohorts in 2008-09 school year. A similar decline in births occurred in the 2002-03 year where Kindergarten enrollments declined from 124 to 118 students...
7. The cohort survival ratios of births to Kindergarten range from .76 to .98 in the 4 different projection series. These indicate the presence of an in-migration trend of children born outside the District and moving into the District and attending Kindergarten.
8. More of the year-to-year discrete meta cohort survival ratios in the high, middle, and last year ratio series exceed 1.000 which indicates that succeeding class sizes have been larger and, consequently, future class sizes are expected to continue to grow.
9. The accumulation of meta cohort survival ratios in the middle projection series forecast 8<sup>th</sup> grade class sizes that are more than 31% larger than the size of the starting class size originating in Kindergarten.

### **Real Estate Analysis**

1. An analysis of Cook County Assessor records for the District indicates very little change in tax code geography between 2001 and 2003. Between 2003 and 2004, a relatively large number of tax codes were changed in the District and most of these changes occurred along the railroad line and in the southwestern portion of the District.
2. A number of changes have taken place in parcel land use. More of the changes involve parcels being recoded to commercial, mixed residential and residential land use. The numbers of parcels undergoing reclassification have declined slightly (from 422 in 2001-02 to 414 in 2002-03 to 380 in 2003-04).
3. A comparison of owner names from tax assessment records found a range of 692 in 2001-02 to 492 in 2003-04. The number of owner changes dipped to 392 in 2002-03.
4. Interviews with two real estate firms confirmed that property sales have ranged between 200 and 300 housing units annually over the last 5 years. Although sales have declined since the late 1990's and 2000, sales have been stable since 2004.
5. Realtors have indicated that the types of households moving into the District have at least 1 child and are planning more in the near future.
6. Some of the pull factors that bring households into the District include location and commuting distances, city neighborhood amenities, housing stock, public schools, and buyers with ties to the area.

7. Some of the push factors that are implicated in household decisions to leave the District include job changes, prices for larger houses, and the desire for new housing construction.

## Project Overview

The objective of this study is to generate various series of enrollment projections and, based on census, administrative records, and expert knowledge of household movement in and out of the district, identify the best series of enrollment projections for the next 5 years. The basic approach to the study along with the required and optional data elements was discussed with Superintendent Lamberson during the week of 14 November 2005. The outcome of this discussion was the development of a proposal and a notice to proceed after 15 December 2005 (see Initial Email and Geodemographic Study Proposal in Appendix 5).

The components identified for the study included the following:

- Census variable comparisons and block group map preparation from the 1990 and 2000 Decennial Censuses;
- Estimates and projections of population, race and ethnic groups, income, and housing characteristics in 2006 and to 2011;
- Student enrollment analysis, enrollment projection model development, and the generation of projections of student enrollments;
- Kindergarten enrollment analysis and projections based on live births;
- Geocoding of student address locations within the District;
- Analysis of real property and assessment data to identify trends in residential sales; and
- Interviews with real estate agents familiar with District population and housing trends.

The purpose of the Decennial Census comparisons was to discover general trends in population and household change over the last decade within the District. Census block groups were identified within the District for both 1990 and 2000 census tabulations. Several differences were noted between these boundaries and the District's boundaries. In addition, 2000 census totals by block group were compared to National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) special tabulations of 2000 census data. As discussed in the next section on data and methods, an adjustment procedure was necessary to make the counts comparable. This adjustment procedure was applied to both 1990 and 2000 census data which included school enrollment counts by school type (public and private).

Population, housing and household estimates and projections were obtained for 2006 and 2011 from Environmental Systems Research Institute's (ESRI) Electronic America Community Profile data series. The use of these data provides an independent set of estimates and projections for the same block group geography used for 2000 Decennial Census tabulations. These data were adjusted for differences between block group and District boundaries. Percentage changes were calculated between 2000 and 2006 to identify current trends in population, households, families, owners, renters, housing value, and per capita income. These same items were adjusted and compared to 2006 totals to identify the direction of change over the next 5 years.

From current classes of students, enrollments were projected using a cohort-component method. Basically, this method uses current class sizes and projects what the class size will be using cohort survival ratios (CSRs). These CSRs were obtained from previous-year class comparisons. During any given school year, 9 different cohorts comprise a total K-8 school population. Accordingly, each cohort or class of students is projected separately into the future using combinations of “survival ratios” which were obtained by averaging the last five years of grade-to-grade enrollment statistics. This allows for several possible enrollment paths, which includes high, medium, and low growth scenarios.

Kindergarten projections represent a challenge to this method because there are no previous year enrollment statistics to use as a base for calculating survival ratios. Kindergarten enrollments define the initial size of the class cohort for comparisons and projections of future class sizes. In this study, three different methods were used to generate Kindergarten projections. Preliminary Kindergarten projections were generated using regression analysis and moving averages of Kindergarten class sizes over the last 10 years. These projections were provided to Superintendent Lamberson on 16 April 2006. Final projections of Kindergarten class sizes and cohort were made using live birth counts over a ten-year period. These counts were obtained by geocoding (address matching) birth records to the District’s base map at the Illinois Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Records on 29-30 June 2006. Cohort survival ratios were obtained by comparing births to Kindergarten enrollments from the beginning of the 1997 school year through the 2005 school year. Various meta-ratios were developed to generate high, middle, and low projections using the last 5 years of births which allows projections based on complete data through the beginning of the 2009 school year. Births for the 2010 Kindergarten projection were annualized from 4 months of data that were available from September through December birth counts in 2004. Birth data for calendar year 2005 were not available for this study.

In addition to counts by cohort year, the IDPH allowed the researcher to develop density grids of birth locations in the District. These density grids show concentrations of births in the District without compromising the confidentiality of the actual location of the mother’s address. Density grids were prepared for each cohort year.

Student address locations were obtained from the District and geocoded or address-matched to District parcels in a similar way that births were geocoded. These data were used to develop student density grids which show concentrations of students in the District and the dispersion of K-5 students throughout the District. The dispersion of students throughout the District regardless of elementary attendance area has implications for enrollment projections and limits the applicability of enrollment projections by attendance area.

The District obtained tax records from tax years 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 (see Interagency and Consultant Agreements, Appendix 5). Data for 2002-2004 were crosstabulated to ascertain changes in parcels, property turnover, and changes in land use using tax and class code comparisons. The data provided for 2000 only contained total assessed value and could not be included in the latter year comparisons.

Real estate developer interviews were identified as a priority for this project. The District selected the interviewees and scheduled the interviews which took place on 23 March 2006. Questions were compiled and provided to the respondents prior to the interviews. The questions asked of realtors and their responses are found in the section on Neighborhood and Real Estate Property Trends. A windshield survey of the District was conducted on 29-30 July 2006 to verify realtor and census data observations. Pictures from the windshield survey are contained in Appendix 3 with a map showing the locations of points of interest.

The balance of this report provides a summary of data and methods, census analysis, analysis of property trends, realtor interviews, and the recommended enrollment projection series. By analyzing census data, demographic estimates and projections, changes in births, residential concentrations of student, changes in land use, and the trends observed by real estate professionals, future enrollment impacts suggested by the various projection scenarios are analyzed in the context of the direction of population and housing change. The goal is to develop and advance the best series of enrollment projections for the District by considering other sources of information that have a direct bearing on public school enrollments.

## Data and Methods

- 1. Geodemographic data were obtained from the US Census Bureau, the Riverside School District, the Cook County Assessor's Office, and the Illinois Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Records.**

Riverside School District boundaries were obtained from the District and digitized on to a digital street map obtained from Environmental Systems Research Institute's (ESRI's) USA Streets (ESRI Data and Maps) (see Map 1, Appendix 2). Basic census data for block groups within District boundaries were obtained from (ESRI's) compilation of the US Census Bureau's Summary Tape File 3a for 1990 and Summary File 3 for 2000. Additional population, housing, and school enrollment data were obtained by using the Census Bureau's, American Fact Finder query system for block groups included within the District's boundaries in 1990 and 2000. These data were taken from the Summary Tape File 3a (1990) and the Summary File 3 (2000) data products. In addition, population and housing estimates and projections were purchased from ESRI's, Electronic America, Community Profile data product. These estimates and projections were available for 2006 and 2011 and provide updates on general population, housing, and socio-economic trends.

To project school district enrollments, the Riverside School District provided enrollments by grade and attendance area since the 1992-93 academic year (see Tables 5-13, Appendix 1). Cohort survival ratios were generated from enrollments for grades 1 through 8 for the entire District (Table 2a, Appendix 1) and for each elementary school based on school-specific enrollments (Table 2c, Appendix 1). The two sets of ratios were calculated due to the District's flexible boundary plan where a number of students attend schools outside of the elementary area that they currently live in. As discussed below, the projections based on total enrollments should be considered because of the movement between school attendance areas.

Two sets of Kindergarten ratios were generated. Preliminary Kindergarten ratios were generated by using a moving average method ( $\text{ave}(n, n-1, n-2)$ ,  $\text{ave}(n-1, n-2, n-3)$ ,  $\text{ave}(n-2, n-3, n-4)$ , where  $n$  is actual enrollments and  $n$  and  $n-x$  through  $-5$  are the last 6 years of Kindergarten enrollments) and by using a regression method. Final Kindergarten projections use live birth data from 1994 through 1999 to compute cohort survival ratios by elementary attendance area (Tables 2a and 2c, Appendix 1). These ratios are applied to live birth data from 2000 forward to project 2006 through 2010 Kindergarten class sizes. The last four months of 2004 births were annualized to project the 2010-11 Kindergarten class. These birth data were obtained from the Illinois Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Records.

To analyze current trends in property sales and property conversions, the school district obtained parcel data and property/assessment records in a digital format from the Cook County Assessor's Office. The County also supplied 2003 digital orthophotography of the school district area. These data were used to verify and conflate (align) census block group and school district boundaries (see Maps 1 -3, Appendix 2), and identify changes in parcel status by way of tax and property class codes and owners (Tables 14-20, Appendix 1 and Maps 20-23, Appendix 2). The boundaries of the school district were first obtained from smaller scale street maps. The larger scale parcel data from the Assessor's Office provided the base map to align boundaries and

streets with cadastral (property definition) rights of ways. These data provided the accuracy required for identifying births within and outside of the District.

Tax and property class codes were supplied by the Cook County Assessor's Office along with parcel identification numbers which matched the parcel base map provided the Cook County's Geographic Information System (GIS). These codes define geographic areas for tax levying purposes and classes of properties (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial, etc.). Changes in tax and property class codes imply changes due to land use or land improvements. Owner names were also supplied with the tax assessment records. Owner names were matched over successive years and real changes in owner names (i.e., different names, not just modifications of existing owner names) indicate changes in parcel ownership.

## **2. Census block group geographies were not comparable with school district boundaries between 1990 and 2000 and required adjustments to decennial census data, estimate, and projection totals.**

To compare census data trends within the District between 1990 and 2000, it was necessary to identify the tabulation units (i.e., census tracts, block groups, or blocks) falling within school district boundaries. Accordingly, census block group boundaries in digital form were obtained from both census operations and compared. The school district boundary map, digitized from maps provided by the District, was joined (overlaid) to the 1990 and 2000 Census block group boundary layers to identify the appropriate tabulation units for extracting census data.

Within the District, as shown in Map 3, Appendix 2, there were several differences found in block group definitions between 1990 and 2000 and these involved combining 1990 block groups and block group statistics to yield numbers and geography comparable to 2000 block groups. The block groups intersected by the District's boundaries were not the same and several block groups overshot the boundaries of the District. Population, household, and housing totals were compared to National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data totals for the school district and were found to be substantially higher. Accordingly, it was necessary to develop a series of population, household, and housing ratios to apply to overlapping block groups to adjust data totals.

To develop these ratios, block centroids were obtained from the ESRI, Data and Maps product for 2000. Totals for blocks were raked and floated (i.e., block totals systematically subtracted and added in block group portions) until the totals for blocks summed to totals reported by NCES for 2000. The sums of population, household, and total housing were compared to their corresponding block group totals and ratios were obtained. These ratios were applied to 1990, 2000, 2006 and 2011 population, household, and housing variables to generate comparable statistics.

Specifically, the following block groups were changed between 1990 and 2000: 8156004 and 8156006 became 8156004; 8157023 and 8157024 became 8157023; 8158001, 8158002, 8158003, 8158004 became 8158001; and 8192004, 8192005, and 8192006 became 8192003. The census data for 1990 were summed for these block groups and then compared to the census data for 2000. Table 1 (Appendix 1) contains a summary of census data compared. These data

were used to create the census maps of population and housing change that appear in Appendix 2.

**3. District mapping data were obtained from several sources. The base map was developed from data provided by the Cook County Assessor's Office and the Cook County GIS.**

The base map of the district and the address information for geocoding birth and student locations came from the Cook County's Geographic Information System (GIS) and the Assessor's Office. These data were delivered in an ESRI personal geodatabase file format and contained a number of feature classes organized in the cadastral feature dataset. These classes included parcels with parcel identification numbers, street centerlines with street and address annotation, and right of way delineations.

Block group data sets for 1990 and 2000 were obtained, initially, from USA Streets (ESRI Data and Maps) and TIGER/Line files (US Census Bureau). District boundaries and elementary attendance areas were identified and digitized from these data files and submitted to Dr. Lamberson for review. Later in the study, these block group boundaries and the boundaries of the District were conflated (matched) to the data obtained from the Cook County GIS. This provided the capability of using the parcel, street centerline and planimetric (right of way) data with the census maps.

**4. Student records were geocoded to the parcel base map.**

The District provided student records and addresses with grades and the schools students attended in February 2006. These data were matched against the parcel base map and overlaid with the District boundaries and elementary attendance areas. Maps 42-50 show student locations. Summary tables containing counts of the numbers of students attending all schools in the District are provided with Maps 42-45 and 50). Maps 46-49 show residential locations of only Kindergarten students attending particular schools. This information validates the use of total enrollment projections for the District as a whole since attendance boundaries don't completely account for or explain student enrollment at each of the schools.

**5. Tax assessment records were joined to parcel data and tabulated to determine changes in taxing geographies, property class codes, and the rate of ownership change in the District since 2001.**

Tax assessment data contained parcel identification numbers, property addresses, total assessed value amounts, land and improved assessed values, tax codes, property class codes, tax payer and address, and parcel dimensions for the years 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004. Parcel data contained property boundary lines and a table containing parcel identification numbers. These data were joined to the parcel geometry data layer using the 14 digit parcel identification number which appeared in both the tax assessment data and in the parcel attribute table. Relational joins between parcel data and assessment data were created for the four years of assessment data. Tables from 2002 were joined to 2001 data. Similarly, 2003 data were joined to 2002 data and 2004 data were joined to 2003 data. This provided the basis for crosstabulating tax codes,

property class codes, and comparing owner names (Tables 14-20, Appendix 1). Tables 14-16 (Appendix 1) show the crosstabulation of tax codes applied to parcels in year-to-year comparisons. Tables 17-19 (Appendix 1) show the crosstabulations of property class codes. Table 20 (Appendix 1) contains the count of parcels with annual owner name changes by street over the 4-year period.

Several maps were created using these crosstabulated data. Map 20 (Appendix 2) shows parcels with changes in tax codes between 2003 and 2004. Maps 21-23 show parcels with changes in overall property class codes assigned by the Cook County Assessor. Maps 24-26 show changes in parcel ownership where owner names contained within the real property tables do not match between successive years.

## **6. School enrollments were projected by grade using cohort survival.**

As stated earlier, a cohort component method was used to project student enrollments by grade and by academic year from 2006-07 to 2010-11. The projection method requires the calculation of cohort survival ratios (CSRs). These ratios represent the numbers of students that are added to or subtracted from a class of students as they progress through grades. Ratios were obtained by simply dividing a given year's grade total by the number of students in the preceding grade and year. Ratios in excess of 1.000 indicate increases in class sizes. Ratios below 1.000 indicate a decline in students between two successive grades. Enrollment data were taken from September 30 enrollment reports.

To use this information to project enrollments, ratios for several cohorts must be combined into one ratio. Depending on the particular method of averaging, it is conventional for a high, middle or mid-range, and low series of projections to be produced. To generate a high series of projections, the lower two ratios in the last 5 years were dropped and the remaining 3 ratios were averaged. The middle or mid-range projection dropped the high and the low ratios from the last 5 years and averaged the remaining 3 ratios. The low projection series dropped the two higher ratios from the last 5 years and averaged the remaining 3 ratios. These three series of ratios were developed for K-1, 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 4-5, 5-6, 6-7, and 7-8 grade comparisons. A fourth series of projections was generated using the cohort survival ratios from the last academic year.

The projections do not include special education students which have ranged from 8 to 23 students over the past 9 years. Historical grade specific data were not available for these students, so these students could not be projected independently. Over the last 5 years, the numbers of special education students have been increasing (from 8 students in 2000-01 to 23 students in 2004-05). Thus, the projections will be 20 to 30 students lower.

Graph 1 (Appendix 1) shows actual and projected enrollments of all District students. Table 2a (Appendix 1) displays the CSRs by grade based on total District enrollments while Table 2c provides CSRs for each of the elementary attendance areas and grades 6-8 at Hauser Jr. High School. Graph 2 (Appendix 1) shows recent sizes of classes or cohorts as they have progressed through the school system. Graphs 3 and 4 (Appendix 1) plot the cohort survival ratios for the four series of projections from the CSRs for total District enrollments. Graph 3 shows the cohort survival ratios from grade to grade while Graph 4 adds the differences in cohort survival ratios in

a cumulative fashion (from Table 2b, Appendix 1). Tables 5-9 in Appendix 1 provide actual and projected enrollments for grades K-8 using the 4 different projection scenarios (i.e., high, middle, low, and last year's ratios) using CSRs for each of the attendance areas. Tables 10-13 (Appendix 1) provide projections based on total District enrollments using the same series scenarios (high, middle, low, and last year's ratio). Graphs 6-14 (Appendix 1) show actual and projected enrollments by grade based on total District Enrollments.

Kindergarten enrollments were projected differently. Preliminary Kindergarten enrollments were projected using a simple regression equation based on Kindergarten enrollments dating back to 1992 and a simple moving average using three years of enrollments. These projections were used to establish class cohorts in the projection interval and were used to provide preliminary enrollment projections that were submitted to Dr. Lamberson on 16 April 2006.

Resident births became available later in this study. To use live births to project Kindergarten enrollments, it was necessary to obtain 10 years of births—5 years to establish cohort survival ratios to Kindergarten and 5 years to project Kindergarten enrollments over the next 5 years. The repository for these data is the Illinois Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Records. To obtain access to these data, the Division required a Memorandum of Understanding, which was signed by the Riverside superintendent. This agreement appears in Appendix 5.

The Division of Vital Records provided 10 years of birth records for zip code areas containing the Riverside School District. After geocoding the birth records, the digital boundaries of the District were overlaid and the points falling within the District boundaries were selected and kept. The numbers of birth records geocoded (matched) within and outside the District and the number of records that were not matched appears in Table 4 (Appendix 1) by cohort year. The columns labeled 'First Count', 'Second Count', and 'Unmatched' refer, respectively, to the number of records that were automatically matched by computer, interactively matched by correcting addresses, and unmatched after the second pass.

In all, the Division provided 5,647 birth records. Of these, 4,496 were matched by computer and another 1,043 were matched during a record by record search through the unmatched records from the first pass. The remaining 108 records could not be located within the District either because of blank addresses, nonmatching street names, or address ranges that didn't match the street centerline or parcel centroid geocoding dataset. The Division of Vital Records does not quality control addresses or zip codes.

Births in the last 4 months of 2004 were annualized to project enrollments for the 2010-11 academic year. The result indicates a decline of births from previous year totals which will result in a smaller cohort and Kindergarten class at the beginning of the 2010 school year. 2005 birth records would be needed to generate totals for this class, so projections based on annualized totals should be considered to be preliminary.

# Findings

## *Census Variable Comparisons*

### **1. Population and housing has and will remain steady in the Riverside School District.**

The total population of the District increased by slightly more than 1.0% between 1990 and 2000. In 1990 the population stood at 13,670. In 2000, the population increased to 13,813. The 1.0% increase represents an increase of 143 persons. Housing units increased by 19 units, from 5,900 in 1990 to 5,919 in 2000. This represents a gain of .3% (see Table 1, Appendix 4). The small increases in population and housing units suggest little change over the last decade. Current population estimates (2006) place the total population at 13,672 which represents a slight decline of 1.0% since 2000. It is projected that the population will increase slightly from 2006 to 13,740 or .5% by the year 2011.

Maps 4 and 5 in Appendix 2 show the percentage change of population and housing units within school district by block groups. Larger population gains (> 4.3% and shaded blue in Map 4) were observed in the blocks groups around Central school and west of Desplaines and the neighborhood north of Ames school. Areas in light blue and green show smaller increases while areas in yellow and red show population losses. Areas losing more population between 1990 and 2000 include the block group north of 25<sup>th</sup> in North Riverside and the block group south of Riverview, although only a small portion of this block group is included in the Riverside School District.

Map 5 shows changes in total numbers of housing units. Reasons for increases or declines of housing units in well-established neighborhoods may include condominium conversions which may either add or subtract housing units, new unit construction on vacant parcels, conversion of group quarters residences to single or multi-family residences, change in zoning and new residential developments on commercial property, and tear-downs or condemnations. Larger increases in housing were observed in the block group north of Edgewater and west of Desplaines, west of Herrick and Delaplaine, and in the block group south of Lawton and north of 14<sup>th</sup>. Larger declines in housing occurred in the block group north of 25<sup>th</sup> in North Riverside and in the block group south of Riverview, although, once again, this represents only a portion of the total block group.

Since 2000, population increases are observed in the area south of Riverview and in the block group north of Edgewater and west of Desplaines (Map 6, Appendix 1). Generally, population losses were observed in the block groups south of the railroad tracks, just east of Desplaines and north of Edgewater, and in the southern part of Blythe Park. Population is expected to increase in Blythe Park and in the lower south portion of the District. The block groups east of Desplaines, south of Forest, and the areas in the southern part of Blythe Park and south of the railroad tracks are expected to decline in population in the next 5 years (Map 7, Appendix 1).

### **2. Race and ethnicity tabulations indicate that the District will continue to become more diverse.**

The racial composition of the District was primarily White in both 1990 and 2000. In 1990, there were 13,412 White persons and 0 Black persons. In 2000, the number of White persons declined to 13,071 which represent a decline of 2.5%. The number of Black persons increased to 82 which doesn't represent much of a change in the overall racial composition of the District. It is expected that the White population will continue to decline slightly and the Black population will continue to increase slightly over the next 5 years (Table 1, Appendix 1).

The big change in the District is the increase in the Hispanic population. The number of Hispanics more than doubled between 1990 and 2000, increasing from 356 to 893 persons. It is estimated that the Hispanic population continued to increase since 2000 with the number of persons increasing to 1,372 or by 53.6%. It is projected that the Hispanic population will increase by another 38.5% to reach the 1,900 mark over the next 5 years (Table 1, Appendix 1). Although the White population will continue to be the dominant racial group, the Hispanic population is expected to increase to constitute approximately 14% of the population in the District by 2011.

### **3. Although total population remained steady, the number of persons under 19 years of age increased dramatically.**

The number of persons under the age of 19 increased by 20.7% between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, there were 2,603 persons in this age group. In 2000, the total increased to 3,141 or by 538 persons. Both the increase in the preschool and the school-aged population (persons under 5 years and persons 5 to 18 years) explains the positive change in this population segment. The actual number of persons under 5 years increased by 9.3%, from 754 persons in 1990 to 824 persons in 2000. The school-aged population increased by over 25%, from 1,849 persons in 1990 to 2,317 in 2000. With total population remaining about the same, the conclusion drawn from these data is that the change in the preschool and school-aged population was not indigenous to the District. More likely, the gain was due to the in-movement of households with preschool- and school-aged children.

Maps 8 and 9 show the changes in the 5 to 19 year (between 5 and 18 years) and under 5 year age groups between 1990 and 2000. The 5 to 19 year map (Map 8) shows the greater increase in the school-aged population around Central School and in the block group north and west of Desplaines. Shown in darker blue areas, these changes in the school-aged population range from 67% to over 144%. It is interesting to note that the areas south of Forest and the railroad tracks also had a sizeable increase in school-aged children. This area has a large number of smaller homes in Riverside and units that are being rehabbed. The block groups losing population between 5 years and 19 years include the area south of Riverview, north and west of Herrick and Delaplaine, and the small block group in the North Riverside area (colored orange and red in Map 8).

The preschool population increased by a smaller margin, 9.3% between 1990 and 2000. In Map 9 (Appendix 1), larger increases are observed in the block groups north and west of Delaplaine and Herrick, north and west of Burr Oak and 26<sup>th</sup> in North Riverside, north and west of Edgewater and Desplaines, and in much of the areas of Blythe Park and the eastern portion of the District. Areas declining in children under the age of 5 include the block groups north and east

of Ames School, the block group area immediately around Central School, and in the block groups south of the railroad tracks, but north of Riverview.

#### **4. The growth in the school-aged population is due to the significant change and composition of families in the District.**

Total households in the District declined by 10, from 5,757 in 1990 to 5,747 in 2000. As the number of households declined, so did the number of families. In 1990, there were 3,794 families living in the District. In 2000, the numbers declined to 3,699 which represent a decline of 2.5%. The significant change occurred in the numbers of families with and without children. In 1990, approximately 32% of the families in the district had children. In 2000, the percentage jumped to about 55% where the largest percentage change occurred in the number of married-couple families with children. This number more than doubled from 637 families to 1,324 families which represents a gain of 107.8%. Table 1 (Appendix 1) shows these data. In 1990, there were 2,569 married-couple families without children. In 2000, the number of married-couple families without children declined to 1,685 which represent a loss of 884 families and a decline of 34.4%.

This pattern is indicative of household transitions from predominately empty nesting to younger family households with children. As householders aged, a significant number were replaced by householders that had begun family formation. Due to the availability of affordable housing and higher housing costs in selective portions of the District, the typical in-migrating householder could have been but more than likely was not a first-time homebuyer. Many of these households had at least one child. The presence of children in households and the transitioning of an older empty-nesting population to other forms of housing both in and outside of the District is one of the more important reasons for the increase in the school-aged population in the District and the increase in public school enrollments.

Maps 10 through 13 in Appendix 2 show household and family change in the District by block group between 1990 and 2000. Larger positive changes in households have occurred in the block groups north and west of Edgewater and Desplaines, around Ames School, and along the railroad tracks (Map 10). Dramatic changes in the number of families were found in the block group area north and west of Herrick and Delaplaine, Families also increased by notable margins in the block groups north and west of Edgewater and Desplaines, and south of Herrick (Map 11). The areas increasing in families with children include the block groups north of Forest and south of Edgewater, south of Lawton, west of Golfview, and in the North Riverside area north of 25<sup>th</sup> (Map 12). The block groups south of Edgewater and Forest experienced larger decreases in families without children, suggesting a succession of families with children (Map 13).

The implications of increasing families with children and a decrease in families without children may suggest a turnover or succession of housing and a positive trend in both families with children and school-aged children in the District. However, it was noted in one of the interviews with realtors that a number of households without children have sought smaller housing in the area and/or have decided to downsize to remain closer to their children who are now forming families in the area. The starter homes in the District may be destinations for aging householders which may moderate or dampen the effect that the presence of the units may have on District enrollments.

**5. With the increase in school-aged children and families with children, the number of children enrolled in public schools has also increased along with the proportion of students enrolled in public schools.**

In 1990, there were 1,643 persons aged 3 years and older enrolled in public school, grades K through 12. In 2000, the number increased to 1,967 which represents a gain of 19.7% or 324 students. When looking at the percentage of persons attending public and private school, the proportions of students attending public and private have changed as well. In 1990, 73.6% of persons enrolled in grades K through 12 were enrolled in public schools. In 2000, the same percentage increased to 80.7%. Private school enrollment in grades K-12 decreased from 434 to 379 which represents a decline of 12.7%. Preschool private school enrollments increased while the same enrollments in public schools decreased over the last decade. In 2000, 85% of preschoolers were enrolled in private preschool programs (Table 1, Appendix 1).

Map 14 shows the percentage change in K-12 public school enrollment by block group over the decade. The block group area containing the town center and parcels west of East increased more rapidly in the percentage of children enrolled in public school grades K-12. The area east of the town center, along the railroad tracks, and parcels along the eastern edge of the district in Blythe Park and Central decline more rapidly. The area in the Hollywood School area also declined in the percentage of children attending public schools. The rest of the block group areas in the District showed increases in the percentage of children attending public schools in grades K-12.

**6. While housing only changed by 19 units over the last decade, owner-occupied units increased at the expense of rental units.**

Owner occupancy in the District increased by 34% between 1990 and 2000. Consequently, rental occupancy decreased by about 43%. Estimates and projections of owner-occupancy show a continuation of these trends; however, the rate of change has slowed since 2000. Current estimates place the number of owner-occupied units at 4,338 which represents an increase of a little more than 1%. Similarly, the number renter-occupied units declined by about 9% since 2000 (Table 1, Appendix 1). Projections to 2011 expect only a slight change in the current number of owner- and renter-occupied units.

Maps 15 and 16 (Appendix 2) show the change in the numbers of owner- and renter-occupied units. The block group area north of Edgewater and west of Desplaines grew more rapidly in the number of units occupied by owners. Renter-occupied units declined in all areas of the District except for the block group immediately south of Ames School and in the block group area north and west of Herrick and Delaplaine.

Average housing values increased by 62% over the decade. In 1990, average housing value was computed at \$129,929. In 2000, this value increased to \$209,273. Current estimates place the median value of housing in the District at \$347,435 which represents an increase of 66% since 2000. Projected housing values place the median at \$443,967 in 2011. Maps 17-19 show the percentage change in median values of housing over the last decade, since 2000, and projected to

2011. Contract rent in the District increased from an average of \$444 in 1990 to \$575 in 2000, which represents a gain of \$131 on the average or 29.5%.

## ***School Enrollment Trends and Projections***

Four projection series were developed for total enrollments by school and grade and by grade alone for grades K-8. These data are provided in Tables 5 through 13 (Appendix 1). Tables 5 through 10 provide enrollment projections by grade and school while Tables 10 through 13 provide enrollment projections based on District-wide enrollments. The presence of a flexible boundary plan and the distribution of students throughout the District attending particular schools (Maps 42-49) suggest that school-specific projections have limited applicability. Also, the attendance of Kindergarten outside of elementary attendance area suggests that elementary area-specific births may not be an accurate predictor of Kindergarten enrollments for particular schools (Maps 46-49, Appendix 2). Accordingly, totals based on District-wide enrollments are depicted graphically in Graphs 1 and by grade in Graphs 6-14 (Appendix 1).

Total District enrollment can be projected in one of two ways using the 4 different series of cohort survival ratios. Total enrollments may be projected using historical enrollments by grade or enrollments may be projected using enrollments by school and by grade which are then summed to reflect a total district enrollment projection. Projections presented at the 22 August 2006 Board meeting which also appear in the slides in Appendix 4 were generated using the first method. After considering the early enrollment numbers for 2006-07, the decision was made to include and recommend projections using the second method. These projections results in a higher degree of variability between the high and low series.

### **1. Recent census trends, current population estimates and projections, and current trends in housing sales suggest the adoption of the middle projection series.**

The relatively stable population scenarios provided by census data comparisons, population and housing estimates and projections, trends in household turnover in families with children, and the current and expected sale of homes in the District suggest that the middle enrollment projection series is the better series to adopt for predicting enrollments over the next 5 years. The census comparisons along with the population estimates and projections show little change in the total population and housing stock in the District. However, there is a demonstrable trend in household aging, empty nesting, and the in-movement of families with children. Interviews with realtors and local government officials confirmed this trend, but there is also the downsizing trend which may have an impact on the smaller home market in the District. Taking these factors into account, the middle projection series is more consistent with current housing sales and levels of property-owner change.

### **2. The middle projection series forecasts an enrollment increase of 11.0% in 2010-2011.**

Based on current class sizes, enrollment trends since 1994, and recent births, the Riverside School District can expect K-8 student enrollments to increase by 11.0% and reach a total of 1,413 students by the 2010-11 school year. This represents an increase of 140 students over last year's enrollment total of 1,273 students. The middle projection series is forecasting an increase of 25 students in the next academic year, 49 students in 2007-08, and 25 students in 2008-09

before jumping to 1,419 students or and additional 47 students in 2009-10. The projection for 2010-11 is forecasting a small decline of 6 students over the 2009-10 academic year total of 1,419 to 1,413 students (Table 11, Appendix 1). These totals represent high watermarks for student enrollments over the last 10 years.

The high projection series is forecasting larger increases in students in the 2007-08 (124 students), 2008-09 (101 students), and 2009-10 (134 students) academic years (Table 10, Appendix 1). The low projection series is forecasting declines of 14 to 58 students over the next 5 years (Table 13, Appendix 1). The last year ratio series (Table 13, Appendix 1) uses the CSRs from last year's enrollments. This series tracks enrollments lower than the middle enrollment projection series and projects enrollments to increase to 1,349 students. The low projection series forecasts a total 2010-11 enrollment of 1,099 students. The enrollment projection trend lines are provided in Graph 1 (Appendix 1).

### **3. Births have been declining in the District although recent birth counts may indicate an increasing trend.**

Over the last 10 years, birth trends in the District may be viewed in two different ways. On the one hand, the general birth trend may be viewed as declining from 1993 to 1997, increasing since 1998 and reaching a high point in 2003. The other perspective may view births as stabilizing between 150 and 160 births with spikes (both increases and declines) observed in 1997, 2002, and 2004. When births are counted by cohort year of entering Kindergarten, the largest group of births will impact the Kindergarten class sizes in 2009-10. Births defining the Kindergarten class in 2004-05 were higher than in previous years which helped push Kindergarten enrollments to 142 students (Graphs 5 and 6, Appendix 1). The decline in births in 2002-03 explains the dip in Kindergarten enrollments expected in 2008-09. Although births declined between 1998 and 1999, actual Kindergarten enrollments still increased which may be due to families moving into the District with preschool children.

### **4. Class or cohort sizes appear to be increasing in size.**

Graph 2 presents the sizes of the last 4 graduating classes in the Riverside School District. The Class of 2002 was the smallest. This class started out with 97 students in Kindergarten and grew to 131 students by 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The Classes of 2004 and 2006 were similar in size through Fifth Grade. However, enrollments in grades 6-8 for the Class of 2006 pushed the size of the class to 157 students while the Class of 2004 closed out with 146 students. The Class of 2005 started with 128 students and finished with 155 students.

### **5. Cohort survival ratios indicate slightly higher class sizes in succeeding years.**

Increases in class sizes in the projection years are due to cohort survival ratios (CSRs) that are in excess of 1.0. Ratios that are greater than one indicate a general trend of larger class sizes as the cohort "survives" to the next grade. Ratios that are less than 1.0 indicate declines between grades. Tables 2a, 2b and 2c (Appendix 1) provides cohort survival ratios for the 4 projection series. Table 2a provides CSRs for total enrollments while Table 2c provides school-specific

CSRs. Table 2b provides cumulative CSRs which indicates the eventual sizes of cohorts as they move through grades.

As shown in Table 2a, the CSRs from Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade for both the high and middle series are all above 1.000. The birth to Kindergarten CSRs in the high, middle, and low series are between .75 and .90 which is indicative of households moving into the area with preschool children. Last year's CSR for births to Kindergarten enrollments was .98 which is above the high series CSR.

The cumulative CSRs for the high series projections predicts that cohort class sizes will be about 52% larger than the starting Kindergarten class size. The Last Year Ratio series and Middle series forecast class sizes that are between 25% and 32% larger, respectively. The low projection series forecasts 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes that are 8% greater than the beginning Kindergarten class. Graph 3 (Appendix 1) shows discrete, grade-to-grade CSRs from each of the projection series. Graph 4 (Appendix 1) shows the accumulation of CSRs from each of the series.

## ***Neighborhood and Real Estate Property Trends***

An important element of this study was the assessment of current trends and the likelihood of the continuation of trends that have been producing larger class sizes in the Riverside School District. To assess neighborhood and housing trends, tax assessment information was obtained for parcels in the District over the last 4 years and compared. This provided information to compare to interviews with realtors and city officials about neighborhood trends and developments.

### **1. The tabulation and comparison of tax and property class codes indicates little change in land use from 2001 to 2003, but increased activity in 2004.**

Tax codes for each parcel in the District were compared over the last 4 years. Tax codes pertain to unique combinations of entities that are enabled to levy or rebate taxes on properties. Tables 14 through 16 contain the results of these comparisons. Between 2001 and 2003, there were no changes in tax codes applied to parcels in the District. This changed in 2004 where there were 647 changes. Table 16 (Appendix 1) shows the codes that changed from 2003 to 2004. Map 20 highlights parcels with changing tax codes. Many of these changes occurred in the District on both sides of Longcommon, along Delaplaine, along the railroad tracks and in the block southeast of the town center, and in the blocks south of Park and east of Woodside.

The tabulation of property class codes in the Cook County Assessor's file revealed a number of differences. Between 2001 and 2002, 11 uncoded parcels in 2001 were classed Commercial in 2002. Similarly, 16 uncoded parcels were coded Mixed Residential and 6 were coded Residential (Table 17, Appendix 1). The locations of these parcels are shown in Map 21 along with a fairly large number of parcels that remain uncoded. Between 2002 and 2003, 27 parcels that were coded Residential were changed to Mixed Residential (Table 18, Appendix 1) and are shown in Map 22. Many of the parcels highlighted in Maps 21-23 indicate changes in the age of housing. As shown in Table 19 and Map 23, there were only 18 between-category changes, but 380 parcels not categorized in either year which may indicate parcels undergoing redevelopment.

In addition to tax codes, the Assessor tables also included owner names. A match of owner names found 690 changes between 2001 and 2002, 392 between 2002 and 2003, and 492 between 2003 and 2004. The matching of owner names excluded nonexact matches through a manual review of nonmatching records. The resulting nonmatches involve different names for parcels compared over the 4 year timeframe. Table 20 contains counts of parcels changing owners, year-to-year, by street. Maps 24 through 26 contain the locations of parcels with owner changes over the last 4 years.

### **2. Interviews with city officials and realtors operating in the area confirmed a steady market for housing sales and revealed a number of the factors pulling households into the District.**

Six interviews (2 with city officials and 4 with area realtors) were scheduled by the District and conducted on 23 March 06. One interview was held at the North Riverside government

building while the rest were held at District offices. The information obtained in the interviews is summarized below.

### **Interview with Guy Belmonte, Village Administrator, Village of North Riverside**

**1. Annually, how many homes are sold in the Riverside School District? Where (in the District) do you find more sales activity?**

**2. Over the last 2 years, have sales been increasing or decreasing?**

Home sales have been steady. Around 100 homes are sold annually. Many of those moving are senior citizens who are moving into assisted living facilities. Housing is becoming more available because of aging householders moving into assisted living housing.

In North Riverside, 24 single family homes are up for sale. Gloor Realty, Century 21 and Karen Arndt, and Dimmie Van Damm (sp?) are active in the area.

**3. What are the ranges of home sale values?**

**4. Over the last 2 years, have home values been increasing, staying about the same, or decreasing?**

**5. Do you expect real estate business in the Riverside School District to be better, the same, or worse over the next 5 years? Why?**

**6. What types of households are moving into the District?**

The District is definitely getting younger. Some people are moving into the District to live with parents. The parents don't want to move. In 1990, the population of North Riverside was 6,003. In 2000, the population was 6,688 with no new housing.

Kids are coming into the District. 1 in 5 houses are sold to Hispanics which is the fastest growing segment of the population. Many of these households have children. Hispanics are moving away from Cicero and Berwyn. The main reason is good schools in Berwyn and Riverside.

**7. What makes housing attractive in the Riverside School District?**

The Village is located ideally from commuters; between Cermak, I-88, and the Eisenhower. Lot sizes are small; for those households looking to downsize North Riverside offers 35' by 50' lots and smaller houses. There is less to do. This is attractive for householders in their mid 50's.

**8. Where do housing buyers come from?**

**9. Typically, what is the income of homebuyers in the Riverside School District?**

Household incomes are in the mid \$50k's and higher.

**10. What do home buyers look for in the Riverside School District?**

Part of the draw is due to public schools. RB High School an attraction. Westchester is trying to create a new school district. This is one of reasons why people are moving into Riverside. Ames is a strong attraction. Most North Riverside students go to Ames and Blythe.

**11. Do newcomers or potential buyers ask about the quality of public schools?**

Part of the draw is due to public schools. The elementary schools have won awards—the Red Apple award. People buying in North Riverside are very much aware of the quality of Riverside schools. This is one of the reasons why North Riverside is so attractive. City services, lower taxes, and access to the Riverside School District.

**12. Why do people move from the area?**

People moving from North Riverside need bigger houses. People like room. When they move from here, they do so for bigger housing and bigger lots.

Movers tend to go all over. Some of these areas are LaMont and Oakland. They don't just jump to Hillside or Westchester.

**13. Are there other factors that pull people into the area?**

North Riverside has low taxes. The Village has frozen taxes at \$490k in property taxes. This is a small community. The Village subsidizes garbage pick up. The Village lives and dies by sales tax revenue.

The Village generally is a safe community. The crime rate is higher because of the mall.

Households don't move into the Village because of local industry. International Harvester moved out of Broadview. Some movers may prefer to living close to Loyola University and Hines VA Hospital. There used to be a GM warehouse, but nothing huge or significant.

**14. Are there any differences in the demographics of households in various parts of the District (younger or older, higher or lower housing values, more or less kids, and race and ethnic groups)? Are there any differences in the demographics of renters v. owners?**

There are apartments on 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Renters tend to stay 2 or 3 years and then leave. A number of apartments are going condo. The conversion market has picked up again.

The household size of rents has been the same. There are young people wanting to rent without kids, but the typical household composition involves young couples with 1 child. Many have another before leaving. However, you would not see a lot of move outs when kids start school. Possibly in Kindergarten, but not in the elementary grades. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is a threshold. After 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, they stay planted. This is true for both owners and renters.

**15. (15) Are you aware of other changes that would alter or affect school enrollment patterns in the near future (within the next 5 years)?**

Two parochial schools in Berwyn have closed. A lot of students in North Riverside are going to St. Mary's. There are no Catholic schools in Broadview. Eulalie closed. Comarc school experienced a 25% increase in the last 5 years and a lot of this has to do with Catholic schools closing.

Building permit activity. A number of additions to housing are valued in the \$80k to 100k range. Home owners are building on because they need more space. Many 2 to 3 bedroom homes are small. With 2 kids in the house, there is very little room. But they like the schools, the tax rates, services from the Village, and they decide to improve their properties.

Condo conversion won't affect the schools much.

Property values are expensive. Younger householders cannot afford to buy in Riverside or North Riverside. Some are looking to downsize or to move back closer to family, but they cannot afford an 1100 square foot house selling for \$340k.

Concern is increasing about residency issues with many families living in one housing unit. Some of these are located at 27<sup>th</sup> and Des Plaines, 30<sup>th</sup> Des Plaines and are in small town homes.

There won't be much new development. There are only 4 empty lots in the Village. The Village annexed the Armory, 40 federal acres north of Creak. The Reserve unit uses it on the weekends. There won't be any single family houses developed on this site.

## **Interview with Carole Peters, Burlington Realty and Joan Wiaduck, Century 21**

### **1. Annually, how many homes are sold in the Riverside School District? Where (in the District) do you find more sales activity?**

Through the Multiple Listing Service (MLS), anywhere from 110 to 145 homes have been sold annually. The area is no longer in the hot housing market. This occurred between 1998 and 2004 when sales were higher and households were moving in with kids. There was an influx from the City, helped by low mortgage rates. Also the housing market in the District mirrored the mortgage rates. The area is still attracting the same kind of buyer.

### **2. Over the last 2 years, have sales been increasing or decreasing?**

Sales have been steady, stable. The volume is not as great as during the 1998-2004 period.

### **3. What are the ranges of home sale values?**

Houses run from \$250k-\$300k to \$1.5m. Condos run from \$200k. In North Riverside houses run from \$200k to \$400k. More expensive housing in the District is toward the center town and the 1<sup>st</sup> Division of the community (southwest). The lots are larger there. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Division is Central east with some expensive housing. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Division is north and has the more affordable, but smaller houses. Households moving into the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division are moving there because of Ames School.

### **4. Over the last 2 years, have home values been increasing, staying about the same, or decreasing?**

Down from 2004 levels, but stable.

### **5. Do you expect real estate business in the Riverside School District to be better, the same, or worse over the next 5 years? Why?**

Existing home sales could be less. Houses are being torn down. North of 26<sup>th</sup>, there are no tear-downs. In Riverside, the tear-down market is driven by the demographics of the area. Older householders are not maintaining their houses and are interested in selling. Builders/developers pick up these properties. Younger householders and families want brand new housing. Only 1 in 10 will buy an older house to renovate. We don't see the value placed on sweat equity in housing sales. Younger households don't want to renovate. There are too many constraints on their time.

### **6. What types of households are moving into the District?**

Generally, householders are in the late 20's or early 30's. Many that start families started looking for housing in the District. Typically, they moved to Downtown from here and then they want to come back to raise their families. Older couples are affluent enough to afford

assisted living which allows them to stay in their homes. There are some that will sell and move elsewhere.

Houses in the District are small; some are priced as starter homes. As the family grows, they tend to stay and buy into larger houses. Many householders who have sold their houses stay in the community by downsizing.

### **7. What makes housing attractive in the Riverside School District?**

Getting to know the area. The layout of the community is attractive. The influence of Olmsted. The lots are irregularly shaped, the landscaping, the road patterns, national historic landmarks, it's like being in another world, gas lights, very safe.

People aren't generally knowledgeable about the area. House walks acquaint some. There are a lot of school options for those living in the District—public schools and proximity to University of Chicago Lab School, Trinity in River Forest, LaGrange, Eulalie, DePaul. The area is a central hub to get to places.

Hollywood and North Riverside have the benefit of lower taxes.

### **8. Where do housing buyers come from?**

Buyers come from downtown. Also, some buyers have previous attachments to the community.

### **9. Typically, what is the income of homebuyers in the Riverside School District?**

Most are pre-qualified by lenders; I really don't get into household incomes.

We're looking at 2 wage-earner incomes totaling \$100k to \$400k.

### **10. What do home buyers look for in the Riverside School District?**

People look at public schools very closely as an option. There are other options including parochial schools in the area. Families have strong values.

Many home buyers have moved from the area into downtown and are looking to move back. They are starting families and want to raise their kids in the neighborhood that they grew up in. Other householders that have moved from the area may be looking to downsize.

### **11. Do newcomers or potential buyers ask about the quality of public schools?**

The schools have a good reputation. The Bright Red Apple award is known. The school district now pops up on the list of elementary schools that transferring employees receive from their companies. The school district is ranked high from state test scores.

## **12. Why do people move from the area?**

People that move into the community may move out in a couple of years. They do so because Riverside doesn't have houses in the \$700k-\$900k range. This is an important price point for housing for square footage and affordability. The alternative is to make additions to existing housing. People move to the western suburbs with older children and they tend to be older. People who add on to existing housing will stay much longer.

If they make the move, they will move while kids are in grammar school. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade seems to be the threshold. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, families find it more difficult to move.

## **13. Are there other factors that pull people into the area?**

Riverside provides a small town living environment. Everyone knows everyone else. Kids know each other and parents know the kids living in the neighborhood. It is a different life style from that which you would find in Oak Park or River Forest. In Oak Park, the life style is eclectic. In River Forest, families are atomized and social stratification is important. In Riverside, the community is not stratified and people don't react to each other based on cliques. Parents get to know each other which creates and maintains the "smallness" of the community. Kids get along the same way. The age of 9 seems to be the magic age for kids to start getting around the neighborhood.

Riverside is the only town in the western suburbs that is like this. It's the only town that is so unpretentious. It attracts that kind of parent and community member. Central has a mix of expensive houses and rentals. Where you live doesn't phase residents. They're not label conscious.

People come to Riverside for the schools (school options) and transportation. Riverside is one of several very desirable communities along the Burlington Railroad line. These communities generally have very strong school systems. Also, the train line provides an easy commute into the City. Riverside is only 18 minutes from downtown on Amtrak.

People aren't coming to Riverside for jobs in local industries; although Riverside is close to hospitals (Loyola, University of Chicago, Rush University medical school).

## **14. Are there any differences in the demographics of households in various parts of the District (younger or older, higher or lower housing values, more or less kids, and race and ethnic groups)? Are there any differences in the demographics of renters v. owners?**

There is a good mix (race and ethnicity) across the community. Riverside was once an older community. During the hot housing market, there was an influx of younger people.

Hispanic households are increasing around the area. St. Mary's school has about 700 students. About half are Hispanic. Many of these students are coming from other communities.

There are many different nationalities in Riverside.

**15. Are you aware of other changes that would alter or affect school enrollment patterns in the near future (within the next 5 years)?**

St. Mary's tuition may be a factor in kids coming to Riverside. If it goes up again, parents may switch to public schools. Families with kids in parochial schools grades 9-11 are reevaluating.

In the 1970's and 1980's, families with 2 children were moving into the District. This was down from the 1960's when families used to be very large. Now, we're seeing more children. The numbers of larger families are increasing on certain streets.

In the late 1980's, school enrollments were under 800. Since then, enrollments have been going up.

Births are slowing down. Double income families won't have 5 or 6 kids anymore. Those that have a lot of kids will build onto their houses. Those households coming into the District are not that large.

Parents get involved in schools and they don't want to leave. Each school area has its own culture. It's kind of like a membership in a club. This passes down to kids who often stay in touch with kids that they went to school with. This results in and from the feeling of community and membership.

The homes in the area are attractive as retirement homes. People are starting to sell and move closer to family. Householders in their late 50's and early 60's really miss the town and the feeling (sense) of community. Westchester is not the same kind of town.

The town center concept is making a come back. As people became more mobile, they went outside of the community to shop. People didn't stay in town to shop. They (community leaders?) are trying to shift back. There are 2 big buildings that are being redeveloped which will provide retail and condos. This will be independent retail located in the middle of Central. There are commercial retail buildings on both sides of the RR tracks.

There is some new commercial development in the center of Riverside. Riverside residents will shop there. However, they don't want new commercial projects or developments. They want shops that can be sustained by residents. They don't want out-of-towners coming in to the area.

The impact of TIF projects has been positive. Assessed values are frozen for up to 20 years. The increment will go to pay off bonds.

## **Interview with Bob Caraher, Chief Building Inspector, Riverside Village Office**

- 1. Annually, how many homes are sold in the Riverside School District? Where (in the District) do you find more sales activity?**
- 2. Over the last 2 years, have sales been increasing or decreasing?**
- 3. What are the ranges of home sale values?**
- 4. Over the last 2 years, have home values been increasing, staying about the same, or decreasing?**
- 5. Do you expect real estate business in the Riverside School District to be better, the same, or worse over the next 5 years? Why?**

New residential real estate development is limited. 9 townhouse units have been proposed at Burlington and Herbert. 9 units are being developed on Ogden at the bowling alley site.

Riverside has a little town center which will grow.

- 6. What types of households are moving into the District?**

More households with children are moving in.

- 7. What makes housing attractive in the Riverside School District?**

River Forest and Riverside are similar communities. Riverside has more commercial activity. Riverside housing development is all about tear-downs. Average high end housing is not affordable for many. Buying existing housing and redeveloping the site is profitable and more affordable. Contractors/developers are actively pursuing homes to tear down and redevelop. They then will turn around and sell the house for \$800k to \$1m.

Homeowners are investing in their property (pride of ownership). Contractors (4 from last year?) are busy in the area. Contracting has increased and keeps increasing. There isn't much new residential development. Commercial property development may increase. There is also a pride of ownership in the town.

There is a private country club, Riverside Golf Club, which is close, economical, and easy to join.

- 8. Where do housing buyers come from?**

Half of the house buyers build to suit.  $\frac{1}{4}$  are current residents.  $\frac{1}{4}$  are speculators. All are young with children. Many buyers come from condos on the lake.

Very similar households buy in the area. Most have kids, want a yard, but want to stay close to the City.

A lot of buyers had old money; some buyers hit it big in real estate.

**9. Typically, what is the income of homebuyers in the Riverside School District?**

**10. What do home buyers look for in the Riverside School District?**

Riverside has older homes. Residential housing redevelopment will continue. New high end housing is costly. Riverside homes have older utility systems and architecture that need to be brought up to date. 50 year mortgages make some of this affordable.

**11. Do newcomers or potential buyers ask about the quality of public schools?**

**12. Why do people move from the area?**

**13. Are there other factors that pull people into the area?**

**14. Are there any differences in the demographics of households in various parts of the District (younger or older, higher or lower housing values, more or less kids, and race and ethnic groups)? Are there any differences in the demographics of renters v. owners?**

**15. Are you aware of other changes that would alter or affect school enrollment patterns in the near future (within the next 5 years)?**

In North Riverside, apartments are being converted to condos. Only 17% of the housing in the Riverside community is considered affordable housing. There is pressure to maintain commercial multi-family as rentals for affordable housing.

## Interview with Richard Dolejis, Century 21

### **1. Annually, how many homes are sold in the Riverside School District? Where (in the District) do you find more sales activity?**

I specialize in managing apartment buildings and condo associations. I have 5 to 6 apartment buildings. On Forest Avenue, I manage 72 units. I have 6 flats on 31<sup>st</sup> and Des Plains. I manage and maintain these properties. I rent these properties to new prospects.

### **2. Over the last 2 years, have sales been increasing or decreasing?**

Over the last two years, the market for rental units has been terrible, disastrous. Vacancy rates have been in excess of 10%. The situation has been turning around. People will move out but the rental will only stay vacant for 3 or 4 months. People are moving and not staying because interest rates have been low. They are getting into houses and condos with no money down. Although owning is preferably, many of these people can't really afford the houses or condos. Taxes, utilities take a bite out of monthly incomes which people don't realize when they buy. They realized after they bought that the costs of home ownership are not affordable.

I'm seeing a lot of foreclosures. Condos are coming on the market at lower prices.

### **3. What are the ranges of home sale values?**

### **4. Over the last 2 years, have home values been increasing, staying about the same, or decreasing?**

### **5. Do you expect real estate business in the Riverside School District to be better, the same, or worse over the next 5 years? Why?**

### **6. What types of households are moving into the District?**

We're seeing more Latino (Mexican) householders moving into rental units. They will rent to get their kids into a good school district like Riverside. Education is very important to these families. Security is also important. The person that rents is ok. They check out ok. No problems with credit. However, the extended families that these people bring with them have problems.

Bigger income households will send their kids to private schools.

African-American households are coming in from Chicago. Section 8 subsidies make renting affordable.

### **7. What makes housing attractive in the Riverside School District?**

Houses are still affordable and the neighborhood is safe.

**8. Where do housing buyers come from?**

Renters are moving westward from the Little Village, to Cicero, and then to Berwyn. Many are moving from neighborhoods that have become unsafe and have gangs. Also, Morton High School has social problems.

**9. Typically, what is the income of homebuyers in the Riverside School District?**

**10. What do home buyers look for in the Riverside School District?**

**11. Do newcomers or potential buyers ask about the quality of public schools?**

**12. Why do people move from the area?**

**13. Are there other factors that pull people into the area?**

**14. Are there any differences in the demographics of households in various parts of the District (younger or older, higher or lower housing values, more or less kids, and race and ethnic groups)? Are there any differences in the demographics of renters v. owners?**

The demographics of renters are different from owners. I rent to all kinds of age groups. We have to because of fair housing laws. The people buying tear downs are doctors practicing at McNeal and Hines. They also take advantage of the transportation.

**15. Are you aware of other changes that would alter or affect school enrollment patterns in the near future (within the next 5 years)?**

Aging of the community brought school enrollment numbers down. Empty nesting households are increasing. The increase in Hispanic households will have an effect. Latinos tend to drive up property values. Many of those that rent don't know how to read or write English, but their kids know English.

I'm renting to more Latinos. They have more kids. About 25% of my units are rented by Latinos. Latinos are also buying in North Riverside. Ames is a draw because of its reputation as a great school. Latinos place a high importance on education. The demand for schooling comes from Mexicans who also place a great deal of importance on family life.

More Latinos will be moving into the area in the near future. Renters typically rent for 2 to 3 years. They will come and stay because of the schools and community values (Catholic, family-oriented).

## **Interview with Karen Arndt, ReMax Properties**

### **1. Annually, how many homes are sold in the Riverside School District? Where (in the District) do you find more sales activity?**

Currently, there are 9 unsold homes in the District. 97 closed in Riverside last year. In North Riverside, 15 to 20 homes closed. Overall, 110 to 115 homes will transfer ownership annually.

### **2. Over the last 2 years, have sales been increasing or decreasing?**

Sales have been steady. On the average 115-120 homes will sell in the District.

### **3. What are the ranges of home sale values?**

Home values are on the rise. 3 houses are priced over \$1m. In the \$600k to \$800k range, there are 48 three bedroom, 14 2 bedroom and 22 4 bedroom houses on the market.

Those that border the railroad tracks (Quincy Street) range between \$215k to \$1.2m.

### **4. Over the last 2 years, have home values been increasing, staying about the same, or decreasing?**

Values have been increasing at 7% a year on the average, but it really depends on the kind of home. Value is increased in some homes as residents buy and add on.

### **5. Do you expect real estate business in the Riverside School District to be better, the same, or worse over the next 5 years? Why?**

Sales activity will remain steady, constant. Prices will increase. The District #208 referendum passed. This will help keep Riverside attractive. Brookfield #95 also passed a referendum. They have strong leadership. This was for curriculum, to retain their fine arts programs, keep class sizes small, etc.

### **6. What types of households are moving into the District?**

Transfers within Riverside involve scaling up and down. City couples look to Riverside as an option because housing prices are out of control. Typically, professionals are moving in (Doctors, other professionals). They have kids (either 2 or 3 children). Larger families are rare. Also, families with preschool kids are less common. There are many generations of families in Riverside; the community is close knit.

### **7. What makes housing attractive in the Riverside School District?**

Many different styles of housing, different lot sizes, winding streets, and irregularly shaped lot sizes. .

**8. Where do housing buyers come from?**

They really come from everywhere. Many buyers come from the City. .

**9. Typically, what is the income of homebuyers in the Riverside School District?**

**10. What do home buyers look for in the Riverside School District?**

Home buyers are looking for space and something different; not the 50' x 150' rectangular lots. They're looking for different lot sizes, privacy. Bedrooms on the second floor are desirable, media centers. Formal dining rooms are not real important. They need more than one bath.

**11. Do newcomers or potential buyers ask about the quality of public schools?**

They've already researched the school district. Many buyers will stretch themselves (their budgets) to settle in the area because of the public schools. Parochial schools are closing, are farther away, and becoming less of an option.

**12. Why do people move from the area?**

Householders are aging and they want to move closer/next to their children. There is still a lot of aged householders in the community. Seniors enjoy the community life/activity.

**13. Are there other factors that pull people into the area?**

Riverside straddles a main commuter line into the City—the old Burlington Northern Railroad line. The easy commute into the City is a definite selling point.

Community activities draw people into the District to see the neighborhood and the housing. Riverside's Christmas Walk is very popular. Also, they have 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities.

Senior will take advantage of condo development in the District.

**14. Are there any differences in the demographics of households in various parts of the District (younger or older, higher or lower housing values, more or less kids, and race and ethnic groups)? Are there any differences in the demographics of renters v. owners?**

There is more rental activity in North Riverside and Brookfield. Brookfield is a blue collar community which is less expensive, but renting there gets you into Riverside schools. Renters (transients) will rent in area because of the school district. They look for rentals within Riverside because of the school district.

The rental market is limited. Rents are close to the costs of a mortgage. Also, there isn't a high volume of condo conversions. North Riverside (Mayor Scheck) has incentives for

building owners to convert multi-family buildings to condos to keep the current residents in their units. Affordable living for seniors is one reason for condo conversion. This is decreasing the number of rental units.

**15. Are you aware of other changes that would alter or affect school enrollment patterns in the near future (within the next 5 years)?**

Tear downs are appealing because it brings new construction to old, well-established neighborhoods. Home buyers want new construction; they don't want to rehab. They look for established neighborhoods with city amenities, services, good schools, and commuter lines.

Builders find opportunities to buy home owners out through their network. They approach home owners or have a line to the property. Tear downs and rehabs may decrease because building materials are getting harder to come by. Dry wall is getting harder to get.

The social aspects of the Riverside community draw people and keep them here. It's a family-oriented community. There are generations of families; people know one another. It's a "Town of Cheers" (where everyone knows each other—your name).

Now that the 208 referendum passed, the Riverside School District will become even more attractive. New renovations to the High School will pull families with elementary school-age children. It makes the District more desirable. School Districts 94, 95, and 96 are all more desirable. We expect to see more competitiveness for housing in these Districts in the immediate future.

## Summary

The purpose of this study is to generate several series of enrollment projections for the Riverside School District and build a case for adopting one particular series of projections to use for strategic planning decisions. Several series of enrollment projections were generated from actual resident enrollments. Four different methods of averaging or selecting cohort survival ratios over the last five years were used to generate the four series of projections. Census data trends, real property changes that were observed from an analysis of tax codes, property class codes, and owner names from assessment records, interviews with local realtors, and a windshield survey of the area were taken into account in recommending the middle projection series as the better series to adopt. The middle projection series is forecasting an increase in enrollment of about 11% over the next 5 years. The projection series based on last year's cohort survival ratios is forecasting an increase of over 6% over the projection interval. These two series of projections fall between the high and low series which provides confirmatory evidence that the actual change in enrollments will be between 6 and 11% over the next 5 years.

Why select the middle projection series as the better series to adopt? There are several reasons for recommending this series. First, the analysis of population and housing changes over the last decade discovered a trend in the turnover of households in the District. Many empty nesting householders were being replaced with householders with children. However, this trend is tempered by a down-sizing housing market which is looking to remain in the area with smaller footprints and tax overhead. The school-aged population increased by over 25% and the rate of home ownership climbed by 34%. These trends suggest a dynamic housing market and an area being revitalized by in-migrating households. However, increasing owner-occupancy implies decreases in the rental market which has provided households with an opportunity for moving into the District and sending their children to public schools.

The analysis of recent tax assessment records found a number of changes which may have both positive and negative impacts on student enrollments. There weren't many tax code changes between 2001 and 2003; however there was a flurry of activity in 2004 and most of this activity was tied to residential properties. A comparison of property class codes revealed relatively small changes in property or land uses in the District. Many of the changes in property class codes involved housing age. However, a comparison of owners revealed a robust real estate market in 2001-02, although ownership changes declined over the latter 2 years.

Interviews were arranged with 2 village officials, 3 realtors and 1 property manger in the area. All interviews were face-to-face meetings that were held at village and District offices. These interviews provided additional insight into the in-migrating trends that the District has experienced over the last decade and more recently. It was learned that many households come from downtown (Chicago) seeking a safe city neighborhood, an easy commute, and urban amenities. The realtors agreed that many of the in-migrating householders were returning to their old neighborhood to raise families. One realtor added that home downsizing is occurring where empty-nesting households are moving into the District because of tax advantages and to be closer to their children and the families that they are starting. The realtors agreed that the "housing sales-boom" in the District was over, although sales have been steady. Several

respondents commented that households with larger household sizes would continue to move into the area which would impact District enrollments and curriculum requirements in the near future. The Superintendent sat in on several of these interviews.

To experience first-hand the information provided by the realtors, city and District officials, the Superintendent was asked to provide points of interest in the District. The District was driven and sights were recorded. Map 51 shows some of the streets driven and the locations of pictures taken that appear in Appendix 3. The impressions obtained by driving the district were consistent with the observations of those interviewed. There were numerous signs of redevelopment and younger family formation which were found in all parts of the District. Moreover, these signs are indicative of a growing school-aged population which may mean growing student enrollments in the near future.

A final observation taken from the face-to-face interview also justifies the choice of the medium projection series. When asked to provide additional comments, one realtor was not surprised by the fact that current enrollments were outpacing expectations as many of the households that were buying into the area were also bringing children into the school district. She said the following:

“Now that the 208 referendum passed, the Riverside School District will become even more attractive. New renovations to the High School will pull families with elementary school-age children. It makes the District more desirable. Districts 94, 95, and 96 are all more desirable. We expect to see more competitiveness for housing in these Districts in the immediate future.”

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested by the findings of the study.

- (1) Birth records should be obtained annually or at least bi-annually and compared to corresponding Kindergarten cohorts. The birth counts for the 2006-07 and 2009-10 academic years were lower than expected. Typically, births are a good indicator of Kindergarten class sizes and these data would be relatively easy to obtain regularly through the Illinois Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Records.
- (2) The enrollment projection model should be maintained with births and current enrollments. As enrollment figures are updated, the projection model should be updated as well. Only time will tell whether or not the high projection series is, in fact, the better predictor of enrollments.
- (3) Changes in property records, which are available at no cost to the District, should be compared at least every two years. If housing turnover in the District declines, then there could be an immediate impact in enrollments. As the District's upswing in student enrollments are generally explained by in-migrating households, there should be an attempt to monitor the rate of housing turnover in the district.

These three elements should be reviewed every two or three years. Benchmarks have been established. It is now relatively easy to maintain these data series, which will result in better and more accurate enrollment projections in the future.