

2.11 Cultural Resources

Cultural resources include archeological and architectural items, places, or events considered important to a culture, community, tradition, religion, or science. Archeological resources are locations where human activity measurably altered the earth or left deposits of physical or biological remains. Prehistoric artifacts include arrowheads, rock chips from tool creation, and village remains. Architectural resources represent properties or districts that are notable in American history and culture. The National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations require federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings.

2.11.1 Archaeological Resources

The Illinois Transportation Archaeological Research Program (ITARP) supplied information on known archaeological resources in the study area, locations where there is a high probability for archaeological resources, and locations where archaeological fieldwork had been previously conducted. The information provided was based solely on records research and involved no fieldwork.

There are 80 known prehistoric sites within the study area, three of which are mound or cemetery sites. The archaeological sites include Paleo Indian (12,000 years ago) sites through the Historic period. Six contain Paleo-Indian components, four Early Archaic, three Middle Archaic, 12 Late Archaic/Early Woodland, four Middle Woodland, six Late Woodland, nine Upper Mississippian, and 17 Historic (some sites are multicomponent). Only a few of the 80 known sites appear to represent small lithic scatters. There are 19 known historic cemeteries³³ within the study area.

Areas containing high probability for archaeological finds coincide with water bodies in the study area, including the Des Plaines River, Salt Creek, Spring Brook, and their tributaries. Twenty percent of the study area has a high probability for archaeological sites (see Exhibit 2-12).

One hundred forty-seven Phase I archaeological surveys were previously conducted, covering about 7.5 percent of the study area. The sites range from having no historical relevance to those warranting further investigation.

2.11.2 Architectural Resources

The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA), specifically its Historic Architectural and Archaeology Resources Geographic Information System (HAARGIS) tool, provided locations of historic structures within the study area. Four are listed in the NRHP. Within the core communities, the historic Fischer School is located in Bensenville. The three other properties are a historic home in Schaumburg, and a historic home and an educational building in Elmhurst. According to HAARGIS, 96 properties within the study area are of undetermined status. That is, an evaluation of the structure has been logged with the IHPA

³³ ITARP considers the cemeteries "historic". However, the term "historic" applies only if the site is on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The cemeteries ITARP classifies as "historic" are not on or eligible for the NRHP.

but no determination was made regarding whether the property or structure is eligible for listing on the National Register. Of the 96 properties, 15 are in Itasca, 12 in Bensenville, and two in Wood Dale.

Local officials and historical societies were contacted to identify properties that the communities consider to have local importance. No communities are Certified Local Governments (CLGs)³⁴ Wood Dale does not have any structures with a local historic designation. Itasca has an historic district and regards the Itasca Baptist Church, Itasca Historical Depot Museum, and the house once owned by the first Village President, A.G. Chessman, as locally important properties. Bensenville regards several properties as having historic relevance, some of which are marked with a plaque indicating its historic relevance.

³⁴ The CLG is a preservation program jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) in each state, with each local community working through a certification process to become recognized as a CLG.