



# A Base of Success

*Thirty-five miles southwest of Chicago sits Plainfield, the oldest village in Will County and one of the earliest settled areas in the Midwest. Steeped in history, Plainfield has a legacy of success that lies at the heart of the area, even today. While Plainfield's story may have started hundreds of years ago, the village's next chapter may just be its most exciting yet.*



Written by Grace McDermott

Today, it is not just the history but instead the flourishing downtown and quality of life offerings which have new professionals and new businesses from across the country flocking to Plainfield. A stone's throw from Chicago, the village offers a haven of suburban charm with the promise of big city excitement. This strategic location offers urban convenience with the financial and lifestyle advantages of suburban living. This has attracted families to the area for decades, but now, a growing downtown and an increasingly diverse industrial footprint have taken Plainfield's potential to the next level.

Jonathan Proulx, director of planning for the Village of Plainfield, explained its continuing legacy. "One of the biggest benefits of the village is that you're working off of a base of success." This sentiment is evident when one looks at the portfolio of not only the businesses that continue to expand in Plainfield but the uniquely success-centric population who call the village home.

For industrial businesses, Plainfield has a perfect mix of people power, affordability and – most importantly – accessibility. In recent years, the expanding business district, on its north side, has cradled the expansion and development of global industry leaders. Among the hundreds of companies that operate in the village are several NYSE listed firms including industrial manufacturing group Logoplaste, Chicago Bridge & Iron and even a major Diageo Smirnoff distilling facility. These companies, along with their suppliers and many other businesses, provide great employment opportunities with high wages to the residents of Plainfield.

Plainfield's location makes it an ideal place for companies that demand access to road and rail transport and quick connections to the wider Chicagoland area. Very few places can compete with the accessibility of the village, which boasts direct access to several major roadways including two US ►►






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- ▶ highways, US 30 and US 66 as well as Interstate 55 and two Illinois state highways.

Logoplaste is a global company and a case study in why Plainfield is a great place to do business. Within six years of operations, it expanded from using forty percent of its facility space to over one hundred percent, and today, it continues to grow. Jake Melrose, economic development specialist for the Village of Plainfield, explained: “They have grown by leaps and bounds; they set a good standard for the village and they are a really great example of business here in Plainfield.”

With a population of just over 42,000, Plainfield has been one of Chicagoland’s most successful rising suburbs over the last two decades. It has a longstanding legacy of attracting an ambitious and highly-trained workforce as a result of its central Chicagoland location. “There is such a strong working population here that is well-educated – the village is a great place to raise a family and it shows with its outstanding demographics,” said Mr. Melrose.

The median household income in Plainfield is over 111,000 USD, which is the highest median household income in the state for populations over 40,000. Manufacturers, as well as research and development organizations, are suited to the current infrastruc-

ture and knowledgeable citizenry. “We have an educated workforce, that served our existing employers well in terms of being able to implement some advanced production technologies and processes of that nature,” Jonathan Proulx affirmed.

On the outskirts of the Windy City, Plainfield has long been a popular spot for young families and professionals seeking the lifestyle benefits of suburban living, but in recent times, the area’s downtown has become an attraction in and of itself. As one of only fourteen communities in Illinois with a nationally recognized historic downtown district, the village’s downtown area has always drawn people. However, in recent years, over \$2 million worth of infrastructure development and overall improvements in the area have transformed the potential of the space. Today Plainfield’s downtown is lively, beautiful and modern, boasting new businesses as well as a range of recreational opportunities including dining and shopping. “We have an up-and-coming downtown. I think that is one of the things that attracts a lot of people to come here,” said Mr. Proulx.

Plainfield has taken an ambitious and proactive approach towards improving the downtown infrastructure. The village has lead several business-centric initiatives to breathe new life and a wealth of excitement to the downtown area. The

efforts include a downtown facade improvement program that provides assistance to businesses looking to set up shop downtown; other projects include streetscaping and the further development of existing infrastructure around the area.

A major success of this is the creation of new retail opportunities in the heart of downtown on a large plot of land that once was a trolley storage structure. As investment continues and an increasing number of people from across the Chicagoland seek out Plainfield's downtown, the village promises even more retail and dining offerings lie ahead.

Doing business in Plainfield has its distinct advantages, but business can only bring people in; ultimately, it is the lifestyle presented by an area that will keep them. While business success is an undeniable achievement of the village, it is the character and charm of Plainfield that makes it a standout Chicago suburb. Today, many residents commute into Chicago for work but have chosen to make Plainfield home. Despite the extensive development that the last two decades have brought to Plainfield, the area has held onto its small town spirit.

In addition to a close-knit community, the area has an excellent real estate market, a good cost of living, great school districts, Pace bus commuter transit, and a new 100,000 square foot Edward Hospital outpatient center and 24/7 emergency room. Pair that with a safe, clean, and conveniently located downtown, and it is evident why so many young professionals and families continue to relocate to Plainfield.

"Plainfield is known for its affordability – the value and quality of housing that you can get here. In Plainfield, you get a lot of bang for your buck; we have strong school districts here, and it's a really nice place to live," noted Mr. Proulx.

Residents here get the best of both worlds, and when it comes to recreation, the attractions extend far beyond shopping and dining. "We have great recreation opportunities that bring people in and distinguish us from other areas," said Mr. Proulx. The Village and its park district continue to invest in its recreational opportunities, creating new pedestrian bridges over the Dupage River and striving to make the trail network as connected and cohesive as possible.

Whether you are a cyclist, a walker, a hiker, or a bird watcher, chances are Plainfield has something to entice you. The area is home to the famous, Lake Renwick Nature Preserve which is acclaimed for bird watching, walking and other wildlife viewing experiences. Mr. Proulx described this mix best. "We have all the amenities of a metropolitan city but also a small town feel.

Everything is close by. You know your neighbors, and you still have sports, culture, and entertainment at your doorstep."

Plainfield has come a long way from its historical roots, but its success story is only just beginning. The projected population is forecasted to reach over 80,000 by 2040, and with several industrial projects in the pipeline and an on-going vision to expand and improve the downtown area, one thing is certain: Plainfield will continue building on its base of success. Mr. Melrose concluded, "One of the great things about the village is that there's still a lot to come, and that's what the exciting part about doing business here is." ■

