Manufactural Geography of Harvey, Illinois

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Prefatory Profile

This is the eighth study in manufactural geography of Calumet communities of Northwest Indiana-Northeast Illinois, all the preceding ones having been published in the Indiana Academy Proceedings.[1]

Harvey (32,000) is about a score miles from the Chicago Loop, named after T. W. Harvey, an enterprising lumber merchant of Chicago, who in 1890 established the Harvey Land Association, which donated purchased land to the community. Another major incentive for industrial development was the crossing here of three major rail lines, the Illinois Central providing the first transportation in the area and "free transportation for a year to and from Chicago for those who actually settled in Harvey." This railway became the chief locus of modern industry, three-fourths of the major plants being situated along its route. Other prime locative factors, as determined from questionnaire-interview survey, rank in this order: land and/or building availability, market, labor, proximity to regional steel industries. Supplemental considerations include secure plant footings (limestone), adequate city zoning, city tax inducement.

Sixteen industries of over the 100 category employment contacted engage a total of 8,500 employees, who travel to work primarily in automobiles. The newly constructed Tri-State Tollway and projected South Expressway skirting the city on the south and west are expected further to increase the trucking service, an unusually large number of the local plants having already switched from rail to truck for their major transportation requirements.

Fabricating metals, machinery plants and machine shops constitute the chief manufactures, reflective of the raw steel sources as the head of Lake Michigan only 10-20 miles away. Hemmed in virtually by other corporate communities, peripheral industrial expansion is highly restricted (Fig. 1).

The future calls for a more compelling discriminating geographic perspective in appraising industrial site quality than ever before. The

[1] Those of Greater Blue Island (including Posen, Dixmoor—between Blue Island and Harvey and Alsip—Chicago Heights, Hammond, East Chicago-Whiting, Gary, Michigan City, and LaPorte. As in these instances, the Harvey study is based on questionnaire-interview-field contacts. Industries as treated in this paper—and in the others mentioned—refer only to those of the manufacturing type (not so-called "service" industries). Their generalized classification and distribution pattern are shown in Figure 1. A great miscellany of moldings, forgings, castings, metal work, and machinery products are involved (e.g., railroad, auto, and foundry equipment, internal combustion engines, metal furniture and cabinets, industrial machinery, diversified alloy products, including alloy steel store fronts and doors, automatic gears, etc.).

Gratefully acknowledged in this survey is the cordial and constructive cooperation of Harvey's industrial respondents; of the Executive Director of the Harvey Association of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Ray Nussmeyer; of the City Planning Director, Mr. Frank So; and of the First National Bank of Harvey.

Harvey Association of Commerce and Industry and the City Plan Commission will have to redouble their efforts to "tailor" both internal land availability and external land accessibility to meet the needs of such industries as can be locally accommodated, or refer newcomers to neighboring communities whose geographic situation can be economically integrated into Harvey's own industrial and commercial core.

Geographic Retrospect

Relict strategic site qualities of Harvey date back to Pottawatomie and Pioneer circulation and settlement. As our earlier departmental researches show, the site was wedged in by a primary and a secondary Indian trail-wagon road linking Vincennes with Chicago. The early commercial prominence of this trail-road is reflected in its designation as Hubbard's Trace (see Fig. 1), named after Gurdon E. Hubbard, a famous American Fur Company trader who came into the Chicago area by this route in 1818. An arterial east-west trail crossed the Vincennes trail only two miles to the north, at the southern tip of Glacial "Blue Island." Here also the Little Calumet River on the northeast reverses its course eastward to join the Grand Calumet Lake Michigan bound, while joining westward with the Sag-a-nash-kee Swamp, now essentially the route of the Sag Channel leading to the Illinois River drainage system. Strategically inherent as these water courses may be, their ultimate significance to Harvey and vicinity must await major projections of further Calumet-Sag waterway developments. As in the case of other Calumet communities, it has been railway, then the modern highway that effected the transportation base for manufacturing.

The Illinois Central Railroad provided the initial transportation and incentive for Harvey settlement. A 1700 acre land grant was divided into blocks with large lots priced at $100, "with free transportation to and from Chicago for a year to those who actually become settlers." Next came the Grand Trunk, followed by a third railroad in 1889, part of the present day Baltimore and Ohio Chicago Terminal Railroad system. In the same year, a Chicago lumber merchant, Turlington W. Harvey, purchased substantial amounts of property in the area and formed the Harvey Land Association, to which he gave, in 1890, the land which he had purchased. The village of Harvey officially came into being in 1891.

Under the leadership of Turlington Harvey, the village of Harvey became "The Magic City," growing to a population of 5000 in a three-year period, and adding water and sewer lines, streets and sidewalks, schools and churches, and six industries. These industries were already geared to the southern Lake Michigan steel areas. They manufactured heavy equipment for industries; cold rolled shafting; railroad supplies; and road-grading machinery.

Electric lights and a street car line were added to the village by 1893, when the World's Fair (Columbian Exposition) was held in Hyde Park near the Illinois Central Railroad. The Harvey Land Association used the proximity of this gathering of people to promote Harvey as a prime spot for industrial development. One of those attracted by Harvey was J. H. Whiting, who founded the Whiting Corporation, now Harvey's third largest industry, in 1894. The firm manufactured cupola furnaces

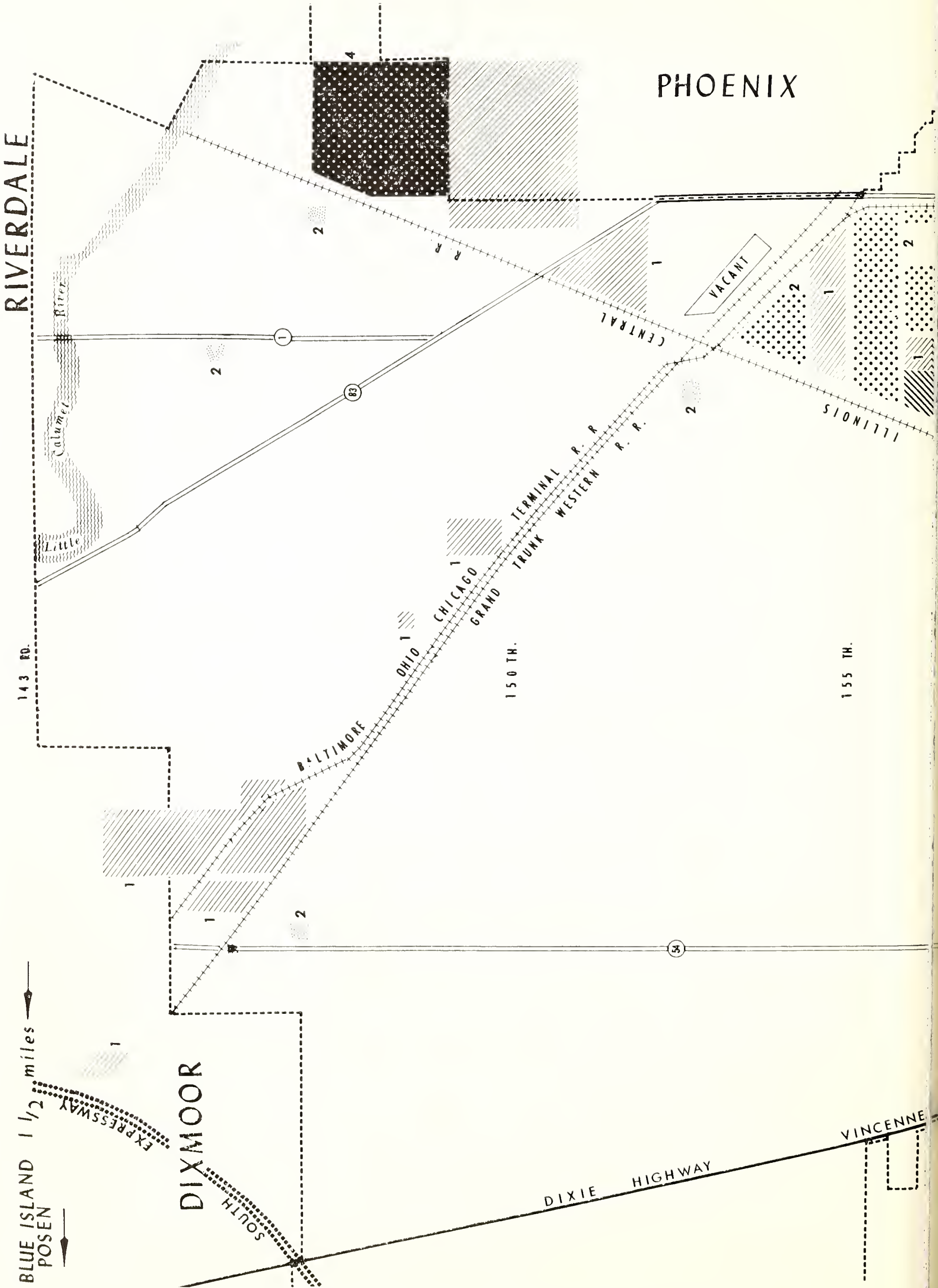
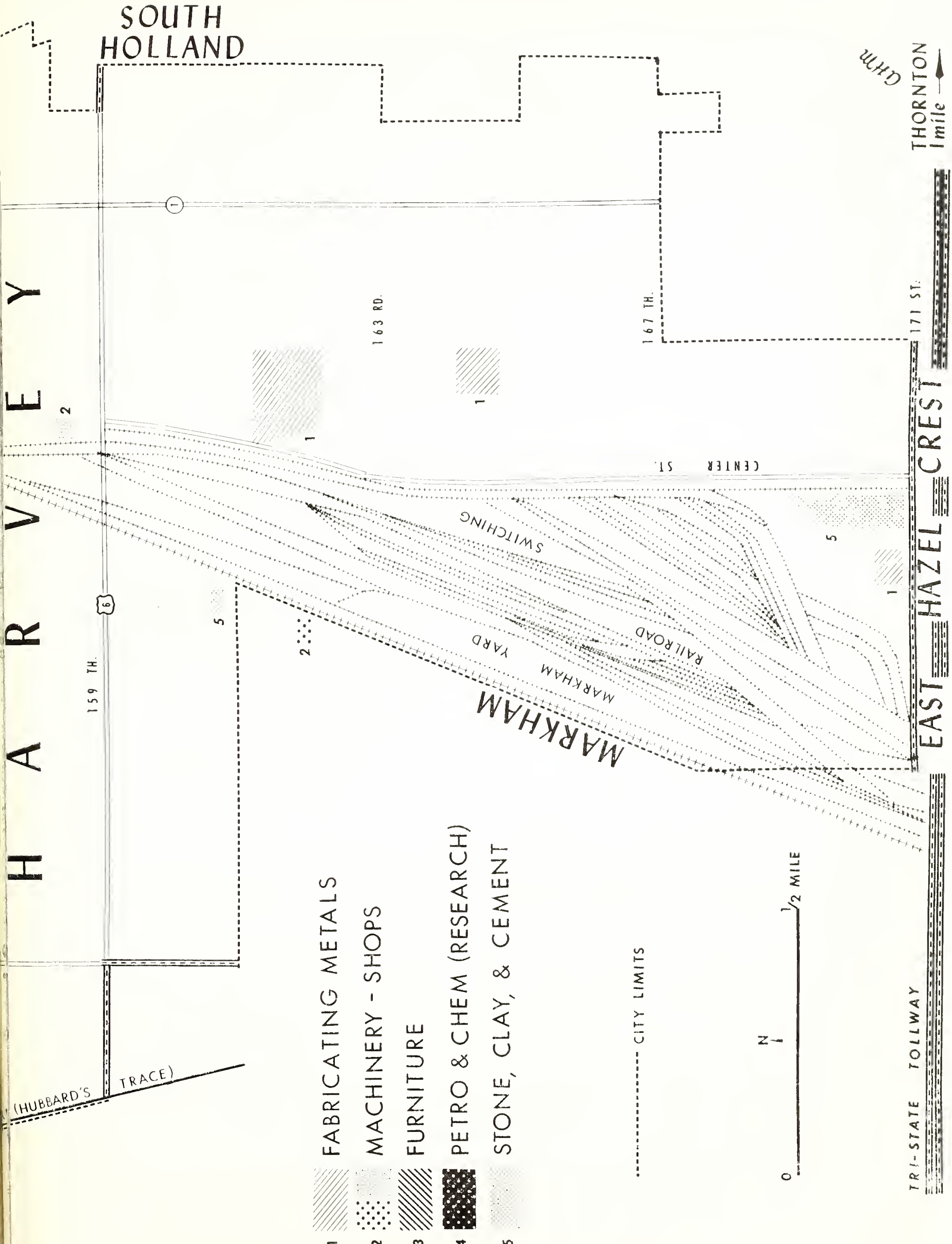


Figure 1. Basic classification and distribution pattern of Harvey manufacturing reflects close geographic coherence to the original railway system.


SOUTH HOLLAND
HARVEY
MARKHAM
EAST HAZEL CREST
THORNTON 1 mile
159 TH.
163 RD.
167 TH.
171 ST.
CENTER ST.
MARKHAM SWITCHING RAILROAD YARD
(HUBBARD'S TRACE)
TRI-STATE TOLLWAY
1 FABRICATING METALS
2 MACHINERY - SHOPS
3 FURNITURE
4 PETRO & CHEM (RESEARCH)
5 STONE, CLAY, & CEMENT
CITY LIMITS
N
0
1/2 MILE
GHM

in the beginning, and expanded production to include other types of industrial equipment. Eighty per cent of the gray iron melted in the United States today is melted in Whiting cupolas.

A brief abstract of established and disestablished industrial plants of Harvey, as reported in greater detail in "The City of Harvey" by the First National Bank, will serve as a representative profile of how Calumet industrial geography is affected by time and circumstance. The Bellaire Stamping Works burned in 1900 and was relocated in Terre Haute, Indiana. The Ingall-Shepard Division of the Wyman-Gordon Company was built on its site between lines of the B&O and Grand Trunk Railroads (Fig. 1) in 1910, manufacturing forgings and crankshafts. The Woods-Mobilette automobile firm had a peak production of 1000 cars a month in 1914. The Austin Manufacturing Company merged with an Aurora company in 1939 and moved out of Harvey. The William E. Dee Company ceased its foundry operations and is today restricted to the sale of sewer tile and kindred products. The American Stove Company, moved to Harvey in 1897 and was a large and successful firm, employing over 600 workers at its plant on Commercial Avenue near 157th Street and making many innovations in the cooking stove industry. The firm moved to St. Louis in 1948. The Fahralloy Company expanded and moved to Harvey in 1937, taking the site of the old Koch Machine Shop. Maremont Automotive Company came to Harvey in 1939 and has expanded considerably, now employing over 800 people.

Locative Factors

A major concern in a geographic study of this type is "relative" location—location relative to the chief anchor items of man's establishments. The senior author, throughout the eight industrial Calumet studies now completed, has found no more reliable basis for plant location "determinants" than the statements made by the industrialists themselves. Questionnaires and interviews thus provided detailed information on sixteen major industries in Harvey. Most industrialists listed several factors as reasons for locating in Harvey, predominantly in the approximate order given:

1. Transportation—Half of the industries considered this to be of major importance. Five of them mentioned railroads as the prime transportational attractor: good transportation; served by three different railroads; accessibility to the Illinois Central; three railroads adjacent to company property.

2. Land and/or Building Available—Nearly half emphasized space: building available and could move in immediately; land was available; only building available; space was needed and the building was there.

3. Market—Six firms reported Chicago and Midwestern market as a consideration: new market in the middle Midwest; close to market; Chicago principal market.

4. Labor—Over a third focused on labor: good labor supply; skilled labor nearby; abundant labor.

5. Proximity to steel industries—The availability of raw materials, especially steel, was mentioned by one-fourth of the manufacturers: close to the Gary Steel Mills; raw materials near; proximity to steel mills.

6. Miscellaneous considerations cited: ground under plant was limestone; near owner's home; family residences, city zoning; room for expansion; tax inducement from city.

But, as the study of Harvey and of other industrial Calumet communities reveals, spatial and other environmental factors involve varying values as related to advancing technology and time. A community may thus also lose a most enterprising establishment, as is illustrated in the case of the Perfection Gear Co. This company came to Harvey in 1933. It has no branch plants, and employs 450 people from Harvey and surrounding towns. It was noted that abundant labor supply, an earlier attractive feature for locating its plant in Harvey, is now tight; competition for it is great. Other factors: present plant now obsolete, haphazard series of additions, lack of adequate storage space. The management has decided to move to the South—Darlington, South Carolina—to avail itself of cheaper labor.

Regional removals may at times evoke local resentment at government "discriminatory" practices of aiding some regions in getting industries at the expense of other regions.

Transit Transition from Train to Truck

Harvey developed as an industrial center because of its railroads. Note in Figure 1 the alignment of the major plants along the railways, with particular attraction to the Illinois Central, and the junction of this railway with the other two—the Baltimore and Ohio and the Grand Trunk. Now, however, the use of the railroads by the industries has declined. Nearly a third of the industrialists contacted in this study indicated that they had switched from rail to truck transport in the last ten years. Almost half of the industries now use trucking as their exclusive means of transportation, both for receiving raw materials and for shipping the finished product.

Truck transportation has increased because the truck is more adaptable, no rail sidings are needed at either the origin or the destination; trucking is cheaper, especially for small shipments; and deliveries often faster; some customers request delivery by truck.

New road developments will probably help Harvey industry to improve its transportation patterns. The Tri-State Tollway on the southern periphery leads to major markets in the Midwest. Route 80 through Hazelcrest (Moline Expressway) is being developed. The proposed leg (South Expressway) of the Dan Ryan leading to Chicago skirts northwest Harvey. The regional expressway pattern and Harvey neighborhood interchanges are shown in Figure 2. The vacant land south of Harvey near Thornton was considered for the location of a large truck terminal, but it was decided that this would take too much land for the number of people it would employ.

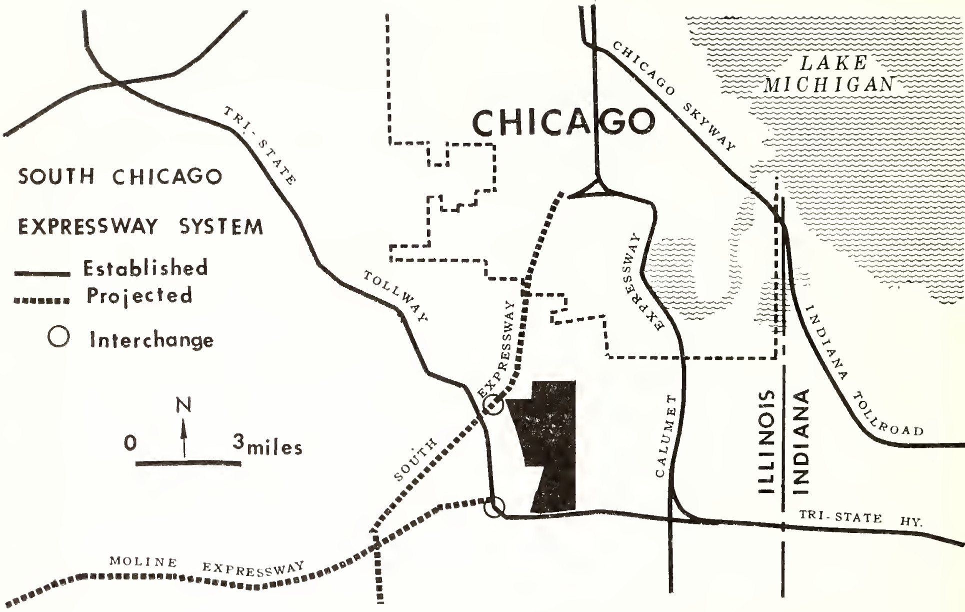


Figure 2. Existing and projected metropolitan expressway system related to Harvey's regional position in the South Chicago region presages an extension of truck transit to Midwestern and other more distant markets. (Adapted from map of State of Illinois Department of Public Works and Buildings.)

Proximity of Raw Materials, Labor, and Midwest Market of Major Regional Concern

The major raw material used by Harvey industry is steel, which comes from the Gary steel mills in nearly half of the cases surveyed. Other steel comes from the Chicago area mills, Indiana Harbor and East Chicago. One industry noted that there was a shipping cost ½¢ higher per pound for steel from Pittsburgh. Wood and packing materials are supplied by Chicago distributors. Limited raw materials from other parts of the United States include aluminum, chemicals, nickel, and brass. Canada, France, Belgium, and Sweden were listed by one firm for importation of products to be processed or assembled.

The sixteen industries interviewed employed 8,386 people, mostly from Harvey and the surrounding communities, embracing the entire south Cook County area.

Employees travel to work predominantly in automobiles; some use the Suburban Safeway Bus Line; a few use the Illinois Central Railroad commuter service; and several walk from their homes nearby. There is no housing problem for workers, since both Harvey and the surrounding residential communities have plenty of homes available.

All industries employing over a hundred people were contacted in this study. Five of them each employ over 500 people.

All Harvey firms contacted in this study had markets in the Midwest. Nine of the sixteen firms had completely Midwestern markets. One mentioned that with the increase of population, his firm had shifted from a market in the East and Midwest to a solely Midwestern market. Significant contributory factors include the sizeable population in the Midwest, the location of competitive manufacturers in other parts of the country, and the establishment of branch plants of Harvey industries in other areas.

Industry-Community Interrelations

Community attitudes favoring industry is strongly reflected in the activities of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This tailors situations for the various industries interested in locating in Harvey. Available land is classified by size and described by maps and documents from the office of the Executive Director.

Most of the industries considered the zoning and planning of Harvey to be adequate for their needs, although several mentioned that the residentially-zoned land near their sites preclude expansion. Price of land and taxes were also cited as a factor discouraging expansion of industry. Complaints about planning centered on truck transportation now used by the majority of the industries. The pavements could be improved and traffic lights installed to facilitate the trucking.

Utilities have been planned well since the establishment of Harvey and there were few complaints about the water, electricity, or sewerage supplied by the city. Several companies have their own electrical generators for emergency purposes, but the reliability of the Harvey public service company was described as good. The industrial uses of water are washing, cooling, steam, settling, and sanitary. All industries gave a favorable rating on quality of water and reliability of Harvey's water system.

Reciprocally, the industries generally make substantial contributions to community welfare, such as sponsoring local fund drives, supporting hospital and Y.M.C.A. programs, and providing films and speakers to local groups.

Assessing Harvey's Future Manufactural Viability

The West Calumet region, of which Harvey is a vital part, once experienced an industrial boost from migrants from the East. It is now faced with the prospect of losing manufactural units to the South and even to the West, for much the same geographic circmstances that once created the shift from the East to the Midwest—more and cheaper space, more and cheaper labor, closer raw materials and more distant expanding markets, augmented motor transport facilities.

And just as Chicago industries once explored for expansible sites in suburbia, like Blue Island and Harvey, now these communities in turn experience space saturation problems, with severe industrial site restrictions. Peripheral population pressure is reflected in the half-dozen corporate communities that almost fence in the city of Harvey (Fig. 1). And urban annexations elsewhere of county land become increasingly more complicated. Witness, for example, the four-score-sided polygon of Harvey.

Comparing the manufacturing pattern of the Zoning Map (Fig. 3) with the actual manufactural occupance pattern (Fig. 1) raises some questions also significantly related to appraisal of the future industrial potential of Harvey. Each map in a sense connotes a different picture. Figure 1 suggests by its rail-aligned plant sites severely restricted premises for plant occupance. Figure 2, on the other hand, indicates dispersed and expansive planned plant sites not now occupied by manufacturing. A check with the Director of Planning and with the Executive Director of the Association of Commerce and Industry resolves not only the apparent geographic discrepancy, but also illuminates vagaries between potential and actual development a community may expect to encounter and which geographic mapping exposes but does not in itself resolve. Mr. Nussmeyer, for example, reports an annexation problem: Several owners of property near the B&O "will not annex to the City of Harvey unless the whole parcel is sold." References to three sizeable tracts zoned for general manufacturing will illustrate other problems involved in realizing the full geographic manufacturing potential of an area.

1. The segment bounded by the I.C. R.R., the B&O R.R. 152 Street, and the City Limits: Occupying this area are

> "a small building that has been used for a grocer's warehouse, but which will soon be getting a new tenant; a building used to house part of the operations of a scrap dealer; some large abandoned grain silos that sit on land that has not exchanged hands for forty years, and for which the title is somewhat cloudy since the present owner cannot be located; and, finally, a building just to the east of the I.C. tracks that has recently been remodeled by an industrial developer, but still lacking a tenant. When the various buildings that I have mentioned are subtracted from the tract in question, we are left with a piece of land that might house one industry that employs a couple hundred workers at the most if parking, storage, and expansion room are also taken into account. I wish I could give you the asking price of the remaining portion but I do not know it. However, it is generally known that it is quite expensive when potential buyers compare it to farm land on the outskirts of the metropolitan area. It should be remembered that this portion of the City was a part of Harvey since incorporation seventy-five years ago."

2. Another parcel zoned for general manufacturing is mostly occupied by railroad switch tracks (the Markham Yard, between I.C. R.R. and Center Street, Fig. 1). This is largely owned by the I.C. Railroad, and in part by investment company or residents who at this time do not wish to sell. This area would almost double manufactural acreage, besides providing sites of high quality, were it made available for industry, but no information is at hand at the moment as to any contemplated change of this land use.

3. A third section, between 167th and 171st, and east of Center Street to the City Limits is vacant at present except for a warehouse. This section together with some others command a high price as compared with agricultural land values, and thus serves as a deterrent to immediate occupance. City officials concerned with this differential land cost problem are disconcerted by the fact, then, that Harvey in competition with other communities for new industries can offer only land that is priced substantially higher than that farther out. Right now, two local major industries contemplate removal as a result of price of local sites being substantially higher than other land being investigated elsewhere, despite the availability of land of sufficient size within the present city limits and just outside to the southeast, and despite the official pleadings to hold these industries. One is headed for North Carolina with its substantially different "economic climate," and the other moving to Matteson, only eight miles south of Harvey, which meets their site requirements for expansion.

The relation of initial higher costs of land within Harvey as compared with those of outlying tracts of land must be viewed in the overall perspective of geographic quality of manufacturing sites. As Mr. So, the Planning Director observes, that while "speculation" is reflected in part in the price boost, the higher price also does reflect that Harvey's industrial sites already are served or can be served very quickly by a whole host of municipal services. Illusory experiences may be in store for plants locating in new areas whose initial price level does not reflect the ultimate cost of "improved" facilities. As Mr. So points out: "Eventually someone has to pay for the sewers, water, police and fire protection, schools, and other services. Some industries are already finding this out in the Chicago Metropolitan area. I think that we shall experience additional industrial development when industries are capable of paying higher prices and those that are perhaps more aware of the eventual costs look into the relative advantages of locating in Harvey."

Observations and operations of Harvey's Association of Commerce and Industry noteworthily supply further insights on future projections as related to the present and past experiences.

Dialogue between Interviewer and Interviewee

(Mr. Ray Nussmeyer, Executive Director of Harvey Association of Commerce and Industry)

Q. Are you in a key position to make evaluation of industries in the area?

A. We have an industrial development committee which not only seeks out new industries, but also tries to keep our finger on the pulse of the industries of the area, and their economic needs.

Q. We have mapped Harvey plants and found space pretty much staturated with industry. Is this correct?

A. Well, it was true of Harvey. Last year we were able to locate two light industries in what was county property, since annexed to the City. . . . These 160-180 acres we can now use, primarily for light industry, because in no case do we have one large tract. . . . Basically 20 acres are left in the city limits.

Q. At what point do you decide to incorporate areas on which there are industrial sites, rather than leave them outside of the city limits?

A. I'm afraid that this is not our choice. In fact, the property owners would find it more expensive to be annexed to a city than to be in the county unless the property is actually sold for industrial purposes . . . . normally won't bring it in and have it put on the tax rolls just for speculation. In 1959, there was a comprehensive plan suggested for setting aside of industrial land that was never adopted, but it was county land and the property holders have not chosen to come into the city.

Q. Are there cases where industries prefer to stay outside the city?

A. We have not found it so because of water, fire protection, etc., supplied by the city. We have a fire rate of five, which is fairly good . . . . in county it would probably be eight or nine, so it would pay for the taxes.

Q. When the geographer makes an industrial study, he generally thinks in terms of including peripheral community sites. Where would you place the limits of the so-called Harvey industrial area?

A. We don't delimit much beyond the city limits, primarily because we have communities on all four sides.

Q. Is there anything in Riverdale to the northeast, Phoenix to the east, East Hazelcrest to the south, and Posen to the northwest, that would be included in your thinking about future industrial planning for your Harvey area?

A. We would first show an industrial prospect an area in Harvey, and if none were suited, take them as far as Lansing, the thought being that money spent within that radius is an economic value to Harvey also. . . . When we're talking to an industrial prospect, who probably would prefer to live in a $45-50,000 home, for executives, our tour of the area would include Homewood and Flossmoor and Olympia Fields. . . . It would also include the golf courses in that area . . . the airport towards Hammond, usable for privately-owned aircraft.

Q. Does your Chamber provide literature explanatory of these various things?

A. Not necessarily, because we're in a rather fortunate geographical location. . . . Our major job is a "tailoring" situation. We get enough people in the office who say, "We would like twenty acres, we have twenty executives, we need forty unskilled laborers," and then we tailor a program to them.

Q. And you still find adequate facilities generally within the present corporate limits to do this?

A. As stated, last year we were fortunate in getting two light industries, and considering that the normal average is to get one out of 150 prospects, we didn't have to go near that high to get the two.

Q. In other words, your prospects are good. What would you say are your limitations to get prospects to settle here?

A. Land only. . . . Some acreage, but not big scale.

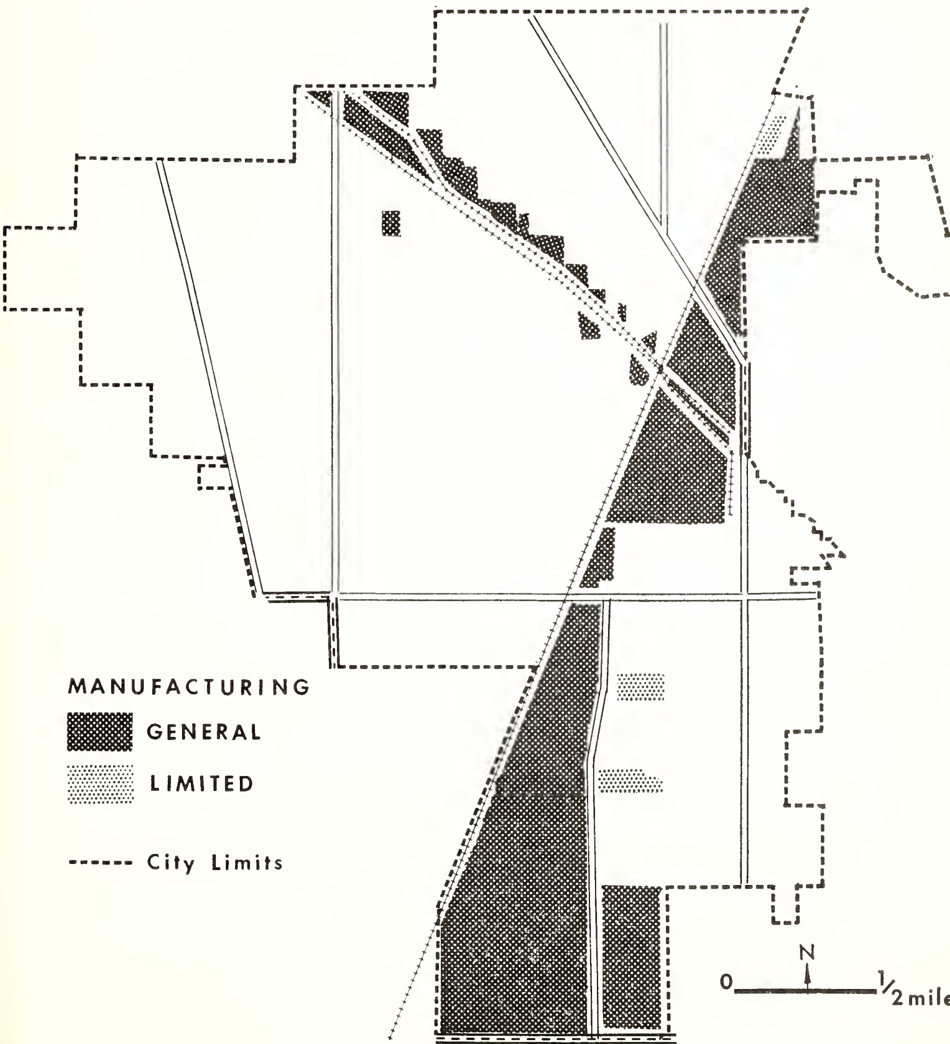


Figure 3. Zoning of manufactural districts of Harvey correlates closely with the major transportation pattern. Sites for limited manufacturing (on small acreages) may be expected to increase, but adjoining urban areas locally restrict corporate extensions for large industries, as shown in Figure 1. (Adapted from Harvey's City Zoning Map.)

The above dialogue, then, together with preceding cartographic and textual portrayal of Harvey's industrial pattern and processes of development, predicates primarily limited expansion potential of limited manufacturing within the present city limits. There are now only three such sites (see Fig. 3). The Greater Harvey area involves some developable sites such as to the southeast where Thornton now has only the major rock quarry. The newly established and projected expressway system in the area (Fig. 2) presages industrial promotional possibilities.

The ultimate appropriation values of these several site and circulation dimensions to the future of Harvey and vicinity must await the new planning program of the city. Harvey has recently added a Department of Planning and Development to the previously existing City Plan Commission, headed by a director and chairman respectively. The Director is a professionally trained planner, employed full-time, who has access to the latest media of industrial site checkups (e.g., large scale Sanborn atlas, and commercial air photos). A comprehensive and coordinated plan for the development of the city has been designed and federal appropriation (701) sought for implementation of the program, estimated at an approximate cost of $103,000. The plan involves consideration of the future growth pattern of Harvey in terms of density and pattern of land use, including, of course, those concerned with industrial development.