

## **SUMMARY OF COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION**

### **DOWNERS GROVE, ILLINOIS**

**SEPTEMBER 7, 2010**

Village Manager Dave Fieldman welcomed those present to the Strategic Planning session at 8:50 p.m. in the Committee Room. He explained that the purpose of this session is to describe the Mission and Vision Statements.

**Present:** Mayor Ron Sandack; Commissioners Marilyn Schnell, William Waldack, Sean P. Durkin, Bruce E. Beckman, Bob Barnett

**Absent:** Commissioner Geoff Neustadt

**Staff:** Village Manager Dave Fieldman; Deputy Village Manager Mike Baker; Village Attorney Enza Petrarca; Village Clerk April Holden

**Consultants:** Larry Maholland, Sikich, LLP

Mr. Maholland described the basis for the mission and vision statements. The mission statement major themes are sense of community, pride in place and ensuring order. He presented the following mission statement: "In Downers Grove, we preserve, enhance and create a sense of pride in place." Alternative mission statements are: 1) To preserve, enhance and create a sense of pride in Downers Grove; 2) To show pride in Downers Grove; 3) Pride in Downers Grove.

Council members discussed the mission statements prepared by Mr. Maholland. Several Commissioners said the statements did not resonate with them. There was discussion with respect to the meaning of "pride in place." Council members expressed concern that the statement does not say what we do or what we are about, and that people will not learn about Downers Grove from this mission statement.

Mr. Maholland discussed some of the sub-themes of the mission statement including heritage, traditional downtown and neighborhoods, transparency, engagement and partnerships, and results. Commissioner Schnell commented that the mission of the Village is to serve residents – to serve the community and make it a better place to live. Commissioner Barnett said he believes the statement needs to be instantly understood by a new resident. Commissioner Durkin referenced Tom LeCren's statement: "Have people want to make Downers Grove home." Mr. Maholland said mission statements are used by Councils to make decisions. Commissioner Schnell said it needs to be simple and understandable. The Mayor said a mission statement is not a slogan. Commissioner Beckman said it should be simple in design so that it is immediately understood. Commissioner Waldack asked if the mission statement is for the community or for the municipal corporation. Commissioner Barnett asked if the mission statement is a tag line or a statement to be reflected upon for decision making.

Mark Thoman commented that his new neighbors said they were looking for a better place to raise a family.

The Mayor suggested that the purpose of the statement is as a guiding principle that can be used by everyone in the organization as to what we do as a municipal organization. Commissioner Waldack questioned the word “results” in the sub-themes.

Mr. Maholland then presented the vision statement: “In 2018, the Village of Downers Grove continues to be a destination for people of all ages and diverse businesses that seek culture, tradition, and beauty in a community. Our willingness to collaborate and financial planning drive a resilient economy, built on vibrant commercial corridors and an accessible transportation network. This vision will only be realized by our commitment to evaluating our services and progress toward the goals of fiscal stewardship and health; exceptional municipal services; quality infrastructure and facilities; diverse and strong local economy; and continual innovation.”

Commissioner Beckman said he has a problem with the first sentence of the vision statement as he does not see it as a goal or vision of what we could be. A vision has to be looking forward.

Commissioner Beckman’s vision statement was read: “To become the best community in the Chicagoland area in which to live and from which to do business. To become the paradigm of the most well managed and forward thinking Village in the United State.”

Mayor Sandack’s vision statement was read: “In 2018, the Village of Downers Grove will be a desired destination for all people and businesses seeking a connected, caring and vibrant community all are proud to call home.”

The Manager said he will work with Mr. Maholland to capture the ideas expressed tonight.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

April K. Holden  
Village Clerk