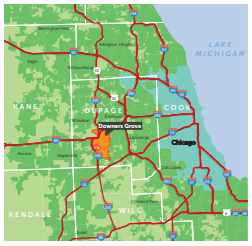
Village of Downers Grove

Comprehensive Plan



Adopted October 4, 2011
Updated 2015
Updated 2017

APA IL AWARD

Village of Downers Grove

Comprehensive Plan

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Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan for the Village of Downers Grove, Illinois, sets forth a long-range guide for the maintenance and enhancement of existing community areas, and for improvements, developments and redevelopments within the Village and its planning jurisdiction.

This update to the Comprehensive Plan ("The Plan") is the result of a planning process conducted with Village Staff and a committee of community representatives. This process and update evaluated the policies and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan from 2011 and recommends changes as needed based on progress made by the Village and external realities that now impact Downers Grove.

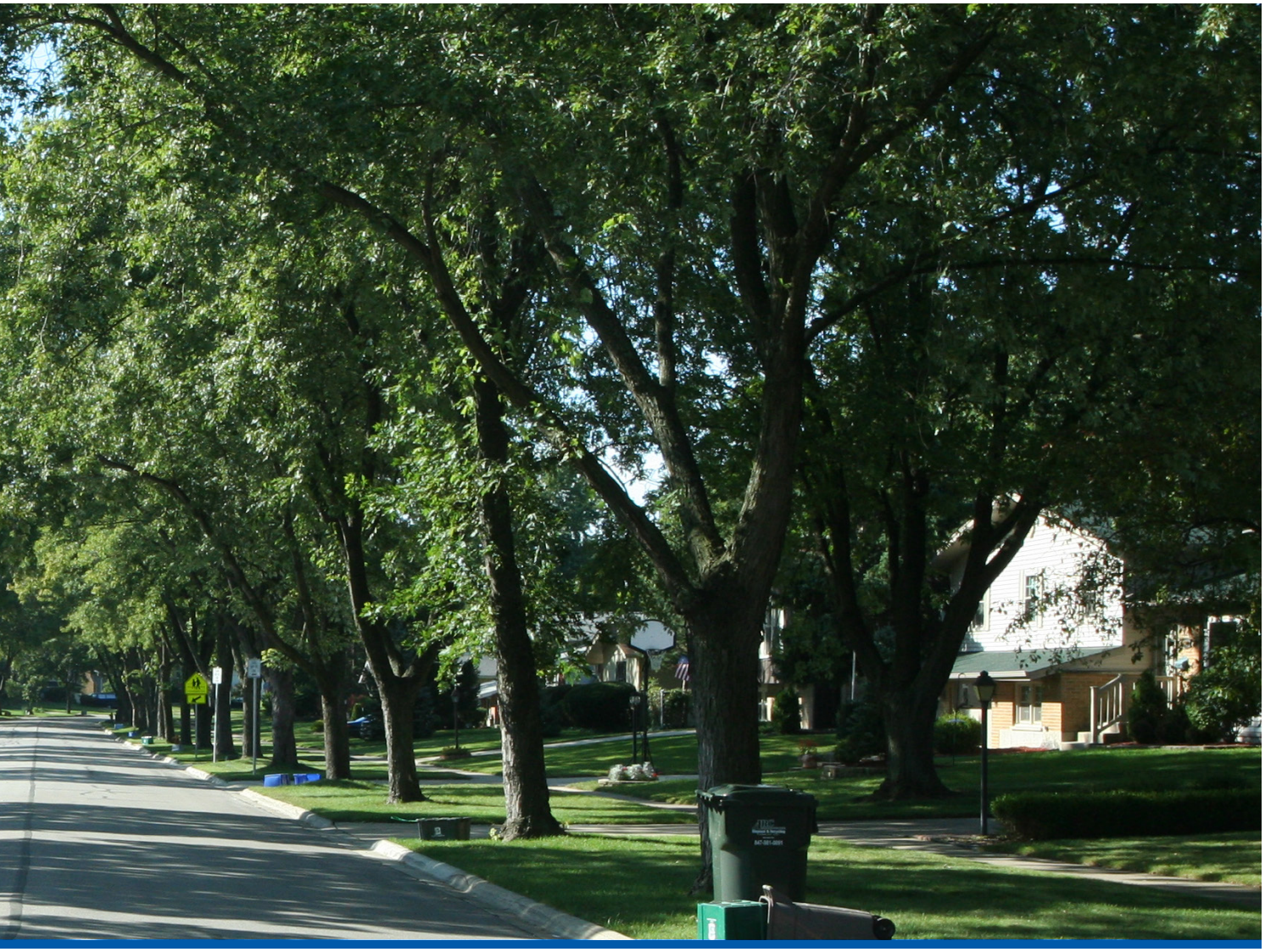
The Downers Grove Community

The Village of Downers Grove is a community of over 48,000 located approximately 22 miles southwest of Chicago. Downers Grove residents enjoy convenient proximity to a major metropolitan city while experiencing a hospitable, small town environment. Beyond its borders, the Village is well-located in the western suburbs with excellent access to recreational, employment and shopping opportunities. The Village is regarded as a desirable community within which to live for its high quality schools and residential neighborhoods.

Established in the early 1800s, Downers Grove has a rich past with established neighborhoods and a traditional downtown. The Village's location along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad has been a significant source of growth and prosperity, first for freight and now commuter service. Downers Grove has obtained regional importance in the modern era due to its proximity to I-88 and I-355 and its three Metra stations.

Metra service in the Village connecting to downtown Chicago is unrivaled by any of its neighbors. Downers Grove has emerged as a regional employment center and major shopping and dining destination.

A location map for the Village of Downers Grove is provided in the Regional Setting graphic on **page 4.**



Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

As the Village looks towards its future, the Comprehensive Plan will guide development decisions and help ensure quality of life remains high. The Comprehensive Plan accomplishes this by directing the use of land; the movement of vehicles and pedestrians; the protection of open spaces and environmental resources; the revitalization of the Village's key commercial areas; and the provision of parks, schools, and other public facilities.

It addresses residential neighborhoods, commercial and business development, public and institutional lands, and the public rights-of-way. The Comprehensive Plan promotes the Village of Downers Grove's unique assets and should be used to achieve the collective vision of the Village while attracting new families and development.

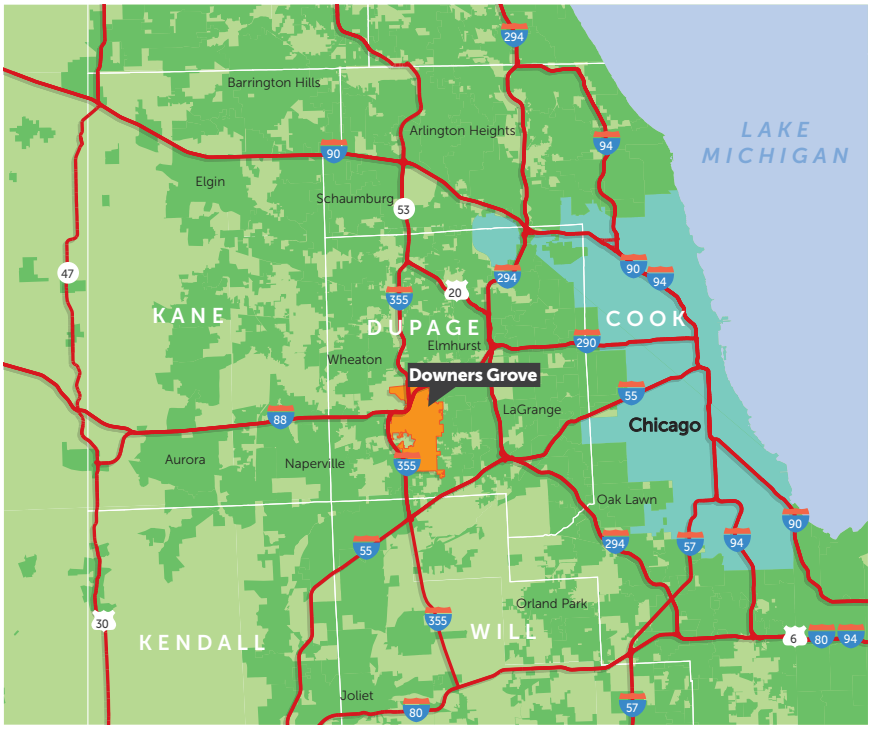
The Comprehensive Plan provides numerous recommendations that are designed to help the Village achieve its overall vision. These recommendations do not take into account fiscal or other constraints. The recommendations also do not account for future best practices or technological advancements. As such, the Village will need to re-evaluate the recommendations at regular intervals to keep the Plan current and in tune with the aspirations of the community and adapt it to changing conditions.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SETS FORTH LONG-RANGE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF EXISTING COMMUNITY AREAS, AND FOR DESIRABLE IMPROVEMENTS, DEVELOPMENTS AND REDEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE VILLAGE AND ITS PLANNING JURISDICTION

The Comprehensive Plan is the official, adopted guide for future development and conservation within the Village of Downers Grove. The Plan sets forth goals, policies and objectives based on community desires and a thorough analysis of existing conditions and trends. The Comprehensive Plan articulates our community's vision for the desired physical, social, and economic characteristics of the Village for the next 15 to 20 years.

Additionally, it outlines policies and guidelines recommended to implement that vision for the long-range future of the community. The Comprehensive Plan helps preserve and protect important existing features and resources, coordinate new growth and development, and establish a strong, positive community identity.

The Comprehensive Plan considers the Village's regional setting and adjacent areas and influences by examining all areas of the Village and the adjacent unincorporated areas that fall within the Village's planning jurisdiction based on existing boundary agreements with neighboring municipalities including Darien, Westmont, Oak Brook, Lombard, Glen Ellyn, Lisle and Woodridge.



State Planning Acts

Several Illinois statutes contain general descriptions of what a comprehensive plan is, and what it should contain. The Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS 5/11-12-5(1)) dictates that a city or village plan commission must prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan to serve as a tool for guiding future development or redevelopment within the municipality. These plans cover the entire incorporated area of the municipality and can extend to land up to one and a half miles beyond its corporate limits. Elected bodies (i.e. village and city councils) charge their appointed planning or zoning commission with the task of preparing a plan and once it is complete, they vote on its adoption as a guiding document for the municipality.

The Illinois Local Planning Technical Assistance Act (Public Act 92-0768, Sec. 5) provides additional guidance as to what elements a comprehensive plan should address, including land use, natural resources and the environment, transportation, economic development and housing/residential development. In addition to these essentials it is suggested that a comprehensive plan consider additional elements, adjusting to suit unique community issues, including: parks and open space, historic preservation, urban design, subareas/key focus areas, agriculture and forestry, and technology.

Foundation versus Obligation

It is important to understand that a comprehensive plan is a vision of what a community wants to become and a roadmap on how to get there. It is not a definitive course of action or a legally binding obligation of what must be done. Rather it is an aspirational document that describes in general terms what the community is to become and what steps and actions can help meet community goals.

Although comprehensive plans are required to be adopted by communities, their legal authority is limited. They are documents that guide future development of a community; they are not, themselves, development plans. A comprehensive plan serves as a foundation for decision making in a community and is not a mandate. The Plan is intended to inform regulatory tools (such as a zoning ordinance) and also a community's decisions, as leaders determine courses of action and the most appropriate forms of development and growth for a community.

The Planning Process

In March 2016, the Village of Downers Grove hired Houseal Lavigne Associates to conduct the update to the 2011 Comprehensive Plan, which involved working closely with the Comprehensive Planning Ad Hoc Committee in order to evaluate the 2011 plan and make recommendations on updates.

The planning process entailed a high degree of input from the Comprehensive Planning Ad Hoc Committee. Policies and recommendations from the 2011 Comprehensive Plan were assessed on their present-day applicability given improvements made by the Village and economic and demographic realities that may have changed. Best practices on innovative approaches to a number of challenges that face Downers Grove were factored in as well.

Comprehensive Planning Ad Hoc Committee

In order to guide and assist the Consultant with developing the Plan, the Comprehensive Planning Ad Hoc Committee was established. The Comprehensive Planning Ad Hoc Committee convened in March 2016 for the first monthly meeting of that year to develop the update to the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Planning Ad Hoc Committee was charged with three responsibilities:

- Hold regular, open public meetings to discuss and update components of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Oversee the addition of subarea plans for 63rd Street and 75th Street for the updated Comprehensive Plan.
- Offer draft amendments to the Downtown Zoning regulations.

Organization of the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is divided into the following 10 sections:

Plan Background

This section of the Plan provides an understanding of the public input process, existing plans and studies and the current demographic profile for the Village.

A Vision for the Future

This section describes, in general terms, the kind of community that Downers Grove desires to be in the future. It includes a vision statement for the community, which describes an "ideal" setting for the community in the year 2031.

Land Use Plan & Policies

The Land Use Plan establishes land use designations for all areas of the Village, presents recommendations for improving and enhancing existing land use areas, and promotes compatible new development and redevelopment in selected locations.

Residential Areas Plan & Policies

This section provides recommendations and policies specific to improving Downers Grove's residential areas.

Commercial Areas Plan & Policies

This section provides recommendations and policies specific to improving Downers Grove's commercial and industrial areas.

Transportation Plan & Policies

The Transportation Plan presents policies and recommendations related to access, traffic circulation, parking, pedestrian and bicycle movement, and public transportation.

Parks, Open Space and Environmental Features Plan & Policies

This section presents policies and recommendations for maintaining and enhancing the community's open space and environmental features, including parks, forest preserves, water features, wetlands, and any other environmental features of interest.

Community Facilities Plan & Policies

This section provides an inventory of community facilities and presents policies and recommendations for municipal facilities, public utilities, telecommunications facilities, schools, institutions, cultural facilities, and other community facilities and services.

Key Focus Area Plans

This section builds upon the generalized guidelines established in the Village-wide plans, providing more detailed and site specific improvement and development recommendations for the overall role and function of an area; land use and development; traffic, circulation and parking; and appearance and character.

Implementation

This section presents specific actions including recommendations regarding development controls, priority improvement projects and redevelopment sites, and potential funding sources for implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

Appendix: Goals & Objectives

This section presents goals and objectives that provide specific actions intended to move the community towards its desired vision.

1 Plan Background

The Village of Downers Grove's previous Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2011. Since that time, the Village has experienced changes to its infrastructure and in its economic condition following the Great Recession. The 2011 plan recommended it be updated five years later in order to reflect progress made by the Village and to incorporate recent trends that would impact the Village. Data from the 2010 Census was also used to show present-day and projected demographic trends to help update this plan. The 2017 Comprehensive Plan assists the Village in setting long-term goals, coordinating local decision-making, and providing guidance to property owners and developers.

The Village built off of public input used in the 2011 Comprehensive Plan with updated demographic data and analysis of existing conditions and local and regional trends. The Village worked collaboratively to establish a vision and a plan that carries on the tradition and character of the community while continually addressing new challenges.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS BASED ON A FOUNDATION OF PUBLIC INPUT

Past Plans and Studies

A thorough review of the Village's existing and past plans, studies, and reports was conducted to gain a better understanding of prior Village initiatives, assessments, and objectives. Understanding the purpose and results of these documents provides important insight into what has already been studied and recommended for the Village.

As conditions change over time, the relevance of some documents is lessened while some components of other documents continue to provide community direction and remain representative of community aspirations. As part of inventorying and understanding existing conditions, a review of these documents is essential. A summary of reviewed documents follows.

A Comprehensive Plan for Downers Grove, 1965

Comprised of 600 acres at the time of its original platting in 1872, Downers Grove grew to more than six times that size (4,000 acres) by the time the Village created its first Comprehensive Plan in 1965. The 1965 Comprehensive Plan identified the development issues facing the Village and took into consideration future growth. Given the time period, it is not surprising to read that the impetus for the plan was "urban outmigration" from the City of Chicago and its potential impacts on suburban municipalities.

Major issues identified included aesthetic concerns for Ogden Avenue and "blight" at the Village's borders. Overall goals of the plan were to preserve the low-density character of the Village and to preserve open space.

The 1965 plan estimated the 1963 population of the Village at 22,700 and projected a 1985 population of 56,000. It was estimated that this projected population would make up 80% of Downers Grove's maximum capacity. At the time of the 1965 plan, 51% of the Village land area was undeveloped. Of the developed area, approximately 73% was residential.

The Village's proximity to the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy (CB&Q) Railroad and several highways figured heavily in the plan and influenced the proposal of future land uses. Recommendations in the 1965 plan included the creation of a thoroughfare system, improving railroad crossings, and upgrades to the sewer systems.

Neighborhood Plans, 1977-1989

Neighborhood plans were adopted for 31 Village neighborhoods between 1977 and 1989 as appendices to the Village Comprehensive Plan. These neighborhood plans identified existing land uses, future land uses, and street classifications. Typically one to three pages in length, they generally include a neighborhood map and a brief narrative of recommendations including floodplain management and proposed street vacations.

Future Land Use Plan (Revised Narrative), 1995

The Future Land Use Plan divides land uses in the Village into nine designations. The revised narrative was approved by ordinance in 1995. The Future Land Use Plan confirmed the Village's boundary agreements with all neighboring jurisdictions which established a known limit to the Village's potential for outward growth. The narrative of the Future Land Use Plan delineated the neighborhood unit system of planning for the Village and identifies the Land Use Plan as a vital document with recommended updates every five years.

Downers Grove Central Business District Master Plan, 1997

The Central Business District Master Plan was the largest CBD planning effort in over twenty years. The 1997 plan focused on 10 opportunity zones with specific recommendations for capital improvements including streetscaping, landscaping, parking lot improvements, alley resurfacing, and pedestrian connections. Conceptual drawings and estimated costs were provided.

Ogden Avenue Commercial Corridor Master Plan, 1999

The Ogden Avenue Commercial Corridor Master Plan was undertaken by the Economic Development Commission and followed a 1997 Ogden Avenue shopper survey. The corridor stretches 3.7 miles and included 300 businesses at the time of the 1997 Master Plan. The corridor master plan includes five sub-areas, conceptual drawings and identified 24 potential development sites. Recommendations from the master plan include reducing the number of curb cuts, addressing outdated signage, improving parking efficiency, implementing a coordinated wayfinding system, and installing streetscape improvements.

Village Bikeway Plan, 2000

Following the passage of landmark federal transportation acts (ISTEA and TEA-21) which provided, for the first time, funding for public bicycle improvements, the Village embarked on a comprehensive bikeway plan from 1998 to 2000. Rooted in recommendations from TCD II in 1994, this quality of life plan set out to improve transportation mode choice and encourage healthy living. Bicycle planning in the Village dates back to the 1970s when civic organizations such as the Jaycees and the Lions Club initiated efforts to increase the provision of bicycle paths. The result was the creation of several "tour loops" throughout the Village.

The Bikeway Plan sought to enhance these efforts by: examining existing conditions, developing a bicycle network philosophy, encouraging broad public participation, and outlining implementation strategies. The goals were to connect major destinations throughout the Village and to provide a network that was accessible to all levels of riders. Special attention was paid to connecting to existing and adjacent bicycle path networks. Additionally, the plan addressed wayfinding signage and bicycle parking. At the time of the Bikeway Plan, Metra did not allow bicycles on trains (a policy that has now been reversed).

Recommendations for a Comprehensive Plan, 2003

As a precursor to the Comprehensive Plan update, a summary was created of the joint discussions of the Village Plan Commission and the Economic Development Commission regarding 14 focus areas for future development. The discussions specifically focused on land use planning for commercial areas. The Recommendations for a Comprehensive Plan used the principles of Smart Growth as its framework including recommendations for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Two notable differences from the topics covered in the 1965 Comprehensive Plan were the addition of "Telecommunications Infrastructure" and "Public Participation".

Total Community Development

Downers Grove has a unique and long-standing commitment to public participation through its Total Community Development (TCD) process. TCD was first undertaken in the 1960s, a second round in the 1990s, and a third conducted in 2009. TCD is a process that is used to identify and examine all aspects of community life by engaging residents, business owners, and elected/appointed officials in a variety of settings and formats. What results is the identification of community issues, concerns, and corresponding recommendations that guide long-range planning in the Village.

Downtown Parking Study, 2011

The 2011 Downtown Parking Study provides a comprehensive review of current and future parking needs in downtown Downers Grove. Recommendations that came out of this study intend to make efficient use of the existing parking and to improve the parking experience for downtown customers and visitors. At the same time, the recommendations seek to discourage the use of customer/visitor spaces by downtown employees by seeking to ensure that appropriate off-street parking options are provided at reasonable costs. The study found the use of public parking by patrons of multiple businesses through sharing arrangements to be the most efficient practice.

Facility Sustainability Plan, 2012

Seeking long-term solutions consistent with the comprehensive plan and minimizing the impact to the taxpayer.

A 2012 Facility Condition Assessment identified the Police Station and Village Hall as "below average condition / requiring major renovation". Both buildings are in need of major system replacement in the coming years and have operational deficiencies. The Village Council has identified existing local sources of funding to support the improvements and is in the process of evaluating options for the best long-term solution, with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan in mind.

Downers Grove Architectural & Historical Survey, 2012

In 2012, the Village surveyed four areas identified as having historical or architectural significance: Denburn Woods, Shady Lane Estates, E.H. Prince Subdivision and Maple Avenue/Main Street corridor. The survey details the architectural and historic context of Downers Grove and helps homeowners understand the historical significance of their property. The Survey also provides recommendations for property owners who wish to voluntarily landmark their property.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan, 2013

In 2013, the Village was awarded a Community Planning Program grant by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) to update the previous bicycle plan from 2000. The purpose of this update was to ensure the Village would be using best practices to plan and manage its transportation system, specifically for non-motorized trips. The major elements of the plan update included creating goals and identifying key findings and developing achievable recommendations. The Plan's goals include:

- Improving mobility and safety for bicyclists & pedestrians
- Improving the pedestrian experience in Downtown
- Encouraging reduction in car trips by using non-motorized means of transportation
- Improving connections to regional bike routes
- Completing the sidewalk network
- Being recognized as a "Bicycle-Friendly Community"

Stormwater System Plans, 2014

In 2006, a Stormwater Master Plan was completed which provided recommendations for how the stormwater system should be managed to ensure compliance with the federal and county regulations.

In 2007, a Watershed Infrastructure Improvement Plan (WIIP) was completed which provided recommendations on capital improvements that should be made to the stormwater system. To address some of the recommended capital needs, the Village issued $25 million in debt in 2008. The full value of the bond has now been used to fund a variety of stormwater improvement projects.

The 2014 Stormwater Project Analysis included a new approach for prioritizing stormwater capital improvement projects that is consistent with the Village's fee-based stormwater utility. The goal of this new approach is to establish a minimum service level standard for stormwater management such that the stormwater system will safely convey and store 95% of all rainfall events.

55th Street Improvement Study, 2015

The DuPage County Division of Transportation is in the process of designing plans for improvements to the 55th Street corridor. The scope of the project includes intersection improvements at 55th Street and Main Street and 55th Street at Fairview Avenue, resurfacing 55th Street from Dunham Road to Williams Street, and signal interconnection from Dunham Road to Clarendon Hills Road. The purpose of these improvements is to improve the flow of traffic on this County arterial roadway, improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, and reduce the use of neighborhood streets for regional transportation.

Water System Improvement, Project Plan 2015

The Village completed a plan which identified all the major water system components, including water storage, back-up wells, and water mains. In conjunction with the Community Investment Program, this plan identifies major water projects over the next five years.

Neighborhood Traffic Studies #1-4, 2010-2015

In 2010, the Village of Downers Grove established the Neighborhood Traffic Study Program, to comprehensively evaluate transportation issues throughout the Village's neighborhoods, identify operational deficiencies, and recommend modifications and/or improvements to enhance both vehicular and pedestrian operations.

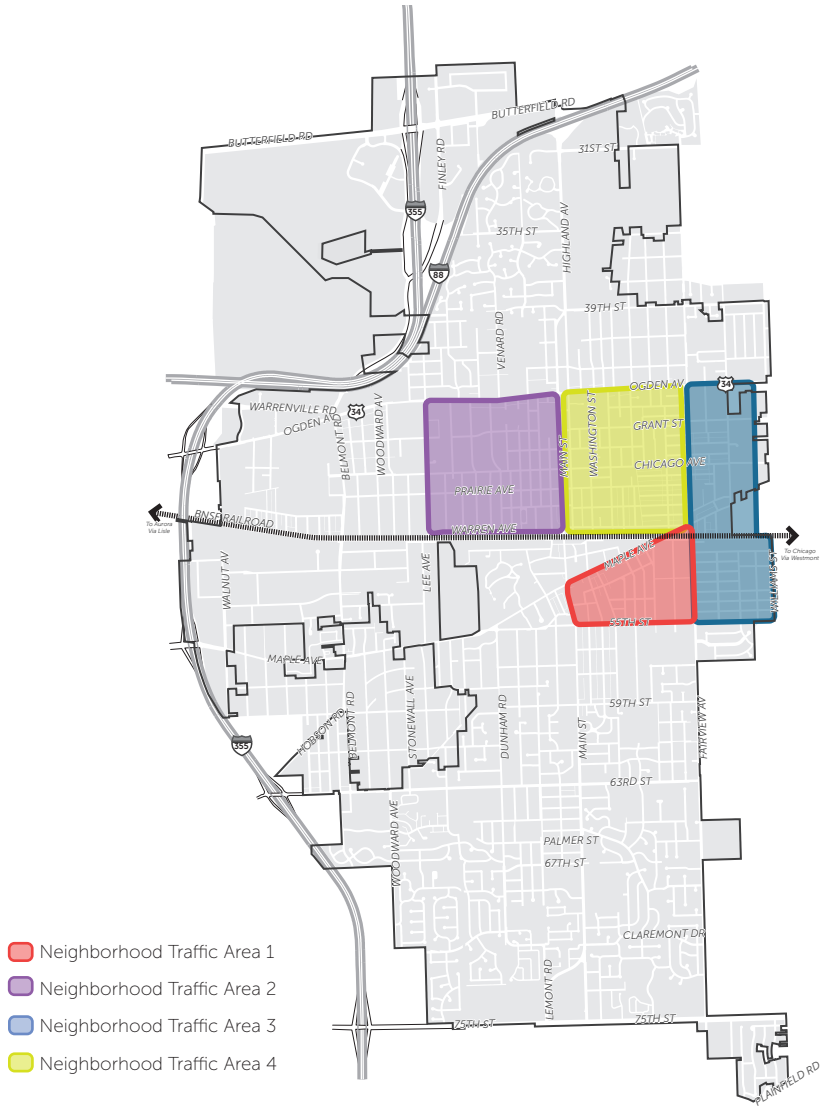
Economic Development Plan to Enhance the Sales Tax Base, 2016

The Economic Development Plan to Enhance the Sales Tax Base was a "Top Priority Action Item" identified by the Village Council and the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation (EDC). The Plan is based on a Competitive Retail Alignment Study commissioned by the EDC.

This plan includes the following:

- Recommended retail segments for attraction and retention
- Strategies for attraction and retention
- Locations suitable for retail development

The key conclusion of the report is that retailers want to locate in Downers Grove, but appropriate, easy-to-develop sites are limited. The Village and the EDC should assist in reducing the risk and cost to developers for infill sites.



Demographic Profile

Over the next several years, Downers Grove is projected to experience a population increase to a projected population of 48,785 people by 2020. This is an increase from an estimated 2015 population of 48,079. This 2015 estimate is roughly 500 more people than what was expected for the 2014 population projections.

It is estimated that the number of households earning less than $75,000 will decrease and the number of households earning between $100,000 and $149,999 will increase. Significant growth for this income group is projected to occur among households in which the defined "head householder" is between 55 and 74 years of age, while a decrease is projected in the number of households aged 35 to 54. Growth in the number of households over the age of 55 will likely have an impact in demand for multi-family housing product as this age cohort is the largest market for condominiums and townhome units.

Population Change

Table 1 includes information on changes in population and number of households within the Village of Downers Grove and DuPage County. Population is defined as the overall number of people within a specified geography. A household is defined as the group of individuals who live in the same dwelling unit. Any discussion of household age in the following overview is with regard to the age of the individual identified as the head of household.

Overall, the number of households and population in the Village is projected to increase over the next five years. The Village is also projected to match population growth seen for DuPage County overall. The Village's household growth is expected to trail DuPage County's growth slightly.

It is projected that the population of the Village will increase by 706 (1.5%) between 2015 and 2020 and the County will grow by 14,227 (1.5%).

Over the same five year period, the Village is projected to gain 318 households, representing a 1.6% increase. DuPage County is projected to grow by 6,044 households (1.8%) over the same period.

The median household income of Downers Grove is projected to grow by $12,949, or 16.0%, to $93,765 in 2020. This represents a compound annual growth rate of 3.02%.

Table 1. Demographic Summary
Village of Downers Grove and DuPage County, 2015-2020

	2015		2020		2015 - 2020 Total Change	
	Downers Grove	*DuPage County*	*Downers Grove*	*DuPage County*	*Downers Grove*	*DuPage County*
Population	48,079	922,956	48,785	937,183	706 (1.5%)	14,227 (1.5%)
Households	19,389	341,275	19,707	347,319	318 (1.6%)	6,044 (1.8%)
Median Age	43.8	39.0	44.6	39.7	0.8 (1.8%)	0.7 (1.8%)
Median Household Income	$80,816	$80,251	$93,765	$91,719	12,949 (16.0%)	11,468 (14.3%)
Average Household Income	$106,340	$108,066	$120,678	$121,965	14,338 (13.5%)	13,899 (12.9%)
Per Capita Income	$42,610	$40,131	$48,431	$45,373	5,821 (13.7%)	5,242 (13.1%)

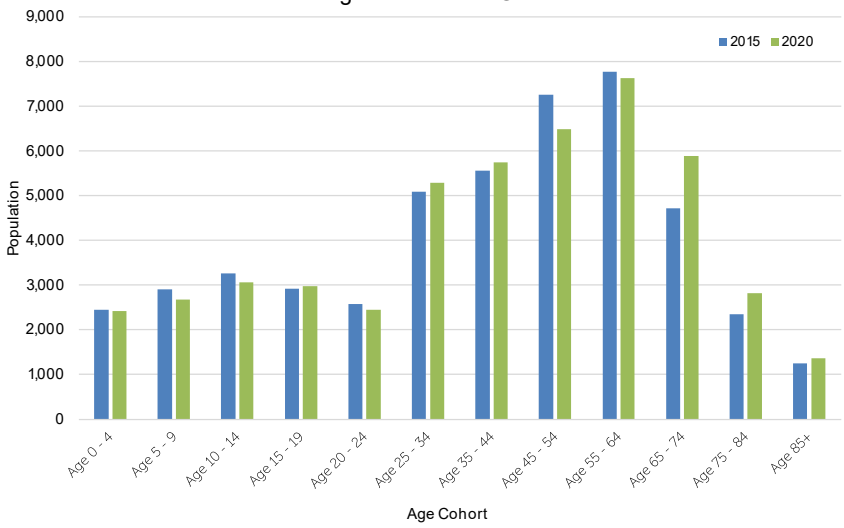
Source: ESRI Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates

Age Profile

Chart 1 illustrates projected population change within age cohorts of the Village over the five-year period between 2015 and 2020. During this time period, the number of people under the age of 20 will decrease by 398 people (-3.4%). Individuals between the ages of 20 and 34 shall increase by 74 people (1.0%). The number of people between the ages of 35 and 44 shall increase by 180 people (3%). The senior population shall see the largest increase in population with ages 65-74 growing by 1,179 people (25%) and ages 75 and up also increasing with 583 people (16.2%). DuPage County is projected to experience a similar change in population among its age cohorts.

The estimated 2015 median age of 43.8 years for the Village is over 12% higher than that of DuPage County which had a median age of 39 in 2015. The Village's median age is projected to increase slightly to 44.6 in 2020.

Chart 1. Projected Population Change by Age
Village of Downers Grove



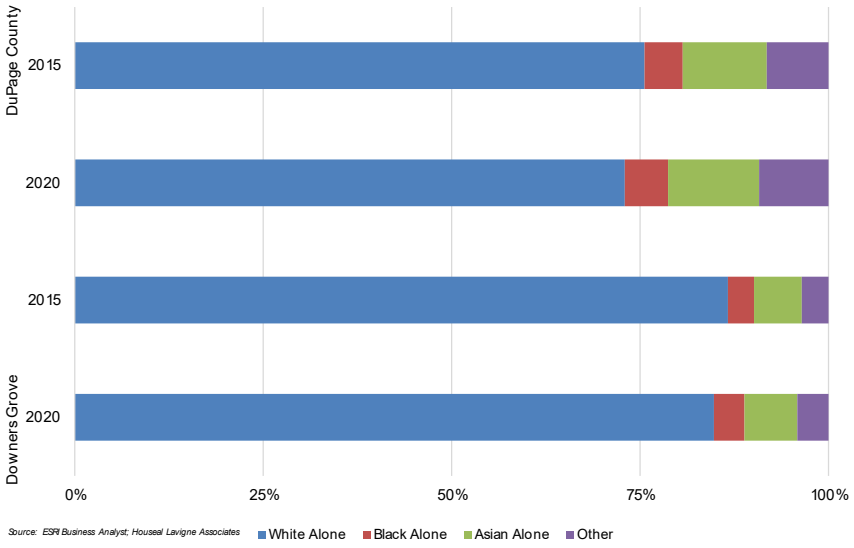
Source: ESRI Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates

Race & Ethnicity

Charts 2 and 3 illustrate the estimated 2015 and projected 2020 racial and ethnic composition of the Village of Downers Grove and DuPage County. It should be noted that according to the federal government and the US Census, race and Hispanic origin are defined as two different concepts. Census respondents are asked to identify if they are Hispanic in a question that is independent of any questions asking to specify racial categories. For example, a community may have a 98% White Alone population and 2% Black Alone population. However, 30% of the population may be comprised of Hispanic individuals who identify with either racial category.

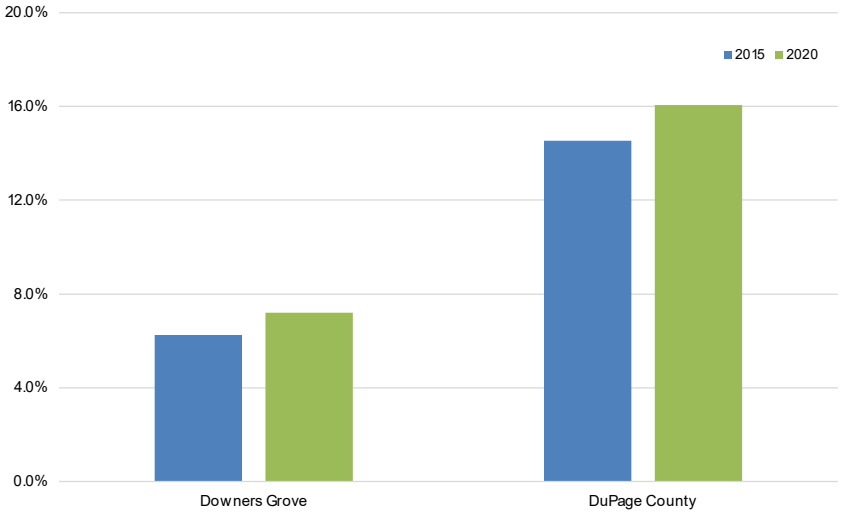
In 2015, it is estimated that 86.7% of the Village's population is comprised of individuals who are considered White Alone (as classified by the U.S. Census). The DuPage County population has a slightly smaller proportion (75.6%) of White Alone individuals. Between 2015 and 2020, it is projected that the White Alone population will have increased by 0.7% and 2.0% in Downers Groves and DuPage County respectively. The Asian Alone population is the largest racial minority population in both Downers Grove and DuPage County, comprising 6.3% and 11.1% of their respective 2015 populations. The only increase in population for the Village is anticipated to occur in the White Alone population which is projected to gain 284 individuals (14.9%) over the next five years. It is estimated that in 2015, the Village's population was 6.3% Hispanic (3,005 individuals) while DuPage County's population was 14.5% Hispanic (134,028 individuals).Between 2015 and 2020, the Hispanic population is projected to grow by 14.4% and 10.9% within the Village of Downers Grove and DuPage County respectively.

Chart 2. Projected Racial & Ethnic Composition
Village of Downers Grove, DuPage County: 2015 - 2020



Source: ESRI Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates

Chart 3. Projected Hispanic Population
Village of Downers Grove, DuPage County



Source: ESRI Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates

Household Change

Charts 4 and 5 depict anticipated growth among Village and DuPage County households with regard to income between 2015 and 2020.

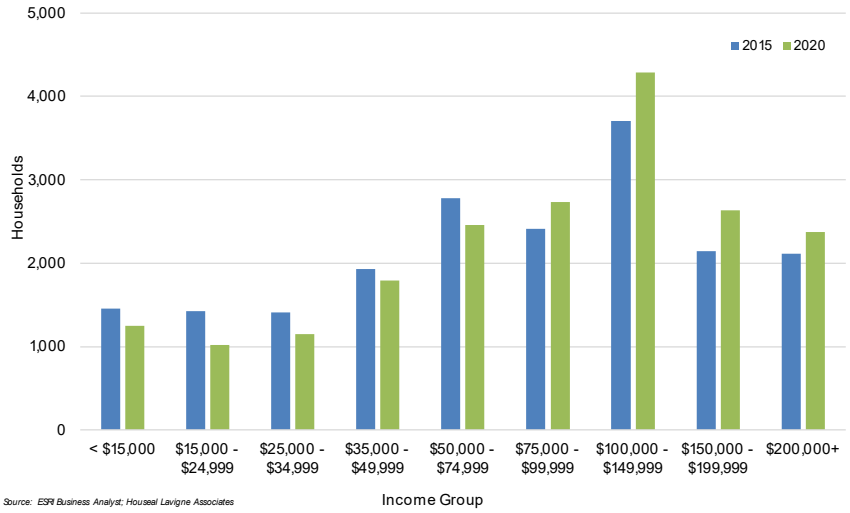
In 2015, the Village's estimated median household income was approximately $80,816 which was higher than that of DuPage County ($80,251). In 2020, Downers Grove's median income is expected to increase to $93,765, which will be higher than DuPage County's median income ($91,719).

The proportion of households with an annual income of less than $75,000 is projected to decrease by 1,333, or 14.8%, between 2015 and 2020. A stronger increase (33.4%) is projected to occur within the larger county.

The proportion of households with an annual income over $150,000 is projected to grow by 753 households (17.6%) between 2015 and 2020. The overall number of DuPage County households in this income group is projected to grow by 17.3% over the same time period.

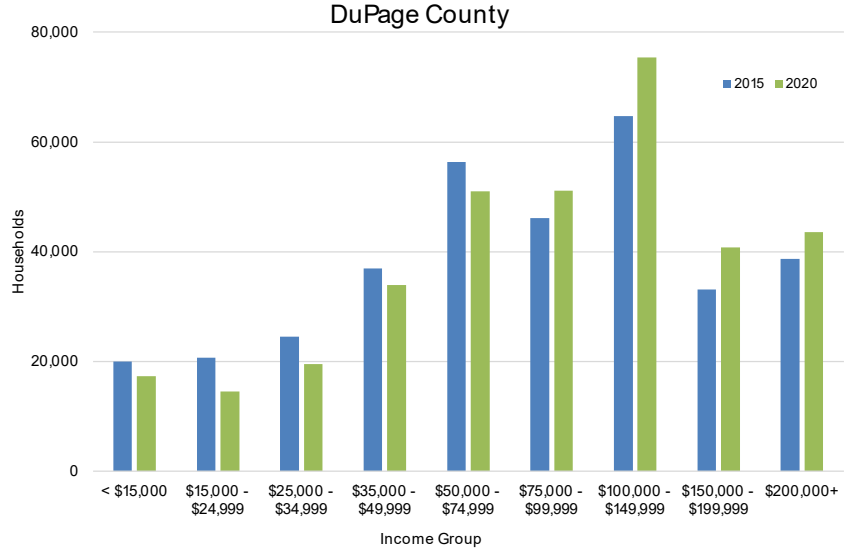
The greatest anticipated increase is projected to occur among households earning between $150,000 and $199,999. This population is projected to grow by 491 households (22.9%) and come to comprise over 13.4% of total households by 2020. Within DuPage County, an increase of 23.0% is projected for this income group.

Chart 4. Projected Household Change by Income
Village of Downers Grove



Source: ESRI Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates

Chart 5. Projected Household Change by Income
DuPage County



Source: ESRI Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates

Age by Income

Chart 6 illustrates the projected change in the number of households according to the age of the head of household and household income. Changes projected to occur between 2015 and 2020 are shown as they pertain to each respective household age cohort in the Village of Downers Grove.

For example, the bars indicate change within the market area householder population between 2015 and 2020 for a specific age group. A bar for an age group is shown in each income bracket. A bar located above the zero line of the graph indicates growth, while a bar below the zero line indicates decline.

It is anticipated that the number of households age 35 to 54 will decrease in every income group that earns under $99,999. This age cohort will witness a decrease of 937 households (-11.5%).

The number of households age 55 to 74 is projected to grow across income groups earning more than $75,000. This age cohort will increase by a total of 437 households (5.8%).

The change in the number of households under 35 years of age is projected to be minimal across all income groups. Households under the age of 35 that make under $75,000 are expected to decrease by 183 households while households under the age of 35 with incomes making over $75,000 will increase by 217 households.

The largest increase of households is projected to occur among households aged 55 to 74. Of these cohorts, those earning over $100,000-$149,999 are expected to see the largest increase of 279 households. The largest anticipated decline in households is projected to occur among households age 55 to 74 earning under $25,000.

Age by Income Implications

The age and income shifts projected to occur among the Village's household population may have an impact on the local demand for a range of housing products. The number of households in the 35 to 54 year old age cohorts is decreasing and 'empty nester' households are growing. At the same time, 35 to 54 year olds are seeing much larger decreases on the lower end of the income spectrum. In a typical market, "empty nester" households comprise a significant proportion of those purchasing multi-family units (condominiums, townhomes, rowhomes etc.). The anticipated growth in the Village's household population over the age of 55, particularly among higher income households may be accompanied by an increased demand for multi-family housing product.

Chart 6. Projected Household Change by Age and Income
Village of Downers Grove, 2015 - 2020

Source: ESRI Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates

2 A Vision for the Future

The Vision provides a basis for identifying many of the specific goals and objectives needed to lead the Village of Downers Grove in the direction of implementation. It describes an outcome that helps define purpose and intent for the many polices and recommendations contained in this document.

The Vision Statement identifies how the community has changed since the 2011 Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2016. It builds on the 2011 vision, and describes in detail what Downers Grove community will be 15 years in the future. This "retrospective" provides important focus and direction for the Comprehensive Plan update.

THE VISION IS AN ASPIRATIONAL RETROSPECTIVE WHICH DESCRIBES THE TYPE OF COMMUNITY DOWNERS GROVE DESIRES TO BE IN THE YEAR 2031

In 2031...

Downers Grove's safe and quiet neighborhoods are its most cherished asset. They consist of a diverse and well-maintained housing stock which is primarily single-family homes, but also includes compatible and well located townhouses, condominiums and apartments. Some of the existing residential areas are still replenishing through redevelopment, however improved education and regulations have made teardowns more context sensitive. This has helped mitigate their impact on local character and flooding. Advocacy and education by the Village along with owner-initiated preservation has bolstered success in preserving architecturally or historically significant structures within the neighborhoods.

Guided by the Village's Comprehensive Plan, a number of high-end multi-family and mixed-use buildings have been constructed in and around the Downtown over the past fifteen years. Drawn by the dining, entertainment, and convenient access to Chicago via Metra, young professionals, empty nesters, and anyone looking for an urban lifestyle have flocked to Downtown. These developments, among others in the community have diversified housing options in the community, allowing residents to stay in Downers Grove through all stages of their lives.

At the same time, the Village was also working hard to maintain and enhance its tree canopy and address stormwater concerns. The invasive insects that once threatened the Village's trees is a thing of the past, and through active replanting and tree maintenance, the urban canopy is once again flourishing. The new trees have improved the appearance and character of neighborhoods and have helped minimize stormwater runoff and flooding potential. These efforts, combined with Low Impact Design (LID) (which mimic natural water filtration processes) for new development have helped mitigate stormwater issues within Downers Grove.

Downtown has maintained its competitiveness due to a solid employment base, an increase in the number of housing opportunities in and near the Downtown, improved parking, and the Village's innovative use of TIF and SSA districts. Downtown is also home to a number of special events and is a continued source of pride and identity for the entire Village. Not long ago the Village had to aggressively pursue businesses to locate in Downtown, today businesses flock to the few remaining vacancies.

All of Downers Grove's commercial areas are contributing to the Village through increased property and retail sales tax revenues. The corridors have also become central to celebrating Downers Grove's identity. Downers Grove's brand has been enhanced through entryway monuments, major developments, and consistent signage. The established commercial centers on 75th Street and 63rd Street have seen aging centers improved and vacancies filled. In some cases, older commercial properties that had poor visibility and excessive vacancies have been completely redeveloped with commercial or other uses that are more appropriate for the property.

Areas like Butterfield Road and the Ellsworth Technology Park are also boasting strong, unique, and sustainable economic opportunities. The office areas are notable for their regional access and are offering numerous corporations state of the art office space. The Ellsworth Technology Park succeeded in growing beyond the more traditional industrial uses found in other similar communities. Its attractive buildings and setting, along with easy expressway access and in-demand jobs, assures its value to the region for decades.

The Fairview Station area continues to evolve into the well-organized, revitalized and unique multi-use area imagined in the Comprehensive Plan. Its growth as a cohesive neighborhood and its attractiveness to those outside the community have resulted in enhanced Metra service and other local transportation improvements.

Through significant investment, Ogden Avenue has also been transformed. Once a linear corridor with several outdated and underperforming commercial uses, incremental redevelopment and improved landscaping has dramatically improved the corridor's appearance and contribution to the local economy. Investments in new sidewalks and improved pedestrian crosswalks have helped pedestrian mobility along the busy corridor, and has connected neighborhoods north and south to the diverse mix of businesses.

Important to the Village's overall desirability for residents has been the reputation of the Village's high-quality schools, parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities. The Village is a model community for local government in its partnering with other municipalities, state agencies, community service providers, local businesses, and residents to achieve its goals and address any concerns. Even before the 2011 Comprehensive Plan's adoption, a proactive village government initiated a thorough approach to infrastructure improvements which quickly mitigated stormwater concerns northeast of Downtown. Early recognition by Village leaders of the complexity of these issues and the intergovernmental relationships needed to effectively address them was crucial to Downers Grove's success.

Fifteen years after the Comprehensive Plan was regularly updated and continually updated every five years, the Village of Downers Grove's maintains the reputation as a great place to live, work, and shop and has become a premiere Chicago suburb. The tangible victories of careful planning are evident and the Village's plans and policies will create many more exciting opportunities and successes to come.

3 Land Use Plan

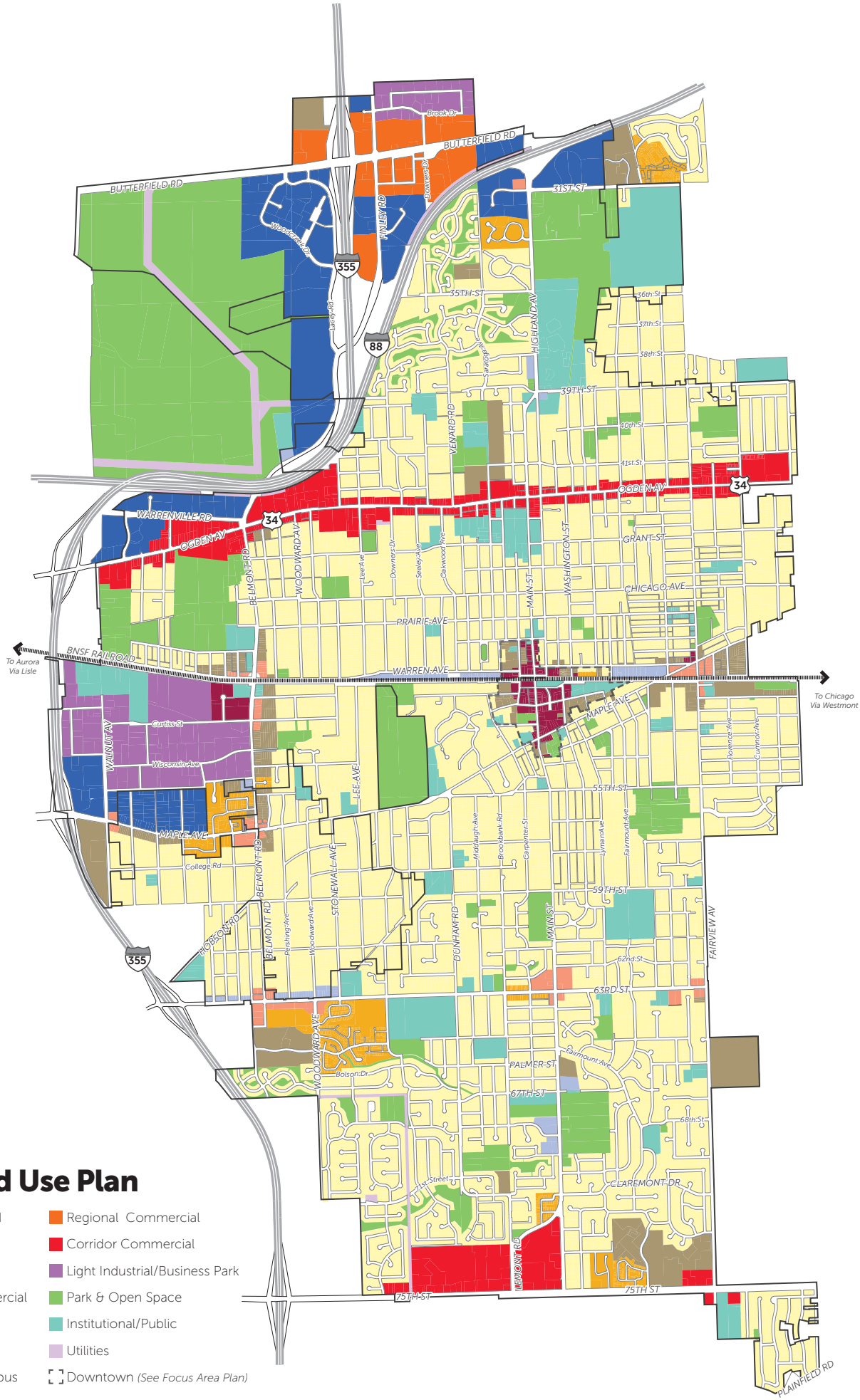
The Land Use Plan builds upon the existing land uses and development patterns within the Village and is an extension of the Comprehensive Plan's vision, policies and recommendations. The Land Use Plan is intended to promote a sustainable and holistic approach to growth and development that protects and enhances existing neighborhoods and promotes energy efficient building practices, strengthens commercial areas, protects industrial areas and employment centers, and enhances the Village's network of parks and open space and provision of community services.

The Land Use Plan is a guide for future land use and development that is respective of the fact that the Village is a developed and mature, established community. It strives to maintain and enhance the traditional form, character and distinguishing features of Downers Grove while accommodating high-quality and compatible improvements and new development in selected locations.

In addition, the Land Use Plan attempts to address land use conflicts that may have arisen as the community has matured. Since the 1965 Plan, the science of land use planning has improved understanding of separating, connecting and integrating land uses. The Land Use Plan accomplishes this by identifying which land uses should remain for the future and which areas should be considered for new uses.

It should be emphasized that the Land Use Plan is a general guide for growth and development within the Village and provides a foundation for further decision-making and is not a site development plan. While it is a detailed document that provides specific guidance on land use decisions, it is also intended to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate unique or compelling circumstances and the consideration of creative approaches to development that are consistent with the overall policies and guidelines in the Comprehensive Plan.

THE LAND USE PLAN IS INTENDED TO PROMOTE A SUSTAINABLE AND HOLISTIC APPROACH TO GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT THAT PROTECTS AND ENHANCES THE VILLAGE'S EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS, EMPLOYMENT CENTERS, PARKS AND OPEN SPACES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES



Future Land Use Plan

- Single-Family Detached
- Single-Family Attached
- Multi-Family
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Downtown/Mixed Use
- Low Intensity Office
- Office/Corporate Campus
- Regional Commercial
- Corridor Commercial
- Light Industrial/Business Park
- Park & Open Space
- Institutional/Public
- Utilities
- Downtown *(See Focus Area Plan)*

Residential Uses

The Land Use Plan classifies residential areas into three (3) residential categories: Single-family Residential, Single-family Attached Residential and Multi-family Residential. The Land Use Plan below provides a brief overview of these land use categories by presenting a concise definition and planned locations. An expanded discussion of the Village's residential areas, along with detailed policies for residential development and improvement are provided in Section 4: Residential Areas Plan.

Single-Family Detached Residential

Single-family residential areas should consist of a detached single household per lot, organized into neighborhoods or subdivisions based on a unifying development pattern. Since its incorporation in 1873, Downers Grove has developed predominately as a residential community nearly 80% of which is single-family and owner-occupied. The Land Use Plan recommends that single-family residential continue to be the predominant land use in the Village and that single-family residential neighborhoods continue to be located throughout the Village. Section 4: Residential Areas Plan addresses the issues facing single-family neighborhoods and ensures that the distinctive qualities and characteristics of individual neighborhoods are enhanced.

Single-Family Attached Residential

Single-family attached residential uses are single-family dwellings that share a sidewall with an adjacent single-family dwelling. Examples include townhouses, row houses and duplexes which are present throughout the Village. Single-family attached residential developments are commonly found along arterial streets and are often used as a transitional land use between single-family detached and multi-family development.

Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family residential development consists of more than one unit or household per lot. This may take the form of standalone buildings of condos or apartments, as part of a mixed-use development or as specialized senior housing. Multi-family residential developments are currently present throughout the Village. The Land Use Plan identifies the redevelopment of some existing multi-family areas that are compatible with adjacent uses, and establishes new areas for multi-family residential land uses based on proximity to the transportation network and to maximize their function as a transitional land use between single-family residential and commercial land uses.

Commercial Uses

The Land Use Plan identifies seven (7) categories of commercial land uses: Neighborhood Commercial, Corridor Commercial, Downtown Commercial/ Mixed-Use, Low-Intensity Office, Office/Corporate Campus, Regional Commercial, and Light Industrial/ Business Park. An overview is provided below while Section 5: Commercial Areas Plan provides an expanded discussion of these uses along with detailed policies for development and improvement.

Downtown Commercial/Mixed-Use

Downtown Downers Grove is characterized by a mix of commercial service, commercial retail, entertainment, civic, multi-family residential, institutional and related public facilities (including parking) in a pedestrian-oriented atmosphere.

To maintain its vibrancy and importance to the Village, Downtown should continue to contain a mix of land uses that reinforce its unique character. The type and location of land uses within Downtown and in mixed-use areas are recommended in order to maintain a pedestrian-orientation while also allowing for automobile access and parking. In order to achieve this, it is recommended that ground floor uses are primarily retail, entertainment, and personal service, with office and residential uses located on the upper floors.

Mixed-use areas outside of the Downtown should be focused around the Village's transit infrastructure. The Village should encourage transit-oriented development (TOD) so these areas can take advantage of transportation opportunities while maintaining commuter parking.

Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood commercial areas function to provide residents with convenient, day-to-day goods and services within a short walk or drive from their homes. Neighborhood commercial areas should be comprised of a mix of retail, service, and office uses that cater to a local population.

These areas may be anchored by a grocery store accompanied by a variety of other smaller retailers such as gas stations, dry cleaners, convenience stores, banks, and restaurants. Providing these daily goods and services close to home is an amenity to nearby residents and serves to reduce automobile trips.

It is recommended that small nodes of neighborhood commercial development should exist throughout the Village at the intersection of primary roadways (arterials and collectors) to serve nearby residential areas.

Low-Intensity Office

Low-Intensity office uses typically include professional services such as medical, dental, legal, and accounting. These uses are sensitive to their context in terms of scale, height, setback, and building materials. This requires consideration of parking, loading, signage, lighting, and business operations.

Office/Corporate Campus

These office uses include large-scale buildings and office parks that have a significant presence in Downers Grove and should continue to play an important role in the local economy. The Village should continue to support office development along the I-88, I-355, and Butterfield Road corridors to maximize visibility and minimize potentially negative impacts on residential areas. As prominent features along major regional roadways, office developments should be of high quality and reflect the character of the Village in the manner of the Esplanade and the Highland Landmark. The Village should encourage offices to include sustainable features and renewable energy into their design. Additionally, the Village should regularly assess its development regulations to ensure that contemporary office styles will be permitted.

Regional Commercial

This land use comprises commercial uses that provide goods and services that draw patrons from within, and beyond, the Village. Appropriate regional commercial uses include large shopping centers, "big box" retail, auto dealerships, restaurants, and hotels. The Land Use Plan designates areas for regional commercial where excellent visibility and access provide the ability to draw from a regional customer base.

Corridor Commercial

Corridor commercial land uses are typically organized in a linear fashion and include a blend of neighborhood-oriented commercial retail, offices, smaller regional commercial retail (such as auto dealers), service uses and multi-family uses.

Commercial uses with a regional draw are appropriate in areas of a corridor where they will benefit from access and visibility without significantly contributing to traffic along the corridor or impact on nearby residential areas. In other areas of the corridor, commercial uses are of a neighborhood scale and are oriented towards nearby residential areas.

The Land Use Plan identifies areas appropriate for corridor commercial uses including areas along Ogden Avenue and 75th Street.

Light Industrial/ Business Park

Light industrial and business park uses include those uses dedicated to the design, assembly, processing, packaging, storage and transportation of products, and light industrial which may or may not have an accessory retail component. These uses should continue to be located in areas where they can capitalize on close proximity to regional transportation networks while minimizing negative impacts on residential neighborhoods. This includes areas near interstates, existing industrial parks, and along the BNSF railroad. The Land Use Plan identifies areas appropriate for light industrial/ business park uses.

Parks & Open Space

Downers Grove is well-served by the parks and open space located throughout the Village and beyond. These parks and open spaces range in terms of size and use to include small, neighborhood "pocket" parks to large tracts of forest preserve and other natural areas, most owned and managed by the Downers Grove Park District or the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County.

The largest open spaces in the Village include Lyman Woods, the Maple Grove Forest Preserve, Belmont Prairie and neighboring Morton Arboretum. Parks and open space features contribute greatly to the overall character of the Village and to the quality of life enjoyed by its residents and should be maintained and enhanced.

The Land Use Plan considers these facts and identifies areas that should remain for parks and open space uses and strives to maintain existing networks within the Village and beyond. Section 7: Parks and Open Space Plan includes a detailed discussion of these areas and identifies policies regarding the preservation, maintenance and expansion of existing parks and open space, and the creation of new parks and open space areas.

Institutional/ Public

Institutional/Public land uses include public and semi-public areas occupied by government facilities, community service providers, schools, and other institutional users. This land use also contains areas used by both private and public utility providers. The distribution of institutional/public land uses requires adequate and comprehensive service delivery to residents and businesses in the Village, which largely determines their location.

The Land Use Plan anticipates that these uses will remain largely as they currently exist in the Village. Section 8: Community Facilities Plan provides an expanded discussion of these areas along with detailed policies and recommendations.

4 Residential Areas Plan

The Village's housing stock is diverse in age, architecture, and design and its residential neighborhoods are some of the most significant contributors to Downers Grove's unique character and identity. The Residential Areas Plan builds on the three categories established in the Land Use Plan: single-family detached residential, single-family attached residential and multi-family residential and further defines the type and locations of each type of residential land use. The location of each residential land use is illustrated in the Residential Areas Plan map.

The Residential Areas Plan identifies policies that apply to the community as a whole although the issues these policies address are not necessarily present in every single one of the Village's residential neighborhoods. As such, the application of Village-wide policies should be tailored to the needs and conditions of Downers Grove's various neighborhoods.

The Policies identified in the Residential Areas Plan are intended to:

- Maintain Downers Grove's character and identity
- Ensure quality housing stock remains a staple of the community
- Maintain the optimal balance of housing types within the community
- Ensure compatibility between new and existing residential development
- Ensure adequate buffering between residential and commercial uses
- Encourage a diversity of housing types, sizes and prices throughout the community

THE VILLAGE'S RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS ARE SOME OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTORS TO DOWNERS GROVE'S UNIQUE CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

Single-Family Detached Residential

Of the residential units in Downers Grove, nearly 80% are single-family and owner-occupied. The single-family detached residential neighborhoods are one of the Village's most cherished attributes and one of its most defining characteristics. As such, single-family residential development should continue to predominate.

Historically, as residential development occurred near downtown, the traditional street grid was continued. Newer residential subdivisions, on the other hand, on the northern and southern areas of the Village have introduced more contemporary development features including curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs.

Single-family detached residential areas make up the single largest land use in the Village of Downers Grove. Much of the Village's character is derived from these neighborhoods and these distinguishing features should be preserved and enhanced.

Single-family residential areas must remain flexible and consider context. There may be situations where single-family attached and multi-family uses may be appropriate within single-family detached areas. For example, street frontage, lot depth, and the presence of neighboring non-residential uses should be considered on a case-by-case basis for other types of compatible residential development.

The Residential Areas Plan depicts the single-family residential areas of the Village and divides them into four categories based on lot size, density, access, and built form.

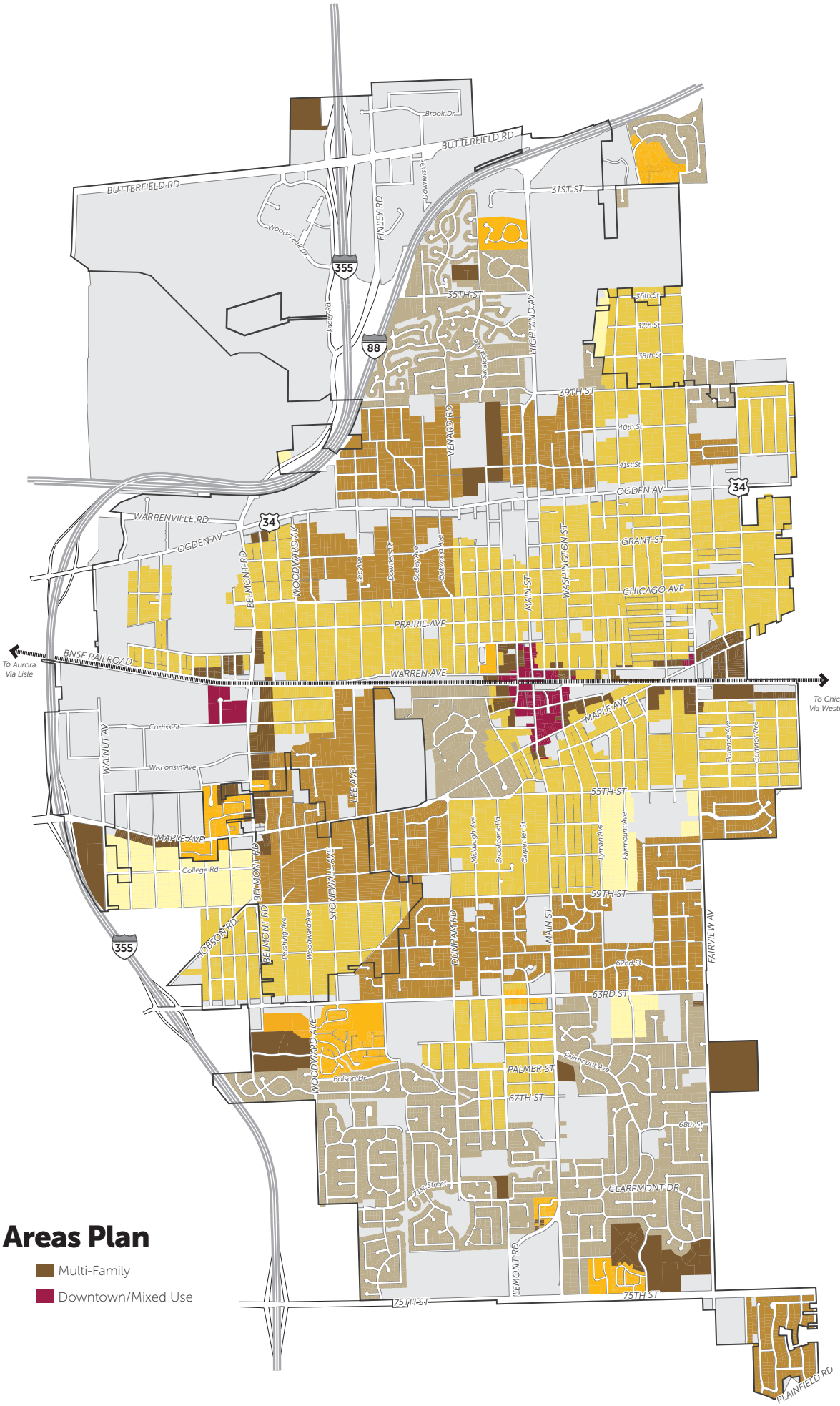
Estate

This category is characterized by large lots that may have developed as part of a formal subdivision or independently in unincorporated DuPage County prior to annexation. These areas are typically located on the periphery of the Village and have characteristics of estate properties such as the absence of sidewalks and street trees and open swale drainage systems as opposed to curb and gutter.

Traditional Grid

The Village's oldest residential areas were developed based on a traditional grid which provides a uniform layout (due to standard street and lot widths) as well as pedestrian and vehicular connectivity. Within the traditional grid's areas, sidewalks are typically present on one or both sides of the street and mature trees (both street trees and concentrations of wooded areas) contribute significantly to their character.

Homes in these areas may face significant development pressure when combining their age and lack of contemporary interior amenities with the attractiveness of a tight knit, walkable neighborhood that is close to amenities such as Downtown and schools.



Residential Areas Plan

- Estate Residential
- Traditional Grid
- Modified Grid
- Suburban/Cuvilinear
- Single-Family Attached
- Multi-Family
- Downtown/Mixed Use

Modified Grid

Historically, as development radiated out from Downtown, residential subdivisions moved from the traditional grid to a modified grid. This combined the function and connectivity of a grid with the appeal of a more formalized subdivision within the Downers Grove community.

As a second wave of growth in the Village, the modified grid allows for a greater range of lot sizes than the traditional grid. The modified grid provides a transition between the traditional grid and the subdivision/curvilinear development type. Similar to the traditional grid category, sidewalks and street trees are a defining characteristic of modified grid areas.

The use of curved streets sometimes results in pockets of common area open space with additional trees and landscaping, which is another defining characteristic. Redevelopment with new home construction is occurring in these areas but they are less common than in traditional grid areas.

Suburban/Curvilinear

Predominantly found on the north and south ends of the Village, the cul-de-sac is a defining characteristic of this residential category.

Contributing to this defining character are varying lot sizes and a range in the age of trees (depending on the time of construction of an individual subdivision or development). On the whole, street trees are younger than in traditional and modified grid areas and the tree canopy is less dense. Sidewalks are often present on one or both sides of the streets within these areas; however, a lack of connectivity for both pedestrians and automobiles is an issue in the presence of cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets.

Single-Family Attached Residential

Single-family attached residential uses are single-family dwellings that share a sidewall with an adjacent single-family dwelling. Examples include townhouses, row houses and duplexes which are present throughout the Village. Single-family attached residential developments are commonly found along arterial streets and are often used as a transitional land use between single-family detached and multi-family development.

Multi-family Residential

Multi-family residential areas provide a wider variety of housing options to Village residents especially to young households, empty nesters and senior citizens, all of which have been identified as growing markets in the Village. Multi-family residential developments are commonly found along arterial streets and often provide a transitional land use between single-family residential and commercial.

Traditionally, multi-family residential uses are sited near or in commercial areas due to the benefits of higher-density housing to support nearby businesses, trends of car ownership/transit ridership among residents and the fact that multi-family residential development is typically more resilient to the impacts of commercial development. For these reasons, multi-family development is encouraged in mixed-use developments and in the Downtown.

Multi-Tenant Buildings

Multi-tenant buildings may be rental (apartments) or for sale (condominiums). These buildings are larger and denser than a single-family home due to the multiple units present. Parking is often provided on-site either through a surface parking lot or structured parking as part of the building. Some multi-family residential buildings are targeted to seniors with amenities that may include social activities, on-site medical care and other special needs of the senior population.

Mixed-Use

Buildings with ground floor retail or office uses with residential units above are another type of multi-family housing, especially in the Downtown. These buildings provide excellent access to goods, services and jobs for residents due to their density and proximity to commercial areas.

Transitional Land Use

Multi-family development should be used as a transitional land use between single-family residential areas and higher intensity commercial and industrial uses. Multi-family development can also be used to transition between and separate nodes of commercial development along a commercial corridor.

New Development & Reinvestment

It is important that new development be sensitive to local context. Regardless of the location or housing type, residential development or redevelopment should be carefully regulated to ensure compatibility with the scale and character of surrounding and adjacent residential neighborhoods. New infill development and alterations to existing development should maintain a setback, height, bulk, and orientation similar to that of neighboring development.

The existing tree canopy is important and should be complemented with additional tree plantings when development occurs.

Modernization

Residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional properties all require modernization from time to time in order to remain competitive in the marketplace and to avoid becoming functionally obsolete. Modernization helps to achieve a balance between the past and the future by providing incremental improvements to existing properties, including both sites and structures.

There are four levels of residential modernization:

- **Upkeep,** which includes the basic maintenance and repair of existing structures (e.g., new exterior paint or roof)
- **Renovation**, which includes small-scale projects to update portions of existing structures (e.g., kitchen or bathroom renovation)
- **Expansion,** which includes adding onto an existing structure (e.g., a rear or side addition)
- **Redevelopment,** which includes demolition of an existing structure to construct a new one (e.g., a residential teardown)

Residential modernization is intended to replenish, rejuvenate, and spur reinvestment in the Village's housing stock and should not conflict with the promotion and protection of the Village's distinguishing character and historic resources.

Neighborhood Character

The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the value and importance of Downers Grove's existing housing stock in terms of image, character, and stability. While the replacement of some aging or obsolete homes may be both natural and desirable, it should be respectful of the established or desired character.

The Village should encourage new development or redevelopment to be sensitive to, and respectful of, existing Village character and architectural diversity. To help educate builders and homeowners to foster development that can preserve and enhance neighborhoods, the Village should consider creating programs and tools, such as design guidelines in order to educate residents on preservation of their homes. The Village should also promote these tools and programs to property owners who seek to renovate their homes in order to keep the property modern and to help prevent deterioration of historic structures.

Expansion and Redevelopment

As a mature community, the Village of Downers Grove's residential districts are largely developed, leaving the Village with limited undeveloped land for new, larger residential subdivisions. As is the case, most of the new residential development within the community will come in the form of alterations and additions to the Village's existing housing stock, or by way of teardown development, where older homes are replaced by new construction.

Regardless of the type of residential improvements that occur, changes within the established residential areas will have the potential to impact the character of the existing neighborhoods. To this end, it is important that additions and alterations to existing homes and new residential construction be consistent with the existing or desired neighborhood character. To provide assistance to home owners, developers and builders, the Village of Downers Grove should consider using specific tools, such as guidelines, to foster desired residential improvements and development.

Historic Preservation

In 2015, the Village updated their Historic Preservation Ordinance to facilitate the voluntary preservation of historic buildings and structures. Preserving historic properties can assist in creating a sustainable community.

The Village is recognized as a Certified Local Government by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and is a participant in the Property Tax Assessment Freeze program. The program can freeze the assessed value of historic owner-occupied, principal residences for a period of 8 years, followed by a four-year period during which the property's assessed value steps up to an amount based upon its current market value. This results in 12 years of reduced property taxes.

Permitting Process

It is important that the permitting process make it easy for property owners to reinvest in their homes. It is recommended that the Village continue to monitor its program, making changes when appropriate, to ensure permits continue to be reviewed and processed in a timely fashion.

Stormwater Management

Improved stormwater management is a near- and long-term priority for the Village and should continue to be addressed in a comprehensive manner within all residential areas. In addition to investments in public infrastructure, the Village should continue to ensure the Subdivision Control Ordinance and Stormwater and Floodplain Ordinance are regularly updated to reflect current design and stormwater practices. The Village should encourage the use of naturalized storm water retention and detention basin areas and should consider requiring pervious paving materials, to reduce long-term contributions to stormwater run-off. The Village should promote Low Impact Development (LID) best practices for residential properties.

Sidewalks

The Village has an extensive sidewalk network where 95% of street segments have sidewalks on at least one side. The Village's current policy seeks to maintain the existing sidewalk system throughout the Village and considers constructing new sidewalks in response to resident requests. However, the construction of traditional sidewalks may negatively impact the character of some neighborhoods. Alternative solutions to traditional sidewalk construction should be considered in sensitive areas where, for example, such improvements may negatively impact existing parkway trees.The Village's sidewalk network should continue to be expanded to provide better connections between the community's residential neighborhoods, parks, and schools. Within residential areas, sidewalks should be installed and maintained as determined by the Village through a public engagement process. The Village should be cognizant of the differences in the character of individual neighborhoods when determining locations and types of sidewalk installation. Sidewalk installation should consider the desires of residents and the existing character of neighborhoods; however, preservation of character should not supersede pedestrian safety and connectivity.

Parkway Trees

Many of the streets within the Village's residential neighborhoods are lined with a canopy from mature parkway trees. These mature trees contribute significantly to the overall desirability and character of the neighborhoods and the Village as a whole. It is recommended that parkway trees be protected and preserved. In some instances, parkway trees have been lost due to disease or other reasons. Currently, the Village's parkway tree planting program plants new parkway trees where no tree previously existed or where a tree has been removed due to disease. The Village should continue its parkway tree program to ensure existing parkway trees are replaced once removed to help ensure a healthy and complete urban tree canopy.

Property Maintenance

Maintaining residential properties is important to protect property values and preserve the character and desirability of residential neighborhoods. The Village requires properties to be maintained pursuant to adopted property maintenance standards, and has utilized new tools and programs that have improved compliance.

The Village should continue to monitor these improvements and work with property owners to enforce property maintenance requirements in private residential developments, particularly with regard to foreclosed units. Increasing fines charged by the Village for property maintenance code violations should also be considered.

The Village should also explore the creation of a property maintenance program to assist residents, particularly seniors, with affordable lawn cutting, snow removal, and other appropriate services.

"Cut-Through" Traffic

Residential neighborhoods are one of Downers Grove's most cherished assets and the residents value their homes and neighborhoods for the comfort and safety they provide. Non-local, or "cut through", traffic is a threat to neighborhoods, as motorists use quiet neighborhood streets as a means of bypassing traffic on more heavily-traveled routes. The residential neighborhoods in the northern area of the Village, adjacent to Ogden Avenue, may be the most susceptible due to the grid street-pattern which provides better predictability for motorists. Automobile dealerships should be prohibited from conducting test drives on residential streets which can also increase non-local traffic.

A combination of signage, traffic enforcement, and traffic management measures should be used to discourage cut-through traffic in all residential areas when it is identified as a problem, and a threat to a neighborhood's safety and residential quality of life. Through traffic should be routed around residential neighborhoods on arterial roadways and collector streets designed to carry higher volumes of traffic with minimal impact on residential areas.

Commercial Buffering

There are several areas throughout the Village where commercial areas abut residential neighborhoods. The use of horizontal and vertical buffering and screening, including berms, fencing, and landscaping, should be promoted to protect single-family neighborhoods from abutting commercial or industrial land uses.

The Village should identify areas where residential and commercial area adjacency is problematic and examine different programs to facilitate the use of buffering and screening techniques. Such initiatives might include establishing a program to promote screening improvements. Alternatively, the Village's landscape ordinance could be revised to require enhanced screening and an amortization schedule to ensure compliance within a set time frame.

Housing Affordability

According to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, housing is considered affordable when it does not cost more than 30% of a household's gross monthly income. This includes providing workforce housing – housing that is affordable to "critical service" employees. Additionally, providing a range of housing options allows residents to stay in Downers Grove to age in place. The Village currently meets the state's mandated goal for affordable housing and should continue to encourage a diversity of unit types, sizes, and prices to maintain these goals.

Residential Policy Recommendations

Note: Policies and recommendations are not listed in order of importance.

- Residential areas should provide for a variety of housing and dwelling unit types and densities, generally organized by dwelling types, lot-sizes, etc. as identified in the Land Use Plan.
- Senior housing, which includes multi-family residential and assisted- and extended-care facilities, should be provided in convenient locations to accommodate the needs of senior citizens within Downers Grove. Single-story homes should also be considered as another option for seniors who are able to live independently. This allows Downers Grove residents to age in place and remain in the community.
- Future multi-family development should be located near significant activity centers and along major roadways as well as a component of mixed-use development within Downtown Downers Grove. The zoning ordinance should be revised to allow for additional multi-family development as identified in the Land Use Plan and subarea plans.
- In determining the future location of multi-family housing, its ability to function as an important transitional land use should be considered. Where appropriate, the use of buffering, screening, transitioning density and intensity, and other separation requirements and techniques should be considered where non-residential uses are adjacent to residential areas to minimize land-use conflicts that may arise.
- A guide or tool should be created to educate residential property owners on options for preservation and redevelopment that is of a desired scale and character.
- As new development or redevelopment occurs, sidewalks should be provided by the developer/builder where the new sidewalk will connect to adjacent sidewalks to maintain continuity.
- Continue to require properties to be maintained in a manner that is compliant with the Village's adopted property maintenance standards.
- Consider developing a property maintenance program to assist qualifying residents, particularly seniors, with affordable lawn cutting snow removal, and other appropriate services.

- Consider voluntary and regulatory protections for the Village's notable historic homes, including its collection of Sears homes.
- The permitting process should accommodate residential renovation and redevelopment through a consistent, expedient, and thorough process.
- Continue to expand the sidewalk network to provide better connections between residential neighborhoods, parks, and schools, while being cognizant of the character of individual neighborhoods.
- Encourage sustainable energy production and green building initiatives in residential areas in a manner that respects the character, scale, and style of the neighborhoods.
- Encourage developers and builders to seek a green building rating through one of the many rating systems, including LEED®, Green Globes™, Energy Star® or the National Green Building Standards™.
- Consider requiring stormwater mitigation on residential properties, which may include controlling lot coverage, permeable pavers, preserving trees, and other Low Impact Development best practices. Any program that manages stormwater utility and lot coverage should be administered in an equitable manner.
- Promote historic preservation as a means to preserve the existing building stock and historic architectural character of the Village.
- Promote the Property Tax Assessment Freeze program to property owners as a means to maintain historic homes.
- Continue to replace parkway trees that have been removed to ensure a healthy and compete urban tree canopy.

5 Commercial Areas Plan

The Village of Downers Grove Commercial Areas Plan promotes high-quality commercial development. It presents recommendations that are intended to capitalize on the Village's strong position within the region, its excellent access to expressways and transit while at the same time diversifying the Village's tax base and providing residents with access to goods and services. The primary goal of the Commercial Areas Plan is to retain, attract and expand high-quality commercial retailers, service providers, and employers by addressing the location, size, and appearance of commercial areas.

The policies identified in the Commercial Areas Plan are intended to:

- Maintain and expand the range of goods and services provided throughout the Village;
- Strengthen the economy by creating more local jobs;
- Stabilize, diversify and expand the tax base;
- Enhance the quality and appearance of existing commercial areas and proposed commercial development; and,
- Minimize conflicts between commercial areas and surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The Commercial Areas Plan builds on the Land Use Plan which identifies seven (7) commercial land uses: Neighborhood Commercial, Corridor Commercial, Downtown/Mixed-Use Commercial, Low-Intensity Office, Office/Corporate Campus, Regional Commercial, and Light Industrial/Business Park. Policies for implementing recommendations for each commercial land use are discussed in this section and the location of each commercial land use is illustrated in the Commercial Areas Plan on map.

THE PRIMARY GOAL OF THE COMMERCIAL AREAS PLAN IS TO RETAIN, ATTRACT AND EXPAND HIGH-QUALITY COMMERCIAL RETAILERS, SERVICE PROVIDERS, AND EMPLOYERS BY ADDRESSING THE LOCATION, SIZE, AND APPEARANCE OF COMMERCIAL AREAS

Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood commercial areas serve local residents and provide the goods and services needed on a daily basis. These areas are composed of a mix of independent storefronts and small retail centers with a single anchor tenant, typically a grocery store. Given that Downers Grove is a mature community, its neighborhood commercial areas are well-established and on the whole, the Village is well-served by neighborhood commercial.

The Plan provides for moderate expansion of neighborhood commercial around key intersections and heavily-trafficked roads that are less desirable for residential uses. Maintaining neighborhood commercial areas throughout the community minimizes the need for residents to travel long distances to meet routine retail and service needs.

Corridor Commercial

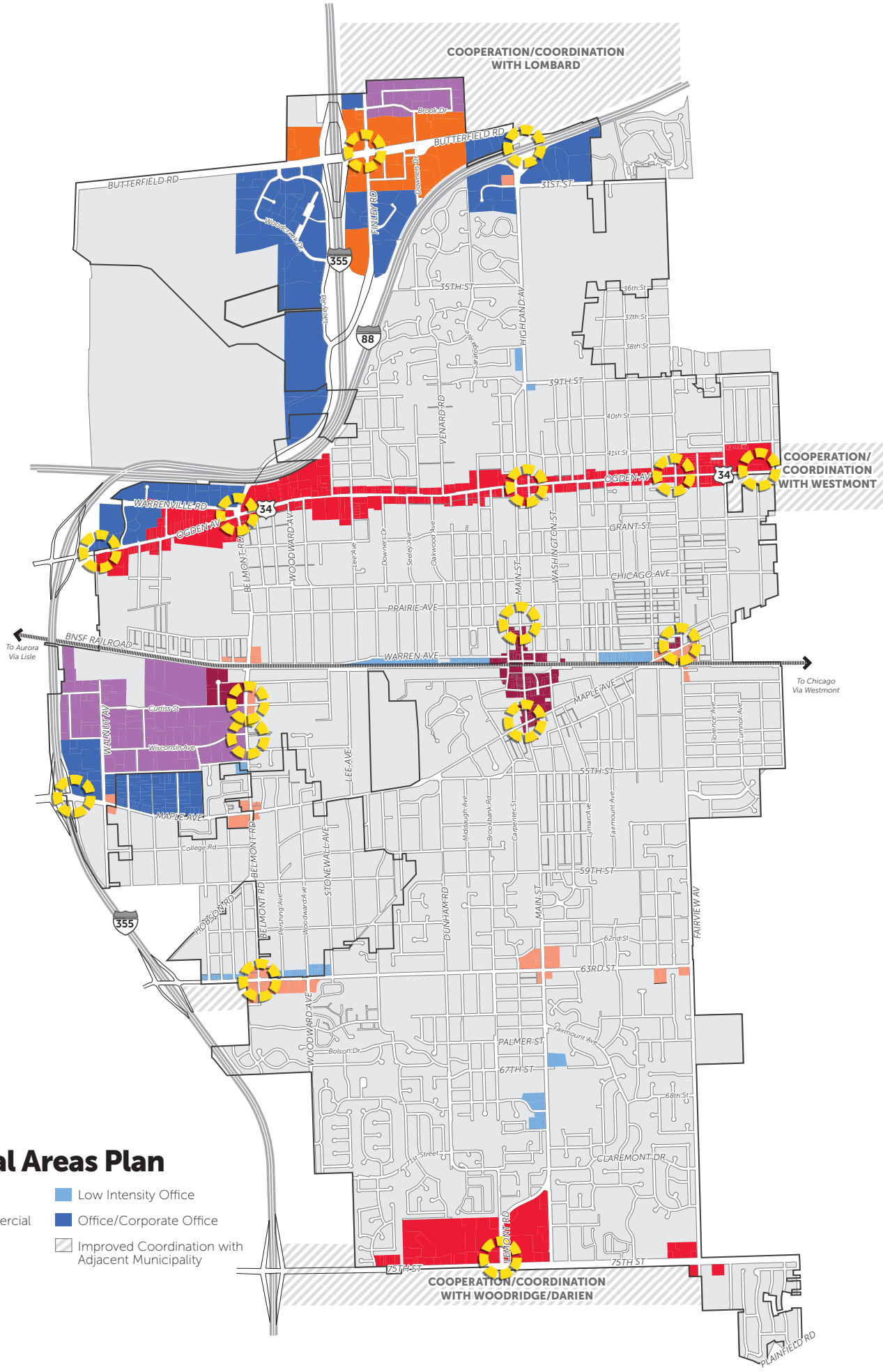
Corridor commercial areas are those areas that developed to cater to the automobile and are typically organized in a linear fashion. Uses include a blend of neighborhood-oriented commercial retail, offices, smaller regional commercial retail (such as auto dealers), service uses and multi-family uses.

The Village's areas of corridor commercial, including Ogden Avenue and 75th Street, should continue to contain a range of retail, service, office and business activities. These commercial areas have a unique character and should continue to function in their dual role within the Village by serving both the daily needs of local residents and providing commercial goods and services to the larger region.

Downtown/Mixed-Use

Downtown Downers Grove is characterized by a mix of uses, dense and compact development, and a pedestrian-friendly environment within which to shop, dine, work, and live. The Downtown area, anchored by the Main Street Metra station, provides a unique shopping destination within the community. As the symbolic heart of the Village, providing a unique atmosphere, it is vital that reinvestment, redevelopment, and new development reinforce these qualities and preserve and enhance the pedestrian-oriented atmosphere of Downtown Downers Grove.

To continue its success and vibrancy, a diverse mix of uses should be promoted and maintained Downtown, including retail, dining, entertainment, professional office and residential uses. Development should continue to reinforce the walkable nature of Downtown and buildings should be oriented toward the street and located at or near the sidewalk line.



Commercial Areas Plan

- Gateways
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Downtown/Mixed Use
- Corridor Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Light Industrial/ Business Park
- Low Intensity Office
- Office/Corporate Office
- Improved Coordination with Adjacent Municipality

Downtown Transition

Downtown Downers Grove is surrounded on all sides by established residential neighborhoods. Maintaining an adequate buffer is accomplished through a transition area where appropriate commercial and residential development of a compatible scale and character is permitted.

Downtown Office

Offices in Downtown should be encouraged to locate above the ground floor whenever possible in order to preserve these areas for retail businesses. If located on the ground floor, offices should maintain attractive window displays that are not covered by blinds or other materials in order to maintain visual interest for pedestrians.

Offices in converted houses provide an important transition area between the commercial activities of Downtown and nearby residential areas and should remain. Parking, loading, signage, lighting and business operations should be of a nature and scale that is compatible with surrounding residential uses.

Mixed-Use

The concept of mixed use refers to a building, set of buildings, area or neighborhood that is comprised of a range of land uses serving more than one purpose. A mixed use building contains multiple uses within the same structure, such as condominiums or offices above ground floor commercial uses. Mixed use areas are typically more compact and are typically considered more pedestrian friendly.

Mixed-use areas outside of the Downtown should be focused around the Village's transit infrastructure. The Village should encourage Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) so these areas can take advantage of transportation opportunities while maintaining commuter parking.

Detailed recommendations for Downtown Downers Grove are also provided in Section 9: Key Focus Area Plans.

Low-Intensity Office

Low-Intensity office uses typically include professional services such as medical, dental, legal and accounting. These uses are sensitive to their context in terms of scale, height, setback and building materials. This requires consideration of parking, loading, signage, lighting and business operations.

Office/Corporate Campus

These office uses include large-scale buildings and office parks that have a significant presence in Downers Grove and should continue to play an important role in the local economy. The Village should continue to support office development along the I-88, I-355, and Butterfield Road corridors to maximize visibility and minimize potentially negative impacts on residential areas. As prominent features along major regional roadways, office developments should be of high quality and reflect the character of the Village in the manner of the Esplanade and the Highland Landmark.

Regional Commercial

Regional commercial is defined by large-scale retail uses that rely on the ability to draw a customer base from the larger region. Based on its proximity to I-355 and I-88, the Village's primary regional commercial area is the Finley Road/Butterfield Road area. This area has a mix of corporate office uses, large shopping centers, hotels, and big box development.

In order to continue to stay competitive and draw from the surrounding region, reinvestment should occur to improve the aesthetics and function of regional commercial uses. Reinvestment will assist in retaining current businesses while also attracting new retailers and restaurants. To accomplish this, the Village should continue to work with the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation (DGEDC) and use the 2016 Economic Development Plan to Enhance the Sales Tax Base to identify strategies to address significant competition from other portions of the Butterfield Road corridor located in neighboring communities, including Yorktown Mall in Lombard and Oakbrook Shopping Center in Oakbrook Terrace.

Light Industrial/ Business Park

Light industrial and business park uses includes those uses dedicated to the design, assembly, processing, packaging, storage and transportation of products. Industrial uses in the Village are scattered throughout with the heaviest concentration located in the Oak Grove Commons Industrial Park and the Ellsworth Industrial Park. Other larger concentrations, although not formally organized within an industrial park, are located adjacent to the Burlington Northern railroad tracks with frontage on paralleling streets.

These uses should continue to be located in areas where they can capitalize on close proximity to regional transportation networks while minimizing negative impacts on residential neighborhoods.

Industrial uses, when organized into parks, provide a level of protection for the uses themselves and for surrounding uses. When isolated, these uses need to be compatible with surrounding and adjacent uses, with screening, buffering and other separation techniques used when appropriate and necessary.

The Plan identifies areas recommended for light industrial/business park uses. The Village should continue to enhance and promote these areas as appropriate for light industrial uses. Improvements should be made to existing buildings, parking lots and the public rights-of-way. The Village's industrial areas should be improved and upgraded as self-contained business areas with an emphasis on expanding existing businesses and targeting contemporary industrial users, including those with accessory retail components. Uses should be restricted to light industrial and office, thus protecting the area from the infiltration of non-compatible commercial, institutional, membership, or recreational uses. Within light industrial and business parks, the Village should enhance wayfinding and directory signage and improve telecommunication infrastructure to better accommodate the needs of modern industrial users.

The Belmont/Ellsworth Key Focus Area Plan offers further guidance that can be applied to the Village's other industrial areas.

Streetscaping

The Village should continue its installation of the streetscape program consisting of elements that strengthen the unified theme of commercial areas such as benches, bus shelters, trash and recycling cans, streetlights, way finding signage and other amenities. In coordination with IDOT where appropriate, the Village should facilitate desired right-of-way improvements including improved landscaping, lighting, and gateway signage consistent with the Key Focus Area Plans.

Overhead Utility Lines

Overhead utility lines are unsightly and detract from the character of the Village's commercial areas. New commercial development and infill development should be encouraged to bury on-site utility lines and screen utility boxes from view of the public rights-of-way. The Village should work with utility companies to bury existing overhead utility lines as properties redevelop. The burying of overhead utility lines should also be coordinated with other scheduled right-of-way improvements.

Commercial Gateway Enhancements

Many of the entry points to the Village occur in commercial areas. In these areas, gateway signage and other enhancements such as lighting, monument walls, landscaping and public art should be installed at highly visible locations to signify entry into Downers Grove and to distinguish the Village from adjacent communities. Gateways features will help reinforce an identity within each respective area.

Wayfinding and Directory Signage

Wayfinding and directory signage to key retail areas and community assets should be used at highly visible entry points in the Village's commercial areas. Wayfinding and directory signage is an important component of directing shoppers and motorists. In select situations, these types of signs can include both directory information as well as Village logos to reinforce an identity.

Development & Re-development

The Village should continue to promote development and redevelopment of commercial properties within areas that provide convenient and general commercial needs of the surrounding community.

To promote continued high-quality neighborhood commercial development, the following policies should be adopted:

- All parking and loading areas should be screened with landscaped berms and/or a combination of landscaping and hardscape materials;
- New and redeveloped commercial properties should be encouraged to provide 360 degree architecture; and
- Dumpster enclosures should be provided.

Vacant or Underutilized Properties

The activity and physical appearance of vacant or over-parked sites has a significant influence on how visitors and potential patrons to Downers Grove businesses perceive the community. The Village should promote the redevelopment of underutilized properties.

Stormwater Management

Improved stormwater management is a near- and long-term priority for the Village and should continue to be addressed in a comprehensive manner within all commercial areas. In addition to investments in public infrastructure, the Village should continue to ensure the Subdivision Control Ordinance and Stormwater and Floodplain Ordinance are regularly updated to reflect current design and stormwater practices. The Village should encourage the use of naturalized storm water retention and detention basin areas and should consider requiring pervious paving materials, to reduce long-term contributions to stormwater run-off. The Village should promote Low Impact Development (LID) best practices for commercial properties.

Façade Improvement Program

The Village should maintain a Façade Improvement Program to assist businesses and property owners with improvements to signage, façade improvements, landscaping, parking areas, and the modernization of aging structures and facilities.

Modernization

Residential, commercial, industrial and institutional properties all require modernization from time to time in order to remain competitive in the marketplace and to avoid becoming functionally obsolete. Modernization helps to achieve a balance between the past and the future by providing incremental improvements to existing buildings, properties, parking lots and public rights-of-way.

For commercial properties, there are four levels of modernization:

- **Upkeep** which includes the basic maintenance and repair of existing structures (e.g., new exterior paint or roof)
- **Renovation** which includes small-scale projects to update portions of existing structures (e.g., façade or sign improvements)
- **Expansion** which includes adding onto an existing structure (e.g., business addition)
- **Redevelopment** which includes partial or full demolition of an existing structure to construct a new one (e.g., demolition and new construction)

Commercial modernization is intended to replenish, rejuvenate and spur reinvestment in the Village's business sector and should not conflict with the promotion and protection of the Village's distinguishing character.

Aging Shopping Centers

Many of the Village's regional commercial areas are faced with the uncertainty of aging or outdated shopping centers.

Dealing with obsolete centers can be troublesome for many reasons. Frequently, they are owned by trusts, pension funds or pools of multiple owners who are more likely to be absentee owners. Additionally, the mortgage is long paid off which means that existing tenants, however marginal, are usually sufficient for these types of owners. Based on these and other factors, the need to remain competitive is not compelling.

The large land area and high visibility of shopping centers makes their maintenance and potential deterioration an important issue for the Village to address. The Village should require that commercial properties be maintained to an adopted standard to prevent their neglect and deterioration. Neglect and deterioration have environmental, fiscal, economic and aesthetic impacts on the Village as a whole.

Aging shopping centers can be modernized through several mechanisms:

- Signage
- Landscaping
- Improved access and circulation
- Modern tenant spaces/layouts
- Building orientation and visibility
- Outlots
- Parking lot maintenance

Business Improvement Funding Sources

Financial incentives are an effective tool that the Village can use to encourage businesses to make improvements to their properties. The Village should continue to utilize and consider additional incentives such as sales tax rebates, TIF, and SSA funds to provide assistance to businesses. Additional Village resources should also be dedicated to the pursuit of grants, low-interest loans, and other state and federal funds.

Commercial Design and Development Guidelines

The Village should expand and continue to implement Commercial Design & Development Guidelines to address corridor commercial issues such as appearance, signage clutter, service/parking screening, and access management in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

Regardless of size, a high level of design should be encouraged to ensure that commercial structures blend into adjacent residential areas with regard to built form, scale, walkability and pedestrian connectivity. The design should be human in scale and pedestrian friendly; and all buildings should be architecturally attractive and add value to the adjacent properties.

White Elephant Ordinance

Communities across the country are using several techniques to combat "big box" blight when a large stand-alone or anchor retailer closes and leaves a vacant store. Even before a new big box is approved, some communities are preparing for their eventual demise. While a developer or property owner has a financial incentive to fill a vacant space, other considerations (such as keeping out competition or the size and mass of the building) may inhibit them from filling a vacancy in a timely fashion. A municipality may draw from a large toolkit to avoid a situation which may encourage blight. Collectively, these regulatory tools are known as "white elephant ordinances."

The Village may choose to enact one or more techniques to combat "big box" blight when a large stand-alone or anchor retailer closes and leaves a vacant store. Potential considerations include: a bond to finance a large buildings demolition or maintenance should it ever become vacated; requiring developers to submit plans for reuse in case of vacancy as a condition of approval; requiring the vacating business to assist in marketing the property; and, limiting the use of restrictive covenants, particularly those that prohibit lease or sale to competitors.

Access Management

Commercial development should continue to be located primarily along the Village's arterials, near I-88 and I-355, and within close proximity to one of the Village's three Metra stations; however, improvements to access management are necessary for both existing and future development. In some areas, incremental commercial development has resulted in poor access management along major corridors where individual businesses have established one or more driveways located within close proximity to one another. This can be problematic with regards to both traffic and pedestrian safety and traffic flow.

The Village should work with other agencies, such as IDOT, as well as property owners to improve access management within corridor commercial areas in order to improve traffic flow. Along commercial corridors, the Village should work to minimize curb cuts, consolidate the number of access points, and facilitate cross-access easements and shared parking agreements. This increases safety for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists by minimizing points of conflict and creating predictability for the location and frequency of ingress and egress.

Permitting Process

It is important that the permitting process make it easy for property owners to reinvest in their businesses. It is recommended that the Village continue to monitor its program, making changes when appropriate, to ensure permits continue to be reviewed and processed in a timely fashion.

Parking

Parking areas throughout the Village should be safe and well-maintained. To achieve this, parking areas should consider both the automobile and the pedestrian to minimize light pollution and glare to neighboring properties.

A combination of perimeter landscaping, berms, masonry walls, and/or decorative wrought iron fencing can be used to effectively screen surface parking lots. Parking areas of significant size should also be improved with interior landscaped islands, ground cover, shade trees, and other landscape elements. Regardless of the size of private parking areas, the Village should encourage the regular repair and maintenance of parking surfaces.

In order to reduce the percent of land area devoted to surface parking, the Village should encourage shared parking agreements. Neighboring businesses with differing peak demand times for parking or businesses with a low volume of customers are best suited to enter into a shared parking agreement. This reduces the number of access points along a corridor and creates opportunities for additional green space or development.

In the case of Downtown, the Village should continue to plan for the provision of parking to accommodate business owners, employees, customers and commuters.

Regulation & Relocation of Uses

In order to maximize redevelopment potential the Village should continue to identify uses that are better suited for alternate sites or locations. Those businesses and sites should be evaluated on a case by case basis based on land use, regulatory issues and the respective needs of the particular business. Alternate sites should be identified and relocation assistance provided, where applicable, in order to ensure that viable businesses remain in the Village. Assistance can range from reimbursement of expenses to grants or loans for building and/or site improvements at an alternate location.

The Village should consider the use of tools such as stricter business licensing, a tool used minimally today, along with development moratoria, and amortization of nonconforming uses to achieve the desired type, size and location of commercial land uses.

Partnerships

The Village should continue to work with local economic development partners to attract, retain and expand businesses in Downers Grove. It is important that the Village support the efforts of the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation (DGEDC), Downers Grove Downtown Management Corporation (DGDMC), and Chamber630 to market and promote local businesses.

The Village should utilize the expertise of these partners to develop and implement a strategic marketing and recruitment plan for targeted businesses and store types. In partnership with these groups, the Village should also form a task force to identify opportunities to reduce the cost of doing business in Downers Grove and enhance the Village's position within the competitive landscape.

Commercial Areas Policy Recommendations

Note: Policies and recommendations are not listed in order of importance.

- A diverse mix of commercial uses should be promoted and maintained in Downtown Downers Grove.
- Corridor commercial areas should continue to function in the dual role of providing daily needs to local residents as well as providing commercial goods and services to the larger region.
- The Village should consider the use of tools such as stricter business licensing, development moratoria, and amortization of nonconforming uses to achieve the desired type, size and location of commercial land uses.
- The Village should conduct a thorough review of permitted uses in the zoning ordinance on a regular basis to ensure compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Reinvestment should occur in the Finley Road/Butterfield Road area to improve the aesthetics and function of regional commercial uses.
- The Village should continue to support office development along the I-88, I-355, and Butterfield Road corridors.
- As prominent features along major regional roadways, office developments should be of a high quality and reflect the character of the Village.
- Development in Downtown should reinforce the walkable nature by orienting buildings toward the street and locating them at or near the sidewalk line.
- The Village's industrial areas should be improved and upgraded as self-contained business areas with an emphasis on expanding existing businesses and attracting contemporary industrial users.
- The Village should enhance wayfinding and directory signage and improve telecommunication infrastructure within light industrial/business parks to better accommodate the needs of modern industrial users.
- The Village should work cooperatively with neighboring communities with adjacent and integrated commercial districts to address issues that transcend municipal boundaries to achieve and maintain mutually beneficial healthy commercial areas.

- The Village should consider expanding the use of Special Service Areas (SSAs) to accomplish stated goals and objectives for the Village's commercial areas in conjunction with those benefiting.
- Offices in Downtown should be encouraged to locate above the ground floor whenever possible in order to preserve ground floor units for retail businesses.
- Mixed-use areas outside of Downtown should be focused around the Village's transit infrastructure, especially through the use of transit-oriented development (TOD) principles.
- The Village's light industrial and business park uses should continue to be located in areas where they can capitalize on close proximity to regional transportation networks while minimizing impacts on residential neighborhoods.
- The Village should continue to promote and enhance light industrial/ business park areas including improvements to existing buildings, parking lots and the public rights-of-way.
- Uses within light industrial/ business park areas should be restricted in order to protect these areas from the infiltration of non-compatible commercial, institutional, membership or recreational uses.
- Continue to facilitate shared parking areas to reduce the total number of parking spaces required within a given commercial area, thus reducing the land devoted to parking and creating opportunities for additional green space or development density.
- Expand and continue to implement commercial design and development guidelines.
- Promote and encourage the relocation of the Post Office truck operations from Downtown while maintaining the postal retail functions.
- Encourage sustainable energy and green building initiatives in the Village's commercial areas.
- The Village should enhance wayfinding to the subareas of Downtown, Belmont/Ellsworth, Butterfield, Fairview, Ogden Avenue, 63rd Street, and 75th Street.
- The Village should partner with shopping center management companies to add "Downers Grove" into the name of the center as a branding and placemaking strategy for the Village.
- Promote historic preservation as a means to preserve the existing commercial building stock and historic architectural character of the Village.
- Promote the federal tax credit program to commercial property owners as a means to maintain historic commercial properties.

6 Transportation Plan

Downers Grove is a mature community with an established street network. The Transportation Plan acknowledges the limited opportunities to solve issues through the construction of new streets and instead focuses on strategic improvements to the Village's existing network of roads, public transit, and pedestrian and bicycle routes. This collection of improvements strives to maintain a balanced transportation system that ensures the safe and efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.

The Plan addresses two types of transportation networks:

- The **Transportation System**, which primarily refers to the street network that accommodates motor vehicle circulation throughout the Village.
- The **Trails and Transit System**, which primarily refers to the trail network, bus routes, and commuter rail lines traversing the Village.

A BALANCED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ENSURES THE SAFE AND EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF VEHICLES, PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

Functional Classification of Streets

Streets in Downers Grove are classified according to their character and intended service; a process known as functional classification. Individual streets work together in a network to accommodate the movement of goods and people in the most efficient manner possible.

Functional classification allows for an understanding of an urbanized area's street hierarchy, which contains five categories:

- Interstates,
- Principal Arterial,
- Minor Arterial,
- Collector Street, and
- Local Street

The Illinois Department of Transportation in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation assigns streets these categories is on a five-year basis. This allows for an orderly network of streets that maintain access to private property through smaller streets while connecting to larger streets that move traffic more efficiently. Downers Grove's street classification includes the following:

Interstates

Interstates are divided highways of three lanes or more that provide a high degree of service to through traffic, are designed with no direct access to individual uses on abutting properties, and generally have grade-separated intersections. The two interstates providing access to and from Downers Grove are I-88 and I-355.

Principal Arterials

Principal arterials are generally wider, faster, and have limited access along the route to allow travel to and through an area. These roads are regional in nature and link interstate, intra-state and regional activity centers. They are built to accommodate the highest traffic volume and longest travel routes. The principal arterials serving the Village are Butterfield Road, Ogden Avenue, and 75th Street.

Minor Arterials

The minor arterial street system supplements and supports the principal arterials by providing trips of moderate length and lower travel mobility. The east-west minor arterials serving the Village are Warren Avenue/Rogers Avenue, Maple Avenue/55th Street, 63rd Street, Warrenville Road, and segments of 31st Street. The north-south minor arterials serving the Village are Main Street/Lemont Road, Fairview Avenue, Woodward Avenue, Belmont Road, Finley Road, Walnut Avenue, and Highland Avenue (north of 39th Street).

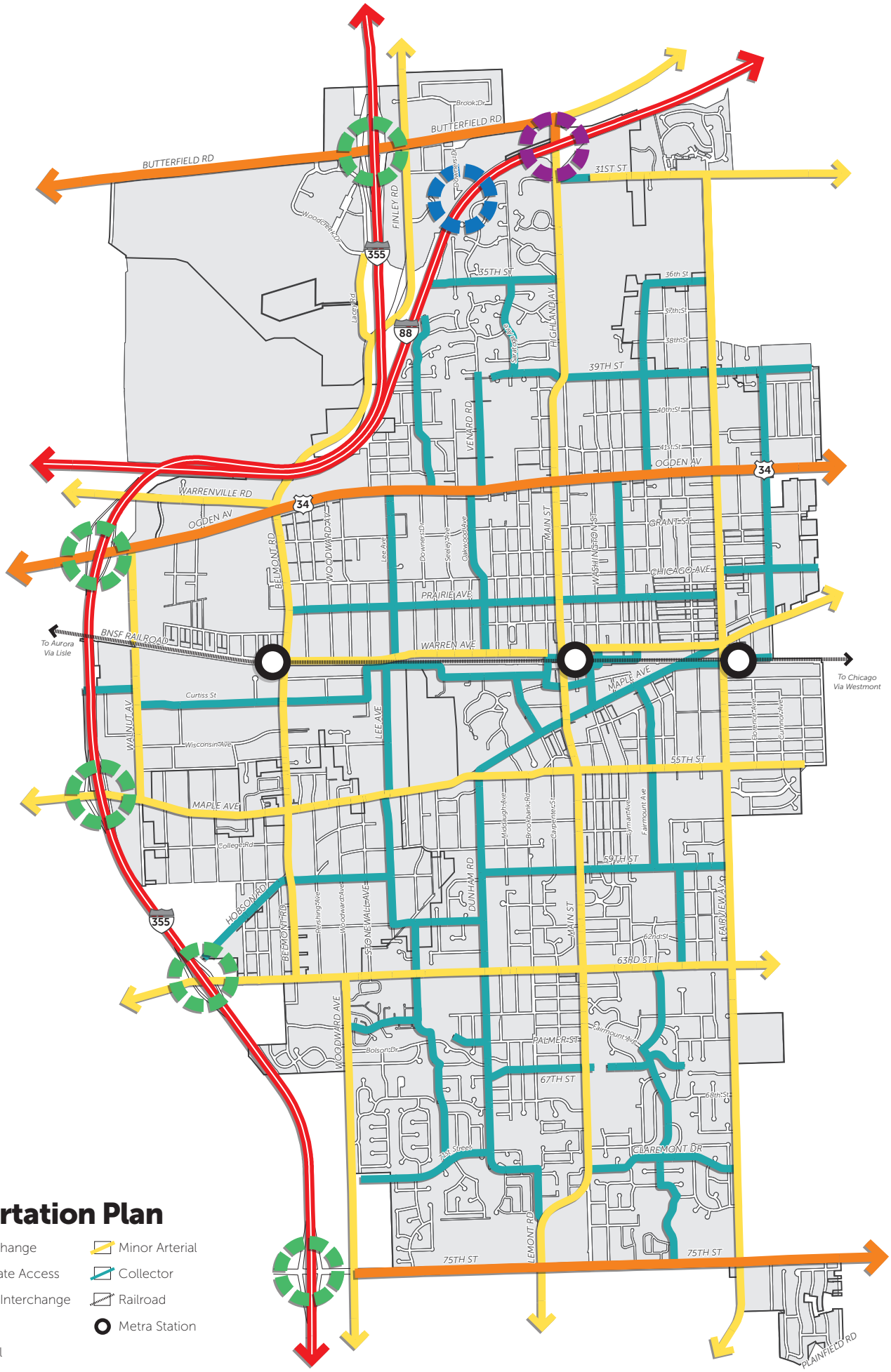
Collector Streets

Collector streets prioritize access to property over mobility and are more locally-oriented. Collectors connect local streets to arterials to create a network of traffic movement. Examples of collector streets are Dunham Road, Prairie Avenue, and 35th Street.

Collector streets located within the Village of Downers Grove corporate limits are generally the responsibility of the Village. In some instances, collector streets are planned together with other transportation agencies or adjacent communities.

Local Streets

The local street system is made up of all streets not belonging to one of the above-mentioned roadway classes. Local streets are generally shorter than other roadway types and have frequent controlled intersections. Compared to other roadway types, local streets are narrower with slower speeds through areas such as residential neighborhoods. Local streets provide direct access to properties and accommodate shorter trips to adjoining collector or arterial streets.



Transportation Plan

- Interstate Interchange
- Remove Interstate Access
- Improve to Full Interchange
- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Collector
- Railroad
- Metra Station

Jurisdiction

The Village of Downers Grove is served by a system of roadways under the jurisdiction of the State of Illinois (IDOT), the Illinois Tollway Authority, DuPage County, Lisle and Downers Grove Townships, and the Village of Downers Grove. With several roads or road segments outside of the Village's jurisdiction, its ability to make improvements or control access to adjoining properties is limited.

Realizing the Comprehensive Plan's transportation-related goals and objectives will require coordination and cooperation between these entities. Traffic control devices, an important component of public safety and efficient traffic movement, will also require cooperation and coordination due to the fact that the Village maintains only 19 of the 76 traffic signals within its jurisdiction.

Coordination & Cooperation

Maintenance and improvements to I-88, I-355, Butterfield Road (IL 56), and Ogden Avenue (US 34) fall under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Tollway and IDOT. 55th Street, 63rd Street, and 75th Street, which provide important connections to I-355, are under the jurisdiction of DuPage County. The Village should work with these agencies to ensure that improvements are made to these roadways to continue to promote efficient and effective vehicular circulation.

Interstate Access

In 2007, the Illinois Tollway completed construction of the I-355 south extension which provided a new connection to I-80. This served to strengthen Downers Grove's position within the larger region as an employment and commercial center due to existing interchanges at Butterfield Road, Ogden Avenue, Maple Avenue/55th Street, 63rd Street, and 75th Street.

Interstate 88 and Interstate 355 pass through the Village and approximate much of the Village's northern and western borders. Access to I-88 provides an important east-west connection in the region. Highland Avenue provides access in three directions but does not provide a westbound entrance. Westbound traffic wishing to travel I-88 must do so at Downers Drive, more than a 1/2 mile west of the Highland Avenue interchange. This configuration significantly impacts both transportation and land use in the area. The Transportation Plan seeks to address this issue through the closing of the exit at Downers Drive and the creation of westbound access to I-88 from Highland Avenue.

Circulation & Access

One-way Street Evaluation

When used appropriately, one-way streets serve to increase roadway capacity and provide additional on-street parking. If too many one-way streets are focused in one area, however, they can have a negative impact on traffic flow and become an obstacle to be overcome by potential business patrons. Within the Village, one-way streets are most appropriate in Downtown and around the Fairview Metra station due to pedestrian traffic and the prevalence of on- and off-street parking. The Village should conduct a review of the existing one-way street configuration in Downtown Downers Grove, identify potential routes for one-way implementation, consider alterations to existing traffic patterns and accommodate on-street parking where appropriate.

North-South Traffic Flow

North-south movement of automobiles is hampered by the BNSF railroad which crosses through the middle of the Village. The frequency of trains and presence of at-grade railroad crossings prevent any smooth or predictable north-south traffic flow. The recently constructed Belmont Road is the only grade-separated crossing in the Village and has greatly improved movement on the Village's west side. The Village should continue to monitor the impact of its construction on traffic flow throughout the Village, including Downtown, before committing to another grade separated crossing elsewhere in the Village.

Intelligent Traffic Systems (ITS)

Implemented in coordination with improvements to the current configuration of the transportation network, Intelligent Traffic Systems (ITS) offer a wide range of opportunities for the Village to increase the efficiency and safety of its existing and future transportation systems. Intelligent Traffic Systems utilize evolving technologies to make transportation more efficient, provide more options for travel and provide better information to travelers.

Specific forms of ITS that the Village of Downers Grove should consider as it continues to grow are traffic signal priority (TSP) and coordinated 'intelligent' signal timing along key corridors. TSP prioritizes public transportation vehicles over personal vehicles and ultimately reduces trip times of public transportation. Intelligent signal timing also improves the flow of traffic along busy corridors by changing the cadence of signal changes to increase efficiency.

The Village has synchronized systems on Main Street and Fairview Avenue and should consider future installations of these synchronized signals based on current and projected traffic volumes and areas that experience peak-hour congestion, such as Ogden Avenue and the areas around the Village's Metra stations. The Village should also work with BNSF to consider changes to the location of train stops to minimize the amount of time that gates are closed and traffic is stopped.

Trails, Bikeways & Pedestrian Mobility

The Village of Downers Grove has several pedestrian and bicycle trails and pathways that represent a non-motorized transportation alternative. The Village has also planned for the installation of several miles of both on-street and off-street facilities throughout the Village. The Village of Downers Grove should continue to improve transportation mode choice and encourage healthy living through enhanced pedestrian mobility.

One of the biggest challenges facing pedestrians is the crossing of major arterials like Ogden Avenue, 55th Street, 63rd Street, 75th Street, and Highland Avenue. Factors that lead to this difficulty include the distance between signals and the volume of traffic. The Village should continue to work with IDOT and DuPage County exploring options to address these issues, including longer crossing times, pedestrian actuated signals, and potentials for mid-block crossings (HAWK beacons).

Pedestrian Mobility & Friendliness

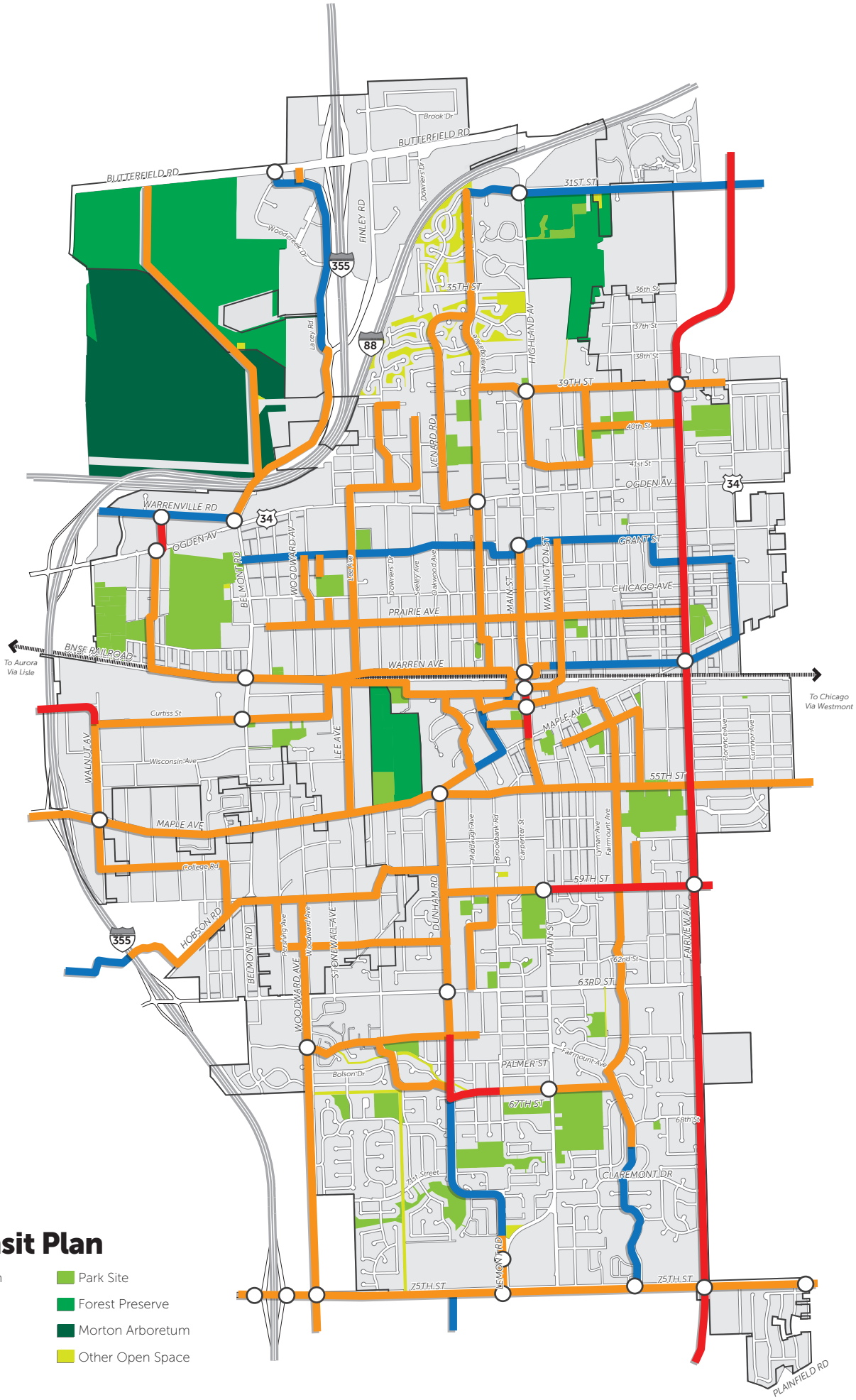
With the exception of Downtown, Downers Grove's commercial areas were developed to cater to the automobile, with pedestrians and patrons who arrive by other modes of transportation mostly an afterthought. The Village should promote improvements within the commercial corridors to improve pedestrian affordances including landscaping on public and private property, closing gaps in the sidewalk network and creating a safe environment through physical separation.

As a measure of promoting pedestrian-friendliness, the Village should continue to install sidewalks and reduce curb cuts along the entire length of commercial corridors, continue to require pedestrian connections on private property, establishing a complete pedestrian network on both sides of the corridor and addressing some of the most significant pedestrian and accessibility issues for the area. The Village should also consider streetscaping enhancements to provide pedestrian amenities such as benches, bus shelters, trash cans, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and wayfinding signage.

Bicycle Mobility & Safety

The Village should continue to implement the recommendations of the Village Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2013) which is the foundation for the Trails and Transit Plan. While the recommendations of the Village Bikeway Plan and the Trails and Transit Plan provide a solid foundation, the Village should create a Trails Master Plan that incorporates the recommendations of the Bikeway Plan, in addition to input from the Park District, DuPage County, regional agencies such as CMAP, and pertinent input from the community.

Although the Village Bikeway Plan contemplates a complete network of bicycle access, there are areas of the Village that are not accommodated. Bicycle parking at the edge of downtown and at commuter stations should be provided. Continuity of bikeways is of utmost importance for encouraging bicycle travel and ensuring safety. Where possible, the Village should remove unnecessary obstacles to safe and efficient bicycle riding. This includes evaluating the location and frequency of curb cuts.



Active Transit Plan

- Existing Bike Lane/Path
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Propoesd Bike Path
- Bike Path Signalized Intersection
- Park Site
- Forest Preserve
- Morton Arboretum
- Other Open Space

Trail Safety

In addition to maintaining and enhancing existing trail system components, new bikeways and trails should consist of a combination of on-street and off-street configurations along select minor arterials and collector streets. On streets where pedestrian and bicycle traffic is to be promoted, adequate rights-of-way should be reserved for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and safe crossings along busy roadways. Traffic speeds should also be controlled.

Connecting to Community Assets

By providing direct and efficient connections to important destinations throughout the Village, residents will be given a greater range of options in how they travel to work, shop, dine or play. Bikeways and trails should establish connections to existing and proposed parks and open space areas as well as major destinations throughout the Village including schools, healthcare facilities, DuPage County Forest Preserve areas, and other community service providers. Connections should also be established between residential areas and existing and proposed future employment centers and shopping destinations within the Village.

Complete Streets

Bicycling, whether for recreation or business, should be encouraged as a mode of transportation. To provide a safe environment for both bicyclists and pedestrians, the Village should explore a complete street policy as noted below. Complete streets are designed and operated to balance the needs of different transportation modes and account for pedestrian, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. A complete street network makes it easier to bicycle to work, cross the street and walk to shops in a safe manner.

A Complete Streets policy requires new road projects and road repair projects to accommodate all users throughout the development process: design, engineering, planning, and construction. Specific Complete Streets elements vary according to the specific conditions and context but may include sidewalks, bike lanes, accessibility improvements, pedestrian refuge islands, transit station improvements, bump outs and curb extensions, and/or raised crosswalks. The Village should adopt a Complete Streets policy to accommodate all users of the road network.

Sidewalks

The Village has an extensive sidewalk network where 95% of street segments have sidewalks on at least one side. The Village's current sidewalk policy seeks to maintain the existing sidewalk system throughout the Village and considers constructing new sidewalks in response to resident requests. The construction of traditional sidewalks may negatively impact the character of some neighborhoods. Alternative solutions to traditional sidewalk construction should be considered in sensitive areas where, for example, such improvements negatively impact existing parkway trees.

In downtown, and other commercial areas, sidewalks should exist on both sides of public rights-of-way to facilitate pedestrian mobility throughout this area and to maintain connectivity with nearby neighborhoods.

Sidewalk Program

The Village should continue its program to maintain the existing sidewalk system and consider the construction of new sidewalks in response to resident requests. Repair work to existing sidewalks, such as the removal and replacement of individual sidewalk sections, should continue to be based on evaluations of concrete deterioration and trip hazards.

Pedestrian Safety

In addition to sidewalk improvements, the Village should consider improvements to pedestrian crossings at all signalized intersections as they are the safest place for pedestrians to cross. Pedestrian crossings at intersections should be well lit and clearly demarcated to enhance pedestrian safety. Potential improvements include amenities such as brick pavers, street and pedestrian lighting, crosswalk signage, and pedestrian islands.

Transit & Commuter Facilities

Downers Grove is served by six Pace bus routes (313, 715, 722, 821, 834, and 888), three stations along Metra's Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) commuter rail line, and five PACE-operated commuter shuttle routes (461, 462, 463, 465 and 877). These services are heavily utilized by residents and commuters from outside of the Village. For example, according to Metra's 2014 Origination-Destination Survey (the most recent year for which ridership data is available); over 4,200 people boarded a train in Downers Grove during the typical weekday.

Activity Generators

There may also be opportunities to improve use rates in areas currently served by transit. Commercial areas and employment centers represent large pools of potential transit riders and expanding transit use in these areas would reduce the number of vehicle trips generated and reduce congestion. The Village should work with area employers and businesses to promote the use of public transit, carpooling, walking and bicycling.

Underserved Areas

The Village's excellent access to transit was identified as a key strength by the community. There are opportunities to improve and expand existing services. While the Village as a whole has excellent access to transit, there are areas where service is limited and residents have no direct access to public transportation.

The Village should work with Pace to modify routes and explore the potential for expanded service to residential areas. These modified or new routes should provide additional service to non-commuters and improve transit linkages between residential neighborhoods, employment centers, and commercial areas. The Village should also continue to work with Metra in providing coordinated shuttle service to commuters and residents.

Comprehensive Transit Plan

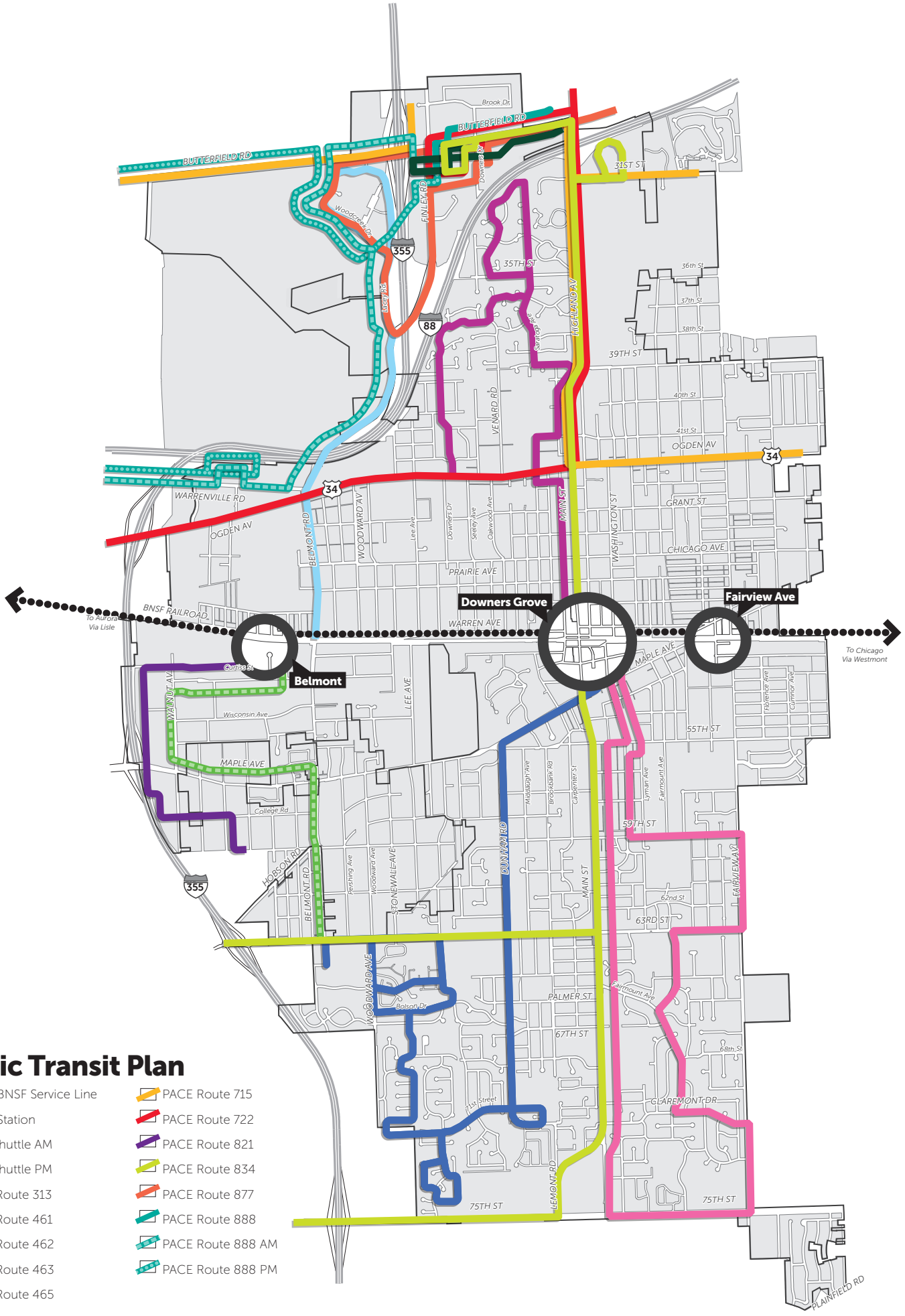
The Trails and Transit Plan identifies existing transit routes throughout the Village. The Trails and Transit Plan also identifies several possible community destinations and traffic generators as a potential starting point for the modification of Pace bus routes. The Village should create a Comprehensive Transit Plan that identifies key traffic generators and destinations within the Village and ensures that these areas are adequately served by Metra, Pace Bus routes and other modes of alternative transportation.

Parking

A vital component to the success of Downtown is the location and availability of parking. This is especially true given the access to and frequency of commuter rail service in Downers Grove. Established standards state that a safe, walkable distance from parking to a transit station is 1/4 mile. Given that much of the community (and potential riders) are beyond this area, certain improvements should be made and/or maintained. Bus service provides a link for riders to the train stations but parking for automobiles should also be accommodated at each station. The Village should monitor improvements and provisions for commuters. For example, the Village may facilitate a "parking permit exchange" to ensure that commuters park on the same side of the tracks on which they live. This provides convenience and safety not only to the commuters themselves but also to other travelling motorists by eliminating unnecessary traffic attempting to cross the railroad tracks.

Whether adequacy of parking is a real or perceived problem in Downtown, the Village should conduct a Downtown circulation and parking needs assessment. The Village should also consider new technologies to address circulation, parking and permitting, including the increased use of car and bike sharing programs and the potential for driverless vehicles in the future. This ensures that commuters, residents, visitors and businesses will be accommodated with accessible and efficient parking.

In order to promote other modes of transportation, the Village should incentivize parking for motorcycles, scooters, and bicycles where appropriate. With the expansion of car share programs (eg. Zipcar) and bike share programs, the Village should encourage property owners to dedicate parking for car sharing if these services are expanded into Downers Grove.


Public Transit Plan
Metra BNSF Service Line
Metra Station
West Shuttle AM
West Shuttle PM
PACE Route 313
PACE Route 461
PACE Route 462
PACE Route 463
PACE Route 465
PACE Route 715
PACE Route 722
PACE Route 821
PACE Route 834
PACE Route 877
PACE Route 888
PACE Route 888 AM
PACE Route 888 PM
Downers Grove
Belmont
Fairview Ave
BUTTERFIELD RD
BNSF RAILROAD
To Aurora Via Lisle
To Chicago Via Westmont
WARRENVILLE RD
OGDEN AV
WARREN AVE
MAPLE AVE
PRAIRIE AVE
CHICAGO AVE
GRANT ST
31ST ST
35TH ST
39TH ST
55TH ST
59TH ST
63RD ST
67TH ST
75TH ST
PALMER ST
CLAREMONT DR
PLAINFIELD RD
FINLEY RD
VENARD RD
HIGHLAND AV
WOODWARD AV
BELMONT RD
MAIN ST
WASHINGTON ST
LEE AVE
WALNUT AV
HOBSON RD
STONEWALL AVE
DUNHAM RD
FAIRVIEW AV
355
88
34

Transportation System Policy Recommendations

Note: Policies and recommendations are not listed in order of importance.

- Protect and improve the function of the street network through controlled access, land-use decisions, and street/intersection design improvements.
- Work closely with existing business owners to consolidate curb cuts by providing cross access between and shared access into businesses wherever possible.
- Work with relevant transportation agencies to ensure that improvements are made to continue to promote efficient and effective vehicular circulation.
- Conduct a review of the existing one-way street configuration in Downtown Downers Grove, identify potential routes for one-way implementation, consider alterations to existing traffic patterns and accommodate off-street parking where appropriate.
- Review the effectiveness of the Belmont Road grade separation as a model for other crossings.
- Parking areas, whether publicly or privately maintained, should be safe and well-maintained by emphasizing pedestrian-scaled lighting, appropriate screening, interior landscaped islands, and other landscape elements as appropriate.
- Environmentally friendly stormwater management practices should be encouraged within parking areas. Native plantings, swales, rain gardens, and pervious pavers can be used to improve stormwater management while being less expensive to install and maintain than traditional curb-and-gutter and landscaping.

- The Village should continue to plan for the provision of adequate parking in Downtown Downers Grove particularly as it relates to commuter parking.
- The Village should evaluate the capacity of the existing street network to ensure adequate circulation and to minimize cut-through traffic on residential neighborhoods.
- Continue to monitor land economics and parking demands, identifying opportunities to consolidate surface parking lots into parking structures to address parking problems, while at the same time creating new development opportunities within Downtown.
- The Village should evaluate the need, potential, and feasibility of constructing a parking structure on the north side of Downtown.
- As electric cars become more prevalent, the Village should find opportunities to locate charging stations throughout the Village.
- As car share and bike share programs become more prevalent, the Village should explore opportunities to locate car share and bike share spaces throughout the Village.

Trails & Transit Policy Recommendations

Note: Policies and recommendations are not listed in order of importance.

- Continue to coordinate bikeway and trail planning and implementation efforts with public agencies such as DuPage County, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, Downers Grove Park District, Downers Grove Township, Lisle Township, York Township, neighboring municipalities and park districts and others.
- Work with relevant agencies to secure funds, such as grants, to create additional trail connections and new segments.
- As development occurs, the Village should require the establishment of new route segments within proposed developments that link to existing or proposed future trail facilities in the Village. Significant developments should also be evaluated for pedestrian mobility and amenities to ensure that pedestrian movements are accommodated.
- Balance the needs of existing property owners with the preservation of environmental features and the requirements of a new trail system that will serve the entire community. Strategies such as public access easements should be explored in established areas where new trail connections are desired.
- Promote improvements to increase pedestrian affordances, including landscaping on public and private property, closing gaps in the sidewalk network and creating a safe environment through physical separation.

- Continue to maintain sidewalks throughout the Village. Along commercial corridors, install sidewalks annually based on established priority and reduce curb cuts along the entire length of commercial corridors, to establish a complete pedestrian network.
- Consider streetscaping enhancements to provide pedestrian amenities such as benches, bus shelters, trash cans, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and wayfinding signage.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation and safety throughout the Village with an emphasis on safer and more convenient routes for non-motorized traffic.
- Expand the Village's network of trails and sidewalks to provide better connections between the Village's residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, Downtown, and other commercial areas.
- Ensure that levels of public transit service are maintained and enhanced throughout the Village, including the continued operation of the schedules of all three of the Metra Station within the Village.
- Continue to work with PACE to ensure the communter shuttle bus system meets the needs of residents
- Create a comprehensive transit plan that identifies key traffic generators and destinations to ensure these locations are served adequately by established transit providers and other modes where appropriate.
- In order to improve pedestrians' safety and overall mobility, the Village should partner with Metra and BNSF to explore a grade separated pedestrian tunnel at the Downers Grove Main Street Metra Station.
- The Village should consider creating a bike rack request system on the Village website. This would allow residents and businesses to request bike racks to be placed where requested.

7 Parks, Open Space & Natural Resources

The Community's parks, open space, and environmental features contribute significantly to its overall quality of life, image, character, desirability, and aesthetics. This includes dozens of parks, facilities and open space areas interspersed by open streams, significant wooded areas, and other environmental features. These areas represent both ecological assets and active and passive recreational amenities for the community. In addition to ensuring the protection and enhancement of parks, open space, and environmental features, a primary goal of the Parks, Open Space & Natural Resources Plan is to improve public access to these areas.

The purpose of the Parks, Open Space & Natural Resource Areas Plan is to:

- Identify existing open spaces and recreation facilities within the Village and County
- Identify natural systems within the village
- Provide recommendations to ensure that ample and quality open space continue to serve the community
- Provide recommendations to maintain and improve the health of environmental systems throughout the Village

PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCES REPRESENT BOTH ECOLOGICAL ASSETS AND ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATIONAL AMENITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY

Downers Grove Park District

Parks in the Village are owned, maintained, and managed by the Downers Grove Park District, an independent government with its own elected board, that provides both active and passive recreation options including ball fields, tennis courts, a nine-hole golf course, community gardening, a remnant prairie and nature preserve with interpretive center, the Downers Grove historical museum, a 69,000 square foot, state-of-the-art Recreation and Fitness Center, and the historic Lincoln Center, a 45,000 square foot community center that once served as the Village's first school.

The Park District's mission is: Enriching our community through natural area preservation and exceptional recreation, parks and facilities that inspire memorable experiences.

NRPA Standards

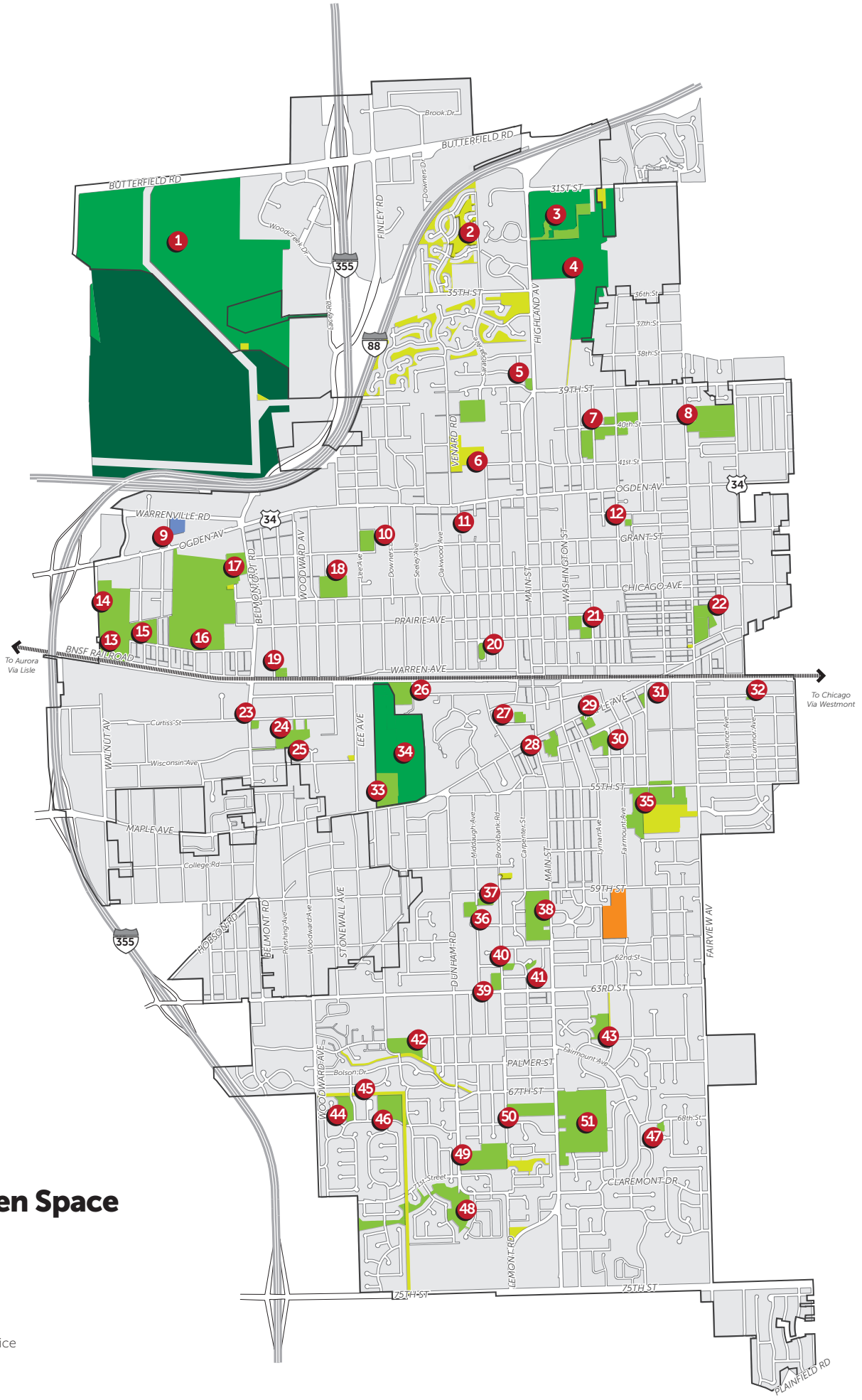
The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) recommend a standard of 10 acres of open space for every 1,000 residents. Based upon the Village's estimated population of 48,000, this would equate to a recommended service level of 480 acres. The Downers Grove Park District manages 48 parks in the Village comprising over 600 acres, exceeding the standards established by the NRPA.

Public Areas Beautification Plan

During the public input process, the community expressed a desire for additional 'greening' of the Village through the use of beautification projects, landscaping, tree plantings, and enhancements to public areas. The Village should work with the Park District to create a community-wide Public Areas Beautification Plan including recommendations for enhancing and expanding existing green space and creating new green space and community gateways.

Parks & Open Space

1. Hidden Lake Forest Preserve
2. Northside Park
3. William F. Sherman, Jr. Interpretive Center
4. Lyman Woods
5. Highland & 39th
6. Doerhoefer Park (41st & Saratoga)
7. Wallingford Park (41st & Earlston)
8. Whitlock Park (40th & Fairview)
9. Administrative Office
10. Lee & Grant Park
11. Downer Burial Place
12. Sterling & Davis
13. Burlington & Walnut
14. Walnut Avenue
15. Belmont Prairie
16. Downers Grove Park District Golf Course
17. Downers Grove Park District Recreation Center
18. Hoopers Hollow
19. Loy Park
20. Prince Pond
21. Washington Park
22. Hummer Park
23. Belmont & Curtiss
24. Sterling North Park
25. Bending Oaks
26. Gilbert Park
27. Fishel Park
28. Lincoln Community Center, Constitution Park
29. Downers Grove Park District Museum/Blodgett House at Wandschneider Park
30. Randall Park
31. Blodgett & Elmwood
32. 2nd & Cumnor
33. Memorial Park
34. Maple Grove Forest Preserve
35. Patriots Park - Barth Pond
36. Walter B. Carroll
37. Frankowiak Park
38. Ebersold Park
39. 62nd & Brookbank
40. 63rd & Brookbank
41. 62nd & Carpenter
42. Ruth K. Powers Park
43. Spring Park
44. Stonewall & Concord
45. NICOR (Easement)
46. Concord Square
47. Blackburn & 68th
48. Dunham Place
49. O'Brien Park
50. Mar-Duke Farm
51. McCollum Park



Parks & Open Space

- Park Site
- Forest Preserve
- Morton Arboretum
- Other Open Space
- Park District Admin Office
- YMCA

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

The mission of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County is to acquire and hold lands containing forests, prairies, wetlands, and associated plant communities or lands capable of being restored to such natural conditions for the purpose of protecting and preserving the flora, fauna, and scenic beauty for the education, pleasure, and recreation of its citizens. In total, the Forest Preserve District maintains 25,000 acres of land at over 60 forest preserves, three of which are located in, or adjacent to, Downers Grove.

Hidden Lake Forest Preserve includes two lakes and the East Branch of the DuPage River, which encourages bicycling, boating, fishing, hiking, picnicking, wildlife watching, and winter activities. Hidden Lake is 390 acres in size and includes two miles of trails.

Maple Grove Forest Preserve is one of the oldest forest preserves in DuPage County and is the last remaining remnant of the vast maple forest that eventually became Downers Grove. It is an 82-acre preserve with passive recreation activities such as bicycling, hiking, picnicking, and wildlife watching.

Lyman Woods contains 135 acres with a trail system and the William F. Sherman Jr. Interpretive Center. The preserve is owned jointly by the Village of Downers Grove, Downers Grove Park District and the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, and operated by the Downers Grove Park District.

The Village should continue to work with the Park District and the Forest Preserve District to provide access to these valuable community assets. Forest preserves should also serve as anchors to the Village's planned bikeway network.

Private Recreation Facilities

In addition to the recreational facilities and parks provided by public entities, there are several private recreational facilities within the community. These facilities play an important role in the community, providing residents with access to recreational amenities that may not be provided by the Park District or other public agency.

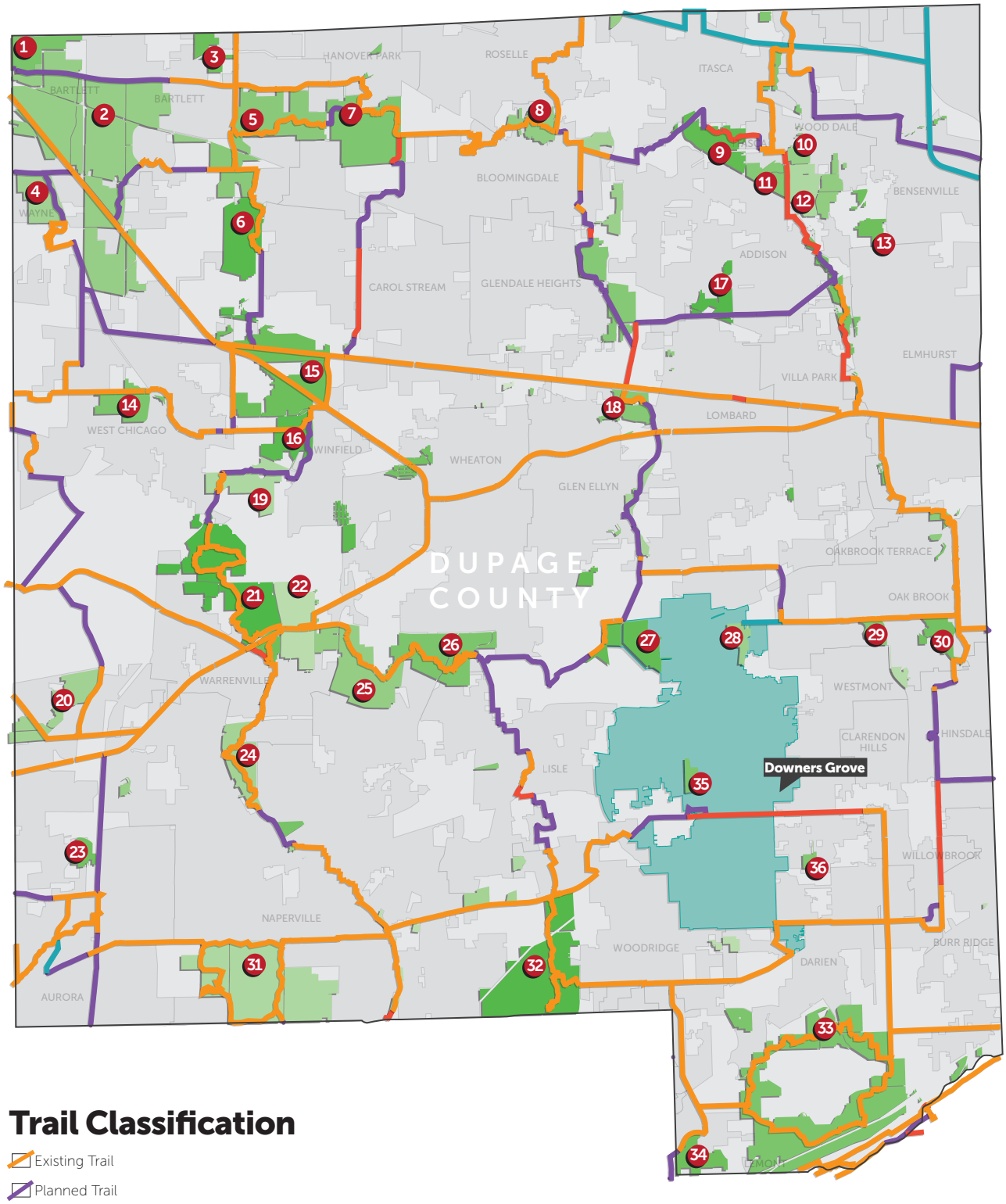
One of the most notable private facilities is the Downers Grove Swim and Racquet Club (DGSRC) located adjacent to Patriots Park. DGSRC features six lighted tennis courts, swimming and wading pools, and sand volleyball courts. Programs include recreational swimming, swim lessons, swim team, dive lessons, dive team, water aerobics, recreational and league tennis, and tennis lessons.

DuPage County Forest Preserves

1. James "Pate" Phillip State Park
2. Pratt's Wayne Woods
3. Wayne Grove
4. Dunham Marsh
5. Hawk Hollow
6. West Branch
7. Mallard Lake
8. Meacham Grove
9. Songbird Slough
10. Salt Creek Park
11. Maple Meadows
12. Oak Meadows
13. Fischer Woods
14. West Chicago Prairie
15. Timber Ridge
16. Winfield Mounds
17. Fullerton Park
18. Churchill Woods
19. West DuPage Woods
20. Big Woods
21. Blackwell
22. St. James Estate
23. Night Heron Marsh
24. McDowell Grove
25. Herrick Lake
26. Danada
27. Hidden Lake
28. Lyman Woods *
29. Mayslake
30. Fullersburg Woods
31. Springbrook Prairie
32. Greene Valley
33. Waterfall Glen
34. Wood Ridge
35. Maple Grove
36. Green Meadows

** this facility is jointly owned by the Village of Downers Grove, Downers Grove Park District, and Forest Preserve District of DuPage County*

DuPage County Regional Trail System & Forest Preserves



Trail Classification

- Existing Trail
- Planned Trail
- Programmed Trail
- Future Trail Connection

Bike & Recreational Trails

Additional pedestrian and bicycle linkages should be created to improve access and enhance the use of the community's parks and open space. The Village should continue the process of implementing the recommendations from its Bikeway Plan, which will include the creation of on-street and off-street paths. This path system will help to connect the Downers Grove community to existing trail systems in neighboring municipalities and parks. The Village should secure funds, such as grants, to create additional connections and new segments in the community's bikeway and trail system.

Open Streams & Water Features

The Village relies on the use of natural features such as creeks, marshes and rivers as part of its stormwater management. Central to this are three creeks: Lacey Creek (north of Ogden Avenue), St. Joseph Creek (central Downers Grove), and Prentiss Creek (south of 63rd Street) which all drain into the East Branch of the DuPage River.

Stormwater Management

Downers Grove's natural stormwater features are supplemented by detention and retention areas located throughout the Village. The Village should encourage environmentally friendly stormwater management practices and encourage the naturalization of these stormwater management areas through the use of natural plantings and wildflowers as opposed to rip-rap and manicured turf grass. Naturalization, however, should not impede recreational opportunities, particularly as part of the Park District's planning and programming.

Limited Development

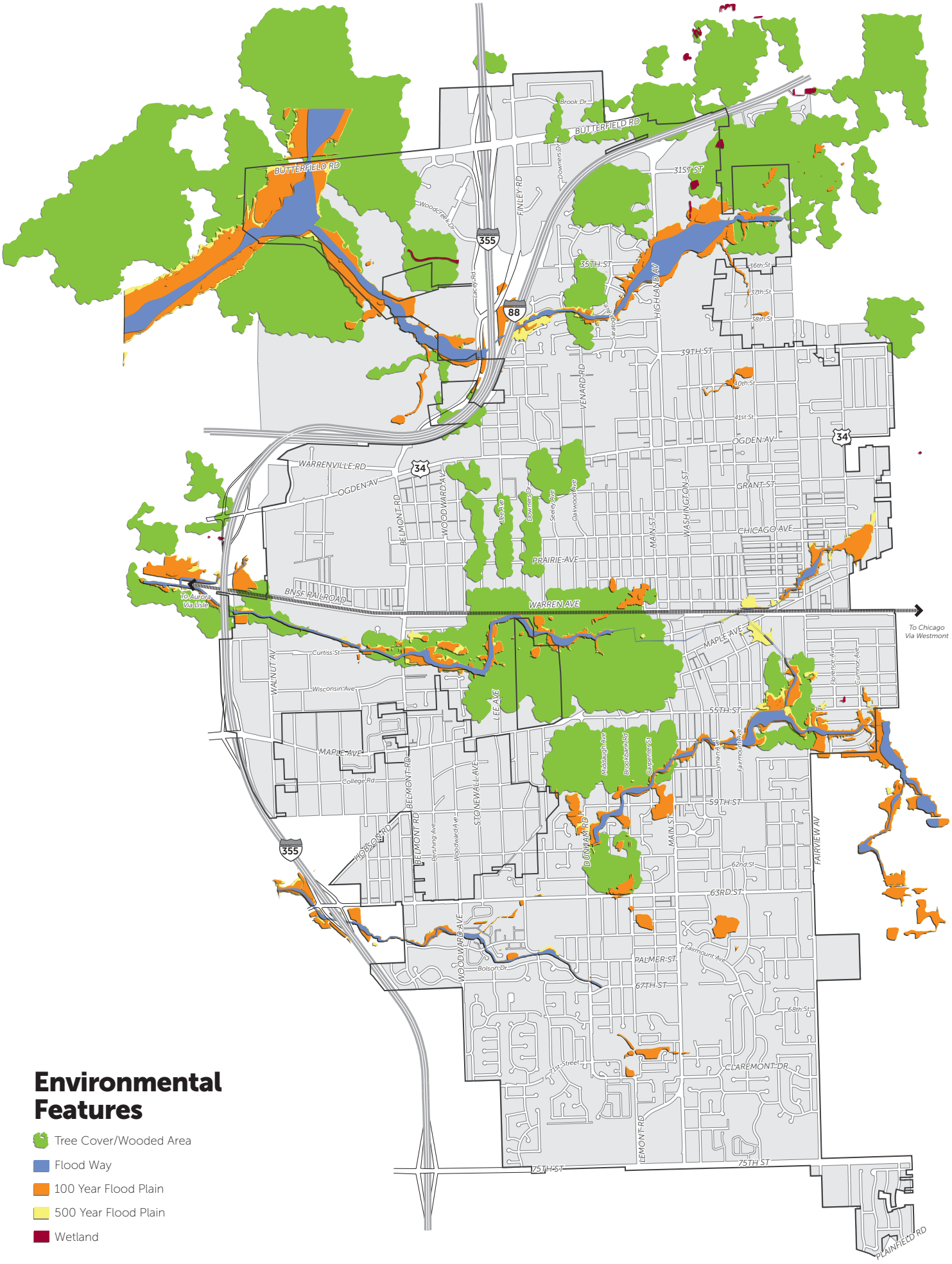
Both floodways and floodplains are present in Downers Grove and the potential for development/ redevelopment can be limited within these areas. In addition, the Village has identified Localized Poor Drainage Areas (LPDA), which are prone to flooding due to local topography. While LPDAs are not recognized by FEMA, they are regulated at the local level in similar manner as a floodplain.

A property's location within a floodplain or LPDA should be a consideration in any development or redevelopment recommendations. The Village should continue to regulate development in flood-prone areas. The Village should also consider establishing guidelines that minimize the amount of impervious surface created by new development and reduce long term contributions to stormwater run-off.

Wooded Areas & Parkway Trees

Several mature wooded areas are located throughout the Village on both developed and undeveloped land. In most instances, these wooded areas are owned and managed by public agencies such as the Forest Preserve District or the Park District and are protected from development. In addition, many of the streets within the Village's residential neighborhoods are lined with a canopy of mature parkway trees. These mature trees contribute significantly to the overall desirability and character of the neighborhoods and the Village as a whole.

Wooded areas are viewed as an important feature of the community. The Village should establish policies and best practices that ensure new development and infrastructure projects do not represent a threat to wooded areas and the Village's much valued green character. The Village should continue to work with the Park District and Forest Preserve District on preservation of the publicly owned trees.



Environmental Features

- Tree Cover/Wooded Area
- Flood Way
- 100 Year Flood Plain
- 500 Year Flood Plain
- Wetland

Parks, Open Space & Natural Resources Policy Recommendations

Note: Policies and recommendations are not listed in order of importance.

- Work cooperatively with the Park District, Forest Preserve District and other private entities to ensure the appropriate provision of recreation in the community.
- Develop a community-wide Public Areas Beautification Plan including recommendations for enhancing and expanding existing green space and creating new green space and community gateways.
- Continue to implement the recommendations of the Bikeway Plan and the Trails & Transit System Plan, including creating on-street and off-street paths.
- Work with the Park District to secure funds, such as grants, to create additional connections and new segments in the Village's bikeway and trail system.
- Ensure effective tree and root protection for new developments or infrastructure projects as appropriate.
- Continue to actively monitor the outbreak of the Asian Long-horned Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, and other harmful insects that threaten the trees and environmental features of Downers Grove, and take proactive measures to protect these important community amenities including planting and promoting a diverse array of tree and plant species.
- Consider programs to address invasive plant species, such as Japanese Knotweed.

- The Village should be proactive in the reforestation and creation of the tree canopy. This would include adding trees to gaps in parkway trees. The Village should seek to diversify the types of trees that are part of the urban forest to ensure resilience against invasive species and for improved aesthetic.
- Discourage development in flood-prone areas through the implementation of a sensitive natural areas overlay in the zoning ordinance.
- Minimize the amount of impervious surface created by new development and reduce long-term contributions to stormwater run-off.
- Promote the use of environmentally friendly stormwater management practices as a component of all development.
- Continue to modernize the Subdivision Control Ordinance and the Stormwater and Floodplain Control Ordinance to reflect current urban design and stormwater practices.
- Encourage naturalized plantings around the perimeter of stormwater detention facilities instead of turf, where appropriate. Include educational materials to property owners on the benefits of rain gardens.
- Where appropriate, incorporate rain gardens with native plants to streetscaping throughout the Village.
- Support measures to prevent the formation of algae and other pest- and insect-breeding environments within detention ponds.
- Continue to work with the Park District to address stormwater issues.
- Explore and encourage solar, wind, and other alternative energy initiatives where compatible and appropriate.

8 Community Facilities Plan

As an established community, Downers Grove is well served by a variety of community facilities and service providers. The Village's high quality schools, municipal services, library, healthcare facilities, and other private organizations all contribute significantly to the quality of life which Village residents enjoy. The Community Facilities Plan provides an overview of the community facilities within the Village and identifies the current and future needs and long-range recommendations for each community service provider.

Communication & Cooperation

It is important to note that the Village has no jurisdiction or control over many of the community facilities within its municipal limits. While some are provided by the Village of Downers Grove, others are provided by other public and quasi-public agencies and organizations which provide desired, necessary and sometimes critical services to residents of the community. Consequently, identifying and understanding the needs of each community service provider puts the Village in a better position to assist in meeting the needs of Downers Grove residents and it is important that the Village maintain communication with these service providers regarding their existing needs and plans for expansion.

THE VILLAGE'S HIGH QUALITY SCHOOLS, MUNICIPAL SERVICES, LIBRARY, HEALTHCARE FACILITIES, AND OTHER PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS ALL CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE WHICH VILLAGE RESIDENTS ENJOY.

Schools

Residents of Downers Grove are served by six grade school districts, two high school districts and several independently operated private schools. Together, these schools provide a well-respected and highly regarded school system serving the students of Downers Grove. While other districts serve the Village, only two – District 58 and 99 – operate facilities in the community.

The Village's strong school system educates local youth and provides gathering places for the community. Downers Grove schools also play a crucial role in building and maintaining home values by increasing demand from families who want to live within their district boundaries and the Village.

The Village should support the continued operation and improvement of both public and private school facilities while ensuring that they do not negatively impact residential neighborhoods through traffic, lighting, and intense activity and cooperate with the various organizations to maintain high quality school sites and facilities.

Downers Grove Grade School

District 58

Downers Grove Grade School District 58 operates 11 elementary schools and two middle schools with an estimated enrollment of 5,000. District officials have indicated that the current capacity is sufficient. These schools include:

- Belle Aire Elementary School
- Highland Elementary School
- Puffer Elementary
- Pierce Downer School
- Lester School
- Whittier School
- Hillcrest School
- Herrick Middle School
- O'Neill Middle School
- Fairmount School
- Indian Trail School
- Kingsley School
- El Sierra School

District 58 Plans

Based on information provided by District officials, District 58 facilities are in need of some improvement and modernization. District officials are currently reviewing facility needs and enrollment trends to determine improvements that would be needed in the coming years. One challenge the District is anticipating is increased enrollment as multi-family developments attract families. The Village should assist the District in identifying potential solutions to these future capacity needs.

School Parking

District officials have indicated that a lack of parking at their schools is an issue. Should School District 58 elect to address this issue, the Village should assist the District in identifying potential solutions to its parking needs, while being sensitive to the impact on adjacent residential areas.

Community High School District 99

Community High School District 99 operates two high schools within the Village: Downers Grove North High School and Downers Grove South High School. School officials report that the schools are currently at capacity with an estimated enrollment of 5,200; however District officials indicate that enrollment has decreased over the last five years and their projections suggest this will continue in the future.

District 99 Plans

In 2011 the District completed athletic facility upgrades at both North and South High School. The North High School project included the vacating of the Prince Street right-of-way adjacent to the football field and the expansion of parking opportunities around the campus. Improvements are needed and District Officials have said they were looking into writing a Master Facility Plan in the near future for both high schools.

School Parking

District officials have indicated that a lack of parking at their high schools is an issue. Should School District 99 elect to address this issue, the Village should assist the District in identifying potential solutions to its parking needs, while being sensitive to the impact on adjacent residential areas.

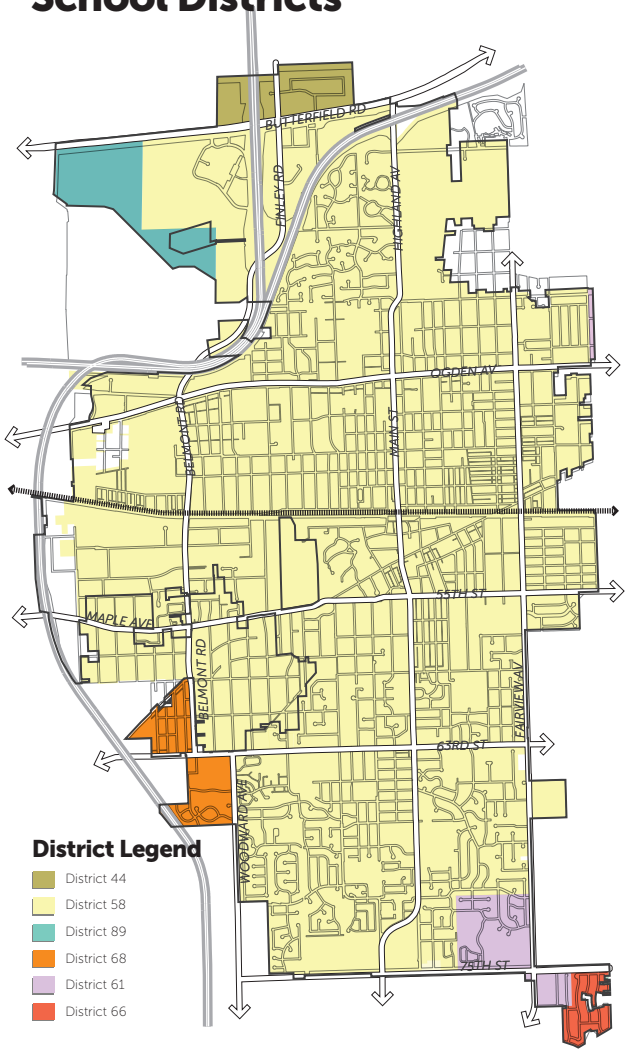
Private Schools

In addition to the public schools within the Village, there are a number of privately owned educational institutions. Private Schools within the Village include the Avery Coonley School, Downers Grove Adventist School, Downers Grove Christian School, First Congregational School, Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Marquette Manor Baptist Academy, St. Joseph Catholic School, and St. Mary of Gostyn Catholic School.

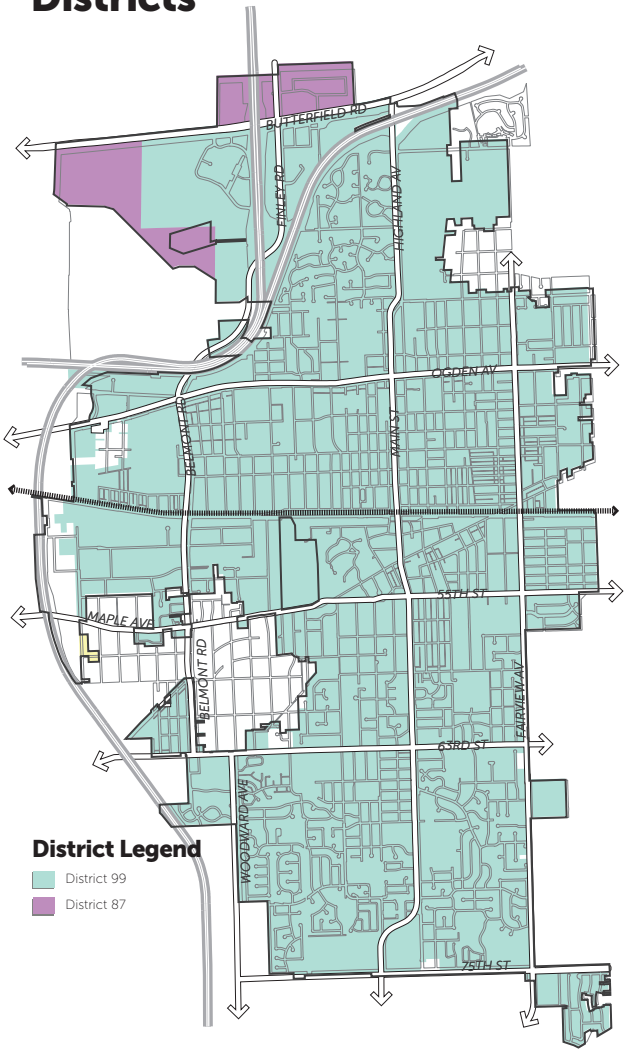
Universities

In addition to numerous trade schools and other post-High School training opportunities, the Village is home to Devry University and Midwestern University.

Elementary School Districts

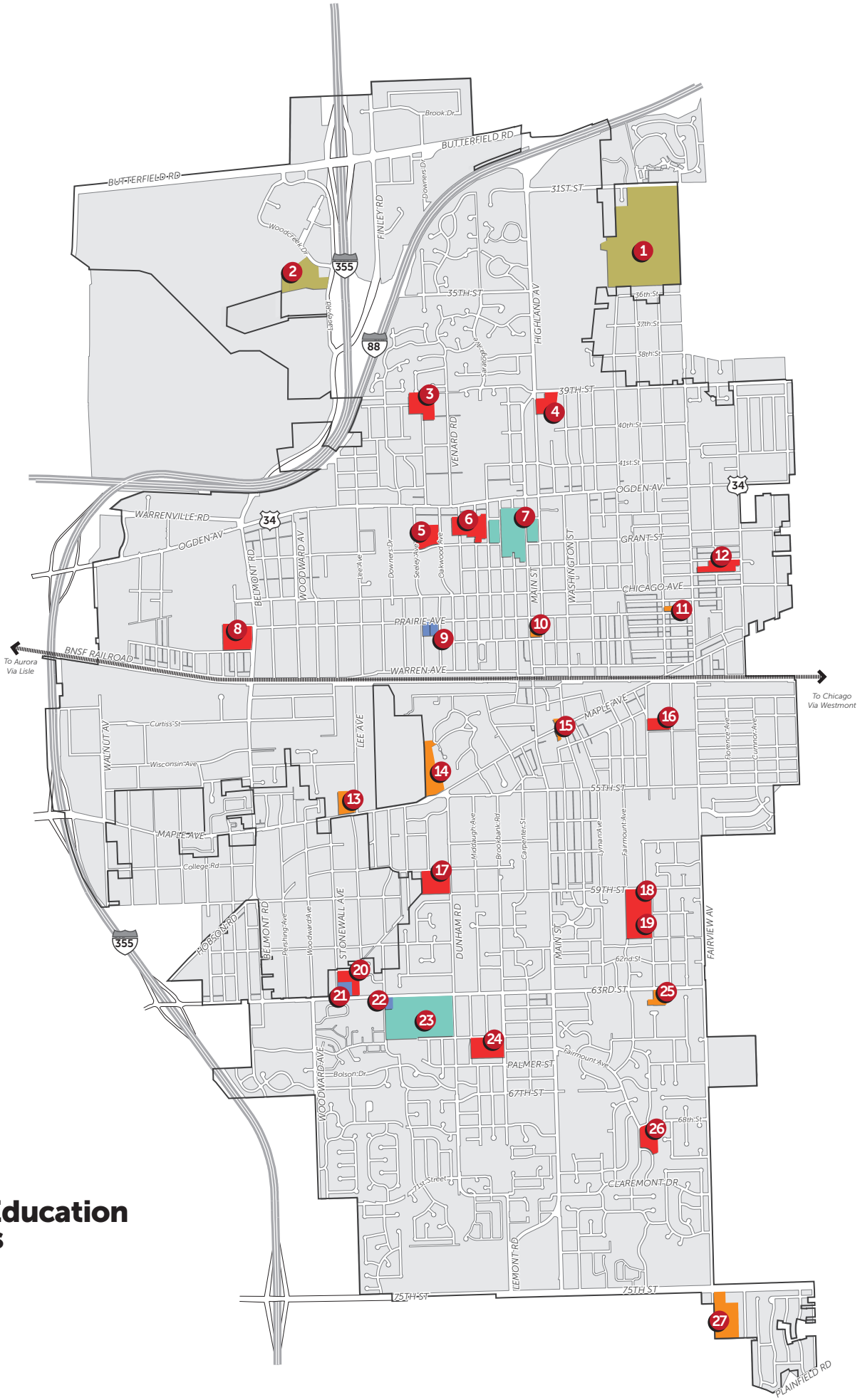


High School Districts



Downers Grove Schools

1. Midwestern University
2. Midwestern Unversity Clinic
3. Belle Aire Grade School
4. Highland Grade School
5. Pierce Downer School
6. Herrick Middle School
7. Downers Grove North High School
8. Henry Puffer Grade School
9. District 58 Board of Education building (Longfellow Center)
10. St. Joseph School
11. St. Mary of Gostyn School
12. Lester School
13. Downers Grove Adventist Elementary School
14. Avery Coonley School
15. Downers Grove Christian School
16. Whittier School
17. Hillcrest School
18. O'Neill Middle School
19. Fairmount School
20. Indian Trail School
21. District 58 Administrative Service Center
22. Community High School District 99 Administrative Office
23. Downers Grove South High School
24. Kingsley School
25. Good Shepherd Lutheran School
26. El Sierra School
27. Marquette Manor Baptist Academy



Schools & Education Institutions

- Elementary School
- High School
- Private School
- College/University
- Administrative Offices

Healthcare

Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital is located in the northern section of the community along Highland Avenue. The hospital has a Level I Trauma Center and is a nationally-recognized hospital.

The primary campus of Midwestern University, which specializes in healthcare education, is located northeast of the hospital. A multi-specialty clinic is located in the Esplanade. Midwestern University has an enrollment of over 1,900 students. The Village should anticipate an expansion of healthcare facilities as part of the university's curriculum.

Throughout the Village, there are number of smaller medial offices and clinics, but Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital and Midwestern University represent significant community assets as activity generators and employment centers. The Village should continue its support of these facilities, in addition to supporting plans for expansion, renovation, modernization, and new satellite campuses and facilities provided they are appropriate and in the best interest of the Village.

United States Postal Service (USPS)

The United States Postal Service (USPS) provides service to the residents and businesses in the community via a U.S. Post Office and service/operations facility in the heart of Downtown. While the counter and retail function of the facility are a positive contribution to Downtown, the truck traffic generated by its operations contributes significantly to peak hour traffic congestion. To address this issue and relocate truck traffic out of Downtown, the Village should work with the USPS to identify a better location for its operations.

Village Facilities

Village Hall

The current Village Hall was purchased in 1968, and at that time it was anticipated to have a 20-year lifespan. A condition assessment and space needs study of the facility in 2015 determined that the major systems, including HVAC, roof, electrical and plumbing, are nearing or beyond the end of their useful life, requiring substantial replacement within the next several years. In addition, there are many operational deficiencies that create difficulties in efficiently serving residents and other customers. Options to improve the facility were considered in 2015, however, due to resource constraints, attention was primarily directed at addressing the needs of the Police Station.

Civic Center Plans

The Civic Center includes an approximately 7.8 acre parcel of property owned by the Village, which currently supports several municipal functions. The facilities currently located on this property include the Police Station, Village Hall and the Fleet Maintenance Facility. As the Village explores options to meet future facility needs, there may be opportunities to capitalize on the redevelopment potential of the site, and support an appropriate and well-designed transit-oriented development.

Fire Department

The Village should continue to takes steps to accommodate the fire department's future facility needs and ensure high levels of fire protection service are maintained. The Downers Grove Fire Department operates four stations located throughout the Village. The Village has a water supply and distribution network to adequately serve the community's fire protection needs. Its fire insurance rating is 1, which is the highest possible rating.

Fire Department Plans

In 2008, the Village constructed a new facility on the former site of Fire Station 2, enabling the consolidation of administrative offices and the relocation of key pieces of equipment to improve response time and service to the Village. At the present, the Village does not have any plans to add or renovate other facilities.

Coordination with Adjacent Districts

Presently, the Darien-Woodridge Fire Protection District provides services to a small, southwestern portion of the Village, including neighboring portions of unincorporated DuPage County; and the Downers Grove Fire Department serves the unincorporated areas located in the northeastern portion of the community. A recently created Special Service Area provides funding for Village fire protection.

The Village should continue to work with neighboring fire protection districts and municipal fire departments to ensure effective fire protection services are maintained in these areas and that the Village continues to receive benefits from mutual aid.

Police Department

The Village of Downers Grove Police Department maintains one facility, adjacent to the Village Hall on the east side of Downtown. The Police Department is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), which formally recognizes the department as being one of the most elite in the field.

Police Department Plans

The Village's efforts to establish a Facility Sustainability Plan have focused heavily on addressing the needs of the Police Station. The building, constructed in 1979, is in need of substantial system replacement and does not meet the operational requirements of the Department. Options being considered include renovation/expansion as well as construction of a new Police Station, provided the preferred solution is financially feasible given limited resources.

Public Works

The Public Works Department is responsible for the appearance, operation, and maintenance of the Village of Downers Grove's infrastructure including streets, the urban forest, water supply system, storm drainage system, municipal grounds, public transportation, and traffic control signs and signals. The Village should ensure that adequate public works facilities are maintained and that the locations of such facilities are appropriate, and that the Community Investment Program is updated regularly to accommodate necessary improvements and additions to the Village's infrastructure.

Stormwater Management

Stormwater management is a significant issue in the Village. While long-term strategies to reduce run-off throughout the Village should be identified, maintenance and upgrades to stormwater infrastructure should be a priority for the Village in the near term. Given the Village is substantially built out and opportunities for new detention facilities are limited, the Village will need to continue to be creative in addressing its storm water issues. Washington Park serves as an excellent example of how the Village worked cooperatively with the Park District to improve stormwater management and alleviate flooding while enhancing the recreational amenities at the park.

Public Library

The Downers Grove Public Library operates a 67,738 square foot building in the downtown, providing services to Downers Grove residents. The Public Library estimates that 63% of Village residents are cardholders. In 2009, the library marked the milestone of circulating over 1 million items.

The current library facility opened in 1999, funded by a successful referendum in 1996. Current issues and concerns cited by Library officials include a lack of available parking at peak periods. The issues experienced in the downtown library and at other downtown buildings may indicate a demand for services that exceed what is currently being provided.

Library Plans

Based on information provided by Library officials, there are no plans at this time to add facilities or perform any major renovations to the existing building.

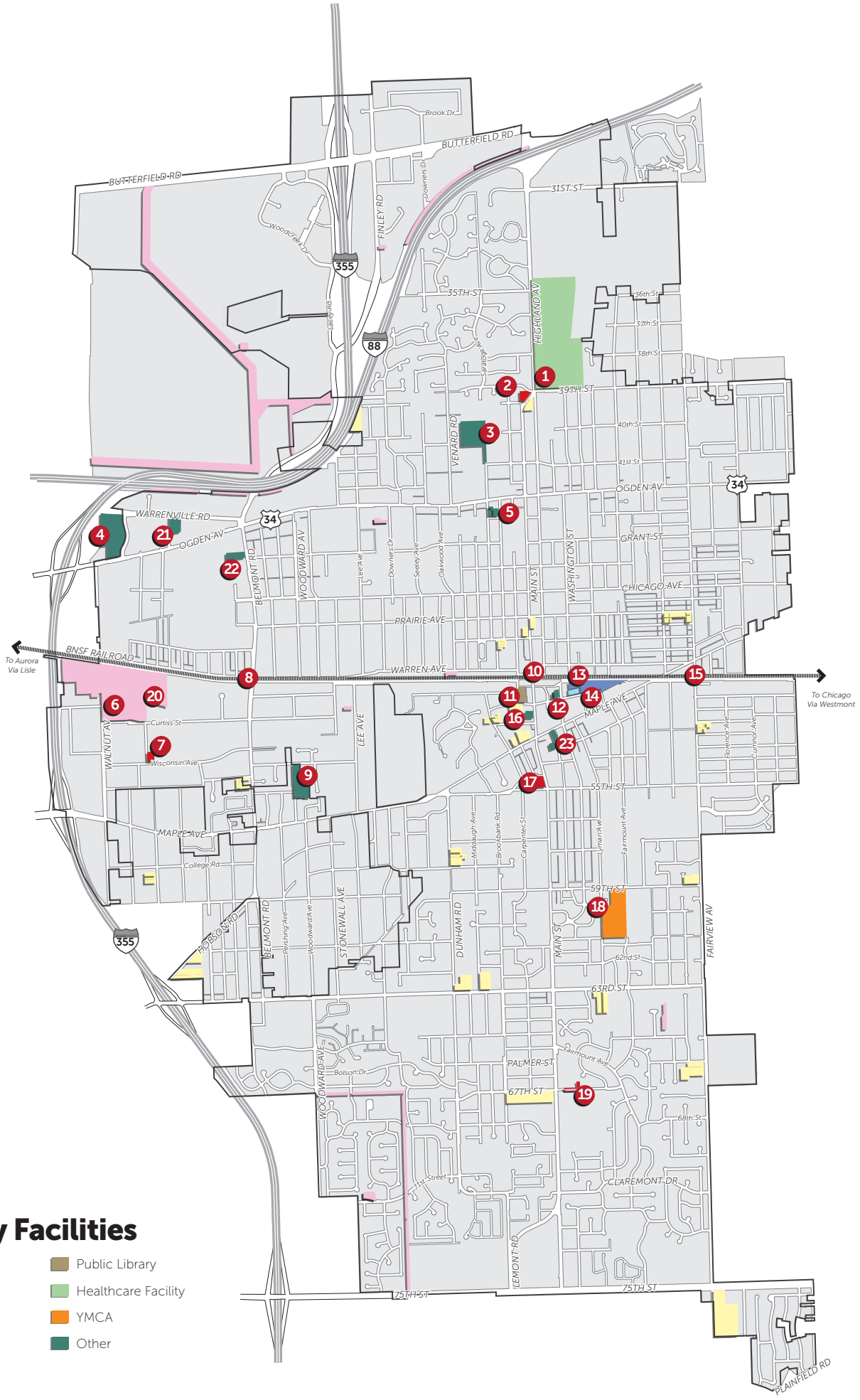
Community Investment Program

Updated annually, the Community Investment Program (CIP) provides a summary of all major capital projects planned over the next five years, including a specific description and cost estimate of each project. The current CIP covers the years 2016 through 2020. All of the departments, organizations and facilities detailed above are impacted by the CIP.

The Village regularly conducts comprehensive life cycle assessments for Village buildings, equipment, vehicles, facilities, and properties and revises the CIP accordingly. In addition, the Village should increase efforts to identify funding sources, such as grants, to pay for the construction of new Village facilities.

Downers Grove Community Facilities

1. Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital
2. Fire Station #3
3. American Legion Post 80
4. Illinois Tollway Authority
5. Downers Grove Township Assessor
6. Public Works Facility
7. Fire Station #1
8. Belmont Metra Station
9. Oak Hill Cemetery
10. Main Street Metra Station
11. Downers Grove Public Library
12. U.S. Post Office
13. Police Department
14. Village Hall
15. Fairview Metra Station
16. Downers Grove Cemetery
17. Fire Station #2
18. Indian Boundary YMCA
19. Fire Station #5
20. Downers Grove Sanitary District
21. Park District Administration Building
22. Recreation Center
23. Lincoln Center



Community Facilities

- Village Hall
- Police Station
- Fire Station
- Utilities
- Religious Institutions
- Public Library
- Healthcare Facility
- YMCA
- Other

Community Facilities Policy Recommendations

Note: Policies and recommendations are not listed in order of importance.

- The Village should actively promote cooperation, interaction, and collaboration among the various agencies and organizations which serve Downers Grove.
- The Village should stay informed on the plans, policies, and projects of the various agencies and organizations in order to assess impacts to the surrounding area and the Village at-large.
- Public sites and buildings should be viewed as potential catalysts for improvement and/or redevelopment of an area. New facilities should be located, designed, and developed as focal points and "signature" projects within the community.
- To the extent possible, new community facilities should be located along collector streets, transit stops, and trail systems to provide improved public access.
- It is recommended that the Village continue to explore the construction of a consolidated governmental facility to remain in the downtown.
- Future construction of Village facilities should have the Village "lead by example" and consider the use of all best practices, including sustainable design and development practices.
- The Village should continue to work to ensure effective police protection services are maintained throughout the community.
- The Village should continue to work to ensure that effective fire and emergency medical services are maintained throughout the Village.
- The Village should work closely with the neighboring fire districts and municipalities to ensure effective fire protection services are maintained throughout the community.
- The Village should promote the continued operation and improvement of both public and private school facilities, ensure they do not impact residential neighborhoods, and cooperate with the various organizations to maintain high quality school sites and facilities.

- The Village should continue to work to ensure effective public works services are maintained throughout the community.
- The Village should encourage the use of shared facilities (i.e. between the Village, Park District and schools) in order to maximize efficiency, tax dollars and land.
- The Village should maintain regular contact with healthcare and educational providers to ensure that land use and tax base goals are shared.
- The Village should promote and encourage the relocation of the Post Office truck operations from Downtown while maintaining the postal retail functions.
- The Village should continue to prioritize stormwater management and work cooperatively and creatively to address it in all areas of the Village.

9 Key Focus Areas

This section presents recommendations regarding land use, development and improvements for five key focus areas within Downers Grove. The Key Focus Area Plans build upon the generalized recommendations established in the Land Use Plan and provide more detailed and site-specific recommendations for these unique and important parts of the Village.

Identification of Key Focus Areas

Many factors entered into the selection of the Key Focus Areas. They are economic generators for Downers Grove and are among the most intensely developed portions of the Village. They include important transportation facilities that connect Downers Grove to the surrounding region. These areas are highly visible to passing motorists and transit riders which means they contribute greatly to the perception of Downers Grove by residents and visitors. Finally, each area has issues which, if addressed, could significantly improve their function and aesthetics.

KEY FOCUS AREAS ARE ECONOMIC GENERATORS FOR DOWNERS GROVE AND ARE AMONG THE MOST INTENSELY DEVELOPED PORTIONS OF THE VILLAGE

Organization of the Key Focus Area Plans Section

Each of the seven Key Focus Areas is discussed in detail on the following pages including:

- Identification of planning influences and existing conditions;
- Key concepts for improvement and redevelopment;
- Identification of catalyst redevelopment sites; and
- Land use recommendations.

Catalyst Sites: Evaluation Criteria

Catalyst sites are those parcels where redevelopment would have a positive catalytic impact on the surrounding area. In the identification of catalyst sites, certain criteria are considered.

Catalyst sites are determined based on the sites exhibiting some or all of the following characteristics:

- Underutilized buildings or land
- Vacant buildings or land
- Structural soundness of buildings
- Size of property
- Ownership (e.g., unified private ownership or Village-owned and potential for consolidation)
- Visibility and access
- Current zoning and adjacent zoning
- Surrounding land uses
- Market potential

The Key Focus Areas include:

Belmont/Ellsworth, which is bounded by I-355 on the west, the BNSF railroad tracks on the north and areas that are predominantly residential to the south and east. This subarea is comprised of two main components: Belmont Road and the Belmont Metra Train Station area (including Chase Court) and the Ellsworth Industrial Park, the Village's largest concentration of industrial land.

Downtown, which is generally comprised of commercial, residential, office and civic uses and is notable for the Tivoli Theatre and the Masonic Temple. Downtown is the symbolic heart of the community and has traditionally been the focus of commercial, social, and civic life as well as an important connection to the regional transportation network.

Butterfield, which is comprised of shopping centers, stand-alone restaurants and office development of varying heights. Its proximity to I-88 and I-355 provides unparalleled access and visibility and is a key gateway into the Village of Downers Grove.

Ogden, which is firmly established as an auto-oriented corridor in terms of its traffic volume, design, development pattern, scale and land use. Ogden is a major east-west arterial with a range of uses that serve the community and the surrounding region.

Fairview, which is made up of the area surrounding the Fairview Metra station. This area is comprised of multi-family residential, industrial, office and retail uses. This Key Focus Area extends to the eastern boundary of the Village.

63rd Street, is a predominantly residential east-west corridor that stretches the length of the village. The corridor is made up of single family detached, three commercial centers, and several public/semi-public uses including Downers Grove South High School.

75th Street, is a commercial corridor that forms the southern border of the Village. The corridor is made up of large shopping centers, some with redevelopment potential. The eastern end of the corridor has a subdivision made up of single family detached.

The following pages provide detailed plans for the seven Key Focus Areas. In addition to specific recommendations tailored towards each area, there are two redevelopment concepts that may apply to some or all of the areas: heat island effect and brownfield redevelopment.

Heat Island Effect

Industrial parks, large office buildings and large retailers are often major contributors to the heat island effect due to their large roof surface area and surface parking lots. The heat island effect is a thermal gradient difference between developed and undeveloped areas due to solar energy retention on constructed surfaces. This basically means that developed areas are measurably hotter than undeveloped areas due to their lack of green areas which naturally provide cooling. Heat islands negatively impact microclimate conditions as well as human and wildlife habitats. Ambient temperatures in urban areas can be artificially elevated by more than 10 degrees Fahrenheit. This requires larger HVAC equipment and electrical demand which increases greenhouse gas and pollution.

Ways to Reduce Heat Island Effect

The U.S. Green Building Council provides ways to reduce the heat island effect through its LEED certification process:

- Provide shade through the installation of landscape features especially for constructed surfaces (garden roofs, shade trees, etc.)
- Shade can be provided by native or adaptive trees, large shrubs and non-invasive vines
- Garden roofs help to reduce stormwater volumes
- Use light colored building materials
- Use light colored paving surfaces and shade paved areas with landscaping
- Use an open grid pavement for the site's non-roof impervious surface (parking lots, walkways, plazas, etc.)
- Place parking spaces underground or in structured parking
- Use highly reflective/EnergyStar-compliant roof surfaces
- Install a green (vegetated) roof
- Limit the amount of impervious hardscape areas

Brownfield Redevelopment

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, a brownfield is "real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant." Despite the presence or potential presence of these elements, brownfield redevelopment can be a sound strategy for achieving a municipality's land use and economic development goals. Prioritizing development on brownfield sites reduces pressure on undeveloped land and maximizes existing investments (such as infrastructure). Time and money can be saved in the redevelopment process by coordinating site development plans with remediation activities.

Ways to Encourage Brownfield Redevelopment:

- Inventory existing or perceived brownfield sites within the Village
- Apply for grants and programs provided through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Illinois EPA
- Develop financial incentives to encourage private redevelopment of brownfield sites

Key Focus Areas

Belmont/Ellsworth Industrial Park

The Belmont/Ellsworth subarea is bounded by I-355 on the west, the BNSF railroad tracks on the north and areas that are predominantly residential to the south and east. This subarea is comprised of two main components: the Belmont Metra Train Station area (including Chase Court) and the Ellsworth Industrial Park.

Ellsworth Industrial Park is the Village's largest concentration of industrial land and is a vital part of the local economy. The Metra commuter station includes a surface parking lot and a small shelter. A grade-separated rail crossing was recently completed at Belmont Road, which has significantly improved the area. The proximity of this frequent commuter rail service to an industrial park provides a regional draw for potential owners and employees.

The recommendations in this subarea plan are intended to improve connectivity to and through this area, create a 21st century industrial park and maximize the benefits of the grade-separated rail crossing.

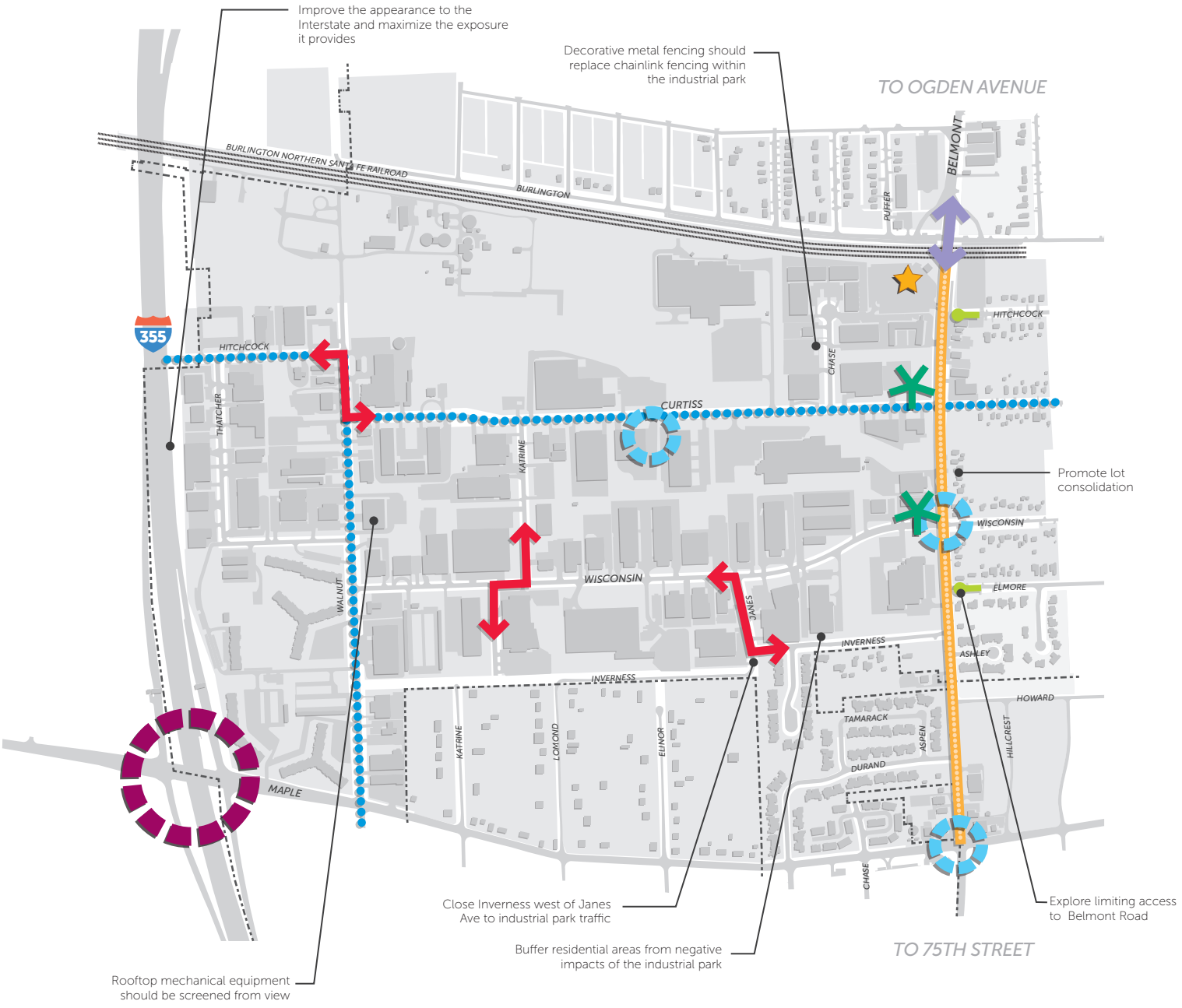
Key Concepts

Belmont Road/Metra Station

- The creation of a unified streetscape along Belmont Road would serve to connect the nearby residential areas to the station by providing enhanced pedestrian amenities.
- Improved crosswalks should be provided to ensure safe passage for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Consolidate curb cuts and redevelop single-family homes along Belmont Road to attached single-family or multi-family residential units.
- Promote an appropriate amount of neighborhood commercial uses along Belmont Road to provide goods and services to commuters and nearby employees.

Industrial Park

- A recently constructed grade-separated rail crossing at Belmont Road has significantly improved the area. The proximity to land to the south and west of the Ellsworth Industrial Park should be reserved for future office/corporate campus expansion.
- The Village should consider the creation of a Special Service Area to provide funding for projects and improvements that enhance the industrial park. This may include improved stormwater management, open space, rest and break areas or shared parking facilities.
- Explore opportunities to create a job training facility or vocational school for current and future industrial needs within the Ellsworth Industrial Park since it is within close proximity to employers and a Metra station.
- Provide the necessary infrastructure to foster state-of-the-art industrial sites for redevelopment .
- Improve connectivity, circulation and loading through street realignment into an aligned grid pattern and widened drive ways, and larger turn radiuses.
- Prohibit incompatible land uses from encroaching into the industrial park.
- Reduce the heat island effect through a combination of providing shade on-site and using light colored building, roofing, and paving materials.
- Future development/redevelopment may be influenced by the presence of brownfield sites which may require compliance with Environmental Protection Agency regulations.



0 1/16 1/8 1/4 Mile

0 2.5 minute walk 5 minute walk

Recommendations

- Belmont Underpass
- Unified Streetscape
- Gateway/Directory Signage
- Interstate Interchange
- "Jog" in Street Grid
- Potential Access Restrictions (right-in / right-out)
- Improved Pedestrian Crossing
- Metra Commuter Station
- Village-Proposed Bicycle Route
- Municipal Boundary

Key Focus Areas

Belmont/Ellsworth Industrial Park Catalyst Sites

A1 Curtiss & Katrine

This site is municipally-owned and could be the site of relocated fleet operations for the Village or the post office.

A2 Metra Station/ Chase Court

This site presents an opportunity to create a transit-oriented development (TOD) based around the Metra station. Non-industrial uses have developed around Chase Court and they detract from the integrity of the industrial park. If this area is not intended for additional industrial development, it should develop as a TOD oriented towards the Metra station.

A3 Belmont & Inverness

This site is currently underutilized and provides an opportunity for a new use along Belmont Road including convenience retail, office or multi-family residential which would provide a transitional use between the industrial area to the north and the multi-family area to the south.

A4 Maple & Walnut

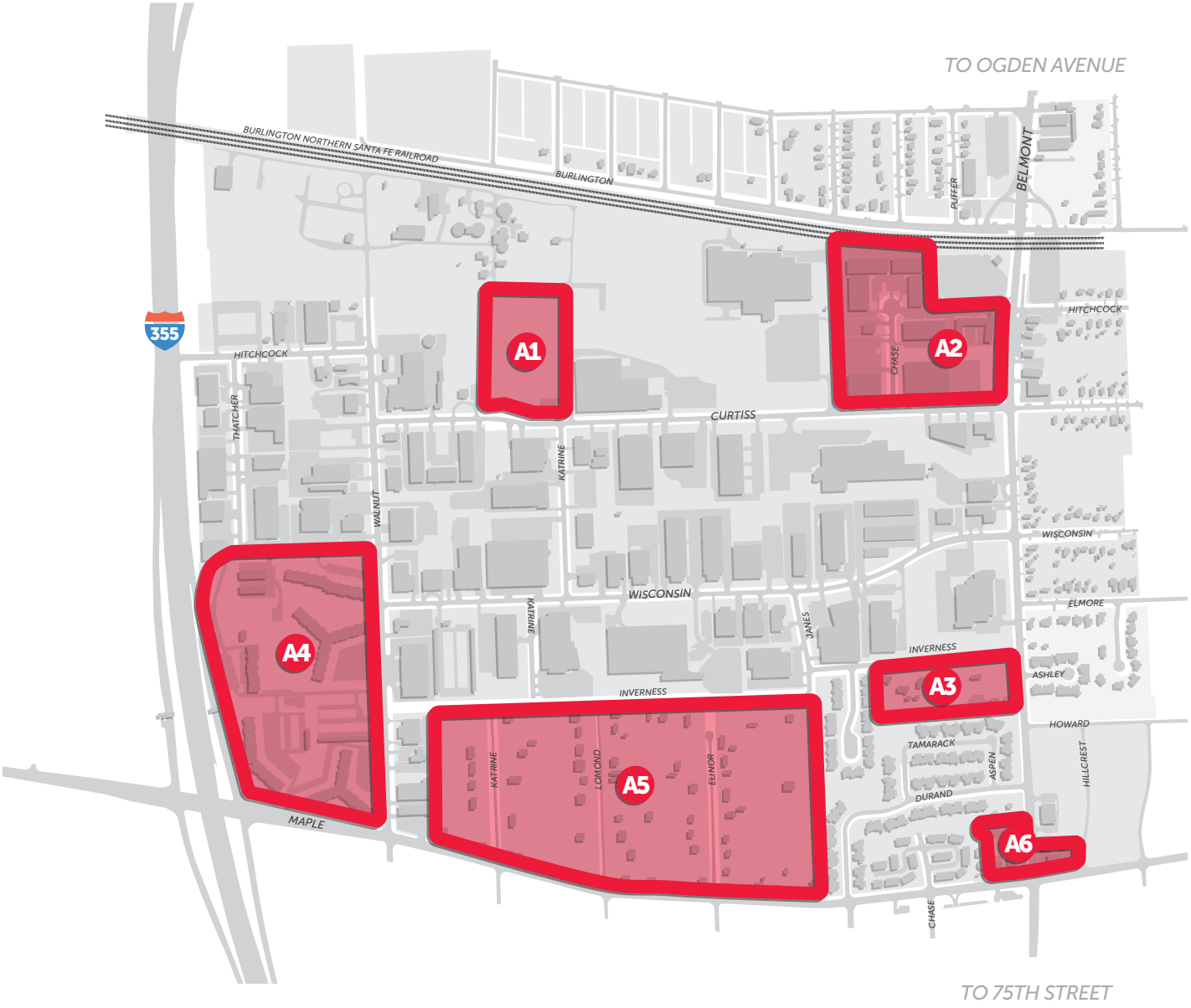
There is a large multi-family residential area isolated from the rest of the community by adjacent industrial uses and I-355. Due to its location at an I-355 interchange and surrounding industrial land uses, this site may be best suited for a corporate campus and/or business park that would flourish with these locational benefits. Multi-family residential should continue to be the short term and immediate use of the property, however, should the residents and owners of this development support a buyout and relocation to more appropriate areas within the community (closer to dining, shopping, mass transit and other community services), redevelopment of the site for Corporate Office should be supported. This prospective use is compatible with the projected suggestion for the unincorporated area immediately to the east.

A5 Unincorporated Area

Over the long term, this area (which is currently unincorporated) should be reserved for expansion of office/corporate campus. Its proximity to I-355 and access to Maple Avenue make it an appropriate site for a more intense use. Creating boundaries for future expansion of such land uses provides clear guidance to property owners (both within the park and neighboring) and prospective business owners.

A6 Maple & Belmont

This prominent commercial intersection is currently unincorporated and its appearance leaves much to be desired. Access is haphazard and the appearance detracts from the character of the community. The Village should pursue annexation of this area to better manage and improve its appearance and function. As this area redevelops, buildings should be oriented towards the street with parking on the side or rear.



0 1/16 1/8 1/4 Mile

0 2.5 minute walk 5 minute walk

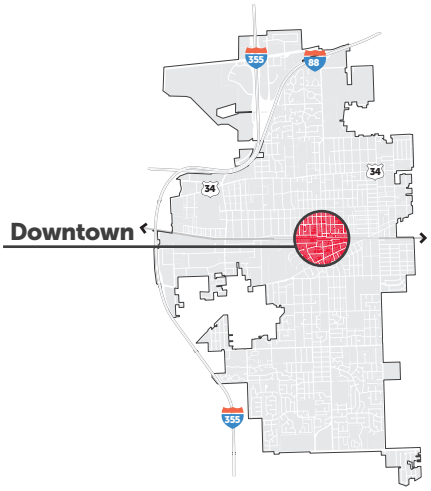
Recommendations

Catalyst Redevelopment Opportunity

Downtown

Downers Grove's Downtown is generally comprised of commercial, residential, office and civic uses and is notable for its historic buildings including the Tivoli Theatre and the Masonic Temple. The boundaries of Downtown are clearly demarcated with little room to expand beyond its current area. While no longer the primary economic engine for Downers Grove, Downtown continues to play an important function for the Village. Downtown is the symbolic heart of the community and has traditionally been the focus of commercial, social, and civic life as well as an important connection to the regional transportation network.

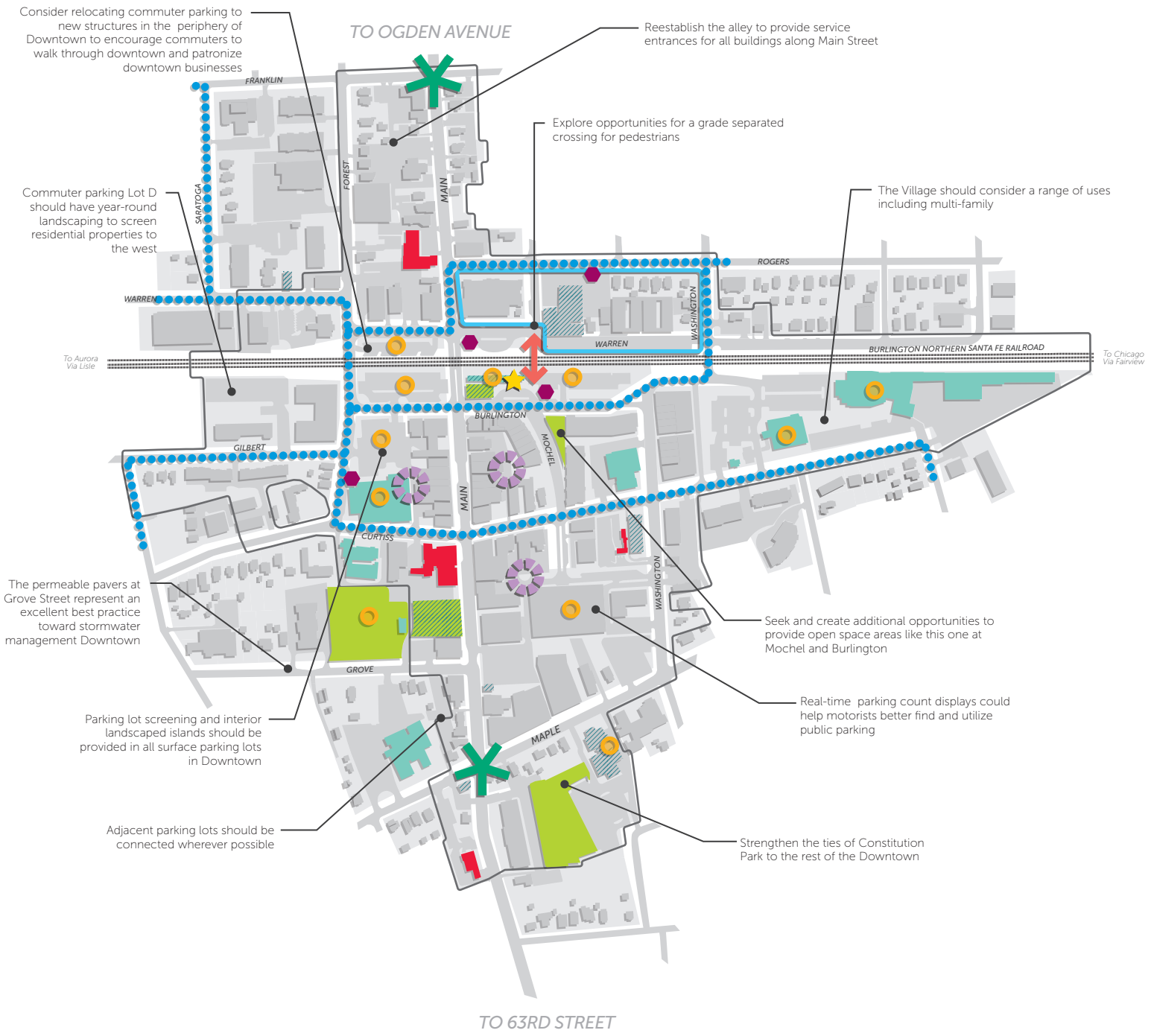
Downtown is bisected by the BNSF railroad tracks and adjacent commuter parking lots. Main Street is the central business corridor in Downtown and has a coordinated streetscape from Franklin Street to Maple Avenue. In recent years, several new developments have occurred in Downtown providing new housing, parking and retail opportunities. Recommendations in this subarea plan take into consideration both the history of Downtown as well as these recent developments.



Key Concepts

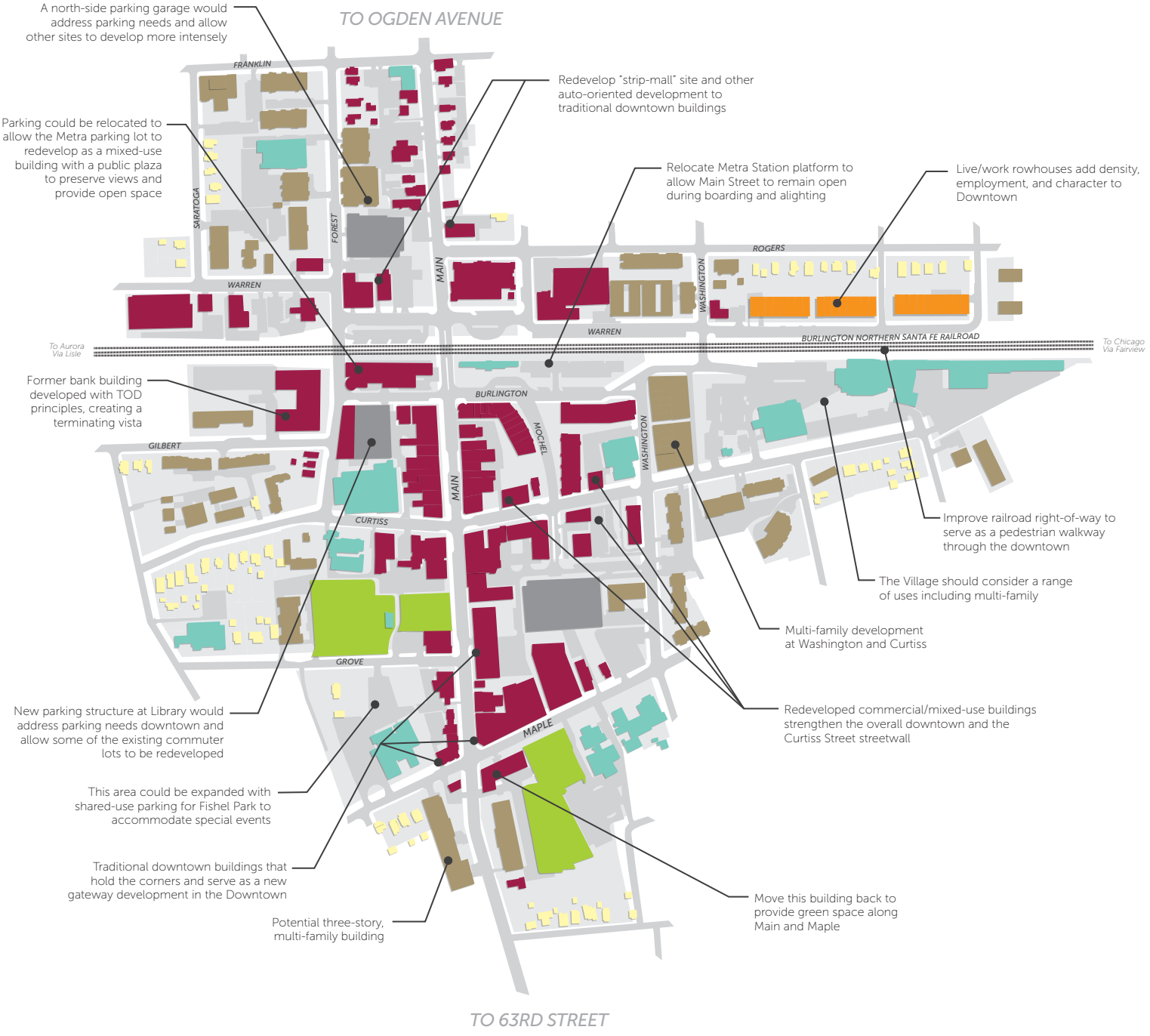
- An improved Downtown wayfinding system should be a priority for Downtown. Wayfinding should include key destinations, public parking facilities, Village Hall, historic landmarks, Downtown parks and facilities, and Metra. Wayfinding can not only direct pedestrians and motorists to destinations in the Downtown, but can help promote the Downtown's unique amenities to commuters and visitors.
- Downtown's urban environment contains a lot of concrete and asphalt, which contributes to stormwater runoff. Where possible, best management practices should be constructed in order to improve stormwater management. Grove Street's permeable pavers serves as a good example of how this could be implemented in downtown.
- Developing boundaries for the Downtown's transition areas should be a priority for the Downtown. Opportunities to expand the boundaries of the Downtown are limited, however there are opportunities for intensification. The priority for the Downtown should be on infill development and redevelopment of key sites in order to maximize the Downtown's potential while strategically evaluating opportunities to expand the boundaries.
- Infill development and redevelopment should be pedestrian-oriented in order to complement the historic building pattern of the Downtown. Retail shops with attractive display windows and restaurants with sidewalk cafes maintain visual interest and generate foot traffic.
- Prohibit new and redevelop existing, non-pedestrian-oriented businesses including the strip commercial center on north Main Street and auto-oriented businesses, including drive-thru uses which should be relocated outside of the Downtown. Office uses should be encouraged to occupy space above the ground floor.
- To maintain the Downtown's unique identity and character, the Village should consider policies, programs and tools to identify and facilitate the protection of historic buildings and sites and encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures.
- The Village should maintain a commitment to quality architecture through the development of tools and design guides for the Downtown properties.
- As key properties redevelop, a sense of enclosure should be maintained to provide comfort to pedestrians. A sense of enclosure is attained through the combination of street widths and building height in proportion to the historic building pattern of the Downtown.
- The importance of public uses (churches, Village Hall, parks, library, post office, and social services) cannot be overstated for the continued success of the Downtown. Preserving key streets as commercial corridors (e.g. Main Street) while also providing areas for public uses encourages visitors to make several stops during a trip to Downtown and encourages them to stay longer.

- Consider dedication of surface parking for shoppers and parking deck use for commuters. The Village should also consider parking counters at public lots and the Parking Deck that will provide drivers with real time information on the number of available parking spots as they navigate the Downtown.
- Reinforce the Downtown as the primary focal point in the community by working with Downtown Management to promote the activation of the Downtown's gathering spaces with special events, public art, and other temporary outdoor uses.
- Guided by the findings of the 2011 Parking Study, explore suitable locations on the north side of the railroad tracks for expanded parking, including the potential for a new parking deck. Not only would this provide businesses on the north end of the downtown and north side commuters with a parking option, but it could serve as a catalyst for north side investment by allowing new development to buy into the parking deck and allow them to fully utilize their property. On either Forest Avenue or Main Street between Franklin Street and Warren Avenue may represent a potential location.
- Identify areas for centralized garbage collection for businesses in the Downtown Core. A centralized dumpster area should be well screened and can remove this unsightly, yet necessary component of business operation to open up alleyways and the rear of buildings for storefronts and rear entrances.
- Encourage outdoor seating areas for restaurants and entertainment uses by streamlining the permitting process and reducing restrictions on sidewalk seating. Additionally, the Village should identify opportunities to expand sidewalks where appropriate and utilize existing set backs on buildings to create plazas and larger outdoor areas. The Village could consider a pilot program to expand outdoor seating into on-street parking spaces as some other communities have done.
- Promote business initiated/focused special events, such as sidewalk sales, to increase energy and activity in Downtown.
- Promote historic preservation as a means to preserve the existing building stock and historic architectural character of the village.
- With bus and train service, the Downtown is, and should remain, a multi-modal environment that fosters a sense of energy and vitality. As a complement to public transportation, active transportation and the use of bicycles should also be supported and encouraged. However, the Downtown should first remain a "walkable" area. The Village should support the installation of additional bike parking at both public and private facilities in the Downtown's periphery to allow cyclists to park and secure their bikes and become "pedestrians" in the Downtown.
- The Village should explore the feasibility of constructing a pedestrian grade separated crossing near the Metra station. This significant capital investment would increase the safety of commuters and residents as they cross the railroad tracks. The Village should look into funding sources to help finance its construction, including grants from Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF), the Illinois Commerce Commission, federal grants, and Metra.
- Ensure that adequate parking is provided for motorcycles and scooters in the Downtown.
- The Village should review circulation patterns, roadway capacities, and parking availability in the downtown after the completion of the Marquis on Maple development and the mixed-use and residential developments currently planned in the Downtown



Key Concept Recommendations

- Key Downtown Destination
- Gateway/Directory Signage
- Existing TIF District
- Existing Auto-Oriented Business
- Historic Structure or Site
- Centralized Garbage Collection
- North-side Parking Deficiency
- Pedestrian Underpass
- Park & Open Space
- Public Use
- Metra Commuter Station
- Village-Propose Bike Route
- Bike Parking


A north-side parking garage would address parking needs and allow other sites to develop more intensely
TO OGDEN AVENUE
Redevelop "strip-mall" site and other auto-oriented development to traditional downtown buildings
Parking could be relocated to allow the Metra parking lot to redevelop as a mixed-use building with a public plaza to preserve views and provide open space
Relocate Metra Station platform to allow Main Street to remain open during boarding and alighting
Live/work rowhouses add density, employment, and character to Downtown
FRANKLIN
SARATOGA
FOREST
MAIN
WARREN
ROGERS
WASHINGTON
To Aurora Via Lisle
BURLINGTON NORTHERN SANTA FE RAILROAD
To Chicago Via Fairview
Former bank building developed with TOD principles, creating a terminating vista
BURLINGTON
MOCHEL
GILBERT
CURTISS
Improve railroad right-of-way to serve as a pedestrian walkway through the downtown
The Village should consider a range of uses including multi-family
Multi-family development at Washington and Curtiss
GROVE
New parking structure at Library would address parking needs downtown and allow some of the existing commuter lots to be redeveloped
Redeveloped commercial/mixed-use buildings strengthen the overall downtown and the Curtiss Street streetwall
MAPLE
This area could be expanded with shared-use parking for Fishel Park to accommodate special events
Traditional downtown buildings that hold the corners and serve as a new gateway development in the Downtown
Potential three-story, multi-family building
Move this building back to provide green space along Main and Maple
TO 63RD STREET
0
1/16
1/8
1/4
Mile
0
2.5 minute walk
5 minute walk
Land Use & Development
Single Family Residential
Mixed-Use
Multi-Family Residential
Park & Open Space
Live/Work Units
Parking Garage
Public/Semi-Public

Key Focus Areas

Downtown Catalyst Sites

B1 Main & Warren

This site presents an opportunity to redevelop an auto-oriented strip center and a one-story building into a multi-story, mixed-use development. Complementing this development, this site could accommodate a parking structure catering to the Downtown employees, shoppers and commuters along Forest Avenue.

B2 Washington & Warren

This area provides an important transition from residential areas to the north to the Downtown. This site provides an opportunity to provide additional multi-family, office, mixed-use or parking.

B3 AT&T Switching Station Parking Lot

This parking lot next to the AT&T Switching Station holds redevelopment potential. This site is ideally located for residential or for parking on the north side of the tracks to serve commuters and businesses. The parking lot is underutilized during the middle of the workday. The Village should explore how much of the lot is used by AT&T and see if it would be feasible to acquire.

B4 Post Office Operations

The post office provides an important civic function and a vital traffic-generator for the Downtown. Consideration should be given to splitting the retail and service functions from the delivery operations in order to minimize truck traffic Downtown. Removing the truck operations/parking would also create a potential redevelopment site on the west side of the post office site. The retail function of the post office should remain Downtown.

B5 Curtiss & Washington

Parcels on the northeast corner of Curtiss Street and Washington Street have been approved for redevelopment. This will include 48 apartments between two buildings at the northeast corner of this intersection. The north half of this catalyst site remains an ideal location for a mixed-use TOD development with residential above retail or for a dense multi-story residential development.

B6 Masonic Temple Parking Lot

The parking lot west of the Masonic Temple has development potential to add more housing units and commercial space in the downtown. Currently, the lot is underutilized and has a drive-thru structure that is no longer in use. Any building constructed on this site should be set back as to not disrupt the view of the Masonic Temple, which is a landmark within the Downtown.

B7 Grove & Main

An underutilized, one-story building and the neighboring surface parking lot provides a redevelopment opportunity for a stronger relationship to the historic building pattern of Downtown. A multi-story building oriented towards Main Street maintains the streetwall and provides a sense of enclosure. Parking could be provided in the rear of the building where access presently exists, with a pedestrian arcade or alley providing access to Main Street. A building with a high-quality of architecture would provide a terminating vista for Grove Street.

B8 Maple & Main

This intersection is the southern gateway into the Downtown. Except for the historic building on the southwest corner, the condition, setback and/or orientation of the buildings surrounding this intersection do not contribute to creating a true gateway.

0 1/16 1/8 1/4 Mile

0 2.5 minute walk 5 minute walk

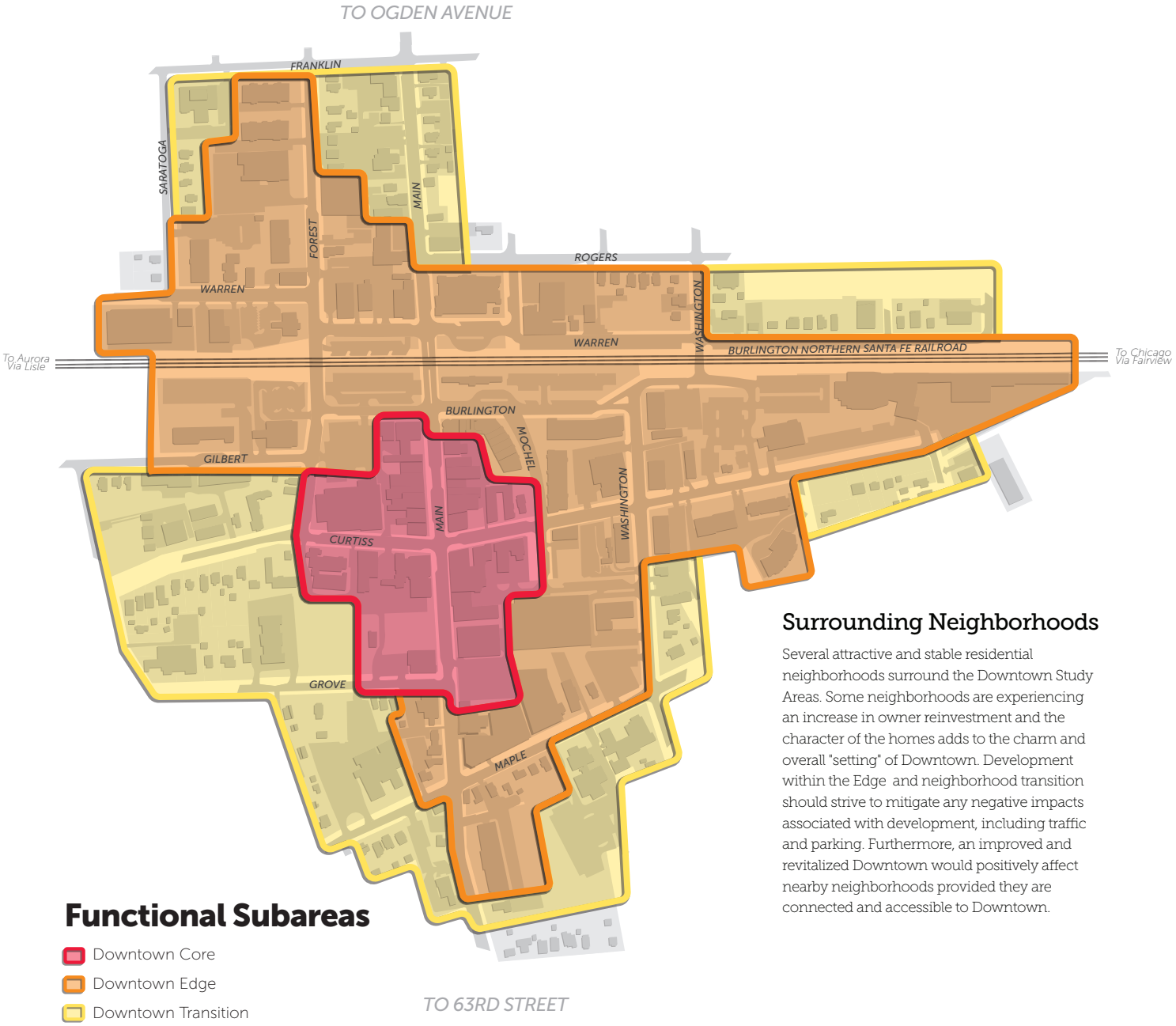
Recommendations

Catalyst Redevelopment Opportunity

Key Focus Areas

Downtown Functional Subareas

Downtown is often referred to, and treated as, a single place. While it is true that Downtown is a unique destination in the community, it is actually comprised of several distinct areas, with different form, uses, conditions, characteristics and potentials. The Downtown Subarea Plan addresses the specific needs of each "Functional Subarea" area and establishes recommendations for the improvement and enhancement of each area in the future, including appropriate uses and intensities.



Functional Subareas

- Downtown Core
- Downtown Edge
- Downtown Transition

Surrounding Neighborhoods

Several attractive and stable residential neighborhoods surround the Downtown Study Areas. Some neighborhoods are experiencing an increase in owner reinvestment and the character of the homes adds to the charm and overall "setting" of Downtown. Development within the Edge and neighborhood transition should strive to mitigate any negative impacts associated with development, including traffic and parking. Furthermore, an improved and revitalized Downtown would positively affect nearby neighborhoods provided they are connected and accessible to Downtown.

Downtown Core

The Downtown Core is focused around the intersection of Curtiss Street and Main Street. It represents the largest concentration of the shopping and dining opportunities that exist in Downtown. While the Core is fully developed, there are opportunities for improvement and redevelopment that respects the height and character of the downtown.

Land Uses

Residential. Residential uses should not be considered a required component of the Downtown Core, however they can be an upper floor component of mixed-use buildings.

Retail. Retail uses should be promoted within all areas of the Downtown Core.

Entertainment. Entertainment uses, including restaurants, bars, and theatres and any other should be promoted within all areas of the Downtown Core Opportunities for al fresco dining, including sidewalk seating, should be promoted throughout.

Office. Office uses should be encouraged as an upper floor component of mixed-use buildings within the Downtown Core.

Service. Commercial service uses that generate frequent customers and contribute to the energy and activity in Downtown and on the sidewalk should be integrated into the mix of ground floor uses in the Downtown Core.

Public Uses. Public uses that generate visitors and activity should be considered appropriate within the Downtown Core. Public uses consisting of primarily office functions should be treated like office land uses.

Built Form

The built form of the Downtown Core should consist of buildings at or near the sidewalk and front property line. A zero-foot side yard setback should be strictly enforced to help establish and maintain a continuous streetwall. Building height should be respectful of existing structures and not exceed three stories. Parking should be provided on-street, in public lots, the Parking Deck, or in the rear of buildings accessed by side streets and rear alleys.

Downtown Edge

The Downtown Edge is an area that exhibits some characteristics of the Downtown Core and some characteristics of the Neighborhood Transition. The Edge should include an urban fabric near the Core and a suburban fabric further from the Core. Although the Downtown Edge is fully developed, there are significant opportunities for improvement, redevelopment, and use intensification.

Land Uses

Residential. Residential uses should be encouraged as a component of mixed-use buildings within the Edge. Dense residential development, including multi-story residential buildings should also be considered appropriate.

Retail. Retail uses should first be directed to the Downtown Core before developing within the Edge. Retail uses in the Edge should be focused near the Downtown Core.

Service. Commercial service uses that generate frequent customers and contribute to the energy and activity in Downtown and on the sidewalk should be directed to the Downtown Core before developing within the Edge. Other types of commercial service uses should be considered appropriate in the Edge.

Office. Office uses should be encouraged as a component of mixed-use buildings within the Edge; however like residential, office uses on the ground floor should be permitted.

Public Uses. Public uses should be considered appropriate within the Edge.

Built Form

The Downtown Edge is uniquely located adjacent to the Downtown Core with denser, commercial development and the Neighborhood Transition and residential neighborhoods with residential characteristics. As such, the location of edge properties should play a role in the built form. For those Edge properties nearer the core, buildings should exhibit core characteristics, such as larger buildings at, or near the sidewalk and front property lines and a continuous streetwall.

For those Edge properties near the Neighborhood Transition and surrounding residential neighborhoods, buildings should exhibit these characteristics. Buildings may be larger but should include front and side setbacks to create open green space around the buildings. Parking in these areas should be provided on-street or in the rear of the buildings accessed by entry drives or side streets. Surface parking lots should follow the Village's landscaping and screening requirements.

Downtown Transition

The areas outside of the Downtown Core and Edge but within the Downtown Study Area comprise the Downtown Transition area. This area plays an important role in helping transition between more intensive uses in the Downtown Core and Downtown Edge into the neighborhoods that surround Downtown.

Land Uses

Residential. All types of residential uses are appropriate in the Neighborhood Transition Area.

Retail. Retail uses should not be encouraged in the Neighborhood Transition area. Retail uses should be directed to the Downtown Core and Edge.

Service. Commercial service uses that generate frequent customers should not be encouraged in the Neighborhood Transition area. Other types of commercial service uses with primarily an office function may be appropriate, but should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Office. Low intensity and professional office uses, including lawyers, accountants, doctors, should be considered appropriate in the Neighborhood Transition area.

Public Uses. Public uses should be considered appropriate within the Neighborhood Transition area.

Built Form

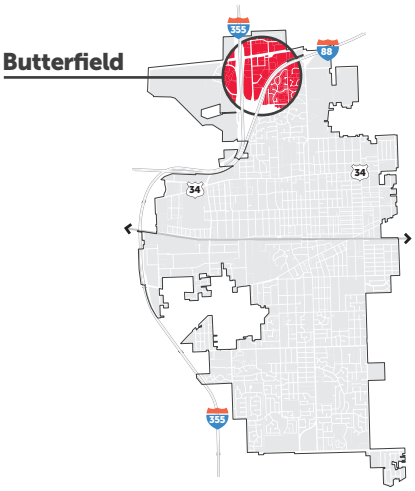
The built form of the Downtown Transition area should consist of buildings that are smaller than what is found in the Core and Edge subareas. These buildings should not have a street wall and should be setback from the front lot line in a manner that creates a front yard with some open space. The building should also be setback from side property lines to create a side yard. This subarea should be denser compared to the surrounding neighborhoods outside of the downtown, but should be respectful of the height of surrounding neighborhoods.

Key Focus Areas

Butterfield

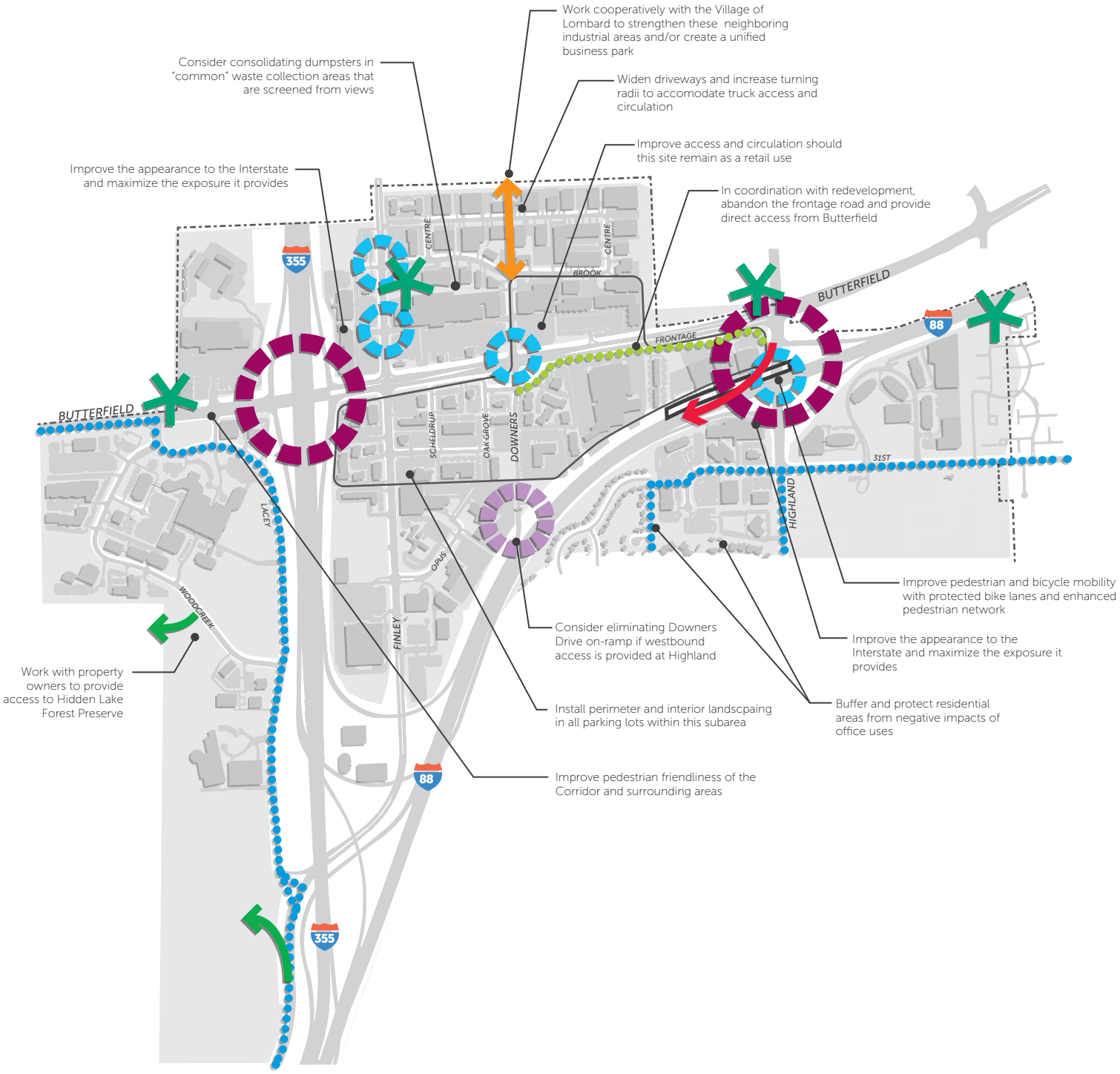
The Finley Road/Butterfield Road area is comprised of shopping centers, stand-alone restaurants and office development of varying heights. Its proximity to I-88 and I-355 provides unparalleled access and visibility and is a key gateway into the Village of Downers Grove. Demand has remained strong as vacancies are filled relatively quickly. This area, more than other parts of the Village, must be aggressive in maintaining its competitiveness in the regional office and retail markets. Neighboring municipalities have taken dramatic actions to maintain and enhance their standing, including the use of tax increment financing (TIF), targeted property redevelopment, and strategic marketing campaigns.

The more successful office developments in this subarea have invested significantly in structured parking, high-quality signage and extensive landscaping. These sites provide best practices for improving the office market overall whether such improvements occur as part of an overall redevelopment or as part of modernization efforts.



Key Concepts

- Identify opportunities for shared, structured parking to reduce the amount of land area dedicated to surface parking lots.
- Work cooperatively with the Village of Lombard to create a single identity for the industrial properties to the north of Butterfield Road and jointly market them.
- Explore creating a TIF district to fund necessary property and infrastructure improvements and possibly to assemble property to facilitate comprehensive redevelopment of commercial uses between Highland and Finley.
- Support and encourage the redevelopment or modernization of the area's Class C office buildings that are functionally obsolete, cannot compete with nearby office developments, and detract from Downers Grove's overall character.
- Promote Highland Landmark as a model site for office development and replicate the elements that contribute to its success should office areas redevelop.
- Explore consolidating all retail uses to the south side of Butterfield as a component of a life-style center redevelopment to better compete with other retail destinations in nearby communities.
- Promote stand-alone, independent big-box retail on the north side of Butterfield Road and/or the expansion of the Oak Grove Commons industrial area.
- Work with IDOT to improve the intersection of Highland and Butterfield, including consideration for creating a complete interchange by providing westbound access to I-88.
- Reduce the heat island effect through a combination of providing shade on-site and using light colored building and paving materials.



Recommendations

- Potential TIF District
- Butterfield Frontage Road
- Gateway/Directory Signage
- Interstate Interchange
- Potential Elimination of Existing Interchagne
- Westbound I-88 Access
- Connection to Lombard
- Improved Pedestrian Crossing
- Village-Proposed Bicycle Route
- Explore connections to Hidden Lake Forest Preserve
- Municipal Boundary

Key Focus Areas

Butterfield Catalyst Sites

C1 Esplanade

Previously approved as part of a Planned Unit Development, these sites have not yet developed. With excellent visibility and access, these parcels could accommodate additional office development, restaurants or retail.

C2 Southeast Corner of Finley &Butterfield

Southeast corner of Finley Road and Butterfield Road This site is currently improved with a hotel and a restaurant surrounded by surface parking which fail to capitalize on its proximity to the interstate and the access and exposure it provides. Given the site's high visibility and proximity to I-355, any redevelopment should occur in a manner that "holds the corner" by orienting new development towards the intersection.

C3 Office Area

This area is currently improved with single-story Class C office space. It is possible that the value of the land may exceed the value of the improvements which will put redevelopment pressure on this area. The opportunity exists to create new Class A office space or additional retail development in this area to better compete with neighboring communities.

C4 North Side of Butterfield

Troubled by poor topography and access, this site may face redevelopment pressure if new retail develops to the south or if additional demand for light industrial/business park uses occurs. Multi-tenant commercial development within the site has not been successful and the area could be comprehensively redeveloped with large format, stand alone development to achieve better success.

C5 University Plaza

University Plaza is the principal use for this site, a multi-tenant shopping center with a high vacancy rate. Due to the condition of the building and site, and the mix of incompatible uses, this center is quickly outliving its useful life as currently developed. Presented with the right opportunity, this site could be combined with the Red Roof Inn parcels to the east to create a larger redevelopment site.

0 1/16 1/8 1/4 1/2 Mile

0 5 minute walk 10 minute walk

Recommendations

Catalyst Redevelopment Opportunity

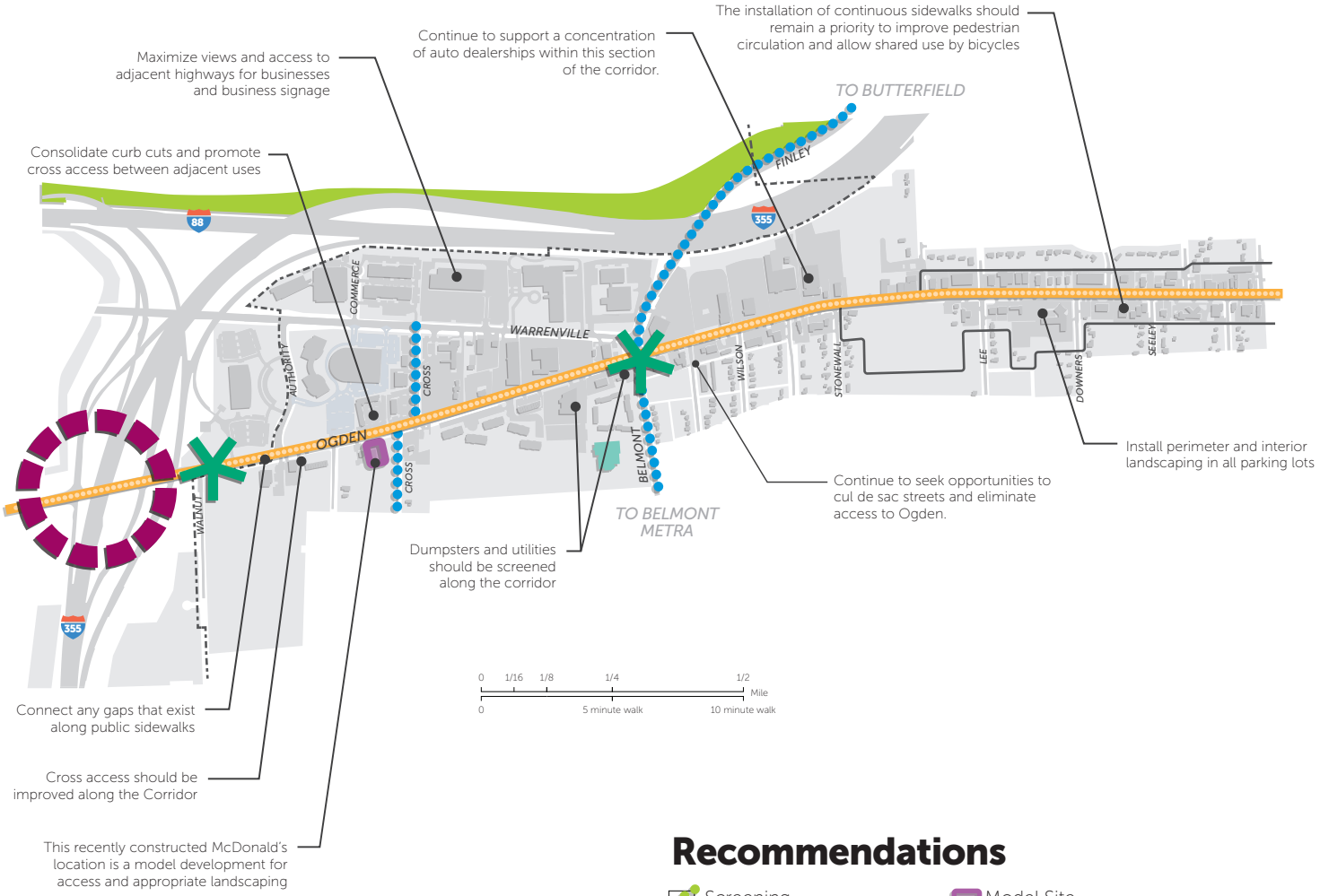
Key Focus Areas

Ogden Avenue

With an average traffic count of 32,000-33,000 vehicles trips per day through Downers Grove, Ogden Avenue is firmly established as an auto-dominated corridor in terms of its traffic volume, design, development pattern, scale and land use. Ogden Avenue is one of only two areas in the Village with an established TIF district, which can be used to fund and incentivize improvements to the area. The Village received federal grants to install sidewalks the entire length of Ogden Avenue and to reduce the number of curb cuts, which will go a long way to address some of the major pedestrian circulation and accessibility concerns along the corridor.

Ogden Avenue lacks any clear identity in terms of signage, wayfinding, landscaping, pedestrian facilities, or overall appearance and is not reflective of the character of the larger Downers Grove community. Parcels in several areas of the corridor are characterized by shallow lot depths with parking along the street in front of buildings. Few adjacent lots are connected to each other through cross-access, thereby forcing customers onto Ogden Avenue to visit neighboring/adjacent commercial sites.

The western end of Ogden Avenue is a community gateway that benefits from its strategic location along Interstate 88 and Interstate 355. It is characterized by larger parcels and a concentration of office uses and automobile dealerships, which, because of the interstates, can serve a large regional market. Towards the east, the corridor is influenced by surrounding civic, institutional, and medical uses. The western end of Ogden Avenue should continue to leverage its strategic location and should be reserved for uses that require and benefit from customers and employees from beyond Downers Grove.



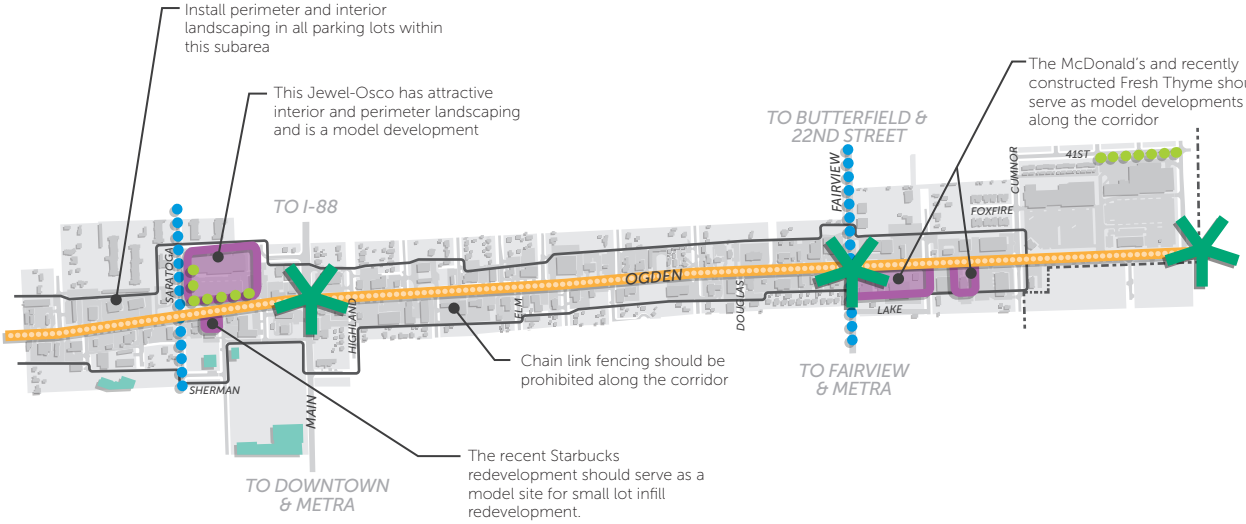
Recommendations

- Screening
- Gateway/Directory Signage
- Village-Proposed Bicycle Route
- Right-of-Way Improvement
- Model Site
- Institutional/Public
- Interstate Interchange
- Existing TIF District
- Muncipal Boundary

Main Street is an important north-south connection from the Interstate to downtown and the Main Street Metra Station. The intersection of Ogden Avenue and Main Street should be enhanced as a gateway into the community and should complement existing uses with additional medical office uses.

The eastern end of Ogden Avenue is anchored by two large neighborhood shopping centers with grocery store anchors. This concentration of retail provides goods and services targeted at neighboring residential areas. Fairview Avenue is a minor arterial that provides an important north-south connection for Downers Grove.

To the south, Fairview connects with the Fairview Metra Station and to the north (as it becomes Meyers Road) it connects to Oak Brook with regional shopping destinations such as Fountain Square. Although located along a regional corridor, this section of Ogden Avenue provides an excellent location to offer necessary "close to home" shopping for everyday goods and services for Downers Grove residents.



Key Concepts

- Encourage commercial expansion by increasing lot depth on a case-by-case basis given location, context, use, and screening.
- Maximize exposure and access to I-88 and I-355 without comprising Village character or identity.
- Consider the use of cul-de-sacs for selected residential streets that currently have access to Ogden Avenue in order to create additional buffering for adjacent residential areas and a potential incentive for better commercial development.
- Parking lot screening and interior landscaped islands are required and should be enforced consistently.
- Buffer nearby residential areas from the impacts of commercial use (such as noise, light, and traffic) through the use of landscaping and screening.
- Connect nearby residential areas to shopping and services by providing pedestrian and bicycle access. This can help to improve traffic congestion by reducing the number of trips by automobile.
- Dumpster enclosures and dumpster screening is required and should be enforced consistently.
- The reduction of curb cuts and the use of shared access agreements (internal cross access) can significantly improve circulation along Ogden Avenue.
- Beautification of Ogden Avenue should be a priority and can be achieved through the installation of streetscape elements and street trees and burying overhead utility lines.
- Install/enhance gateway features such as signage and landscaping at key intersections (Ogden and Finley & Ogden and Main) that "announce" entry into the Downers Grove community.
- Zoning is a tool that can be used to protect an area's character by regulating the type and location of land uses that may be detrimental to or incompatible with the area.

Key Focus Areas

Ogden Avenue Catalyst Sites

D1 Walnut & Ogden

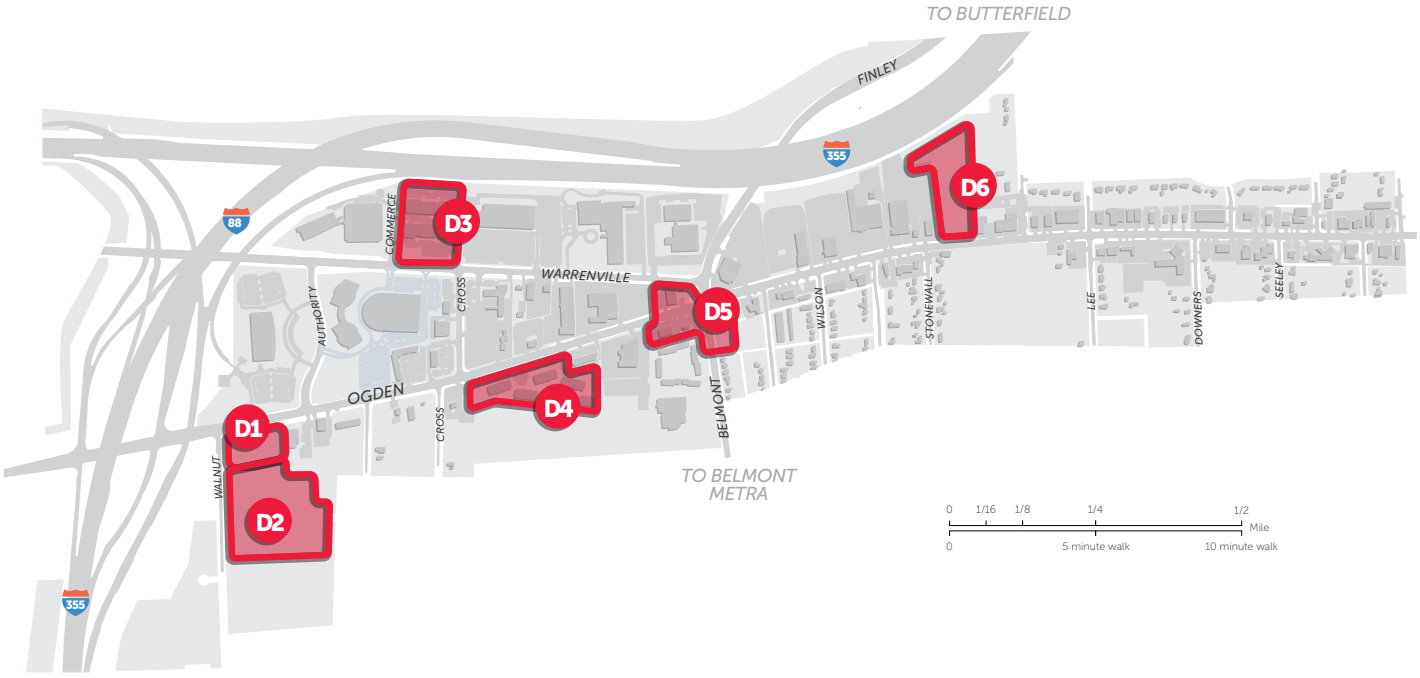
This three acres site is in close proximity to I-355 and has an opportunity to be a wetsern gateway to Downers Grove. A striking, high-quality building on this site could effectively anchor the west end of the corridor and serve as a landmark for drivers on I-355.

D2 Park District Property on Walnut

This property was recently purchased by the Downers Grove Park District and is well-suited for a regional recreation facility due to its close proximity to I-88 and I-355.

D3 Cross & Warrenville

The visibility for this site from I-355 provides this site with a redevelopment opportunity. The site currently has a lower-quality multi-tenant office structure. Much like adjacent structures, this site would be ideal for a high-quality office building.



D4 Fairway Grove Condos

This site presents an opportunity to showcase the golf course through a long-term redevelopment such as a banquet facility/special event center. A redevelopment of this nature could be a perception-altering move by creating an eye-catching use for visitors and residents. It would also allow for the addition of revenue-generating uses that capitalize on the site's frontage along a significant commercial corridor within the Village and region.

D5 Finley/Belmont & Ogden Avenue

The prominence of this intersection presents an opportunity for redevelopment and enhancement as a major gateway into the Village of Downers Grove. Parcels in this area are underutilized and are characterized by large surface parking lots that exceed demand for the current uses. Through parcel assembly on the south side of Ogden, it is possible to create larger sites attractive for redevelopment.

D6 Stonewall Avenue & Ogden Avenue (South)

Given its proximity to and visibility from I-355, this site could be developed as a shared facility for test driving automobiles or a parking garage for providing off-site storage for car dealerships within the vicinity. This type of amenity gives a competitive advantage to the existing concentration of auto dealerships along Ogden Avenue. This site is also well-suited to accommodate the relocation of other auto dealerships.

D7 Saratoga & Ogden Avenue (Southwest Corner)

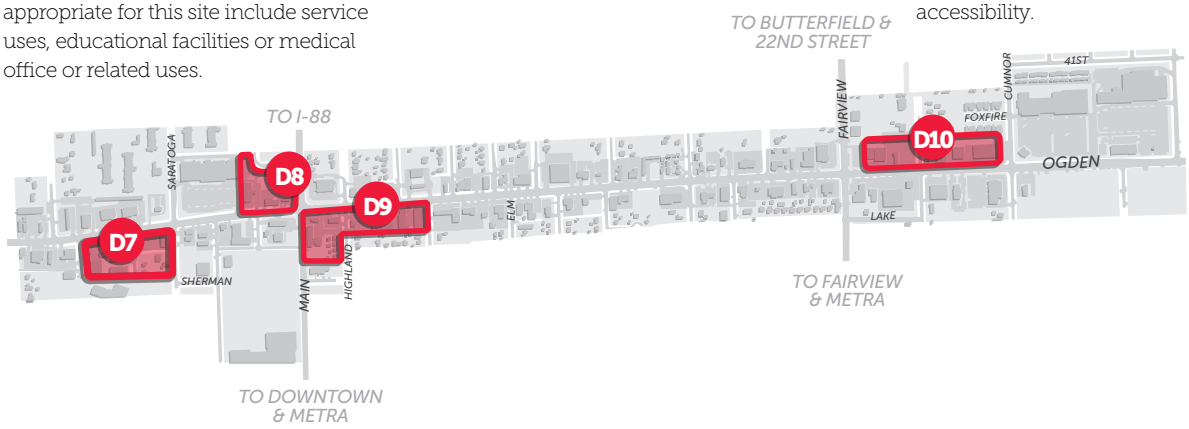
Throughout the corridor, lack of sufficient parcel depth hampers redevelopment. At this location, the middle school establishes an acceptable commercial depth that the existing shallow-lot commercial uses have failed to utilize. Development in this area should go south to the middle school to foster better, more contemporary development. Should the auto dealership currently located on this site moves to the western end of Ogden Avenue, there is an opportunity to bring the buildings closer to the street as occurs on the north side. Uses appropriate for this site include service uses, educational facilities or medical office or related uses.

D8 Main Street & Ogden Avenue (Northwest Corner)

Parcel assembly and improvements to the aesthetics and function of this site could have dramatic results for enhancing this intersection as a gateway by complementing the recent construction of a Walgreens and a BP gas station.

D9 Main Street & Ogden Avenue (Southeast Corner)

The existing medical office uses on this site are an important component that can remain. However, aesthetic and functional improvements (e.g. shared parking) should be implemented in order to strengthen these uses. Additional medical office and related uses should be concentrated in this area. Consolidation of parcels at this corner and east to Washington Street would allow for in improved, functional corner at this major intersection. Cross access between buildings on this site would improve accessibility.



Recommendations

Catalyst Redevelopment Opportunity

D10 Fairview & Ogden Avenue (Northeast Corner)

Should the car dealerships relocate to the west end of Ogden Avenue, the site has the opportunity to be redeveloped into a commercial center. Any future center here should have cross access to the newer commercial space at the northeast corner of Fairview Avenue and Ogden Avenue.

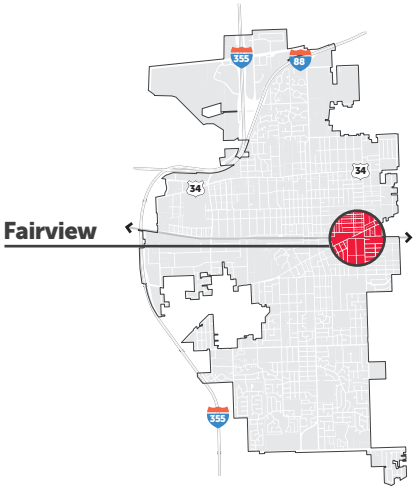
Key Focus Areas

Fairview

The Fairview subarea is bounded by Hummer Park on the north, the Village limits on the east and stable residential neighborhoods to the south and west. This area is comprised of a mix of uses, which includes: industrial, commercial retail, commercial service, multi-family residential, and single-family residential. The area is anchored by the Fairview Metra Station and a Pepperidge Farm facility.

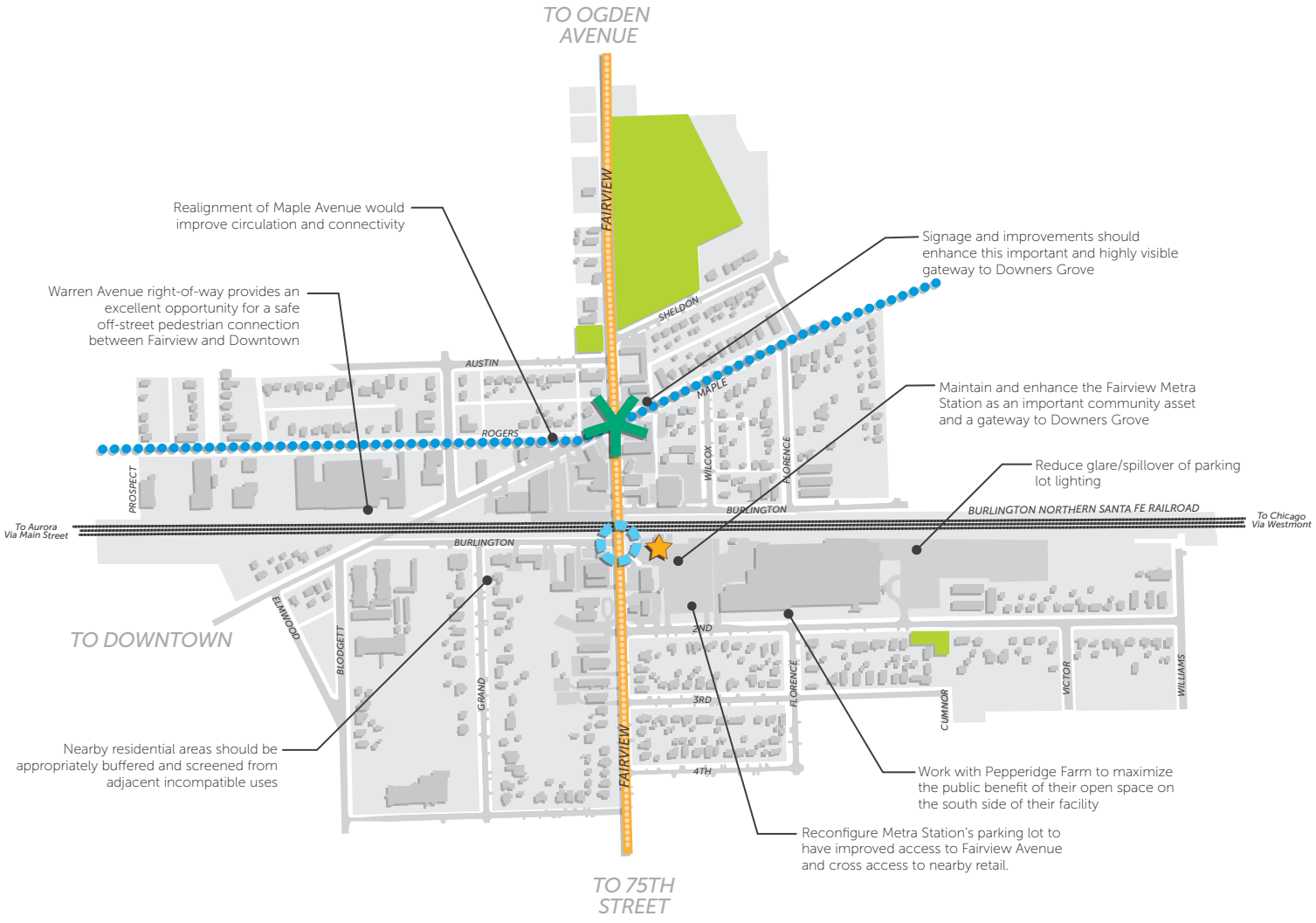
The existing land uses in the Fairview area are appropriate but development has occurred in a piecemeal fashion with little coordination between developments. Many buildings are dated and underperforming in terms of height, density, and site configuration, and fail to maximize their potential, particularly given their proximity to a commuter rail station.

Emphasis for this subarea plan will be on improving the form, function and appearance of this area consistent with the principles of transit-oriented development (TOD) to be more representative of the character and image of Downers Grove. The intended result is a distinct identity for the neighborhood and improved circulation. Mixed-use development that provides goods and services targeted towards commuters and nearby residents is intended to complement, not compete with, Downtown Downers Grove.



Key Concepts

- Explore incentives and financing opportunities to fund necessary property and infrastructure improvements, and to facilitate potential parcel assembly to foster comprehensive redevelopment of key properties.
- Redevelopment should be oriented towards the street with parking areas in the rear of buildings.
- Identify opportunities for shared parking facilities to reduce the amount of land area dedicated to surface parking lots.
- Promote neighborhood commercial uses along Fairview Avenue to provide goods and services to commuters and nearby residents.
- Communicate with existing industrial users regarding future needs and potential desire to relocate.
- While industrial uses remain in the area, establish truck routes to minimize the impact on residential neighborhoods.
- Explore realigning Maple Avenue to improve connectivity and circulation in the Fairview area.
- Install/enhance gateway features such as signage and landscaping in recognition of this area's function as a major entry point into the Village from the east.
- The existing land uses are appropriate; however, the priority should be on updating and enhancing the built form of the area and better coordination through uses.
- Development regulations should encourage mixed-use, transit-oriented development that is appropriate in height.
- Visual and physical connections to Downtown should be enhanced through wayfinding signage and improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- The creation of a streetscaping program along Fairview Avenue and Maple Avenue would unify the area through the creation of an identity, connect this area to Downtown, and provide enhanced pedestrian amenities for commuters.
- Buffer nearby residential areas from the impacts of commercial uses (such as noise, light and traffic) through the use of landscaping and screening.
- Connect nearby residential areas to shopping and services by enhancing pedestrian and bicycle access. This can help to improve traffic congestion by reducing the number of trips by automobile.
- Dumpster enclosures and dumpster screening should be required and enforced consistently.
- Parking lot screening and interior landscaped islands with trees is required and should be enforced consistently.
- Consider conducting a traffic study for the area to improve the movement of vehicles within, and through this area, and to identify and address existing impacts and cut-through traffic in surrounding residential neighborhoods.



Recommendations

- Village-Proposed Bike Route
- Gateway/Directory Signage
- Improved Pedestrian Crossing
- Park/Open Space
- Metra Station
- Right-of-Way Improvement

Key Focus Areas

Fairview Catalyst Sites

E1 Prospect & Warren

The industrial uses along Rogers Avenue present an opportunity to redevelop with more compatible uses and facilitate a better connection between Downtown and the Fairview area. These parcels would be most appropriate for low-intensity office uses but could also develop with mixed-use, single-family attached housing or multi-family housing. To avoid closing viable Village businesses, the Village should work with existing industrial owners to relocate to more appropriate areas in the Village such as the Ellsworth Industrial Park.

E2 Maple & Rogers

The potential exists to realign Maple Avenue creating a development parcel appropriately sized for mixed-use, multi-family housing, single-family attached housing, or office development to achieve transit-oriented development near the Fairview Metra Station.

E3 Maple & Fairview

This intersection is currently improved with auto-oriented uses characterized by surface parking lots in front with little or no landscaping and screening. A transit-oriented development in this area would hinge on the successful redevelopment of these parcels stretching south to the railroad tracks. New development should promote a mixed-use, compact form that is oriented towards Fairview Avenue, with parking for residents and customers in the rear.

E4 Burlington & Fairview (Southwest Corner)

Historically, this area developed in a piecemeal fashion with little to no coordination. Multi-family uses are appropriate for this site; however redevelopment towards transit-oriented development would vastly improve the form, function, and appearance of this area.

E5 2nd & Fairview (Northeast Corner)

The southeast corner of this intersection is currently improved with the Fairview Metra Station and convenience retail and a vacant service station. Redevelopment of this site should be neighborhood-scaled, offering goods and services aimed at commuters and nearby residents. This may include mixed-use development, convenience retail and services, and professional services such as doctor and dental offices. A master planned development for this site in conjunction with Catalyst Site E6 would allow for more development along Fairview Avenue by shifting commuter parking to the east, as necessary.

E6 Pepperidge Farm Site

In the event the Pepperidge Farm facility desires to relocate, a contingency plan should be put into place for the future use of the site. Every effort should be made to retain this important asset in the Village of Downers Grove. Relocation of the facility to the Ellsworth Industrial Park (or similar industrial area) would allow the facility to modernize and grow and would alleviate land use conflicts in its current location.

Single-family attached housing on this site would provide a buffer between the railroad and single-family detached housing areas to the south. The eastern portion of this site tapers slightly and should be reserved for open space, stormwater facilities and/or utilities needed to support new development in the area.

0 1/16 1/8 1/4 Mile

0 2.5 minute walk 5 minute walk

Recommendations

Catalyst Redevelopment Opportunity

Key Focus Areas

Fairview Redevelopment Concept

1. Redeveloped industrial sites into professional offices or multi-family residential which will be more compatible with nearby residential uses.
2. Neighborhood commercial center with a strong presence at Maple and Fairview.
3. Multi-family residential and neighborhood commercial uses.
4. A neighborhood commercial center with a strong street presence on Fairview with parking at the rear.
5. Multi-family residential uses separate single-family neighborhoods from the railroad.
6. Redeveloped multi-family buildings into more contemporary buildings in a more coordinated fashion.
7. Expanded Metra parking flanked by neighborhood commercial to the west and multi-family residential to the east.
8. Should the existing use vacate, this site would have strong potential for attached single-family rowhomes that could follow a sustainable development certification such as LEED ND.

Identity & Placemaking

The recommendations included within this Key Focus Area Plan provide an opportunity to create a cohesive neighborhood with a distinct identity. Neighborhood commercial uses along Fairview Avenue are proposed to be surrounded by contemporary multi-family housing options (both standalone and as part of mixed-use developments). Improvements to circulation, land use, aesthetics, open space and gateways are proposed to create Downers Grove's newest neighborhood. Assisting with this effort, include appropriate applications of the principles of TOD and LEED for Neighborhood Development.

TOD

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is a type of development that prioritizes mass transit as a mode of transportation in its orientation and built form. TODs are typically compact, dense and located in close proximity to transit facilities.

Mixed-use development is emphasized and uses may include a mix of housing types, convenience retail (such as coffee shops, dry cleaners and shoe repair), and public spaces. A TOD is walkable, and clusters appropriate land uses within one-quarter to one-half mile of a transit stop or station.

LEED ND

The Fairview area provides an opportunity for a demonstration project using LEED-ND (Neighborhood Development) criteria, the U.S. Green Building Council's metrics and rating system applicable to neighborhood-scale development. LEED-ND places emphasis on site selection, design and the construction elements of buildings and infrastructure.

Redevelopment within the Fairview area could employ techniques to create a self-sustaining, walkable town center unrivaled in the western suburbs. The presence of transit, the existing street network and the diversity of uses in this area all contribute to the possibility of such a project.

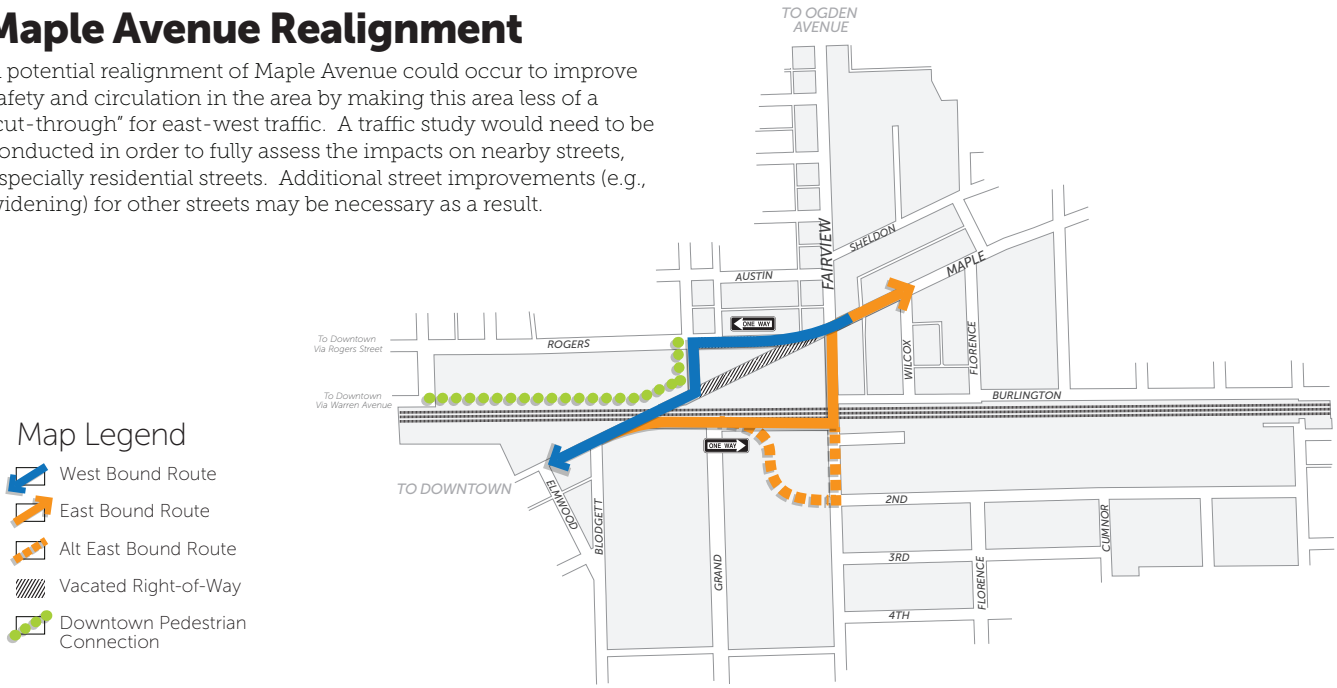
Achieving LEED-ND may increase the time and cost of a particular development project. The Village may encourage parcels to strive to adhere to the requirements of LEED-ND even if certification is not sought.

Guiding Principles

- An emphasis on infill development
- Improvements to open space and stormwater facililties
- Buildings oriented towards the street (parking in the rear)
- Increased density and an emphasis on mixed-use within 1/4 mile of the station
- Shared parking facilities/minimize surface parking lots
- Continuation of the street grid
- Improved pedestrian and bicycle connections
- Avoid developing in floodplains and environmentally-sensitive land

Maple Avenue Realignment

A potential realignment of Maple Avenue could occur to improve safety and circulation in the area by making this area less of a "cut-through" for east-west traffic. A traffic study would need to be conducted in order to fully assess the impacts on nearby streets, especially residential streets. Additional street improvements (e.g., widening) for other streets may be necessary as a result.



Key Focus Areas

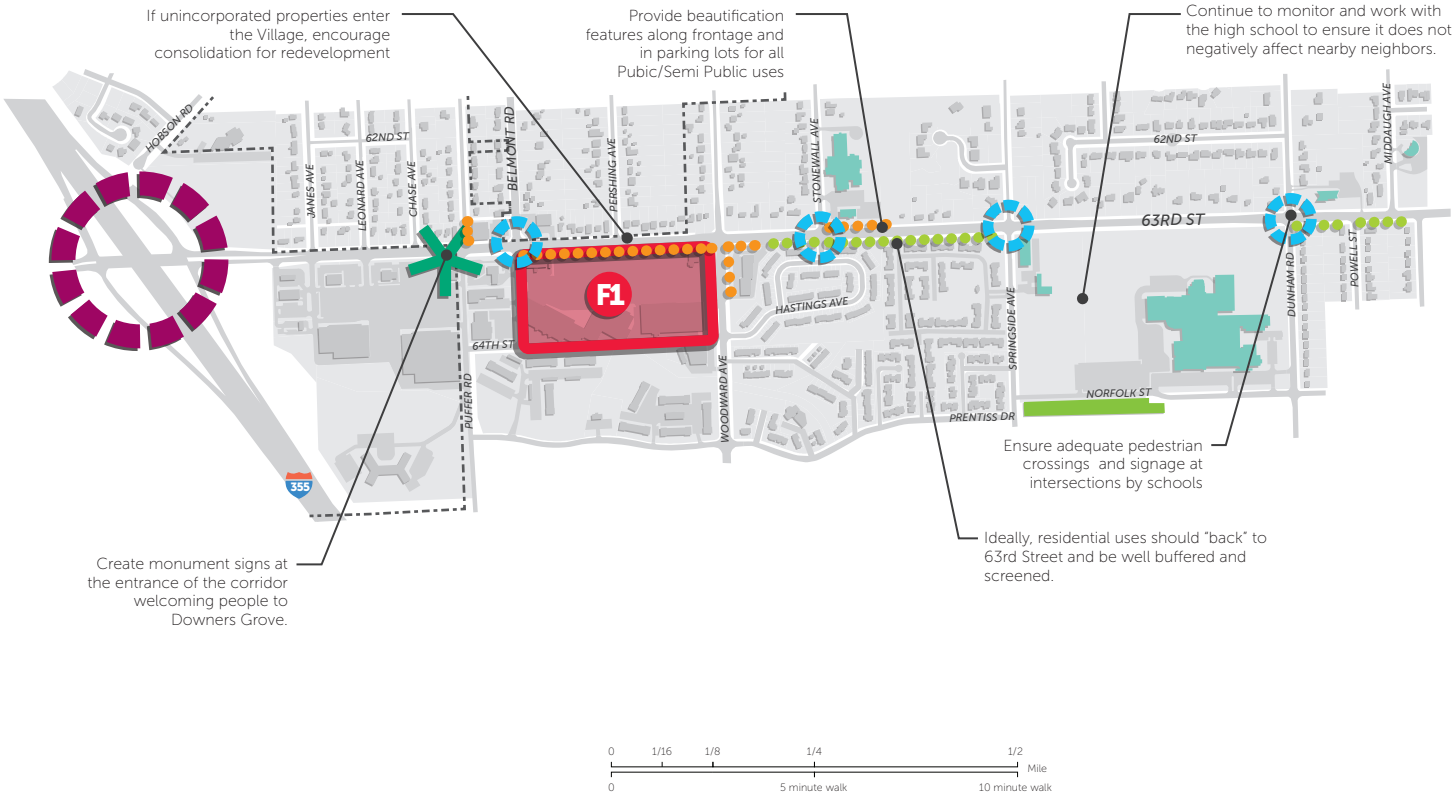
63rd Street

Stretching from the I-355 exit to Fairview Avenue, this is a key east-west corridor that is predominantly residential. The corridor has a three commercial nodes and key intersections throughout that are mostly neighborhood retail. Given its proximity to a number of prominent commercial corridors in the vicinity, the Village should seek to expand and improve upon the existing residential, and maintain the commercial nodes.

63rd Street lacks clear gateway features or signs at both ends of the corridor to welcome people into Downers Grove. A number of residential properties on 63rd street front onto the corridor and have signs of disinvestment and vacancy. Repositioning these properties would be a better fit for the corridor

Key Concepts

- Promote the consolidation of smaller, disinvested residential properties and underutilized commercial spaces and redeveloping them into rowhouses within reason.
- Explore creating a TIF District to fund necessary property and infrastructure improvements and possibly to assemble property to facilitate the redevelopment of the Meadowbrook shopping center on 63rd Street and Woodward Avenue.
- Install/enhance gateway features such as signage and landscaping at key intersections (63rd Street and Janes Avenue) to "announce" entry into the Downers Grove community.
- Beautify and/or enhance landscaping at major intersections on 63rd Street.
- Encourage commercial expansion at key intersections where existing commercial uses exist and where it is necessary to improving their vitality.
- Enhance access, visibility, and consolidate nearby parcels where appropriate.
- Connect nearby residential areas to shopping and services by providing pedestrian and bicycle access. This can help to improve traffic congestion by reducing the number of trips by automobile.
- Adequate screening should be constructed in areas where the rear or sides of residential buildings that front 63rd Street. This should be done along the length of the corridor.

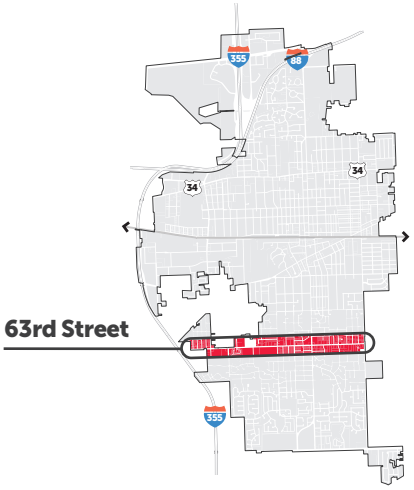


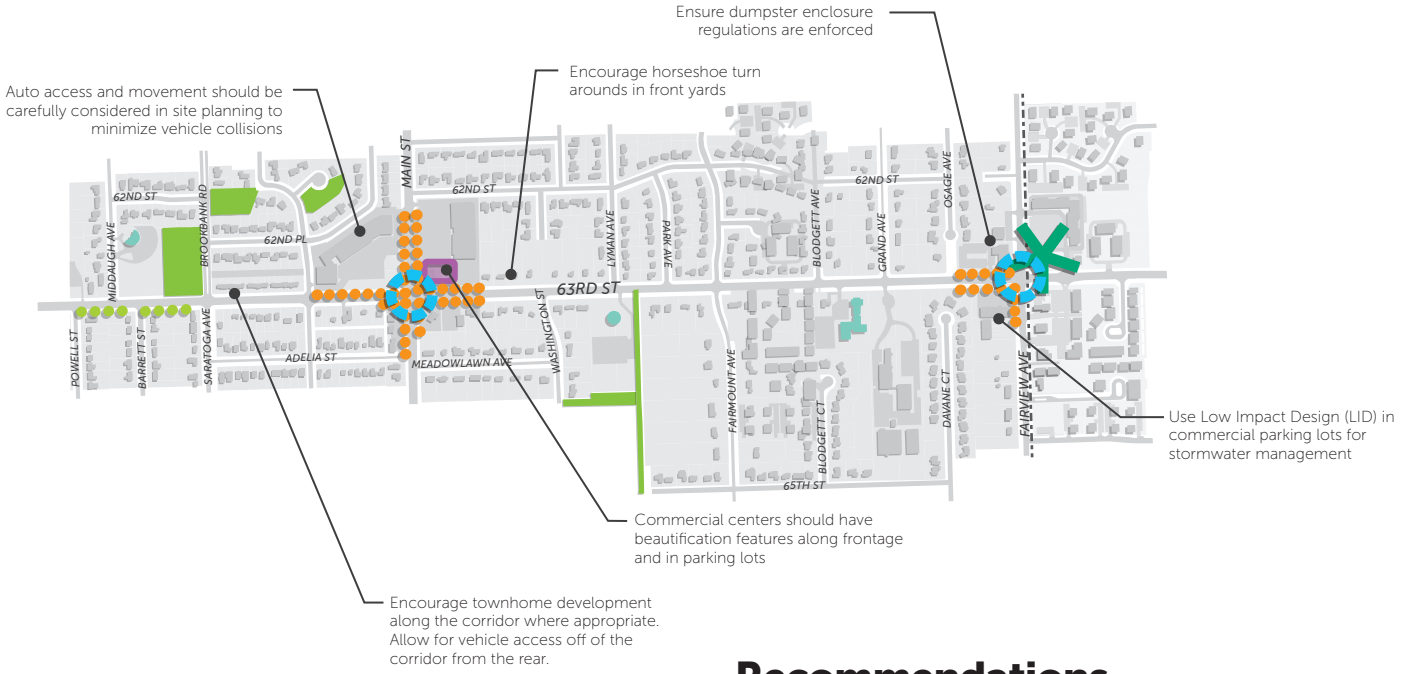
- Encourage and/or consider the construction of horseshoe driveways on residential properties to improve residential access onto 63rd Street.
- Promote and permit the construction of multi-family or single family attached at major nodes.
- Ensure parkways trees are preserved and enhanced for the entire length of the corridor.
- Reduce the heat island effect through a combination of providing shade on-site and using light colored building and paving materials.
- The Village should be proactive in the reforestation and creation of the tree canopy along 63rd Street. This would include adding trees where gaps exist in the parkway.

Catalyst Sites

F1 Meadowbrook Shopping Center

Given changes in the commercial trade area for Downers Grove and the present quality of this site, the Meadowbrook Mall Shopping Center is the largest development opportunity on 63rd Street. This site could be redeveloped to include commercial uses on the north half of the site and residential at the south end of the site. The north end of the parcel could have enhanced existing structures and new-constructed outlots that would front onto 63rd Street. Toward the south half of the site, townhomes could be developed.





Recommendations

- Screening
- Gateway/Directory Signage
- Landscaping/Site Beautification
- Interstate Interchange
- Improved Pedestrian Crossing
- Institutional/Public
- Park/Open Space
- Municipal Boundary
- Catalyst Site
- Model Site

Key Focus Areas

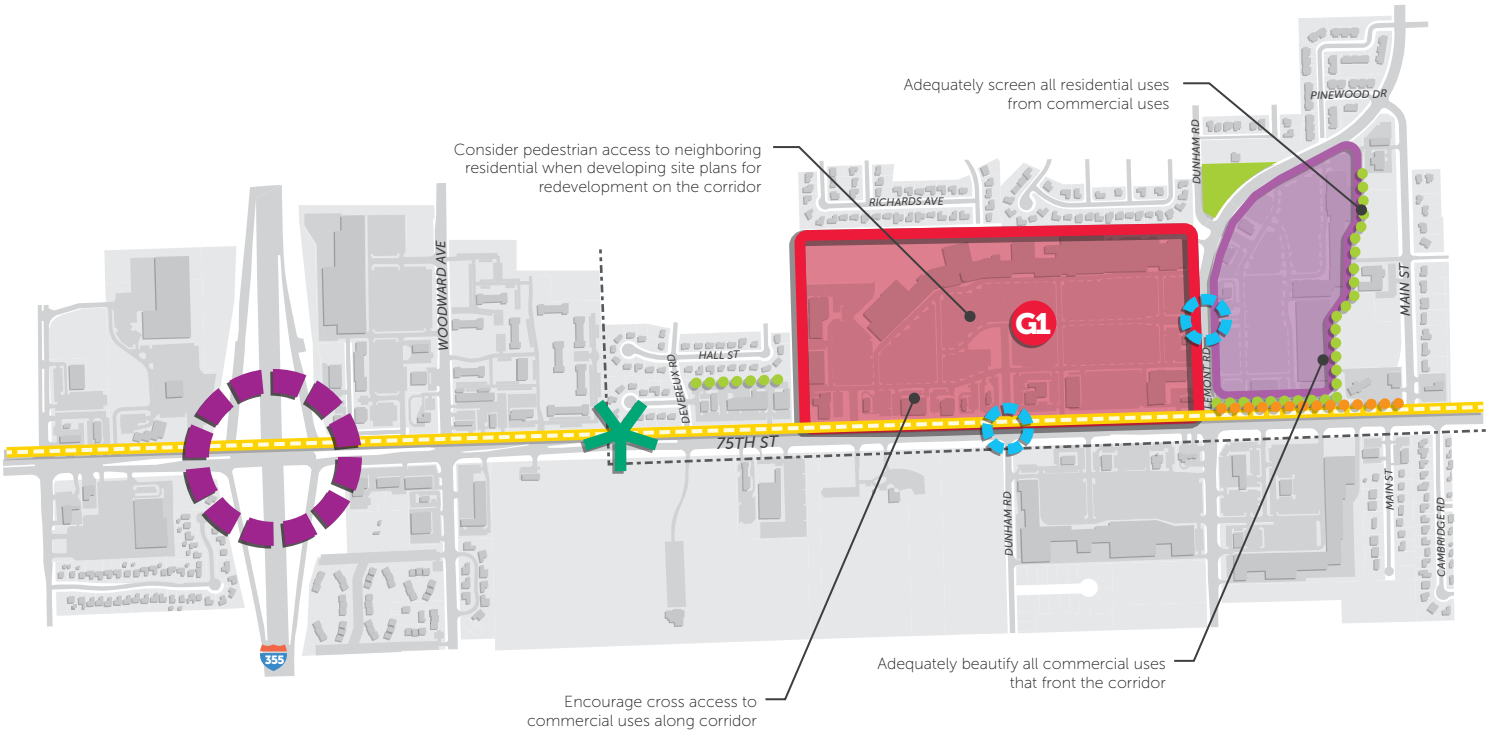
75th Street

The 75th Street subarea is generally comprised of commercial and residential uses with major commercial centers along the corridor. The 75th Street corridor runs from just east of Woodward Avenue to Fairview Avenue. Portions of the corridor that are in Downers Grove are on the north side of the corridor for most of 75th Street until Fairview Avenue where Downers Grove's land falls on the south side of the corridor. The 75th Street corridor is a major commercial center for Downers Grove, since it is centered on The Grove Strip Center and the Downers Park Plaza at Lemont Road and 75th Street.

The commercial centers on the corridor have existed for decades and vary in quality. Some have been updated in recent years while others have shown signs of deterioration. The largest shopping center on this corridor provides the best opportunity for redevelopment that could change the dynamics of 75th Street.

Key Concepts

- Encourage and promote the redevelopment of The Grove Shopping Center into a life-style center in order to better compete with nearby retail destinations.
- Support and encourage the redevelopment into a life-style center or modernization of The Grove shopping center in order to better compete with nearby retail destinations.
- Connect nearby residential areas to shopping and services by providing pedestrian and bicycle access. This can help to improve traffic congestion by reducing the number of trips by automobile.
- Work with Darien to explore the implications of fully annexing the Knottingham subdivision into either community to provide more efficient government services.
- Provide adequate buffering and screening for commercial buildings that abut residential uses.

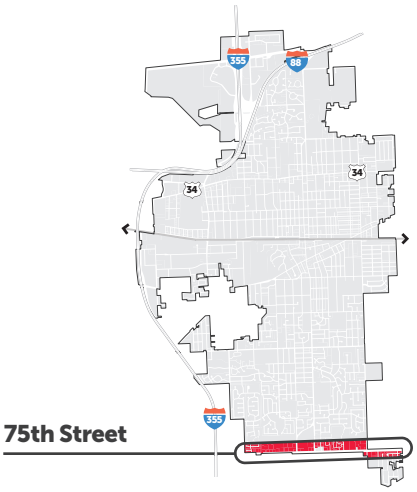


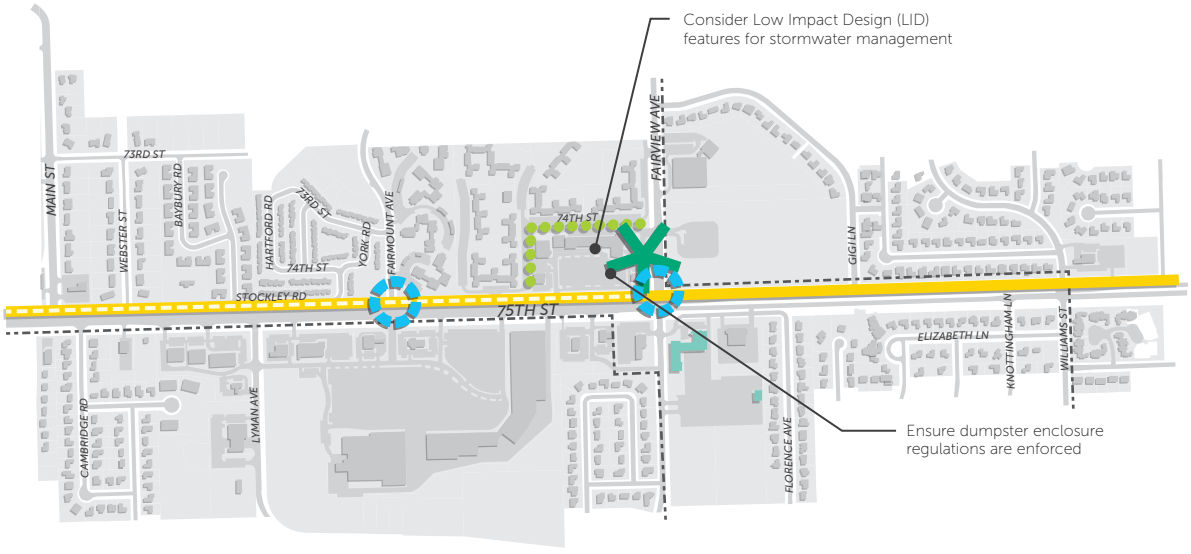
- Dumpster enclosures and dumpster screening are required and should be enforced consistently.
- Reduce the heat island effect through a combination of providing shade on-site and using light colored building and paving materials.
- Explore creating a TIF District to fund necessary property and infrastructure improvements and possibly to assemble property to facilitate comprehensive redevelopment.

Catalyst Sites

G1 The Grove Shopping Center

The Grove Shopping Center
This site has great redevelopment potential due to its size and location at a prominent intersection in Downers Grove. Given that there are notable large vacancies and an abundance of underutilized parking, the Village should explore redeveloping this site into a life-style center. This center could consist of retail, restaurants and residential in the form of apartments and townhomes. Any business types that are targeted should complement the Downers Park Plaza shopping center just east of the site. This could allow for additional tax revenue generation and could help this node be more competitive with other commercial centers nearby.





Recommendations

- Screening
- Gateway/Directory Signage
- Landscaping/Site Beautification
- Interstate Interchange
- Improved Pedestrian Crossing
- Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Institutional/Public
- Park/Open Space
- Municipal Boundary
- Catalyst Site
- Model Site

Key Focus Areas

63rd Street Redevelopment Concept

Key Focus Areas

75th Street Redevelopment Concept

10 Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan sets forth an agreed-upon "road map" for growth and development within the Village of Downers Grove over the next 15 to 20 years. It is the product of considerable effort on behalf of the Village Council, Plan Commission, Comprehensive Planning Ad Hoc Committee, Village staff, and the community at large.

This section highlights several steps that should be undertaken to initiate and sustain the plan implementation process. These include:

- Use the updated Comprehensive Plan on a day-to-day basis;
- Review and update the Zoning Ordinance and other development controls;
- Review and update the Community Investment Program (CIP);
- Annually, prepare a 5-year action plan to prioritize objectives for the future and list accomplishments of preceding years;
- Promote cooperation and participation among various agencies, organizations, community groups and individuals;
- Enhance public communication;
- Continue to engage the public using a variety of outreach tools including continued use of social media;
- Review the Comprehensive Plan every five years for potential updates; and,
- Explore possible funding sources and implementation techniques.

THE IMPLEMENTATION SECTION HIGHLIGHTS SEVERAL STEPS THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN TO INITIATE AND SUSTAIN THE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Use the Plan on a Day-to-Day Basis

The Comprehensive Plan is the official policy guide for improvement and development, and reflects a significant amount of public investment, both in time and money. The Plan should be used on a day-to-day basis by Village staff, officials, boards, and commissions to:

- Evaluate and shape policies and regulations;
- Work with partner agencies and service providers;
- Review and evaluate development proposals;
- Prioritize public expenditures; and
- Encourage private sector investment; and;
- Ensure new facilities, infrastructure and programming align with the Plan;

The Village should continue to make a digital version of this plan available on the Village website and in the Downers Grove Public Library. Likewise, the Plan and its relationship to private and public development projects should be explained to residents.

Review of Zoning Ordinance

The Comprehensive Plan sets forth policies regarding the use of land within the Village and establishes guidelines for the quality, character, and intensity of future development. The Plan's policies and guidelines should inform the revision or drafting of zoning and development regulations to ensure consistency.

Zoning is an important tool in implementing planning policy. It establishes the types of uses allowed on specific properties, and prescribes the overall character and intensity of development to be permitted.

After the adoption of the 2011 Comprehensive Plan, the Village undertook a comprehensive review and update to the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to ensure that both ordinances were consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's policies and guidelines. It is essential that the Village's various development controls including zoning, subdivision, property maintenance, and other related codes, are reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect the updated Comprehensive Plan.

Prepare an Action Agenda

The preparation of an Action Agenda will help structure implementation of the Comprehensive Plan in a manageable way and measure progress. The Comprehensive Plan is a long-range document with numerous recommendations. Simply put, implementation items (e.g. new policies, infrastructure investments, in conjunction with the CIP) should be prioritized and measureable. Village officials should evaluate all of the Plan's recommendations and annually prioritize execution based on community needs, ease of implementation, and current and projected resources.

An Action Plan should highlight the key activities to be undertaken each year (like a "checklist"), and might consist of:

- A detailed description of the projects and activities to be undertaken;
- The priority of each project or activity;
- An indication of the public and private sector responsibilities for initiating and participating in each activity;
- A suggestion of the possible funding sources and assistance programs for implementing each project or activity; and
- Metrics for tracking the progress of each project or activity.

Community Investment Program (CIP)

Long-term infrastructure needs should be mapped out, funded, and aligned with the Comprehensive Plan. The Village of Downers Grove 5-Year Capital Improvements Plan, funded through the Capital Improvements Fund, includes a variety of investments and planned projects, It establishes schedules and priorities for all public improvement projects within a five-year period.

The CIP is typically used to schedule the implementation of specific projects related to the Comprehensive Plan, particularly the restoration and upgrading of existing infrastructure, utilities, and Village facilities. The expansion or improvement of the existing Village Hall or Police Department facilities is also included in the Community Investment Program. As planned projects are completed and funding sources emerge, the Action Plan should be revised to include new projects, cost estimates, and priorities.

As financial resources in Downers Grove will always be limited and public dollars must be spent wisely, the Village should continue to use the CIP to provide the most desirable public improvements and stay within budget constraints.

Cooperation

The Village of Downers Grove should assume the leadership role in implementing the updated Comprehensive Plan. This includes carrying out the administrative actions, the public improvement projects and a variety of programs available to local residents, businesses and property owners.

However, for the Comprehensive Plan to be successful, it must be based on a strong partnership among the Village, other public agencies, citizens, neighborhood groups and organizations, and the business community.

The Village should lead this collaborative effort to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The Village's partners should include:

- Other governmental and service districts such as: the school districts, public library, Park District, Forest Preserve District, Downers Grove Township, DuPage County, emergency service providers such as police and fire, private utility companies, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT),
- Builders and developers, who should be encouraged to undertake improvements and new construction that conform to the Plan and enhance the overall quality and character of the community; and,
- The Downers Grove community, since all residents and neighborhood groups should be encouraged to participate in the on-going planning process, and all should be given the opportunity to voice their opinions on improvement and development decisions within the community.

Public Communication

Implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan will require the support and extensive participation of the community. Successfully communicating with local residents, businesses, and property owners should be a priority of the Village.

The Village should prepare a brief summary of the updated Comprehensive Plan and distribute it widely throughout the community online, at the public library, and at Village Hall. It is important that all local residents, businesses, and property owners be familiar with the Plan's major recommendations and its "vision" for the future.

The Village should also consider additional techniques for responding quickly to public questions and concerns regarding planning and development. For example, the Village might consider a special newsletter, website features, and social media posts that focus on frequently-raised questions and concerns regarding planning and development or new Village projects.

The Village should continue to focus on integrating social media into a regular communications strategy when announcing different actions undertaken by the Village when implementing the plan.

Regular Updates

It is important to emphasize that the Comprehensive Plan is not a static document. If community attitudes change or new issues arise that are beyond the scope of the current Plan, the Plan should be revised and updated accordingly.

The Village should regularly undertake a systematic review of the Plan every 5 years, and revise and update the Plan accordingly. The Village should also maintain a public list of potential amendments, issues, or needs. Ideally, this review should coincide with the preparation of the Village's budget and Community Investment Program and the preparation of an annual action agenda. In this manner, recommendations or changes relating to capital improvements or other programs can be considered as part of the commitments for the upcoming fiscal year. Routine examination of the Plan will help ensure that the planning program remains relevant to community needs and aspirations.

Implementation Funding & Incentives

The Comprehensive Plan includes a variety of policy and planning recommendations for land use and development, transportation, parks and open space, and community facilities. Many vary in terms of timeframe and cost. Some actions, such as regulatory amendments, administrative policies, or partnerships, can be executed immediately with minimal or no financial cost. Others, however, require funding that is not currently programmed or is beyond the capacity of the Village. This section identifies a series of sources for project funding available.

General Funding Sources

The funding sources provided in this section can be utilized for a variety of programming, infrastructure and operational uses.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program

The Community Development Block Grant program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique development needs. The CDBG program provides annual grants on a formula basis to general units of local governments and states. A grantee must develop and follow a detailed plan that provides for, and encourages citizen participation. This process emphasizes participation by persons of low- or moderate- income, particularly residents of low-income and moderate-income neighborhoods, blighted areas, and areas in which the grantee proposes to use CDBG funds.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

The purpose of TIF funding is to incentivize and attract desired development within key commercial areas. TIF dollars can typically be used for infrastructure, streetscaping, public improvements, land assemblage, and environmental remediation.

TIF utilizes future property tax revenues generated within a designated area or district, to pay for improvements and further incentivize continued reinvestment. As the Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) of properties within a TIF District increases, the incremental growth in property tax over the base year that the TIF was established, is reinvested in that area. Local officials may then issue bonds or undertake other financial obligation based on the growth in new revenue.

Over the life of a TIF district, existing taxing bodies receive the same level of tax revenue as in the base year. Provisions exist for schools to receive additional revenue. The maximum life of a TIF district in the State of Illinois is 23 years, although a district can be extended beyond that horizon through authorization from the State Legislature.

Special Service Area (SSA)

A Special Service Area (SSA) provides a means of funding improvements and programs within a designated area. In an SSA, a small percentage is added to the property tax of the properties within the defined service area. The revenue received from this targeted increase is channeled back into projects and programs benefiting those properties. An SSA can be rejected if 51% of the property owners and electors within a designated area object.

SSA funded projects can include such things as district marketing and advertising assistance, promotional activities and special events, streetscape and signage improvements, property maintenance services. SSA's can also be used to fund various incentives and tools such as small business loan funds or façade improvement programs.

Business Districts

As authorized by Division 74.3 of the Municipal Code of the State of Illinois, a municipality may designate, after public hearings, an area as a Business Development District (BDD). A BDD would allow the Village to levy up to an additional 1% retailers occupation tax, 1% hotel tax, and 1% sales tax within a designated district. Similar to a TIF district, a BDD has a maximum life of 23 years. BDD legislation also permits municipalities to utilize tax revenue growth that has been generated by BDD properties to fund improvements in the district.

Business district designation empowers a municipality to carry out a business district development or redevelopment plan through the following actions:

- Acquire all development and redevelopment proposals
- Acquire, manage, convey, or otherwise dispose of real and personal property acquired pursuant to the provisions of a development or redevelopment plan
- Apply for and accept capital grants and loans from the federal government and the State of Illinois for business district development and redevelopment
- Borrow funds as it may be deemed necessary for the purpose of business district development and redevelopment, and in this connection, issue such obligation or revenue bonds as it shall be deemed necessary, subject to applicable statutory limitations.

- Enter into contracts with any public or private agency or person
- Sell, lease, trade, or improve such real property as may be acquired in connection with business district development and redevelopment plans
- Expend such public funds as may be necessary for the planning, execution, and implementation of the business district plans
- Create a Business District Development and Redevelopment Commission to act as an agent for the municipality for the purposes of business district development and redevelopment. BDD funds can be used for infrastructure improvements, public improvements, site acquisition, and land assemblage and could be applicable in the identified subareas, or in emerging business and industrial parks in the community. Given the limited amount of funds that a BDD is capable of generating, compared to a TIF district, BDD is best suited for funding small scale improvements and property maintenance programs.

Community Development Corporation

Some communities use Special Service Areas or Tax Increment Financing to fund the start-up and/or operation of a Community Development Corporation (CDC) to oversee a range of redevelopment activities for a specific geographic area, particularly commercial areas and central business districts. A CDC is typically an independent chartered organization, often with not-for-profit status, that is governed by a board of directors. The directors typically bring expertise in real estate or business development along with a demonstrated commitment to the community. CDCs are often funded through public-private partnerships with financial commitments from local financial institutions or businesses and a public funding source to provide for both operating expenses and programs, as appropriate. CDCs may undertake traditional chamber of commerce-like activities such as marketing, promotion, workforce development, information management, and technical assistance to small businesses, but may also administer loan programs or acquire or redevelop property.

Revolving Loan Fund

A revolving loan fund is administered to provide financial support and assistance to new or expanding businesses and is funded through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs. The borrower may use the low-interest loan for construction, property rehabilitation/improvements, and land acquisition, among other things. This funding opportunity could be marketed to local entrepreneurs seeking to grow their businesses.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) is a tool similar to tax abatement. The Village can use PILOT to reduce the property tax burden of desired businesses for a predetermined period. In this instance, the Village and a property owner will agree to the annual payment of a set fee in place of the property taxes. Payments are generally made in the form of a fixed sum, but they may also be paid as a percentage of the income generated by a property.

In addition, PILOT can be a means of reducing the fiscal impact on the Village of a nonprofit, institutional use, or other non-taxpaying entity locating to a key site. While such uses can be desirable as activity generators, they can also negatively impact municipal services because they do not pay taxes. Provisions can be made to offset that negative impact by allowing the Village to be compensated for at least a portion of the revenue that would otherwise be collected in the form of property tax.

Incubators

Business incubators provide low-cost space and specialized support to small companies. Such services might include administrative consulting, access to office equipment and training, and assisting in accessing credit. Incubators are typically owned by public entities such as municipalities or economic development agencies who subsidize rents and services with grants. In addition to job creation and generating activity, the goal is to have startup businesses grow and relocate to larger spaces within the Village.

Foundation & Specialized Grants

The successful implementation of the Plan requires execution of projects that range in size and scope. One type of funding source that becomes increasingly significant when issue-specific projects or programs are considered are foundation grants. The Village should dedicate resources to monitoring and exploring foundation grants for potential funding opportunities.

Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax credit program is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPOs). The amount of credit available under this program equals 20% of the qualifying expenses of a rehabilitation. Key criteria to obtain the credit include:

- The tax credit is only available for properties that will be used for a business or other income-producing purpose, and a "substantial" amount must be spent rehabilitating the historic building;
- The building needs to be certified as a historic structure by the National Park Service; and
- Rehabilitation work has to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, as determined by the National Park Service.

Transportation Funding Sources

MAP-21

In July 2012, the "Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century" (MAP-21) bill was signed into law. This two-year transportation reauthorization bill replaced the "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users" (SAFETEA-LU), which expired in September 2009. The goal of MAP-21 is to modernize and reform the current transportation system to help create jobs, accelerate economic recovery, and build a foundation for long-term prosperity.

The following discussion summarizes grant programs covered under MAP-21 that could be utilized by the Village to make enhancements to local transportation infrastructure including roads, bridges, sidewalks, and trails.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

The SRTS program provides funding for the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure related projects that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bike to school.

Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)

The Illinois Department of Transportation administers the ITEP and has funded projects including bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscaping, landscaping, historic preservation, and projects that control or remove outdoor advertising. In the past, federal reimbursement has been available for up to 50% of the costs of right-of-way and easement acquisition and 80% of the cost for preliminary engineering, utility relocations, construction engineering, and construction costs.

Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is the administrator of CMAQ funds for the northeastern Illinois region. CMAP supports a wide range of projects through the CMAQ program including improvements to bicycle facilities, transit facilities, intersections, sidewalk improvements, and signal timing. Funds have also been used to make transportation improvements to eliminate traffic bottlenecks, limit diesel emissions, and to create promotional campaigns to enhance use of transit and bicycles.

Surface Transportation Program (STP)

In the past, these funds have been allocated to coordinating regional councils to be used for roadway and roadway related items. Projects in this funding category have required a local sponsor and have been selected based on, among other factors, a ranking scale that takes into account the regional benefits provided by the project. STP funds have been used for a variety of project types including roadway rehabilitation, reconstruction, and restoration; widening and adding lanes; intersection improvements; traffic signal improvements; and green infrastructure funding.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The Recreational Trails Program is a federally funded grant program for trail-related land acquisition, development, or restoration. The grants are awarded based on the results of a competitive scoring process and the application's suitability under MAP-21. A minimum 20% match is required by the applicant. Grants are to be used for motorized or non-motorized trail development, renovation, and/or preservation. All projects must be maintained for 25 years. Eligible applicants include municipalities, counties, schools, non-profits, and for-profit businesses.

Transit-Oriented Development Funding

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), in conjunction with the Regional Transit-Oriented Development Working Group, provides a comprehensive list of funding sources available for transit-oriented development (TOD). The list includes local, state, and federal resources, as well as private foundation grants. The Village should periodically review the RTA list of TOD funding sources to understand application deadlines and eligibility requirements.

Parks & Open Space Funding Sources

Illinois Department of Natural Resources & OSLAD

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) administers several grants-in-aid programs to help municipalities and other local agencies provide a number of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The programs operate on a cost reimbursement basis to a government or not-for-profit organization. Local governments can receive one grant per program per year, with no restriction on the number of local governments that can be funded for a given location. IDNR Grants are organized into three major categories: Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD); Boat Access Area Development (BAAD); and the Illinois Trails Grants Program.

The OSLAD program awards up to 50% of project costs up to a maximum of $750,000 for acquisition and $400,000 for development/renovation of such recreational facilities such as playgrounds, outdoor nature interpretive areas, campgrounds and fishing piers, park roads and paths, and beaches. IDNR administers five grant programs to provide financial assistance for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of trails that are used for public recreation uses.

Land & Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) was created by Congress in 1965 to assist eligible governmental units in the provision of new park areas. The LWCF is a matching assistance program that provides grants for 50% of the cost for the acquisition and/or development of outdoor recreation sites and facilities. The sponsor must have the local matching 50% of the project cost available prior to the application. The Land and Water Conservation Fund applicants may request amounts ranging from a minimum of $10,000 up to a maximum of $200,000.

Examples of types of projects include:

- Acquiring park or natural area;
- Picnic areas;
- Sports and playfields, such as playgrounds, ballfields, court facilities and golf courses;
- Water oriented facilities for boating, swimming, and access to lakes, rivers, and streams;
- Natural areas and interpretive facilities;
- Campgrounds;
- Fishing and hunting areas;
- Winter sports facilities;
- Amphitheaters and bandstands;
- Parks adjacent to schools for mutual use;
- Outdoor natural habitat zoo facilities; and
- Roads, restrooms, utilities, park maintenance buildings; and nature centers.

Goals & Objectives

The Village of Downers Grove's Comprehensive Plan looks forward over the next 15-20 years and expresses what the Village desires to become in the future. This section presents the relevant goals and objectives derived from the TCD3 public input effort. The goals and objectives form the framework for consideration by the Comprehensive Plan Committee and its recommendations. The input was gathered largely in 2009 by TCD3.

Goals describe desired end situations toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are broad and long-range. They represent an end to be sought, although they may never actually be fully attained.

Objectives describe more specific actions that should be undertaken by the Village to advance toward the overall goals. They provide more precise and measurable guidelines for planning action.

Goals and Objectives have been established for:

- Residential Areas;
- Commercial and Office Areas;
- Industrial Areas;
- Transportation and Circulation;
- Infrastructure and Development;
- Community Facilities;
- Parks, Open Space and Environmental Features;
- Image and Identity;
- Economic Development; and,
- Village Services and Administration.

Residential Areas

Goal

Maintain the Village's image and desirability as a great place to live by preserving and enhancing the quality, character, safety and appeal of residential neighborhoods, developments and subdivisions, and providing diversity in its housing stock and unit types.

Objectives

- Promote residential development and redevelopment of a variety of housing and dwelling unit types and densities in accordance with the Land Use Plan, and ensure the Zoning Ordinance and other regulatory tools are updated appropriately.
- Accommodate residential renovation and redevelopment through a consistent, expedient and thorough permitting process.
- Consistently administer and enforce residential development regulations, including compliance with setbacks, maximum height, parkway tree preservation, stormwater, bulk, density and other development regulations.
- Consistently administer and enforce residential construction regulations, including construction hours, fencing, trash and debris, parking, and other construction related activities that can impact nearby properties.
- Consider the development of a guide or tool to ensure that new residential construction (including infill and teardown construction) and additions are of an appropriate scale and character.
- Continue to inventory and enhance regulatory protections for the Village's notable historic homes including its collection of Sears homes.
- Examine alternative solutions to sidewalk construction in certain challenging areas of the Village.
- Improve public outreach and input programs for capital and infrastructure improvement projects.
- Explore the creation of a property maintenance program to assist residents, particularly seniors, with affordable lawn cutting and snow removal services.

- Preserve sound existing housing through regular, active code enforcement and preventative maintenance programs.
- Work with home owners associations and property management companies to enforce property maintenance requirements in private residential developments, particularly with regard to vacant units.
- Prevent the encroachment of incompatible development on residential areas through implementation of the Land Use Plan and buffering, screening, and separation requirements where necessary and provide areas of transitioning density and intensity of use between residential and commercial land uses where appropriate.
- Strictly enforce buffering, landscaping, screening and lighting requirements of adjacent commercial areas to minimize the negative impacts of commercial development on residential uses.
- Discourage "cut through" commercial traffic in residential areas through signage, enforcement, traffic calming and other measures particularly at the time of reconstruction.
- Promote the economic importance, and support the provision of, a variety of housing types and choices within the Village including single family, multi-family, senior housing and others including both owner-occupied and rental properties.
- Encourage the replacement and preservation of parkway trees as an important component of the Village's tree canopy.

Commercial & Office Areas

Goal 1

Develop aesthetically pleasing and functionally well-designed retail and commercial shopping areas that are market supportable, maintain a diversified tax base, and serve the needs of the Village's residents and in some areas, a larger regional market.

Objectives

- Maintain a range of retail and service commercial activities throughout the Village.
- Define and designate more specific functional roles for the various commercial areas within the Village distinguished by local-, community-, and regional-serving developments.
- Ensure that new commercial development and redevelopment is designed in scale with, and complementary to, existing adjacent development.
- Ensure that all new and improved commercial development, and encourage existing commercial development are effectively screened and buffered from adjacent residential uses.
- Support and encourage all retail, office, and service commercial activities to be organized by use and concentrated within or near areas of complementary uses.
- Recognize, support, and encourage the catalytic role of new campuses and buildings of higher education in appropriate locations within the Village.
- Recognize, support and encourage the catalytic role of medical services in appropriate locations within the Village.
- Where applicable, require the design of new commercial developments to incorporate public amenities such as parks, plazas, arcades and connections to existing or proposed trails.
- New or expanded parking structures should be designed to complement the architecture and urban form of the surrounding area.
- Establish a program to assist businesses and property owners with façade improvements, landscaping, parking improvements, and modernization of aging structures and facilities.
- Continue to utilize and consider additional incentives such as sales tax rebates, TIF, SSA, and business district funds to initiate redevelopment of key opportunity sites.
- Initiate programs to incentivize the improvement and rehabilitation of older commercial buildings and areas which are, or are becoming, functionally obsolete including improvements to facades, signage, streetscaping, landscaping, and parking areas.
- Implement a more systematic and proactive property maintenance and code enforcement process in commercial areas of the Village.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of commercial uses in the zoning ordinance to ensure they are up-to-date and serving the Village well.

Goal 2

Enhance the economic viability, productivity, appearance and function of the Village's commercial corridors, including Butterfield Road, Ogden Avenue, 63rd Street and 75th Street.

Objectives

- Promote a healthy and mutually reinforcing mix of commercial, retail, and service uses along key corridors within the Village including Butterfield Road, Ogden Avenue, 63rd Street, and 75th Street.
- Establish design and improvement standards for commercial areas to guide the scale, appearance, orientation, and overall character of new development.
- Encourage appropriate signage along corridors to ensure safe traffic movements into, out of, and through commercial areas.
- Encourage corporate campuses and office development to take advantage of their location along I-88 and I-355 by orienting attractive facades and corporate identification signage toward the highway.
- Maximize the exposure and capitalize on the access to I-88 and I-355 by clustering uses and businesses that benefit from, and cater to, a larger regional market and employment base near interchanges and promoting and encouraging better signage and appearances on facades fronting the interstates.
- Encourage office campusus to offer office spaces that are adaptable to market trends.

- Promote the relocation of incompatible uses, and uses in conflict with the community's vision for its key commercial corridors, to more appropriate areas within or outside of the Village of Downers Grove. This should occur on a case by case basis based on land use, regulatory issues and the respective needs of the particular business.
- Utilize a commercial "node" approach by locating commercial uses along Ogden Avenue, 63rd Street, and 75th Street at or near key intersections, rather than treating the entire length of the corridor as appropriate for commercial development.
- Develop and install a streetscape program consisting of elements that strengthen the unified theme of the commercial areas such as benches, bus shelters, trash cans, streetlights, way finding signage and other amenities.
- Work cooperatively with IDOT to facilitate desired improvements within their right-of-way including improved landscaping, lighting, and gateway signage consistent with the Key Focus Area Plans.
- Identify underperforming and underutilized parcels and sites and work with property owners and developers to promote their redevelopment encouraging parcel assembly where appropriate.
- Promote the redevelopment of the Meadowbrook Mall and other outdated shopping centers.
- Promote coordinated and shared vehicle access to commercial properties along the Village's commercial corridors and remove redundant and unnecessary curb cuts to improve traffic flow and vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- Encourage shared parking programs and policies in commercial areas wherever possible.

Goal 3

Continue to revitalize Downtown as the symbolic "heart" of the community and enhance its role as the Village's primary mixed-use pedestrian environment.

Objectives

- Continue to revitalize Downtown with a mixture of uses including commercial, office, restaurant, and residential.
- Follow Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) principles (embodied by a pedestrian orientation, incorporation of density and a focus on the transit infrastructure) when considering new development and improvements in the Downtown.
- Maintain Downtown as pedestrian-oriented area and a walkable shopping area that is unlike any other commercial area in the community.
- Promote new infill development in the Downtown area and encourage the consolidation of smaller development parcels where possible to foster larger, more coordinated commercial development opportunities.
- Building on the Downtown Pattern Book, establish Design & Development Guidelines to better guide redevelopment in Downtown.
- Establish a regulatory framework, such as form-based codes, to work in conjunction with the Design and Development Guidelines to foster a desired and predictable built form in the Downtown.
- Zoning for the Downtown should be analyzed and amended if necessary to adequately accommodate appropriate new development and establish the desirable physical form of the Downtown.
- Ensure parking adequately supports businesses by conducting a circulation and parking needs assessment for Downtown and develop a plan for the continued provision of adequate parking in Downtown.
- Require development and redevelopment projects within the Downtown to provide detailed parking and traffic studies which plan for current and future parking demand, access and circulation.
- Promote and encourage shared parking arrangements and facilities wherever feasible to minimize the land area within Downtown dedicated to parking.
- Require Downtown development to be compatible with the scale and uses of the surrounding area and minimize and mitigate any negative impacts on adjacent land uses.
- Conduct a Downtown traffic study in order to assess issues and identify a solution for improving traffic flow.

Industrial Areas

Goal

Continue to support a diversified light industrial/business park/commercial service economic base that provides employment opportunities within the community.

Objectives

- Establish and maintain regular lines of communication with industrial property owners and businesses.
- Promote and encourage the improvement and rehabilitation of older industrial buildings and areas which are, or are becoming, functionally obsolete or undesirable including improvements to loading docks, access, building facades, signage, streetscaping, landscaping, and parking areas to accommodate more appropriate and market viable uses.
- Encourage the use of green technology and best management practices (BMPs) in the development and redevelopment of industrial uses and market the Village's industrial areas as centers of green technology and light industrial.
- Reclassify and rezone manufacturing areas which are functionally obsolete where there is: incompatible proximity to residential land uses, small lot sizes, or challenging lot configurations. Industrial properties between Warren Avenue and the BNSF railroad tracks and Rogers Street and the BNSF railroad tracks are examples of areas exhibiting these characteristics.
- Identify industrial properties that may be potential brownfield sites in order to assess the need for clean-up and remediation and seek funding as appropriate.
- Prevent the encroachment of incompatible development into industrial areas and utilize appropriate setbacks, screening, buffering, and site design to mitigate the impacts of industrial uses on adjacent areas.
- Ensure that all uses are effectively screened from adjacent properties and public rights-of-way, through the use of landscaping, fencing, or a combination of the two.
- Reserve Ellsworth Industrial Park exclusively for light industrial, research and development and business park uses, prohibiting the infiltration of institutional, membership, athletic, or commercial uses.
- Install directory signage at entrances to Ellsworth Industrial Park to direct traffic within the industrial area to promote the businesses to residents and motorists.
- Improve the public utilities and road infrastructure within Ellsworth Industrial Park to accommodate the state-of-the-art technological needs of the businesses and the physical and circulation needs of the truck traffic moving in and throughout the area.

Transportation & Circulation

Goal 1

Improve the safety, function and efficiency of vehicular movement and parking facilities within the Village.

Objectives

- Install and maintain "intelligent" traffic signals and systems along key corridors and routes to facilitate the efficient movement of vehicles within and through the Village and minimize the impact of peak traffic flows.
- Conduct a review of the existing one-way street configuration in Downtown and alter traffic patterns in areas where one-way streets do not have a positive impact on traffic flow and pedestrian safety.
- Protect and improve the function of the street network through controlled access, land-use decisions, and street/intersection design improvements.
- Ensure adequate resources are made available for the maintenance of Village streets and public rights-of-way.
- Work closely with existing business owners to consolidate curb cuts by providing cross access between and shared access into businesses wherever possible.
- Eliminate unnecessary, redundant, obsolete and dangerous curb cuts throughout all commercial areas to improve the safety and efficiency of vehicular movement.
- Continue to support and work with other relevant agencies to ensure the completion of the Belmont underpass project.
- Evaluate methods to achieve improved north-south traffic flow across the downtown train tracks, whether by a new grade separation or by locating a new train station platform to the east near the current village hall to eliminate the need for barriers while commuter trains load and unload passengers.
- Provide priority parking spaces for no- and low-emissions vehicles in all public parking facilities and encourage the provision of similar spaces in private parking facilities.
- If validated through a parking needs assessment and separate feasibility and engineering analysis, expand public parking facilities in Downtown Downers Grove.
- Establish a wayfinding signage system that directs motorists to key retail, office, industrial, and community facility destinations.
- Encourage the maintenance and preservation of parkway trees as an important component of the Village's tree canopy.
- Consider traffic calming and other measures to improve traffic flow in tandem with surface reconstruction projects.
- Work with relevant agencies and officials to ensure completion of a westbound exit from I-88 at Highland Avenue.

Goal 2

Provide a coordinated transportation network for pedestrians and bicyclists in order to connect them to employment, shopping and recreational areas.

Objectives

- Where appropriate, encourage new development/redevelopment to include connections and amenities for pedestrians, bicyclists and commuters.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation and safety throughout the Village with an emphasis on safer and more convenient routes for non-motorized traffic.
- Expand the Village's network of trails and sidewalks to provide better connections between the Village's residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, Downtown, and other commercial areas. This should be undertaken with consideration of the privacy of adjoining residences.
- Conduct an analysis of potentially dangerous pedestrian crosswalks in Downtown and along other heavily trafficked roads including 63rd Street, 75th Street, Belmont Road, Main Street, and Ogden Avenue and other heavily trafficked roads and improve them, where feasible, with additional lighting, signalization, bollards, bulb outs and/or curb extensions.
- Identify key pedestrian routes and budget for streetlight replacement along those routes to include pedestrian-scaled lighting amenities and identify areas throughout the Village needing enhanced lighting for pedestrian safety.
- Budget for on-going maintenance and repair of sidewalks as part of the Village's Community Investment Program (CIP) including the consideration of a cost-sharing program with private property owners.

- Maintain and expand the sidewalk network throughout the Village's commercial districts and corridors ensuring sidewalks are located along both sides of all streets within these areas and ensure they connect to businesses and other destinations.
- Implement the recommendations of the Village's bicycle plan to continue to expand the Village's bike path system, and work towards a complete trail system that connects to the larger regional trail system. This should be undertaken with consideration of the privacy of adjoining residences.
- Conduct and implement an on-street bike lane feasibility analysis and plan.
- Promote bicycle safety.

Goal 3

Ensure that high-quality public transit remains a vital part of Downers Grove's transportation network.

Objectives

- Ensure that levels of public transit service are maintained and enhanced throughout the Village, including the continued operation of the schedules of all three of the Metra Station within the Village.
- Work with area employers and businesses to promote and implement traffic demand management and reduction techniques including the use of public transit, carpooling, walking and bicycling.
- Promote Pace's Vanpool Incentive Program (VIP) including traditional vanpooling, employer shuttles and Metra feeders as an economical, convenient and environmentally-friendly alternative to driving.
- Inventory and assess the condition and location of all Pace Bus shelters in the Village to ensure schedules are adequately posted, that the shelters are in good condition, and that they are connected to the Village's sidewalk system, community facilities, employment centers and other key destinations.
- Work with transit providers to improve service routes and encourage increased use of transit throughout the Village including improved service within the Village's residential areas.

Infrastructure and Development

Goal

Maintain high-quality, green and efficient infrastructure systems and networks through regular investment and maintenance to meet the changing needs of the Village today and in the future.

Objectives

- Continue to budget for and implement the improvement, expansion and maintenance of the community's infrastructure including roadways, stormwater drainage system, water production and distribution infrastructure, and sewer collection and treatment infrastructure.
- Conduct a Village-wide pavement study and sidewalk condition analysis to identify roads in need of repair.
- Continue the Village's sidewalk repair program based on evaluations of concrete deterioration and trip hazards.
- Pursue alternative sources of funding such as grants to facilitate 'green' improvements to public areas.
- Promote the coordination of infrastructure and utility projects with other agencies to reduce Village costs through economies of scale.
- Investigate options for implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) throughout the Village to address flooding issues.
- Promote the use of sustainable design and development practices for new development throughout the Village.
- Continue updating the Village's Subdivision Control Ordinance to match current urban design and stormwater practices.

- Promote the adaptation of sustainable technologies and application of sustainable management practices to existing development throughout the Village.
- Encourage new development to utilize "green technology" such as green rooftops, solar energy, and green paver parking lots to reduce stormwater runoff.
- Continue to seek grants, loans and other sources of intergovernmental funding to assist with capital improvements and projects to minimize the financial impact on the Village.
- Work with environmental advocacy groups to educate the public on the benefits of incorporating the use of green/Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the management of residential properties.
- Evaluate pedestrian mobility and amenities in new development to ensure that pedestrian movements are accommodated in new projects
- Plan and budget for beautification elements to be incorporated into planned infrastructure improvements such as landscaped parking lots, planted medians, landscaped sidewalks, and street trees.
- Consider incorporating the use of solar powered street lights, wind power, and other green technologies into future roadway improvements and street lighting replacement.
- Consider the use of pervious paving materials in public parking lots and encourage private developers to use this and other run-off reducing technologies.

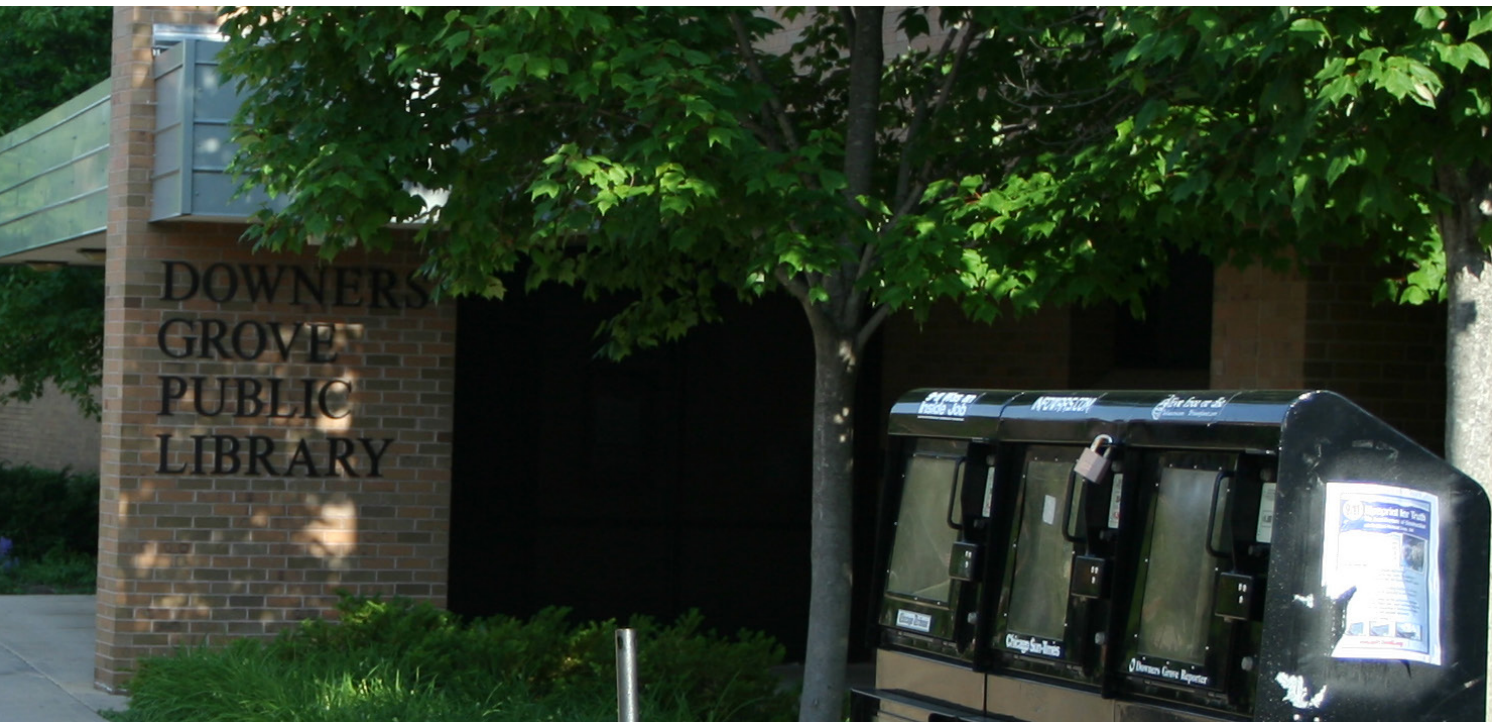
Community Facilities

Goal

Ensure the provision of high-quality public facilities, including municipal and educational facilities, for all residents of the Village of Downers Grove.

Objectives

- Work with the school districts to review the existing parking facilities, buildings, drop-off/pick-up areas, and bus parking, including ingress and egress to ensure they are adequate and if not, identify opportunities for improvement.
- Work with the school districts to ensure proper buffering surrounding school facilities and safe and adequate access to school sites.
- Ensure the Village continues to benefit from an adequate level of fire and police protection throughout the Village.
- Enhance the physical relationship between school facilities and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Continue to support the operation of other important community service providers, including Midwestern University, Good Samaritan Hospital, and others and maintain positive and mutually beneficial relationships with each organization.
- Work with others to seek appropriate locations for specialized facilities and services for senior citizens, youth and disadvantaged populations. Work with other public agencies to maintain adequate and appropriate sites and facilities for the provision of public services.



- Work with the U.S. Post Office to relocate the operations and truck traffic to a more appropriate site in the Village outside of Downtown.
- Continue to conduct a comprehensive life cycle assessment for Village buildings, equipment, vehicles, facilities, and properties and develop/revise a multi-year maintenance plan and on-going maintenance program.
- Identify funding sources such as grants to pay for the construction of new Village facilities.
- Consider pursuing LEED, or similar, certification for new or renovated Village facilities.
- Increase efforts to identify alternative sources of funds such as grants to fund a wide range of public projects including, but not limited to village facilities, parks and recreation enhancements, transportation improvements, economic development related projects, and social services.
- Using various design and signage tools, reinforce community landmarks such as Village Hall, the Public Library, 1846 Blodgett House, Pierce Downer's Burial Place, Downers Grove Historical Society, schools, religious institutions, and parks as important focal points and resources for the community.

Parks, Open Space & Environmental Features

Goal 1

Work with the Downers Grove Park District to continue to provide opportunities for passive and active recreation through high-quality facilities and programming.

Objectives

- Work cooperatively with the Park District and other interested agencies and stakeholders to create a Trails Master Plan that incorporates the trail plan recommendations of the Village, Park District, regional agencies and pertinent input from the community.
- Work with the Park District to market and promote the Village's trail system including the posting on-line of the existing and proposed trail system.
- Assist the Park District in identifying grants and securing alternative funding for parks, open space, trail segments, trail connections, and other recreation amenities for the community.
- Work with the Park District to identify potential park site locations in areas of the community determined to be underserved by existing facilities.
- Continue to work with the Park District to address the Village's stormwater issues.
- Should it be determined that there is demand and/or desire for a community pool, work cooperatively with the Park District to consider the traffic and other externalities the facility may generate.

Goal 2

Protect and promote the Village's unique environmental assets and promote the importance of environmental issues and sustainable practices to residents and businesses.

Objectives

- Provide opportunities for increased public participation in decision-making, promotion and protection of the Village's unique environmental assets.
- With the Park District, continue to link parks and open space with the multi-use trail system.
- Ensure adequate resources for the maintenance of Village-owned environmentally-sensitive lands.

- With the Park District, create a Public Areas Beautification Plan for the Village which should include recommendations for enhancing and expanding green space and creating new green space and community gateways.
- With the Park District, install environmental education and interpretive signage throughout the community in locations with natural areas and important environmental assets.
- Consider local ordinances and regulations to preserve and protect trees and other environmental features throughout the Village and its neighborhoods.
- Establish zoning regulations to protect floodplains, Localized Poor Drainage Areas, wetlands and other sensitive environmental features.
- Continue to actively monitor the outbreak of invasive species that threaten the Village's trees and environmental features and take proactive measures to protect these important community amenities including planting and promoting a diverse array of tree and plant species.
- Support measures to prevent the formation of algae and other pest- and insect-breeding environments within detention ponds.
- Continue to prohibit burning of leaves and other debris.

Image & Identity

Goal

Maintain a positive image and identity for the Village that is distinct and reflective of its unique character and assets to distinguish Downers Grove from other nearby communities.

Objectives

- Encourage compatible and high-quality design and construction for all development/redevelopment with an emphasis on site design, building orientation, architecture, building materials and site improvements.
- Provide for consistent and high-quality maintenance of all local streets, parkways, sidewalks, water towers and other visible municipal infrastructure.
- Install streetscape elements that strengthen the unified theme of the community such as benches, bus shelters, trash cans, streetlights, way finding signage and other amenities.
- Create gateway features consisting of signage, walls, sculptures, pylons, fountains, lighting, monuments, and/or landscaping at key locations within the community to announce entry into Downers Grove and to distinguish the Village from adjacent municipalities.
- Encourage subdivision and business park monument signs to include the Village of Downers Grove's name and/or logo to promote the Village's identity.
- Review existing and install new wayfinding signage to direct vehicles to key community destinations.
- Review and update the Village's landscape ordinance to ensure new development includes sufficient landscaping.

- Develop and implement landscaping and tree planting and maintenance programs that beautify the residential and commercial areas of the Village.
- Develop a program to bury and/or relocate overhead utility lines along key commercial areas, including Downtown, Ogden Avenue, 63rd Street, and 75th Street.
- Implement a program to screen fixed utility locations, such as lift stations, pump houses, transformer sites, antennas, telephone switches, etc.
- Review and update signage ordinances being flexible to the desire and necessity of business identification but mindful of its potential to block views, create visual clutter and detract from the appearance of the Village and its commercial areas.
- Strictly enforce landscaping, screening and signage requirements including amortization regulations of non-conforming signs.
- Review development controls to ensure that they require appropriate screening of public utilities, dumpsters, rooftop equipment, etc.
- Develop a marketing campaign to promote the advantages and benefits of living, working, visiting, or doing business in the Village.
- Improve communication with residents in an effort to increase awareness of, and participation in, programs, services and events within the Village.
- Improve and maintain relationships with the press and other media.

Economic Development

Goal 1

Prioritize improvements to existing areas and developments including adaptive reuse and redevelopment.

Objectives

- Continue to use TIF as a means of fostering redevelopment along Ogden Avenue and Downtown, and explore the use of TIF and other development incentives for site-specific redevelopment in other parts of the Village.
- Promote the use of tax credit incentives and other grant programs to fund renovation and expansion.
- Identify resources for the maintenance of the Village's physical facilities including buildings, properties, and infrastructure.
- Identify additional small business assistance programs to stabilize and improve conditions for existing businesses.
- Renovate or redevelop aging shopping centers and commercial areas in order to maximize their contribution to the Village's tax base.
- Enhance the appearance of commercial districts to attract businesses and customers, particularly Downtown, Fairview Avenue and Ogden Avenue.
- Improve commercial building design and development controls by developing and utilizing Design and Development Guidelines and other tools.
- Accommodate renovation and redevelopment through an expedient yet thorough permitting process.

Goal 2

Work with the Village's economic development partners to maintain and strengthen the Village's diverse tax base through the attraction, retention and expansion of businesses in the Village.

Objectives

- Support Chamber630, the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation and the Downers Grove Downtown Management Corporation in their efforts to attract, market, and promote local businesses.
- Support the evolution of Chamber630, the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation and the Downers Grove Downtown Management Corporation to meet challenges and take advantage of new and emerging opportunities.

- Coordinate with the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation and Chamber630 to organize a task force whose mission is to identify opportunities to reduce the cost of doing business in Downers Grove in order to enhance the Village's competitiveness.
- Continue to support the Economic Development Corporation's efforts to market Downers Grove as a community of diverse businesses whose presence enhances the community's reputation as a place to live and work.
- Promote the Village's commercial corridors and Downtown through joint marketing efforts, community events, and district identification signage.
- Develop and implement a strategic marketing and recruitment plan for targeted businesses and store types.
- Coordinate planning and economic development activities in a manner which provides regular opportunities for contact between business and development interests within the Village.
- Seek an appropriate mix of commercial retail, commercial service, office and industrial uses throughout the Village
- Maximize retail sales tax-generating uses, where appropriate, by concentrating retailers in Downtown and the Village's commercial corridors.
- Seek opportunities for new employment growth through the retention and expansion of existing employers.
- Ensure that new development pays its fair share of public facilities and service costs, which are attributable to the demand for additional facilities or services as a result of new development.

Village Services & Administration

Goal

Continue to ensure high-quality and efficient services are provided to residents and businesses through a well-organized, and participatory support system allowing both neighborhoods and businesses to thrive.

Objectives

- Work with appropriate departments, agencies and community service providers to provide reliable infrastructure and quality services to the residents and businesses within the community including fire protection, police protection, electricity (power and substation locations), water supply and distribution, sanitary sewers, and telecommunications.
- Create and publish an alternatives analysis that identifies the costs and benefits of multiple Village Hall and Police Station facility scenarios.
- Coordinate plan review activities of new development proposals with appropriate public agencies and departments such as the Fire Department, School Districts, and Park District.

- Maintain regular communication with agencies such as Metra, Pace, Regional Transportation Authority, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, DuPage County, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Good Samaritan Hospital, Midwestern University and others to advance better coordination regarding projects on their properties or within their jurisdiction.
- Establish a process for the regular review and update of the Village's Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan to appropriately meet the changing needs of the community.
- Support the implementation of TCD3's Principal Recommendation: establishing a means for enhanced communication, enhanced coordination, and enhanced cooperation to foster a more responsive local government with an on-going framework to address localized issues with neighborhoods and businesses.
- Continue to utilize the "community on-line mapping tool" introduced during the TCD3 process to gather public input on future planning issues and projects.
- Coordinate with adjacent communities, including Darien, Glen Ellyn, Lisle, Lombard, Oak Brook, Westmont, and Woodridge, area townships and DuPage County, to assist in realizing mutual objectives and addressing issues such as traffic that transcend municipal boundaries.