

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE

2006 *Annual Report*



**VILLAGE OF
DOWNERS GROVE OFFICIALS**

Mayor Brian Krajewski

Commissioner Marilyn Schnell

Commissioner Martin Tully

Commissioner Ron Sandack

Commissioner Stan Urban

Commissioner William Waldack

Commissioner Sean Patrick Durkin

Village Manager Cara Pavlicek

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE MISSION

Our Village Government provides exceptional municipal services that are valued by our citizens and businesses. We are fiscally responsible, have passion for our customers and have an eye on the future. We engage our citizens and partner with others to make Downers Grove a great community in which to live and to do business.

Over the course of the first half of 2006, the Village Council, Village Manager, and Department Directors met to discuss the creation of a document that would define our goals and vision for the next 15 years. In July, Council voted to adopt the **Strategic Plan for 2006, 2011, and 2021**. The Plan aligns the goals of the Village Council and expectations of our customers with the work we do on a daily basis. It is a map to lead the Village's future.

In addition to developing the above mission statement, the team identified the most important services we provide to our customers, as well as a set of core beliefs to guide our interactions.

The Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation (DGEDC), formed by the Village Council in December 2005, took shape in 2006 as the president and board of directors representing business, government and community leaders were selected. The role of the DGEDC is to facilitate the local economy and new development by promoting Downers Grove as the place to do business.

The implementation of the **Strategic Plan** and the DGEDC are just a few of the year's highlights the Village would like to share in the 2006 Annual Report.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Are you shopping around?

Visit Downers Grove and we'll win you over with a combination of superior services, architectural diversity, convenient amenities, and a great location. You'll love the hometown feel of our historic downtown (**named one of the region's "TEN BEST" by the Chicago Tribune**), and enjoy the benefits of a community that effectively balances economic growth, while maintaining its heritage.

Village of Downers Grove At-A-Glance

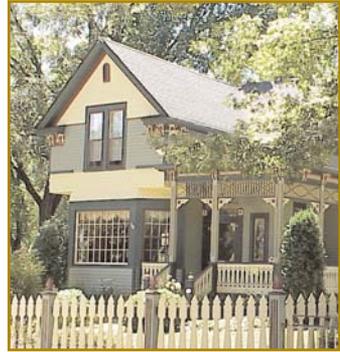
Founded: 1832 by Pierce Downer
Location: 22 miles west of Chicago
Incorporation: 1873
Population: 49,000
County: DuPage
Township(s): Downers Grove, York, Lisle, Milton
Form of Government: Council/Manager
Elected: Mayor and 6 Commissioners
Appointed: Village Manager
Home Rule Authority: Yes
Sales Tax Rate: 7.25 %
Property Tax Rate: .4137
Village Website: www.downers.us
Library: Downers Grove Public Library
www.downersgrovelibrary.org
Hospital: Advocate Good Samaritan
www.advocatehealth.com/gsam

Resident Demographics

Median Age: 39
Total Households: 18,968
Household Median Income: \$65,539
Family Median Income: \$80,604

Housing

Total Housing Units: 19,540
Occupied Units: 19,304
Owner Occupied 14,869
Renter Occupied 4,435
2006 Average Sale Price
(for all types of housing): \$364,670
Total Senior Housing Units: 1,052



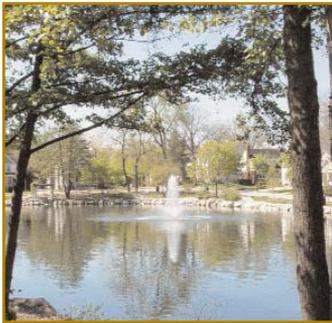
Public Schools

District 58 serves students in grades K-8 living in Downers Grove and portions of Oak Brook, Westmont, and Woodridge.
11 elementary schools, 2 middle schools

Enrollment: 5,110
Website: www.dg58.dupage.k12.il.us

District 99 has two high schools serving students in Downers Grove, Woodridge, and parts of Bolingbrook, Darien, Lisle, Oak Brook, Westmont, and unincorporated portions of DuPage County.

Enrollment: 5,504
Average ACT Composite score: 22.4
Graduation Rate: 91%
Website: www.csd99.k12.il.us



Parks and Recreation

Downers Grove Park District
Website: www.dgparcs.org
49 parks, 600 acres

The **Recreation and Fitness Center** offers services and programs to promote healthy lifestyles and enhance body and mind. Amenities include open gyms, multi-purpose rooms for classes, free weights and cardio equipment, and an indoor track.

The **Lyman Woods Interpretive Center** acts as a gateway to 150 acres of natural area. After a visit to the Center, explore the beauty of Lyman Woods, home to an oak/hickory forest, frogs, deer, insects, and other natural wonders.

Utilities

Electricity: ComEd www.exeloncorp.com

Natural Gas: Nicor www.nicor.com

Local Phone Service: AT&T www.att.com, Comcast www.comcast.com

Water Source: DuPage Water Commission www.dpwc.org (Lake Michigan) and some private wells (unincorporated areas)

Refuse/Recycling: Allied Waste www.alliedwaste.com

Cable: Comcast www.comcast.com

Sanitary Sewers: Downers Grove Sanitary District www.dgsd.org

Transportation



Airports: O'Hare International - 22 miles
Midway International - 18 miles
DuPage Airport - 25 miles



Driving: Downers Grove is located close to several interstates, offering convenient access to Chicago and other popular destinations: I-88, I-355 (5 interchanges), I-294, I-55, I-290, and Illinois Routes 34, 56, 53, and 83.

Parking Deck: A 792-space parking deck located at 945 Curtiss offers parking for shoppers and commuters in the heart of downtown, easing on-street parking congestion.

Public Rail: METRA rail service connects Downers Grove to Chicago and the far western suburbs with three stations located at Belmont Road, Main Street, and Fairview Avenue. www.metrarail.com

Bus Service: PACE Suburban Bus Service www.pacebus.com
The Grove Commuter Shuttle, operated by the Village, provides service to the Main Street Train Station during the morning and evening rush hours.

Business

Downers Grove has 12 business districts with distinct characteristics, including two industrial parks. One is sure to be the perfect fit for your next business move or the right shopping destination for your needs. Visit the Planning and Community Development website for complete information about each district.



Competitive Initiatives: Yes

Industrial Revenue Bonds: Yes

Tax Increment Financing Districts: 2

Special Service Areas: 3

Major Employers:

Good Samaritan Hospital (2,500), GCA Services 1,500, Northwestern University (1,000), First Health (700), Acxiom Corporation (700), Wackenhut Corporation (650) Donnelley & Sons Company (600), FTD Incorporated (500), Tricon Industries, Inc. (500)

Community Events



Annual Events in Downers Grove:

January: Ice Sculpture Festival and Carving Competition

June: Heritage Festival

July: July 4 Parade and Fireworks/Bike and Buggy Parade

August: USPRO Cycling Championships

September: Fine Arts Festival

November: Hospitality Day and Tree Lighting



PRESERVING THE BALANCE BETWEEN TRADITION AND PROGRESS

The health of the Village's bottom line depends on executing a solid plan to achieve stable growth. There are three resources the Village uses to guide development; the Ogden Avenue Master Plan, the Downtown Master Plan and the newly adopted **Strategic Plan**.

One tool used to implement these plans is the Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District. A TIF District diverts a portion of the taxes paid into a special fund that is used to facilitate redevelopment and spur the economy. The Village has designated two areas as TIF Districts: Ogden Avenue and Downtown.

Downtown Development

In 1997, the Village Council adopted a Downtown Master Plan to manage economic growth and guide future redevelopment of land, with the goal of revitalizing the Downtown District. The plan supports the Village's vision of Downtown as a focal point of the community that offers residents an aesthetically pleasing place to live, play, shop and work.

Consistent with the Master Plan, plans for several Downtown construction projects were presented in 2006.



Acadia on the Green

The first phase of this mixed-use development, bounded by Curtiss St., Burlington Ave., Main St. and Washington St., began construction in the summer. The overall project includes four buildings with a mix of 126 residential units and

35,000 square feet of commercial space to be leased for retail, dining, or other entertainment.



Charles Place

The former site of Hart's Garage at 5151 Mochel Drive will emerge as a three-story commercial building to support a mix of retail and office space.



4929 Forest Avenue

Construction of these luxury condominiums is currently underway. The five-story building features 28 maintenance-free units, with 1, 2, and 3 bedroom options.

Northeast corner of Main and Maple

Redevelopment of this parcel, currently a Village-owned parking lot, is projected to begin in 2007. InterCapital Partners will purchase the site from the Village and construct a three-story building consisting of five town homes and 5,800 square feet of retail space.

Other Village Projects



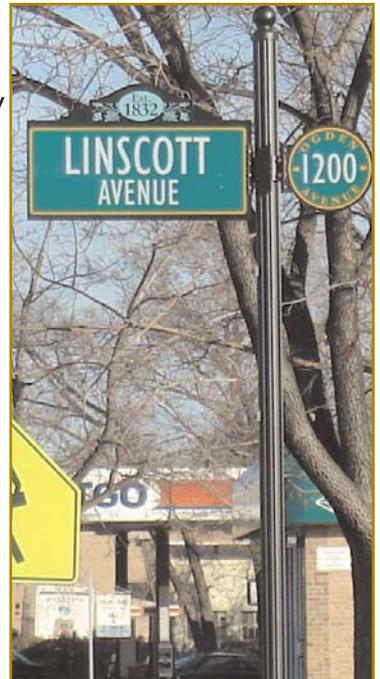
Fire Station 2

A new firehouse will be built on the site of the current Fire Station 2 on the northwest corner of 55th St. and Main St. In 2006, the Village began to move forward with plans after both a 1999 study and a 2006 report to the Village Council concluded that a new station was needed. The modern facility will benefit everyone with centralized administrative operations and improved response times and equipment coverage to a greater portion of the village.

Ogden Avenue Improvements

The plan to improve Downers Grove's stretch of Ogden Avenue made progress this year as new ornamental street identification signs were installed. The Village continued to work with Ogden Avenue property owners and developers to consolidate access points in order to improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety. As redevelopment occurs, developers will be required to install sidewalks and include a percentage of green space.

Construction projects along Ogden Avenue in 2006 include the new Jewel/Osco and National City Bank at Ogden and Fairview Avenues.



Managing Growth

The Village is concerned about maintaining the integrity of our neighborhoods and preserving the quality of life.

Demolition and Site Maintenance Ordinance

In 2006, the Village took action to minimize the impact of development on adjacent parcels and neighborhoods. The Village Council adopted ***An Ordinance Amending Demolition and Construction Site Management*** in August.

The following regulations were enacted:

1. A chain link fence must be installed around the perimeter of residential building sites.
2. A parking plan must be submitted and workers on the site must comply with the plan.
3. A site management account in the amount of \$5,000 will be established as security for the full and complete performance of the site.
4. Construction activity is limited only to the permitted site.
5. Portable toilets and dumpsters must be set back at least five feet from the front and side lot lines.
6. Fees and fines for violations of the ordinance, late work permits and additional street cleaning are established.
7. The site must display a notice of rules and regulations, provided by the Village.

In addition, builders are required to provide to adjacent property owners the name and phone number of the site's supervisor; a site plan and explanation of the work that will be done at least seven days in advance of the work.

Community Investment Program

Infrastructure Improvements

The Village Council elected to keep the Home Rule Sales Tax at .5 percent. Valued at approximately \$4.4 million dollars, Council directed this revenue be reserved for repairs and upgrades to streets, sidewalks and storm sewers, including equipment necessary to perform the job.

Stormwater Master Plan

Many residents were overwhelmed by the amount of rainfall received from September to December. Compared to an average yearly rainfall of 33 inches, Downers Grove received 47.08 inches in 2006, making it one of the wettest years on record.

The Village Council adopted a Stormwater Master Plan to address deficiencies in the operation and maintenance of the stormwater system.

Key recommendations include:

- 1.** Mapping the stormwater system with the aid of GIS technology
- 2.** Constructing neighborhood stormwater storage facilities to handle water overflow.
- 3.** Implementation of a proactive maintenance program

Recommendations regarding specific improvements will be made to the Village Council in 2007.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Police and Fire Operations

As identified in the **Strategic Plan**, one of the Village's primary businesses is to provide emergency services.

In March, the Downers Grove Police Department was once again awarded accreditation status by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). This distinction certifies that our agency adheres to professional standards and complies with department procedures and policies.

Police Department Achievements

- Over 955 man hours invested in patrol of residential streets
- 340 hours of foot patrol in the Downtown district between May and September
- 315 drunk driving arrests
- 4,007 speeding tickets issued
- 1,005 seat belt citations
- 7,140 children participated in safety education programs



Fire Department Achievements

- Maintained emergency response time of 4-6 minutes
- Technical Rescue Team earned validation from State of Illinois
- High-rise evacuation training offered to community
- New automated external defibrillators (AED) purchased for Police and Fire departments vehicles, as well as Public Works Facility
- Pak-Tracker locating devices purchased with grant money. Downers Grove is only the third department in the country to receive this technology

Both the Fire and Police Department's education officers have made an impact on the community's safety. In 2006, the Fire Department Public Education Officer was selected as one of two representatives from Illinois to attend a safety conference in Washington D.C.



Solid Waste

Another primary Village function determined in the **Strategic Plan** is the collection of solid waste. The Village approved a one-year contract extension with Allied Waste, Inc. to provide residential solid waste collection from April 2007 through March 2008. Under the terms of the agreement, residents will receive the same level of service, and sticker prices will remain at the current price of \$2.27. The one-year extension will allow staff an opportunity to carefully evaluate options for solid waste collection services for 2008 and beyond.

Transportation

The Village Council agreed to continue operation of the Grove Commuter Shuttle through 2007. Council approved the purchase of eight low-emission buses funded by a grant from PACE Suburban Bus Service. PACE contributed \$448,000 and the Village's portion was \$112,000. These buses will significantly reduce maintenance and fuel costs, as well as reduce emissions.

The Grove Commuter Shuttle operates four routes during the weekday morning and evening rush hours with service to the Main Street and Belmont Road Train Stations. Service improvements include a new Park and Ride location with free parking for riders of the West Route that serves the Belmont Station.

FINANCIAL STATUS

The Village of Downers Grove maintained a strong financial position in fiscal 2006. Low property taxes and the maintenance of moderate debt levels, combined with adequate reserve levels are the cornerstones of the Village Council's commitment to fiscal responsibility.

Property taxes in the Village for 2006 were paid at a rate of \$0.41 per hundred dollars of equalized assessed valuation.

The Village's overall debt burden is a moderate 2%, calculated as a debt to valuation ratio.

As of December 31, 2006 the Village maintained \$41,220,000 in general obligation long-term debt.

For the fiscal year ending April 30, 2006, the Village completed capital expenditures of \$4,270,733 across all funds. Notable capital projects completed in 2006 included Gilbert Avenue sidewalk improvements, water main replacements, water tank repainting, and commuter parking lot improvements.

Revenues

Total

\$ 59,381,745

- A** Property & Other Taxes **36%**
- B** Sales Taxes **30%**
- C** Intergovernmental Revenues **1%**
- D** Charge for Services **27%**
- E** Grants and Contributions **4%**
- F** Miscellaneous **2%**

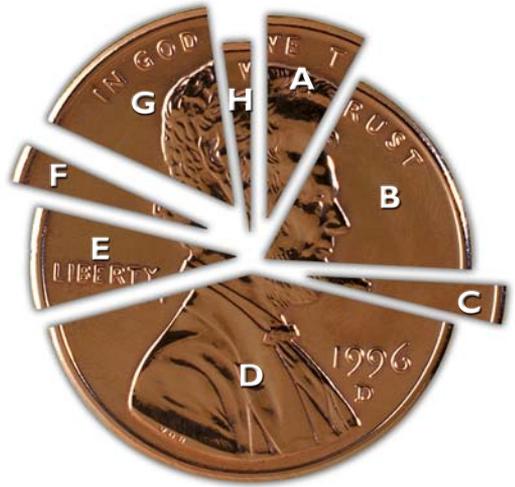


Expenditures

Total

\$ 54,324,967

- A** General Government **8%**
- B** Public Works **18%**
- C** Community Development **3%**
- D** Public Safety **42%**
- E** Community Services **8%**
- F** Interest and Fiscal Charges **3%**
- G** Waterworks **16%**
- H** Parking **2%**



As reported in the FY 05/06 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report on a full accrual basis with depreciation.

SERVICE WITH PRIDE

The authors of the **Strategic Plan** produced an acronym by which Village interactions with customers are guided. **PRIDE** means:

We **P**roduce Results

We Take **R**esponsibility

We Act with **I**ntegrity

We are **D**edicated

We Always Strive for **E**xcellence

All Village departments are committed to deliver the best possible service to our customers, both internal and external to the organization.

Department Achievements

- **Village Clerk's Office** processed 411 Freedom of Information (FOIA) requests and noticed 181 Village meetings.
- **Community Events** (formerly known as Tourism and Events) won a bid to host the 2007 National Ice Carving Competition.
- **Counseling and Social Services** initiated the appointment of a youth member to the Human Services Commission. As the Downers Grove representative of the Salvation Army, 93 families were assisted financially. The Autumn Grove Resource Center added 8 refurbished computers to its after school programs.
- **Human Resources** filled 36 vacancies and assisted departments to fill critical staffing needs. A new police officer eligibility list was formed after a four month process.
- **Communications Office** (formerly Public Information) handled 4,115 Community Response Center records, and produced over 170 programs for DGTV Channel 6. The Village Corner was published weekly in the Downers Grove Reporter and three Hometown Times newsletters were mailed to residents.
- **Information Services** upgraded the Village's network infrastructure, enhancing the connection speed and delivery of information between Village Hall and the Public Works facility.
- **Finance Department** prepared for the conversion of the fiscal year system to coincide with the calendar year, beginning in January 2007. New financial software was also purchased to increase operational efficiency.
 - Over \$43,000 in Community Grants was awarded to area service clubs and local performance groups.
 - The Village received \$286,030.83 in federal and state grants.
- **Public Works Department** installed over 54,000 square feet of sidewalk, resurfaced 10 miles of streets, and sealed another 10 miles of streets.