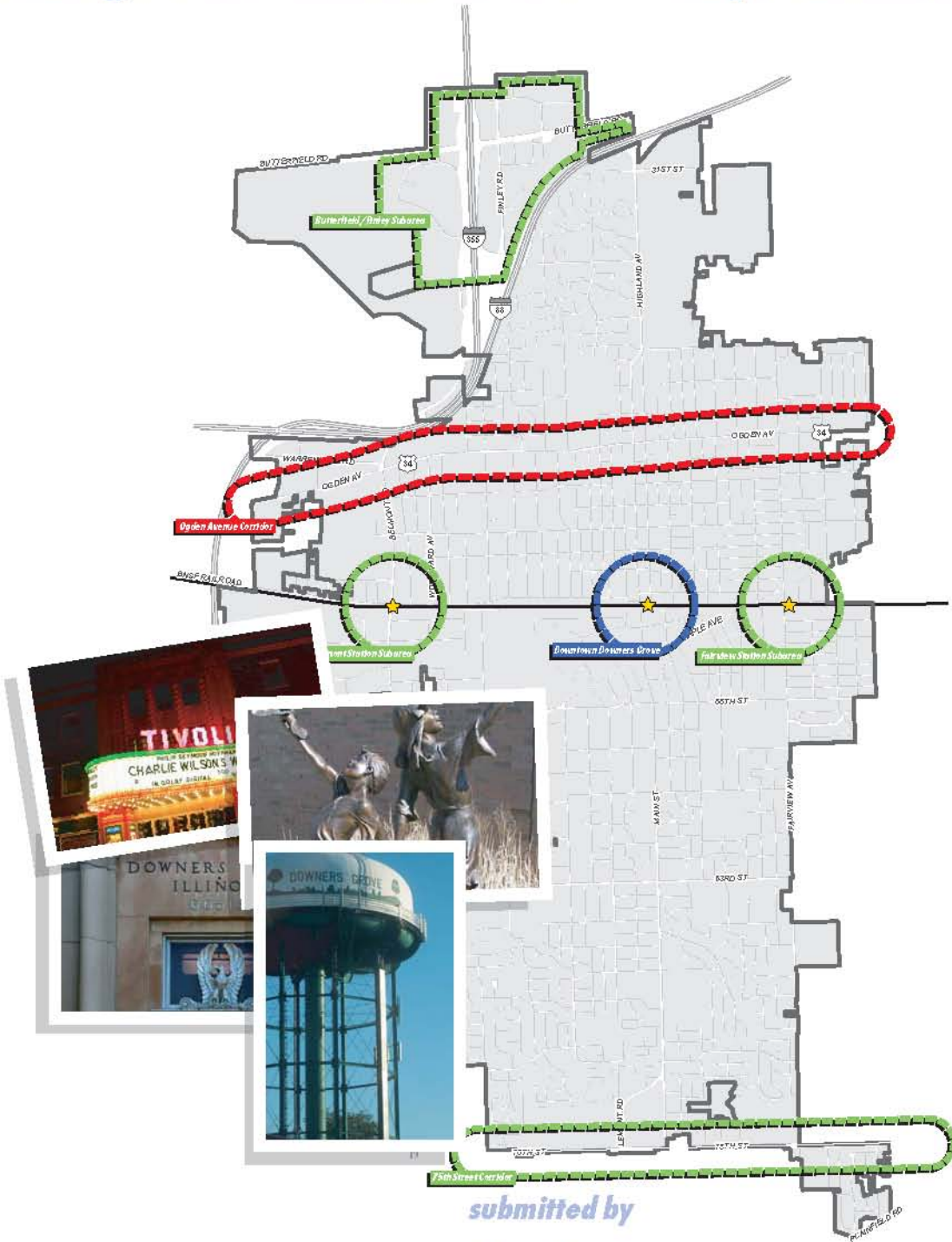


EXCERPT

Proposal

Village of Downers Grove • Comprehensive Plan



submitted by





March 27, 2008

Tom Dabareiner
Director of Community Development
Village of Downers Grove
801 Burlington Avenue
Downers Grove, IL 60515

Dear Mr. Dabareiner:

We are pleased to submit this proposal to the Village of Downers Grove for preparing the new *Comprehensive Plan* and conducting portions of the Village's *TCD3* process.

We believe our firm is uniquely qualified to undertake the Downers Grove assignment. Our firm has extensive experience in comprehensive planning, with special expertise in strategic planning, corridor planning, downtown and commercial area planning, development and redevelopment projects, subarea planning, transit-oriented development, parks and open space planning, transportation, urban design and streetscape, and project financing and implementation. Our firm has undertaken several similar assignments in other communities.

We have a strong understanding of the issues and conditions in Downers Grove and the surrounding area. In addition to our current Downtown Development Pattern Book assignment in Downers Grove, we have experience with planning projects in many nearby communities, including Oak Brook, Hinsdale, Naperville, Oakbrook Terrace, Clarendon Hills, Brookfield, Melrose Park, River Forest, and Bellwood.

Through the TCD3 process, we will work with the Village to establish a Vision and community Goals and Objectives. As part of the Comprehensive Plan we will develop Village-wide and area-specific recommendations, which address land use; development & redevelopment; transportation, circulation and parking; community facilities; open space and environmental features; and implementation. We are proposing to develop a new Downtown Master Plan, a new Ogden Avenue Corridor Plan, and three additional Sub-Area Framework Plans for other areas within the Village. Our approach is comprehensive in coverage, yet will provide detailed and specific recommendations needed for success and "real world" implementation.

HOUSEAL LAVIGNE ASSOCIATES is an award-winning urban planning, economic development, and urban design firm with extensive experience in a range of planning assignments, including downtown and corridor planning, transit-oriented development planning, comprehensive planning, zoning and development regulations, parks and open space planning, and urban design. Collectively, the senior level staff of Houseal Lavigne Associates have worked with more than 75 communities in several states and have more than 60 years of professional planning experience. The Firm's innovative approach to planning, illustrative format and graphic capabilities, use of appropriate and available technologies, and outstanding community outreach distinguish it from other planning firms.

**HOUSEAL LAVIGNE
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Our proposal for completing the Downers Grove assignment contains the following sections:

1. **INTRODUCTION** provides a brief overview of our firm and our understanding of the assignment.
2. **PROJECT APPROACH AND SCOPE OF WORK** provides our approach to completing the Comprehensive Planning assignment and our scope of work.
3. **FIRM QUALIFICATIONS** provides our firm's qualifications and related planning experience.
4. **KEY PERSONNEL** provides detailed information for each key personnel that will be assigned to this project.
5. **PROJECT SCHEDULE** provides our proposed project schedule for completing the assignment.
6. **PROJECT COST** includes our cost for completing this assignment.
7. **PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES** provides a list of professional references for our firm.
8. **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS** includes the required documents as stated in the Request for Proposals.

We appreciate the opportunity to be considered for the *TCD3* and *Comprehensive Plan assignment*. We look forward to the possibility of working with you and the Village on this important project. If you have any questions regarding our qualifications or our proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

HOUSEAL LAVIGNE ASSOCIATES



John A. Houseal, AICP
Principal

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section **1**
Introduction

Our approach to Downers Grove's *TCD3* and *Comprehensive Plan* is built on a foundation of professional experience, sound planning and design practices, and a track record of award-winning projects. Our approach combines extensive community outreach and participation, highly illustrative and user-friendly maps and graphics, and utilization of available technologies. Our process will help establish community consensus and foster a stewardship for the Village's *Comprehensive Plan*. Our professionals are experienced in all areas of comprehensive planning, including downtown planning, corridor planning, community and strategic planning, with special expertise in community outreach.

APPROACH TO COMMUNITY PLANNING

Our approach to the assignment will include and be guided by the following:

Focus on Urban Planning and Community Development. Houseal Lavigne Associates specializes in community planning, urban design and economic development. It is our focus, it is our passion, and it is our area of expertise. We are a specialized urban planning firm whose efforts are not diluted or compromised by bureaucracy or competing interests. Our focus and size allow us to provide the creativity, flexibility, and responsiveness needed to meet our Clients' needs without wasting precious resources. Our firm possesses all of the tools, experience, and unparalleled expertise to create an exciting, viable, and attractive Comprehensive Plan.

Foundation of Experience. The Principals of Houseal Lavigne Associates have extensive experience in Comprehensive Planning, Strategic Planning, Corridor Planning, and Downtown Planning. We have directed, managed, and assisted with similar planning assignments for communities throughout the region. Houseal Lavigne Associates has worked for several municipalities surrounding or near the Village of Downers Grove on a variety of planning assignments including: Hinsdale, Clarendon Hills, Oakbrook, Oakbrook Terrace, Naperville, Warrenville, Melrose Park, Bellwood, River Forest, and Brookfield.

In addition, Houseal Lavigne Associates has in-depth experience in areas related to comprehensive planning and strategic planning, including corridor planning, downtown planning, TOD, urban design, design & development guidelines, zoning and development regulations, subareas and special area planning, residential neighborhoods, parks and open space master planning, parking and infrastructure facilities, transportation systems, and development/redevelopment projects.

Engaging Community Outreach. One of our greatest strengths is our ability to design and conduct engaging and effective community outreach. It is a vital part of all of our planning projects and we believe it is a necessary component of any successful planning process. It is important that all interested persons have the ability to participate in the planning process, and to know they have been heard and their opinion taken into consideration. We believe strongly in fostering a stewardship for the community and achieving a high level of community consensus for planning initiatives.

Illustrative Format and Quality Graphics. All of our projects incorporate a highly illustrative and graphic approach to communicating planning and development policies and recommendations. Over the years, the Principals of Houseal Lavigne Associates have developed a distinct design approach to urban planning and community development projects. The results of this approach are reports and plans that are attractive, distinctive, and easy to use and understand.

Technology Integration. Integrating appropriate technologies can greatly improve the planning process and product. We specialize in the use of GIS, development of on-line surveys, designing and hosting project websites, and utilizing 3-D rendering to improve planning and development concepts. Our maps and graphics are attractive and compatible with existing and developing information systems. Where needed, we will build the initial GIS maps and data for municipal clients for future use. When designed and managed appropriately, these technologies greatly improve communication and involvement with the public.

Market Analysis Experience. Houseal Lavigne Associate incorporates market assessment and economic analysis as part of the foundation for planning and development recommendations. Dan Gardner, Principal Associate with Houseal Lavigne, will lead the market analysis portion of the study. Dan has national and international economic development experience on hundreds of assignments, and is very familiar with the Downers Grove and surrounding area market. In his previous capacity as Director of Consulting Services for S.B. Friedman & Company, he managed several market studies in the region.

Commitment to Client Satisfaction. Our Firm's primary focus is on client satisfaction. We pride ourselves on our professional relationships, reputation, and client references. We develop strong relationships with our clients and are often considered "an extension of staff". We are responsive to clients' concerns, we are available on a moments notice to assist with unforeseen events and issues, and we are committed to doing whatever it takes to serve the client. Many of our "one-time" projects result in long-term on-going professional relationships with client communities.

Vision, Creativity and Innovation. We believe vision and creativity are among the most important components of good planning and design. Too often, vision and creativity are lacking in the planning process and final planning product. With the help of the community, we will establish a "Vision" for the Village that captures the spirit and character of the Village, while presenting new ideas and concepts for local consideration. Our fresh approach to planning and development will broaden the range of available options to the community and maximize the potential of community resources.

Targeted Implementation. Identifying the “next steps” to be taken is an important part of any good plan. Plans are not meant to sit on a shelf gathering dust, but should be used on a regular and on-going basis as a foundation for decision-making. Our plans identify key implementation steps that should be taken to “jump start” the ultimate realization of the Plan’s vision and recommendations. Implementation steps outline the projects and actions to be taken and identify responsibilities, timing, and funding options.

PRELIMINARY UNDERSTANDING

We are very familiar with the Village of Downers Grove and have strong understanding of the issues, conditions, potentials, and opportunities that need to be explored and addressed as part of the Comprehensive Plan. We are currently working with the Village on the Downtown Development Pattern Book and have worked on a variety of planning assignments in surrounding and nearby communities.

Although the community is essentially fully developed, there are a number of opportunities for new development/redevelopment within the Village. The Village provides beautiful and distinct residential neighborhoods, a vibrant and dynamic downtown, regional and local scaled commercial areas and uses, a variety of successful industrial and business uses, and several parks and public uses that together comprise the highly desirable attractive community.

The Village has a very strong community involvement and planning history. The previous TCD programs and the many Village Plans (Downtown, Ogden, Bikeway, TIF Districts, and more) have positioned the Village very well over the years to improve the character and quality of new development and secure the overall success of the Village. However, the Downtown Master Plan and Ogden Avenue Corridor Plan are now a bit old and are in need of updating. Several other unique areas of the Village would also benefit from more detailed planning efforts. Together with other Village planning efforts, the Comprehensive Plan must lay the foundation for future improvements, including Design and Development Guidelines, updated Zoning Ordinance, and more.

The Comprehensive Plan must focus on strengthening the distinct residential neighborhoods, revitalizing the commercial corridors, providing guidance to Downtown improvements and redevelopment efforts, and coordinate land use, development, transportation, open space, and community facilities.

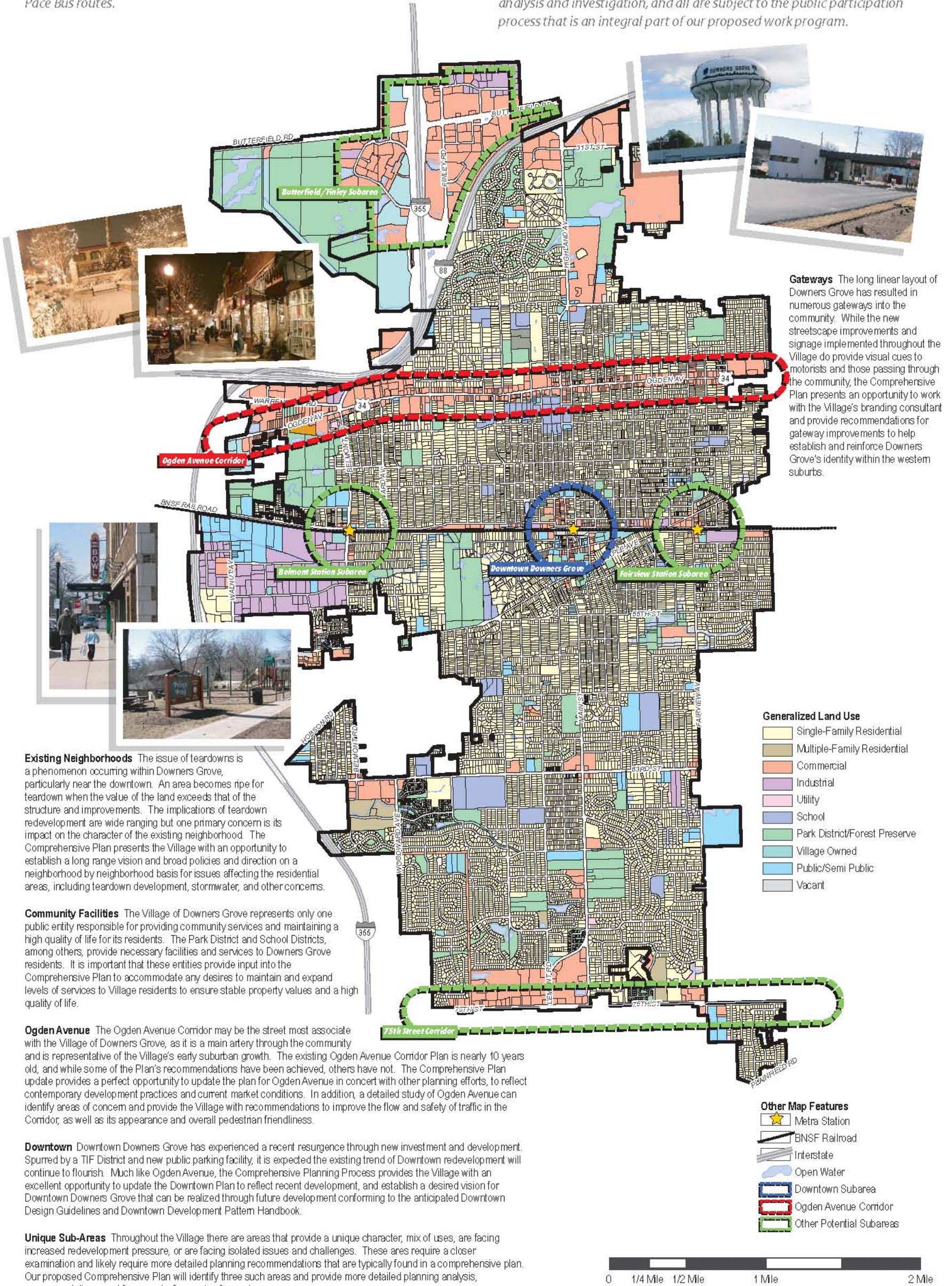
Some of our preliminary thoughts are provided on the illustration on the following page.

Preliminary Reconnaissance

The Village of Downers Grove is a mature community located in east DuPage County, 21 miles from Chicago's loop. The Village is generally bordered by Lombard to the north, Oakbrook and Westmont to the east, Darien to the south, and Woodridge and Lisle to the west. The Village is well positioned for convenient access to the City of Chicago and Chicago Region through several modes of transportation including Interstate 355, Interstate 88, U.S. Route 34 (Ogden Avenue), 3 Metra Stations with service to the City of Chicago and the City of Aurora along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, and numerous Pace Bus routes.

We are very familiar with the Village of Downers Grove and have recently revisited the community to gain first hand impressions and insights regarding future needs and potentials to be considered in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan. This preliminary reconnaissance enables us to tailor a more responsive work program and to move more quickly and efficiently into the planning assignment.

We emphasize that these initial observations are preliminary. All require further analysis and investigation, and all are subject to the public participation process that is an integral part of our proposed work program.



Existing Neighborhoods The issue of teardowns is a phenomenon occurring within Downers Grove, particularly near the downtown. An area becomes ripe for teardown when the value of the land exceeds that of the structure and improvements. The implications of teardown redevelopment are wide ranging but one primary concern is its impact on the character of the existing neighborhood. The Comprehensive Plan presents the Village with an opportunity to establish a long range vision and broad policies and direction on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis for issues affecting the residential areas, including teardown development, stormwater, and other concerns.

Community Facilities The Village of Downers Grove represents only one public entity responsible for providing community services and maintaining a high quality of life for its residents. The Park District and School Districts, among others, provide necessary facilities and services to Downers Grove residents. It is important that these entities provide input into the Comprehensive Plan to accommodate any desires to maintain and expand levels of services to Village residents to ensure stable property values and a high quality of life.

Ogden Avenue The Ogden Avenue Corridor may be the street most associate with the Village of Downers Grove, as it is a main artery through the community and is representative of the Village's early suburban growth. The existing Ogden Avenue Corridor Plan is nearly 10 years old, and while some of the Plan's recommendations have been achieved, others have not. The Comprehensive Plan update provides a perfect opportunity to update the plan for Ogden Avenue in concert with other planning efforts, to reflect contemporary development practices and current market conditions. In addition, a detailed study of Ogden Avenue can identify areas of concern and provide the Village with recommendations to improve the flow and safety of traffic in the Corridor, as well as its appearance and overall pedestrian friendliness.

Downtown Downtown Downers Grove has experienced a recent resurgence through new investment and development. Spurred by a TIF District and new public parking facility, it is expected the existing trend of Downtown redevelopment will continue to flourish. Much like Ogden Avenue, the Comprehensive Planning Process provides the Village with an excellent opportunity to update the Downtown Plan to reflect recent development, and establish a desired vision for Downtown Downers Grove that can be realized through future development conforming to the anticipated Downtown Design Guidelines and Downtown Development Pattern Handbook.

Unique Sub-Areas Throughout the Village there are areas that provide a unique character, mix of uses, are facing increased redevelopment pressure, or are facing isolated issues and challenges. These areas require a closer examination and likely require more detailed planning recommendations that are typically found in a comprehensive plan. Our proposed Comprehensive Plan will identify three such areas and provide more detailed planning analysis, recommendations, and frameworks for moving forward.