



## Meeting Minutes

Village of Downers Grove - Council Meeting

Council Chambers

September 5, 2023

07:00 PM

### 1. Call to Order

Mayor Barnett called to order the Village Council meeting at 7:00 p.m. and led those in the room in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. He explained the protocol for the meeting and the guidelines to submit public comment.

### 2. Roll Call

**Council Attendance (Present):** Mayor Barnett, Commissioner José, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Commissioner Gilmartin, Commissioner Glover, Commissioner Tully, Commissioner Davenport

**Council Attendance (Not Present):** None

**Non-Voting:** Village Manager Dave Fieldman, Village Attorney Enza Petrarca, and Village Clerk Rosa Berardi

### 3. Proclamations

#### A. Suicide Prevention and Action Month

Mayor Barnett read a proclamation in honor of Suicide Prevention and Action Month and encouraged all residents to take the time to understand the importance of mental health education, self-care, and to take proactive steps to help each other.

#### B. National Hunger Action Month

Mayor Barnett read a proclamation in honor of National Hunger Action Month.

### 4. Minutes of Council Meetings

**MIN 2023-9909** - A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes – August 22, 2023

**MIN 2023-10016** - B. Minutes: Executive Session Meeting Minutes for Approval Only – August 22, 2023

**MOTION:** To adopt the regular Village Council Meeting Minutes and the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of August 22, 2023, as presented.

**RESULT:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**MOTIONED TO APPROVE:** Commissioner José

**SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt

**AYES:** Commissioners José, Sadowski-Fugitt, Davenport, Tully, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett

**NAYES:** None

## 5. Consent Agenda

**BIL 2022-9798** — A. Bills Payable: No. 6750 – September 5, 2023

**COR 2022-9799** — B. Claims Ordinance: No. 6519, Payroll – August 11, 2023 & August 25, 2023

**MOT 2023-10020** — C. Motion: Approve a Contract with Artlow Systems for the Public Works Facility Garage Floor Coating

**Summary:** This motion authorizes a contact with Artlow Systems of Carol Stream, IL for the Public Works Facility garage floor coating in the amount of \$222,528.08, which includes a 5% contingency.

**MOT 2023-10015** — D. Motion: Award a Three-Year Contract to H&H Electric Company of Franklin Park, IL for Traffic Signal Maintenance of Village-Maintained Traffic Signals

**Summary:** This motion awards a three-year contract, from 2024 through 2026, for Traffic Signal Maintenance of Village-maintained traffic signals to H&H Electric Company of Franklin Park, Illinois in the amount of \$250,455.60.

***MOTION:** To adopt the consent agenda, as presented.*

***RESULT:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.*

***MOTIONED TO APPROVE:** Commissioner José*

***SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt*

***AYES:** Commissioners José, Sadowski-Fugitt, Davenport, Tully, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett*

***NAYES:** None*

## 6. Active Agenda

There was no Active Agenda

## 7. First Reading

**ORD 2023-10019** — A. Ordinance: Approving a Sales Tax Rebate Agreement between the Village of Downers Grove and Downers Grove Cars, LLC, d/b/a Genesis of Downers Grove, Located at 2424 Ogden Avenue

**RES 2023-10023** — B. Resolution: Assigning the Sales Tax Rebate Agreement Between the Village of Downers Grove and Downers Grove Imports, LTD to Castle Motors of Downers Grove, LLC, Castle Cars of Downers Grove, and Castle Imports of Downers Grove, LLC

Village Manager Dave Fieldman presented Items A&B. He stated that both items had to do with welcoming Castle to the Village of Downers Grove and transferring existing Sales Tax Rebate Agreements from Pugi to Castle. One of the existing agreements involved the Volkswagen, Mazda and Hyundai dealerships on Ogden Avenue and dates back to 2005. There is also another agreement for the brand new Genesis Dealership (where construction recently started) at the corner of Ogden and Cross. Manager Fieldman wished Pugi and his family well in his retirement and welcomed Castle to the Village.

Sava Micic with Castle Motors thanked the Village for the support Castle has received with the change in ownership. He also stated that he would like to provide a donation to the causes that the Mayor spoke of.

Commissioner Davenport thanked Mr. Micic for his generosity.

The Mayor welcomed Castle to Downers Grove and congratulated Pugi on his retirement.

## 8. Attorney's Report

Pursuant to Section 2.5 of the Downers Grove Municipal Code, Village Attorney Enza Petrarca presented the following for Village Council consideration:

1. An ordinance approving a Sales Tax Rebate Agreement between the Village of Downers Grove and Downers Grove Cars, LLC, d/b/a Genesis of Downers Grove, located at 2424 Ogden Avenue.

## 9. Public Comments

Drake Coty, a senior at Benet Academy, spoke of equal pay for workers with disabilities and introduced a law known as 14C, which allows companies to pay workers with disabilities subminimum wages. He talked about legislation aimed at rectifying this and encouraged discussion on this issue at the local level.

Warner Kiuntke, a resident, stated he would like more focus on diversity in Downers Grove and noted that this should not only be accomplished by increasing the percentages of diverse cultures, but also by recognizing those who are homeless, persons with disabilities, people with mental health challenges and those with other faiths/beliefs. Mr. Kiuntke noted celebrations that take place in Naperville and said he would support the Council in efforts that focus on diversity and inclusion.

## 10. Mayor's Report

There was no Mayor's Report

## 11. Council Member Reports

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt gave details about the Grove Foundation's Annual Golf Outing that was taking place on Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at the Belmont Golf Club. She said there may still be openings and encouraged anyone interested to register right away.

Commissioner Tully said that the Downers Grove Education Foundation and District 58 would be hosting the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Oktoberfest on September 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. He gave details about the location and said that all were welcome. He said to visit [dgoktoberfest.org](http://dgoktoberfest.org) for more information.

**Mayor Barnett called for a short recess at 7:20 pm., stating that the Village Council Meeting would reconvene in the Committee Room to continue discussions on the Village's Long Range Plan for 2023-2025. He welcomed the audience to join the meeting in the Committee Room.**

## 12. Manager's Report

**REP 2023-10026 — A. Report: 2023-2025 Priority Action Items Implementation**

**MOT 2023-10017 — B. Motion: Accept the 2023-2025 Long Range Plan**

The Mayor explained that this portion of the meeting was regarding the Long Range Plan (LRP) and would touch on what the LRP process would look like moving forward and would also focus on solidifying the items that will be on the Priority Action Item (PAI) list. He clarified how the PAI list was narrowed down from 29 to 18 items and explained that over a two to three week period, each of the Village Council members had individual meetings with Village Staff to review the list and rank the items by priority. He said the goal of this meeting was to find a way to get all seven of the Council members' priorities in line. The Mayor then opened the discussion to the Council

Commissioner Gilmartin referred to Page 6 of the Long Range Plan (LRP) packet and said he believed there was a misconception about the scale of some of the priority actions. He explained that when the staff prepared the report, each item was given a time and resource allocation metric of moderate (lower tier of time and resources), significant (mid-range) or extensive (requires the most time and resources). Commissioner Gilmartin said his opinion was that four items on the list did not meet the standard, further stating three of the items would not be scheduled out for more than the next six months. He spoke of the ERP, scheduled to be completed in the next three months, and the Building Code Updates and Public Safety Pension Stabilization Plan, which are fairly straight forward and earmarked for completion in the next three months (marked as moderate by Village staff). He noted the Ogden TIF (also rated as moderate) as being slated for more than three months but expressed that it was an extension of an existing TIF and therefore, did not have the pull that a new TIF would require. Commissioner Gilmartin expressed his concern that there is an imbalance when referring to all 18 items on the list equally. He looked forward to discussing five of the seven items that were marked as extensive. The Commissioner also noted that with all 18 items, some consultants were slated but only 1 additional staff member was included in the count, further stating that lead him to believe it is demonstrative of a plan that could be handled by Village staff. Commissioner Gilmartin continued by stating that he would like to remove Public Tree Planting from the list and replace it with Public Art Leasing. This is because it would fit better with the Downtown Dining and Hardscape plans. He said he is also in favor of Street Crossing Standards, which he believes ties into the Bike and Pedestrian Plan and some of the other planning around town. Commissioner Gilmartin also stated that he would like to have Community Grants added to the list as well.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt stated that since the Village has certified arborists on staff, she is comfortable with replacing the Public Tree Planting item with Public Art. She said that Downers Grove would gain value in having a Public Art Leasing option, where the load could be shared by working with other partners. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt spoke of the Street Crossing Standards and said she believes they will get into that during the Comprehensive Plan update process - she is hesitant to replace an item with one that may be covered during other discussions.

Commissioner José said he will speak later because he believes that the staff presentation will set the stage for what he has to say.

Commissioner Davenport said he does not think Public Tree Planting is a huge lift and wants to keep it on the list, further stating that he believes investing in arborists that spend the time needed to look at what is already being done and whether or not new trees should be planted..

Commissioner Tully said his only issue with Public Art Leasing is timing. He said if you look at the description of the initiatives, there will be much work being done in the downtown area. The Commissioner is hesitant to discuss where to put the public art until the all the plans for the downtown are set.

Commissioner Davenport concurred with Commissioner Tully and suggested taking the subject of Public Art back up in a couple years.

Commissioner Glover said he is happy with the list as is. He said if changing anything out, he would like to include Community Grants on the list, but he did not believe it outweighed a majority of the items on the list. He suggested adding Community Grants (instead of Public Art) in place of Public Tree Planting.

The Mayor noted that every list from the past had involved big lifts and small lifts, and with every list in the past, the Council started down one path and would have to change course. He said within the next six months, the Council may decide that some of the things on the list are not feasible and may need to be removed from the list. He said historically the lists have been less predictable then the Council thought they would be. They were adjusted as needed. He stated that the 18 items on the list were not his top 18, nor did he believe they were the top 18 of any of his colleagues. The Mayor stressed that he wanted to get to work. He then explained that when speaking of the metrics used to determine the time and resources for each item, there were different pieces that feed into that determination; staff work, Council work, and community work. He recalled past policy issues, over the years, that involved bringing the community along in the decision making process and he wanted to be sure this was considered

when evaluating the definition of moderate, significant or extensive, in terms of time and resource allocations. He said that time frames of completion would depend heavily on the experience of those performing the tasks. The Mayor also stressed that he always wants to have the community as a part of the decision making process. He concluded by stating that he believes this is the list the Council needs to start working on, while realizing that it would likely change in the next six or ten months.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he thinks that the context of the last meeting revolved around discussions about the number of items on the list and had no regard to whether they were listed as moderate, significant, or extensive. He said he did not believe a large number of items on the list constitutes a heavy workload. He gave the example of DEI Initiatives – work and training had been done and it was in place and this was just the process of maintaining practices for the next two years. Commissioner Gilmartin said he thinks the last meeting interpreted the list as a heavy 18 items and he wants to be clear because a lot of talk was about bandwidth. He said he is aware the process does not only include the staff and the Council's time, but also the community's time. He gave another example of ERP – the project is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Commissioner Gilmartin said if the Council is looking to do things to create the vision to do more, then they should not include things on the list that are nearly complete.

Commissioner Tully said during the last meeting, he brought up the conversation about the amount of items on the list. He said he did this from the lens of experience from two perspectives: 1) Not to only look at what is on paper, but consider what can realistically get done; and 2) When evaluating the time and resources for each item, as mentioned by Mayor Barnett, the Council needs to consider that some things may take a little staff time, but may take a lot of community conversations and vice versa. Commissioner Tully explained that there is a process that is statutory and that is a huge factor, further explaining that he has seen things moving forward where everyone is unanimous for many months and then things take a turn. He said taking the community along is the Downers Grove way. Commissioner Tully said if by chance all of the 18 items get done by June of next year, the Council can work on some of items that were on the larger list. He also said it is important to manage expectations by under-promising and over-delivering. Commissioner Tully said the biggest expectation is to move at the speed of the community. He said things will change during the next year and the Council's course may be changed with regard to the items on the list, further stating this Council should show the same flexibility that past Councils have demonstrated. The Commissioner concluded by saying there is no limit to the number of items that can be worked on if the 18 items on the list are completed.

Commissioner José said during the last meeting, both he and Commissioner Gilmartin tried to change the list by either adding or deleting items from the list, with both of their efforts falling flat. He noted that he wants to be sure that the plan is looked at as not only Council's plan, but also as the community's plan. Commissioner José said that many of the items on the list require decisions that can have an impact for decades to come - such as the Compensation Plan, Environmental Sustainability Plan, Downtown Dining and Hardscape Plans, and the Enhanced Bike and Pedestrian Plan. He does not believe they should be completed rapidly, further stating the he believes the Council should pair down the list in an effort to get things done. Commissioner José said that he and Commissioner Gilmartin will have to disagree on some of the items, noting that he takes the input of Commissioner Tully and the Mayor with great respect with regard to some of the items taking a great deal of time. Commissioner José stated he does not believe the Council should upend the processes used in the past. He said he believes the Comprehensive Plan Update and the two downtown items should be postponed and the Council's focus should be placed on the Environmental Sustainability Plan, the Bike and Pedestrian Plan and the Fairview Avenue Plan implementation. He said he believes doing all of the items on the list in parallel is taking bandwidth that can be used elsewhere. Commissioner José concluded by noting his recommendation is to fold the Public Tree Planting and Private Tree Regulations into the Environmental Sustainability Plan.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt commented that she respects the thought of managing expectations. She said that under-promising and over-delivering is not visionary. She stated that when discussing big action items, she wants to be visionary in what the Council wants to see completed in the next 2 years and then beyond that (in 5-10 years). Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she worries that by not taking on projects for fear of falling short, the Council is not pushing themselves hard enough when it comes to the work plan. She noted she would rather see an ambitious

plan so the community can see where Council wants to take the Village in the future.

The Mayor noted that Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt's comments were important comments. He said he felt that all seven members shared her thoughts but had been stating them in different ways with a different emphasis on things. He stated that this is a 18 top items of the 29-item list, further stating that a review of history would say that the list sitting before them this is a stretch. The Mayor then turned the discussion over to Manager Fieldman to explain how the Village staff thinks the Council should go about working through the plan before them.

Village Manager Fieldman explained that the Long Range Plan includes several action items that are planned to be completed in a 20 month period, from now through April of 2025. The action items include:

1. Comprehensive Plan Update
2. Environmental Sustainability Plan (includes 5 related action items)
3. Downtown Hardscape and Landscape Plan
4. Downtown Outdoor Dining Plan
5. Enhanced Bike and Pedestrian Plan
6. Fairview Focus Area Implementation

Manager Fieldman noted the four Goals and Objectives for these items are:

1. Substantially Complete or Advance all Six Items by May of 2025 (Noting that Efforts on the Fairview Focus Area will Continue for Many Years to Come)
2. Prepare a Modern, Best Practice Based Comprehensive Plan
3. Prepare the Deliverables Noted in the PAI Descriptions
4. Align the Work (Avoid Inconsistent Recommendations)

Manager Fieldman spoke of Village Innovation consisting of:

- Working Concurrently on all Six Projects
- Village Council Takes on the Duties Usually Handled by a Comprehensive Plan Ad Hoc Committee
- Engage Multiple Boards and Commissions
- Engage Multiple Consultants

Manager Fieldman explained that the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) is the Priority Action Item that drives the other five projects and he explained how it relates to the other projects. He showed excerpts from the 2017 Comprehensive Plan, noting that the Comp Plan is an aspirational document (a Planning Document) and explained the update will be substantial, as so much has changed since 2017. The changes include topics typically covered in a Comp Plan that are directly related to the topics to be addressed in the other five Priority Action Items. He went through the list of several topics, some that have appeared in past Village Comp Plans and several that have not. Next, Manager Fieldman listed the Supporting Plans and Implementation as follows:

#### Supporting Plans

- Environmental Sustainability Plan
- Enhanced Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan
- Downtown Streetscape Plan

#### Implementation

- Fairview Focus Area Implementation
- Downtown Outdoor Dining Plan

Manager Fieldman said the traditional approach is to review the Comprehensive Plan first and then prepare the Supporting Plans and the Implementation. He noted that Downers Grove used this approach in 2011 and 2017. The Village also engaged an Ad Hoc Committee, the Plan Commission, and the Village Council. Manager Fieldman said the 2011 Comprehensive Plan process took 38 months, and he reviewed the steps involved. He also explained the 2017 Comprehensive Plan process and the steps involved, which were completed in 31 months. Manager Fieldman

reviewed the innovative approach. In this approach, staff suggested working on all six projects concurrently, the Council serving in the role of the Ad Hoc Committee, and the engagement of multiple Boards and Commissions and consultants. He explained that the team would consist of the Environmental Concerns Commission (ECC), Transportation and Parking Commission (TAP), Historic Preservation and Design Review Board (HPDRB), the Plan Commission, along with likely four consultants – all working simultaneously. He noted that the Council would direct and coordinate all the work, providing policy direction throughout the process, instead of at the latter parts of the process as previously done. The Council’s policy direction would be provided to the other members of the team in real time assuring their work would reflect the policy of the Council. Manager Fieldman explained that the Council would likely have to meet monthly on each of the topics to provide effective direction and reviewed a slide of how the plan would play out.. He explained that work on the Comprehensive Plan would take place from October 2023 through May of 2025, and at some point early in the process (once the Comp Plan recommendations and policy directions in all other areas related to the other 5 projects are sufficiently developed), work on the other five projects would commence. Manager Fieldman noted this was the best approach to completing a lot of work in a short amount of time.

Manager Fieldman then reviewed the challenges that may arise:

- Consultants’ Ability to Meet Schedule and Manage Concurrent Work
- Advisory Boards Availability and Caseload
- Potentially Conflicting Recommendations
- Managing Public Engagement from Multiple Sources
- Complexity of Concurrent Work

Manager Fieldman noted what it will take to complete the work:

- Perform Comprehensive Plan Level Work and Supporting Plan/Implementation Level Work Simultaneously
- Staff, Consultants, Boards/Commissions and Village Council to Move Work Forward Monthly
- Flexibility - Accept Uncertainties of Innovative Approach and Willingness to Adjust Completion Deadlines

Manager Fieldman noted that Council has requested more work in an expedited manner. He said it is unusual for staff to provide an implementation plan and it is important that the Council understood it is an innovative approach.

#### **Village Council Questions/Comments:**

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt stated she is comfortable with the start of this with caveats. She said she thinks engaging with Boards and Commissions is a positive, further stating that she knows some people on the boards and that they want to provide input in a meaningful way. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she thinks it is a benefit to engage Boards and Commissions more and it is better for the Council to meet more frequently. She noted her opinion that it is okay to go beyond the 18 to 24 months if this load is unbearable. She stated that even though one of the challenges could be conflicting direction, she thinks it is good to work on many items in parallel. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she thinks there are benefits to doing things this way and is comfortable moving forward with this process, even if projects are not complete in two years.

Commissioner José asked Manager Fieldman to bring up a slide showing the proposed Council’s interactions with Boards and Commissions. He said that no matter what Council asks of Village staff, they come back with options. He said he believes engaging with Boards and Commissions is good, and all of this is creating a feedback loop. Commissioner José said he thinks there is benefit to people getting down into the details. He stated he has seen great feedback coming from the Ad Hoc Committees regarding Comprehensive Plans, all useful to the Council. The Commissioner said he believes this plan can be carried out, but thinks they should go with the model used in the past and not turn this into a sprint. He said he thinks doing all these projects all at once is a mistake.

Commissioner Tully noted agreement with aspects of what both Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt and Commissioner

Hosé had said. He said the Council is asking staff to basically do twice as much work in one-third of the time. He spoke about a comment made to him by Commissioner Davenport - the plan did not have to be 20-months, it could go beyond that. Commissioner Tully noted that staff came up with a visionary plan and is excited about it, but he wants everyone to realize that if things are not complete in 20 months, they will not go away. The Commissioner said it is great to be super innovative, but if the plan is not working, the direction needs to be changed. He said he thinks the plan is impressive and very ambitious and wants to get started but also be mindful and purposeful to get things done in a manner that delights their constituents.

Commissioner Hosé said he agrees with Commissioner Tully, but stated that an election takes place in 20 months and after that there would be at least one new member on the Council, with the possibly three. He noted he would hate to see project get two-thirds of the way done and get scratched off the list because the new members have different opinions.

Commissioner Tully stated that many things on past lists have spanned multiple Councils and that the plan needed to be one that the community was behind.

Commissioner Davenport asked Commission Hosé to clarify what his concern is.

Commissioner Hosé expressed his concern was with not bringing the community along. He said he thinks there is a need for a Comprehensive Plan Ad Hoc Committee and he thinks this work plan does not allow for as much community involvement as needed. He stated that what staff is proposing is a result of what they are hearing from the Council.

The Mayor noted that staff used a narrow window to put together a plan and that is why they pulled out the Ad Hoc Committee that had been used in the past for the Comprehensive Plan updates. He stated it was just a suggestion to move faster.

Commissioner Davenport said that he does not believe staff is proposing anything that they do not think will work.

Manager Fieldman summarized what he had heard, stating that everyone has said (in their own way) that one of the challenges is trying to figure out what public engagement would look like in a 20-month process, with four boards, as well as how it would be managed. He noted Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt's concern about possible conflicts and expressed that was a challenge as well. Manager Fieldman reiterated what heard from the majority of Council is that this is an untested, complex and innovative approach and there may be significant adjustments along the way, where completion deadlines may have to be adjusted. Manager Fieldman said the tried and true way to get this done is the way it had been done before, but with the current list everything would not get done.

Commissioner Davenport said he likes the innovative approach because it is similar to how he does work with clients, having a constant back and forth. He said he has seen how committees can go down a long path, only to find that it was not what the Council envisioned. This is why he finds a constant back and forth desirable. Commissioner Davenport asked Manager Fieldman if he knew of other municipalities doing it this way.

Manager Fieldman said he has not seen the current approach being used by other municipalites, but also did do an extensive search.

Commissioner Davenport said that some of his work at District 99 was much like this plan. He noted that he is flexible with how this will work, and does agree that high quality work needs to be accomplished. Commissioner Davenport asked if anyone believes that any weight should be put on any of the other items on the list, aside from the six clumped items that were agreed upon. He stated that this information could give staff a little more guidance with what may need to be adjusted on the list.

## Council Minutes

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Manager Fieldman noted that the staff is proposing monthly updates on all the projects in this plan, also noting, as Commissioner Gilmartin said, that some items are short term and will come off the list. Manager Fieldman said in the past there was usually only one update halfway through the plan.

Commissioner Davenport said if the innovative plan can be pulled off, people will be talking about what Downers Grove is doing.

Commissioner Gilmartin spoke of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan review that Manager Fieldman gave and asked what the step “five months at Council” meant.

Manager Fieldman said he would have to go back to check the details, but he said that the Village’s Department Directors, overseeing the work, would come and present chapters of the Comprehensive Plan to the Council at every meeting.

The Mayor said the Council got the draft Comp Plan from the Ad Hoc Committee and the Council members marked up their draft copy of the Plan and then work went from there – it took a lot of time.

Manager Fieldman said that in both cases of 2011 and 2017, there were significant changes of the document at the Council level.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked Commissioner José if believes the challenge is the lack of public engagement built into the model.

Commissioner José said it was both that and speed. He said that working too fast could be reckless, and the Council will be talking about documents that are going to guide the Village for the next 5, 10 to 20 years. Commissioner José noted that it could take more time to consider the impacts of the changes looking to be made. He stated that community, staff, and Council input goes into creating the Comprehensive Plan and because the Council would be creating a visionary document, he does not want to rush it.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he feels the benefit to this is getting real-time information as they are working through multiple projects that are independent, yet interconnected. He said he does not want the project to go beyond the 22 months, because the plan could get old quickly. Commissioner Gilmartin said if an Ad Hoc Committee is the missing piece, he wants to look at other ways to engage with the community to bring them along the way with this plan. He said he does not want the work to be done in a fast way, but in an efficient way, to get more done. Commissioner Gilmartin said speed is not a concern for him and he wants to come up with creative ways to funnel the community’s involvement into this.

Commissioner José said with all due respect to business owners, this is not a private business, this is the people’s business. He noted that he thinks these challenges are larger than some of his colleagues think and if they are going to be and going down this road, it will force the Council to talk about the projects taking longer than expected.

Commissioner Gilmartin stated that this is all audible and it sounds like they just discussed how flexible they will need to be.

The Mayor concurred that it is all audible, but this is planning and stewardship for 50,000 people and their assets. He said there is a public input process, and even if all of the Council members like that this plan engages more with Boards and Commissions, it is known fact that when Boards and Commissions (and Ad Hoc Committees) have come up with plans for the next 20 years, multiple Councils and Village Managers have taken a year (and sometimes years) to mark them up with red pens. He said this plan will cost about \$1 million, with five or six consultants and extra staff to be hired. It will take many months to get the staff member and consultants in place. The Mayor said this is a big investment of time and effort and nothing had been prioritized. He said the Council wants five or six items to be completed at the same time and he believes the Council should prioritize the Comprehensive Plan and/or

Environmental Sustainability Plan as top priorities because they are the two items that will have the biggest impact. The Mayor said he understands the fear and concern of acting responsibly.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she has never worked for Corporate America and has always worked with nonprofits or for the government. She spoke about red penning the Boards and Commission Plans and reiterated that she thinks the Council take their visions and ideas and put them on paper. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she values the work that the Ad Hoc Committees have done in the past, but this Comprehensive Plan is different from the past plans because it includes things like sustainability, noting the recent record-breaking heat. She also pointed out that Council will need to be flexible and thoughtful, further stating that she believes a benefit to having constant feedback from the Boards and Commissions is that the red pen work would not be needed. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt stated that if the Council finds that the community engagement is not enough, they can increase the number of Coffee with Council events that take place, further stating that she has always been a proponent of community engagement. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt concluded by stating that she is comfortable moving forward, being very clear that dates may be extended and the Council has to be flexible.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked who the Ad Hoc Committee was comprised of in the past.

The Mayor responded that it was like HDRB, that there was some intentionality behind geography and profession.

Commissioner Gilmartin stated that Boards and Commissions involved a cross-section of residents, further asking if the same approach was used for the Ad Hoc Committee. He also noted that with this plan there would be four boards, instead of one, and he felt that meant there would be quite a bit of community feedback with this plan.

The Mayor said that the process of the Ad Hoc is similar to that the Plan Commission process with public engagement.

Commissioner Gilmartin surmised that the Ad Hoc was an added layer (of an additional committee) that made overarching recommendations based on what a lower committee made.

The Mayor explained that it is a little like the committee process with the Planning Commission, where people voice their opinions in public and professionals make recommendations.

Commissioner Tully noted that many times it is not until the recommendations come up to Council level that the community gets involved.

Commissioner Davenport said he was part of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan, further stating this was different because there would be consultants involved and they will lead the discussions. He noted that he was unsure if consultants would be able to move at the Council's speed and he did believe there were speed bumps coming – which could mean the Council would need to stop or slow down with the plan. The Commission said there is risk involved, but that nothing ventured, is nothing gained.

The Mayor said that the Council needed to give staff direction at this meeting and they could continue the discussion with an additional meeting, if needed.

Manager Fieldman noted that there were two options on the table 1) the innovative plan produced for the discussion; or 2) A sequential plan that starts with either the Comprehensive Plan or the Environmental Sustainability Plan.

Mayor Barnett said the sequential plan was his preference, only one voice.

Commissioner José said he would rather push the Comprehensive Plan off and start with a couple of the others items.

Commissioner Tully asked if it was possible to unlink the Comprehensive Plan from the other items, especially after having many discussions about how they are all linked together.

Manager Fieldman said they have used the sequential way in the past and the Comprehensive Plan informs the other policies. He said he does not think you can unlink any of the other items from it. Manager Fieldman stated if work begins with the other projects first, the Comprehensive Plan would be (in a way) built from the detail instead of the policy. He concluded by stating that the list came about because of how interrelated the policies and practices were.

Commissioner José noted that he thought the Comprehensive Plan could be build based on all the detail, i.e., if the Downtown Street and Hardscape Plans are to be updated, this would affect the Comprehensive Plan. He said that if the staff says they would rather start with the Comprehensive Plan and work their way down, he is fine with that. Commissioner José reiterated that he does not want to rush and cut out opportunities for community feedback.

Commissioner Tully noted the Comprehensive Plan is all-encompassing and the Environmental Sustainability Plan is just as important. He said he likes the innovative approach but wants all to agree that it will take longer than 20 months.

Manager Fieldman said he would like to add black arrows to the items that are estimated to take longer than 20 months.

Commissioner Gilmartin stated he does not like the arrows.

Commissioner Davenport said he thinks the arrows show there is an admission about the reality of what will happen and that there is a consensus that items may potentially take longer than 20 months.

Commissioner Tully said he does not care about the arrows because the projects speak for themselves.

Commissioner Gilmartin said the arrows take away the accountability factor that the Council can meet deadlines. He noted with 29 items on the list, it is reflective a Council that wants to complete a lot of things and that would require a more efficient way of doing things, without cutting out the public. The Commissioner stated the innovative plan is a new way to get feedback from the public, while adding consultants and staff liaisons is another layer of people with focus. He said it is the Council's responsibility to keep things moving.

Manager Fieldman noted that if the Council requests this plan, one of the first steps will be a request for proposals from consulting firms. He said one of the fundamental questions to the consultants about the plan is asking what they propose for the plan and for community engagement.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that during one-on-one discussions with Manager Fieldman, they discussed the potential that consultants could all be from one firm.

Manager Fieldman said he thinks it is best if the consultants are all from the same firm.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he is fully supportive of that. He also stated that since public engagement is a concern, there should be budgeting for communications to the public, in ways than have been used in the past.

Manager Fieldman recounted the example of the 2016 Stormwater SWU Campaign and said how the Council showed the public they were heard and that it was a significant line item.

The Mayor noted everyone wanted to move forward, with the exception of himself and Commissioner José.

Commissioner Tully said he prefers an innovative approach, but over a longer time period. He said that he wants to get started with the work.

Manager Fieldman stated with the Council direction received, the next step would be to move forward and accept the Long Range Plan. He said the agenda packet, linked online, included the complete LRP Report. He reviewed the Executive Summary and reviewed the process that had taken place since the first meeting in May. Manager Fieldman stated that he and Village staff want to make sure that this LRP is the product of the Council and that policy direction is given from the Council on it.

The Mayor asked if any Council members had anything else to add.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that the discussion during the meeting had been helpful to him.

The Mayor explained that the process that had taken place during LRP discussion was tedious but normal.

### **Public Comment**

Linda Schranz, said she was excited about the LRP and this approach, which is different and innovative from the past. She said she is excited that this Village Council is looking to the future and does not feel that past Council were as visionary.

Robin Tryloff, a resident, is in the arts profession and does not agree with waiting until the downtown items are set before allowing Public Art, further stating she believes it would revitalize the Downtown. She recommended changing the Village Sign Ordinance in order to allow artwork and she offered her expertise in this area, pro bono.

A resident stated that he is anxious to hear the plans for the Outdoor Dining and Hardscape Plan because thinks the downtown currently looks unattractive, further asking if the removal of the parking spaces to allow for the current outdoor dining is permanent. He noted that is difficult to drive through the downtown and is concerned with plans the Council has set in place for the downtown

Janet Whittingham, a resident, stated that the residents of Downers Grove will own whatever the Council decides and she does not feel the Council is taking that into consideration. She expressed concerns with limited parking in the downtown area due to outdoor dining, the people selected to hold positions on Village Boards and Commissions and the Village Council are like-minded, that the work plan is being rushed so that it can be completed by the next election cycle, and lastly that the residents should have more input since they pay taxes.

Ken Lerner, a resident, said he has enjoyed the dialogue and quality of discussion amongst the Council at the meeting, further stating that he felt the innovative approach is ambitious and responsive to the community. Mr. Lerner also reminded all that the Village does support the arts, as the Arts Festival would be taking place in the Downtown that upcoming weekend.

Carol Richards, a resident, from Greener Grove expressed that she is happy the Village is taking on the issue of sustainability and noted that the members of the community in support of sustainability are happy to help in any way. Ms. Richards also added that she is glad that the Fairview area is on the list.

### **Village Council Questions and Comments**

The Mayor said that the entire LRP document is included with the meeting's agenda material and is available on the Village website. He suggested that the community take the time to read it, as descriptions of each of the items are included in the packet. The Mayor explained that 18 items of the 29 would be worked on first and public input and commentary would be a part of the process before any decisions are made by the Council. He further noted that the process would take place over the next two years and possibly longer.

Council Minutes

Village of Downers Grove

September 5, 2023

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt reminded the public that Coffee with Council would be taking place on Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am.

**MOTION:** *To accept the 2023-2025 Long Range Plan, as presented.*

**RESULT:** *Motion carried 5-2 by voice vote.*

**MOTIONED TO APPROVE:** *Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt*

**SECONDED BY:** *Commissioner Gilmartin*

**AYES:** *Commissioners Sadowski-Fugitt, Gilmartin, Davenport, Tully, Glover*

**NAYES:** *Commissioner Hosé and Mayor Barnett*

### 13. Adjournment

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION:** *To adjourn the September 5, 2023 Village Council Meeting.*

**RESULT:** *Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.*

**MOTIONED TO APPROVE:** *Commissioner Hosé*

**SECONDED BY:** *Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt*

**AYES:** *Commissioners Hosé, Sadowski-Fugitt, Davenport, Tully, Glover, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett*

**NAYES:** *None*

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosa Berardi  
Village Clerk