

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE

Report for the Village

10/15/2024

SUBJECT:	SUBMITTED BY:
Guiding DG: Comprehensive Plan and Related Projects - Comprehensive Plan Draft Vision Follow-Up	Stan Popovich, AICP Director of Community Development

SYNOPSIS

A continued discussion of the Comprehensive Plan's draft vision.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The Village Council has identified the Comprehensive Plan and related projects as Priority Action Items for 2023-2025.

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A

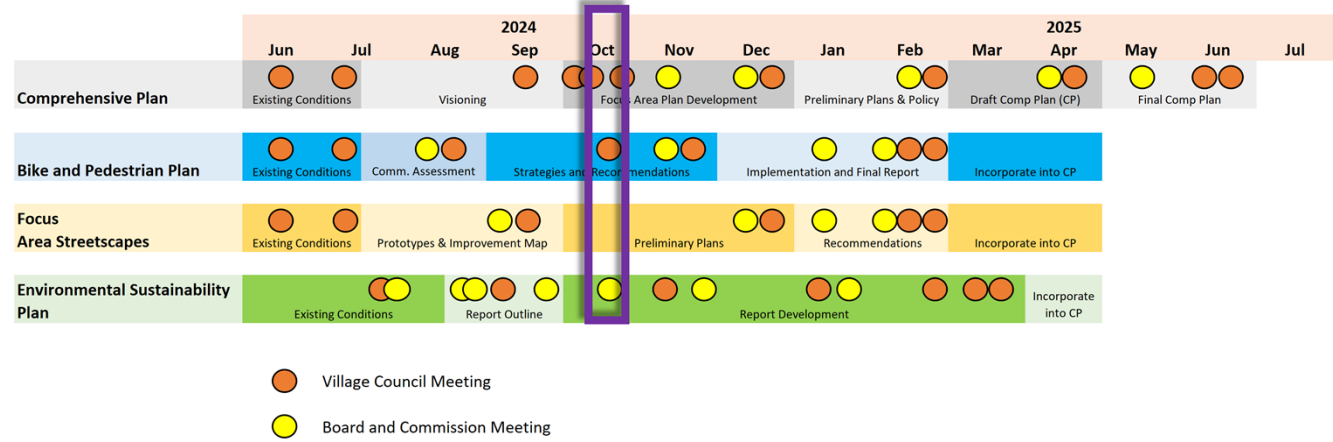
RECOMMENDATION

UPDATE & RECOMMENDATION The Guiding DG Comprehensive Plan vision has been previously discussed at three Village Council meetings; September 17, October 1 and October 8. Staff requests the Council review and provide final direction on the Guiding DG Comprehensive Plan vision statement.

BACKGROUND

On September 17, 2024, Houseal Lavigne (HL) presented the draft vision statement and preliminary land use framework for the Comprehensive Plan to the Village Council. The Village Council reviewed approximately half of the vision statement and provided HL with comments. HL has incorporated those comments into an updated draft vision statement. Further discussion of the draft goals, key recommendations and a preliminary land use framework will be discussed at a later meeting.

Schedule



ATTACHMENTS

- Draft Vision for the Comprehensive Plan
- Previous Drafts of Vision for the Comprehensive Plan

Draft Vision

Updated 10/9/24

Downers Grove will become a model community with a population of over 50,000 people of all ages, races, backgrounds and incomes. Over the coming decades, it will be renowned for its strong sense of place, cultural diversity and the human connection among its residents. It will continue to celebrate its tradition of excellence, safe, distinctive and well maintained neighborhoods, premier regional and local commercial choices, a lively, vibrant Downtown, commitment to sustainability, accessible and attractive open spaces, safe connectivity for all road users, and an array of quality local government services and amenities.

Downers Grove will be a vibrant and inclusive place with high quality, diverse housing options that support residents throughout their lives and foster a sense of belonging. The rich housing history will be preserved and a variety of residential architectural styles, housing types and multipurpose development will be embraced. Residential areas will be walkable, welcoming, and reflective of their unique neighborhood character.

The business-friendly environment will continue to attract businesses and investment. Commercial areas will continue to improve, thrive, and grow as regionally recognized destinations and notable activity centers. The Village will support new entrepreneurs and existing businesses of all sizes, both in the Downtown and throughout Downers Grove. Major employers that create a variety of employment opportunities will be drawn to the local economy.

Downtown Downers Grove will continue to be the heart of the community – a place where neighbors and visitors gather, and businesses thrive. The success of Downtown will be expanded with a strong connection to the Fairview focus area. These two areas will have innovative and sustainable streetscapes, art displays and public spaces resulting in an inviting, visually appealing, and culturally rich destination that attracts residents, visitors, and commuters alike. The Belmont focus area will similarly be transformed into a third commuter rail-anchored node as a place for innovation, commerce, and residential amenities - strategically positioned the area will see sustainable and context-sensitive development.

Similar to the Downtown and Fairview focus areas, other key locations will be transformed. These sites will offer opportunities to create distinctive gateway and destination nodes, each unique in character and purpose but aligned with the vision to provide diverse residential, commercial, cultural, resource, recreational, and natural amenities.

Downers Grove will consist of permanently preserved open spaces, native landscaping and a green stormwater management system. Natural resources will be respected by a more sustainable and livable community. There will be an abundance of natural recreation areas, walking paths, trails and trees. The community will be resilient in the face of intensifying climatological events and sustainability efforts will be embraced.

There will be a high quality, aesthetically pleasing, safe and accessible transportation system for all users with priority given to pedestrians, bicycles, and micro-mobility devices. Neighborhoods, commercial corridors, and local amenities will be connected through an extensive mobility network, providing the opportunity to comfortably walk, bike, drive, or take public transportation.

Residents, workers, students and visitors will continue to be welcomed in Downers Grove. The community will be a hub for inclusiveness, acceptance, mutual respect and cultural excellence, fostering a strong relationship among local institutions to promote an excellent quality of life and sense of pride.

Previous Draft Published 09/13/2024



MEMORANDUM

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Date: September 13, 2024

SENT VIA EMAIL

To: Village of Downers Grove
Stan Popovich, AICP, Director of Community Development
Jason Zawila, AICP, Planning Manager

From: Houseal Lavigne Associates
Josh Koonce, AICP, Practice Lead

Re: Guiding DG Comprehensive Plan
Draft Vision, Goals, and Key Recommendations

This memorandum includes Vision, Goals, and Key Recommendations paired with a Preliminary Land Use Framework for the **Village of Downers Grove Guiding DG Comprehensive Plan**. The memorandum has been developed based on the existing conditions assessment and input received through outreach efforts conducted in support of the project so far. These components of the plan are intended to provide Downers Grove with a sense of direction and priorities to be addressed in the Plan, before detailed core elements, policies, and recommended actions are drafted in the coming months.

This is an interim deliverable for discussion with staff and the Village Council acting in its role for the project as Steering Committee, and will serve as the foundation for subsequent plan deliverables. The following sections are organized under topical headings that reflect the chapter structure currently being considered for the Plan.

Vision Statement: The vision statement is an aspirational description of what Downers Grove will accomplish in the long term, following the direction of the Comprehensive Plan. The statement is meant to serve as a foundation for the Village's future decision-making. It introduces the content of chapters that will eventually be discussed in the Plan.

Four plans, cohesive vision: Guiding DG is a combined planning effort that includes the Comprehensive Plan, the Bike and Pedestrian Plan, the Environmental Sustainability Plan, and the Downtown and Fairview Focus Area Streetscape Plan. The Community Vision Statement for the Comprehensive Plan establishes a cohesive framework for all projects under the unified foundation of Guiding DG. It provides a shared direction to ensure that these individual plans work together to create a more sustainable, resilient, equitable, well-connected community. In the final plan document, our project team anticipates incorporating a concise version of each of the supporting plan documents' vision statements alongside the broader Comprehensive Plan vision statement, using the layout and design of the document to clearly articulate the relationship between the four studies.

Goals: The goals support the vision and further define what the Village is aiming to achieve in the future. They represent broad categories that will help the Village realize its vision.

Key Recommendations: Key recommendations are based on planning best practices, still-relevant direction from the Village's past plans and studies, and community engagement key themes and takeaways. These support the goals and provide an indication of policy direction to be included in the forthcoming Comprehensive Plan – our project team will use these key recommendations to build out more detailed chapter outlines for the subsequent core elements of the Plan.

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Preliminary Land Use Framework: The primary function of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide policy and direction for future land use and development over the next 20 years. To support this directive, the Preliminary Land Use Framework (composed of the Future Land Use Plan, and including land use influences and definitions) and Future Land Use Map section of this memo identifies high-level policy to guide the type and location for land uses and long-range investment. The Preliminary Land Use Framework builds upon existing uses and patterns of development within the community to establish a sustainable, compatible, and desirable mix of uses to meet the needs of current and future residents and community stakeholders.

NOTE: *This memorandum has been revised based on input from the full Guiding DG consultant team and Village staff. Each of the following sections in this memorandum is in draft form. As the planning process continues in the coming months, these will be adjusted and refined for incorporation into the draft plan document.*

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Community Vision Statement

The Vision Statement paints a picture of what the Village can achieve following the adoption of the Guiding DG Comprehensive Plan. The Vision Statement is the foundation for the Plan's goals, recommendations, and actions.

Community Vision Statement for the Comprehensive Plan

Since its incorporation in 1873, the Village of Downers Grove has grown to become home to 50,000 people and a model community within Illinois. As a result of the four Guiding DG plans, over the coming decades the Village will continue its long tradition of excellence, known for its diverse and well-maintained neighborhoods, premier regional and local commercial choices, strong Downtown, commitment to sustainability, accessible and attractive open spaces, safe connectivity for all road users, and an array of quality municipal services and amenities.

Downers Grove will provide a variety of housing options price points to accommodate residents at all stages of life. Whether it be seniors, young professionals, or new families, anyone will be able to call Downers Grove home. Given the historic nature of the Village, new housing will reflect the architectural style and character of the community. Mixed-use development will enable living, working, and playing in the Village's most compact areas, encouraging walkability and neighborhood vitality.

Downers Grove's business-friendly environment will continue to attract businesses and investment. The Village will continue to improve its attractive commercial corridors, growing them as regionally recognized destinations and home to notable activity centers. The Village will be known for supporting new entrepreneurs and existing small businesses alike, both in the thriving Downtown and throughout the community. The Village will continue to drive economic development by attracting major employers, fostering a thriving job market with living wages and above.

Downtown Downers Grove will continue to be the heart of the community – a place where neighbors and visitors gather, and businesses thrive. The Downtown and Fairview Focus Area Streetscape projects will catalyze functional, innovative, and sustainable streetscapes and public spaces that encourage community interaction and commerce, improving the pedestrian experience and draw of Downtown. Incorporating cultural elements will further create a unique environment, reflect community pride, and attract visitors. Fairview Avenue will be revitalized creating a unique multi-use center that will cater to residents, visitors from neighboring communities, and commuters.

Honoring its heritage, Downers Grove will preserve open spaces and promote sustainability, inspired by the grove of bur oaks that once surrounded the community. Downers Grove will create a more sustainable and livable community by investing in green infrastructure and preserving open spaces, as outlined in its Environmental Sustainability Plan. The community will continue to enjoy natural recreation areas and the Village's many walking tracks and trails, ensuring anyone can get active, enjoy the outdoors, and play in Downers Grove.

Guided by the Bike and Pedestrian Plan, the Village's investment in its road network will support a high-quality transportation system that is well-connected, easy to navigate, and safe for all users, improving traffic flow and reducing congestion. The Village will connect its housing stock, commercial corridors, and local amenities through an extensive and diverse mobility network, providing residents the option to comfortably walk, bike, drive, or take the train or bus.

Downers Grove's community facilities and services will remain a hallmark of the Village. The Village's community service providers will diligently work to make Downers Grove the most attractive and safest community in the region and bolstering its image as a desirable place to raise a family. A more sustainable Village will see the community incorporate native landscaping and additional and improved stormwater management infrastructure, strengthening Downers Grove's resiliency in the face of intensifying flood events.

By strengthening its positive reputation, Downers Grove will continue to welcome residents, visitors, and new opportunities and become more diverse in age, race, income, and business type. The Village will be a hub for inclusive cultural excellence, fostering a strong relationship with community institutions to promote an excellent quality of life and reflecting community pride.

Goals and Key Recommendations

For each goal, several key recommendations have been drafted. Key recommendations offer insight into how the Plan will address issues identified during the community engagement process and existing conditions analysis. These recommendations are still preliminary and may become more detailed as the Plan is developed. Key recommendations are based on community engagement, existing conditions analysis, and discussion with Village staff and Village Council throughout the first phases of the project. Additionally, key recommendations that are still relevant were carried forward from the 2017 Update of the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

As the Plan is developed, the structure can be modified as needed to better address and organize planning issues and recommendations. The final Comprehensive Plan will be populated with maps, graphics, and photos to better communicate recommendations and concepts.

Land Use, Growth, and Development

Under the guidance of the Future Land Use Map, approach land use decisions in a way that preserves the identity of Downers Grove, fosters strategic and context-sensitive growth, and promotes attractive development.

Key Recommendations:

- Encourage land uses and development patterns that promote safe and efficient connections between neighborhoods and destinations within and outside the Village, and support multiple transportation options including vehicles, walking, bicycling, and public transit (trains, buses, on-demand, and similar).
- Facilitate redevelopment opportunities to meet the housing and economic development needs of Downers Grove and protect the environment through the inclusion of green infrastructure and native plantings.
- Create mixed-use districts that include housing, offices, commercial and retail space, and other community amenities.
- Create strategic plans to revitalize commercial corridors and districts, such as along Ogden Avenue, and incorporate traffic calming measures and public gathering spaces to make these areas more pedestrian scale.
- Encourage infill development to efficiently use vacant or underutilized land for both residential and commercial uses within established neighborhoods.
- Preserve historic buildings and neighborhoods, promoting their adaptive reuse for residential, cultural, or commercial purposes.
- Ensure that developments incorporate the provisions of the Guiding DG Sustainability Plan.

Housing and Neighborhoods

Provide high-quality housing and neighborhoods for residents in all stages of life and all incomes, maintaining and expanding the Village's reputation as an attractive place to live.

Key Recommendations:

- Promote residential development and redevelopment of a variety of housing and dwelling unit types and densities in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan.
- Consider streamlining the review and permitting processes for developments that meet specific criteria, such as a minimum number of units reserved for residents 55 or older, incorporating universal design principles, or meeting income thresholds.
- Investigate strategies to compliment neighborhood character with residential new construction, additions, and renovations.
- Maintain the integrity of sound existing housing through continued regular, active code enforcement and preventative maintenance programs, supporting the preservation of historical features and the community's distinctive character.

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- 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.
- Consider establishing or expanding policies and programs that directly address housing attainability for all incomes and ages, including density bonuses for developments that incorporate attainable housing units or financial incentives for attainable housing developments.
- Promote green building practices, including the use of sustainable materials, energy-efficient appliances, and renewable energy sources in residential construction. Consider regulatory requirements or incentives like reduced permit/review fees for housing developments that incorporate green and sustainable materials or design.
- Explore opportunities to increase tree preservation efforts for existing trees and maintain the urban tree canopy.
- Encourage developments to adhere to the International Dark Sky Initiative, utilize bird-friendly glass, and continue to incorporate sustainable stormwater management practices.

Economic Development

Support local businesses, commercial centers, major employers, and innovative industries to strengthen the Village's diverse tax base. Continue to work with the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation and Visitors Bureau to implement the following key recommendations.

Key Recommendations:

- Continue to partner with the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation and Visitors Bureau to market Downers Grove available development sites, programs and incentives, events, and tourism.
- Consider marketing available residential, mixed-use, or redevelopment sites in addition to commercial, industrial, and area-specific sites.
- Consider creating a small business/entrepreneur program to provide financial support (either directly or through reduced fees), direct business owners to state or federal resources, and establish connections to the larger business community (mentor program, networking sessions, partnership opportunities).
- Establish a program to assist businesses and property owners with façade improvements, landscaping, parking improvements, and modernization of aging structures and facilities, allowing small businesses to remain successful while maintaining standards that contribute to the identity of Downers Grove.
- 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.
- Continue to build upon the Village's reputation for community-wide events and tourism by expanding cultural, arts, recreation, and regional draw activities.
- Promote the attraction and retention of businesses that are aligned with the Guiding DG Environmental Sustainability Plan.

Transportation and Mobility

Provide a seamless, efficient transportation system that offers good connectivity, supports safety and mobility for people using all modes (walking, biking, transit, and driving), reduces traffic congestion, and enhances the character of the Village.

Key Recommendations:

- Implement the recommendations of the Guiding DG Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and continue to participate in the Safe Routes to School program.
- Foster a Pedestrian First culture through the provision of a network of accessible, connected, safe, and equitable active transportation (bicycle, pedestrian, and transit) facilities as detailed within the Guiding DG Bike and Pedestrian Plan.
- Consider traffic calming and other measures to slow traffic in conjunction with surface reconstruction projects.

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- Continue to require new development/redevelopment to include connections and amenities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and commuters.
- Expand the Village's network of trails and sidewalks to provide better connections between the Village's residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, Downtown, and commercial destinations. This should be undertaken in conjunction with developments, road projects, and within utility easements where feasible.
- Continue to work with public transit providers to ensure that levels of public transit service support the ridership needs of the Village, including the continued operation of the schedules of all three of the Metra train stations within the Village.
- Ensure that all development proposals in the Downtown and Fairview Focus Areas incorporate the provisions of the Streetscape Plan (note that this could be moved to either the Land Use or Community Facilities section).

Community Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure

Support the delivery of community services, maintain the Village's facilities, provide community gathering spaces, and invest in its critical infrastructure to continue to ensure a resilient, sustainable, and high quality of life for the whole community.

Key Recommendations:

- Ensure that developments incorporate the provisions of the Guiding DG Environmental Sustainability Plan.
- Develop and maintain functional yet innovative streetscapes and public spaces that provide public access and encourage community interaction.
- Continue to identify areas for community gathering spaces like plazas and seating areas and explore the feasibility of creating new spaces for various sized community events.
- Continue to expand year-round cultural and community events and activities throughout the Village, including pop-ups and seasonal installations, temporary art installations or shops in vacant storefronts, and heritage celebrations. Partner with local groups, libraries, schools, and businesses to sponsor events and installations.
- Explore opportunities to incorporate public art within the Village.
- Work with service providers, developers, and community partners to seek appropriate locations for specialized facilities and services for senior citizens, youth, and disadvantaged populations.
- Continue to coordinate with community partners on facility needs and siting to ensure provision of community services and infrastructure.

Sustainability, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Promote sustainability in all developments to ensure Village resiliency and foster partnerships to maintain a complete system of parks and open spaces within walking and biking distance of existing neighborhoods to meet the recreational and environmental needs of Downers Grove residents and visitors.

Key Recommendations:

- Ensure that all developments incorporate the provisions of the Guiding DG Environmental Sustainability Plan.
- Create, expand, and incentivize programs for private landowners to participate in sustainability efforts. Programs and incentives may relate to streamlined permitting and reduced fees for installation of solar panels, utilizing rain barrels and green infrastructure, incorporating sustainable building materials, planting canopy trees, and similar measures.
- Work with the Park District to implement the Comprehensive Master Plan, including identifying future needs for parks, open space, trail segments, trail connections, and other recreation amenities for the community, particularly in underserved areas and as developments are presented for Village review.
- Expand public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and encourage or require new developments/redevelopments to incorporate EV infrastructure.
- Continue to participate in the Tree City USA program and expand the Village's urban canopy where feasible.
- Steward existing natural areas and new green spaces to increase biodiversity.

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- Implement climate resilience strategies to prioritize environmental protection, reduce flooding, upgrade aging infrastructure, reduce impermeable surfaces, and positively change the urban heat island effect.
- Consider expanding recycling options for Village residents and businesses.
- Continue to participate and maintain a high rating in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Rating System.

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Land Use Influences and Constraints

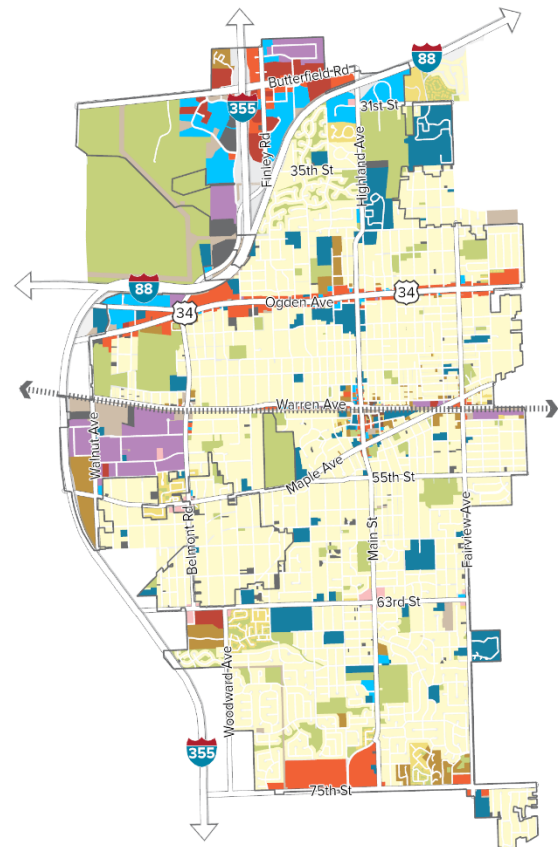
Land use and development are influenced and constrained by factors including: 1) existing land use, 2) limited available land for new development, and 3) its significant regional transit stations. This section of the Land Use Framework examines these factors to provide context for future growth and development.

Existing Land Use

In the existing conditions phase of the process, all parcels within Downers Grove and its planning area were categorized into 13 existing land uses, identifying development patterns and analyzing the existing land use composition.

The map illustrates these established patterns, including residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, and industrial areas, which can limit the flexibility to introduce new types of development or higher densities, especially in single-family neighborhoods and industrial parks surrounding the three Metra stations.

The Village is built out, and as such, the current distribution of land is the primary influence on a framework that guides future development. By understanding these patterns, the Village can reveal opportunities for enhancing and optimizing land use, such as redeveloping underutilized properties or transitioning areas to meet new community needs.



Single-Family Detached	Office
Single-Family Attached	Industrial
Multifamily	Public/Semi-Public
Neighborhood Commercial	Parks and Open Space
Corridor Commercial	Utilities and Transportation
Regional Commercial	Vacant and Undeveloped
Mixed-use	

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Limited Available Land for New Development

Downers Grove is a landlocked community with no greenfield land available, placing greater emphasis on ensuring that redevelopment is carefully planned and aligns with the Village's long-term vision.

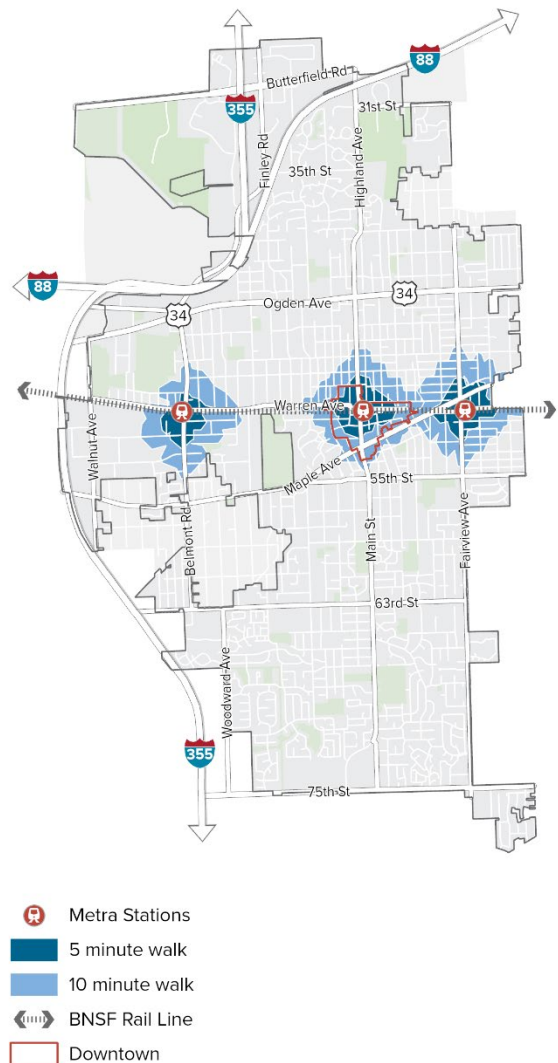


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Regional Rail – Metra BNSF Railway Stations

Downers Grove is serviced by three Metra rail stations (Fairview Avenue, Downers Grove Main Street, and Belmont), with the Main Street Station located in the Downtown area. The BNSF Railway service runs from Chicago Union Station to Downtown Aurora, connecting Downers Grove to Naperville, Lisle, Westmont, and other communities along Ogden Avenue. This accessibility not only supports the daily commute of residents but also positions Downtown as an attractive destination within the region, underscoring the need for targeted growth to attract more people to Downtown businesses and enhance economic vitality. The map depicts 5- and 10-minute walksheds around each Metra station based on the Village's existing streets. These areas are reachable on foot for the average person and are logical for the promotion of compact, walkable, pedestrian-oriented, and transit-oriented development. However, the Village remains mindful of preserving the character of established residential neighborhoods, such as the single-family homes near Maple Avenue and Downtown, which are highly valued by the community. Any new development or infill in these areas must carefully balance growth with respect for the existing neighborhood character.

While Downtown continues to thrive as a regional hub, there is an opportunity to enhance the areas around the Fairview and Belmont area, transforming them into attractive hubs for future development. Strategic redevelopment near these stations can leverage transit infrastructure, reduce reliance on cars, and contribute to a more sustainable urban environment while addressing community concerns about overexpansion around the Main Street station.



Preliminary Future Land Use Framework

The Future Land Use Plan is intended to guide the future growth and development of the Village and its Planning Area. The Future Land Use Plan aims to improve the character and quality of the Village's residential neighborhoods, enhance the Village's commercial and employment areas, and support a balanced approach to development. The following section outlines the land use classifications that will guide the growth and development of the community over the next 20 years.

NOTE: The following land uses correspond to the Future Land Use Map.

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. Downers Grove has developed as a residential community, approximately 80% of which is single-family and owner-occupied. It is anticipated that over the coming decades, single-family residential will continue to be a predominant land use within the Village. These areas should allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs, or "granny flats," which are typically less than 800 square feet and allow for context-sensitive infill on smaller lots, such as by placing an accessory structure behind the primary residence or through a home expansion.

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 should be 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 condominiums 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 Comprehensive 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.

Mixed Residential Overlay

The Village's previous Comprehensive Plan (2017) encouraged Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) principles when considering new development and improvements in Downtown. The Mixed Residential Overlay expands this approach around the Village's other two Metra stations (Fairview Avenue and Belmont).

Based on the 5- and 10-minute network walkshed around the stations, the overlay promotes pedestrian-friendly development and a focus on access to transit as redevelopment and infill occur. Over time, mixed residential areas should allow for more flexibility to build denser residential development within the context of Downers Grove's established neighborhood patterns. Areas designated for mixed residential should easily accommodate a variety of denser dwelling types, including senior, workforce, and attainable/affordable housing.

Mixed-Use

Mixed-use areas are composed of zones that combine distinct functions, such as offices, shops, and homes, within the same geographic area. Mixed-use buildings often have retail stores, restaurants, and entertainment uses on the ground floor to create an active and engaging pedestrian environment, with residential or other service-based activities above. Mixed-use developments should be targeted in the Downtown, Esplanade, and 75th Street. Transit-oriented development should be targeted near all train stations.

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Downtown

Downtown Downers Grove is characterized by a mix of commercial service, commercial retail, office, 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 to maintain a pedestrian-orientation while also allowing for biking and automobile access.

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. Small nodes of neighborhood commercial development should be throughout the Village at the intersection of primary roadways (arterials and collectors) to serve nearby residential areas.

Corridor Commercial

Corridor commercial land uses are typically organized in a linear fashion and include a blend of neighborhood-oriented commercial retail, offices, auto dealerships, smaller regional commercial retail, 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.

Regional Commercial

Regional Commercial 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, hotels, and entertainment uses.

Office

Office uses include large-scale office buildings and complexes, office parks, and small individual offices. Office uses can be compatible with adjacent residential uses given appropriate buffering and screening. Multifamily development may also occur in and around these areas to promote workforce housing, live-work housing and/or hotel and lodging buildings. Additional small-scale commercial uses are also allowed to support the predominant office uses.

Light Industrial and Business Park

Light industrial and business park uses include those 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 in areas where they can capitalize on 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.

Previous Draft Published 09/13/2024

Parks and 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.

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 determines their location.

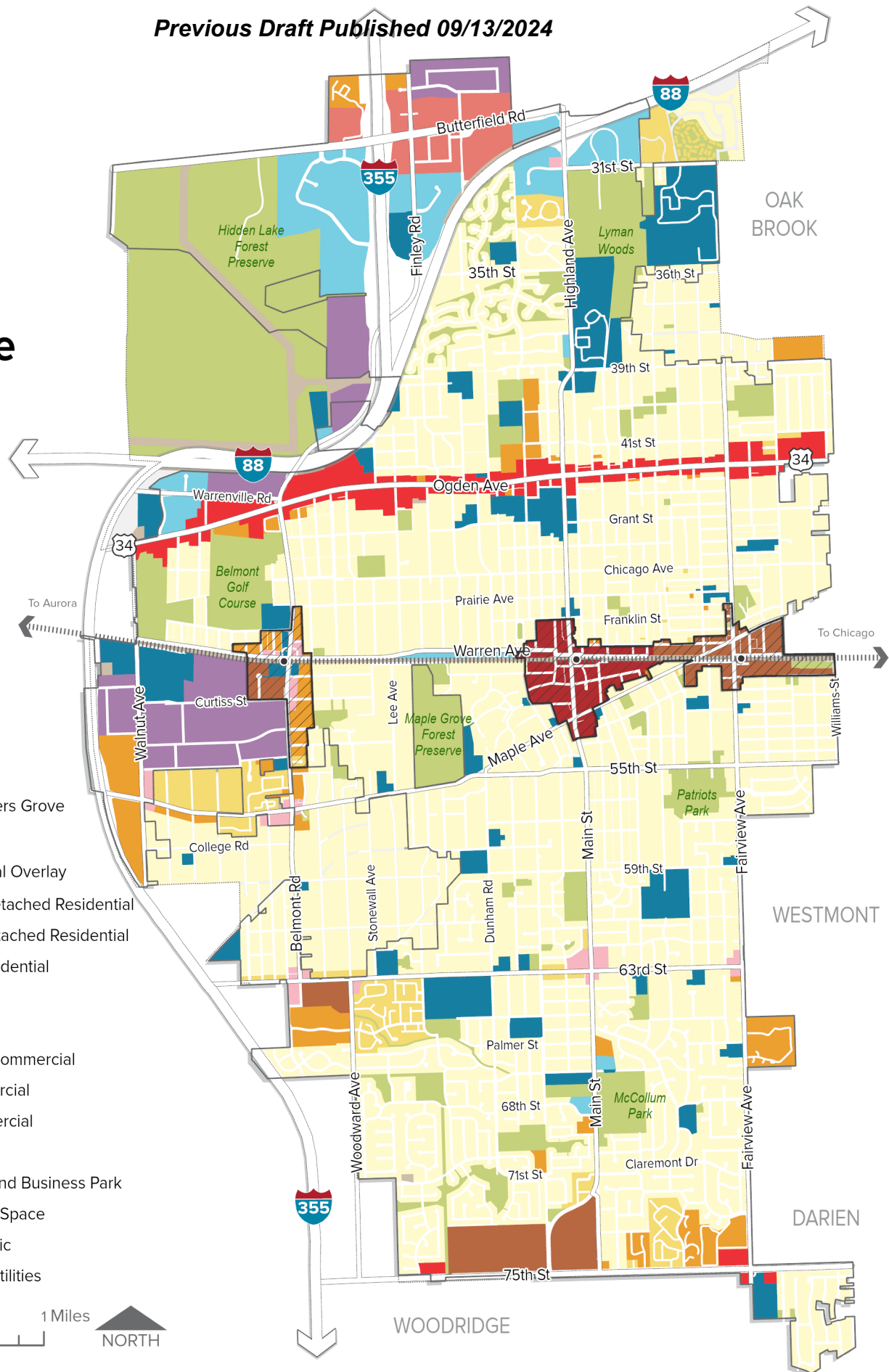
Transportation/Utilities

Utilities and transportation uses support local infrastructure and provide rights-of-way or easements for the transmission of gas, electric, water, and sewer.

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Future Land Use

- Village of Downers Grove
- Metra Stations
- Mixed Residential Overlay
- Single-Family Detached Residential
- Single-Family Attached Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Mixed-Use
- Downtown
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Corridor Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Office
- Light Industrial and Business Park
- Parks and Open Space
- Institutional/Public
- Transportation/Utilities



Previous Draft Published 09/27/2024

Community Vision Statement for the Comprehensive Plan

Since its incorporation in 1873, Downers Grove has grown to become a diverse community of 50,000 people and a model community within Illinois. Over the coming decades, Downers Grove will be renowned for its strong sense of community, cultural diversity and the human connection among its residents. The community will continue its long tradition of excellence, known for its safe, diverse and well maintained neighborhoods, premier regional and local commercial choices, a lively, vibrant Downtown, commitment to sustainability, accessible and attractive open spaces, safe connectivity for all road users, and an array of quality local government services and amenities.

Downers Grove will have a variety of housing options to accommodate residents at all stages of life, income levels and abilities. Downers Grove will be a vibrant and inclusive community where high quality, diverse housing options support residents throughout their lives. The community will foster a sense of place that preserves its rich housing history while embracing a variety of residential architectural styles, housing types and mixed-use development. Downers Grove's neighborhoods will be walkable, welcoming, and reflective of the unique character and diversity that define the community.

Downers Grove's business-friendly environment will continue to attract businesses and investment. The attractive commercial and employment corridors and centers will continue to improve and thrive. These key areas of the community will grow as regionally recognized destinations and notable activity centers, mixed use areas, and employment hubs. Downers Grove will support new entrepreneurs and existing small businesses alike, both in the Downtown and throughout the community. The community will continue to attract major employers that create a diversified economy with a variety of opportunities for all levels of employment.

Downtown Downers Grove will continue to be the heart of the community – a place where neighbors and visitors gather, and businesses thrive. The success of Downtown will be expanded via a pedestrian and bike friendly connection to Fairview. The Downtown and Fairview will have innovative and sustainable streetscapes, art displays and public spaces resulting in an inviting, visually appealing, and culturally rich destination that attracts residents, visitors, and commuters alike.

The community will invest in and transform the Belmont Station area. Strategically positioned near I-355, the area will see sustainable and context-sensitive development. It will grow into the Village's third commuter rail-anchored node – a place for innovation, commerce, and residential amenities, while preserving its industrial heritage.

Downers Grove will honor its natural resources by being a more sustainable and livable community that consists of permanently preserved open spaces, native landscaping and a "green" stormwater management system. Downers Grove will be resilient in the face of intensifying climatological events. Sustainability efforts will be embraced throughout the

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community. The community will continue to enjoy natural recreation areas, walking paths, and trails.

Downers Grove will have a high-quality transportation system that is easy to navigate, and safe for all users. The community will have connected neighborhoods, commercial corridors, and local amenities through an extensive and diverse mobility network, providing the opportunity to comfortably walk, bike, drive, or take the train or bus.

Downers Grove will continue to welcome residents, visitors, and new opportunities and will consist of a population diverse in age, race, income, and business type. Downers Grove will be a hub for inclusiveness, acceptance, mutual respect and cultural excellence, fostering a strong relationship with community institutions to promote an excellent quality of life and community pride.

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Draft Vision

Since its incorporation in 1873, Downers Grove has grown to become a diverse community of 50,000 people and a model community within Illinois. Over the coming decades, Downers Grove will be renowned for its strong sense of community, cultural diversity and the human connection among its residents. The community will continue its long tradition of excellence, known for its safe, distinctive and well maintained neighborhoods, premier regional and local commercial choices, a lively, vibrant Downtown, commitment to sustainability, accessible and attractive open spaces, safe connectivity for all road users, and an array of quality local government services and amenities.

Downers Grove will be a vibrant and inclusive community where high quality, diverse housing options support residents throughout their lives. The community will foster a sense of place that preserves its rich housing history while embracing a variety of residential architectural styles, housing types and multipurpose development. Downers Grove's neighborhoods will be walkable, welcoming, and reflective of the unique character that define the community.

Downers Grove's business-friendly environment will continue to attract businesses and investment. The attractive commercial areas will continue to improve, thrive, and grow as regionally recognized destinations and notable activity centers. Downers Grove will support new entrepreneurs and existing small businesses alike, both in the Downtown and throughout the community. The community will continue to draw major employers that create a variety of employment opportunities.

Downtown Downers Grove will continue to be the heart of the community – a place where neighbors and visitors gather, and businesses thrive. The success of Downtown will be expanded via a pedestrian and bike friendly connection to Fairview. The Downtown and Fairview will have innovative and sustainable streetscapes, art displays and public spaces resulting in an inviting, visually appealing, and culturally rich destination that attracts residents, visitors, and commuters alike.

The Belmont area will be transformed into the Village's third commuter rail-anchored node – a place for innovation, commerce, and residential amenities. Strategically positioned near I-355, the area will see sustainable and context-sensitive development.

Downers Grove will respect its natural resources by being a more sustainable and livable community that consists of permanently preserved open spaces, native landscaping and a green stormwater management system. Downers Grove will be resilient in the face of intensifying climatological events. Sustainability efforts will be embraced throughout the community. The community will continue to have an abundance of natural recreation areas, walking paths, trails and trees.

Downers Grove will have a high-quality, pedestrian first transportation system that is easily accessible, safe for all users, and aesthetically pleasing. Neighborhoods, commercial corridors,

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and local amenities will be connected through an extensive mobility network, providing the opportunity to comfortably walk, bike, drive, or take the train or bus.

Downers Grove will continue to welcome residents, visitors, and new opportunities and will consist of a population diverse in age, race, and income. Downers Grove will be a hub for inclusiveness, acceptance, mutual respect and cultural excellence, fostering a strong relationship with community institutions to promote an excellent quality of life and community pride.