

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE

Report for the Village Council Meeting

SUBJECT:	9/2/2025	SUBMITTED BY:
Long Range Planning - Priority Action Items		Dave Fieldman Village Manager

SYNOPSIS

Discussion of the 2025-27 Long Range Plan Priority Action Items.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The Long Range Plan establishes the Village’s Priority Action Items which serve as the work plan for September 2025 through April 2027.

FISCAL IMPACT

The FY26 and FY27 budgets will be provide the financial resources required to complete the Priority Action Items.

RECOMMENDATION

For the 2025-27 Priority Action Items, staff recommends a list of projects that would result in a workload that is less than that in the 2023-25 work plan while continuing to undertake an aggressive schedule.

BACKGROUND

The Long Range Plan identifies and addresses issues affecting the long-term future of the Village. The Plan establishes the Village’s goals and priority actions that guide annual budgets, daily operations, and delivery of services. The long range planning process is one of many strong management practices that led S&P to grant the Village its highest bond rating of AAA. The Long Range Plan consists of:

- Strategic Goals for 2025 to 2027 and beyond
- Key trends and issues affecting the Village’s long-term future
- Strategies and solutions to address key trends and issues
- Priority Action Items to be completed by April 2027.

To prepare the Long Range Plan, the Village Council plans to meet multiple times in a workshop format from June through September. The meetings provide an opportunity for dialogue and collaboration among the Village Council, community members, and staff.

More information about the Long Range Plan can be found at <https://www.downers.us/long-range-plan>.

ATTACHMENTS

Long Range Plan Report #2

2025-2027 Long Range Plan

Report 2

Priority Action Items

September 2, 2025

PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS

A key component of the Long Range Plan are the Priority Action Items. These items reflect Council priorities and serve as the Village’s work plan from September 2025 through May 2027. The work plan should consist of action items that can be completed by May 2027.

Criteria for Priority Action Items

Priority Action Items reflect Council priorities for new policies or revisions to existing programs and policies. The criteria for a Council Priority Action Item include:

- **Support of Strategic Plan Goals and Key Issues** - the action should achieve a measurable result that supports one or more of the Strategic Plan Goals and/or Key Issues addressed during Long-Range Planning.
- **Village Council Policy Direction Required** - the action requires the Village Council to provide policy level direction to be completed.
- **Six Months or More to Complete** - the action requires significant staff and/or Village Council time; six months or more from the time staff begins work on the action to the time the action is completed.
- **Multi-Departmental Effort** - the action requires effort from more than one Village department.

POTENTIAL PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS 2025-27

The table below includes 30 Potential Priority Action Items consisting of:

- 8 action items in progress, 2 of which are required to be completed
- 3 action items that were included in the 2023-25 work plan but were not undertaken
- 19 other action items

The majority of the potential action items are recommended in the Guiding DG suite of plans.

Priority Action Items are established by the Village Council prior to the preparation of the annual municipal budget. This schedule allows the budget to include the resources required to complete the Action Items. As an example, the 2023-25 Priority Action Items included the preparation of an updated Comprehensive Plan, Environmental Sustainability Plan, Active Transportation Plan and Streetscapes Plan. The FY24 and FY25 budgets included approximately \$900,000 to pay for consultants for these projects. Further, the FY24 budget included the then new staff position Environmental Sustainability Manager.

While resources required to undertake the identified Priority Action Items will be included in the FY26 and FY27 budgets, there are some practical limits to the number of action items that can reasonably be expected to be completed in an 18 month period. For example, consultants cannot complete projects

independently. Staff leadership and participation in the projects that consultants work on are required. Further, there are limitations on the number of projects that the Council can undertake while providing the public participation expected by community members.

In 2023-25, the Village undertook and completed an unprecedented amount of Priority Action Items in terms of overall workload. However, three Priority Action Items included in the work plan were not started.

For the 2025-27 Priority Action Items, staff recommends a list of projects that would result in a workload that is less than that in the 2023-25 work plan while continuing to undertake an aggressive schedule. Given the complexity and unpredictability of some of the potential Action Items, it is difficult to establish a specific maximum number of projects to be included. Judgement may be required in preparing a work plan that has a high likelihood of being completed by May, 2027.

To assist in developing the work plan, staff has provided information about the likely duration, overall effort and the participating departments for each potential Priority Action Item. It may be difficult to undertake multiple high effort projects with the same participating departments while achieving the Council's performance expectations.

To assist in the selection of Priority Action Items, staff has prepared a proposed work plan which is aligned with the concepts noted above. It appears at the end of this report following the table of Potential Priority Action Items below.

Once the list of Priority Action Items is established and work commences, staff plans on presenting monthly status reports to the Village Council. This will allow the Council to make any desired adjustments to the work plan on a regular basis. Further, the Priority Action Items will be reviewed and discussed more formally as part of the 2025-27 Long Range Plan Update that will take place in summer 2026.

Table 1
Potential 2025-27 LRP PAI's

Action Item	Notes Status	Duration	Effort	Depts.
<p>Update the Zoning Ordinance This project consists of amending the Zoning Ordinance and potentially the Zoning Map to implement the recommendations of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan, including:</p> <p>Consider allowing ADUs in single-family detached districts as context-sensitive infill.</p> <p>Consider diversifying housing options by incrementally introducing duplexes, small-scale multi-family to existing single family districts.</p> <p>Consider offering density bonuses for attainable-housing projects.</p> <p>Consider offering grants or density bonuses that encourage restoration and adaptive reuse of heritage structures.</p> <p>Update ordinances to encourage a mix of retail, service, office, and multi-family uses in neighborhood commercial areas.</p> <p>Ensure shops, restaurants, entertainment, and high-density housing are allowed in mixed-use projects.</p> <p>Ensure Zoning Ordinance prioritizes mixed-use development in Downtown, Fairview, 75th Street, Belmont Train Station, West Ogden Avenue and, where appropriate, the Esplanade and the Butterfield Road Corridor</p> <p>Consider amending the outdoor-lighting code to a dark-sky outdoor lighting code.</p> <p>Consider updating ordinance to encourage the use of bird-friendly glass in multi-family buildings</p> <p>Examine sustainability infrastructure requirements (e.g. EV charging, native plantings)</p> <p>Re-examine shared parking agreement regulations.</p> <p>Examine parking requirements to encourage outlot redevelopment and green space</p>	<p>Allows multiple Comp Plan recommendations to be considered in one project.</p> <p>Allows multiple ESP recommendations to be considered</p> <p>Undertaking the Zoning Ord. update is an efficient means of furthering the Comp Plan recommendations</p>	12+ Mos	High	CD, LEG, VMO

<p>Evaluate Village policies to potential updates that would promote biodiversity on private property (ESP)</p> <p>Evaluate Village policies and permitting to promote renewable energy development (ESP)</p>				
<p>Update the Subdivision Code This project consists of amending the Subdivision Code to implement the recommendations of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan.</p>	Should be completed once the Zoning Ordinance is updated	3 Mos	Med	CD, PW, VMO, LEG
<p>Develop a Public Art Program This project consists of creating a public art program to address program management and governance, funding, project selection, community engagement, and program evaluation.</p>	Spaces for art in the downtown will be constructed in 2026	6 Mos	High	CD, LEG, PW, VMO
<p>Conduct an Attainable Housing Study This project consists of analyzing the Downers Grove housing market to better understand housing costs, cost burden and housing availability.</p>	<p>The Comprehensive Plan and Existing Conditions Memo contain significant information and analysis as well as recommendations that would be the basis for this study.</p> <p>The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus could be engaged to complete this study as part of their Homes for a Changing Region program</p>	6 Mos	Med	CD, VMO, LEG
<p>Work With DGEDC on Ogden Ave Gap Analysis This project consists of analyzing the Ogden Avenue corridor to assist in attracting new businesses that may be underrepresented</p>		6-9 Mos	Low	CD, VMO
<p>Work With DGEDC on 75th St. Gap Analysis This project consists of analyzing the 75th Street corridor to assist in attracting new businesses that may be underrepresented</p>		6-9 Mos	Low	CD, VMO

<p>Consider a Private Tree Protection Ordinance</p> <p>This project consists of adopting an Ordinance with regulations intended to reduce or minimize the number of privately owned trees removed in conjunction with construction and development activities. The regulations would focus on creating awareness of the existing privately owned trees that may be affected by the proposed construction and development activities. The Ordinance may be similar to the voluntary historic preservation ordinance. The Ordinance may require a mandatory submittal and review process while implementation of the regulations may not be mandatory.</p>		12-15 Mos	High	CD, PW, VMO, LEG
<p>Conduct a Downtown Parking Study</p> <p>This project consists of reviewing the current parking conditions in the downtown, identifying the impact that new land uses have had on parking demand, and providing guidance and recommendations regarding future parking planning policy and operations.</p>	A consultant is recommended for this project.	6 - 9 Mos	Med	PD, CD, PW, VMO
<p>Develop a Facade Grant Program for Obsolete Commercial Nodes</p> <p>This project consists of developing a reimbursement / matching grant program to encourage the rehabilitation and renovation of facades in older, obsolete commercial centers.</p>		12 Mos	Med	CD, FIN, LEG, VMO
<p>Expand Programs to Retrofit Older Homes with Energy Efficient Upgrades</p> <p>This project consists of developing a reimbursement / matching grant program to encourage the installation of energy efficient upgrades to building systems in older homes.</p>		12 Mos	Med	CD, VMO, LEG, FIN
<p>Establish Micromobility Device Regulations</p> <p>This project consists of developing rules and regulations for the operation of bikes, e-bikes, e-scooters and other mobility devices.</p>	In Progress	6 Mos	High	PD, LEG, VMO, PW, CD
<p>Create the Active Transportation Friendly District</p> <p>This project consists of identifying physical improvements and rules and regulations in the Downtown, Fairview and surrounding areas as shown in the ATP that allow for safe and efficient travel by pedestrians, bikes, micromobility devices and vehicles.</p>		6 Mos	High	PD, LEG, VMO, PW, CD

<p>Create a TIF District for the Fairview Focus Area and Connection Area</p> <p>This project consists of creating a Tax Increment Financing District which would generate revenue to be used to make public improvements and facilitate redevelopment projects.</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>A consultant has completed some of the analysis required to create the District, under contract with the DGEDC</p>	<p>9 to 12 Mos</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>CD, PW, LEG, VMO, FIN</p>
<p>Facilitate the Redevelopment of Parking Lot I</p> <p>This project consists of redeveloping the Village-owned parking lot that serves the Fairview Train Station with a residential or mixed use development as directed by the Council. Some commuter parking would be required to be provided, as approved by Metra.</p>	<p>Metra will have to participate in this project</p>	<p>12-15 Mos</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>CD, LEG, VMO, FIN</p>
<p>Design and Construct the 5 Flexible Amenity Areas</p> <p>This project consists of designing and constructing five flexible amenity areas as recommended in the Streetscapes Plan and directed by the Village Council.</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>Construction is planned for Spring 2026</p>	<p>6 to 12 Mos</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>PW, CD, LEG, VMO</p>
<p>Design and Construct the Kunze Plaza Improvements</p> <p>This project consists of the design and construction of the Linda Kunze Plaza in the Downtown as identified in the Guiding DG Streetscapes Plan.</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>A consultant is preparing the plans</p>	<p>Design in 2025</p> <p>Construct in one season</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>PW, CD, LEG, VMO</p>
<p>Design and Construct the Northside Main Street Train Station Plaza</p> <p>This project consists of the design and construction of the plaza on the north side of the Main Street train station in the Downtown as identified in the Guiding DG Streetscapes Plan.</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>A consultant is preparing the plans</p>	<p>Design in 2025</p> <p>Construct in one season</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>PW, CD, LEG, VMO</p>
<p>Facilities Condition Assessment (Phases 1 & 2)</p> <p>This project consists of the preparation of a comprehensive facility condition assessment and maintenance plan (FCA). The FCA will determine funding requirements and priorities necessary for effective operating and capital maintenance of Village facilities, including the implementation of the related Environmental Sustainability Plan actions.</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>A consultant is preparing the assessment</p>	<p>6-12 Mos</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>VMO, PW, FIN</p>

<p>Review Public Tree Planting Policies and Practices This project would consist of review and amending policies and practices related to planting public trees. It is intended to identify additional areas where public trees could be planted and to increase the total number of public trees within the Village.</p>	<p>Staff recently made changes in tree planting practices that will result in increasing the number of parkway trees and diversifying the urban forest. Currently about 430 trees per year are planted. Beginning in 2026, staff plans to plant up to 800 trees per year. Staff efforts are now focused on increasing the diversity of species for the best long term outlook of the urban forest. Resident specific requests and desires will still be considered, but must meet the biodiversity guidelines</p>	<p>6 Mos</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>PW, VMO, LEG</p>
<p>Update the Purchasing Policy This project consists of updating the Purchasing Policy to allow for preferential selection from vendors that propose less environmentally impactful services and enhanced reporting that allows for evaluation of upstream and downstream environmental impacts.</p>		<p>6 Mos</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>FIN, LEG, VMO</p>
<p>Evaluate the Amount and Types of Waste Generated throughout Village Operations This project consists of evaluating the amount and types of waste generated throughout Village operations and provide recommendations to reduce the overall amount of waste, identify ways to improve recycling rates and identify areas where the environmental impact of disposal can be reduced.</p>		<p>6-12 Mos</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>All Depts</p>
<p>Solid Waste Contract This project consists of selecting a vendor to provide solid waste collection and disposal services including refuse, recycling and yard waste for single family houses and qualify single family attached houses.</p>	<p>In Progress Contract Expires in 3/31/26</p>	<p>12 Mos</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>VMO, LEG, FIN</p>

Evaluate Village Policies Regarding Solid Waste and Recycling This project consists of evaluating existing waste ordinances and licenses to identify recommendations that would improve recycling and composting services for single-family, multi-family, and commercial properties.	Aligns with Solid Waste RFP	3 Mos	Med	VMO, LEG
Conduct Ecology Assessment on Village-owned Properties and Develop Plan for Additional Natural Areas This project consists of evaluating biodiversity and land management practices on Village owned properties that includes an enhanced inventory of parkway trees that can be used to calculate carbon sink values, an evaluation of biodiversity around Village facilities, identification and prioritization of areas of Village-owned property that would benefit from naturalization and recommendations to improve the biodiversity of parkway trees and land that is directly managed by the Village.		12 Mos	Med	VMO, PW, CD, LEG
Evaluate Village Policies to Potential Updates that would Promote Biodiversity on Private Property This project consists of evaluating existing policies that relate to landscape and maintenance of plants on private property	Should be undertaken in conjunction with Zoning Ordinance Update	12+ Mos	High	CD, LEG, VMO
Evaluate Village Policies and Permitting to Promote Renewable Energy Development This project consists of reviewing zoning regulations and permitting processes relative to the SolSmart framework and other sustainable building practices and systems (e.g. geothermal, small-scale wind, passive solar, etc.).	Should be undertaken in conjunction with Zoning Ordinance Update	12+ Mos	Med	CD, LEG, VMO
Lead Service Line Replacement Plan The Lead Service Replacement and Notification Act, effective January 1, 2022, requires the Village to:	In Progress Required	4 Years	Med	PW, VMO, FIN, COM

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and maintain a complete inventory of lead service lines by April 2024Implement a plan to replace all lead service lines from 2027 to 2044Use good faith efforts to contract with vendors owned by minority persons, women and persons with a disability to complete lead service line replacements					
Close the Ogden TIF District This project consists of investing the remaining funds in the Ogden TIF District (approximately \$2 million) in redevelopment projects that generate sales tax and food & beverage tax revenue and then retiring the District.	In Progress	12 to 24 Mos	Low	VMO, CD, LEG, FIN	
Amend the Sign Ordinance (all regulations) This project consists of a complete review of the regulations in the sign ordinance including amending provisions and regulations in the sign ordinance to allow for digital copy signs, provide flexibility in creating murals and public art, allowing for alterations of existing heritage signs and other changes that have been or may be requested by businesses. Outside legal counsel may be engaged to assist with this project. Amend the Sign Ordinance to Allow Digital Signs for Selected Areas or Uses This project would consist of amending portions of the sign ordinance to allow for digital signs in selected areas or for selected land uses.	Could be Completed as Part of the Zoning Ordinance Update	12 Mos	High	CD, LEG, VMO	
Other Required Large Projects					
Negotiate Police Sergeants CBA		Required	6-12 Mos	Med	LEG, VMO, FIN
Negotiate Fire Department CBA		Required	6-12 Mos	Med	LEG, VMO, FIN
Negotiate Police Patrol CBA		Required	6-12 Mos	Med	LEG, VMO, FIN

Table 2
Staff Proposed Priority Action Items

1	Execute a Solid Waste Contract
2	Evaluate Solid Waste & Recycling Policies
3	Facilities Condition Assessment
4	Establish Micromobility Regulations
5	Lead Service Line Replacement Plan
6	Design and Construct the Downtown Flexible Amenity Areas & Train Station Plazas
7	Design and Construct the Linda Kunze Plaza
8	Design and Construct the Northside Main Street Train Station Plaza
9	Update the Zoning Ordinance
10	Update the Subdivision Code
11	Develop a Public Art Program
12	Review Public Tree Planting Policies and Practices
13	Create a TIF District for the Fairview Focus and Connection Areas
14	Facilitate the Redevelopment of Parking Lot I
15	Complete A Gap Analysis for Ogden Avenue
16	Complete A Gap Analysis for 75th Street
17	Conduct Ecology Assessment on Village-Owned Properties and Develop a Plan for Additional Natural Areas
18	Close the Ogden TIF
19	Amend Sign Ord (digital only)
20	Conduct an Attainable Housing Study

Table 3
Preliminary Schedule of Staff Proposed Priority Action Items

	2025	2026				2027	
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Solid Waste Contract							
Evaluate Solid Waste & Recycling Policies							
Facilities Conditions Assessment							
Micromobility Device Regs							
Lead Service Line Replacement Plan							
Design & Construct							
Flexible Amenity Areas							
Linda Kunze Plaza (Design)							
North Train Station Plaza (Design)							
Update Zoning Ordinance							
Update Subdivision Code							
Public Art Program							
Public Tree Practices							

Fairview & Connection TIF District							
Redevelop Parking Lot I							
Ogden Gap Analysis							
75th Gap Analysis							
Conduct VoDG Ecological Assessment							
Close Ogden TIF							
Amend Sign Ord (Digital Only)							
Attainable Housing Study							