

11/18/2025

Public Art Program

November 18, 2025



Background

Develop a Public Art Program is a Priority Action Item

Description - Project Consists of Creating a Public Art Program to Address Program Management and Governance, Funding, Project Selection, Community Engagement and Program Evaluation

This project can likely be completed according to the schedule if the art program is operated by the Village (the Village will purchase the art and place it on Village-owned properties)

Initial Phase - Village Operated Program Focusing on the Downtown Flexible Amenity Areas.





Village of Downers Grove STREETSCAPES PLAN

ADOPTED | April 8, 2025



1 STREETSCAPE FUNCTION AND CHARACTER

For all areas, the streetscape is functional but lacks a distinctive image and identity representing the community. Stakeholders raised the question if the Downtown Area and Fairview Focus Area should have the same character for consistency within the community, or if the Fairview Focus Area could have its own unique neighborhood style.

The Downtown and Fairview Focus Area streetscape improvements first establish baseline functional improvements, with additional components identified to add character. The resulting improvements create a community-wide style, while allowing the Fairview Focus Area to have its own neighborhood identity.

The streetscape style leans towards traditional given comments received through community input, although innovative elements, products, and materials are included as a progressive solution, consistent with community sustainability goals.



2 EXPANDED FLEXIBLE AMENITY AREAS

Streetscapes need to provide a balance between pedestrian and vehicular uses, which are not always clear and obvious. Several situations exist where pedestrian and vehicular uses compete for the same space. As of 2025, the Village allows seasonal outdoor dining to use on-street parking spaces in certain permitted areas. Permanent modifications provide additional pedestrian space by converting vehicular areas and strategically determined on-street parking spaces to pedestrian use. These additional pedestrian areas are designed to be flexible for a variety of uses including outdoor dining, cultural amenities, additional landscaping, and common seating areas.

Additional crosswalks, curb bump-outs, and traffic calming devices are included to improve pedestrian safety.



3 PUBLIC GATHERING SPACES AND PROGRAMMED EVENTS

Streetscape areas and parks and open spaces are frequently used as public gathering spaces for programmed events. The commuter parking lot is used for the Downtown Downers Grove Market and Rotary Grove Fest. Parks and plazas are used to host a variety of events. Friends Corner and Linda Kunze Plaza are owned and operated by the Village, while Fishel Park is owned and operated by the Park District. Programmed events contribute to the success of the community and the streetscape environment is designed to accommodate functional and operational requirements. Locations, temporary conditions, timing of events, infrastructure, and management expectations impact the design of these spaces.

Specifically, Linda Kunze Plaza and the public space on the north side of the railroad tracks at Main Street can be improved to better accommodate public gathering and programmed events. A public space is created in the Fairview Focus Area at the commuter lot along with connecting the pocket park on Fairview Avenue and to the Fairview Metra Station area.



4 CULTURE AND PUBLIC ART

Currently there are limited cultural or public art components within the streetscapes. There is an opportunity to better represent the character of the community by including cultural references and public art within the streetscape environment. Numerous stakeholders brought up the desire to incorporate public art, seasonal installations, and historical and cultural references, not only as a sense of pride for the community, but also as an attraction to help local businesses.

Opportunities are identified to incorporate public art components, along with ways to incorporate historical and cultural references and considerations for temporary or seasonal attractions to draw local and out of town visitors. Downtown gateways and wayfinding signage that reflect the culture of the community can be designed in a tasteful way and implemented tactfully so that it does not become too cluttered.



Public Art Program Elements

- Type & Location of Art
- Governance
- Funding
- Project Selection
- Community Engagement



Type & Location of Art



3 Locations

- Near Pierce Tavern
- Near Entourage
- Near Citibank



Type & Location of Art

Guiding Principles

- Looks Like it Belongs in the Downtown Area
- Is Authentic and Timeless
- Reflects a Balance between Tradition and Progress
- Is Welcoming and Inclusive to All Visitors
- Is Suitable for Viewing by All Ages
- Creates Placemaking and Sense of Belonging
- Is Permanent
- Looks Great All Year
- Requires Little Maintenance
- Complies with Downers Grove Municipal Code and Downtown Design Guidelines
- Fits On or In the Art Space within the Flexible Amenity Areas

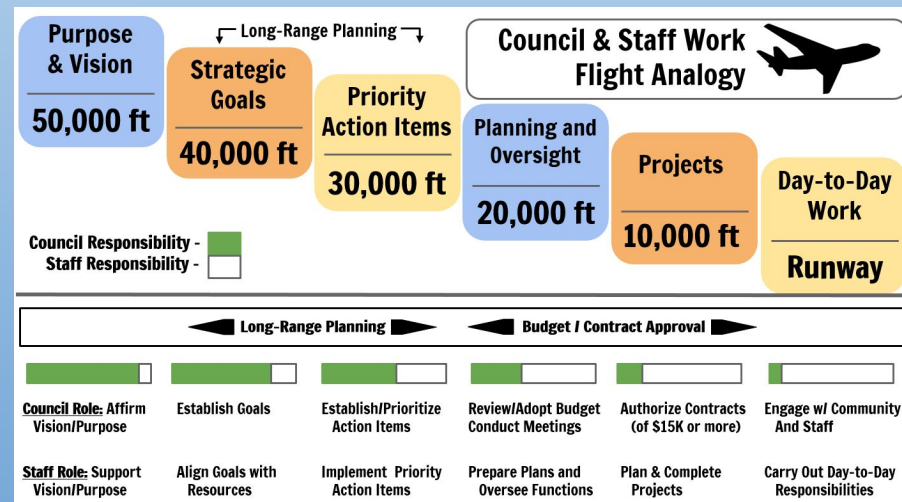


Governance

- Village Council Role
 - Authorize Budget
 - Approve Contract with Artist / Design Firm / Fabricator
- Staff Role
 - Facilitate Village Council Decision Making
 - Implement Village Council Decisions
 - Day to Day Interactions with Artist / Design Firm / Fabricator

Artist Role

- Design, Construct & Install Art
- Adhere to Guiding Principles



Funding

- Funding Provided as Part of Annual Village Budgets
- FY26 Proposed Budget Includes \$200,000

Activity	Budget
Design & Construction Administration	\$50,000
Construction / Fabrication (3 Pieces)	\$150,000 (\$50,000 per Piece)
Total	\$200,000



Community Engagement

- Stakeholder Meetings Among Staff, Artist and Downtown Management
- Public Input During Village Council Meetings (Consideration of Contracts & Project Design / Selection)



Next Steps

- Prepare and Publish RFP/Q Based on Council Provided Guiding Principles (December '25)
- Award Contract for Design, Construction and Installation (February '26)
- Visioning Sessions / Stakeholder Meetings (Spring '26)
- Complete Construction & Installation of Art (December '26)



Seeking Council Direction

Guiding Principles

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