Village of Long Grove
Downtown Master Plan

Prepared by ESI Consultants, Ltd.
in Association with
Hitchcock Design Group and Business District, Inc.

May 6, 2008

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Contents

1 Executive Summary
2 Introduction
4 Opportunity Analysis Summary
10 Conceptual Strategy
13 Recommendations
A.1 Appendix A
B.1 Appendix B - Design Guidelines (*To be included when complete*)

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This Master Plan concludes a thorough and collaborative planning process. During this process the consultant team evaluated existing resources, analyzed the marketplace, gathered stakeholder input, prepared and presented alternative concepts, refined the preferred alternative, prepared an implementation plan, and documented the final recommendations in this Master Plan report. The project was guided by a diverse group of stakeholders, including the Downtown Task Force, Village staff, elected and appointed officials, property owners, business owners, representatives of other local taxing bodies, State and County officials, and Long Grove residents.

Based on our analysis, we believe Downtown Long Grove has remarkable potential. It has a unique legacy as a special place, a solid base of existing business, attractive but under utilized natural features, and the room to selectively expand its offerings. Most importantly, it has a substantial and wealthy nearby market. In order to take advantage of this highly desirable demographic, the Village should pursue a new comprehensive strategy that fundamentally repositions Downtown in the local marketplace.

New Comprehensive Strategy

Recently, modern and centrally managed shopping centers in nearby communities have targeted the wealthy local market that has developed over the past two decades. At the same time, Downtown Long Grove's sales tax revenues have declined. Downtown also faces the challenge of capturing higher sales from a declining day trip market.

We recommend a strategy in which public and private interests partner to broaden Downtown's overall appeal so that more people are inspired to visit more frequently – especially those who live nearby. The focus of this strategy is to improve the quality, mix, and type of destinations available and to dramatically improve visitor hospitality. A marketing program that clearly communicates Downtown's new image is also needed to elevate awareness and strengthen investor confidence in Downtown's future prospects.

Recommendations

Long-term Vision

Downtown improvements will be led by key public sector projects such as new local streets to improve circulation, reconfigured parking lots to improve appearance and provide locations for new businesses that meet contemporary marketplace requirements, streetscape and wayfinding improvements, and new trails and pedestrian connections designed to make Buffalo Creek a signature destination. Another important feature is a new amenity rich public space in the Triangle Sub-district immediately adjacent to Downtown. This public space, which fronts directly onto Old McHenry Road and connects to recreational facilities along Buffalo Creek, will strengthen Downtown's new image and identity as a desirable destination for children, families, and local residents.

New development and improvements to private properties are also vitally important. New shops and restaurants in the Triangle, Illinois Route 83, and Illinois Route 53 Sub-districts will broaden Downtown's marketplace appeal. Development / redevelopment of highly visible properties within the Historic Core Sub-district will expand the amount of contemporary commercial space and enhance Downtown's image. The most important improvements are those that enhance pedestrian comfort, safety, and hospitality. Safe and comfortable pathways, increased lighting, better signage, and higher quality street furnishings will allow visitors to more easily access and enjoy Downtown attractions for longer hours each day.

Short-term Opportunities

A number of the public improvements described in the long-term vision can be implemented within the next 5 years. These include:

- Review municipal codes and policies – including Planned Unit Development ordinances – and modify as necessary to align with the Master Plan.
- Reconfigure Archer Parking Lot to create new commercial / restaurant space that fronts onto a new local road connecting Old McHenry Road and Robert Parker Coffin Road.
- Determine the appropriate water system improvements for Downtown and create a plan to implement the improvements.
- Implement a signage and wayfinding system that includes Downtown gateway enhancements.
- Create a marketing program that repositions Downtown to align with the recommendations of the Master Plan.
- Develop a phasing plan for streetscape improvements that include paving, lighting, coordinated furnishings, on-street parking, and landscaping.
- Improve the Stempel Parking Lot entrance by the covered bridge.
- Change the name of "Robert Parker Coffin Road" to "Long Grove Road."
- Change the name "Long Grove Covered Bridge" to "Robert Parker Coffin Covered Bridge."

All those who care about and have contributed to Downtown Long Grove's past successes should be excited about its remarkable potential. It is important understand that despite the exceptional efforts made by project stakeholders to identify and reach consensus on opportunities and improvements for Downtown Long Grove, redevelopment cannot and should not happen all at once. However, with patience, perseverance, and a focus on continuous and incremental improvement, the goals and objectives of the Master Plan can be achieved. Downtown Long Grove will indeed remain the community's centerpiece for generations to come.

Respectfully submitted,

ESI Consultants, Ltd. / Hitchcock Design Group / Business Districts, Inc. Consulting Team

Introduction

The Downtown Long Grove Master Plan was developed in response to the Village of Long Grove's need to organize, develop, and implement improvement strategies for the Downtown Business District and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. The Master Plan has been created as a conceptual set of design strategies to lay the foundation for future development within Downtown Long Grove. The Master Plan has been created to unify previous plans, market analysis, and available resources to address current and future commerce challenges facing Downtown Long Grove.

Approach

In the fall of 2007, the Village of Long Grove engaged the consultant team to develop a Master Plan for Downtown Long Grove. A Master Plan Task Force was established to guide and direct the consultant team for the duration of the project. Task Force members included Village Staff, Downtown business owners, and Village Board and Planning Commission members. To successfully develop and establish the Master Plan as a standard document, the consultant team and Task Force worked throughout the fall, meeting every other week, working together to develop master plan strategies for Downtown Long Grove. In addition to the bi-monthly meetings, the consultant team interviewed over 20 stakeholders to retain feedback from residents, business and property owners, jurisdictional interests, and public officials. Several presentations were given to the Village Board and Planning Commission throughout the master planning process and comments and concerns were addressed at those meetings and within the master plan document.

Project Area

The project area encompasses approximately 121 acres and includes Village Hall, Kildeer-Countryside School, Historic Downtown Long Grove, selected properties between Old McHenry Road and IL Route 53, Fremont Way property, Midwest Bank property, and the Mid America / Executive House / Bluebird Site.

Process

The Downtown Long Grove Master Plan included three distinct phases:

1. An **Opportunity Analysis** was conducted to examine resources, stakeholder interest, and market place conditions.

2. Several **Alternative Strategies** were developed based on a conceptual framework created from the findings of the Opportunity Analysis. The strategies were reviewed by the Task Force and a preferred strategy was selected for further refinement.

3. Based on the direction given by the Task Force, the preferred strategy underwent a series of refinements and was presented to the Planning Commission, Architectural Board, and Village Board. Upon approval, findings and recommendations were documented in a **Master Plan** report that was presented to the Village Board for final approval.

Project Goal and Objectives

One project goal and six objectives were established for the Master Plan. This goal and these objectives created a foundation from which the preferred concept plan was cultivated.

Project Goal

Strengthen and enhance Downtown's unique qualities to ensure that it remains the centerpiece of Long Grove's image and identity, continues to be a high quality destination for visitors, and an engaging live / work / play / shop environment for community residents and their families.

Project Objectives

Retain Existing Successful Businesses
Retaining successful businesses will attract and encourage new businesses to Downtown. An existing strong consumer base will strengthen the confidence of potential commercial investors to develop in the business district.

Broaden Downtown's Appeal
By enhancing downtown's appeal, more residents will want to utilize Downtown and will not travel to neighboring communities for their daily commerce needs.

Strengthen Downtown's Identity, Safety, and Hospitality
Developing marketing, identity, safety, and hospitality strategies for Downtown will strongly distinguish it's attributes from the surrounding commercial choices and will ensure that Long Grove remains a high quality commercial destination within the region.

Increase Tax Revenues
Investing in Downtown will attract new businesses, which will increase the tax base and ultimately the tax revenue for the Village.

Enhance Open Spaces
Enhancing open space not only benefits residents by creating improved open spaces and adding public amenities but also benefits the environment.

Provide Policy and Resource Guidelines
The Village should communicate the high quality standards that are expected from Downtown investors and facilitate the desired the patterns of development.

Project Study Area (in yellow)

Opportunity Analysis Summary

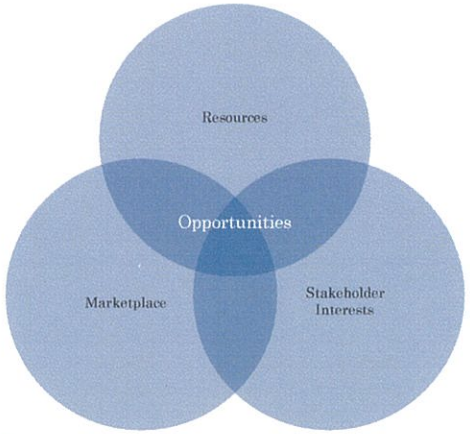
Introduction

An opportunity analysis is a time-tested method of conducting background research and analysis to identify and understand marketplace dynamics, stakeholder interests, and available resources. The best opportunities exist where the three dimensions overlap.

The following is a summary of the opportunity analysis conducted for Downtown Long Grove (the complete analysis is included in Appendix A of this report).

Marketplace

Downtown Long Grove is at the heart of prosperous suburban neighborhoods where residents value their family oriented lifestyles, spacious properties, and a long history of quality development. These community assets have traditionally offered specialty shopping that draws few convenience visits from nearby residents and numerous day trips from residents within a multi-state geography.



Resources
- Land
- Finances
- Infrastructure
- Organizations
- Culture

Marketplace
- Demographics
- Trade areas
- Trends
- Similar communities

Stakeholder Interests
- Jurisdictions
- Land use / zoning
- Land ownership
- Public opinion

At its peak, Downtown Long Grove annually hosted over 400 buses that brought day visitors for lunch and unique shopping. Today, organized tours bring less than 80 buses annually. At the same time, Long Grove and the surrounding communities have grown from diverse ex-urban villages to wealthy suburban communities. Modern, centrally managed shopping centers have developed ideal store and restaurant space in Deer Park and Buffalo Grove. These market changes have combined to cause Long Grove's sales tax revenue to decline.

To reverse this decline, Downtown Long Grove faces the challenge of capturing higher sales from a deteriorating traditional, day trip market and a growing but increasingly competitive local market. The Master Plan for Downtown Long Grove must support the existing strong store offering as it adds businesses that take advantage of the nearby market. It is important to recognize that there is existing capacity to increase sales. Although there could be some additional store space, sales volumes can increase without significant new development. The limited addition of consumer services like spas, medical offices, and apparel services should not be at the expense of the existing stores.

Primary Market

A shopping center's primary market provides between 50% and 90% of its individual businesses sales. This variation in individual stores helps to expand the overall center sales. Each store has a core market and then benefits from the markets of its co-tenants, the adjacent businesses.

Business owners interviewed for this analysis acknowledged the high quality of Long Grove's nearby market. To understand the quality of Long Grove's market (based on a 20-minute drive time), it is important to understand that all 77 Long Grove stores and restaurants could have sales of $1 million each and even then the Downtown would be capturing only 1.4% of this market's household spending. A key characteristic of this market is the large population with high income throughout the geography.

Bonus Markets

With the primary market supplying 50% to 90% of the sales in each Long Grove business, other important sales sources must bring at least 10% of each business' sales. Long Grove's unique concentration of independent businesses fits with a region-wide niche market of customers seeking relationships with talented merchandise buyers who can offer specialty goods not available at national chains.

Although bus parking may not be as important as it once was, it still should be accommodated. The Master Plan must also support businesses who may focus on internet sales.

Market Conditions Summary
Although there is great concern about the future of Downtown Long Grove, key market conditions suggest an optimistic future:

- There is a substantial and wealthy market available to the owners of Downtown Long Grove businesses.
- The Downtown has a unique image as a special place to visit. The predominance of stores and restaurants exceeds the offering of most suburban downtowns in both number and unique offerings.

Despite conditions that are the goal of many downtowns, Long Grove business and property owners lack the confidence to make the substantial investment necessary to build business inventories, enhance buildings, and undertake interior modernization. Anticipated but unknown road improvements and design guideline changes that may be associated with necessary streetscape improvements cause some uncertainty. There is also uncertainty associated with plans for a substantial convenience development at Illinois Route 83, between Aptakisic Road and Illinois Route 53. The Master Plan must instill confidence in the appropriateness of private and public improvements by providing "certainty" about Downtown Long Grove's future.

Stakeholder Interests

Understanding stakeholder interests is an integral part of a successful planning process. Without broad consensus regarding key issues, problems, recommended strategies, and implementation procedures, even the most carefully considered plan risks losing community support once it has been formally adopted.

Stakeholder Interviews
The Downtown Long Grove Master Plan solicited input from a variety of project stakeholders, including property owners, merchants, public officials, and residents. In addition, input was solicited from school, park district, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), and Lake County representatives who whose organizations have jurisdictional control over roadways and other institutionally-owned properties. Much of the input was gathered during personal interviews. A summary of the comments provided is as follows:

- Preserve of the unique appearance and feel of Downtown Long Grove.
- Sidewalks and paths are uneven and are safety hazards. Paths are not clearly defined and are poorly lit.
- Lighting needs to be added which will allow businesses to remain open during critical evening hours.
- Existing parking is difficult to find, and it is difficult to navigate from the parking areas to the shops. Convenient on-street (teaser) parking is needed. In addition, parking is not distributed evenly, which weakens the desirability of the north and east quadrants of Downtown.
- Key Downtown gateways need to be highlighted and clearly identified. Roadway entrances and connections from parking lots to merchant paths are poorly marked.
- Current Downtown destinations and activities are seen as having a limited appeal outside of the major festivals because there is little to do except eat and shop.
- Buffalo Creek Park is a passive site with limited connectivity to the Downtown area.
- There is a desire to add new destinations, activities, and community gathering places to attract the local residents to the Downtown area. There is also a desire to have a focus on cultural activities such as music and the arts. Examples might include a band shell / concert area or playground / children's area. New destinations and activities should be connected to shopping areas and to each other.
- There is need for a higher quality, more manageable water system with expanded capacity.
- Businesses should capitalize on attractive local demographics, and increase activities and destinations for community residents, with tourism remaining as a bonus market.
- The public sector should make needed infrastructure investments in order to restore investor confidence in Downtown's long-term economic viability.

Other Jurisdictional Interests
- The Archer and Stempel Parking Lots are under Village jurisdiction. A portion of Stempel Lot is privately owned.
- There are a small amount of on-street parking spaces on Robert Parker Coffin Road, adjacent to the covered bridge. All other parking in the study area is privately owned.
- The area southeast of Robert Parker Coffin Road, adjacent to Buffalo Creek, is owned and maintained by the Long Grove Park District. The area southwest of the Stempel Parking Lot is owned by the Village of Long Grove. The Long Grove Park District also owns the park site north of Robert Parker Coffin Road west of Buffalo Creek and the site east of Buffalo Creek (running to Old McHenry Road).
- Army Corps of Engineers, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Agency and the Stormwater Management Commission all have jurisdiction over Buffalo Creek and its associated floodplain and wetlands.
- Kildeer-Countryside School, District 96, is located north of Old McHenry Road on approximately 9 acres immediately west of the core retail area.
- Long Grove Business and Community Partners, the local marking and coordination organization, serves as a liaison between businesses and the Village.

Resources

Past Plans, Reports, and Studies in Progress

A number of previously prepared plans and reports were reviewed as part of the Opportunity Analysis planning process. These include:

- Long Grove Historic District Approved Streetscape Plan (1999)
- Downtown Long Grove: Market Review and Action Plan (2000)
- Commercial Site Review (2003)
- Studio Restaurant Development (2005)
- Special Use Process Review (2005)
- Red Oaks PUD Development Proposal (2205)
- Long Grove Park District – Restoration Update (2006)
- Long Grove Partners – Design Guidelines Priorities (2007)

In addition, the *Long Grove Comprehensive Plan* (2000) included policies that have particular relevance for the Downtown:

- Maintain the 19th century character of the Village Historic Business District as a unique commercial environment and as a regional specialty center.
- Safeguard and supervise the general appearance of the Village.
- Protect areas of significant natural value and promote the re-establishment of native vegetation of all types, with particular attention to the groves that gave Long Grove its name and historic character.
- Reduce traffic circulation and congestion and provide solutions to transportation requirements in a sensitive fashion to ensure no adverse impacts on the existing environment.
- Ensure the future availability of parks, passive recreation land, and other open space dedicated as such perpetuity.

More recently, ESI Consultants, Ltd. (formerly K+ Engineering) has performed several technical studies for the Village that include evaluations of Downtown traffic, parking, and infrastructure resources:

- Village Wide Traffic Study (2007)
- Pedestrian Study of Downtown Long Grove (2007)
- Parking Study of Downtown Long Grove (2007)
- Truck Route Study for Downtown Long Grove (2007)

Highlights from these studies include level of service evaluations for key intersections:

- Old McHenry Road at Robert Parker Coffin Road – Level of Service = F
- Old McHenry Road at Illinois Route 53 – Under Capacity
- Illinois Route 83 at Robert Parker Coffin Road – Level of Service = F
- Illinois Route 83 at Aptakisic Road – Level of Service = F
- Illinois Route 83 at Illinois Route 53 – Level of Service = F

Other findings that had a bearing on the Downtown Master Planning process included:

- Introducing mid-block crossings in the Downtown area to enhance pedestrian safety.
- Curb extensions at proposed mid-block crossings to slow down traffic speeds.
- A buffer zone of four to six feet is recommended to separate pedestrians from the street.
- Both Downtown public parking lots – in conjunction with other parking on private properties – have ample capacity to accommodate the everyday needs of Downtown businesses. In addition, the Village may consider reconfiguring portions of the lots to accommodate new public improvements and / or private market redevelopment that enhances overall Downtown marketplace performance.
- Adjustments should be made to the public lots and associated driveways to facilitate truck deliveries to Downtown shops.

ESI Consultants, Ltd. is now in the process of preparing the *Downtown Area Improvements – Feasibility Study*, which will address the following:

- Drainage within the Downtown Long Grove Business District B-1, its public rights of way, the four quadrants surrounding the major public roadways, and Buffalo Creek.
- Recommendations for utility corridor locations within the right-of-way.
- Intersection design and the feasibility of a modern round-about at the intersection of Old McHenry Road and Robert Parker Coffin Road.
- Street lighting improvements and design standards.

Current Development Projects

- Red Oaks Redevelopment
  Red Oaks Furniture is currently considering an expansion and redevelopment of their facilities. Plans include removing an existing building and creating a courtyard between remaining buildings. Additional on-site parking will also be provided and new sidewalks will enhance pedestrian circulation. Additional work will include a new façade for two of the existing buildings. The project is currently in schematic design.

- Mid America Development / Sunset Foods
  Mid America Development, in partnership with Sunset Foods, is proposing to develop the area southeast of the intersection of Illinois Route 83 and Aptakisic Road. The development is proposed to contain six buildings totaling approximately 109,000 square feet of retail space. Proposed large tenants who will be located within the development include Sunset Foods, Walgreens, Starbucks, and Fifth Third Bank. The project is currently in design development.

Pedestrian Pathways Conditions
The sidewalk / pedestrian pathway system in the core retail area does not meet American Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Existing pedestrian paths have been developed by property owners over time using a variety of paving materials, pathway widths, and techniques for accommodating grade changes. Settling, particularly in the eastern quadrant, has resulted in uneven surfaces that are extremely difficult to navigate. The uneven surfaces are especially difficult for senior citizen to use, as observed during the site visit. Sidewalks adjacent to Old McHenry Road and Robert Parker Coffin Road and the two major parking lots are similarly substandard, and in some cases are nonexistent.

Roadway Conditions
The surfaces of Old McHenry Road and Robert Parker Coffin Road are in poor condition. In locations where the surface conditions are poor, such as the curb cuts along Robert Parker Coffin Road west of Old McHenry Road, pedestrian mobility is especially impaired.

Street Furnishings / Lighting
There are many sizes and styles of street furnishings in use throughout the core retail area. These variations create inconsistent experiences for visitors and weaken Downtown's overall image and identity. The insufficient lighting throughout Downtown and the parking lots, in combination with the uneven paving surfaces, creates an especially hazardous pedestrian environment at night.

Overhead and Underground Utilities
All Downtown properties are currently serviced by private wells. Discussions are underway to determine the feasibility of creating a public water system for Downtown. The sanitary sewer that runs along both Old McHenry Road and Robert Parker Coffin Road is owned by Lake County. There are various storm inlets with different jurisdictions throughout Downtown Long Grove, majority of which are private sewers installed by the property owners in order to minimize flooding problems. The Village has investigated the possibility of having ComEd bury their overhead utility lines. The other utilities currently located on the overhead poles will have to be contracted separately for their relocation cost, and the service lines into the businesses will have to be retrofitted to accommodate the change from overhead lines to an underground utility.

Pathways with uneven surfaces (above and above right) throughout the Downtown are dangerous to navigate, especially in low light conditions.

Different paving materials and uneven surfaces at curb cuts along Robert Parker Coffin Road and Old McHenry Road compromise pedestrian comfort and safety.

The lack of lighting in public areas creates a hazardous environment for pedestrians at night.

The sizes and styles of benches, trash receptacles, and light fixtures vary throughout the core retail area.

Overhead utility lines have a strong visual presence along Robert Parker Coffin Road.

Topography and Natural Features
Buffalo Creek is the most compelling natural feature within the study area. The creek, its floodplain, and its floodway form a green belt along the southwestern edge of Downtown that extends south of Illinois Route 53. Covered Bridge Trail follows the southern edge to the Stempel Parking Lot and includes a pedestrian bridge that crosses Buffalo Creek. However, the existing trail is not well marked, hidden from view, and is not used by visitors on a regular basis. While the Downtown area is relatively flat, there are areas in which small grade changes are emphasized by uneven pavement and stairs made of railroad ties. Any new improvements must meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements related to slopes, ramps, and grading.

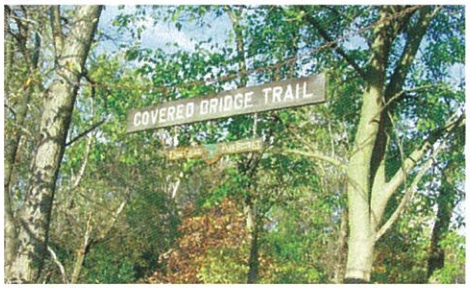
Many properties throughout the core retail area feature well kept landscaping and a variety of trees. However, there is a lack of vegetation and trees within the public right-of-way and public parking lots. Buffalo Creek and its associated floodplain support an abundance of vegetation that screen the creek from the Downtown. Buffalo Creek Park also contains a variety of trees and wetland / floodplain vegetation.

Architecture
The buildings located in Downtown Long Grove are generally a blend of two architectural styles, Greek Revival and Victorian. The Village of Long Grove has developed a style in which all architecture building must be developed. Building architecture must comply with six criteria listed in the Village Code to ensure a consistently high quality character and image is maintained.

Vehicular Circulation / Parking
Old McHenry Road is a two lane, two way roadway that is under the jurisdiction of Lake County. Robert Parker Coffin Road is a two lane, two way roadway maintained by the Village of Long Grove. The intersection of the two roadways is currently controlled by a four way stop. The bridge over Buffalo Creek is one lane, two-way covered bridge.

Downtown Long Grove does not have a local street network to provide alternative routes around the Robert Parker Coffin Road / Old McHenry Road intersection. While average daily traffic (ADT) volumes along Old McHenry Road and Robert Parker Coffin Road are well below 20,000, traffic back-ups on Old McHenry Road at school time rush hours are an inconvenience cited by many project stakeholders. Illinois Routes 53 and 83 each have higher ADTs (21,100 and 44,000, respectively) that are attractive to retailers and restaurants.

The parking needs for the Downtown businesses and restaurants are served by several small private lots and two large public parking lots, Archer and Stempel. There are approximately 753 on- and off-street public and private parking spaces in Downtown's historic core. With approximately 85,000 square feet of commercial space, this quantity provides nearly 7.7 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of existing commercial space.



Covered Bridge Trail (above) along Buffalo Creek (above right) is overgrown and hidden from view, and is not used by visitors on a regular basis.

The two primary public parking lots lack trees and / or other landscaping features.

The public right-of-way along Old McHenry Road also lacks trees and landscaping features.

Downtown buildings (above and above right) are generally a blend of Greek Revival and Victorian styles.

General Land Use Information and Zoning
Properties within the core retail area are zoned Business (B1). Properties adjacent to the business districts are zoned single family residential (R1 and R2 PUD). The area between Illinois Route 53 and Old McHenry Road is zoned single family residential (R3). There is a small area south of Illinois Route 53 that is zoned Office and Research (O & R). Properties located along Illinois Route 83 are a zoned single family residential, residential PUD, residential with declaratory judgment overlay. (R2, R2 PUD, DJ)

The properties within the study area are in working condition although not all are up to current commercial property standards. There are no vacant properties in the core retail area as land has been utilized for commercial, parking, or open space uses.

The houses within the triangle site north of Illinois Route 53 and south of Old McHenry Road are older, single family homes. Properties surrounding the project area are a consistent mix of single family homes on one or more acres of land. Municipal / institutional uses located within project boundary include the Village Hall, Fire Station, Kildeer-Countryside School, and Buffalo Creek Park.

Conceptual Strategy

Conclusions were organized into six clusters, as follows:

Scale
- Build on Downtown's existing charm, character, image, and identity.
- Analysis suggests there may be a marketplace for up to approximately 40,000 s.f. additional retail / restaurant / commercial and up to 30,000 s.f. of office space.
- New sites are needed that can accommodate the business needs of contemporary retailers and restaurants.

Capacity
- Roadways and key intersections are at or near capacities during peak times.
- The Fire Department is concerned about the water system and overhead utilities.
- These conditions will limit Downtown's development potential.

Business Mix and Activities
- Build on Downtown's positive existing business mix.
- There is a substantial, wealthy, and family oriented market available.
- The new businesses recruited to downtown Long Grove should complement Downtown's unique identity.
- Expand the existing business mix to provide for the daily needs of local residents.

Image and Identity
- Downtown has a unique image as a special place to visit.
- Leverage Downtown's best features and reposition its brand image to become a high quality destination for the daily needs of local residents.
- Make sure the building facades reflect the high quality of the merchandise being sold inside the stores.
- Strengthen the gateways to the historic core to heighten awareness of Downtown's proximity and location.

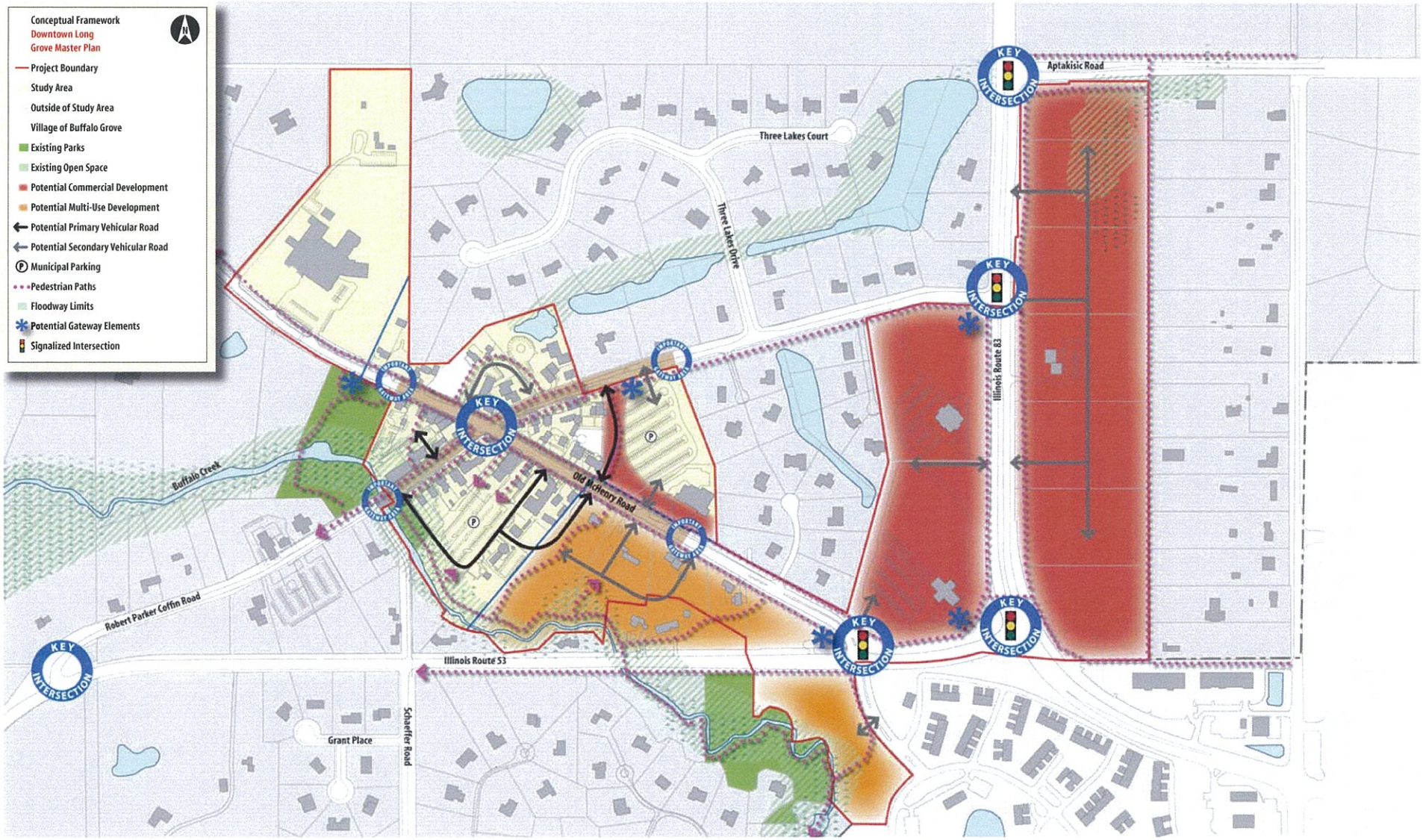
Hospitality
- Expanding Downtown's customer base will be sustainable only if a wide variety of visitors (moms, kids, families, etc.) are enticed to return again and again.
- The public sector should assume a leadership role in ensuring that Downtown has:
  - improved motorist and pedestrian access to and barrier free circulation within Downtown.
  - conveniently located and accessible on- and off-street parking facilities.
  - new activities and destinations, such as a children's park or garden, that appeal to parents and children.
  - improved sidewalks, streetscapes, landscaping, and community gathering places.
  - enhanced signage and wayfinding.

Confidence
- Despite conditions that are the envy of many downtowns, Long Grove business and property owners lack the confidence to make the substantial investments necessary to build business inventories, enhance buildings, and undertake interior modernization because of uncertainties about:
  - future road improvements.
  - the potential impacts of new design guidelines.
  - the status of possible new convenience developments at Illinois Route 83.
- The Master Plan can instill confidence in the appropriateness of private as well as public improvements by providing certainty about Downtown Long Grove's future. This is a unique opportunity to set standards and review plans at a moment in time when there are not significant pending changes to Downtown's historic core.
- The public sector should lead by example through a program of ongoing and systematic reinvestment in infrastructure and improved public amenities such as parks, festival spaces, natural areas, and pedestrian pathways and trails.

Conceptual Framework
The Opportunity Analysis conclusions summarized above created the basis for the conceptual framework shown on the following page. This conceptual framework provided structure and criteria for the alternative strategies created in the second phase of the master planning process. These alternative strategies were presented to the Task Force and public officials and refined into the Long-term Vision detailed in the next section.

Conceptual Strategy
Key Features

- **Improve vehicular connections**
- **Add convenient parking**
- **Improve pedestrian circulation, comfort and safety**
- **Improve gateways and wayfinding**
- **Add a children's park or open space**
- **Facilitate development of new shops and restaurants that meet contemporary business requirements**
- **Support mixed use development outside of the historic core**
- **Create an integrated well system along Illinois Route 83 redevelopment sites**


Conceptual Framework
Downtown Long
Grove Master Plan
Project Boundary
Study Area
Outside of Study Area
Village of Buffalo Grove
Existing Parks
Existing Open Space
Potential Commercial Development
Potential Multi-Use Development
Potential Primary Vehicular Road
Potential Secondary Vehicular Road
Municipal Parking
Pedestrian Paths
Floodway Limits
Potential Gateway Elements
Signalized Intersection
Aptakisic Road
Three Lakes Court
Three Lakes Drive
Illinois Route 83
Old McHenry Road
Buffalo Creek
Robert Parker Coffin Road
Illinois Route 53
Grant Place
Schaeffer Road
KEY INTERSECTION

Recommendations

Recommendations: Implementation

Implementation

The Master Plan provides an exciting and ambitious vision for Downtown Long Grove. While the revitalization strategies can appear daunting when viewed collectively, it is important to understand that not all recommended improvements can happen immediately. Understanding and communicating this reality is increasingly necessary as time passes in order to sustain revitalization momentum, fulfill stakeholders' expectations, and maintain public support for Downtown improvements. To do so, Village leadership will have to work closely with Downtown stakeholders and keep the general public well informed about revitalization objectives, goals, strategies, and implementation progress.

Process

The Downtown Master Plan recommends a number of revitalization strategies for both public and private improvements. Public improvements to utilities, vehicular and pedestrian access / circulation / safety, visitor wayfinding, and public parking will play an especially vital role in stimulating investor interest and creating confidence in Downtown's long-term economic prospects. The Village should maintain a strong leadership role in ensuring these improvements are advanced in a timely manner and meet community quality standards. As a principle investor, the Village should also have a strong voice in marketing, management, business recruitment, and other operations that are critical to achieving the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.

Implementation Action Plan

Listed below are actions that should be taken to support the Downtown Master Plan goals, objectives, and recommended revitalization actions.

Public Policy

1. Adopt this Master Plan as public policy in Spring 2008.
2. Review municipal codes and policies – including Planned Unit Development Ordinances - and modify as necessary to align with the Master Plan goals, objectives, and recommended revitalization strategies. Continue to modify as necessary to ensure alignment with future design guidelines.
3. Adopt related Design Guidelines to support the intent of the Master Plan.
4. Review properties such as Towner Green, Fountain Square, and Stempel Parking Lot and decided on appropriate action, such as zoning change or Village purchase.
5. Create Maintenance Ordinance to aid in the enforcement of maintenance requirements for Downtown businesses.
6. Confirm Village's role in the implementation process, including:
   - Planning / design / engineering
   - Facilitation of public and private sector development
   - Ownership / infrastructure construction / management
   - Property assembly
   - Developer recruitment / assistance
   - Business development
7. Confirm Lake County's plans and schedule for Old McHenry Road improvements.
8. Confirm the role and structure of Long Grove Partners and the Long Grove Task Force in master plan implementation.
9. Confirm and prioritize public improvement projects.
10. Explore alternative strategies for developer participation in designing, financing, and constructing public improvements.
11. Evaluate plan review, zoning review, and public meeting procedures to ensure that consensus can be reached on desirable new projects in the timeliest manner possible.
12. Confirm entitlement and development procedures for priority revitalization opportunities to promote confidence about Village commitment and timing.
13. Finalize the process for the development parcels along the Archer Parking Lot.

Organization

1. Maintain the Long Grove Task Force as the Master Plan Implementation Team.
2. Consider adding individuals to the Task Force with experience in development, finance, recreation and other skills not currently represented. Consider adding school district and park district representatives to the Task Force.
3. Create and update prioritized annual Task Force work plans.

Public Improvements

1. Identify the type, character, construction costs of public infrastructure and amenities that will inspire investor confidence and help to stimulate private market investment in Long Grove. Focus on the public improvements that will provide the greatest benefits to Downtown investors, visitors, and community residents.
2. Confirm the public improvements that the Village might assume a leadership role in facilitating include:
    - Improving street and streetscapes
    - Expanding on- and off-street parking in sufficient quantities and in the right locations to support existing and proposed levels of development
    - Retaining access to commercial areas throughout construction periods
    - Improving water service
    - Expanding storm water management facilities
    - Creating new public gathering spaces and open spaces
    - Improving wayfinding and sign graphics
    - Coordinate with the Park District to continue to develop the trail network within and around Downtown Long Grove. Develop a partnership for maintenance responsibilities.

Business Retention and Recruitment

1. Work with Long Grove Partners to improve the quality of existing businesses.
    - Develop best practice standards that address cleanliness, inventory turn over, customer-friendly hours, business plan updates, marking and advertising, technologies, and other relevant business practices.
    - Create a certification program to identify stores using best practices.
    - Create a mentoring program through which certified business owners provide assistance for new or improving businesses.
2. Meet with property owners on an ongoing basis to determine:
    - Future plans for their property
    - Ability to implement recommended improvements to private sidewalks, pathways, and public spaces
    - Utility capacity and concerns (water system, etc.)
    - Tenanting options (ability to accommodate new restaurants, stores, etc.)
    - Potential alignments between building improvement needs and existing municipal programs
    - Property owners who could benefit from an architectural improvement program and other incentives.
3. Reach out to prospective businesses interested in locating their business within Downtown. Targeted employers may include retailers and professional / personal services (a neighborhood pharmacy, dry cleaners, doctors, dentists, attorneys, accountants, etc.) and other small businesses that provide for the daily needs of Long Grove residents.

New Development / Redevelopment

1. Facilitate land acquisition, parcel assembly, and development projects that are partially or wholly owned by the Village.
2. Identify existing property owners who are interested in undertaking new developments identified in the Master Plan.
3. Attract new stores and restaurants and identify prospective tenants' site requirements for locating in Downtown Long Grove.
4. Coordinate with developers to ensure that the quality and character of proposed projects meets the Village's standards and the community expectations, and also fit into Downtown's historic fabric.

Financing

1. Finalize the development of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District in Downtown Long Grove.
2. Create a five year capital improvement plan that includes costs for priority public improvement and / or other projects related to business development.
3. Create an annual maintenance budget for public spaces.
4. Identify and utilize previous lenders and / or grant programs for façade and property improvements for existing businesses.
5. Identify grants that might be available for recommended improvements.
6. Develop criteria for developer assistance (gap financing).
7. Develop a five year macro financing plan that balances sources and uses of funds.

Promotion

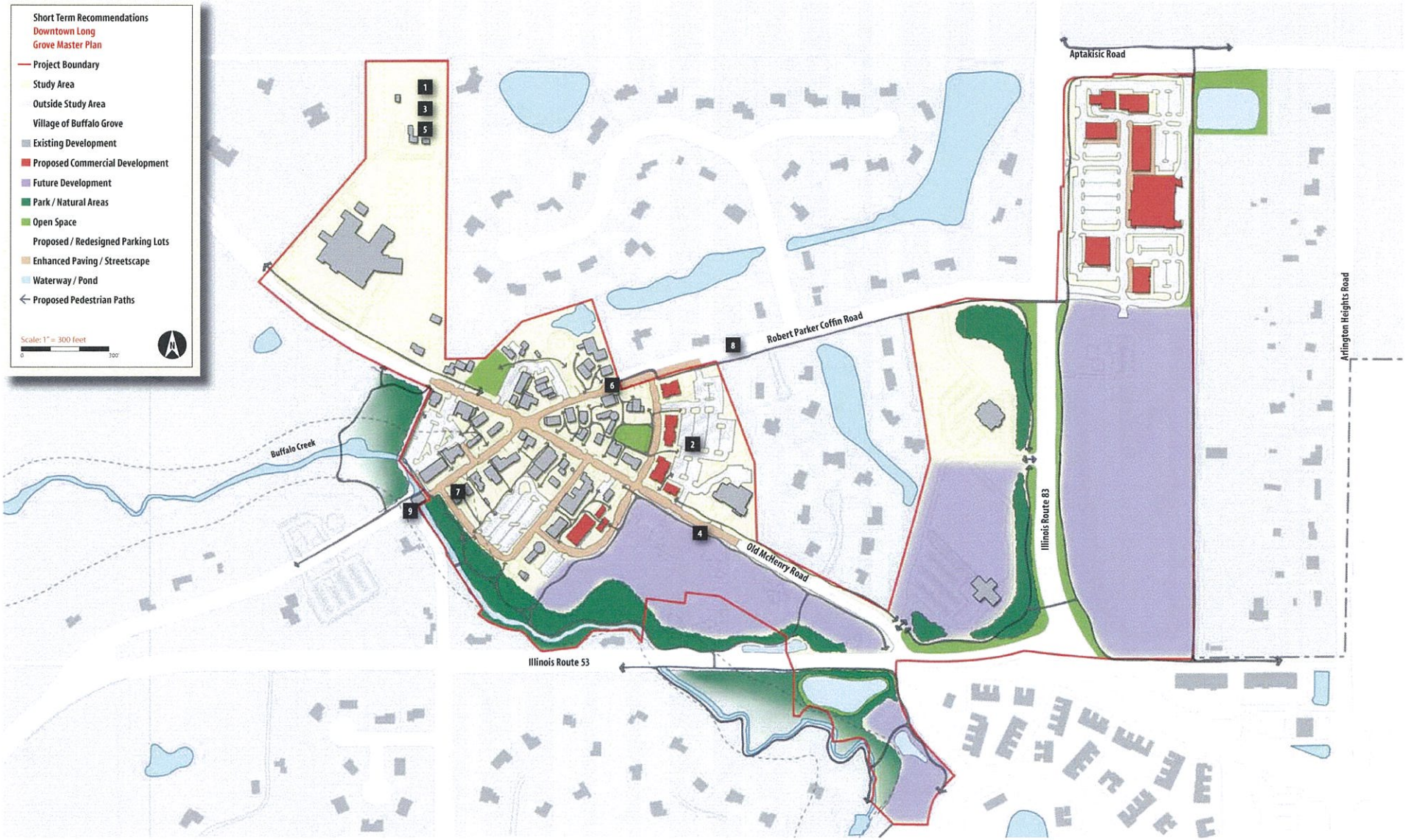
1. Develop a new logo / brand for the Downtown.
2. Work with Long Grove Partners to create and refine marketing strategies in order to clearly identify and promote the Downtown's brand and image.
3. Evaluate the schedule of special events with the Long Grove Partners to determine how revitalization strategies can be showcased and promoted to attract new visitors and business prospects.
4. Create an integrated marketing strategy that clearly identifies and consistently promotes the Downtown brand promise.
5. Regularly and frequently communicate the master plan and related implementation strategies to public officials, Long Grove Partners, property owners, business owners, prospective investors, and the general public.

Management

1. Develop a maintenance plan for public streets, parking lots, and open space.
2. Partner with the Long Grove Park District to develop a maintenance strategy for Buffalo Creek and its associated trails.
3. Create a management strategy for on- and off-street parking that includes evaluation of supply / demand, user satisfaction, operations, and maintenance.
4. Annually evaluate and update the implementation plan and report to appropriate constituents.

Recommendations:
Short-term Opportunities

1. **Review municipal codes and policies – including Planned Unit Development Ordinances – and modify as necessary to align with the Master Plan**
2. Reconfigure Archer Parking Lot to create new commercial / restaurant space that fronts onto a new local road connecting Old McHenry Road and Robert Parker Coffin Road - **Parking lots are conceptual, actual layout to be determined*
3. Determine the appropriate water system improvements for Downtown and create a plan to implement the improvements
4. Implement a signage and wayfinding system that includes Downtown gateway enhancements
5. Create a marketing program that repositions Downtown to align with the recommendations of the Master Plan
6. Develop a phasing plan for streetscape improvements that include paving, lighting, coordinated furnishings, on-street parking, and landscaping
7. Improve the Stempel Parking Lot entrance by the covered bridge
8. Change the name of "Robert Parker Coffin Road" to "Long Grove Road"
9. Change the name "Long Grove Covered Bridge" to "Robert Parker Coffin Covered Bridge"



Long Grove Downtown Master Plan - Short Term Opportunities

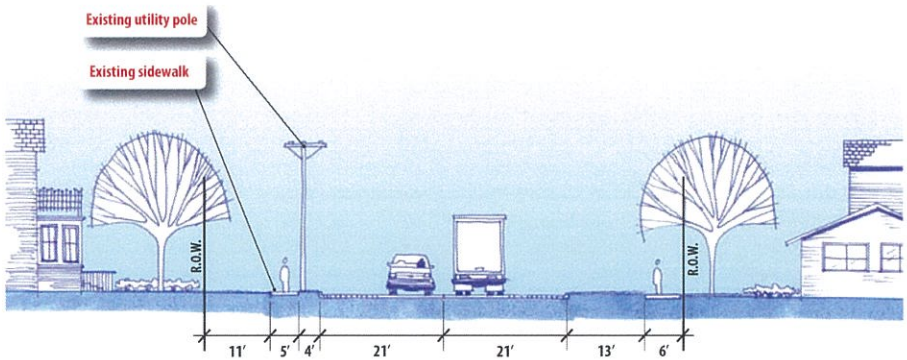
Recommendations:
Long-term Vision

1. Improve pedestrian connections between Downtown and the Buffalo Creek Trail
2. Expand trails along Buffalo Creek to strengthen connections to Downtown and regional trail systems
3. Relocate fire station to accommodate new commercial development
4. Install additional plantings within the medians on Old McHenry Road
5. Make premium landscaping enhancements at the Illinois Route 53 / Illinois Route 83 intersection to emphasize Downtown gateway location
6. Create a new signature public open space in the Triangle Sub-district that fronts onto Old McHenry Road
7. Preserve existing natural areas south of Illinois Route 53 and improve pedestrian connections to them
8. Create new multi-modal pathways along Illinois Route 83
9. Create new stormwater management facility south of Downtown
10. Implement streetscape improvements along Old McHenry Road and Robert Parker Coffin Road - See page 18 for existing and proposed sections
11. Install additional plantings within the medians on Illinois Route 83 north of the Illinois Route 53 intersection
12. Reorganize Stempel Parking Lot and merge properties to make entire lot public property
    **Parking lots are conceptual, actual layout to be determined*
13. Reorganize privately-owned parking to expand capacity and improve access and circulation
    **Parking lots are conceptual, actual layout to be determined*
14. Redevelop property at the western corner of the Old McHenry Road / Robert Parker Coffin Road intersection
15. Create a new green space in privately owned parking lot
16. Preserve Towner Green as open space
17. Redevelop gas station property to new retail / commercial service use
18. Improve amenities at Fountain Square
19. Redevelop Triangle Sub-district around signature public open space with various commercial and retail businesses and / or community center
20. Create a new local street network in the Triangle Sub-district that aligns with existing streets and includes on-street parking
21. Build gateway commercial development at the intersection of Old McHenry Road and Illinois Route 53
22. Redevelop the Illinois Route 53 Sub-district
23. Develop parcels south of Illinois Route 53
24. Retain natural areas along Illinois Route 83
25. Redevelop the Illinois Route 83 Sub-district with commercial, retail, hospitality, residential, and office uses
26. Redevelop Triangle Sub-district

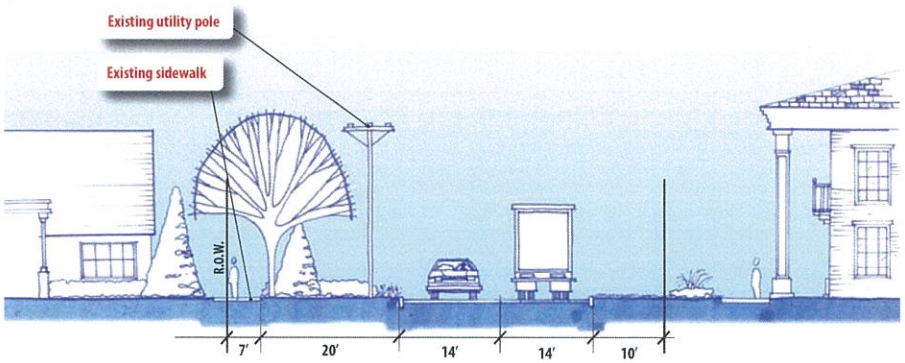
Long Grove Downtown Master Plan - Long Term Vision

Recommendations:
Roadway Sections

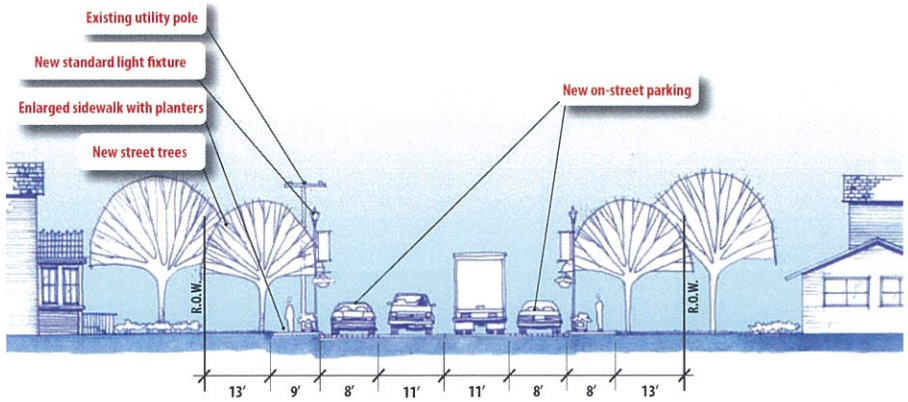
Existing Section - Old McHenry Road



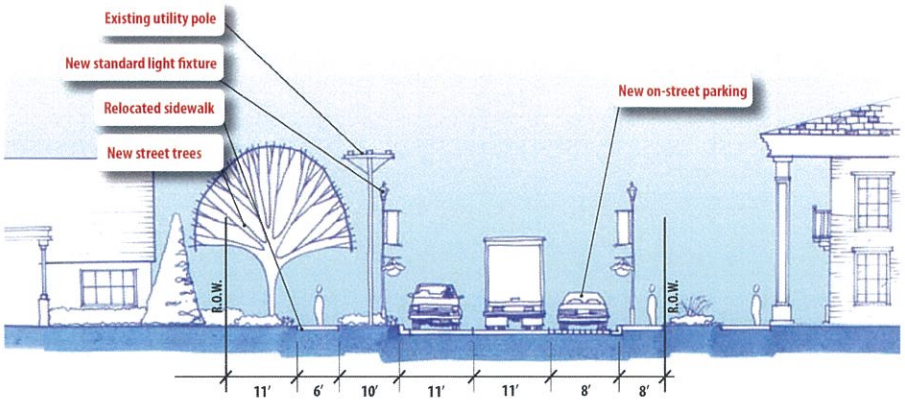
Existing Section - Robert Parker Coffin Road



Proposed Section - Old McHenry Road

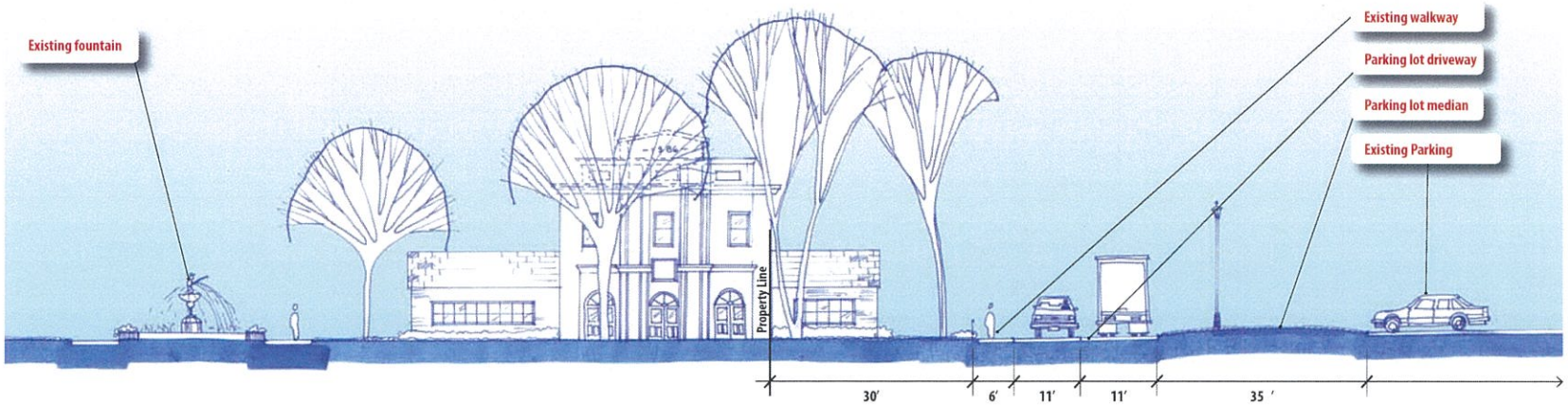
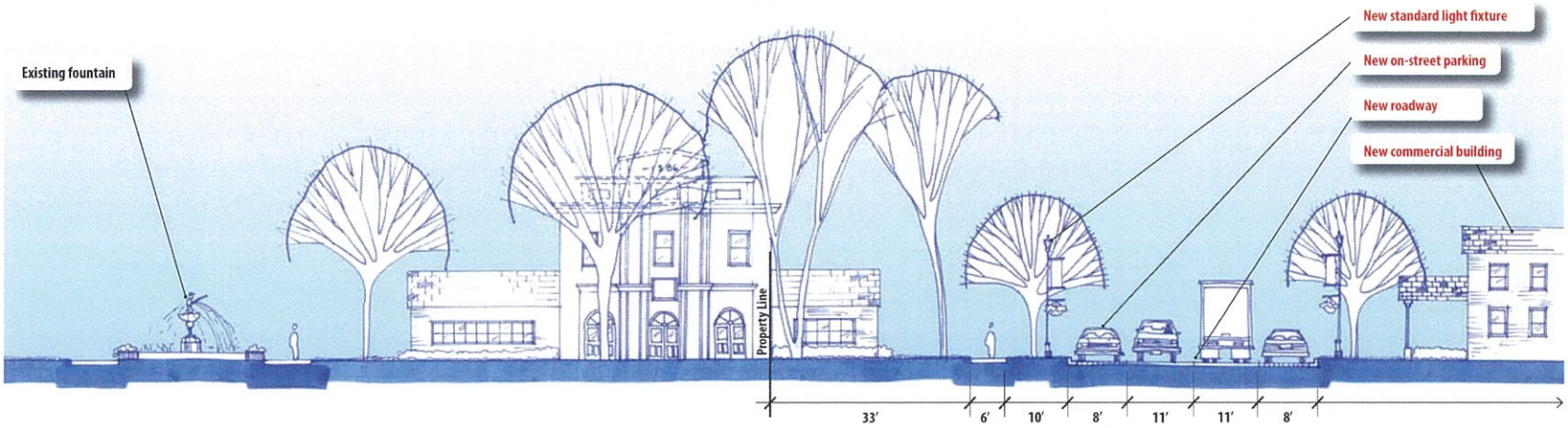


Proposed Section - Robert Parker Coffin Road



Recommendations:
Fountain Square and Archer Parking Lot

Existing Section - Fountain Square and Archer Parking Lot



Proposed Section - Fountain Square and Archer Parking Lot