

Preliminary
Village of Long Grove, Illinois
Strategic Plan Summary Report
October 2013



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PROCESS SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

It was a pleasure for us to work with the Board and staff again to conduct the Village's 2013 Strategic Plan update and retreat workshop. As an organization, you continue to be among the special class of municipal governments that engage in formalized strategic planning and goal-setting. As your regular workshops over the years demonstrate, the Village recognizes that strategic planning is a preferred approach to guiding the Village's future—it helps leaders to be proactive, rather than reactive, and lessens the need to manage crisis by crisis. Overall, the 2013 workshop provided a collaborative and energetic setting for the Board and staff to methodically and strategically determine where it is you want to go as a Village government, as an organization, and as a community over the next several years.

The workshop setting for 2013 allowed new and continuing Board members to exchange ideas in the context of the future and long-term planning for the Village. It was beneficial for the Board to participate as a leadership team in the process. The group was able to reflect on its mission and goals and share strategic issues of importance with one another and senior staff. The Board's working dynamics were open and collaborative with multiple views shared and senior staff offered their expertise, background and perspective on a variety of topics. While differences of opinion on some items were part of the discussions, different views are to be expected as part of the policy development process. That's democracy in action! We have no doubt the Board, as a whole, will work together to find viable approaches and solutions for the many goals that were identified and prioritized as part of the 2013 update.

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

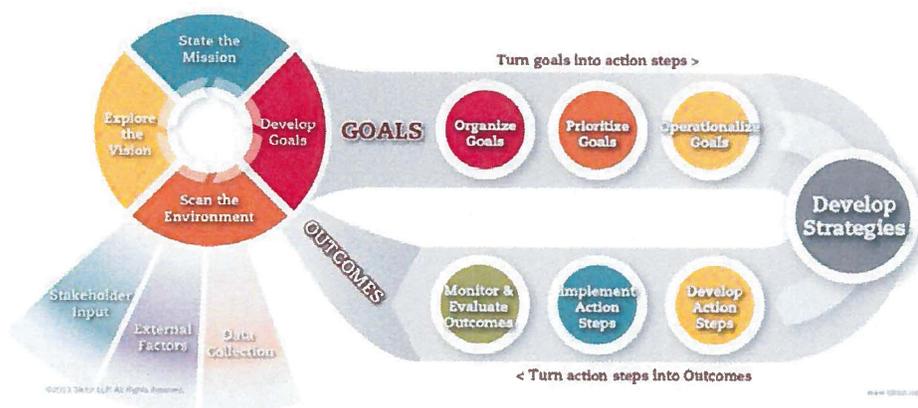
REFLECTIONS

The 2013 strategic plan workshop was held on July 9th at the Reed-Turner Nature Center. This workshop location provided a positive setting for the Board and senior staff to set aside time to methodically—“strategically”—determine the Village’s future direction as a community and as a municipal government. Your ongoing work on the Village’s future will serve the Village’s residents and organization well into the coming years.

In light of the economic conditions that have impacted all units of government, including Long Grove, it remains important to proceed with careful thought. Long and short-term goals will only be realized through prioritization and the judicious use of your professional staff. The standards of excellence that you expect can place a strain on the organization, as excellence requires adequate staff time, expertise, and resources. Quality results equate to tough choices in prioritization and resource allocation. Only a limited number of objectives, goals, and services can be effectively managed and implemented at a given time. In a very realistic sense, **clear and stable priorities** must be maintained if the Village seeks to maximize its resources. Resist the temptation to “re-arrange” priorities as the fiscal year moves along. A pattern of “continuous” shifting can create a confusing tone in the organization and hamper your efforts to reach your near and long-term goals.

The following pages capture the discussion sessions that comprised the strategic planning workshop for 2013. It is important to note that the format for all of the discussion sessions included highly participative and interactive exercises. The process utilized a group discussion approach known as *Nominal Group Technique* where participants were assured equal opportunities to speak and share opinions with the facilitators. During the activities, all Board members had the opportunity to generate and share ideas, weigh alternatives, and further explain or refine their thinking. An overview of the strategic planning model that was used for this update of the strategic planning process can be seen in the illustration below. As the model visually demonstrates, strategic planning is a multi-phase process that most closely resembles an on-going cycle of information gathering, assessment, decision-making, and follow-through.

Strategic Planning Process Model- G. Kuhn



PART I: OVERVIEW MISSION AND CORE ROLES

OVERVIEW

The Strategic Planning workshop was conducted at the Reed-Turner Nature Center, which has been a frequent location for Board and staff to discuss the Village's current environment, challenges, and desires, and to set the Village's strategic goals for the next two to ten years. During this day-long session, the Board and senior staff participated in a variety of exercises that not only addressed the Village's future visions, but also reviewed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that impact the policy and operational environment. The Board and staff also developed a consolidated list of short and long term goals, categorizing them in a matrix of time and complexity. The process started with visioning exercises and concluded with the development of short and long-term goals that were later ranked and prioritized by the Board. The results of the ranking process are presented later in this summary report.

The workshop started with a warm-up/ reflection exercise that asked participants to pick an item from an assortment of small objects that might be found at a garage sale. Each participant was asked to find the item that represented an important issue or element that the Village should be discussing, exploring, or considering during the Strategic Planning process. The brief notes from that exercise are presented in the Appendix section of this report.

CORE MISSION AND ROLES

The exercise that followed the reflection warm-up were designed to focus participant's discussion and ideas around the Village's mission and role. Board members were asked to offer their thoughts and perspectives on their view of the Village's mission and core governmental role by answering the question: What is the Village's mission? What are the core functions and responsibilities of the Village? In response, participants offered the following:

- Choice and differences are important: we value open space and serenity that can be sustained; change must be balanced and enhance the quality of life;
- Create/maintain the infrastructure needed for health and safety;
- To follow the Comprehensive Plan – because it lays out a good solid future, has been voted on and accepted;
- Preserve and enhance our community's character including it's quality of life and uniqueness that should be maintained and allowed to flourish;
- Protection: the Village's mission is to protect what we have. Our mission is to maintain and change, but not strictly adhere to or be get stuck in the past;
- Enhance the quality of life of our residents, to work to enhance our community, and to enjoy our preserve areas. We are on a path;
- Make decisions on behalf of others, coordinate , control, adapt, and respond;
- Preserve, monitor, and facilitate the enhancement of Village's unique features and to manage change with the future in mind (we are also a score keeper of policies).

Based on participant's perspectives and views of the Village's mission and core role, the facilitator asked participants to reflect on the resulting common themes and how those themes might eventually be incorporated into goals for the organization.

PART II: VISIONING

With the mission and important issue reviews complete, each workshop participant was then asked to reflect on their future vision for the Village. This was a brainstorming exercise where any and all ideas about the Village's desired future were encouraged and shared. Participants engaged in this exercise by considering the phrase: "In 15 – 20 years, when I return to Long Grove, I hope to see...., or, what I think I'll see is...." The notes presented below are the thoughts and views as recorded by the facilitator on flip chart paper offered by participants.

VISION EXERCISE: LONG GROVE IN 15-20 YEARS

"In 15 – 20 years when I return to Long Grove, I hope to see...., or, I think I will see:"

PARTICIPANTS OFFERED VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

Hope/Think

- Like to see a strong downtown doing very well – with great peripheral businesses that will generate revenues on a steady basis with restaurants and upscale shops suitable for all ages.
- Upon return, like to see the Village, governed by Home Rule and making helpful local decisions.
- Like to see the Village provide more or improved services that we currently do not have.
- Scheduled road maintenance well in place; better stormwater management, maybe a sewer system; and Lake Michigan water as a source for parts of the Village.
- Like to take a walk in downtown Long Grove and I would hope to see a "re-invented" downtown that doesn't exist anywhere else. This might include: art, wine, or services that are not available elsewhere as well as a spruced-up downtown using T.I.F. or other resources.
- Like to see businesses that give the Village sustainable finances to provide the quality of services our residents desire and need.
- Like to see our prairie type areas restored and paths that interconnect the Village where we can meet and see each other. Let's enhance what we have today.
- Maintain the Village's historic charm, but see rehabilitated/improved buildings that are in poor condition.

Hope/Think

- One or two destination locations like a resort spa, wedding, or meeting center, arts center, or, high-end museum. We need a unique draw for the community (may be the bridge can be catalyst).
- Hope to see an artistic venue for downtown; art never goes out of style.
- Hope to see environmentally sensitive/well-managed high-quality open spaces that will not only be an asset, but, also help to manage invasive species.
- Like to see a “L.E.E.D. Certified” building in downtown.
- A downtown re-utilized with mixed use of residences, townhouses, and businesses.
- Route 53 extension will be built, but we (the Village) will have influenced how it looks and how it is/was built.
- Need to be alert to changing technologies and grasp and leverage these changes to our benefit.
- I see useful services downtown (ones that residents would use everyday).
- A destination business, e.g. custom leather shop, glass, or other specialty shops.
- Successful development along our periphery and on our major arterials that fits in and that helps our tax base.
- Infrastructure that has been maintained- not degraded.
- Our “oasis” character would be maintained and enhanced; maintain and enhance our uniqueness.
- Hope to see roads, water, sewer, paths, and infrastructure that are more comprehensively built and maintained.
- A clear definition of who’s responsible for what projects, services etc. Village would have resolved the need to clarify roles and responsibility and who pays.
- A true sense of place that can be enhanced with amenities, uniqueness, local services, and local facilities, (e.g. parks, businesses, programs).

PART III: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The next workshop session was a review and accounting of the internal and external factors present in the environment that can and do impact the Village's core mission. This is a fundamental exercise in any strategic planning process known as SWOT Analysis.

In two different exercises, participants were asked to identify what constraints and practical difficulties are likely to be encountered, or would make it difficult to achieve the desired future described in the vision statements. The exercise called on participants to explore the organization's strengths and weaknesses. The notes that follow are the thoughts and views shared during the environmental scan, as captured by the facilitators on flip chart paper.

EXERCISE A: SURRENDER OR LEAD EXERCISE

The first exercise was a pre-SWOT assignment entitled 'Surrender or Lead.' In this exercise, participants work in sub groups to develop responses to some simple, but thought provoking statements. All participants were assigned to random working groups and were given the same series of structure statements. The participant's responses were recorded and discussed. Groups were also asked to select a name for their group, which helped to develop a spirit of camaraderie. Responses to the structure statements are presented below. As a guide for readers, the words typed in bold indicate the provided prompts/statement and the normal text indicates the group's response to the "blank" lines.

Group Name: *Village Visionaries*

1. **We want to:** build a stronger future for the Village, but only so much is within our power at the moment.
2. **If it weren't for:** this urban oasis that we all love, we would just be another suburb.
3. **We need to:** finally find a sustainable source of revenue.
4. Revenue sources **will have the biggest** impact on our future
5. Open space **makes** us unique!

Group Name: *The Team One*

1. **We want to:** take care of the Village and improve, enhance, maintain character, but it takes more resources than we have.
2. **If it weren't for:** the vision of prior Boards we would be like other suburbs.
3. **We need to:** finally decide on a solution.
4. Illinois route 53 extension **will have the biggest** impact on our future.
5. Long Grove **makes** us happy.

EXERCISE B - SWOT IDENTIFICATION

Participants were next asked to use the outcomes of ‘Surrender or Lead’ as a starting point to develop and discuss the internal and external factors that can potentially impact the success of the Village, both negatively and positively. The participant’s responses, categorized as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, or threats (SWOT) appear below. This was designed as a ‘rapid fire’ exercise and as such the listing of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats is abbreviated and not meant to be a series of complete statements.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents that are educated and care about the community and have resources, abilities. • Open spaces. • Quaint downtown. • Good image/reputation. • Elected and appointed officials that are engaged. • Location. • Sunset Grove. • No debt. • Balanced budget. • Quality of life/safety. • Staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location. • Aging downtown. • Lack of strong partnerships among downtown stakeholders. • Lack of tax base, revenue sources. • Perception of Long Grove as “difficult” to work with. • Deferred maintained of infrastructure. • Lack of local lobbying /political muscle in Springfield. • Facilities-Village Hall. • Limited number of staff. • Resources. • Varying levels of interest of business owners.

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location. • Vacant properties identified for community development. • T.I.F. in C.B.D. • Route 53. • The realizations that resulted from economy downtown. • Lake County Department of Transportation. • Lake Michigan water. • Sunset Grove. • The new community well and tank in Long Grove and Sunset Grove. • Traffic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location. • Route 53. • State of Illinois and Finances. • State mandates. • Status quo/lack of action. • Impact of weather on infrastructure. • Deferred maintenance of infrastructure. • Wells. • Distractions. • Septic and sanitary management. • Stormwater management and age maintained, etc. • Limited Resources. • Traffic.

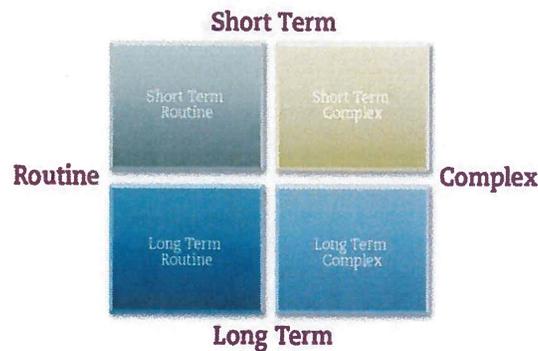
PART IV: GROUP GOAL IDENTIFICATION/CONSOLIDATION

EXERCISE A: GOAL UPDATES

TIME/COMPLEXITY CLASSIFICATION

In the next exercise, participants were asked to classify each goal according to a matrix model of complexity and time (created by Dr. Gerald Gabris and depicted below). Specific criterion was used to classify a goal as short-or long-term and as complex or routine. This final piece of the goal development exercise allowed decision-makers to cluster goals of roughly the same “type” together, so that when prioritization occurred, participants can avoid the problem of comparing “apples to oranges.” The agreed-to criteria for the classifications were as follows: short-term goals were those that could or should be completed (or substantially underway) by the end of the next fiscal year (approximately two years). Long-term goals were any that fell within a three to seven year time span. Complex goals were those that required extraordinary resources, specialists, funding, or the agreement of outside organizations or agencies. Routine goals, although not necessarily simple, were goals that could be accomplished upon unilateral decision of the Board and within present budget streams, or with minor revenue enhancements or reallocations.

Goal Classification Grid (Dr. Gerald Gabris)



EXERCISE C: GOAL CONSOLIDATION

Once classified, where appropriate, and where goals were connected or related, staff was asked to work with the facilitators to consolidate goals and refine/clarify some of the workshop terms used to describe the goals. This process resulted in a final listing of goals from the prior exercise into logical groupings. The combined and consolidated goals were reviewed and converted to ranking sheets for the Board that maintained the agreed upon criteria for both time and complexity.

PART V: GOAL PRIORITIZATION/ RANKINGS

Using the consolidated goals from the workshop sessions, the final exercise in developing the 2013 Strategic Plan was Board input to produce a consensus ranking of short and long-term goals and objectives. These group prioritization rankings are designed to aid the Board and staff in developing action plans and decision points required to attain the goals. Board members were asked to indicate their priority ranking for each goal as compared to other goals in the same category (i.e., prioritize all short-term complex goals against one another, prioritize all long-term routine goals against one another, and so on). This was essentially a Board exercise that ultimately produced a collaborative ranking of goals within each of the four quadrants of time and complexity. Below are the final tabulations of the ranking exercise as compiled by staff as part of the planning process.

**2013 LONG GROVE STRATEGIC PLAN
GOAL RANKINGS**

Preliminary Draft
For Discussion Only

LONG TERM COMPLEX GOALS		
GROUP AVG.	GOAL ID #	GOAL DESCRIPTION
2.0	21 (L)	Continue development of Sunset Grove properties South along Route 83 and peripheral areas in the Village.
3.7	18 (L)	Develop a long-term plan/consensus to redevelop the historical downtown business district.
3.8	22 (L)	Take steps to foster revitalization of the downtown and increase/enhance business activity and commerce.
4.0	16 (L)	Complete development of the Triangle property.
4.3	24 (L)	Complete an interconnected path-system in the Village including exploring funding options like grants, partnerships with County, etc.
4.7	26 (L)	Install Lake Michigan water supply mains for downtown/Central Business District of the Village.
6.2	23 (L)	Seek out pathway to Home Rule.
7.3	17 (L)	Adopt an Invasive Species Education And Eradication policy and program (e.g. Lake Forest open lands policies).

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LONG TERM ROUTINE GOALS		
GROUP AVG.	GOAL ID #	GOAL DESCRIPTION
1.3	29 (L)	Identify sustainable long-term funding sources for needed infrastructure repair/replacement.
3.0	25 (L)	Maximize TIF opportunities based on revenues and needs.
3.3	28 (L)	Complete a full update and adopt revisions to the Village's Comprehensive Plan.
3.8	27 (L)	Bring all downtown/Central Business District structures in compliance with fire/life safety code.
4.5	19 (L)	Create signage and public information to convey the history of downtown.
5.0	20 (L)	Develop strategy and implement a program to establish a destination/focus point (like the bridge) in Long Grove.

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SHORT TERM COMPLEX GOALS		
GROUP AVG.	GOAL ID #	GOAL DESCRIPTION
2.3	16 (S)	Foster development of Archer out-lots.
2.8	17 (S)	Foster development of South 15th Street.
3.7	4 (S)	Undertake direct outreach to potential businesses/economic development with our community partners.
4.0	12 (S)	Continue to advance connections/availability of Lake Michigan water for the Village.
4.7	5 (S)	Design and install initial portions/legs of Village pathway system in the community.
5.2	14 (S)	Complete a historic preservation ordinance.
5.3	10 (S)	Improve way-finding signage in the Central Business District and at Village Gateways.

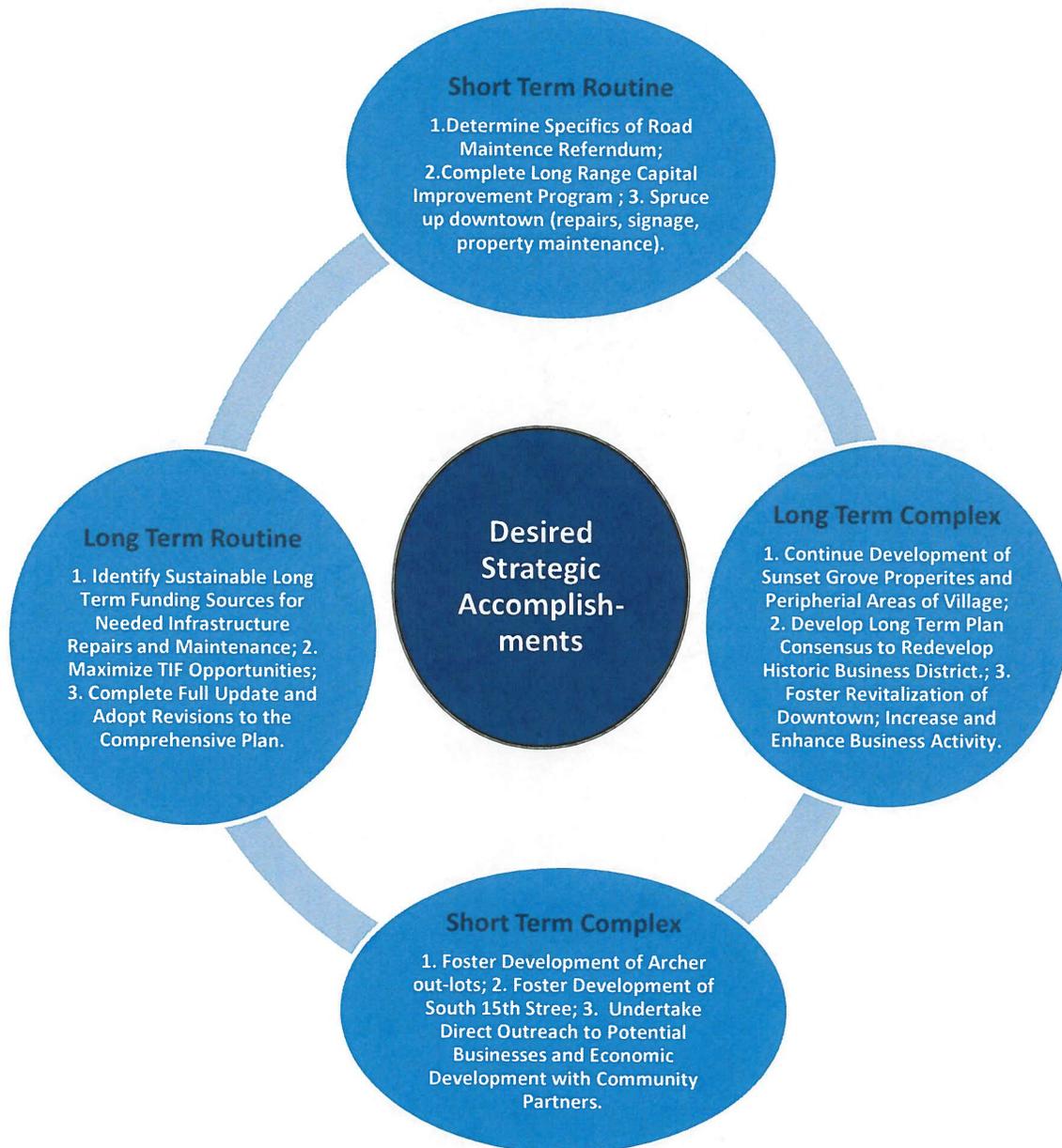
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SHORT TERM ROUTINE GOALS		
GROUP AVG.	GOAL ID #	GOAL DESCRIPTION
2.8	1 (S)	Identify/determine specifics of Road Maintenance Program funding referendum (by November 13, 2013), place on ballot in April of 2014.
3.3	2 (S)	Complete long-range Capital Improvement Plan that provides a comprehensive view of Village Capital needs.
4.8	9 (S)	Spruce up the town – repair/improve road signs, property maintenance, Village R.O.W.'s (Rights of Way).
5.0	7 (S)	Revisit the Village's Master Plan/Comprehensive Plan and development scenarios for properties around Sunset Grove.
6.2	13 (S)	Explore historic designation for the covered bridge.
6.2	15 (S)	Develop a clear/universal policy on stormwater intervention for subdivision/localized flooding issues.
6.5	18 (S)	Update the Village's Master Plan/Comprehensive Plan.
7.0	3 (S)	Review permitted uses in the Central Business District/Downtown.
7.7	8 (S)	Explore options for improvement or relocation of Village Offices/Village Hall.
8.2	11 (S)	Explore uses and/or leases of Village soccer fields to others.
8.3	6 (S)	Explore metered parking in the Central Business District/Downtown.

As a further refinement of results, and in order to aid in communication of the Board's top goal priorities, the following illustration depicts the top three goals within each quadrant of the time/complexity matrix.

TOP THREE GOALS WITHIN TIME/COMPLEXITY MATRIX



CONCLUSION

This 2013 Strategic Planning Summary Report represents an update of leadership's vision and goals for the Village's future. The Village Board's ideas and prioritized goals were revisited, refined, and refreshed within the context of the current operating environment and therefore should become a working guide for both the Village Board and staff to pursue as an outcome of the planning process. This report is designed to capture the topics and processes of your discussions and should be used to assist the organization in developing action plans in follow-up sessions that include your committees, staff, advisors, and elected Board members.

The next step is for senior staff to review the results and with the Village President and Board to fine-tune these objectives and report back to the Board and to appropriate committees on how and when the goals and objectives might be most efficiently and effectively addressed. What is apparent from the exchange of ideas and dialogue during the discussion sessions and workshop is that the organization is fortunate to have elected leadership that continues to look ahead, while facing the unprecedented economic challenges that have impacted all communities

One noted organizational observer summarized the challenges of progress this way:

*"The art of progress is to preserve order amid change,
and change amid order..." A.F. Whitehead*

Again, you have an ambitious couple of years that lay ahead. Best of luck to all as you work through these important goals.

*Gregory T. Kuhn, Ph.D.
Cristi H. Musser, MPA
Process Facilitators*

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SHORT TERM ROUTINE											
YOUR RANKING						GROUP AVG.	GOAL ID #	GOAL DESCRIPTION			
A	B	C	D	E	F						
2	10	2	1	1	1	2.8	1 (S)	Identify/determine specifics of Road Maintenance Program funding referendum (by November 13, 2013), place on ballot in April of 2014.			
1	9	1	2	3	4	3.3	2 (S)	Complete long-range Capital Improvement Plan that provides a comprehensive view of Village Capital needs.			
11	11	6	4	7	3	7.0	3 (S)	Review permitted uses in the Central Business District/Downtown.			
7	2	11	8	11	11	8.3	6 (S)	Explore metered parking in the Central Business District/Downtown.			
3	1	7	9	5	5	5.0	7 (S)	Revisit the Village's Master Plan/Comprehensive Plan and development scenarios for properties around Sunset Grove.			
8	3	10	7	10	8	7.7	8 (S)	Explore options for improvement or relocation of Village Offices/Village Hall.			
9	4	3	3	8	2	4.8	9 (S)	Spruce up the town – repair/improve road signs, property maintenance, Village R.O.W.'s (Rights of Way).			
5	5	9	11	9	10	8.2	11 (S)	Explore uses and/or leases of Village soccer fields to others.			
10	6	4	6	2	9	6.2	13 (S)	Explore historic designation for the covered bridge.			
6	8	5	5	6	7	6.2	15 (S)	Develop a clear/universal policy on stormwater intervention for subdivision/localized flooding issues.			
4	7	8	10	4	6	6.5	18 (S)	Update the Village's Master Plan/Comprehensive Plan.			

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SHORT TERM COMPLEX										
YOUR RANKING						GROUP AVG.	GOAL ID #	GOAL DESCRIPTION		
A	B	C	D	E	F					
1	3	6	2	5	5	3.7	4 (S)	Undertake direct outreach to potential businesses/economic development with our community partners.		
5	5	3	5	6	4	4.7	5 (S)	Design and install initial portions/legs of Village pathway system in the community.		
7	7	7	1	7	3	5.3	10 (S)	Improve way-finding signage in the Central Business District and at Village Gateways.		
4	4	4	3	2	7	4.0	12 (S)	Continue to advance connections/availability of Lake Michigan water for the Village.		
6	6	5	7	1	6	5.2	14 (S)	Complete a historic preservation ordinance.		
2	1	2	4	3	2	2.3	16 (S)	Foster development of Archer out-lots.		
3	2	1	6	4	1	2.8	17 (S)	Foster development of South 15 th Street.		

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LONG TERM ROUTINE								
YOUR RANKING						GROUP AVG.	GOAL ID #	GOAL DESCRIPTION
A	B	C	D	E	F			
6	5	5	5	3	3	4.5	19 (L)	Create signage and public information to convey the history of downtown.
5	6	6	6	5	2	5.0	20 (L)	Develop strategy and implement a program to establish a destination/focus point (like the bridge) in Long Grove.
1	3	3	2	4	5	3.0	25 (L)	Maximize TIF opportunities based on revenues and needs.
4	2	2	3	6	6	3.8	27 (L)	Bring all downtown/Central Business District structures in compliance with fire/life safety code.
2	4	4	4	2	4	3.3	28 (L)	Complete a full update and adopt revisions to the Village's Comprehensive Plan.
3	1	1	1	1	1	1.3	29 (L)	Identify sustainable long-term funding sources for needed infrastructure repair/replacement.

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LONG TERM COMPLEX									
YOUR RANKING						GROUP AVG.	GOAL ID #	GOAL DESCRIPTION	
A	B	C	D	E	F				
2	5	6	5	2	4	4.0	16 (L)	Complete development of the Triangle property.	
8	8	8	6	7	7	7.3	17 (L)	Adopt an <i>Invasive Species Education And Eradication</i> policy and program (e.g. Lake Forest open lands policies).	
3	4	2	8	3	2	3.7	18 (L)	Develop a long-term plan/consensus to redevelop the historical downtown business district.	
1	3	1	3	1	3	2.0	21 (L)	Continue development of Sunset Grove properties South along Route 83 and peripheral areas in the Village.	
4	2	4	2	6	5	3.8	22 (L)	Take steps to foster revitalization of the downtown and increase/enhance business activity and commerce.	
6	1	7	7	8	8	6.2	23 (L)	Seek out pathway to Home Rule.	
7	7	3	4	4	1	4.3	24 (L)	Complete an interconnected path-system in the Village including exploring funding options like grants, partnerships with County, etc.	
5	6	5	1	5	6	4.7	26 (L)	Install Lake Michigan water supply mains for downtown/Central Business District of the Village.	

Ice Breaker

- Spring: Is always changing and adaptable; not sure where we came from and where we are going (like a spring with no beginning/end) but we are changing.
- Hard Hat: Structures, infrastructure; they need to be part of our core to the community-health and safety.
- Flower Basket: Everything's coming up roses," a lot of good things are happening but we need to continue to work hard to help make good things happen.
- Clamped
Radiator Hose: Not a "permanent" solution. It is a patch. We need long-term infrastructure.
- Nail Polish: "You have to maintain" we haven't been maintaining as we should have – not gloss with coat of polish, but real maintenance and repairs.
- Tiffany Ring: Our jewel is our open space and tranquility and uniqueness.
- Globe: The Globe represents a broad view; the big picture is important and one of those things to keep in mind is nature, environment, and tranquility.
- Ruler: Also represents green path; a pathway system equals measurement; able to live within our means.
- Switch: I see myself as a switch to generate ideas and explore options.
- Traffic Cone: Roads and buildings have many infrastructure needs and it seems not enough is being done, but we can't ignore.
- Chain: All our actions are interconnected – what we do have consequences, all our previous decisions have brought us to today.