



## Memorandum

**To:** Ed Cage, AICP – Community Development Director, City of Wood Dale  
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**Date:** September 27, 2017

**RE:** **Steering Committee #4: September 25, 2017 Meeting Summary**

The fourth meeting of the project Steering Committee focused on a review of the Preliminary Subarea Recommendations. The Comprehensive Plan will examine two main subareas, the Irving Park Road Corridor (divided into three segments: Central, West, and East) and the Thorndale Road Corridor. A presentation to the Steering Committee included an overview of each subarea's key existing conditions and challenges to enhancement plus a thorough discussion of the preliminary recommendations. With each recommendation, the group considered whether the plan should: pursue, further develop, not pursue, or think of an alternative approach. Members also voted for the words or phrases that they feel should best describe each subarea in the future.

Feedback from Steering Committee members will be invaluable as the project team refines the draft recommendations in preparation for the second Community Open House on October 19<sup>th</sup>. The open house will feature interactive stations in which participants can learn about and respond to preliminary plan concepts. With this input, the draft plan will then be developed to reflect the community's wishes and priorities for Wood Dale's focus areas. Key additions and refinements to the draft recommendations shared through a slide presentation at the September 25<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting are summarized below and reference the relevant presentation slide item.

### **Subarea 1: Irving Park Road (Central)**

- Regarding the proposed road diet, the committee suggested that a separated, off-street bike path along Irving Park Road would function better than on-street bike lanes due to traffic volumes. Whatever the road treatment, the group discussed the fact that making Wood Dale Road and Irving Park Road more comfortable for bicyclists can be an employer amenity, as it would help employees access jobs from the Metra station without a car. (Item 1.3)

- The crossing at Wood Dale Road and Stoneham Street in the northwest quadrant of Irving Park Road and Wood Dale Road could be made more comfortable with curb bump outs and a pedestrian-activated signal. The City could coordinate with the park district to better understand the needs and future plans for the Water Park, which can then inform future planning in this area. (Item 1.5)
- Any plans for shared parking in the southwest quadrant should consider that the school uses the church parking lot as a playground on weekdays. Regarding potential future land uses for this quadrant, it was suggested that a microbrewery, or some type of business that can become a destination to attract visitors to Wood Dale would be desirable. (Item 1.6)
- The group agreed that the Metra station is the most important asset in the southeast quadrant. If improvements are made to add another access point for vehicles, bicycle access should also be considered. (Item 1.7)
- The northeast quadrant currently has few uses that draw residents in, but those living one or two blocks north of Irving Park Road do visit some of the existing businesses (eg: dry cleaners, Tomczak's Tap). (Item 1.8)

#### **Subarea 2: Irving Park Road (West)**

- Adding businesses as outlots at the Jewel/Target shopping center frontage along Irving Park Road to better utilize the site was considered a good approach. (Item 2.5)

#### **Subarea 3: Irving Park Road (East)**

- While potential exists to develop the eastern section of Irving Park Road, patron typically only go there to visit a specific business and then leave. (Item 3.1)
- The group agreed that a secondary access point into the Metra station from the east could boost business along Irving Park Road and enhance Metra ridership. The location of this access point and a traffic light to go with it is still unknown but could function at Central Avenue or Ash Avenue. (Item 3.2)

#### **Subarea 4: Thorndale Road Corridor**

- When considering potential recommendations for the corridor, members pointed out the need to be realistic and to engage business leaders in the discussion from the beginning.
- There is a need for an anchor tenant, but a development could also include residential, manufacturing, and commercial uses.
- The committee considered options for redevelopment of the 23-acre former HSBC site: senior living facility, sports complex, mixed-use with residential (or a combination of all these ideas).

#### **Interactive Voting Results**

After discussing preliminary recommendations for each subarea, meeting participants selected from a list of words / phrases that best describe their vision for the area in the future. The top three choices for each subarea are listed below:

- Irving Park Road (Central): pedestrian friendly, gathering space, easy to access
- Irving Park Road (West): shopping center, attractive, city-wide appeal
- Irving Park Road (East): business district, local stores, attractive
- Thorndale Road Corridor: quality design, business park, employment center