



Memorandum

To: Ed Cage, AICP – Community Development Director, City of Wood Dale
Kelley Chrissie, AICP – Assistant Community Development Director, City of Wood Dale

From: Michael Blue, FAICP – Principal, Teska Associates
Francesca Sallinger – Associate, Teska Associates

CC: Bridget Lane, BDI
Carl Wohlt, wohltgroup
Lynn Means, Gewalt Hamilton Associates

Date: August 3, 2017

RE: **Steering Committee 3: Meeting Notes – July 31, 2017**

The Steering Committee convened for its third meeting to review and discuss the draft vision and draft goals and objectives. Once finalized, these will guide development of the Comprehensive Plan Document and also can serve to inform Wood Dale’s elected and appointed officials and staff when making future decisions.

The meeting kicked off with an explanation of the purpose of the meeting, in which Michael Blue of Teska Associates described the intent behind the vision, goals, and objectives of the plan. The vision statement should serve as a description of what the community could be like 20 years from now. Each goal expresses an abstract aspiration, while the objectives describe measurable actions, programs, or policies that can help to move the community towards that goal. The strategies then offer ideas for steps to be taken to accomplish each objective.

The consultant team used this meeting to ask the Steering Committee whether any topic was missed, overlooked, or inappropriate from the draft vision down to the strategies. First, the draft goals, objectives, and strategies were presented to the committee and members had the opportunity to ask questions and clarify certain points. The next portion of the meeting was interactive—committee members used smartphones to do live, real-time polling. For each objective, they voted on “How important is this policy/program to the future of Wood Dale?” The survey format was not statistically significant and only used to encourage in depth evaluation of the objectives. The group discussed those objectives in which opinions varied greatly or those that had many votes for “very important” or “not that important.” The topics covered in the meeting are summarized below.

Goal 1: Connect Wood Dale citizens to: each other, jobs, shopping, government, and nature and recreation.

- The need for more and better signage was noted as a way to direct residents and commuters to the Metra station, which will help with access and can increase public awareness of this major community asset.
- Regarding connections to government, the committee noted that being “user-friendly” (in terms of the City website, mobile apps, and social media) is becoming increasingly important to residents.
- Wood Dale residents have ample access to nature and recreation, but many residents might not be aware of how close and convenient these opportunities are. The committee recommended more education to the public about existing preserves and trails, and one member recommended a focus on increasing connections in the eastern part of the City.
- While the City might have plenty of outdoor recreation space, young adults and teens also desire greater access to indoor facilities, with expanded hours for open recreation and gym time at more locations.

Goal 2: Build community capacity.

- The subjects of economic development and job opportunities were both very important to the committee. Participants discussed what types of new jobs they want to see in Wood Dale, and most agree that it is important to attract well-paying, good quality and professional jobs, though a variety and balance is necessary.

Goal 3: Embrace small-town charm.

- The notion of increasing “curb appeal” along Irving Park Road was considered “very important” for many committee members. As part of this objective, they noted that the corridor needed more trees, public art, and overall should have a more fun atmosphere.

Goal 4: Keep Wood Dale diverse.

- Balance was a major theme throughout the meeting, and in particular in this goal. The committee agreed that it is crucial to manage development in a way that creates a balanced mix of land uses.

Goal 5: Protect Land Values.

- Noise and flood mitigation continue to be very important issues for Wood Dale residents.
- Part of protecting land values involves encouraging new investment, and one member noted that a crucial way to attract new residents is by emphasizing Wood Dale’s quality schools.