



Wood Dale Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee 2: Meeting Notes – April 5th, 2017

The second Steering Committee Meeting for the Wood Dale Comprehensive Plan was held at Wood Dale City Hall. The consultant team (Teska Associates, Inc., Gewalt Hamilton Associates Inc., Business Districts Inc., and wohltgroup) presented the Existing Conditions Report. The first part of the presentation reviewed the comprehensive plan process and covered findings on Land Use, Key Areas, Urban Design, Community Facilities, and Transportation. The second part of the session involved a presentation about the Market Assessment and Branding components, as well as Preliminary Marketing Positioning ideas.

Key takeaways from Steering Committee discussion on branding included:

- A brand is more than a logo, it is a promise made to residents and the business community.
- To succeed, a brand must be authentic (true to the community) and nurtured (it is not a one time task, but something that is built on over time).
- Residents in Wood Dale (as with those of all communities) do not live, work, shop, and seek entertainment just within the boundaries of the City. They use the resources of the region, primarily within a 30 minute drive of their home. Wood Dale's place in this broader market is defined by any number of resources, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Compared to adjacent communities, Wood Dale's demographic characteristics show it has a higher average income, older population, and a higher percentage of home owners. However, it is generally reflective of the average of those communities.
- A community survey showed that residents are general concerned with the appearance of the City and do not consider the City's housing, or pedestrian safety as strengths. Only half of those surveyed considered Wood Dale a good place to live or a friendly community. Respondents describe Wood Dale as a quiet and likeable community, but would like for it to be a more likeable and confident place.
- Steering Committee members were asked to review three brand positioning statements regarding: 1) A Nurturing Community Focus, 2) An International Focus, and 3) A Business Focus.
- The discussion indicated that a combination of all three was desired, with an emphasis on options 1 and 2 (which the consultant team will continue to develop). In the discussion, Steering Committee members came to that consideration by noting that:
 - There is no "one" sense of place in the community: disconnected places, several small towns in one, different community service districts, invisible barriers like Irving Park Road and railroad tracks make a sense of community challenging.

- The City has strong “Hometown” and “International” characteristics and noted these should be reflected in the brand position.
- Upcoming growth and changes from I – 390 reinforce opportunities for new development and business.
- A goal of the community should be to have more activities to take advantage of for residents and employees.