

## **Section 8: Implementation**

The planning process for Downtown Round Lake has just begun. In many ways, formal adoption of the *Downtown Plan* is only the first step, not the last. Without continuing action to implement and update the Plan, Village efforts up to this point will have minimal lasting impact.

The *Downtown Plan* sets forth an agreed-upon "road map" for the next ten to fifteen years. It is the product of considerable effort on the part of the Village official, Village staff, business persons, and residents. The final Plan represents the consensus of all involved.

There are several requirements for effective implementation of the *Downtown Plan*. Although specific recommendations are found throughout the Plan, basic implementation components are highlighted below.

### ***Administrative***

The Village should be guided by a suggested agenda of administrative actions which will help establish a policy framework aligned with the recommendations of the Downtown Plan.

### ***Regulatory***

The Village should review and revise its regulatory measures, primarily the zoning ordinance, which can enforce the Plan's policies and recommendations.

### ***Capital Improvements***

The Village should utilize project scheduling devices, such as the Capital Improvements Program, which allow implementation of the most important public improvements on a priority system, while staying within budgetary constraints.

### ***Review and Update***

The Plan itself should be subjected to a monitoring process and be updated periodically to continually reflect local aspirations and opportunities.

Each of these implementation components is discussed below.

### ***Administrative Actions***

These are all high-priority, early-action projects which largely represent public policy or administrative decisions. They do not require a significant new allocation of funds, and they should all be undertaken within a relatively short time frame. These actions relate to revising and updating local codes and ordinances, follow-up studies and related administrative actions.

### ***Economic Development***

- ▣ A critically important implementation recommendation of the Downtown Plan is that the Village form a strong organizational framework for undertaking the recommendations of the Plan. This should include the identification of an appropriate business organization with which the Village could closely work.
- ▣ The Village should consider the initiation of a facade improvement program to assist property owners in updating the appearance and image of commercial buildings. This should include some level of design review on behalf of the Village of Round Lake and the program should be initially targeted for the Cedar Lake Road area between Nippersink Road and Route 134.
- ▣ The Village should make a high priority of working with the development community, businesses and land owners to realize economic change and physical improvement, as recommended under the Plan.

### ***Housing and Residential Areas***

- ▣ Closely monitor building conditions in all areas of the Downtown and strictly enforce all zoning, building, fire safety, and occupancy codes as they apply to all structures.
- ▣ Utilize the Land-Use Plan to guide the location, type, and amount of condominium and townhouse development.
- ▣ Revise existing zoning regulations to ensure the protection of sound existing development, to reduce adverse influences, and to establish setback, height, and density

requirements for new residential development.

### **Commercial Development**

- ▣ Utilize the Land-Use Plan to establish basic functional roles for the Downtown's various commercial areas.
- ▣ Update the Village zoning map to reflect new commercial area designations.
- ▣ Consider the development of access control policies and standards to be integrated into an updated Zoning Ordinance which facilitates the Village's desire to reduce the number of individual curb cuts along major streets in favor of shared or common access ways.
- ▣ Introduce standards and guidelines for appearance through the establishment of a design guidelines program.
- ▣ Continue to participate in economic development programs aimed at attracting attention to business and development opportunities within Round Lake.
- ▣ Hold regular meetings with the business, real estate, and development communities to apprise them of active changes and improvements being undertaken in the Downtown and the part they can play to help stimulate positive change.

### **Transportation and Community Facilities**

- ▣ Adopt the Downtown Plan Land-Use Plan Map as the Downtown's "Official Map" giving more significant status to the location of future facilities.
- ▣ Attempt to secure available funds for the development of the Village's bicycle system and pedestrian system improvements, including special funds made available under TEA-21 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA).
- ▣ Work with Metra to improve the train schedule and increase service to the Village.

### **Development Controls**

Adoption of the Downtown Plan should be followed by a review and update of the

Village's various development controls including zoning, subdivision regulations, and other related codes and ordinances. It is essential that all development controls be consistent with and complement the Downtown Plan.

The Village's zoning regulations have not been comprehensively reviewed within the last several years. Among other zoning recommendations included in the Plan, the Village should consider the following:

- ▣ Conduct an overall review and update of the Village's Zoning Ordinance to ensure it adequately addresses the overall recommendations of the Plan.
- ▣ Create the appropriate new commercial and residential use zoning classifications as called for in the Plan, including *Mixed Residential*, *Downtown Commercial*, *Corridor Commercial*, and *Downtown Rowhouse*.
- ▣ Update/revise the Village's Sign Ordinance to improve the appearance, character, and consistency of signage in the Downtown.

### **Capital Improvements Program**

Another tool for implementing the *Downtown Plan* is the Capital Improvements Program. It establishes schedules and priorities for all public improvement projects within a five-year period. The Village first prepares a list of all public improvements that will be required in the next five years. Then all projects are reviewed, priorities assigned, cost estimates prepared, and potential funding sources identified.

The Capital Improvements Program typically schedules the implementation of a range of specific projects related to the *Downtown Plan*, particularly the restoration, upgrading, and expansion of existing utilities and infrastructure facilities, including the water system, sanitary sewers, storm water facilities, and the street system.

Round Lake's financial resources will always be limited and public dollars must be spent wisely. The Capital Improvements Program would allow the Village of Round Lake to provide the most desirable public improvements, yet stay within budget constraints.

## **Review and Revision**

The *Downtown Plan* is not a static document; the planning process must be continuous. The Plan should be monitored and updated on a regular basis. The need for Plan amendments are the result of many community influences. Most frequently these are brought about by changes in attitudes or emerging needs not foreseen at the time of Plan adoption. The following paragraphs describe the procedures which apply to any amendment of the *Downtown Plan*.

### **Day-to-Day Monitoring and Administration**

In order for the Plan to be “maintained” and updated in a timely manner, the designation of an agency responsible for coordinating planning activities, receiving community input and comments, and providing and disseminating information regarding the Downtown Plan is required. While the Village Council are ultimately responsible for implementing the Plan, the Village staff is the most appropriate group to carry out the day-to-day activities of Plan administration. The Village will:

- ▣ Make available copies of the Plan document for public purchase.
- ▣ Provide assistance to the public in explaining the Plan and its relationship to private and public development projects and other proposals, as appropriate.
- ▣ Assist the Village Council in the day-to-day administration, interpretation and application of the Plan.
- ▣ Maintain a list of current possible amendments, issues or needs which may be a subject of change, addition or deletion from the Downtown Plan.
- ▣ Coordinate with, and assist the Village Board in the Plan amendment process.

### **Plan Review and Progress Report**

Although a proposal to amend the Plan can be brought forth by petition at any time, the Village should regularly undertake a systematic review of the Plan. Although an annual review is desirable, the Village should initiate review of the Plan at least every two to three years.

Ideally, this review should coincide with the preparation of the annual budget and capital improvement program. In this manner, recommendations or changes relating to capital improvements or other programs can be considered as part of the upcoming commitments for the fiscal year. Routine examination of the Plan will help ensure that the planning program remains relevant to community needs and aspirations.

## **Funding Sources and Implementation Techniques**

While many of the recommended actions called for in the Downtown Plan can be implemented through administrative and policy decisions or can be funded through normal municipal programs, other projects will require special technical and/or financial assistance.

This section identifies several of the local, state and federal resources and programs that are available for assisting in the implementation of key Plan recommendations.

While the Downtown Plan generally endorses the traditional role of the Village in the Downtown improvement process, it is suggested that the Village consider taking a more active leadership role in promoting, coordinating and “facilitating” the Downtown development process. For example, the Village might offer technical assistance and support to property owners or developers of Downtown projects that meet the guidelines and foster the objectives of the Downtown Plan.

In areas where the Village owns land, the Village might coordinate with adjacent and nearby property owners to assemble larger, more desirable sites for new development. The Village might assist in the preparation of developer “Requests for Proposals,” and might assist in the review and evaluation of proposals for key projects. Village ownership of land in the Downtown gives the Village substantially more control and influence over how the Downtown is developed.

Several techniques for implementing complex improvement and redevelopment projects are highlighted below. In general, the Village has

been creative, aggressive and successful in acquiring property in the Downtown District, which has given the Village a strong position in working with developers and other property owners, as it seeks to implement the Plan. Additionally, the Village should seek out funding from local, state and federal sources for financing a range of projects throughout the Downtown.

Listed below are basic descriptions of programs that the Village may want to consider for accomplishing the Downtown Plan goals.

### **General Resources and Funding Tools**

Communities have a number of general sources of revenue that can be applied to any corporate purpose, including Downtown improvements that will benefit the community as a whole. The largest of these is normally the general-purpose property tax, which primarily funds the Village's General Revenue Fund. Others include state income tax rebates, motor fuel tax funds, public utility taxes, hotel/motel tax, retailers' occupational tax, plus various fees, fines and other receipts. Municipal bonds may also be considered for special projects during various phases of the implementation of the *Downtown Plan* that may require more long-term financing. One type of bond that could be considered for Downtown projects is the special assessment bond. These bonds are issued to finance improvements that are to be paid for by special assessments against benefited properties. Bond obligations are payable only from the special assessment receipts, are not backed by general taxes and usually carry higher interest rates.

### **Downtown District Designations**

Many economic development financing and resource tools are based on the principle of establishing geographic boundaries for a "redevelopment area" for the purposes of accomplishing complex, coordinated, comprehensive and timely improvement projects and programs. These economic development tools are commonly used by communities for established central business districts or downtown neighborhoods. Individually and in combination, these

economic development tools provide flexibility for achieving financing and technical assistance for the "hard" and "soft" component strategies of downtown revitalization and promotion. The use of one or more of these financing tools may be considered for the implementation of the Village's Downtown Plan.

### **Special Service Areas**

Special Service Area (SSA) financing is an economic development tool that enables a municipality, property owners and community members to cooperatively plan, provide for, benefit from, and finance capital improvements or "special services" for an identified geographic area. The projects or services of an SSA district are paid for with revenue from taxes levied on the properties receiving the benefit. SSA services and programs are in addition to the normal programs and services provided by the Village.

SSA districts most typically encompass commercial or business districts (which is why they are often referred to as "business improvement districts"), but can include residential areas as well. SSAs have been used by communities throughout Illinois to accomplish a range of improvement activities, including: parking structures and surface lots, lighting, paving, landscaping installation and maintenance, streetscape improvements and seasonal decorations, litter control, security services, snow removal, storm sewers, tenant search and commercial attraction activities, and area-wide marketing and promotion activities.

SSA services and improvements are funded entirely through the tax revenues generated by the special service tax. The revenue is derived from a computation using the Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) of the taxable parcels within the special service area boundaries. The process for establishing an SSA involves first establishing proposed boundaries of a contiguous area and defining the benefits and services to be paid for within that area. The costs of these services and projects are then estimated to determine a corresponding tax levy, rate and duration of the SSA. The decision of whether the municipality will issue bonds for SSA projects is also evaluated at the initial

stages of SSA consideration. A public process for notifying property owners and other stakeholders within the SSA is required to provide information, gather feedback, and to allow for challenge. Upon successful adoption of an SSA ordinance, which includes a levy and budget, the sponsoring municipality typically serves as the administrator of the SSA. Depending on the types of projects and services proposed for the SSA, however, many communities choose to delegate administration of the SSA to either an existing or new organization with a mission consistent with the purposes of the SSA. Amendments to and dissolution of the SSA, however, are accomplished by the sponsoring municipality.

### ***Business District Designation***

Business district development and redevelopment is authorized by Division 74.3 of the Municipal Code of the State of Illinois. A municipality may designate, after public hearings, an area of the municipality as a Business District. While business district designation does not provide a funding source, it empowers a municipality to carry out a business district development or redevelopment plan through the following actions:

- ▣ Approve all development and redevelopment proposals.
- ▣ Exercise the use of eminent domain for the acquisition of real and personal property for the purpose of a development or redevelopment project.
- ▣ Acquire, manage, convey or otherwise dispose of real and personal property acquired pursuant to the provisions of a development or redevelopment plan.
- ▣ Apply for and accept capital grants and loans from the United States and the State of Illinois, or any instrumentality of the United States or the State, for business district development and redevelopment.
- ▣ Borrow funds as it may be deemed necessary for the purpose of business district development and redevelopment, and in this connection issue such obligation or revenue

bonds as it shall be deemed necessary, subject to applicable statutory limitations.

- ▣ Enter into contracts with any public or private agency or person.
- ▣ Sell, lease, trade or improve such real property as may be acquired in connection with business district development and redevelopment plans.
- ▣ Expend such public funds as may be necessary for the planning, execution and implementation of the business district plans.
- ▣ Establish by ordinance or resolution procedures for the planning, execution and implementation of business district plans.
- ▣ Create a Business District Development and Redevelopment Commission to act as an agent for the municipality for the purposes of business district development and redevelopment.

### ***Community Development Corporations***

Many communities use Special Service Areas or Tax Increment Financing (as appropriate) to fund the start up and/or operation of a community development corporation (CDC) to oversee a range of redevelopment activities for a specific geographic area, particularly commercial areas and central business districts. A central business district CDC is typically an independently chartered organization, often times with not-for-profit status, that is governed by a board of directors. The directors typically bring expertise in real estate or business development along with a demonstrated commitment to the community. CDCs are often funded through public-private partnerships with financial commitments from local financial institutions or businesses and a public funding source (TIF, SSA, etc.) to provide for both operating expenses and programs, as appropriate. CDCs may undertake traditional chamber of commerce-like activities such as marketing, promotion, workforce development, information management, and technical assistance to small businesses, but may also administer loan programs or acquire and redevelop property in the community.

Many communities create CDCs under the umbrella structure of an established chamber of commerce in the community so that missions are complementary and do not overlap. An example of a distinctive CDC activity is the facilitation or administration of a revolving loan fund or a community lending pool capitalized by commitments from local financial institutions to provide low-interest/low-cost loans. Such funds typically target both new and expanding businesses for such redevelopment activities as interior improvements, façade and exterior improvements, building additions, site improvements, etc. Some state and federal small business assistance programs are structured to work in combination with CDC-administered loan programs. Another distinctive activity of a CDC is property acquisition and redevelopment, which is most successful when the organization is mature in both expertise and capacity (particularly if the CDC intends to manage property after redevelopment).

### ***Transportation and Infrastructure Improvements***

Based on the types of improvements recommended for Downtown, the funding sources that will most likely be applicable to Round Lake are programs of the *Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century* (TEA-21), including ITEP, CMAQ and STP Programs. TEA-21 was appropriated in 1998 as a successor to the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and is currently funded for five years. The TEA-21 programs are administered through various regional and state agencies and are supported by federal revenues. While the details of project eligibility vary from program to program, they all generally require that a project have a local sponsor (the Village of Round Lake), and some evidence of local support of the project. Brief descriptions of the component programs of TEA-21 are described below.

It should be noted that these transportation and infrastructure programs might be applied in combination with one or more funding sources described under other funding categories.

### ***Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)***

This funding source is administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation and is a set-aside fund from the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Among the projects that are eligible for this funding include bicycle/pedestrian facilities, streetscaping, landscaping, historic preservation and projects that control or remove outdoor advertising. Federal reimbursement is available for up to 50 percent of the cost of right-of-way and easement acquisition and 80 percent of the cost for preliminary engineering, utility relocations, construction engineering and construction costs.

### ***Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)***

The CMAQ program is also part of TEA-21 and it focuses on projects that provide solutions to regional congestion and air quality problems. Eligible project types include transit improvements, commuter parking lots, traffic flow improvements, bicycle/pedestrian projects and projects that result in emissions reductions. These projects are also federally funded at 80 percent of project costs.

### ***Surface Transportation Program (STP)***

These funds are allocated to coordinating regional councils to be used for all roadway and roadway related items. Projects in this funding category must have a local sponsor and are selected based, among other factors, on a ranking scale that takes into account the regional benefits provided by the project among other factors. STP funds are allocated among the following programs: demonstration projects; enhancement; hazard elimination; and urban funds.

### ***State Only Funding***

These funds are distributed to municipalities for roadway related projects. The recently initiated Illinois FIRST legislation increases funds available in this category. Elements of the Illinois FIRST program include a fund for locally sponsored projects that improve the quality of life. Other recommended projects such as

utility and lighting improvements might be eligible for funds from this facet of the program. While many projects and allocations to legislative districts have already been approved (including the district encompassing the Village of Round Lake), Illinois FIRST is still accepting proposals for additional projects.

### ***Open Space and Natural Resources***

The Village has had the foresight to recognize the importance of the natural assets and open space opportunities that exist in the Downtown. Funding resources of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) are tailored for such open space and natural area designations. The Village should monitor this agency's programming and funding as a part of the implementation of the *Downtown Plan*. A brief description of the most relevant IDNR programs is given below.

#### ***Illinois Department of Natural Resources***

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) administers seven grants-in-aid programs to help municipalities and other local agencies provide a number of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The programs operate on a cost reimbursement basis to local agencies (government or not-for-profit organization) and are awarded on an annual basis. Local governments can receive one grant per program per year, with no restrictions on the number of local governments that can be funded for a given location. IDNR grants are organized into three major categories: Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD); Boat Access Area Development (BAAD); and Illinois Trails Grant Programs.

- The OSLAD program awards up to fifty percent of project costs up to a maximum of \$400,000 for acquisition and \$200,000 for development/renovation of such recreation facilities as playgrounds, outdoor nature interpretive areas, campgrounds and fishing piers, park roads and paths, and beaches.
- The BAAD program provides financial assistance for acquisition, construction, expansion and rehabilitation of public boat and canoe access areas. The program provides up to 100 percent of funds for project construction and 90 percent of funds

for land acquisition (\$200,000 annual maximum per project).

- IDNR administers five grant programs to provide financial assistance for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of trails that are used for public recreation uses (bike paths, snowmobile, off-highway vehicles, motorized and non-motorized recreational trails, etc.). The Illinois Bicycle Path Program is one program under this category and provides up to fifty percent of costs for approved projects (maximum of \$200,000 for development, no limit for acquisition). Another program is the Recreational Trails Program that provides an eighty percent match to a local twenty percent investment in projects for acquisition, development rehabilitation and maintenance of both motorized and non-motorized recreational trails (this is part of the TEA-21 umbrella program as described in the Transportation and Infrastructure section above).

#### ***Foundation and Specialized Grants***

The successful implementation of the *Downtown Plan* requires realization of projects that range in scale and scope. One type of funding source that becomes increasingly significant when issue-specific projects or programs (tourism, performing arts, historic preservation, small business assistance, etc.) are considered is foundation grants. The Village should continue to dedicate resources to monitoring and exploring the foundation grant as a funding tool.

For example, the Grand Victoria Foundation—the philanthropic arm of the Grand Victoria Casino in the Village of Elgin, can possibly assist with the establishment of a commercial façade rehabilitation program. The foundation's mission is to "assist communities in their efforts to pursue systemic solutions to problems in specific areas of education, economic development and the environment. Specifically, the foundation will fund economic development projects that: link workforce development to jobs and job creation; provide greater access to capital and other resources; improve housing and home ownership

opportunities; and implement smart growth management. The foundation indicates that priority is given to projects that are regional in scope, employ “best practices,” pursue long-term positive results, and leverage additional investment. Not-for-profit organizations and public entities located in Illinois are eligible for Grand Victoria Foundation grants.