



VILLAGE OF MOUNT PROSPECT

# BRANDING PLAN



Prepared by: MECO Consulting  
DRAFT February 2020







## **MOUNT PROSPECT MISSION**

To advance our community's collective quality of life and potential through adaptive leadership and leading-edge service delivery.

## **MOUNT PROSPECT VISION**

A community that is thriving, proud, diverse and connected – having a rich heritage, strong values and a timeless yet contemporary atmosphere.

- Mount Prospect Strategic Plan





# VILLAGE OF MOUNT PROSPECT **BRANDING PLAN**

## Table of Contents

- Executive Summary ..... i-iii**
- Introduction ..... 1**
- What Is A Brand? ..... 2**
- Mount Prospect Brand ..... 4**
- Stakeholder/Community Input..... 9**
- Influencing Factors..... 13**
  - Economic Development ..... 13**
  - Demographics..... 17**
  - Diversity ..... 20**
- Target Audiences ..... 21**
- Brand Strategy Recommendations ..... 22**

## Appendix

- Appendix A: Sample Marketing Budget**
- Appendix B: Examples**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## WHY DO WE NEED A BRAND?

Village leadership recognizes the need to undertake a comprehensive marketing effort in order to promote the community externally, and generate a sense of pride internally. The first step in this process is to identify the Village's brand. The brand will lay the foundation for marketing initiatives moving forward. The brand is what the messaging will be built on. The brand is an articulation of the Village's identity and a reflection of the Strategic Plan.

## COMMUNITY BRAND

A community brand is different than a commercial brand and has different meanings, inferences and purpose. A Community Brand resonates with local residents. It boosts local pride, provides a sense of identity, and increases local support for residential, retail, entertainment, leisure and sporting activities. The brand enhances the community's economic well-being and competitiveness.

Branding is strategic; it requires a long-term outlook. Marketing is also strategic but should be shorter term and is primarily tactical; it is an element of branding.<sup>1</sup> The Branding Plan will provide recommendations for marketing tactics and efforts and allow the Village to market with strategic intent.



Village of Mount Prospect Branding Plan - DRAFT February 2020

## BRANDING PLAN GOAL

The goal of the Village of Mount Prospect Branding Plan is to capture the qualities of Mount Prospect that produce positive emotional reactions. Creating a brand focusing on the positives of the Village will help its leaders continue to successfully grow and develop the community. The brand identity should capture the essence of what the Village represents and is the foundation upon which future marketing and outreach efforts will be based.

## METHODOLOGY

The following tools were used in developing the Branding Plan:

### Primary Research

- Face to face stakeholder interviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys

### Secondary Research

- Past Village Plans
- Industry Trends
- Local and National Media
- Data Sources
- Examples



## BRAND POSITIONING STATEMENT

Mount Prospect is a welcoming, down-to-earth community that offers its diverse residents modern living, responsive leadership and vibrant community events with a smile and a good neighbor vibe. It offers the promise of opportunity for both residents and businesses that choose to make Mount Prospect their home.

## BRAND PROMISE

Mount Prospect welcomes you home - one person, one family, one neighborhood, one business at a time.

Mount Prospect offers an exceptional quality of life with a forward-focused perspective for those who live, work and visit here.

It is a thriving community with diverse neighborhoods, tree-lined streets and top-rated schools.

Mount Prospect provides memorable friendly gatherings and delivers full-service retail, dining, recreation and entertainment amenities.

Home to Fortune 500 companies along with entrepreneurial mom-and-pop ventures, Mount Prospect's business environment is unbeatable.

The welcome sign is out...the excitement is building...be a part of it.





# INPUT

## Interviews & Focus Groups

A total of nineteen interviews, five follow-up interviews and three focus groups were conducted with community stakeholders including Village elected officials and staff, business owners, residents and thought leaders.

The feedback received from the interview process was invaluable in providing insights into perceptions and providing constructive suggestions that helped to form the basis of several of the recommendations in the Brand Strategy.

## Survey

In addition to the interview and focus groups, an online survey was utilized to gain insight into general perceptions both internally and externally about the Village in relation to its neighbors.

74 total survey respondents included:

- 43 Mount Prospect Residents
- 31 Other Zip Codes



# BRAND INFLUENCING FACTORS

The report takes a closer look at important socio-economic factors that have significant influence on the development of the brand:

- Economic Development
- Demographics
- Diversity

Each of these elements are woven into the fabric of the community brand and the brand is influenced by them. It is important to take each these into account – and to understand how future projections in each of these areas can have an impact on the brand vision.

## Economic Development

Cultivating a community brand is critical to an effective economic development program. The community brand is an overarching theme that encompasses all of the Village’s marketing efforts, tying them together under a common strategy. With a cohesive strategy, the Village can speak with one voice, with various departments and projects using coordinated themes and messaging.

Mount Prospect is well-positioned for future growth in economic development because of their focus on improving the overall quality of life and their willingness to support businesses in creative and innovative ways.

## Demographics

There are significant population shifts occurring nationwide that are reflected in Mount Prospect’s experience. Three key demographic forces have reshaped the overall U.S. population in recent years: growing racial and ethnic diversity, increasing immigration and rising numbers of older adults.<sup>2</sup> These factors, combined with generational shifts taking place in the housing market, are impacting housing choices.

The report also takes a deep dive into socio-economics of the Village, examining household-based consumer lifestyle segmentation that provides insight into behaviors, attitudes and preferences the population base and the most effective channels for reaching them.

## Diversity

Having a distinct sense of place often makes a city or suburb one that is vibrant and attractive. The sense of place is shaped and transformed by the people who live there and contribute to the quality of life. The heartbeat of Mount Prospect is the diversity of its residents and businesses. According to US Census Data, 33.5% of Mount Prospect’s population is foreign born and 43% of residents speak a language other than English.

# AUDIENCE

The following target audiences have been identified for the Branding Plan:

- Developers/Prospective Businesses
- Future Residents
  - Millennials
  - Generation Z
  - Baby Boomers
- Existing Businesses/Residents
- Regional Visitors





## BRAND STRATEGY

There are four categories of tactics recommended for bringing the “place brand” to life: Public Relations, Marketing/Outreach, Economic Development Initiatives and Product Development.

The brand strategy sets guidelines for how the Village’s brand should be communicated and should also identify how to deliver experiences to target audiences. In order for the brand strategy to succeed, consistent messaging must be enforced on multiple platforms.

### Public Relations

Public relations play a valuable role in brand development and enhancing the reputation of a community. Maintaining a proactive public relations program is vital to the success of a branding program.

By developing key messages that convey the essence of the brand in sound bites for speeches and presentations as well as several key phrases for written communications, the Village can convey its brand more effectively.<sup>3</sup>

### Marketing/Outreach

With the branding strategy promoting quality of life in Mount Prospect, it is necessary to develop a community marketing plan. The plan should target areas to advertise that will reach the target audiences. Main points would include: location - easy highway and transit access to suburbs and downtown Chicago; new transit-oriented development; diverse housing options; great schools and family amenities.

### Economic Development Initiatives

Economic development is changing and the Village is in a prime position to build its economic development programming. The Village should consider marketing and branding within its economic development approach.

### Product Development

Promoting a municipality as a product is different from promoting a consumer product. Forming the concept of a Mount Prospect brand is necessary to proactively market the Village. It helps to consider the Village as an experiential product. A community’s products can include curb appeal (streetscapes, gateways, public art, public spaces), events and festivals, customer service and infrastructure.<sup>4</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Mount Prospect is moving in the right direction by recognizing the need to develop a brand identity. The next steps will include the development of a brand implementation plan, along with robust marketing and economic development plans. It is vital that Village leadership be committed to making implementation of the brand a priority.





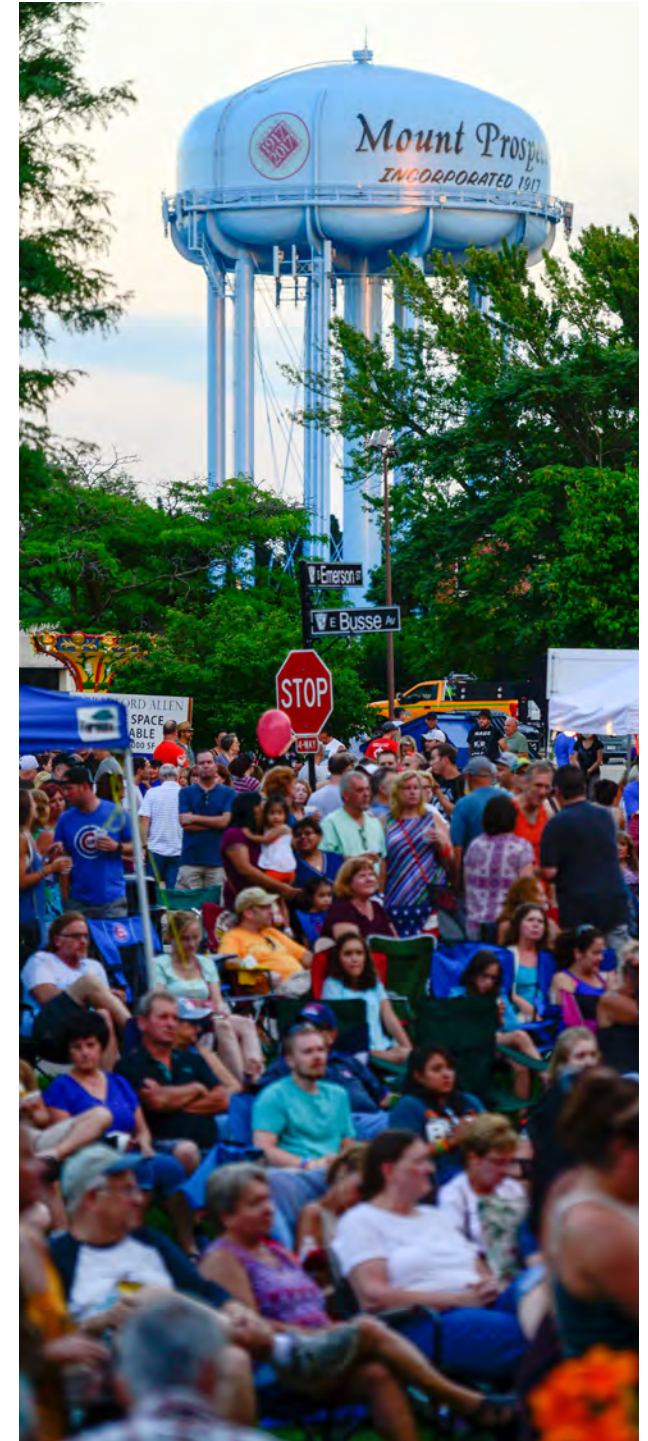
# VILLAGE OF MOUNT PROSPECT BRANDING PLAN

## INTRODUCTION

The Village of Mount Prospect is experiencing the redevelopment of several key commercial corridors facilitated by the strategic and forward-thinking mindset of its leaders. Identifying and refining the Village's brand image is an essential prerequisite to undertaking marketing efforts aimed at both new and existing residents and businesses as well as visitors. Transformations are not only occurring on the local front - larger socio-economic trends are also impacting what is happening within the Village. These changes include:

- **Reinvestment Downtown:** Increased development activity is taking place in the downtown area, with several residential and commercial transit-oriented projects taking shape.
- **Commerce and Industry:** Due to the impact of a healthy economy, demand for industrial/commercial space in south Mount Prospect and in Kensington Business Center is strong. What effect will new highways, O'Hare corridor enhancements, and greater accessibility and connectivity have on the area?
- **Population Shifts Influence on Preferences:** As the area experiences an influx of Millennials and Generation Z (just entering/soon to be entering the housing market), Baby Boomers are transitioning from single-family homes to rental options. What do each group's housing preferences mean to the larger real estate market?
- **Consumer Shifts:** As the online shopping market share continues to grow, what are the impacts on "brick and mortar" retail locations? Consumers are looking for less retail driven, more experientially focused uses.

Mount Prospect is generating excitement as these developments and trends play out. The transformational period is now, it is imperative to lay the groundwork to develop a robust identity for the Village. Establishing the foundation of a strong brand will ensure that as developments and opportunities arise, the Village will be well-positioned to successfully market itself to the appropriate audiences.





## WHY DO WE NEED A BRAND?

Village leadership recognizes the need to undertake a comprehensive marketing effort in order to promote the community externally, and generate a sense of pride internally. The first step in this process is to identify the Village's brand. The brand will lay the foundation for marketing initiatives moving forward. The brand is what the messaging will be built on. The brand is an articulation of the Village's identity.

## WHAT IS A BRAND?

A BRAND IS:

### REPUTATION

What do people say about your organization when you aren't in the room?

X

### VISIBILITY

How well known is your brand in your target market?

=

**BRAND STRENGTH**

### COMMUNITY BRAND

A community brand is different than a commercial brand and has different meanings, inferences and purpose. A community brand resonates with local residents. It boosts local pride, provides a sense of identity, and increases local support for residential, retail, entertainment, leisure and sporting activities. The brand enhances the community's economic well-being and competitiveness.

A brand represents not just the physical features but also the feelings that a product, or in this case a place can evoke. This combination of physical and emotional cues is triggered when exposed to the name, the logo, the visual identity, or even the message communicated. Close emotional ties exist between people and the places they live, work and visit. The thoughts and associations that come to mind when the Village's name is heard or read can have huge financial, political and social value.<sup>5</sup>

### BRANDING VS. MARKETING

Establishing an authentic brand for the Village of Mount Prospect will help to guide community marketing in the years to come. Branding is strategic; it requires a long-term outlook. Marketing is also strategic but should be shorter term and is primarily tactical; it is an element of branding.<sup>6</sup> The Branding Plan will provide recommendations for marketing tactics and efforts and allow the Village to market with strategic intent.

The market creates the brand. Marketing and communications define the brand. The market experiences the Village, its offerings and its messages through direct and indirect means – opinions, experiences, anecdotes, media, and perceptions (their own as well as those of family, friends, co-workers, etc.). Advertising does not create brands – behaviors, offerings and attributes do.<sup>7</sup>



## PLACE BRAND STRATEGY

In today's interconnected world, places increasingly compete for attention. Place branding can help communities by guiding them towards building a competitive identity. The goal of place branding is to influence perceptions in relevant markets or audiences.

Place branding is about bridging gaps between the identity or sense of place; its product offering; the experience that visitors get when they visit; and the image/perception that people have of a place.<sup>8</sup>

Three important tactics that can be used to tie these elements together include:

- Communications/Public Relations
- Construction - real actions or policy initiatives that support the brand claims
- Cooperation - finding common ground between stakeholders, private and public sector and civil society, in order to determine what makes a place unique and attractive and to make sure that institutions, companies, employees and residents "live the brand."



## PLACE BRANDING PRINCIPLES

A set of place branding principles can be applied for successful brand development and management.<sup>9</sup> These include:

### 1. Distinctiveness

What makes your place unique when you compare it to other places / competitors?

### 2. Authenticity

Stakeholders should be involved in the identification of key characteristics of the place brand inspired by the identity or sense of place.

### 3. Memorable

When a place has a unique and distinctive sense of place, it becomes memorable.

### 4. Co-Creation

Place branding will produce the best results when it is created and maintained through a strong coalition between government, business, citizens and target markets.

### 5. Place Making

Place branding is not about a good slogan, logo and nice promotional campaigns. An integrative place branding strategy is needed to capture the hearts and attention of the target audiences.





# MOUNT PROSPECT BRAND

## BRANDING PLAN GOAL

The goal of the Village of Mount Prospect Branding Plan is to capture the qualities of Mount Prospect that produce positive emotional reactions. Creating a brand focusing on the positives of the Village will help its leaders continue to successfully grow and develop the community. The intent of this plan is not to develop a logo or slogan - it is to develop a brand identity that captures the essence of what the Village represents, upon which marketing and outreach efforts can be based.

## HOW DOES THE BRAND RELATE TO THE VILLAGE'S STRATEGIC PLAN?

The Village's mission and vision are essential aspects to the Village's brand. They are the core beliefs of the community and affirm what the leadership is committed to and how they go about achieving the goals they have laid out. The mission, vision and values are the essence of the Village's identity, and the brand should reflect these principles. The brand can be seen as the "elevator speech" for the Village's strategic plan.

## BRANDING PLAN OBJECTIVES

- Redefine and strengthen the Village's competitive identity.
- Foster a more accurate, contemporary and positive image.
- Provide a unifying and strategically focused decision-making framework to guide how the place presents itself.
- Generate improved results for investment and recruitment return on investment.
- Stimulate pride in the Village and renewed sense of purpose.<sup>10</sup>

## METHODOLOGY

The approach used to develop the Village of Mount Prospect Branding Plan consisted of:

### Primary Research

- Face to face stakeholder interviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys

### Secondary Research

- Past Village Plans
- Industry Trends
- Local and National Media
- Data Sources
- Examples







# MOUNT PROSPECT BRAND

## MOUNT PROSPECT IDENTITY...WHO ARE YOU?

Residents and business leaders think you are the best. They all agree they wouldn't live or work any place else. They appreciate the welcoming culture of a place where neighbors help neighbors. They're proud of the family-friendly community with signature events. They feel safe and can count on municipal leaders to act in a professional and accessible manner. When they say it is "all here" they're not kidding: award-winning schools, exceptional golf courses and recreational facilities, a world-class library, retail and hospitality centers, diverse restaurants, a transportation hub and the list goes on. They are proud of stability and history – but recognize it is time to change, grow, transform, and evolve.



## BRAND POSITIONING STATEMENT

Brand positioning establishes what we want the audience to think and feel about the place. It relates to the position in the audience's minds that we want to occupy.<sup>11</sup>

### Mount Prospect Brand Positioning Statement:

Mount Prospect is a welcoming and down-to-earth community that offers its diverse residents modern living, responsive leadership and vibrant events with a smile and a good neighbor vibe. It offers the promise of opportunity for both residents and businesses that choose to make Mount Prospect their home.



## BRAND PROMISE

A brand promise is what you want people to think when you mention Mount Prospect. It's their impression of the community. It can represent not only what you are today, but what you aspire to be.<sup>12</sup>





**Mount Prospect Welcomes You Home**  
One person One family One neighborhood One business at a time

Mount Prospect is a welcoming community that offers an exceptional quality of life with a forward-focused perspective for those who live, work and visit here.

The Village is a thriving place with diverse neighborhoods, tree-lined streets and top-rated schools.

Mount Prospect provides friendly events and gatherings, and delivers full-service retail, dining, recreation and entertainment amenities.

Home to Fortune 500 companies along with entrepreneurial mom-and-pop ventures, Mount Prospect's business environment is unbeatable.

**The welcome sign is out...the excitement is building...be a part of it!**



# KEY BRANDING CONCEPTS

The key branding concepts are all centered in the brand promise, but each focuses on a different aspect of life in the community. These are based on major themes that emerged from community input and help define Mount Prospect. Depending on the audience and purpose, the concepts can be drawn upon to refine the message and enhance the brand.

## Mount Prospect is **Home**

Mount Prospect welcomes all who desire an extraordinary quality of life. It's all here—top-ranked schools, unbeatable recreation amenities, beloved family events, a world of retail, cut-above eateries, and an outstanding library.

Mount Prospect offers a wide range of living environments from luxury apartments located near public transit in the village center to single-family homes on tree-lined streets, or beautifully landscaped townhome communities - there is something for everyone.

In Mount Prospect, we take being a neighbor seriously - we value diversity and are excited about what the future holds.

## Mount Prospect **Works**

Mount Prospect creates a better work environment for success. The Village helps businesses succeed through partnerships and support. We are on the right track, and building momentum with several exciting redevelopment projects taking place.

Optimally located near major highways and commuter rail lines and situated along the O'Hare corridor, Mount Prospect puts the region at your fingertips.

Mount Prospect provides easy access for commuting to downtown Chicago, making for an easy transition for those looking to relocate from the City to the suburbs.

Mount Prospect thrives with hometown corporations including CVS Caremark, Robert Bosch Tool Corporation, Cummins Allison, United Airlines and more, offering attractive office locations including Kensington Business Center.

## Mount Prospect **Celebrates**

Mount Prospect throws great celebrations. Trick-or-treat in the streets of downtown; join in a community Bike Ride; rock it out at summer evening concert, celebrate the season with the tree lighting and historic home tours.

Mount Prospect is a vibrant gathering place for friends, neighbors and family.



# KEY BRANDING CONCEPTS

## Mount Prospect is **Green**

If living a sustainable lifestyle is important to you, check out all that Mount Prospect has to offer. Mount Prospect is known for our innovative and award-winning recycling and sustainability programs and has been a leader in the region in introducing programs like textile recycling, composting, household hazardous waste collection events and more. Improving the Village's environmental sustainability and implementing environmentally friendly practices and programs is a priority for Village leadership as we continue to pursue policies that reinforce our commitment to environmental stewardship.

## Mount Prospect is a **Destination**

Mount Prospect really moves people! Drive the ball 200 yards down manicured fairways; skate across the smooth ice at the arena; tap your toes to a Sousa march at a summer concert; laugh out loud enjoying the latest comedy at the movie theater; share a bottle of wine with friends during happy hour; test your skills at a barre class; hand pick fresh produce at the Farmers Market; stay in one of our comfortable hotels; host a party at an elegant banquet facility; stroll past classic cars on a summer evening at the car show.

Our local shops and restaurants will have you crafting, sharing in community art, whipping up culinary masterpieces in cooking classes or enjoying adventurous and diverse dining experiences at one of our many authentic ethnic eateries.

## Mount Prospect is **Building Momentum**

Mount Prospect is turning up the power with innovative planning and development. Feel the momentum of a forward-focused perspective and make your move to this village.

With transit-oriented residential and commercial developments in the downtown, activity on the Rand Road retail corridor, O'Hare corridor commercial growth, and improved regional highway connections underway Mount Prospect is ideally positioned. Add to that an exceptional quality of life featuring unparalleled excellence in schools, parks and neighborhoods, this is where you want to be.



**“THE VILLAGE IS  
BUSINESS FRIENDLY.”**

“OUR MOTTO IS  
‘WHERE FRIENDLINESS  
IS A WAY OF LIFE’ - THE  
PEOPLE SET US APART.”

**“WE ARE TRUE TO  
OUR PAST, BUT  
WE NEED TO GROW.”**

“MOUNT PROSPECT  
HAS A COLLABORATIVE  
ENVIRONMENT –  
STAKEHOLDERS  
COMMUNICATE AND  
COOPERATE. THERE ARE  
GOOD RELATIONSHIPS.

**“PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO  
PUT EFFORT INTO MAKING  
THE VILLAGE BETTER.”**

“THERE IS OPPORTUNITY  
HERE – FRIENDS,  
NEW BUSINESS,  
GROWTH, PROGRESS.”

# STAKEHOLDER/COMMUNITY INPUT

## INTERVIEWS

A total of nineteen interviews, five follow-up interviews and three focus groups were conducted with community stakeholders including Village elected officials and staff, business owners, residents and thought leaders. Valuable feedback was obtained from the interview process. It is beneficial to include some of the quotes received through the interviews as they contain insights into perceptions and provide constructive suggestions that can be considered in implementation of the Branding Plan.

## SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

### Strengths

- Family-friendly, strong sense of community
- Great amenities - schools, park district, library, special events/festivals
- Location, transportation accessibility
- Strong leadership, partnerships
- Diversity
- Affordable/accessible

### Challenges

- Behind the curve - downtown redevelopment and single family teardowns
- Some who want to keep the town the way it was 50 years ago
- Need to improve messaging
- Need to be more proactive in business retention and recruitment
- Perception of bedroom community
- Perception of value-oriented consumers
- Channels of communication are fragmented
- No big draw – (ie. don't have a Riverwalk, not a lot of nature)

### Business

- Mount Prospect is a great place for businesses and a place to live
- We need housing density to support our businesses
- Needs a more robust economic development effort
- Need to make process as easy to navigate as possible

### Personality

- We're not trying to be anyone else
- Not pretentious - humble, authentic
- People know each other and this community
- Supportive community culture, neighborly – help each other
- I know my neighbors have my back

### Loyal

- Rooted in history, but looking toward the future
- Strong foundation, stable
- Not broken, but we are looking to improve
- Can be true to the past but continue to grow/evolve

### Relationships/Leadership

- The Village is known for its professional staff
- Staff is very accessible and responsive

### Essence

- Mount Prospect is a complete community – we have it all
- We don't have all of our eggs in one basket
- It is seen as a good place for families, and to age in place
- Mount Prospect is a large community with great amenities and a small town feel
- “It's all here, I love it here”
- We are known for our signature events
- Proud of diversity - in all sectors – residents as well as businesses
- We are creating childhood memories

### Changes

- Mount Prospect is experiencing a generational shift
- It's time to turn it over – appeal to a younger crowd
- Development in town has been great – however, we are in catch up mode compared to neighbors
- What is happening now is out of necessity
- Identity is centered around family, relationships
- It is an old school community, but is growing into 21st century

### Mission Vs Vision

- Best way to convey the message of mission and vision is to follow them in policy decisions and reinforce with narrative/messaging
- The mission/vision does line up with the Village's character
- People aren't really aware of the Village's mission or vision

### As is Vs To Be

- Not the place to go now, but can be
- Additional residents downtown will lead to more options dining/shopping
- Current redevelopment projects are attracting attention

### Industrial/South MP

- There are many opportunities for business development in South Mount Prospect
- Need to make sure zoning regulations match what the market is looking for
- Important to look at how annexations will impact this area
- Retention matters as much as recruitment especially in industrial market

### Messaging

- Emails are the best way to reach people
- Word of mouth is important
- Have to get correct information, positive stories out
- Send information to schools
- Social Media
- Advertise outside of Mount Prospect (ie along Metra line)
- Use of videos
- Local bloggers

### How do you see Mount Prospect in the next 10 years? What is on your wish list?

- Looking forward to seeing the downtown redevelopment come to fruition and be a vibrant space for residential living and entertainment
- Randhurst - More family-friendly experience-oriented establishments
- Need fast casual restaurants downtown
- Places for tweens/teens to hang out
- Wine bar or brewery in downtown
- More streetscaping throughout town
- More boutiques/retail in downtown



**“THE VILLAGE IS SEEN AS QUAIN AND CHARMING - BUT THAT’S CHANGING. IT CAN BE A DESTINATION “**

““PEOPLE HAVE THE ATTITUDE ‘WE ARE WHO WE ARE’ - IT’S NOT PRETENTIOUS. CHECK YOUR EGO AT THE DOOR”

**“WE ARE PROUD OF OUR DIVERSITY.”**

“EVENTS HAVE BECOME OUR SIGNATURE. WE ARE MAKING MEMORIES”.

**“WHAT SETS US APART? THE PEOPLE.”**

““MOUNT PROSPECT HAS A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY CULTURE. NEIGHBORS STEP UP TO HELP WHEN SOMEONE IS IN NEED.”



## COMMUNITY IDENTITY SURVEY

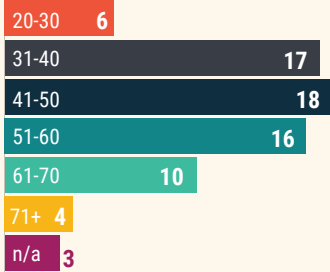
An online survey was developed in order to gain insight into general perceptions both internally and externally about the Village in relation to its neighbors. Interview participants were asked to share the survey to their family and friends in the area. This was intended to be a small sample of public opinion due to the open ended nature of the questions.

**74** total respondents included:

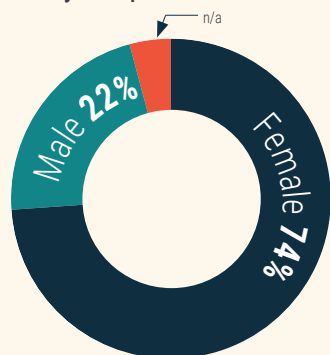
**43** Mount Prospect residents

**31** Other Zip Codes

### Survey Respondent - Age



### Survey Respondent - Gender



## COMMUNITY IDENTITY SURVEY RESPONSES - SUMMARY

### Mount Prospect Residents

#### Positive Themes

- Family friendly, friendly, welcoming, safe
- Growing, exciting development, potential, opportunity
- Fun activities, festivals/events, good restaurants
- Down to earth, approachable, affordable, good value

#### Positive Comments:

**Friendliness is a way of life** - all that our family encounters from Park District teams to auto repairs and shops/restaurants around town, all seem to be friendly. Mount Prospect has a ton to offer and if anything is missing, we are short distance away from whatever we are missing. The special events planned throughout the year (fests, concerts, etc.) are appreciated by our family.

**Good value** (great schools, affordable homes); **family-oriented**; down-to-earth & friendly; quaint; small downtown that's very nice/cute but doesn't have as much to offer as Arlington Heights. Lots of family activities like festivals, concerts in the park, farmer's market, etc. We love living in Mount Prospect!

**Potential**- there are some wonderful opportunities for the community to become a place for families with holding on to traditions, but upgrading into the modern world. The town is big and has great things to offer families and couples, but they need to bring the retail, restaurants and activities up to date. Less franchises more uniqueness. We have great schools and communities, but we need to bring Randhurst up to par like Oakbrook mall or Old Orchard.

#### Negative comments:

- A disconnect between the residential and business communities
- Limited on places to go and things to do
- Poorly managed
- Too much development without proper planning
- Horrible parking
- Petty bureaucracy
- Not enough positive news shared
- Homey, but risky old thinking
- Downtown needs a central business district look and feel
- Working for growth but needs direction, waiting for change
- Nicer than Des Plaines and not as nice as Arlington Heights



## SURVEY RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED:

What is your general **perception** of Mount Prospect?

### Other Residents

#### Positive Comments

- Promising progress in downtown development
- Nice community and neighborhoods
- Cute downtown, good restaurants, good entertainment
- Close knit/hometown appeal
- Great village, love the entertainment
- Spend lots of time there with friends at restaurants, festivals

#### Negative Comments

- No downtown
- Aging demographic
- Not enough parking
- Disastrous Randhurst
- Congested
- Old neighborhoods
- Not enough shops or restaurants

## Community Identity Survey Responses - Summary

### Mount Prospect Residents

#### Perceptions of Des Plaines

- Hard working. Small changes are in place to take older buildings/companies and transform them into newer venues
- Blue collar. Flooding. Opportunity to turn a corner
- Cheaper, not quite as nice as surrounding towns
- Up and coming

#### Perceptions of Arlington Heights

- Vibrant downtown, parking issues
- Forward thinking
- Snobby, expensive

#### Perceptions of Prospect Heights

- Nice, more country like
- Airport, no sidewalks, no downtown, water issue, not defined, vague, missing an opportunity it seems like, not leaders
- Disjointed, ununified, covers large area without businesses that keep you in town
- Not as much to offer

#### Perceptions of Wheeling

- Diverse, growing
- Making strides to turn it around
- Very run down in some sections
- No downtown and not great schools

#### Perceptions of Rolling Meadows

- No downtown, no Metra access
- Affordable housing, not the most desirable
- Diverse
- Schools not as good

#### Perceptions of Elk Grove Village

- Manufacturing, business, truck traffic, opportunity for business growth, elks, not thought of as a place people want to move to
- Business driven
- Flourishing, great marketing as a village
- Blue collar, great park district, good hospital, near forest preserve to bike or paddle

#### Perceptions of Palatine

- Nice, fun restaurants
- Party central - Lots of great late night options right off the train
- Farther out, but great for families, reasonable prices

### Other Residents

#### Perceptions of Des Plaines

- Very urban- much older style homes
- Not a fan of the school districts
- Downtown area is older but has a nice selection of restaurants to choose from
- A little less positive, somewhat old feel, messed up traffic flow
- Great location, much potential, not there yet, may never be

#### Perceptions of Arlington Heights

- Solid downtown but expensive options, summer is fun with downtown music, good vibe
- Great town, great downtown area, great park district, easy to get around town and great restaurants and a horse track and beautiful theater, and a great hospital
- Too crowded, no parking

#### Perceptions of Prospect Heights

- Very limited, no central area- the city doesn't have a lot to offer. Schools aren't the best rated
- Bedroom community with mixed values and reputation
- Don't know much about it except hear about poor water quality and they have video gaming

#### Perceptions of Wheeling

- Excellent restaurant options
- Older community that is going through some major redevelopment change
- Not taken care of; no style
- Village redeveloping bad areas and trying to change their image and demographics

#### Perceptions of Rolling Meadows

- Don't know much but that it is close to Harper and Woodfield
- Small town, with old houses, okay schools, no central downtown area- overall seems behind the times
- Lacks any major entertainment or unique shopping venues
- Non-traditional downtown lacks identity/atmosphere

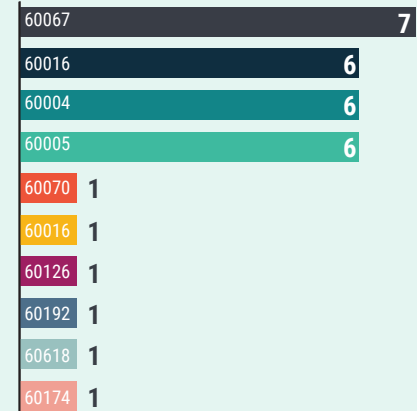
#### Perceptions of Elk Grove Village

- Lacks in shopping, and downtown area
- The industrial park gives the town ample business and job opportunities
- Not the first place I would think to buy a home
- Very progressive marketing of the community that has the largest industrial park in the U.S.
- Although home to many industries/manufacturing, has residential appeal as well
- Affordable housing, great schools and parks

## SURVEY RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED:

Please provide a brief description of your perception of the following communities. When you think of each town, what qualities or character traits come to mind? How would you describe it?

### OTHER SURVEY RESPONDENTS ZIP CODES



#### Perceptions of Palatine

- Nice downtown area, great summer events, easy to get to, close to 53, some nice shops
- I like all the entertainment and restaurant options and enjoy the downtown area
- Kind of a cross between Arlington Heights and Mount Prospect
- Some upscale areas, some lower income



# BRAND INFLUENCING FACTORS

The following factors are closely related to the community's brand:

- Economic Development
- Demographics
- Diversity

Each of these elements are woven into the fabric of the community brand and the brand is influenced by them. It is important to take each these into account – and to understand how future projections in each of these areas can have an impact on the brand vision.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### HOW DO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BRANDING FIT TOGETHER?

Cultivating a community brand is critical to an effective economic development program. The community brand is an overarching theme that encompasses all of the Village's marketing efforts, tying them together under a common strategy. With a cohesive strategy, the Village can speak with one voice, with various departments and projects using coordinated themes and messaging.

The field of economic development has changed considerably in the past 20 years. While marketing sheets and trade shows were once the cornerstones of an active municipal economic development program, data suggests that this model is no longer effective.

Instead, municipalities are embracing a quality of life model of promoting their community, highlighting the desirable amenities that the town offers to residents, businesses and visitors.

In addition to Mount Prospect's ideal location within the northwest suburbs, Mount Prospect has a strong school system, vibrant park network, access to a skilled workforce and a variety of housing options. All of these factors combine to make a town attractive to businesses because business leaders and their labor force will want to live and work in the community.

Mount Prospect is well-positioned for future growth in economic development because of their focus on improving the overall quality of life and their willingness to support businesses in creative and innovative ways.

Businesses migrate to areas where the quality of life matches the group of employees that they are trying to attract. Many areas are trying to attain a mix of urban and suburban environments to help foster new economy businesses and workforce. Urban lifestyles cater to young professionals and start-up businesses. Suburban lifestyles cater to a family-orientated workforce. Talented youth are the key to any successful economy - they are seeking sociable and walkable places with restaurants, cafés, bars, night clubs, health clubs, and public spaces.<sup>13</sup>



Relocating or expanding businesses place a strong emphasis on education standards to encourage existing employees to move, attract new employees, and to take advantage of a well-educated workforce.

In order to capitalize on the branding efforts and successfully integrate them into Economic Development initiatives, the Village must:

- Set the right goals—expand the scope and metrics of economic development to reflect a more foundational and holistic understanding of how to expand the economy and opportunity
- Grow from within—prioritize established and emerging firms and industries, invest in the ecosystems of innovation, trade, talent, infrastructure, and governance to support globally competitive firms and enable small businesses to grow in the market
- Invest in people and skills—incorporate skills development of workers as a priority for economic development and employers so that improving human capacities results in meaningful work and income gains
- Connect place—catalyze economic place making and work at multiple geographic levels to connect local communities to regional jobs, housing, and opportunity.<sup>14</sup>





## SPOTLIGHT: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Downtown

In countless interviews, stakeholders gave positive reviews and feedback about the redevelopment activity taking place in the downtown. While they acknowledged concerns of some residents, the individuals interviewed were supportive of the new development and changes taking place. Many remarked that it was not enough or had taken too long, but they were glad it was happening now, and felt that it was necessary for the Village to evolve and remain relevant in the region.

While a more vibrant and lively downtown was at the top of many wish lists, stakeholders recognized that increased business interest would follow an influx of residents in the area which was needed to create a strong customer base to support those businesses.

Not only is the built environment improving, but the overall consensus is that the downtown events have been a great way to showcase Mount Prospect as a family-friendly, fun place to be. Interviewees were pleased with events and festivals held in the downtown, and encouraged more of these.

### Suggestions for enhancing downtown include:

- Continue to make walkability a priority and ensure the area is pedestrian friendly, following the Complete Streets Policy
- Gathering places
- Retail shops
- Fast-casual family-oriented dining
- Place for tweens/teens to go (food/drink and shop)



### Randhurst Corridor

While vacancies at Randhurst Village Mall are of concern, it is important to point out that many of the closures occurred due to national chains going out of business and were not related to the performance of those locations. In fact, several of the stores and outlets at Randhurst are some of the highest performing locations in the region.

A recent survey by JLL Commercial Real Estate shows that nearly 40 percent of the 1,500 shoppers surveyed said their choice of shopping center is determined by its food offerings. More than 40 percent want to see open green spaces at their center, while another 40 percent are seeking stores that offer healthy food and drink. 17 percent want a gym at their center, and nearly 20 percent of respondents want to find healthcare providers at shopping centers.<sup>15</sup>

Many retail centers turning to “experiential” tenants, uses that provide an activity or experience to patrons. Some suggestions include Pintstripes Bowling and Bocce Ball, a trampoline park or an arcade/game center.

Other retail center experiential trends include:

- Food hall
- Co-working space
- Residential component
- Fitness center
- Family-friendly activities
- Health care uses







### **Kensington Business Center**

After suffering high vacancy rates during the economic downturn of the late 2000s, the Kensington Business Center now boasts nearly 100% occupancy and features new, nontraditional uses that benefit the entire community. These include many family-oriented, activity-based businesses like the Mount Prospect Ice Arena and The Gymnastics Shop.

This asset, one of the premier business parks in the Chicago suburban market, should be more heavily marketed and promoted by the Village. Its location is close to regional shopping and dining choices while access to the region is at the doorstep of this business park.

Due to the location of the Kensington Business Center - "off the beaten path" - identity is an issue. The Village should explore the feasibility of installing signage, banners and markers in order to highlight the fact that the property is part of Mount Prospect and look into the possibility of cost sharing with property owners and tenants.



### **South Mount Prospect**

Conditions in the southern corridor of Mount Prospect present many opportunities for economic investment and strengthening of the business base in the area. The economic engine of O'Hare International Airport is booming, leading to increased demand for industrial properties in the area. New tollway projects and improved transportation connections in the region are making this area especially desirable.

#### **Highlights include:**

- Construction of Lake Center Project (1731 Wall Street - 83 & Algonquin) – 130,000 sf industrial space.
- The extension of the Elgin-O'Hare Expressway will have added benefit for businesses that choose to locate in this area.
- In 2017, the Village annexed approximately 100 acres on the south end of Mount Prospect, including the former United Airlines headquarters, a potential site for redevelopment.
- The Village is currently examining the feasibility of annexing an area of industrial properties in the Oakton Avenue corridor.
- It is essential that the Village zoning code with respect to industrial properties matches the market and what businesses are seeking for in terms of facilities. Retention in this sector is almost more important than recruitment, as new industrial construction and developments in neighboring communities could lure these businesses out of Mount Prospect.

## O'Hare Impact

Chicago O'Hare International Airport was recently recognized as the nation's busiest in terms of total flights for the first time since 2014. O'Hare transported more than 83.4 million passengers in 2018, representing a 4.5% increase from 2017, according to the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA).

The airport's importance to the industrial sector is clear. On average in 2018, there were 60 cargo flights per day departing from or arriving at O'Hare. International flights carried an average of 3,876 tons of cargo per day, with domestic flights carrying an average of 1,152 tons of cargo per day. Multi-story warehouses continue to be the focus of the industrial sector, as developers look for creative ways to fill demand for last mile and other warehousing space in dense, urban population bases.<sup>16</sup>

With the O'Hare Modernization Program nearing completion (which reconfigured the airfield by adding several new runways and eliminating converging runways) the Chicago Department of Aviation's focus is on ORD21, a multi-billion dollar project expanding and enhancing the terminal area space. The continuing upgrades to both passenger and cargo facilities is expected to keep O'Hare competitive as the busiest airport for years to come.<sup>17</sup>

Mount Prospect's proximity to O'Hare puts the Village in a prime position to capitalize on its excellent location, as well as its access to major highways, transit hubs and skilled workers.



“The **O’Hare market** is being driven by **demand** from companies expanding or realigning their **distribution** and **light manufacturing** networks, as well as from the **growing e-commerce sector**.”

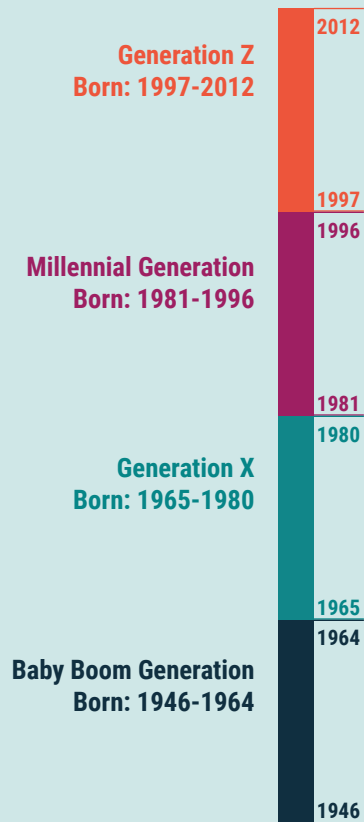
- Avison Young Commercial Real Estate



# GENERATIONS: EXPLAINED

According to the Pew Research Center, generational cutoff points aren't an exact science. Events and circumstances (for instance, wars, social movements, economic booms or busts, scientific or technological breakthroughs) as well as broader social forces can simultaneously impact everyone, regardless of age. However, differences between generations can also be a result of the unique historical circumstances that members of an age cohort experience, particularly during a time when they are in the process of forming opinions. Understanding what drives generational differences strengthens our understanding of how public attitudes and preferences are shaped.<sup>25</sup>

**Figure 1: Generations Defined**



Source: Pew Research Center

# DEMOGRAPHICS

## RESEARCH/DATA

### How will demographics impact the future vision of the Village?

A recent headline in the Daily Herald read “Mount Prospect’s downtown is finally taking off...” After many years of effort, there is a new critical mass in Mount Prospect’s downtown development. More than 500 new residential units have been approved for development. It is widely accepted that adding residents to downtown Mount Prospect will lead to increased interest for restaurant and retail uses.

There are significant population shifts occurring nationwide that are reflected in Mount Prospect’s experience.

Three key demographic forces have reshaped the overall U.S. population in recent years: growing racial and ethnic diversity, increasing immigration and rising numbers of older adults.<sup>18</sup> These factors, combined with generational shifts taking place in the housing market nationwide are impacting housing choices. A Pew Research report found that more U.S. households are renting than at any other point in 50 years.<sup>19</sup>

*The Atlantic Magazine* reports that the United States is currently experiencing a housing shortage. After the great recession, the

adult population kept growing, but construction spending fell. Homebuilding per household has never been lower. Millennials cannot afford the homes that are available today; home ownership levels have fallen to a 60-year low. The scarcity of homes has led to enormous growth in average home prices, as well as higher demand for rental options.<sup>20</sup>

The millennial generation has surpassed baby boomers in numbers and is throwing conventional wisdom out the window. They are now making critical decisions where to live and their preferences diverge quite dramatically from previous generations.

One reason is that young worker lifestyles fit no earlier pattern in history. They are on a 24 hour/7-day-a-week schedule with long, untraditional work hours. They marry later and have fewer children. They like diversity in race, nationality, culture.<sup>21</sup>

Millennials have higher debt and lower levels of disposable income than previous generations at the same life stage, so they have shown a preference to rent rather than own. They prefer walkable,

mixed-use communities; they drive less than previous generations, preferring to bike, walk, public transit or ridesharing.<sup>22</sup>

Baby boomers, the second largest population group in the U.S. are also expressing a strong desire for rentals. Between 2009 and 2015, the number of renters over 55 increased by 28 percent. By 2020, more than 5 million baby boomers are expected to rent their next home.<sup>23</sup>

Early research on the post-millennial generation, dubbed “Generation Z” indicates they share many of the preferences and social views as the millennials. Generation Z has been identified as those born from 1997 on. One significant difference in Generation Z is that they are more likely to be pursuing college and less likely to be in the workforce (especially full time). Among those who were no longer in high school in 2017, 59% were enrolled in college – higher than the enrollment rate for 18- to 20-year-old Millennials in 2002 (53%) and Gen Xers in 1986 (44%). While they are just now coming of age, it is important to keep this generation on the radar and continue to follow their trends and preferences.<sup>24</sup>

**65%** of those under age **35** prefer to rent their primary residence.\*

Strongest influences on millennials' locational choice:

Neighborhood Quality - **63%**

Convenience of Jobs - **60%**

Affordability - **49%**

Millennials are **69%** more likely to pay more to live in a walkable community.

**24%** are willing to pay a lot more for walkability.\*\*

*\*Source: Understanding the Preferences of Millennials: Implications for Chicago's Suburbs, Wes Leblanc and Alice Davis.*

*\*\*National Association of Realtors, 2018*

A rental housing market study conducted for the Village in 2016 by Appraisal Research Counselors found “very little apartment development occurred in the overall Chicago suburban market between 2004 and 2012,” with the lowest amount of growth in the Northwest Cook market. There is a deficiency in the area in what are considered “Class A” properties – luxury apartments with extensive amenities.

The study states that Mount Prospect is the ideal central location for a person working in the metropolitan area, thanks to easy access to highways as well as public transit options. The focus of the new development in downtown Mount Prospect is on transit-oriented development, within walking distance of the Metra station. Developments of this kind are in high demand in the market. Improving walkability and connectivity in the downtown area is also a priority for the Village, which is vital to the success of the transit-oriented developments.

The residential rental market study “anticipates that the renter profile will be comprised of persons who work in the area, commute via train or I-90, I-290, or I-294 or couples who work in different parts of the metropolitan area and require a location which is centralized for their individual commutes.”

The study also “views demand for the location to be from persons who have a connection to Mount

Prospect. It is also a location which could also appeal to persons in transition – i.e. moving locally or transferees, persons in the process of obtaining a divorce, divorced parents, or active grandparents relocating to be closer to their adult children and grandchildren and desiring a new construction rental apartment.”<sup>26</sup>

According to real estate experts, there is a strong demand for high-end rental in the northwest suburbs. In fact, there has been no new rental development in Mount Prospect for about 30 years. From 1996 to 2016, only 574 rental units were added to the Northwest Cook submarket. Developers are looking to build in Mount Prospect precisely due to the great interest and support for rental.

Economic and population growth in the Chicago region overall is expected to be relatively flat in the short term. There will be strong competition in the area to attract the millennial demographic, and doing so will be key to achieving local economic goals. It is crucial that the Village understands these target populations, what their preferences are and how to reach them with the right messaging.

The Village’s development partners confirm these demographic trends and preferences. They are reporting strong demand in the marketing of the new rental properties under construction. Mount Prospect is indeed well-positioned to attract these in-demand populations.

Suburban areas that have been the most successful at attracting millennials with a college degrees are those with a mix of housing types (apartments, attached homes, and single family homes), those with good transit options and those that are relatively affordable.<sup>27</sup> These are all good indications for the Mount Prospect market.

Three key demographic forces have reshaped the overall U.S. population in recent years: growing racial and ethnic diversity, increasing immigration and rising numbers of older adults.

*Pew Research Center  
“What Unites and Divides Urban, Suburban and Rural Communities”*







## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

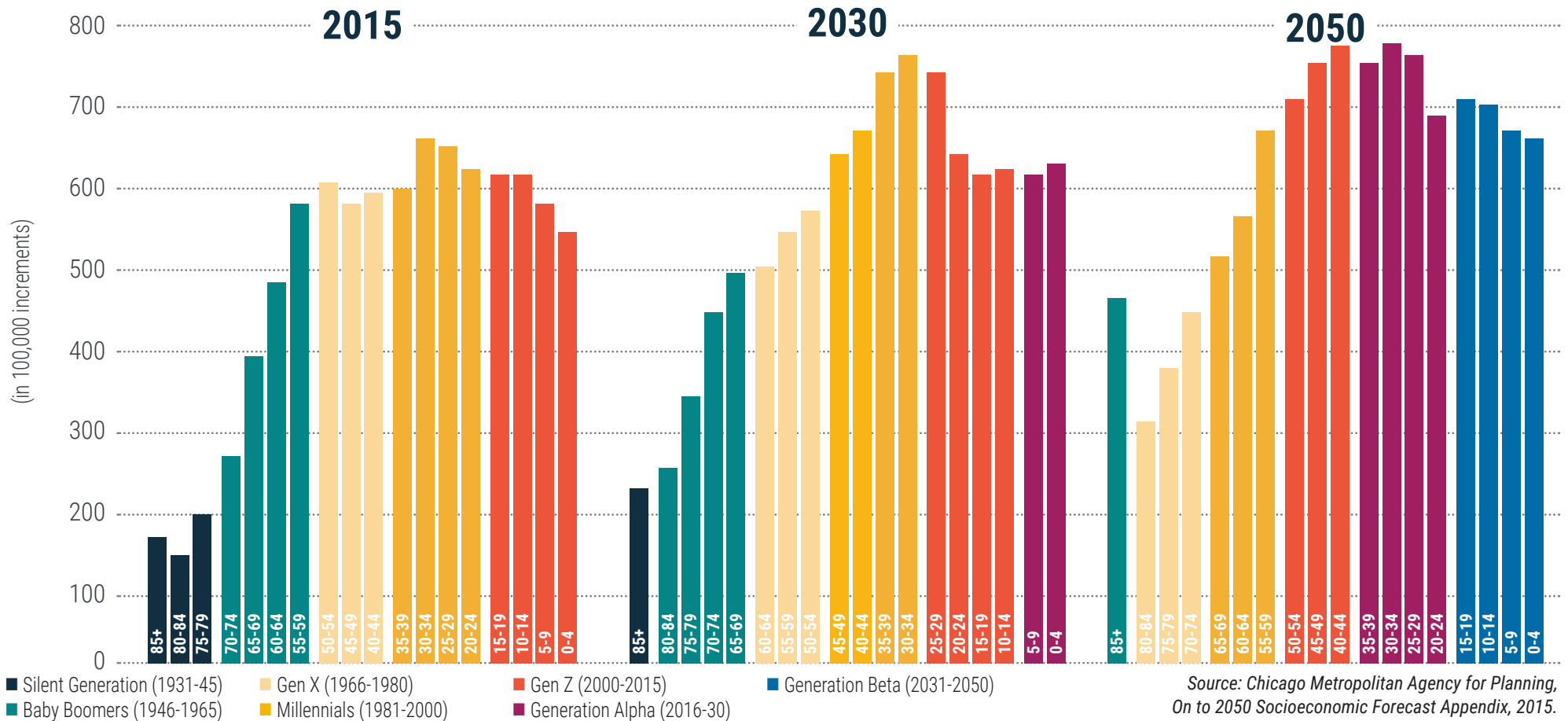
According to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's *On to 2050 Socioeconomic Forecast*, the Chicago region will continue to diversify. Over the past decade, the region's Hispanic and Asian populations have been fueling population growth. By 2050, the region will have an even stronger diversity of residents than today, and the majority of the region's residents will be persons of color.

**Figure 2: Change in Population of Chicago Suburbs by Age Group, 2010-2018**

	2010	2018	Change 2010-2018
Total Population	6,775,230	6,884,807	+109,577 (1.6%)
Population aged 21+	5,106,881 (74%)	5,257,222 (76%)	+240,341 (4.8%)
Population aged 20-40	1,713,359 (25%)	1,773,914 (26%)	+60,555 (3.5%)

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, *On to 2050 Socioeconomic Forecast Appendix*, 2015.

**Figure 3: Chicago Region Population change by age group and generation 2015 estimate, 2030 and 2050 forecasts**



# DIVERSITY

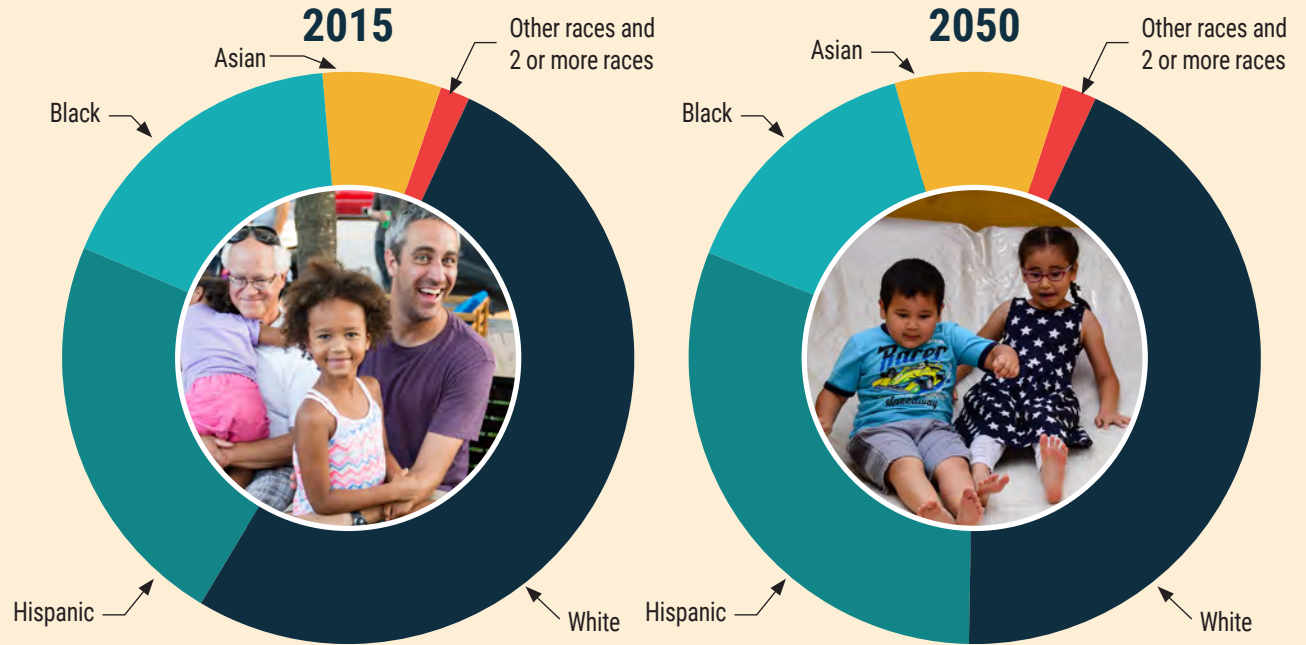
Having a distinct sense of place often makes a city or suburb one that is vibrant and attractive. The sense of place is shaped and transformed by the people who live there and contribute to the quality of life. The heartbeat of Mount Prospect is the diversity of its residents and businesses. Its diverse population is a significant portion of overall residents - according to US Census Data, 33.5% of Mount Prospect's population is foreign born; 43% of residents speak a language other than English.

Data also show that Mount Prospect is considered a port of entry for new immigrants. The Community Connections Center, which opened its doors in 2009, provides a pathway to Village services, social services, medical health, library services and more by hosting meetings, educational opportunities and drop-in events for the community. The Center is a partnership between the Village of Mount Prospect, staffed by the Human Services and Police Departments, and the Mount Prospect Public Library (which established a south branch location adjacent to the Center).

Another outreach effort with the intent of promoting and appreciating Mount Prospect's diverse population is the Celebration of Cultures. The inaugural event, held in 2018, was just one positive endeavor to share the kaleidoscope of backgrounds. In 2019, the Village established a citizen Community Engagement Committee, which seeks to build opportunities to productively engage the community in areas of inclusion, understanding, respect and tolerance.

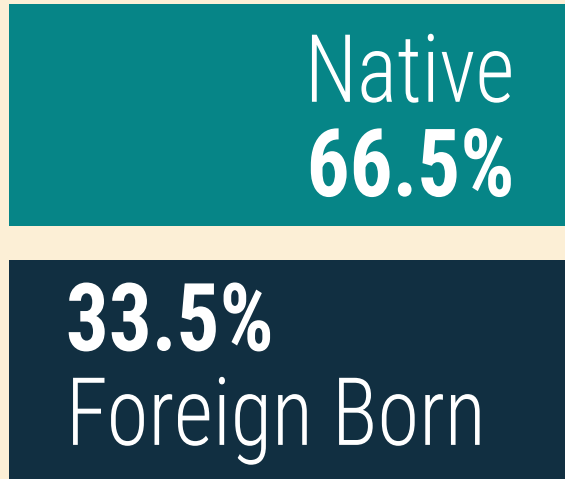


**Figure 4: Proportion of Population by race and ethnicity in the Chicago region, 2015 Estimate and 2050 Forecast**



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, On to 2050 Socioeconomic Forecast Appendix, 2015.

**Figure 5: Mount Prospect Nativity (2016)**



**Figure 6: Mount Prospect Language Spoken at Home (2016)**

English	56.7%	Tagalog	1.5%
Spanish	15.2%	Korean	1.3%
Slavic	12.3%	Other/Unspecified	0.8%
Other Indo-European	8.0%	Chinese	0.7%
Other Asian	3.3%	Arabic	0.2%

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates



# TARGET AUDIENCES

The ultimate goal of the Branding Plan is to influence how the Village's target audiences think about the Village. Based on data analysis and research, the following categories have been identified as key target audiences:

## DEVELOPERS/PROSPECTIVE BUSINESSES

The brand will raise Mount Prospect's profile as a desirable place to do business. It will define Mount Prospect's image and character.

## FUTURE RESIDENTS

The brand will appeal to potential new residents seeking modern living options.

**Millennials** – single or starter family professionals who are starting to make critical decisions about where to live. They represent the largest and fastest growing demographic group, and their preferences and circumstances differ from previous generations – they prefer to rent, have a higher rate of debt, are more ethnically diverse, like transit oriented development, and walkability is important to them.

**Generation Z** – entering their 20s, this generation will be the future residents of Mount Prospect and as they enter the workforce, they will soon be making decisions about where to work and live.

**Baby Boomers** – second largest population group, they are the fastest growing group of renters. Seen as prime target market for new rental developments. Still active, they wish to stay near family and community but want to lessen burden of home maintenance.

## EXISTING BUSINESSES/RESIDENTS

The brand should appeal to the existing residents and businesses of Mount Prospect to inspire pride and loyalty.

## REGIONAL VISITORS

The brand will attract regional visitors for shopping, dining and events. Mount Prospect has several vibrant commercial corridors - from the Randhurst Corridor to the culturally rich South Mount Prospect area, to downtown, the heart of Mount Prospect - there is so much to experience here. In addition to the many and varied shopping and dining options, Mount Prospect is known for its festivals and celebrations including Irish Fest, Downtown Block Party, Fridays on the Green and Oktoberfest – everyone is welcome and made to feel like family.

More than **750** new residential units are either approved or in the pipeline.

The focus of new developments is on **transit-oriented** development, within walking distance of the Metra station.

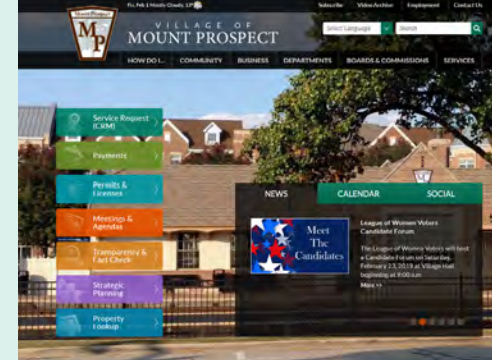


Maple Street Lofts Development

# BRAND STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

There are four categories of tactics that are recommended for bringing the “place brand” to life: Public Relations, Marketing, Economic Development initiatives and Product Development. Many of the recommendations noted here came directly from stakeholder interviews.

The brand strategy sets guidelines for how the Village’s brand should be communicated and should also identify how to deliver experiences to target audiences. In order for the brand strategy to succeed, consistent messaging must be enforced on multiple platforms. These recommendations should be viewed as suggestions to support the brand, not a checklist of items to be accomplished.



## PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public Relations plays a valuable role in brand development and enhancing the reputation of a community. Maintaining a proactive public relations program is vital to the success of a branding program.

By developing key messages that convey the essence of the brand in sound bites for speeches and presentations as well as several key phrases for written communications, the Village can convey its brand more effectively.<sup>28</sup>

With the drastic changes that have taken place in the information universe (i.e. the decline of local media, the rise of social media, spread of misinformation, information overload), it is more challenging than ever for the Village to get its message out. However, these new media have also led to alternate messaging opportunities.

The recommendations for public relations involve messaging and ways of sharing more positive aspects of life in the Village. Communications staff must control the message by ensuring correct information is shared in a timely manner. This will minimize inaccurate information from spreading. The Village will also focus on positive messages throughout the year. The Village has a lot to celebrate and telling a positive story is necessary for both internal and external communications.

### Influencers

This is an exciting time for public relations because of the opportunity to explore new tools, outlets and outreach tactics. One example of a creative outreach tactic is developing non-elected champions of the Village. These champions will help to share accurate information and help to spread the word on all of the important municipal decisions made.

### Customer Service

Customer service is part of public relations. It is important to be recognize how vital staff is in maintaining and building the brand. Residents and businesses may not have many interactions with Village staff members, so when they do, it is important to make a good impression. Customer service training can incorporate the branding initiative and messages in order to get buy-in from staff. Village staff should know the “elevator pitch” and understand their role as brand ambassadors.

### Share the Stories

The Village should share stories of people who live and work in town who help shape the Village’s character. The campaign should focus on real people and real stories of why the quality of life in Mount Prospect is second to none.

## MARKETING/OUTREACH

### Develop Community Marketing Plan

With the branding strategy promoting quality of life in Mount Prospect, it is necessary to develop a community marketing plan. Main points would include: location, easy highway access and quick train to Chicago, diverse housing options, safe community (low crime), great schools and family amenities.

### Build Pride with Residents

Build pride in Mount Prospect at an early age. Families are already building positive memories and traditions by attending the signature Mount Prospect events. Civics lessons at Mount Prospect schools are an opportunity to be current and interactive. The lessons can reinforce the pride in the Village because it can also be a chance to educate the public on the Village’s responsible governing, strategic leadership and high quality services.

### Community Feedback

Re-imagine the format of Coffee with the Council. These meetings are a great tool to connect the community with leadership and could be used to consolidate messaging as opposed to having many open houses on separate topics.

### Publications/Materials

- Encourage consistency in printed materials by enforcing Village design guidelines with regard to logo usage, colors and fonts
- Publish Restaurant Guide annually (can be insert in Village newsletter)
- Publish and mail Community Events postcard quarterly





## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Economic development is changing and the Village is in a prime position to build their economic development programming. A marketing and branding initiative must include a robust and comprehensive approach to economic development.

### General

Develop strategic action plan for economic development. This could include:

- Assemble a working group to develop an annual scope of work with the downtown business community/Mount Prospect Downtown Merchants Association (MPDMA). The plan should include image and brand enhancement for the downtown, special events, retail promotion, and downtown-specific marketing.
- Pursue establishment of small business incubator for manufacturing or technology in Kensington Business Center or South Mount Prospect.
- Explore regional economic development opportunities/partnerships.

### Economic Development Outreach

- Build a recruitment campaign targeted to the real estate community focusing on the quality of life branding message.
- Hold broker open houses/tours for available commercial sites.
- Meet with commercial owners and brokers to monitor office tenancies and market changes.
- Continue business visit retention program, an excellent way to build relationships with business community.
- Enlist the Economic Development Commission to assist with engaging corporate partners in the community through "Corporate Pride" program with the purpose of building relationships, and to inform and involve businesses about events, and shopping and dining opportunities.
- Engage young business owners (form committee or advisory council or partner with Chamber of Commerce's 20/30 group) to share information about the happenings in the Village, get them involved in Village Boards and Commissions.
- Work with businesses in Kensington Business Center to form an association. Consider forming similar group for South Mount Prospect.
- Form marketing and recruitment partnership with Randhurst Village.
- Ensure Village building codes are compatible with commercial real estate demands, especially with respect to industrial properties.
- Continue and build on Mount Prospect Entrepreneur's Institute (MPEI) as a vehicle for fostering good relationships with the business community and a way to develop potential new businesses.



- Village staff and elected officials take on role of advocate/intermediary for businesses with commercial property owners. Several interviewees expressed concern about high rent/taxes and the ability of small businesses (especially retail) to survive.
- The Village's workforce is key asset in attracting and retaining business. The Village should continue its efforts with the LEAP Program (Learning, Experience, Apprenticeships, Pathways) in collaboration with High School District 214, and expand its workforce development efforts to include Oakton Community College, Harper College and other educational institutions in the region.

### Economic Development Marketing Efforts

- Enhance the Village's overall social media presence to reinforce the brand. This could include:
  - Economic development-focused posts on outlets like LinkedIn.
  - Increased presence on Instagram featuring quality of life imagery and messaging.
  - Incorporate social media posts with focus on local business - featuring "the story behind the business."
- Develop marketing information packet for businesses promoting Village quality of life, events etc.
- Economic Development Blog – promoted and updated on a regular basis.
- Issue press releases for new businesses.
- Work with businesses to help promote them.
- Produce testimonials/video profiles of local businesses (similar to "Dishin' Out Program currently in place for restaurants).
- Publish annual ED update as a report (based on presentation), available on web site and e-mail to targeted mailing list with invitation to meet with elected officials and staff.
- Refocus and re-energize Experience Mount Prospect program (web site, e-news and social media) to be more oriented to promoting local business promotion and events.

## PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Promoting a municipality as a product is different from promoting a consumer product. Forming the concept of a Mount Prospect brand is necessary to proactively market the Village. It helps to consider the Village as an experiential product. A community's products can include curb appeal (streetscapes, gateways, public art, public spaces), events and festivals, customer service and infrastructure.<sup>29</sup>

### Product Development Recommendations

#### Curb Appeal

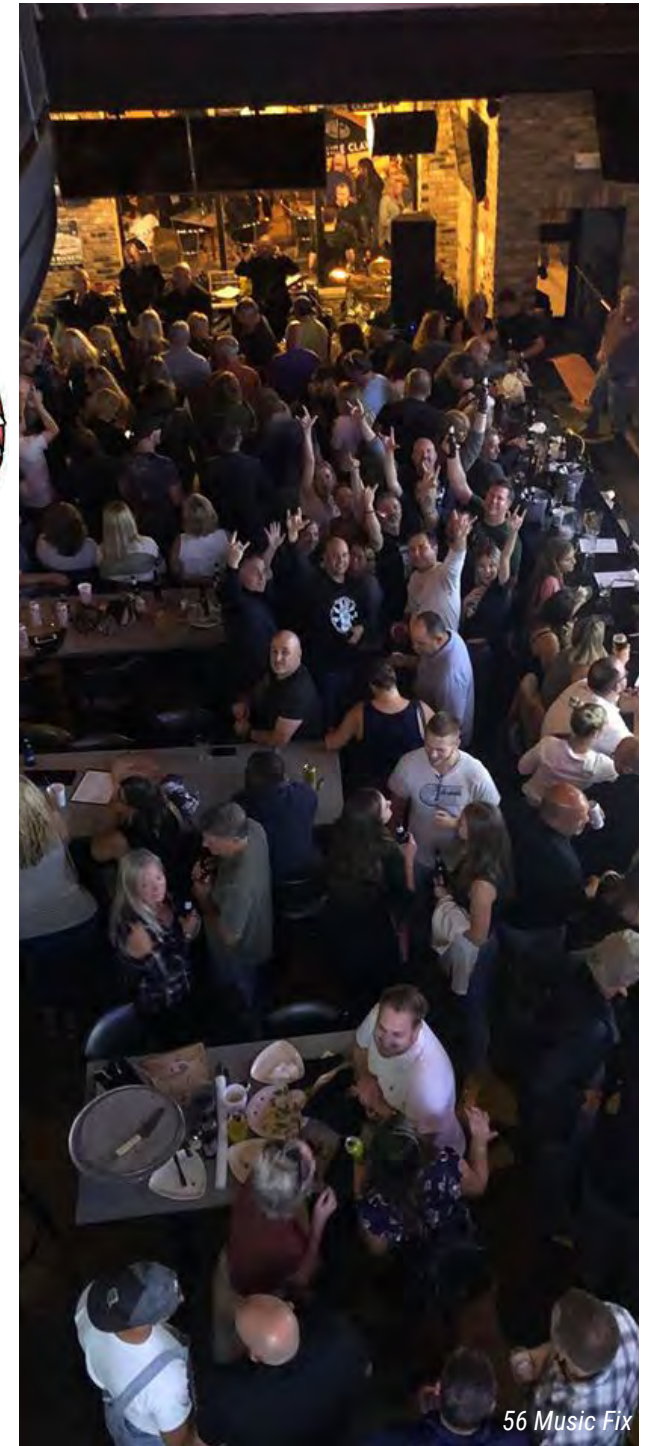
- Look everywhere for branding opportunities – signage along main corridors, streetscape, lighting, music downtown.
- Update and expand gateway signage – know that you are entering Mount Prospect and that you are IN Mount Prospect. Currently, several different types of signs are used at gateway locations. Consider standardizing per the Village's Corridor Design Guidelines.
- Corridor signage and enhancements – planters, banners (Examples – Elk Grove, Bensenville).
- Implement Rand Road Corridor Plan.
- Implement Prospect Ave. Branding Plan as recommended by Downtown Plan.
- Enhance wayfinding signage in downtown to include kiosks with event posters/info (Examples – Park Ridge, Elmhurst).
- Enhance gathering places within downtown (plazas, fountains, etc.). More opportunities like Busse Pocket Park.
- Improve walkability in downtown.
- Encourage utilization of the Emerson Street Parking Deck (and soon to be opened Maple Street Parking Deck).
- Sustainability or living a “green” lifestyle is a growing priority for many. The Village should continue to be a leader in sustainability programs and actively promote all the Village does to encourage environmentally- friendly policies.

#### Events

- Refresh events and enhance promotion of events.
- Explore potential new events (input from young business council).
- Expand Christkindlemarket (outside, with tents).
- Expand Fridays on the Green concert series – several people mentioned this as the ideal community event and want more like this.
- The 56 Music Fix was well received by the community. People liked the grassroots nature of this event and suggested more events like this.
- Consider incorporating time/events for kids with special needs.



Tree Lighting Ceremony



56 Music Fix



# APPENDIX A SAMPLE MARKETING BUDGET



## SAMPLE MARKETING BUDGET

Item	Description	Estimate
PRINT MATERIALS		
Event Postcards	2x year (spring/summer, fall/winter) Mailed to all postal customers	\$5,000 (+postage)
Dining Guide	Insert for Village Newsletter + extras	\$3,000
ADVERTISING		
Chicago Magazine	Print - 2x/yr, 1/3 page	\$7,000
	Web - 2 - 1 month runs (300x250 pixel on home page)	\$6,000
Daily Herald	Web ads	\$5,000
Billboards	Select locations in Chicago neighborhoods	\$50,000
Metra/CTA Advertising	Includes: Digital Signage at Ogilvie Station 2-sheet and King Posters at select City stations	\$30,000
Radio Ads	WBEZ	\$30,000
Promotional Items		\$5,000
Google Search Ads		\$5,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$131,000</b>



# APPENDIX B EXAMPLES



# EXAMPLES

## ELK GROVE VILLAGE

### Makers Wanted Campaign

<https://www.makerswanted.org/>

Since 2015, Elk Grove Village has invested extensively in economic development marketing initiatives related to its industrial park, most recently sponsoring the 2018 Bahama Bowl College football game.

The “Makers Wanted” campaign and microsite was supported by a multimedia campaign, including broadcast media, radio, print advertising, and online ads and attracted businesses looking to relocate or move to the MakersWanted.org. The site allows businesses to investigate available sites, understand business incentives, and information on relocation and expansion.

### Busse-Elmhurst TIF – Corridor Improvements

As part of the Busse-Elmhurst TIF the Village made extensive streetscape improvements to this heavily traveled corridor. The attractive median planters, roadway enhancements and signage installations really give the area a sense of place and effectively communicate the Village’s brand. Driving down Busse Road, it’s very clear one is traveling through Elk Grove Village.



## CITY OF ELMHURST

### City Centre and Economic Development Team

Elmhurst created the City Centre - an organization that focuses on downtown Elmhurst - in 1994. In addition to the City Centre, the City of Elmhurst established a funding mechanism for two Special Service Areas (SSA). The SSA district requires that land owners pay an additional property tax that goes to fund the City Centre and focuses funding on downtown related expenses and improvements.

With an annual budget comprised of SSA dollars and TIF funds of more than \$800,000, the Elmhurst City Centre is able to market the downtown as a whole, provide additional maintenance, such as sidewalk snow removal and street cleaning, and add features that make downtown inviting, like planters and holiday decorations.

Elmhurst City Centre has a very robust marketing campaign, promoting shopping, dining and events. They have very tight branding standards, and strictly follow color, font and themes. Their marketing includes billboards, banners, kiosk posters, social media and more.

In addition, the city has a dedicated staff person serving as the Business Development Coordinator. The Elmhurst Economic Development team offers business incentives including Business Grant Incentives, TIF Districts, Sales Tax Incentives, and personalized site selection assistance. They work with new, relocating and existing businesses to assist them with location, navigate the permit and grant application processes, and discuss all Elmhurst has to offer.

The City’s Economic Development team is very proactive, attending and actively participating in regional and national conferences, actively recruiting and meeting with potential new businesses and hosting broker events and tours.

The City manages several outreach efforts that include the Explore Elmhurst web site and social media accounts, print advertising campaigns and more. They also maintain a photo library that is updated seasonally by a professional photographer of scenic shots around town as well as photos of retail and restaurant establishments.





# CITY OF BERWYN

## Whyberwyn.com

The Berwyn Development Corporation, which manages the Why Berwyn? marketing effort, is a public/private partnership, receiving over half of their budget through a contract with the City of Berwyn.

“Located west of Chicago, the city measures just 3.9 square miles, but what it lacks in size, it more than makes up for in character, diversity and delightfully eclectic community culture. Home to long-time families, young couples, artists and entrepreneurs, and seasoned business owners alike, Berwyn strikes that rare balance of progressive spirit and old school charm.”

After 9 years of running the Why Berwyn? campaign, the Berwyn Development Corporation recently re-branded themselves with the tagline – “It’s nothing like a suburb.” For the duration of the marketing efforts, the campaign has targeted a younger audience, with paid advertising placements in the City of Chicago. The current marketing campaign focuses on billboards throughout Chicago neighborhoods and posters at CTA platforms. They were featured in the May 2018 edition of Chicago Magazine with a Field Guide to Berwyn. Their marketing budget for 2019 is \$98,000.



# VILLAGE OF ALGONQUIN

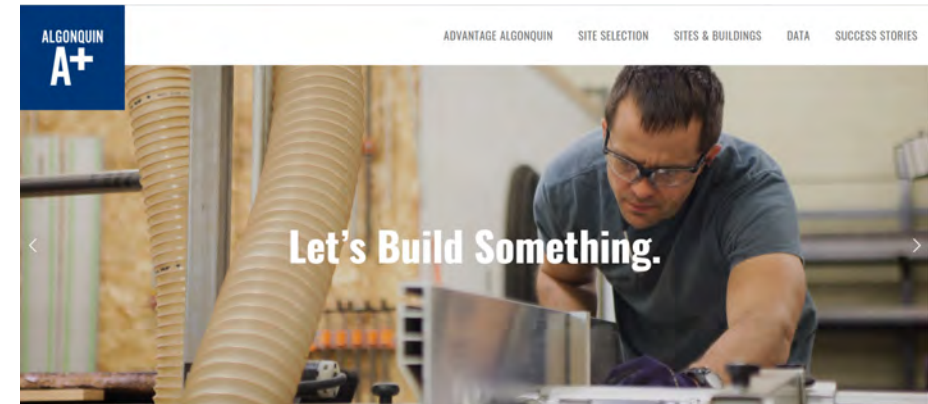
## A+ Algonquin

[www.aplusalgonquin.com/](http://www.aplusalgonquin.com/)

Algonquin is located on the Randall Road corridor. The Village has planned and set aside about 800 acres for business and industrial development, dubbed the “Algonquin Corporate Campus”. Marketing the Algonquin Corporate Campus for employment growth is the main focus of the campaign. The Village also wished to promote development along several retail corridors in town, as well as large vacant tracts available for development.



The Village of Algonquin sought to develop a branding program that would tell its story to developers, brokers and site selection professionals. The campaign included developing graphic identity, and advertising campaign, print materials and web site.



### SUCCESS STORIES

- ALGONQUIN NEWS
- ALGONQUIN + LOVELY CANDY
- ALGONQUIN + WHAT WE MAKE
- ALGONQUIN + NORTHWEST PULMONARY

### ALGONQUIN + LOVELY CANDY



Let's Develop Something.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing.
- 2 Parker, Kim et al. (2018, May 15). What Unites and Divides Urban, Suburban and Rural Communities. *Pew Research Center*. <https://pewrsr.ch/34BgaW8>
- 3 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing
- 4 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing
- 5 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing.
- 6 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing.
- 7 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing.
- 8 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing.
- 9 5 Place Branding Principles for Successful Brand Development and Management (2015), *The Place Brand Observer*. <http://bit.ly/2NQVToQ>
- 10 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing
- 11 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing
- 12 Destination Development International, <http://bit.ly/2NxmiJ5>
- 13 The International Economic Development Council's Economic Development Reference Guide, *The International Economic Development Council*. <http://bit.ly/2NrYp63>
- 14 Liu, Amy (2016) *Remaking Economic Development*. The Brookings Institution, <https://brook.gs/34GptUQ>
- 15 The Future of Retail is very physical: JLL report, *JLL Commercial Real Estate*, <http://bit.ly/33sEBFg>
- 16 First Quarter 2019 Industrial Market Report - Chicago. *Avison Young Commercial Real Estate*. <http://bit.ly/2PZvcBj>
- 17 First Quarter 2019 Industrial Market Report - Chicago. *Avison Young Commercial Real Estate*. <http://bit.ly/2PZvcBj>
- 18 Parker, Kim et al. (2018, May 15). What Unites and Divides Urban, Suburban and Rural Communities. *Pew Research Center*. <https://pewrsr.ch/34BgaW8>
- 19 Cilluffo, Anthony et al. (2017, July 19) More U.S. households are renting than at any point in 50 years. *Pew Research Center*. <https://pewrsr.ch/2pQHktx>
- 20 Derek Thompson, Senior Editor, The Atlantic, Magazine, WBUR Interview, January 14, 2019
- 21 The International Economic Development Council's Economic Development Reference Guide. *The International Economic Development Council*. <http://bit.ly/2NrYp63>
- 22 Leblanc, Wes and Davis Gensler, Alice. (2018). Understanding the Preferences of Millennials: Implications for Chicago's Suburbs. *Illinois Municipal Policy Journal*, 2018, Vol. 3 No. 1, 1-16
- 23 Tjarksen, Susan. (2018, February 1) 6 Three Reasons Multifamily Developers Should Focus On Baby Boomer Renters. *Forbes.com*. <http://bit.ly/2NtMNPO>
- 24 Fry, Richard and Parker, Kim. (2018, November 15). Early Benchmarks Show 'Post-Millennials' on Track to Be Most Diverse, Best-Educated Generation Yet. *Pew Research Center*, <https://pewrsr.ch/2rjPuuJ>.
- 25 Pew Center for Research. (2018, November 15). The Whys and Hows of Generations Research. <https://pewrsr.ch/325PUDz>
- 26 Market Study For the Proposed Rental Apartment Building Northwest Corner Main Street and Central Road, Mount Prospect, Illinois. Appraisal Research Counselors, 2016
- 27 Leblanc, Wes and Davis Gensler, Alice. (2018). Understanding the Preferences of Millennials: Implications for Chicago's Suburbs. *Illinois Municipal Policy Journal*, 2018, Vol. 3 No. 1, 1-16
- 28 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing
- 29 Baker, Bill (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities, The Essentials for Successful Place Branding*, Creative Leap Publishing





Prepared by: MECO Consulting  
DRAFT February 2020

Contact: Maura El Metennani  
[www.mecoconsulting.com](http://www.mecoconsulting.com)  
[maura@mecoconsulting.com](mailto:maura@mecoconsulting.com)  
773/818-7822