



*Downtown TIF District
Strategic Plan*



Prepared by the Downtown Strategic Plan Ad Hoc Committee

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INTRODUCTION

The intent of this strategic plan for Downtown Mount Prospect is to guide revitalization of the community's Central Business District. As in many established towns, this is not an easy or necessarily straightforward process. In fact, downtown planning in Mount Prospect has been going on for many years. Those efforts, which are summarized in the appendix, have generated a number of successful projects. Conversely, the Village's downtown presents challenges that have made extensive improvements by either the public or private sectors difficult. Not surprisingly, the positive improvements in the downtown result from a shared effort by the public and private sectors. Recognizing these realities, this plan builds on past planning for downtown and establishes a program to foster downtown revitalization.

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This plan was prepared by an ad hoc committee that included representatives from the Village's Plan Commission, Business District Development and Redevelopment Commission, Economic Development Commission, Board of Trustees, and Village residents. In this way, the committee reflected a community-wide perspective, in addition to insights and experiences of those whose attention is regularly on the downtown. The committee met twice a month on predetermined mornings to prepare the plan. As the need to cover issues in greater depth arose, the committee also met on additional mornings. Those meetings were open to all and included time for public comment. The agenda for each meeting was established at the outset of the project to help maintain the tight schedule. A short time frame was important in order to take advantage of growing or increased interest in downtown revitalization, and to maximize use of funding available through the Downtown Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District.

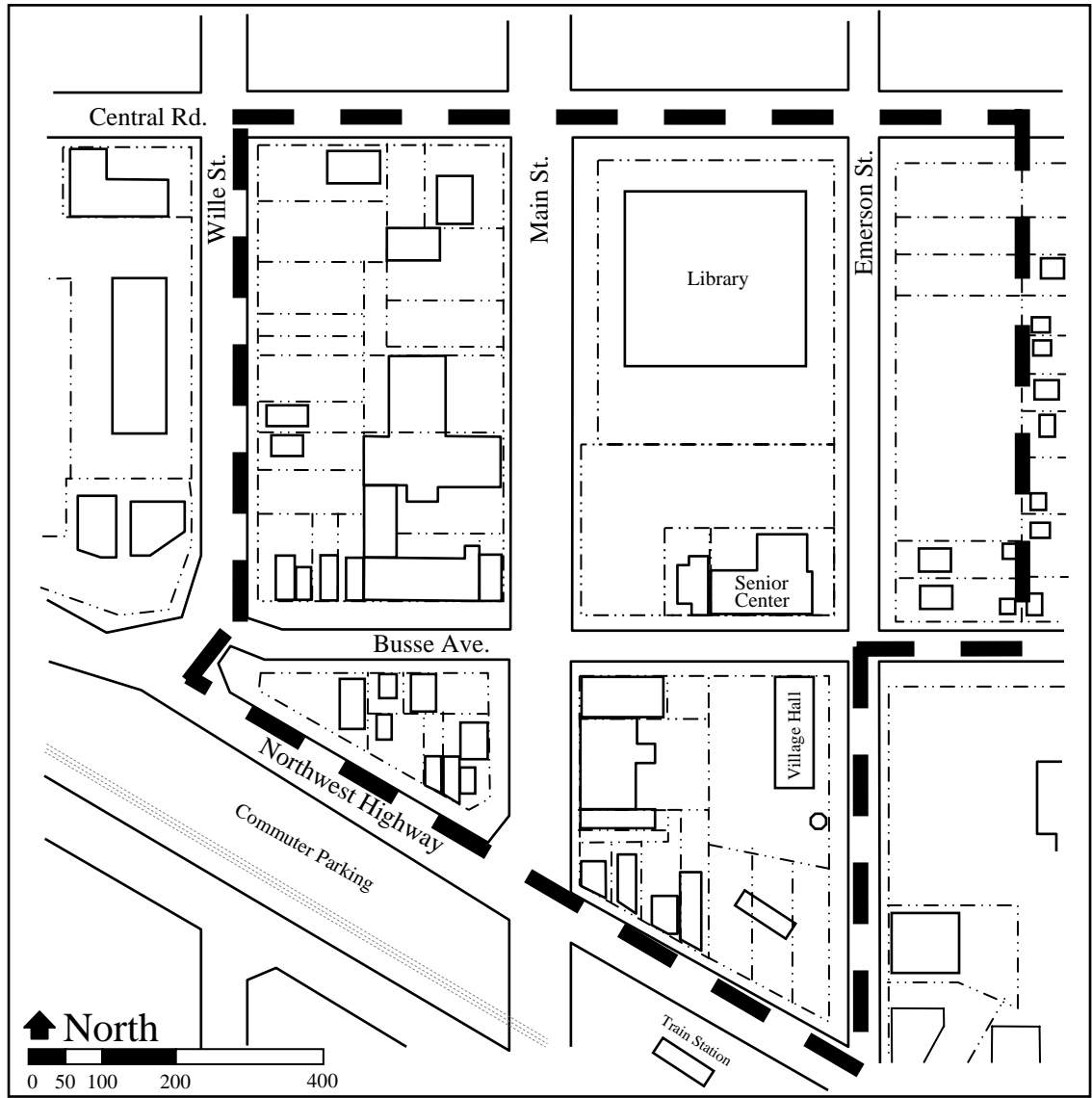
The study area (see Figure 1) was limited to the portion of downtown that presented the greatest need and opportunity for enhancement. That area is bounded by Central Road on the north, Wille Street on the west, Northwest Highway on the south, Emerson (between Northwest Highway and Busse Avenue) and the mid block between Emerson and Maple (from Busse to Central) on the east. However, the targeted study area is not considered in a vacuum. The plan considers the needs and impacts of properties and businesses throughout the downtown.

Plan Purpose and Contents

The purpose of this strategic plan is to identify consensus on the most appropriate redevelopment alternatives in the study area.

The purpose of this strategic plan is to identify consensus on the most appropriate redevelopment alternatives in the study area, as well as to outline the process for that redevelopment to occur. Therefore, the plan focuses on three topics: land use, development guidelines (such as height and bulk regulations), and design guidelines (such as architecture and streetscape). The plan also prioritizes sites for redevelopment (see Figure 7). The last item is important because one of the ultimate purposes of this strategic plan is to create a request for proposals from developers for redevelopment of certain parcels in the downtown.

To accomplish this charge, the plan is in four sections. The first outlines existing conditions pertinent to the plan. The second section presents a vision for the downtown that has been created by Village residents, officials, and the Ad Hoc Committee in preparing the plan. The third section describes the strategic plan issues in the study area. The final section details a development concept plan for each block in the area.



Study Area Boundary

FIGURE 1
STUDY AREA

prepared 12/23/97

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Land Use

Downtown Mount Prospect was the original commercial and civic center of the Village. A mix of uses, including municipal/civic uses, retail stores, and commercial uses characterizes the area (see Figure 2). Downtown continues to be a highly accessible area, influenced by the heavy volume of vehicular traffic on its three major arterial streets. These roads have a significant impact on the land use patterns and character of the downtown. Although Mount Prospect has an active commuter rail station, nearly all downtown businesses are primarily dependent on auto traffic rather than pedestrian traffic.

The physical conditions of buildings in the downtown vary. Some buildings were renovated within the last ten years and are well maintained, while other buildings continue to deteriorate and have numerous building code violations. With a few exceptions, the buildings are not architecturally significant. Most are “box-type” buildings constructed in the 1950's and 1960's. It is important to note that past facade improvement projects have held up better on Prospect Avenue than on the north side of the tracks. Also, there are very few new buildings in the study area.

Residential Development in the Study Area

Residential development in the study area includes recently constructed Shires at Clocktower Place Condominiums. Currently, there are 89 units completed, and once the third and final building is completed, there will be 139 units. In addition to condominiums, the downtown area also contains town homes. The Village Commons Subdivision, also known as the Hemphill Townhome Development, is located in the TIF district. It is east of the study area, and consists of 51 townhouse units. The development is relatively new and provides a good transition from the single-family residences east of downtown, to the commercial uses west of the Village Commons Subdivision. There are four single-family residences in the study area. Northwest Electric rents out two houses on Wille Street and the other two are located on the northeast corner of Emerson Street and Busse Avenue. In addition to these four houses, there are several apartment units located above commercial uses on Busse Avenue. These units were part of the original construction of the buildings, and vary in age.



The newest commercial development adjacent to the study area is the Clocktower Development.

Commercial Development in the Study Area

The newest commercial development adjacent to the study area is the Clocktower Development, located at the intersection of Wille and Northwest Highway. This strip mall includes a coffee shop (Starbucks), a bread store (Montana Gold), a hair stylist and a dry cleaner. Until recently, Busse Avenue, between Main/Elmhurst Road and Wille Street, was characterized by numerous vacancies. To date, several new businesses have opened, or are scheduled to open soon. These new businesses, which have filled most previous vacancies, include a clothing resale shop and an art gallery.

Other commercial uses found in the study area are not considered appropriate for a traditional downtown. Although these auto-intensive and wholesale types of businesses in the study area may do well financially, they are not components of a downtown striving to create a pedestrian friendly, community-orientated environment. From a land use stand point, these heavy commercial businesses are more appropriate in an industrial area. Their move would allow more suitable uses to occupy these highly visible, prime locations.

Surrounding Land Use

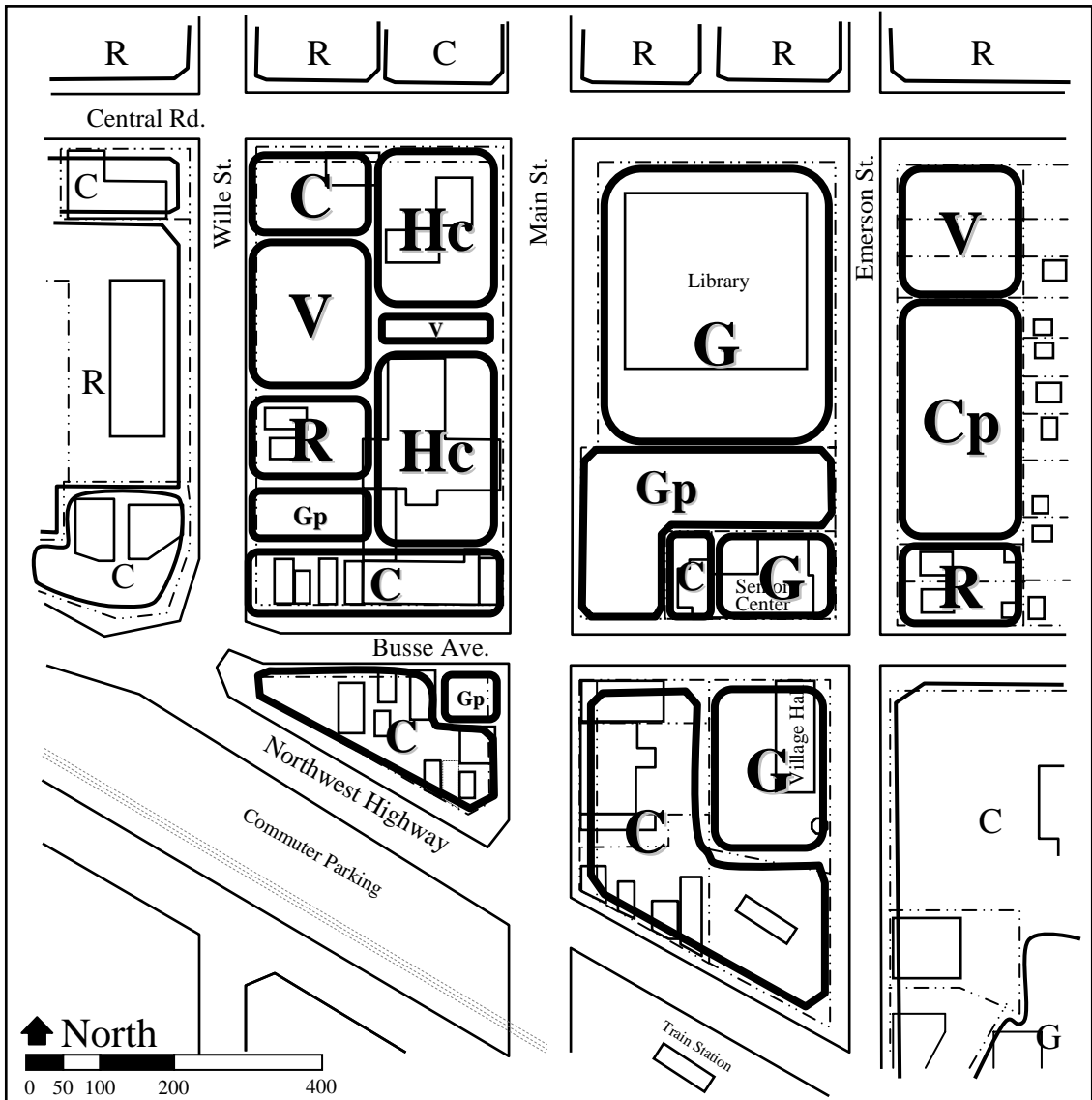
The study area, located within the downtown core, is surrounded by several different land uses. In some directions, the land use character of the surrounding areas reflects that of the study area; it also is commercial. In other cases, the areas quickly change to residential in character.

Land uses directly west of the study area, from Wille Street to the corner of Central Road and Northwest Highway, are commercial uses and condominiums. These commercial uses include two restaurants as well as a gas station, an electronics store, and small business service operators. These types of businesses reflect the types of uses found in the study area.

Land uses south of the study area are separated by the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. Although this area is a part of Downtown Mount Prospect, the tracks create a visual and physical separation from the study area. Beyond the tracks is a small group of commercial uses that include service-oriented businesses, medical offices, and some retail businesses. Beyond those uses, the character of the area quickly becomes residential.



Until recently, Busse Avenue, between Main/Elmhurst Road and Wille Street, was characterized by numerous vacancies.



- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| G Government | Gp Parking Lot (Government) |
| C Commercial | Cp Parking Lot (Commercial) |
| Hc Heavy Commercial | |
| R Residential | |
| V Vacant | |

FIGURE 2
EXISTING LAND USE MAP

prepared 12/23/97

Immediately east of the study area are single family residences, a municipal use (the Public Safety Building) as well as retail businesses along Northwest Highway. Further east on Northwest Highway is a townhome development (Village Commons Subdivision) and numerous, smaller retail businesses such as a flower store, a comic book store, a bicycle store, and an insurance company. While these businesses continue the commercial character along Northwest Highway, they do not have a strong connection to the downtown core.

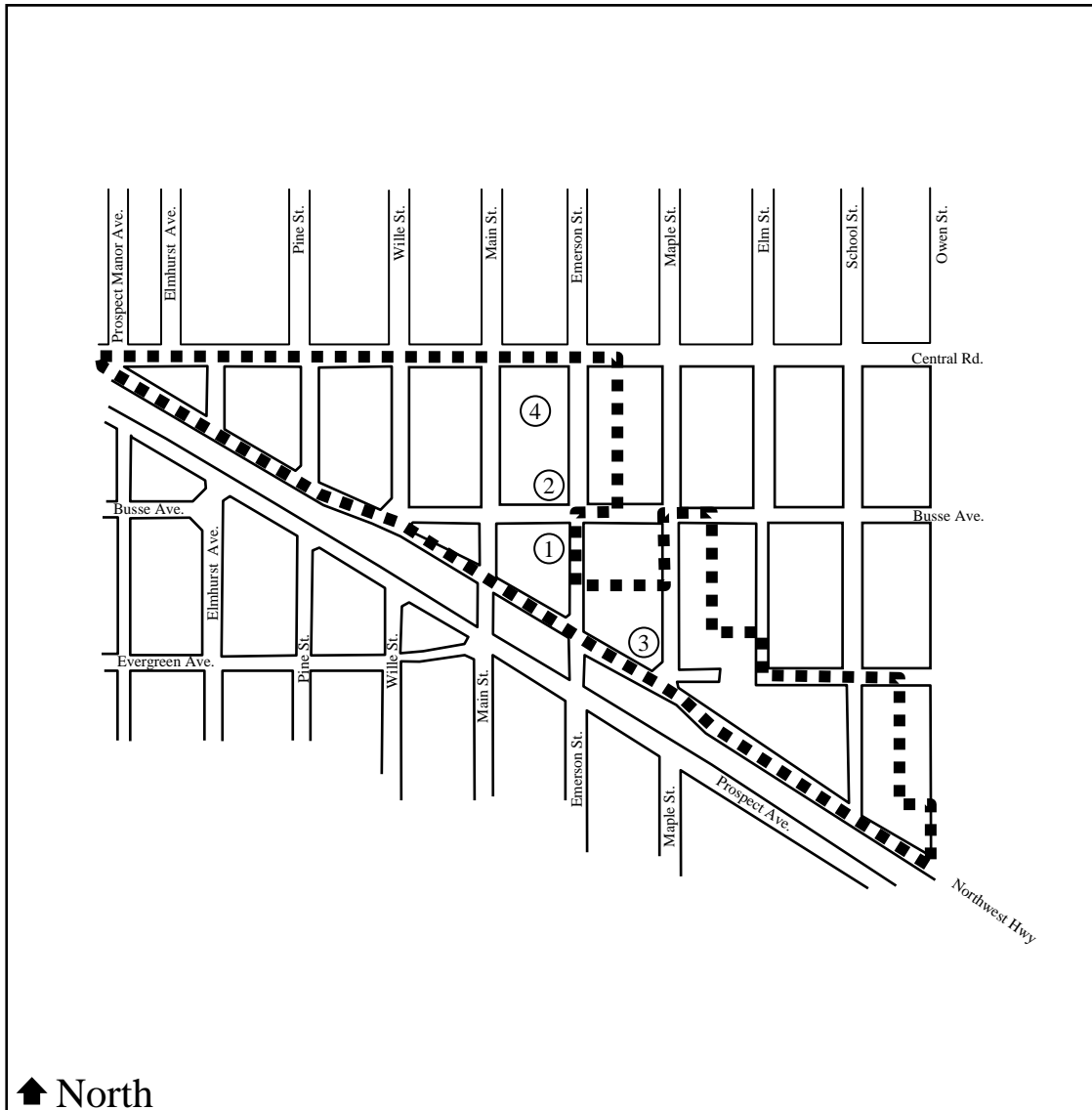
North of Central Road, the land uses are primarily single-family residences. The multi-family housing at the northeast corner of Central and Main Street provides a transition to the neighboring single-family residences. As a result of this residential character, the downtown area generally is not considered to extend north of Central Road. However, Central Plaza and the yet to be constructed Mount Prospect National Bank serve as an entryway into the downtown, and are used as if part of the downtown.

Tax Increment Finance District

The original TIF District was established in August of 1985. It has since been amended and expanded. Currently, the TIF District is bounded by Central Road to the north, Northwest Highway to the south, and Owen Street to the east. The TIF boundaries do not form a complete triangle as the boundary lines jog around and exclude First Chicago and the vast majority of the single-family residences. East of Emerson, the north boundary is Busse Avenue, but then continues south to Evergreen and ends at Northwest Highway and Owen Street. Figure 3 shows the boundaries of the TIF District.

To date, TIF funds have been used to finance the Streetscape Program, the Facade Rebate Program, property acquisition, infrastructure, and the Interior Remodel Program. Potential uses of TIF funds include property acquisition, infrastructure improvement, consultant fees and demolition. The TIF expires in the year 2008, leaving only ten years for the Village to utilize TIF revenues to fund eligible activities in the district, and to retire bonds used in support of downtown redevelopment.

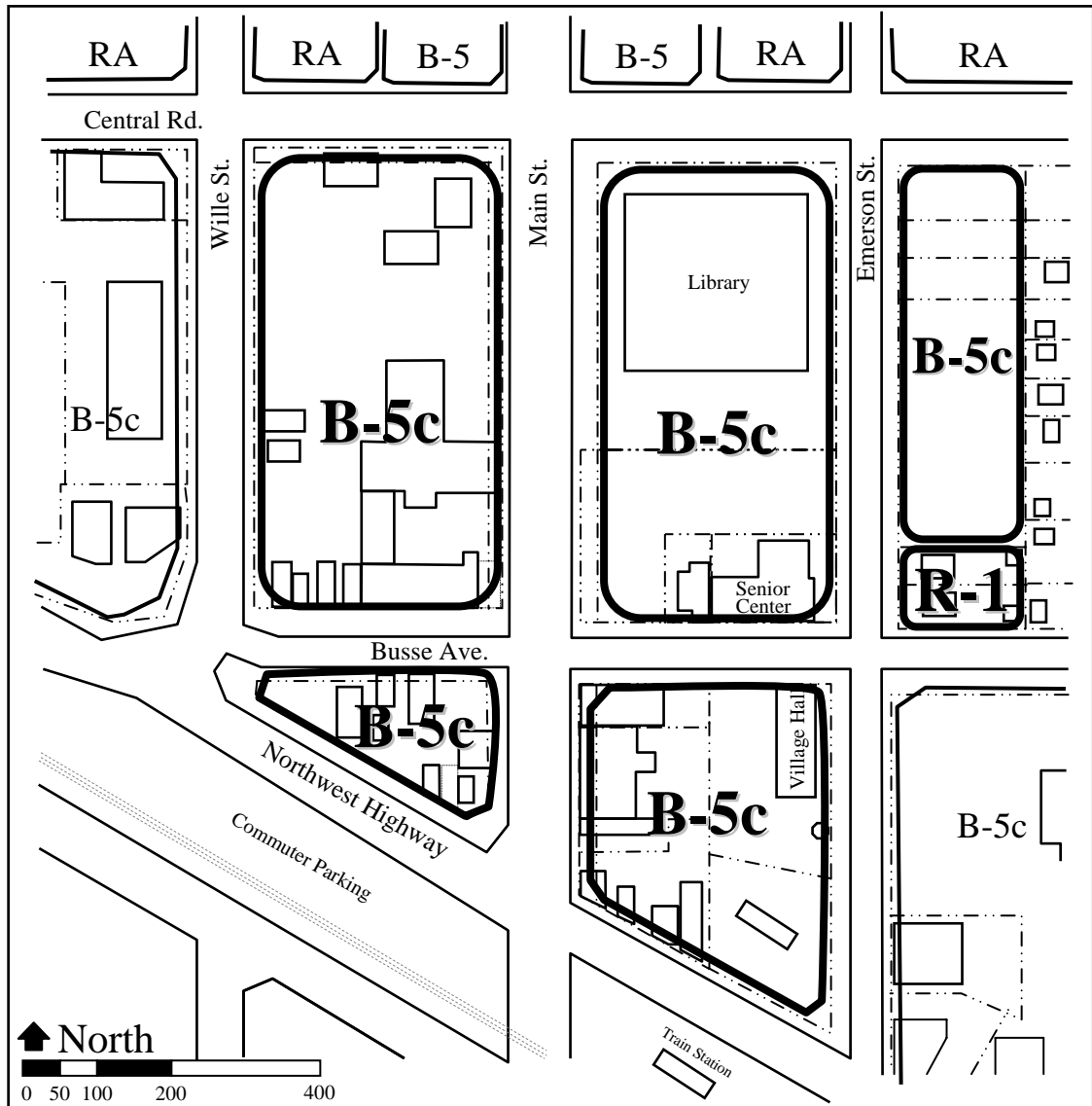
To date, TIF funds have been used to finance the Streetscape Program, the Facade Rebate Program, property acquisition, infrastructure, and the Interior Remodel Program.



- ■ ■ ■ T.I.F. Boundary
- ① Village Hall
- ② Senior Citizen Center
- ③ Public Safety Building
- ④ Library

FIGURE 3
TAX INCREMENT FINANCE DISTRICT

prepared 12/23/97



- R-1** Single Family Residence District
- R-A** Single Family Residence District
- B-5** Central Commercial District
- B-5c** Central Commercial Core District

FIGURE 4
EXISTING ZONING MAP

prepared 12/23/97

Zoning

The Downtown area is zoned B-5, Central Commercial, with the center zoned B-5C, Central Commercial Core, (see Figure 4). The two homes at the northeast corner of Busse and Emerson are zoned R-1. The most significant bulk regulation established in the Zoning Code for these districts is the maximum permitted height. Code permits 30' or three stories in the B-5 district, or six stories or 70' in the B-5C district.

Traffic/Parking

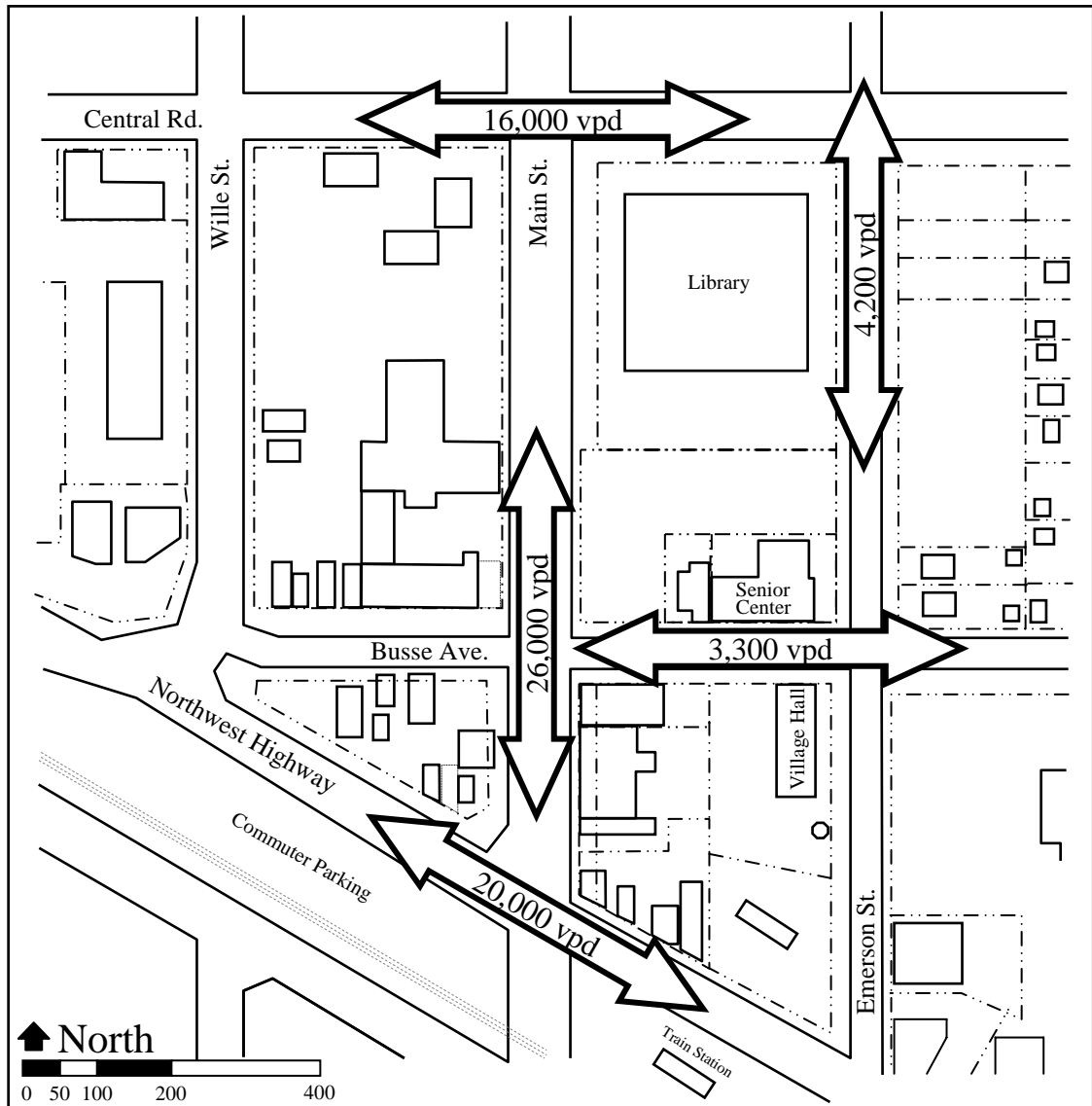
The downtown area is accessible from three major roads, Northwest Highway, Central Road and Main Street/Elmhurst Road (Route 83). The high traffic volume and multiple access points make it difficult to establish a focal point or a pedestrian friendly environment in the downtown area. Figure 5 shows traffic counts for the study area. The three major roads in the downtown area, Main/Elmhurst Road, Northwest Highway, and Central Road have traffic counts of 26,000 vehicles per day (vpd), 20,000 vpd, and 16,000 vpd respectively. This volume is desirable for attracting retailers, and the counts are comparable to Arlington Heights and Rand Roads.

There is a perception that the downtown area does not have adequate parking. A parking study conducted by Rich and Associates in April 1990 found there was a deficit of 40 spaces in the downtown. Given the size of the downtown, this is not considered a significant deficit in the number of parking spaces. Figure 5a provides the location and number of spaces available. Rich and Associates recommended that additional parking be developed in the core area, and that parking along Prospect Avenue and behind businesses be promoted with better signage.

Downtown Status Report

The amount of vacant buildings in the downtown area is common for the age and type of structures in the downtown. More importantly, though, is the location of the vacancies along the highly visible Northwest Highway and Central Road. The pattern of uses in the study area is currently segregated, and underutilized, with a wide mix of uses. Figure 6 shows the location of vacancies, properties for sale and Village owned properties.

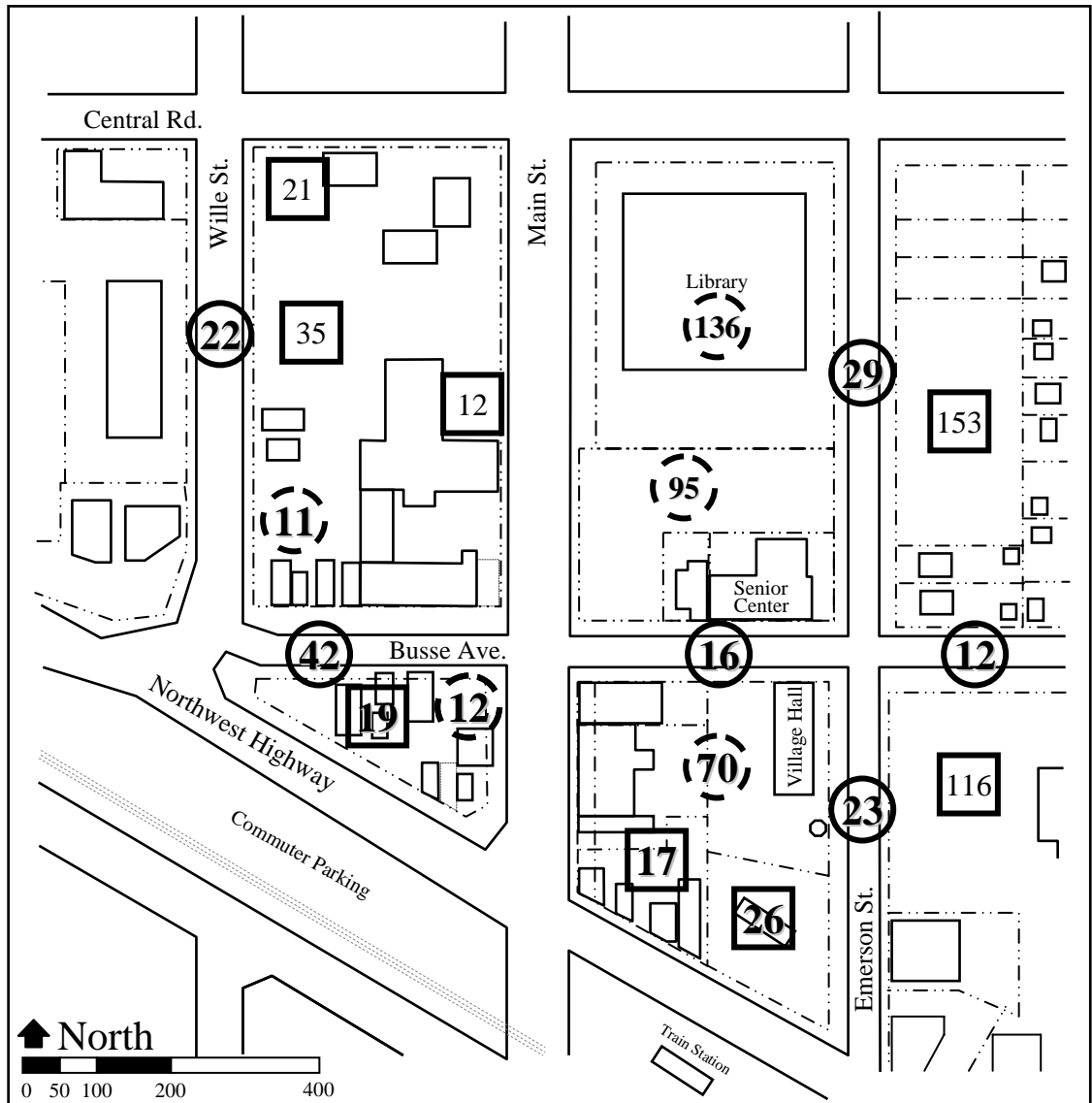
Traffic volumes from Northwest Highway, Main/Elmhurst and Central Roads are desirable for attracting retailers.



vpd Vehicles Per Day

FIGURE 5
TRAFFIC COUNTS (1995)

prepared 12/23/97






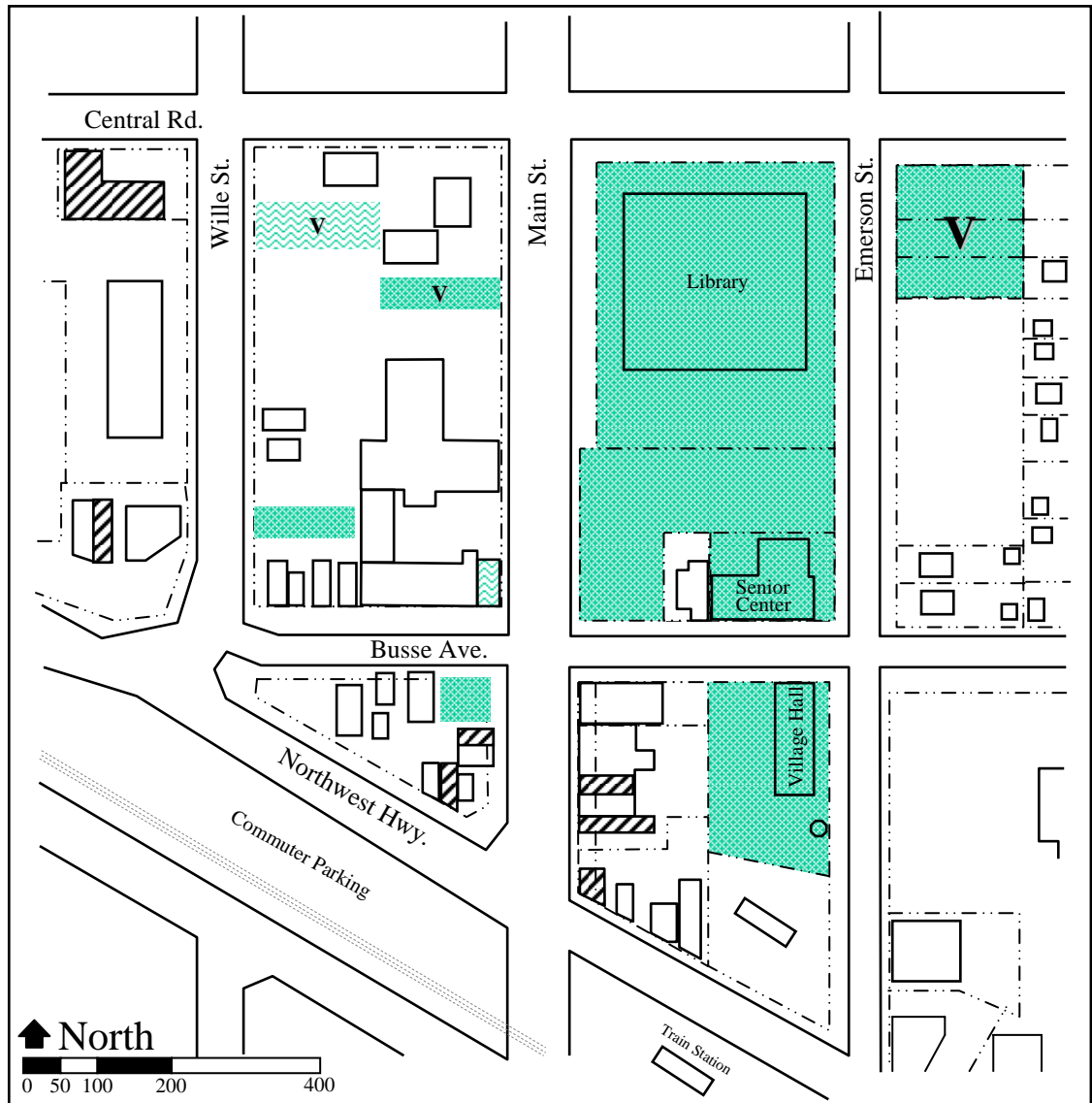
-  Private Parking Lot
-  On-St. Parking
-  Public Parking Lot

FIGURE 5a
PARKING MAP

prepared 12/23/97








-  Property Owned by Village of Mount Prospect
-  Vacant Property Owned by Village of Mount Prospect
-  Vacant Storefront
-  Property for Sale
-  Vacant Property for Sale

FIGURE 6
STATUS MAP

prepared 12/23/97

Population

Demographic information on Mount Prospect and surrounding areas is shown in Table 1. The table provides detailed information but general trends suggest a decrease in household size, while NIPC anticipates the addition of 39,000 additional households for the Near North and Northwest communities, including 2,356 in Mount Prospect.

Since 1990, the population within a half-mile of the downtown area has declined 3.2%, although it has increased 3.2% within a three-mile radius. The average age within a half-mile of downtown is estimated to exceed 40 years. However, School District 57 reported an increase in enrollment for the last three years and projections show this trend will continue for the next five years and then level off.

Downtown Characteristics

Building Heights

Most of the buildings in the downtown are less than three stories tall. The few exceptions include the First Chicago building, which is 93' tall, and the Shires at Clocktower Place, standing six stories tall.

Transportation

The Union Pacific Railroad train station is located in downtown Mount Prospect. Mount Prospect's stop is the second busiest on the northwest line, having 1,900 - 2,000 boardings each day. In addition, four Pace bus routes service the downtown area. Routes 234, 209, 226, and 223 link commuters to Buffalo Grove, Wheeling, Woodfield Mall, Elk Grove and Des Plaines.

Visual and Aesthetic Elements

Completion of the Village's Streetscape Program will help unite and identify the downtown area. The new paver sidewalks, trash receptacles, benches, and entry sign will help distinguish the downtown from other commercial areas in the community. These changes will improve and enhance the general appearance.



Completion of the Village's Streetscape Program will help unite and identify the downtown area.

Northeastern Illinois	6,974,755		7,262,176	7,855,784	8,450,392	9,045,000	
Northwest Suburban							
Arlington Heights	65,058	66,116	75,460	77,105	78,749	80,394	3.82%
Mount Prospect	34,995	52,634	53,170	53,390	53,609	53,829	0.42%
Palatine	26,050	32,166	39,253	45,780	52,306	58,833	47.14%
Prospect Heights	13,333	11,808	15,239	15,346	15,453	15,560	-0.48%
Rolling Meadows	19,478	20,167	22,591	22,699	22,808	22,916	-0.16%
Wheeling	13,243	23,266	29,911	31,740	33,570	35,399	14.70%
Subtotal	172,157	206,157	235,624	246,060	256,495	266,931	11.00%
Near North Suburban							
DesPlaines	57,239	53,568	53,223	58,884	64,546	70,207	32.73%
Evanston	80,113	73,706	73,233	75,066	76,899	78,732	7.22%
Lincolnwood	12,929	11,921	11,365	12,098	12,832	13,565	11.48%
Morton Grove	26,369	23,747	22,408	22,682	22,955	23,229	4.15%
Niles	31,432	30,363	28,284	32,976	37,668	42,360	43.83%
Park Ridge	42,614	38,704	36,175	35,612	35,048	34,485	-5.40%
Skokie	68,322	60,278	59,432	60,883	62,334	63,785	8.15%
Subtotal	319,018	292,287	284,120	298,201	312,282	326,363	14.24%
Total North Suburban	491,175.00	498,444.00	519,744.00	544,261.00	568,777.00	593,294.00	12.76%

**TABLE 1
 DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

prepared 11/20/97
 Source: Clarion Associates, Inc.

Market Study

Understanding the market potential in downtown is important to making wise land use decisions. To that end, a detailed market study was an integral part of the planning process. The study helped the plan reflect market realities for downtown. The findings of the market study are summarized below.

General Findings

- Given the accessibility and amenities of the area, together with demographic, economic, and competitive conditions in the surrounding market area, downtown Mount Prospect can support substantial new residential and commercial development over the next several years.
- In spite of an active commuter rail station, most of the downtown businesses are primarily dependent on automobile-oriented traffic, rather than pedestrian traffic. This automobile-dependency is likely to continue even if more sites in the downtown area are developed for residential use.
- Downtown Mount Prospect is smaller than other downtowns. From a market perspective, this will influence the scale of potential development, both for individual projects and in terms of the area's potential to develop critical mass as a destination point. At the same time, it presents the opportunity significantly to transform the downtown's image as a community center with a few essential projects.
- The pattern of land uses on the south side of the railroad tracks is cohesive, in terms of both physical structures and land uses. However, the pattern of uses on the north side is more complex and currently somewhat disjointed, with a wider mix of uses, more vacant or underutilized sites and no clear and consistent orientation to the major arterials. From a market perspective, this is confusing for both potential customers and potential developers.



The pattern of land uses on the south side of the railroad tracks is cohesive, in terms of both physical structures and land uses.

Residential

- Demographics for the Village and the region are supportive of new mid-rise condominiums in the downtown over both the short and long terms.
- Residential infill projects are becoming increasingly popular in both urban and suburban locations, particularly in the north and northwest suburbs.
- Given its location, access, and demographics of the surrounding area, downtown Mount Prospect can compete in the residential market with virtually any other medium density residential location in the northwest suburban area.

Retail

- Due to cyclical impacts of the economy and ongoing technological changes, the traditional retail market is more volatile than in the past. For downtown development, this means that retail space might be harder to rent than in the past, and that the spaces must be flexible enough to accommodate small offices or other uses.
- National tenants in the comparison goods field would be desirable for the downtown in terms of attracting new customers from the entire three-mile market area and beyond. However, these tenants, in most cases, will focus on the automobile-oriented traffic moving through the downtown. In addition, they require a field of highly visible and readily accessible parking.
- To date, TIF funds have been used to finance the Streetscape Program, the Facade Rebate Program, property acquisition, infrastructure, and the Interior Remodel Program. However, these tenants will not support a substantial new construction program. Retaining these tenants will require an ongoing effort on the part of the property owners and the Village.

Office

- Small businesses providing professional service should continue to find downtown to an attractive location. In this setting, however, most will need first floor visibility, easy access, and close, surface parking. In these respects, their market needs are similar to those of various small local retailers and personal service providers.
- The most appropriate locations for office uses are in the retained commercial spaces along Busse Avenue west of Main Street, and in flexible retail/office spaces on the first floor of residential/retail buildings fronting Main Street or Northwest Highway.

A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN

The most important part of the planning process is first to decide the Village's vision for downtown. Without this step, the area could develop as a collection of buildings and businesses with little or no cohesiveness. It requires that many questions be resolved: What types of activities should be located in the downtown? Should government functions be located downtown? Who should downtown serve? Should downtown be a place to live? The answers to these types of questions really become the Village's collective goals for its downtown. More to the point, they direct the findings and recommendations of this plan.



Include businesses that go beyond the most basic day to day needs of residents.

Land Use Priorities

Results of the Downtown Survey (shown in the Appendix) indicated the desire for downtown to include a wide range of services, activities, stores, and living opportunities.

The process of establishing a vision for downtown and this planning effort began in late spring of this year. A Village Board workshop was held on May 31, 1997 to discuss the status of the downtown and establish a direction for its future. The meeting included the Village Board, representatives of various Village commissions, residents, and representatives of the development community. An initial list of the *land use priorities* evolved from a survey conducted during the workshop. The survey results (shown in the Appendix) indicated the desire for a downtown that included a wide range of services, activities, stores, and living opportunities. The results also showed a need for Downtown Mount Prospect to serve residents from all over the Village, downtown employees, and commuters.

The Ad Hoc Committee for Downtown Redevelopment, at their initial meeting, focused this list into a description of favorable downtown businesses. This list (shown in the Appendix) included a range of businesses, but also began to draw a desired picture of downtown. It suggested a need for downtown to include businesses that go beyond the most basic day to day needs of residents (dry cleaners, video rental, etc.), to also include specialty retail businesses (a toy store, hardware store, etc.) and the types of places that encourage residents meeting and visiting with one another at night and on weekends (ice cream store, sit down restaurants, etc.).

Public Participation

The input of Village residents was incorporated into the process of developing the vision and plan for downtown Mount Prospect. In addition to the May 31st Village Board workshop, a number of other steps were taken to secure public input, both in general and as a reaction to the preliminary and final recommendations of this plan:

- Each of the Ad Hoc Committee meetings was open to the public, and included time for comments by those in attendance.
- An open house was held at Village Hall on October 22 to display draft development concepts, and to hear initial findings of the market study. About 100 downtown property owners, business owners, and Village residents, took the opportunity to visit the display, talk with Ad Hoc Committee members, and ask questions of staff. That input, as well as their written comments, was considered in drafting this plan.
- A computer survey was located downtown over parts of October and November. The survey, which was similar to that conducted at the May 31 workshop, was available to residents and visitors at the Village Hall and Library. The computer

survey was at each of these places for about one week. The results of this survey are found in the appendix.

- A workshop to review a draft of this plan was held by the Ad Hoc Committee on December 6. That meeting was open to the public and allowed residents the opportunity to give the Committee opinions on the plan before its adoption.

Vision Statement

The community's values and priorities for Downtown are summarized by this Vision Statement for its future:

Downtown Mount Prospect should be a vibrant social and visual focal point for the community. The downtown should be an active, pedestrian-friendly place, providing opportunities for living, dining, entertainment, shopping and personal services. It should provide areas for hosting community events and be the central location for cultural and civic facilities. It should be a source of pride for both residents and businesses in the community.



Downtown should serve as a place for residents to congregate.

Plan Objectives

For the purposes of this plan, the intent of the land use priorities and vision statement are best understood through three strategic plan objectives. These very straightforward objectives were used as benchmarks in deliberations over the land use plan. They represent the intent of this strategic plan, and its prescribed future for downtown.

- 1) Downtown should serve as a place for Village residents to congregate. This includes outdoor dining, community events, formal and informal gathering spaces, and Village Hall and other government facilities.
- 2) How downtown "feels" to pedestrians should be considered in design of the downtown and its buildings. This means Downtown should be attractive and comfortable for pedestrians to use. Building sizes should be carefully coordinated with their locations. A system of small open spaces should be located downtown, and open spaces should be connected visually and physically, where possible.
- 3) Downtown should have an attractive character based on architectural guidelines setting the standard for the entire community. The architectural guidelines do not need to set a specific theme but should build upon architectural characteristics of existing downtown buildings. The Clocktower development and the Public Safety building are good examples of this approach.

- 4) The implementation of the Downtown Streetscape Program should continue.

STRATEGIC PLANNING ISSUES

Before presenting the land use plan for downtown, it is important to consider the underlying issues relevant to that development plan. Those issues include development phasing, property acquisition, business relocation, pedestrian scale and transportation network, and design guidelines.

Development Phasing

The plan shows development of the downtown in three phases. Those plans show detailed development objectives and recommendations in Phases I, II, and III. This phased approach to downtown redevelopment serves the Village in a number of ways:

- Identifying a target area for initial development allows the Village to focus available TIF resources for redevelopment needs.
- Beginning the process with a manageable portion of the downtown (rather than the entire area) will help the Village create a development success downtown. A positive start will make future phases and developments more feasible.
- The more complex (and potentially costly) decisions related to downtown redevelopment require more deliberation. Phase I of the plan allows for downtown revitalization to begin in an area with clearer redevelopment potential. As described later, Phases II and III require that certain issues are resolved. In addition, Phase III is flexible to reflect possible changes in market conditions.

Property Acquisition

Accumulating parcels from multiple property owners for large-scale redevelopment will be among the most difficult aspects of downtown redevelopment. The realities of modern development require larger parcels than are held by most single owners in the downtown. In addition, the process of purchasing these properties typically discourages private sector developers from undertaking a project. Therefore, property acquisition often is conducted by the public sector. The Village of Mount Prospect has played this role in past projects, and will have to take a leadership role to make this plan a reality.

It is the intent of the Village to secure any property through a negotiated sale with the owners. Acquiring property through the Village's right of eminent domain is an option. However, as a matter of established public policy, it is a tactic of last resort. Only in cases where an agreement acceptable to both parties cannot be reached will the Village consider condemnation.

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Business Relocation

Many downtown properties include businesses that have been operated for some time by a single owner. They represent years of hard work and contribution to the community. Beyond purchasing those properties, it is in the best interest of the Village for those businesses that support the plan's objectives and vision statement to remain in the downtown. The challenge here is that those businesses cannot simply wait the year or more that will be needed to develop modern retail space. In addition, the rents typically paid in older structures do not support development. That is, businesses in existing older structures (whether they rent or own) may not be able to afford the cost of new retail space. Therefore, a series of business relocation actions are a part of this strategic plan:

- There is vacant space in existing downtown retail centers. The Village will work with displaced retail and convenience service business owners to find space in those centers.
- Virginia Court retail center located at the southwest corner of Central Road and Wille Street presents a specific opportunity for relocation of business in the Phase I area. It currently stands vacant, sits at a high visibility corner, and could accommodate several of the existing businesses. Unfortunately, this is an older structure that does not reflect the quality or character of recent development in downtown, which has been adopted as a standard for this plan. Any Village effort to relocate businesses to that site would require significant upgrades to the facade and interior of the building.
- The Village will consider contributing to the cost of relocating displaced businesses. The decision of whether to assist with those costs will be made on a case by case basis. This applies to both those retail businesses that would remain downtown, as well as businesses that would relocate outside the downtown.

Pedestrian Scale and Transportation Network

The notion of creating Transit Oriented Developments (TODs) has received a great deal of attention lately in the development world. A TOD is a mixed-use community within walking distance of a transit stop and core commercial area. TODs mix residential, retail, office, open space and public uses in a walkable environment,

making it convenient for residents and employees to travel by transit, bicycle, foot or car. It is the idea that careful design and development can create a positive relationship between people and the transportation network. A pedestrian friendly environment and major roadways may seem an odd combination in downtown Mount Prospect. In fact, from a TOD perspective, this is clearly a positive situation. In fact, many developments long for the combination of roads, buses, sidewalks, parking lots, and commuter rail that already are essential elements of downtown Mount Prospect. The challenge is to make them work together. To that end, it is the intent of this plan to incorporate the notions of TOD into the development project, so that the downtown may continue to take advantage of its existing pedestrian scale and transportation network.

Design Guidelines

The design guidelines presented here are intended to reinforce the ongoing redevelopment work of the downtown area and guide the design of specific upcoming development projects. The design guidelines express the character and quality needed to make Mount Prospect a special place to live, work and play.

The redevelopment of the downtown area offers the unusual opportunity and challenge of building a larger scale, mixed use community that is surrounded by a fully developed existing village. The community will grow from land which has a previous development history, and some important visual cues to mark or influence the direction of this new community. This document serves as a guide for the design efforts that will start the building process, and for future projects which will carry the plan to completion. There are three key ideas that have influenced the guidelines. They are architectural style, mid and low building height, and building pedestrian-friendly streets.

Architectural Style

Architectural diversity is strongly encouraged throughout the redevelopment project and should be pursued by using varied building materials and architectural styles. Within this concept, the residential and retail/commercial areas should strive for diversity in design. The intersection corners at either end of Main Street and the Village Hall and Village Green mark areas that shall incorporate common design elements exhibiting unity in scale, building material and color. These areas will be the gathering places for the redevelopment project and will serve as 'gateways' from the surrounding neighborhoods. Projects should display a unified image and create gracious pedestrian environments of walkways, courts, or other gathering places. The gateway and



Residential and commercial buildings should be six to eight story height limit, and should be further limited in height where appropriate to be compatible with adjacent neighborhoods.

public buildings should be predominantly brick buildings with possibly arcaded bases, and sloping roofs.

Mid or Low Building Height

In general, buildings of no more than 2-1/2 stories in height can meet the projected uses for the low-rise 'row house' neighborhood. Residential and commercial buildings are encouraged to stay at six to eight story height limit, and should be further limited in height where appropriate to be compatible with adjacent neighborhoods. Such a height restriction allows the landscape, rather than the architecture, to create the dominant image for the downtown redevelopment plan. The tree canopy and the street environment currently unify the Mount Prospect community. These buildings will collectively form a backdrop to a larger streetscape with trees. The height restrictions proposed will help unify various building types (i.e. building across from train station can be no more than four to five stories tall).

Building Pedestrian-Friendly Streets

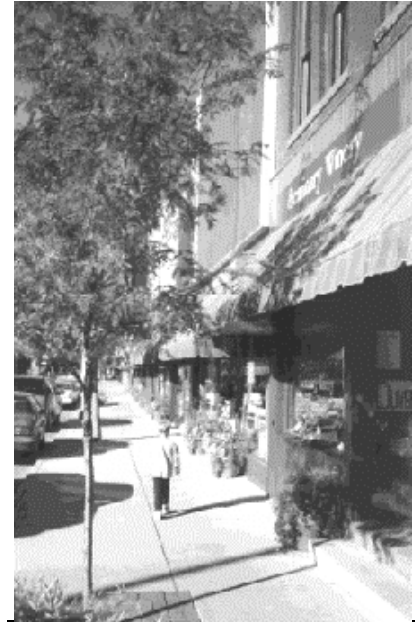
The streets within the redevelopment area consist of a hierarchy of 'addressing' streets and 'service' streets. Along 'addressing' streets, the siting and orientation of all buildings are encouraged to face the street in a strong, straightforward and welcoming manner, similar to the existing retail on the north side of Busse Avenue. Street orientation of front doors, windows to major work and living spaces, and minimal building setbacks are all suggested to create a friendly and active street environment. The buildings and landscape in the redevelopment area should be complementary to create distinctive, pedestrian-friendly streets.

Development Guidelines

This plan for downtown Mount Prospect presents not just a program for new buildings, but also a vision of downtown's image. The structures within the downtown (building, infrastructure, open spaces, etc.) will be key in creating its character. Therefore, these sections describe recommendations for downtown streets, open spaces, residential uses, commercial areas, public buildings, and signs.

Street System Guidelines

The street system guidelines encourage gracious, walkable streets that reflect a commonality of landscape, lighting and pavement design. A commitment to well-designed streetscapes will bring higher property value and will unify the new developments with the existing Village. The guidelines are based on the following objectives:



The buildings and landscape in the redevelopment area should be complementary to create distinctive, pedestrian-friendly streets.

- a. Streetscapes should be designed to accommodate pedestrians with ample, shaded sidewalks, clearly marked crosswalks and lighting.
- b. On-street parking is encouraged on all non-arterial residential and commercial streets.
- c. Tree planting, consistent with the Streetscape Program, is encouraged for all streets.
- d. Any modifications or restrictions to the traffic pattern should be reviewed for compatibility with the overall development concept.
- e. Pedestrian crossings, specifically those across Main Street, should be enhanced through distinctive paving of crosswalks and possible pedestrian islands at Busse Avenue and Main Street.



Pedestrian crossings, specifically those across Main Street, should be enhanced through distinctive paving of crosswalks.

Open Space Guidelines

The open spaces proposed for the downtown redevelopment consist of a large community space, referred to as the Village Green, and smaller open spaces found in the commercial and row house developments. The open spaces are linked by the street parkway landscapes. The connectivity of the open spaces will encourage pedestrian activity, increase the value of each area, and insure that the downtown is a highly desirable place to live, work and play. This character would be emphasized through application of the Village's Streetscape Program, and incorporating public art into the downtown area.

Residential Guidelines

Much of the downtown redevelopment area will be devoted to housing. Residential densities will range from two and one-half story row homes to three floors of housing over retail, to six to eight story residential developments. A mix of condominium, rental and possible senior housing development is encouraged. The guidelines encourage the development of residential areas that reflect the character and density of the specific site area.

Commercial/Office Guidelines

The character of development in the Village Center is encouraged to build on the history of early Mount Prospect, taking into consideration the single-unit development style of the existing retailers on the north edge of Busse Avenue. The commercial development is encouraged to supplement the ground floor retail with office, residential and other program uses for the remaining floors.

The development of this area should respond to the following objectives:

- a. To create a mixed-use development that defines an important commercial center;



Buildings along the streets should be encouraged to build to the property line per the Village's Streetscape Program.

- b. To integrate suitable existing buildings, where possible, into the development of this area;
- c. To define a village green, being a central space for the downtown area; and
- d. To link commercial building types in a way that provides logical pedestrian movement.

Building Placement & Setbacks

Buildings are encouraged to orient towards the street to define the street and create a comfortable pedestrian-friendly environment. The commercial area streets should be lively, people oriented places that encourage walking and gathering. Storefronts and main entrances should be oriented towards the street to support these activities. Buildings along the addressing streets are encouraged to build to the property line per the Downtown Streetscape Program. In certain zones this will allow for outdoor dining and display per the Village's Streetscape Program.

Parking

On street parking is encouraged for all commercial non-arterial streets. The development of parking lots is encouraged at the rear or side of retail or entertainment buildings. Parking lots or structures are discouraged along Main Street. A surface parking lot shall not be incorporated into the Village Green area. In general, off-street parking should be directly visible and accessible from major arterial roads or be well marked with directional signage.

Public Buildings Guidelines (Village Hall & Senior Center)

The proposed Village Hall/Senior Center will mark an important focus in the downtown community. It will serve the entire Mount Prospect community and should be representative of other public landmark buildings such as the fire station and the METRA train station, which are strong and positive examples of public buildings.

These guidelines are intended to achieve the following objectives:

- a. To encourage a high-caliber of design using high quality materials; and
- b. To anchor the village government as a positive force in the downtown area.

Signage System Guidelines

A well-coordinated signage system within a community is one of the most effective ways of creating identity and way-finding clarity. The signage system for downtown Mount Prospect may include the following sign types: building signs, street system signs, banners, informational signs, and regulatory signs.



Parking lots should be at the rear or side of retail or entertainment buildings.



The proposed Municipal Center should be representative of other public landmark buildings such as the fire station and the train station

Management and Promotion

The new stores, residents, and office workers who will accompany redevelopment are critical to revitalizing downtown Mount Prospect. However, to remain competitive over time, issues such as management and promotion of the downtown must be addressed.

In this context, downtown is much more than the five blocks in the Strategic Plan study area. It includes the remainder of the triangle area, shops and businesses along Prospect Avenue, and the Central Plaza/Mount Prospect National Bank development at Central Road and Main Street. The Main Street approach developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation is a proven strategy for creating a marketable identity for the business district. This strategy is based on four key principles:

- Organization
- Promotion
- Design
- Economic Restructuring

To remain competitive over time, issues such as management and promotion of the downtown must be addressed. In this context, downtown is much more than the five blocks in the Strategic Plan study area.

The Village clearly has an important role in the implementation of this strategy, given the location of Village Hall and the potential tax revenue generated by redevelopment. However, most successful downtowns have an independent organization, comprised of merchants, bankers, chamber of commerce members, concerned citizens and civic leaders. This group, which can be developed with existing downtown organizations, builds partnerships that can create a consistent long-term revitalization effort. This group can sponsor joint promotions and special events, bring in experts on small business management and marketing, coordinate store hours, and generally do all of the things which malls have traditionally done for their tenants. A group called "Do-it-Downtown" has been formed by local downtown merchants for just this purpose.

Activities such as retaining and expanding existing business, recruiting new businesses to provide a balanced mix, converting underutilized space into productive property, and sharpening the competitiveness of downtown's traditional merchants, are all a part of economic restructuring. While Village staff can assist in these efforts through their overall economic development activities, a downtown organization would be able to focus more attention and effort on this important part of the community.

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

A development concept has been formed by the Ad Hoc Committee reflecting the vision for downtown and outlining how the Village

plans to implement the framework for redevelopment. The land use plans that detail this concept are described in the sections that follow. The proposed redevelopment of downtown is described by development phase (See Figure 7). Each of the three phases includes a description of the proposed development, consideration of primary development issues, and an outline of design and development guidelines for that area.

The Concept Plan illustrated on Figure 8 is truly a concept. The Ad Hoc committee has spent considerable time discussing and refining the concept as a graphic tool to communicate one way in which redevelopment could achieve the community's vision for downtown. In fact, at one meeting, twelve separate concept plans were discussed and reviewed before reaching a consensus on the plan contained in this document. However, the committee also realizes the need to allow developers room for creativity and flexibility in their redevelopment efforts. It is critical that redevelopment efforts follow the guidelines noted above regarding both design and development issues. The Concept Plan portrays one approach, which follows these guidelines, creating a strong pedestrian environment with convenient parking located at the side and rear of buildings, opportunities for public events, and a variety of housing opportunities. The Committee and the Village realize that many other physical plans can be developed within the context of the established guidelines. Developers will be encouraged to expand on the development concept portrayed in Figure 8 to create a unique core area for downtown Mount Prospect.

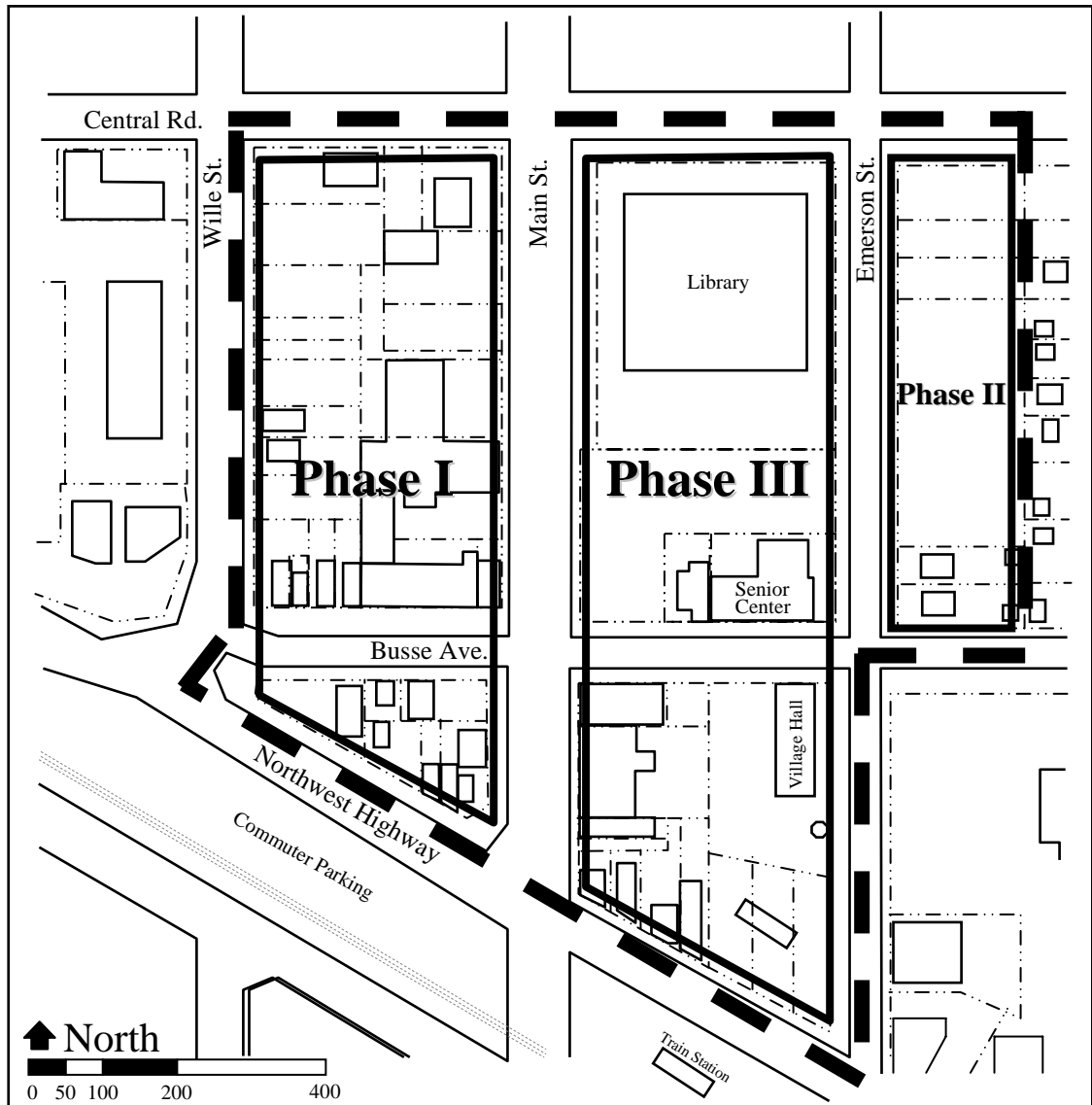


FIGURE 7
DEVELOPMENT PHASE PLAN

prepared 12/23/97

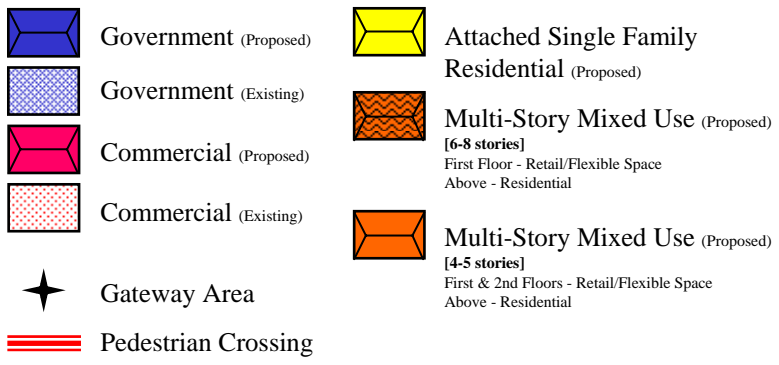
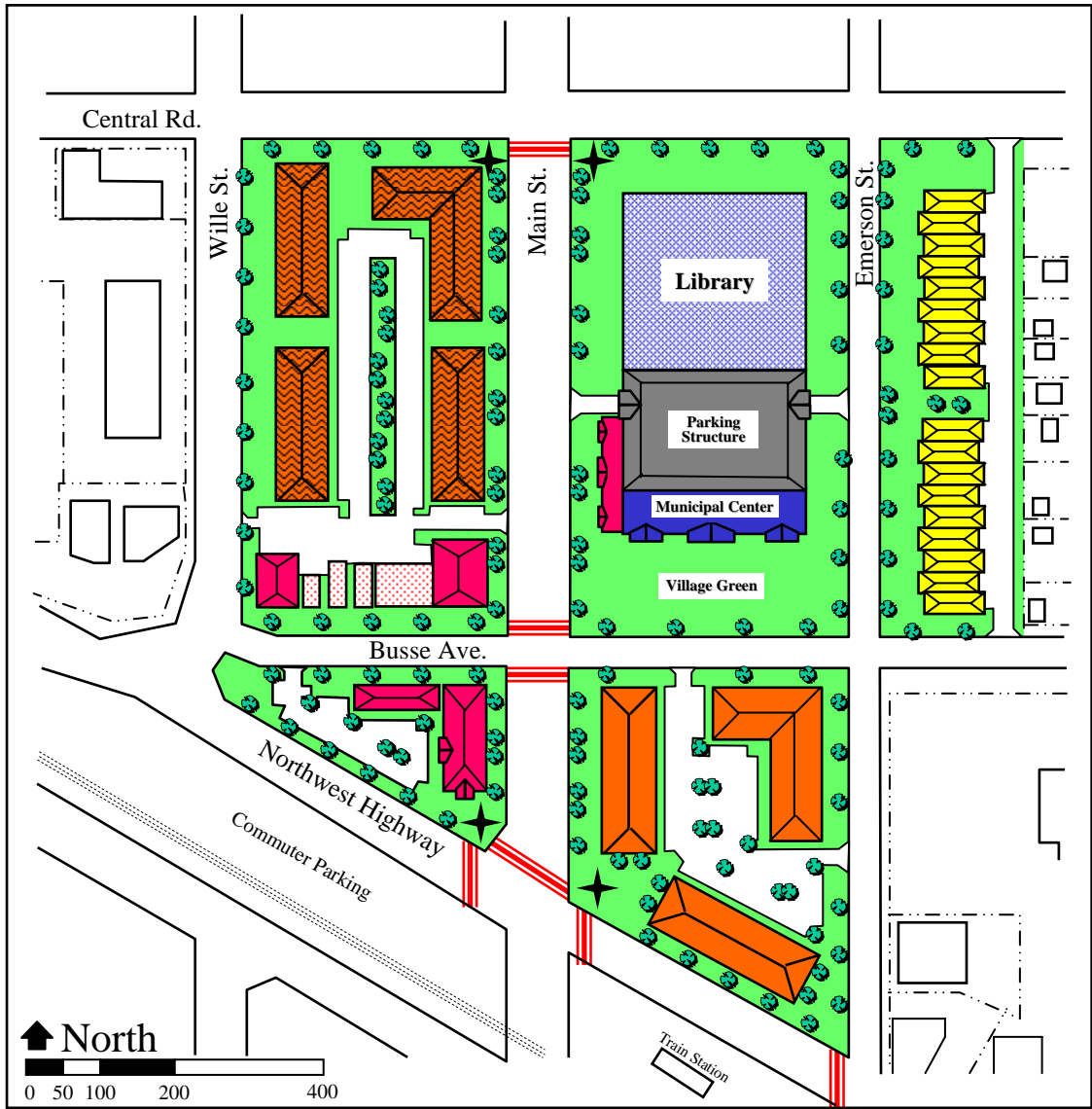


FIGURE 8
CONCEPT PLAN

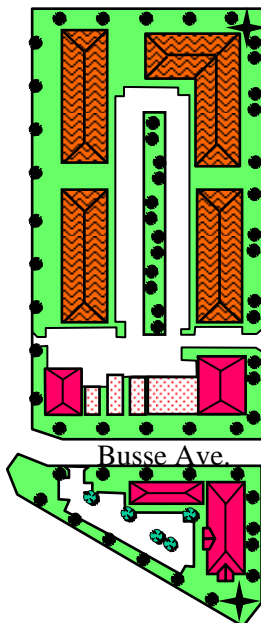
prepared 12/23/97

Phase I

Phase I would be initiated upon the plan's adoption by the Village Board. The first step would be to send out a formal request for proposals for a developer to redevelop this portion of the downtown.

Description

This phase corresponds to the area bounded by Central Road, Main Street, Northwest Highway, and Wille Street (see Figure 8). It includes a mix of residential and retail/commercial uses, and combines redevelopment with preservation and renovation of essential structures. The plan envisions the area as including a multi-story mixed use development, which would complement the condominium development to the west (Shires at Clocktower Place), the retail development to the north (Central Plaza Shopping Center) and the existing 'historic' developments along Busse Avenue.



Phase I

Development Issues

Several issues related to development in the Phase I area required special consideration, and are described below:

Size of the Area

This area clearly is larger than a single development parcel. The size of this phase allows a large development parcel to be established at its north end, one that can accommodate a modern mixed use development. It also allows the needs and potentials of the rest of the area (the existing uses on Busse and the triangle shaped parcel on Northwest Highway) to be incorporated into the initial development stage.

Northwest Electrical Supply

This business has long been located in downtown. It is a successful operation and an asset to the Village of Mount Prospect. However, a significant component of the operation, warehousing, detracts greatly from the desired pedestrian orientation of downtown. In addition, its sales are geared more toward contractors than consumers, making it a poor match with the established vision of downtown. Finally, the business sits on one of the few sites in downtown large enough to accommodate large-scale redevelopment. Therefore, it is the intention of this plan to relocate the warehousing function of Northwest Electrical to another location in the Village; one that would be appropriate for that activity. If possible, the businesses' showroom would be incorporated into one of the developments or relocation sites in the downtown.

Busse Avenue Businesses

The buildings and businesses on the north side of Busse Avenue combine to create an area that enhances the downtown, and supports the vision of this plan. Its pedestrian scale, historic character, and

unique businesses should be maintained. However, many of the buildings do not meet building code standards. They will require significant facade and interior improvements to keep them viable in the long term. The buildings have been included in this larger development site so that their improvement can be considered as part of the larger development, and so that surrounding development can be designed to protect and support the properties.

Businesses on the north side of Busse Avenue create an area that enhances the downtown. Its pedestrian scale, historic character, and unique businesses should be maintained.

Development Details

The development depicted for Phase I include:

- Four condominium buildings with 160 new residential units. The buildings would be six to eight stories high, 72' to 93'. The required 280 parking spaces would be located in enclosed and/or first level parking areas.
- A common parking court of 100 cars is located in the center of the four buildings to accommodate visitors and parking for commercial uses.
- 12,500 square feet of existing retail space along Busse Avenue
- 13,500 square feet of commercial space in new two-story buildings along Busse Avenue.
- Between 15,500 and 60,000 square feet of new flexible commercial/office space on the ground floor of the residential buildings. It is anticipated that this space would be clustered near gaps in the four buildings in order to keep it close to visible and accessible parking.
- Approximately 7,500 square feet of commercial space between Northwest Highway and Busse Avenue, with sufficient parking.

Tax Increment Financing Analysis

The development concept for Phase I is supportable given the current status of the downtown tax increment finance (TIF) district.

TIF funds are assumed to be used for property acquisition, site clearance, and necessary infrastructure.

Development Process

The process described below represents the steps to be taken by the Village in bringing about Phase I redevelopment. Although they

are presented in a clear order, they are not necessarily sequential. In fact, several of the steps could more accurately be described as overlapping. It is the intent of this plan that Phase I construction would commence in 1999.

Action Steps

- Acquire essential parcels of land in Phase I area.
- Prepare RFP to solicit developer interest in the area.
- Select and negotiate with developer to initiate development process.
- Work with downtown landlords to identify space for relocated businesses.

Phase II

Description

Having more people living downtown is important to increasing activity in the area. That issue is addressed in Phase I through development of condominium dwellings. As a way to diversify the type of living options in the downtown, and add to its overall character, this area (the eastern face of Emerson Street between Busse and Central) would be enhanced by the addition of high quality row homes. See Figure 8.

Development Issues

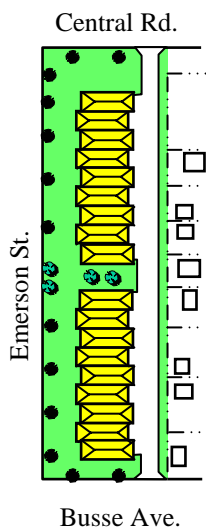
Several issues related to development in the Phase II areas required special consideration, and are described below.

Bank parking

The largest single use of this block currently is parking for the First Chicago Bank building. The parking serves employees of the bank and tenants of the building. From a redevelopment standpoint, the parking being located in the center of the block makes redevelopment of other parts of the block impractical. To facilitate redevelopment on the block, the parking is recommended to be relocated to another site in the downtown on either a temporary or permanent basis. Several locations have been considered for the temporary placement of the First Chicago Bank parking lot. Options for a permanent parking location are described in Phase III.

Existing Residential

The two homes at the corner of Busse and Emerson would need to be removed to accommodate the proposed redevelopment. It is recommended that if a prospective developer or the Village are unable to reach an agreement to purchase the properties, that a right of first refusal is negotiated. This would provide the developer (or Village) with the option to buy the properties when the residents wish to sell.



Phase II

Residential to the East

The impact on adjacent residential properties will be a primary concern of redevelopment on this site. Careful attention should be given to adequately screening the adjacent homes from the site. This would be best accomplished through a combination of fencing and landscaping.

Development Details

The development depicted for Phase II includes:

- Eighteen new row homes with alley access from Central Road and Busse Avenue.
- The site currently is zoned B-5 and R-1. Development of the row homes should be done with R-2 (Attached Single Family Residences) as the base-zoning district.
- Buildings should be oriented to the street with garages orientated to the rear.
- Building materials and architectural design should reflect the high quality character and image envisioned for the downtown.
- A small open space to break up the mass of the row home buildings.

Tax Increment Financing Analysis

The development concept for Phase II is supportable given the status of the downtown tax increment finance (TIF) district. TIF funds are assumed to be used for property acquisition, site clearance, and necessary infrastructure.

Development Process

The process described below represents steps to be taken by the Village in bringing about Phase II redevelopment.

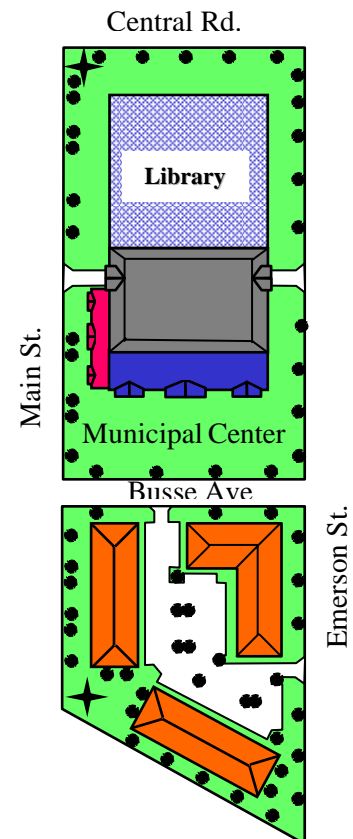
Action Steps

- Prepare RFP to solicit interest from residential/town home developers.
- Begin negotiations with property owners to acquire land in Phase II area.
- Select and negotiate with developer to initiate development process.

Phase III

Phase III redevelopment is anticipated to occur after Phase I is well underway, or perhaps even completed. A primary assumption of this phase is that the Village Hall and Senior Center are redeveloped on the north side of Busse Avenue between Emerson and Main Streets. This determination has yet to be finalized by the Village Board. In fact, part of the logic behind identifying this area as a later phase is to provide the Village an opportunity to make a

Building materials and architectural design should reflect the high quality character and image envisioned for the downtown.



Phase III

well considered decision on how to proceed with Village Hall and Senior Center, as well as the other development issues described below. This phase will also accommodate the expansion of the library.

Description

This scenario envisions a mix of retail, residential, and public uses on the area bounded by Central Road, Emerson Street, Northwest Highway, and Main Street (See Figure 8). The area would include a parking structure. That parking structure would be designed to serve the Village Hall, Senior Center, Library, First Chicago Bank and bank building employees, and Metra commuters. The parking structure also could be designed to accommodate retail or office uses on the first level, and should be designed expanding upon the library's existing below grade parking lot.

Development Issues

Several issues related to development in the Phase III areas required special consideration, and are described below.

Location of Village Hall

The current Mount Prospect Village Hall requires extensive rehabilitation work in order to remain a functional facility. The question facing the Village at this time is whether the cost of that rehabilitation is a good investment. Alternatively, a new Village Hall could be constructed. Obviously, that cost would be higher than the cost of rehabilitating the existing building. This plan works under the assumption that the Village Hall will be combined with the Senior Center and moved to the north side of Busse Avenue between Emerson and Main Streets. Village Hall would be designed within a village green, also located at that site. If the Village Hall and Senior Center remain at their current locations, the redevelopment plans for this phase clearly would require amendment.

Existing Businesses

This area includes three of the downtown's most active and viable retailers: Fannie May Candy, The Sakura Restaurant, and Central Bakery. In addition, the medical facility located just west of the Senior Center would be relocated to a new site. It is the intent of this plan that these businesses remain in the downtown. The businesses could be relocated into new structures in the downtown.

Library Expansion

Expansion of the existing Mount Prospect Library has been considered for several years. The most likely plans show the facility adding a second floor, and would require additional parking. From a land use planning point of view, the upward expansion is not an issue. However, the need for additional parking

should be addressed. As the plan shows, those parking needs would be met through joint use of the parking structure.

Parking Deck

The idea of a multiple story parking deck in the downtown presents both opportunities and challenges. The study area of this plan is relatively small. When Phase III development takes place, it will consume most or the entire available surface parking in the downtown. Clearly, this will generate the need for a parking structure. While the notion of the deck is rather straightforward, its use must be shared by a number of users to make it fiscally possible. Those users may include First Chicago, Library, Metra, and area business employees.

Development Details

The development depicted for Phase III includes:

- The anticipated character and style of the buildings and infrastructure of Phase III would match that described in Phase I.
- Three residential buildings with 120 new residential units. The required 180 parking spaces would be located in below grade parking. These buildings should be four to five stories high (30-65 feet).
- A common parking court located in the center of the buildings, visible at grade level from Main Street and Northwest Highway, to accommodate visitors and parking for commercial uses.
- Between 15,000 and 45,000 square feet of new flexible commercial/office space on the ground floor of the residential buildings. It is anticipated that this space would be clustered near gaps in the three buildings in order to keep it close to visible and accessible parking.
- The library could be expanded to include a second story addition of 50,000 square feet.
- A two story Municipal Center of 35,000 square feet would include current Village Hall and Senior Center functions.
- A four story parking structure with 425 parking spaces.

Tax Increment Finance District

Use of TIF funds for this phase depends in large part of when the work begins. Currently the TIF district will expire within ten years. It is essential that Phase III take place in the very near future in order for the Village to effectively use the revenue generated by the Downtown TIF district. It is anticipated that TIF funds will be available to support the residential/commercial aspects of this phase.



The idea of a multiple story parking deck in the downtown presents both opportunities and challenges.

It is essential that Phase III take place in the very near future in order for the Village to effectively use the revenue generated by the Downtown TIF district.

Development Process

The development process recommended for Phase III would mirror that described in Phase I. However, as noted above issues related to the future location of the Village Hall and Senior Center must first be addressed.

The Downtown Strategic Plan Ad Hoc Committee

Michael Hoffman, Chairman	(Plan Commission Chairman)
William Reddy	(Plan Commission Member)
Norman Kurtz	(Economic Development Chairman)
David Lindgren	(Economic Development Member)
Harold Predovich	(BDDRC Chairman)
Keith Youngquist	(BDDRC Member)
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