

Village of Mukwonago
**DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE SPECIAL
MEETING**

Notice of Meeting and Agenda
Thursday, May 24, 2018

Time: **6:00 p.m.**

Place: Mukwonago Municipal Building/Community Room, 440 River Crest Court

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Minutes:

A. May 10, 2018 meeting

4. Comments from the Public (*Up to 15 min*)

The purpose of this section is to allow the general public the opportunity to address the Committee on any subject of concern that the Committee is tasked with reviewing. If you wish to be heard, the Committee asks that you begin by stating your name and address, speak for no more than three minutes and attempt to avoid duplication. Each person speaking must sign the Comments from the Public Appearance sign-in sheet before speaking. The sign-in sheet is available on the table located at the back of the room. The Committee will only receive comments during Public Comment. The Public Comment portion of the meeting is scheduled for a total of 15 minutes in length but will end sooner if the Chairman has determined that there is no one else present who still wishes to speak.

5. Unfinished Business (*Appr 60 min*)

Discussion and Possible Action on the Following Items

A. Review and Adopt the Downtown Strategic Plan

6. Comments from the Public (*Up to 15 min*)

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7. Adjournment

It is possible that members of, and possibly a quorum of, members of other governmental bodies of the municipality may be in attendance at the above stated meeting to gather information. No action will be taken by any governmental body at the above stated meeting other than the governmental body specifically referred to above in this notice. Please note that, upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities through appropriate aids and services. For additional information or to request this service, contact the Clerk's Office, 440 River Crest Court, (262) 363-6420, Option 4.

Village of Mukwonago
DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of May 10, 2018

Call to Order:

Chairperson, Jason Wamser, called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. located in the Mukwonago Municipal Building, 440 River Crest Ct.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Doug Bruins
Tina Chitwood
Eric Brill
Jason Wamser, Chairperson
John Weidl
Diana Doherty

Members Excused: Fred Winchowky
Sue Perkins
April Reszka
Mark Penzkover
Roger Walsh

Minutes

Motion by Weidl/Bruins to approve the Minutes of March 22, 2018 and April 19, 2018 carried.

Comments from the Public:

No public comments at this time.

Unfinished Business:

Motion by Weidl/Chitwood to table the unfinished business and address new business carried.

New Business:

- A. Reviewed WI DOT information and update on progress and partial cost.
No action taken.
- B. Group discussion and direction on additions/changes to Next Steps portion of the Plan. No further action.

Re-open Unfinished Business

Reviewed Plan and made adjustments and edits from group discussion. Group decided the information still under development was too much to pass the plan under a motion with conditions, and decided to set another meeting date for final review. No further action taken.

Comments from the Public:

Group answered questions. Bill Kasch volunteered to be involved in a Downtown Streetscape group if one was assembled.

Public comments closed.

Adjournment:

Motion Bruins/Weidl to adjourn at 7:15 p.m. carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Wamser



Downtown Strategic Plan

DRAFT - 05.21.2018

Village of Mukwonago

Waukesha and Walworth Counties, Wisconsin

June 2018



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Downtown Strategic Plan Steering Committee Members

Jason Wamser, Co-Chair and Village Trustee
Tina Chitwood, Co-Chair, Village Resident and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
Eric Brill, Village Resident
Doug Bruins, Citizens Bank
Diana Doherty, Village Finance Director
Ray Goodden, Downtown Business Owner and Real Estate Broker
Eliza Pautz, Downtown Resident
Mark Penzkover, Village Trustee
Sue Perkins, Downtown Resident
April Rezka, Mukwonago Area Chamber of Commerce
Roger Walsh, Real Estate Appraiser, Downtown Property Owner and Downtown Resident
John Weidl, Village Administrator and Economic Development Director
Fred Winchowky, Village President

A special thank you to Kyle Knott, Village Economic Development Intern



Executive Summary

In September 2017, a steering committee was formed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Village of Mukwonago's current downtown environment and to create recommendations for downtown improvements based on those findings. Village officials, residents, business owners and community leaders comprised the Downtown Strategic Plan Steering Committee (DSPSC). This group met twice monthly over a period of eight months to discuss and prioritize information obtained through activities such as visioning exercises, community surveys, presentations and other resources. Public feedback was solicited from interested parties who attended the meetings and at a Community Open House in which we asked participants to rank the proposed initiatives according to what was important to them. The result of all these efforts was summarized in this Downtown Strategic Plan and presented to the Village Board **June of 2018**. It is the steering committee's sincere hope that the Village Board will incorporate these recommendations into its own short and long-term plans for the Village.

Development of the Downtown Vision

One of the committee's initial activities was a visioning exercise which involved members of the audience. Questions were asked: "What kind of downtown should we have?" and "What does the downtown mean to you as an individual and to the community?" Themes began to emerge and provided the basis on which to categorize and prioritize numerous ideas and suggestions. A Mission Statement was adopted to capture the spirit of the exercise and to help guide the committee's task of recommending specific downtown goals and the steps needed to achieve them.

Adopted Mission Statement

Make the downtown a pedestrian-friendly destination centered on historic preservation, business development and cultural and recreational opportunities while noting the importance of Goal #1 of the Comprehensive Plan; to preserve and enhance the Village's quality of life including its historical identity, its small-town atmosphere, the community events and its traditional downtown.



Strategic Plan Introduction and Overview

This plan can serve as a guide for the Village of Mukwonago to prioritize and implement improvement projects within the four key areas identified by the committee:

- Business Development
- Culture and Recreation Opportunities
- Historic Preservation
- Pedestrian-Friendly Destination

Why Look at Downtown?

Downtowns are the heart of any community and Mukwonago's downtown is no exception. Mukwonago's unique small town feel is often what draws residents and visitors to the Village. Providing opportunities for people to spend time downtown helps local businesses and encourages new businesses to consider investments in the Village. A thriving downtown also builds a greater sense of community and pride in the Village and aids in the growth of the community's economy. Investment in arts, culture, entertainment, history and events are all important factors in developing a strong downtown. These concepts are part of a nationwide movement called Smart Growth which supports revitalizing Main Street America. We must give people reasons to visit downtown Mukwonago again and again.

In considering all that Mukwonago's downtown has to offer, attention must also be paid to concerns such as traffic and pedestrian safety, parking issues and the preservation of Mukwonago's historical character.

Brief History of Mukwonago

Mukwonago - which translates to Place of the Bear - was first settled in the 1700s by the Potawatomi and by the mid 1800s, saw its first European settlers who began envisioning a town. Mukwonago continued to grow as a farming community aided by the establishment of the Wisconsin Central Railroad which increased its ability to distribute crops. Additionally, diverse business development occurred as more settlers arrived in the area. One hundred years later, Mukwonago began to evolve into a tourist destination as travelers discovered its freshwater springs. In 1905, the town was incorporated into a village and by the late 1980s, Mukwonago saw its most substantial growth as subdivisions began to develop and an industrial park was built.

Throughout the Village's evolution, the downtown has held on to its character and charm. The recommendations seek to enhance these qualities and create a vibrant gathering place for residents and visitors.



Key Demographics & Data

Today, Mukwonago continues to grow with approved plans for a new tax base projected at \$157 Million and 1,325 new residents within 10 years. The Village has grown in value on average 4.25% annually and the 2017 estimated population has increased to 7,878, a 23% increase since 2000.

Demographic and economic analysis provide an overview of a community's composition and helps guide planning efforts. The source of the following snapshot of the Village of Mukwonago comes from the U.S. Census Bureau 2010 survey, with some figures updated based on 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

2010 Total Population	7,355
2017 Population Estimate	7,878
Median Age	39
Number of Companies	468
Educational Attainment (% high school graduate or higher)	97.2%
Total Housing Units	3,175
Median Household Income	\$64,011
Individuals below Poverty Level	8.7%

Summary of Existing Conditions and Market Analysis

The DSPSC reviewed several existing Village reports and studies¹ in order to understand prior attempts at resolving some of the downtown issues and to evaluate whether any of the proposed solutions were still viable. According to a report called *Responsive Urbanism* by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Technische Universitat Graz-Austria, Mukwonago “has a bare-bones planning structure and a largely unrecognizable city center, with the market playing a perhaps exaggerated role in the decision-making process.” The report also stated most of the planning has been ineffectual, this is the Village’s chance to turn that around and impact the downtown and the greater community for generations to come.

¹ These resources are listed in the Reference Section of this downtown plan.

Downtown Development Goals & Objectives

The DSPSC was tasked to develop a comprehensive strategic plan with recommendations for groups to lead and accomplish specific goals. The DSPSC adopted a timeline to complete this report by April 2018; although with the date of the community feedback open house occurring later than originally anticipated, the group adjusted its targeted date of completion to May 2018.

The following list describes the topics and ideas discussed in the committee meetings and form the basis of the final recommendations which will be described in more detail later in the plan:

- Identifying the main features that attract people to a downtown area - whether to visit or to invest in a business opportunity?
- Repurposing land use and potentially expanding the downtown core to incorporate the waterfront
- Promoting a vision for specific areas by encouraging the highest and best use of property available for redevelopment
- Investing in public infrastructure both above-ground and below-ground (e.g. sidewalks, lighting, sewer and water upgrades, and re-routing heavy truck traffic to bypass downtown)
- Developing and implementing Architectural Enhancements and Design Guidelines
- Promoting Historic Preservation through an entity such as a Historic Preservation Commission
- Establishing zoning recommendations to allow desired businesses
- Implementing Wayfinding Signage
- Retaining, supporting and recruiting fresh retail, business mix
- Programming for events, festivals, promotion
- Analyzing parking and traffic
- Initiating a group to spearhead downtown revitalization (e.g. Business Improvement District or Community Development Authority)

Opportunity Assessment

In evaluating the numerous ideas that arose through the committee's activities, the DSPSC identified the following broad areas to be addressed via the plan recommendations.



Land Use and Urban Design

- **Downtown Boundaries:** Downtown Overlay District with arterial spokes north on 83 to Field Park, South on 83 to the railroad overpass and Southwest on ES to Indian Head Park.
- **Pedestrian Amenities:** missing sections of sidewalk to access downtown, need for pedestrian crossings with safety features added, concrete medians/bump outs, etc.
- **Transportation:** Hwy. 83 traverses through downtown including heavy truck traffic, backups at prime commuting hours and throughout the day depending on events
- **Land Use:** missing a focus on historic preservation, the positive economic impact of historic preservation on property values, and the need to capitalize on Mukwonago's Certified Local Government status

- **Streetscape:** limited by few public spaces, pocket parks, benches, bike racks, etc. and Mukwonago is in need of landmarks to denote you are both entering and within a historical pedestrian-friendly downtown area
- **Parking:** no signage directing visitors to existing public parking

EXHIBIT 1 Ordinance No. 931

Village Center Overlay Zoning District Boundary And Sub-Districts



Sub-Districts

- Red—Retail Center
- Green—Multi-Purpose Perimeter
- Yellow—Residential Perimeter

Redevelopment and Historic Preservation/Restoration

- **Façade Renovations:** there is no plan for cohesive image/design guidelines of downtown
- **Historic Preservation:** no active group to review plans and to promote historic preservation following Federal guidelines for evaluating the historical importance of a property (such as a Historic Preservation Commission or Landmark Commission)
- **Real Estate Market:** underutilization of second stories, vacancy rate, removal of blight
- **Business Organization:** no group to support the downtown cause politically, technically and financially, such as through a BID or CDA

Organizational Structures

- Collaboration: a structure involving private groups, non-profit organizations, consultants, municipal staff and elected leaders does not currently exist to address, or attempt to resolve, downtown issues
- Resources: without a group supporting downtown initiatives and making recommendations to the Village Board, there aren't dedicated resources to improve the downtown in the municipal operating or capital budgets

Strategies Used to Create Downtown Master Plan

The following activities were completed by either the full committee, individual members or support staff in order to amass and evaluate information needed to prepare the Downtown Plan.

- Vision Session held on September 28, 2017
- DSPSC goals defined on October 12, 2017
- Invited industry experts to present on the topics of Historic Preservation, Strategic Planning and current zoning in Downtown Mukwonago
- Independent research conducted by committee members on the topics of: CDA's, BID's, Connect Communities, etc.
- Review of peer community plans and the Smart Growth America planning concepts
- Logo and tag-line "Make Downtown Yours" created for the planning committee
- Social media campaign including a Facebook page and meeting information housed on the Village's website. The DSPSC considered the immediate feedback provided by Facebook users and Public Comment sessions during public meetings.
- Online community survey to evaluate the current perception of downtown by the general public and to serve as an initial gauge regarding the proposed goals defined by the DSPSC
- Hard copy media via banners, newspaper articles and brochures handed out during the Midnight Magic event, information flyer for a community feedback open house sent out with the utility bill
- An open house was held April 12, 2018 to seek community input on committee recommendations

Objective Summary

The DSPSC identified four primary categories which they used to formulate the recommendations of the Plan. The goals and objectives of each of the four categories are outlined in this section.

Business Development

Goals	Objectives
Enhance and Support the Downtown Business District	Offer an immediate central point of contact to engage with existing building and property owners, and develop an organization to lead downtown business development activities. Create incentives to support investment in downtown buildings and businesses.
Support Business Attraction, Growth and Expansion Activities	Develop business attraction activities with a focus on local, independently-owned businesses, niche/specialty businesses and businesses seeking a second location. Maintain and grow existing businesses.
Creation of an organizational structure to facilitate business development in downtown	Be a resource for development by defining the needs of the community, educate and build ties with the business and development community, local government, civic and non-profit organizations. Develop programs to support renovation and redevelopment of buildings to address demand challenges.



Cultural and Recreation

Goals	Objectives
A connected parks and trails system that promotes a connection to nature, recreation and downtown.	A system of well-balanced parks and land and water trails that connects and directs users to downtown, engages people of all ages and backgrounds, and enhances the overall quality of life for Village residents and visitors.
Events programming that promotes community engagement and cultural offerings.	Capitalize on the Village’s cultural assets (Red Brick Museum, library) and events (arts, culture and heritage) to build economic prosperity, quality of life and community identity.
A strong and engaged network of neighbors, community groups and volunteers.	Build a strong community where residents have a sense of belonging and civic pride to support cultural and recreational efforts. This requires organizations and individuals to work together.



Historic Preservation

Goals	Objectives
Develop a group to guide and support historic preservation	Create and support a community group with a focus on historic preservation.
Develop downtown design guidelines	Serve as a tool for commercial and residential properties to guide building renovations and new construction to support a cohesive image and branding for downtown. Guidelines will promote the preservation of the historic attributes of existing buildings while maintaining the historic authenticity of our community.
Increase Community Engagement and Awareness	Educate the public, create transparency about the historic preservation program, engage the public to become ambassadors of the program.



Pedestrian Friendly Environment

Goals	Objectives
<p>Complete a Jurisdictional Transfer Agreement for Hwy. 83, E. Veterans Way and Holz Parkway</p>	<p>Reduce heavy truck traffic downtown for the long-term to promote a pedestrian-friendly environment. Allows the Village access to fix and improve the infrastructure on and under the road.</p>
<p>Adopt a Truck Route that Bypasses Downtown</p>	<p>Reduce heavy truck traffic downtown in the immediate future. Educate truck drivers of the preferred truck route being the current E. Veterans Way and Holz Parkway and not through downtown. Educate residents and visitors about the location of the downtown business district.</p>
<p>Enhance the Downtown Environment to be a Welcoming, Friendly, Attractive, Colorful, Connected and Safe Environment</p>	<p>Downtown’s environment should be a key reason why people want to visit, work, shop and live in the center of the Village. Downtown’s environment should advance overall cleanliness, attractiveness, maintenance and repair, and safety for all. Downtown should be connected to the rest of the community through signage and sidewalks.</p>
<p>Downtown Public Parking Must Present a Positive and Aesthetically Pleasing Image</p>	<p>Downtown parking spots will receive regular, scheduled maintenance, repair, replacement and possibly other enhancements. Educate the public about the location of public parking options in downtown.</p>



Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered based on the review of historical downtown plans, discussion of activities previously undertaken by committees and advisory groups with a focus on downtown Mukwonago, research conducted about downtown best practices and available tools, Smart Growth America, the 2017 community e-survey results, and feedback received during the 2018 community feedback open house.

Recommendations are offered, in priority order, as determined by the DSPSC and listed as Tier 1 and Tier 2 groupings. The Plan focus includes the Retail Center Overlay Zoning district and the residential areas in the boundaries between Field Park on the North and Indian Head Park on the southwest as well as on Hwy. 83 to the railroad overpass in the southeast.

Tier 1 - Recommendations

These recommendations are those that should be acted upon within a one to two-year timeframe. These recommendations are of the highest importance to the committee and the community. Additional details for each recommendation follow in the next section titled "Description."

- 1-1 | Engage a firm to create a roadway design and streetscaping enhancement plan. Such as sidewalks, crosswalks, beautification, lighting, safety, connectivity and gateways. Begin implementing crosswalk safety enhancements.
- 1-2 | Adopt an ordinance to change the trucking route onto Veterans Way/Holz Parkway to bypass downtown.
- 1-3 | Encourage opportunities for community spaces to allow for activities, community meeting and relaxation spaces in downtown.
- 1-4 | Re-establish a Historic Preservation Commission (Landmark Commission) to guide and support historic preservation and compatible redevelopment.
- 1-5 | Engage a firm to conduct a market analysis with the goal of attracting new businesses and growing the existing economic base, and maximizing the existing commercial space in downtown.
- 1-6 | Investigate the development of a Downtown Business Owner's Association to support and enhance downtown.



Tier 2 - Recommendations

These recommendations should be acted upon within a three to four-year timeframe, as some recommendations build off of the Tier 1 plans. Additional details for each recommendation follow in the next section titled “Description.”

- 2-1 | Invest in the maintenance and replacement of pedestrian safety features and roadside amenities. Continue with pedestrian safety and crosswalk enhancements.
- 2-2 | Engage a firm to develop a design plan with specific guidelines focusing on exterior building improvements and roadway design that are compatible with or will enhance the existing environments.
- 2-3 | Promote and collaborate with the Library, Red Brick Museum and the Wisconsin Historical Society for historical and cultural events and programming.
- 2-4 | Marketing to highlight the uniqueness of Mukwonago and to showcase events, culture and recreational activities.
- 2-5 | Create financial support programs to encourage and support downtown building improvements and business development.
- 2-6 | Invest in wayfinding signage around the downtown and to key points of interest in the Village.
- 2-7 | Marketing of existing public parking options in downtown.
- 2-8 | Investigate the development of a Business Improvement District (BID) to support and enhance downtown.



Recommendation Descriptions

The following details have been offered by the DSPSC for background and support for each recommendation. The estimated costs have been included for capital expense planning purposes and offer a range of cost based on committee members' history and knowledge for the items. When available, actual cost estimates have been noted.

Recommendation 1-1

Engage a firm to create a roadway design and streetscaping enhancement plan. Elements to be included: sidewalks, crosswalks, beautification, lighting, safety, connectivity and gateways. Begin implementing crosswalk safety enhancements.

Mukwonago has a fair amount of historic buildings at its core, but the Hwy. 83 roadway corridor through downtown leaves a lot to be desired with many concrete surfaces, mismatched benches and lighting and limited color in the downtown. The downtown environment should be a key reason why people want to visit, work, shop and live in the center of the Village. Other considerations include:

- Overall cleanliness, attractiveness, maintenance and repair, and safety
- Connect to the rest of the community through signage and sidewalks
- Inventory existing sidewalks, crosswalks and other amenities such as benches, planters and garbage bins
- Address sidewalks, crosswalks and pedestrian safety features such as activated flashing pedestrian crossing signs, banners, street lights, benches, garbage/recycling cans, bike racks, shade, vegetation, restrooms, water fountains, gathering spaces and gateways
- Connect and enhance Indianhead Park on the southern boundary of downtown
- The plan should also include a comprehensive recommendation for the downtown along with a list of potential funding sources
- Regarding implementation (see Tier 2 recommendations), consider a manageable block-by-block plan instead of attempting to improve the entire district at once

This recommendation addresses enhancing the environment in downtown to be a welcoming, friendly, attractive, colorful, connected and safe environment.

❖ Estimated Planning cCost: \$10,000-\$50,000



Recommendation 1-2

Adopt an ordinance to change the trucking route onto Veterans Way/Holz Parkway to bypass downtown.

To reduce heavy truck traffic, the DSPSC has recommended to the Village Board to adopt an ordinance diverting heavy truck traffic from Hwy 83 to Veterans Way/Holz Parkway. This should be supported by:

- Educating truck drivers of the preferred truck route
 - Installation of new signs indicating the bypass route
 - Educating residents and visitors about the option to use Veterans Way/Holz Parkway if they do not intend to stop at a business/location in downtown
 - It is important that this recommendation does not negatively impact the business community, so the DSPSC is recommending the installation of additional signage to direct traffic to the historical downtown retail center
- ❖ Estimated Cost: \$250-\$2,000 for new signs to be installed informing drivers of new routes and limited costs associated with the Village Attorney's time spent on the project.

Recommendation 1-3

Encourage opportunities for community spaces to allow for activities, community meeting and relaxation spaces in the downtown area.

An engaged network of neighbors, community groups and volunteers should be created to develop additional cultural opportunities while capitalizing on the Village's existing assets (Red Brick Museum, Community Library) and events (arts, culture and heritage). The goal will be to articulate the unique character of downtown culture, heritage and recreational activities.

- Strengthen relationships with individuals and organizations to build a common vision and thereby maximize resources
 - Allocate additional human and fiscal resources for marketing and promoting the activities of this group
 - Encourage a connected parks and trail system that promotes a link to nature, recreation, and the downtown. Consider the goals for the Village's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2017) to make informed decisions pertaining to facilities and parks before making capital investment plans
- ❖ Estimated Cost: TBD based on the amenities and resources to be developed.



Recommendation 1-4

Re-establish a Historic Preservation Commission (Landmark Commission) to guide and support historic preservation and compatible redevelopment.

In recent history, the Village had a Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) which was absorbed by Mukwonago's Plan Commission. Reinstating a HPC is a top priority activity in the Tier 1 recommendations based on the community survey, feedback from the open house as well as the committee members' research on this topic. The Village also maintains a Certified Local Government (CLG) status with the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS). The recommended activities for this group include:

- Assess the benefits of activating the Village's CLG status
- Conduct walking tours to promote the historic features and cultural assets of downtown (in cooperation with the Red Brick Museum)
- Coordinate with the Red Brick Museum and Chamber to educate property owners about the benefits of historic preservation
- Conduct an architectural review based on newly created Design Guidelines (Tier 2 activity)
- Develop financial tools to support historic preservation and compatible redevelopment (Tier 2 activity)

❖ Estimated Cost: \$0

Recommendation 1-5

Engage a firm to conduct a market analysis with the goal of attracting new businesses and growing the existing economic base, and maximizing the existing commercial space in downtown.

By engaging a firm such as the UW-Extension to conduct a market analysis, relevant market data and information can be used to support existing and new business growth. Additional areas to be addressed in this report should include:

- Industry cluster targets and a market gap-analysis
- Programs to attract locally-owned, independently-owned, niche/specialty businesses as well as existing businesses seeking a second location in downtown
- Conduct a business and building inventory
- Compare attraction prospects with existing land use and zoning ordinances within the Downtown Overlay District
- The results of the program should be communicated with existing businesses and property owners via a business outreach program (Tier 2 activity)

❖ Estimated Report Cost: \$5,000-\$10,000

Recommendation 1-6

Investigate the development of a Downtown Business Owner's Association (DBA) and in years 2-3 a Business Improvement District (BID) to support and enhance downtown.

Downtown business development is most successful when led by a strategically-focused group. The DSPSC recommends the creation of an organizational structure to lead downtown business redevelopment activities and projects. Potential structures include:

- Downtown Business Owner's Association (DBA)
- Existing Village Economic Development Committee (EDC)
- A committee to be created under the Chamber of Commerce
- A Business Improvement District (see Tier 2 recommendation)
- Main Street program
- Connect Communities program

The DSPSC is not recommending the Village coordinate the ongoing management/organization for downtown business development, as this is best done in a partnership with the Village, business owners, property owners and key downtown stakeholders. The Village should continue to highlight downtown economic development efforts during the annual Economic Development Breakfast, and for the Village President to continue with business retention visits, as well as engage in discussion with the newly created entity.

❖ Estimated Cost - DBA (Tier 1): \$0

Recommendation 2-1

Invest in the maintenance and replacement of pedestrian safety features and roadside amenities.

Building off of Recommendation 1-1 there will be needed maintenance as well as additional features to consider for the beautification of downtown. Elements to be assessed include but are not limited to:

- Maintaining sidewalks, crosswalks and pedestrian safety features such as activated, flashing pedestrian crossing signs, banners, street lights, benches, garbage and recycling bins, bike racks, elements that offer shade, vegetation, restrooms, water fountains and gathering spaces
- Developing an annual flower/perennials planting/tree planting and maintenance program throughout downtown with an eye toward adding more color for prolonged periods of time
- Enhance the entrances to the historical pedestrian-friendly downtown with prominent visual upgrading and/or utilizing landmarks to serve as gateways

❖ Estimated Cost: Varies depending on the elements to be installed.

Recommendation 2-2

Engage a firm to develop a design plan with specific guidelines focusing on exterior building improvements and other infrastructure improvements including roadway design that are compatible with or will enhance the existing environments.

Historic buildings are critical to the fabric of downtown. The Village Historic Overlay District ordinance provides guidance for maintenance and improvements made to existing commercial and residential properties in the District. By engaging a firm to develop a Design Guidelines Plan that focuses on exterior building improvements, the fabric of downtown will be enhanced for future generations to enjoy.

The guidelines should serve as a tool for commercial and residential properties during building renovations and new construction to support a cohesive image and branding for downtown. This will promote the preservation of the historic attributes of existing buildings while maintaining the historic authenticity of our community. Incorporating the recommended roadway improvements from the previous recommendation in the Tier 1 (see Roadway Improvements and Streetscaping Enhancement Plan) will maintain compatibility with the existing environment.

The firm will also conduct an independent analysis of commercial properties for the entirety of Mukwonago's downtown and include action items, funding sources and a consideration of multi-use housing opportunities.

It is recommended that the selected firm and the Village engage the public through several methodologies:

- Include downtown stakeholders and residents in several visioning as well as community workshops. Items to be addressed include the current status of properties, identification of properties suited or marketable for commercial use and areas that lend themselves to possible redevelopment
- Present results to the public for comment in informational feedback sessions
- Share design guidelines with the public via the Village's website and other resources

❖ **Estimated Cost: \$10,000-\$50,000**



Recommendation 2-3

Promote and collaborate with community-based organizations for historical and cultural events and programming.

Mukwonago has existing groups, such as the Red Brick Museum and the Mukwonago Community Library, that offer programs and other activities which enhance the historic and cultural identity of the Village. The DSPSC recommends developing partnerships with these groups, the newly formed Historic Preservation Commission, the Mukwonago Area School District and Education Foundation, as well as downtown property and business owners to support existing events while encouraging new activities and cultural programming in the downtown.

❖ Estimated Cost: \$0*

**New events/activities may require funds for implementation and marketing.*

Recommendation 2-4

Marketing to highlight the uniqueness of Mukwonago and to showcase events, culture and recreational activities.

The DSPSC recognizes the existing events and offerings by the Red Brick Museum, Community Library, Chamber of Commerce, School District, among others that provide historic and cultural benefit to Village residents and visitors. The Committee recommends actively conducting cross-promotions by each of these groups to create a strong and engaged network that will showcase activities throughout the community. The end goal is that residents have a greater sense of belonging and civic pride to support local, cultural and recreational activities.

- Promote the development of a community calendar to consolidate all planned activities and events

❖ Estimated Cost: Varies depending on the type of marketing to be deployed.

Recommendation 2-5

Create financial support programs to encourage and support downtown building improvements and business development.

A part of implementing the new Design Guidelines and Market Analysis, financial support programs must be developed to encourage and support downtown building improvements and business development.

- Identify and research financial tools to support historic preservation, building improvements and compatible redevelopment (ex. Local lenders low-interest loan pool and Façade, White Box Grant and Signage Grant)
 - Identify other funding mechanisms to support business development (ex. Rent Assistance Grant, TIF, BID, housing financial assistance, Revolving Loan Fund, etc.)
 - Implementation of selected financial assistance programs to be conducted by the Village and/or newly created HPC (or BID)
 - Grants which aid in the revitalization of specific properties within downtown should also be pursued (ex. WI Economic Development Corporation's Community Development Investment Grant and Brownfield Grant)
 - Continue the existing business retention program conducted by the Village President
 - Create marketing materials to summarize all the available local and regional/state resources and business services organizations such as (SBA, SCORE, WWBIC) with property and business owners
- ❖ **Estimated Cost: Varies with the program to be created***
**Source of funds may come from the Village's General Fund, TIF, BID, etc.*

Recommendation 2-6

Invest in wayfinding signage around the downtown and to key points of interest in the Village.

Develop a plan and install a coordinated wayfinding signage system throughout the Village including Downtown and Downtown Neighborhoods (ie: Pearl Street as a destination).

A system of well-balanced parks as well as land and water trails that connect and direct users to downtown, engages people of all ages and backgrounds, while enhancing the overall quality of life for Village residents and visitors. The Village has many trails that serve a range of uses (walking, biking, East Troy Railroad Trolley, boating, canoeing and kayaking on the rivers and lakes).

- Signage will be installed to direct trail users to downtown
 - Install wayfinding signage from neighborhoods to downtown parks, public spaces and the business district
 - Downtown parking options must be signed and should present a positive and aesthetically pleasing image
- ❖ **Estimated Cost: Varies, but may range between \$10,000-\$25,000 depending on the number and style of signs to be installed.**

Recommendation 2-7

Marketing of existing public parking options in downtown.

Public parking spots exist within downtown in both public parking lots and on-street parking. These parking spaces serve visitors, daytime workers and attendees of special events.

The Chamber of Commerce, in its function as a visitors' bureau and special events coordinator, existing businesses, and other community stakeholders offer numerous tools to educate the public about the location of public parking options in downtown.

Recommendations include:

- Develop a map to share with business owners; online map resource
 - Identifying the location of all parking spaces
 - Install wayfinding/directional signage to identify the location of parking lots
 - Develop and undertake a capital repair and replacement plan for parking lots and parking spaces in downtown
- ❖ **Estimated Cost: TBD**

Recommendation 2-8

Investigate the development of a Business Improvement District (BID) to support and enhance downtown.

See Recommendation 1-6.

- ❖ Estimated Cost - BID (Tier 2): Each property owner in the BID pays an annual special assessment tax.

Recommendations Made for Immediate Implementation

During the development of the strategic plan the DSPSC made the following recommendations to the Village Board for immediate implementation. The committee took such action as these activities were rated important by the community survey and by prior committees focused on downtown planning. A number of the items recommended by the DSPSC are quick-wins such as: roadway design planning and reinstating the HPC, some recommendations will take longer to implement such as a reroute Hwy. 83.

Reroute of Hwy. 83 Around Downtown

The DSPSC recommended the Village Board pursue negotiations with WisDOT to complete a jurisdictional transfer of Hwy. 83 through downtown on Veterans Way/Holz Parkway. The urgency in this recommendation is the goal of reducing heavy truck traffic downtown for the long-term and to promote a pedestrian-friendly environment. An ownership transfer of Hwy. 83 in downtown to the Village would provide the Village unimpeded access to fix and improve the oldest infrastructure in the Village both above and below the road.

- ❖ Estimated Cost: TBD

Ordinance to Change the Trucking Route onto Veterans Way/Holz Parkway

See Recommendation 1-2.

Police Department Crosswalk Safety Enhancements

Meetings between Village officials and WI Dept. of Transportation in March 2018 resulted in the Village being granted permission to pursue pedestrian safety enhancements on Hwy. 83. The Village will be responsible for funding 100% of the costs of the improvements. A comprehensive roadway design should be considered prior to implementation of these enhancements - see Recommendation 1-1. The downtown core area from Hwy. LO to Field Street should be the primary focus for immediate improvements.

In the interim it is recommended that an educational campaign be developed.

- A mailer to be included with the utility billings

- Reminders that it's State Law to stop at pedestrian crossings
- Utilizing Veterans Way/Holz Parkway as an alternative to reduce the number of non-stop vehicles through downtown
- Reinstall pedestrian crossing signs in the middle of the road on Hwy. 83 as soon as possible in the spring
- The downtown business community, residents and the Police Department continue to meet and work together to address safety issues

❖ **Estimated Cost: \$250,000+**

Reinstitute the Historic Preservation Commission

See Recommendation 1-4.

Next Steps

The Downtown Strategic Plan Steering Committee would like to thank the Village Board for their thoughtful consideration of this plan's recommendations. Many hours have been spent planning, surveying, discussing and debating the information that has been summarized in this report. Village residents and business owners have provided valuable input on what is important to them and have expressed excitement over the potential changes that will impact and shape the future of Mukwonago's downtown.

Continued discussions and planning for the implementation of the plan's recommendations is vital to keep the momentum moving forward. Recommendations of capital improvements involving Village funding should be incorporated into the Village's 5-year capital plan in a manner that makes implementation feasible and cost-effective for Mukwonago's taxpayers.

Concurrently, some recommendations can be implemented by individual property owners and downtown stakeholders. Property owners are encouraged to think about the elements of this plan that they can directly impact, such as: installing bike racks, undertaking building façade improvements, and encouraging the Hwy. 83 jurisdictional transfer. Stakeholders throughout the Village can continue to voice their opinions and support for the Village's initiatives to make the downtown pedestrian-friendly and historically significant. Encouraging business development and providing cultural and recreational opportunities to continue bringing the community together is essential.

As the adopting body of this plan, the Village Board plays a significant role in ensuring the recommendations are implemented. In addition to authorizing funding when needed, the Board needs to create the ad hoc committees or stakeholder groups necessary to further explore the plan's recommendations and take the necessary steps to ensure the goals are ultimately met. In doing so, the Board will define the metrics and frequency by which they want to receive reports from the stakeholders showing their progress toward goal completion. Operating budgets may be needed to provide funding for some of the



committees' activities, for example, the annual \$200 fee to join Connect Community or mailing notices to residents. The use of Village staff to serve on the committees or assist with specific tasks may need to be granted within the parameters of existing staff budgets. Other estimated costs for specific plan recommendations are listed within the Plan for inclusion in the budget when authorized by the Village Board.

To ensure we continue to receive ongoing feedback from the community, it is vitally important that the activities in this plan be conducted by citizen volunteers and key stakeholders (see the Stakeholders column in each Goals/Activities Recommendations section in the Appendix). Each of the four key areas recommended in this plan should have its own Chair(s) and committee members. The committees should be led by involved citizen volunteers and stakeholders, with a Village Trustee as an active member of each committee who can obtain assistance from Village Staff as necessary. Communication between the individual committees, Village Board and Village Staff to keep each entity apprised of activities occurring in the development of downtown is vital, so the Village's assistance in facilitating communication will be extremely helpful. In addition, the Village Board's support in authorizing the funding, and partnering with other stakeholder groups, to obtain professional services in designing or implementing specific recommendations is crucial in achieving the Plan's goals and in the ultimate success of the overall Plan.

The Downtown Strategic Plan Steering Committee members have been enthusiastically engaged in all the activities culminating in this Plan's recommendations. The number of people responding to the online survey, attending the community feedback open house, and signing up to volunteer in implementing the recommendations of the Plan, has been impressive. The Village Board is in an enviable position as the community has wholeheartedly embraced the "Make Downtown Yours" theme and the passion to continue the effort started by the steering committee is strong! The Village has an opportunity to engage interested community members to further explore the Plan recommendations and work in conjunction with the Village Board to implement them. It will be exciting to see the progress as the Plan's actions are implemented and the Downtown is transformed into a place we can all say we had a hand in shaping. Thank you again for your consideration of the Plan and the future of Downtown Mukwonago.

Appendix A: DSPSC Goals Spreadsheets - with Stakeholders

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