

DESIGNING SHOREWOOD: Our Comprehensive Plan

Village of Shorewood Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #3 Meeting Summary | July 19th, 2022 | 7 – 9:30pm

Members of the Shorewood Village Board and Planning & Zoning Commission joined the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee on July 19th to discuss draft comprehensive plan goals and objectives, which are aspirational statements of Village ambitions for the future, setting out what the Village seeks to preserve, change, and become. In many ways, these statements are a first draft of the plan. An important note is that some objectives are broad and others more specific. They do not come with a timeline and may be refined as they're implemented depending on future economic conditions and possible changes in Village policy.

The workshop included a presentation of the draft goals and objectives by the consultant team (organized around plan themes). The presentation covered subareas, representing future land uses and development in key areas that contributes to the character, quality of life, and economic stability of the Village. See map below.

Mayor Clarence C. DeBold started the meeting by welcoming members of the Village Board, Planning & Zoning Commission, and Steering Committee. Attendees and the consultant team introduced themselves. The consultant team members present were Michael Blue, *Teska Associates*/project manager, Benito Garcia, *Teska Associates*, Joshua Harris, *Baxter & Woodman*, and Carl Wohlt, *Wohltgroup*.

Michael started the meeting by summarizing the events of Steering Committee Meeting #2 and outlining how the draft goals and objectives were generated. They were created based on the existing conditions analysis, input from stakeholders, overall public engagement, discussions at previous Steering Committee meetings, review of existing plans and policies, and insights provided by Village staff. The intent of this meeting was for attendees to respond to the information, point out additional details, provide clarification, agree/disagree to the statements, and ask questions. To review these goals and objectives, please visit designingshorewood.org.

Members of the group shared the following.

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Community Character

Maintaining a high-quality, small-town feeling in Shorewood is important for the community. Attendees agreed that this defines “who the Village is and what it has to offer.” They commented that opportunities such as connection to parks and residential areas should be prioritized, keeping kids in mind. Design guidelines were also noted as important to preserving community character, emphasizing they add a high aesthetic value, and that the Village should set that tone. Others noted that leveraging the DuPage River to be more of a presence allows the Village to be more distinguishable. They said the riverwalk is the heart of the town, that it is what brought people to Shorewood, and that it was a good time to make such enhancements.



Mayor DeBold stated the Village is working on ways to improve user connections and market the riverfront more effectively. One example is how Village staff is working with the forest preserve to find ways to improve access over Route 59 and expand the trail network (and working to secure funding and partnerships for these improvements). Attendees underlined the importance of making the trails accessible and connecting them to neighborhoods. The Mayor noted that the collaboration and contribution of those in attendance is helping that process by showing support and incorporating the idea into the comprehensive plan.

Housing

A consensus of the group was that Shorewood is a community with quality homes and neighborhoods that needs housing diversity. With various housing types, there could be more options for more people, and the opportunity for a range of housing, some of which may be more affordable. Townhomes and apartments could help bring more young professionals and families into Shorewood, and keep the Village a warm, inviting place.



The group noted that other municipalities maintain a high quality and diverse housing stock and continue to thrive. They also stated apartments may be a temporary living space to some but are useful for people that don’t want to settle down yet. In this way, options other than single family homes provide benefit to a community. Stressing the significance of having a variety of housing, attendees commented that residential expansion out west should reflect a mix of housing types as the Village grows west.

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Community Facilities & Services

Local events were noted as a valuable aspect of community in Shorewood, and that the riverfront could be used to create programming for residents and be an event venue. The value to residents of the Troy Library was also noted in the discussion.



Economic Development

Economic development in Shorewood included a range of points – new development, more stores, employment, and tax base support. It was noted that both anchor stores and small businesses are needed to serve residents and provide financial stability for the Village. Likewise, large employers, such as a healthcare complex or light industrial/logistics industries, were seen as part of the Village’s future.



Natural Resources

Attendees were very conscious of preserving the biodiversity and natural resources in and around Shorewood. As new development progresses, there is need to conserve that natural environment. They highlighted the Village should clear with new development, to be “smart growth” that limits environmental impacts. The idea was advanced with the Village considering an educational approach toward residents, businesses, and developers regarding the importance of the environment generally and about future development.



Transportation & Mobility

As transportation and mobility are essential to a thriving community, attendees agreed about the need to coordinate with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and other agencies to address existing inefficiencies and plan for sound future transportation systems. Village staff highlighted (and there was support for) the concept of “Complete Streets”, the idea that roads are shared and not just for cars. It underlines user safety and can be incorporated into the transportation system in several ways. Mayor DeBold noted that such cooperative discussions with various agencies were ongoing and would continue.



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Infrastructure

Discussion of infrastructure reflected the need to preserve existing systems and extend new services as the Village grows. As Shorewood expands out west, services need to be extended beyond the railroad lines and such investments could be large. The need to coordinate with other municipalities and entities, as well as seek out funding sources, was discussed.



Land Use

Current land use patterns in most existing parts of Shorewood are not expected to change dramatically. The most change will occur to the west. Where areas in the Village are most likely to see change, the comprehensive plan will provide guidance in the form of subarea plans.



Subareas

I-55 Gateway Corridor

This subarea is an important gateway for the Village, given traffic volumes on and coming off Interstate 55, and should present the community well. Attendees noted that strategic signage or other visible features letting visitors know they have arrived in Shorewood is merited.

Cottage Street Corridor

This area is of significance given upcoming improvements to the I-55 interchange and pending development to the south of I-80. This will likely lead to increases in traffic volumes and markets for new businesses. Future development plans will consider those potentials.

Shorewood Business Park

As an established industrial site, development on vacant properties along Jefferson Street and some enhancements to existing sites present the main opportunities in this subarea.

Southwest Expansion

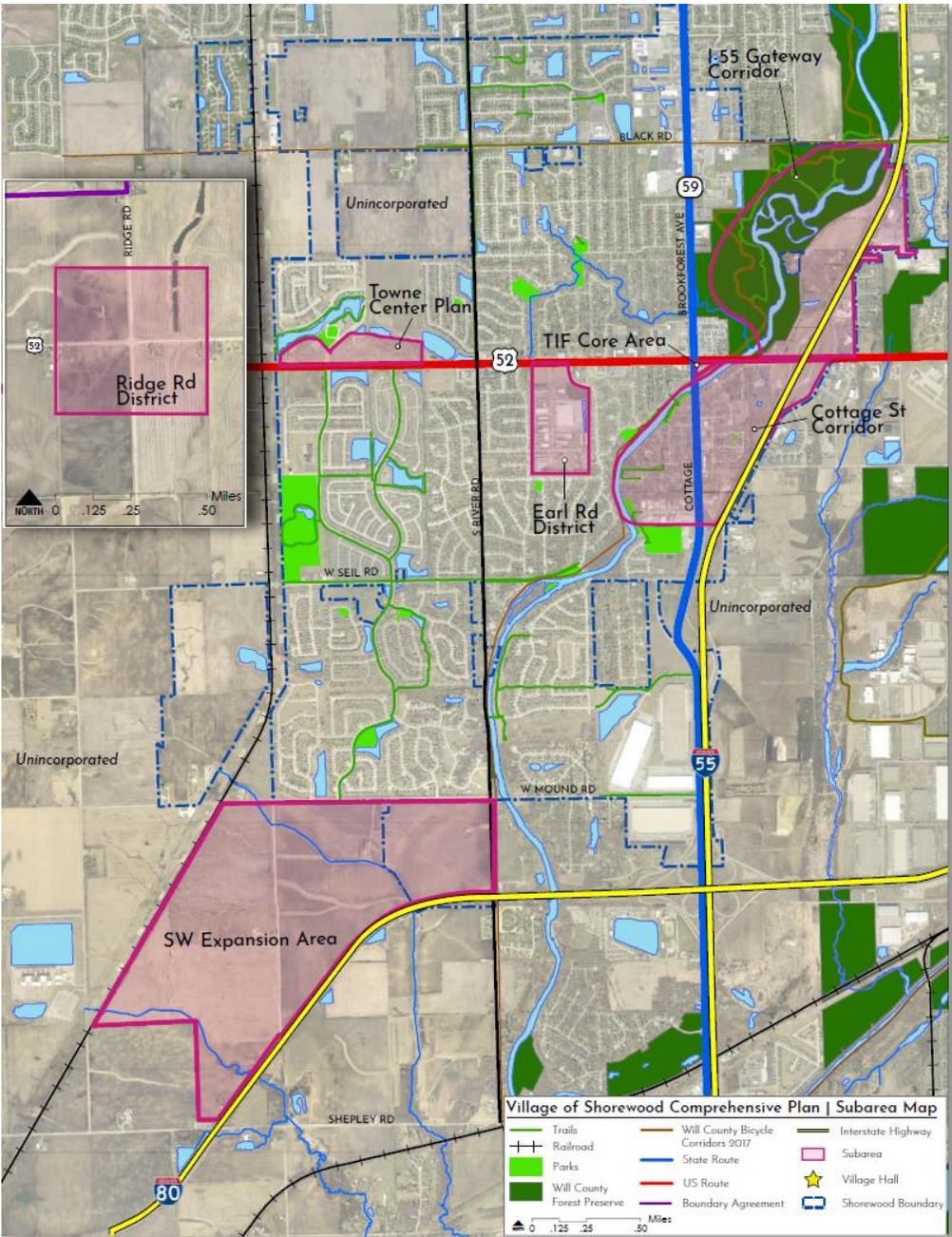
This area is envisioned as a business park complex, similar to those seen near interstate frontages. Primary needs and opportunities in this subarea focus on securing development that mitigates impacts to nearby residential uses and addresses stormwater management needs.

Ridge Road District

The intersection of Route 52 and Ridge Road is longer term, but a significant future opportunity for Shorewood. Shorewood secured this area by having existing annexation agreements and its future potential stems from the increasing development (and interchange with I-80) on Ridge Road (already occurring to the north and south). The opportunity for the lands around this intersection are to create a western district hub for the Village.

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Subarea Map



Adjourn

Michael and Mayor DeBold concluded the meeting and thanked everyone who attended. Participants were reminded to share any additional input with Village Staff or to post comments on the website.