



Village of Lemont
Planning and Zoning Commission

418 Main Street · Lemont, Illinois 60439
phone 630-257-1595 · fax 630-257-1598

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 16, 2011
6:30 p.m.

**Planning and Zoning
Commission**

Dennis Schubert,
Chairman

Commission Members:

Tony Armijo
Kerry Erber
David Maher
Katherine Murphy
William O'Malley
Anthony Spinelli

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Verify Quorum

C. Approval of Minutes: February 16, 2011

II. CHAIRMANS COMMENTS

III. GENERAL DISCUSSION

A. What is Economic Development?

**B. Past & Current Village Economic Development
Efforts**

**C. Discussion of Future Economic Development
Priorities**

IV. ADJOURNMENT

**Community Development
Department Staff**

James A. Brown, Director

Charity Jones, AICP Planner

Village of Lemont
Planning and Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting of February 16, 2011

A meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission of the Village of Lemont was held at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 16, 2011, in the second floor Board Room of the Village Hall, 418 Main Street, Lemont, Illinois.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Erber led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Verify Quorum

Upon roll call the following were:

Present: Maher, Murphy, O'Malley, Erber

Absent: Armijo, Spinelli, Schubert

Village Planer Charity Jones, Planning and Economic Development Director Jim Brown, and Village Trustee Ron Stapleton were also present.

C. Approve Minutes

Commissioner Murphy made a motion, seconded by Commissioner O'Malley to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2010 meeting with no changes. A voice vote was taken:

Ayes: All

None: None

Motion passed

II. CHAIRMAN COMMENTS

Commissioner Erber stated that the meeting would have to be moved downstairs to the lunchroom due to computer problems.

III. GENERAL DISCUSSION

A. Comprehensive Planning

Mrs. Jones provided a presentation via power point to discuss the process for updating the Comprehensive Plan. She stated that as she goes thru the presentation if anyone had questions or comments to please speak up. She stated that the planning process is a continuing circle of observing, planning, implementing, and evaluating.

Mrs. Jones stated that there are six characteristics in local planning. One is that it is inclusive so that all the citizens have a chance to influence and be part of the planning process. She said that good planning is consensus based, it reflects the views of the

majority of the community. She stated that good planning is integrated so that everything works together. The process is a continuing process that it doesn't just end when the plan is adopted. Mrs. Jones said good planning should be coordinated, such as local efforts are coordinated with other municipalities and with the region. Mrs. Jones said that Mr. Brown brought a copy of the Go To 20/40 Plan. (The book was passed around to the Commissioners) Mrs. Jones stated that this plan was adopted last fall by CMAP (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning). It is the Comprehensive Plan for the seven county region. She stated that they would be looking at how Lemont fits in with those goals. The last characteristic of good local planning is that it is sustainable. She said that good planning should promote a community that is sustainable not only environmentally but also fiscally.

Mrs. Jones then went over general types of planning tools. One tool is plans themselves, like the current Comprehensive Plan, or other sub area plans, economic development plans, bike and pedestrian plans, redevelopment plans, and natural resource protection plans. She said that the regulations, for example Unified Development Ordinance, are another tool; these contain requirements for property owners. Mrs. Jones stated that initiatives are a third planning tool and are different than the regulations. The government uses initiatives as a more pro-active strategy. The initiatives can help implement the recommendations of a plan, such as open space acquisition.

Mrs. Jones stated that the Comprehensive Plan should be the centerpiece of the whole planning program. She stated that it should be the framework through which all other plans are viewed. A comprehensive plan should be based on facts and values and it should give the community direction on how to attain its goals. She said that the focus should be on inspiration, clarity, and priority. She stated that most Comprehensive Plans are long range (20 to 30 years), however they are constantly reevaluated.

Mrs. Jones said that in Illinois, Comprehensive Plans are advisory and are not a regulatory document. She said that it does not carry the same authority as the UDO. She said the plan could cover the Village limits and 1.5 miles beyond as long as the properties are not within another municipality. She stated that by law the plan requires a public hearing, must be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and then adopted by the Village Board.

B. Comprehensive Plan Examples

Mrs. Jones then talked about the typical components of a Comprehensive Plan. She said it would include an update as to what has happened since the last plan was adopted. The data and analysis could be a separate section showing influences effecting the community – projected trends, population projection, etc.. She stated that public participation would be included in the plan. She said the policy recommendations would be in the functional elements of the plan. The plan usually includes a map series. Mrs. Jones said that in Illinois it is not very common to see a capital improvement schedule of three to five years, but sometimes it can be included and is mandatory in

some states. She said a general implementation schedule is often included at the end of the plan that shows short, mid and long-range goals.

Commissioner O'Malley asked what the Village's long-range water capacity is.

Mrs. Jones stated that long range water supply and its capacity is one thing they would want to address in the plan. She said currently there is more capacity than what is needed.

Mrs. Jones then talked about the functional elements of the plan. She stated that some of the topics that are typically addressed are land use, natural resource, transportation, economic development, housing, community facilities, and historic preservation. She stated that a land use element shows the community's intention for the general location and characteristic of future land use. It is not a zoning ordinance, which is more specific. Mrs. Jones stated that the natural resources element could identify areas of protection and also areas that are in need of remediation. She stated that the transportation element would have to look at water, rail, bike and pedestrian transportation as well as roads. Mrs. Jones stated that the Village just received a grant for \$48,000 from Cook County to do planning for active transportation. She said that Mr. Brown would talk about that later in the meeting.

As far as the economic development element, Mrs. Jones said that it should define what role the local government is going to take in economic development and set goals for economic development. She stated that a housing element is not necessarily just about affordable housing, but also housing preservation and creation to meet the needs of the projected population. She said that a community facilities element would include the planning for major facility enhancements like aquifers or a school. It can also include standards like a certain number of acres of parks per resident. The last typical functional element, historic preservation, can cover preservation of residential structures, commercial buildings, transportation facilities, public art, etc. She said that the goals and recommendations contained within each functional element need to work together to achieve the overall goals for the community.

Mrs. Jones stated that plans are often organized in terms of goals, objectives, and policies within these functional elements. Mrs. Jones provided an example of a goal, then the objective, and then the policies that help achieve that objective.

Mrs. Jones then asked if anyone had any comments or questions.

Commissioner Erber stated that the downtown area was unique and historic. It should possibly be treated separately.

Mrs. Jones stated that the plan could include a special section on the downtown because there are some aspects of the downtown that are different from the rest of Lemont, like land use, but in other respects the Village's overall goals and policies would apply equally to all areas including downtown.

Commissioner Murphy asked if adding another train would be part of this Comprehensive Plan.

Mrs. Jones said yes it could be part of economic development as well as mobility.

Commissioner Murphy asked if they were going to be working with a consultant.

Mrs. Jones stated that most of the work would be done in house. Staff might get someone to do research for economic development. Also, the Village will be receiving consultant help through a recently received grant.

C. Tentative Comp Plan Update Timeline

Mr. Brown stated that they received a grant from the Cook County Health Department. The grant is aimed at reducing obesity and improving people's health. The grant would be used to plan for improving the networks in town to get people to walk or bike to local areas in town. Mr. Brown stated that there are not a lot of designated bike routes in the Village. He said that staff would come up with a signage plan the bike networks. Mr. Brown stated that they have a partner already with Active Transportation Alliance, who is contracted to provide technical assistance through the grant. He stated that everything for the grant has to be completed by next February. He said that there is a big public involvement that has to be included with this grant. The plans created through the grant will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan update.

Mr. Brown stated that there is another consultant that is working on what staff calls Destination Development. It is looking specifically at the downtown area and how to bring people into that area. He stated that hopefully it should be done by April of this year.

Discussion then continued on ideas for increasing tourism in the downtown area.

Mr. Brown stated that the grant and the consulting effort would come first. He stated that in August or September they would have a big meeting and at that time they would look at land use, housing, and transportation portions of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Murphy asked if the grant gave any money to businesses that promoted health or wellness.

Mr. Brown stated that it did not.

Mr. Brown then presented on the computer a draft schedule for the Comprehensive Plan update. He stated that there will be a big kick-off meeting and they would gather a lot of public input. He said than staff or the consultant would start looking at community data. Then they would go through it chapter by chapter.

Mr. Brown stated that the PZC meeting in March will be a discussion of economic development. He stated that staff would not be presenting a draft but rather the key economic issues facing the Village. The next meeting either in April or May will probably be the bike planning. Mr. Brown stated that over summer staff would continue working with the consultant, who would be working with a steering committee. He said in September of 2011 they would have a big kick-off meeting. He stated that he is projecting to have everything done by October of 2012.

Mr. Brown then passed out a list of websites showing Comprehensive Plans within the region for the Commissioners to take a look at.

Discussion continued about the economic development of the downtown area.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Maher made a motion, seconded by Commissioner O'Malley to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken:

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Motion passed



Village of Lemont
Community Development Department

418 Main Street · Lemont, Illinois 60439
phone 630-257-1595 · fax 630-257-1598

TO: Dennis Schubert, Chairman
Planning & Zoning Commission #018-11

FROM: James A. Brown, Planning & Economic Development Director

THRU:

SUBJECT: **The Comprehensive Plan – Economic Development**

DATE: 10 March 2011

Last month the village planner, Charity Jones, spoke on comprehensive planning in general, and I distributed a short list of websites to comprehensive plans that other municipalities have recently completed. This month we will begin our monthly discussions of the various elements that will comprise our updated comprehensive plan. The topic for the March meeting will be economic development.

Economic Development and the Comprehensive Plan

Economic development refers to efforts to accommodate and stimulate economic growth and activity. Such efforts are usually aimed at business retention, business expansion, and business relocation to the community. Other economic development efforts may include job education and training, labor force development, development financing, favorable tax policies, and public services to businesses. Municipalities are interested in promoting economic development because it improves the quality of life within the community and it translates into tax revenue. A strong economic base supports schools, parks, and basic government services such as police protection and infrastructure maintenance.

The economic development element is that part of the comprehensive plan that describes the strategies that a local government will engage in to promote economic health of the community. Economic development goals and strategies vary depending on the municipality.

Economic Development in Lemont

The Village's 2002 Comprehensive Plan contains a short section on economic development. An additional section on the downtown also offers recommendations related to economic development. The recommendations of the 2002 Comprehensive Plan's economic development section are found in Attachment 1 to this document.

In the spring of 2008 the Chamber of Commerce hosted a business forum with the intention of gathering input on the business climate in Lemont. Some attendees at this forum were especially critical of the Village's role—or lack of a role—in economic development. The negative comments received wide circulation. Although some comments were certainly justified, many of the comments demonstrated a lack of understanding of efforts undertaken by the Village or of a typical municipal role in economic development.

Partly in response to the Chamber forum, and partly to bolster the meager guidance on economic development provided in the 2002 Comprehensive Plan, the Community Development Department created a Economic Development and Downtown Improvement Work Program (September 2008). The plan included both short- and long-term goals and highlighted some of the efforts already accomplished or being undertaken by the Village and the Community Development Department. Staff presented the Work Program to the public at a Chamber of Commerce forum and the Committee of the Whole in October 2008. This plan is attached.

The document was never formerly adopted by the Village; it was primarily to be used as a guide and evaluation tool for staff. The following year the Village Planner analyzed the progress made on the work program. This progress report was brought up to date and also has been attached.

A majority of the short-term goals have been accomplished. The Village Planner will provide a summary of the progress at the PZC meeting. Many of the long-term goals are either (1) accomplished with the update of the comprehensive plan; or (2) incorporated as goals/recommendations into an updated comprehensive plan. Please review pages 7-9 of the attached Economic Development and Downtown Improvement Work Program. The goals and recommendations contained here will form much of our discussion for the meeting.

Attachments:

Economic Development Recommendations from 2002 Comprehensive Plan
Economic Development and Downtown Improvement Work Program, 2008
Update to 2008 Work Program, Mar 2011

Attachment 1 – Economic Development Recommendations from the 2002 Comprehensive Plan

Marketing and Tourism Development	
Recommended Actions	Status
Make Lemont a destination for tourists interested in the historic downtown and canal, recreational areas, golf and other attractions	Continuing effort. The Village has undertaken several efforts aimed at creating a more inviting environment for residents and visitors alike: I&M Canal landscaping, Talcott Street improvements, new signage, informational kiosks. The P&ED staff has also fostered closer ties to the Canal Corridor Association and the Heritage Corridor Visitor and Convention Bureau, but these ties have not yet paid off in any solid or concrete manner thus far. A consultant has been hired for a “destination development” study to assess ways that Lemont can easily capitalize on the historic nature of its downtown and the nearby recreational amenities. The consultant’s final report is expected in April 2011.
Make Lemont self-sufficient in the goods and services that local residents demand on a regular basis	Continuing effort. The charette and other data collection done in conjunction with Marquette’s downtown vision and plan included a survey to gauge what services and goods the community wanted. Many of the responses indicated preferences for specific retail stores or restaurants that would be difficult to attract to a community of Lemont’s size, e.g. a Trader Joe’s.
Strengthen the local tax base by increasing and diversifying revenue sources	Partially accomplished. The P&ED staff and Village Board have recently been more accommodating to requests by industrial or transportation-related businesses. Last year the Village annexed a heavy equipment sales company; it has the potential to be a significant source of sales tax revenue for the Village.

Attachment 1 – Economic Development Recommendations from the 2002 Comprehensive Plan

Business Retention and Outreach	
Recommended Actions	Status
Reduce sales leakage by maintaining and attracting goods and services that local residents demand on a regular basis	Continuing Effort. Lemont has a fairly wide variety of retail stores and service available.
Develop marketing campaigns to attract new businesses and customers	Not Accomplished. The P&ED staff attempted last year to develop a marketing campaign with the Chamber of Commerce. Staff quickly realized that such an effort was beyond the scope of expertise and the budget of either the Chamber or the Village. As an interim measure, staff budgeted for the “destination development” study mentioned above.
Target employers of skilled and educated workers to match the local workforce	Not Accomplished. However, the Village responded with incentives to attract a firm with approximately 15-20 highly educated, professional staff.
Review infrastructure projects for their economic impact on the community	Partially Accomplished. Infrastructure projects in the downtown area have been undertaken in part for their potential economic benefits to the community. Outside of the downtown, however, most infrastructure projects are prioritized on the basis of need for continuing maintenance or traffic rather than their economic impact.
Continue a competitive grant program to defray building rehabilitation expenses	Accomplished. After a hiatus of two years, the “façade grant” program was re-instituted in 2010. Staff anticipates funding will remain available through the expiration of the downtown tax increment financing district.

Village of Lemont Community Development Department
**Economic Development & Downtown Improvement
Work Program**



September 10, 2008

Introduction

Recently, the Community Development Department assumed a more active role in economic development and downtown improvement activities. In March, Department staff began meeting with Chamber of Commerce board members to address issues raised at a Chamber-sponsored business forum held earlier this year. As a result of these meetings, Department staff worked with Chamber representatives to publish a “business start-up guide”; the guide provides general information to lead entrepreneurs through the steps of starting or expanding a business in Lemont. Staff also worked with the Chamber to develop an online community calendar that will be available for use by all businesses, clubs, and organizations in the community. The community calendar will be available online by the end of the year. Department staff have also been active in attending monthly meetings of the Breakfast Club, a group of downtown stakeholders. At these meetings stakeholders often commented about parking in downtown. Based on these and other comments, the department undertook a downtown parking study. The results, published in July, found that generally parking is available during the day in the surface parking lots downtown.

The Community Development Department wishes to build on these recent efforts. This work program is intended to provide a road map for future department activities. The work program is divided into two sections: short-term goals and longer-term goals. The short-term goals generally reflect targets that can be achieved within one year, with minimal need for additional policy

input from the Village Board. Although some of the short-term goals represent ongoing objectives, many of the recommended actions that support these goals can still be realized within a year. The longer-term goals generally reflect more complex topics that will require significant policy direction from the Board; these goals, and the recommended actions that support these goals, will generally take longer than one year to be realized.

This work program is intended to serve as a guide and an evaluation tool for the Community Development Department. As approved, the recommendations of this report will represent the economic development and downtown improvement priorities of the Community Development Department. The work program will also serve as the basis for a bi-annual progress report on the department’s economic development and downtown improvement activities.

PART ONE: SHORT-TERM GOALS

GOAL: Make Lemont Area Information Readily Accessible to Businesses

Business firms seek two general types of information: market information (demographics, income, labor pool, etc.) and site information (zoning, traffic counts, size, etc.).¹ The Village has detailed information on demographics and partial information on available commercial sites. Some of this information is available online, but more is possible.

Recommended Actions:

- Assemble the information that the Village currently has available and put the appropriate pieces on the Village website.
- Update and maintain the previously created map and list of available commercial sites within the Village. The list should include, at a minimum, the following: site address, PIN, site acreage, building type (e.g., manufacturing or retail), building square footage available, parking info, street frontage (with traffic counts if possible), zoning, price/rent, and seller's contact information. Once updated, a report should be published on the website and updated quarterly.
- Make TIF District maps, plans, and advantages of doing business within a TIF district readily available on the Village website.
- Add to the current list of resources for small businesses/entrepreneurs on Village website. Include the recently created "business start up guide" among these resources.
- Consider ways to reorganize information on the Village website so it is easily accessible.

¹ Metropolitan Planning Council, et al., Retail 1-2-3: A Workbook for Local Officials and Community Leaders (2006).

GOAL: Continue to Improve Community Development Processes

Businesses seek predictability, fair treatment, timely processing, consistent requirements, and accurate and accessible information from local governments.² The Community Development Department has created information/application packets for rezoning, annexation, variation, PUD, subdivision plat, special use and site development permit requests that correspond to the requirements of the new Unified Development Ordinance. These packets clearly explain the development review process and application requirements for each type of request, thereby providing greater predictability for applicants. The Department has made steps toward greater predictability and consistency in the development review process, but more can be done.

Recommended Actions:

- Continue to work with the Lemont Chamber to address business concerns regarding the development review process. Consider regularly scheduled forums or surveys to exchange information (perhaps semi-annually) between the Village and the business community.
- Continue to establish formal internal department procedures.
- Proactively look for ways to reduce uncertainty in the development review process.
- Continue to create informational packets for frequently asked questions and/or frequently occurring scenarios (e.g., an R-4A zoning district info packet, swimming pool info packet, how to find a property's PIN, etc.). Make these informational packets available in hard copy and on the Village website.
- Explore options for an interactive online zoning map (i.e., an Arc IMS site) that enables the public to check the zoning of properties online.

² Moore, et al., An Economic Development Toolbox: Strategies and Methods (American Planning Association, 2006); Metropolitan Planning Council, et al., 42.

GOAL: Make Downtown Lemont more Visitor-Friendly

Downtown Lemont is a unique and beautiful area. In the past several years, many improvements have been made to the sidewalks and streetscape of the downtown. A few more strategic improvements will make downtown Lemont truly inviting to newcomers and lifelong Lemonters alike.

Recommended Actions:

- Construct and place informational kiosks at a few key locations downtown. Each kiosk will provide a map of the downtown that highlights public parking, shopping, and dining opportunities and can be kept updated as new establishments open. Each kiosk will also provide space to post information about special events in the downtown. Village staff will work together with the Heritage Committee to ensure that the design of these kiosks supports the overall downtown aesthetic.



- Place bicycle racks in the downtown. The I&M Canal trail is an excellent cycling opportunity that runs through the heart of downtown Lemont. In addition, many of the young people of Lemont ride their bicycles as a primary means of transportation. Unfortunately, there is nowhere for these bicy-

clists to safely lock up their bicycles in the downtown. The addition of bicycle racks will encourage these bicyclists, and more, to shop and dine in downtown. Village staff will work together with the Heritage Committee to ensure that the design of the bicycle racks supports the overall downtown aesthetic.

- Update the downtown parking signs. Downtown Lemont has free public parking, but many of the parking lots are underutilized. One reason for this might be that visitors aren't aware of where to park. Improved signage can better direct people to the public parking lots and should improve the utilization of those lots. Location of parking signs, as well as the design of the signs, will be evaluated.



- Explore opportunities to promote historic downtown Lemont through signage along major thoroughfares, such as Interstates 355 and 55, Lemont Road, New Avenue, and 127th Street.
- Improve non-motorized access to downtown Lemont. Evaluate non-motorized routes to downtown and explore strategies to improve those routes. Work toward an improved link between the Centennial Trail and downtown Lemont.
- Promote Lemont within the region. Coordinate with other local organizations in support of marketing efforts that benefit Lemont. Seek out low-cost strategies to enhance regional awareness of downtown Lemont, local special events, and recreational opportunities.

Economic Development & Downtown Improvement Work Program

GOAL: Review the Façade Improvement Grant Program

Aesthetics are clearly important to projecting the image of a vibrant downtown. The Village has offered façade improvement grants for businesses in the downtown area since 1999. The Village has budgeted a total of \$90,000 for this program over the past three years (FY 06, 07, and 08). However, Village records indicate that only about \$39,000 in grants were awarded during this time period. A thorough analysis will provide a comprehensive assessment of the program in its current state and enable the Village to evaluate what, if any, changes might improve the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the program.

Recommended Actions:

- The Community Development Department should review the goals of the façade improvement grant program. The Village may want to re-evaluate eligibility requirements and/or program goals.
- Examine sites that are eligible for participation in the program. Evaluate how many sites have already participated and how many eligible sites remain that could benefit from façade improvements. Target promotion of the façade improvement grant program to those sites.
- Consider targeting grant expenditures on one of the downtown gateway areas identified in Lemont Station Area Plan.
- Develop a flyer/brochure to promote the façade improvement grant program.

GOAL: Pursue Grants to Fund Downtown & Economic Development Initiatives

Several entities offer grants that can be used for economic development and downtown revitalization efforts. Also, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and similar organizations provide grants for historic preservation and heritage tourism initiatives.

Recommended Actions:

- Continue to research grant opportunities from various sources (e.g., State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Cultural Heritage Tourism Coalition, the National Endowment for the Humanities, Chicagoland Bicycle Federation etc.)
- Pursue grants that could be used for planned Village initiatives.
- Apply to become a designated “Preserve America” community; such designation will provide positive marketing exposure for the downtown and entitle Lemont to apply for Preserve America grants.



Ali Tucker Artistic Entertaining recently received a facade improvement grant.

GOAL: Evaluate Impact of the New Parking Facility and Review Downtown Parking Regulations

The new parking garage will soon be completed. The Village would benefit from tracking the immediate and long term impacts that the parking garage has on downtown parking. In addition, the Village is responsible for maintaining the parking garage. The Village may want to examine the maintenance costs and consider potential revisions to the current downtown parking requirements to help meet those and other costs associated with providing free downtown parking.

Recommended Actions:

- Follow up the recent parking study with additional parking studies immediately after the parking garage opens to the public, and a few months after the parking garage has been in use.
- Explore options for revisions to the downtown parking requirements. Currently, all downtown uses on less than ½ acre have no minimum required parking and uses on greater than ½ acre lots may use the public parking facilities to satisfy the minimum required parking if the public parking facilities are within 500 feet of the proposed use. The Village may want to consider requiring new businesses to pay into a parking fund; the amount can be based on the number of public parking spaces that the business is relying on to meet its required minimum parking. The cost per space can be calculated using estimates of the current construction cost per parking space as a reference point. Because the Village wants to encourage new businesses to locate in the downtown, any parking fee paid by new businesses should not be equal to cost of constructing on-site parking spaces, but it could be some fraction of that amount.
- Adopt any revisions to the downtown parking requirements that are deemed desirable by the Village Board.

GOAL: Consider Measures to Prevent Large, Vacant Commercial Buildings in the Village

Large, abandoned commercial buildings (big box retail) are often a hindrance to economic development efforts. Although this is not a problem currently, there are steps the Village can take to prevent such eyesores from occurring in the future.

Recommended Actions:

- Investigate measures that could protect the Village in the event that a large-scale retailer abandons its building. One possibility is to require demolition bonds that would require large-scale commercial developers to establish a bond when they build a commercial site; the bond is used to pay for demolition of the building if it is left vacant for a specified period of time. Another possibility is to require commercial developers of a certain size to contribute to a demolition fund, similar to an impact fee; this fund would be dedicated to the demolition of vacant commercial buildings.
- Consider opportunities for re-use of abandoned retail buildings (e.g., governmental or institutional uses).
- Adopt any measures that are deemed effective and desirable by the Village Board.

GOAL: Improve Coordination with I&M Canal Corridor Association

The I&M Canal has long been recognized as a community asset in Lemont. The I&M Canal Corridor Association is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to preserving history, protecting nature and open space, and creating tourism destinations in the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor. The Canal Corridor Association will begin developing an I&M Canal Corridor Plan within the year; the plan will serve as a guide for the Association's future goals and activities in support of its mission.



The Canal Corridor Association worked with community leaders in LaSalle to improve the western end of the I&M Canal. In June, they held a grand opening for "the Volunteer," a full-size replica canal boat, and the Lock 16 Visitors Center.

Recommended Actions:

- Work with Canal Corridor Association staff to update and increase the Lemont area information on the Canal Corridor Association website. Specifically, add links to Lemont restaurants, shopping and accommodations on the I&M Canal Driving Tour web page.
- Coordinate with Canal Corridor Association staff throughout the preparation of the Canal Corridor Plan. Work to ensure that Lemont receives appropriate consideration in the plan.
- Evaluate ways to make Lemont the eastern gateway to the I&M Canal corridor. Based on Lemont's geographic location, its colorful history, and its outstanding collection of 19th century limestone buildings, Lemont is the logical eastern gateway to the corridor. Canal Corridor Association officials have agreed that Lemont would be an appropriate choice for such a gateway. While this initiative will not be completed in the short-term, the Department and Village should at least examine the feasibility of various options.
- Continue discussions with the Canal Corridor Association staff regarding the possibility of having a Canal Corridor Association physical presence in downtown Lemont.
- Collaborate with the Canal Corridor Association to explore heritage tourism opportunities in downtown Lemont. Opportunities which require significant resources should be evaluated within the broader context of a comprehensive downtown vision.
- Explore opportunities to partner with Canal Corridor Association in grant applications.

PART TWO: LONGER-TERM GOALS

GOAL: Develop a Comprehensive Strategy for Achieving a Downtown Vision

Lemont's downtown has been the subject of numerous studies (see appendix A for a list of studies). Each study has set forth its own vision for the downtown; many components of those visions are similar, but there are differences. Recently, the Lemont Station Area Plan was completed in November 2004. The Lemont Station Area Plan sets forth a thorough plan for downtown Lemont, complete with phasing and other implementation recommendations. A downtown visioning charette was conducted by Dover, Kohl and Partners in January 2005, and a series of downtown vision illustrations were subsequently presented to the Village. Zoning regulations that support the vision presented by Dover, Kohl and Partners have since been incorporated in the Unified Development Ordinance. The Comprehensive Plan pre-dates these planning efforts and reflects elements of a previous vision of downtown that may be outdated. The Village would benefit by formalizing a complete vision for the downtown in the Comprehensive Plan.

Recommended Actions:

- Clarify and define the generalized future land use vision for downtown through incorporation of a vision into the Comprehensive Plan. This can be accomplished by defining and describing the vision for each subarea of the downtown or by including a map that details the land use vision, or both.
- Incorporate goals, objectives and policies to support the downtown vision into the Comprehensive Plan. The downtown strategy can either be an element unto itself in the Comprehensive Plan or can be sub-sections of the Land Use and Economic Development elements.
- Include economic development goals, objectives and policies that are specific to the downtown. Like the Village's general economic

development goals, the downtown economic development goals should identify the Village's role in economic development, be specific, be realistic, and prioritize among conflicting Village goals.

- Include goals, objectives and policies related to heritage and eco-tourism in downtown Lemont. The goals, objectives and policies should consider improvements to existing recreation opportunities in and near downtown Lemont.
- Incorporate goals, objectives and policies for effective marketing of downtown. The goals, objectives and policies should define the Village's role in marketing efforts as a part of the greater economic development goals, objectives and policies for downtown.
- As part of the Comprehensive Plan downtown goals, objectives, and policies, consider capital improvement planning for downtown area improvements in coordination with the TIF plan. The goals, objectives and policies should establish priorities for the scheduling of capital improvements that is in line with the adopted vision for the downtown.
- Consider how the Village will partner with private and non-profit entities (ie: use of volunteers, private fundraising for public improvements, etc.) in formulating the Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, and policies.
- Evaluate employing the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program as a model for developing a comprehensive downtown improvement strategy.

GOAL: Revise the Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan

Lemont does not currently have an adopted comprehensive strategy for economic development. The Comprehensive Plan currently includes some general economic development goals (p.44-45). Some economic development analysis has been done for the downtown area. Very little analysis appears to have been done for the remainder of the Village. The Village would benefit from an economic development strategy that clearly defines the Village's goals and identifies measurable objectives and policies that will be initiated to achieve those goals.



Industrial uses have long been a part of Lemont's local economy; these uses have thrived on the railroad and canal access available in Lemont. In moving forward, the Village will consider these traditional industries as well as other potential economic engines in the Comprehensive Plan.

Recommended Actions:

- Conduct an economic baseline analysis of the Village and its planning area. Such analysis might include: identifying potential emerging industries, identifying any business clusters within the Village, comparing employment/industry growth projections with available commercial land to determine commercial acreage necessary to support growth, etc. Economic baseline data may expand on previous economic studies commissioned by the Village. This analysis should provide the basis for the Village's economic development goals. By grounding the Village's goals in the available data, the Village will be less likely to set unrealistic expectations.
- Clearly identify the Village's economic development goals in the Comprehensive Plan. The goals should identify the Village's role in economic development (leader, supporter, etc.). The goals should be specific (e.g., the Village will concentrate its new business recruitment strategies on the retail industry). The goals should prioritize among conflicting Village goals (e.g., retaining existing industries vs. eliminating industrial uses along the canal). The goals should be realistic, grounded in economic analysis and be sensitive to Village resource constraints.
- Clearly identify the Village's targeted industries and the targeted locations for those industries, if applicable, in the Comprehensive Plan Economic Development element.
- Incorporate transportation, land use, environmental, and other considerations in the Economic Development element as part of a comprehensive approach to economic development.
- Include tools for monitoring and measuring the success of the objectives and policies of the Economic Development element in the Comprehensive Plan.

GOAL: Adopt a Village Policy on Economic Development Incentives

There are a variety of economic development incentives which the Village can offer to businesses as an enticement to locate/expand/stay in the Village. Such incentives include: property tax relief, sales tax rebates, workforce development incentives, revolving loan funds, fee waivers, etc. Economic development publications recommend adopting an incentives policy to guide the use of these economic development tools. Such a policy will state which, if any, economic development incentives the Village will employ and how the incentives can be used. Adoption of a formal policy will make the Village's position on economic development incentives clear to developers, staff, and the public. It will also ensure that if incentives are used, they are used to effectively support the Village's economic development goals.

Recommended Actions:

- Develop an incentives policy that considers return on investment (ie, the efficiency of the incentive) for different types of incentives and encourages use of incentives with better return on investment.
- Consider the implications of different types of incentives in formulating an incentives policy and tailor the policy to meet the Village's economic development goals. For example, sales tax rebates offer relief to retailers directly, while property tax relief benefits the commercial property owner. If the Village's goal is to assist retailers directly, then sales tax rebates would be a more effective tool.
- Within the incentives policy, include procedures to periodically review and measure the impact of any incentives given.

GOAL: Continue to Support Clean up and Reuse of former Tri-Central Marine Property

The clean up and redevelopment of the former Tri-Central Marine property has been a subject of many downtown planning studies. Through a grant from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Village has been overseeing a brownfield study for remediation of the site. The level of remediation required will be dependent upon the intended future use of the property. Although the Dover, Kohl and Partners visioning efforts in 2005 show a vision for residential development of the site, other factors related to contamination, access, and ownership indicate that non-residential uses may be more appropriate.

Recommended Actions:

- Community Development staff should continue to support Village Administration in remediation efforts and provide input regarding proposed land uses for this site.
- Include goals and policies related to remediation and reuse of the former Tri-Central Marine site in the Comprehensive Plan.

Appendix A - Studies and Planning Efforts Related to Downtown Lemont

1977 - *A Plan for Revitalization of the Central Area – Lemont, IL*
Prepared by Harland Bartholomew and Associates

Needs identified:

- Downtown lacks a clear identity/image.
- Downtown lacks a central focus.
- Appearance of the I&M Canal and surrounding towpath area is poor.
- Conditions of many buildings is poor.

Opportunities noted:

- State street bridge (in planning at the time) will relieve traffic.
- Adjacent neighborhoods to the downtown are stable.
- Vacant lots allow for easy redevelopment.
- Older commercial buildings provide low cost space; with appropriate renovations they can contribute to the historic character of the area.
- I&M Canal can provide a focal point and identity for the downtown.

Recommendations:

- Buildings oriented toward the canal.
- Development of the I&M Canal as a major feature of downtown.
- Development of an amphitheater with a performance platform on north side of canal at Fry's Landing and seating across the canal on the south side.
- Commercial development in the Front Street Lofts and Post Office area and light industrial uses east of downtown.
- 12 new parking lots with a total of 971 new parking spaces throughout downtown.

1991 - *Downtown Lemont Tax Increment Redevelopment Project and Plan*
Prepared by Trkla, Pettigrew, Allen & Payne, Inc.

Needs identified:

- States that the needs identified in the 1977 plan still exist

Recommendations:

- Proposes land use plan with commercial development covering an area generally bounded by the I&M Canal on the north, Illinois Street on the south, Lockport Road on the west and Brady Street on the east. The plan also proposes a few public and semi-public uses sprinkled throughout that area.
- The land use plan also proposes light industrial from Holmes Street east to Brady Street.

Economic Development & Downtown Improvement Work Program

1993 - A Preliminary Town Planning Analysis of Downtown Lemont, IL

Prepared by Decker and Kemp, Architecture and Town Planning, for the I&M Canal Corridor Main Street Partnership on behalf of Downtown Lemont, Inc.

Needs Identified:

- Downtown Lemont is walkable, but ways to move into and throughout downtown are not as clear and convenient as they could be because principal streets bypass downtown or are routed in ways to make getting downtown difficult.
- Parking areas, historic sites, and private businesses are not clearly connected.
- The I&M Canal is underutilized as a tourism and economic development asset.

Recommendations:

- Create gateways to delineate clear points of entry to downtown.
- Improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation to make it easy and convenient to move about downtown.
- Create attractive public spaces, including improvements to Mural Park at Stephen & Main Streets, Monument Park, and the I&M Canal.
- Provide an attractive downtown environment through streetscape improvements which are in keeping with Lemont's character.
- Keep Post office and library downtown; relocate within the downtown if necessary.
- Create an interpretive site along the Chicago Shipping Canal.

1994 - Downtown Area Master Plan – Phase One

Prepared by Teska Associates Inc., for Downtown Lemont, Inc.

- Identifies nine districts within the downtown – historic/retail core, retail/warehouse area, office/gateway, commuter depot area, I&M Canal corridor, warehouse/industrial area, mixed business and residential district, sanitary and ship canal, and residential business transition area.
- Goal of plan is to unify the downtown, link together the nine areas, and enhance the historical aspects of downtown architecture and the I&M canal.
- Plan includes designs for several of the streetscape features present in downtown Lemont today, including: street lamps, limestone planters, and railings along railroad.

2002 - Opportunities on the Waterfront
Prepared by Hitchcock Design Group

Recommendations:

- Downtown should include a mix of residential and commercial uses, particularly along Stephen Street and the I&M Canal.
- MWRD property north and south of Sanitary and Ship Canal (the former Tri-Central site) is a major opportunity for redevelopment, possibly residential development.
- Upgrade the I&M Canal trail through the downtown area so as to easily distinguish it from the more utilitarian segments of the trail outside downtown.
- Establish an implementation team, made up of representatives from the public and private sector. The team should identify a series of redevelopment objectives and prioritize projects that support those objectives. The implementation team should then create a development funding program that supports the priority projects.
- Once economic revitalization objectives are identified, employ business recruitment strategies to recruit businesses that support the identified objectives.

2003 - Draft Lemont Canal Corridor Action Plan
Prepared by the Village of Lemont for the MWRD

Recommendations:

- Rezone the 27 acre Tri-Central site to B-4, if only as a temporary designation while exploring redevelopment opportunities for the site. Redevelopment with uses of high density or intensity is not recommended.
- Rezone the majority of properties between the Sanitary and Ship Canal and the Des Plaines River Diversion Channel to B-4. Annex properties as necessary.
- Acquire the “turning basin” property through a long term lease and retain it as a buffer between KA Steel and Heritage Quarries Park.

2003 - I&M Canal Comprehensive Development Plan
Prepared by the Lemont Heritage Committee

Recommendations:

- Improve I&M Canal Corridor trail by extending the trail to the east and west, constructing additional shelters along the trail, installing informational/historic markers along the trail, installing mile markers along the trail, and developing parks that lay near the trail.
- Improve landscaping along I&M Canal Corridor trail at the following targeted locations: east of Stephen Street near Safety Village, Fry’s Landing (east and west entrances), the KA Steel Road cross-over, trail segments adjacent to industrial uses, and at shelter locations.
- Install foot bridges across I&M Canal at the following locations: Quarry One, near IMT’s property, Boyer Road, and at I-355 cross-over point.

I&M Canal Comprehensive Development Plan (cont'd.)

- Improve Fry's Landing with the following: a decorative and versatile stage/ban shell, an interactive fountain park (at east end of Fry's Landing), a landscaped historical interpretive area (at west end of Fry's Landing), and brick pavers for I&M Canal Corridor trail through Fry's Landing.
- Install a full-size replica canal boat, stationary or moving.
- Clean up and dredge the I&M canal.
- Downzone all canal trail property zoned M-3.
- Acquire remaining strategic property near the Heritage Quarry Park for open space.
- Monitor leases along I&M Canal.

2004 - Lemont Station Area Plan
Prepared by URS Corporation

Needs Identified & Observations:

- Commercial core includes a variety of business uses. Older properties around the periphery of the commercial core are generally underutilized and may provide redevelopment opportunities.
- Downtown is very walkable and streetscape improvements along Main, Canal, and Stephen reinforce that walkability. Additional projects should be considered near the Lemont train station to overcome topographic barriers and street interruptions.
- The I&M Canal trail and several decorative parks add to the quality and character of downtown.
- Identifies view of Lemont from southbound traffic on Lemont road as an important asset to be preserved.
- Most buildings are structurally sound, but some are in need of major repair.
- The industrial and commercial properties around the periphery of the Station area, and sever older homes along Illinois, Porter and Cass are generally characterized by deferred maintenance and minor condition problems.
- There are not a lot of vacant properties in the downtown but some are highly visible from major roadways and detract from the overall downtown appearance.
- Parking near the train station and for the commercial uses on the periphery of the station area are not landscaped and detract from the appearance of the station area.
- Railroad corridor is not well maintained. More extensive landscaping along tracks is needed. Also improvements to back sides of many commercial and industrial buildings are unsightly but visible from the commuter train.

Lemont Station Area Plan (cont'd.)

- Tri-Central may be more appropriate for commercial or industrial use, rather than residential use, to minimize environmental risks to potential users.

Recommendations:

- Manufacturing zoning in station area is incompatible with vision presented in Opportunities on the Waterfront and should be phased out over time.
- Streetscape improvements have improved pedestrian friendliness and created a walkable downtown. Additional improvements should include: pedestrian crosswalks across Main Street, additional landscaping and other streetscape improvements along major traffic and pedestrian routes, wayfinding and directional signage, and more extensive gateway features.
- Commuter station is not well connected to rest of downtown. Better linkages are needed.
- Existing recreation features in the station area should be strengthened and opportunities for additional park land should be explored.
- Downtown Lemont should be a mixed use district with a mix of retail, service, and residential uses. The area's distinguishing features should be enhanced. Densities of 16-20 dwelling units per acre with building heights of 4 to 5 stories would be appropriate in the immediate Station Area. Outside the Station Area, residential densities should range from 4 to 8 dwelling units per acre in areas designated for urban residential development while areas designated for mixed density residential development would reflect ranges of 10 to 14 dwelling units per acre.
- Parking should be improved through enhancement of existing lots and the construction of shared-use parking lots and parking structures. Most parking should be positioned behind buildings.
- Lemont Station Area should become a more pedestrian and bicyclist attractive area through improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks, and other ped/bike amenities.
- A range of actions should be undertaken to enhance the image and character of the Lemont Station Area. The image should help distinguish downtown and also contribute to the image and identity of the Village of Lemont as a whole.
- The land use recommendations include the addition of mixed use and retail buildings to link train station to rest of downtown. Proposes structured parking with commercial or mixed use buildings on New Avenue/Main Street and Canal Street.
- Informational kiosks and improved wayfinding signs will help visitors know how to navigate downtown and where to park.
- Existing parking lots should be landscaped.
- Create a development agency for the downtown that would ensure the phased implementation recommended in the plan is completed.
- Explore the creation of a Business Improvement District for the downtown.

2005 - *Village of Lemont Downtown Canal District One, Redevelopment Project Area No. 2 Redevelopment Plan and Project*
Prepared by Ehlers and Associates, Inc.

Needs identified:

- Problems typical of older downtowns are present in Lemont, including vacancies, environmental issues, excessive ground coverage, and deteriorating structures.
- Railways that bisect the downtown have created access issues.
- Surface parking dominates too much of the downtown.

Recommendations:

- Reduce or eliminate those conditions that qualify the Redevelopment Project Area as a “blighted area.”
- Encourage a high quality appearance of buildings, rights of way, and open spaces and encourage high standards of design.
- Assemble land into parcels of sufficient shape and size for disposition and redevelopment.
- Achieve attractive development with a complementary mix of uses within the Redevelopment Project Area.
- Provide needed public improvements or facilities in proper relationship to the projected demand for such facilities and in accordance with present day design standards for such facilities, including improved access and bikeways.
- Provide needed incentives to encourage a broad range of improvements.
- Improve the visual attractiveness of the Village by landscaping, street furniture, renovation and removal of buildings and screening of unattractive uses.
- Increase housing opportunities within the Village.

2005 - Marquette Downtown Visioning Initiative

Prepared by Dover, Khol, and Partners

- Includes a five phase plan for developing the downtown that features mixed use buildings and structured parking. Also includes plans for residential and public uses on the former Tri-Central property.
- Divides downtown into six distinct areas:
 - Lemont Station – centered around train station, characterized by retail and residential mixed uses with structured parking; includes a park under the State Street bridge.
 - Historic Downtown – characterized by preservation of existing historic core, with addition of more commercial and residential uses, with live/work units along the south side I&M Canal. Building heights should be consistent with existing structures. Also calls for future structured parking, behind the Stonecutters building and next to Village Hall.
 - Canal Walk & Smokey Row – characterized by entertainment related uses, seen as an extension of the historic downtown with heavy focus on improved pedestrian experience along I&M Canal. Also includes future structured parking.
 - The Wharf – described as a trendy neighborhood along a working waterfront. Calls for a waterfront park and “industrial looking” residential and office buildings located on the former Tri-Central property.
 - Tri-Central West – described as the new downtown neighborhood, characterized by single-family homes and park areas.
 - Cultural and Recreational Center – located between the Wharf and Tri-Central West, an area for organized sports, a health club, skate park, and other recreational uses.
- Proposes several parking structures, all within a 500 foot radius of one another, to promote pedestrian opportunities.
- Includes a regulating plan that served as a basis for the current Downtown District zoning requirements.

2005 - Village of Lemont Strategic Goals

Prepared by Dr. Curt Wood, Northern Illinois University, based on Village Board goal-setting retreat

- High importance, short-term goals included annexing pockets of unincorporated areas and inventorying and regulating nonconforming residential structures.
- High importance, long-term goals included building a police facility and completion of the Front Street Lofts buildings and parking structure.
- Medium importance, short-term goals included stricter enforcement of building and zoning codes, electronic distribution of Village Board packets, contracting out Village services, down zoning the I&M Canal reserve strip, and developing a public art master plan/beautification program for the Village.
- Developing the area around the intersection of Route 83 and Main Street was the Board’s medium importance, long-term goal.

Village of Lemont Planning & Economic Development Department
**Economic Development & Downtown Improvement
Work Program - Status Report**



March 9, 2011

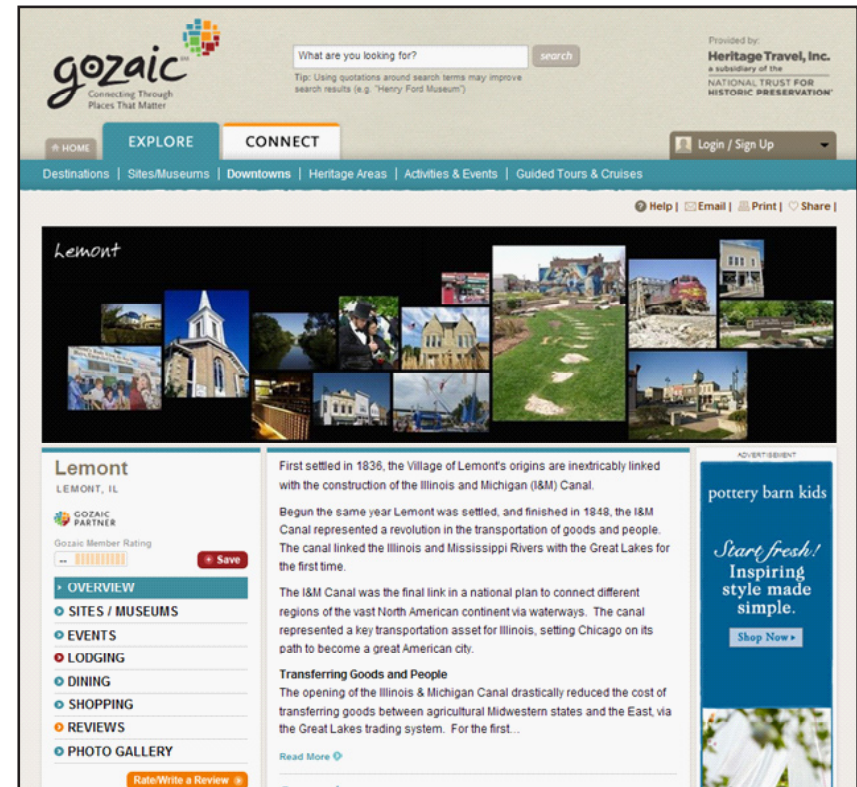
Introduction

In October 2008, the Community Development Department (now the Planning & Economic Development Department) presented the Economic Development & Downtown Improvement Work Program to the Village Board. The work program was created as a road map for future department activities and was divided into two sections: short-term goals and longer-term goals. The short-term goals reflected targets to be achieved within one year. Although the short-term goals included some ongoing objectives, these goals were supported by recommendations for specific actions that could be completed within a year. The longer-term goals reflected more complex topics that required significant policy direction from the Board. The longer-term goals, and the recommended actions that support those goals, were presented as generally taking longer than one year to be realized.

Significant progress has been made toward many of the goals of the work program. The following pages provide a status update for all of the work program short-term goals and associated recommended actions. For those action items which have not yet been completed, an explanation has been provided. Some items have not been completed on schedule due to the unanticipated reduction in department staff during 2009.

A detailed report of the status of the longer-term goals is not included in this update. The longer-term goals of the work program are: to develop a comprehensive strategy for achieving a downtown vision; to revise the Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan; to adopt a Village policy on economic development incentives; and to continue to support the clean up and reuse of the former Tri-Central Marine property. The longer-term goals of the Work Program, and each goal's corresponding

recommended actions should be considered for inclusion in the Lemont Comprehensive Plan update.



Above: Lemont's main page on Gozaic.com

Cover: Farmer's Market at its new location along Talcott Street.

GOAL: Make Lemont Area Information Readily Accessible to Businesses

Recommended Actions	Status
Assemble the information that the Village currently has available and put the appropriate pieces on the Village website.	Accomplished / Continuing Effort. In 2009, the department completed a community profile containing information on demographics, housing trends, and community amenities which has been available on the website since March 2009. As new Census data becomes available, staff will update the demographic information on the website.
Update and maintain the previously created map and list of available commercial sites within the Village.	Accomplished / Continuing Effort. The new Village website includes a page dedicated to available sites and buildings. Staff continues to work with CoStar and commercial real estate brokers to keep this information up to date.
Make TIF District maps, plans, and advantages of doing business within a TIF district readily available on the Village website.	Accomplished. The new Village website includes a page dedicated to the TIF districts in the "For Business" section of the site that provides information and a map for each of the Village's three TIF districts.
Add to the current list of resources for small businesses/entrepreneurs on Village website. Include the recently created "business start up guide" among these resources.	Accomplished / Continuing Effort. The business start up guide was posted to the Village website in September 2008. Lemontevents.com, a community event calendar, was launched in October 2008 as a joint venture with the Chamber; the Chamber is no longer interested in maintaining the site, so Village staff is looking at other ways to provide a community event calendar.
Consider ways to reorganize information on the Village website so it is easily accessible.	Accomplished. The new Village website went live October 2009 and now features information categorized into three main sections - For Visitors, For Residents, and For Business.

GOAL: Continue to Improve Community Development Processes

Recommended Actions	Status
Continue to work with the Lemont Chamber to address business concerns regarding the development review process. Consider regularly scheduled forums or surveys to exchange information (perhaps semi-annually) between the Village and the business community.	Continuing Effort. Participated in October Chamber business forums in October 2008 and October 2009. Began hosting the Breakfast Club, a downtown merchants group. Conducted a survey of downtown merchants in early 2009 to gather input on special events. Continued regular communication with the Chamber including speaking at a Chamber member luncheon in 2009.
Continue to establish formal internal department procedures.	Continuing Effort. A continuous effort has been made by department staff to standardize forms, procedures, etc. to provide better service to citizens.
Proactively look for ways to reduce uncertainty in the development review process.	Continuing Effort. CD Dept., Building Dept., and Village Engineer met in November and December 2008 to discuss uncertainties and unclear requirements in the site development permit process. Subsequent to those meetings, department staff revised the site development permit application and there has been improved communication between departments on site development permit issues.
Continue to create informational packets for frequently asked questions and/or frequently occurring scenarios (e.g., an R-4A zoning district info packet, swimming pool info packet, how to find a property's PIN, etc.).	Accomplished / Continuing Effort. Two new informational packets have been created and are available at Village Hall and on the Village website. One provides answers to frequently asked questions about the R-4A District. The other provides guidance on the use of electronic pet containment systems (invisible fences). In addition, the new website features a FAQ section in which department staff provides answers to some commonly asked questions. Informational packets will continue to be created by department staff and the website is continually updated.
Explore options for an interactive online zoning map (i.e., an Arc IMS site) that enables the public to check the zoning of properties online.	Accomplished. Department staff researched quotes for an ArcIMS server to provide an online interactive zoning map; the cost for the technology was \$8,000 plus a \$2,000 annual maintenance fee. The service is cost prohibitive at this time. However, staff did post a static zoning map to the website; this zoning map is an improvement because the old zoning map did not include property addresses and the new map does.

GOAL: Make Downtown Lemont More Visitor-Friendly

Recommended Actions	Status
Construct and place informational kiosks at a few key locations downtown.	Accomplished. Two kiosks were created by Western Remac Inc., of Woodridge. Echo Design Group of Lemont designed the directories to place inside the kiosks. The kiosks were installed in fall 2009 and the artwork was placed in the kiosks in winter.
Place bicycle racks in the downtown.	Accomplished. Two bicycle racks have been ordered. Public Works has installed one along Main Street. The other bike rack, which is planned for General Fry's Landing, will be installed in Spring 2011 when the General Fry's final landscaping is installed.
Update the downtown parking signs.	Accomplished. This effort was expanded to include all new wayfinding signage for the downtown, including directions to recreational and public amenities in addition to parking.
Explore opportunities to promote historic downtown Lemont through signage along major thoroughfares (i.e. I-355).	Accomplished. Based on Tollway Authority criteria provided to staff in spring 2009, Lemont would not qualify to receive signage at this time. To receive signage as a "recreational and cultural interest traffic generator" an attraction must demonstrate 200,000 annual attendees, 50% of which must come from more than 10 miles away. To receive signage as a "point of interest" an attraction must demonstrate 150,000 annual attendees, 50% of which must come from more than 10 miles away. Currently, no attendance figures are kept for the Heritage Quarries Recreation Area or Village festivals such as Heritage Fest. Even if figures were tracked, the attendance likely does not meet the minimum qualifications at this time.
Improve non-motorized access to downtown Lemont. Work toward an improved link between the Centennial Trail and downtown.	Continuing Effort. Staff has held preliminary meetings with the National Park Service and other regional bicycle and trail organizations to discuss improved connections between the I&M Canal Trail and other regional trails. In 2010 department staff applied for an ITEP grant to improve the connection between the I&M Canal Trail and the Centennial Trail; the application was not approved. Department staff is currently working with the Village Engineer to apply for CMAQ funding to accomplish this connection. Department staff recently received Model Communities grant funding to create a new non-motorized transportation plan for the entire Village, including access to downtown.

GOAL: Make Downtown Lemont More Visitor-Friendly (cont'd)

Recommended Actions	Status
<p>Promote Lemont within the region. Coordinate with other local organizations in support of marketing efforts that benefit Lemont. Seek out low-cost strategies to enhance regional awareness of downtown Lemont, local special events, and recreational opportunities.</p>	<p>Continuing Effort. Accomplishments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gozaic.com. In cooperation with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Lemont is a part of a new national heritage travel website, www.gozaic.com. As a partner destination, Lemont benefits from the National Trust's \$4 million annual advertising campaign for Gozaic. In addition, the website provides a professional framework through which staff can promote Lemont within the region, and locally. Downtown Lemont is currently featured on Gozaic's main "Explore" page as a downtown with great public art. Department staff continues to work with downtown businesses and the Lemont Historical Society to ensure that information on Lemont's page is up to date and complete.• The 3/50 Project. The 3/50 Project is a free promotional campaign to encourage people to shop locally. The Village has advanced this promotion through the 2010 State of the Village Address, the Village newsletter, and the printing and distribution of posters and flyers for Village Hall, the library, and Park District. Department staff also coordinated with the library to distribute 3/50 Project bookmarks for all books checked out during the 2009 holiday season. The Lemont-Reporter featured an article on Lemont's participation in the 3/50 Project and NBC 5 Chicago ran a story on Lemont and The 3/50 Project during the 2009 holiday season. The Village continues to promote The 3/50 Project through the Village website and newsletter.• Lemontevents.com. Created in coordination with the Chamber, this website was dedicated to promoting special events in the Village and provides a free place for organizations to advertise their events. The Village promoted the website through the newsletter and the Village website and the Chamber actively promotes the website until 2010. The site is no longer maintained by the Chamber and the Village became the only active participant; therefore, Village staff are exploring other options to provide a community calendar of local events.

GOAL: Review the Facade Improvement Grant Program

Recommended Actions	Status
The Community Development Department should review the goals of the façade improvement grant program. The Village may want to re-evaluate eligibility requirements and/or program goals.	Accomplished. The grant goals were very broadly defined and provided little guidance as to whether a proposed project should be eligible for funding. They provided no guidance as to prioritization of competing projects. When the grant program was re-established in 2010, the grant program was rewritten to more clearly state the program goals and provide criteria for prioritizing grant applications.
Examine sites that are eligible for participation in the program. Evaluate how many sites have already participated and how many eligible sites remain that could benefit from façade improvements. Target promotion of the façade improvement grant program to those sites.	Partially Accomplished. A thorough examination of all previous grant expenditures was conducted. However, no analysis was completed regarding future eligible sites. Targeted promotion has not occurred, but department staff has used several general forums to promote the grant program to all downtown property owners and businesses.
Consider targeting grant expenditures on one of the downtown gateway areas identified in Lemont Station Area Plan.	Accomplished. Since the grant program has been reinstated, grant applications have not exceeded grant funds available; therefore, no targeting of funds has been deemed necessary.
Develop a flyer/brochure to promote the façade improvement grant program.	Accomplished. The facade improvement grant program brochure is available on the Village website and at Village Hall.

GOAL: Pursue Grants to Fund Downtown & Economic Development Initiatives

Recommended Actions	Status
Continue to research grant opportunities from various sources (e.g., State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Cultural Heritage Tourism Coalition, the National Endowment for the Humanities, etc.)	Continuing Effort. Department staff continues to explore new funding sources for grants.
Pursue grants that could be used for planned Village initiatives.	Accomplished / Continuing Effort. To date, department staff has applied for grants through the following programs: Preserve America; IL Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP); IL Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Grant Program; Model Communities; and the IL Green Infrastructure Grant Program. Department staff continues to apply for grants that could benefit the downtown.
Apply to become a designated “Preserve America” community; such designation will provide positive marketing exposure for the downtown and entitle Lemont to apply for Preserve America grants.	Accomplished. The Village was officially designated as a Preserve America Community on October 7, 2009.

GOAL: Evaluate Impact of New Parking Facility & Review Downtown Parking Regulations

Recommended Actions	Status
Follow up the recent parking study with additional parking studies immediately after the parking garage opens to the public, and a few months after the parking garage has been in use.	Not accomplished. The parking study conducted in July 2008 showed that sufficient parking existed in the downtown to meet current needs. The parking garage has opened, but very little new parking demand has been generated. Given the lack of changed circumstances and the reduction in department staff during 2009, a follow up parking study has not been conducted.
Explore options for revisions to the downtown parking requirements and adopt any revisions approved by the Board.	Accomplished. No revisions to the parking requirements for new development have been proposed at this time. However, downtown parking time restrictions have been discussed and time limit signs for all downtown parking lots have been updated. A downtown employee parking permit system has been created to allow downtown employees to park on the top two levels of the parking garage without time restraints.

GOAL: Consider Measures to Prevent Large, Vacant Commercial Buildings in the Village

Recommended Actions	Status
Investigate measures that could protect the Village in the event that a large-scale retailer abandons its building (e.g. demolition bonds or a demolition fund).	Not accomplished due to limited staff availability.
Consider opportunities for re-use of abandoned retail buildings (e.g., governmental or institutional uses).	Not accomplished due to limited staff availability.
Adopt any measures that are deemed effective and desirable by the Village Board.	Not accomplished.

GOAL: Improve Coordination with the I&M Canal Corridor Association (CCA)

Recommended Actions	Status
Work with Canal Corridor Association staff to update and increase the Lemont area information on the Canal Corridor Association website.	Not Accomplished. The Canal Corridor Association is in the process of exploring new options for their website and therefore is not actively maintaining the current site.
Coordinate with Canal Corridor Association staff throughout the preparation of the Canal Corridor Plan.	Accomplished. The Village has been well represented during the development of the Corridor Management plan - several public forums have been hosted in Lemont and Lemont has two representatives on the plan Steering Committee.
Evaluate ways to make Lemont the eastern gateway to the I&M Canal corridor. Canal Corridor Association officials have agreed that Lemont would be an appropriate choice for such a gateway. While this initiative will not be completed in a year, the Village should at least examine the feasibility of various options.	Continuing Effort. Staff is evaluating several improvements to tourism content in the downtown to support the concept of Lemont as an eastern gateway to the I&M Canal. In addition, department staff are working to ensure Lemont is well represented in the Corridor Management Plan currently being developed by the CCA.
Continue discussions with the Canal Corridor Association staff regarding the possibility of having a CCA physical presence in downtown Lemont.	Not accomplished. Since the CCA recently moved its offices from Lockport to LaSalle, a physical presence in downtown Lemont seems unlikely at this time. However, staff continues to pursue this idea.
Collaborate with the Canal Corridor Association to explore heritage tourism opportunities in downtown Lemont.	Continuing Effort. Department staff continue to discuss tourism opportunities with the CCA. The CCA has expressed interest in partnering with the Lemont Historical Society to develop tours that can be marketed to charter bus groups. During summer Department staff have recently attended CCA-hosted workshops on developing podcasts and group tours.
Explore opportunities to partner with Canal Corridor Association in grant applications.	Continuing Effort. The CCA has written letters of support for several of Lemont's recent grant applications. Upon completion of the CCA's Corridor Management Plan, the Village will explore the opportunity to engage the CCA as a partner in future grant applications.