

Lombard Town Centre 2010 / 2011 Annual Report and Goals

General Lombard Town Centre Overview

Current Updates are underlined

- Have new Executive Director in place by 6/15/2010 – Update - New Director has been in place for 15 months.
- LTC will work closely with the Village to put a training program in place for the new ED. We will look to the Village for training involving outreach as well as economic development. LTC will facilitate any programs available from the National Main Street Program and bear the costs incurred for that training. *Committee: Organization and Executive* IL Main St. does not at this time have any training available as they are still in a probationary period. LTC has provided all materials to Karen Stonehouse and we feel that with her background she is relatively up to speed. Update - Status unchanged until a decision is made to continue with LTC's Main Street status.
- LTC and ECDC will facilitate formal introduction to all business and property owners, as well as key LTC and Village partners such as the Library, Park District, Historical Society, Garden Club, etc... The ED must be the new face of downtown Lombard and be viewed as accessible and accommodating. *Committee: Executive and ECDC* Karen has met with and spent time with all of the above. We feel that we have an excellent working relationship with these partners. Update - Karen and the board have made excellent strides with our above partners. Co hosted the annual Pub Crawl with the Historical Society, partnered with the Garden Club and Park District for the Lilac convention, sat on the committee for our Lilac Fest and annual Chamber golf fund raiser, partnered with the Library for Library week, and Karen was most often at the front end of the events.
- Evaluate the downtown Passport program by interviewing all businesses that participate as well as those who have not. *Committee: Promotions* Promotion is revamping this program and has spoken with the majority of the businesses for their input; additionally Karen is working with a company to discover the feasibility of a Downtown credit card that may tie into the Passport program. Update – The Passport program has re-launched and is receiving good feedback, no downtown credit card at this time it is too costly for LTC.
- Make relative changes and re-launch the Passport program. *Committee: Promotions and Board* When all is clear with the above we will plan a re-launch of the Passport program, including advertising and a kick off at a Forum Update – see above
- Establishment of a Lombard Town Centre Facebook page, create friends of LTC and drive people to our web site. *Committee: Promotions* The Facebook page was launched in the summer of 2010, and has been a good communication tool, as well as a venue to get out information. We have I believe in excess of 100 friends and I receive a report of the sites activities weekly. We have posted pictures of our events and welcomed comments. Update – LTC FB page has 200



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friends and most members and friends go to the page for events, it has been a great method to get the word out on various events along with Constant Contact.

- Upgrade LTC web site for a cleaner more informative look, create links to our partners and businesses. It needs to be very easy for those looking for the happenings in downtown to find dates, times and the activity. *Committee: Organization / Board* This project is in the planning stages with some great input from Lynne M. it should not be as cumbersome as in the past, hoping for completion or at minimum beginning changes in Jan / 2011. Readus (our web master) is also assisting. Update – We are still searching for a cost effective method of upgrading the web site or attempting to do it in house. Target is end of December 2011.
- Establish stronger working partnerships and co host events with the Library, the Park District, the Historical Society, Garden Club and others. *Committee: ER and Board* As stated prior LTC and our partners have held joint events and shared in each other's events, also sharing ideas and in some cases sitting on each other's committee's Update – mission accomplished and we are planning addition partnerships in the future.
- Renew and invigorate the quarterly newsletter, include articles from our above partners and committee chairs and co chairs E mail delivery and paper based at high traffic locations. *Committee: All and Board* Winter issue in process
- Add qualified board members (up to 4 additional) from our passionate volunteers and leaders that are currently involved, as well as looking to property owners at minimum to join committee's and look to them as potential board members. *Committee: All and Board* Belinda – Colleen – Lynn – Wayne – Walter have agreed to be nominated. Annual meeting 1/11 will host elections, re-election nominees are Kathy and Krista hopefully bringing our board to 9 sitting members. Update – All of the above have been service since the LTC annual meeting, Lynne is Organization Chair, Colleen Promotions Chair, and Wayne is the Chair for Economic Development. LTC has chosen not to pursue a Design committee until we locate a qualified Chair.
- Strengthen our 4 committees with new volunteers and additional leadership by adding co chairs. *Committee: All and Board* With new Board members we will attract new committee members, we have added strength with volunteers 27 for Spook and can draw on them for future events, added 2 interns for various tasks Update – W have strengthened our volunteer and committee base.
- Establish a recognition program for all volunteers and investigate the qualification of the Presidential Volunteerism Award for LTC volunteers. *Committee: All Presidential Award ER* Registered for the Presidential award process, waiting for approval and to begin the process. Update – This program I believe has vanished under the current administration. Organization is working a reward program for our volunteers.
- Continue the Downtown Forum and look to draw 20 – 25 per session. *Committee: All* Capones has closed on Monday's. It seems that the best thought is to utilize the old Just Be with Mr. Elliott's blessing. That plan would be to have 2 banners made announcing that as the Forum meeting place and hang in the windows 1 on St Charles Rd and 1 on N Park as well as directing folks to gain additional details on the LTC web site and LTC Facebook page Update – The

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forum has been switched to Weds evening on the second week of each month. Additionally LTC has scheduled a guest speaker that has something to offer the DT business and property owners. The attendance varies from 10 – 20 each month.

- Plan to establish two additional special events in 2010 and 2011, we feel a need to have something in early Spring and again in the Summer. Jingle Bell-Dec, Arts and Crafts-May, Spooktacular-Oct. Some ideas have been brought to the table and we hope to add one in 2010 and another in 2011. *Committee: Promotions and Organization supported by all* An Easter time event has been discussed – egg hunt etc... Possibly a late spring / summer Ladies / Mens / kids nights out to promote the downtown businesses including a sidewalk sales of sorts. Update – LTC added 3 Ladies Nights Out over the summer attendance was better than first thought, and the businesses that participated are very happy with the added foot traffic, this will continue in 2012.
- Conduct a survey that the business owners collaborate on retail driven events such as a downtown sidewalk sale possibly twice a year with suggest that our restaurants be involved by creating a special themed menu and hosting outdoor cooking as well as potential discounts for their fare based on customers total spend with our retailers during that day. These events will be for the purpose of driving business as a retail event. *Committee: Promotions driven supported by all* Planning is underway details to follow in Feb. Update – Karen has been attempting along with Promotions to cross market with some success. Sweet Streets collaborated with 20 W Liquors for a wine and chocolate gift basket. We feel this is an important method to drive DT traffic, and will continue to attempt to gain cooperation from the businesses.
- A better definition of the benefits of business membership in LTC. Survey all businesses not just our members to better understand how we may enhance and communicate these benefits. *Committee: Organization* This topic has been discussed on many occasions at many BOD meetings, the best method probably is to take a page from the DuPage County Visitors benefit statement and realign that to conform to LTC. Re-launch with the Passport program Update – LTC created a completely new membership brochure and application along with the branding from the DT plan. Response has been tremendous for the new look and feel.
- Formalize a static evaluation format for all events from all committees, report to the board and offer suggestion for improvements. *Committee: Board* We have surveyed the businesses for the Spooktacular but this process needs to be formalized. Due date end of 1/2011. Update – We have tried a few formats however getting a response from more than 20% has been difficult – work in process
- Committee chairs to better track all volunteer hours worked, this is a must for recognition. *Committee: All* An electronic form needs to be completed, when we receive approval from the Presidential Recognition Forum they will provide all materials needed. Looking at a possible FTP site to drop in an excel time sheet.
- Establish a report in Excel for reporting quarterly for all LTC goals and reviewed by the board. Automate as much of the report as possible. *Committee: Organization* This needs to be a priority will be addressed at the Dec board meeting Update – Reestablishing a new electronic

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format. A new ED weekly allocation of hours sheet was created by Karen and is working very well.

- Investigate grant possibilities to produce a downtown brochure that outlines all businesses, historical information and annual events. *Committee: ER* Karen is taking the lead with this, but has hit some financial roadblocks w/ the State Update – There is no funding available LTC did recreate our literature and member apps.
- Investigate marketing companies cost (possible grant) to produce a promotion piece on the downtown via video or inclusion in hotel / motel materials or promotional TV channel. *Committee: promotion and Organization* Looks to be cost prohibitive as of 12/10, I do not believe this is a possibility at this juncture unless we can obtain a grant. Update – LTC is partnering with the Library for a 5 minute promotional piece on their video for local cable. This will run once per month and there is no cost involved.

Promotion Committee Goals

Chair, Colleen

- Increasing the volunteer base by 20% to better manage events. Promotions has built a solid base of single event volunteers as well as by our board growing to 9 we have a number of new avenues that can be pursued. Update – LTC currently has enough volunteers however additional committee members would be a great benefit.
- Develop a Facebook page for LTC that informs and drives patrons to our web site. See prior overall LTC goal Update – see FB on overall goals.
- Introduce a new Ladies Night Out event(s) during the summer. This is in the Promotion planning stage, after elections this will be headed by a Promotions co chair to be named Update – Elsa Roberts chair Trich B co chair. Event has been a good success.
- Work closely with the Organization Committee in assisting with promoting their fundraising events. Working well Update –These 2 teams work together on almost every event as well as memberships
- Tightening up and expansion of Spooktacular, closing St Charles Rd during the event adding vendors and entertainment venues. Successfully completed and plans will be under way for 2011 in March. Update – Actually we are pairing back this event due to lack of funding and sponsors. 2011 is worse economically than anyone perceived. St Charles will not be closed however N and S Park will, we will also hold the event on Sunday to accommodate a couple businesses that had a hard time with Saturday last year.
- Gain feedback from all businesses and tally some members on the effectiveness of the Passport program. Evaluate with the Board and re-launch the program. Completed Update – see above
- Expand the committee to 8 effective people to better distribute the work load. Promotions currently has 4 active members that have been stressed to carry the workload, however some of the assistance has come from Organization as these two committees work hand and hand. Still

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need additional members. Update – We never have enough committee members however it has been better.

- Look into any grant programs that may be used to promote the downtown. Karen is heading this up Update – They seem to pop up on occasion and Karen applies when it makes sense however we have found that we have tremendous competition and it is very difficult.
- Appoint Co-Chairs for all events This has been working well for some events but all Chairs need to really prepare for all events and projects better in this area Update – LTC has had a co chair for every event and activity since May.

Organization Committee Goals Chair, Lynne

- Gain a total of 10,000 in fund raising for 2010. New estimate including wine dinner 6000.00 Update – Including an anticipated sold out wine dinner an est. of probably 4500.00 will have been raised. This is something that has had the board attention as we plan 2012 LTC needs additional funds to survive and expand
- Expand the wine dinner and increase attendance to 70 from 35 last year, offer a better selection of pairings during dinner. 68 confirmed as of 11/29 – completed great result Update - See above
- Add a golf outing fund raising event in August 2010, to be held at Western Acers Golf Course Completed went very well for our first outing, and expanding into 2011 looks good work plan beginning in Feb 2011 Update – 2011 golf out had to canceled due to a lack of golfers that registered. We had sponsors however the feedback on the golfers was that we needed to change the venue, and hold it earlier. We will make changes for 2012 and look to late May to hold the event
- Continue with 2nd fund raising events Cut-a-Thon, Swap Meet, and Wine Dinner. Completed Update – Cut-a-Thon and the Swap we not able to be held in 2011. The wine dinner is on course and again should be sold out again. We will look to bring back an auto show with a swap element and hope to reestablish the Cut-a-Thon
- Create membership drive by hosting a get together at current member homes each month drive membership by promoting the Passport program and raising awareness of LTC to our residents in close proximity to the member's homes. Completed re-engage in Jan 2011 Update – LTC is looking at various ways to create a membership buzz and has had some success at the Farmers Market weekly, Cruise Nights and other face to face engagements
- Appoint Co-Chairs for all events. Update - Completed

Design Committee Goals Committee Lead Ken Gallt

Based on the Design Committee's losing Tom Knapp in late 2009 we have been without a qualified leader until April 2010. Ken has shown much interest in LTC and has is a Landscape Engineer by profession. We welcome his leadership in our Design Committee, however, Design's goals are currently being established therefore we have very few. Ken has had some personal issues and has not been able

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to attend. LTC does not have a lead for this committee, as no one has any background that would be necessary to lead a group dedicated to design. Update – no change

Economic Restructuring Committee Goals

Committee Chair Wayne Kankovsky

Wayne has only led this committee for a few months and this committee will add goals by June 2010, but only goals with a reasonable success factor.

- Work closely with Design and the Village for our new entrance signs. Now a part of the Downtown Plan Update – LTC will support the DT Plan
- Re-launch our quarterly business education series held in Capone's banquet room on the lower level. Probable topics include 1) Who what and where in the Village of Lombard, 2) Educational programs at COD, 3) How to increase sales by driving your web site, 4) How secure is your network? Create a small ad-hoc committee, Dan and Karen, working on the first in the series for Feb 2011 – May 2011 – August 2011 and November 2011 Update – LTC hosts a monthly education at our forums, additionally we host various educational opportunities throughout the year for business and property owners
- Investigation and possible plan to bring Wi Fi to downtown. Installation in December the Wi Fi is functional and being tested for expansion Update – about 50% of DT Lombard has Wi Fi
- Survey of business owners and their concerns regarding our downtown opportunities. Working Colleen has also been involved as Promo Chair Update – we have hosted various meetings asking for opinions and suggestions, handed out a couple of surveys.

Executive Director

This new PT position will be officially employed by Lombard Town Centre but will be reporting to the Director of Community Development with a dotted line to the LTC President.

The primary purpose of this position is to promote economic development activities, keep the pulse on downtown, and fill vacant tenant spaces within downtown Lombard by understanding and utilizing Lombard development programs.

The essential functions of the position are recruitment of new business, retention and expansion of our current business base, develop and conduct on-going public awareness to enhance application of downtown Lombard.

Become familiar and communicate regularly with all businesses that may be or become interested in the various grant programs available.

Assist individual tenants and property owners as needed with improvement projects, and act as a liaison to the Village.

Monitor the economic development and track the progress of the downtown. This will be done by developing files that contain available properties, base rent, and appetite of the property owners to bring in new businesses and fill vacancies. These files will include photos, building files, documentation of any physical changes, recruiting efforts, follow up on those efforts, tours that have taken place, the

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results and next steps of those tours, and statistics on job creation and potential sales tax that would be generated.

Represent LTC with presence at various Village functions as well as downtown grand openings and open houses.

Be present at various LTC and Village meetings.

This position should be filled with the following competencies.

Minimum of a bachelor's degree or experience in one or more of the following: Main Street programs, economics, finance, public relations, urban planning, business administration, commercial real estate, retailing, architecture, and small business development. Previous experience in the aforementioned areas is highly desirable.

The ED must be sensitive to economic development issues and understand the issues confronting the downtown businesses, property owners, public agencies and community organizations.

Additionally the ED must be: Entrepreneurial, energetic, imaginative, well organized, capable of performing independently, manage change very well, as well as possess excellent verbal communication and written skills. Project management skills are also desirable.

Finally, proficiency in Microsoft Office, Excel, Power Point, Quick Books, Constant Contact and other programs are desired. Web site management is a plus.

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RETENTION

Retention activities have been an ongoing priority. Increasing traffic to existing businesses will encourage positive “buzz” in the Downtown and attract additional interest from potential new tenants.

Retention activities have included regular visits to current businesses to listen to their concerns and needs, and assist them in addressing improvement projects at their locations. LTC Staff have assisted with landlord-tenant communication, grant program questions, publication of store specials and news, and making all businesses an active part of the various LTC and partner events. An example is the recent partnership with the Historical Society to hold a very successful pub crawl, which brought over 80 people to 5 venues in the Downtown area, and illustrated a critical mass of food and beverage options for a complete night on the town. The event also raised funds for the two organizations.

Three Ladies Night Out events this summer have also gotten great reviews from participants, who enjoyed specials and treats at over a dozen downtown businesses. Efforts are underway to enlarge the event by expanding advertising and media coverage.

A new volunteer at LTC is helping Staff to produce marketing materials for Small Business Saturday, reminding community members to Shop Local and renewing their knowledge of the products and services they can find in their own Downtown.

FILLING VACANCIES

Property readiness has been an issue, with some vacant spaces in need of improvement before they can be rented. Suggestions have been made to several property representatives as to small improvements they can make to increase property appeal. Cleaning, minor maintenance, replacing deteriorated fixtures, renewing utility connections, and advertising certain attractive aspects of properties are some examples that LTC Staff have encouraged.

Recent searches by LTC Staff and Volunteers have revealed that while we can cultivate a list of possibilities for businesses (mostly those that exist in other communities and may be encouraged to open an additional location in Downtown Lombard) and get recruitment materials out to them, most are not in a position to expand into another/new location.

Despite the somewhat disappointing results of searches for new businesses, a new photographer has recently signed a lease for 5 South Park Avenue, where he plans to make façade improvements that will beautify the streetscape. Every vacant space filled adds interest to the area, brings new customers Downtown, and allows property owners to increase revenue that they can use to make other property upgrades as needed.

Staff are also working with two other interested parties, both currently working on getting estimates for property improvements, for two potential new businesses on St. Charles Road. If they come to fruition, the two businesses would add nearly 10,000 square feet of occupied, traffic-producing space to the business mix.

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MEMBERSHIP and BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP

LTC's Organization Committee has been hard at work and has sent a series of membership renewal letters, as well as sending welcome materials to new and renewing members. As many renewals are currently pending, total membership continues to hover in the 40's. However, the recent revival of the Downtown Passport Card Program, which offers great incentives for new members to join and receive discounts at many Downtown businesses, holds great promise for increasing total membership. The focus at this point is getting the word out about the Passport Card.

To that end, a new 5-minute local cable TV spot has been created, highlighting the variety of existing businesses in the Downtown and showing the passport card in use. We are seeking to use additional venues to get the word out about existing businesses, the passport card, and the mission of LTC.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT FOR BUSINESS OUTREACH

As noted above under "Recruitment," outreach to new businesses has been a tough sell of late. While the economy struggles, we continue to search for new tenants, but are also spending time on items that should make the outreach process easier when conditions start to bounce back. These include Downtown promotional materials, which have been in the works but require funding for printing and distribution – highlighting the attractive demographics and traffic counts that characterize Downtown Lombard; and assisting the Village Staff with undertaking infrastructure improvements such as street furniture replacement.

Using the results of several field visits, a list is being populated with details (mailing address, etc.) for a recruitment campaign to reach more broadly toward prospective businesses. In addition, a new 5-minute cable TV spot will highlight available properties, in the style of the real estate house videos, giving viewers an easy way to find out more about the opportunities to locate their businesses Downtown.