



MEMORANDUM

TO: David A. Hulseberg, Village Manager

FROM: William J. Heniff, AICP, Director of Community Development

DATE: January 21, 2009

SUBJECT: **Downtown Lombard Market Analysis**

BACKGROUND

On October 15, 2009, the Village Board considered Houseal Lavigne's Downtown Lombard Market Analysis report. At that meeting, the Village Board referred the report to the Economic and Community Development Committee (ECDC) for their review and recommendation.

ECDC COMMENTS

The ECDC reviewed the Downtown Lombard Market Analysis report at their November 4, 2009 and December 2, 2009 meetings. The ECDC approved the report and its findings and recommendations. Additionally, the ECDC offered the following comments:

1. The Village should explore having a first right of refusal to purchase a property that receives a large grant amount (i.e. forgivable loan).
2. In addition to Cruise Nights, Lilac Time, etc, the Village should consider coming up with additional special events to bring people into the downtown.
3. Members suggested that the Village should explore other alternative uses for some of the buildings, especially for 2nd floor space. Some examples included; small culinary school, continuing education classes (Learning Annex) etc.
4. Marketing materials used for the available properties should identify any recent upgrades to the building, especially if Village grant funds were used.
5. The Village and the LTC should work with landlords that have vacant tenant spaces to see if they would be interested in short term leases to accommodate seasonal (Halloween Stores) or temporary uses. The temporary uses could include larger retail chains located elsewhere that may want a small storefront as a way to "test" the downtown Lombard market before committing to a long term lease.
6. The ECDC members noted the need for destination-oriented uses in the downtown. The Village should consider a public space for the 101 S Main site.

An example given was a small band shell and plaza for weekly music events. They also encouraged some small storefronts surrounding the plaza. Members noted that the market analysis identified that the downtown area has a maturing population and these types of uses and events could cater well to that age group. Another example given was the ice paved trail in Downtown Elkhart, Indiana for ice skating.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

As outlined in the Downtown Strategy Plan Framework approved in June, 2009, staff intends to use the findings of the market study to develop a marketing strategy to assist with our business retention and recruitment efforts. Furthermore, the market study identified a number of opportunity sites including the vacant, Village-owned properties as well as potential private property assemblages. Staff proposes that a range of development plans be created for these opportunity sites that represent a variety of public and private investment opportunities.

To assist in finalizing the downtown planning efforts and achieve the goals outlined in the Downtown Strategy Plan, the Village of Lombard has been approved for a RTA Community Planning Grant. The grant will cover up to 80% of the costs, not to exceed \$125,000, for planning projects that benefit both the local community and the RTA transit system. Building upon the previous studies conducted by the Village, the grant will allow us to complete the following tasks:

1. **Development Concept Plans:** For Village-owned properties as well as potential private property assemblages, concept plans will be created that include a minimum, mid, and maximum approach for selected sites. Data for each scenario will include building massing, design, costs, TIF impacts and land use.
2. **East St. Charles Road Assessment and Recommendations:** Building on the recommendations and character of the rest of the downtown area and putting a focus on the transit amenities of the area, this task will involve the creation of an existing conditions assessment and recommendation for future land uses and zoning for the St. Charles Road TIF 1 West area.
3. **Parking, Circulation, and Access Plan:** This part of the plan will include an analysis of all parking needs (commuter, employee, and customer), address vehicular/pedestrian/bicycle circulation issues, address staging areas for the circulator and develop strategies to connect the study area with the Illinois Prairie Path and Great Western Trail.
4. **Streetscape, Façade, and Signage Plan:** Building on the recommendation of the Downtown Landscape Enhancement Recommendation, the consultant will develop a comprehensive streetscape plan including ornamental elements, way finding signage, and aesthetic improvements to the underpass.

5. **Marketing Strategy**: Create a marketing strategy for the downtown using the data from the Market Study. This marketing strategy will include a defined theme designed to best promote the assets of the downtown as well as the creation of promotional materials and templates to be used for business recruitment to assist the Village and downtown organizations.

ACTION REQUESTED

Please place this item on the January 21, 2010 Village Board agenda. Staff recommends that the Village Board review the comments from the ECDC and recommends that the Corporate Authorities approve the Downtown Lombard Market Analysis report. Staff also seeks Village Board comments with regard to the final tasks to be completed as part of the RTA Community Planning Grant.