



DOWNTOWN & SUBAREA PLANNING

RELEVANT PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Communities are often characterized by smaller subareas that each has its own identity, history, assets, issues, opportunities, and stakeholders. A downtown is a particular subarea known for its distinct attributes that contribute to the identity of the overall community. My project experience includes a variety of downtown and subarea plans that generally share the same objective: improve the physical, social, economic, and recreational connections and opportunities offered by the subarea to the overall community.

In addition to the projects listed to the right, I have completed several other subarea plans as part of a larger project, such as a comprehensive plan or transit oriented development (TOD) study.

DOWNTOWN PLANS

- Canton Downtown Streetscape Master Plan | CANTON, IL
- Fox River Grove Downtown Redevelopment Plan | FOX RIVER GROVE, IL
- Highwood Downtown Project Guidebook | HIGHWOOD, IL
- Lake Zurich Downtown Redevelopment Strategy Plan | LAKE ZURICH, IL
- Northbrook Downtown Area Plan | NORTHBROOK, IL
- Thornton Downtown Plan | THORNTON, IL
- Western Springs Downtown Plan | WESTERN SPRINGS, IL

SUBAREA PLANS

- Central Main Street Redevelopment Plan | WEST CHICAGO, IL
- Fox River Corridor Plan | KENDALL COUNTY, IL
- Industrial Lane Redevelopment Plan | WHEELING, IL
- Lake Villa Redevelopment Strategy | LAKE VILLA, IL
- Sugar Grove Main Street Plan | SUGAR GROVE, IL
- Tolentine Estates Architectural Pattern Book | OLYMPIA FIELDS, IL

NOTE: Unless noted otherwise, all projects were completed by Todd Vanadilok while with his previous employer, Teska Associates, Inc. All graphics and text shown below were created and written by Todd. Projects completed by Egret+Ox Planning, LLC are denoted with a blue tag (🏷️).



SHARED STREET CONCEPT

Assess the potential to enhance certain downtown streets using the "shared street" concept to accommodate cars, pedestrians, and bicycles.

The shared street concept should be explored for Webster Avenue and Clay Avenue on the east side of the railroad, as well as North Avenue on the west side. Creating a shared street along Webster Avenue and Clay Avenue helps connect pedestrians and bicycles from the McClary Path westward to the core downtown area. They also offer the potential to help activate the far eastern edge of the downtown area, particularly along Lake View Avenue. On the west side of the tracks, creating a shared street concept along North Avenue would have the benefit of traversing past Events Park and opening up a view corridor eastward towards the Metra station (see page 90) for a concept design for this area.

RECOMMENDATION

MAJOR THEMES GUIDING THE HIGHWOOD DOWNTOWN TOD PLAN

1	Ensure decisions about downtown expansion and redevelopment are tied to market support and financial viability	2	Create zoning that allows more by-right uses rather than variances or special uses	3	Support the future of downtown by its ability to cater to and attract Gen Y/millennials (ages 20-39)
4	Continue to expand Downtown Highwood's brand as a food destination—everything food	5	Expand events during off-peak times by exploring flexible event structures	6	Build on local resources to expand marketing and brand message
7	Explore ways to differentiate Downtown's identity as a special district within the city	8	Improve the pedestrian and bicyclist experience, regarding them as the primary user of downtown	9	Ensure better integration of the Metra station with the downtown core area
10	Provide a coordinated parking management plan to maximize existing resources (both public and private)	11	Maintain the presence of civic uses in the downtown area (e.g., City hall, library, community center, etc)	12	Seek regional cooperation to further enhance Highwood's identity and ability to expand market opportunities



Signage DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design Intent

Signs serve as guides for people to recognize where they are and where they want to go. Signs also serve as promotional tools, whether for local organizations to promote community events or businesses to promote their shops, goods, and services. Directional signage or promotional signage are both core elements of helping a downtown district function efficiently with minimal difficulties and confusion. Encouraging high quality signage placed in optimal locations will go a long way to help the Village strengthen the identity of Downtown Northbrook and its sense of place.

The following signage design guidelines will enable the Village to encourage the design and installation of signs that help enhance the downtown streetscape while achieving their intended purposes to promote the community and businesses and help people navigate through Downtown Northbrook.

These guidelines are also supplemented by the downtown gateway signage design provided in Section 4.

1	Provide signage that is scaled appropriately to the site and building, ensuring compatibility and design at a pedestrian scale while still maintaining adequate visibility for motorists.	5	Add landscaping around the base of signs to enhance its physical appearance and provide screening of utilities such as light enclosures, electrical boxes, sign base materials, etc.	6	Continue supporting the banner program on light poles to promote local businesses and community activities; banners can be a supplemental element of a wayfinding signage program (SEE #13).
3	Utilize awnings to add a supplemental design element to signs and provide shade relief for window displays (and covered areas for pedestrians during inclement weather).	7	Build upon existing design elements, such as the design of existing downtown streetscape columns (e.g. brick piers, planters, black iron fencing, etc. SEE #7 ABOVE LEFT) and existing Village entry signs (e.g. green and yellow sign colors, historic elements, clean signage, etc. SEE #8 ABOVE RIGHT), when designing new downtown signage, particularly those created by the Village (SEE THE PUBLIC STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS PLAN IN SECTION 4 FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS).	8	