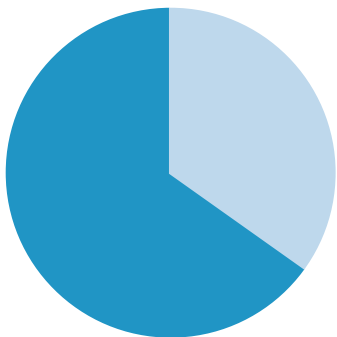




DuPage Forest Preserve Warrenville Grove Bridge



Report 1



Resident
Strategic Plan
Input Report

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Introduction

The overall goal of the Resident Strategic Plan Input Report is to combine feedback from the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogue meetings and 2013 Community Survey in a manner that establishes the foundation for a new City of Warrenville Strategic/Economic Development Plan. The new Strategic/Economic Development Plan will guide the direction of City services and polices for the next five years.

In the summer of 2012, the City conducted Neighborhood Dialogue meetings with groups of residents from each of the City's four Wards. The Neighborhood Dialogue Results Report was presented to the public and City Council on June 25, 2012. A brief summary of the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogue process and the input collected during it is provided in Appendix A. The full report is available for review on the City's website under Forms & Documents.*

In August of 2013, the City issued its second Community Survey. The results of the Community Survey were presented at the December 9, 2013, Public Safety Committee meeting. A brief summary of the survey process and the resident input received from it is provided in Appendix B.*

The specific objectives this report aims to accomplish include:

- Identify the most common themes and priorities reflected in resident feedback received during the City's two most recent outreach initiatives; and
- Define preliminary goal statements based on the prevailing priorities.



* The complete 2012 Neighborhood Dialogue Report and October 2013 Warrenville Community Survey Report are both available on the City's website under 'Forms & Documents'.

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Identifying Common Themes and Shared Priorities

Theme refers to the subject of a talk, a piece of writing, a person's thoughts, or an exhibition; a topic. When reviewing the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogue meetings and the 2013 Community Survey, common themes – or subjects – emerged.

- ▶ Both citizen outreach initiatives demonstrated that the advantages to living in Warrenville centered on maintaining the natural setting/open spaces as well as its sound fiscal management.
- ▶ Shared priorities for the future included encouraging thoughtful, planned, and environmentally responsible economic development, maintaining open space, continued sound fiscal management - which included low taxes - reducing flooding, coordinated maintenance and targeted upgrade of City infrastructure assets, and comprehensive and proactive policing.

A more detailed assessment of the six most prominent areas of resident interest and concern, or 'Topics of Interest', as listed at right, follows. While some of these may be specific areas of focus in the final Strategic/Economic Development Plan, others may become key points in broader areas.

TOPICS OF INTEREST

- 1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- 2 OPEN SPACE
- 3 FINANCES
- 4 FLOODING & STORMWATER
- 5 INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES
- 6 SAFETY



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TOPIC 1

Based on feedback collected from the Neighborhood Dialogues and 2013 Community Survey, Economic Development is the #1 Topic of Interest.

From the residents' perspective, this area needs to be the City's top priority. How to address economic development varies from respondent to respondent. While some just indicated in general that development must be a priority, others had very specific ideas. From a broad overview, what appears most often is a desired focus on development along the Route 59 corridor and an increase in restaurants and shopping venues for residents.

Based on the Neighborhood Dialogues, development along Route 59 and creating gathering places were listed as the top overall priorities. Highlighted at right are the specific priorities emphasized by each of the four wards.

In the Community Survey, economic development was also ranked as the biggest concern related to living in Warrenville including the lack of retail shopping options (67.4%) and restaurants (59.6%). Land use planning of currently undeveloped areas was identified as a service in which residents were not satisfied (43.2% satisfaction level).

▶ **When asked specifically about priorities for land use:**

- 73% wanted the City to encourage environmentally responsible development.
- 71.5% wanted the City to maximize the benefits and minimize the negative impacts associated with new development.
- 70.9% wanted the City to increase job opportunities
- Similar to the Neighborhood Dialogues, Rt. 59 development and redevelopment, along with new restaurants were top priorities.

▶ **When asked what business they would patronize more if Warrenville had them:**

- 69.9% identified new restaurants
- 53.2% identified building supplies/home goods stores
- Taking a broader look at the comments, it was clear that respondents would also like to see more restaurants and grocery stores in Warrenville. There were 188 comments for additional grocery stores and 208 for more restaurants.



PRIORITIES BY WARD BASED ON NEIGHBORHOOD DIALOGUES

WARD 1

"We desire thoughtful planning and new development, especially in the Rt. 59 corridor."

WARD 2

"We desire redevelopment along Rt. 59 that includes an upscale gathering place near Batavia Rd."

WARD 3

"We desire mixed use downtown development."

WARD 4

"We desire redevelopment of vacant properties and new gathering places"



OPEN SPACE + ENVIRONMENT

TOPIC 2

Warrenville has a reputation of placing high value on its natural setting and outdoor recreational amenities; the environment is important to residents.

In the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogues, Ward 1 participants felt it was important to preserve the City's "rural" character, Ward 3 participants wanted the City to encourage and maintain "environmental awareness," and Ward 4 participants wanted to ensure that open spaces were maintained.

While the Community Survey did not identify these elements as priorities, almost all participating residents identified similar items, including the community's natural setting (98%), open spaces (91.7%), and environmental quality (85.7%), among the most highly rated advantages to living in Warrenville.

Warrenville Grove Bridge, DuPage Forest Preserve District



Illinois Prairie Path



The Warrenville Grove Bridge, DuPage Forest Preserve District allows for pedestrian and bicycle crossing of the West Branch of the DuPage River.

Warrenville is surrounded by Dupage County Forest Preserves, including Blackwell, Warrenville Grove, and Herrick Lake. Multiple trails and paths run through the City for everyone to use, including the nationally recognized Illinois Prairie Path.



ADVANTAGES TO LIVING IN WARRENVILLE BASED ON COMMUNITY SURVEY

98%
Natural Setting

92%
Open Spaces

86%
Environmental Quality



CITY FINANCES

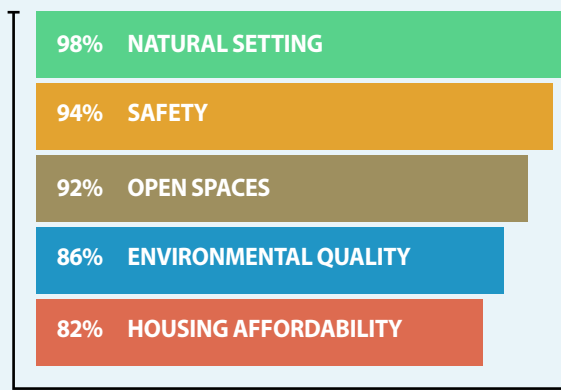
TOPIC 3

According to the 2013 Community Survey, the cost of living and affordability of housing were both viewed as advantages to living in Warrentville.

In the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogues*, sound fiscal management emerged as a high priority for each ward. Ward 1 participants noted that the City should live within its means. Ward 2 participants wanted the City to maintain no debt. Ward 3 participants asked that the City maintain its financial stability and balanced budget. Finally, Ward 4 participants desired continued financial management.

Comparing these priorities against the priorities of the 2013 Community Survey*, 84 comments from 325 completed surveys noted decreasing taxes/fees as the second highest priority for the City in the next three years. However, respondents also noted that Warrentville's cost of living (80.4%) and housing affordability (81.8%) were both advantages to living in Warrentville. So there seemed to be acknowledgement that the City engages in sound fiscal management coupled with a desire to maintain that, particularly so it will lead to decreasing taxes.

► What Do Residents Like MOST About Living in Warrentville?



SOURCE: 2013 Community Survey

* Note that in either effort, there was no explanation or distinction provided to participants about taxes, i.e. differentiation between City and other taxing bodies' tax rates or distinction between income tax vs. property tax.



FLOODING + STORMWATER

TOPIC 4

According to the 2013 Community Survey, Warrenville residents would like the City to address issues related to flooding and stormwater while improving flood mitigation and protection.

Even though flooding or stormwater related issues were not identified as priorities in the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogues, a high percentage (75.4%) of the 2013 Community Survey respondents felt addressing these issues should be a priority for the City. In addition, improving flood mitigation/protection was one of the few items that a majority (68.8%) of Warrenville residents indicated they would like to see the City address even if it meant raising taxes and fees.

- ▶ **76% identified flooding and stormwater related issues as a priority.**
- ▶ **69% indicated that they would like flood mitigation / protection improved.**

SOURCE: 2013 Community Survey

Rendering of River Post Modification

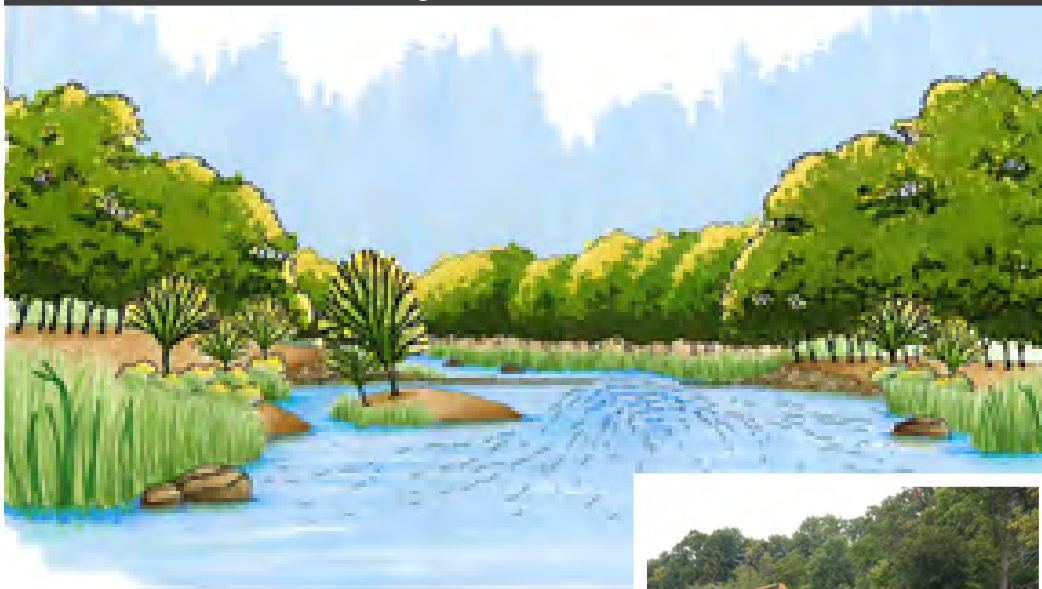


PHOTO CREDIT: Forest Preserve District of DuPage County



Warrenville Grove Dam Modification



CITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

TOPIC 5

According to the 2013 Community Survey, Warrenville residents would like the City to improve infrastructure, including trails and paths, as well as the quality of water, which is believed to be an issue.

Overall, resident input received through the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogues and the 2013 Community Survey placed a high value on the community's existing trail and path system with a desire to improve the safety and connectivity of the area's sidewalk, trail, and bike network. Citizens also rated their satisfaction level relatively high regarding the City's ongoing maintenance of the community's various infrastructure assets (streets, sidewalks, streetlights, sewer and water system improvements, etc.) and placed a high priority on continued infrastructure maintenance. Finally, there was a desire to improve the quality of the City's municipal water system (as detailed below).

In the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogues, participants both Wards 2 and 3 identified improving the safety and expanding the network of bike paths and sidewalks as priority. Almost all (95.9%) of the residents who participated in the Community Survey identified trail/paths among the most highly rated advantages to living in Warrenville. In addition, improving pedestrian/bicycle connections and safety was one of the few infrastructure improvements that more than 50% of survey respondents felt would justify an increase in City taxes or fees.

Even though more than three-quarters of the Community Survey respondents indicated they were satisfied with street and parkway maintenance in the City, infrastructure maintenance was still prominently identified among the most important issues for the City to address in the next three years. "Well-maintained infrastructure" was also identified as one of Ward 2 residents' top priorities during the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogues.

While the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogues did not highlight the City's water quality as an issue, the 2013 Community Survey feedback indicated that the "quality" of the City's municipal water continues to be a concern among residents. While almost 70% indicated that they were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the City's water supply more than 72.5% of the respondents indicated they would like to see water quality improved even if it meant increased taxes or fees. At least twenty of the written comments received indicated that the City should make it a priority to improve the quality - including reducing hardness - of the City's water.

- ▶ **Although 70% of survey respondents indicated they were satisfied/somewhat satisfied with City's water supply, 73% indicated they would like to see water quality improved.**

SOURCE: 2013 Community Survey

P PUBLIC SAFETY
TOPIC 6

According to the 2013 Community Survey, Warrenville residents feel safe and enjoy living in Warrenville for that reason but would like the City to continue efforts to address gang and drug activity.

In the 2012 Neighborhood Dialogues, public safety services were identified among some of the participants. Ward 1 participants desired more neighborhood policing and individuals from Ward 4 wanted cooperative and proactive policing to maintain a safe community. The 2013 Community Survey identified safety as an advantage (94.4%) in the community, but it identified public safety as an important issue as well. Respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay increased taxes and fees if it meant more aggressively addressing a perception of gang and drug activity (88.1%).

Award-Winning 'National Night Out' Event



The 'Dog Demonstration' is one of many activities for families to watch and take part in at the award-winning 'National Night Out' event hosted annually during summer months by the Warrenville Police Department. Featured in this picture are Officer Tom Bellinger and Bandit.

Warrenville Police Bike Patrol Program



Warrenville police officer Teresa McBride, right, and Mayor David Brummel commemorating the 2013 start of Warrenville's fledgling police bike patrol program, wherein officers spend several hours a week patrolling parks, paths and other hard-to-reach places in Warrenville.

PHOTO CREDIT: The Daily Herald

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Preliminary Goal Statements Based on Prevailing Priorities

This Resident Strategic Plan Input Report is the first interim report for the City Council during the Strategic/Economic Development planning process. This interim report is the initial step in formulating goal statements based on what the resident outreach initiatives identified as priorities. However, it is important to note that these goal statements will evolve as outreach activities with specialized stakeholder, business, and community groups take place, as well as meetings with the City Council members themselves.

GOAL 1

Economic Development

Enhance the City's tax base, increase local shopping and dining opportunities, expand the City's labor market, and create attractive gathering places by:

- actively planning for and aggressively encouraging well designed and environmentally responsible commercial development in the Route 59 corridor;
- mixed use redevelopment in the Old Town/Civic Center; and
- rehabilitation, improvement, and occupancy of older vacant commercial properties throughout the community.

GOAL 2

City Finances

Uphold the City's record of fiscal conservatism by adopting a balanced budget overall and at the fund level, ensuring a relatively low cost of living for Warrenville residents, incurring little to no debt, and maintaining a diversified revenue stream.

PRELIMINARY GOAL STATEMENTS

CONTINUED

GOAL 3



Open Space and Environment

Preserve and protect the natural features, open space, and wooded areas that contribute significantly to the City's overall character, setting, and uniqueness, and seek opportunities to showcase, access, and promote these components as important and valuable community assets.

GOAL 4



Flooding and Stormwater

Improve flood protection and reduce residential and business flooding in the West Branch of the DuPage River Watershed, require environmentally responsible development that effectively controls the volume and improves the quality of stormwater runoff, and address neighborhood drainage issues.

GOAL 5



City Infrastructure and Utilities

Repair, maintain, replace, and strategically upgrade the City's physical infrastructure assets in a well planned, coordinated, and timely manner that is fiscally responsible, enhances public safety and supports increased private property values.

GOAL 6



Public Safety

Provide excellent, proactive, public safety service throughout the community, focusing on addressing the perception of gang activity and drug use.

Conclusion

The Resident Strategic Plan Input Report is the City's first step in assessing the community's thoughts and desires regarding Warrenville's future, particularly in regards to economic development. The purpose of this interim report is to identify the most common themes and priorities reflected in the resident feedback received during the City's two most recent resident outreach initiatives. Secondly, the report articulates preliminary goal statements based on these prevailing priorities.

- ▶ This report identified six common themes and priorities and developed goal statements accordingly. These goal statements will evolve as additional feedback is analyzed. Ultimately, this report will be incorporated into the final Strategic/Economic Development Plan that will serve the community for coming years and help shape its future.

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF 2012 NEIGHBORHOOD DIALOGUES

During the Neighborhood Dialogue meetings, participants were asked to answer the question: *What are your hopes and dreams for Warrentville for 2017?*

Each table had a staff facilitator who guided the participants through the process of answering this question. A worksheet posed questions covering seven broad areas that fall under the responsibility of the City, including Public Safety, Financial Management, Service Levels, Development, Communication/Open Government, Neighborhood Character, and Quality of Life.

► **Questions were as follows:**

- What would a safe and secure Warrentville look like in 2017?
 - What can/should the community do to ensure financial stability in 2017 and beyond?
 - What services should be provided in Warrentville in 2017?
 - What type of development would make Warrentville a good place to live in 2017?
 - Describe the best way Warrentville can communicate with you.
 - What would an ideal neighborhood look like in Warrentville in 2017?
 - What makes a good community?
 - What are some of the important things that make you want to live in Warrentville?
 - If you were going to persuade someone to live in Warrentville, what would you tell them?
 - If Warrentville would get an award for “the place to live”, what qualities would earn them that award?
-

After a process of brainstorming and prioritization, common themes, which represented the hopes and dreams for Warrentville for 2017, were derived from each ward. While each ward identified different priorities, they had common themes as well. Overall, every ward recognized sound fiscal management as a high priority. The financial themes centered on maintaining no debt and living within the City’s means. The second common goal among all four wards was related to development. While some wards were more specific in the location of where they wanted to see development, all wanted to see continued development of vacant areas in the City. Among three of the wards, there were identified priorities in the area of recreation, including open spaces, sidewalks and bike paths, proactive policing, enhanced communication to citizens and the creation of gathering places.

Appendix A

PRIORITIES BY WARD

▶ WARD 1

- Live within means
- Rt. 59 Development Plan
- Thoughtful planned development
- Maintain small town/rural character
- More neighborhood policing
- Utilize social media
- Enforce property maintenance rules
- Engage diverse groups
- Promote Arts

▶ WARD 2

- Maintain no debt
- Re-development along Rt. 59
- Safe bike paths & sidewalks for all
- Partner with Park, Library & School districts to maintain high levels of service
- One upscale gathering place near Batavia Road and Rt. 59
- Well-maintained infrastructure

▶ WARD 3

- Financial stability/balanced budget
- Mixed use downtown development
- More sidewalks
- Senior housing development
- Increase public transportation access
- Improve City-to-citizen communications
- Environmental Awareness / Recycling

▶ WARD 4

- Continue financial management
- Re-develop vacant properties
- Maintain open spaces
- Cooperative/proactive policing maintain safe community
- Create gathering places

Appendix B

SUMMARY OF 2013 COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Survey research was designed to help City Council and staff assess satisfaction with levels of City services and residents' desire to pay for additional or increases in the levels or variety of services, as well as gain insight on resident-desire for type and amount of development.

.....

While citizens were generally satisfied with the quality and level of services provided by the City, there were two areas that stood out in both the data and commentary that respondents felt needed addressing; economic development and lowering taxes. Responses showed that these two issues were linked in that respondents believed that generating economic development would lead to lowering taxes. The next two issues that residents felt there was a need for improvement were flooding and/or stormwater control and maintaining or even enhancing public safety, particularly addressing gangs and drugs.

Objectives/Conclusions: The overall objective of the Community Survey was to help the City Council guide the direction of City services and policies for the next three years and inform the Strategic/Economic Development Planning process.

▶ **The specific information objectives were as follows:**

- How do residents feel about the types/levels of services the City provides?
- What are the unmet needs in the community that residents would like the City Council to address? How do residents feel about increased fees or taxes associated with meeting these needs?
- How do residents feel about economic and community development in Warrenville, and what type of economic development do they desire?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the quality of life in Warrenville?
- What should be the City Council's priorities in the next three years?

▶ **The conclusions from the 2013 survey demonstrated the following:**

- Residents were satisfied with City services, but did want potential expansion.
- Residents wanted to see more economic development, but wanted to ensure it was thoughtful and planned.
- Residents wanted their taxes lowered and believed economic development was a component of this goal.
- Residents very much valued Warrenville's open space and wanted that maintained.