

This report concerns a request an amendment to the City's 1976 Comprehensive Master Plan approved by the City Council on May 27, 1997. It describes the Goals and Objectives that were created during the past year by the Master Plan Steering Committee. Adopting these goals and objectives completes Phase One of the process of replacing the 1976 Plan and creating a new Master Plan. These Goals and Objectives will also provide a foundation for the neighborhood plans that will be prepared during Phase Two of this process of creating a new Master Plan.

**Identification of Values**

The Master Plan Steering Committee first met with various elected officials, Plan Commission members, and residents in March, 1996 to identify the basic core values or principles important to most residents of Highland Park. The Committee identified over 70 separate values or issues which were consolidated into similar categories. The Committee then identified about 20 problems or negative aspects of Highland Park which should be addressed in the new Master Plan. Finally, the Committee listed about 40 obstacles or conflicts that will make it difficult to preserve or achieve the community's values in the future.

The three following lists identify each of these sets of ideas. The Steering Committee used these concepts to create the specific Goals and Objectives listed later in this report which are the foundation of the new Master Plan:

- A. Community Values and Principles
- B. Problems/Negatives About Highland Park
- C. Conflicts/Obstacles to Achieve Community Values

In reviewing and discussing the draft Goals and Objectives, the Master Plan Steering Committee focused on citywide concerns and objectives, not narrow, localized problems. They brainstormed about the concepts expressed in these statements before editing the specific language. They did not try to work out detailed solutions to problems but simply identified potential solutions to be explored in the future. Finally, they also identified conflicting or overlapping Goals and Objectives to reduce redundancies.

In order to translate the values listed above into the new Master Plan, specific Goals and Objectives were created and organized into the four following categories to give structure to the Master Plan:

1. Shaping the Physical Future of Highland Park
2. Maintaining and Improving a Strong Economy
3. Improving Our Community and Ourselves
4. Government's Role and Responsibilities

**Sustain an Involved, Tolerant and Inclusive Community**

- Increase public involvement and community interaction
- Work together to decrease isolation
- Promote citizen participation and diversity in the planning process
- Encourage ecological and cultural tolerance
- Foster greater communication, diversity, cooperation, and civility
- Foster concern for common good of entire community
- Involve all residents, early in the planning and policy making process
- Reach for the common good

**Maintain Diversity**

- Celebrate diversity in population, neighborhoods, built environment
- Maintain an economically diverse housing stock
- Celebrate diversity among ages, income levels, housing, and education
- Develop a vibrant 24 hour community
- Avoid becoming a bedroom community
- Promote and maintain cultural diversity and economic diversity
- Increase diversity in schools and community
- Retain mature population with senior and empty-nester housing

**Sustain the Mature Character of the Community While Growing and Evolving**

- Maintain neighborhood character
- Insure that new development strengthens the existing fabric and is compatible with what already exists
- Champion the needs of older residents for housing and quality of life
- Design for quality not quantity
- Control impacts of new subdivisions that increase density
- Insure that the town is desirable and livable for all economic levels
- Reduce impacts of teardowns on density, compatibility, scale, diversity
- Formulate regulations to protect character (F.A.R., setbacks, street width, etc.)
- Preserve the residential character and integrity of the community
- Maintain existing housing and population density
- Attract young families, preserve and maintain values, provide daycare
- Balance impacts of larger houses and higher taxes they pay for schools

**Create Positive Changes Through Community-Based Government**

- Change ways government governs to achieve goals and objectives
- Respect and embrace professionalization of government
- Use a business approach to raising and spending revenues
- Avoid forcing people on fixed incomes to move out of community
- Provide services to meet the human needs for all population groups
- Create realistic expectations about paying for desired services
- Identify alternatives to more taxation
- Recognize the cumulative costs and impacts of local regulations
- Maintain a healthy balance between the public good and private rights
- Consider effects of tax caps on School Districts, Park District, City Increase collaboration by City, Park District, School Districts, etc.
- Balance the use of government regulations and incentives
- Develop and maintain an excellent physical infrastructure

### **Create a More Effective and Efficient Transportation System**

- Link neighborhoods, with the schools, parks, and open spaces
- Support and implement the Greenways Plan
- Reduce Westside/Eastside separation
- Provide non-vehicular connections

### **Protect the Environment**

- Enhance natural relationships to Lake Michigan, and the ravines, bluffs, wetlands, forests, prairies, open spaces, flood plains, rivers and other natural resources in Highland Park
- Preserve natural settings and the prevalence of nature over the built environment
- Create a legacy for future generations by protecting the environment

### **Maintain Excellent Schools**

- Promote lifelong learning for children and adults
- Maintain a strong quality school system
- Maintain excellence in education and encourage high expectations
- Preserve architectural quality of school facilities

### **Maintain a Healthy Local Economy**

- Maintain a strong and vibrant Downtown
- Improve the vital Skokie Highway corridor
- Support local businesses
- Create a stable community through economic vitality which respects the environment
- Provide incentives to retain and attract businesses
- Protect and strengthen the neighborhood business districts
- Increase the non-residential tax base
- Provide adequate parking for customers, commuters, and employee

### **Sustain a Philosophy of Preservation**

- Maintain Highland Park's sense of place, character, and history
- Maintain quality of architecture in residential and public structures
- Preserve the quality of residential neighborhoods
- Protect natural, historic and physical resources, and natural beauty

### **Focus on the Arts**

- Support cultural institutions
- Encourage public art

- Lack of tolerance, civility, and courtesy
- Lack of courtesy by drivers for pedestrians and other drivers
- Unwillingness to sacrifice for the common good
- Effects of existing/potential density
- Effects of teardowns and out-of-scale new construction
- Traffic circulation and safety hazards, especially around schools
- Increasing urbanization/intensification of the community
- High rents for Downtown floor space
- Lack of services for young adults
- Prevalence of parochial interests and narrow viewpoints
- Fear and suspicion
- Social stratification into mutually exclusive social layers
- Loss of trees
- Lack of day care for infants
- Aging school facilities
- Lack of connection to the past
- Loss of local businesses from too many national retail chains in CBD
- Length of time for City to make decisions
- Lack of cooperation among City, School Districts, and Park District

# CONFLICTS/OBSTACLES TO ACHIEVE COMMUNITY VALUES

Updated June 16, 2006

## Finances

- Desire for services vs. unwillingness/inability to pay high taxes
- Lobby Springfield for more school funding
- Lack of alternative ways to reduce costs and raise revenues
- Preserving residential uses limits sales tax revenue and causes higher property taxes
- Educate the community about what they get for their taxes
- Consider amusement tax
- Preserve sales tax generators like automobile sales

## Affordable Housing

- Teardowns: impacts of bigger houses vs. their economic benefits
- Should government provide zoning or economic incentives?
- NIMBY - "Not in my backyard" attitudes
- Desire for rental housing but not multiple-family housing
- Rising land values vs. desire for retaining diverse, affordable housing
- Failure to retain and attract middle-income families who can afford homes
- Growth vs. preservation of natural environment and resources
- Effect of regulations on property values vs. property rights
- Increasing urbanization vs. desire for retaining diversity
- Environmental and aesthetic preservation vs. property rights
- Need more information about existing housing and population diversity
- Teardowns: "gentrification" vs. retaining existing housing and population

## Traffic

- Neighborhood traffic management systems
- Educate residents to show more courtesy to drivers and pedestrians
- Accidents and safety problems on U.S. 41
- Reduce speed to keep neighborhoods safe vs. providing efficient traffic circulation
- Providing beach access for all residents vs. neighborhood concerns
- Provide reasonable alternatives to automobile use
- Attitude that "someone else" should solve traffic problems
- Parking for customers, employees, commuters in business districts
- Identify alternative traffic routes not through neighborhoods (involve Police and experts)
- Restrictions on construction traffic and trucks vs. needs of businesses

## Community Involvement

- Lack of time for participation by two-income families
- Need more events like "Talk of the Town"
- Increase opportunities for communication by televising more commission meetings
- Educate residents about their responsibility to get involved, especially children
- Residents are unwilling to get involved or are happy with status quo
- Form of government: city-wide versus district representation
- More involvement may increase time to reach decisions and may not resolve conflicts
- Pro-active outreach to involve people in neighborhood planning efforts

Highland Park benefits from a combination of natural beauty, man-made features, and quality services. An expansive lakefront, a vibrant and pedestrian-friendly downtown, a top-ranked school system, abundant religious and cultural institutions, and high quality public services are all important features which support the ambiance and appeal of Highland Park. But of all the elements which define Highland Park, our neighborhoods are the most important, for it is here that we establish our homes and spend time with our families and friends. Highland Park's neighborhoods are characterized by quiet, tree-lined streets and well maintained homes of quality design and construction. Preservation of these high quality neighborhoods through continued investment in the existing housing stock and limited new development is key to maintaining the character of our community. However, selected areas of the City, primarily neighborhoods near Downtown, can benefit from carefully managed and directed new growth. The Goals and Objectives detailed below, therefore, are designed to encourage reinvestment in older homes, while directing new growth to appropriate areas.

This category addresses Goals and Objectives related to the following values: preserving neighborhood character including historic and natural resources while allowing new development; requiring quality site planning and design; balancing the desire for affordable housing with community concerns; working to maintain affordable housing for people of all ages; providing a balanced transportation system; and maintaining Highland Park's identity as one of the most livable communities in the nation.

Although they are grouped into six categories, there is some overlap between the groups:

- Community Character and Physical Growth
- Land Use and Zoning
- Housing
- Environment
- Urban Design and Preservation
- Transportation and Circulation

<b>Community Character and Physical Growth</b>		
<b>Goals</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Policies/Actions</b>
1. To effectively manage new development and redevelopment through thoughtful planning and appropriate regulations to maintain low density residential and commercial areas.	a. Prepare and implement neighborhood and district strategic plans that enhance the community and create an inspiring environment.	Amend the Zoning Ordinance to control the height and bulk of new construction in the commercial zoning districts.
2. To assure continuity and maintenance of neighborhood character as redevelopment occurs throughout the community to enhance the quality of life and preserve the aesthetic appeal of all neighborhoods.	b. Explore the creation of a "livability index" combining various types of data (similar to the Consumer Price Index) to measure and evaluate changes in the "quality of life" in Highland Park.	

3. To protect and manage natural and cultural features to ensure the prevalence of nature over the built environment, especially those areas throughout the community that are heavily wooded and in a more natural state.	c. Periodically review the "dimensional controls" in the Zoning Ordinance and revise the regulations concerning lot area, bulk, setbacks, and density of new construction as needed to protect neighborhood character.	
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## Land Use and Zoning

Goals	Objectives	Policies/Actions
1. To maintain predominantly low-density residential neighborhoods, healthy and viable business districts, and higher residential densities around commercial cores that provide a range of services convenient to the community.	a. Evaluate the suitability of existing zoning in each neighborhood and business district during the formation of the forthcoming neighborhood and district strategic plans.	Amend the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to address problems created by lots-in-depth.
2. To require new land uses and structures to harmonize with their immediate surroundings.	b. Address problems created when existing zoning classifications do not reflect current lot sizes and development patterns in various areas of the community.	Amend the Zoning and Subdivision regulations to address problems created by "teardowns" of the existing housing stock.
3. To create and use a simple and flexible system for regulating the use and development of land which balances the protection of individual private property rights with the common good of the entire community.	c. Evaluate the need to create new zoning districts for public institutions and/or public and private golf courses, parks, and open-spaces.	Amend the Zoning Ordinance to encourage removal or redevelopment of non-conforming structures and land uses or to bring such properties into conformance with the Ordinance.
4. To use strategic planning in both neighborhoods and business districts to support decision-making that will ensure stability throughout the community and encourage balanced growth and development.	d. Continue using the "Site Plan Review Team" to allow prospective developers and City staff to meet early in the development process to identify problems and avoid unnecessary, costly delays.	Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow creative re-use of large residential estates or parcels as an incentive to protect such buildings and properties.

## Housing

Goals	Objectives	Policies/Actions
1. To preserve, maintain and promote housing of high quality that reflects the community's commitment to cultural and economic diversity.	a. Create a system of financial incentives and/or regulations for the private housing market to build a percentage of affordable housing units in projects, for	Amend the Zoning Ordinance to promote housing for the special needs population in the community, such as group homes and other options.

	buyers and renters, especially at Fort Sheridan.	
2. To maintain and increase diversity in housing styles, sizes, types, densities, and prices or rents in order to welcome a wider array of families and individuals into the community.	b. Seek financing from public and private sources to construct new affordable housing units and rehabilitate existing units.	Create an assistance program to avoid or resolve maintenance problems in the community's rental housing and to allow tenants to withhold rental payments if severe maintenance problems occur.
3. To support development of a wide range of single-family and multiple-family housing near shopping, mass transit, recreational and civic amenities to enable all residents to remain in the community as they age.	c. Allow the Housing Commission to share in using various municipal and non-municipal revenues to create housing assistance programs and acquire land for new affordable housing developments.	Amend the Zoning Ordinance to facilitate development of congregate care housing and other types of assisted housing to meet the needs of senior citizens, developmentally disabled people and others.
4. To provide affordable housing that is an integral part of neighborhoods throughout the community, especially for the following groups of residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Senior citizens;</li> <li>b. Single-parent households;</li> <li>c. Residents with special needs such as the developmentally disabled;</li> <li>d. Low and moderate income families;</li> <li>e. Families with young children;</li> <li>f. Employees who work in Highland Park but cannot afford to live here.</li> </ul>	d. Encourage amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to increase housing choices and population diversity by allowing enclaves of higher densities within single-family residential neighborhoods, by supporting home sharing and co-housing, and by permitting other alternative housing choices.	Create an assistance program to avoid or resolve maintenance problems in the community's rental housing and to allow tenants to withhold rental payments if severe maintenance problems occur. Create an assistance program to avoid or resolve maintenance problems in the community's rental housing and to allow tenants to withhold rental payments if severe maintenance problems occur.
5. To maintain areas around commercial districts that are zoned for medium to high density multiple-family residential development to provide housing for residents who cannot afford or do not desire detached single-family residential houses.	e. Encourage the community's financial institutions to provide funds for housing assistance programs, particularly those institutions where the City's accounts are deposited.	The Housing Commission and Lake County Affordable Housing Commission should conduct a Home Buyer's Fair and create programs for first-time home buyers in the city.
		Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow accessory dwelling units within single-family residential zoning districts.

## Environment

Goals	Objectives	Policies/Actions
1. To protect, preserve, restore and rehabilitate the natural habitats, open spaces, parks, beaches, ravines, forests, wetlands, prairies, and flood plains to enhance the quality of life and unique physical and aesthetic character of Highland Park including Fort Sheridan.	a. Continue protecting mature trees from insensitive removal or relocation through enforcement of the Tree Preservation Ordinance.	Amend the Tree Preservation Ordinance to allow developers to remove invasive species from off-site locations in addition to replanting trees on new development sites.
2. To support planning for Lake Michigan, the ravines and lake bluffs, flood plains, wetlands and all watersheds by supporting regional efforts to protect these areas from over-development and mitigate the effects of stormwater drainage through the use of development regulations, infrastructure projects and ravine remediation.	b. Establish and support a regional mechanism with neighboring communities to work for shoreline protection along Lake Michigan.	Create an Ordinance that defines acceptable types of landscaping, allows the use of non-native species on private property, and encourages preservation of natural areas and native species.
3. To encourage the use of native plant materials in both public and private landscaping while actively eliminating nonnative, invasive species such as buckthorn, honeysuckle, etc. on publicly owned lands.	c. Work with the Solid Waste Agency of Lake County and private haulers to continue the residential recycling system and expand the commercial recycling program.	Eliminate invasive species from public lands.
4. To support the efforts of the community's public and private golf courses to reduce the environmental impacts of their operations while preserving open spaces and natural habitats.	d. Work with individual property owners to mitigate the effects of stormwater drainage through the ravine remediation projects and development regulations identified by the Lakefront Task Force.	Continue working with the Park District to support and expand the "Care of the Commons"
5. To work with the Park District to create and maintain parks and open space areas in a manner that emphasizes both personal safety and natural beauty while protecting the parks from encroachment crime and vandalism.	e. Work with the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission and other municipalities to develop a watershed-based approach to stormwater management and floodplain protection.	
	f. Work with the Park District to define, design, and maintain parks and open spaces for both active and passive recreational uses.	
	g. Require property owners and developers to use "planned unit developments"	

	to reduce environmental impacts of new construction.	
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<b>Urban Design and Preservation</b>		
<b>Goals</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Policies/Actions</b>
1. To maintain the natural ambiance, human scale, and pedestrian accessibility found in neighborhoods and business districts and to preserve and improve the community's character, public image, property values and the public health, safety, and welfare.	a. Work with a committee of property owners, business owners, and design professionals to establish appropriate urban design standards and guidelines for all business districts.	Establish programs with the Park Districts and School Districts to educate residents about Highland Park's significant natural resources, landmarks and the characteristics of pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.
2. Maintain Highland Park's character and identity by using established guidelines and procedures to protect properties that are of historic, architectural, and/or cultural value to the community, including structures and natural or man-made landscapes.	b. Explore methods to require or encourage contributions from developers and businesses for public art.	Pursue landmark nominations of individual properties and districts which have historic, architectural and/or cultural significance to protect them from inappropriate changes.
3. To increase community awareness and support for preservation of historically, architecturally, and/or culturally significant structures, properties, and landscapes.	c. Create more pedestrian-friendly streets with identified landmarks that reinforce the character of neighborhoods.	Create distinctive and attractive gateways into the community and public spaces that incorporate art, signs and landscaping.
4. To provide technical advice and support to property owners and City decision-makers regarding development proposals affecting historically, architecturally, and/or culturally significant properties.	d. Work with the telecommunications industry, property owners, and neighboring communities to create a plan and regulations to avoid harming the visual character of Highland Park with multiple towers, antennas, and similar facilities.	Design new public and private off-street parking facilities to include adequate green areas with trees and landscaping.
5. To assure continuity and maintenance of neighborhood character as renovation and redevelopment of existing properties occurs throughout the City.	e. Continue to work with developers, design professionals, contractors, residents, business owners, and the Design Review Commission to require sensitive designs in new development and remodeling projects.	Require owners of non-compliant properties to upgrade their sites over time in order to improve their appearance and bring them into compliance with current regulations.
6. Preserve the cultural and historic places in Fort Sheridan by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Maintaining an overall density appropriate to the integrity of the historic structures and</li> </ul>	f. Repeat and retain historic architectural details of existing structures in building new public structures to create consistency in styles.	Provide financial incentives to assist owners of historically or architecturally significant structures in repairing and restoring them including

<p>landscaping;</p> <p>b. Relating new construction to the architectural character of existing buildings and locating new construction to preserve significant views and vistas;</p> <p>c. Maintaining the parade grounds as open space.</p>		<p>methods such as waiving permit fees, freezing municipal property taxes, and providing low interest loans.</p>
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Transportation and Circulation		
Goals	Objectives	Policies/Actions
<p>1. To provide a safe, efficient, and comprehensive transportation system including mass transit, motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians, with connections to the region's highways, mass transit facilities, and bicycle/pedestrian trails.</p>	<p>a. Identify ways to encourage better and more efficient use of the roadway hierarchy by preventing short-cuts through residential neighborhoods and barriers to traffic flow on arterial streets.</p>	<p>Actively enforce the rules of the road so that pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists adhere to traffic laws minimize conflicts between different types of users.</p>
<p>2. To provide a hierarchy of roads to serve the needs of residents and businesses in all parts of the community for maximum accessibility, efficiency, and safety while minimizing traffic volume, speed, noise, air pollution and negative impacts in neighborhoods.</p>	<p>b. Continue working with Metra to maintain and enhance the high level of rail commuting services by improving "rush-hour" service and extending the "Skokie Swift" north to Highland Park.</p>	<p>Build and maintain the facilities recommended in the Greenways Plan consistent with the community's high aesthetic standards and with sensitivity to the natural environment.</p>
<p>3. To reduce dependence on cars and make walking and bicycling safer, more accessible, and more enjoyable by building greenways, on-street routes, off-street trails, and sidewalks to connect all neighborhoods, parks, schools and business areas in Highland Park and adjacent communities.</p>	<p>c. Assure adequate access to adjacent commercial sites if U.S. Route 41 is widened by using non-continuous deceleration lanes and consolidated curb cuts in accord with the Skokie Highway Corridor Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>Build more east-west sidewalks, trails, and bicycle/pedestrian bridges to better connect and unify the parts of the community divided by Skokie Highway.</p>
<p>4. To improve traffic circulation, accessibility, parking and safety in all business districts and minimize impacts on adjacent residential communities.</p>	<p>d. Improve pedestrian and bicycle access to the Metra stations and build sheltered bicycle racks.</p>	<p>Update the Major Street Plan as part of this Master Plan amendment.</p>
<p>5. To create and maintain more walkable shopping areas including the Central Business District and Ravinia Business District.</p>	<p>e. Continue working with the School Districts, Parent/Teacher Organizations, and drivers to improve safety and traffic circulation around schools.</p>	<p>Adopt and enforce appropriate regulations to design, construct and operate a safe, comprehensive, and environmentally sensitive system of streets and greenways.</p>
<p>6. To balance the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers for safety, access, and ease of movement.</p>	<p>f. Ensure the design, construction and operation of a safe and comprehensive</p>	<p>Continue to oppose the widening of Lake-Cook Road.</p>

	system of roadways and greenways.	
	g. Monitor the proposed widening of Route 22 west of U.S. 41 and oppose any widening of Half Day Road east of Summit Avenue.	Develop educational materials with the Park District and School Districts, to educate pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists about the opportunities and benefits of walking, running and bicycling and about ways to safely and courteously share the streets, sidewalks, and trails.
	h. Ensure that access for pedestrians and bicyclists is considered in constructing new developments and public infrastructure.	Improve access to the public beaches for pedestrians and bicyclists and increase automobile parking as well.
	i. Aggressively pursue funds from developers, other private sources, state and federal programs to build traffic improvements and greenways.	

The Central Business District, Skokie Highway Corridor, Ravinia Business District, and other business districts are home to more than 1,000 businesses which provide a wide array of goods and services to the community and region. The Central Business District fulfills an additional role by serving as the focal point of the community and adding to Highland Park's unique identity. In addition, these businesses generate significant property and sales tax revenues which help provide the high-quality municipal services, schools, parks, and public infrastructure desired by the residents.

The health and vitality of these business districts is, therefore, vital to the quality of life in Highland Park. The following Goals and Objectives are intended to protect and strengthen the community's economy. This category addresses Goals and Objectives related to the following values: maintaining healthy and attractive business areas; retaining local businesses while attracting new growth; providing for the transportation and parking needs of businesses and residents; improving Highland Park's share of the regional retail market; and providing government with adequate revenues to provide the services and facilities desired by residents and businesses.

Goals	Objectives	Policies/Actions
<p>1. To provide a diverse economic base by retaining and attracting a range of businesses and industries compatible with the community's character and by maintaining a healthy, supportive climate conducive to investment and the conduct of business.</p>	<p>a. Continue to enhance the partnership between the City, residents, and <a href="#">Chamber of Commerce</a> to support existing businesses while marketing the community to new businesses.</p>	<p>Conduct annual surveys of existing businesses to determine their needs and problems and their suggestions on the role that the City should play in helping meet their needs.</p>
<p>2. To support a sound economy as a means of generating revenue to finance public services and capital improvements, thereby achieving the community's major environmental, social and public goals. To expand income-producing land uses to generate tax revenues in excess of the cost of public services.</p>	<p>b. Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a strategic plan to retain current businesses and attract selected retail, office, research and light industrial activities which will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stabilize and enhance the business environment;</li> <li>2. Contribute to the diversification of the economic base;</li> <li>3. Significantly contribute to the local commercial tax base;</li> <li>4. Have little or no adverse environmental impact;</li> <li>5. Emphasize attracting and retaining local retailers.</li> </ol>	<p>Waivers or variances may be used as incentives to retain or attract businesses and industries that will provide economic and other benefits to the community. Environmental protection standards, zoning, and building codes should be applied to all new businesses and industries with flexibility while maintaining high standards and without compromising quality.</p>

<p>3. To provide a sound and diverse employment base for the community by retaining and attracting businesses that will hire area residents.</p>	<p>c. Continue aggressive revitalization of Downtown expanding on the success of Port Clinton Square.</p>	<p>Continue to allow home-based businesses that will not create negative impacts in neighborhoods.</p>
<p>4. To increase regional, state, and national awareness of the uniqueness of Highland Park as a strong, safe and vibrant community by communicating our location and strengths.</p>	<p>d. Work with the Chamber of Commerce, property owners, and businesses in the Downtown to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Capitalize on the new U.S. Export Office;</li> <li>2. Reduce vacancies by attracting a desirable mix of retailers, services businesses, and restaurants;</li> <li>3. Provide management assistance as requested;</li> <li>4. Explore uniform hours of operation, including evenings and Sundays;</li> <li>5. Identify the desirable limit of horizontal and vertical growth of the Central Business District.</li> </ol>	<p>Construct streetscape features such as lighting, special pavements, and street furniture in pedestrian-oriented business districts.</p>
<p>5. To protect and strengthen all commercial areas in the community, including all neighborhood business districts, to meet the needs of residents and effectively capture Highland Park's share of the region's retail sales.</p>	<p>e. Identify economic opportunities in all business districts and develop proactive strategic plans for each area similar to the Ravinia Strategic Plan and the Skokie Highway Corridor Strategic Plan, including a sign and graphic identification program featuring entry identification markers.</p>	<p>Expand public parking as needed in all business districts, including parking structures, by implementing the Parking Subcommittee's "Final Report and Recommendations for Parking in the Central Business District".</p>
<p>6. To protect and strengthen the economic vitality of the Skokie Corridor in order to realize its full market potential as a regional center not in competition with downtown.</p>	<p>f. Improve the image of all business districts by creating an attractive and unified appearance, relating new construction to the architectural character of existing buildings. Establish urban design standards for business districts that provide for additional yet sensitive treatment of signage and expanded parking.</p>	<p>Work with all automobile dealers to identify and resolve their needs for additional visibility, access, and signage.</p>

<p>7. To maintain a compact, clearly-defined, and prosperous downtown that will satisfy the community's needs for a wide array of shopping and dining opportunities and services as well as civic, cultural and entertainment facilities.</p>	<p>g. Recognize Ravinia Festival, Apple Tree Theater, Suburban Fine Arts Center, and the Highland Park Community House as important visitor destinations and build upon these attractions to promote Highland Park's dining and shopping opportunities.</p>	<p>Continue to work with landlords and Realtors to maintain a database of available, leaseable business spaces in Highland Park for use by prospective business tenants.</p>
	<p>h. Encourage owners of existing businesses which do not comply with applicable environmental protection, zoning, and building codes to upgrade their properties over time in order to approve site appearance and bring sites into compliance with current regulations.</p>	<p>Use all home-rule municipality powers as needed to assist in economic development activities.</p>
	<p>i. Continue working with Highland Park Hospital and other health care providers to maintain and enhance the level of health care services available in Highland Park.</p>	

Highland Park has a proud tradition of active participation by many elected and appointed residents who guide public decision making and provide ample opportunities for public discussion of community concerns. With more than 20 citizen commissions, the City benefits from this unusual level of citizen concern and voluntary involvement. In addition to improving the community, the residents are actively committed to self-improvement as shown by the high levels of participation and financial support provided by residents for the arts, education, religious activities, social services, charitable interests, recreational activities, and other leisure-time interests available in the region.

This category addresses Goals and Objectives related to the following values: maintaining the high quality of the community's schools and parks; supporting life-long learning by all residents; supporting the arts; encouraging a vibrant community; increasing citizen involvement; improving cooperation, toleration and civility; decreasing isolation and social stratification; maintaining socioeconomic diversity; and increasing participation in the planning process throughout government to decrease confrontations resulting from the "Not in My Backyard" attitude held by some residents.

Goals	Objectives	Policies/Actions
1. To expand a community spirit which is characterized by civility and courtesy, common concerns and interests, trust and cooperation, and community-wide participation in civic and cultural programs.	a. Expand the use of modern technology to better inform residents of issues, meetings, decisions, and events including greater use of community-access cable-TV, email, the Internet, and interactive Home Pages.	Discuss pending City actions and decisions with the School Boards, school classes, Park District Board, Rotary Clubs, Lions Club, and other service organizations, etc.
2. To ensure that information flows to all segments of the community, including the opportunity for citizen feedback.	b. Work with committees of residents and business owners to complete all of the neighborhood and district strategic plans by the end of 1999.	Hold a televised annual "Town Hall" meeting for residents to meet with the City Council, School Boards, Park Board, commissioners, and staff.
3. To build strong partnerships between local government, schools, parks, religious groups, and local agencies within the community.	c. Reconvene the Master Plan Steering Committee for an Annual meeting to review the implementation of the Master Plan including progress on creating and carrying out the neighborhood and district strategic plans.	Expand The Highlander to include more information about meetings and ongoing issues including articles which publicize and celebrate the diversity of Highland Park's residents.
4. To use the neighborhood strategic planning process as a forum to encourage active citizen participation early in the process of making planning policies and decisions.	d. Continue utilizing commissions and task forces composed of residents to conduct hearings and meetings to advise the City Council and staff on matters of interest to the community.	Assist the Highland Park Library in becoming an information resource about the City, schools, and other local organizations and institutions by expanding the use of the Internet.

<p>5. To promote the importance of the family and empower families to take care of themselves and each other.</p>	<p>e. Facilitate more cross-group communication to encourage a better sense of community among residents of diverse backgrounds and characteristics.</p>	<p>Increase access and awareness of the diversified services and entertainment offered to all residents.</p>
<p>6. To ensure that adequate, affordable, and convenient social, medical, cultural, recreational, educational, and public services are available to meet the needs of all residents throughout the community.</p>	<p>f. Assist artists, arts organizations and other community organizations that present arts programming by providing direct financial and technical assistance, especially by seeking non-local funding assistance to the greatest possible extent.</p>	<p>Expand use of the Buhai Plaza, Highland Park Country Club, Highland Park Community House and other public facilities for civic and cultural programming to enhance social interaction among residents.</p>
<p>7. To value, support and promote youth development and achievements to strengthen or regain their ties to community.</p>	<p>g. Work with the Park District, School Districts, and others to offer diverse programming, including basic health and social services, recreation, and educational activities, to all residents, especially:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Senior citizens;</li> <li>2. All youths who live or attend school in Highland Park;</li> <li>3. People with special needs including developmentally disabled;</li> <li>4. Families with children too young to be served by the City's Youth Services Division or other organizations.</li> </ol>	<p>Work with the Park District and/or Lake County Forest Preserve District to create a lakefront learning center to educate residents and visitors about the unique, valuable and fragile ecosystem found along the ravines and lake bluffs.</p>
<p>8. To recognize the experience and wisdom of the community's senior citizens and encourage them to share their knowledge with other residents.</p>	<p>h. Expand efforts to encourage residents to volunteer their time for School and Park District programs, social service agencies, and community improvement projects.</p>	<p>Conduct periodic assessments of community service needs in cooperation with the United Way and other social service providers in Highland Park.</p>
<p>9. To increase public access to art and promote understanding and awareness of arts in the public environment.</p>	<p>i. Promote quality arts programs and serve as a clearinghouse for arts information by serving as a re-granting agency for the Illinois Arts Council.</p>	<p>Amend the Zoning Ordinance to support providing home day care services.</p>
<p>10. To increase public access to, and use of, beaches, open spaces, parks and other public or private recreational facilities.</p>	<p>j. Enrich the public environment for both residents and visitors through the use of visual arts throughout the community.</p>	<p>Continue working closely with the Park District to implement the recommendations made in the Park District's 1994 Comprehensive Open Space Master Plan.</p>

<p>11. To support the Library's efforts to maintain its excellent collections and services in meeting the residents' needs for information.</p>	<p>k. Maintain and enhance the already high standards of public education provided by the School Districts.</p>	<p>Maintain a branch of the College of Lake County in Highland Park.</p>
<p>12. To encourage and support lifelong learning by all residents.</p>	<p>l. Reduce substance abuse in the community.</p>	<p>Provide an appropriate distribution of parks so all residents have easy pedestrian access and all facilities are handicapped accessible.</p>
	<p>m. Affirm youth by accentuating their positive contributions to the community and recognizing their good character at public events.</p>	<p>Work to expand parks and other public facilities and to provide more public access to Lake Michigan, especially at Fort Sheridan.</p>
	<p>n. Emphasize programs that provide modeling and mentoring between senior citizens and youths.</p>	

## GOVERNMENT'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES Updated June 16, 2006

This category addresses Goals and Objectives related to the following values: providing high quality public services and facilities; improving communications between residents and government; re-engineering government to continually improve it; balancing individual property rights and the needs of the entire community; improving collaboration by different units of government; balancing the need for tax revenues to provide desired services and facilities with the economic impacts of raising taxes; addressing the use of incentives and regulations to achieve desired goals; and maintaining the community's infrastructure.

Goals	Objectives	Policies/Actions
1. To enhance cooperation among all public agencies providing services to residents, including the City, Park District, School Districts 112, 113, and 109, North Shore Special Education District, Deerfield and West Deerfield Townships, neighboring cities, Lake County, North Shore Sanitary District, Drainage Districts, State of Illinois, and federal government.	a. Increase cooperation between all government entities in Highland Park, especially by sharing in the use of existing public facilities and by financing, the construction, operation, and maintenance of new facilities and infrastructure.	Establish an Action Plan and Work Program and continue using the annual Budget Forum process to assign specific responsibilities for the implementation of all elements of this Master Plan.
2. To ensure an adequate infrastructure to serve the current and future needs of the community.	b. Identify long-term infrastructure and public facility needs in order to establish a five-year Capital Improvement Program for City capital projects and public facilities.	Work with the School Districts to create, support and expand as needed reduce substance abuse and reduction programs such as the D.A.R.E. program and others.
3. To maintain and improve public safety, minimize crime, and enhance emergency services.	c. Upgrade undersized sewers and utility services and continue to maintain and improve all streets, sidewalks and other public facilities.	Use the City's regulatory powers to enforce and implement the adopted Master Plan and update it as needed in the future.
4. To improve efficiency in providing the numerous services desired by the community while keeping taxes as low as possible.	d. Maintain and enhance high standards in all public services, police and fire protection, and emergency and rescue operations.	Use the Geographic Information System (GIS) to create databases to assist in capital planning for public infrastructure and in planning for all neighborhoods and business districts.
5. To provide superior local services and maintain the City's fiscal health while informing residents, businesses, property owners, and employees that excellent services are both expected and available.	e. Review the capital facility and infrastructure improvements built by the City, Park District, and School Districts for consistency with the urban design Goals and Objectives.	Compile a library of all existing master plans prepared by private interests (Highland Park Hospital, Ravinia Festival, etc.) and by other cities, counties, and public agencies for review by

		residents, developers, and staff to insure awareness and compliance with such plans.
6. To identify new sources of revenue for the City in order to reduce reliance on property tax revenues.	f. Provide the resources needed to achieve these Goals and Objectives and the Actions recommended in the neighborhood strategic plans.	
7. To improve communications and better inform the residents of pending City actions.	g. Consolidate municipal operations as much as possible while maintaining equitable service levels in all parts of the community.	