

VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Adopted June 28, 2005
Reaffirmed by Board of Trustees on July 16, 2007

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INTRODUCTION

In early 2005, the Economic Development Committee (EDC) and the Industrial and Commercial Development Commission (ICDC) set out to establish an economic development strategy for the Northbrook community. Given recent budget deficits facing local governments, tax caps imposed on school districts by the State, and the shift in the local property tax base from approximately 55% to only 45% non-residential, the ICDC and the EDC believe it is imperative that the Northbrook community develop and implement an economic development strategic plan that more proactively encourages commercial, office, and industrial development in the community.

The EDC and ICDC held a series of joint planning sessions to prepare this strategic plan. At the first joint session, the group conducted a SWOT analysis to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for promoting economic development in Northbrook; a summary of which can be found on pages 10 and 11. Based upon the SWOT findings, the group developed the components of the strategic plan, which include a vision statement as well as the objectives and general action steps necessary to make the vision statement a reality.

Four common themes run through the document. The first is that the Northbrook community must be more **proactive** at encouraging economic development in the community. Due to the increasing competition between communities for tax generating non-residential uses, the Village must adopt a more inviting approach to business development in the community while at the same time preserving the character of Northbrook.

To successfully adopt a more proactive approach to business development, the Village must actively **educate** residents regarding the importance of the business community's contribution to the financial health of the village, park district, library district, and local elementary and secondary school districts.

In growing the industrial, office, and retail tax base of the community, the Village must focus its efforts on both **retaining** existing businesses and **attracting** desired businesses to the community. Ensuring that existing businesses have an opportunity to grow and providing new businesses with a reason to locate in Northbrook are the keys to maintaining the community's economic vitality. The Village on its own cannot make economic growth happen. In the end, business growth and development requires the complete and total cooperation of local property owners and of new and existing business owners. Additionally, the cooperation of all taxing bodies is vital to economic development.

This Economic Development Strategic Plan includes a set of tools to foster economic development in the community. Offering financial incentives is only one of the tools. Encouraging economic development is a process, and it is the responsibility of the elected officials to sustain and enhance the property and sales tax bases for the future.

Although the Plan prioritizes the action steps, all of the tools identified in the Plan are important to achieving economic prosperity. Prioritizing the action steps is intended to provide guidance regarding how the community should direct its limited resources to foster economic growth. However, an item noted as "As needed", (a Priority C) may be elevated to the number one priority at any point in time, given a specific project's time requirements.



VILLAGE OF NORTHBROOK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION STATEMENT

Our common economic development vision is that the Northbrook community will foster an attitude and process that continually strives to maintain and enhance a diverse tax base mix of retail, office, and industrial businesses to ensure the resources to support the high quality of public services that our community desires.





Retail Market Objective: To retain and attract desired retail businesses, restaurants, and personal service businesses in order to maintain Northbrook’s position as a leading retail center in the North Shore area.

Priority	Action Steps	Lead Entity	Village Resources ⁽¹⁾
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively rezone land determined to be appropriate for major sales tax generators such as large scale retail developments, big box retailers, and automobile dealerships. 	Village Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time to process rezonings.
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist property owners and real estate brokers with directly marketing available retail space in the Village to retailers which are in expansion mode and are poised to enter the Chicago area market. 	Village Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Marketing materials promoting area.
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the appropriate actions to support the market’s efforts to provide retail and mixed use developments in the downtown. 	Village Board & Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Potentially, financial incentives.
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider granting sales tax incentives when economically appropriate and based upon formally established sales tax incentive criteria. 	Village Board with assistance from ICDC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Forgone tax revenue given as incentive.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the availability of local retail goods and services to the Northbrook daytime employment base. 	Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Marketing materials promoting available goods & services.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the efforts of the Northbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry to establish a “Buy Locally” program. 	Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that access to major retail areas is maintained and improved where and when possible. 	Village Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Capital projects, unknown at this time.
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support unique community events and activities that draw customers to Northbrook retail businesses. 	Village Board & Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Potentially, financial grants

Priority A – Top Priority

Priority B – As Time Permits or Information is Available

Priority C – As Needed

⁽¹⁾ Village resources in addition to Village Board and Commission time.



Office Market Objective: To increase the occupancy of existing office space and when opportunities arise support the construction of new office buildings.

Priority	Action Steps	Lead Entity	Village Resources ⁽¹⁾
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform a thorough study of existing office corridors in the community, in particular Skokie Boulevard, to determine if existing Zoning Code requirements are appropriate to ensure their continued success. 	Plan Commission & Village Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time. Consultants (Potentially)
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address infrastructure needs of office building tenants, such as access to high speed internet connections as well as high quality access to major transportation routes. 	ICDC & Village Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time. Potentially capital projects such as internet connections or intersection improvements.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist owners and brokers of existing office buildings at marketing those available portions of their buildings. 	Village Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve existing office zoned property for future office building developments, unless a desirable retail project requires rezoning of such property. 	Village Board & Plan Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider providing unique financial incentive packages to assist new office development projects that meet a unique market niche and/or an identified unmet market demand. 	Village Board & other Appropriate Taxing Bodies Village Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Financial resources in the form of grants/loans and/or forgone tax revenue given as an incentive.
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a means of encouraging new office development, favorably consider mixed use developments that include office buildings as well as residential and retail uses. 	Village Board & Village Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village Board and Staff time.

Priority A – Top Priority

Priority B – As Time Permits or Information is Available

Priority C – As Needed

⁽¹⁾ Village resources in addition to Village Board and Commission time.



Industrial Objective: To reposition the Village’s existing industrial areas to meet changing market forces and the needs of industrial businesses in order to ensure that Northbrook can competitively retain and attract manufacturing, warehousing, and research and development businesses

Priority	Action Steps	Lead Entity	Village Resources ⁽¹⁾
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform a thorough study of existing industrial areas of the community to determine if existing Zoning Code requirements are appropriate to ensure their continued success as industrial areas. 	Plan Commission & Village Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address infrastructure needs in industrial areas, such as high speed internet access to businesses in Sky Harbor. 	ICDC & Village Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Consultant services Potentially, public infrastructure costs
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify means of assisting businesses expanding or new business occupying existing industrial buildings to meet current fire and life safety codes. 	ICDC & EDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Financial grants/loans.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with property owners in Sky Harbor to promote available space in the business park and identify new and appropriate uses of available space, such as a small business incubator. 	Village Staff & ICDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Community marketing materials
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the use of the 6B and IRB programs as an incentive for retention of existing businesses and attraction of new businesses. 	Village Board and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Potentially, forgone tax revenue given as an incentive.

Priority A – Top Priority

Priority B – As Time Permits or Information is Available

Priority C – As Needed

⁽¹⁾ Village resources in addition to Village Board and Commission time.



Marketing Objective: To market Northbrook to prospective businesses and the public as an unsurpassed location for business.

Priority	Action Steps	Lead Entity	Village Resources ⁽¹⁾
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with area business groups and professional associations to assist the Village with business recruitment and retention (e.g. Northbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Enterpriz Cook County, Commonwealth Edison, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity etc.) 	Village Staff & Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business visitation program of major businesses in the community to encourage business retention. 	ICDC, EDC, Village Staff, & Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Correspondence materials. Potentially travel expenses to corporate headquarters.
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually conduct business forums with owners, developers and leasing agents of industrial, office, and retail space to identify those issues that effect occupancy. 	ICDC, Village Staff & Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Correspondence materials.
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate Northbrook residents regarding the importance of the business community by publicizing activity of local businesses. 	Village Board with assistance of ICDC, EDC, Chamber of Commerce & Village Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business retention and attraction marketing program targeting business decision-makers who already own businesses or live in the northern suburbs. 	EDC & ICDC with assistance of Village Staff & Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Consultant services Community marketing materials
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a comprehensive marketing plan that creates a dynamic message and utilizes the most advantageous means to deliver that message. 	EDC with assistance of Village Staff & Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Consultant services
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the real estate community to ensure that available retail, office, and industrial space information is easily accessible to businesses looking to locate in Northbrook, including placing timely information on the Village's web site. 	Village Staff & Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time

Priority A – Top Priority

Priority B – As Time Permits or Information is Available

Priority C – As Needed

⁽¹⁾ Village resources in addition to Village Board and Commission time.



Programmatic Review Objective: To structure the Village of Northbrook’s code requirements, tax system, development review processes and economic development programs to be as efficient and effective as possible.

Priority	Action Steps	Lead Entity	Village Resources ⁽¹⁾
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicate staff and additional resources (such as consulting services, marketing materials, etc.) to carryout the Village’s proactive economic development efforts. 	Village Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider financial resources for consulting services, additional staff, marketing materials.
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the existing lists of special uses for validity and possible revision. 	ICDC & Plan Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the existing Village development review processes to evaluate their efficiency and determine what improvements can be made. 	Permit Review Task Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Potentially, additional staff, web-based software programs.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly review the community’s economic development programs and structure to evaluate its effectiveness and to determine what improvements can be made. 	Village Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Financial resources for economic development assistance programs.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider establishing new programs for fostering public/private partnerships, including the use of tax increment financing and special service areas. 	Village Board & EDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Potentially consultants
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly review the Village’s zoning requirements to reflect current market demands and business needs. 	Plan Commission & Village Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support a study of the Cook County property tax system to determine how it can be more favorably structured to keep existing businesses within Cook County and to attract new businesses and industry. 	Village Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political resources
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an office of economic development. 	Village Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time, office space, support materials.

Priority A – Top Priority
 Priority B – As Time Permits or Information is Available
 Priority C – As Needed

⁽¹⁾ Village resources in addition to Village Board and Commission time.

SUMMARY OF IDEAS FROM STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

Joint Meeting of the Economic Development Commission and the Industrial and Commercial Development Commission February 9, 2005

Retail:

- Attract/retain appropriate retail (appearance/zoning)
- Flexible zoning
- Need economic development personnel
- Marketing
- Educate public
- Encourage local support of local business – such as buy in Northbrook programs.
- Incentives – prepare policy
- Increase local activities/events at NBK and other retail areas.
- Market available space
- Comprehensive plan - O.K. to have vision
- Act, not react.
- Proactive in terms of have land zoned and ready for retail and big box retail
- Plan ahead – promote new retail areas
- Improve access to Northbrook Court
- Enhance revenues
- Desired retailers
- Facilitate zoning changes
- Market to daytime population

Office

- Bring in New Office Buildings and Lower Vacancies
- Do things to support existing office properties, increase occupancy of these
- Consider tax incentives
- Enlist an economic development guru
- Improve/invest in infrastructure
- Flexibility in zoning

- Market strengths
- Use “portal”
- Market education
- Market to smaller tenants
- Identify areas for mixed use as a means to get office development
- Look at “rebates” on lease”
- Dialogue with owners
- Marketing

Industrial

- Define/understand the changing face (evolution) of “industrial”
- Define/understand what community wants.
- Recognize change
- Focus on retention of existing businesses
- Look long-term & short term
- Identify and address environmental concerns
- Change Zoning Code to reflect progress
- Infrastructure – Determine what is “needed” by having a dialogue with owners.
- Inventory
- Identify realistic parking strategies.
- Redevelopment of Sky Harbor
- Ensure access to the internet.
- Consider providing incentives
- Changes to Zoning Code
- Identify means of assisting businesses occupying existing buildings to meet current fire and life safety codes.
- Consider annexing property for future industrial use, such as the property at the southwest corner of the Edens Spur and Waukegan Road.
- Promote Sky Harbor as an Incubator

SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, & THREATS

**Joint Meeting of the Economic Development Commission and the Industrial and Commercial Development Commission
January 12, 2005 SWOT Session**

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>	<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location close proximity to Loop, O’Hare, etc. • Access to facilities – Northbrook Court, UPS, FEDEX • Public Works, Public Safety • “Prestige” – Name recognition • Amenities – Quality parks, golf, library, etc. • Access to Village leaders and business leaders • Infrastructure • Comparatively low taxes, fewer taxes • Nice housing stock • Careful planning • Sites for new development • New attitude by governmental officials • Demographics/Socio-Economic • Broad/diverse businesses – entrepreneurs, vendors, etc. • Positive Northbrook Chamber-Village relations • Location – Proximity to other Northshore communities • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook County Taxes as compared to Lake County taxes • Perception of Village being “difficult” • Lack of collaboration – intergovernmental cooperation doesn’t always work • Some Industrial businesses have poor access to internet and outdated buildings • Lack of affordable housing • Traffic congestion • Negative perception of Village processes toward operating a business • Rigid planning • Lacking local non-professional work force • Lack of vision • Lack of land • Lack of consensus on incentives • Lack of downtown development • Glenview incentives • Lack of unified attitudes by part of town and by school district • Downtown ownership • Complacent residential attitude • Resist change • Aging infrastructure in Sky Harbor and Northbrook Court • We’re spoiled/complacent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive with development sites • Share “success stories” • Downtown has potential • Tools – 6B/TIF • Successful base – keep • Ingredients for business incubators • Do have sites • International trade opportunity • Internet – use for products and distribution • Economy on the rebound • Large “daytime” employee population – untapped market. • Upgrade telecommunications • Affordable housing • Aging demographics • O’Hare expansion • Improve access for employees to Northbrook businesses. (streets, shuttles from train) • Market Northbrook • Three large parcels available for development • Development opportunities • Asian population increasing • Learn from others regarding marketing, incentives, and mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our neighboring communities • Ourselves – Need unity behind incentives, and providing necessary infrastructure • Corporate downsizing • Maintaining government service levels • Aging population • Competing communities • Outsourcing jobs • Lake County taxes • Internet sales • Unfunded mandates • Pressure to rezone industrial land to residential • Traffic congestion • High taxes • Changing technology • Uncooperative Northbrook communities • The Glen – Use of TIF • County taxes • Global competition State/County finances.