

**2014 DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**  
**November 2014**

**(AMENDED 12/19/2016)**



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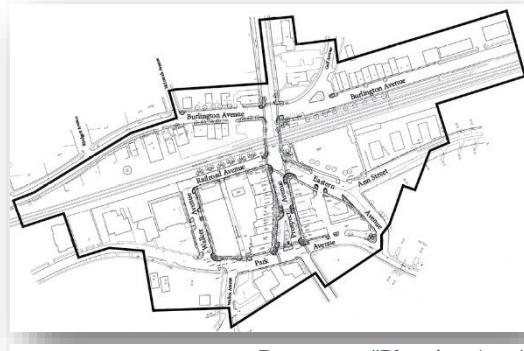
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## I. Introduction

A comprehensive plan looks ahead. It simply asks the question “if we set aside the obstacles, what do we want to be? Where do we want to go?” The end result, the plan, becomes a guide for day to day decisions, to be sure that limited and precious resources (time, budget dollars and staff time) are aligned with a shared goal. Ideally, a plan eliminates duplicate efforts and a waste of resources.

The Village Comprehensive Plan serves as the Village’s official policy document for physical improvement and development, and is intended to direct orderly growth and change as well as maintain and enhance the livability in the Village. It establishes a long-range vision for the Village, defines community goals and objectives, and provides guidance for implementing programs and policies for the Village’s future growth. The comprehensive plan identifies and addresses community land use, design and economic needs, initiatives and steps needed to reach the community’s defined vision over the next five to twenty years. Similar to a business plan, a comprehensive plan should regularly be reviewed and updated so that it remains relevant with the current vision for the community and the ever changing economic environment.

The Downtown Master Plan, last adopted in March 2006 as a component of the village comprehensive plan, is a guide for future land use and infrastructure decisions for real estate included in the village inside and adjacent to the defined Downtown Design Review Overlay District<sup>i</sup> (the “Planning Area”). This document, being an update to 2006 Downtown Master Plan, was developed by a volunteer master planning committee made up of more than twenty (20) residents, with input from the wider community at-large. Through the volunteers’ work and dedication to their community, the master planning committee developed this update to the Village’s Downtown Master Plan which will supersede and replace the 2006 Downtown Master Plan, and which is reflective of the community’s values and goals balanced with current economic realities, and reinforces the Downtown as the center of community life.



Downtown "Planning Area"

## II. History

The Village Comprehensive Plan was last adopted on April 29, 1991<sup>ii</sup>, and later revised through the adoption of the 2006 Downtown Master Plan<sup>iii</sup> (DTMP), an adopted component of the Village Comprehensive Plan. The 2006 DTMP provides short and long-term plans and recommendations for the Village’s Downtown Central Business District; specifically for those properties and developments located within the Planning Area.

The 2006 DTMP, facilitated by consultant team of S.B. Friedman & Company, The Lakota Group, and Metro Transportation Group, assessed opportunities for physical development and transportation improvements in relation to the market potential of the Downtown and the Metra station area. The 2006

DTMP included 2006 market findings and potential development programs for specific priority projects and action steps to be completed by the Village and the development community. The specified goal for the 2006 DTMP was “to foster improvements to the downtown area and the area served by the Metra station to attract and retain businesses, increase tax revenues to the Village, enhance transit access, and increase transit ridership while serving to enhance character of Clarendon Hills.” The adopted DTMP plan envisioned “an attractive, small-scale, pedestrian-oriented shopping district with pocket parks and plazas, expanded streetscape amenities, and new housing products, shops, and restaurants.” The 2006 DTMP included, among other initiatives, the redevelopment of east side of South Prospect Avenue, Eastern Avenue, the Metra commuter parking lot and station, and the apartments on Ann Street. These concepts were consistent with the economic and real estate environment being experienced at that time.



2006 DTMP Land Use Map

The 2006 DTMP also included an implementation strategy which included: implementation of transportation, circulation, and roadway realignments and improvements; *modification of zoning and creation of an overlay district*; encourage and assist with the redevelopment of the Metra station block; encourage the redevelopment of the east side of South Prospect Avenue; *improve wayfinding to the downtown*; solicit a developer for the former police station site; encourage redevelopment along Burlington Ave; and facilitate façade improvements and potential rehabilitation of downtown buildings. Strategy steps completed since adoption of the 2006 DTMP are italicized. The 2006 DTMP also described and recommended financial tools that could be used to implement the recommendations of the plan. The financial tools described in the 2006 DTMP include Special Service Areas (SSAs), Tax Increment Financing (TIF), as well as state and federal funding sources.

In late 2012, the Village Board made the determination that the proposed land uses, design and economic development initiatives contained in the 2006 DTMP were no longer relevant as a result of the 2008 economic downturn experienced by the nation, the region and Downtown Clarendon Hills. In early 2013, the Village Board directed Staff to facilitate an in-house update of the 2006 DTMP using existing internal resources and community volunteers.

### III. 2014 DTMP Planning Process, Outreach & Program Priorities

Throughout the 2014 DTMP planning process (the “Project”), the Village Board and Staff have made it a priority to engage stakeholders in the development, review and implementation of the DTMP update. In early 2013 the Village Board appointed twenty (20) residents and business owners to hold positions on a new DTMP Committee; all who expressed interest in being on the DTMP Committee at that time were appointed to the DTMP Committee. The DTMP Committee’s assigned role was to evaluate and update the DTMP building upon the lessons and planning strategies discussed in the Village’s adopted 2006 DTMP, adopted 2001 Downtown Design Guidelines, and components of the 2012 Train Station Redevelopment Study. Historically, this type of project had been conducted with paid consultant services. However, given that the Village had a solid foundation of local downtown planning documents and studies, and that the

goal of this exercise was to update the 2006 Downtown Master Plan, Staff managed this project in-house utilizing external government agencies and business resources whenever possible.

The Project was designed to be conducted in five (5) phases with various levels of public and committee involvement. These phases included: 1) Project Kick-Off, 2) Review of Existing Conditions, 3) Community Visioning, 4) Draft, and 5) Final Document approval. Similar to the 2006 DTMP, the final updated document will serve as a component of the Village's Comprehensive Plan establishing strategy and priorities for public and private investment needed to support the Village's agreed upon vision and goals for the Downtown.

The DTMP Committee began their work on March 20, 2013 to explore and make recommendations for how the Village Board might consider updating and/or replacing in its entirety the 2006 DTMP. With a set priority to community outreach, these twenty (20) volunteer committee members were divided into three (3) subcommittees set out to address issues of Design, Land Use and Economic Development. The Land Use Subcommittee was to explore and develop a plan that allows for the most appropriate, complementary, and desirable mix of land uses in Downtown Clarendon Hills based on needs and wants of Clarendon Hills' citizens. The Design Subcommittee was to discuss and identify best design practices for Downtown development that would best maintain and enhance the pedestrian friendly, traditional, mixed use environment present today. The Economic Development Subcommittee was to provide analyses, tool and recommendations that would ensure that the Village's DTMP reflects financially sustainable practices, and is mindful of the economic realities of our market and the financial means of the Clarendon Hills community.

All Subcommittee meetings, workshops and public hearings were conducted in compliance with the State Open Meetings Act. In addition to conducting multiple public workshops, meetings and open house discussions, the DTMP Committee maintained the Project webpage to publish Project updates and posting agendas, agenda packets, archived documents and proposed documents for public viewing and comment. The DTMP Committee also utilized traditional and social media, such as newsletters, banners, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to encourage an ongoing community discussion. In keeping with this premise, it is the DTMP Committee's goal to publish and maintain the updated DTMP and related discussion online to facilitate continued discussion beyond approval of the Plan.

Early on in the planning process, the DTMP Committee facilitated several open workshops to develop a vision statement that would be used as a guiding principle during the development of the updated DTMP and later during the implementation the updated DTMP initiatives. The vision statement is as follows:

*"The Plan should encourage downtown public and private investment provided that such investment protects or creates evolving/gradual change, small town charm, more retail choices, unique draw or destination, services for local residents, a family friendly atmosphere, safe pedestrian circulation, and active living with photogenic, vibrant, progressive/self-sustaining pleasant spaces."*

On June 26, July 17 and August 21, 2014, the Village Zoning Board of Appeals/Plan Commission (ZBA/PC) conducted a public hearing in consideration of a recommended update to the Village's 2006 DTMP. During these three (3) meetings, the ZBA/PC heard and considered public comment, and reviewed the recommendations proposed by the volunteer DTMP Committee. Their combined work included over

fifty (50) meetings, ten (10) workshops, and countless hours invested by the DTMP Committee members and community members-at-large. The DTMP Committee's recommendations include the above described vision statement, findings and proposed initiatives addressing land use, design and economic development for the Planning Area. During each of the three (3) public hearing meetings the ZBA/PC also heard and considered the findings of an economic feasibility study prepared and presented by Ehlers Inc.

At the conclusion of the August 21, 2014 public hearing meeting, the ZBA/PC formally recommended approval of the proposed update to the DTMP, a component of the Village's Comprehensive Plan, that includes the Design, Economic Development, and Land Use findings, initiatives, implementation steps, analysis and maps with several modifications. The motion to recommend approval was adopted by a vote of 4-0, with one (1) abstention.

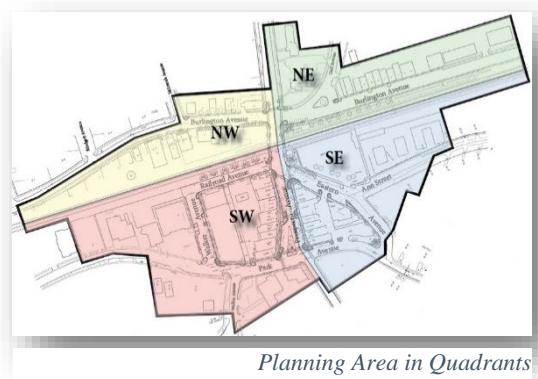
The ZBA/PC's recommendation was first transmitted to the Village Board on September 15, 2014. After careful consideration, discussion and allowance for more public input, the Village Board directed Staff to complete this DTMP document and prepare an ordinance adopting the 2014 DTMP as the new updated DTMP replacing the 2006 DTMP document. By the Village Board's direction the 2014 DTMP would not encourage building heights beyond what is already permitted as-of-right by the current zoning ordinance.

The 2014 DTMP in its entirety was adopted by the President and Board of Trustees on November 3, 2014. The findings, implementation steps and tools contained in the 2014 DTMP are defined in the following sections.

#### IV. Existing Conditions

The Planning Area includes a variety of existing land uses, including civic facilities, a mix of retail and service buildings, and housing of various densities and types. Prospect Avenue is the main north/south road through the middle of the Downtown and acts as the Village's traditional "Main Street." The Metra Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) rail line runs east-west through the district, intersecting with Prospect Avenue to divide the Planning Area into four quadrants.

The *northwest quadrant* includes the north side of Burlington Avenue between Prospect and McIntosh Avenues, and the south side of Burlington Avenue between Prospect and Gilbert Avenues. The uses on the north side of Burlington Avenue include a mix of office and service commercial uses, as well as a Village-owned garage. The south side of Burlington Avenue is mostly service commercial with some mixed-use office/commercial buildings. It also contains a Village water tower south of Burlington Ave between Blodgett and McIntosh Avenues, and a now-vacant Village-owned property at the southwest corner of Burlington and Prospect Avenues.



The *northeast quadrant* includes the Village Hall and Library at the corner of Burlington and Prospect Avenues. Uses along Burlington Avenue include service commercial, two (2) apartment buildings, and commuter parking adjacent to the rail line and in a lot adjacent to the apartments.

The *southwest quadrant* includes the area west of Prospect Avenue and south of the BNSF rail line. At the far west of the Planning Area, there are several apartment and condominium buildings. East of those buildings are the Fire Station and the Post Office. To the east of those institutional uses is a mixed-use commercial/residential building at the southwest corner of Walker and Railroad Avenues, a commercial building at the southeast corner of Railroad and Walker Avenues. A large vacant parcel exists at the northeast corner of Park and Walker Avenues. Also included are a bank at the southeast corner of Park and Ridge Avenues, a commercial building at the southwest corner of Park and Prospect Avenues, and single-family residential uses at the southwest corner of Park and Ridge Avenues, and at the southeast corner of Park and Prospect Avenues.

The Planning Area's *southeast quadrant* is south of the BNSF rail line and east of Prospect Avenue. Its most prominent feature is the Metra station and the large commuter parking lot between Ann Street and the rail line. South of the parking lot are commercial buildings on Prospect Avenue's east side, as well as an office building at the intersection of Eastern Avenue and Ann Street. Also included in the Planning Area is a vacant property located at the southeast corner of Park and Prospect Avenues. During the development of this 2014 DTMP, this property received Village Board approval for a comprehensive plan amendment<sup>iv</sup> and preliminary planned unit development for a residential condominium building.

Properties to the north, east and south of the Planning Area are found to be at a slightly higher grade. Homes on Ann Street, Blodgett, McIntosh, Prospect and easterly Chestnut Avenues, can be seen over the existing commercial buildings on Burlington Avenue from the BNSF rail line. This grading condition also exists for the homes on Prospect and Walker Avenues, south of Park Avenue.

A map illustrating the existing zoning designations for properties in and adjacent to the Planning Area is set forth on Exhibit A.

## V. Findings

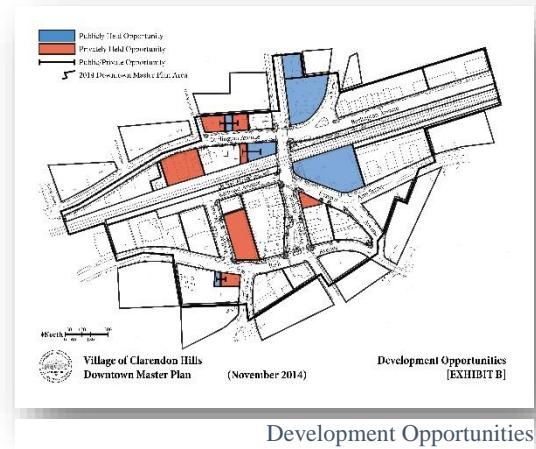
The following are the observations and findings identified by the Downtown Master Plan Committee during the development of the 2014 DTMP:

### A. Land Use

- Properties are under-utilized and under-developed
- Buildings and properties are in need of basic maintenance
- There is limited day-time traffic and customer base
- There is inadequate parking for existing and potential new uses
- Festival street attractions (i.e. Dancing in the Street, Christmas Walk, and Daisy Days) have been a successful draw
- There is limited space for community gathering/activities
- Potential retail development struggles to compete with existing rents and property values
- Grandfathered service uses remain on South Prospect Avenue despite ordinance prohibition
- Public properties are a large component in the Downtown

### B. Design

- The 2001 Downtown Design Review Guidelines need to be updated to better address signage, outdoor display and single-use buildings
- The Downtown needs a common marketing theme or brand via signage, public art, streetscape furnishings, etc.
- The Downtown lacks parks and open space for passive recreation (i.e. walking, bicycling and gathering)
- The Downtown lacks formal pedestrian and bikeway connections to adjoining neighborhoods and adjacent communities
- Through its ownership of property within the Planning Area, the Village has the opportunity to set a positive example with the redevelopment of public properties [see Exhibit B in regard to Development Opportunities, attached hereto and made part of hereof]
- The redevelopment of public and private properties provides opportunity to create private and adjoining public spaces and plazas
- The redevelopment of public and private properties provides opportunity to restore natural elements once found in the downtown (creeks, gardens, etc.)



Development Opportunities

### C. Economic Development

The DTMP Committee early-on identified the challenges of maintaining a sustainable Downtown business community with limited vehicular access. Although the Metra commuter station is a strong asset to the Downtown community, its design does not attract enough customer traffic to support Downtown business; at least not in its current configuration. This theory was confirmed through a group of studies including a gap analysis, local residents surveys, Downtown businesses surveys, property Owner Interviews, comments heard at the February 2014 economic development panel, and as was reported in an economic development analysis conducted by Ehlers Inc. Ehlers Inc.'s report, dated September 5, 2014, identified the following: 1) Providing a strong local customer base is essential to maintain and grow a sustainable Downtown business environment; 2) Increased building heights can yield incremental cost savings for development; 3) Parking costs are a significant portion of development projects; and 4) More taxable development resulting from building height equals more public revenues.

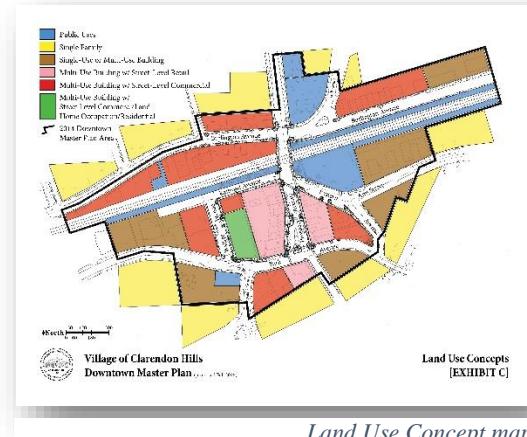
## VI. Implementation Steps

### A. Land Use

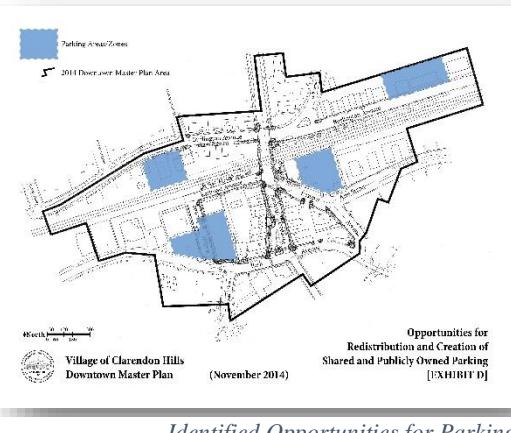
- Adopt the Land Use Concepts map [See Exhibit C attached hereto and made part hereof]
- Revise the Zoning Ordinance to change acceptable prohibited uses to special uses.
- Conduct a parking study that determines methods to meet Downtown parking needs through redistribution and creation of public, private and shared parking [See Exhibit D attached hereto and made part hereof.]
- Rezone the property east of the Burlington Avenue water tower from I-Industrial to B-2 Commercial Business District.
- Improve pedestrian crossing at BNSF and South Prospect Avenue.
- Develop public plazas for public gathering/activities at Central Plaza, Golf and Burlington Avenues, Park and Walker Avenues, and a linear park along the BNSF RR to accommodate regional bikeway and public art corridor through the community/Downtown.
- Amend Ordinances: special uses and parking consistent with these initiatives.

### B. Design

- Adopt the Design Concepts map [See Exhibit E attached hereto and made part hereof].
- Update the Downtown Design Review Guidelines to better address current Development and marketing needs and be supportive of the ideas depicted in the Downtown design concepts map. The revised Downtown Design Review Guidelines should be accessible via the Village website with up-to-date images and photograph examples.
- Develop a branding program that creates a modern sense of place through design of public gathering spaces and architectural design.



Land Use Concept map



Identified Opportunities for Parking

- Create linear parks and plazas north and south of the BNSF railroad to create festival streets for community events and passive social gathering by residents and Downtown visitors.
- Improve safe pedestrian access to transit by improving pedestrian crossings over streets and the BNSF railroad at South Prospect Avenue.
- Redesign and reconstruct Rail Road Avenue to improve pedestrian streetscape along its south side and to improve the commercial viability of its adjacent properties.

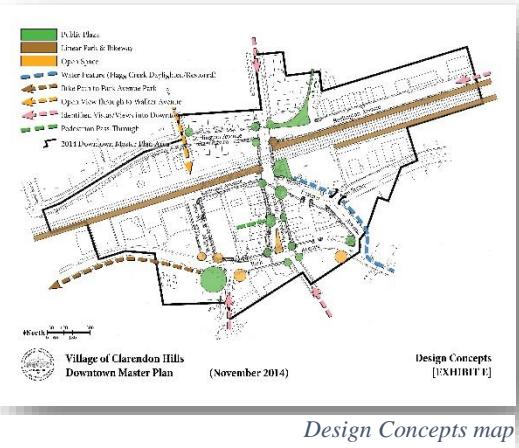
### C. Economic Development

Based on their findings, the following is an introduction to some of the initiatives recommended by the Economic Development Subcommittee:

- The images and text contained in the DTMP must provide flexibility for the market place without hampering the Village's efforts to maintain its vision for the Downtown. Unlike the 2006 DTMP, the 2014 DTMP should not provide specifics that will otherwise be refined during the development entitlement process. Buildings having a single use designation described in this 2014 DTMP should be able to accommodate residential or office; buildings having a mixed use designation should be able to provide the same flexibility above the first floor.
- The addition of additional public gathering spaces should be developed north and south of the BNSF rail road to reinforce the Downtown as a community and area-wide destination. These spaces should be designed to accommodate active and passive activities, for example: public art parks, pedestrian/bikeways, festival streets/street-markets.
- Creation of an Economic Development/DTMP Implementation Committee to facilitate the continued engagement of existing property and business owners; development of better signage along Ogden, 55th, and Route 83/use of Village social media efforts to promote business; to oversee the development of a Downtown brand/identity.
- Conduct a parking study to determine the Downtown's parking needs and capacity if the maximum based on the proposed land use plan. Any such study should also consider how parking could be phased along with the evolution and phasing of Downtown development.

## VII. Economic Development Tools

As was included in the 2006 DTMP, the following financial economic development tools should be considered when implementing this 2014 DTMP: Write-Down of sale price of Village owned property; Special Service Area(s); Tax Increment Financing District; Sales Tax Rebates; Long-term Leasehold Agreements with private entities; Bond Offerings. Use of taxpayer dollars to support development should only be considered as a last resort.



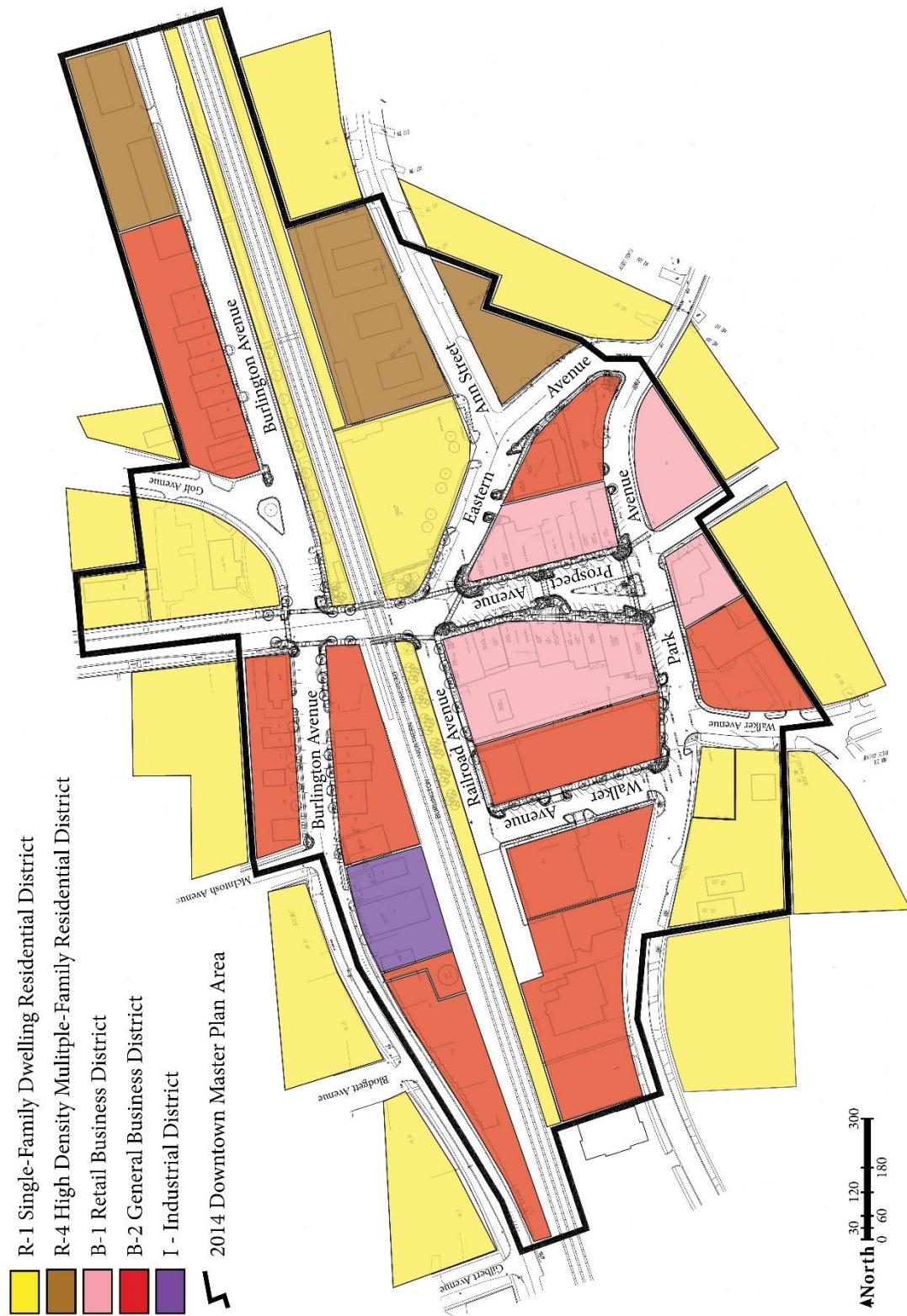
Design Concepts map

## **VIII. Conclusion**

This update to the Village's Downtown Master Plan came about as part of a long and thorough community conversation. Parts of that conversation were formal, planned, and facilitated. Others were informal and spontaneous. This document should not be viewed as an end to that conversation or an answer to it. It should not be viewed as a set of rules that one generation imposes upon the next. Instead, it should be viewed as a reflection of that community conversation as it stands at this particular moment in time. This plan can and should be reviewed, questioned, challenged, and built upon every time conditions change and unforeseen opportunities present themselves. In other words, the conversation should continue. It is the hope of the many who authored this document that its readers and users do their part to see that it does.

## IX. Maps/Exhibits

- Exhibit A - Existing Zoning
- Exhibit B - Opportunities
- Exhibit C - Land Use Concepts (amended 3/7/2016)
- Exhibit D - Parking
- Exhibit E - Design Concepts

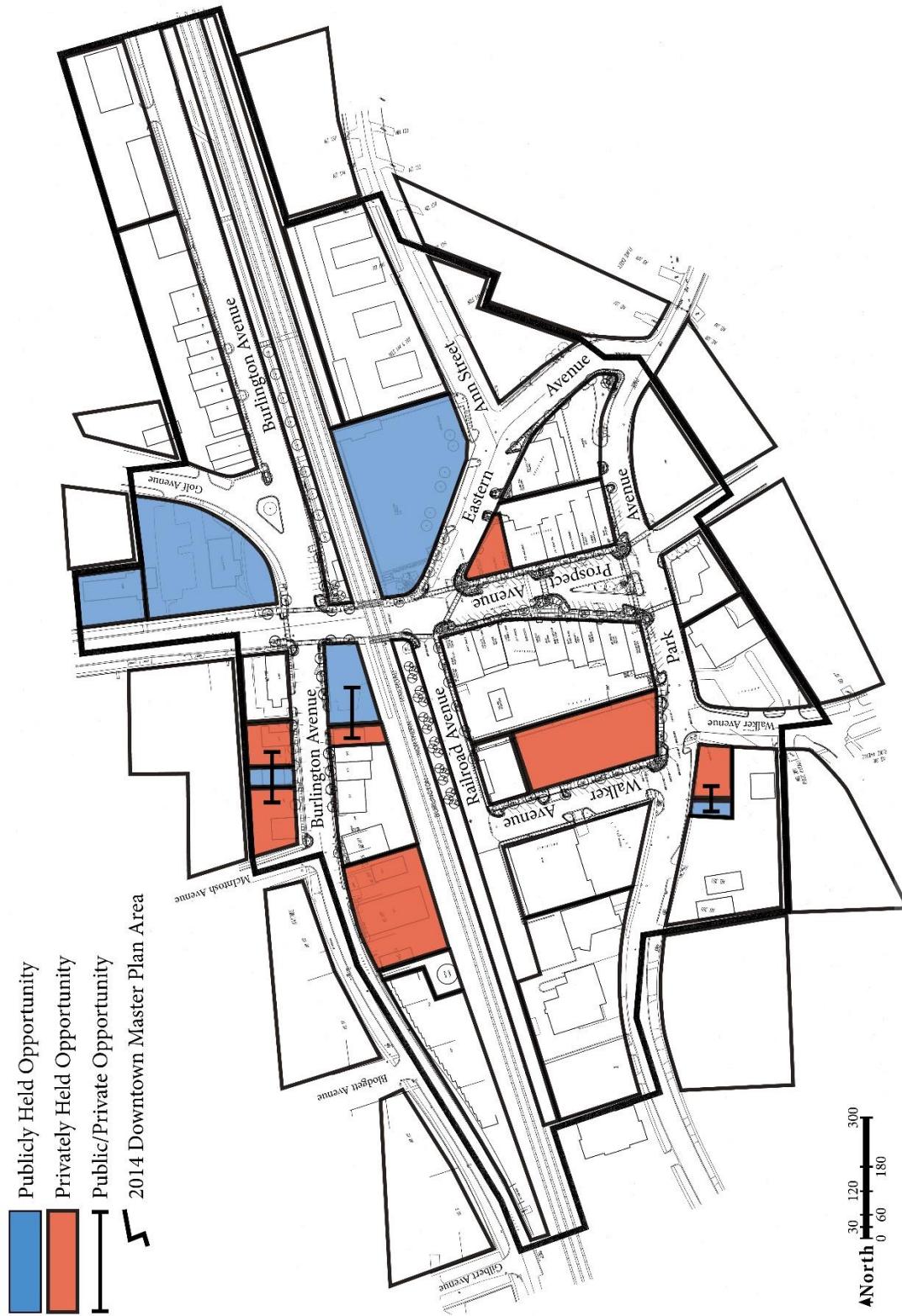


**Village of Clarendon Hills  
Downtown Master Plan**

(November 2014)



**Existing Zoning  
[EXHIBIT A]**

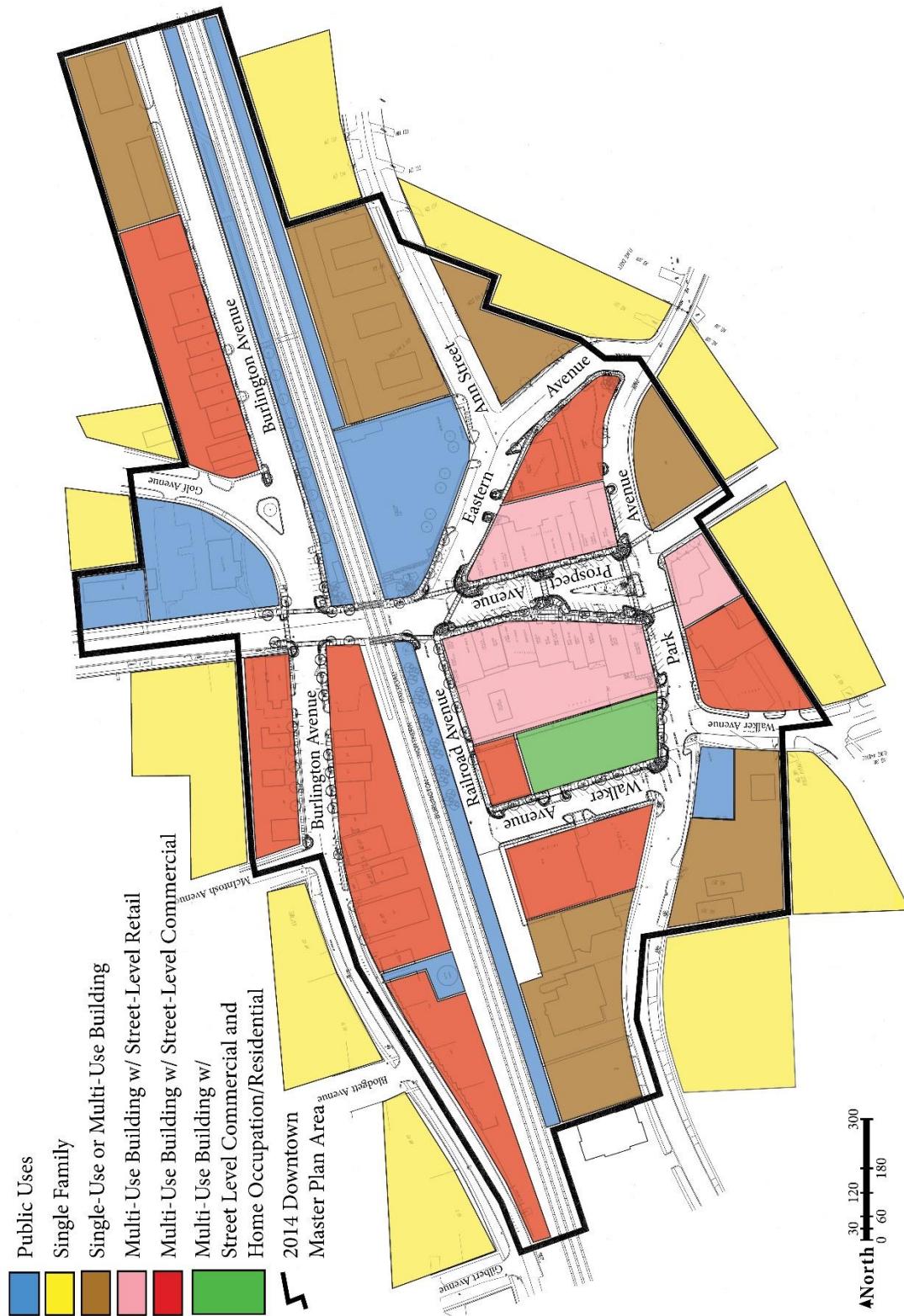


**Village of Clarendon Hills  
Downtown Master Plan**

(November 2014)

**Development Opportunities  
[EXHIBIT B]**

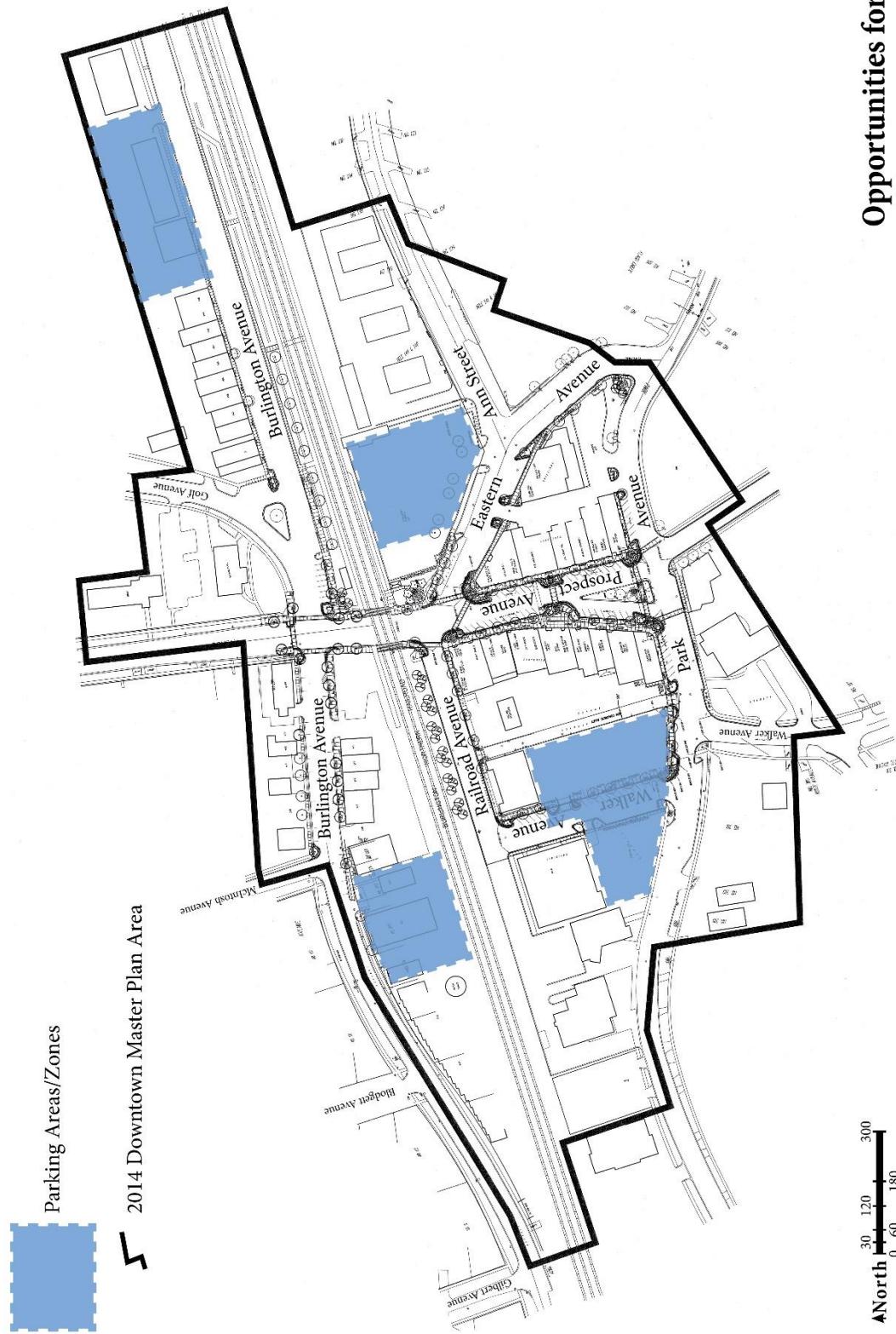




**Land Use Concepts**  
[EXHIBIT C]

**Village of Clarendon Hills  
Downtown Master Plan** (proposed Fall 2016)



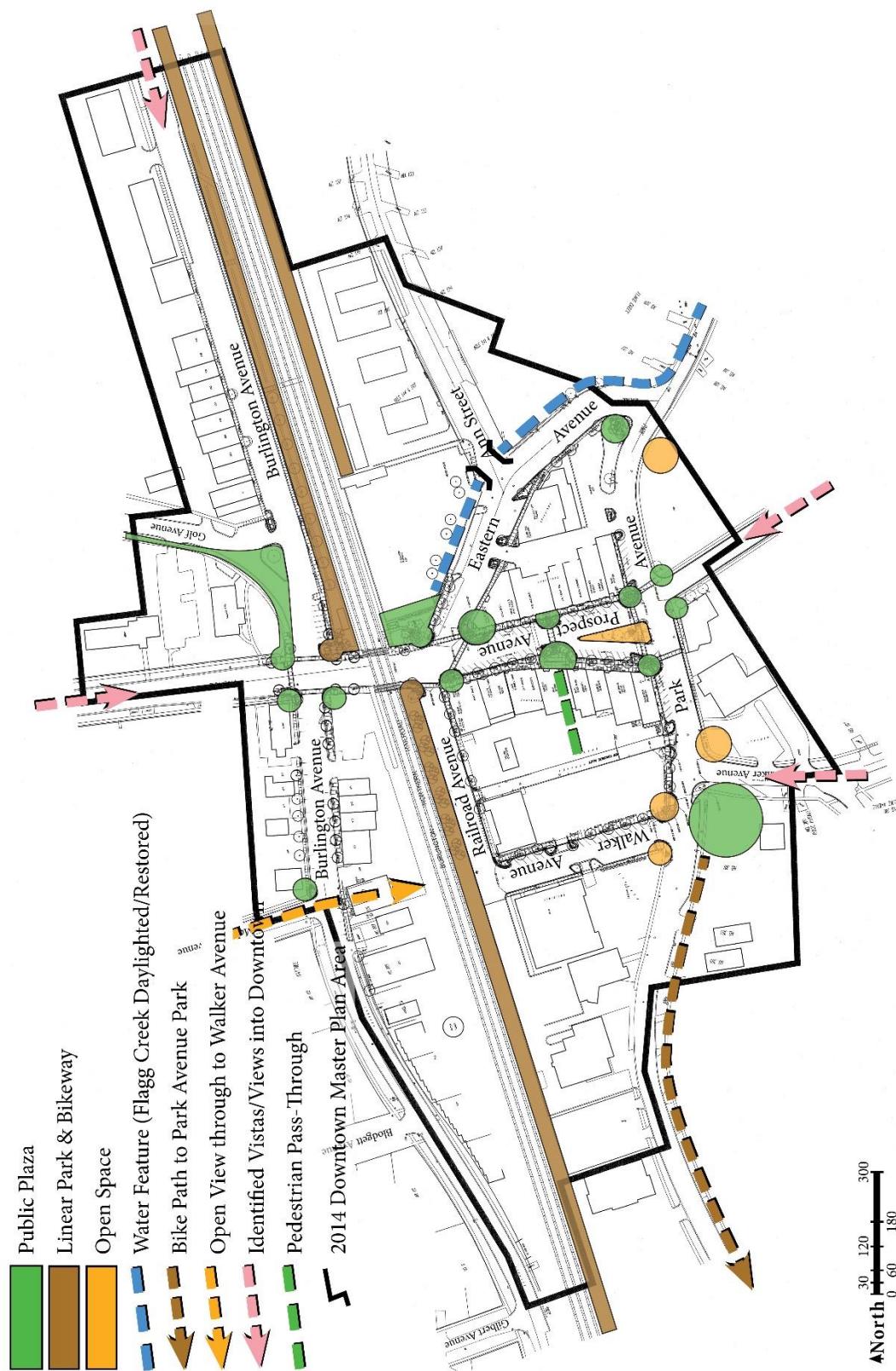


Opportunities for  
Redistribution and Creation of  
Shared and Publicly Owned Parking  
[EXHIBIT D]

(November 2014)

Village of Clarendon Hills  
Downtown Master Plan





**Design Concepts**  
[EXHIBIT E]

(November 2014)

**Village of Clarendon Hills  
Downtown Master Plan**



## X. References

- 1991 Comprehensive Plan
- 2001 Downtown Design Review Guidelines
- 2006 Downtown Master Plan
- 2012 Train Station Redevelopment Plan
- Ehlers Inc - Evaluation of Development Scenarios, dated 9/5/2014

## XI. Acknowledgements

- **Village Board of Trustees**
  - Thomas F. Karaba, Village President
  - Dawn Tandle, Village Clerk
  - Paul Flood, Trustee
  - Don Knoll, Trustee
  - Ken Hall, Trustee
  - Paul Pederson, Trustee
  - Ed Reid, Trustee
  - Eric Stach, Trustee
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  - Greg Kuhn
  - Len Austin
  - Wil Freve
  - James Scheer
  - Richard Trembath
  - Jan Morel
- **Downtown Design Review Commission**
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  - Stephanie Bryant
  - Annie Horton Krug
  - Dave Yandel
  - Patrick Plunkett
- **DTMP Committee**
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  - Donald Burke
  - Wil Freve
  - Mike McCurry
  - Sheetal Rao
  - Joseph Tobolski
  - Pat Simpson
  - Mike Abraham, Design Chair
  - Megan Balderston
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  - Kirk Purcell
  - Dan Tausk
  - Korina Tweed
  - Russ Zabler
  - Dave LaBrash, Economic Dev Chair
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  - Sean Bolger
  - Brendan Head
  - Jason Lewis
  - Bryan Gay, Choose DuPage
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  - David Hene, New Albertsons Inc.
  - Mike Mallon, DKMallon
- **Legat Architects**
- **Ehlers Inc.**

<sup>i</sup> Ordinance 07-03-07 creating the Downtown Design Review Overlay District

<sup>ii</sup> Ordinance 91-04-17 adopting the 1991 Comprehensive Plan

<sup>iii</sup> Ordinance 06-03-07 adopting the 2006 Downtown Master Plan as a component of the Village Comprehensive Plan

<sup>iv</sup> Ordinance 13-10-31 amending the Comprehensive Plan for 103 S Prospect

Ordinance 13-10-32 granting special use for a planned unit development for 103 S Prospect Avenue