



Downtown Development Guide

City of Lakeville



Executive Summary

Introduction

Downtown Lakeville possesses potential for being the heart of activity for the city. It offers opportunities for expanding smaller retail and service-related businesses, increasing mixed-use, and strengthening connections for trails, sidewalks and street networks. By re-establishing Downtown as an attractive walkable place, it can also be the hub for public gathering and interaction a strong community deserves. The Development Guide describes in detail the vision for Downtown Lakeville. To achieve this vision, the city and its residents can utilize the Downtown Development Guide as a way to direct decisions and strengthen commitments to the future of Lakeville.

The Downtown Development Guide is a tool for establishing and sustaining the Downtown desired in Lakeville by:

- Describing the contents, character and qualities desired for Downtown.
- Explaining how to guide private and public improvements to achieve this vision.
- Outlining the public actions and investments required for change.

The Guide consists of three primary chapters:

- Downtown Setting (Chapter 2). A clear understanding about Downtown as it exists today is the foundation for the Development Guide. For the majority of Downtown, the Guide seeks to sustain and enhance current land uses. In several key locations, the Guide becomes a catalyst for change. The Downtown Setting provides a means of comparing current conditions with plans for the future. The information in this chapter also serves as a resource for future planning.
- Plan for the Downtown (Chapter 3). This chapter describes community aspirations for Downtown. The chapter begins with the vision for the future of Downtown. This vision acts as the over-arching framework for the Guide by describing the fundamental objectives for all public and private investments. The vision is articulated in the form of a “Concept Plan”. The Concept Plan describes the future characteristics of Downtown including land use, public improvements and qualities of place. It explains the rationale for pursuing these objectives and offers guidance on actions needed to undertake the Guide.
- Implementation (Chapter 4). Without clear direction on implementation, there is a risk that the Downtown Development Guide will not be used. To make it serve as a useful tool, the Guide provides direction on the steps that are needed to convert ideas into realities.

The remainder of this Executive Summary highlights important elements of the plan for Downtown and the steps proposed to realize this vision.

Vision

The vision for Downtown Lakeville begins with a single statement: Downtown is a unique, identifiable and thriving business district. Within this vision statement are a set of fundamental objectives that seek to achieve this outcome.

1. Downtown provides people with reasons to shop and the experience of shopping Downtown encourages people to return.
2. Downtown retains the character and feel of a traditional small town main street.
3. Downtown maintains the heritage and history of Lakeville.
4. Downtown is where the community gathers.



5. The development pattern and public improvements combine to make Downtown the most recognizable place in Lakeville.
6. The setting and collection of businesses make Downtown different from any other business district in Lakeville.
7. Downtown is a great place to operate a business and to be a customer.
8. Downtown businesses and the surrounding residential neighborhoods share a common environment and exist in a complementary and supportive manner.
9. Downtown builds strong connections with the civic, park and commercial uses that draws people to this part of Lakeville.
10. This broader Downtown area is the most “complete” place in Lakeville with opportunities to purchase goods and services, live, work, play, and learn.
11. A system of streets, sidewalks and parking lots allow safe and convenient access to Downtown.
12. Sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes provide interesting and safe ways to reach Downtown without a car.
13. The quality and variety of public and private spaces invite people to stay and explore Downtown.
14. Downtown offers something for people of all ages.

Concept Plan

The Downtown Development Guide seeks to achieve these objectives by providing a guide for positive actions and investments by both private and public parties. The application of this Guide also provides a barrier to discourage actions that are inconsistent with the vision for Downtown.

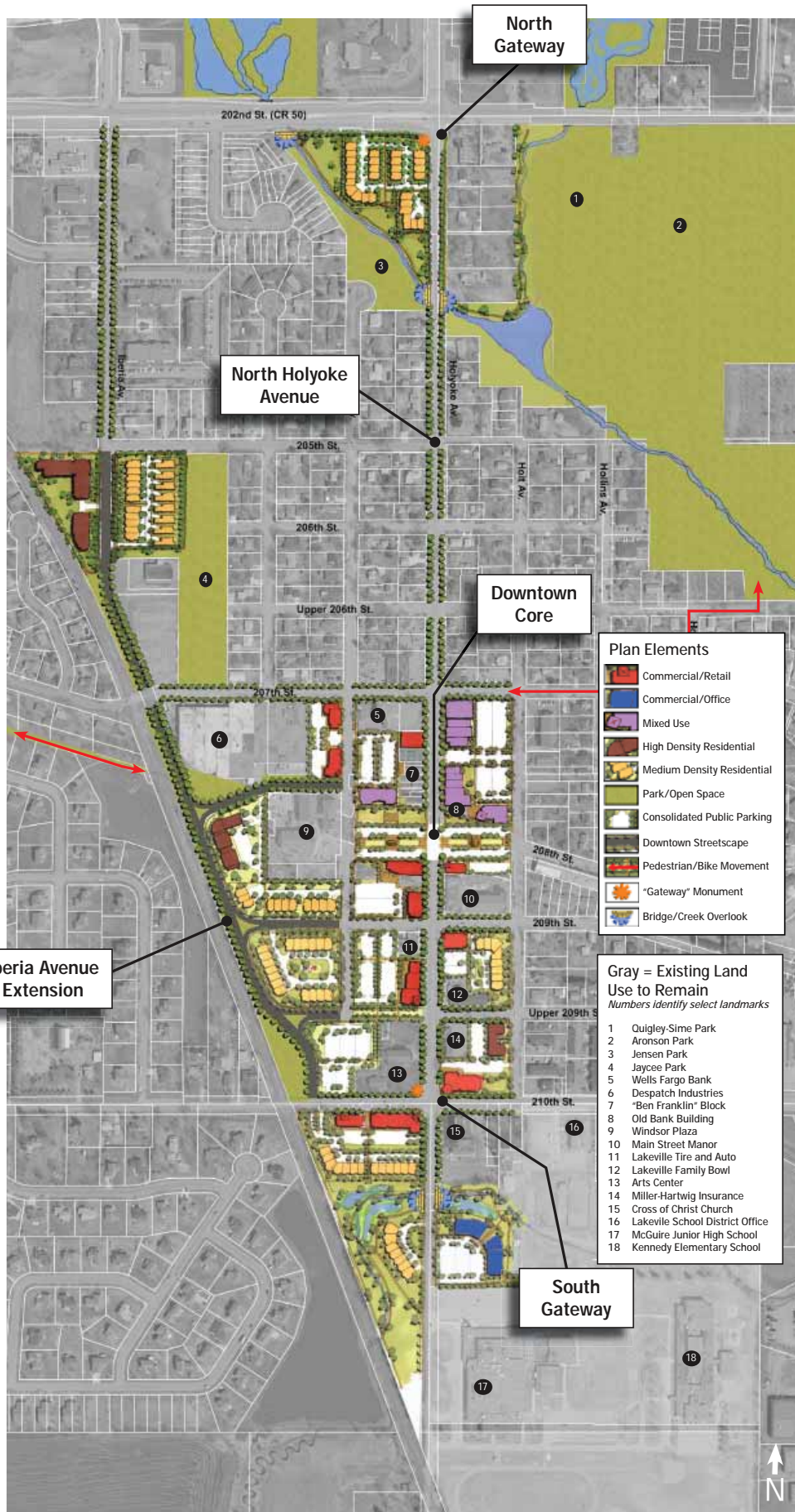
This Development Guide does not ensure a successful Downtown, but the adoption and use of this Guide enhances the opportunities for success. Conversely, the failure to use this Guide makes the path to the vision for the future far more difficult.

The vision for Downtown Lakeville takes form in the Concept Plan shown on the next page. The Concept Plan illustrates the key developments and public improvements envisioned in Downtown. The Concept Plan shows building orientation and site layout as a means of representing broad development ideas and potential long-range development patterns. The Concept Plan should not be treated as a specific “blueprint” for future development in Downtown. The Development Guide recognizes that actual development patterns, site designs and phasing will vary.

Downtown Core

The Concept Plan for Downtown Lakeville can be viewed as a jigsaw puzzle. It is a collection of areas and actions (puzzle pieces) that when fit together form the desired picture – the vision for Downtown. It is easier to explain the Concept Plan for Downtown by dividing the area into a series of districts.

The Downtown Core includes the property along Holyoke Avenue from 207th Street to Upper 209th Street. It might be more appropriate to call this area the “heart” of



Plan Elements

- Commercial/Retail
- Commercial/Office
- Mixed Use
- High Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Park/Open Space
- Consolidated Public Parking
- Downtown Streetscape
- Pedestrian/Bike Movement
- "Gateway" Monument
- Bridge/Creek Overlook

- Gray = Existing Land Use to Remain**
Numbers identify select landmarks
- 1 Quigley-Sime Park
 - 2 Aronson Park
 - 3 Jensen Park
 - 4 Jaycee Park
 - 5 Wells Fargo Bank
 - 6 Despatch Industries
 - 7 "Ben Franklin" Block
 - 8 Old Bank Building
 - 9 Windsor Plaza
 - 10 Main Street Manor
 - 11 Lakeville Tire and Auto
 - 12 Lakeville Family Bowl
 - 13 Arts Center
 - 14 Miller-Hartwig Insurance
 - 15 Cross of Christ Church
 - 16 Lakeville School District Office
 - 17 McGuire Junior High School
 - 18 Kennedy Elementary School

Downtown. The heart needs to be strong and healthy for the rest of the system to survive. The development objectives represented in the Concept Plan include:

- All buildings should be oriented to the street with commercial activities occupying the ground level.
- Housing will be encouraged as needed to undertake redevelopment of parcels.
- An ample supply of on and off-street parking will be located throughout the Core.
- Public spaces will be used to provide beauty and places to gather.

These land uses seek to strengthen the existing character of Holyoke Avenue as a commercial street.

208th Street Plaza

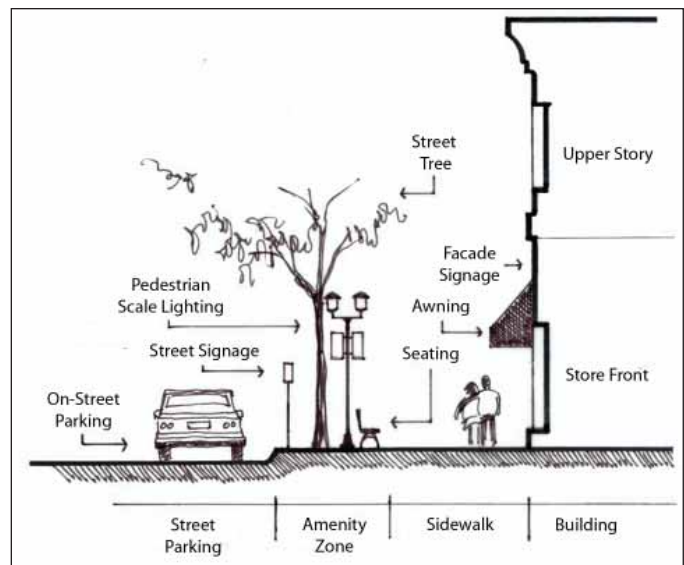
The 208th Street Plaza is an attempt to bring elements of the classic downtown square to Lakeville. The linear nature of development along Holyoke Avenue does not present an opportunity to create a traditional town square. The alternative approach devised during the planning process is the “208th Street Plaza”. The Plaza is not a park, but a multi-functional public space in the heart of Downtown.

It is anticipated that the Plaza would be built in phases. The first phase occurs on the east side of Holyoke Avenue. Phase 1 of the Plaza occupies the vacant lot between Enggren’s Mall and Main Street Manor combined with the existing right-of-way of 208th Street. Phase 2 would occur when the School District decides to relocate the Community Education functions, making it possible to remove this building.

Ben Franklin Block

The west side of Holyoke Avenue south of 207th Street is commonly called the Ben Franklin Block. The Concept Plan envisions the retention and enhancement of the existing buildings. Strategies for this part of Downtown include:

- Work to keep buildings occupied.
- Maintain and enhance building character and facades.
- Require any new development to occur at streetfront. (Do not allow traditional suburban site design with parking between street and building as seen at the Wells Fargo Bank.)



One way the Development Guide seeks to achieve this objective is by encouraging building character that is consistent with the historic and small town nature of Downtown. The desired characteristics include:

- Building design and materials consistent with the Design Guidelines for the Historic Fairfield District.
- Buildings with more than one story.
- Large storefront windows that allow people to see activity within a building.
- Shop doors that add character to each building.
- Use facades, awnings and windows for business signs in a manner that supports the overall character of the setting.



The conceptual design of the 208th Street Plaza consists of three elements:

- *Green/open/gathering space.* The 208th Street Plaza brings more “green” to Downtown. The design of the Plaza should provide the ability to support short-term events such as farmer’s market, art fairs and antique car shows.
- *Off street parking spaces.* The Plaza expands the supply of off-street parking, creating more flexibility in the intensity of development on adjacent blocks.
- *Movement.* The Plaza should include drive lanes that allow, but do not encourage, movement between Holt and Howland Avenues. Another possible use of the Plaza is as a downtown hub for the local trail system.

- Make improvements to parking areas on “back” side of this block.
- Work with property owners to encourage improvements to rear facades and the creation of rear entrances adjacent to parking areas.

Enggren’s Mall and Lakeville Mall

The Concept Plan shows the future of these parcels with a mixed-use form of development. While the Concept Plan shows the complete redevelopment of the former Enggren’s Mall and the Lakeville Mall, the Development Guide recognizes that this result will evolve over time. Complete redevelopment of these properties is not necessary to achieve the vision for Downtown.

Both mall buildings may retain their existing design as interior oriented space. Even with this design, it is possible to make improvements to building facades. Brickwork, larger windows, awnings and signage follow the design guidelines and complement the character of the Ben Franklin block. Such improvements expand the appearance and development character desired for Downtown. These exterior improvements also create an impression of vitality and a more inviting atmosphere.



There are multiple approaches to the future redevelopment of the Lakeville Mall and Enggren’s Mall site that would be consistent with the Development Guide. Housing may be needed to make redevelopment economically feasible. The housing may share a building with commercial uses (similar to Main Street Manor) or occupy a separate location on the site. Commercial uses should be oriented to Holyoke Avenue.

Such a change creates an important design challenge for the former Enggren’s Mall. Any reconfiguration must provide storefronts facing Holyoke Avenue. With the construction of the 208th Street Plaza, new storefronts would also take advantage of this amenity and related parking. If the reconfiguration of Enggren’s Mall occurs in this manner, care must be given to the design and materials for the north side of the building. It presents the opportunity to design spaces with two fronts – 208th Street Plaza and the parking area shared with the Lakeville Mall. An opportunity exists for a courtyard or other pedestrian way that links 208th Street Plaza and the parking area shared with the Lakeville Mall.

At some point in the future, it may be desirable or necessary to redevelop the existing mall buildings. A healthy and vibrant Downtown can provide a catalyst for redevelopment. Property values and market forces make it attractive for the owner to replace the existing structures. Failure to reinvest in the mall buildings will create a need for redevelopment. The deterioration in condition and appearance of these buildings would adversely affect other Downtown property.

The Development Guide envisions that the historic bank building on the northeast corner of Holyoke Avenue and 208th Street remains through any revitalization or redevelopment.

South Gateway

The intersection of Holyoke Avenue and 210th Street forms the south gateway to Downtown. The Concept Plan contains several actions to better define this entrance to Downtown:

- Adding gateway improvements to the grounds of the Arts Center.
- Replacing the city-owned parking lot with new commercial space.
- Guiding future development on the southwest portion of the intersection for new commercial development.

Arts Center

The Lakeville Area Arts Center is an essential part of the Downtown. It is a unique civic facility that draws people to Downtown. There are strong relationships between the Arts Center and future redevelopment projects:

- Uses with some connection to the Arts Center would be ideal for proposed commercial redevelopment. A restaurant could have a strong relationship with the Arts Center. Retail uses such as arts supplies, scrapbooking and photography are other businesses with potential connections.
- The potential relocation of the Area Learning Center and the redevelopment of this site provide an opportunity to explore shared site and parking enhancements.
- The proposed extension of Iberia Avenue to 210th Street could be used to create more parking and enhance the site of the Arts Center.

The master plan for the Arts Center should serve as a guide for coordinating redevelopment with the Arts Center campus.

Bus Garage

The objective for including the bus garage property in the plan for Downtown is not to promote the immediate redevelopment of the property. The use is compatible with the adjacent school campus. The Development Guide focuses on the need to determine the appropriate land use if and when the bus garage moves to a different location. The Concept Plan shows a future office use for this property. Future redevelopment of this property for housing would also be consistent with the Development Guide. The Concept Plan shows vacant property on the west side of Holyoke Avenue as medium density housing, consistent with the current zoning.

Southwest Quadrant

As the core of Downtown strengthens and expands, the market will seek for other areas for commercial development. The southwest quadrant of the Holyoke Avenue/210th Street intersection is a potential location for such expansion. The combination of market pressures and increasing traffic on 210th Street will make it difficult to sustain single family homes at this location. When redevelopment of these parcels becomes appropriate, the Concept Plan recommends a mixed use development.

Iberia Avenue Extension

A significant public initiative identified by the planning process was the extension of Iberia Avenue from 205th Street to 210th Street. The rationale for this project was based on several factors:

- The extension of Iberia Avenue creates new access to Downtown.
- The proposed improvements enhance the connection between Downtown and the retail development in Heritage Commons.
- A new north-south connection through this area would allow more flexibility in the use of Holyoke Avenue for community events.



“Downtown Lakeville” monument signs add to the identity by announcing arrival into the area. Gateway improvements reinforces the idea that Downtown is an important place. The Concept Plan shows the intersections of Holyoke Avenue with 202nd Street and 210th Street as the primary locations for these improvements. The Arts Center grounds present an immediate opportunity for defining a gateway. Gateway improvements should be part of any redevelopment at the Holyoke Avenue/202nd Street intersection.

- The improvements would be an important tool for facilitating redevelopment of industrial uses in the Downtown area.
- This redevelopment could bring a broader range of housing options to the area.
- Opportunities to enhance park facilities in this part of Lakeville.

While the Concept Plan shows the complete project, the extension of Iberia Avenue could occur in phases, such as: (1) 205th Street to 207th Street, (2) 207th Street to 209th Street and (3) 209th Street to 210th Street.

A phased approach allows the City to better coordinate this improvement with the realities of redevelopment. New development will be needed to provide some of the financial resources required to undertake this project. The Development Guide does not propose the Iberia Avenue extension as an immediate initiative, but rather an important idea that requires further study.

The initiative to extend Iberia Avenue should not be viewed as simply the construction of a new street. This project is intended to help redefine the development setting for this part of the Downtown area.

- The street provides new development opportunity through enhanced access. The use of appropriate design and streetscape create quality public spaces as a means of attracting private investment.
- Extending Iberia Avenue may have implications for the overall city street system. These implications should be identified and studied as part of updating the City’s Transportation Plan.
- These improvements will not occur without a source of funding. Additional study is needed to more carefully evaluate funding options for the improvements, in particular, how much of this funding could come from future redevelopment. The results of this evaluation could affect timing.
- The process of updating the Comprehensive Plan should be used to consider the future of industrial land uses in the Downtown area. The Concept Plan shows the redevelopment of all industrial uses with the exception of Despatch Industries. While Despatch is an important part of Downtown, it must be recognized that the company may reach a point that it no longer wishes to operate from this location. If Despatch decides to leave Downtown Lakeville, the Development Guide suggests conversion of this property to residential use.
- The extension of Iberia Avenue cannot occur without the redevelopment of properties in the proposed right-of-way. Recent legislative action makes it more difficult for cities to proactively undertake redevelopment projects. The City should explore if and how this improvement project can be used as a catalyst for redevelopment.

North Gateway

The North Gateway area represents the property on the southeast and southwest quadrants of the intersection of Holyoke Avenue and 202nd Street/CSAH 50. Jensen Park and the creek form the southern edge of this area. Planning for the North Gateway area is similar to the other residential sections of Holyoke Avenue. Existing conditions do not suggest an immediate need to encourage redevelopment. The Plan guides what should happen at this location when redevelopment is appropriate.

The primary objectives for guiding development in the North Gateway area are:

- Make use of landscaping and monumentation to create gateway identity at 202nd/Holyoke.
- Encourage four-sided architecture so buildings present a “face” to the park/open space rather than make these public places the “back yards” of private development.
- Build sidewalks along Holyoke Avenue and trails through the park/open space area to improve pedestrian connections between the Heritage Commons-Downtown-Quigley/Sime Park areas.

- Establish pedestrian crossings with supporting sidewalk/trail connections at the intersection of Holyoke Avenue and 202nd Street.
- Seek ways to better define open space to the east of Holyoke Avenue as part of a community greenway by building a trail that links with the existing greenway trail and constructing a bridge-like structure on Holyoke Avenue over the Central District Greenway.

North Holyoke Avenue

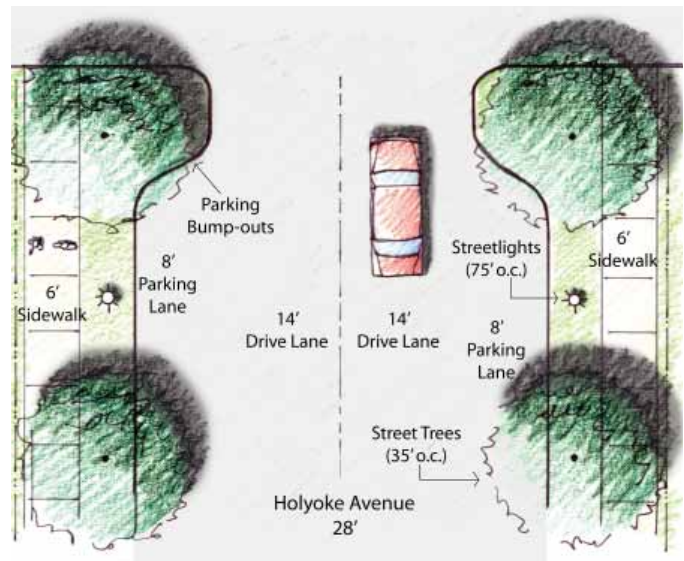
The planning process highlighted the importance of North Holyoke Avenue (from 207th Street to 202nd Street/CSAH 50). This corridor links the commercial core of Downtown with the civic and commercial development along 202nd Street. The Corridor is also part of a mature and strong residential neighborhood. The Downtown Development Guide seeks to preserve and strengthen the existing single family residential character of North Holyoke Avenue. The current condition of the housing stock along north Holyoke Avenue provides the basis for a strong gateway to the commercial core of Downtown. A change in land use is not needed to provide the connection between the Downtown core and 202nd Street. Further, the current condition of the housing stock does not indicate the need to encourage redevelopment.

This strategy must not be mistaken as a “do nothing” approach. The City should actively seek to maintain and enhance existing character of this area as a residential neighborhood by:

- Using the Comprehensive Plan and land use controls to establish strong edges that prevent the incremental conversion of property to non-residential uses.
- Using regulations and financial incentives to promote property maintenance and to prevent undesired uses of property.
- Making streetscape improvements to enhance street as corridor to Downtown.
- Enhancing opportunity for pedestrian and bicycle use.

Parking

Parking is an important ingredient of a successful Downtown. One of the recommendations in the Guide is to create a public parking system in Downtown Lakeville. This recommendation was also made in the 2000 Downtown Lakeville Parking Study. The City would be responsible for managing the parking lot, including design, maintenance and signage. The City has better mechanisms for allocating costs and collecting monies from benefiting properties. The Guide recommends the Ben Franklin Block as the location for the initial public parking lot. A related long-term strategy is to encourage property owners to add rear entrances and to improve the appearance of the building facing the parking lot. This strategy is intended to enhance the customer friendly nature of Downtown.



A key public initiative in the North Holyoke Avenue in the expansion of the existing system of sidewalk and streetscape improvements. The public spaces must work with private development to form an impressive gateway to Downtown. Public improvements proposed for Holyoke Avenue include:

- *Intensification of street trees creates an attractive and enticing corridor.*
- *Sidewalks should be moved back from the curb line to provide space for street trees and to enhance comfort and safety for pedestrians.*
- *Sidewalk and streetscape improvements should be made on the east side of the street.*
- *Curb “bump outs” at street intersections aid with pedestrian crossing and help to calm traffic.*

Implementation

The Downtown Development Guide is intended to be a relevant and useful tool for guiding public and private actions in Downtown. To serve as such a tool, the Guide must provide direction on the steps that are need to convert ideas into realities. The Implementation chapter focuses on the keys to creating and sustaining the Downtown desired by Lakeville.

The experience of other cities shows that several factors are important ingredients for the successful implementation of downtown plans:

Patience: The vision for Downtown cannot be implemented overnight. The time frame for implementation reflects its evolutionary nature; it looks forward over a period of years. The desired change often requires the patience to wait for the right things to happen, rather than making changes simply to be seen as doing something.

Commitment: Commitment to this Development Guide and patience go hand-in-hand. This Guide does not simply seek to attract development to Downtown; it also seeks to move Downtown toward a vision for the future. There is a difference. Commitment to the Development Guide means the willingness to actively promote public and private investments that achieve the vision, and to deter developments that do not fit. Not all of these decisions will be easy.

Public-Private Partnerships: Implementation of this Development Guide requires a continuation of the public-private partnerships that have been found in Downtown Lakeville for many years. Both city government and businesses must actively work to achieve the vision for Downtown.

Financial Reality: Implementing the Development Guide requires the careful investment of public funds, but the private side of the financial equation must not be overlooked. New development and existing businesses will pay for part of the improvements called for in the Guide. Implementing the Development Guide seeks to balance the investment in public initiatives with the creation of a financial environment that sustains businesses.

Strategic Investments: If financial support for the Development Guide was unlimited, the need for strategic decisions would be less important. With limited funds, though, every expenditure is crucial. It is not possible to undertake immediately all of the initiatives described in this Development Guide. Needs and opportunities not contemplated in this Guide may arise in the future. Every investment must be evaluated for its impact on achieving the vision for the future of Downtown Lakeville.

Roles and Responsibilities

There is a temptation to give responsibility for implementation of the Downtown Development Guide to the City of Lakeville. Many of the powers and resources needed to undertake the actions described in this Guide are held by the City. The success of Downtown Lakeville cannot be made the sole responsibility of city government. Achieving the vision for Downtown requires on-going collaboration of both public and private stakeholders. Key players include:

- Business and Property Owners
- Downtown Lakeville Business Association (DLBA)
- City Council
- Planning Commission
- Economic Development Commission (EDC)
- Arts Center Board
- Independent School District 194

Annual Downtown Action Plan

Implementation of the Downtown Development Guide is not a single action. Implementation is a collection of public and private actions that occur over a period of years. The City of Lakeville, working with other stakeholders, should create an Annual Downtown Action Plan as a means of focusing on current actions to be taken. The use of an Annual Downtown Action Plan keeps an active and current focus on achieving the vision for Downtown. This Plan also becomes a tool for communication and collaboration between the City and the Downtown stakeholders.

The elements of the 2007 Downtown Action Plan should include at least the following items.

- **Public Parking System.** The City should take the first steps towards the establishment of a public parking system in Downtown.
- **Comprehensive Plan.** The Downtown Development Guide must be considered in the process of updating the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- **208th Street Plaza.** In 2007, the Plaza should evolve from concept to preliminary design.
- **Enggren's Mall.** The short-term goal is to fill available space with businesses that contribute to the overall business environment in Downtown. The key task for 2007 will be understanding the owner's plan for the configuration of the building.
- **Ben Franklin Block.** The focus for this Block is the establishment of a public parking lot.
- **Gateways.** Exploration of the gateway improvements in 2007 should focus on the design, funding and potential locations.
- **Iberia Avenue.** The City is scheduled to update its Transportation Plan in 2007. This process should be used to conduct a technical evaluation of extending Iberia Avenue to 210th Street.
- **North Holyoke Avenue.** The North Holyoke Avenue area, as well as other single-family neighborhoods surrounding Downtown, should receive special attention in the Comprehensive Plan update. Efforts should be made to identify sources of funding for loans and/or grants for homeowners to make improvements and upgrades to their homes.
- **Pedestrian Connections.** Initiatives to improve pedestrian connections to Downtown that should receive additional attention in 2007 include adding proposed trail and bike lane improvements should be added to the Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan, evaluation of the wayfinding concept, funding for these initiatives should be included in the City's capital improvements program.



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