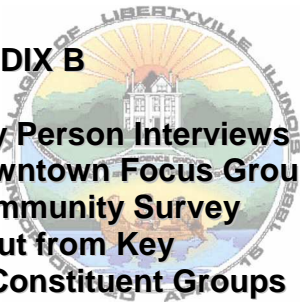


APPENDIX B

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RESULTS

APPENDIX B

- B.1 Key Person Interviews
- B.2 Downtown Focus Group
- B.3 Community Survey
- B.4 Input from Key
Constituent Groups





B.1

KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS

Key person interviews were held on January 24, 2002 and January 30, 2002. Participants were chosen to provide a representative cross-section of residents, and business and community leaders. The interviews were organized around key questions, which addressed Libertyville's main planning issues. The responses are summarized below.

How would you describe Libertyville as a community?

Responses varied, but it was clear that the residents interviewed had a strong sense of civic pride. One interviewee saw Libertyville composed of four components, which were also lauded by others in the course of the interviews – the schools, the municipal system, local community organizations and the churches. Another saw Libertyville as a fairly self-contained community that, while large in population, maintains a small-town feel. All agreed that the Downtown is key to the identity of Libertyville and exerts a very positive influence over the Village as a whole.

How has Libertyville changed in the last 10 years and have these changes been positive or negative?

In general, the interviewees saw the changes that have occurred in Libertyville over the past ten years as positive. One area of concern has been the rising cost of housing and property taxes. The MainStreet Libertyville program, and the changes in Downtown, were cited by many as an example of the positive changes that have occurred in the Village.

What do you see as the three biggest issues facing Libertyville in the next decade?

Most did not respond with a list of three issues but, instead, cited what they perceived as the biggest issues facing Libertyville. The Library came up frequently in the course of the interviews, with residents wanting the issue of the Library's future settled, but realizing expansion is necessary. Other concerns included parking and traffic, teardowns, and high property taxes.

How much should Libertyville grow? Where should growth occur? What types of development should be encouraged?

When looking at Libertyville's growth, interviewees agreed that the Village is still growing and needs to prepare for that inevitable growth in terms of providing the necessary infrastructure, dealing with the burden of additional traffic, and the need for economic diversification. Frequently mentioned suggestions included transit-oriented development around Metra stations and annexation of additional land. Also, as the Village grows, there is concern that there will be no attainable housing available for young families and empty-nesters. Two additional concerns are how the Village will prepare for an aging population and the need for a teardown ordinance to prevent out-of-scale housing within Libertyville's neighborhoods.

What is your view of the Downtown?

Vacancies negatively impact the Downtown, a problem cited by all interviewees. Also, the type of stores Downtown should be expanded. This was also noted in the Community Survey (see [Section B.3](#)), where residents responded by noting what else (in terms of retail) they wanted to see Downtown. Parking was again cited as a problem, as was the exclusion of South Milwaukee Avenue from the benefits of the MainStreet Libertyville program. In general though, the Downtown solicited a very positive reaction, with particular praise for Cook Park as it provides a unique center to the Heritage Area.

Does Libertyville have a traffic problem? Where are the specific areas of concern?

Traffic is considered a problem within Libertyville. The high amount of traffic causes additional problems, such as cut-throughs on residential streets. Route 176 was cited as a problematic thoroughfare, especially during rush hour. The extension of Route 53 through Libertyville was viewed as one possible solution to these problems.

What is your view of the range of housing within Libertyville? Are there housing types and/or price ranges that are missing and need to be encouraged? Are there issues with new construction in Libertyville? Especially regarding new homes being built within existing neighborhoods?

Teardowns and attainable housing were two major areas of concern during the key person interviews. Young families and empty-nesters have a difficult time affording a home in Libertyville. For those who grew up in the Village and want to move back, it is hard to afford even a smaller home. On a related note, property taxes continue to rise, which may push some long-time residents out. Empty-nesters, especially since Libertyville's population is aging, would like

to remain within the Village and there are limited options in terms of lower maintenance homes, such as townhomes or condominiums. Teardowns are also a concern, as new construction is, at times, out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood. As one interviewee commented, “teardowns are good when you are tearing down the tired old houses, but it needs to be regulated.”

B.2

DOWNTOWN FOCUS GROUPS

A focus group session was held on April 3, 2002. From this session it became clear that the Downtown Heritage Area is very important to the residents of Libertyville. Many identified the Downtown as key to the Village's identity. There is a synergy present between residents of Libertyville and the Downtown businesses - residents try to buy what they can from Downtown stores, the programs sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and the MainStreet Libertyville program, such as Lunch in the Park, are a major attraction for residents, and the small town feel of the Downtown is highly valued.

However, concerns emerged through the course of the session. Parking was frequently cited as a problem. Comments ranged from an inability to find a parking space to the lack of signage indicating additional lots, such as additional parking located behind the Civic Center. There was also apprehension regarding the addition of either structured or surface parking to Downtown; the addition of parking lots may relieve parking problems but there are concerns regarding costs and aesthetics. When discussion turned to placing higher density residential around the Downtown, the question was posed – “Can Downtown sustain itself when more traffic resulting from more residential is added to the current load?”

The Downtown focus group also discussed affordable housing in Libertyville. New residences are high-end homes. There are few affordable homes for young families or those on a fixed-income; the most frequent comment was that children who grew up in Libertyville and have started their own families, now cannot afford to move back.

The focus group discussion was dominated by Downtown and a concern for its preservation and sustainability. However, residents of Libertyville are aware of the larger issues in the Village, as evidenced in the summary of the Key Person Interviews and the Community Survey (see [Sections B.1 and B.3](#)).

B.3 COMMUNITY SURVEY

Surveys were sent to 7,183 residential households and 1,161 Libertyville businesses as part of the planning process. 2,164 surveys were returned and tabulated - a 26% response rate. Highlights from the community survey responses are summarized below. A copy of the survey can be found at the end of this Section.

General Profile of Survey Respondents
Table B.1:
General Profile of Survey Respondents

Most respondents have lived in Libertyville for many years – over half have lived in the Village for more than 11 years. An overwhelming majority own single-family homes; very few rent either a home or apartment. When cross-referenced (years living in Libertyville versus home type), single-family homeowners dominate each category of Libertyville residency. Over half of the respondents reported no children in their household. The next highest percentage reports two children in a household. Of the respondents, most households have one full-time employed person, followed by households with two employed persons. It is important to note that 17.1% of the respondents are retired and another cross-reference shows that 36.4% of retired workers have lived in Libertyville for over 20 years. Of those respondents currently employed, approximately one-fifth work in Libertyville; most respondents work in Lake County (including the communities of Vernon Hills, Mundelein, Gurnee, Waukegan, and North Chicago).

TABLE B.1: GENERAL PROFILE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS
35.2% have lived in Libertyville more than 20 years 24.0% have lived in Libertyville 11-20 years
81.8% own single-family homes 6.1% own townhomes
54.3% households have no children under the age of 18 19.3 % have two children under 18
47.3% of households have one full-time job 30.6% of households have two full-time jobs 17.1% retired
20.7% work in Libertyville 16.7% work elsewhere in Lake County

**General Perceptions of
Libertyville**
Table B.2:
General Perceptions of
Libertyville

The strongest perception of Libertyville is that it is a safe family-oriented community. In terms of Libertyville’s character, this perception received the strongest response, with over half of the respondents “strongly agreeing.” Combined with those that “agree,” 97.6% of respondents believe in this statement. When cross-referenced against the number of years lived in Libertyville, this perception is supported by the majority of all respondents. This reflects the large number of respondents who chose “character of the community” as their first choice when asked why they live in Libertyville.

TABLE B.2: GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF LIBERTYVILLE
Respondents live in Libertyville because: community character - 37.6% of “number one” choice schools – 28.9% of “number one” choice
57.3% strongly agree and 40.6% agree “Libertyville is a safe, family-oriented community”
36.4% strongly agree and 53.7% agree “Libertyville is an active and vibrant community”
33.7% strongly agree and 50.4% agree “Libertyville has a small town atmosphere”
18.8% strongly agree and 54.3% agree “Libertyville has a balance of housing, industrial and commercial uses”
22.2% strongly agree and 48.2% agree “the changes Libertyville has undergone over the past ten years have, for the most part, been positive”

Again, when cross-referenced against the number of years the respondent has lived in Libertyville, the character of the community also dominated as “first choice,” no matter how long someone has resided in Libertyville. In keeping with this perception, most (90.1%) believe Libertyville is an active and vibrant community, and most (84.1%) feel the Village has a small town atmosphere. In regard to the mix of commercial, industrial and housing uses within the Village, most feel the mix is appropriate, however 16.8% are unsure of the validity of that statement, perhaps due to a lack of a clear definition of what comprises a good balance. Finally, these positive perceptions are reinforced by 70.4% of respondents who feel Libertyville’s changes over the past ten years have been positive.

**Libertyville’s
Downtown**
Table B.3:
Libertyville’s
Downtown

Almost two-thirds of the respondents visit Downtown frequently and another third visit often. More specifically, the Library is used “frequently” by 21.8%, “often” by 41.0%, and “every couple of months” by 22.4%. 13.4% of respondents do not use the Library at all. However, most respondents feel the Library is a key part of Libertyville’s identity and three-quarters consider the Library key to Downtown. 95.1% of respondents believe that Downtown’s character should be actively preserved.

TABLE B.3: LIBERTYVILLE'S DOWNTOWN¹
Respondents visit Libertyville's Downtown (Heritage Area): 35.3% - 1-2 times a week 22.4% - 3-5 times a week 21.6% - 1-2 times every couple weeks
Respondents visit the Library: 25.4% - 1-2 times every couple weeks 22.4% - every couple of months 17.9% - 1-2 times a week 15.6% - once or twice a month 13.4% - not at all
52.7% strongly agree and 29.0% agree "the Library is a key part of Libertyville's identity as a community"
51.0% strongly agree and 27.6% agree "the Library is a key element of Downtown"
72.1% strongly agree and 23.0% agree that the "Downtown character should be actively preserved"
Parking Downtown 56.1% - "sometimes difficult" 30.6% - "never difficult"
41.4% agree and 23.4% disagree that "there is adequate parking Downtown"
Most frequently, residents visit: 32.2% - Downtown restaurants 27.8% - Cook Park/Library 33.8% - a variety of uses
38.3% agree and 27.7% disagree "the mix of stores and services Downtown meets (their) needs"
29.7% strongly agree and 47.2% agree that "community events draw me to the Downtown"

In regard to the Library, longer-term residents (those who have lived in Libertyville for 20 years or more) show a stronger affinity to the Library's presence Downtown. 57.9% of those respondents that have lived in Libertyville for over 20 years "strongly agree" that the "Library is a key part of Libertyville's identity as a community." Only 40.3% of residents who have lived in the Village for less than 2 years responded with "strongly agree." When asked if the Library is a "key element of Downtown," again longer-term residents, especially 20-years-plus residents had the highest percentage – 55.5% responding "strongly agree." Only 38.4% of newer residents "strongly agreed" with the statement. In general, evidenced by the response to the previous statement ("the Library is a key part of Libertyville's identity as a community") and the response to this statement ("the Library is a key element of Downtown"), the longer someone has lived in Libertyville, the more they feel that the Library is of central significance to Libertyville's Downtown.

The majority of respondents do not find parking to be consistently difficult. Over half find parking difficult "sometimes," but only 10.7% find parking to be difficult all the time. However, when asked, 41.4% of respondents find an adequate amount of parking Downtown. Frustrations are more apparent in this question, as 23.4% responded that they disagree that there is enough parking.

¹ Definitions of Time:
 "Frequent" = 3-5 times or 1-2 times a week
 "Often" = 1-2 times every couple weeks or 1-2 times a month

Split almost equally into thirds, respondents most frequently visit restaurants, Cook Park/ Library, and a then a variety of other uses found Downtown. A similar breakdown is seen when respondents are asked about where they bring their families Downtown; restaurants dominate, with Cook Park/Library second, and community events third. When asked about the mix of stores Downtown, 38.3% agreed that stores and services fulfill their needs, while 27.7% disagree – finding the mix of stores insufficient. However, the majority of respondents agree that community events Downtown are valuable – combined, over three-quarters of the respondents are drawn to Downtown by community events.

Libertyville’s Housing & Neighborhoods
Table B.4:
Libertyville’s Housing & Neighborhoods

The respondents like the neighborhoods that make up Libertyville and want to preserve them. When asked whether Libertyville has a good range of housing in terms of type or style, most respondents found that statement to be true – reflecting the satisfaction with the character of the community. However, when inquiries are made into housing price, housing density and the idea of “attainable housing,” the respondents show more division. One-fifth of respondents disagree that the Libertyville housing market provides a good range of prices. There is resistance toward townhome or condo development in the community by half of the respondents. When the issue of “attainable” housing is brought up, a good number of respondents reply with “unsure” – perhaps reflecting a lack of clear definition in what the Village means by attainable or whether there is attainable housing in the Village currently (30.6% are unsure whether there is enough “attainable” housing in Libertyville). There is also resistance toward accepting higher density as way to accommodate more attainable housing - approximately 40% of respondents disagree.

TABLE B.4: LIBERTYVILLE'S HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS
47.7% agree and 20.6% disagree “Libertyville has a good range of housing in terms of price”
14.9% strongly agree and 67.6% agree “Libertyville has a good range of housing in terms of housing type or style”
30.2% agree, 30.6% are unsure and 25.3% disagree that there is enough “attainable” housing in Libertyville
22.2% agree and 54.2% are unsure Libertyville has enough rental housing available
27.7% are unsure, 27.6% disagree and 23.5% strongly disagree “Libertyville would benefit from more townhome or condominium developments”
25.6% agree, 24.8% are unsure, 21.3% disagree and 19.8% strongly disagree that increased density is a way to accommodate the need for “attainable” housing
25.9% strongly agree and 70.1% agree that they “like the neighborhoods that make up Libertyville”
47.1% strongly agree and 40.3% agree that “the character of older neighborhoods should be preserved”

Libertyville’s Economic Development & Growth

**Table B.5:
Libertyville’s Economic Development & Growth**

Over three-quarters of the respondents believe Libertyville should try to attract more retail and restaurants to Downtown; some of this response may reflect the sentiment of the 27.7% who disagree that the mix of stores and services Downtown meets their needs. As a side note, many respondents used the fill-in-the-blank portions of the survey to state their specific preferences and needs in terms of retail and restaurants. The respondents are aware of the industrial and office facilities within the Village, and over three-quarters agree that they should be protected. Finally, development and growth enjoy support from the respondents – over half agree that if Route 53 is constructed, Libertyville should annex to control commercial development near the roadway. Northward growth to Casey Road also enjoys support (approximately 30% of respondents), but also receives a significant “unsure” response (37.8%).

TABLE B.5: LIBERTYVILLE’S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH
26.9% strongly agree and 50.0% agree that Libertyville should “diversify the commercial tax/retail base and attract more retail and restaurants”
18.8% strongly agree and 57.3% agree that the “industrial and office facilities are important and should be protected”
27.1% strongly agree and 36.5% agree that if Route 53 is constructed, “Libertyville should annex to control commercial development near the roadway”
29.8% agree and 37.8% are unsure “Libertyville should grow northward to Casey Road”

Quadrant Breakdown of Survey Respondents

**Table B.6:
Quadrant Breakdown**

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the quadrant of Libertyville in which they lived. The quadrants were broken down using the axis of Park Avenue (Route 176) and Milwaukee Avenue; the quadrants were then named Northwest, Northeast, Southwest and Southeast.

Most times, within the breakdown of responses by quadrant, a cross-reference does not show significant differences. In general, each quadrant has similar proportions of term of residency; the Southeast and Southwest Quadrants have the highest percentages of residents who have lived in Libertyville over 20 years. The majority of respondents from all quadrants are single-family homeowners, including 92.1% of those in the Northwest Quadrant. The Northeast Quadrant has the highest percentage of rental housing (11.1%) – significantly more than other quadrants.

As the earlier analysis revealed, most residents are drawn to Libertyville because of the character of the community. When results are analyzed by quadrant, the Northwest Quadrant has many respondents who responded that schools are a “first choice” for living in Libertyville. It is also the Northwest Quadrant that has the highest percentage of children under 18 – over a quarter of the households have two children under 18.

The attitudes expressed by respondents when total responses are examined are generally the same when broken into the four quadrants.

TABLE B.6: QUADRANT BREAKDOWN
<p>Respondents who have lived in Libertyville over 20 years:</p> <p>SE Quadrant - 39.1%</p> <p>SW Quadrant - 39.9%</p> <p>NE Quadrant - 33.1%</p> <p>NW Quadrant - 27.8%</p>
<p>81.1% of all respondents own a single-family home:</p> <p>NE Quadrant - 71.1%</p> <p>NW Quadrant - 92.1%</p> <p>SE Quadrant - 74.6%</p> <p>SW Quadrant - 84.2%</p>
<p>The largest amount of rental housing was in the NE Quadrant with 11.1% of respondents (NW – 2.4%, SE – 0.8%, SW – 2.4%)</p>
<p>36.9% of respondents from the NE Quadrant, 39.8% from the NW, 38.1% from the SE, and 36.2% from the SW live in Libertyville because of “the character of the community” (as first choice)</p>
<p>20.6% of respondents from the NE Quadrant, 35.6% from the NW, 26.2% from the SE, and 30.0% from the SW live in Libertyville because of “schools” (as first choice)</p>
<p>The NW Quadrant has the highest percentage of children (under 18) in the household: 43.0% had none, 13.5% had one, 26.0% had two, 12.5% had three, 3.8% had four or more</p>

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**INSERT COPY OF
COMMUNITY SURVEY**

B.4

INPUT FROM KEY CONSTITUENT GROUPS

The Comprehensive Plan Review Committee (CPRC) met with a number of key constituent groups over the course of the comprehensive planning process. These groups included the Economic Development Commission, freshman and sophomore students from Libertyville High School, the Department of Public Works, East Side Industrial Area property owners, MainStreet Libertyville, Condell Medical Center and the School Districts.

The kick-off session with the CPRC brought up the following areas of concern, among others:

- Does the Village need a better retail/office/service mix in its core?
- Being sales tax dependent on automobile sales.
- What businesses are missing Downtown?
- Housing gentrification and teardown issues.
- How do you build affordable housing?
- A unique town center that is functional.
- The east entrance to town along Route 176.
- Milwaukee Avenue south of Route 176.
- Transitional issues: how close to allow residential to industrial?
- Evaluating opportunities for land annexations.
- School Street: commercial development vs. office vs. residential, and its relationship to Downtown.
- Cut-through traffic; volume or behavior of traffic.
- Information on youth needs.

Through the course of meeting with the abovementioned groups, many of these initial concerns and issues were refined. Highlighted in this Section are some of the decisions reached by these groups that have impacted the direction of this Comprehensive Plan.

East Side Area

The East Side Area was one of the sections of the Village discussed at the CPRC meetings and the initial conclusions reached about the area were:

- The East Side Area is needed to maintain and grow the tax base.
- It is necessary to reduce conflicts between industrial users and adjacent land uses.
- The East Side Area can provide opportunities for small industrial users closer to Downtown.

- The character of residential areas located in the East Side Area should be preserved in terms of scale of density, lot coverage and variety.
- The East Side Area is part of maintaining Libertyville's identity as a town within a town.

Following this kick-off session, a meeting with East Side Area business owners and operators brought forward more issues for the area, which were also taken into consideration in the crafting of this Plan. These included:

- The East Side Area is at full occupancy.
- When will the Village stop residential encroachment?
- Need a buffer/transition between residential and industrial.
- Noise issues; issue of who was there first in dealing with complaints.
- Any Village tax breaks possible for commercial/industrial/retail development?
- Truck route should be untouchable.
- This is a unique area with small businesses that have value.

Downtown

Another CPRC meeting established the concerns regarding the Downtown:

- Need to introduce a residential component to create a "live/work" Downtown.
- Need for additional commercial choice, such as groceries, clothing, retail and activities for teenagers; continuation of the food and beverage choices.
- Realization that Downtown cannot compete with shopping centers, but the strength is in specialty and niche goods.
- Need to create design standards for additions, remodelings and new buildings.

Also, certain aspects of the Downtown that were successful and should be maintained were highlighted, including:

- The pedestrian-scale and pedestrian connections.
- Multi-sided buildings with two fronts and no back.
- Three-story height limit.
- Zero front yard setbacks.

A meeting with the Economic Development Commission further established the role of Downtown. In the course of the discussion, it became clear that the Downtown has a significant role in the economics of Libertyville. Residents support local services and therefore would benefit from the addition of residential units Downtown. However, more retail and residential in Downtown will place additional stress on the already burdened grid system and so considerations regarding more traffic problems should be considered. In addition, the discussion addressed whether or not there was a "parking problem or a parking perception problem." (CPRC: Minutes – May 1, 2002) Currently, problems with parking appear to be a perception problem, but there is a need to provide

more parking for the future and to make the current parking facilities more pedestrian-friendly.

Libertyville Students

In meetings with students from Libertyville High School, students provided a number of insights into how they view the Village and how they use the Downtown. The following are some of their observations and suggestions.

Freshman and Sophomore Students:

- Some students said they frequently used the Downtown, especially the Library, the park and restaurants. Others said that it does not appeal to their age bracket.
- Most thought the Downtown should have a record store and an arcade.
- The students also thought the Village should install lights on the bike paths.
- The students want to live in Libertyville and stated that it is a good place for families.

Junior and Senior Students:

- Downtown stores generally serve the older age bracket.
- Students come Downtown for the restaurants and Downtown events.
- The students found the Library a difficult place to park.
- The Library is “extremely important and is great for school projects.” (CPRC: Minutes – May 15, 2002).
- The older students also stated that they used the Library more now than they did when they were younger.
- The students view Libertyville as their home.
- The students want to live in Libertyville and stated that it is a good place for families.

Input from these key constituent groups, as well as others, over the course of the planning process was essential to the creation of this Plan. The consensus reached in these meetings is reflected in the goals and policies within the Plan.