



## **SECTION 4 - PROCESS**

The visioning process began with the Steering Committee creating a detailed work program outlining the steps in the visioning process. Three large public meetings were held from January to July of 2003. NIPC prepared an extensive GIS database and maps for the public meetings. During the meetings stakeholders worked on defining community goals and objectives for the Green Vision. Each meeting was designed to move through a series of successive steps leading toward consensus on a final statement of goals giving guidance for all actions to follow.

### **PROJECT HISTORY**

#### **Kickoff Session: January 21, 2003**

The Kickoff event was an inaugural session introducing the green vision process to the community. The event included a presentation outlining the significance of a green vision. A green vision will build upon the Village's mission statement and provide a contextual framework for the Village's new comprehensive plan. A green vision can enhance the comprehensive plan by placing special emphasis on the importance of natural resources for the community's quality of

life. Representing a community's shared values and inspiring the imagination, a green vision promotes conservation of a community's natural resources by providing a basis for action for conservation.

It was explained that the Green Vision would include a green vision statement, a series of goals and objectives, maps of critical natural areas as identified by the community, development prototypes, and recommended actions to achieve the goals. A PowerPoint presentation included photos of significant rural and natural areas and addressed the question "What's So Green about Homer Glen?" NIPC representatives explained how the visioning process would work. The residents and other stakeholders were given dates for visioning events and encouraged to participate in the visioning process.

#### **First Workshop: February 24, 2003**

The first workshop began with an introduction and overview of the process and keypad polling to identify participants' background. Keypad polling was also used to identify main environmental concerns and to rank environmental issues identified by IEPA. The stakeholders discussed the key environmental issues facing the community, identifying environmental challenges and opportunities. They worked at small tables, identifying the issues one-by-one. Issues were written on large flip-chart sheets at each table. After the naming of issues, voting occurred with dots to rank the importance of the issues.

In response to the identified issues, the stakeholders began to discuss goals. Again working at the small tables, goals were formulated and written. These were voted on at the tables to determine the most significant or important goals, and the results were reported to the whole room. Then, each table was assigned one or more of the goals to continue to discuss and modify. The initial work on goal statements

was followed by a discussion of objectives. Participants, writing on letter-size sheets, listed objectives and submitted these sheets for later consideration.

From the stakeholders' work emerged a first draft of the Green Vision goals and objectives. The goals were arranged into general themes.

## **Second Workshop:**

**April 26, 2003**

Stakeholders, again working at tables, reviewed the issues and draft goals from the first workshop. Each table was assigned specific goal statements to review and revise. Participants could decide to work with the draft goals or develop entirely new ones. They also discussed whether there were any additional goals needed within the theme areas. Facilitators monitored the table discussions and then wrote down goals and the changes in goals that resulted from discussion. This continued until consensus was reached at each table.

Participants next reviewed the draft objectives and other materials from the first workshop. Table discussions began with the facilitators recording the objectives, as new objectives were added or revised based on the discussions. This process continued until ideas were complete and there was consensus. Objectives were listed in order of priority by participants.

Table spokespersons reported the new revised goals. They shared the two or three most immediate objectives with the stakeholders present. Keypad voting took place to gauge acceptance.

Dave Yocca and Charles McGhee Hassrick, of the Conservation Design Forum, provided a visual presentation on green design opportunities. This was followed by keypad polling on conventional versus conservation design.

## **Third Workshop:**

**July 14, 2003**

Participants created maps identifying the resource areas of greatest value in Homer Glen. Five groups were formed to work on large table size maps.

Table 1: Habitat, Wildlife and Water Resources

Table 2: Community Image and Open Space

Table 3: Green Circulation: Transportation, Trails and Recreation

Table 4: Conservation Design Neighborhood Prototype

Table 5: Town Center Concept Design

Maps at tables one, two, and three depicted elements of the Village's natural resources, which were superimposed over an aerial image of Homer Glen and its surroundings. Participants marked trails for pedestrians, bicycles and horses. They identified a route for a new community transit system, indicating important civic assets within the Village. Also outlined were wildlife and stream corridors and important woodland and wetland areas. Participants at tables four and five worked on maps to develop concept plans for a new town center and a conservation design neighborhood. They worked on more specific details of neighborhood design that was carefully set into the natural environment. Specialists in site planning led the discussions at these tables in a studio format.

After the workshops, NIPC integrated the mapping results into a geographic information system (GIS). The GIS maps were reproduced in standard graphical formats. They were compared and corresponded closely with the Land Use Plan and the Parks, Open Space and Environmental Plan of the Village's official comprehensive land use plan. The work completed by stakeholders in the third workshop amplified and added knowledge about critical natural resource areas.

## **Conservation Design Workshop: September 2, 2003**

Stakeholders voiced a preference for conservation design developments as indicated by keypad polling. Before approving objectives recommending conservation design developments, the stakeholders indicated the need for more specific information about the costs and benefits of conservation design. A Conservation Design Workshop was arranged which featured environmental experts presenting model planning principles designed to conserve identified natural features within a context of sustainable development. Speakers explained the economic and environmental benefits which are interrelated with site planning. They demonstrated conservation practices which provide positive community benefits such as minimizing storm water run off, improving water quality, preserving natural resources, enhancing marketability and decreasing development costs while increasing property values.

The workshop featured four main speakers:

- Dennis Dreher, NIPC.  
Mr. Dreher explained how natural features can be protected within a context of sustainable development.
- Bill Ward, Principal, The Cadmus Group, Inc.  
Mr. Ward addressed the impact of stormwater runoff on water quality. He spoke about the regulatory requirements the Village will face under the NPDES Phase II Stormwater Rule and the need to prevent water quality problems as the Village develops.
- David Yocca, Director of Landscape Architecture and Planning, Conservation Design Forum.

Mr. Yocca explained how to integrate natural systems into new neighborhood and community developments in an ecologically sustainable way. He discussed a holistic approach to storm - water management, soil health, natural landscapes, and “green” buildings and infrastructure. The presentation looked at three kinds of project examples: watershed scale; community/ neighborhood scale; individual site or parcel scale.

- Jeff Swano, Enviro Impact Solutions  
Mr. Swano addressed the economic impacts of conservation design. He compared construction and maintenance costs of conservation development versus traditional development.

## **Conservation Design Guided Tour: November 8, 2003**

Stakeholders, members of the Village Board and the Steering Committee visited conservation design neighborhoods and corporate campuses. Their observations helped them to learn more about the principles of this important conservation technique and observe real world applications. The sites visited were the following:

- Tellabs – Bolingbrook
- Tellabs – Naperville
- Tanglewood Hills
- Mill Creek
- DuPage County Forest Preserve headquarters – Wheaton

## **Community Mailing**

During the winter of 2004, the Steering Committee sent a community wide mailing seeking feedback concerning the draft goals and objectives created at the visioning sessions. The mailing included a brief review of the visioning purpose and process. It included the draft Vision Statement and complete list of draft goals and objectives.

## **Report to Village Officials:**

### **April 16, 2004**

The Green Vision was presented to the Village officials along with a plan for innovative stormwater management on a stakeholder's property. The concepts of the plan demonstrated how the objectives of the Green Vision could be successfully implemented.

### **Grand Finale:**

### **May 21, 2004**

The Green Vision for the Homer Glen Community was unveiled at the Grand Finale in May. A PowerPoint program which represented the two years of work was presented. Many displays showcased current and planned activities relating to the Goals and Objectives of the Green Vision. The more than 250 attendees were encouraged to participate in the implementation process.

## **SIGNIFICANT RESULTS**

The visioning process produced several significant results:

- Homer Glen Green Vision Statement
- Goals and Objectives with recommended actions to achieve those objectives
- Report mailed to all residents requesting feedback on goals and objectives
- Benchmarks to measure progress of implementation
- Maps of the Village's critical resource areas
- A town center concept design
- A concept plan for a conservation design neighborhood
- Support for more environmentally sensitive plans by stakeholders

- Application of conservation design techniques by stakeholders
- Green Vision as a valuable tool for sustainability to guide future development
- Community acceptance of the Green Vision
- Multimedia presentations available as an educational tool
- CD copies of the Green Vision
- Executive Summary and Final Report documenting all that has taken place

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Steering Committee members made initial recommendations for the Next Steps that highlight many of the recommended actions.

1. Create Implementation Plans
2. Establish Oversight Responsibility
3. Develop Education & Awareness Program
  - Residents
  - Developers
  - Businesses
  - Teachers/Students (special projects)
  - Elected Officials
4. Vision Promotion & Sharing  
Develop ideas for sharing the Green Vision, ideas, and implementation strategies with others, under the premise that "Nature Knows No Boundaries" including:
  - Neighboring municipalities
  - Chicago Wilderness
  - Reference Library
5. Review efficacy and make recommended changes to implementation plans
6. Community Involvement
  - Get involved!
  - You CAN make a difference!

## CONCLUSION

Passionate and dedicated residents and stakeholders have developed this collective “green vision” together, including goals and recommended actions for improving our local environment. Ongoing success of this vision rests upon *continued* community participation and commitment.

Homer Glen residents, local businesses, property owners, developers, local officials, and others must join together to ensure our fast-growing community continues to take pro-active steps now in the interests of an environmentally healthy future for our community.

Working together strategically will ensure environmental issues such as quality water, the development of parks and recreation areas, and the restoration and protection of natural areas are a high priority. Of equal importance are issues of community image and character and transportation. As a new village, we have the unique opportunity and challenge to use this vision to build upon our capacity to protect the environment and enhance our community’s well being.

It is essential and the benefits profound . . . for our families . . . for our children . . . for everyone!

## LESSONS LEARNED

Steering Committee members evaluated the process to create the Green Vision. An initial assessment identified what worked well and what might have worked better.

The following aspects of the planning process apparently worked well:

- The stakeholder recruitment campaign
- The media packets
- Presentations and activities

The keypad computer polling

- Individual table facilitators
- Availability of maps and resources
- Conservation Design visual aids
- The meeting locations
- The food and giveaways

The following items are suggestions for future vision planning:

### STAKEHOLDER/PARTICIPANTS

Set a goal for the number of stakeholders desired and work toward that number. Add more personal contacts, phone calls, letters, and emails if needed to reach that number.

### FINAL PRODUCTS

The desired Final Products should be determined at the beginning of the vision planning. This would include decisions such as: the number of copies of the Final Report and Executive Summary that should be printed. Other final products could include multimedia presentations and CDs or binders of the vision process documentation.

### TIMELINE

A timeline should be prepared with as many planning details conceivable, such as: committee meetings, workshops, draft copy deadlines, printing deadlines, reports due, contract facility, confirm facility arrangements, submit newsletter article, draft press release, submit press release, contact catering, shop for food, shop for prizes, and mail the Final report.

### ESTABLISH SUBCOMMITTEES

Our Steering Committee had a nice mix of talent. The committee as a whole brought much needed knowledge for directing the vision process. Establishing four subcommittees with members from the Steering Committee represented at each subcommittee meeting may have worked more efficiently. The Steering Committee would then have continued to meet once a month, but more preparation work would have been accomplished between Steering Committee meetings.

### **SUGGESTED SUBCOMMITTEES**

Please note that several Steering Committee members could participate on more than one subcommittee. However, one member would be needed to chair a subcommittee. The subcommittees would not be limited to Steering Committee members but could also consist of additional staff and community members. Listed below are suggestions for subcommittees.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE**

This committee would be responsible for project management, budget, timeline, stakeholder/participant communication, Steering Committee meeting agenda, distribution of minutes, Village Official communication, Executive Summary and Final Report documentation, workshop packets, copying, and printing.

#### **PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE**

This committee would be responsible for speakers, meeting facilitators, and event agendas and content.

#### **FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE**

This committee would be responsible for the physical needs of the event such as: meeting location/space, tables, AV equipment, prizes, catering, food, and beverages.

#### **PUBLIC RELATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE**

This committee would be responsible for establishing and following through a Public Relations (PR) program. This would include community mailings, newspaper articles, newsletter articles, website content, posters and communication with community organizations. This committee would also be very involved with the drafting and designing of the Executive Summary and Final Report.

### **FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW**

Establishing subcommittees will help with the attention to detail that is needed to carry out tasks. Regular review and updating of the work program should take place throughout the visioning process. To maintain communication about the process, stakeholders need to be reminded of workshops and events; the community needs to be informed through newsletter and newspaper articles, and Village Officials should receive regular reports.

The budget, detailed work program, and timeline may need to be adjusted periodically. These items should be reviewed at each Steering Committee meeting.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

More volunteers are always needed to complete tasks. Invite the stakeholders to sign up and work on a subcommittee. Many hands make for lighter work, more enthusiasm and participation between events.

### **SCHEDULING OF ACTIVITIES**

When scheduling the visioning process, consideration should be given to other meetings, community events and holidays