

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD



BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

DATE OF MEETING: April 23, 2024

To: Village President and Board of Trustees

Through: Napoleon Haney, Village Manager

From: Angela Mesaros, Director of Economic and Community Development

Topic: Presentation and Adoption of the Village of Homewood Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan

PURPOSE

Village staff, in partnership with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) and planning consultants, worked to develop the Village of Homewood Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is an approach to creating walkable, mixed-use communities in proximity to transit. The plan addresses public spaces, walking, biking, parking, development, and redevelopment in downtown Homewood. The study area encompasses roughly a 15-minute walk from the Homewood Metra rail station and is generally bounded by 183rd Street, Dixie Highway, and Park Avenue, with additional areas included along Ridge Road. The plan serves as an amendment to the Village's Comprehensive Plan and requires adoption by the Village Board.

PROCESS

In 2022, the Village of Homewood applied for and received a technical assistance grant from the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to complete a transit-oriented development (TOD) plan as part of the Community Planning Program of Projects. Through the issuance of a Request for Proposals, the RTA and the Village selected a planning consulting firm, MUSE Community + Design of Chicago, Illinois. Working with the consultant, were sub-consultants Civiltech Engineering and Latent Design Corporation, both from Chicago, Illinois.

In April 2023, staff solicited public participation through social media, email, Village website, and Village Key for volunteers from the community to serve on the Steering Committee. We received 47 responses. Of the responses, staff selected a community cross-section of 11 members to serve on the Steering Committee. The committee provided guidance and feedback on the planning process and public engagement and held five meetings over the course of the plan. Additional volunteers were invited to participate in focus groups related to business owners and developers, transit riders, residents, and the biking community. The project team hosted two focus groups with 28 participants.

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Staff consultants and members of the Steering Committee participated in Village events such as Gotts-Chalk the Walk and Fall Fest to seek input from residents. The team also hosted a Saturday pop-up at GoodSpeed Cycles, which included 60 participants, and presented at a Homewood Business Association meeting. Throughout the process, information and updates were regularly communicated to the public through a dedicated website page, social media, Village Key, and surveys.

On April 11, 2024, the Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing to review the plan. After the presentation, discussion, and audience participation, the Commission voted unanimously (with all members present) to recommend the adoption of the TOD Plan.

OUTCOME

The TOD Plan recommendations are the result of prioritizing feedback from the Steering Committee, focus groups, and public events. The plan is organized into four topic areas: Arrive Downtown (main entry points), Navigate Downtown (local transportation), Enjoy Downtown (enhancing Homewood as a destination), and Invest Downtown (development and redevelopment opportunities). Recommendations include improving the viaducts, wayfinding, pedestrian and bike networks, business support, parking changes, open space opportunities, and visioning development sites in downtown Homewood.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

- **Funding Source:** N/A
- **Budgeted Amount:** N/A
- **Cost:** N/A

LEGAL REVIEW

Completed

RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION

Adoption of the Village of Homewood Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan, an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

ATTACHMENT(S)

- Ordinance
- The Village of Homewood Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan