

**June 24, 2009: Central District Plan Update Open House
Responses to Questions at Planning Theme Stations**

PLANNING THEME: CREATING A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN

What buildings and/or street frontages best reflect the character of downtown Highland Park?

- *Consistency in design. Maintain small-town feel and look. Go to Lake Forest!*
- *Downtown Trolley – hop on/hop off. Yearly pass?*
- *There is a real need to do better vetting of publicly prominent sculptures/ memorials et al. The recent ones are tacky, unaesthetic, truly a civic embarrassment.*
- *All and any buildings with living quarters above.*
- *Old and charming with an updated look: Smith & Hawken.*
- *Another “agrees” to the above comment.*
- *Keep the most distinctive buildings, but there are many very undistinguished one-story buildings that could be redeveloped.*
- *Central Ave. from Green Bay to railroad tracks*
- *Smith and Hawken excellent adaptive reuse of auto repair shop.*
- *Central Ave. – but we miss G’selle’s*
- *Port Clinton*
- *Central St. some to the “contemporary” additional features are starting to look dated - i.e. The ‘train wash’ at RR tracks. Port Clinton is OK however.*

Would you like to live downtown Highland Park? Yes or No? If No, why not?	Where would the best location for more housing in the downtown be?
<p><i>5 Yes Responses</i></p> <p><u>YES COMMENTS:</u></p> <p><i>-Yes, in buildings that have attractive landscaping/ setting</i></p> <p><i>-Yes, but too costly and wouldn’t give up the yard</i></p> <p><i>-Needs more rental units at reasonable prices</i></p> <p><i>6 No Responses</i></p> <p><u>NO COMMENTS</u></p> <p><i>-No, need to be able to step outside to my wooded backyard.</i></p> <p><i>-No, I love living on the ravine</i></p> <p><i>-No, but only because I don’t want to leave my little house by Ravinia Business District.</i></p> <p><i>-No, not enough people my age (20’s). Too expensive.</i></p>	<p><i>-Everywhere!</i></p> <p><i>-Would not encourage more residential development until currently stalled projects come on line.</i></p> <p><i>-Not sure we need more housing downtown, but prefer townhomes to condo blocks.</i></p> <p><i>-On the fringes, above retail or offices.</i></p> <p><i>-Above commercial.</i></p> <p><i>-Affordable, Affordable, Affordable!!</i></p>

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THEME: PROMOTING COMMERCE AND SERVICE

Is the business that you work for the type that could move in downtown Highland Park and what factors might influence it to relocate?

- *No. I'm in nonprofit consulting /management with a Chicago focus*
- *Yes –inexpensive rents*
- *Greater availability of offices - office space in downtown HP is limited and sizes (sq. ft.) are small – makes for high \$/sq. ft. rent*
- *Yes. No access by el-train. High cost for office space rental.*
- *To find out:*
 - A) *Ask business owners*
 - B) *Encourage them to move here*

What business have you spent money at over the last 30 days that are located outside of downtown Highland Park?

- *Banking, grocery stores, dry cleaners, Target – on-line retailers, restaurants (but also use restaurants in downtown, too)*
- *Target, Wendy's, Denny's, Walgreen's in Ravinia*
- *For variety of retail – Hawthorne, Old Orchard, Target (H.P.), CVS*
- *Yummy Bowl, Joseph Bank, Ross Discount, County Kitchen (HP), HP Theater, Café Central, Walgreen's, Pino & Franco*
- *Walgreen's in Ravinia, Sunset-Northbrook (by my office), Trader Joe's in Northbrook*
- *Shell Gas Station in Bannockburn – they aren't taxed the extra 2 cents a gallon*
- *Mark Shale at Northbrook Ct.*
- *Dominick' at Bannockburn, Target, CVS, Photo Closet at Hawthorn Mall*
- *CVS (Northbrook Ct.), Target, Walgreen's in Ravinia, Whole Foods, Trader Joe's*
- *Denny's, Target, Dunkin Donuts/Baskin Robins at Crossroads, Old Orchard, Northbrook Ct., Jewel*
- *Outside HP: Home Depot, LF=Books, Stationary, Kinko's, Garden Fresh, Container Store, Trader Joe's, Pet store, REI, Lowes, Whole Food's, IKEA*
- *In HP: Jewel, HW businesses, Hair stylist, ACE, Mike's Fruit Stand, Gas Station*
- *Bluegrass Restaurant (HP), Tub Tim Thai (Skokie), Bluegrass Concert at American Legion Hall (Evanston)*
- *Garden Fresh, Il Forno Pizza, The Alley, Buffo's, Dominick's*
- *Poeta's, Hardware store –ACE, (too far away and not easily accessed by bike or pedestrians*
- *HP needs – Stores that don't sell exclusively small sizes & glitzy clothes*
- *Electronics, specialty foods, cheeses, men's shoes*
- *Rockport shoes, Whitefish Bay (WI) – Sales Tax < 6%!*
- *Forever 21, Grate & Barrel, Design Studio, Bebe Sport, Lululemon, Icing*
- *Mirimar, New Bistro in Ravinia, Target, Gas Station, Neighborhood Dry Cleaners, Jewel, Home Depot, Ace Hardware, REI*
- *Lake Forest book store, Highlanders - stationary & cards, Container Store, Trader Joes, Performance Bike –Flat tire at Skokie Valley Rd. + Clavey – No Bike lane!!!*
- *Pet Stores*

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THEME: ADVANCING A SUSTAINABLE DOWNTOWN:

What can I, the City, Business/Property Owner do to make downtown more sustainable?

I	CITY	Business
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Bike to shop -More walking and driving-less driving -Inside place to have lunch (Bag it!) -Use the businesses and the events -For ease on the back, keep bike path gravel, but fill in the low spots and holes. Very bad when it rains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bike Lanes -Bike Racks -Place to place recyclable paper & bottles -Shuttle bus for train commuters to get to the local biz -Place to place recyclable paper and bottles -Work cooperatively with B2 owners instead of threatening them -Eminent domain best use – Casino: Get Indians to buy HP – put in casino-have Las Vegas open a bordello -More “hangout” areas than jus Buhai-Second Downtown? -Permeable paving, on-site handling of stormwater -Do something about weekend bike packs=noisy & inconsistent road usage –Yelling to each other at 6am. -More living downtown -Get tough with dead beat landlords -Bike Lanes!!! Plus community education. for drivers regarding use - Recycling containers - Make WIFI really easy to use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rubbish responsibility -Snow removal on their side -Incentives walking/Biking with discounts associated with those activities -More recycling bins -Permeable pavements

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THEME: ADVANCING A SUSTAINABLE DOWNTOWN:

Should the City require or encourage all new commercial or multi-family residential buildings be green buildings?		Should the City permit greater density and/or building height and lower off-street parking requirements for developments that are located near public transit facilities?	
Require or Encourage	No	Yes. Greater Density/Height	No
-21 Responses	-1 Response	-11 Responses	-12 Responses
<u>COMMENTS:</u> -Absolutely -Encourage -Encourage incentives -Require through because (carrots)		<u>COMMENTS:</u> -Yes, in B4 re-height (not parking) -Depends... -Encourage multi-use buildings with living above street level use -Yes to height and reduce off street parking, especially in a building host a Zip Car (Car Sharing).	<u>COMMENTS:</u> -No, because in Highland Park's case we are under-parked in CBD (perception vs. reality, I know). So reducing parking regulations.- not option. Perhaps height/density. Payment into affordable housing funds-a more meaningful quid pro quo -No, seems these areas are already built out with these types of developments -No. Less. Stay small-ish!

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THEME: ASSURING A WELL FUNCTIONING DOWNTOWN

What is your opinion of the traffic flow, traffic safety and parking availability in downtown Highland Park?

- *Ample parking (3)*
- *Too many cars – Encourage biking and walking. Additional crosswalks enforced stopping by cars. No left turn across street into parking space (as in Glencoe)*
- *Biking is difficult – drivers aren't watching for bikers.*
- *Central Ave. is the only challenge spot*
- *Central Ave. is always congested.*
- *It is plenty safe. Plenty of people who say there is not enough are not patient or not willing to walk a few minutes.*
- *Very unsafe for pedestrians. Plenty of parking in lots. Drivers need to be monitored.*
- *Too many uncoordinated lights along Central Ave. Stop/Start = Irritating!!*
- *Adequate for most purposes.*
- *Extend bike path through town! (2 other people commented "Ditto!" by this remark.*
- *Clean up litter!*
- *I can always find a parking space – traffic flow is fine –only complaint is that some drivers do not pay attention to pedestrians or bicyclists.*
- *Encourage Free Parking*
- *Need to work on busy hour traffic flow*
- *Revisit how people move through the district – make entering downtown more than about Central Ave. Agree that more traffic diversion signage is needed vs. Central ones*
- *Cars and people in crosswalks create scary situations*

Check how frequently you would use an underground parking structure: Anytime, Sometimes or Never

ANYTIME	SOMETIMES	NEVER
14 responses	17 responses	1 response
<i>- Key factor is amount of "busyness"</i> <i>- Main difference between perceived safety of Pt. Clinton vs. Ren. Place</i>	<i>- Last resort</i> <i>-Want to be visible – concerned about security</i> <i>-When it is raining or snowing</i>	