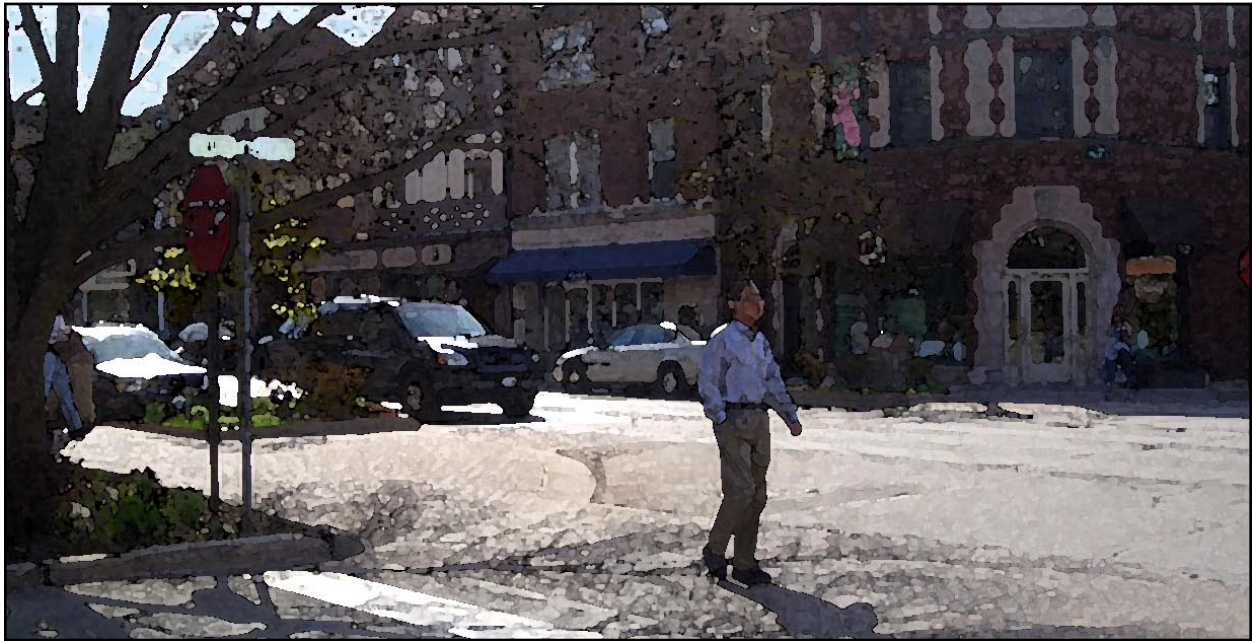


Winnetka, Illinois

Commercial Districts

Master Streetscape and Wayfinding Plan



**THE LAKOTA GROUP
SPACECO INC.**

Christopher B. Burke Engineering Limited

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Winnetka Commercial Districts Master Streetscape + Wayfinding Plan

Executive Summary

In Spring of 2006, the Winnetka Village Council engaged the design team of the Lakota Group, SpaceCo Inc., and Christopher B. Burke Engineering to develop a comprehensive, unified streetscape vision for its three commercial business districts. The Master Streetscape and Wayfinding Plan for unifying and enhancing Winnetka's Commercial Business Districts has been a positive and productive two year collaboration between the project Ad-hoc Streetscape Committee, Village Staff and The Lakota Group/SpaceCo planning and design team. It has resulted in this Master Plan report that outlines the analysis process, the creative design thinking, trade-offs, opportunities and constraints; it culminates in a strategy for a prioritized implementation program.



Winnetka's Commercial Business District streetscapes offer a variety of characters, intensities for both pedestrian and vehicular activities, and challenges for integrating a universal palette or vocabulary for streetscape amenities. The Committee developed a design rationale or approach, which breaks these "types of streetscape conditions" into two categories of intensity. (See Streetscape Design Types on 2.12 – 2.18) A further step was developed in which improvements to road geometries, circulation, and additional on-street parking may be implemented in each of the districts regardless of any new streetscape aesthetic character improvements. (See Geometric Improvements on 2.3 – 2.5)

By defining these street intensities or characters by District, the team developed a "working palette" of streetscape features and amenities to be used on any given block. These prototype treatments were then applied to target area projects or streets in each of the three business districts, East/West Elm, Hubbard Woods and Indian Hill. The design team created a streetscape layout for each district which clearly identifies approaches and design thinking for such items as:

- Curb-line Realignments
- Additional On-Street Parking
- Enhanced Corner Bump-out Area/Pedestrian Street Crossings
- New Pedestrian and Intersection Character Street Lighting
- Decorative Paving/Sidewalk/Alley Access Treatments
- Streetscape Furniture and Amenities
- Landscape and Planting Zone Opportunities



These target area prototypes were then tested by the team for physical character impact. In the separate Streetscape and Wayfinding Implementation Plan, the team will develop working construction budgets for implementation of not only these target areas, but for full construction of all of the three suggested priority levels of this program. The team will carefully analyze each district, each target area and its relative cost and physical impacts to the Village. Each of these priority levels of the process will be further developed to understand the ultimate near and long-term horizon for implementing the entire streetscape program.

Of particular concern and focus to the team was the need to address those portions of Green Bay Road which run through or are adjacent to each of the Districts. As noted in the text of the Master Plan, improvements to Green Bay Road, a State roadway, will require significant discussion and, ultimately, a Village policy direction regarding a jurisdictional transfer of the roadway. This will undoubtedly come with significant Council discussion of the cost/benefit impacts to the Village for the near and long-term control and maintenance costs. For this reason, the Master Streetscape and Wayfinding Plan has put these suggested streetscape improvements into the Priority 3 time horizon, which may extend from 5-7 years from the start of any streetscape program implementations. We believe, however, that with this Streetscape Master Plan, the Village may consider entertaining near-term open discussion or dialogue with IDOT to gain support for some more immediate projects within the Green Bay Road right-of-way such as paving improvements, landscape installations, or signage.

Also important to consider is that while costs will be considered for the suggested streetscape improvements and will be examined in detail in the separate Implementation Plan, underground utilities work/replacements or other unforeseen improvements may be required and provide the Village with additional necessary costs incidental to any streetscape project or priority. The Village's Public Works staff understands these issues and will continue to address each of these "underground" issues in their yearly comments for infrastructure capital working budgets.

Winnetka Commercial Districts Master Streetscape + Wayfinding Plan

Executive Summary

This Master Streetscape and Wayfinding Plan further investigated, evaluated and developed design thinking for Village Commercial District and Village-wide signage and way-finding components. A suggested Community-wide signage family and location exhibit has been provided to help visualize locations and the need for current and future Village signage replacements and removals. Within each Commercial District, these signs have been applied. Outside the Commercial Districts, a menu of sign types has been provided as a guide for future use.

Throughout the process, maintenance, long-term durability, and care were discussed at length. This Master Plan suggests the establishment of a long-term budget for maintenance of these new streetscapes. Some of the elements are currently in place within the Village's overall budget structures, but new streetscape/landscape improvements will require more intensive care. In order to facilitate this, funding strategies such as additional taxing sources; Special Service Areas, Business Improvement Districts or Chamber of Commerce Funding should be considered. The separate Streetscape and Wayfinding Implementation Plan will address such strategies in greater detail.

This plan has had a significant amount of “road testing” by the team, good dialogue, and care and concern for the fiscal prudence required by the Village. We believe we have successfully balanced these concerns and look forward to working with Council and Staff to see this plan come to reality and provide a new, fresh look for Winnetka's Commercial Business Districts.

