

Comprehensive Plan FAQs

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint for the Village's future. It is a statement of the community's vision that is intended to guide the Village for the next 15-20 years. The Comprehensive Plan will result in a set of policies that direct future growth and development. Additionally, the creation of a Plan can lead to potential strategies that will help effectively guide Village leaders with making substantive and thoughtful decisions for the community.

Why is the Village preparing a new Comprehensive Plan?

The Village last adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2003. The typical life span of a Comprehensive Plan is approximately 15-20 years. It is important to update the plan to ensure it reflects existing conditions, identifies goals and strategies to meet current and future challenges, and remains relevant to decision makers.

What topics are covered in the Comprehensive Plan?

A typical Comprehensive Plan outlines the existing conditions of the Village, describes future goals and objectives for development, and includes an action plan on how to achieve these goals and objectives. The River Forest Comprehensive Plan addresses the following:

- Land Use & Development
- Neighborhoods/Housing & Commercial Areas
- Transportation & Mobility
- Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Environmental Features
- Public Facilities & Infrastructure
- Sustainability & Community Character
- Specific Sub-Areas (including Madison Street, North Avenue, Harlem Avenue and Lake Street)

Who was involved in creating the Comprehensive Plan?

As the blueprint for the Village, it has been critical throughout this process that River Forest's stakeholders are involved in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The Village sought input from residents, elected and appointed officials, business owners, and leaders of other taxing bodies and local agencies. Over the course of the planning process, which began in 2017, the following outreach events and tools were utilized to engage the community:

- Plan Commission Initiation Workshop (7/18/2017)
- Food Truck Rally Tent and Questionnaire (8/26/2017)
- Online Resident and Business Questionnaires (Ongoing 2017-2018)
- Online Issues Mapping and Identification (Ongoing 2017-2018)
- Village Board Roundtable Discussion (10/16/2017)
- Joint Boards and Commissions Workshop (10/19/2017)
- Business Workshop (11/14/2017)
- Community Workshop (11/16/2017)
- Interviews of Local Realtor, Development Community, Historic Society, Community Group, School, University, Township, Library and Park District Representatives (1/2018)
- Plan Commission Review of Issues & Opportunities Memorandum (3/19/2018)
- Community Visioning Workshop (4/11/2018)
- Joint Meeting of the Plan Commission and Economic Development Commission (10/11/2018)
- Meetings with Village Advisory Bodies: Traffic and Safety Commission (1/16/19), Historic Preservation Commission (12/13/18), Sustainability Commission (11/14/18, 12/11/18, 1/8/19, 3/12/19), Economic Development Commission (1/11/19), Plan Commission (2/12/2019)
- Plan Commission Public Hearing (3/7/19)

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Who uses the Comprehensive Plan and how do they use it?

The Comprehensive Plan lays out the community's vision for the future and will serve as the foundation for decision-making by the Village Board of Trustees, advisory boards/commissions/committees, Village Staff, consultants, residents, developers and other stakeholders. Each chapter of the Plan includes specific goals and recommendations. An Implementation Matrix has been created that identifies and prioritizes these goals and recommendations as well as the advisory board/commission responsible for evaluating each item. For example, the Plan identifies possible future infrastructure projects that the Village Board and staff will review and consider during the annual budgeting process. It will also be used by developers, Village Staff and consultants, appointed advisory bodies (such as the Development Review Board), and the Village Board of Trustees when evaluating proposed development projects and whether or not it supports the objectives identified in the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

Is the Comprehensive Plan the law?

Authorized by Illinois State Law (ILCS 5/11-12-5), a Comprehensive Plan is intended to inform decision-making related to land use and development, infrastructure, transportation, parks and recreation, environment and natural resources, and community services and facilities. Communities are entitled to draft and adopt a Comprehensive Plan that can be used to guide those decisions. The Comprehensive Plan is adopted by Ordinance but it does not replace the Village's current regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance, for example. The document will be used to determine whether changes need to be made to existing Village regulations to support the long term vision laid out in the Plan, but additional review and public comment will occur before certain regulatory changes (e.g. amendments to the Zoning Ordinance) can be made.

How can I make my voice heard before the Comprehensive Plan is adopted?

The public hearing is closed, however, residents are invited to attend the April 8, 2019 Village Board Meeting at 7 p.m. at the River Forest Village Hall and share their additional questions, comments and concerns with Trustees. Residents are also invited to contact Village Staff and Officials prior to the meeting. Please contact Lisa Scheiner, Assistant Village Administrator at (708) 714-3554 or via email at lscheiner@vrf.us. Residents can also contact their elected officials through the Village's website at <https://www.vrf.us/contact-board.aspx>.

How is the Comprehensive Plan adopted and what happens after it has been adopted?

The Plan Commission had a hearing on March 7th and recommended approval of the Plan with certain changes that have been incorporated into the final draft which is available online. The Village Board will review the Plan on April 8th at 7 p.m. and will adopt the Comprehensive Plan during a special Board Meeting on May 13th at 6 p.m. Once the plan is adopted it becomes effective 10 days after it is recorded with Cook County. The Village will continually review the Implementation Matrix and discuss these matters on an ongoing basis. All public meeting agendas are available on the Village's [website](#). Residents can follow the Village's [Facebook](#) page and subscribe to the Village's monthly [e-newsletter](#) (distributed the first Friday of every month) to learn more.