




ELECTED BOARD RELATIONS:

*Building the Relationship with Your
Elected Officials*



November 15, 2023

Presenters

- **Julia Cedillo**, Village Manager,
Village of La Grange Park
 - *13 years Village Manager*
 - *2 AVM*

- **Jim Discipio**, Village President,
Village of La Grange Park
 - *19+ years Village President*





Village Officials



President
Jim Discipio



Trustee
Robert Lautner



Trustee
Jamie Zaura



Trustee
Karen Koncel



Trustee
Michael Sheehan



Trustee
Jermaine Stewart



Trustee
Joe Caputo



Village Clerk
Meghan Kooi

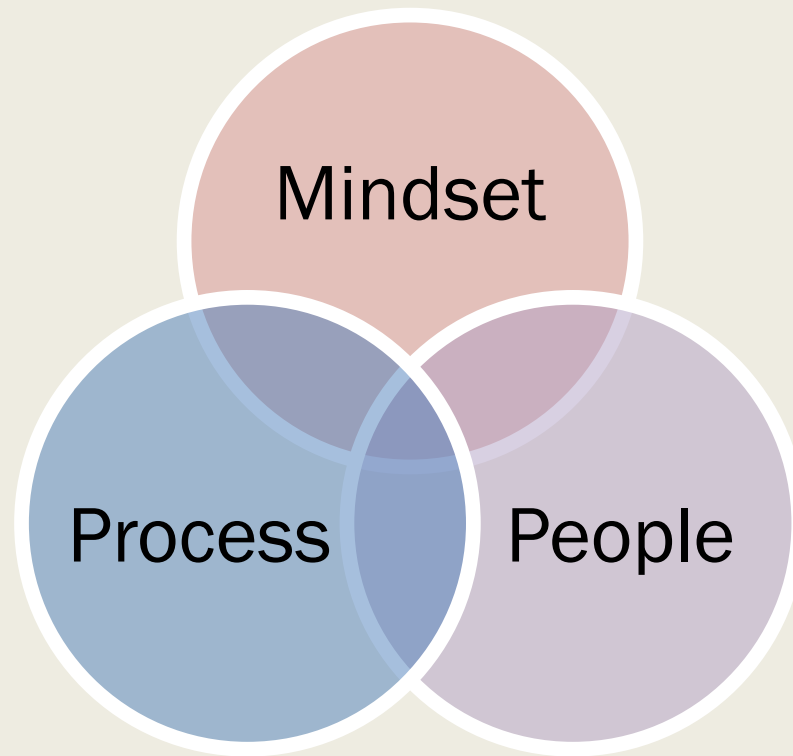
Prologue

(Our experience...)

- Together, we have enjoyed many accomplishments and weathered some challenges
- Lessons learned
- There is no one best approach
- Suggestions based upon:
 - *experience and*
 - *best practices*
- This session hopes to build on others today (The Institute)
- Take and make for your own

Overview

Elected Board Relations



PART ONE

MINDSET



- Carol Dweck, Social Psychologist

MINDSET: Personal Strategy

- Self evaluation – know oneself, be self aware
- Examine your thoughts on capabilities and reset, if necessary
- Take care of your health
- Know your purpose
- Be curious, engage deeply
- Appreciate others – must be genuine
- Have situational awareness, embrace setbacks
- Practice **empathy** & **compassion**
- Have a Play Book – your own
- Create your Board of Advisors, seek feedback
- Resources – Learn Every Day
- Don't limit yourself! (“I can do that, we can do that”)



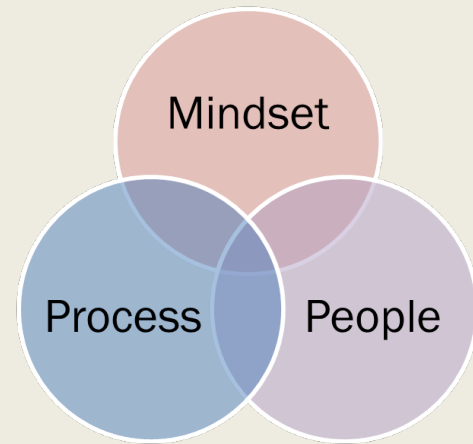
MINDSET: GROWTH / DYNAMIC

The roles of the Manager must play are*:

- Consensus builder
- Educator on community issues
- Translator/interpreter of community values
- Problem solver
- Process leader
- Convener of interested parties & diverse groups
- Team builder/mentor
- Source of empowerment
- Change agent
- Champion of new technologies
- Facilitator of conflict resolution
- Bearer of ethical standards
- Champion of leadership development



*Source: ICMA, (Newell, 1993)



PART TWO

PROCESS

“The failures of government are not a problem of people, but of process.”

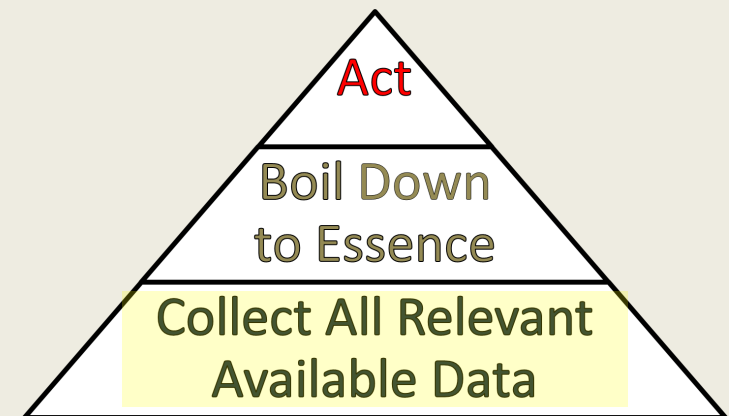
- John Carver, “Boards that Make a Difference”

PROCESS: Advising and Assisting Policy Development GENERALLY

- How do I do a good job advising the Board/Council?
- How do I assist in the development of policy?
- How do I build **trust**?

PROCESS: Advising and Assisting Policy Development GENERALLY

- Demonstrate good judgment – COLLECT THE DATA!
- Data must be BALANCED.
 - *Must include perspectives from different sides of the issue – PROS and CONS.*
 - *Must include OPTIONS- Conservative, Moderate, Aggressive or Status Quo.*
 - *Managers must stay within proper boundaries – Don't Take Sides.*
 - *Managers must not be overly opinionated or influential - unless asked.*



Judgment model, Leopold Bellak, M.D.

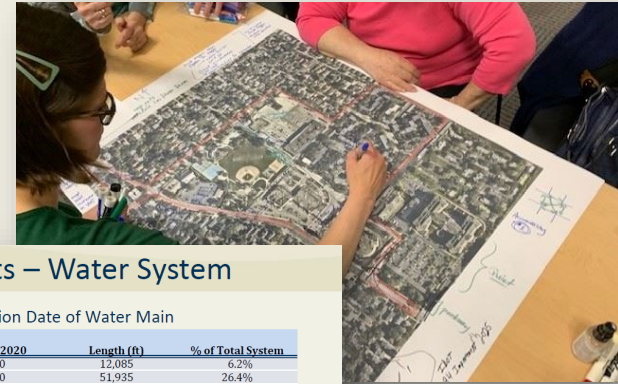
PROCESS: Advising and Assisting Policy Development GENERALLY

- Be TIMELY with the data.
- Give elected officials time to absorb the information.
- 7 to 10 days preferred, a weekend at minimum.
- Studies need a least a month.
- Follow-up calls are helpful and promote **communication** and understanding.



PROCESS: Advising and Assisting Policy Development GENERALLY

- Provide good CONTEXT with the data.
- Study each infrastructure area and develop a **PLAN!**
 - Streets: CPI & prioritization
 - Water maintenance & rate
 - Sewer maintenance & rate
 - Streetscape improvements
 - Flood and stormwater
- Other contextual processes:
 - Update Zoning Code - process
 - Comprehensive Plan
 - Economic Development Plan
 - Sustainability Plan
 - Funding Plans
 - Staffing Plan

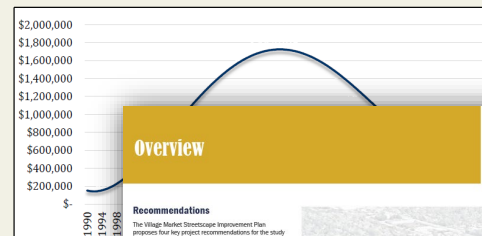


Capital Improvements – Water System

Installation Date of Water Main

Decade of Installation	Age in 2020	Length (ft)	% of Total System
1900	120	12,085	6.2%
1920	100	51,935	26.4%
1950	70	95,280	48.5%
1960	60	24,345	12.4%
1980	40	1,340	0.7%
1990	30	6,125	3.1%
2000	20	5,323	2.7%

Projected Annual Expenditure for Water Main Replacement



Overview

Recommendations

The Village Market Streetscape Improvement Plan proposes four key project recommendations for the study area. If fully implemented, any of these items could be transformative for the site, each would improve pedestrian safety, slow traffic, and create a more cohesive gathering area. The list items are presented here as discrete but can also be taken as a coherent whole; each has implications for other projects within the study area.

Additionally, while each of the recommended projects can stand alone or work together, there are other, smaller improvements that the Village can make, either as a precursor to a larger project or as a supplemental, fine-scale improvement. The opportunities for quick-build, interim improvements are detailed within the discussion of each individual project idea.

The four key recommendations include:

1. Traffic Safety Improvements to La Grange Road.
2. Pedestrianism Woodmen.
3. Sherwood Community Green Street, and
4. District Branding for Village Market.

Key Project Themes

- SAFETY:** Many residents expressed the need to address persistent high vehicle speeds, particularly on La Grange Road, as well as the need for safe crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.
- IDENTITY:** Within Village Market and surrounding area already serves as a community destination, its built environment does not currently have an identifiable, distinct identity.
- ACTIVATION:** Along with creating a distinct Village Market identity, residents expressed interest in establishing steps to make the area more lively and attractive for visitors.
- SUSTAINABILITY:** To the Village makes streetscape changes into the future, sustainability remains at the forefront.



"All we need is a Plan!"

PROCESS: Advising and Assisting Policy Development GENERALLY

- Provide good CONTEXT with the data.
- Elected officials do not have the same baseline information as managers.
- Provide charts, maps and written policies when available.
- Include information of budget and legal impacts when available.

Safety Intervention Tactics

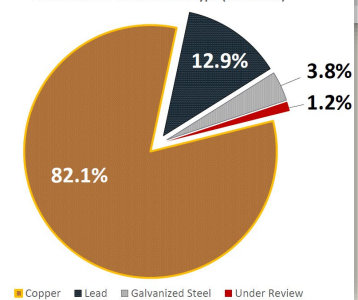
Various safety intervention methods have been proven to lower vehicle speeds and improve safety for pedestrians and other non-vehicle users on high-speed corridors. The following tactics can be incorporated to improve the safety and comfort of walking along La Grange Road.

Safety Intervention	Reduced Speeds	Safer Crossings	Increased Visibility	Reduced Conflicts	Mode Separation
Speed Feedback	✓				
Pedestrian Islands	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Curb Radii	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Crosswalks & Signals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leading Pedestrian Intervals		✓	✓	✓	
Street Furniture	✓		✓		
Trees	✓		✓		
					✓

Service Line Material

- Material identified for 62% of **private** service lines (2,116)
- Per the Act:
 - All **lead, galvanized steel, and unknown** service lines **must be replaced**
 - Village is required to replace 7% of lead lines per year starting in 2027 (IEPA threshold)
- Copper is the predominant material type and does not need to be replaced
- Lead is the second most common, but much lower percentage than anticipated

Private Service Line Material Type (Of Known)



PROCESS: Advising and Assisting Policy Development GENERALLY

- Make sure data is DIMENSIONAL.
- Give background on past practices/experiences of organization
- Compare to neighboring or similar communities.
- Needs to speak to multiple audiences including elected officials, residents and media.
- OPTIONS, OPTIONS, OPTIONS – Never provide only one choice to elected officials because that is not really a choice. Elected officials need to have the ability to make a decision.
- In the absence of policy options, all that is left to debate is politics.

Idea Summary

Creating a sense-of-place and cohesive identity helps to attract people and create a unified image for the Village.

Within the study area, there are not only signs identifying the shopping center, library, park and other destinations, there are also two Village monument signs along La Grange Road. One is located at Poet's Corner, welcoming southbound travelers along La Grange Road, and one is located in front of Plymouth Place, addressing northbound travelers along La Grange Road. The signs are not cohesive, with one using a logo that features all uppercase letters, and the other using title case. The color palettes, design, and structure of the signs are also inconsistent. The southernmost sign (in front of Plymouth Place) is undersized for its location. As the key entry point for drivers traveling along La Grange Road from the south, the sign should be prominent, clearly delineating one has left La Grange is now entering La Grange Park.

Place-based branding and identity can come in many forms. The goals for the branding and identity improvements are to:

- Establish a unique sense-of-place for the study area;
- Emphasize the study area's identity as a community destination for retail and recreation;
- Create a sense of arrival for visitors entering La Grange Park on La Grange Road from both the south and north; and,
- Attract investment, people, and capital to the study area.

These ideas are conceptual, and would require further study and input from the community to establish the brand standards which would include, but are not limited to, logos, color palettes, typography, imagery, and messaging. The Village Market brand can be communicated in a variety of ways throughout the built environment. Signage and wayfinding is typically how a cohesive family of elements is created, but this can also be done through public realm improvements such as furnishings.

The map on the following page highlights the focus areas for branding, identity, and amenity improvements.



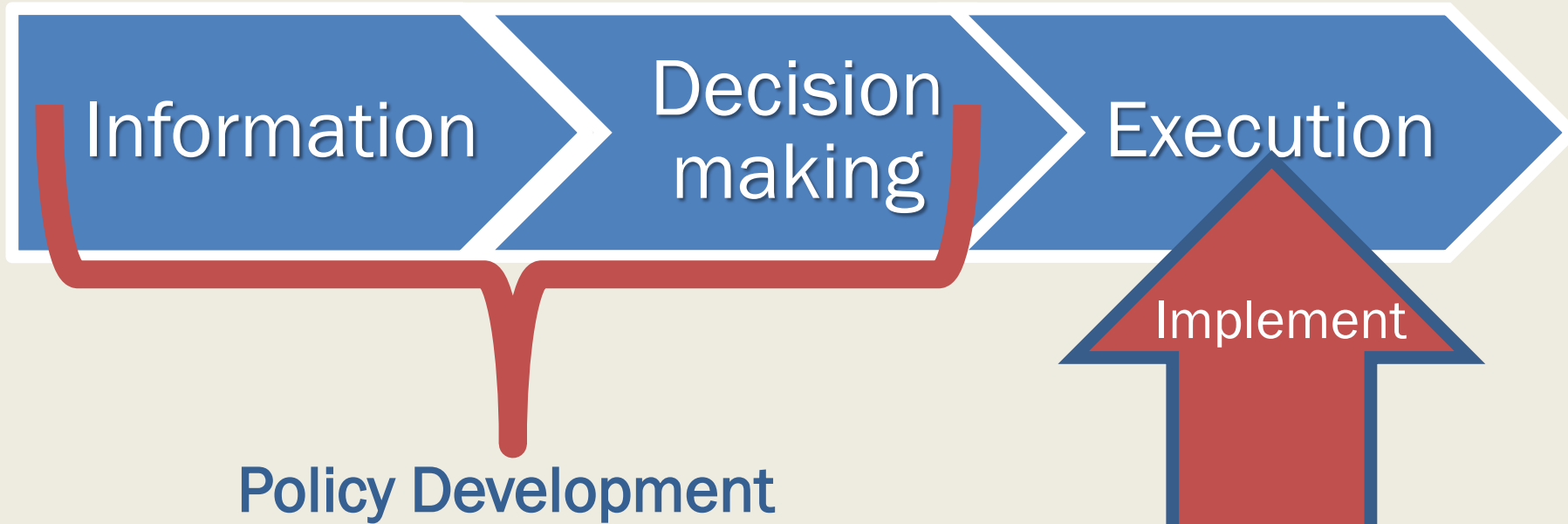
Signage and Wayfinding Examples from Burleson, Texas



Case Study: Burleson, Texas

This place-based brand was developed by CivicBrand. Burleson's brand was the result of an iterative community-driven process and includes two place logos (the badge and the typography-based option), an official City Government logo, and an emblem for civic pride ("BTX Made"). The emblem is meant primarily for Burleson businesses and residents to display their love and affection for their hometown. Following the development of the city's new brand, CivicBrand also developed new signage and branding for Mayor Vera Olavin Plaza, which was an opportunity to highlight a variety of ways the brand could be communicated through the built environment. Seen via major and minor gateways, a watertower mural, vinyl banners, and fence screening, the simple, identifiable brand is versatile, allowing the City to implement it across all necessary platforms both built, print, and digital.

Implementing Policy (once developed)



LAST STEP: MEASURE / EVALUATE

- Necessary for **accountability** to the residents.
- Did it meet expected timelines?
- Expected budget?
- Level of quality (as measured or perceived)?
- Were there unexpected results?
- Adapt when needed!
- Report back often, and if things are going south.

A President's View

President & Manager Collaboration: Why It Matters

- For the roles to reach their full potential, the relationship is critical and transcends *form of government*. The roles require:
 - A recognition that **communication** is critical.
 - **Mutual trust and respect** (of roles and goals).
 - Those involved (manager and president and board) have a **shared philosophical framework** when it comes to how to treat people and the quality of service provided.
 - An appreciation of and fostering of the relationship.



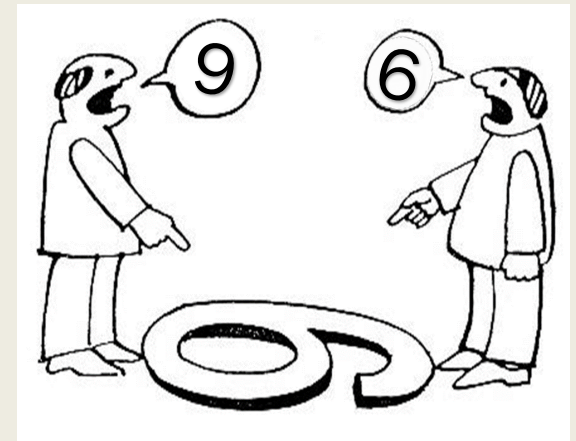
An effective and valued relationship allows for:

- Conversations on challenging issues.
- Preparedness for tough situations.
- An openness in exchanging ideas for the future.
- Proactive planning processes such as strategic planning.
- Greater creativity in policy development.
- More enjoyment while the work is getting done.

PROCESS: COMMUNICATION IS KEY

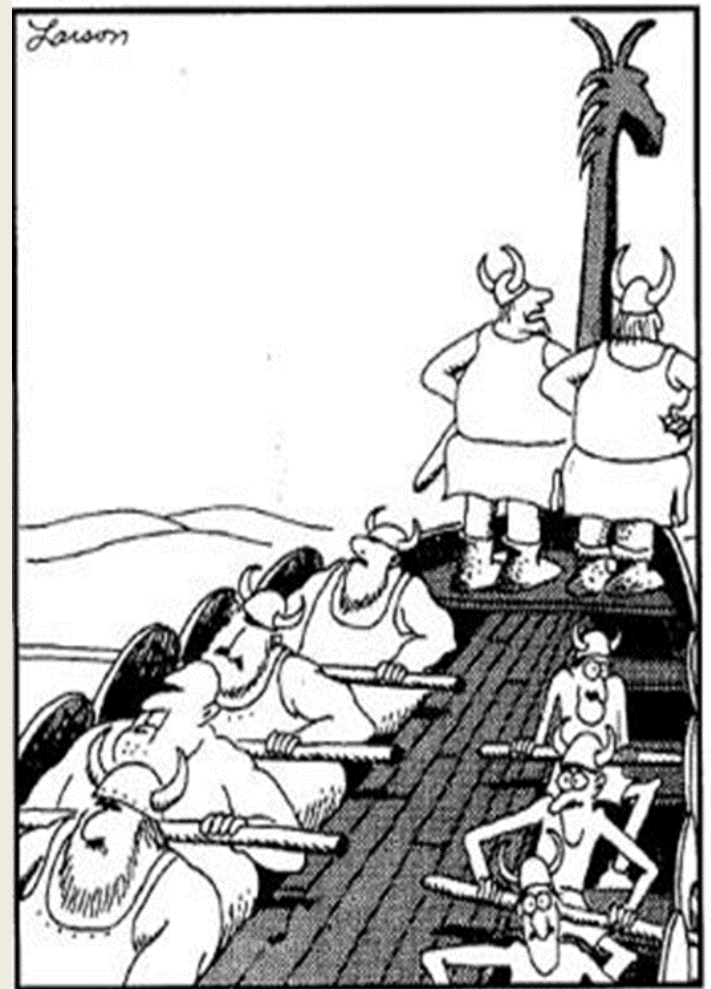
The most important role of a manager is that of communicator. A successful manager has to be adept at both sending and receiving information and must be able to make adjustments to fit multiple audiences and personalities. The dynamic nature of public service requires nothing less. In addition to good data, strong **communication** builds **trust**.

- Issue starts at staff level, community level or Board level
- START by collaborating with the VILLAGE PRESIDENT / MAYOR
 - *Data?, Options?, Preliminary plan!*
- Introduce the issue to the Village Board
 - *Obtain feedback, confirm direction and steps*
 - *Report progress*
 - *All work from the same information – “Trustee Inquiry” (anonymous)*



PROCESS: AND SO IS A SHARED STRATEGY!

- A successful manager has to be adept at working with the Village President to engage in a strategy to bring the Board to a common place to identify a path forward.
- Strategic Planning can be an invaluable tool here.
- Finds the **Pulse of the Board**.
- Unlike the private sector, local governments don't have measurables like stock prices or P&Ls to demonstrate success. Strategic planning can help take stock of success, solve big problems and plan for the future.



"I've got it, too, Omar ... a strange feeling like we've just been going in circles."

PROCESS: Strategic Planning

- Operational Improvements
- Policy / legislation development
- Strategic Management Components
 - *Citizen Engagement*
 - *Data Collection (financial, citizen feedback, catalogue of issues)*
 - *Review Mission*
 - *Assessment (internal and external, financial and environmental, SWOT)*
 - *Identify and prioritize goals through a process*
 - *Identify Actionable Items (tied to the goals)*
 - *Track progress, evaluate, adapt*



PROCESS:

Strategic Planning Session

- SHARED COORDINATION between the Village President/Mayor and the Manager
- *What is the purpose of this?*
- *Is it sustainable?*
- *How are we doing this?*
- *Should we be doing more? Less?*
- *Can we do more with less?*
- *What are the community's goals and dreams? How do we find out?*
- *What are our values and goals?*
- *Gives the Board the space to contemplate the big picture, their role in it, and a tangible contribution towards a policy or vision for the future.*

*Coordination brings
clarity of purpose!*

Goals to Mission

Resources to Goals

Structure to

Results/Accountability



PROCESS: Strategic Planning



Strategic Planning Efforts – Village of La Grange Park

- **2002:** Strategic Planning Session Focusing on Priorities
- **2011:** Strategic Session on Strategic Planning: An introduction to the process and how it might guide the Village and the Board. This included a presentation on each department and options for strategic elements to be integrated into the planning process.
- **2012:** Economic Development Session. This session focused on past and current economic development realities and efforts. Sought feedback from the Board about how to move forward strategically.
- **2012:** Flood Mitigation Meetings and Final Report. A committee was formed to identify challenges and potential options for implementation. This report has guided the Village in its efforts.
- **December 2012:** Local Revenue Study Strategic Session. Here we went through a process with staff of identifying revenue and service challenges and opportunities. We implemented 23 changes that ensured we were recouping the provision of services.
- **March 2013:** Capital Projects Prioritization Strategic Session. This session identified necessary capital needs for the next 10 years. The Board approved the budget process.
- **2013:** Local Roads Evaluation and Prioritization. Village Engineer. The results were mapped out and presented to the Board.
- **2014:** Review of Village Priorities: SWOT Analysis. Goals/Priorities.
- **February 2015:** Economic Development Initiatives & Conditions. This session focused on current economic development conditions, current revenue strategies, and whether they wanted to pursue a Tax Incremental District (TID).
- **June 2015:** Capital Planning and Financing Options: A session focused on the prioritization of capital needs and financing options.
- **February and April 2016:** A Community Building and Staff (April) which included personalities and staff.
- **February 2017:** Accomplishments, Priorities and Goals.
- **June 2017:** Creating A Vision for Commercial Revitalization. Village Market (Visioning Exercise)
- **June 2018:** Refining a Vision for Commercial Revitalization.
- **March 2019:** Update & Review of Village Priorities: Strategic Goals/Priorities.

Others:

- Annual State of the Village – Overview of Village Goals, Accomplishments
- Five Year Plan and Annual Budget Workshop Presentation
- Referendum Tour & Town Hall Meetings
- Newly Elected Official Orientation Session
- Village Board Handbook – Expectations of the Role (updated in 2019)

Updated September 2019

What is our next step?

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

HOW DO WE CAPTURE THE VISION FROM RESIDENTS?

Vision from Residents	RED	GREEN	YELLOW	RANKING
Review existing Comprehensive Plan				
Focus Groups (on plans and projects)	3	2		1
Targeted Surveys (based on focus group feedback)				
Use Village communication tools (Rose Clippings, E-Briefs, website, message board)			2	4
State of the Village Feedback session				
Online or cable channel presentation				
Reach out to developers				
Resident input = resident ownership			2	4
Neighborhood Dialogues				

HOW DO WE CAPTURE THE VISION FROM BUSINESSES?

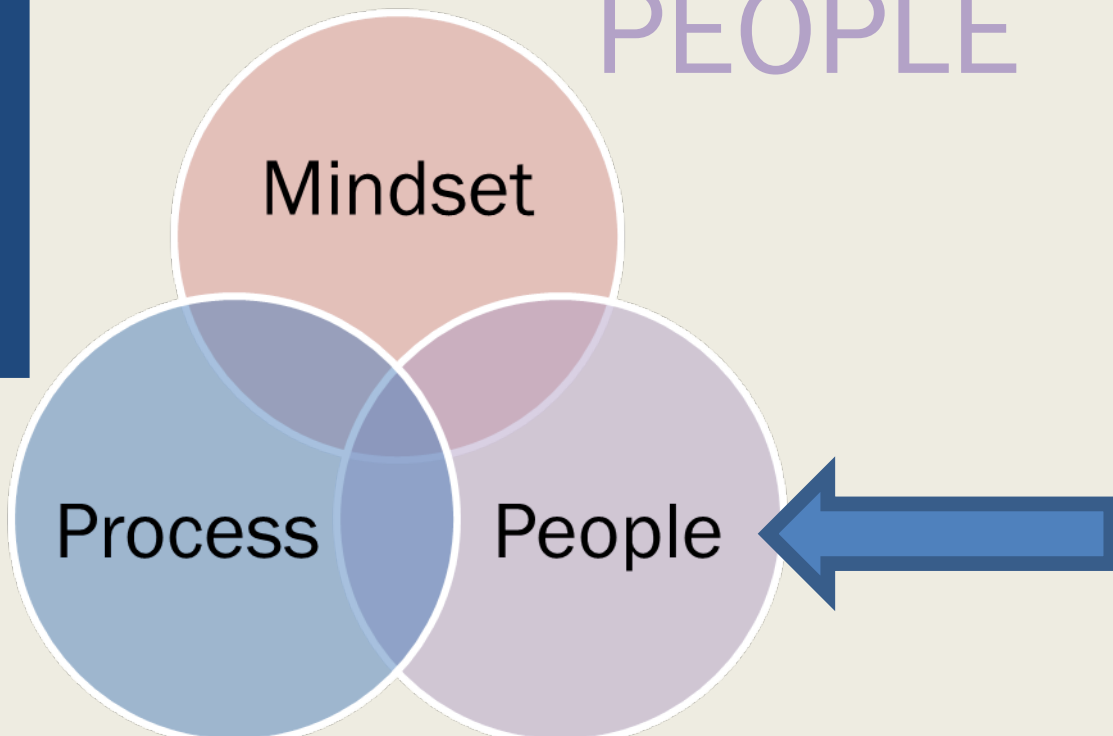
Vision from Businesses	RED	GREEN	YELLOW
Communication with LGP Chamber	1	2	
Talk to businesses			
CRC Outreach - review program data	1		
"What can we do to help you succeed?"		1	
"What challenges are you facing?"			
"Are you looking to expand?"			
"Would you like to advertise in the Rose Clippings?"			

Local Revenue Study SCORECARD				
#	Item	Recommendation / Option	Board Direction	Status
Administration				
1	Liquor License Class A - Original Pack	No Change (\$750)		
2	Liquor License Class B - Beer/Wine Rest.	Increase from \$600 to \$800	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
3	Liquor License Class C - All Liquors off premises	No Change (\$1,500)		
4	Liquor License - Class D - All Liquors consumption off premises	No Change (\$1,500)		
5	Liquor License - Retail Sale Class E - Amend Classification	Increase from \$5 per occurrence to \$25 per occurrence, per day	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
6	Tobacco License Fee	Increase from \$50 to \$75	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
7	Business License - New Restaurant	No Change (\$125)		
8	Annual Business License	No Change (\$75)		
9	New Zoning Fee Structure	\$500 Application Fee, Escrow est., recapture of out of pocket costs	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
10	Vehicle Sticker Fee	Increase from \$30 to \$35	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
11	Vehicle Sticker Replacement Fee	Increase from \$1 to \$5	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
12	Water Turn On Fee	Increase from \$25 to \$50; Increase from \$50 to \$100 After Hours	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Fee	New NSF Fee at \$20	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Fee	New \$5-to-\$2 processing fee	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Review Fee	New \$25 Administrative	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Review Fee	\$50 VR Review Fee	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Annual	No change (\$20)		
	Annual	New \$10 per year (for 4 or more)	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A due to LTACC
	Annual	New \$10 per use	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A due to LTACC
				In Place
Building Department				
	Review Fee structure, which is now 1.13% of cost		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Increase from 1% to 1.13% or align with other (Review)		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Increase from \$35 to \$50 (Review)		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Increase from \$35 to \$50 (Review)		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Increase from \$15 to \$25 (Review)		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Increase from \$25 to \$50 per unit (Review)		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	Complete
	Research P-Ticket Enforcement Option		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> MAYBE <input type="checkbox"/>	BUILDING DEPT REVIEW Evaluate as part of Code



PART THREE

PEOPLE



PEOPLE – The Why

1. Our purpose is to care for our residents. (people)
2. We work with people (elected officials & staff) to determine the best way.
3. We must prepare people for the process and listen to people for measures of success.

PEOPLE:

Your Role & the Elected Board

- Map the organization and people.
- Listen, learn and observe relationships.
- Learn the history – what went well, what did not and why.
- Know the layers of government and applicable laws.
 - *Illinois Municipal Code*
 - *Village or City Code*
- Know the Manager's authority.
- Establish and record (write it down) expectations.
- **Every day is Training Day!**
- Establish check ins with the Village President / Mayor.



PEOPLE:

Working With Elected Officials

- Keep the Board informed – **no surprises!** (the Board before the headline)
- We must be flexible/adaptable to constant change of circumstance of elected officials.
- Lack of ego – We must put ourselves in the background when elected officials need to take front leadership role.
- We must have both **respect** and **empathy** to the role of the elected official. Their work is not easy and they have limited time to do it.
- We must **respect** the elected official role as “part time” and their need to take care of their “day to day” business.
- We must be honest, **trustworthy** and **fair** in our **communications** and responding to requests. When there is **trust**, there is efficiency, because the focus is on the work.
- If there are concerns with Process, work with the Village President/ Mayor on next steps and outcomes. Collaboration and coordination is paramount.
- Don't get ahead of the elected officials and communicate this!
- **Communicate** and share success with the elected officials.
- Collaborate and coordinate on all of the above with the Village President / Mayor.

PEOPLE:

Onboarding Elected Officials

First impression is important! (Don't miss this precious opportunity!)

- Host a training session with new elected officials and staff (w/tour).
- Provide resources:
 - *IML Handbook*
 - *Village Board Handbook (code of conduct)*
 - *Ask if the new official would like some scenarios for training purposes (one on one or in a group).*
 - *OMA materials*
 - *Meeting Packets, major studies, subject matter meetings to catch them up to speed*
 - *ICMA Code of Ethics to help explain your role*
 - *Public Officials Liability Coverage Information (and training, if offered)*
- Do a meeting dry-run in advance of the first meeting
- Share the Elected Board's Goal's and Values
- Ask about them, tell them about you, your purpose, your values.
- “How can I make your job easier now or in the future?”
- Relay expectations for **communications** and information.

PEOPLE:

When things go awry....

- Do not hope it goes away.
- Communicate and collaborate with the Village President / Mayor.
- What is the immediacy of the issue?
- Collect all relevant data.
- Consider options:
 - *Meeting / conversation (in-person, preferred)*
 - *Intervention. If so, at what level?*
 - *Board Retreat (facilitated)*
 - *Strategic Planning (if project or service oriented)*
- Take action.

PEOPLE:

The “WE” Relationship Connected by Purpose

Managers and Elected Officials share
a Role in Caring for residents.
TOGETHER we must:

- *Navigate through challenges.*
- *Know why we are doing what we are doing. MISSION*
- *Know where the community wants to go. VISION*
- *Have a process for getting there. VALUES & STRATEGY*
- *Establish rules of engagement.*



PEOPLE:

The Manager As a Team Builder

Management Team

- Team commitment
- Appreciation of the expert
- Build Capacity
- Delegate, ownership
- Feedback / evaluate
- Demonstrate passion!

Assists the President / Mayor

- Team commitment (to the Mission, Vision, goals)
- Appreciation of Breadth (promotes full expression, walks through differences)
- Build Capacity (ensures process and that the board has sufficient information and expertise)
- Ownership (recognizes accomplishments, progress)
- Feedback / evaluate (helps resolve decisively)
- Demonstrate passion!



**The approach
is different,
the goals are
the same.**

Find commonalities, learn together, achieve together, share successes and be engaged. And have some fun!





Contact

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EXTRA CONTENT:

Communication Examples

- Weekly report to the Board on Fridays.
- Weekly report to the residents about activities.
- Monthly report to the Board of all departmental activities.
- Annual budget report that ties Budget to Village Board Goals.
- Strategic planning annually.
- Trustee Inquiries.
- Annual Performance Evaluation, with full progress report in all areas and goals. This is necessary for accountability.
- Annual State of the Village Address with successes, outcomes and updates of all projects and activities.