

Below is a list of ideas and focus areas we can consider when updating a village master plan.

1. Update the Data and Community Context

- **Demographics & Trends:** Reassess population, housing, employment, and income trends. Many communities now update these analyses every 5 years to capture shifts and future needs.
- **Economic Conditions:** Evaluate local economic trends, business mix, and employment sectors. Consider lessons from nearby municipalities that have shifted toward mixed-use or “neighborhood mixed use” to boost local economic development.

2. Land Use and Zoning Revisions

- **Zoning Alignment:** Consider updating zoning ordinances to better reflect current and anticipated land uses. For example, some cities have expanded their downtown zones to allow for mixed-use developments that encourage residential density and active streets.
- **Mixed-Use & Transit-Oriented Development:** Look at incorporating areas designated for a blend of residential, commercial, and community uses that support walkability and local convenience.
- **Infill & Redevelopment:** Identify vacant or underutilized parcels for redevelopment or adaptive reuse to enhance community vitality.

3. Infrastructure & Environmental Sustainability

- **Infrastructure Needs:** Review the condition of streets, water, sewer, and public facilities. Align your master plan with current infrastructure realities and potential state/federal funding opportunities.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Integrate sustainable design principles such as stormwater management, renewable energy options, and preservation of natural areas to support resiliency and environmental health.
- **Connectivity & Mobility:** Emphasize pedestrian, cycling, and transit-friendly designs. This might include “complete streets” approaches and better non-motorized connectivity.

4. Community Engagement & Vision

- **Stakeholder Input:** Use surveys, public meetings, and workshops to gather community feedback—many updated master plans now integrate robust public engagement.
- **Vision & Guiding Principles:** Revisit and update your village’s vision statement and core values. Ensure they reflect today’s aspirations and the unique character of your community.
- **Historical & Cultural Assets:** Consider how to preserve and enhance local heritage, parks, and community spaces while accommodating new development.

5. Implementation and Phasing

- **Short, Medium, & Long-Term Goals:** Structure your master plan update to include actionable strategies with clear time frames. Many communities break these into immediate (1–2 years), mid-term (2–5 years), and long-term (5+ years) actions.
- **Monitoring & Flexibility:** Develop an evaluation framework so the plan can be reviewed periodically (e.g., every five years) and updated as conditions change.

Next Steps

- **Form a Review Committee:** Assemble a planning team (including planning staff, board members, and local consultants) to review existing data, public input, and best practices.
- **Benchmark Best Practices:** Look at examples from nearby towns and larger municipalities that have updated their master plans—many have shifted to more dynamic and flexible planning frameworks.
- **Draft and Discuss:** Develop a draft update for the Planning Commission review and use public workshops to refine key elements before final board adoption.

By addressing these areas, we can set the stage for a comprehensive update that not only aligns with current conditions but also provides a flexible framework for future growth and community well-being.

These ideas should serve as a starting point for our discussions going forward and help energize the review process.