



## **SEG 7 – Recommendations**

### **Ogden Avenue Character, Aesthetics, Traffic, and Land Use**

#### **Background**

The SEG 7 committee’s findings were a result of round table discussions in which the entire length of the Ogden corridor from Route 83 to Interstate 294 was focused on. We initiated discussions based on general feel and character of the Corridor, travel and safety concerns, aesthetics and land use issues. The following observations are the result of these many meetings.

There were numerous issues that unfolded during our meetings that ranged from traffic problems at particular street corners to a lack of continuity along the corridor. In enumerating all topics of discussion and issues brought forward we were able to characterize the large majority of issues into three basic categories. Those categories were Character & Aesthetics, Traffic and Safety related issues and Land Use. Below is a synopsis of our observations, analysis of survey results and a list of recommendations related to each of these 3 major categories that we believe answer the community’s desires for the future of the Ogden Corridor as defined in the Survey’s results.

#### ***Character & Aesthetics***

The Ogden Corridor is in general a variety of mixed unconnected uses. To the east is the Business Corridor with an array of building types, styles and property conditions. The westernmost end is largely residential with a smaller business zone from Monroe Street to Route 83.

Because of a lack of continuity of uses and the general age and condition of many of the commercial buildings along it, the Corridor gives off an impression of randomness. There was also a sense that the Corridor was not being kept up as nicely as other areas in the Village.

Because of a random and unkempt feel, the Corridor is not able to display any sense of identity or charm as we see in the downtown area. The Corridor is a major east-west thoroughfare and those passing through it are not left with any impression that Hinsdale is any different from any other community along the Corridor. There is no sense of entering or leaving and no lasting impression of it.

***Traffic and Safety Related Problems***

Many discussions centered on traffic safety. It is widely understood that Ogden Avenue is a major east-west thoroughfare that caters to higher speed travelers, many of which are just passing through Hinsdale. Traffic problems were perceived at several of the main intersections.

- Westbound traffic off of I-294 creates havoc with traveler's crossing over lanes to make a left turn onto County Line Road and Oak Street.
- York Road traffic in the north direction backs up because of traveler's who want to make a left turn. This intersection is also perceived as the most dangerous intersection because of the volume of left turn traffic.
- Southbound traffic on York is increased because of a lack of any other access to I-294.
- Access in and out of the business and office parks east of York Road create dangerous traffic situations.
- Travelers that are turning onto and off of side streets create backups and dangerous traffic situations. Most noticeable among these streets is the Monroe Street intersection.

In addition to basic vehicular traffic issues, it was generally agreed that no thought has been put into any form of pedestrian or bicycle traffic through the Corridor. Oak Brook has many bicycle paths ending at Ogden Avenue that have the ability to be continued but are not. There was a general consensus that Hinsdale in general is not a bicycle friendly Village.

In regard to pedestrian safety we found no continuous sidewalks that would allow pedestrians to walk safely along Ogden Avenue nor were there adequate crosswalks at the major intersections. In addition, the light level is poor along many lengths of the roadway.

***Land Use***

There are fairly well defined areas of similar land uses along the corridor that for the most part transition well between each other. The business areas are fairly consolidated at the east and west end of the Corridor and the residential area between is separated well from those uses with the exception of the Animal Hospital on Vine Street and the small office structure on the northwest corner of Madison and Ogden.

All agreed that all residential areas along the Corridor should remain residential and not infringed upon. However, the committee's view was that a variety of options might exist for future development along the business sections of the Corridor.

The possible redevelopment of the north side of Ogden East of York does create many possibilities to start with a clean slate. The remaining haphazard collection of zoning uses, building styles and conditions on the southeast end of Ogden led the committee to ask the question how to create continuity, and upgrade the aesthetics in this area.

As we seek new uses along this part of Ogden, bringing in larger tax based revenue sources should be considered. Also, the creation of a destination style development was considered an asset.

In regard to the Animal Hospital, it is felt that should this use discontinue it should return to residential zoning.

## SEG 7 – Recommendations

The small office structure on the northwest corner of Madison and Ogden is well insulated from the residential areas and poses no issues for change.

Moving west from Madison, the Basic Life Principals site has many possibilities for future redevelopment that could either bring new tax revenue into the Village or provide much needed expansion for Village services such as maintenance facilities or outdoor activity spaces.

The current Amling's property was the most contentious as to possible future uses. The local residents have strong feelings on what should and should not be developed on this site should it change uses. Because of the proximity to the homes along Madison the same issues would exist for the medical offices on the southwest corner if it were to redevelop.

The Manor Care Healthcare Center seemed like an appropriate use considering the desire for specialized housing alternatives in the area.

### **Key Findings**

The following levels of support were determined through the Phase II Survey regarding character and aesthetics issues, traffic and safety concerns along Ogden Avenue and land use preferences:

- Strong support for screening of parking lots
- Strong support for improving Village entrances with attractive signage and landscaping
- Relatively strong support for the addition of decorative streetlights Village-wide
- Preference to bury overhead utility lines along all Village streets
- Overall results show desire to provide beautification opportunities
- Little or no support for pedestrian over or underpasses along Ogden
- Major thoroughfares should be converted to concrete
- Stronger support for providing new sidewalks to fill critical gaps and to increase the sidewalk budget
- Little demand for new Multi-purpose center to be built
- Little demand for new Youth Center
- Little or no support for new indoor recreation facility
- Little support for remote parking for downtown
- Strong support for finding alternative areas for Multi-family housing or senior living
- Overall mid range support for most commercial land uses along Ogden including office buildings, retail, restaurants, and hotels. Hotel type space was not supported on the South side of Ogden but more heavily supported on the north side of Ogden. Auto dealerships were not desired (although the SEG group believes that if the survey were to have defined boutique auto dealers, there may have been another outcome). There is a desire for senior living, condominium buildings, town homes and of course open/public green space. Single family along Ogden had mixed support as did duplexes
- Strong desire to replace any changing buildings with buildings of similar use and scale

## **Recommendations**

### **7-1 Improve Village Gateways by providing major entry monument features at either end of Ogden Avenue**

*Definition:* Treatments at key Village entrances should be designed to invoke the Character of Hinsdale and should be beautifully landscaped with architectural features.

*Critical Success Factors:*

1. Arguably the York/Ogden and Madison/Ogden controlled intersections should also be considered major gateways to our community and improvements such as decorative low walls, crosswalks with defined alternative materials to elicit a desired character. Architectural features etc. should be added to these intersections to gain a sense of place or arrival to a destination
2. Visual connections associated with the character of Hinsdale should be placed along the length of the Corridor including possibilities of nostalgic light fixtures, benches, wrought iron fencing, brick or stone piers, etc. to achieve a desired character
3. Look into the possibility of creating public art display areas at key points along the Corridor

*Funding and Cost Considerations:* Look into possibilities of incentive plans to those who submit to design reviews for newly developed property or incentive plans to promote existing landowners to reinvigorate their property

*Implementation Considerations:*

1. Review the sign ordinance to provide for more continuity and character
2. Review and bolster the currently minimal Landscape Ordinance
3. Institute a Landscape design plan for key intersections and for parkways along the corridor and increase budgets to maintain the landscaping in these areas
4. Bury all utilities where practical
5. If center turn lane is a possibility develop unnecessary center turn lane to landscaped boulevards
6. Create a Corridor Plan to be included in a Comprehensive Master Plan that will be adopted by the Village Trustee's for implementation

### **7-2 The Village should engage a qualified land planner to develop a Corridor Plan to identify key changes requested and in conjunction with this engage a qualified engineering consultant to study and determine the possibilities along the corridor for expansion of it's width to accommodate any of these ideas**

*Critical Success Factors:* Although it is easy to identify many improvement options for the corridor such as the below recommended bike paths and turning lanes, it is not practical to do so without the general Corridor Plan recommendation stated above. In addition the following specific improvements and actions are recommended:

1. Traffic intensity would be significantly reduced at York and Ogden if a new southbound I-294 ramp were instituted at 31<sup>st</sup> Street. The Village should work closely with Oak Brook and IDOT in insuring that this ramp is approved. In addition, IDOT

- should be communicated and coordinated with in any modifications to the proposed ramp extensions for I-294 at Ogden Avenue
2. Study possibility a center boulevard with left turn lanes. Incorporating center turn lanes would create safer transitions off and on Ogden from uncontrolled intersections. If a center turn lane is not feasible left turn restrictions onto Ogden should be reviewed for many of the lower visibility side streets
  3. Encourage limited access streets wherever possible in any newer developments
  4. Encourage the creation bike paths and pedestrian walks along the length of Ogden Ave. Bike paths should be connected to the Oak Brook trail system. If placed on the South of Ogden they would provide better visibility of traffic turning from side streets onto Ogden due to the increased distance to the roadway that would be required
  5. Create better uniformly lit roadways by installing new roadway lighting
  6. Crosswalks and bike paths should be clearly defined at controlled intersections with bold markings. With the right material selections these could be aesthetic improvements in addition to creating a safer route of travel for pedestrians
  7. Controlled intersections should be reviewed by qualified engineers and expanded if necessary for left turn lanes at high traffic intersections such as York and Ogden

*Implementation Considerations:* If any further development occurs on the IBLP properties or other surrounding properties, it is strongly recommended that an additional traffic control device be installed at the corner of Monroe Street. Access to the north might be reconfigured by terminating the existing curb cut of Ogden at Adams and reconnecting Adams to a new frontage like road that runs parallel to Ogden and connects up with Monroe Street. Such a scenario better controls safe access to a more intensely developed area.

**7-3 It is highly recommended that the Village study the land use issue in more detail with land planning professionals in the desire to develop a Comprehensive Master Plan that can be used to guide future development**

*Definition:* In light of the multitude of land use options and the overall ambivalence recorded in the survey as to what would be desired along Ogden Avenue and the prospect of certain more controversial sites where local residents are dramatically affected by redevelopment. A Comprehensive Master Plan needs to be discussed in much greater detail and adopted by the Village to guide future growth. By doing so the Village would set clear direction to developers and could reduce its exposure to liability in determinations of future land use changes.

*Critical Success Factors:*

1. Review existing liquor ordinances and make directed efforts to encourage the development of restaurants along the corridor. However, when determining location of restaurants, insure restaurants are not located adjacent to single family residential uses
2. Encourage destination style developments in which general parking is provided with shops, restaurants etc. located within a general themed development. Considerations related to form are important since they largely define the character and contribute to its sense of place
3. Scale, character and traditional styling should be maintained in all new developments

4. Consider land acquisitions north of the Corridor at I-294 or Route 83 to relocate public service buildings as long as they are well hidden from the main thoroughfare.
5. All land between Garfield and Madison should remain residential. The only land use that is contrary to this is the animal hospital located on the corner of Vine and Ogden Avenue which we would assume would revert back to residential should the use be vacated.
6. Actively search out and attract high revenue generating uses such as hotels, boutique auto-dealers, retail and restaurants to supplement income to the Village. The Village in doing so needs to educate the community on the potential benefits of higher income producing uses.
7. There are remaining, four primary areas that are more susceptible for more commercial development. Below we have identified these areas and provided recommendations for possible uses.
  - **North Side of Ogden, East of Garfield to I-294** The group recommended that this area accommodate the existing mix of uses (office and residential) in this area as well as the mix of complementary new uses. Other desired uses in this area would be hotel/convention center and spa, destination style retail center, restaurants, senior living or other multi-family. We would also strongly encourage support for a destination-style development that incorporates these uses. We also would highly recommend limited access to the site and others adjacent to it.
  - **South Side of Ogden, East of Garfield to I-294** Maintain the mix of commercial uses that are currently present in this sub area. This includes retail, personal services, and auto-oriented uses. Any suggestion for expansion of the auto-oriented category into a more district-like cluster would require a specific definition of “boutique” (that is, ultra-exclusive, small building footprint, very limited inventory. Consolidation of lots into larger parcels would be welcomed. Also, the suggestion of mixed use developments would also be desired.
  - **South Side of Ogden, Madison to Route 83** The current uses between Madison and Monroe Streets contain Residential single family homes. No change to this designation seems necessary due to an unlikely chance of redevelopment in the next 25 years. While a variety of uses were deemed acceptable in the survey for this area, specific commercial uses cited in the survey may be better suited to other areas along the corridor. The re-development of the orthopedic center and Manor Care are also not likely, however, the Amlings’s property is poised for redevelopment. The group believes that the highest and best use of the Amling’s site is mixed-use with retail on the first floor and residential above and to the south, however, the group has concluded that this may not be viable at this location due to local resident opposition to anything non-residential. Other than traditional detached single family residential the only other option acceptable may be either zero-lot line detached homes or attached town homes directed at empty-nesters or “lifestyle” housing buyers. A transitional use such as this makes sense along a thoroughfare such as Ogden.
  - **North Side of Ogden, Madison to Route 83** If working with the current owner of the Institute in Basic Life Principles (IBLP) and the existing land available for development, a retirement community and hotel/lodge and conference center were the preferred land use choices. In addition to these uses multiple family residential/lifestyle housing (in the form of town homes) and retail

SEG 7 – Recommendations

complementary to the proposed hotel and residential uses would also be appropriate. The group also expressed support for securing some public park land north of the lagoon should the IBLP hotel/lodge development move forward. Should any of this development move forward it is strongly encouraged to redirect Adams Street to connect to Monroe and place a traffic light to control the increased traffic.

- **North and South Sides of Ogden, West of Garfield to Madison** This is the tightest portion of the corridor and is currently purely residential. In the future, if redevelopment opportunities arise this area should remain strictly residential.

This concludes the recommendations of SEG7 to the Village Trustees. We thank all members of SEG7 that contributed to the recommendations.

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