



SEG 1 – Recommendation Number One Tree Protection

Background

Elm Tree Inoculation and Emerald Ash Borer

Dutch elm disease (DED) has been decimating our elm population. Similarly situated communities, once full of elms, now have virtually none. Hinsdale's American elm population is in danger. It would be foolhardy to ignore what may very well be a more devastating and equally immediate problem. The Emerald ash borer is now established in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and since early 2006, Illinois. In Michigan alone, the Emerald ash borer has killed over 20 million ash trees. To combat the Emerald ash borer, the community of Hinsdale must immediately take action. Hinsdale's tree resource is valued at many millions of dollars and currently we have no staff person to ensure that this valuable resource will not be rapidly destroyed by pests and disease.

Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance

It has long been acknowledged and recognized that a major part of Hinsdale's charm and warmth is its tree lined streets and well maintained yards. Survey results indicated that residents are concerned about trees that are being lost to new construction and private tree removal that is not adequately regulated. Other towns that share the same warmth and socioeconomic status as Hinsdale enacted protection and preservation ordinances, which balance private property owners' rights with the greater good of the community. The Hinsdale tree protection ordinance is limited to publicly owned trees and contains no requirements regarding trees or shrubs on private property. The trend is for village governments to take a more active approach to maintaining both the public and private resources.

Key Findings

Elm Tree Inoculation

While the survey did not address the threat of the Emerald ash borer, the direction and sentiment of Village residents regarding elm trees should naturally be extended to the growing threat of the emerald ash borer.

A significant majority of Hinsdale residents have opined that the current level of elm tree inoculations used to prevent Dutch elm disease is insufficient. Eighty four percent (84%)

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of those responding to the survey favor a complete inoculation of Village owned elms. Survey results indicate that an overwhelming percentage of responded in favor of a continuous three-year cycle of fungicidal inoculation of public owned elms. Such a cycle would inoculate all Village owned elms by the end of year three.

Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance

A majority of Hinsdale residents support a comprehensive tree protection and landscape ordinance. Sixty three percent (63%) of those responding to the survey favor the adoption of a comprehensive tree protection and preservation ordinance, which would regulate private trees as well as public trees. (The survey question referred to the highly publicized Lake Forest ordinance as an example).

Recommendation

1-1a The Village should establish a Comprehensive Approach to Dutch Elm and Emerald ash borer

Critical Success Factors:

1. It is strongly recommended that the Village hire a Village Forester. This would be a management position, and ideally he or she would head an independent department. The rationale is that there will be an individual fully qualified to monitor our valuable asset, and thereby require a separate budget. Responsibilities would include:
 - Working with the village and citizens to establish ordinances, policies and practices for Hinsdale’s trees
 - Directing the care of trees regarding pests, disease, pruning and other tree issues
 - Investigating the possibilities of grants for funding of tree care.
 - Contracting with tree firms to perform necessary tree care.
 - Overseeing the enforcement of tree ordinances and policies.
2. Tree Survey - Our effectiveness in combating Dutch elm disease, or the Emerald ash borer, can only be measured if an accurate tree count is maintained. An up to date tree survey is necessary.
3. Cohesive Tree Policy – The implementation of any policy shift in how elm trees or ash trees are protected in our village must be carefully researched and monitored. Fungicidal injections must be viewed as only one component of a plan to save our elm population. Our recommendations encompass a balanced approach to protecting our elms. (To be directed by Village Forester).
4. Fungicide Injections - It is recommended that the Village immediately consider an increase in Village sponsored preventative fungicide injections for existing elms on public property deemed in good health. Certain fungicides may be capable of protecting elm trees from infection.
 - Implementation of an injection program must be carefully undertaken due to the significant cost of such a program and the effectiveness and risks of undertaking a “blanket” approach to injections.
 - Elms chosen for injection should meet certain criteria, which would

effectively increase the opportunities for success. Preliminarily, signature and stand-alone trees should be treated. “Signature” trees are those which have been identified as being most visible and highly valuable to the community.

- As the success of the fungicide approach to management of DED is inherently tied into whether the injection is done before the tree has been exposed to DED (usually via a root graft from a nearby infected tree), it is recommended that only groups of healthy trees not in contact with private trees be injected.
 - Consideration should be given to increasing the budget for 50-50 injections with homeowners. (Village pays 50%, homeowner pays 50%.)
5. Formation of a Tree Task Force - It is recommended that a task force be formed immediately to establish the criteria to determine which elms should be injected. This task force should be comprised of interested citizens, subject matter experts and the Village Forester. (Evanston’s January 31, 2005 Dutch Elm Disease Report could also be a valuable aid.)
 6. Community Wide Public Relations Campaign - Dutch elm disease - It is strongly recommended that a community wide education program, including schools, should be implemented to inform the public that sanitation and observation is the key to controlling Dutch elm disease.
 - The public must be taught to look for wilts symptoms throughout the summer, but particularly in April and May.
 - Homeowners should be educated to be alert for the first signs for of DED. They should routinely have elms on their private property inspected by a recommended contractor who should remove dead, dying or weak elm wood with the bark still attached. It is important that routine pruning be done at the proper times
 - Elm wood should be chipped immediately. Elm wood must never be placed in firewood piles. Any existing elm wood should be destroyed immediately.
 - It is recommended that the village, through its foresters and public reporting, increase its monitoring for Dutch elm disease. Subsequent inspections by village foresters would allow eradicate pruning. Eradicate pruning may save trees if the disease is detected at an early stage. Many American elms may be saved by this pruning method.
 7. Community Wide Public Relations Campaign - Emerald ash borer - It is strongly recommended that a community wide education program should be implemented to educate the public that sanitation and observation is the key to controlling the Emerald ash borer.
 - The public must be taught to identify an ash tree.
 - The public must be taught to identify the Emerald ash borer.
 - Usually their presence goes undetected until the trees show symptoms of infestation.
 8. Establish a Trap Program for Emerald Ash Borer - It is recommended that the village, through its foresters and public reporting, set emerald ash borer traps. Early detection is critical.
 9. Regulate or prohibit the use of movement of ash firewood - Firewood and log

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movement have been the primary means by which EAB is spread.

Funding and Cost Considerations:

1. Costs of hiring a Village Forester
2. Costs of injections - Open bid process
3. Tax increase (Implemented already?)
4. Grants (If available?)
5. Revenue from tree banking fund if implemented via a tree ordinance

Implementation Considerations:

1. Hire a Village Forester. (Implement as soon as possible.)
2. Form a Tree Task Force. (Implement immediately.)
3. Conduct a Public Relations Campaign. (Implement immediately.)
 - Newspaper, web site, village newsletter, public service announcements, library exhibits, posters in merchant's windows.
 - Seminar given by the Morton Arboretum's Community Tree Advocate, Edith Makra.
 - Community wide events for Arbor Day and Earth Day.
 - Educate Landscapers.
4. Engage school system - Implement an education program at the school level regarding both the Emerald ash borer and Dutch elm situation. (Implement immediately.)
5. Conduct a Professional Tree Survey. (Implement immediately.)

1-1b The Village should establish a Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance

Critical Success Factors:

1. It is recommended that the Village of Hinsdale adopt a comprehensive tree protection ordinance and a landscape ordinance for private and public trees. These ordinances should be based upon the Lake Forest Tree Preservation and Landscaping Ordinance, which have successfully accommodated public property rights and private property rights. The Lake Forest ordinance places planting and replacement requirements on private property owners wishing to remove carefully defined trees and shrubs and places planting requirements on new construction.
2. It is recommended that the Village form a committee of interested and qualified citizens to study the Lake Forest ordinance and make recommendations about how our village could benefit from a similar ordinance in part or in total.
3. It is recommended that the existing Hinsdale ordinance of tree protection on Village property be enforced more stringently through the hiring of additional Village staff or forming citizen's groups to report to the village violations of the ordinance. (It seems imprudent to spend taxpayer's money caring for our Elms while other Village trees are simultaneously destroyed due to lack of ordinance enforcement.)
4. It is recommended that the Village Forester oversee the burial of any utility lines in order to save mature trees.
5. Enforcing the ordinances.

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Funding and Cost Considerations:

1. Hiring a Village Forester
2. Legislative process costs.

Implementation Considerations:

1. Development of a Hinsdale Tree Preservation Ordinance for private and public property.
2. Development of a Hinsdale Landscape Ordinance for all zoning classifications.



SEG 1 – Recommendation Number Two Gateways

Background

Little emphasis has been given to enhance or update Village signage at Village gateways. Village entrances have not been significantly marked other than population signage.

Key Findings

The survey showed that seventy one percent (71%) of village residents strongly supported improving village entrances. Establishing unified thematic elements that identify Hinsdale is important to clarify Village boundaries and welcome residents and visitors.

Recommendation

1-2 The Village should establish a palette of both hardscape and plant materials to be used for all gateways as well as establish design guidelines

Critical Success Factors:

1. The interchange of I-294 and Ogden is the major gateway to our Village and should be given prime consideration. In order to make a statement to toll road users the cloverleaf would be planted in low maintenance prairie plants with emphasis on design, not prairie. The overpass or bridge would also receive decorative elements and historic street lighting. The transition would also carry plantings into the Village entrance vs. an abrupt sign and token plantings.
2. Choosing a design firm with experience in the magnitude of this project such as Living Habitats (recommended by the Chicago Botanic Gardens).
3. Working with the toll road authority and its landscape architect.
4. It is important to work with IDOT and being proactive with the upcoming changes to that interchange so as not to increase cost. This is the GATEWAY to our Village and design considerations must be addressed in the early phases and right of way issues resolved to get as much space for esthetic and safety issues. This may mean moving the road laterally to increase median/planting space. Coordinate with “Ogden” (SEG7).
5. Possible cooperative effort with Western Springs to do its cloverleaf and share costs on bridge/overpass improvements.

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6. Property Ownership and right of way Issues – What areas are limited in right of way and can a cooperative effort be made with owners if Village does not have ownership or right of way of the property
7. Maintenance
 - Who is responsible for long term maintenance?
 - What are the definitions of maintenance or standards?
 - Who is responsible for monitoring the results?
8. Timeless Design

Funding and Cost Considerations:

1. Business/corporate and private sponsorship “Greening of Gateway”, “Bridge to The Future”
2. Grants for enhancement/beautification of public thoroughfares (Geneva and other communities have used such for beautification of highways)
3. Establish a preliminary budget for preliminary design.

Implementation Considerations:

1. Preliminary budget for design enhancement
2. Review by Beautification Commission



SEG 1 – Recommendation Number Three Beautification Commission

Background

Many areas of beautification have been previously designed and recommended by Trustees, community groups, and individuals. Many design firms have been utilized without any cohesive or collaborative efforts and sometimes at the same time on projects across town or even adjacent to one another. (i.e. Doug Hoerr's Landscape Design was working on streetscapes for the downtown business district and 3-D Design was working on the Burlington Park revitalization project with no collaborative effort even though the projects were going on at the same time).

Key Findings

Beautification projects have greatly enhanced the Village and have been all well intended; however there must be coordination and the thread of recurrent thematic elements are important to overall cohesiveness. There must be a group of residents and professionals at large who oversee design and beautification issues

Recommendation

1-3 The Village should implement a Beautification Commission

Definition: An appointed group of professionals and residents meeting monthly to review beautification issues, applications, and meet potential petitioners. This group is responsible for reviewing all new and major beautification projects in the Village of Hinsdale.

Critical Success Factors:

1. Jurisdiction – Clearly defined areas of oversight that minimize overlap with other commissions.
2. Integration of activities – To establish conscious decision making, and minimize risk of hodge-podge solutions
3. Liaison with Parks and Recreation –Member from each commission who attends the meetings of the other commission when overlapping issues are involved
4. Horticulturist (new employee of village) – Oversees all horticultural and maintenance issues relating to flowers. This person would also have a seat on the commission.
5. Landscape ordinance for Village of Hinsdale updated and expanded.
6. Commission Composition – A group of individuals that are qualified, respected, and represent a balance of potential competing interests. The commission may include: at large

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residents who have background or pertinent experience in design or beautification, garden club members, arborist, horticulturist, landscape architect, and one non-voting staff member.

7. Design guidelines – The commission must establish the creation of a set of standards by which to evaluate beautification issues.
8. Non-binding Discovery Meetings – The commission encourages developers and petitioners to present their projects early in the conceptual phases.
9. Binding recommendations – Recommendations of the commission that are binding and which require the chair’s signature.
10. Appeal Process – Petitioners may appeal to the ZPS.
11. Timeliness – Process is timely so as to be effective and manageable by development community.

Funding and Cost Considerations: Volunteers, one staff member to attend meetings

Implementation Considerations: An ordinance must be adopted that governs funding and operation of the commission, its identity, and that recruits participants. Consideration must also be given to draft design guidelines and establishing approval criteria. Staff would prepare operating procedures based upon best practices from other existing commissions or other communities.



SEG 1 – Recommendation Number Four Streetscape, Railroad Corridor, and Historic Street Lighting

Background

Our historic downtown has always been architecturally significant. The downtown beautification with flowers, benches and ornamental ironwork lead to exploration of other key areas that need beautification. By including other similar beautification themes other business areas in town could be linked and give a sense of geographic boundaries of our Village.

The train station has been a hub of commuters and a center of ingress and egress into our Village. The train station has been recently targeted for beautification by the same firm that designed the downtown sidewalk planters. The railroad corridor is owned by Burlington Northern and is maintained in a largely natural state. Railroad construction debris can be found along the tracks through Hinsdale.

Historic street lighting helps define downtown Hinsdale. This lighting is only used in the business districts directly south and north of the tracks. Street lighting in other areas of town is provided by utility pole street light.

Key Findings

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of responses felt that strategic improvements should be made to the businesses north of the tracks. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of responses wanted increased screening along parking lots.

The seventy percent (70%) of responses wanted more landscaping along the railroad tracks. This corridor is highly visible both to our residents and to commuters from other towns. It is an area that can make a significant statement regarding quality of life that Hinsdale has to offer.

Fifty-six percent (56%) of responses would like to expand decorative street lighting to at least the major thoroughfares of Hinsdale.

Recommendation

1-4a The Village should create design guidelines to expand planting of flowers, benches and ornamental ironwork north of the tracks, to match existing elements south of the tracks and create one cohesive business district

1-4b The Village should adopt an ordinance create design guidelines for rail corridor, to include plantings, hardscape, and architectural elements (benches, trash receptacles, etc.) maintenance and landscape requirements

1-4c The Village should adopt an ordinance to establish a more historic look in corporations/businesses that have a corporate identity (i.e., gas stations that have lighted green canopies would have a more “Williamsburg” look.) Coordinate with recommendations from “Downtown” (SEG 2), “Northtown” (SEG 3), and “Ogden: New & Improved” (SEG7) on this issue

1-4d The Village should adopt an ordinance similar to Chicago’s Vehicular Screening Requirements (Chapter Two of the City of Chicago’s Landscape Ordinance)

1-4e The Village should expand decorative street lights to major thoroughfares including Ogden, Garfield, County Line and 55th Street corridors

Critical Success Factors:

1. Developers of new and redeveloped housing and commercial areas should install historic street lighting.
2. Adopt an ordinance requiring style to match existing historic street lights in downtown Hinsdale.
3. Vehicular screening ordinance would cover requirements for existing and new parking lot landscape setbacks, including ornamental fencing and plant material.
4. Right of way needed at York and Ogden as well as other areas.
5. Communication with Burlington Northern (Martin Gross, Dr. Wilson could facilitate this.)
6. Coordination with SEG 5, SEG 6, SEG 7, SEG2, SEG 3.

Funding and Cost Considerations:

1. Joint venture with businesses.
2. Joint venture with Burlington Northern Railroad.
3. Joint venture with IDOT
4. Development impact fees
5. Site redevelopment agreements

Implementation Considerations:

1. Install sidewalk planters, benches and ornamental ironwork north of the tracks, to match existing elements south of the tracks and create one cohesive business district.
2. Creation and adoption of design guidelines for architectural style to establish a more historic look in corporations/businesses that have a corporate identity (i.e. Gas stations that have lighted green canopies would have a more “Williamsburg” look.) Example: Lake Forest
3. Adoption of Hinsdale Landscape Ordinance for parking lot screening.
4. Streetscape: York and Ogden south to Gateway Shopping Center
5. Create a visual corridor using decorative streetlights from downtown Hinsdale north on Garfield to York and Ogden as a preliminary target area.
6. Require developers of new and redeveloped housing and commercial areas to install historic street lighting.

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7. Developers of new and redeveloped housing and commercial areas should install historic street lighting.
8. Hire or contract a horticulturist to oversee beautification and maintenance of flower planted areas such as downtown, train station, and streetscapes who coordinates with Beautification Commission