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Village Reviving Route 30 Improvement Plans

Five years after completing a study on a 2.5-mile stretch of Route 30, New Lenox will get some help in finding new ways to improve the image, accessibility and downtown feel of the area.

By [Michael Sewall](#) | [Email the author](#) | October 18, 2011

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The historic downtown area in New Lenox—mostly consisting of a few blocks along Route 30 west of Cedar Road—is historic more in the sense of having a "tired and dated" look than it is for being full of tradition and character.

That critique is part of a plan written five years ago that studied ways to improve a stretch of Route 30. Now, with help from a grant program, the village will revive these plans.

A walk along the crumbling sidewalks, which eventually end, reveals a number of vacant businesses, gravel parking lots and inconsistent facades. But there is potential. There are some successful, home-grown businesses in the area, and many people in town would like to see the downtown options expanded, not just for businesses but also for pedestrians.



PHOTOS (2)

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For years, village leaders have worked with residents and business owners to form a vision for the Route 30 corridor, a 2.5-mile stretch that extends east on Route 30 from the Interstate 80 ramp to the [Fire Protection District](#).

From 2004 to 2006, an advisory group created the Route 30 Corridor Revitalization Plan, which aimed to identify problems with the area and ways to enhance it for the future.

The [Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning](#), which is responsible for producing a regional plan for land use and transportation, is tackling those issues with the village and many other area communities as part of its Local Technical Assistance Program.

At a land use committee meeting Oct. 17, village planner Robin Ellis said CMAP gave \$60,000 to the village to hire a consultant who will help plan for some larger projects in the corridor and supplement the village planning department's day-to-day work.

Some of the key issues the village wants to look at are:

- Cross-access between businesses;
- Fewer curb cuts;
- More sidewalks and bike paths; and
- Improved landscaping and parking lots.

In the revitaliation plan, which was published in 2006, the advisory group writes that the corridor has a "lack of architectural character ... and a lack of pedestrian friendliness."

Your Feedback

In a 2004 workshop, the advisory group asked various questions about the area. Read a few of the questions below and leave your responses in the comments section.

1. List three new private-sector projects, uses or developments you would like to see undertaken within the Route 30 Corridor study area.
2. List three new public-sector projects or improvements you would like to see.
3. What would you *not* like to see take place in the corridor study area in the future?