



Plan presents new look for downtown Riverside

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RIVERSIDE — Karl Krutsch slowly bent down and lifted his daughter up to eye level. She leaned forward in his arms and added a bright green dot to a page on the wall of a conference room at Riverside Township Hall March 19.

Green dots colored the pages hung around the room that gave residents an opportunity to see how the village of Riverside might change in the next 10 years, as called for in a new plan for the Village's Central Business District. Residents were given the dots to signal their support of a particular item in the plan, ranging from the development of walkways along the Des Plaines River to more restaurants occupying storefronts.

Krutsch said his wife grew up in Riverside — a big reason why the couple decided to move back to town a little over two years ago. They love the village: it's quaint, quiet and full of history. But, like many Riverside residents, they would like more.

"There's not much to dislike," Krutsch said about Riverside. "More restaurants would be nice and some more businesses. I like the plan for the river too."

In April, Riverside's Board of Trustees will meet to discuss the plan in detail — what they want to do now and what will remain a longer range goal for the community. The village last adopted a plan for the village in 2006, but by most accounts, the plan was too ambitious.

"With this plan, we've tried to have it provide a better match with the community," said Nora Beck, associate planner at the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). "We've tried to make it obtainable."

CMAP works with village's across Chicago's suburbs to provide land use and transportation planning assistance. Their plan for Riverside calls for attracting new retail and restaurant businesses to the village's center, provides ideas for the Village to better utilize its access to the Des Plaines River and adds bicycle routes through the village that will connect it to regional trails.

Many of the ideas come from residents, or are at least based on what residents said they wanted in a contemporary downtown.



Riverside resident Karl Krutsch with daughter as they review a new plan for Riverside's Central Business District March 19. (Matthew Hendrickson - mhendrickson@shawmedia.com)