

Land-use plan approved by Northlake City Council

BY MARK LAWTON | mlawton@pioneerlocal.com May 28, 2013 2:58PM



Northlake Mayor Jeff Sherwin says his first priorities will be to tackle the recommendations that the city can afford. | Mark Lawton~Sun-Times Media

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On May 20 the Northlake City Council approved a comprehensive plan that will guide land-use decisions in the city for the next 10 to 15 years.

The city developed the plan with the help the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. Over about 18 months, CMAP and the city sought suggestions and feedback from residents, business owners, city staff, officials and others. CMAP then took those suggestions and did research to see which are feasible.

The plan approved last week is more than 90 pages and includes more than 100 recommendations. The finalized plan may be found on the CMAP website at <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov>

Mayor Jeff Sherwin knows how to prioritize the recommendations.

"The first ones should be the ones I can afford, the ones that are economically feasible," Sherwin said.

Those could include creating pedestrian access along North Avenue and leasing land from ComEd to extend the Midland bicycle trail through CenterPoint park.

"Other goals like the development of a city center, we're talking about a major infusion of money which is just not available," Sherwin said.

CMAP will work with the city for two years to implement recommendations. With the plan finalized, the first step will be to prioritize recommendations.

“We’ll try to get it down to the top five,” said Trevor Dick, senior planner at CMAP. “Some will be low-hanging fruit. Others will take a long time.”

CMAP will also assist in finding money for the recommendations.

“We’ve identified potential funding sources and potential partnerships,” Dick said. “A lot of these recommendations don’t have to be solved by the city or residents. There are other government agencies or businesses or non-profits.”

Sherwin says there is less grant money available from the state and federal governments. Still, he’s pleased the city has developed a comprehensive plan.

“We love the plan,” Sherwin said. “It’s good confirmation we’ve been heading in the right direction. It’s good to see someone come in with a fresh eye.”