

THE TESKA BEAT

News on the projects that make us tick.

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A SUSTAINABLE DECATUR PLAN & IMPLEMENTATION

LOCATION :: DECATUR, IL | ARTICLE BY :: BEN CARLISLE

What does sustainability mean, and how do we apply it in a diverse community? These are two of the important questions that Teska Associates helped the City of Decatur, and its residents and business leaders, answer in the recently adopted Sustainable Decatur Plan.

What is a "sustainable" Decatur? It is a healthy, prosperous, and growing community. It has a central urban core, with vibrant neighborhoods; a strong economy; social infrastructure; and environmental consciousness. Decatur found that planning for sustainability afforded the opportunity to set a standard that increases economic opportunities, reduces household expenses, and takes a long-term look to make sure they have the resources to sustain their needs for generations to come.

The Sustainable Decatur Plan ensures that Decatur is a community that protects and enhances the natural environment, advances immediate and long-term well-being of the community and its citizens, and increases economic development opportunities. For Decatur, sustainability was more than simple environmental protection; it was also a matter of dollars and cents. Sustainability for Decatur promoted sustained economic growth and expansion of markets of goods and services that are achieved in ways that are environmentally benign and socially just.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- *Illinois Parks and Recreation Association 2011 State Conference* – Mike Hoffman served as a co-presenter for a talk on Community-wide Park Master Planning, focused on community engagement and building support for the plan.
- *UIC Placemaking Design Charette* - Jeff Martin spoke to graduate planning students at the University of Illinois Chicago on streetscaping and placemaking. After the lecture, Mr. Martin conducted an hour long design charette with the students.
- *Grundy County Planners Quarterly Forum* – Mike Hoffman gave a legislative update on TIF and other planning related bills working their way through Springfield.
- *Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation Quarterly Forum* – Mike Hoffman gave a presentation on the South Suburban Retail Investment Study at beautiful Olympia Fields Country Club. For more information on this project, please visit <http://www.teskaassociates.com/SouthSuburbs/>
- *Chicago APA - Outside the Box: A Historic Preservation Toolkit for Planning* - Jodi Mariano was one of four panelists to speak on streetscape planning processes, and design influences/ implementation steps for historic and contemporary downtowns.



Neighborhood Steering Committee Meeting in Decatur



B Lombard Downtown Guidebook

LOCATION :: LOMBARD, IL | ARTICLE BY :: TODD VANADILOK



"We have the consumers that are willing to purchase things if we get the right mix of businesses in there. I support the downtown development plan that has been brought forth. I like the idea of really relying upon our history as the Lilac Village and making a consistent look and feel throughout the downtown."

- Peter Breen, 34, public interest attorney

"I'm old enough to remember the old downtown ... You can't go back. It's nice to know where you've been, but it's important to know where you've been going. Since the advent of Yorktown (shopping center), all of the downtowns have changed. However, in Lombard the development plan for downtown is a good plan."

- David Brown, 61, pastor

Lombard desired more than a plan; what the Village envisioned and received was a practical guidebook of projects to enable them to hit the ground running.

Downtown Lombard's function in the community as a center for commerce and community has changed for a variety of reasons. From the emergence of other commercial districts and Yorktown Center, certain businesses and uses were drawn away from the downtown area, changing its role as the traditional central business district. The primary objective of the Lombard Downtown Revitalization Project Guidebook was to identify specific projects and actions that the Village and its partners can implement to rejuvenate Downtown Lombard as a strong commercial district with a balance of supporting uses and dynamic gathering spaces.

Teska Associates, Inc. -- along with its partners BDI, Gewalt Hamilton, Fish Transportation Group, Hitchcock Design Group, wohltgroup, and sculptor Richard Hunt -- took past planning and visioning efforts to the next level to create a series of action steps that the Village and its partners can begin implementing immediately and continue rolling out as resources become available. From redeveloping vacant sites to creating a downtown branding program, the Lombard Downtown Revitalization Project Guidebook was supported by a series of civic engagement activities to build public consensus on strategies to revitalize Downtown Lombard as a more vibrant destination and livable community. In addition, redevelopment strategies were market-tested to ensure their feasibility.

flickr from YAHOO!

Signed in as teskaassociates

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teskaassociates > Collections > **Lombard Downtown Plan**

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Lilacia Park
Thumbnails Detail Comments

Our visit to the Village of Lombard included an afternoon trip to the historic Lilacia Park, designed by Jens Jensen in 1927. Not surprisingly, the 8.5 acre park is filled with all sorts of lilac specimen, tulips, and trees. Thus, it goes without saying that our olfactory senses were quite pleased with this stop over....

For more information please visit:
www.lombardparks.com/parks/lilacia.htm

46 photos | 0 views | [Add a comment?](#)

Items are from between 03 May 2010 & 04 May 2010.

A FLICKR GALLERY OF THE DOWNTOWN WAS CREATED AS PART OF THE PROJECT WEBSITE



Revitalizing the East Bluff Neighborhood in Peoria

LOCATION :: PEORIA, IL | ARTICLE BY :: MIKE HOFFMAN

Grid streets with short walkable blocks. A new \$26 million dollar school. A solid institutional base including several churches and OSF St. Francis Medical Center. A location immediately adjacent to downtown. Sounds like a new urbanist dream neighborhood.

The East Bluff neighborhood of Peoria once was a dream neighborhood, with well-kept, attractive homes for working-class families. However, the neighborhood has deteriorated significantly over the past 25 years with rising crime rates and significant declines in both the housing stock and infrastructure. Facing these realities, the City of Peoria decided it was time for a new dream – a dream of restoring this once proud neighborhood. And like all good modern day dreamers, they explored ways to fund their vision. Based on research into successful residential Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts in Decatur and Springfield, the City retained Teska to conduct an eligibility study and craft a redevelopment plan.

The only challenge of proving eligibility of the area for a TIF was in the documentation required by the sheer size of the District which ultimately included 653 acres and 2,532 parcels. The bigger challenge was education – explaining to residents what TIF is, how it works, and how it will impact them. This challenge was met head-on by creating a project web site (www.eastvillagepeoria.com), establishing an on-going advisory board to guide planning and implementation, and conducting multiple neighborhood meetings to explain the process and bring in guests from other communities that could share their TIF experiences. In addition to providing assistance in presenting the plan at public meetings, Teska also provided an extensive FAQ response that was posted to the project web site. For more information on the plan's adoption, visit the link below:

<http://www.pjstar.com/business/x1840140105/East-Village-TIF-district-gains-city-approval>



Existing Housing in the East Bluff Neighborhood – Peoria, IL



Building Relationships - Kendall County

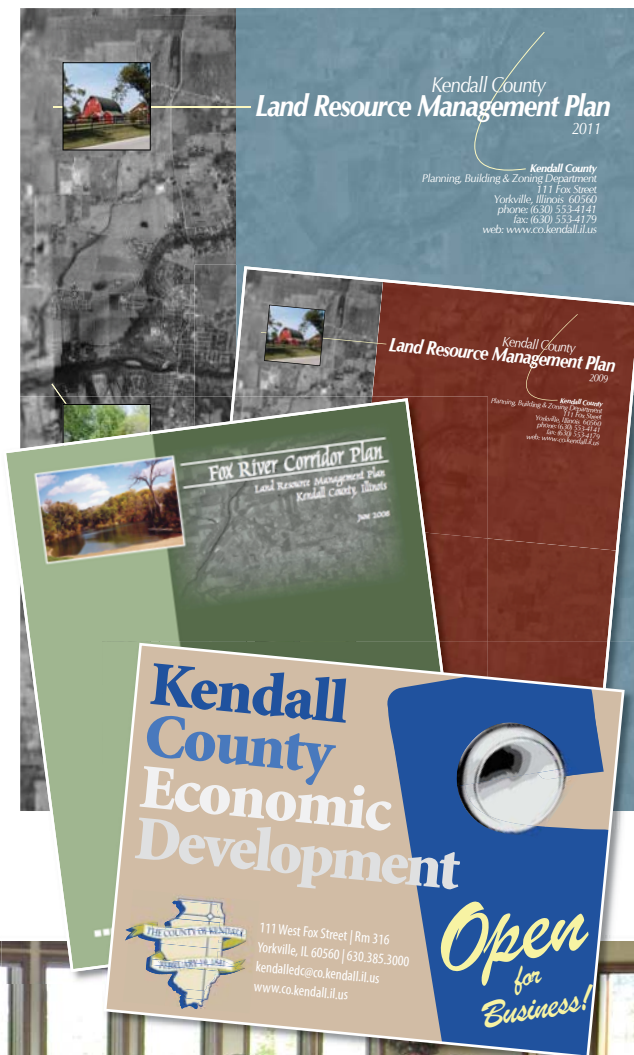
LOCATION :: KENDALL COUNTY, IL | ARTICLE BY :: MIKE HOFFMAN

At Teska Associates we take great pride in establishing long-term relationships with our clients, and our relationship with Kendall County is a great example. In fact, Teska Vice President Mike Hoffman has served as the firm's project manager for Kendall County for that entire 18 year period. How about that for some serious consistency?

The fastest growing County in the nation between 2000 and 2009 was in Illinois. Seriously? Yep. And for the past 18 years, that County has had the same planning consultant. Seriously? You bet. While Kendall County has grown exponentially over the past few decades, they have been able to manage that growth with the on-going assistance of Teska Associates, Inc.

Teska's efforts began with development of the Kendall County Land Resource Management Plan for the County back in the early 1990's. While the initial plan was fairly general, we have worked with the County to refine the plan over the years, developing specific and detailed plans for each Township as well as for special areas such as the Fox River Corridor. We have also assisted the County in keeping their zoning regulations up-to-date. Recent amendments have integrated sustainable solutions such as wind and solar renewable energy provisions and incorporation of appropriate conditions for keeping chickens within residential subdivisions. With Teska's assistance, Kendall County was one of the first in the State of Illinois to adopt Conservation Design requirements for new developments.

Our role has adapted and changed over time to match the County's needs. Several times we have stepped in to provide day-to-day support when the County was between planning directors. In addition to assisting with on-going review of development regulations, Teska is currently working closely with the County's planning staff to craft an Economic Development Plan in response to strong interest in expanding local employment opportunities expressed by residents in a 2010 County-wide survey.



Kendall County Economic Development Roundtable at White Tail Ridge Country Club

E IMSA Intercession: Creating a More Sustainable Campus

LOCATION :: AURORA, IL | ARTICLE BY :: TODD VANADILOK

From its classroom learning to its community outreach efforts, the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) in Aurora builds upon its mission: "Igniting and nurturing creative, ethical minds that advance the human condition." As an IMSA alum, Todd Vanadilok returned to campus in January, this time as an instructor, to lead a week-long class on creating a more sustainable campus which, more importantly, would support the school's mission to nurture "creative, ethical minds" and "advance the human condition."

As part of IMSA's annual Intercession program, a class of 9 students took part in learning about fundamental elements of sustainability and how to apply them to help make the IMSA campus more sustainable.

Breaking off into three teams, each team developed creative sustainability projects. One team researched the potential to install skylights throughout the main academic building to encourage more natural light that would help reduce energy costs associated with lighting and heating. Another team devised a solar water heater system for the residential dorms on campus, which would help reduce energy costs and promote water conservation. The third team developed a campus bike rental program to promote bike usage on campus; this team went as far as collaborating with school officials to research grant funding, address liability and storage issues, and form a bike club. Watching over the teams' progress and thought processes, Todd was highly impressed with the students' abilities to quickly grasp sustainability concepts and appropriately apply them to real projects that the school will explore to improve IMSA's sustainability.

GO
GREEN
@IMSA



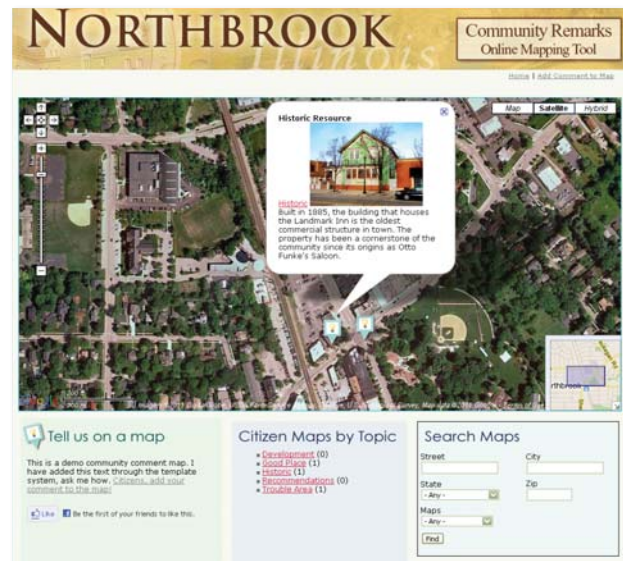
Students socialize as they view each other's Intercession projects



F IN THE WORKS! Stay tuned for updates come Fall on the following projects:



- Glenwood Comprehensive Plan
- Sugar Grove Industrial TIF
- Hanover Park Station Area Plan
- Romeoville East Side & Downtown Plan
- Schiller Park Station Area Study
- Northbrook Downtown Station Area Plan



Glenwood Comprehensive Plan Project Website | Designed By Teska Associates, Inc.
Please visit it at www.teskaassociates.com/glenwood

*Teska would like to extend a warm welcome to our 2011 summer interns,
Malika Ramdas and Louis Mercado.*

Malika will be joining the Teska Team in Plainfield and Louis will be holding down the fort at our Evanston office.

