

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Beginning in 2001, the Village of Skokie embarked on completing a total overhaul of the Comprehensive Plan, which was last compiled in 1969. Between 1969 and 2001 Skokie continued to do smaller area plans and minor updates, but following the 2000 Census, it became clear that we needed to start from scratch and develop the plan again from the bottom up. The process has been continuing ever since.

## NEW BEGINNINGS

This plan differs from the 1969 plan in many ways. The style and format are specifically designed and written to take a lot of complex information and make it understandable to a broad and diverse population using text, tables, and graphics. We tried to make it conversational, as succinct as possible, and hopefully a little fun to read. Our hope is that people will actually *read* and implement this document. We don't know of another community who has tried it this way, so we're going to take the lead, like Skokie has in so many other ways.

Another major difference is that all the parts are being looked at separately so that we more completely study each issue and how it effects all the other pieces of the plan. We compiled detailed demographic, social, housing, and economic data and technical studies to be better able to make good decisions. We have also implemented a set of ways to include the public in the process tailored to the specific needs of each part of the plan, including committees, focus and advisory groups, design charettes, surveys, electronic communication methods, as well as public hearings. This public participation has added a new dimension to the planning process, allowing plans to be modified to meet community needs and concerns and build support for the plan's initiatives.

## THE CONTENT

We don't want to give everything away right at the beginning, so here are the basics. This plan is divided into eight parts that contain the "good stuff" ... the processes, explanations, summaries, and conclusions. The technical parts are put into appendices for those who need more detailed information. The eight sections are as follows:

*Introduction* ... provides an overview of our planning history and where we are headed with the document as a whole.

*Demographics* ... looks at who we are and provides the basic data that is the part of the foundation of all our planning.

*Community Participation* ... defines the methodology and justification for collecting information from people.

*Direction* ... defines the basic principles for future decision making.

*Transportation ...* explores how we get around not just by cars but by train, by bus, by bike, and on foot.

*Housing ...* an area not covered by the 1969 plan, studies the places that we live.

*Public Facilities and Service ...* looks beyond stone and steel and also considers the assistance and other services available to Skokie residents.

*Land Use ...* organizes and maps how we are currently using our land and how we should use our land in the future, area by area, neighborhood by neighborhood, fitting smaller pieces into the bigger picture.

## **A COMMITMENT TO INCOMPLETENESS**

The final change from the original 1969 plan is that we have made it public policy that this Comprehensive Plan will never be complete! It is designed to be ever-changing. Each part that gets completed may lead to further studies and future changes. This allows us to avoid having the process get stuck, finding consensus and approving some items while allowing for further analysis and later recommendations by others. It also allows us to prioritize future land planning based on community needs and specific issues that need to be addressed.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to thank the Skokie Plan Commission and Board of Trustees for allowing us the opportunity to try something a little different and produce a document that has received much acclaim from the public. We would also like to thank all the members of the public themselves, residents, employees, employers, agencies, and other taxing bodies that came together to contribute to the pieces of this plan.