



**City of Naperville**

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# **Water Street Study Area Vision Statement**

*An Opportunity to Proactively and  
Comprehensively Plan for the  
Redevelopment of the Water Street  
Area*



**Planning Services Team  
TED Business Group  
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## **1. Design and Character**

The unique character of Downtown Naperville has been established through the incorporation of a variety of design elements into the buildings, streetscapes, and amenities. Building on the success of Downtown Naperville, the Water Street Study Area should include some predominate characteristics of the existing downtown, such as building materials, scale, and pedestrian amenities.

### Considerations:

1. Consolidate the multiple property ownership to allow for the comprehensive redevelopment of the Water Street Study Area (rather than a lot-by-lot redevelopment).
2. Design buildings to be four-sided and have multiple entry points to further the pedestrian friendliness of the development.
3. Require pedestrian-oriented design, including building orientation, façade treatments, building size/scale, seating areas, multiple entry points (doors), and open space.
4. Incorporate pedestrian scale elements, such as awnings, landscaping, courtyards, and benches to create a more human scale and pedestrian friendly development.
5. Incorporate traditional building materials, such as brick and stone in earth tone colors, into the building design, as outlined in the Downtown Plan.
6. Arrange the buildings in a manner, which capitalizes on the Riverwalk and Naper Settlement, while also maximizing open space and pedestrian connections.
7. Utilize the grade differential from Aurora Avenue to the Riverwalk (downward sloping towards the Riverwalk) to minimize the height of buildings on Aurora Avenue.
8. Consideration shall be given for predominately 2 story or taller buildings where appropriate. Taller structures of 3 to 5 stories may be suitable if a minimal impact is imposed upon the surrounding area. (This is not to be intended as an absolute maximum number of stories). The height guidelines established for the study area through the Downtown Plan, as well as the site topography and existing building heights within the general area, will be utilized to determine appropriate height for each building. Each building should not exceed the floor-area-ratio or maximum height limitation established within the respective zoning district in which the property is located.
9. Utilize the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process to accomplish a flexible, comprehensive, and cohesive development.
10. Ensure that the visibility of parking lots is minimized within the redevelopment of the Water Street Study Area.
11. Ensure that the architectural design of the redevelopment project includes design elements, which are consistent with the downtown, while not attempting to recreate the Downtown Core.
12. Rezone the properties located along the north side of Aurora Avenue to TU (Transitional Use) upon redevelopment.
13. Ensure that the buildings located along the north side of Aurora Avenue are designed in a manner and scale that is appropriate within the Transitional Use Area.

## **2. Multi-Use Development**

The success of Downtown Naperville is not only linked to the design, character, and pedestrian scale of development, but also the mix of uses included in the downtown. These different uses (residential, commercial, office, and recreational) compliment each other and create activity in the downtown throughout the day and evening; accordingly, multiple uses should be incorporated into the Water Street Study Area.

### Considerations:

1. Incorporate residential, office, destination commercial, neighborhood commercial, and recreational uses into the Water Street Study Area to encourage activity throughout the day and evening hours.
2. Ensure that a mix of uses that support visitor uses, which compliment each other and the Downtown as a whole, are provided within the Water Street Study Area.
3. Anchor the Water Street Study Area with a commercial use or restaurant, which encourages visitors to take advantage of additional shopping opportunities.
4. Include uses that support visitor destinations, such as Naper Settlement, including restaurants with banquet facilities and small lodging facilities.
5. Include recreational uses, such as outdoor amphitheaters and exhibit galleries, which encourage additional activity in the Water Street Study Area.
6. Design the site in a manner, which maximizes open space and accommodates pedestrian activity.
7. Explore funding opportunities, such as public-private partnerships, to encourage comprehensive redevelopment that incorporates the design character and uses, which are desired for the Water Street Study Area.
8. Ensure that the uses included in the development are consistent with the Downtown Plan Secondary Commercial and Traditional Use District recommendations as well as the Zoning Ordinance requirements.

### **3. Pedestrian Access**

Pedestrian access is an important element to the success of Downtown Naperville. Because individual parking lots are not provided for each of the commercial uses in the downtown, businesses are forced to draw on pedestrian, rather than vehicular traffic. The Downtown Plan identifies the Water Street Study Area as an important link to the downtown pedestrian system through the connection it can provide between the downtown businesses, the Riverwalk, the Municipal Center, and Naper Settlement.

#### Considerations:

1. Consider vacating Water Street and provide pedestrian walkways and amenities in its place.
2. Upgrade Webster Street to create a pedestrian link between the Downtown and Naper Settlement.
3. Provide pedestrian connections to the Riverwalk to provide a more direct connection to Downtown Naperville.
4. Design redevelopment in a manner that is pedestrian-oriented, including building orientation and façade treatments (windows, awnings, scale, etc.).
5. Improve the intersection of Aurora Avenue and Webster Street to provide a better pedestrian connection between the areas south of Aurora Avenue and the Riverwalk.
6. Ensure pedestrian access within the Water Street Study Area through design elements that are inviting, safe, and secure and that also provide ample space for pedestrians.
7. Ensure that pedestrian access ways are designated as such through signage and pavement markings.
8. Ensure that pedestrian access is provided at multiple points within the Water Street Study Area, including from the parking areas to the commercial, office, and residential uses.
9. Work with Naperville Township to identify pedestrian connections

#### **4. Riverwalk and Naper Settlement**

The Riverwalk and Naper Settlement serve as recreational attractions for community residents and visitors and as destination points within and adjacent to Downtown Naperville and the larger community. The proximity of the Water Street Study Area to the Riverwalk and Naper Settlement provides opportunities to tie into each amenity, as well as expand and enhance the existing Riverwalk system and connections to the Naper Settlement.

##### Considerations:

1. Encourage multiple pedestrian connections from the Riverwalk and Naper Settlement into the Water Street Study Area.
2. Expand the Riverwalk along the north side of Water Street (south side of the river).
3. Provide pedestrian connections to the existing Riverwalk at the Main Street and Webster Street bridges to encourage pedestrian traffic through the Water Street Study Area.
4. Explore opportunities to re-use the surface parking lot adjacent to the Naperville Township building in a manner, which better compliments the Webster Street Bridge and adjacent Riverwalk amenities.
5. Consider the maintenance and ownership of the additional Riverwalk right-of-way, if dedicated.
6. Ensure that all future Riverwalk connections are handicap accessible.
7. Ensure that the expanded/extended Riverwalk facilities are compatible with the design and style of the existing facilities.
8. Work with the property owners located north of Water Street to obtain additional easement dedications (minimum of 15 feet from edge of the River, with additional dedications where necessary/appropriate) to expand the Riverwalk along the south side of the river.
9. Explore incorporation of historical architectural elements that complement Naper Settlement.

## **5. Streetscape**

The Downtown Plan indicates a variety of streetscape improvements for Downtown Naperville. These recommendations, which include the addition of benches, lighting, trees, fountains, landscaping, etc. should be incorporated into the redevelopment of the Water Street Study Area to ensure cohesiveness and compatibility throughout the downtown area.

### Considerations:

1. Provide entryway features, which lead residents and customers into the Water Street Study Area, Downtown Naperville, and Naper Settlement.
2. Incorporate directional signage, entryway features, gathering spaces, public art, and other streetscape elements to increase the usability of the site by pedestrians and customers.
3. Provide consolidated trash collection containers (rather than separate containers for each tenant) in a centralized location.
4. Include amenities, such as benches, landscaping, lighting fixtures, which are similar in style and type to create a uniform character for the area.
5. Comply with the streetscape design standards adopted by the City of Naperville for the Downtown Area, which identifies Main Street as a “Downtown” street which must include brick pavers, tree grates, and benches (see attachment B). Aurora Avenue and Webster Street are identified in the Downtown Plan as a “Boulevard” streetscape requiring low-rise planters, along with brick pavers, tree grates, and benches (see attachment C). Water Street, identified in the Downtown Plan as a Downtown Street, will be treated as a “Boulevard” streetscape in order to promote a pedestrian friendly atmosphere. Streetscape improvements will be concentrated in the public right-of-way areas.
6. Relocate/bury utility lines in the redevelopment of the Water Street Study Area at the cost of the owner(s).
7. Locate trash collection containers and other associated service containers behind buildings or in less visible areas and incorporate tastefully designed trash enclosure schemes so as to minimize their impact on the pedestrian nature of the development.

## **6. Parking/Access**

Parking and access is a crucial point that must be considered when reviewing not only the Water Street Study Area, but also Downtown Naperville as a whole. Residents and visitors should have a place to park their vehicles when they come to downtown to the Water Street Study Area to shop, eat, work, or walk the Riverwalk. As a means to build and maintain the pedestrian character of this area, parking should be convenient and accessible, while not detracting from the design, character, and walkability of the area.

### Considerations:

1. At a minimum, provide adequate spaces to accommodate the parking demand generated in this area based on the continuous improvement model.
2. Encourage the provision of parking in a centralized location(s), and if possible, through a single decked parking facility to provide consolidated parking for the entire study area and potentially surplus parking for the overall Downtown area, including the Riverwalk, City Hall, Naper Settlement, and the Downtown as a whole.
3. Determine a funding mechanism, such as public-private partnerships or SSA, to provide parking that meets or exceeds the demand for the Water Street Study Area.
4. Determine the feasibility of locating a portion of the parking facility underground so as to minimize the appearance/height of the facility from Aurora Avenue.
5. Coordinate with adjacent properties, such as Walgreen's, to determine if an off-site shared parking facility can accommodate the parking needs of the study area.
6. Parking in this area shall be coordinated with the current parking study to determine the feasibility of developing additional public parking facilities in the downtown. Though this property was not part of the parking study, as the study focused on parcels that were either owned by the City or were more difficult to develop due to their unusual shape and other constraints, the possibility of a parking facility established through re-development should be encouraged.
7. Re-examine the necessity to maintain the existing agreement between the City of Naperville and various Water Street Study Area property owners that allows these property owners to utilize up to 80 spaces within the City of Naperville's parking facility at 400 S. Eagle Street (agreement is valid until 2013).
8. Locate parking behind buildings, in mid-block locations, or in other less visible areas, so as to minimize its impacts on the pedestrian nature of the redevelopment.
9. If surface parking lots are utilized, these should be limited in number, provide consolidated parking for several properties, and be located in a manner to reduce visibility and impact on pedestrians (likely behind buildings).
10. Avoid providing parking in visible areas, such as in front of buildings or at corner sites.
11. Ensure that accessible parking is provided in close proximity to the Naperville Township building, to accommodate its patrons with physical limitations and special needs.
12. Work with Naperville Township to discuss the possibility for an alternative/cooperative parking arrangement.
13. Restrict curb cuts into the property along Aurora Avenue and ensure that other access points, including access to the parking facility, do not conflict with the internal or external roadway and pedestrian network.

## **7. Traffic**

Similar to parking and access, circulation through and within Downtown Naperville is a critical issue. Traffic should be thoroughly addressed and accommodated within the Water Street Study Area to minimize the impact of the increased traffic, which will result from redevelopment of the area.

### Considerations:

1. Provide road network improvements which improve the current traffic flow within and surrounding the Water Street Study Area, particularly through the improvement of various intersections, Main Street Bridge, the existing alley, addition of turning lanes/traffic signals, and the removal of on-street parking conflicts.
2. Consider vacating Water Street to decrease traffic conflicts and increase/improve pedestrian access with a condition that an east – west access route connecting Main Street and Webster Street is maintained.
3. Undertake a traffic study to determine the impacts of a proposed redevelopment on the existing road network within and adjacent to the Water Street Study Area.
4. Ensure that the impact of increased traffic related to the proposed redevelopment is minimized, particularly in the residential neighborhood located to the south of the Water Street Study Area, along Webster, Main, and Porter Streets (south of Aurora Avenue).
5. If a development proposal includes the vacation of right-of-way, the vacation will be reviewed by the Transportation Advisory Board, with final approval by City Council. Vacation of right-of-way (the alley, Water Street, or a portion of Webster Street) may be appropriate to accommodate a unified development, which establishes different vehicular traffic patterns and encourages pedestrian access through the area.
6. Require vehicular access, including loading zones and refuse areas, to be located off of Squaw Alley, where applicable. Other vehicular and service areas should be located in a manner to limit visibility and impact on pedestrians.
7. Restrict curb cuts onto Aurora Avenue (for the properties located north of Aurora Avenue).
8. Minimize access points onto Water Street by providing shared or consolidated access points that serve multiple properties.

## **8. Stormwater Management**

The Water Street Study Area is located adjacent to the West Branch of the DuPage River and accordingly, within a portion of the floodplain; as such, adequate stormwater management systems should be provided. These systems should account for existing floodplain considerations, as well as increased run-off, which may result from the redevelopment of the site.

### Considerations:

1. Improve the flow and management of stormwater through the Water Street Study Area and surrounding neighboring commercial area.
2. Provide detention for the redevelopment of the Water Street Study Area and investigate the opportunity to accommodate additional stormwater for the overall Downtown area.
3. Coordinate with the Riverwalk Commission to stabilize the streambank.
4. Efficiently provide collective stormwater management for the Water Street Study Area redevelopment, as opposed to individual facilities through incremental redevelopment.
5. Require the provision of adequate and efficient stormwater management systems to serve the stormwater needs resulting from redevelopment within the study area. Stormwater management should be provided in a consolidated manner, if possible.
6. Provide compensatory storage for any construction within the floodplain or floodway area.
7. Consider requests to accommodate detention and compensatory storage through underground storage or other alternative mechanisms. Such requests for alternative mechanisms shall require City Council approval.
8. Accommodate the requirements to address the floodway and floodplain in future development proposals.

## **9. Planned Unit Development District**

To address the future vision of the Water Street Study Area, a Planned Unit Development (PUD) District applicable only to the Water Street Study Area should be established by the city. This PUD district, in conjunction with the Water Street Vision Statement, will provide a mechanism to enforce the considerations contained within the vision statement and ensure that the future vision of the Water Street Study Area is realized. The adoption of the Vision Statement and implementation of the PUD district will assist the city by establishing the level of expectation for developers seeking to redevelop within the subject area. A PUD district provides the city with the authority to mandate that any or all of the considerations listed above be included in a redevelopment proposal. The degree of control and flexibility afforded by the PUD district represents the most effective way of guiding redevelopment in the Water Street Study Area.

PUD districts are established to encourage creative design that otherwise would not be achievable through traditional zoning channels. The five goals hoped to be achieved through the creation of a PUD district as defined by Section 6-2-4 (Purpose and Intent) of the Municipal Code are:

1. To stimulate creative approaches to the residential, commercial and industrial development of land
2. To provide more efficient use of land
3. To preserve natural features and provide open space areas and recreation areas in excess of that required under existing zoning regulations
4. To develop new approaches to the living environment through variety in type, design and layout of residential structures, commercial and industrial buildings, transportation systems, and public facilities
5. To unify buildings and structures through design. (Ord. 01-110, 6-5-2001)

Staff recommends that a PUD district be established and implemented for the WSSA. A PUD district will effectively regulate redevelopment and promote the five goals listed above within the context provided by the Water Street Vision Statement.