



Village of Morton Grove
Economic Development Commission (EDC) Meeting
Agenda & Meeting Notice

Monday, April 13, 2026 - 7:00 P.M.

2nd Floor Scanlon Conference Room
Flickinger Municipal Center, 6101 Capulina Avenue, Morton Grove, IL 60053

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Approval of Minutes**
February 9, 2026
- III. **Project Updates**
 - 8500-50 Lehigh Avenue
 - 6724 Dempster Street
 - 8120-40 Lehigh Avenue/8125-45 River Drive
 - Menard/Dempster, Amazon Fresh Site, CVS Site
- IV. **Dempster Plan Corridor Update**
- V. **Comprehensive Plan Update**
 - Issues and Opportunities Workshop Results
- VI. **Facade Improvement Program**
- VII. **Other Business**
- VIII. **Public Comments**
- IX. **Adjournment**

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 09, 2026
MEETING OF THE MORTON GROVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
MORTON GROVE VILLAGE HALL, 6101 CAPULINA AVENUE, MORTON GROVE, IL 60053

Pursuant to proper notice in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission was called to order at 7:02 p.m. Secretary Brandon Nolin called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Khounani, Laliwala, Mathew, Pandit, Chairperson Fernandez

Commissioners Absent: Hardegree with notice, Khan, Mohammed, O'Connor with notice

Village Staff Present: Brandon Nolin, AICP, Community Development Administrator

Village Trustees Present: White

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2025 meeting was made by Commissioner Pandit and was seconded by Chairperson Fernandez.

Commissioner Khan	voting	aye
Commissioner Laliwala	voting	aye
Commissioner Mohammed	voting	aye
Commissioner Pandit	voting	aye
Chairperson Fernandez	voting	aye

Motion passed (6-0).

Brandon Nolin provided an update on active projects, including:

- Napleton Honda (Steve Napleton Automotive Group)
- Hennings/Ferris/Narragansett Townhomes & Duplex (P & P Properties)
- Metro on Main 89-Unit Townhome Development (Lexington Homes)
- 6724 Dempster
- 5843 Dempster (Dunkin')
- Fifth Third at 6210 Dempster / Village Hall/Police Station at 6201 Dempster
- Metra Station
- 8500-50 Lehigh – Special Use Permit and Preliminary Plat of Subdivision approved by Plan Commission in September
- Amazon Fresh recent closure

The Commissioners discussed the active projects. Commissioner Laliwala asked what kind of response the Village received to the RFQ. Mr. Nolin stated that the number of organizations that actually pulled the bid is in the teens, with approximately 15 entities expressing some form of interest. He also noted that staff have given tours of the site to three businesses so far, with interest primarily coming from restaurant and coffee shop owners, and people that have an existing business and are looking for an expansion site. Commissioner Pandit asked for more details regarding the retail space. Mr. Nolin indicated that the space is approximately 160 square feet with an exterior walk-up window, and all utilities have been stubbed into the space. He also noted that some interested parties have submitted questions about the potential for outdoor seating. Mr. Nolin noted that he would share the RFQ with the Commission following the meeting.

Chairperson Fernandez inquired about the status of the Amazon Fresh. Mr. Nolin stated that the Village was not notified in advance of the store's pending closure. He noted that the building is owned by another entity based on the east coast that is independent of Kensington, who owns the larger Sawmill Station shopping center. Mr. Nolin then noted that the Village is in communication with the regional manager for Amazon Fresh, as well as the location team with Amazon/Whole Foods. He indicated the Village is making calls and providing marketing materials to make the case for why the site could be a good location for a future Whole Foods. He noted that data indicate the Amazon

Fresh store was the third busiest in the state, and foot traffic grew 25% year-over-year. Concluding that Amazon is a large corporation that is making a bigger business decision beyond Village control.

Commissioner Pandit asked what the home prices were at the Metro On Main townhome development. Mr. Nolin noted that he did not have the exact pricing on hand, but believed units were generally being sold for of \$600,000.

Commissioner Laliwala asked why the project proposed for 8500-50 Lehigh was only four stories and referred to taller developments in the surrounding area. Mr. Nolin replied that a big consideration in the proposed height is that going over four stories would likely trigger building code requirements for steel frame construction or additional fire suppression. Mr. Nolin noted that the four story height was a function of land economics and construction costs related to building something taller.

Chairperson Fernandez asked about the status of the former Giordano's. Mr. Nolin stated that inspections were scheduled for a new restaurant, Al Badia Tandoori, that is seeking to open later in the month.

Commissioner Laliwala then asked about the status of the former restaurant at 6000 Dempster Street. Mr. Nolin indicated that there was no change or news to report regarding that vacant space. He noted that the space no longer has any kitchen equipment, so it is not an ideal fit for another restaurant despite having been a restaurant in the past.

Commissioner Pandit inquired about the status of the former CVS. Mr. Nolin indicated that the Village has been in communication with the property owner and realtor of the former CVS property. To his knowledge, Mr. Nolin noted that the CVS lease is active, but will expired at the end of January 2027. Staff are hopeful that the property will be able to obtain a new tenant in the coming year to minimize vacancy after the end of the lease.

Mr. Nolin shared a brief update on the Dempster Street Corridor Plan process, highlighting the Community Workshop scheduled for March 19, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the Civic Center. He indicated that the Steering Committee was presented with preliminary recommendations at its meeting in January and provided generally positive to the consultant team. He noted that following the community workshop, the consultant team will use the feedback received to revise draft content as appropriate, and assemble a plan document including more detailed narrative and illustrations. The project is on schedule for completion in the summer of 2026.

Other Business

A Comprehensive Plan Workshop was conducted by Mr. Nolin. The Commissioners answered an issues and opportunities questionnaire.

- What are the primary strengths and assets of Morton Grove?
- Identify 5 issues or concerns facing Morton Grove.
- List, in order of importance, the 3 most important issues discussed thus far.
- Identify 3 specific projects or actions that you would like to see undertaken in Morton Grove.

Discussion ensued regarding each of the four questions. A summary of the discussion is attached (**Attachment A**).

Hearing no further business or public comment, Commissioner Pandit moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Laliwala. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously pursuant to a voice vote at 8:33 p.m.



Minutes by: Brandon Nolin, AICP

ATTACHMENT A

Village of Morton Grove
Comprehensive Plan Update

Issues and Opportunities Workshop Summary Economic Development Commission – February 9, 2026

A workshop exercise for the Comprehensive Plan update was conducted with the Economic Development Commission as part of a regularly scheduled meeting on February 9, 2026. In the workshop, commissioners were first asked to identify the primary of strengths and assets of the Morton Grove. After discussing the positive aspects of the community, commissioners were then asked to identify the issues and concerns they see facing the community. The results of that discussion were used to create a cumulative list of issues and participants were then asked to rank the three most important issues discussed from that single list. Lastly, commissioners were asked to identify specific actions or projects to undertake in Morton Grove in response to the issues discussed by the group.

The summary below identifies the assets identified by the commission and present the highest-ranked issues as determined by commission input. For each issue identified by the Economic Development Commission, the number of votes the issue received during the group exercise is included in parentheses. Actions and projects are listed and grouped based on written responses provided in discussion.

NOTE: The following is a summary of the thoughts, comments, and opinions received in the Economic Development Commission workshop. Some comments were shared with the entire group, while others were recorded privately on worksheets. The items identified in this summary are not recommendations or observations of the Village Administration, but represent feedback and comments received from those who participated.

Strengths and Assets

As the Comprehensive Plan for Morton Grove is updated, the key strengths and assets of the Morton Grove community should be leveraged and built upon. For the initial step in the workshop exercise commissioners were asked to identify the strengths and assets of Morton Grove that should be preserved. The following strengths were identified (listed in particular order):

- Convenient Regional Location
- Strong Family Community
- Diversity – Multiple ethnicities and religious groups
- Park District and greenspace
- Religious Institutions
- Friendly People
- Solid/Clear Infrastructure
- Trains, Accessibility, and Proximity to O’Hare Airport
- Active Volunteer Community
- Regional Trail Network
- Variety of Services and Retailers
- Good Schools

Top Issues and Concerns

The top issues and concerns identified by the Economic Development Commission were related to an increasing tax burden and rising cost of living, and the need to attract additional full-service restaurants. Below is the collective list of issues as determined during the workshop ordered as ranked by the commission. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of votes an issue received during the ranking discussion. Additional notes are provided on the top ranked issues.

Ranked Issues and Concerns

- Increasing Taxes with Decreasing Affordability (4)
- Failure to Attract Full-service Restaurants (4)

- Harlem/Beckwith Signal (2)
- Old Infrastructure (2)
- No Downtown (2)
- Lack of Youth Oriented Entertainment (2)
- Resources Available to Businesses (1)
- Lack of Regional Special Events (1)
- Small Park District Gym (1)
- Need for a Theater (1)
- Perception of Increasing Crime (1)
- Village Reputation as Hard to Work With (1)
- Lack of Open Space for Development or Recreation (1)
- Blue Collar Image (-)

Increasing Taxes with Decreasing Affordability

Commissioners highlighted a concern with increasing taxes, noting the recent increase tied to reassessment of property values by the Cook County Assessor. Discussion acknowledged that the Village is not a primary driver of taxes, but that a location in Cook County generally has a high tax burden. Discussion of rising taxes was then linked to increasing costs of living including grocery prices as well as the cost of construction. Commissioners noted that this seemed to be a regional issue, but that it has local impacts including increasing housing costs and limited available housing stock for young professionals and families.

Failure to Attract Full-service Restaurants

While business attraction was a primary topic of discussion among commissioners, the desire to attract full-service restaurants was specifically cited by several. Comments cited a need for family-friendly restaurants, a wider variety of cuisine, and sports bars. Commissioners also cited a related need for additional entertainment venues that included food service.

Priority Actions and Projects

In response to the list of issues, commissioners were asked to name specific projects or actions that would provide solutions to those issues identified in the first part of the exercise. Recommended projects and actions that were discussed as a group and/or provided on individual sheets are summarized below:

- Increase traffic control to address speeding on Dempster
- Attract more businesses with incentives (funding or tax relief)
- Establish a downtown area
- Attract additional recreation/entertainment businesses to warehouse areas
- Invest more in marketing and improving the Village's image
- Revitalize and reimagine existing vacant spaces
- Build a bigger and better gym in partnership with the Park District
- Build teen-oriented (indoor/outdoor) activity center like a skate park or sports center
- Create intense focus group to deep dive into businesses lost over the last 2-3 years and develop a corrective action plan
- Attract more family-friendly restaurants to support increasing population of family households
- Install a traffic signal at Harlem and Beckwith
- Lower taxes