

2026

NORTHFIELD VILLAGE CAUCUS PLATFORM

Ratified on August 4, 2026

Purpose

The Village of Northfield Caucus Platform is a statement of expectation setting out the basic policies and goals for our elected Northfield Village officials and serves as a guide for administering Village activities and initiatives. The Caucus develops a platform with views and opinions from residents, and it seeks to create the vision of Village residents on Village direction and administration. The platform's goal is to maintain and enhance the small-town character of the village as predominantly single-family residential community at a level that is in line with surrounding communities*. The Caucus addresses specific actions or policies in the Platform when they find a clear majority of residents surveyed support a particular action or policy. In the absence of a current survey, Caucus members endeavor to informally monitor the views and opinions within their precincts. The Caucus expects Village President and Trustee candidates endorsed by the Caucus to concur with the Platform prior to slating.

A. Administration

1. Representation and Communication

The Village Board should implement a Communications Strategy that fully and proactively informs residents concerning Village activities and initiatives (including current studies and proposed projects) through all available communication channels, such as e-news, electronic alerts, newsletters, and press releases, as well as face-to-face interaction, with the objective of reaching every household. They should also promptly post notices and minutes on the Village Website and social media platforms. Official notification, meeting schedules (for regular and ad hoc meetings), and agendas need to be posted in advance, as provided by law. The Village Board should also inform and update Northfield businesses and taxing bodies of the same.

Over time, changing circumstances may create significantly new perspectives and dictate markedly different approaches to issues referred to in this Platform. Prior to adopting any such new perspectives or approaches, the Board should solicit the views of the Caucus and the community in general to ensure full understanding of the proposals and identify any unintended consequences in advance. It is important that the Village

President as well as the Village Trustees and Village Manager attend a Caucus meeting at least annually in order to share thoughts and seek input from Caucus members and residents on Village issues. The Village Board and Village Manager have an open invitation to attend.

The Village President and Village Trustees acknowledge their duty to follow the clear majority opinion of Village residents while respecting the rights of all.

2. Financial Responsibility

Residents expect that the Village Board will assure maintenance of the high investment grade quality of Northfield's debt obligations as a reflection of sound fiscal management and to assure continued access to liquidity. This objective is attained through ongoing balanced budgets and strict control of costs without degrading the quality of such essential services as Police, Fire, and Public Works services.

B. Planning, Development, and Land Use

1. Planning and Development

The Caucus strongly encourages the Village Board as well as its various commissions, to follow all development plans that have wide resident acceptance when refining zoning and other requirements, to continue to protect the small-town character of the Village, as defined by population density relative to geographic footprint. The Caucus recognizes that a vibrant community must include a suitable combination of work-related, entertainment, and residential facilities.

The residents support mixed-use, ground-level retail space with additional businesses or condominiums above in low rise structures within the central business area. The Edens corridor (Frontage Rd north of Central Ave) is seen as appropriate for continued development of commercial and residential buildings. There continues to be great interest in suitably located dining and retail establishments. Residents are sensitive to higher and larger buildings being close to single-family and low-rise housing impinging on the residential nature of the Village.

2. Building and Zoning Density

Northfield should be dedicated to remaining primarily a residential community. Large commercial developments, such as shopping malls, large and complex mixed-use or large chain stores are not appropriate for Northfield, relative to the size of the Village. Buildings should be constructed in a style consistent with neighboring properties. Impact

on traffic congestion and local travel patterns (e.g., presence of school children and our elderly population) should be carefully analyzed before building.

The Caucus supports strict enforcement of all building codes and zoning ordinances and encourages the Village Board to enforce setback and floor area ratio restrictions that are consistent with neighboring properties. The Board should regulate teardowns or subdivision of existing properties to maintain the character of the neighborhood and to preserve property values. The Village Board should enforce property maintenance codes which are violated by neglected properties and ensure compliance with applicable ordinances. Significant policy exceptions should be carefully evaluated with a high degree of transparency.

3. Traffic and Public Safety

The Village should continue to explore various ways to optimize vehicle and pedestrian traffic, making Northfield safe for pedestrians and bicyclists. More sidewalks and crosswalks are needed to enhance safety and walkability throughout the Village.

The Village should adopt and enforce clear safety policies regarding electronic vehicles (skateboards, scooters, bikes, etc.). Those policies should be widely publicized.

4. Drainage and Flooding

Replacing, maintaining, and improving Village infrastructure for drainage management and flood prevention are critical to Northfield residents and should continue to be a high priority. The Village Board's storm management plan should be updated regularly to reflect changes in problem areas, technology, regulations, potential flood water projects and funding sources. The Village Board should provide detailed updates to Village residents regarding the same. System enhancements should be explored and sources of funding actively pursued for the installment of recommended improvements.

5. Sustainability and Green Initiatives

The Village Board should be committed to protecting Northfield's ecosystem and natural resources and to working with neighboring jurisdictions on environmental sustainability and green initiatives. The Village Board should explore establishing commissions and/or committees to create climate action plans that will serve our community in the years ahead.

C. Resident Services

The Village should be sufficiently staffed in order to maintain a high level of professional service delivery and properly maintain and improve Village services and infrastructure.

The Village Board and staff should actively engage with other governments to identify areas of cooperation and coordination that improve services and/or reduce costs. Any time an issue such as budgets and enrollment/membership involving local parks or schools arises, the Village should actively cooperate with the Park District(s) or School District(s) to ensure that the interests of Northfield citizens are protected.

D. Surveys

The Caucus last conducted a survey in 2023 and recognizing it needs updating. The Caucus will gather input from residents anecdotally and through an open and ongoing questionnaire posted to their website. Findings will be shared with the Village Board at a minimum of annual intervals.

E. Standards of Professionalism

The Village Board should be fully committed to the necessary civility and professional conduct. They should elicit a variety of viewpoints in all their interaction with residents and Village staff to ensure they make the best decisions for the future of the Village. Ad hoc committees are strongly encouraged to engage the community and include residents' viewpoints.

Candidates who seek to be slated by the Caucus, and elected Village board members should acknowledge that the Caucus is a nonpartisan organization designed to serve as conduit between residents and elected officials. Communication between the two entities is essential to ensure the integrity of the Platform, candidate slating and elections.

* Percent of housing that is attached (i.e. condos, apartment, townhomes) in Northfield is 24.5%, in Wilmette 19.4%, in Winnetka 17.3%, in Glencoe 8.6% (Source: Institute for Housing Studies at DePaul University <https://www.housingstudies.org/topic/indicators-and-data-tools/>)