

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

UPDATED MARCH 26, 2013

INTRODUCTION

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the Village of Homer Glen, Illinois sets forth long-range recommendations for the future acquisition, development and enhancement of parks and open space in the community. The Plan also includes recommendations regarding providing recreational opportunities for residents.

New development is increasing the need for more parks and recreation amenities throughout Homer Glen. The Village has acquired and will continue to acquire park sites within new residential developments through its Park Donation Ordinance. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan will assist the Village in developing these sites and acquiring and developing other future park sites.

VILLAGE OF HOMER GLEN MISSION STATEMENT

Parks, open space and recreation are an important part of what gives Homer Glen its unique character. So much so, that the Village's Mission Statement cites how important preserving parks and open space is to the quality of life in the community:

“The Village of Homer Glen is committed to preserving, protecting, and enhancing our community’s quality of life through responsible residential and economic development while utilizing sound fiscal management. We will strive to maintain open space, preserve our unique rural character, and safeguard our natural resources. The Village encourages community involvement in order to maintain and cultivate a balance of family, agriculture, business,

environment, and cultural diversity for present and future generations.”

VILLAGE PARKS DEPARTMENT

The Village of Homer Glen has the goal of creating a Parks Department. It is intended that the future Parks Department will be a new department within the Village's current structure and will not be a separate taxing body, such as a Park District. The objective of a Village Parks Department would be to manage and maintain our parks, as well as to provide recreational opportunities for our residents.

HOMER TOWNSHIP'S OPEN SPACE LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Homer Township is a separate government entity from the Village of Homer Glen. Homer Township has an Open Space program that was established in 1999 through a citizen-based initiative.

The Township has acquired over 200 acres for their Open Space program. The majority of the parcels continue to be farmed. The Open Space Land Stewardship Committee is currently working on the long-term plans for the sites. The goals of the Township's Open Space Land Stewardship Committee are to promote the preservation of the natural environment, scenic resources, geological features and historic sites. The Open Space Land Stewardship Committee is currently working to establish a Native Plant Nursery, a community garden project, a historic preservation project, and restoration of a wetland. According to the Township, future projects are to develop a living history farm, reforestation, prairie

restoration, woodland management, paths, and some public access areas. The Open Space Land Stewardship Committee continues to seek grants, funding and to maintain an active volunteer base.

THE VILLAGE OF HOMER GLEN

The Village of Homer Glen is located in northeastern Will County, approximately 30 miles southwest of Chicago. The Village was incorporated in April of 2001 and is one of the newest municipalities in Illinois. Homer Glen encompasses approximately 22 square miles of land. It is generally bordered by the Village of Lemont and unincorporated Cook County on the north, the Village of Orland Park and unincorporated Cook County on the east, the Village of New Lenox and unincorporated Will County on the south and the Village of Lockport and unincorporated Will County on the west. The Village of Homer Glen is the fourth largest municipality in Will County. According to the 2010 Decennial Census, the Village's population is 24,220 with 8,389 households.

Open spaces, low-density development and an attractive environmental setting characterize the Village of Homer Glen. The Forest Preserve District of Will County has several properties, including Messenger Marsh and Messenger Woods, a part of the Spring Creek Greenway, that traverse the southern part of the Village. In terms of development, approximately 50% of the community is fully developed.

Homer Glen is a residential community of beautiful neighborhoods consisting mostly of single-family subdivisions with

lot sizes ranging from approximately 10,000 square feet to several acres. Commercial development exists along the primary roadways that pass through the community including Bell Road, 143rd Street and 159th Street.

The majority of parks and open space within the community are provided by the Forest Preserve District of Will County and Homer Township. The Forest Preserve District of Will County has approximately 1,780 acres of land in and around Homer Glen devoted to passive recreational use. Homer Township has parks for both passive and active recreation.

The Village of Homer Glen has 13 park sites that are currently owned or are in the process of being conveyed to the Village. Several of the Village's parks have been developed.

THE BACKGROUND TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

The Village of Homer Glen was incorporated for the purpose of establishing local control over various issues impacting the quality of life of local residents.

Shortly after the Village's incorporation, the Village began working on its *Comprehensive Plan*, which was adopted in March of 2005. The *Comprehensive Plan* contained a brief plan for parks and open space. However, the Village realized that a more focused plan would be needed.

In past surveys conducted by the Village, residents have indicated that parks and recreation opportunities in Homer Glen

need to be improved in order to satisfy their quality of life expectations. With limited existing parks and recreation opportunities available and with new development occurring in Homer Glen, additional parks and recreational facilities will be required while protecting open space and natural resource features.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan allows the Village to pursue outside alternative funding sources such as State administered grants. One such example of available outside funding is the Open Spaces Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant. The Village has effectively used the OSLAD grant program for both the acquisition of park land (Erin Hills Park) and the development of park land (Stonebridge Park and Erin Hills Park).

PURPOSE OF THIS MASTER PLAN

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is Homer Glen's official policy guide for parks and recreation acquisition and development. The Plan considers not only the immediate needs and concerns of the community, but also the projected needs of the community until 2030 based on the projected build out population of 47,000.

The Plan strives to help preserve and protect important existing open space, natural features and resources, as well as to coordinate the management and development of new park and recreation opportunities. The importance of parks and recreation to assist the Village in establishing a strong and positive community image and identity is a common element throughout.

The Master Plan is "comprehensive" in both scope and coverage. It encompasses the entire Village and creates recommendations for the acquisition, development, number and type of recreation elements and maintenance. The Plan addresses land currently within Homer Glen's corporate boundaries, as well as adjacent unincorporated areas within the Village's planning jurisdiction.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan establishes the "ground rules" for the improvement and development of parks and open space in the community. The Plan provides guidelines by which the Village can review and evaluate private development proposals to ensure that the parks and recreation needs of future residents will be met.

Recommendations within the Plan also strive to ensure that local dollars are spent efficiently. It is recommended that the Village continue to partner with and promote other agencies regarding the provision of parks and recreation amenities to minimize any duplication in parks and recreation services in the community. Finally, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan should serve as an important marketing tool to promote Homer Glen's unique parks and recreation system to current and future residents.

PARKS AND RECREATION STANDARDS

The following outlines the Village of Homer Glen's Parks and Recreation Standards. Standards are guidelines for the planning, acquisition, and development of park and recreation areas. It is important to establish

minimum standards so that park facilities meet specific goals. Standards should be flexible, but adhered to when possible to maintain a consistent approach to planning.

The list of recreation standards is based upon input received from Community Workshops, Parks and Recreation Committee feedback, Village staff input, National Recreation and Parks Association Guidelines, and Illinois Association of Parks and Recreation Guidelines. The Village should continue to survey the community about recreation needs, demands and trends to keep the list and standards current.

Population Ratio Method

The population ratio method expresses a need of land or facilities based on the number of people. An example of the population ratio would be to set a standard of 11 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people. Population ratio standards are also commonly used in facility standards expressing the number of facilities that are needed for a specified number of people (i.e., one (1) Little League Field per 5,000 people).

The NRPA “10 Acre Standard”

The NRPA states that the origin of the 10 acres per 1,000 population was the work of George Butler of the National Recreation Association. Butler, who worked on the standard methodologies, prepared a standard of 10 acres of park and open space per 1,000 population. Due to its ease of application, the “10 Acre Standard” is used regularly throughout the country. The 1990 reprint of the NRPA’s Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines recommends, at a minimum, the core system of developed parklands should

consist of between 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 population.

The Village’s “11 Acre Standard”

In keeping with the NRPA’s recommended minimum standard, the Village of Homer Glen has adopted an 11 acre standard. The Village’s Park Donation Ordinance states, “the total requirement shall be eleven (11) acres of park or recreational land, or cash in lieu of land, per 1,000 of ultimate population.” The Village’s standard is slightly higher than the NRPA’s recommended minimum standard, as to compensate for the current shortfall of park and recreation land. A higher standard is appropriate for meeting the recreational needs of residents and maintaining the character of the community.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Homer Glen’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan has entailed a seven (7) step planning process designed to assist the Village of Homer Glen in identifying underserved areas of the community and formulating long-range improvement and acquisition plans for the Community. The steps of the planning process are highlighted in Figure One (1).

**FIGURE ONE:
PLANNING PROCESS**

**STEP 1
PROJECT
INITIATION**



**STEP 2
EXISTING CONDITIONS
ANALYSIS**



**STEP 3
COMMUNITY OUTREACH**



**STEP 4
GOALS, OBJECTIVES,
BENCHMARKS,
AND STANDARDS**



**STEP 5
PARKS AND RECREATION
ANALYSIS AND PLANS**



**STEP 6
PRELIMINARY
IMPLEMENTATION
AND FUNDING**



**STEP 7
PARKS AND RECREATION
MASTER PLAN
DOCUMENT**



★ Meeting/Workshop
★ Deliverable

INFLUENCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Several factors will influence the Village's ability to provide and plan for open space, recreation and park facilities. An understanding of the existing conditions which influence the development of parks and recreation opportunities in the area provides a sound basis for this Plan's recommendations and for future policy decisions made by the Village.

This section of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan presents a review of the following:

- Demographics
- Past Plans and Studies
- Other Influencing Factors

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics and Population

At the time of the 2000 US census the Village did not exist. There have been two (2) subsequent Special Censuses in 2004 and 2008 and the 2010 decennial Census has been completed.

According to the Special Census in 2004, the population of Homer Glen was 24,083. The population increased slightly to 25,069 as a result of the 2008 Special Census. Based upon the 2010 decennial Census data, the Village's total population is 24,220.

Age Distribution

The median age in the Village has dropped since 2004. The median age in Homer Glen was 39.0 in 2004, 40.6 in 2008 and was 37.9 in 2010.

Local School Districts estimates that a number of new students could be added in the next few years. An increase in the number of children in the Village provides the rationale for additional children's recreational amenities within Village parks.

Housing

The majority of the housing units in the Village are owner occupied. According to the 2010 Census, over 95% of the houses are owner occupied. The 2010 Census estimated that the median owner-occupied housing value in Homer Glen was \$350,900.

PAST PLANS, STUDIES, AND REPORTS

The following plans, studies and reports were reviewed in the preparation of this Master Plan:

- Village of Homer Glen's *Comprehensive Plan*
- Village of Homer Glen's *Park Donation Ordinance*
- Village of Homer Glen's *Residential Conservation Overlay District Ordinance*
- Village of Homer Glen's *Green Vision Plan*
- Village of Homer Glen *Town Center Task Force Report to Village Board*
- Illinois Statewide *Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2009 – 2014*.

Village of Homer Glen Comprehensive Plan

The Village of Homer Glen's *Comprehensive Plan* was adopted in March 2005. The *Comprehensive Plan* consists of a variety of sections dealing with land use, transportation, community facilities and the environment.

The *Comprehensive Plan* identifies the Village's attractive environmental setting as one (1) of Homer Glen's most important characteristics. As part of the planning process, a community survey was completed. The survey indicated that the two (2) highest ranked advantages of living in Homer Glen were the "countryside character" and the "open spaces".

Section three (3) of the *Comprehensive Plan* consists of the Parks, Open Space and Environmental Plan. This section identifies environmental corridors and existing open space and recreation providers within the community. Section three (3) also identifies future open space dedications, as well as park goals and objectives. The following is a summary of each of these topics:

Environmental Corridors

Environmental Corridors are key features of the Parks, Open Space and Environmental Plan. Environmental Corridors include wetlands, flood plains and distinctive natural plantings that create a network of open space throughout the community. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan continues the use of environmental corridors to provide linkages of open space throughout the community.

Existing Open Space and Recreation

The Parks, Open Space and Environmental Plan illustrates existing open space and recreation within the community. The Plan highlights open space and recreation provided by The Forest Preserve District of Will County, Homer Township, local school districts, golf courses, homeowners associations, detention areas, religious institutions and private organizations. This Plan creates a comprehensive inventory of all the existing open space and recreational areas within the community, strengthening both the analysis and the recommendations of the Plan.

Future Parks and Open Space Dedications

The *Comprehensive Plan* states that all new residential developments within Homer Glen and within the community's one and a half (1.5) mile planning jurisdiction should incorporate open space. The Plan also provides guidelines for the following types of parks:

- Pocket Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Village Green
- Multi-Use Trail System – Homer Glen's Heroes Trail System

This Master Plan examines the current parks classification system and looks for ways to strengthen or improve the location and size of future park sites.

Parks and Recreation Goals and Objectives

The following are the Goals and Objectives for Parks and Recreation in the Village of Homer Glen as identified in the Village's *Comprehensive Plan*.

Goal

- A park and recreation system that meets the active recreational and leisure needs of residents, and enhances the overall image and character of the community.

Objectives

- Actively promote and manage cooperation between the Village, Homer Township, The Forest Preserve District of Will County and the local school districts.
- Prepare a long-range, comprehensive master plan for park and recreational facilities.
- Continue to encourage and support the volunteer efforts of the various active sports groups.
- Establish standards and rules of use for a local park system consisting of pocket parks, neighborhood parks and community parks.
- Create recreational facilities and programs that respond to the needs and desires of Village residents.
- Require that land or cash dedications be set aside within all new residential developments.
- Develop a Village Green as part of the new “town center” development.
- Promote the development of attractive and usable public open spaces within the Village’s commercial and business areas.
- Continue to develop a network of multi-use trails and pathways.

- Establish “greening” programs along major street corridors.
- Investigate using utility easements for low-intensity recreational uses as an example.
- Revise the land/cash dedication ordinance to achieve and implement park, open space and recreation objectives.
- Work with residents, associations, sports groups, non-profit organizations and elected officials to explore alternative construction and maintenance funding sources.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan is an important step towards fulfilling many of the objectives listed above. The Plan strives to bring these objectives together in its recommendations.

Green Vision Plan

The *Green Vision Plan* of the Homer Glen Community was completed in June of 2004. The *Green Vision Plan* was undertaken with the assistance of the Green Communities Demonstration Program.

The *Green Vision Plan* presents a number of goals, objectives and recommended actions. Goals were created in direct response to significant issues that were identified by stakeholders over the course of three (3) meetings. Objectives were then created for each goal that then became quantifiable milestones towards achieving the goals. Action steps were next created with the assistance of the former Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC). These goals and objectives were supported with maps of current and future critical resource areas.

Stakeholders also identified environmentally sensitive town center and conservation neighborhood concepts.

The following summarizes the goals of the *Green Vision Plan*.

Goal One: Community Image and Character

“Maintain and enhance an attractive and distinctive community that builds upon and preserves Homer Glen’s countryside character, unique natural resources and abundance of open space.”

Goal Two: Natural Resources, Habitat and Wildlife

“Preservation, protection and enhancement of the existing and potential natural resources and wildlife habitat that are enjoyed by Village residents.”

Goal Three: Open Space

“Protection and enhancement of the extensive open space areas that are essential to the overall image and character of Homer Glen.”

Goal Four: Parks and Recreation

“A Parks and Recreation system that promotes healthy lifestyles by offering active and passive recreational opportunities for residents, employees, and visitors, and enhances the overall image and character of the community.”

Goal Five: Transportation

“A coordinated, sustainable system of roadways, pedestrian facilities, recreational pathways and public transportation services that provides for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians and enhances

the countryside character and environmental amenities of the Village.”

Goal Six: Water Resources

“Promote plentiful, high quality surface and groundwater resources that protect the quality of life for residents and all ecosystems, especially wetlands, by reducing the impacts on these systems.”

The *Green Vision Plan* concludes with a number of benchmarks that allows the Village of Homer Glen to measure the Plan’s progress within one (1) year, five (5) years, and within 10 to 20 years. The creation of the original Parks and Recreation Master Plan, dated October 2007, was a benchmark to be completed within five (5) years from the completion of the *Green Vision Plan*.

Village of Homer Glen Town Center Task Force

A Town Center is defined in the Village’s *Comprehensive Plan* as “a specifically designated area containing several public and/or private uses that serves as a focal point for the Village and a place where people come together as a community. While municipal offices may not be essential in some communities, it is recommended that a Village Hall be a key component of the Town Center in Homer Glen.

The Village of Homer Glen’s *Town Center Task Force* was established by the Village’s Community and Civic Involvement Committee. The group was tasked with exploring the concept of a Homer Glen Town Center, researching support for the possible center, recommending possible components and identifying potential sites.

The Task Force presented three (3) different planning options for the Village's Town Center project. The first option was the Town Center. Benefits to a Town Center included establishment of a destination point, inclusion of a Village Green, and provision of a variety of housing options. Drawbacks included increased traffic, sustainability requirements, and resistance from the established business community.

The second planning option was the Village Campus. This publicly owned property would provide space for a Village Hall and other public facilities and recreational amenities. Benefits include aesthetics and that the project is a Village sponsored initiative. Drawbacks include a higher cost to taxpayers and the lack of a "downtown" feel.

The third and final planning option included a separate Town Center and Village Campus. The Village would make plans for both areas of development. The future Town Center and Village Campus may or may not occur in the same area.

The Town Center Task Force recommended that the Village of Homer Glen pursue a plan to develop a mixed-tax base Town Center. The Task Force also recommended that the Village Hall be a necessary component of the future Homer Glen Town Center.

Village of Homer Glen Park Donation Ordinance

The Village of Homer Glen's *Park Donation Ordinance*, originally adopted on December 4, 2001 and updated on March 28, 2006, is used by the Village to provide public park and recreational

facilities for present and future residents. The *Park Donation Ordinance* states that the owners, developers or sub-dividers of land that improve their property with residential development must donate or contribute land or money to the Village of Homer Glen for the provision of parks and open space.

As a condition of final plat approval, a developer is required to dedicate land for park and recreational purposes to serve the development, or make a cash contribution in lieu of actual land dedication, or a combination of both.

The amount of a cash donation required is based upon the fair market value of fully improved land and the expected increased population generated by the development. The amount of a land donation required is based upon the ultimate population of the development. The requirement of the ordinance is to provide 11 acres, or cash in lieu of land, per 1,000 people.

Location of Park Sites

According to the Ordinance, the Village can use the following as guidelines in locating parks or recreational facilities.

- Village's *Comprehensive Plan*.
- Present availability of park or recreational facilities.
- Recommendation of Village committees, commissions or other bodies.
- Published guidelines or standards of parks or recreation associations.
- Concerns of civic or resident groups.

Contribution in lieu of Park Sites

When the development is small and the resulting park site is too small or unsuitable for park and recreational purposes, the developer is required to pay a cash contribution in lieu of all or a portion of the land dedication required. The cash contribution is based upon current "fair market value" of an improved acre of land.

Combination of Park Site and a Fee

The Village may accept a combination of a land dedication and a cash contribution in lieu of land. For example, if there is an immediate need for a park site with recreational facilities, the Village can accept a land dedication for the park site, as well as a cash dedication for the construction of the recreational items.

In-Kind Contributions

The Village Board may decide to allow the developer to fulfill the cash dedication by constructing recreational improvements on an existing or planned Village park.

Reservation of Additional Land

Where the Village's *Comprehensive Plan* calls for a larger park site than the developer is required to dedicate, the additional land above and beyond the required dedication can be reserved and designated for subsequent purchase by the Village. The Ordinance states that the Village shall have two (2) year from the time of the final platting of the subdivision to sign a contract to purchase the land.

Combining with Adjoining Development

In subdivisions less than 40 acres in size, park sites should be located near adjoining developments. Park sites from

smaller adjoining subdivisions can be combined to create larger public parks.

Improved Park Sites

In order to be dedicated to and accepted by the Village, park sites shall have access to the following: Utilities; fully improved streets with curb and gutter if consistent with the subdivision design; and necessary storm drainage. Park sites shall also be graded and fully seeded, except for natural areas, such as woods or other features worthy of preservation.

Shape, Topography, and Grading

The Village manager, or his/her designee, shall review and approve the shape, topography and grading of the park site before it is approved. The land must be 100% buildable for permanent structures.

Village of Homer Glen Residential Conservation Overlay District Ordinance

The Village Board approved a *Residential Conservation Overlay District Ordinance* on July 25, 2006. The Ordinance encourages efficient use of land and public services through unified development. The Ordinance strives to protect biodiversity and encourage development as outlined in the Village's *Comprehensive Plan* and the *Green Vision Plan*. The following are the stated objectives of the Ordinance as they relate to this Plan:

- To provide a residential zoning district that permits flexibility of design and to promote environmentally sensitive and efficient uses of land;

- To preserve unique or sensitive natural resources;
- To preserve important historical and archaeological sites;
- To permit residential clustering;
- To reduce erosion and sedimentation; and,
- To promote interconnected greenways, corridors, greenspace and multi-use trails.

This Ordinance will be used for all residential subdivisions except those that meet one or more of the following exceptions, as listed.

- A. The subdivision consists of a total land area of ten (10) acres or less, exclusive of roads or easements of access.
- B. The subdivision consists of lots each of which has a minimum land area of one and half (1.5) acres in size or greater, exclusive of roads or easements of access.

This Ordinance requires all applicants to create a detailed Site Analysis Plan that will be reviewed by the Village. Once approved, the applicant will determine the areas within the property to be set aside and protected as Preservation Areas. The number of dwelling areas permitted on the property will be based upon a net-buildable acreage calculation. A preliminary sketch plan showing the residential development will be created by the applicant and reviewed by the Village.

Development and design standards are also outlined in the Ordinance for "Conservation Subdivisions". Requirements include: lot size, setbacks,

streets, stormwater, park and open space. Select requirements that relate to this Parks and Recreation Master Plan are highlighted below.

- Not less than 90% of the lots within the Conservation Subdivision shall directly abut Open Space located on a separate lot.
- Each residential cluster shall contain between five (5) and 20 dwelling units.
- Each cluster shall connect with existing or potential Open Space or multi-use trails.
- A minimum 30 foot vegetative/landscaping buffer, contained in a separate lot, shall be maintained around the Conservation Subdivision on sides that abut a dedicated road. An interconnected trail shall be contained in this buffer. If large enough, this buffer may count as part of the required Open Space area.
- As per the Village's Park Donation Ordinance, the Village shall require additional land to be set-aside as Park Area, or cash-in-lieu, which will not count towards the required Open Space area. The Park Area shall consist of developable land. All Park Area shall be fully developed within three (3) years of the letting of the first residential building permit unless the Village grants additional time.
- The percentage of the site devoted to Open Space shall meet

the following minimum percentage of the gross land area of the site: R-1 (well and septic 30%, sewer and water 50%); R-2 (50%); R-2A (50%); R-3 (30%); R-3A (20%); R-6A (20%).

- At least 25% of the net Open Space area shall consist of land that is suitable for building.
- The responsibility for maintaining the dedicated Open Space area shall be borne by the Developer for five (5) years from the start of construction or a shorter time. If agreed to by the Village, the Village will take over ownership and maintenance responsibility after this time.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

The *Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, revised in 2009-2014 (SCORP)* serves as a guide and vision for outdoor recreation in Illinois. The Plan has been developed and is revised regularly by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). The Plan is required to maintain the State's eligibility for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a federal grant program providing a 50% match for acquisition and development of outdoor recreation land and facilities.

More specifically, *SCORP* is a five-year plan that assesses the following items listed below.

- Illinois's natural resources.
- Demographic trends.

- Outdoor recreation demand, supply, and needs.
- Priorities for the LWCF program.

Natural Resources

The *SCORP* identifies the forests, prairies, savannas, wetlands, and lakes and ponds as natural resources that should be preserved as the State becomes increasingly urbanized.

Demographic Trends

The demographic overview with the *SCORP* concerns the state as a whole. A more specific demographic overview of the Village of Homer Glen's population is provided in a previous section of this report.

Potential Growth in Outdoor Recreation Activities

To identify demand for outdoor recreational activities IDNR conducted a statewide Open Space Survey as part of the *SCORP*. The following provides the percentage distribution of the top 10 potential growth activities:

- Pleasure walking 13.5%
- Bicycling 13.0%
- Fishing 11.1%
- Hiking 7.4%
- Camping 5.9%
- Golf 5.4%
- Canoeing/Kayaking 5.0%
- Hunting 4.4%
- Swimming 3.4%
- Equestrian 3.0%

According to the SCORP there is a trend towards more unstructured and passive recreation. The following recreational trends are identified in the SCORP.

- Increase of participants in, walking, bicycling, camping, fishing, hiking, golfing and hunting compared to 2008.

Priorities for the LWCF Program

The priorities for the state and local project and grant priorities, as presented within the SCORP are as follows:

Conservation of Natural Resources

Natural Areas, Wildlife Habitat, and Wetlands:

- Community Open Space
- Sustainable Natural Resources

Children in the Outdoors:

- Conservation Education
- Interpretive Facilities

Greenways and Trails

Revitalized Lands:

- Adaptive Re-Use
- Restoration

Water Resources:

- Quality Water Resources
- Recreational Use

Special Populations:

- Underserved Populations
- High-need Populations

Healthy Communities:

- Active Spaces
- Close-to-Home

Interagency Cooperation and Coordination:

- Partnerships

- Expand Cooperative Planning

Implementing the Plan

SCORP outlines a number of funding sources for implementing the Plan, including a chapter on IDNR Outdoor Recreation Grant programs. The grant programs operate on a cost reimbursement basis for approved project elements and are available to any unit of local government with statutory authority to acquire, develop, and maintain public parks. The two most significant grant programs are:

- Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund.
- Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development.

The six other outdoor recreation grant programs discussed in *SCORP* are:

- Bicycle Path Grant Program
- Snowmobile Trail Establishment Fund
- Off-Highway Vehicle Recreational Trails Program
- Federal Recreational Trails Program
- Local Government Snowmobile Grant Program
- Boat Access Area Development Grant Program

OTHER INFLUENCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Examining opportunities and constraints makes it necessary to look at existing as well as projected issues and developments. The following summary of

conditions identifies the most important factors affecting the direction of the Plan.

Future Development

As noted in the demographic overview of Homer Glen, the Village has experienced growth in recent years; however, growth pressures have recently declined due to the overall economic climate. It is anticipated that when the economy revitalizes, growth in Homer Glen will continue given the Village's prime location within the Chicago Region along the I-355 corridor. As the land is developed, the Village will have opportunities to work with developers to acquire future park sites.

Homer Township Potential Open Space Plans

Homer Township currently owns four (4) open space areas: Purdy Property, Paul Property, Welter Property and Trantina Property.

As discussed earlier in the document, plans for Trantina have been developed and construction is well underway. The remaining three (3) open space areas only have potential plans at this point. The following summarizes the potential plans of each.

Purdy Property – Homer Township

An 86 acre open space site located on the southwest side of the Township at the corner of Gougar Road and 175th Street. The Purdy Farm was the first property purchased by the Township through its Open Space Program.

Although currently farmed, there are a few areas identified as being within the FEMA flood plain that most likely will be restored back to their original wetlands as future development plans unfold.

Paul Property – Homer Township

A 56 acre open space site located between Gougar Road and Farrell Road on the south side of 151st Street. The site contains a natural forested area and remnants of original farmstead buildings.

Welter Property – Homer Township

A 50 acre open space site located within the Village on Bell Road, south of 143rd Street. The Welter property was originally over 80 acres when purchased by the Township. The Township carved out approximately 25 acres for a planned unit development with shared infrastructure and water detention; 10 acres along Bell Road were sold for commercial development; five (5) acres were developed and are now operated by the Township as Founder's Crossings independent senior living facility and 10 acres were set aside by the Township for a potential future Community Center. Located on the future Community Center parcel is an area known as the Homer Healing Garden adjacent to one (1) of the site's two (2) ponds. It is a beautiful, peaceful public area maintained by volunteers with various gardens, benches, parking and assorted wildlife.

Lockport Township High School New High School

Lockport Township High School District 205 owns an 80 acre property in Homer Glen. The District has future plans to build an additional high school campus on this property. The construction of the high school and its related facilities could provide additional recreational opportunities to Village residents.

Land Control

The majority of agricultural and undeveloped land in the Village is already owned or under contract by

developers and financial institutions. Although land dedications will be made for neighborhood parks the Village may have difficulties acquiring larger sites for community parks. To acquire community parks, the Village may have to compete with developers to acquire appropriate land.

Residential Growth Patterns

Homer Glen has many environmental assets, quality residential areas, and an attractive rural character and image. The existing and planned residential development within the Village can be described as either “rural” or “suburban”. As shown in the Village’s *Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan* there are areas of the Village that contain large lot residential (Single-Family Rural and Estate zoning) and areas that contain smaller residential lots (Single-Family Low and Moderate Density, and Multi-Family Residential zoning).

- **Single-Family: Rural.** This zoning reflects the importance of large-lot residential areas to the character of Homer Glen. Lot sizes in this category are 2 ½ acres and larger. Most of these areas are located in the southern and northwestern portions of the Village.
- **Single-Family: Estate.** This category reflects single-family residential lots between 1 and 2 ½ acres. These areas are located in the northwestern portion of the community and in the area near the Messenger Woods and the Messenger Marsh-Forest Preserves.
- **Single-Family: Low Density.** This category reflects single-family

residential lots of ½ to 1 acre in size. These areas are scattered throughout the Village particularly in the northern portion and along major roadways.

- **Single-Family: Moderate Density:** This category reflects single-family residential lots of ½ acre or less in size. These areas are located in the northeastern portion of the Village.
- **Multi-Family Residential.** This category reflects multi-family housing in select locations within the Village. Townhomes, cluster homes and similar developments are recommended in this zoning district, which is located mostly around the periphery of selected commercial areas.

Generally speaking, the central portion and the 159th Street Corridor in Homer Glen will be more suburban in character than the remaining portions of the Village. Outside of this central portion of the Village, larger lots will be developed in rural and estate residential zoning. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan should reflect this pattern of residential growth and make recommendations accordingly.

I-355 Extension

The protected right-of-way for the Interstate 355 extension represents an excellent opportunity for a multi-purpose trail. The Village is working with the Forest Preserve District of Will County, the Illinois Department of Transportation, and other public agencies, to develop a regional multi-use trail system. IDOT has provided a 20’ right of way along the

eastern side of the I-355 extension for the multi-use trail. The proposed I-355 trail will connect to the Village's Hero's trail system, as well as other trail systems in the area.

Natural Environment

The Village of Homer Glen has an abundance of natural resources. Careful site planning and open space preservation techniques can ensure that future developments are sensitive to natural physical features. In addition, drainage courses, wooded areas and utility easements could be used to form the backbone of a linear park and trail system throughout the Village. However, providing connections within the natural environment can be difficult due to the large size of the Village.

The Village's *Residential Conservation Overlay District Ordinance* is an excellent tool for protecting Homer Glen's unique natural environment and for providing future connections.

Public and Private Agencies

Currently, most of the open space, parks and recreation in the community are provided by other public and private agencies. Homer Township, Forest Preserve District of Will County, three School Districts, private exercise clubs provide for the recreational needs of the community. It is important that the Village work with these organizations so services or amenities are not duplicated. Consideration should be given to formalizing shared-used or cooperation agreements for use of their facilities.

Overlapping Park Departments/Park Districts

Currently, the Lemont Park District, Mokena Community Park District, and New Lenox Community Park District may overlap the Village's boundaries. The current situation can result in a duplication of services and may create confusion for residents.

Strain on Current Facilities

There is an unfortunate lag between the time new residents buy homes in a neighborhood and when the parks, which make the neighborhood more attractive, are developed. This technique is commonly used by developers throughout the area and can be frustrating to new homeowners. Slowed residential development, due to economic factors, has exasperated this challenge. This lag time may create a strain on existing facilities already within the system.

Previous Planning Efforts

Since its incorporation, the Village of Homer Glen has placed a high-priority on planning to ensure the Village's character and appeal is not lost or ignored. The Village has already completed plans and studies related to parks and recreation including the *Comprehensive Plan*, the *Master Transportation Plan* and the *Green Vision Plan*.

Pedestrian Scale

Achieving a pedestrian scale within a suburban community is a difficult task. Most suburbs, including Homer Glen have a strong orientation towards the automobile. Residents travel from place to place, including shopping and business areas in their cars. However, the creation of pedestrian/bicycle

circulation plan, the development of an open space network with a range of recreation facilities and the designation and development of a Village Center can reinforce alternative forms of transportation and a more human scale environment.

Traffic/Transportation Plan

An increase in development breeds an increase in traffic. As vehicular traffic increases in the Village, safe crossings for pedestrians and cyclists will become more important and at the same time more difficult to provide. As a result, it is important that the Village strive to create an open space and recreation system that makes the safety of residents and children a top priority. Consideration should be given to providing both parkland and recreational amenities for children within a safe, “barrier-free” walking distance.

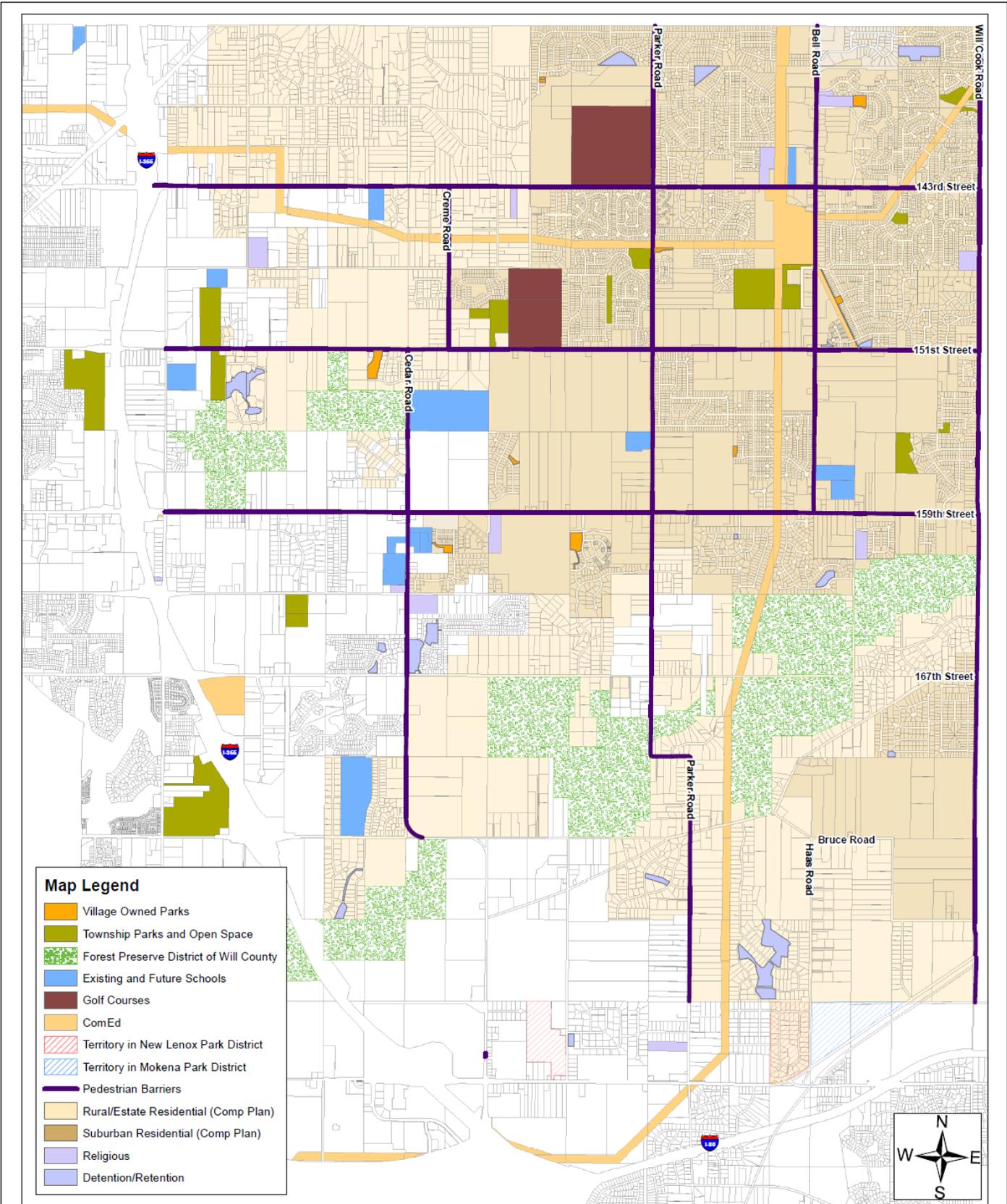


Figure 2: Influences and Opportunities

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Together, the goals and objectives paint a picture of what a community wants to accomplish with its Parks and Recreation Master Plan. With other documents, tools and policies, the goals and objectives provide direction and serve as a guide for evaluating specific projects. Goals and objectives also assist in park and recreation acquisition and development.

The following topics are discussed in this Section of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan:

- Goals and Objectives
- Benchmarking Analysis
- Community Outreach

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is an expression of the community's vision for parks and recreation in the future. The Plan, if carefully crafted, can become a reliable policy guide for parks and recreation decision-making and Village action.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan, includes statements of goals and objectives, which provide the framework for planning recommendations, policies and future projects and actions:

1. Goals describe desired end situations toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are broad and long –range. They represent an end to be sought, although they may never actually be fully attained.
2. Objectives describe more specific actions that should be undertaken in order to advance toward the

overall goal. They provide more precise and measurable guidelines for planning actions.

The goals and objectives presented below are based on:

- A. Input from Village staff, the Village Parks and Recreation Committee, and the Village Board of Trustees;
- B. Input from Community Workshops; and,
- C. Feedback from various public meetings and discussions.

***Goal One:
To develop a balanced and accessible parks and recreation system in the Village.***

A balanced and accessible parks and recreation system will ensure that the unique natural character of the community will remain. This parks and recreation system will provide residents throughout the Village with equal access to parks, open space and active and passive recreational opportunities.

A parks and recreation system that is provided throughout the community will also play a role in increasing property values. There is a direct correlation between higher property values and close proximity to a park. In addition, a balanced and accessible parks and recreation system will improve residents' quality of life and the overall desirability of the community.

Objectives:

1. Promote environmental protection. Acquire areas with special environmental and ecological value for protection from development such as

environmental corridors, which may encompass wetlands, watercourses, floodplains, wooded areas and ridgelines. The Village's Residential Conservation Overlay District Ordinance will be an excellent tool to achieve this objective.

2. Pursue the acquisition of parkland as recommended in this Plan.
3. Utilize a variety of techniques to acquire and gain access to land, such as conservation easements, partnerships with other public agencies and grant opportunities.
4. Follow the recommended Parks and Open Space Classification System outlined in this Plan for acquiring and developing a balanced park system.
5. Acquire land for both active and passive recreation, environmental and wildlife protection or a combination of both.
6. Ensure that parks are accessible and have appropriate street frontage.
7. Accept buildable high-and-dry parkland, cash in lieu of a land donation or a suitable combination of the two from a developer when donated. The Village's Park Donation Ordinance will be an excellent tool to achieve this objective.
8. Review and update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan on a regular basis to ensure it appropriately reflects the Village's goals, objectives and the current desires of the community.

9. Continue to implement the goals and objectives of the Village's Green Vision Plan.

Goal Two:

To promote the individual, community, economic and environmental benefits of parks, open space and recreation.

Parks, open space and recreational opportunities provide endless benefits to individuals, the community, the economy and the environment.

The individual benefit of parks, open space and recreation involves how a person can individually gain from recreation or a recreational experience. Parks and recreation provide opportunities for living, learning and leading a full and productive life. Parks and recreation also improves a person's health and well-being. According to NRPA, the individual benefits of parks and recreation are:

- Full and meaningful life
- Balance between work and play
- Life satisfaction
- Personal development and growth
- Creativity and adaptability
- Problem solving and decision making
- Physical health and maintenance
- Outlets for stimulation

Community benefits of recreation pertain to how the community as a whole can profit from recreational activities. Parks open space and recreation play an integral role in providing opportunities for community and resident interactions.

Community benefits of parks and recreation include:

- Strong, vital, involved communities
- Connected families
- Community pride
- Support for youth, and seniors
- Reduced alienation
- Reduced delinquency
- Social bonding
- Understanding and tolerance

Homer Glen can also benefit economically from parks, open space and recreation through the following:

- Economic stimulant
- Reduced health-care costs
- Reduced vandalism and crime
- Revenue generator
- Enhanced land values

Parks, open space and recreation also provide the community with several environmental benefits. Select environmental benefits of parks and recreation include:

- Environmental health and protection
- Clean air and clean water
- Protection of the ecosystem
- Preservation of open space

Objectives:

1. Promote the benefits of parks, open space and recreation to residents of Homer Glen.
2. Create appropriate and desired parks, open space and recreation that provide one or more of the following benefits: individual, community, economic and environmental.

Goal Three:

Provide a variety of recreational amenities and programming throughout the community.

There should be safe and equal opportunities for recreational elements and programming provided to all residents of the community. By cooperating with other public and private agencies, the recreational needs of the community will be served without duplicating services or wasting tax dollars.

Objectives:

1. Develop and utilize the recreational service areas and population standards.
2. Create a variety of recreational elements and programming for different age groups and skill levels. Recreation facilities should be constructed following the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design.
3. Design parks with safety in mind. Village Staff should review plans for safety. A member of Village Staff should be trained to be a certified playground inspector.
4. Encourage multi-use facilities. Facilities may be designed for a

variety of recreational activities and they may also be for different times of the day or even season (i.e.: skating rink/sand volleyball court).

5. Promote other agencies, both public and private, and their programming of recreation throughout the community.
6. Prepare a development site plan for each Village Park. An estimated construction and maintenance budget for each park should also be developed.
7. Design parks with amenities desired by the community, such as shade structures or landscaping, “green design” and park identification signage.
8. Design active recreation sites so that their normal use will not interfere with adjacent landowners, nor degrade the natural resources and ecosystems within the open space system.
9. Negotiate and enter into sharing and cooperative agreements with public agencies such as the schools and the Township, and private organizations for the shared use of facilities.
10. Encourage community input through various community outreach techniques.
11. Include natural areas in parks where possible.

**Goal Four:
Utilize Village financial resources effectively and efficiently.**

When providing parks and recreation to the community, the Village should utilize

its financial resources efficiently to minimize tax contributions and duplication of services.

Objectives:

1. Coordinate the acquisition and development of parks with alternative funding sources, including grants.
2. Continue to review and update the Village’s Park Donation Ordinance. Emphasis should be placed on the acreage per 1,000 goal as well as the land value per acre.
3. Seek out appropriate sponsorship opportunities and/or partnerships.
4. Address overlapping Park District or Recreation Department boundaries from neighboring communities. These overlaps should be identified and removed through boundary agreements.
5. Cooperate with both public and private agencies to serve the community’s parks, open space and recreational needs.
6. Create a short-term action plan that outlines the next five (5) years of construction projects (both new and replacements), land acquisitions and estimated maintenance costs.

**Goal Five:
Create and strengthen the Village of Homer Glen’s image and identity.**

The Village should promote the benefits of parks and recreation to the community effectively. Through a variety of design standards, the parks and open space system can “tie” the community together and create easily identifiable Village park

sites. This creates a sense of pride and ownership in the Village's park system.

Objectives:

1. Create a Marketing Plan to promote the parks and recreation available within the Village.
2. Summarize the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. A copy of the summary should be posted on the Village's website and included in a newsletter that is mailed to residents of the Village.
3. Create Design and Development Standards to be used as guidelines in the planning and construction of current and future park sites. Standards should be created for signage, athletic fields, infrastructure facilities and elements such as benches and garbage cans, lighting, pavilion types and colors, etc. The Village should utilize construction techniques and materials to reinforce a unified design theme throughout Village parks.
4. Monitor the parks and recreational trends of the community.
5. Educate residents about the Village, and its services, Neighborhood Parks and other park and recreation issues at Neighborhood Meetings.
6. Work closely with community organizations to educate community leaders about the Village's role in providing parks and open space.
7. Organize community-wide and/or local neighborhood events in Village parks. The future Village Green will be an excellent location

for community-wide events and festivals.

Goal Six: The Village should continue to promote and seek Intergovernmental Cooperation.

Intergovernmental cooperation will assist the Village in providing parks and recreation throughout the community with a minimal amount of duplication. By communicating with other governmental agencies on a regular basis, the entire community will benefit with an improved parks and recreation system.

Objectives:

1. Establish regular meetings with public agencies both within Homer Glen and adjacent to review common parks and recreation issues. In addition, these meetings will provide a forum for coordinating current and future parks and recreation. Participants may include the Village, Homer Township, the School Districts, adjacent Park Districts and Recreation Departments, and both the Forest Preserve Districts of Will and Cook County.
2. The Village should continue to work with other agencies and landowners, including the Illinois Department of Transportation and Commonwealth Edison, to implement the *Homer Glen Multi-Use Trail System*.
3. When feasible, engage in joint purchases with other governmental agencies to save tax dollars.

Goal Seven: The Development of parks should be planned and

designed with minimal expected maintenance costs.

Maintenance costs, both short-term and long-term, should be identified and budgeted:

Objectives:

1. Implement innovative conservation practices and technologies, such as green design that will promote environmental stewardship and reduce traditional maintenance cost (i.e., native plantings around ponds reduces mowing costs).
2. Create a Parks Department to administer this Master Plan; and to maintain, acquire, and develop the Village's Parks and Open Space system.
3. Create and promote a Volunteer Maintenance Program throughout the Village's parks system. The Program should identify appropriate opportunities for residents and neighborhoods to maintain Village parks and open space. A Volunteer Maintenance Program has a number of benefits including the provision of community service opportunities, as well as the reduction of maintenance costs. In addition, many grant programs award additional points to projects that involve volunteers. A Volunteer Maintenance Program could assist the Village in obtaining grants.

BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS

To assist with the creation of Goals and Objectives, the Village of Homer Glen's existing recreation and open space has been compared to adjacent/nearby Park Districts and Recreation Departments. In

addition, an analysis of distinguished Illinois Park Districts has been completed. These agencies were selected based on their geographical proximity to the Village of Homer Glen.

Agencies with Geographical Proximity

The communities and park districts analyzed along with rationale for their inclusion are provided below:

Lockport Township Park District

-The Lockport Township Park District was organized in 1945 to serve the Village of Lockport, which is located west of Homer Glen. The Park District has a variety of recreational opportunities including an 18-hole golf course, an indoor tennis/fitness facility, and three (3) pools (two (2) outdoor and one (1) indoor). Lockport Park District maintains 19 facilities, 38 parks, approximately 950 acres of property and provides hundreds of recreational programs for residents of all ages.

Lemont Park District

-The Park District was formed in 1966 to provide recreational programs and facilities to the residents of the Village of Lemont, which is north of Homer Glen. The Park District has grown to 15 parks, including 2 recreation centers, 1 fifty-meter swimming pool and multiple playgrounds and athletic fields. The district offers over 1,200 recreational programs annually, ranging in age from preschool to senior citizen. The Lemont Park District has been recognized for multiple awards including: The National Gold Medal Award Winner for excellence in park management and public participation; Best Outstanding Park Development Award (Virginia Reed Park); Best Outstanding Community

Center Development Award (Centennial Community Center); and, the Excellence Award for Risk Management and Safety. 16,000

Orland Park Recreation and Parks Department

-The Department serves the Village of Orland Park with a number of parks and recreational opportunities. The Recreation and Parks Department serves a population of 57,000. The Department maintains 46 parks on 701 acres.

New Lenox Community Park District

-The New Lenox Community Park District, located south of Homer Glen, provides the 24,000 residents of New Lenox with a variety of parks and recreation including 33 parks on 464 acres. The portion of Homer Glen in New Lenox Township is served by this Park District.

Mokena Community Park District

-The Mokena Community Park District, which is southeast of Homer Glen, provides parks and recreation to the 18,000 residents of Mokena. The Park district has 10 parks totaling 239 acres.

Romeoville Recreation Department

-The Romeoville Recreation Department provides residents of Romeoville with a number of parks and recreational programming. The current population served by the Recreation Department is 40,000. The Department maintains 22 parks on 250 acres.

Distinguished Agencies

Distinguished Park and Recreation Agencies are selected by the Illinois Association of Park Districts. This voluntary program uses a set of standards to identify agencies throughout

the State of Illinois that provide superior parks and recreation services to their residents. The evaluation process consists of several sections including: general management; finance and management; facilities and parks; personnel; and recreation services.

Several park districts that currently hold Distinguished Agency Awards from the Illinois Association of Park Districts have been used as benchmarks for this Plan. Park Districts that have been selected for comparison were chosen based upon the similarity of their 2030 populations to that of Homer Glen's 2030 build out population estimate (47,000).

The following 10 Distinguished Agencies (estimated populations in brackets) are included the benchmarking analysis:

- Addison Park District (37,000)
- Bartlett Park District (41,000)
- Buffalo Grove Park District (44,000)
- Crystal Lake Park District (58,000)
- Elmhurst Park District (44,121)
- Hoffman Estates Park District (52,000)
- Quincy Park District (41,000)
- Streamwood Park District (39,000)
- Wheaton Park District (63,824)
- Woodridge Park District (35,500)

Benchmarking analysis with the above award winning communities and municipalities is one of the many tools used by this Plan to create recommendations for the parks, open space and recreation needs of the

Village of Homer Glen. This benchmarking process provides the Village with an indication of how its parks and recreational opportunities compare to other similar communities, and what components of the parks and recreation system may be lacking.

The following table summarizes the benchmarking exercise:

	Addison	Bartlett	Buffalo Grove	Crystal Lake	Elmhurst	Hoffman Estates	Lemont	Lockport	Mokena	New Lenox	Orland Park	Quincy	Romeoville	Streamwood	Wheaton	Woodridge	AVERAGE
Baseball Field	21	16	34	32	28	13	6	13	20	28	34	8	14	8	36	14	20
Basketball Court	6	15	16	14	13	8	9	10	8	9	28	6	3	9	14	14	11
Fishing Pier	3	1	0	10	0	4	0	0	0	2	13	6	1	0	10	8	4
Fitness Stations	1	1	0	8	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	9	1	1	1	2
Football Fields	1	1	7	3	26	1	0	0	2	7	1	0	1	2	3	0	3
Golf Courses	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	3	1	1
Equestrian Areas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ice Skating	0	3	3	2	0	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	1	4	0	1	1
Picnic Areas	1	36	16	19	14	16	11	17	2	32	35	24	18	12	8	10	17
Playgrounds	21	33	45	24	18	32	17	38	19	32	53	14	29	38	21	24	29
Soccer Fields	8	17	25	16	26	5	4	13	10	17	23	6	13	3	15	21	14
Skate park	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	1
Tennis Courts	15	5	26	29	33	8	1	8	11	2	24	18	6	3	23	12	14
Volleyball Courts	4	0	11	4	3	4	2	2	3	7	5	1	1	4	10	4	4

A M E N I T Y

BENCHMARKING CONCLUSIONS

The following section highlights the results of the benchmarking exercise for each of the comparables. It is important to restate that benchmarking is only one of the tools used in creating the Plan's Goals and Objectives. In addition, community input, past plans and studies, Illinois and National Parks and Recreation Standards, and input from local organizations and athletic groups have been included in the formulation of Goals and Objectives.

Amount of Parks/Open Space

The Village's current goal of providing 11 acres of parks for 1,000 residents is comparable to that of the other communities studied. However, the Village is low in the amount of acreage that it currently provides. This is to be expected as Homer Glen is a new community, especially compared to some of the communities studied. Prior to Homer Glen's incorporation, Will County required 5.5 acres of park land per 1,000 population in unincorporated Homer Township.

The Homer Glen community has a fairly high amount of open space due in most part to the Forest Preserve District. This land is being dedicated to passive recreation. Therefore, the Village is significantly short of land that can be used for active recreation. It is important to note that the benchmarking acreage numbers from other communities do not reflect how much land is detention/retention, golf course, etc. Therefore, in many cases, the acreage numbers do not accurately reflect the amount of useable land.

The following highlights the results of the recreational components studied in other communities:

Baseball. This is a popular activity in Illinois, especially in the Homer Glen community. The number of fields provided in each community varied greatly.

Basketball. This is a popular outdoor activity. Indoor basketball space is also popular especially in the communities studied. Most communities that have a recreation center include indoor basketball courts.

Fishing. Communities varied substantially on their provision of fishing opportunities. Fishing areas require the use of a larger body of water. Communities along the Fox River, for example, cited a high number of fishing opportunities.

Football. This is a very popular sport in Illinois and in the Homer Glen community. However, communities do not need to provide a high number of these fields. Many of the communities studied had one (1) or two (2) football fields.

Golf. This is a very popular activity in the Illinois area. Approximately half of the communities studied had their own golf course.

Ice Rinks (indoor and outdoor). Very few of the communities studied provide indoor ice rinks. Far more communities provide outdoor skating areas.

Nature Areas/Picnicking. Generally all of the communities provide nature areas and picnicking opportunities.

Playgrounds. All of the communities studied had a high number of playground opportunities.

Skate Parks. Only a few communities studied provide skate parks.

Soccer. This is a very popular sport in Illinois and the Homer Glen community. The number of fields provided in each of the communities studied varied greatly.

Tennis. Generally, those communities that have been established longer have more tennis courts than new communities.

Volleyball. Most communities that provide indoor volleyball provide it in their recreation centers. The number of outdoor volleyball facilities varies greatly by community.

COMMUNITY INPUT AND OUTREACH

The public was invited to all meetings held by the Village's Parks and Recreation Committee. The timeline and status of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan project was posted on the project's website. Community Outreach efforts were undertaken early in the planning process to involve elected officials, property owners, businesspersons and residents. These outreach efforts provided the Village with important insight on local issues, concerns and opinions from residents.

Community Workshop

A Community Workshop was conducted with the Parks and Recreation Committee, key Village staff and members of the public on April 24, 2006 at the Homer Glen Village Hall. The

workshop was conducted to obtain community opinions, comments and concerns about the Village of Homer Glen's existing and future parks and recreation services and facilities. Opinions were also sought regarding the Parks and Recreation Master Planning process. Approximately 40 people attended the meeting and participated in the workshop.

Workshop participants identified a number of locally perceived problems and issues that are addressed throughout the Plan. This report provides a summary of the results of the Community Workshop. The summary reflects the opinions and comments stated during the workshop dialogue and includes participants' responses to the workshop questionnaires.

Comprehensive Plan Park Classification System

The first questionnaire was used to solicit input from residents regarding the current parks classification system and its definitions that are currently outlined in the Village's Comprehensive Plan.

- 1. Do you agree or disagree with the definition of Environmental Corridors in the Village's Comprehensive Plan that states, "Environmental Corridors including watercourses and drainage ways, ridgelines, wetlands and wooded areas should be preserved and protected."***

Attendee's unanimously agreed with this definition (15). None disagreed (0).

- 2. Do you agree or disagree with the definition of Pocket Parks in***

the Village’s Comprehensive Plan that states, “Pocket Parks are specialized parks intended to serve a limited group such as small children or seniors. These types of parks are appropriate where the average residential lot size is less than ½ acres and is close to multi-family homes or senior housing. A park of 2,500 to 10,000 square feet is recommended.”

Individual responses include:

- Agree (13)
- Disagree (3)

Individual responses mentioned only once from those who agreed include: We don’t need a pocket park in every open space in the subdivision; prefer larger one acre parks; utilize a vacant lot on Meadowview Lane in Meadow View Estates; raise upper limit to one acre; 2,500 square feet is too small; keep small lots as open space; some pocket parks can be visual; and, Kingston Hills needs a park.

Individual responses mentioned only once from those who disagreed include: Difficult to maintain; no comment; and larger parks are the first priority; and, a subdivision without parks could be developed.

3. *Do you agree or disagree with the definition of Neighborhood Parks in the Village’s Comprehensive Plan that states, “Neighborhood Parks provide more recreational opportunities for the residents of a neighborhood or*

subdivision. It is recommended that these parks be constructed in association with schools and have a minimum size of 6 acres. Neighborhood Parks should be larger than 6 acres if not associated with a school.”

Individual’s responses include:

- Agree (12)
- Disagree (2)

Individual responses mentioned only once for those who agreed include: Agreements should be made with the Schools; and renovate and add parking at Culver Park.

Individual responses mentioned only once from those who disagreed include: Parks associated with schools will be used mostly by students; and Neighborhood Parks could be less than 6 acres.

4. *Do you agree or disagree with the definition of Community Parks in the Village’s Comprehensive Plan that states, “Community Parks are recommended to serve a radius of up to one and one-half miles. The Plan recommends that Community Parks be min. 40 acres if associated with a junior high school, and a minimum of 60 acres if associated with a senior high school.”*

Individual responses include:

- Agree (10)
- Disagree (5)

Issues and concerns mentioned only once from those who agreed include: pool park.

The individual responses that were cited the most from those who disagreed include: Serve a radius of 3 to 5 miles or more (3).

Individual responses mentioned only once from those who disagreed include: need two to three parks of that size; and radius served seems small.

- 5. Do you agree or disagree with the definition of Village Green in the Village's Comprehensive Plan that states, "a Village Green of approximately 5 acres is recommended to be located in the Village's new Town Center. The Village Green should be constructed to hold community festivals and gatherings."**

Attendee's unanimously agreed with this definition (14). None disagreed (0).

- 6. Do you agree or disagree with the definition of Multi-Use Trail System in the Village's Comprehensive Plan that states, "A Multi-Use Trail System is recommended that will provide safe linkages between residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, commercial, other public facilities and businesses, as well as connections to existing regional trail systems."**

Individual's responses include:
Agree (14)
Disagree (0)

Individual responses mentioned only once from those who agreed include: Many families with young

children need a park without times the park is closed; shared use trails that include equestrians; and shared trails on ComEd right-of-way for low cost, should not be paved, interconnect to other trails in the area, and serious bikers and horses do not belong in small parks.

Components of a Park

The second questionnaire was used to solicit input from residents regarding the components that should be developed in a Village Park.

- 1. Identify five (5) necessary components of a park, regardless of its size or classification.**

The individual responses that were cited the most include:

- Play activity fields/facilities (12)
- Play equipment for all ages (11)
- Shade (6)
- Seating (5)
- Open Space (5)
- Attractive Landscaping (4)
- Walking Path (4)
- Access Trails (4)
- Safety (3)
- Pavilion/Gazebo (3)
- Water Fountain/Toilets (3)
- Picnic Tables (3)
- Water Features (3)
- Event coordinator/Athletic Club (2)
- Trees (2)

- Accessibility (2)

Necessary components mentioned only once included: All age's park; location; land; ambiance; user-friendly; multi-purpose; lighting; Dog Park; and adequate parking.

2. List the three (3) most important components discussed thus far for a Neighborhood Park.

The individual responses that were cited the most include:

- Play equipment (15)
- Seating with shade (6)
- Safety (5)
- Open play space (5)
- Walking paths (5)

Components mentioned twice include:

- Attractive landscaping (2)
- Outdoor fields (2)
- Gazebo (2)
- Toilet facility (2)

Components mentioned only once include: Maintenance; park pool; convenience; trees for shade and wildlife shelter; park benches and picnic table; athletic fields; and surveillance.

3. List the three (3) most important components discussed thus far for a Community Park.

The individual responses that were cited the most include:

- Play activity fields (10)
- Trails (6)

- Open space (5)
- Parking (4)
- Restroom (3)
- Playground equipment (2)
- Sports complex/indoor sports facility (2)
- Trees (2)
- Safety (2)
- Picnic (2)

Components mentioned only once include: Water feature; covered area for congregating; surveillance; accessibility; shared gardens; Dog Park; and shelter and seating.

4. Identify specific parks and recreation projects or actions that you would like to see the Village of Homer Glen undertake.

The individual responses that were cited the most include:

- Village Green (5)
- Multi-Use Trails (5)
- Community Park (3)
- Maintenance and upgrade existing parks (2)
- Fix Culver Park and clean it up* (2)
- Woodbine Park needs updating* (2)
- Develop a large Sports Complex (2)

Specific projects mentioned only once include: Athletic fields; pure open space with walking paths; purchase 150+ acres to develop a Community Park; playground equipment in smaller parks with

subdivisions; enhance open space for passive recreation only; sledding hill; secure land for a Community Park; finish park Master Plan; secure land for general parks; connecting trails on corridors; align park mission with existing natural features, such as wildlife; pocket parks; one large central park; Kingston Hills Park; spray park; and Neighborhood Parks.

*Culver Park and Woodbine Park (Sendra Park) are not owned by the Village of Homer Glen. Both property of Homer Township.

PARKS & RECREATION PLAN

This section of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan presents the classification system for parks within the Village, along with an inventory of all parks and open space within the community. It is followed by an analysis of existing recreational service levels along with short-term and long-term recommendations for parks and recreational facilities.

PARK CLASSIFICATION

The classification system to categorize the specific types of parks is as follows:

Neighborhood Parks

A neighborhood park is an area that provides park opportunities within close proximity to residents. Neighborhood parks are intended to serve a local population and provide a balance of recreation facilities, open space and play areas.

Community Parks

A community park is a large park that provides park opportunities within a short driving distance to residents. Community parks are intended to serve a larger geographic area than neighborhood parks. Community parks provide a balance of recreation facilities and natural resource areas.

Within the Community Park classification, two unique types of recreation space are included: Village Green and Sports Complex.

Village Green – A Village Green of five (5) or more acres in size should be part of the Village’s new Town Center. This public open space should function as a social gathering place and a location for

community events such as festivals, fairs, markets and holiday celebrations.

Sports Complex – Sports Complexes, such as the Homer Sports Complex, consolidate heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities. The sports complex classification varies from community parks in the sense that they do not preserve a unique natural landscape. Sports complexes utilize all available land to concentrate recreation facilities.

11 Acres per 1,000 Breakdown for Neighborhood and Community Parks

The NRPA does not currently provide a population-based standard for neighborhood or community parks, stating that a standard cannot be universal and that each community should assess its own needs. The Village’s current Park Donation Ordinance establishes the population standard of 11 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. This Plan recommends splitting the acreage between neighborhood and community parkland. The 11 acres should be divided into 4 acres per 1,000 population devoted to neighborhood parkland and 7 acres per 1,000 residents for community parkland. This breakdown results in the proper amount of land for neighborhood and community parks based on the specific parks identified later in this section. Most communities divide their goal (typically between 6.25 and 11 acres per 1,000 populations) within this range. Although some communities may be closer to 50/50, Homer Glen is a unique community characterized by open spaces, low-density development and an attractive environmental setting.

Since the Village is newly established, it is playing “catch-up” and needs to acquire land for parks before it is no longer financially feasible or even available for acquisition. The larger community parks will continue to maintain Homer Glen’s unique environmental character. Neighborhood parks are equally important; however, due to their smaller size they are more easily acquired through the Village’s Park Donation Ordinance.

EXISTING RECREATIONAL LAND

Recreational land within the Homer Glen community consists of a wide variety of developed parks and undeveloped open space. These areas range in size from small mini-parks less than two acres in size to forest preserve areas over a thousand acres in size.

In 2012, all parks and open space in the community were inventoried. The inventory was compiled through site visits, a review of County tax information and aerial photography. The inventory consists of parks and open space owned by the following entities:

- Village of Homer Glen
- Homer Township
- Forest Preserve District of Will County
- Will County School District 92
- Homer School District 33C
- Lockport Township High School District 205

Village of Homer Glen

Through the Village of Homer Glen’s Park Donation Ordinance a total of

thirteen properties have been acquired or are in the process of being dedicated to the Village, several of which have been completely developed:

Goodings Grove (2.64 acres) – a future neighborhood park.

Erin Hills (1.4 acres) – a future neighborhood park and nature area. The Township has an additional 10 acres of nature area adjacent to the Village’s parcel. An OSLAD grant has been awarded to the Village to develop the park.

Amberfield (1.32 acres) - a future neighborhood park.

Kingston Hills (1.15 acres) – a neighborhood park developed with a playground, shelter, drinking fountain and landscaping. The park also has a trail connection to the Village’s Heroes Trail.

Glenview Walk Estates (0.88 acres) - a future neighborhood park.

Stonebridge Woods (5.61 acres) – a neighborhood park developed with a playground, shelter, tennis court, baseball field, basketball courts, volleyball court, fitness equipment, trail and drinking fountain.

Meadowview West Park (0.94 acres) - a future neighborhood park.

Evlyn’s Gate (2.3 acres) - a Neighborhood Park developed with a playground, pavilions, and walking path.

Gallagher and Henry/McGivney # 1 (5.45 acres) – adjacent to Meadowview West Park.

Gallagher and Henry/McGivney # 2 (2.53 acres) – a future neighborhood park.

Gallagher and Henry/McGivney # 3 (1.66 acres) – a future neighborhood park.

Cedar Brook (3.3 acres) - a future neighborhood park.

151st/Bell Road Prairie Style Garden (.31 acres) – a current open space area.

Homer Township

Homer Township has established a committee that is dedicated to preserving open space in the community, The Homer Township Open Space Land Stewardship Committee. As of today, the Township has acquired over 200 acres of land for the program. The Committee is working on long-term plans for each area including the creation of a Native Plant Nursery, a community garden project, a historic preservation project, a wetland restoration project, a living history farm, reforestation, woodland management, prairie restoration, paths and public access areas.

Homer Township owns and maintains four (4) open space areas and seven (7) parks. Most of the park sites are located within the Village’s corporate limits, while Purdy and Paul Farms and Morris Park are outside of Homer Glen’s boundary agreement. In terms of function and classification, Township Parks are classified as neighborhood parks. The following is a summary of each open space area and park location owned and maintained by Homer Township:

Trantina Farm – A 50 acre open space site located on 151st Street between Gougar Road and Cedar Road. Trantina Farm contains a dog park, playground, historical barn, equestrian trail and shelter.

Paul Farm – A 59 acre open space site located between Gougar Road and Farrell Road on the south side of 151st Street.

Welter Farm – A 50 acre open space site located within the Village on Bell Road, south of 143rd Street. The Township purchased the eastern part of the parcel for its Senior Housing project.

Purdy Farm – An 86 acre open space site located on the southwest side of the Township at the corner of Gougar Road and 175th Street. The Purdy Farm was the first property purchased by the Township for use as open space.

Morris Park – An 18 acre park located off 163rd Street, west of Cedar Road. The Park is outside of the Village limits and is on the Lockport side of the Village’s Boundary Agreement. Morris Park contains six (6) soccer fields, a fishing lake, one (1) playground, a concession stand, picnic tables and two (2) parking lots.

Culver Memorial Park – An 11 acre park located off of Parker Road in the Pebble Creek subdivision. Culver Memorial Park has three (3) baseball/softball fields, fishing pond, picnic areas, one (1) playground and two (2) parking lots. The park also features a connection to the Village’s Heroes Trail System.

Country Woods – An undeveloped two (2) acre wooded parcel in the Country Woods subdivision with a small picnic area.

Edmond J. Sendra Park – A 6 acre park located on Greenbrier Lane in the Woodbine subdivision. The park contains a lighted one half (½) mile jogging trail, adult exercise equipment, one (1) playground equipment, basketball hoops, picnic tables and an off street parking lot. On street parking is also available.

Yangas Park – A 10 acre park located on Venetian Way off of Will Cook Road in the Derby Meadows subdivision. Yangas Park contains a variety of recreational and passive amenities including two volleyball courts, two basketball courts, two tennis courts, and a playground. Yangas Park also features a trail connection to the Village's Heroes Trail System.

Much of the land in Yangas Park is for retention, which limits the use of the park. For purposes of this Plan, the full acreage of Yangas Park is useable during dry weather. However, it is difficult to determine the exact size of the useable areas after periods of significant rainfall.

Lamers Park – A 9 acre park located at the end of Lakeview Trail in the Twin Lakes Subdivision off of 159th Street. Lamers Park contains a fishing pond, nature outlook, picnic tables and a forested grove of trees.

Goreham Park – A 4 acre park located on Pheasant Lane in the Derby Hills subdivision off of 143rd Street. Goreham Park contains one (1) baseball field (for

local unorganized games), a walking trail, one (1) playground and picnic tables.

Homer Sports Complex – A 17 acre lighted sports complex located at 14350 W. 151st Street behind the Homer Township Administration Center. Town Center Park contains one (1) full-sized baseball field, two (2) softball/multi-purpose ball fields, one (1) regulation Little League field, two (2) soccer fields, a concession stand, restroom facilities, picnic tables, a pavilion, two (2) football fields with bleachers and a scoreboard, and one (1) playground.

Forest Preserve District of Will County

The Forest Preserve District of Will County's stated mission is "The Forest Preserve District is dedicated to protecting, conserving, enhancing and promoting Will County's natural heritage for the educational, recreational and environmental benefit of present and future generations." The organization provides only passive recreational opportunities.

The District has a number of open space areas throughout Will County. Two of these are located within the southern portions of the Village and one is located in the northwest portion of Homer Glen. The two southern preserve areas are located along the Spring Creek Greenway, while the northwestern preserve is located along Fiddymont Creek.

Messenger Marsh Preserve is a 620 acre preserve located a quarter-mile south of 159th Street on South Bell Road. In 2008, the District completed a major renovation to the access area on South Bell Road, and the preserve now offers a

number of recreational activities including dog exercising, fishing, geocaching, picnicking, snowshoeing, wildlife viewing, and a multiuse limestone screening trail for biking, cross-county skiing, hiking/running, horseback riding.

Trail users can take to the 3.5-mile limestone trail, which features two 1-mile loops and travels through wetlands, woodlands, and open areas. (Horse trailer parking is available at the access area.) A picnic shelter is available for rental to rental groups up to 100 people.

Dog owners can let their dogs run unleashed in the 5-acre dog park, which features two rotating fields and a park for dogs less than 35 pounds.

Messenger Woods Nature Preserve is a 441 acre preserve located on Bruce Road. This is one of the County's oldest forest preserves and is reported to have one of the few remaining woodlands in Northeastern Illinois that has not been altered by farming or development. Messenger Woods Nature Preserve contains restrooms, drinking water, a camping area for tents, two picnic shelters (capacity of 217 visitors), group camping areas, two paved parking areas and 1.92 miles of trails for hiking and cross-country skiing. The Forest Preserve District has long range plans to remove the northernmost parking area and then north shelter to restore habitat. A new development within the preserve will replace and expand these facilities in an area known as Konow Grove along 167th Street. The new parking, picnic area, trail connection and camping sites will be relocated at this new public access.

Fiddymment Creek Preserve protects 274 acres of an aesthetic rolling landscape with woodlands, prairies, a scenic valley and the creek. Fiddymment Creek Preserve is the wooded land northeast of 159th Street and Gougar Rd. The Village is currently working with the District to preserve additional lands and remove the gap in the Preserve in this area. A District land use plan is under development which includes future plans for a proposed looped trail.

The district also has 326 acres in unincorporated Homer Township, which are part of the Spring Creek Greenway.

OTHER PARKS AND OPEN SPACE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

In addition to the open space provided by the Village, Township and Will County Forest Preserve, other agencies and organizations provide additional parks and open space. These include School Districts, private agencies, camps, golf courses, Home Owners Associations and nearby Cook County Forest Preserve District properties.

Will County School District 92

School District 92 is one of four (4) school districts serving the Village of Homer Glen. District 92 has two (2) schools located in the Village of Homer Glen. The District also has one (1) undeveloped property that is currently located within the unincorporated area of Homer Glen. This property will eventually become a part of the Village of Homer Glen, as it is within the Village's boundary agreement with the City of Lockport.

At this time, the school district does not have plans for improving existing sites or

acquiring new sites in the near future in Homer Glen. The School District is frequently contacted for facility and open space usage.

Reed School – An elementary school located at 14939 W. 143rd Street (outside of Village limits). The site contains a playground, baseball fields and gymnasium.

Oak Prairie Junior High School – A junior high school located at 15161 S. Gougar Road. Oak Prairie Junior High School has two (2) ballfields. The school has 53 acres which includes ponds, wetlands, open fields and groves of trees.

147th Street Site – An undeveloped 10 acre parcel located on the south side of 147th Street, east of Gougar Road.

Homer School District 33C

Homer School District 33C currently has six (6) schools and owns two (2) additional undeveloped properties. One (1) parcel is near the intersection of Parker Road and the future 155th Street. The second undeveloped property is located on the north side of Bruce Road, in between McCarron Road and Heritage Drive. According to the School District, future plans at the Bruce Road property may include ball fields.

Currently, the District has six (6) gymnasiums with one (1) each at Goodings Grove School, William J. Butler School, Hadley School, Homer Jr. High, Schilling School and William E. Young School. The School District provides indoor space to Homer Athletics, Lockport Legacy, Lockport Mustangs, Girls Scouts, Boy Scouts, etc. for most of

the hours that the gymnasiums are not in use by the School District.

Homer Jr. High School – A junior high located at 15711 S. Bell Road, the school as constructed in 1980-1981. The junior high school shares outdoor space with Hadley School.

Hadley School – A middle school located at 15731 S. Bell Road, Hadley school shares outdoor space with Homer Jr. High School. There are two (2) baseball/softball fields with a soccer/football field.

Goodings Grove School – An elementary school located at 12914 West 143rd Street has three (3) softball/baseball fields, a soccer/football area and a playground.

Luther J. Schilling – An elementary school located at 16025 Cedar Road. Schilling School has one (1) playground.

William J. Butler – An elementary school located at 1900 Farrell Road. Butler is located outside of Homer Glen. The school contains two (2) ball fields, an open play area, a wooded hiking path and two (2) playgrounds.

William E. Young – An elementary school located at 16240 S. Cedar Road. Young is located outside of Homer Glen. The site contains two (2) playgrounds and an open field. The site also contains 14 acres of undeveloped land that can be used for athletic fields in the future.

Lockport Township High School District 205

Lockport Township High School District 205 does not currently have a school located in the Village of Homer Glen.

However, the District does own an 80 acre site in the Village and plans to build a new high school at 155th Street and Cedar Road. Once this new high school is opened it will provide a number of recreational facilities for the community. Although the District does not know when this new school will be constructed, the Village should explore shared use agreements with the District.

Shady Oaks Camp

Founded in 1947, Shady Oaks Camp is a privately owned not for profit; summer camp located 16300 Parker Road in Homer Glen. The Camp is located on 35 acres of which 10 acres are in a long-term lease. The Camp provides summer camp activities for people with disabilities and includes a swimming pool, a recreational hall for games and arts and crafts. The Camp facilities are available to the public for a fee.

Within the next few years, the Camp has expressed a desire to remodel its existing facilities. Some of the proposed improvements include: remodeling a few of the dorms, constructing a handicapped accessible sports field, ropes course and playground, and restoring the existing pond to provide fishing. However, any future improvements to the Camp are contingent upon donations of time, material and monetary resources.

Shady Oaks is always in need of donations of time, money, materials and skilled labor to help run its program.

Homeowners Associations

Several Homeowner Associations (HOAs) own parcels of open space within the Village. HOA parcels typically consist

of stormwater management areas deeded to associations for maintenance to be funded by homes within the development.

Forest Preserve District of Cook County

Although not located in the Village of Homer Glen, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County has large preserves near the Village. The Palos and Sag Valley Divisions of the Forest Preserve are northeast of the Village. In particular, two (2) preserves are near the northeast portion of the Village: Tampier Lake and Orland Grove.

Tampier Lake is located at 131st Street and Wolf Road. Visitors can rent canoes and rowboats at this preserve.

Orland Grove is located between 131st and 143rd Streets, west of LaGrange Road. This Preserve contains a fishing pond.

Golf Courses

There are two (2) privately owned golf courses in Homer Glen. Both courses are open to the public.

Old Oak Country Club was established in 1926 and is located at 14200 S. Parker Road. The golf course contains 18-holes is approximately 160 acres of mostly wooded property.

Woodbine Golf Course is a newer course that was established in 1988. The 18-hole course is approximately 100 acres and is located at 14240 West 151st Street.

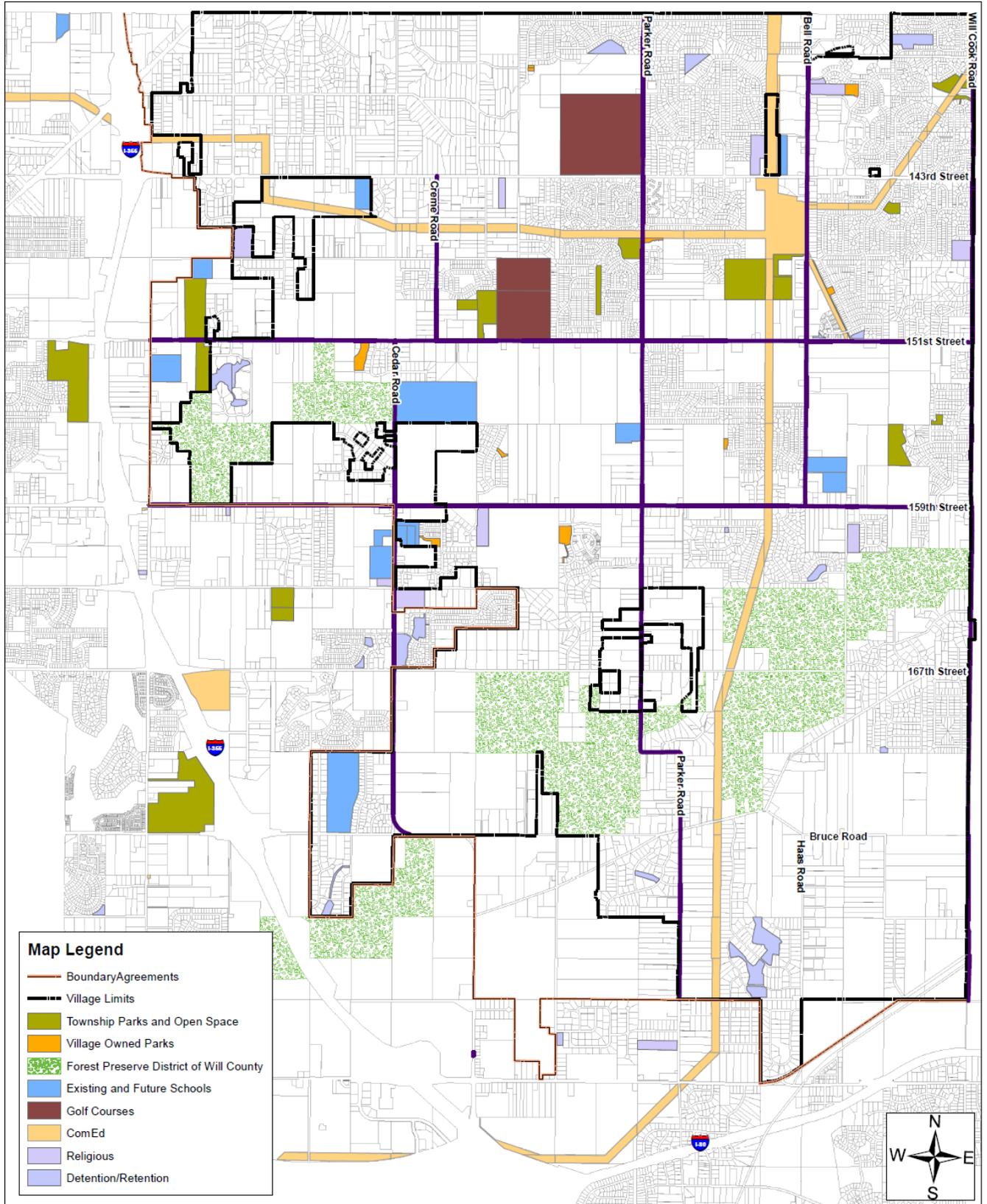


Figure 4: Existing Recreational Land

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Population Standards

4 acres of neighborhood parkland for every 1,000 residents.

Service Area Standard

The service area of a neighborhood park is a one-half mile radius (½ mile).

Development Guidelines

To promote good access, neighborhood parks should be centrally located within the subdivision/development. Consideration should be given to provide street frontage on at least two (2) full sides of neighborhood parks. Where possible, the park site should be accessible through greenways and other pedestrian and trail connections. Park sites should consist of developable, high-and-dry land that lies above the 100-year flood elevation.

The development of neighborhood parks should strike a balance between active and passive recreation. Active recreation facilities should be informal type facilities, used by nearby residents of all ages for unstructured recreation. While use by groups such as youth leagues may be appropriate on a limited basis, Neighborhood Parks are not intended for intense recreation that draws visitors from other neighborhoods. In addition to active recreation facilities, open areas should be provided for unstructured, individual and small-group recreational activities (e.g. Frisbee, kite flying, etc.) Areas for passive recreation should also supplement fields and active recreation areas. Amenities such as natural restorations, native plantings and interpretive/educational signage should be considered for these areas where appropriate. Environmentally responsible design practices should also be

implemented in the design of Neighborhood Parks wherever possible.

If available, Neighborhood Parks may be developed adjacent to elementary schools. When combined with a school site, a Neighborhood Park can benefit from school amenities such as parking and school recreation facilities during summer months and after school hours. However, it is important that the park site is not simply the school property, but indeed a full size park adjacent to a school. Consideration should also be given to facility availability for residents during school hours.

Size and Dimensions

Neighborhood Parks should be between three (3) acres and 10 acres in size, with 10 acres considered ideal. It is important that the park size be sufficient to accommodate any planned facilities, while maintaining a balance between active and passive recreation areas. It is important that the geometry of the park site accommodates the required dimensions of planned recreation facilities.

When achieving the recommended park size is not possible, pocket parks can be used to achieve the recreational goals of the community. The sizes of these facilities are secondary to their purpose of providing adequate space for needed recreation facilities. In some cases, parks can be located adjacent to a stormwater detention facility that provides the appearance of a larger park and buffers the park from residential properties. At a minimum, pocket parks should have a minimum street frontage of 50' to promote the park as a neighborhood amenity and not simply an extension of a residential property.

Discussion

A Neighborhood Park is an area that provides park opportunities within a ½ mile proximity to residents. A service area of ½ mile is the distance an average person can walk in 10 minutes. This service area standard is also endorsed by the NRPA and is commonly used throughout the country as the service level for neighborhood parks. It is further recommended that the ½ mile area service area be uninterrupted from pedestrian barriers.

The NRPA does not currently provide a population-based standard for Neighborhood Parks, stating that a standard cannot be universal. The NRPA recommends that each community should assess its own needs. There is also no accepted NRPA standard for the breakdown between neighborhood parks and community parks. Per the Park Donation Ordinance, the Village of Homer Glen has established a requirement to provide a minimum of 11 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. It is important to achieve a balanced recreational system of Community and Neighborhood Parks, recognizing that Community Parks by their nature are larger in size. Therefore, the Village of Homer Glen will provide four (4) acres of neighborhood parkland for every 1,000 residents and seven (7) acres of community parkland for every 1,000 residents.

Neighborhood Park Analysis

Based on the four (4) acre standard for neighborhood parks and the 2010 population of 24,220, there is a current need for approximately 97 acres of Neighborhood Parkland.

Township park sites currently provide 41.8 acres of neighborhood parkland to residents within the Village's planning area. Developed or soon to be developed Village Parks currently provide approximately 29.1 acres of Neighborhood Parkland. This calculates to a shortage of 26.1 acres of Neighborhood Parkland. The future need for Neighborhood Parkland, based on the projected build out population of 47,000 is 188 acres.

As discussed earlier in this Plan, the current and future residential development pattern of the Village (rural/estate and more suburban residential areas) plays an important role in the location of neighborhood parks. This Plan takes into account the residential development pattern with the population and service area standards when locating future Neighborhood Parks.

The current shortage of parkland can be attributed to development of much of the Village before its incorporation and establishment of the Park Donation Ordinance. Parkland is scarce in the older parts of the community, and addressing this shortage will be difficult. In the more recently developed areas of Homer Glen, the Village has secured nearly 45 acres in 10 neighborhoods including 5.6 acres in the Stonebridge Woods subdivision. The Village should continue securing park donations for all future residential developments.

To address the shortage of parks in developed areas, the Village should utilize pocket parks and school sites to provide recreation and open space. It is important to understand that schools should not simply "substitute" for park

sites. However, through the use of cooperative agreements and installation of playground equipment and park amenities on school properties, schools can be improved to provide a solution to providing parkland in areas of the Village that are already built out. When schools are not available, church sites and other public spaces with large areas of open space can be utilized. In some cases, the Village should also consider acquisition of existing parcels of land in developed areas for redevelopment as parkland.

Short Term Recommendations

Continue to acquire land for Neighborhood Parks in new residential developments through the Village's Park Donation Ordinance.

Explore the acquisition of smaller Pocket Parks in the portion of the Village north of 143rd Street, and in the portion of the Village south of the Messenger Woods Forest Preserve.

Work with and encourage the Township to improve access, parking, signage and other facilities at existing Township Parks.

Long Term Recommendations

Acquire and develop Neighborhood Parks as indicated on the Plan.

In existing subdivisions, where adequate land is unavailable for neighborhood parks, explore the acquisition and redevelopment of existing properties where feasible.

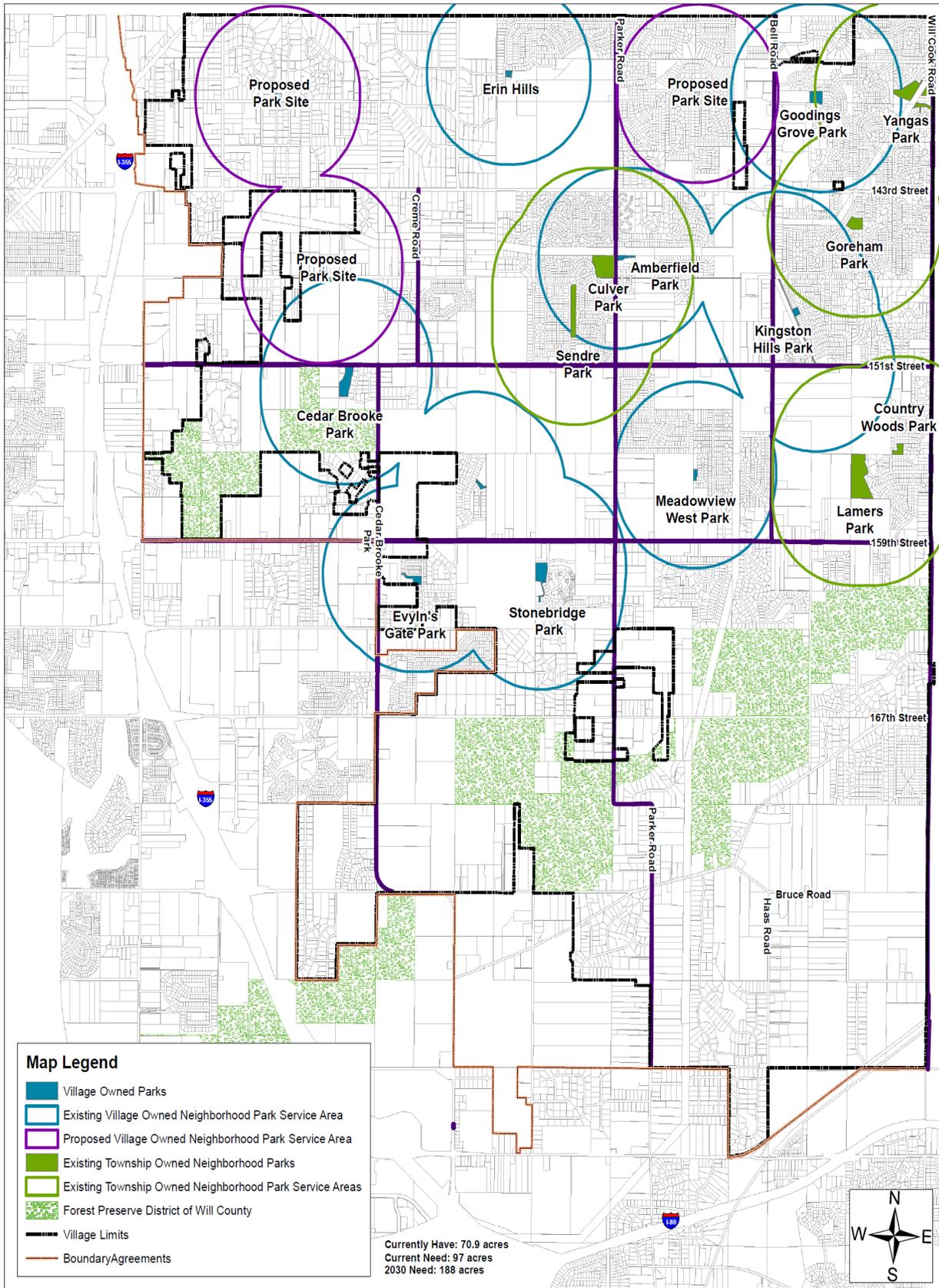


Figure 5: Neighborhood Parks

COMMUNITY PARKS

Population Standard

Seven (7) acres of Community Parkland for every 1,000 residents.

Service Area Standard

The service area of a Community Park is two (2) miles.

Development Guidelines

Community parks serve the recreational needs of large areas of the community and preserve natural resources and unique landscapes. This classification includes:

- Community Park
- Sports Complex
- Village Green

Community Park – Community Parks provide facilities for recreational programming and group activities not desirable at the neighborhood level. With a two (2) mile service area, community parks are “drive-to” parks, serving a larger geographic area and containing structured activities which draw visitors from throughout the community. In order to minimize disruption and maintain the safety of residential neighborhoods, it is important that community parks are located on collector and arterial roads. Adequate parking should also be provided for within community parks, based on the level of activity expected. Wherever possible, community parks should be accessible through greenways and other pedestrian and trail connections.

The development of Community Parks should strike a balance between active and passive recreation. Active recreation facilities within Community Parks should

accommodate both structured and unstructured recreation including athletic league programs for all ages. The amount of area dedicated to active recreation facilities should be driven by the needs of the community based on specific sports and activities. In addition to active recreation facilities, open areas should be provided for unstructured, individual and small-group recreational activities (e.g. Frisbee, kite flying, etc.).

Extensive areas of passive recreation, natural restoration/conservation and native plantings should be provided to supplement fields and active recreation areas. The amount of area dedicated for this purpose should be driven, in part, by the site’s natural resources. It is common for Park Districts to set a goal of approximately 20-50% of a Community Park for passive recreation or environmental protection. Environmentally responsible design practices should also be implemented in the design of Community Parks wherever possible.

Sports Complex – A Sports Complex is a variation of a Community Park that is devoted entirely to active recreation. This classification applies to the Homer Sports Complex. This is the community’s only Sports Complex.

Village Green – This public open space functions as a social gathering place and a location for community events such as festivals, fairs, markets and holiday celebrations. A Village Green of five (5) or more acres in size should be part of the Village’s new Town Center.

Size and Dimensions

The minimum size for a Community Park is 20 acres, with 40 acres or more

considered ideal. Community Parks should be sufficiently sized to accommodate any planned fields, athletic facilities and park amenities while providing significant areas of passive recreation and natural plantings. Specific parking dimensions are not particularly important for Community Parks. However, the Village should be cognizant of the recreational needs of the community and ensure that the park's layout and geometry accommodate planned recreational facilities.

Discussion

Community Parks in the Village of Homer Glen should be areas that provide park opportunities for village-wide activities. Homer Glen's future Village Green will fall in this classification, providing a focal point and gathering place for the entire community. Since Community Parks draw from larger areas, they should be larger than Neighborhood Parks, but smaller than regional facilities such as Forest Preserves.

It is often said that Community Parks are "drive to" parks, meaning that users of the parks will arrive by car. Establishing a service area however, requires an answer to the question: What is an acceptable driving distance? The NRPA suggests that a Community Park serve two or more neighborhoods with a service area between ½ and 3 miles. Given that Neighborhood Parks have a ½ mile service radius, it is reasonable to expect that a Community Park's service radius be on the high side of that range. A two (2) mile radius service area is commonly used throughout the country as the service level for a Community Park and is utilized by this Plan.

The NRPA does not currently provide a population-based standard for Community Parks, stating that a standard cannot be universal. The NRPA recommends that each community should assess its own needs. There is also no accepted NRPA standard for the breakdown between neighborhood parks and community parks. Per the Park Donation Ordinance, the Village of Homer Glen has established a requirement to provide a minimum of 11 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. It is important to achieve a balanced recreational system of Community and Neighborhood Parks, recognizing that Community Parks by their nature are larger in size. Therefore, the Village of Homer Glen will provide four (4) acres of neighborhood parkland for every 1,000 residents and seven (7) acres of community parkland for every 1,000 residents.

Community Park Recommendation Analysis

Based on the seven (7) acre standard for Community Parks and the 2010 population of 24,220, there is a current need for approximately 170 acres of Community Parkland. The Township's Sports Complex currently provides 17 acres of Community Parkland to residents within the Village's planning area. This calculates to a current shortage of 153 acres of Community Parkland. The future need for Community Parkland, based on the projected build out population of 47,000 is 329 acres.

To address the service level for previously developed areas within the Village and future development areas, it is recommended that the Village continue to work with developers to realize the Town-Center/Village-Green project. It is

also recommended that the Village work with property owners and developers to secure land for Community Parks. The Village should look for opportunities to work with other governmental agencies such as the Forest Preserve or adjacent municipalities and park districts to partner in the acquisition and development/maintenance of new Community Parks. Due to a diminishing supply of large parcels of land and development pressures within the Village, it is recommended that planning and acquisition of land for Community Parks begin as soon as possible. For this reason, alternate locations for Community Parks should also be considered if necessary.

Long Term Recommendations

Work with land owners to acquire land and to develop Community Parks.

TRAILS – WALKING/JOGGING

Population

No population standard is recommended.

Service Area

No service area is recommended.

Development Guidelines

Trails should be designed to accommodate multiple modes and users, including walking, hiking, jogging, bicycling, cross country skiing and possibly in-line skating and horses. Trails that are expected to be heavily used or are part of a broader connected trail network should be at least 10' in width to accommodate the various users. Trails should be constructed of crushed limestone or asphalt, depending upon the environmental sensitivity of the site and the expected primary users.

Size and Dimensions

Generally trails should be 10' in width. Internal park trails that are not expected to be heavily used may be narrower than 10'.

Trail-Walking/Jogging Analysis and Recommendations

Trails are one of the most popular recreational amenities for communities to provide their residents. Trails are popular with all ages from children to seniors. Trails should be developed where feasible and should connect to other trails, creating a network of linked trails throughout the community. Signage and/or markings should be installed where trails cross streets to alert both trail users and vehicles.

Short Term Recommendations

Link parks to current and planned trail network.

Work with Homer Township to explore adding trails to existing Township parks.

Long Term Recommendations

Create a network of trails to create links to other parks and regional trail systems.

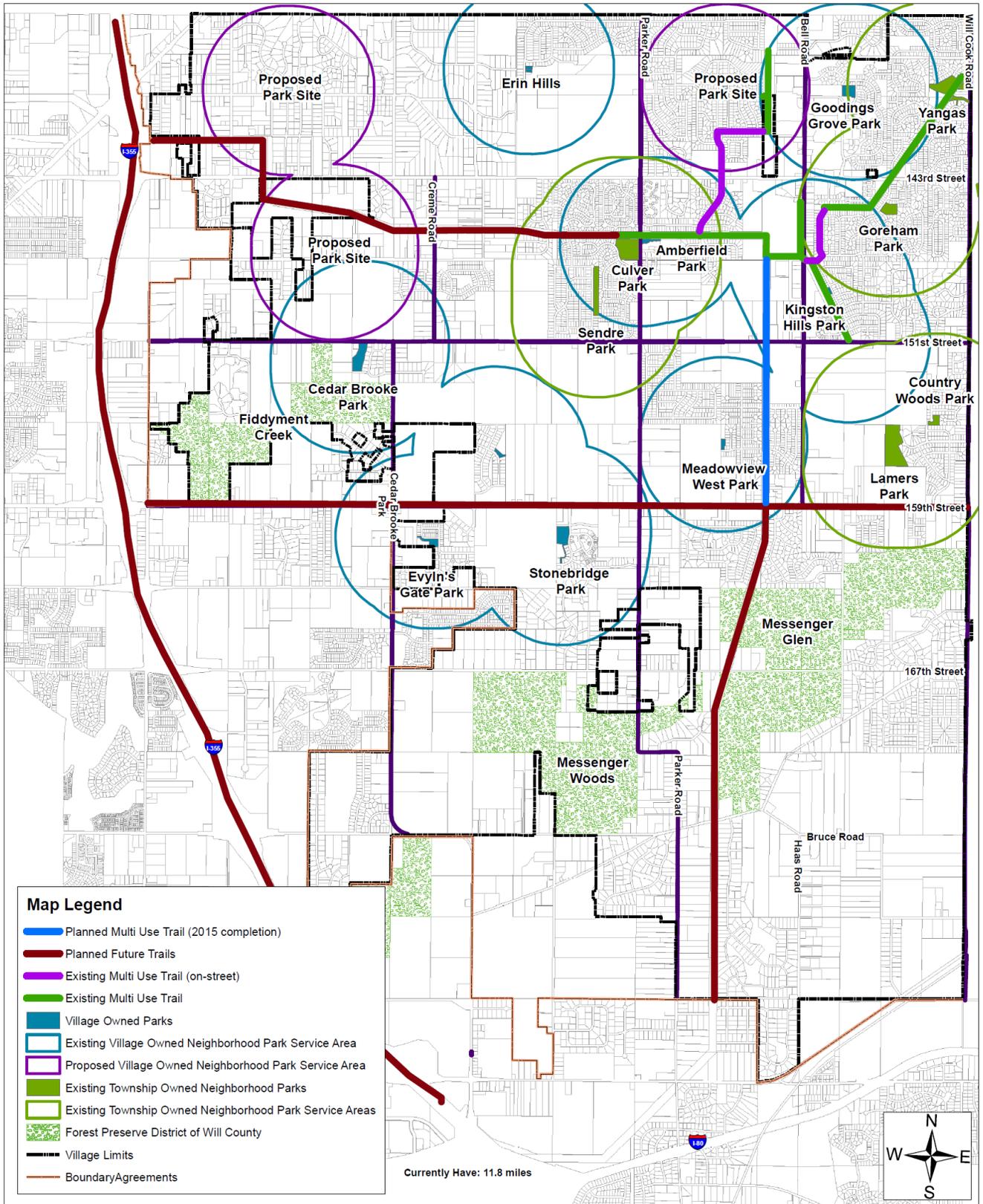


Figure 6: Trails

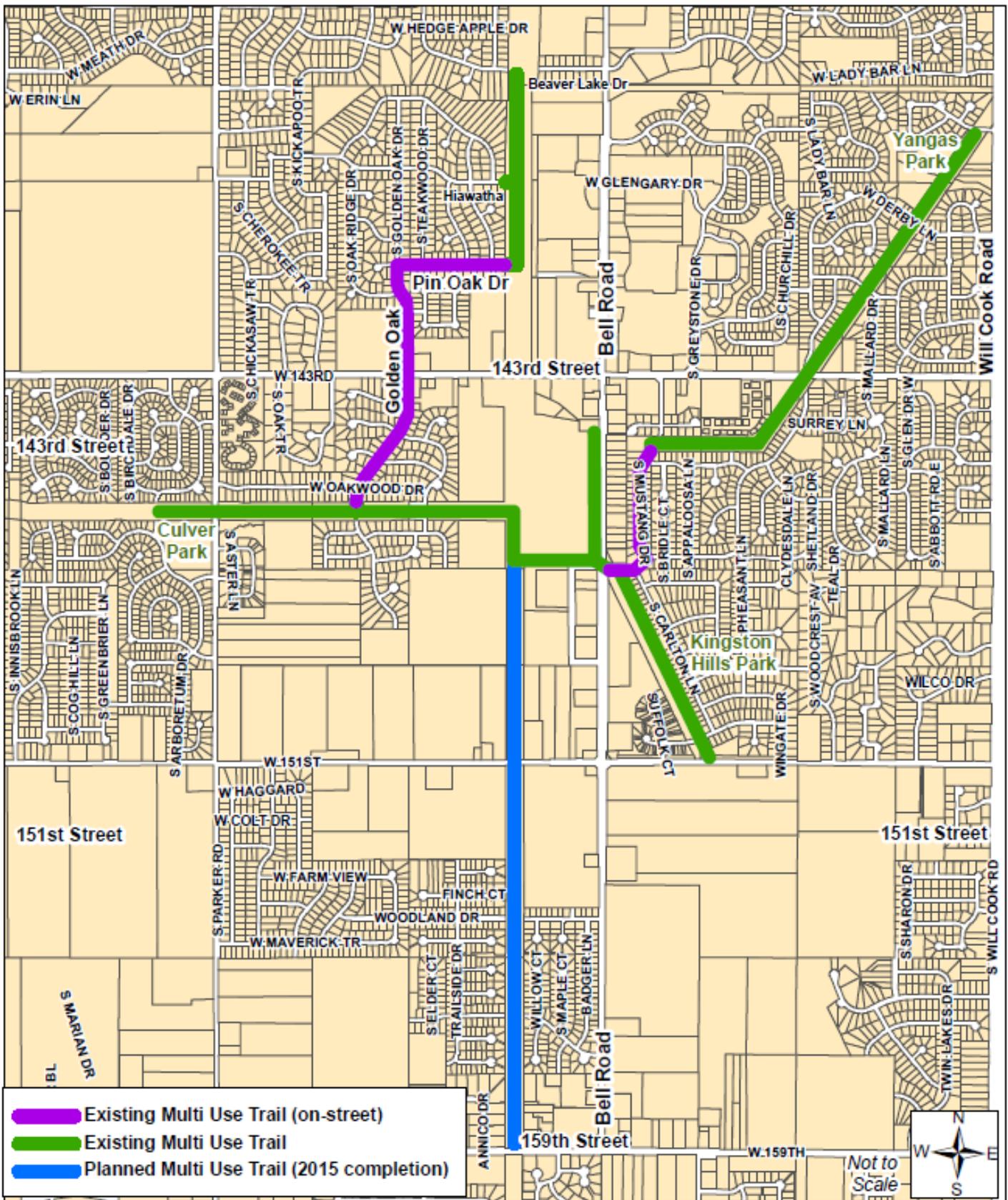


Fig. 6-1: Current Trails

RECREATION PLAN

This section of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan presents an inventory of all recreation facilities and providers within the community, followed by an analysis of existing service levels. This section concludes with short-term and long-term recommendations for recreation.

EXISTING RECREATION

A variety of recreational programs and activities are provided to the residents of Homer Glen through a combination of public and private organizations.

Public Recreation

Baseball

A baseball field is an all-encompassing term that includes backstops, Little League, Pony League, full-size baseball and softball fields. Each of these levels of play has slightly different requirements for playing fields. Baseball requires the largest area (3.5 acres) and Little League requires the smallest (1.2 acres). Backstops consist of an open play area with a typical chain-link fence backstop that accommodate mostly informal pickup games and provide an area for beginners to learn the game. Pony League and Softball can utilize similar fields (2.0 acres) with different base distances. Currently, there are 16 public baseball fields in the community. The Village of Homer Glen provides one (1) public baseball field at Stonebridge Park. Homer Township provides seven (7) public baseball fields with three (3) fields at Culver Memorial Park and four (4) fields at the Homer Sports Complex. The School Districts provide an additional eight public baseball fields at Reed School (one), Oak Prairie Junior High School (two), Homer Junior High/Hadley

School (two), and Goodings Grove School (three).

Basketball Courts

For purposes of this Master Plan, basketball courts are outdoor courts designed either for basketball games or basketball shooting. Public courts can be full-court or half-court. Typically, public basketball courts are asphalt or poured concrete with a rubber surface. Half-courts can be designed on standard rectangular areas or circular shapes. Currently, the Village of Homer Glen provides three half basketball courts at Stonebridge Park.

Fishing Piers

Fishing piers are located on public ponds or detention basins and can transform the area into a recreational amenity. Concrete pads may be constructed on the bank of the water, or piers can extend out into the water. Typically, ponds designed for recreational fishing are stocked with fish. Currently, there are no fishing piers in the Village. However, Homer Township has two (2) parks with fishing ponds including Lamers Park and Culver Memorial Park. The Forest Preserve District of Will County also offers fishing at the Messenger Marsh Preserve.

Fitness Stations

Fitness stations are outdoor amenities located in public parks. Fitness stations can be stand-alone exercise opportunities, such as a pull-up bar, or a climbing apparatus. Most fitness stations are designed as part of a larger fitness “loop”. Public fitness stations should be designed for a variety of age groups and skill levels, including meeting ADA standards. The Village of Homer Glen provides outdoor fitness stations at

Stonebridge Park. Homer Township offers outdoor fitness stations at Edmond J. Sendra Park.

Football

Football fields are outdoor fields designed to accommodate football games and practices. Most public football fields have turf-playing surfaces with permanent football goal posts. Currently, there are two (2) public football fields in the community provided by Homer Township at the Homer Sports Complex.

Golf

Public golf courses are open to the public and do not require private memberships. Public golf courses can be nine (9) or 18 holes and may or may not include a driving range. Currently, there are two (2) public golf courses in the community: Woodbine Golf Course and Old Oak Country Club.

Horseback Riding

Horseback riding is currently available at the Messenger Marsh Forest Preserve of The Forest Preserve District of Will County. The Township also has equestrian trails and trailer parking on its Trantina Farm property.

Ice Skating

Ice skating rinks or skating facilities are outdoor facilities that can be designed and used in different ways. Typically, ice rinks are a standard size to accommodate hockey games with boards that can be permanent or removable. Skating facilities may also be designed for hockey games; however, they are smaller and can be in a variety of shapes and sizes, typically designed for free public skating. Currently, there are no public ice rinks or skating facilities in Homer Glen.

Picnic Areas

Picnic areas are outdoor areas designed for small or large picnicking opportunities. Typically, pavilions or shelters are located in these picnic areas. Ideally, picnic areas have trashcans, drinking water and restrooms nearby. There are 12 picnic areas and pavilions in the community. The Village of Homer Glen provides picnic area/pavilions at Kingston Hills Park, Stonebridge Park. There are also two pavilions in the Evelyn's Gate North subdivision. Homer Township provides public picnic areas/pavilions at Edmond J. Sendra Park, Yangas Park, Lamers Park, Goreham Park, Homer Sports Complex and Culver Memorial Park. The Forest Preserve District of Will County provide public picnic areas/pavilions at the Messenger Woods and Messenger Marsh Preserves.

Playgrounds

Public playgrounds are outdoor play structures designed to accommodate children with different ages and skill levels. Playground elements often include the following: swings, slides, climbing activities, and activity boards. Public playgrounds are typically designed for children ages two (2) through 12. Playground surfacing is usually constructed of either mulch, pea gravel, or poured rubber. Currently, there are 11 public playgrounds located in the community. The Village of Homer Glen provides two (2) public playgrounds at Kingston Hills Park and Stonebridge Park. Homer Township provides five (5) public playgrounds at: Edmond J. Sendra Park, Yangas Park, Goreham Park, Homer Sports Complex and Culver Memorial Park. The School District provides three (3) public playgrounds at: Reed School; Goodings Grove School;

and Luther J. Schilling School. There is also a playground in the Evlyn's Gate North subdivision.

Soccer

Soccer fields are outdoor fields that vary in size. Different age groups have different field size standards and practices may occur in small open areas. Typically, public soccer fields are turf with temporary soccer goals. Currently, there are three (3) public Soccer Fields in the community. Homer Township provides one (1) at the Homer Sports Complex (1). The School District provides two (2) additional public soccer fields at Homer Junior High/Hadley School (1) and Goodings Grove School (1).

Skateboarding

Skateboarding facilities are outdoor skating facilities that vary in size from mini-skate parks to larger community skate parks. Mini-skate parks can be designed with two or three skating elements that provide beginner skating opportunities. Mini-skate parks can be built on small concrete or asphalt pads. Larger community skate parks are designed with a number of skating elements and are typically constructed on poured concrete. Currently, there are no public skate parks located in the community.

Tennis Courts

Tennis courts are outdoor courts designed for tennis games. Public tennis court surfaces are typically asphalt or poured concrete with a rubber surface. Public tennis courts are designed with permanent net posts with nets that can be removed in the off-season. Currently, there are four (4) tennis courts in Homer Glen. The Village provides two (2) tennis

courts at Stonebridge Woods Park and Homer Township provides two (2) tennis courts at Yangas Park.

Trails

Public trails can be constructed of a variety of materials including turf, dirt, mulch, gravel or asphalt. Trails can also be constructed on street and/or off-street. Trails are designed for a specific type of user or they may be designed for multiple types of users. Trails users may include pedestrians, cyclists, in-line skaters, joggers and horses. Multi-use trails are typically 10' wide with 2' fall zones on either side. Off-street, outdoor, public trails have been inventoried for this Plan. Currently, there are approximately 11.8 miles of public multi-use trails in the community. The Village of Homer Glen provides approximately 5.8 miles of multi-use trail (4.8 miles in the Heroes Trail System and .5 miles each in the Kingston Hills Park and the Stonebridge Park). The Forest Preserve District of Will County provides the remaining 5.5 miles of multi-use trail in the Messenger Woods and Messenger Marsh Preserve. Homer Township provides 0.5 miles of trail in Edmond J. Sendra Park.

Volleyball

Volleyball courts are outdoor courts that can have a variety of playing surfaces including grass, pavement or sand (preferred). Typically, public outdoor volleyball courts have year-round net posts with a removable net. Currently, the Village provides one (1) volleyball court at Stonebridge Park.

EXISTING PRIVATE RECREATION

Private recreation open to the public in the Village includes recreation facilities and organizations that coordinates

leagues, classes, programming and structured recreation on any available facility, regardless of ownership.

MPX Elite Fitness

MPX Elite Fitness (formerly Megaplex) is an 80,000 square foot recreational facility located on Bell Road, between 159th and 151st Streets in Homer Glen. The private facility provides a variety of activities for youth, adults, businesses and schools.

The facility contains:

- Full-service health club with group fitness classes
- One (1) regulation size in-line hockey rink
- One (1) regulation size soccer field
- Basketball court
- Arcade and concession stand
- 200 space parking lot

The following activities are currently offered: roller skating; adult in-line hockey; adult basketball leagues; indoor soccer; tournaments; speed enhancement; and youth indoor football.

Homer Soccer Club

The Homer Soccer Club was established in 1987 to provide recreational and travel soccer for boys and girls (ages 6 to 15). The organization's stated mission is to instruct and promote soccer to the youth of Homer Township. Homer Soccer Club is affiliated with the Illinois Youth Soccer Association. The Club's travel teams play in the Illinois Women's Soccer League and the Northern Illinois Soccer League.

The organization provides both recreational and travel soccer programs

in the fall (August 1 to November 15) and spring (April 1 to June 19). Recreational soccer is offered in the winter (November 1 to March 31). According to the organization, recreational and travel spring and fall soccer programs are the most popular and fastest growing.

According to the organization's President, Homer Soccer Club does not own any facilities. The Club uses:

- Morris Park for both games and practices.
- Culver Park for practices
- Reed School for practices
- Hadley School for practices, and
- Schilling School for practices.

Also, in the winter, the Club provides indoor soccer programs and rents space at MPX Elite Fitness.

Homer Stallions Youth Football Corporation

Homer Stallions is a non-profit organization devoted and committed to the teaching and development of good sportsmanship, teamwork, team spirit, respect, discipline, coordination and physical fitness in children while developing fundamental skills in football, lacrosse and cheerleading. The organization has been in existence for 28 years.

The Stallions operate at the Homer Township Sports Complex from approximately August 1st to November 15th. The Stallions have added lights to the football field on the east side of Homer Township's Sports Complex. In addition, a new well has recently been added at the Complex for irrigation

purposes. However, according to the organization, the fields are in poor condition, and receive no time to heal. Multiple sports programs result in overuse of the fields, not allowing the grass time to fully recover.

According to the organization, the present facilities will not meet the future needs, especially for practice. Additional lighted practice space has been added at the vacant property owned by Homer Community Consolidated School District 33C.

Currently, the organization has approximately 650 participants, of which 80% are from Homer Glen. For the past several years, the Stallions have added children annually. The organization expects to continue to add children as the Village population increases.

Homer Athletic Club

The Homer Athletic Club, founded in 1959, provides organized athletic programming for residents of Homer Glen year-round. The Club offers volleyball, basketball, baseball, softball and golf. Baseball is offered for males ages five (5) to 19. Softball is offered for females, ages five (5) to 14. Basketball is offered for males in the 3rd through 8th grades and females in the 5th through 7th grades. Golf is offered for males and females ages seven (7) to 14.

First Church of the Nazarene

First Church of the Nazarene is located at 12725 Bell Road and has been serving the local community since 1974. The church offers both competitive and non-competitive recreation, as well as a number of special camps and events throughout the year. The program

offerings range in age from children as young as three (3) to adults.

During the course of the year, the church offers over 190 individual leagues and courses and has over 4,000 participants. The leagues are non-competitive and no records are kept and no standings are posted.

In addition to the church's non-competitive children's leagues, the church also offers a travel club soccer program and a competitive club volleyball program for young athletes who are ready to take the game to the next level. These programs involve practicing several times a week and games or tournaments several weekends throughout the season.

BREAKDOWN OF RECREATION FACILITIES

The following section provides a detailed examination of the recreational amenities recommended in this Plan based upon the previous steps of the planning process.

For each amenity, the following information has been provided:

- Population Standard
- Service Area Standard
- Development Guidelines
- Size and Dimensions
- Discussion
- Analysis
- Guidelines
- Recommendations (both short and long-term)

For each amenity a graphic is also provided that illustrates the information discussed and the short and long-term recommendations.

Emerging Sports and Activities

As new sports and activities become popular in the community, the Village should continue to readdress facility needs. This is also true for those sports and activities that diminish in popularity.

BASEBALL FIELDS

Population Standards

The population standard is one (1) Baseball Field for every 5,000 residents. Based upon the needs of the community, this Plan recommends one (1) Baseball Field for every 2,500 residents.

Service Area

The service area of a baseball field is one (1) mile.

Development Guidelines

A baseball field is an all-encompassing term that includes backstops, Little League, Pony League, full-size baseball and softball fields. Each of these levels of play has slightly different requirements for distances and dimensions, and each varies in intensity of use. Backstops consist of an open play area with a typical chain-link fence backstop, accommodating mostly informal pickup games. Backstops are well suited for Neighborhood Parks. Other fields, including Pony League, Softball, Little League, and Regulation Baseball fields, are likely to be programmed and should be limited to Community Parks.

Size and Dimensions

Backstop – No minimum size and dimensions.

Little League Field – Baselines should be 60', pitching distance should be 46', and centerfield should be 200' to 250' (1.5 acres)

Regulation Baseball – Baselines should be 90', pitching distances should be 60'6", centerfield should be 380' to 400' (2.5 acres)

Softball – Baselines should be 60', pitching distances should be 45', and centerfield should be 275' (1.5 to 2.0 acres)

Discussion

The standards and development recommendations for baseball are based upon the National Recreation and Parks Association Standards along with an analysis of neighboring communities and Distinguished Park Agencies. The NRPA's standard is 1 field per 5,000 residents. The benchmarking analysis found other agencies provide a service level of 1 field per 5,685 residents. However, due to the popularity of Baseball in the Homer Glen community and the need identified by the baseball community, this Plan recommends one (1) Baseball Field per 2,500 residents.

In terms of suitability, Baseball Fields, when programmed, will generate traffic. If lighted, Baseball Fields can affect residential areas even further. Therefore, regulation Baseball Fields and Little League Fields that are lighted or heavily programmed are best suited for Community Parks. Backstops and low intensity fields are best suited for Neighborhood Parks.

Baseball Analysis

Currently, there are 16 baseball fields located in the community. The current service level is one (1) baseball field per 1,514 residents, exceeding the goal of 1 field per 2,500. However, eight (8) of the 16 fields are owned by the School Districts. Use of these baseball fields by residents is limited. Additionally, future space needs may require the School District to use the land for buildings instead of fields.

The local baseball groups in Homer Glen also expressed the lack of time available for these fields. The number of school facilities available to the public and local organizations should be closely monitored and should be factored into future updates of this Master Plan.

Based on an estimated build-out population of 47,000, 18 baseball fields will be needed to adequately serve the residents of Homer Glen by 2030. Based upon dialogue with the local baseball groups, the Village does not meet the current population and service area standards. Baseball Associations also expressed their desire to “group” fields for programming efficiency and for potential concessions.

Short Term Recommendations

Encourage the baseball associations and the School Districts to enter into a shared-use agreement for use of the eight (8) baseball fields owned by the School District.

Long Term Recommendations

Consideration of the development of baseball fields of appropriate size and scale at all future Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks.

Encourage the baseball associations to enter into a shared-use agreement with the School Districts for the use of baseball fields at future school properties.

Seek opportunities for lighted fields. Lights need to be carefully planned so as not to impact existing or future residents.

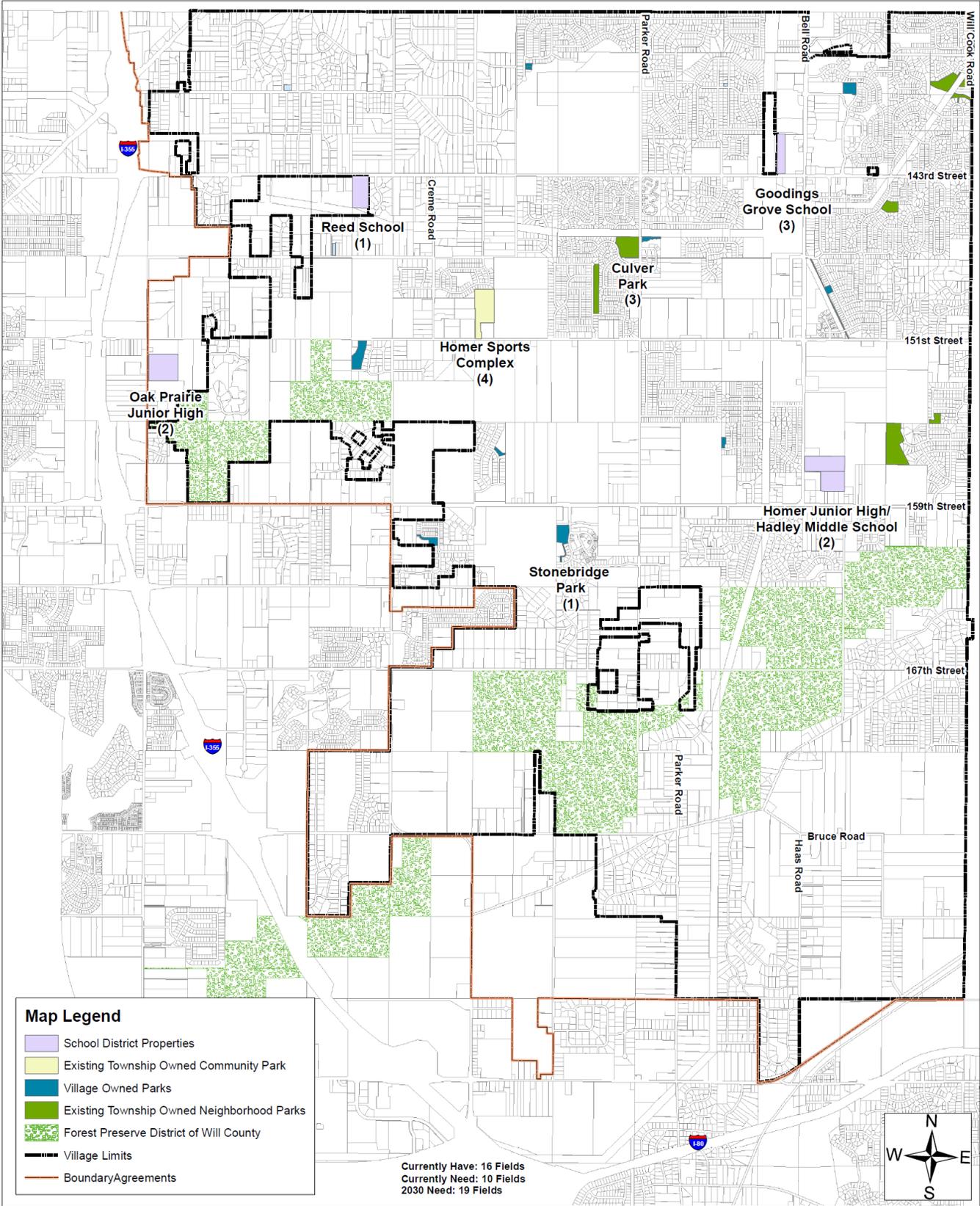


Figure 7: Baseball Fields

BASKETBALL COURTS

Population Standards

The population standard is one (1) Basketball Court for every 5,000 residents.

Service Area

The service area for a Basketball Court is one (1) Mile.

Development Guidelines

Basketball Courts are appropriate in both Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks; however, it is recommended that full size courts be limited to Community Parks and Sports Complexes.

Neighborhood Parks should only have half-courts; however, not all Neighborhood Parks are appropriate for basketball due to the size and configurations of the parks. Basketball courts should be located on larger Neighborhood Parks and designed and positioned in the best way to reduce any adverse impacts, such as noise, on adjacent residences.

Full Size Basketball Courts can be a destination-type facility and can attract people of all ages seeking to play a game of basketball. The noise and traffic associated with more competitive games should be considered undesirable for Neighborhood Parks.

Size and Dimensions

Full courts – These courts should be 50' by 94' with 5' of unobstructed space surrounding the court (5,600 to 7,980 square feet). This size will serve youth, high school, and collegiate level games. The court's long axis should run along a north to south direction.

Half-courts or circular courts – These courts vary in size and dimensions.

Discussion

The population standard established for basketball in Homer Glen is based upon the National Recreation and Parks Association Standard. Benchmarking analysis of nearby communities is skewed badly due to Joliet's poor service level of only two (2) outdoor courts for 110,000 population. However, the analysis of the Distinguished Agencies proved reliable, with an average service level of one (1) court per 4,196, which is very close to the NRPA's guidelines.

Basketball Analysis & Recommendations

Based on the analysis of standards, there is a current need for six (6) basketball courts in the community and a need for 9 courts at the build out population of 47,000.

Short Term Recommendations

Consideration of development of a half-court basketball courts at all future Neighborhood Parks.

Long Term Recommendations

Consideration of development of a full court basketball court at all future Community Parks.

Seek opportunities for lighted courts. Lights need to be carefully planned so as not to impact existing or future residents.

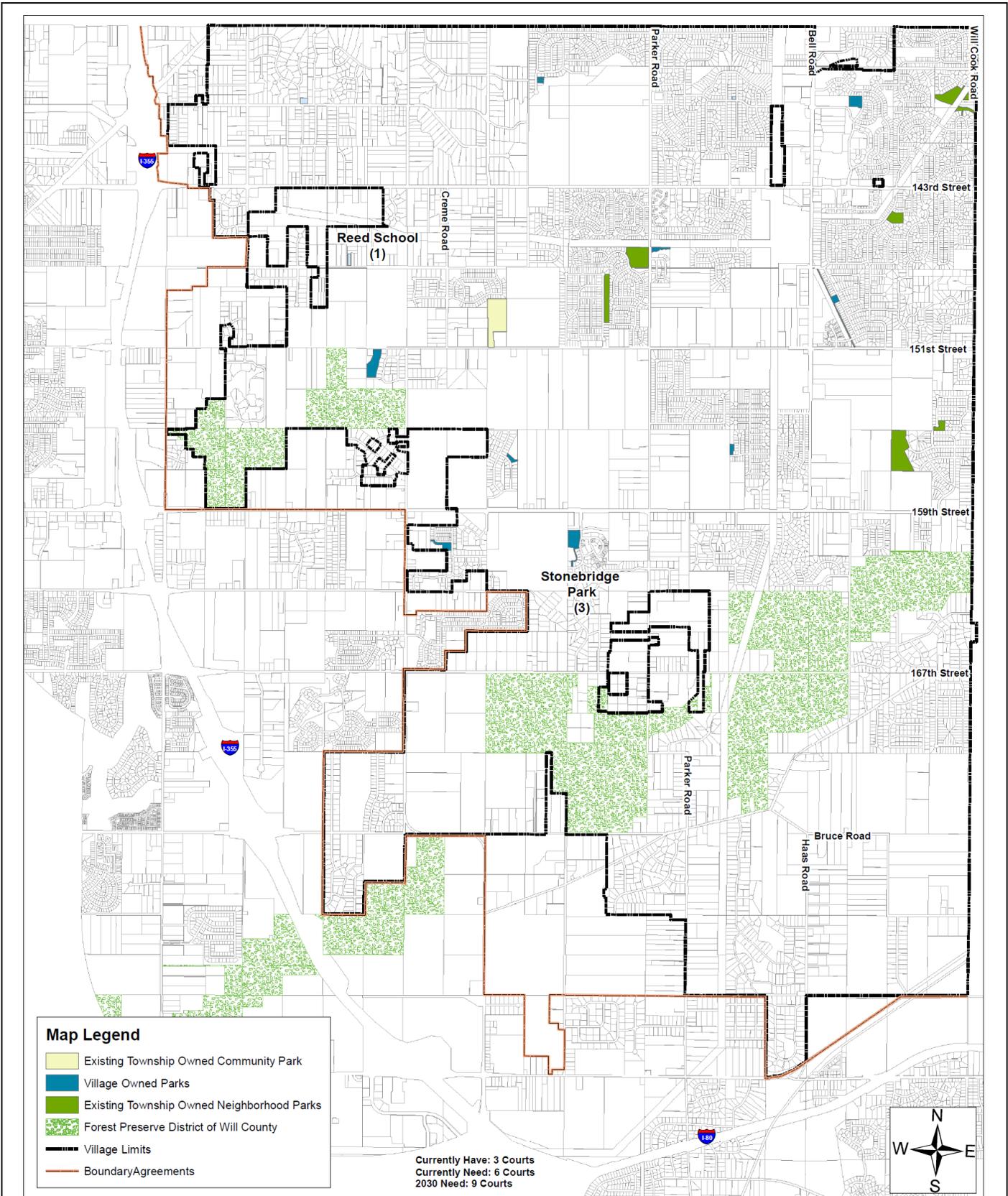


Figure 7: Basketball Courts

FISHING POND/PIERS

Population Standards

No population standard is recommended.

Service Area

A service area standard for a Fishing Pond/Pier is not recommended.

Development Guidelines

Fishing can be done at a variety of water bodies in the community. If formalized fishing piers are constructed, they should be located in bodies of water that are easily accessible to the public.

Size and Dimensions

There are no size and dimensions recommended for Fishing Ponds or Piers.

Discussion

The Forest Preserve District of Will County offers fishing opportunities at the Messenger Marsh Preserve. Although not in the Village, the nearby Forest Preserve District of Cook County offers a number of fishing opportunities.

There are no population standards established for fishing by the National Recreation and Parks Association. A Benchmarking analysis found that nearby communities' average one (1) fishing pier per 34,014, and Distinguished Agencies averaged one (1) fishing pier per 14,105.

Fishing Pond/Pier Analysis and Recommendations

Fishing facilities provide a unique outdoor activity that appeal to a wide-ranging audience. Formal facilities, such as piers, are a relatively low cost option for expanding the number of recreational activities in the community.

Short Term Recommendations

The Village does not need to establish formal Fishing Ponds or Piers in the short-term.

Determine if the accessible ponds need to be stocked.

The Village should work with the Township to explore the possibility of making the retention pond at the Welter Property accessible for fishing.

Long Term Recommendations

Development of a Fishing Pier in a Neighborhood or Community Park with excellent water access and fishing opportunities.

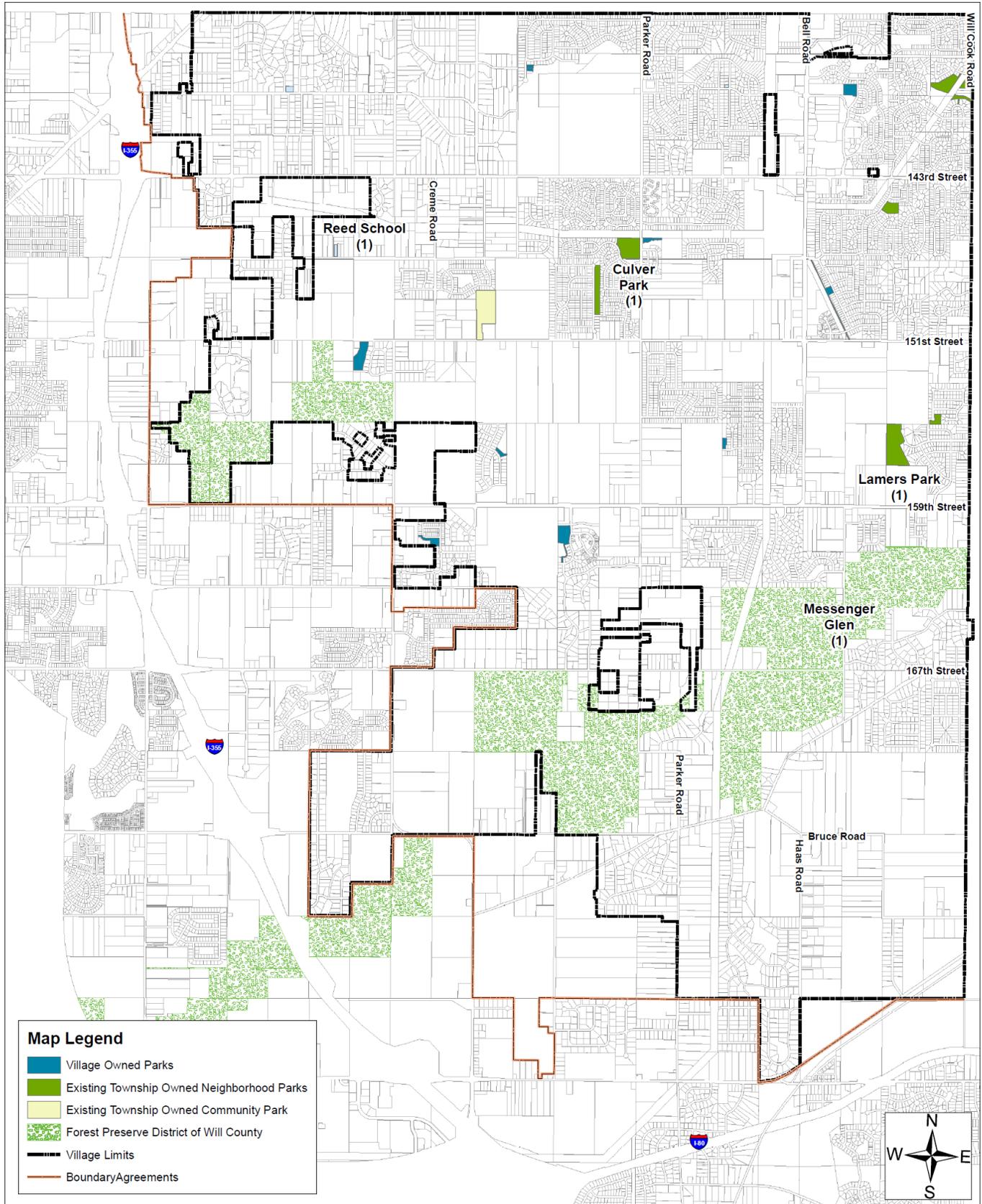


Figure 9: Fishing Piers

FOOTBALL FIELDS

Population Standards

The population standard is one (1) Football Field for every 20,000 residents. Based upon the needs of the community, this Plan recommends one (1) Football Field for every 10,000 residents.

Service Area

The service area for a Football Field is 2 Miles.

Development Guidelines

The intense programming of Football Fields, for games and practices should limit their development to Community Parks and Sports Complexes. Football Fields accommodate youth leagues, including in-house and travel leagues, drawing visitors from the entire Village and beyond. The noise and traffic associated with Football Fields render them undesirable for Neighborhood Parks.

Size and Dimensions

Football fields should be 160' by 360' with a minimum of 6' clearance on all sides (1.5 acres).

Discussion

This population standard for football Fields in the Village of Homer Glen is based upon input from the Homer Stallions Football Club, the National Recreation and Parks Association Standard, and analysis of the service levels of adjacent communities and Distinguished Agencies. According to participation data provided by the Homer Stallions, football is one of the most popular activities for both boys and girls in Homer Glen. Therefore, the population standard for Homer Glen is recommended at 1 field per 10,000

residents (higher than the NRPA standard of 1 field per 20,000). As football games draw a large number of players and spectators, they are recommended for Community Parks.

Football Analysis

Currently, there are two (2) football fields located at the Homer Sports Complex. The current service level is one (1) football field per 12,041 residents, close to the recommended population standard of one (1) per 10,000. Although the population standard is close to being achieved, the local football organization identifies a lack of practice areas and quality game fields. Also, the two (2) mile service area standard for football is not being met.

Short Term Recommendations

The Village should facilitate discussion of a formalized shared-use agreement between Homer Stallions and the School Districts for use of school property for football games and practice space.

Long Term Recommendations

Consideration of the development of Football Fields at all future Community Parks.

Seek opportunities for lighted fields. Lights need to be carefully planned so as not to impact existing or future residents.

Established a shared-use agreement with the School Districts for use of football fields at future schools.

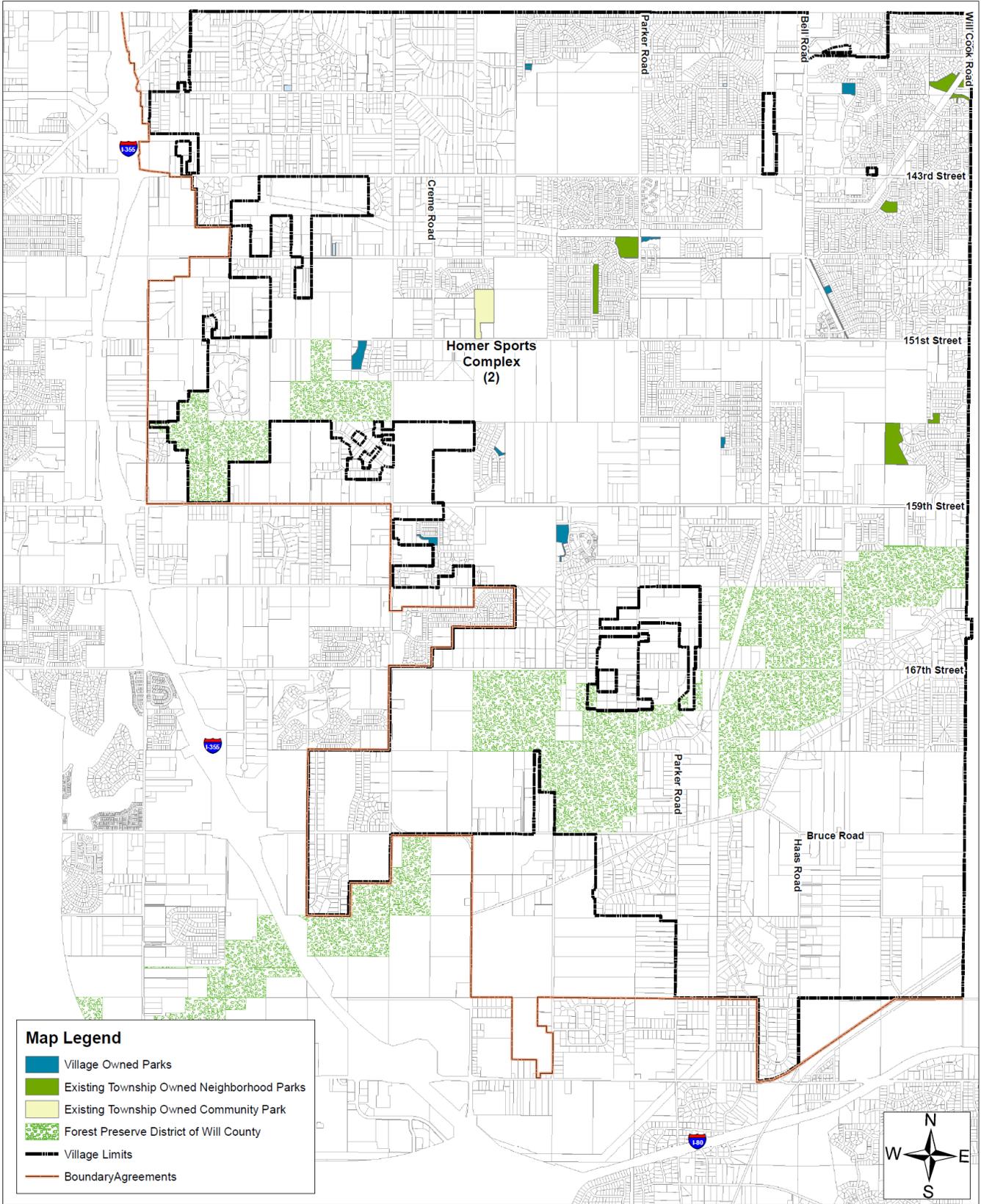


Figure 10: Football Fields

GOLF

Population Standard

The population standard is one (1) Golf Course (18-hole) for every 50,000 residents.

Service Area

A service area standard for Golf Courses is not recommended.

Development Guidelines

Golf courses range in size depending on the intent and design of the course. Typically golf courses are Par-3 (18-hole) executive or beginner courses, 9-hole courses and 18-hole courses. Public golf courses are regional draws that attract players from throughout the Chicagoland area.

Size and Dimensions

There is no standard size for a golf course. However, there are three types of golf courses, each with recommended sizes and lengths.

Par-3 (18-hole) – average length varies from 600 to 2,700 yards (50 to 60 acres).

9-hole standard – average length is 2,250 yards (50 acre minimum).

18-hole standard – average length is 6,500 yards (110 acre minimum).

Discussion

The population standard for golf courses is based on the NRPA's established standard. Although benchmarking analysis shows that adjacent Park Districts/Departments have an average of one (1) course per 18,333 and Distinguished Agencies provide an average of one (1) course per 32,967, some of these communities rely entirely

on publicly owned courses for public golf. However in Homer Glen, both Old Oak Country Club and Woodbine Golf Course are open to the public.

In regard to the service area, no standard is proposed due to the unique nature of Golf Courses and a golfer's willingness to travel great distances to use them. Therefore, Golf Courses do not have a recommended service and should be considered a unique park facility that draws users from the entire community.

Golf Analysis and Recommendations

It is recommended that the Village rely on the two (2) privately owned public courses to provide golf to the residents of Homer Glen. In addition to these courses, there are numerous golf courses in adjacent communities, which are open to the public and residents of the Village. Acquiring the land and developing a new Village owned golf course would be a significant expense. The project would also dilute or delay the Village's efforts to address other recommended parks and recreation acquisitions/improvements. However, in the future, if one of the two private golf courses decides to close, the Village should consider the viability of preserving the property or a portion thereof as a Golf Course.

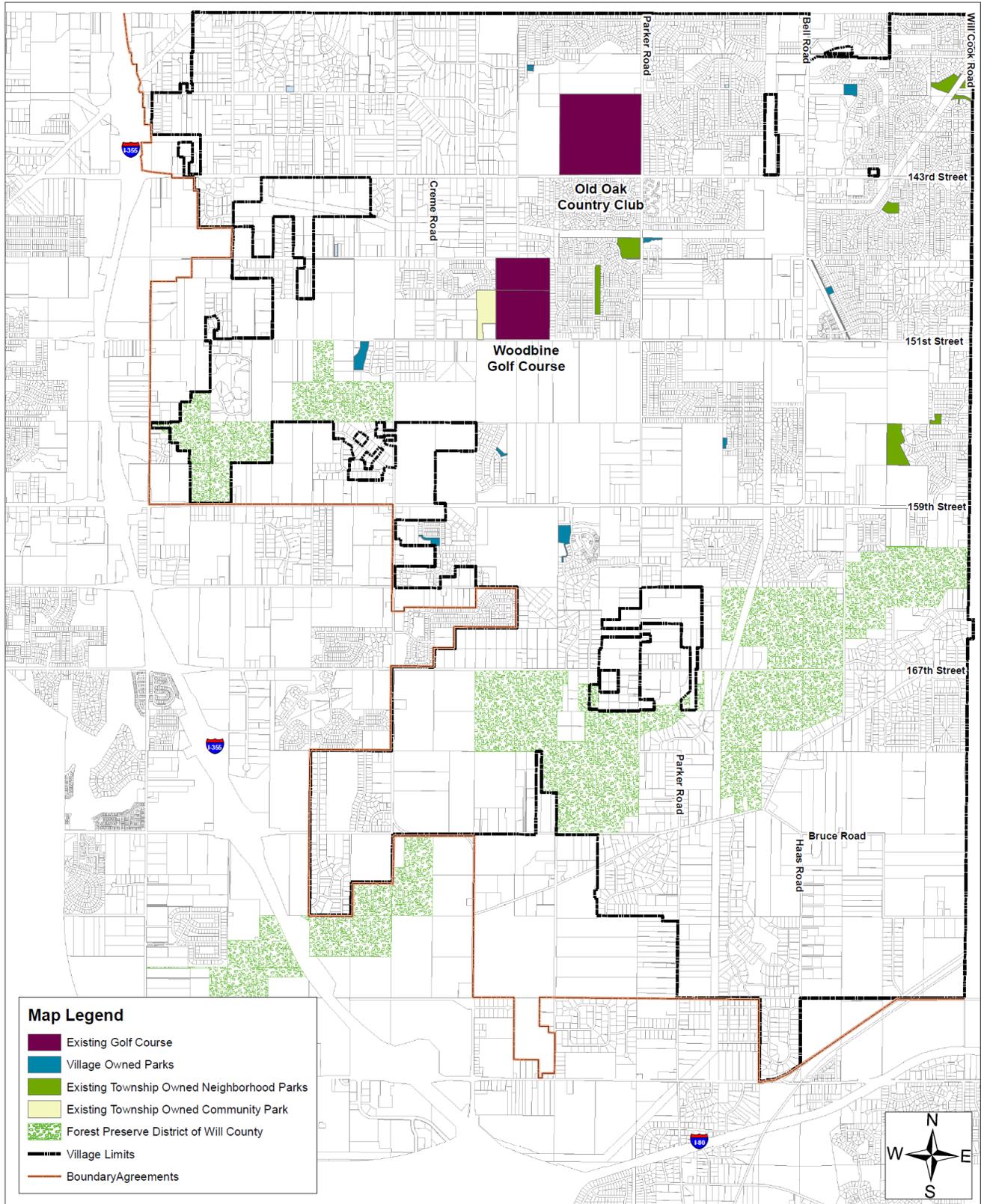


Figure 11: Golf

HORSEBACK RIDING

Population Standard

A population standard for Horseback Riding is not recommended.

Service Area

A service area for Horseback Riding is not recommended.

Development Guidelines

Equestrian trails are preferably constructed of limestone screenings. They should be considered for predominately rural areas of Homer Glen, especially where horse ownership is significant. Adequate consideration should be made for parking near equestrian trails due to the size of the vehicles and trailers required to transport horses.

Size and Dimensions

Trail width should be at least 10'. This allows traffic to flow comfortably in two (2) directions.

Horseback Riding Analysis and Recommendations

Although equestrian trails are designed to accommodate horses, it is recommended that they be shared with other activities such as walking, jogging and bicycling wherever possible.

Short Term Recommendations

Identify areas of significant horse ownership within the Village and identify opportunities for equestrian trails.

Add equestrian friendly amenities to current and future trails.

Link to existing trails in the area.

Long Term Recommendations

Create parking lots designed for horse trailers where appropriate.

Provide access from horse properties to equestrian trails where appropriate.

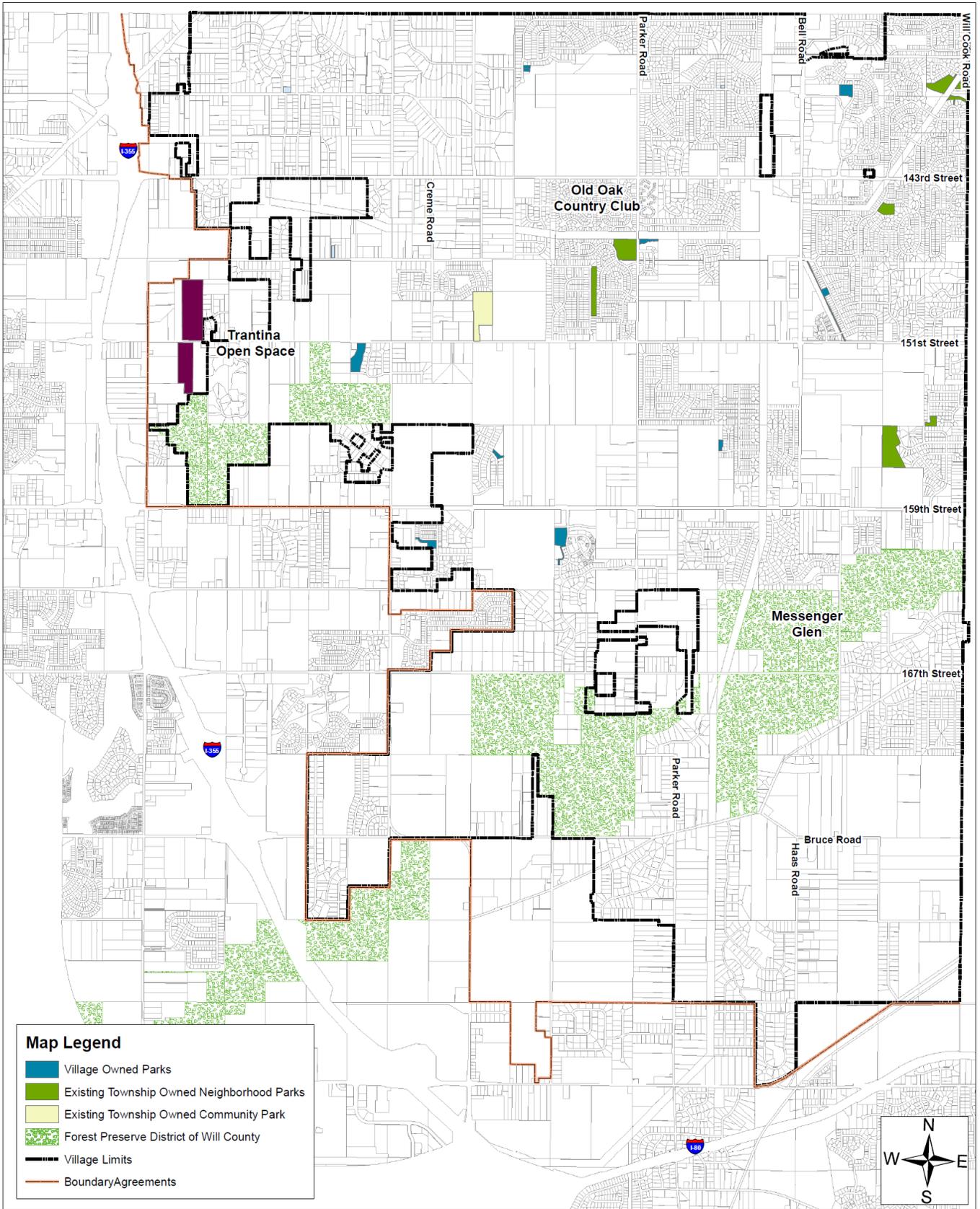


Figure 12: Horseback Riding

IN-LINE RINK/ICE HOCKEY/ICE SKATING

Population Standard

The population standard is one (1) In-Line Rink/Ice Hockey/Ice Skating Rink for every 20,000 residents.

Service Area

A service area standard for In-Line Rink/Ice Hockey/Ice Skating is not recommended.

Development Guidelines

In-line and ice rinks are very unique facilities that expand the recreation experience to residents. Given their unique nature, these facilities do not have a recommended service radius as they are considered a unique park facility, drawing users from the entire community. Since they will generate traffic, it is recommended that this type of facility be placed at a Community Park.

Size and Dimensions

The minimum size for an ice rink is 85' by 185'. An in-line rink for hockey or ice-skating rink can vary in size and shape. According to US Hockey In-Line, the recommended size of an In-Line rink is 65' – 85' wide and 145' – 185' long. The long axis of the rink should run north to south.

Discussion

The National Parks and Recreation Association has never published a standard for this type of facility. The NRPA is a national body, with a national focus. Given the climate of much of the county and the recent emergence of in-line sports, standards have never been established. However, the benchmarking analysis conducted as part of this Plan shows that adjacent Park

Districts/Departments have an average of one (1) outdoor rink per 37,855 and Distinguished Agencies have an average of one (1) outdoor rink per 11,148. It is recommended that the Village of Homer Glen set a service level between these two (2) numbers.

Analysis & Recommendations

Currently, there are no ice rinks or skating facilities in Homer Glen. There is a current need of one (1) ice rink/skating facility in the community. Based on an estimated build-out population of 47,000, two (2) ice rinks/skating facilities will be needed to adequately serve the residents of Homer Glen by 2030. This Plan recommends only outdoor ice-skating facilities; however, if an acceptable public-partnership presents itself, the Village should explore this opportunity.

This Plan recommends a skating facility at the future Community Parks. The proposed lighted tennis courts at Stonebridge Park could be designed to possibly accommodate a skating facility. The lights would benefit the ice skating facility since it will be in use in the winter months when daylight hours are short. Additionally, because ice-skating is a unique facility, additional parking is recommended to accommodate residents who will drive to the park.

Short Term Recommendations

Development of an outdoor Ice Rink.

Long Term Recommendations

Consideration of the development of In-Line Rink/Ice Hockey/Ice Skating at future Community Parks.

PLAYGROUNDS

Population Standard

The population standard is one (1) Playground for every 2,500 residents.

Service Area

The service area for a playground is a combination of one-half mile (½ mile), and factors such as population density and pedestrian barriers.

Development Guidelines

Playgrounds are suitable for development in both Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks. It is recommended that shade and benches be provided at each playground. Playgrounds should be designed to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act standards. It is also recommended that the Village, when possible, meet with nearby residents to solicit input into the color, configuration and features of the playground.

Size and Dimensions

Playgrounds should be designed to fit into the park and to provide equal opportunities for children with varying skill levels and ages.

Discussion

The standards and development recommendations are based upon the National Recreation and Parks Association Standards, along with an analysis of adjacent communities and Distinguished Park Agencies. In terms of suitability, playgrounds are suited for all types of parks. Playgrounds are often considered the building block of a recreation system, and are often the most used facilities. They should be considered a necessary component of

most Neighborhood Parks, and also a component of Community Parks and Sports Complexes. When located in Neighborhood Parks, playgrounds should also have a one-half mile service area that is uninterrupted from pedestrian barriers. In larger facilities, such as Community Parks and Sports Complexes, playgrounds assist in contributing to a park's role as a destination.

Playground Analysis & Recommendations

Currently, there are 11 playgrounds located in the community: Kingston Hills Park, Stonebridge Park, Evelyn's Gate, Edmond J. Sendra Park, Yangas Park, Goreham Park, Culver Memorial Park, Town Center Park, Reed School, Goodings Grove School and Luther J. Schilling School.

The 11 playgrounds provide a current service level of one (1) playground per 2,202 residents. Although the population standard is being achieved, three (3) of the 11 playgrounds are located at school facilities. While school playgrounds are public facilities, the use of school playgrounds during school hours can sometimes be difficult for residents. Therefore, the Village should work with the School Districts to formalize shared use agreements for their facilities.

Based on an estimated build-out population of 47,000, 18 playgrounds will be needed to adequately serve the residents of Homer Glen. The Service Area Standard increases the number of recommended playgrounds at the build-out population to 24.

Short Term Recommendations

Consideration of the development of a playground at all future Neighborhood Parks.

Consideration of the development of a playground at all future Community Parks.

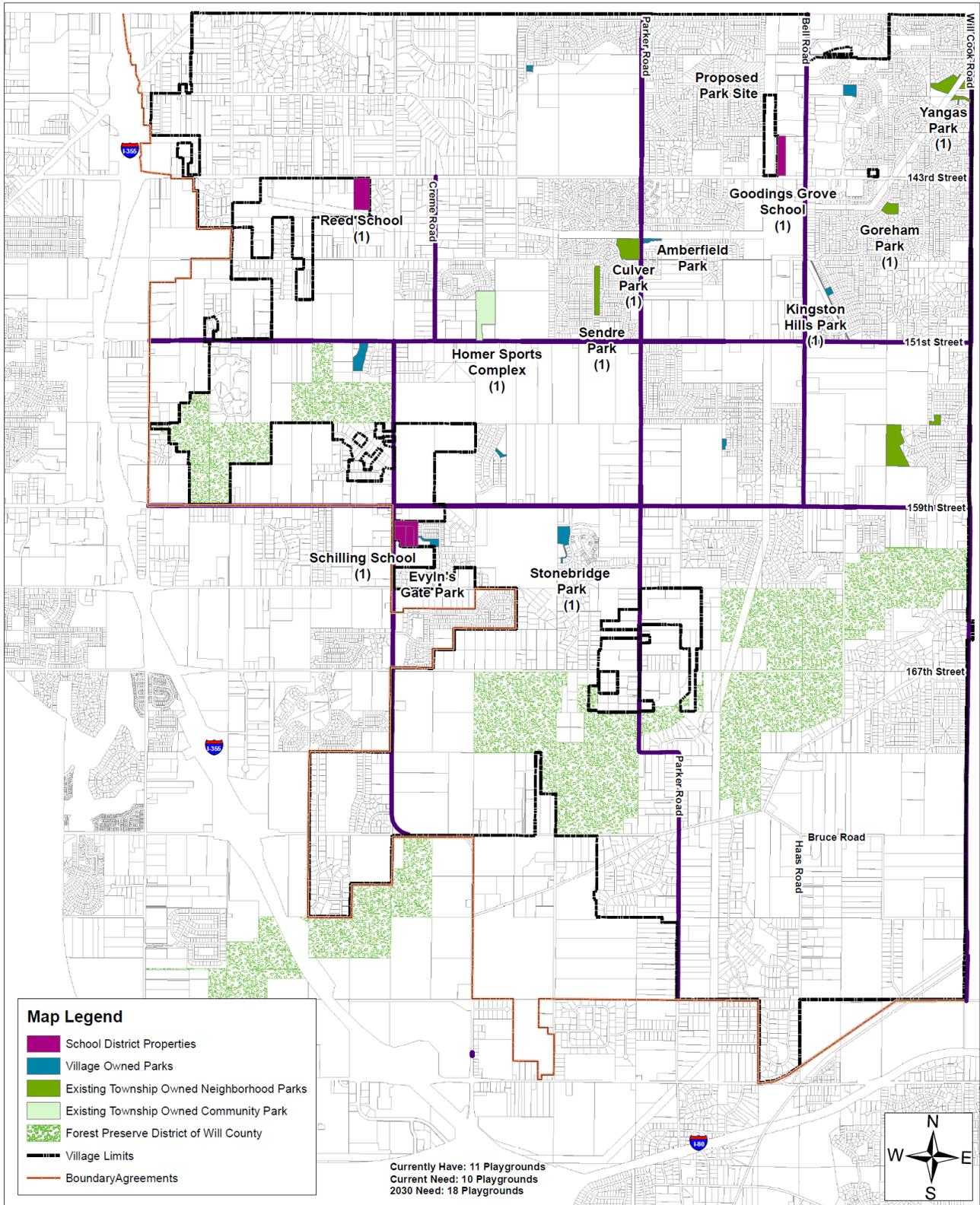


Figure 13: Playgrounds

RECREATION

CENTER/ACTIVITY

CENTER

Population Standard

The NRPA's standard is one (1) recreation center/activity center per 20,000 residents.

Service Area Standard

A service area standard for Recreation Center/Activity Center is not recommended.

Development Guidelines

The potential types and number of recreation amenities that can be included in a recreation center is vast. Before a facility of this type is constructed, the Village should conduct extensive public research, including surveys and focus groups, to develop a facility menu that can meet the recreational desires of most the population.

Size and Dimensions

There are no recommended sizes provided for a recreation center/activity center. The size of the facility should accommodate the planned uses/facilities.

Discussion

The National Recreation and Parks Association suggests a standard of one (1) recreation center/activity center per 20,000 residents. Based upon the current population of the Village, this equates to a need of one Center. An analysis of adjacent Park Districts/Departments found an average service level of one (1) activity center per 35,446 residents. A similar analysis of Distinguished Agencies found an average service level

of one (1) activity center per 19,101 residents. In regards to the service area, there should be no standard proposed for these types of facilities. Community Centers are costly to develop. Users will generally travel from throughout the community to participate in classes or activities. The Village should ensure that any activity centers constructed are centrally located within the community for best access to all residents.

Recreation Center Analysis & Recommendations

Indoor recreation centers are typically found in more mature communities that have already addressed most of their outdoor recreational needs. In communities that are consistently growing, the development of new park sites is the top priority. The Village of Homer Glen is in a more unique situation, playing "catch-up" in park development in existing residential areas and working with developers to acquire new parkland donations in areas of new residential growth.

Short Term Recommendations

Facilitate discussions with the School Districts regarding a shared-use agreement for use of their current and future facilities.

Long Term Recommendations

When and if needed, partner in the development and maintenance of a Community Center.

SKATE PARKS

Population Standard

The population standard is one (1) Skate Park for every 25,000 residents.

Service Area

A service area standard for Recreation Center/Activity Center has not been recommended.

Development Guidelines

Skate Parks should be located in Community Parks. Skate Parks should be located near streets for easy visibility. Proper signage should be used outlining proper safety gear and facility rules.

Size and Dimensions

A Skate Park can vary in size and dimensions based upon the desired user of the facility. A larger Community Skate Park may be 50,000 square feet.

Discussion

Skateboarding and in-line skating are being provided by many public agencies through the Chicago region. Skate Parks are facilities that consist of obstacles and events for skateboarding, in-line skating or BMX bicycles. In several communities, BMX bicycles are banned from using the Skate Parks. The bicycles damage the equipment, which increases the maintenance costs for the Skate Parks. BMX bicycle facilities should be on separate facilities/ramps. At this time, the Plan does not recommend constructing a separate BMX facility until the community expresses a strong desire for one, the funds are available and an appropriate location can be found.

In the very recent past, Skate Parks have proved difficult to establish, despite the growing popularity of the sport.

Communities throughout the region all tell a very similar tale: 1) youths are banned from skating through the community; 2) youths request a skateboard park or defined place to practice their sport; 3) the facility is proposed and nearby residents speak out against the facility, citing numerous reasons, unfounded claims and statistics about the effects of the facility; and finally, 4) facility is constructed. No concerns are realized. The facility becomes a prized community amenity.

With such a common history skate parks have become less controversial and are among the more popular facilities with communities. A benchmarking analysis of adjacent Park Districts/Departments finds an average of one (1) per 21,200 residents, and an average of one (1) Skate Park per 24,653 residents in communities with a Distinguished Agency designation.

Skateboarding Analysis & Recommendations

Currently, there are no Skate Parks in the community. Based on this analysis, there is a current need for one (1) Skate Park in the community. Based on an estimated build out population of 47,000, two (2) Skate Parks will be needed to adequately serve the residents of Homer Glen. Skate Parks should be located within Community Parks and along multi-use trails. As a unique facility, Skate Parks require parking areas for “drive-to” users. Community Parks also provide acreage to buffer Skate Parks from other facilities at the park, as well as from adjacent uses. By locating the Skate Parks near an interconnected multi-use trail, skaters will be able to access the park without the need to be driven to the park.

Long Term Recommendations

Consideration of the development of a Skate Park at future Community Parks.

SOCCER FIELDS

Population Standard

The NRPA's standard is one (1) Soccer Field for every 10,000 residents. However, based on analysis, this Park Plan recommends one (1) Soccer Field for every 5,000 residents.

Service Area Standard

The service area of a Soccer Field is two (2) miles.

Development Guidelines

The intense programming of soccer fields should limit their placement to Community Parks, Sport Complexes or schools. The site should be easily accessible with ample parking available. Soccer Fields can be appropriate in both Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks; however, it is recommended that fields used by children aged 11 and up, along with those fields used by travel clubs, be limited to Community Parks and Sports Complexes.

Size and Dimensions

Soccer fields can vary in size to meet the needs of different age groups. According to the Illinois Youth Soccer Association, fields range between 15 yards by 25 yards to 100 yards by 130 yards.

Discussion

The National Recreation and Parks Association Standard for soccer is one (1) field for every 10,000 population. However, research indicates that one (1) field per 5,000 population is more appropriate, especially where the popularity of soccer is high, such as in Homer Glen. A benchmarking analysis found that adjacent Park Districts/Departments average one (1) Soccer Field per 5,887 residents and

Distinguished Agencies average one field per 3,655 residents. In regards to a Soccer Field's suitability within the park system, it is important to realize that Soccer Fields that are programmed for leagues or practice will generate traffic. Youth soccer is considered one of the largest traffic generators within a park system. As a result, Soccer Fields should be limited to parks that are accessible from major streets and that have parking available.

Soccer Analysis & Recommendations

Based on the established standards for Soccer Fields, there is a current need for five (5) fields, and a future need for nine (9) fields at the build out population of 47,000. Currently, there are three (3) Soccer Fields of various sizes located in the community. This is a service standard of one (1) Soccer Field for every 8,073 residents, which does not meet this Plan's recommendation.

The Township's Soccer Fields in Morris Park are used by the local soccer groups. However, Morris Park is outside of the Village's Boundary Agreement. While the current population standard is being met, the southern areas of the community are underserved. Based upon the popularity of soccer in the community and the Village's future population, seven (7) new soccer fields are recommended.

Short Term Recommendations

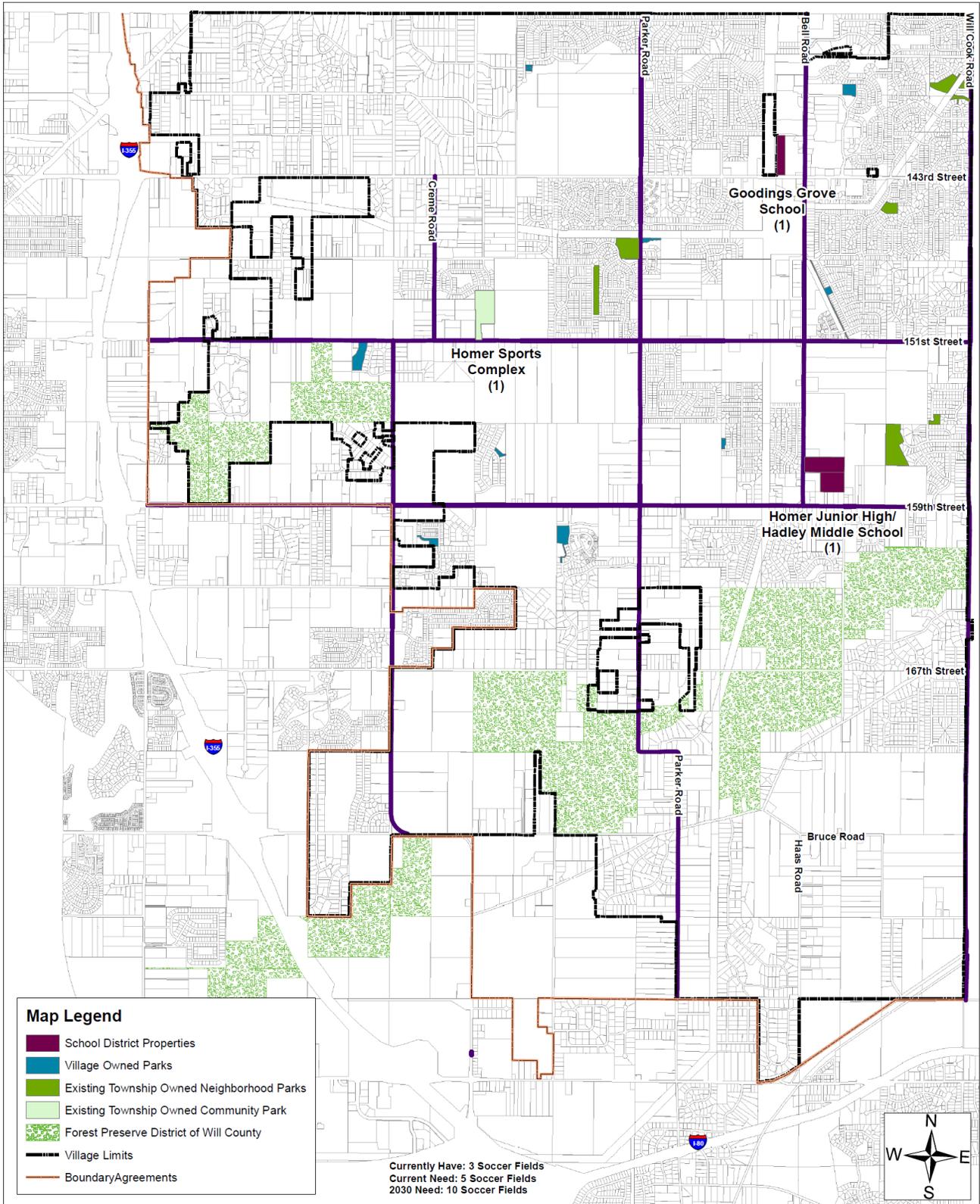
Facilitate discussions with the soccer clubs and the school districts regarding shared-use agreements for game and practice space.

Long Term Recommendations

Consideration of the development of Soccer Fields at Community Parks.

Facilitate discussions with the soccer clubs and the school districts regarding a shared-use agreement for use of the soccer fields at future school properties.

Seek opportunities for lighted fields.
Lights need to be carefully planned so as not to impact existing residents.



SWIMMING FACILITIES

Population Standard

No population standard recommended. This Plan does not recommend a population standard for Swimming Facilities.

Service Area

A service area standard for Swimming Pool has not been recommended.

Development Guidelines

Swimming pools are unique facilities that draw users from the entire community. Since they will generate traffic, it is recommended that swimming facilities be located at Community Parks. A facility should be designed for a variety of swimming activities, such as diving, open swim and competitive swim for all age groups.

Size and Dimensions

There are a variety of swimming facility types offered by public agencies in the Chicagoland area. Facilities may include areas for general recreation and diving, or designated lanes for laps, practice and competition. Outdoor swimming is provided in summer months, while year round swimming requires an indoor pool.

Discussion

Swimming pools, especially indoor facilities, are expensive to construct, maintain and operate. For these reasons, many public pools in the region are subsidized through tax dollars. Many Park Districts/Departments provide outdoor facilities for recreation and rely on other organizations, such as schools, to provide indoor swimming. This allows the Park Districts/Departments to create less expensive outdoor family-based swimming facilities. This reality is

reflected in the fact that the NRPA does not provide indoor swimming standards but does recommend one (1) outdoor swimming pool per 20,000 residents.

The current trend is to construct smaller “spraygrounds” at Community Parks. These types of facilities are typically areas, similar to a playground, with spray features and a zero water depth. In most communities “spraygrounds” are designed to meet ADA requirements and are free, unsupervised facilities open in the summer months.

Swimming Facility Analysis & Recommendations

Of the adjacent Parks Departments and Districts studied, only Lockport has an indoor swimming facility. The Distinguished Agencies averaged one (1) indoor pool per 55,000. In terms of outdoor swimming facilities, the Distinguished Agencies averaged one (1) outdoor pool per 31,050. Adjacent Park Districts/Departments averaged one (1) outdoor swimming pool per 32,853 residents. Joliet had the most outdoor pools (three), while the Romeoville Recreation Department, the New Lenox Community Park District and the Mokena Community Park District did not have outdoor pools.

Because indoor swimming facilities are expensive to construct, maintain and operate, the Village cannot afford to operate an indoor swimming pool without tax support or entering into a public-private partnership. The ongoing operation and maintenance costs of a swimming facility should be factored into any future decisions regarding providing swimming in the community.

Short Term Recommendations

Enter into a shared-use agreement with the School District for use of the swimming pool at future school properties.

Long Term Recommendations

The development of an outdoor family orientated swimming facility, preferably centrally located in the community, should be contingent on additional sources of future funding. The Village should pursue a public-private partnership for the construction, maintenance and operation of the facility.

TENNIS COURTS

Population Standard

The NRPA's standard is one Tennis Court for every 2,500 residents. However, based on analysis, this Park Plan recommends one (1) Tennis Court for every 5,000 residents.

Service Area

The service area of Tennis Court is two (2) miles.

Development Guidelines

Tennis courts are appropriate for Community Parks. Tennis Courts have a larger service area than that of a Neighborhood Park. As a result, Tennis Courts will generate more vehicular traffic from outside a Neighborhood Park's service area. Tennis courts can also be lighted courts, significantly extending their use during the spring and fall. However, illumination of tennis courts should be permitted only if there are no impacts on adjacent residential properties. To facilitate programming, it is recommended that Tennis Courts be constructed in batteries of two or more courts.

Size and Dimensions

Tennis Courts are recommended to be 36' by 78' with 12' clearance on each end of the court (7,200 square feet for a single court area). The long axis should run north to south.

Discussion

The National Recreation and Park Association suggests a service level of one Tennis Court per 2,000 population. It is important to note that the NRPA's standard was first established in the 1970's and since that time, tennis has experienced a decline in popularity and

participation. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has reported that the popularity of tennis has been declining since 1985 (from 21.4% in 1985 to 9.8% in 1995).

No other outdoor sport or activity experienced more of a decline during that period. According to IDNR's *2004 Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2003-2006*, tennis ranked 21 out of the 30 most popular adult outdoor recreation activities with 8%. Therefore, reliance on the outdated standard established by the NRPA would most likely result in building unnecessary facilities. It is recommended that Tennis Courts be provided at a service level of one Tennis Court per 5,000 residents.

Tennis Analysis & Recommendations

Currently, there are four (4) Tennis Courts located in the community. The current service level is one (1) court per 6,055 residents. According to the recommended standard, there is a shortage of one (1) court. With an expected build out population of 47,000, nine Tennis Courts will be needed to serve the community. If properly planned and located, nine Tennis Courts would serve the Community and the two mile service area.

Long Term Recommendations

Consideration of the development of Tennis Courts at Community Parks

Enter into a shared-use agreement with for use of the proposed tennis courts at future school properties.

Seek opportunities for lighted courts. Lights need to be carefully planned so as not to impact existing residents.

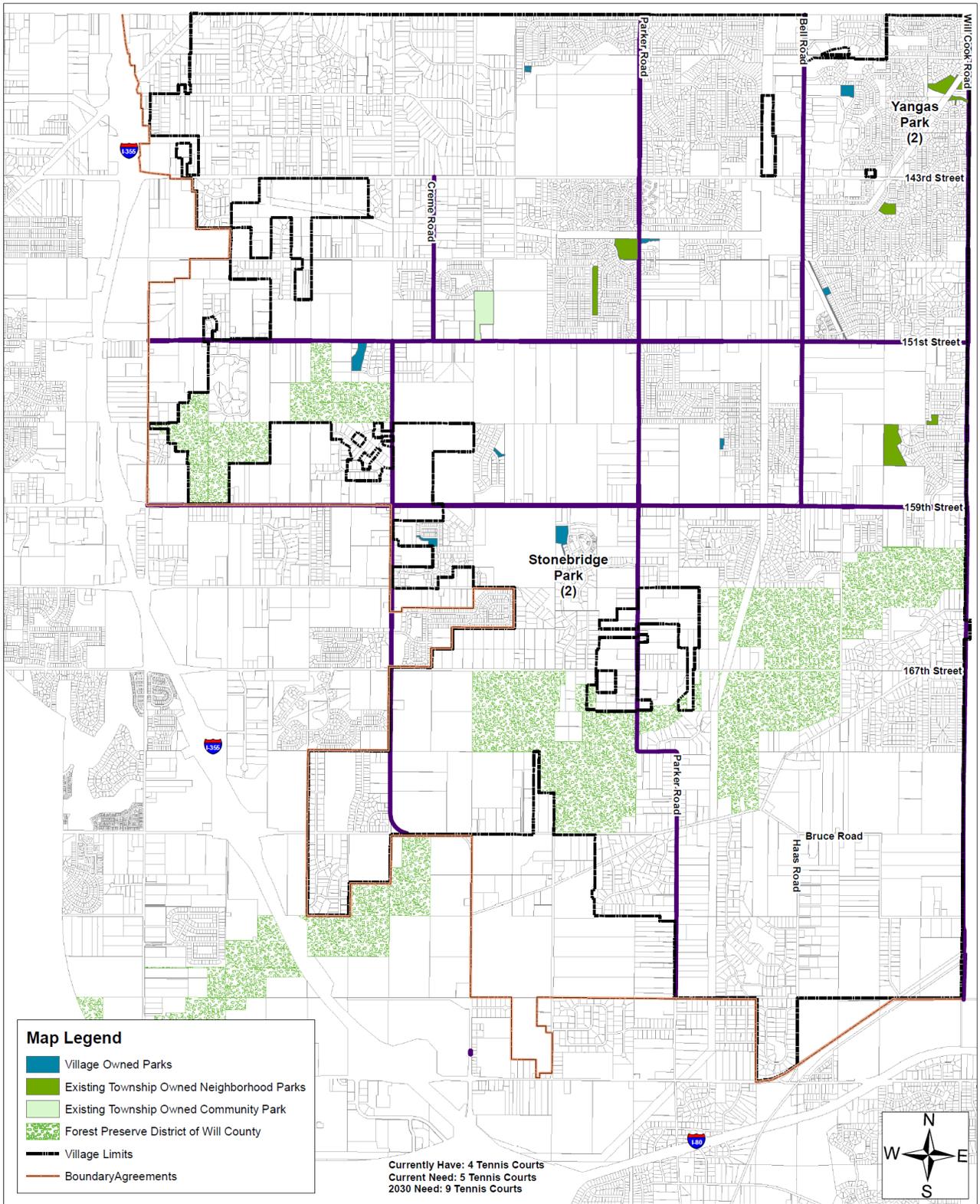


Figure 15: Tennis Courts

VOLLEYBALL COURTS

Population Standards

The NRPA's standard is one (1) Volleyball Court for every 10,000 residents.

Service Area

The service area of a Volleyball Court is two (2) miles.

Development Guidelines

It is recommended that Volleyball Courts be limited to Community Parks and Sports Complexes. Volleyball Courts are unique, destination-type facilities. Volleyball Courts will attract people of all ages and generate traffic. Consequently, Volleyball Courts are undesirable for Neighborhood Parks.

Size and Dimensions

A Volleyball Court should be 30' by 60' with a minimum of 6' clearance on all sides (a minimum of 4,000 square feet). The long axis should run north to south.

Discussion

This population standard is based upon the National Recreation and Parks Association Standard along with a survey of adjacent communities and Distinguished Agencies. According to the analysis, adjacent Park Districts/Departments have an average of one outdoor volleyball court per 19,587 population and Distinguished Agencies have an average of one (1) outdoor court per 10,016 population. The NRPA recommends a service level of one (1) Volleyball Court per 10,000 population.

Volleyball Analysis & Recommendations

Based on a standard of one court per 10,000 population, there is a current need for two (2) Volleyball Courts, and a need for five (5) courts by build out. The Village currently has one (1) Volleyball Court.

An analysis of the service level illustrates that the community lacks volleyball service. The five (5) planned courts, with a two (2) mile service area, will serve the future population of Homer Glen.

Long Term Recommendations

Consideration of the development of Volleyball Courts at future Community Parks

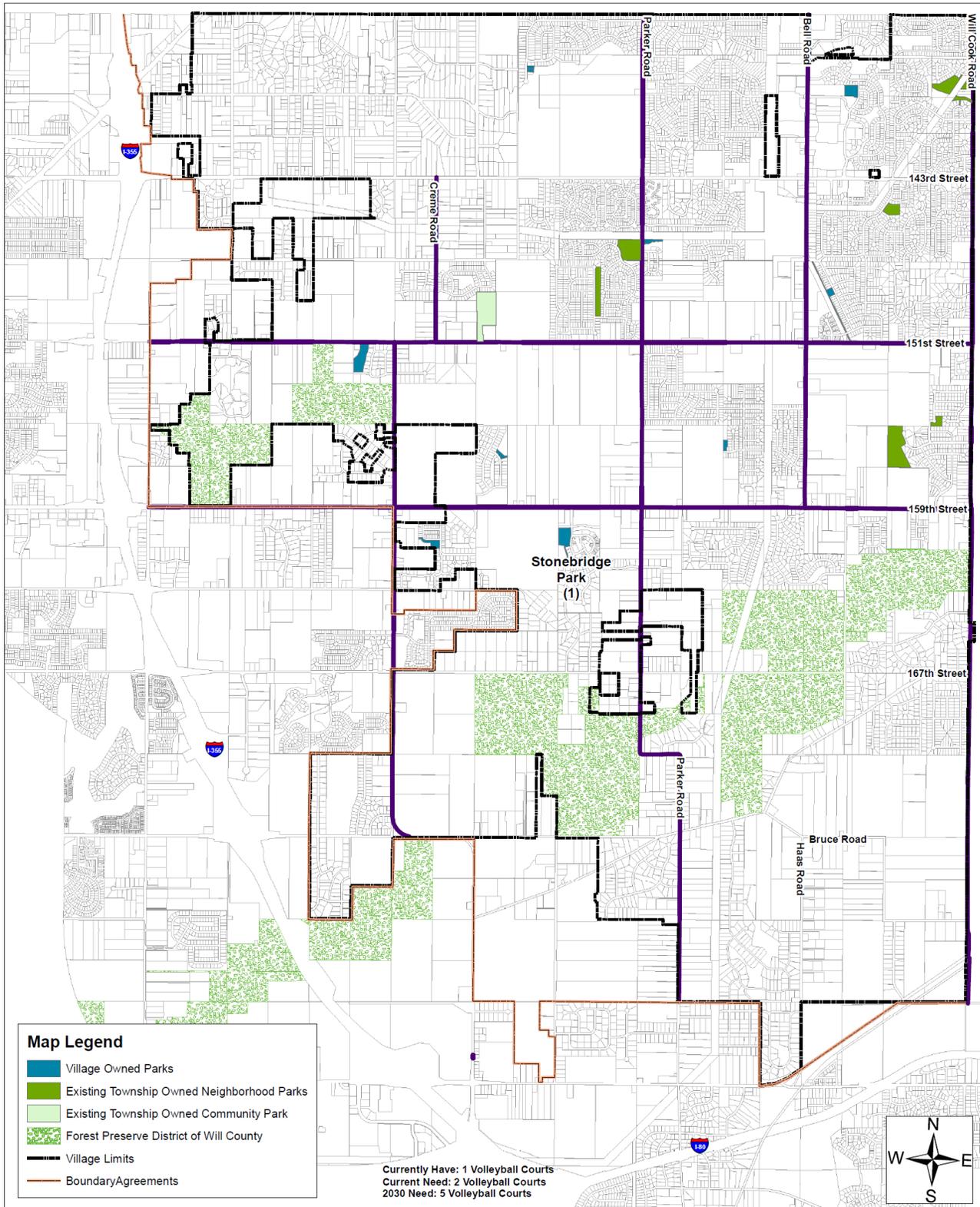


Figure 16: Volleyball Courts

IMPLEMENTATION

The Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan presents an agreed upon “road map” for future open space acquisition and recreation facility development for the Village of Homer Glen. The short term and long term recommendations of the Plan are meant to provide the needed parks, open space and recreation for both the current and future build-out population of the Village. The Plan is the product of considerable effort of the Parks and Recreation Committee, Village Staff, Village Board and Homer Glen Residents.

The section outlines the next steps that should be taken by the Village to implement this Plan’s recommendations.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

Based upon input and dialogue throughout the planning process, the following have been identified as the top actions to be taken by the Village in no particular order.

1. Adopt and use the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
2. Acquire Park Acreage.
3. Adopt a Park Naming Guideline Policy.
4. Create Design Standards and criteria for use in park developments.
5. Implement the Park Donation Ordinance.
6. Enter into Park Boundary Agreements with adjoining municipalities.

Adopt and Use the Plan

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan should become Homer Glen’s official guide to the acquisition and development of Parks, Open Space and Recreation. To be effective, the Plan must be adopted by the Village Board and then used by the Village Staff and the future Parks staff. The Plan’s recommendations should be incorporated into the Village’s annual budgeting process. Village Staff should also use the Master Plan during development reviews and other Village Planning exercises and studies.

Acquire Park Acreage

The Village should continue to acquire park acreage and continue to look for partnership opportunities with other agencies. Acquiring community park land should be the Village’s top priority

Adopt a Park Naming Guideline Policy

The Village’s Parks and Recreation Committee should create a set of guidelines for naming parks. Once created, this policy should be adopted and implemented by the Village Board.

Create Design Standards/Criteria

The Village should complete design criteria and standards for its park system. This will improve the image and identity of the Village’s parks in the community and should allow the Village to begin to see cost savings in purchasing and replacements. Design standards and criteria should include signage, building materials, building and amenity colors and pathway lighting.

Implement the Park Donation Ordinance

The Village of Homer Glen should continue to implement its Park Donation Ordinance.

The Village should examine its current ordinance to include specific development requests that developers should be required to undertake. Nearby communities, for example, require the developer to pay for future playground equipment or the actual installation of the equipment. This type of requirement can greatly reduce the type of time it takes to complete a park.

Enter into Park Boundary Agreements with Adjoining Municipalities

The Village of Homer Glen should meet with adjoining governments to formalize an agreed upon Park Boundary Agreement. This Plan recommends the Park Boundary be the same as the Village's existing Boundary Agreements. As identified earlier in this Plan, it is believed that the Lemont Park District, Mokena Community Park District and New Lenox Park District are partially located within the boundaries of the Village of Homer Glen.

FUTURE ACTIONS

Based upon input and dialogue throughout the planning process, the following have been identified as the top future actions to be undertaken by the Village in no particular order.

1. Create a Village Parks Department.
2. Budget for Park Maintenance and Operations.
3. Promote Cooperation and Participation.
4. Prepare Annual Goals.
5. Seek Alternative Funding Sources.

6. Update the Park Donation Ordinance on a Regular Basis.
7. Update the Plan on a Regular Basis.

Create a Village Parks Department

The Village of Homer Glen currently does not have dedicated staff for the planning, development, programming or maintenance of the Village owned parks. As the Village's parks inventory continues to grow, a Village Parks Department should be created and staffed. Volunteer support should also be used by the Village to assist with the programming or maintenance of the parks system. Staffing needs may be realized through intergovernmental agreements similar to the agreement with the Homer Township Highway Department for all road services. The staffing needs of the Park Department should be included in the Village's Annual Operating Budget and reflective of the Park's Capital Improvement Budget.

BUDGET FOR PARK MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

Maintenance and operations costs should become part of the Village's Annual Budget. Maintenance staff will be needed to keep the parks and open space in the Village safe, accessible and usable. While the Village's park system is still small, maintenance may be contracted out to other public agencies or private businesses. As the Village continues to acquire land, the maintenance and operational costs will become more refined and better anticipated.

Other Park Districts/Departments in the area typically use a ranking system for anticipated maintenance levels, such as a one (1) to three (3) scale, with each scale associated with a level of upkeep. For example, Maintenance Level One (1) may be a park with an athletic field with baseball, courts, or other specific amenity such as a playground. Upkeep is of principle importance and more costly in a Maintenance Level One (1) Park. A Maintenance Level Two (2) Park would be simply require turf maintenance and general upkeep. A Maintenance Level Three (3) Park would contain a pond, wetland, woods or native planting. Little maintenance is required at a Maintenance Level Three (3) Park. Estimated costs for any trail maintenance should also be created based upon a cost per mile.

The Village should also create a Life Cycle Needs Assessment. The Assessment should be used as a guideline to assess the anticipated capital funds that will be needed to provide for the replacement or renovation of Village facilities such as playgrounds and other facilities with a determinable usable life.

PROMOTE COOPERATION AND PARTICIPATION

The Village should continue to strengthen and develop community partnerships, which will maximize resources. Cooperation with the School Districts, Athletic Clubs and Homer Township is an important piece of the puzzle in realizing this Plan's recommendations. The School Districts have land and recreational amenities in many areas of the Village, especially in built-out neighborhoods where acquiring a park is difficult. Collaborations between

the Village and the School District should benefit both agencies and the community. Clubs currently provide much of the recreational programming in the community. The Village should continue to promote these athletic clubs and their programs. Homer Township owns most of the existing parks in the community. The Village should continue to communicate with the Township, so as not to duplicate services and to explore possible joint operation and maintenance opportunities.

PREPARE ANNUAL GOALS

The Village should prepare annual goals based upon the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The Village will be continuously prioritizing park acquisitions and developments, as these annual goals should be tied directly to the Capital Improvement Budget. The annual goals will allow the Village to implement the Plan's recommendations over time because it would be impossible to acquire all of the land and build all of the recreational amenities at once. The Village should look for projects that will benefit the greatest number of people, protect the environmental quality and uniqueness of Homer Glen, improve the health and safety of the community and provides a need or a service that is not currently being met.

SEEK ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES

In addition to the Village's Annual Budget, the Village should explore all available funding sources when implementing the recommendations of this Plan. Some possible alternative funding sources include: grants, rental fees, donations and volunteer efforts, public/private partnerships, and land trusts.

Grants – There are several grants administered by the State and Federal governments for land acquisition and park development.

Rental Fees – When the Village has its own recreation fields and facilities, appropriate rental fees should be charged to assist in their maintenance and operation costs.

Donation and Volunteer Efforts – Donation and volunteer efforts are alternative funding sources that should be pursued by the Village. Donations may be through the Park Donation Ordinance or from private individuals. Volunteer groups often look for community projects, such as the maintenance of Village Parks. This also creates a sense of community and a pride of ownership for the residents who volunteer.

Public/Private Partnership - Public/Private Partnerships are being used more often throughout the area in order to construct large, expensive projects, such as the *Darien Sportsplex* in Darien, Illinois. Villages enter into relationships with a private business and together they fund, build and/or operate the public facility. Typically, the Village has land that it can use for the project. There may also be tax advantages for this type of project.

Private Land Trusts – Trusts, such as the Conservation Foundation, employ various methods to assist municipalities in acquiring land. Methods include conservation easements and the ability to work with willing owners to conserve land. Because the available land for a large Community Park is quickly being

developed, the Village should begin to work with a land trust to acquire property. The land trust can assist the Village by purchasing and holding the land for eventual acquisition by the Village.

Update the Park Donation Ordinance on a Regular Basis

The Village should regularly update the Park Donation Ordinance to reflect both the accurate cash value for land in the community, as well as the amount of acreage required to be dedicated. Many Villages and Park Districts undertake specific studies to keep both variables up-to-date and accurate. If it is determined that park donation requirements need to be increased in the future, the Master Plan and Park Donation Ordinance should be updated concurrently.

Update the Master Plan on a Regular Basis

The Village should continue to update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan on a regular basis. This helps ensure that the Plan does not become outdated and that new community needs are included. By creating annual goals and a Capital Improvements Budget, the Village will be indirectly updating the Plan.

The Village should make copies of this Plan available for purchase, keep a copy of the Plan on file at Village Hall for residents to view, include an executive summary of the Plan in a Village Newsletter and post an electronic version of the Plan on the Village's website.

Figure 21: Estimated Construction Costs

Facility and Amenity	Possible Cost Range		Ext. Cost Per Facility
	Low	High	
Facility			
Park Land (per acre)	\$150,000	\$170,000	\$160,000
Baseball Backstop	\$2,500	\$8,000	\$8,000
Baseball Field	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$220,000
Basketball	\$5,000	\$90,000	\$30,000
Football/Soccer	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$75,000
Fishing Pier	\$25,000	\$125,000	\$75,000
Ice Skating			
Playground	\$60,000	\$130,000	\$130,000
Recreation Center	\$8,000,000	\$20,000,000	\$20,000,000
Skate Park	\$50,000	\$300,000	\$100,000
Swimming (Outdoor)	\$900,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Sprayground	\$70,000	\$400,000	\$200,000
Tennis Court	\$130,000	\$200,000	\$160,000
Trails (Asphalt per mile)			
Sand Volleyball Court	\$6,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Amenity			
Area Light & Electricity	\$5,000	\$7,500	\$6,500
Drinking Fountain, Meter & Preventer	\$10,000	\$14,000	\$12,500
Picnic Table	\$800	\$1,200	\$1,200
Bench	\$500	\$2,500	\$2,000
Shade Shelter	\$14,000	\$65,000	\$50,000
Garbage Can	\$300	\$1,200	\$1,100
Bike Rack	\$300	\$800	\$800
Parking Lot (per space)	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$2,200
Interpretive Sign	\$500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Park Identification Sign	\$500	\$1600	\$1200

Figure 22: Proposed Financial Timeline

Fiscal Year	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17
Parks					
Amenities & Equipment	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Park Improvements	\$500,500	\$173,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Signage	\$9,250	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200
Utilities	\$3,250	\$4,875	\$5,000	\$5,200	\$5,400
Trails					
Trail Improvements	\$126,174	\$175,400	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Misc.					
Misc. projects	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Maintenance - Equipment	\$7,000	\$15,000	\$15,750	\$16,538	\$17,635
Maintenance - Mowing	\$35,000	\$45,000	\$47,250	\$49,613	\$52,094
Maintenance – Landscaping	\$6,000	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$11,025	\$11,578
Totals:	\$700,874	\$444,475	\$309,700	\$313,576	\$317,907