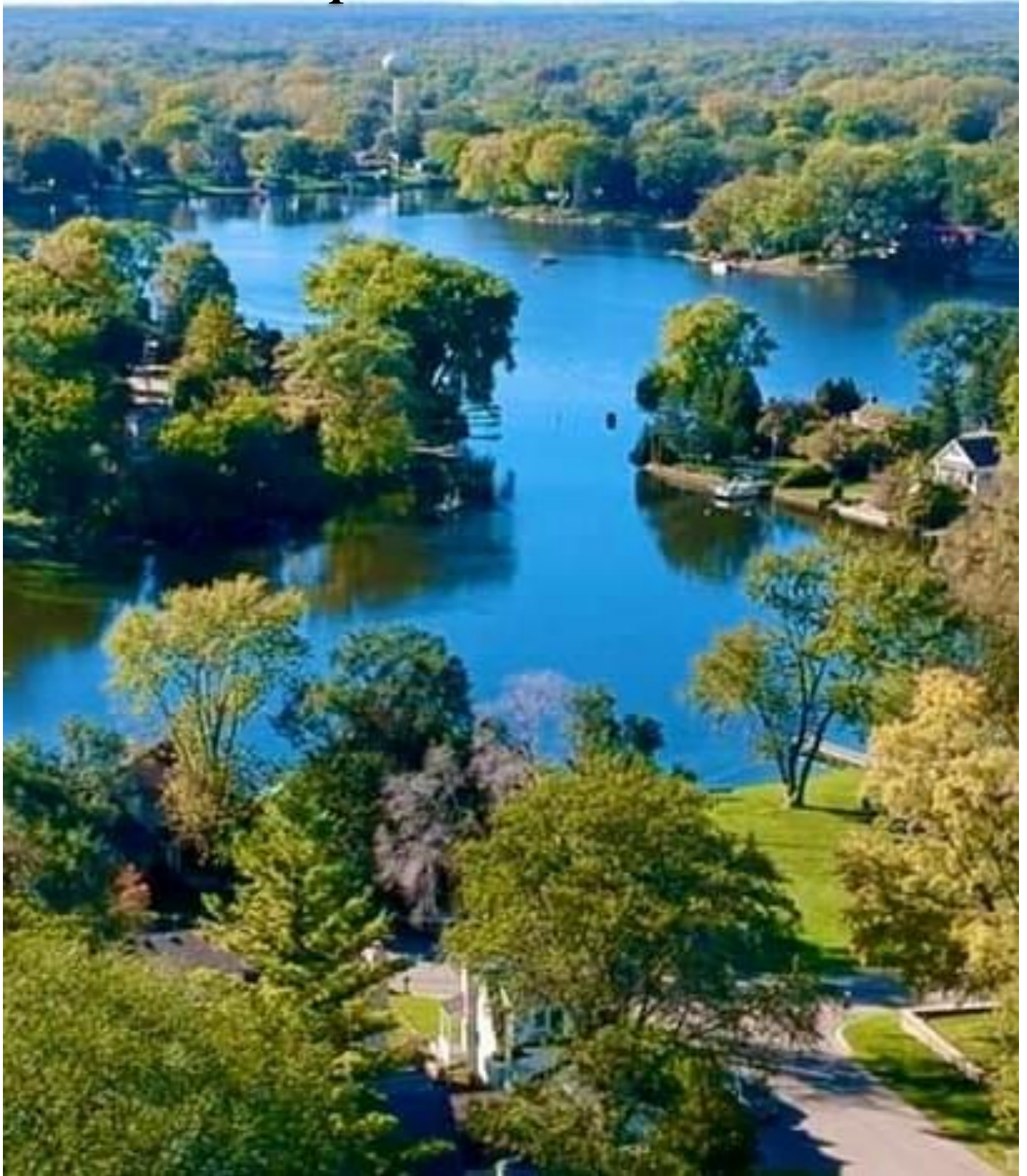


*Village of Island Lake*  
*Comprehensive Plan*





**Village of Island Lake, Illinois**  
**2023 Comprehensive Plan**

**Adopted: April 13<sup>th</sup> 2023**

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Welcome to Island Lake Video:





## INTRODUCTION

The Village of Island Lake Comprehensive Plan is a statement to guide the physical, economic, environmental and social development of the area. The Plan offers an outline to preserve the existing community while guiding future growth in a manner consistent with Village policy.

Island Lake adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1961. It was a document that helped shape the future of the Village. Further updates have been provided in 1981, 1988, 1992, 2004 and 2012. The Comprehensive Plan takes into consideration existing conditions and trends in the Village and in its immediate surrounding areas and builds from those patterns to address important development related topics including housing, traffic, economic development, natural resources, utilities, land use and community facilities.

*Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will help ensure that the Village of Island Lake continues to grow in a responsible, positive manner while retaining the charming small community character that has kept many families in the community for generations.*





# HISTORY OF ISLAND LAKE

The Village of Island Lake is in both Lake and McHenry Counties. It is about 40 miles northwest of the Chicago Loop. It is just west of Wauconda, south of McHenry, north of Barrington and east of Crystal Lake.

The area, that is now the Village of Island Lake, had no lake or island, just rolling farmland, a gravel pit and Mutton Creek. In 1929, a group of area residents including Ray Paddock, Homer Cook and Dennis Putnam bought the land that is now Island Lake from Dowell, Smith, Burnett and Darrell. They decided to dam up Mutton Creek and establish a lake development patterned after their own community of Wauconda.

In 1938, the Island Lake Property Owners Association was formed and George LaGrue was the first president. The housing crunch during post World War II brought a renewed interest in the lake community as many Chicago area residents looked to rural real estate to provide them with homes. Homes gradually were converted to year round homes and new construction filled the remaining lots. The Village of Island Lake was formally incorporated on June 25, 1952.

In 1960, the Village Hall was built on Route 176, with a garage and Police Department added later. The original Village Hall was located at 333 W State Road. On Palm Sunday, April 11, 1965, a tornado hit the Village. A child was killed and the Village sustained considerable property damage. Some homes were lifted and deposited in the Lake. The community rebuilt and a year later only a few scars remained.

In 1980, an 800 acre annexation of Fox River Shores made the Village grown to about 1300 acres in size and brought the potential for considerable growth. 250 acres of the annexation was designated as a conservation area, called Cotton Creek Marsh, a rare and valuable wetland and home to many endangered species. Currently, the McHenry County Conservation District manages the protected land. The Village continued to see further expansion throughout the 1980s and 1990s as acres of land were annexed and/or developed.

Importantly, the Island Lake area was originally targeted for middle income people, who if they saved enough money, could have a nice lake cottage. This has been and continues to be the town's charm, average people getting a chance to own a piece of charming property in a natural setting surrounded by Mutton Creek, Cotton Creek Marsh, Island Lake, Highwood Lake, Slocum Lake and the Fox River.

*The Historical Society of Island Lake provided various documentation on the history of Island Lake as noted in this section.*





**Map 1 – Regional Context Map**

## PLANNING BOUNDARY

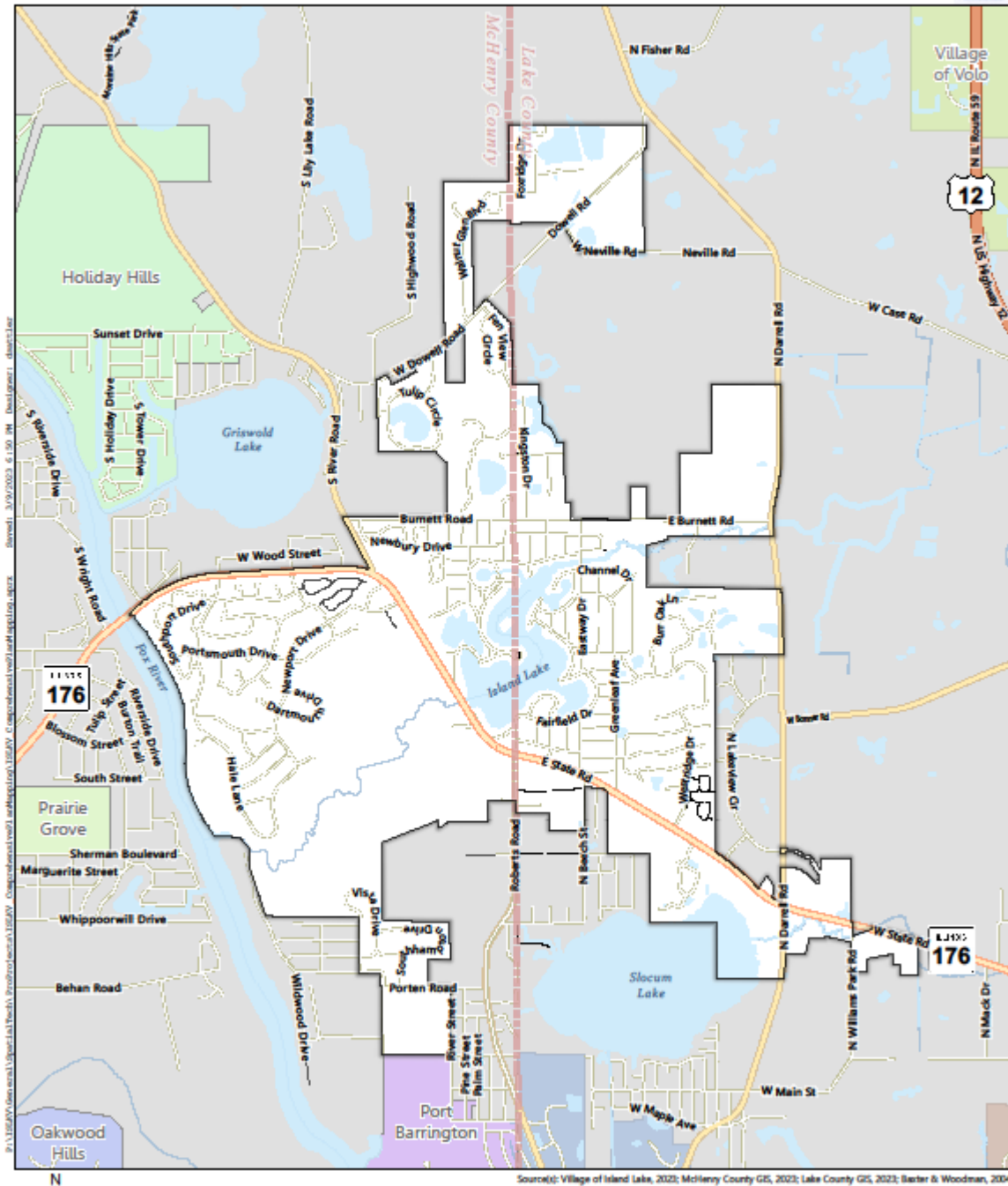
The Island Lake Comprehensive Plan covers the current boundaries of the village along with areas that may be annexed in the future. The Village limits currently extend west to the Fox River, to the north near the intersection of Dowell and Darrell Roads, to the east along Darrell Road, except for some sprawl along Route 176 and to south in the area of Roberts Road and Porten Road. The Fox River to the west, forms a physical barrier to future growth in that direction, although expansion on the west side of the river is possible provided that the Village perceives a benefit for the community. Route 176 is a main artery through the center of the Village.

Any proposed expansion is noted in the Land Use Chapter of the Plan.



# VILLAGE BOUNDARY MAP

Comprehensive Plan  
Village of Island Lake, IL



Source(s): Village of Island Lake, 2022; McHenry County GIS, 2022; Lake County GIS, 2022; Baxter & Woodman, 2004

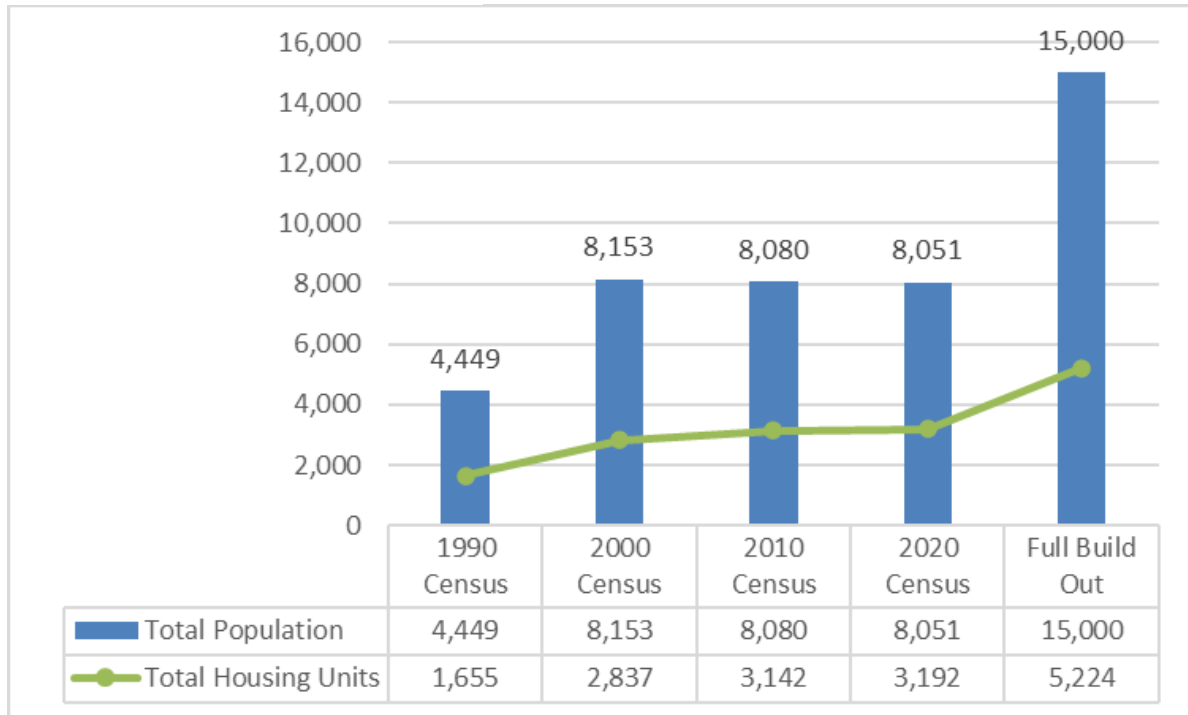


Map 2 – Village Boundary Map

# POPULATION



Island Lake nearly doubled in size between the 1990 and 2000 Census. Since that time, the population has remained nearly unchanged.



Census Data from: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/islandlakevillageillinois>

**Table 1 – Island Lake Population and Housing Units**

In order to plan for Island Lake's future, it is necessary to project its population when build-out is complete. The last bar estimates of the Village's population at build out. The full build out population projection is based on the amount of undeveloped land contained within the Village's planning boundary. After calculating the number of available acres, an estimate of acreage usually required for streets, open space, and wetlands was subtracted from the total available acreage (30% south of Bonner Road and 40% north of Bonner the latter is due to wetter soils and lakes). The net available land divided by the planned acceptable lot size, 20,000 square feet, provides the number of housing units. Using that number of housing units multiplied by the Census estimate of 2.68 persons per Household, results in the 15,000 residents at build out.

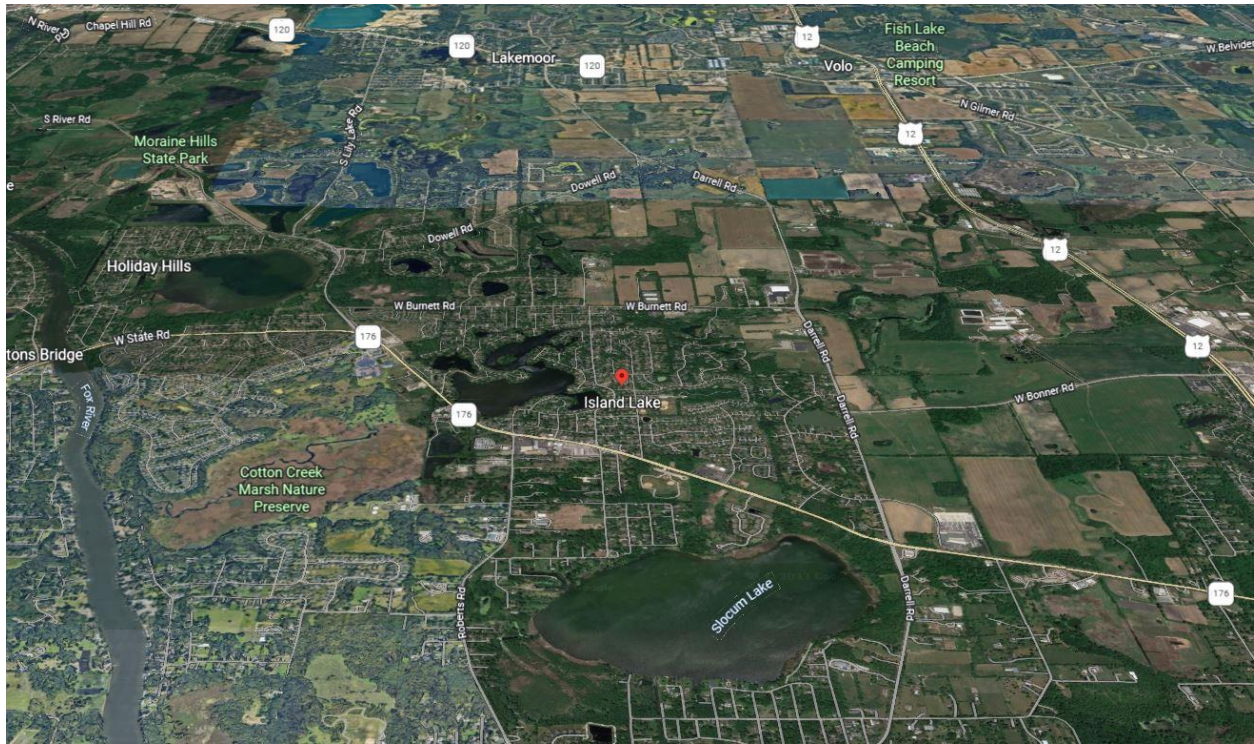
The Village will be prepared to launch new planning initiatives when Golden Oaks Farm owners are ready to begin development. No projections provided include any future Golden Oaks development.

	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 Census
<b>Total Population</b>				
Lake County	516,418	644,356	703,462	714,342
McHenry County	183,241	260,077	308,760	310,229
<b>Number of Housing Units</b>				
Lake County	177,966	255,919	260,310	265,507
McHenry County	62,940	92,908	116,040	119,173
<b>Persons Per Household</b>				
Lake County	2.90	2.52	2.70	2.69
McHenry County	2.91	2.80	2.66	2.60

**Table 2 - Lake & McHenry Counties Population Changes**

Table 2 presents information on the growth that occurred in both Lake and McHenry counties between 1990 and 2020. Both counties experienced substantial growth. Due to their size, the rates of growth in the counties are lower than the Village's growth rate. The Persons per Household number is similar for both counties and Island Lake.

# HOUSING



The Village of Island Lake offers a variety of housing types available in the market, ranging from estate homes to mixed use homes.

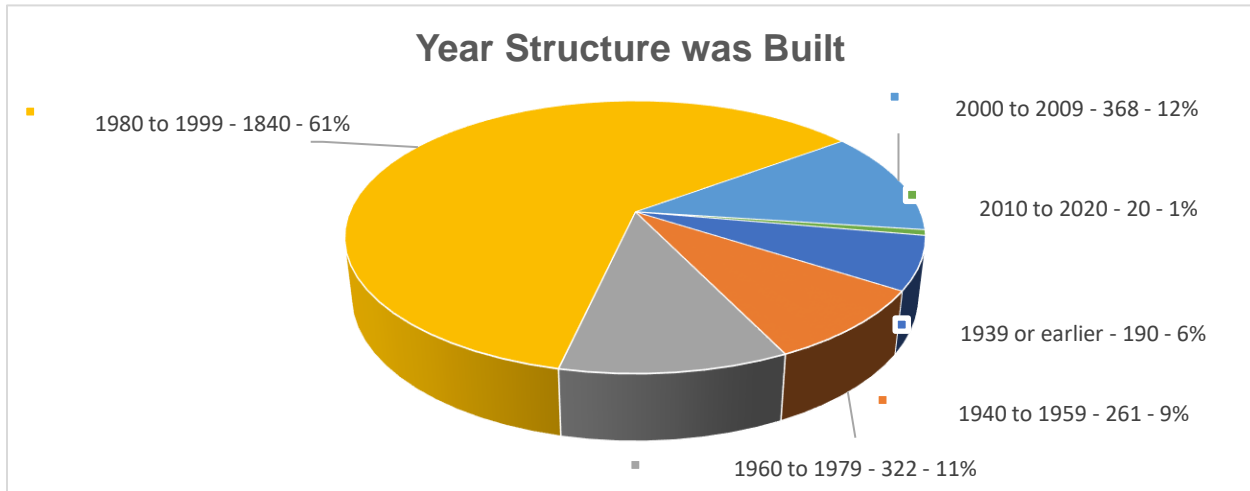
Housing Type	Count	Percentage
Detached Single Family	2301	72%
Attached Single Family	731	%
2 Units	0	0%
3-4 Units	32	1%
5-9 Units	102	3.2%
10-19 Units	0	0%
20 or More Units	28	0.9%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey five-year estimates

Housing Size	Number of Households	Percentage
1 Person Household	633	21.1
2 Person Household	1103	36.8
3 Person Household	431	14.4
4 or More Person Household	834	27.8

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey five-year estimates. Universe: Occupied housing units

2020 Census data shows Island Lake with 3116 housing units and a homeownership rate of 78.7%



For residential properties, the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, depicts five levels of ranges of residential development densities. These categories of residential development were developed to respect the existing residential development patterns in the Village and direct future residential development to be compatible with existing neighborhoods and non-residential developments. The Village encourages a mixture of residential developments to accommodate a wide variety of housing options.

Estate	Minimum 2½-acre lot with small density of homes
Low Density	1 acre and ½ acre lots with no more than 1 home per lot
Moderate Density	¼ acre lot with both single family detached, and single family attached
High Density	Residential up to 5 homes per acre
Historical	A district constructed to protect and maintain the historical characteristics of Island Lake. Ord. 1588-19

The Village adopts the following housing policies:

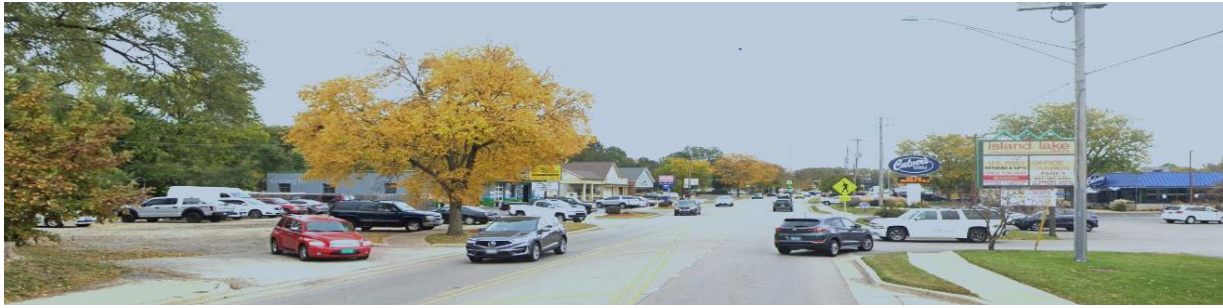
- 1) The Village encourages a variety of housing prospects, including new development of residential properties allotting for diversity, while maintaining patterns that preserve the environmental beauty of the wooded areas, lakes and wetlands. A varied range of housing types are designed to meet the needs of all residents. Island Lake will work to retain its residents because they provide a wealth of social capital that enriches the entire community. The Village will not inhibit development of apartments by policy. If a future apartment development offers substantial amenities to its prospective residents and to the Village as a whole, it will be considered. The Village would welcome mixed use residential uses on second floors of buildings with ground

floor commercial/ services uses in appropriate locations. This sort of development creates a unique neighborhood in its own right. Development that provides a minimized conflict between low-density and high-density areas should utilize setbacks, site layout, landscaping and architectural design to blend the development. The Village is currently working to provide senior housing. Agencies and organizations that provide such housing search for sites that are located in proximity to the homes of senior citizen's successful children. The Village, therefore, expects to experience growing interest in the development of senior citizen housing and such housing will be encouraged.

- 2) Property owners are encouraged to renovate and restore their lake homes. Many of the original homes around Island Lake are unique and part of what make the Village special. These homes add to the unique housing stock and should be preserved whenever possible. Recently the Island Lake Overlay District was added to the Zoning Code to encourage preservation and restoration of these homes with greater flexibility in the Code.
- 3) The Village shall periodically evaluate the Codes to continually upgrade the current construction requirements to meet the ever-changing industry technologies. Codes should also address property maintenance requirements to increase community awareness and responsibility to upkeep properties and prevent deterioration of existing homes.



# TRAFFIC



Traffic plays a major role in sculpting the future of Island Lake. Congestion on IL 176 already impacts the Village and increased traffic volume is predicted for the future. Alternative methods for handling this increased traffic are limited considerably by the physical reality along the corridors of possible road locations both in the Village and its surrounding area

The Village's residences and commercial establishments generate traffic and, typically, this local traffic is what concerns local government. Island Lake, however, has a unique problem. It straddles a major commuter corridor that collects traffic from two counties. Residents from growing communities located west and northwest of Island Lake in McHenry and Lake Counties drive through the Village to access US 12 and IL 59. Both of these roads offer passage to large nodes of employment located southeast of the Village. The same commuters then return through the Village at the end of the day.

Currently, commuters travel on IL 176, Roberts, and Burnett Road. The Village studied each of these roads with the following results:

- 1) The flow of commuter traffic on IL 176 was dramatically and permanently increased when the Charles Miller Bridge, to the north of Island Lake, was opened. This bridge relieved a traffic bottleneck experienced along IL 120. It directs a major flow of traffic onto River Road that, in turn, enters IL 176 or Burnett Road. The Village has experienced continuously increasing traffic on IL 176. As seen below, no real alternatives exist for commuters; therefore, the Village expects the already heavy burden on IL 176 to increase in the future.
- 2) Commuters seeking IL 59 often use Roberts Road to reach their destination. Roberts Road winds southeasterly and connects to IL 59 in the Village of Tower Lake. Roberts Road also collects commuters who are heading toward IL 59 from Rawson Bridge Road. Although this latter group of commuters is not located within the Village's planning area, it impacts the flow of traffic on Roberts Road. Roberts Road in Island Lake will require enhancement because it is currently not designed for the commuter burden it carries. Not all commuters seeking IL 59 choose Roberts Road. Some use IL- 176 to get to US 12 then to IL 59 and a few others have been observed using Darrell Road to Roberts Road, although this is another indirect route.
- 3) The use of Burnett Road by commuters to by-pass IL 176 poses another situation the Village must address. A small number of commuters are using Burnett Road to gain access to Darrell and/or Bonner Roads. Burnett Road was not constructed for heavy use let alone ever-increasing use as the road runs through multiple residential neighborhoods. To make this street into an

arterial road would require substantial fiscal investment and would disrupt a well-established neighborhood.

- 4) Darrell Road also carries some commuter traffic, especially the traffic that drives across Burnett Road. A commuter could reach US 12 by taking Dowell Road to either Neville or Darrell Roads and then travel east on Case Road to US 12; however, commuters do not seem to favor this course because the current intersection configurations.

After looking at the existing road situation, the Village studied alternatives with the following results:

- 1) The Fox River limits alternatives because it is only bridged at Charles J Miller Memorial Highway, IL 176, and Rawson Bridge Road. The Village could not discover any plans by McHenry County or the State to build another bridge. In fact, land development and open space acquisition along the Fox River has already eliminated many alternative bridge corridors. The result is that even if money for a bridge could be acquired, it would be very difficult to locate a bridge site.
- 2) Case and Bonner Roads, the only other major east-west roads in Island Lake, provide little relief for congestion on IL 176. Case and Bonner Roads are both experiencing increased traffic flows, albeit smaller increases than Burnett and Roberts Roads, even though neither connects directly to the roads that carry most of the traffic through the Village. To use Case or Bonner Roads, commuters must drive northeast rather than southeast with the main traffic flow. The Village expects that only a small number of commuters coming from the west and northwest as well as from future northern Island Lake residential developments will use these streets.
- 3) Lake County is currently planning to improve Darrell Road with intersection improvements for Dowell, Case, Neville and Fisher Roads. Village will continue to work with the county and township to develop Dowell/Case Roads as an alternate east/west route to help relieve traffic on Rt 176.

The State of Illinois, McHenry County, and Lake County all have overall authority or jurisdiction over major portions of the roads that are important to the Village. Long-range plans for all three of these entities show that only modest infrastructure improvements will be made to these roads in the next five years. Table 3 lists planned improvements and the agency responsible for the plans.

**Table 3 - Planned Road Improvements**

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Timetable</u>
<b>Village</b>	Lakeview Bridge	In five year plan
<b>McHenry</b>	River Road-Chapel Hill Road Corridor Roadside Safety Review	In five year plan
<b>Lake</b>	Darrell Road Realign Dowell/Fisher/Case roundabouts	In five year plan
<b>IDOT</b>	SRA study IL 176	Completed 2010
<b>Lake</b>	IL 176-four lanes	In twenty-year plan

The Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) study of IL 176 is a very important first step because it is a preliminary indication that the State believes the road is in need of improvements. Expanding IL 176 to a four-lane highway has been placed on road improvement

priority lists and, eventually, in the long term, these improvements will be included in IDOT's five-year capital improvement plans. At this time, the State asserts that it does not have sufficient funds to maintain existing roads and emphasized that construction and expansion are very hard to anticipate. Some IDOT long-term plans propose alternative enhancement strategies for IL 120. These plans include a total rebuilding of the road or an extension of an expressway. It does not appear that either of these plans would offer much help to Island Lake. First, they are very long-term; no definite start date or funding exists, nor has any major land acquisition started. Second, the enhancement of IL 120 would require commuters to drive north or northeast to get to their jobs that lie to the southeast. While the enhanced IL 120 will help move some of the residential traffic generated by development of the unincorporated land that lies north of the existing Island Lake boundary, it will not assist in moving the main flow of commuter traffic that will come with the development of neighboring communities to the west and northwest.

The Village faces a very difficult policy choice. Given the realities explained above, two alternatives exist: first, the Village can encourage the widening of IL 176. The State prefers to construct five-lane roads because a center lane for left turns is required. Left-turning vehicles pose accident hazards because drivers do not anticipate cars stopped to make left turns and the turning vehicles constrict traffic flow by blocking one lane. Therefore, if IL 176 is to be widened, the Village must consider the five-lane design. The main advantage to widening IL 176 lies in the attraction it will have for all types of traffic. A disadvantage is the impact, discussed below, which could accrue to the land uses located along IL 176; however, with planning, this disadvantage can be mitigated. In the final analysis, the reality of the situation is that IL 176 must be widened and the Village will use this foreknowledge to benefit Island Lake residents.

Another alternative, the Village could seek the reconstruction of Dowell/Case Roads in addition to IL 176. The advantage of this alternative is that it would offer a second route that would alleviate some of the traffic on IL 176 which, in turn, might delay the need to widen IL 176 or make the reconstruction of IL 176 less than five lanes.

After careful consideration, the Village chooses to pursue the five-lane expansion of IL 176. The Village is aware of the visual and physical impact a five-lane IL 176 would have on its downtown commercial area. Many stores in the commercial district are located relatively close to the existing right-of-way. Most stores offer parking in their "front" yard. In addition, a large number of driveways enter the highway. The Village will undertake a commercial development corridor study to address these impacts and, with the cooperation of commercial owners, develop an action plan to mitigate any negative impacts of widening this road.

The utility system would also be impacted by an expansion of IL 176 because the Village's oldest water tower sits just outside of the existing right-of-way. It is quite possible that the tower would have to be removed or substantially reinforced if the road is expanded. Impact on the utility system must also be studied and plans developed to mitigate any potential negatives.

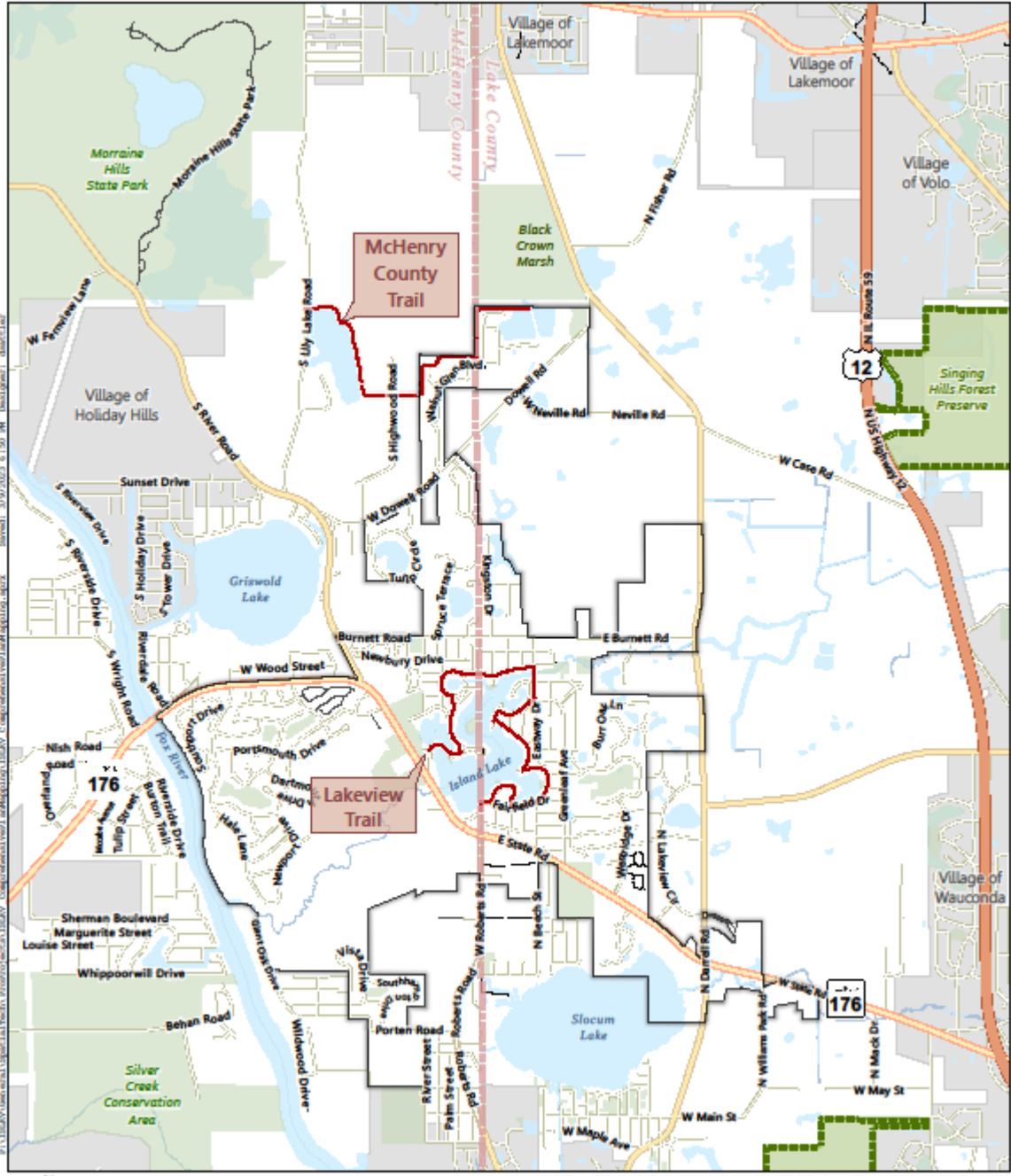
IL 176 presents a different problem. The State of Illinois SRA study proposes a 120 foot right-of-way through the core of Island Lake's downtown. This contrast significantly with the existing right-of-way of approximately 80 feet. Island Lake will commit itself to maintaining the narrower right-of-way for one simple reason: a 120 foot right-of-way would simply not fit between the Village's downtown buildings. In

addition, the state's standards would place curbs directly in front of the existing buildings and eliminate pedestrian walkways. The Village needs a five-lane cross-section on IL 176, but it cannot allow the excessively wide state standard to be applied.

Second, the area located between the commercial node and the western planning boundary appears to offer more flexibility in the amount of land that could be included in the right-of-way., the Village will, therefore, rely on sound traffic engineering design to establish the most appropriate right-of-way for this length of IL 176.

The Village will encourage new developments to provide traffic and road patterns to provide adequate access to residential neighborhoods without subjecting the interior of the neighborhood too intrusive through traffic and include sidewalks to connect neighborhoods and other commercial and public uses. In addition, the Village is a golf cart/UTV friendly community and considerations should be pursued for ways to help minimizes localized vehicle traffic.

# ROAD AND BIKE PATH MAP



Source(s): Village of Island Lake, 2021; McHenry County GIS, 2021; Lake County GIS, 2021; Baxter & Woodman, 2024

March 9, 2023

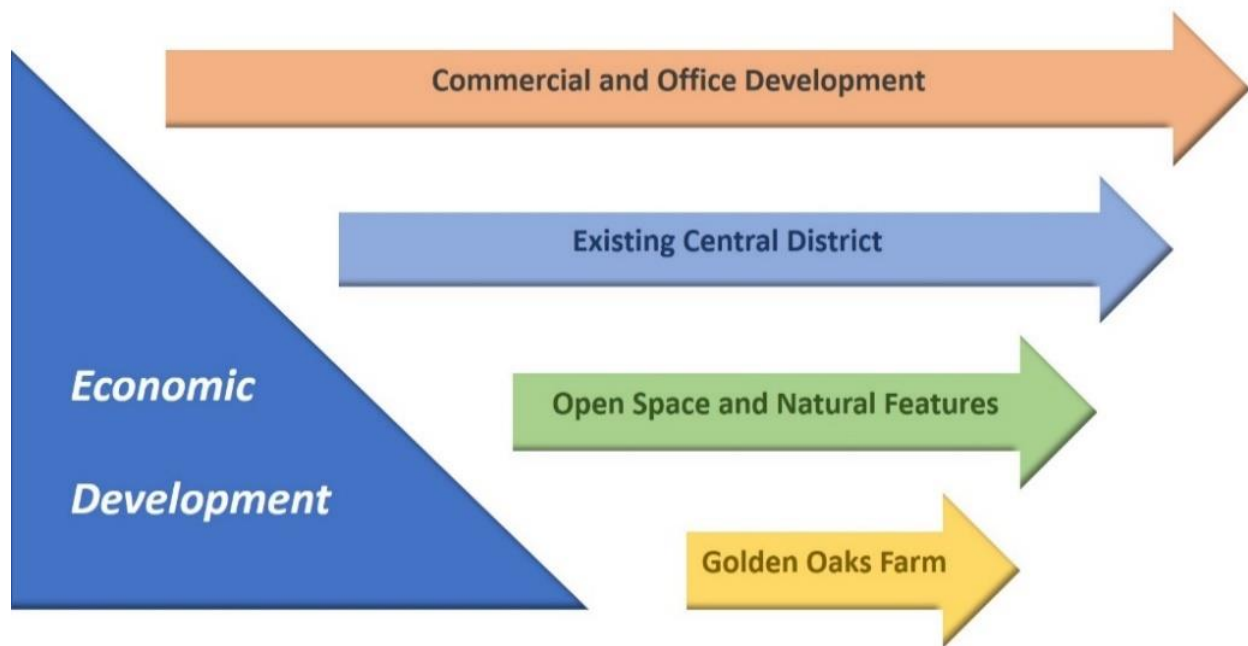
0 1,500 3,000 6,000 Feet

- Trails
- Forest Preserve
- Parks and Open Space
- Village Boundary
- Adjacent Municipal Limits

**BAXTER & WOODMAN**  
COURTNEY EXPERTS

Map 3 – Road and Bike Map

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Island Lake will pursue a four-pronged economic development strategy. This chapter will describe each prong as well as the steps the Village will take to implement it. One overriding factor exists simultaneously with this economic development strategy, the Golden Oaks Farm and its future. The economic development potential of Golden Oaks Farm may well dominate Island Lake's future; however, as discussed in other chapters, the Village cannot remain inactive until the Farm is developed. Its current owners are content to keep Golden Oaks Farm's existing, specialized stock breeding program in operation for the present and for an indeterminate number of years in the future.

Golden Oaks Farm is one of the four prongs of Island Lake's economic development strategy and will be discussed below even though the Village understands that its potential will not be unlocked for many years. This will require the Village to exploit other, existing resources for the economic benefit of the Village. The remaining three prongs of this strategy are development of vacant land parcels, redevelopment of the Village's existing central business district and the promotion of the Village as a natural open space and recreational hub.

## **Commercial and Office Development**

The Village will encourage commercial and office developers to locate their facilities on vacant parcels along IL 176. Potential sites for these new facilities are illustrated in red on the land use map which accompanies this plan.

To encourage such development, the Village will take the following steps:

- 1) Designate enough land in the Village's comprehensive plan to meet the commercial requirements of current and future residents.
- 2) Provide access to Island Lake officials so landowners can meet with them to discuss potential development proposals.



- 3) Offer reasonable flexibility in applying zoning regulations in order to enhance the attraction parcels in the Village will have for potential commercial developers and operators. The Village's zoning ordinance contains provision for PUDs that, when properly utilized, can offer great design flexibility.
- 4) Advocate on behalf of owners of commercial and office development with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) as required. IDOT usually seeks to limit the number of access points on arterials to reduce turning movement. From a traffic management point of view, the Village recognizes the benefits of reducing access points. It does not, however, want such limits to inhibit commercial development on IL 176. The Village will negotiate with IDOT to implement practical traffic improvement features, such as placing one driveway on the property line between two parcels so that one driveway can serve both parcels.
- 5) Be open to considering economic incentive packages if the packages make fiscal sense for both parties. Such packages could include sales tax rebates, tax increment financing (TIF) districts, direct subsidies infrastructure enhancements, or density considerations.

### **Existing Central District**

The second prong in the Village's economic development strategy is the redevelopment of its existing central business district, or downtown, along IL 176. Growing communities are often tempted to focus their energy on new development while neglecting their older commercial districts. Island Lake will not dismiss its existing commercial district. Instead, through this plan, it makes a firm commitment to enhance this existing commercial district.

Island Lake's downtown has provided the community with its essentials for many years. Today, it lacks unifying elements and is very utilitarian. A great variety of architectural styles are represented. A wide variety of placement of buildings and parking configurations exist. All of these elements will be addressed as development plans are defined as property owners and business owners redevelop existing properties.

While widening IL 176 will solve one major problem, it will create others. For example, IDOT will require limited access points, i.e., entrance and exit points to and from parking lots. Such requirements will necessitate the Village's mediating with IDOT on behalf of its downtown commercial operators. The final goal of this mediation will be to improve traffic on IL 176 while still retaining significant access to existing and new commercial locations.

To ensure the vitality of Island Lake's downtown, the Village will take the following steps:

- 1) Ensure that the interests of the Village's downtown commercial operators are fairly represented in IDOT's traffic planning.
- 2) Review the Rt 176 "corridor study" that analyzes the downtown's strengths and weaknesses and then identify methodologies to convert weaknesses into opportunities for enhancing the area.
- 3) Commit Village resources to support and expand a local business association. The tasks of the association will be to focus business owners' attention and energy on downtown improvement; provide critical input for the corridor study; and then take the lead in implementing the study's recommendations.

- 4) Reserve the Village's financial resources to support the economic redevelopment of downtown, including its infrastructure, e.g., streetscapes, road intersections, utilities, and other elements identified in the corridor study. The Village will work to leverage public funds dedicated to redevelopment in order to garner private contributions and thus increase the total amount of funds available for its redevelopment programs. Overall, the Village will seek private commitments from downtown business operations that parallel the Village's investment of public funds.

### **Open Space and Natural Features**

This prong of the Village's economic development strategy relates directly to the incredible amount of open space and preserved natural features that surround the Village. Moraine Hills State Park, the Fox River, and the McHenry County Conservation District's holdings all offer tremendous attractions upon which the Village will capitalize. Island Lake will work to increase the public's awareness and use of these resources and then will capture an economic spin-off through these visitors' stops at its restaurants, gas stations, and other commercial locations.

Island Lake has its origin in people's desire to recreate in a natural environment. The Village recognizes the advantage it enjoys because of its location and is committed to increasing public interest and involvement in the area. Island Lake will work to draw visitors and nature enthusiasts by assisting in providing convenient and attractive locations in or around the Village in order to increase visitor traffic and sales for local business.

### **Golden Oaks Farm**

The final prong of this economic development strategy concerns Golden Oaks Farm. Its current owners are very experienced at developing large parcels of land. When they decide to develop their land holdings; which are not expected to be in the immediate future, the Village will work with them to design a community compatible with the owners' vision of the Farm and the Village's vision for Island Lake. The Village will encourage the owners to position commercial, light industry, and office land uses in the logical locations.

In order to implement this strategy, the Village will take the following steps:

- 1) Maintain open communications with the Golden Oaks Farm owners and their representatives.
- 2) Offer flexibility in land use configuration so that the needs of the owners and the Village can both be supported.
- 3) Work with the owners to initiate a reasonable division of the Golden Oaks Farm holdings among neighboring communities. The current owners do not wish to alienate surrounding communities by encouraging a "land grab." Nor do they wish to forego sound, whole-community planning by dividing their property into sections that discourage a creative arrangement of land uses and a logical distribution of utility facilities.
- 4) Discourage other communities from creating artificial boundary agreements that divide the Golden Oaks Farm with or without the owners' consent.

## NATURAL RESOURCES



Island Lake possesses an abundance of natural resources and several natural resource challenges. The obvious resources include the village's 84 acre namesake Island Lake, the Fox River and the northern shore of Slocum Lake. The less obvious resources include numerous wetlands, creek beds, the Mutton Creek wetlands, and Cotton Creek Marsh. Island Lake will protect these resources with whatever practical means it has available. Where possible and appropriate, it will work with interested agencies and organizations to protect these resources.

The Village sits on a vast network of hydric soils that builders must take note of hydric soils in the design of their buildings. The soil's wetness also places considerable limits on septic field operation; however, this will not impact the Village's growth because the Northern Moraine Wastewater Reclamation District will serve all new development.

The Village is aware that the 247.5-acre Cotton Creek Marsh is considered by the McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD) to be a high-quality wetland. It has also been recognized by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory indicating its importance to the State of Illinois. In addition to nesting Sandhill cranes, the marsh is a habitat for the cuckoo flower, a state-designated endangered plant which, in Illinois, grows only in Lake and McHenry counties. Cotton Creek Marsh supports a high level of plant diversity and also provides habitat for a variety of large and small animals. Cotton Creek and water in the marsh are used for spawning by a variety of fish. According to the MCCD, "the 179 highest-quality acres of the marsh constitute 72 percent of the highest-quality marsh acreage recognized by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory in the Northeastern Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois." The Illinois Nature Preserve Commission has assumed jurisdiction over the marsh.

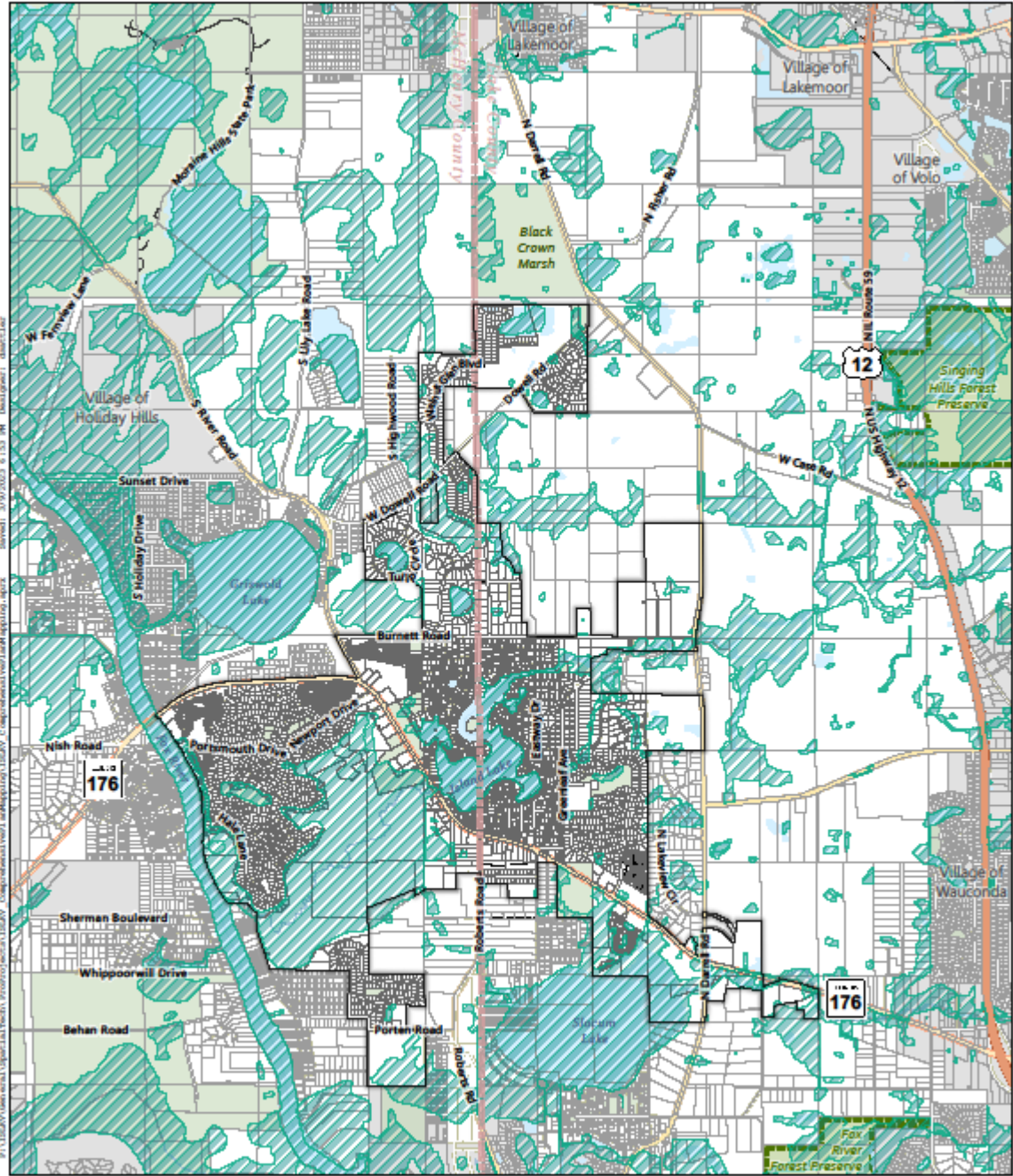
All developers are required to comply with the State of Illinois's review for natural resources. These have identified numerous species but no study has identified unique animal or plant life that required extraordinary habitat protection of land upon which the Village expects to see development. If such special protection is ever required, the Village will take the necessary steps to ensure it.

The Village's goals in relation to natural resources are as follows:

- 1) Continue to protect the environment through state-of-the-art engineering regulations. With the regulations it currently has in place, the Village will be able to protect environmentally sensitive lands; however, it will embrace reasonable additions to these regulations and will cooperate with regional efforts to improve natural resource protection.
- 2) The Village's existing subdivision control ordinance contains the following provisions: woodland protection, wetland regulations, flood plain regulations, density incentives for preserving natural resources, lakeshore protection, standard storm water control and environmental audits.
- 3) The Village will proactively manage and maintain the health of its natural resources, especially Island Lake and work with other entities that associated with the Mutton-Cotton Creek sub watershed that feeds Island Lake.
- 4) The Village will incorporate the national standard-of 10 acres of park per 1,000 population into its subdivision control ordinance. This regulation will provide recreational space for future housing developments. The Village will also commit to requiring land donation in the form of dry, flat, usable land. If usable land is located next to a natural resource, then the donation may incorporate credit for the natural resource. However, it is imperative that the Village secures sufficient open space to provide recreational space so that existing public lands do not become overwhelmed and overused.
- 5) Slocum Lake's water quality remains a concern for Island Lake and other surrounding communities. The Village's border extends to the northern shore of the lake due to boundary agreements. The Village will cooperate with programs designed to address the lake's quality. It will also vigorously enforce its existing regulations on the northern shore so that new development does not exacerbate or accelerate the deterioration of water quality.

Both McHenry and Lake counties have adopted storm water protection ordinances. They serve many laudable purposes, one of which is to enhance the quality of storm water runoff before it enters natural bodies of water. The Village embraces these regulations and will require developers to strictly conform to these storm water regulations.

**ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS** Comprehensive Plan  
 Village of Island Lake, IL



March 9, 2023

0 1,500 3,000 6,000 Feet

- Wetlands
- Forest Preserve
- Parks and Open Space
- Village Boundary

**BAXTER & WOODMAN**  
 CONSULTANTS

**Map 4 – Environmentally Sensitive Lands**

# UTILITIES

## Water Service

The Village of Island Lake owns and operates the existing water supply, storage and distribution facilities. The Village's facilities originally served only the new sections of the Village, but this service was expanded to the entire Village when the Village purchased the Island Lake Water Company (ILWC) in 1995. Since that time, the Village has been conducting an annual program to upgrade the distribution network that it inherited from ILWC. This has greatly improved the level of service to the older areas of town by providing greater water pressure, reducing the number of water main breaks and increasing water quality.



The Village of Island Lake Water Treatment includes iron removal, water softening, chlorination, fluoridation and phosphate for corrosion control. In 2021, 193,302,629 million gallons were pumped with a daily average daily of 536,951, with a peak daily flow of 955,000 gallons. Currently there is a combined elevated storage of 650,000 gallons, 4 water softeners 500 gallons capacity each and 6 iron removal system 900 gallons capacity. The Village has been recognized by the IDPH for maintaining perfect compliance with community water fluoridation award for 27 consecutive years.

To help address future needs the Village is currently participating in a Lake Michigan Water Feasibility Analysis as a possibility opportunity to improve the public water supply by obtaining Lake Michigan water as its primary source.

## Sanitary Sewer Service

The Northern Moraine Wastewater Reclamation District (NMWRD) provides wastewater collection and treatment within the Village of Island Lake. The District is a separate municipal corporation formed for the purpose of collecting and treating sewage within its Facility Planning Area (FPA). The NMWRD FPA currently provides wastewater collection and treatment services to the Villages of Island Lake, Lakemoor and Port Barrington. Portions of the Village of Lake Barrington and Holiday Hills are also located within the Northern Moraine FPA but are not currently served or connected to the system.



The NMWRD owns and operates a 2.0 million gallon per day (MGD) wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) located on Timber Trail west of Roberts Road. The WWTP is designed to be expandable to 3.0 MGD. The current flow rate is approximately 1.4 MGD, or approximately 70% of its capacity. Capacity at the treatment plant is obtained on a first come, first-serve basis. The District cannot



guarantee capacity to any entity unless the capacity is pre-purchased or another agreement is in place. The Village of Island Lake does not have any pre-purchased additional capacity at this time.

The Village will require all developers to pay the necessary sanitary sewer tap-on fees. The District will not allow developers to obtain service without paying tap-on fees. However, as part of the Village's ongoing commitment to the success of the District, it will keep developers informed of the need to pay the District and construct the necessary facilities. It should be noted that when facilities are constructed, the Village will require the developers to construct systems that not only serve their own project but also size facilities (pipes) so that they can offer service to the next property in line.

Several areas shown on the Land Use Map lie outside of the NMWRD's FPA and sanitary sewer service can be provided by one of the following methods:

- 1) Service is provided strictly by the designated management authority in whose FPA the property is located.
- 2) FPA boundaries are amended to include the indicated properties.
- 3) Treatment is provided by contract for a portion of a development outside the FPA, but the sewers are owned and maintained by another designated management agency.

The FPA amendment process should be started well in advance of the need to provide sewer service to areas currently outside the FPA. The amendment process is lengthy and includes review by the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) and approval by Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

# LAND USE

This section of the Comprehensive Plan looks at the Village's ability to expand and provides the Village with guidelines it can use as it faces future land use decisions.

## **Expansion**

Island Lake's neighboring municipalities dramatically expanded during the last twenty years, creating annexation limits on the east, north, west, and south of the Village's current boundaries. The Village has entered into a boundary agreement with its Lake County southern neighbors and thereby created a strong southern limit to its growth.

Additional limits are the result of the increase of publicly held land. Both the McHenry County Conservation District and the Moraine Hills State Park acquired substantial acreage in the last few years. The MCCD land lies south of the Village and also on the west side of the Fox River. The State of Illinois secured a considerable amount of territory immediately northwest of for the purpose of long-term planning, the land acquired by these two agencies is permanent open space.

The Village adopts the following policies in light of these limits to its expansion:

- 1) The Village will continue to seek annexation within the territory indicated on the Land Use Map.
- 2) The Village will use a standard density of 2.0 dwelling units per acre for the remaining annexable land (see discussion of gross density presented below)

## **Recreation**

The Village finds itself surrounded by numerous recreational opportunities that have dramatically expanded over the last few years. The Fox River has always provided very attractive recreational opportunities. Burton Bridge and its environs offers several boating-related enterprises plus restaurants that thrive on customers who are there seeking recreation. The likelihood is that as water improves, the area will attract more people.

In the last few years, the popularity of hiking in natural settings has also increased. The Fox River offers many beautiful and relatively untouched open areas which visitors seek out for a chance to observe and enjoy nature and its wild inhabitants. This kind of recreation generates a demand for more natural open space and both the McHenry County Conservation District and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources are responding by increasing the size of their holdings.

The Village's original developers designed the community's layout to offer a recreational setting. Streets meander around Island Lake and several tributaries. Many waterfront properties offer access to water for boating and fishing. Today, waterfront property remains at a premium.

The demand for outdoor recreational sites and plethora of open space offers a tremendous opportunity for the Village. In response, the Village adopts the following policies:

- 1) Annexation of land that enhances the Village's ability to meet a demand for outdoor recreational sites is encouraged.
- 2) Proactively, pursue the creation of facilities that will attract people seeking outdoor recreational opportunities, i.e., parks and trails.

- 3) Recognize that outdoor recreation will provide viable future economic development opportunities for the Village.

### **Golden Oaks Farm**

Golden Oak Farm consisted of almost 2,500 acres of land and without a doubt, the Farm has the potential of profoundly influencing the future of the Village. When developed, the Farm could provide a dramatically expanded tax base and introduce a vast number and variety of new housing units as well as doubling the size of the Village. The Farm is indicated on the Land Use Plan Map but, for this section, it is described as running between IL 176 on the south to the Village of Volo on the north, US 12 on the east and a variety of points along the Village's western boundary.

The owners of the Farm indicate that at some future date they would be interested in developing the property. They recently made a multi-million-dollar investment in building and equipment for the Farm's specialized function of breeding pure strains of livestock. Its operators contemplate using these new assets for a number of years. It can be reasonably expected that the Farm's owners will not be interested in its development in the near future

The size of the Farm also triggers interest from four different municipalities with which it is contiguous. The challenge is that each of these communities may wish to annex a portion of the Farm, thus destroying an opportunity for the owners to create a unified and logical land use plan. Existing Illinois statutes give the property owner a great deal of authority to choose the community or communities into which the Farm is annexed, if any. However, phased development of different sections of the Farm may make annexation to one community more logical than annexation to another. Water supply, sanitary sewer service, road access, and drainage control could also contribute to making one community more attractive than the others. Illinois statutes also set a goal of not using intergovernmental boundary agreements to break-up property held by one owner. The Village must that if and when the Farm properties come on the market, it will be required to negotiate a complex annexation strategy with the landowners and surrounding communities.

In conclusion, with respect to the Farm, the Village adopts the following policies:

- 1) Place a Planned Unit Development (PUD) designation on the entire site with a general description of acceptable land uses.
- 2) Prepare to negotiate a variety of land uses with the owners.
- 3) Seek a logical division of the property for annexation into Island Lake and other communities.
- 4) Recognize the potential economic and community development opportunities the site offers.
- 5) Set a residential density of 2.0 dwelling units per gross acre (see discussion of gross density presented below).

### **Gross Density**

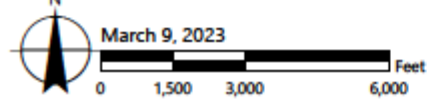
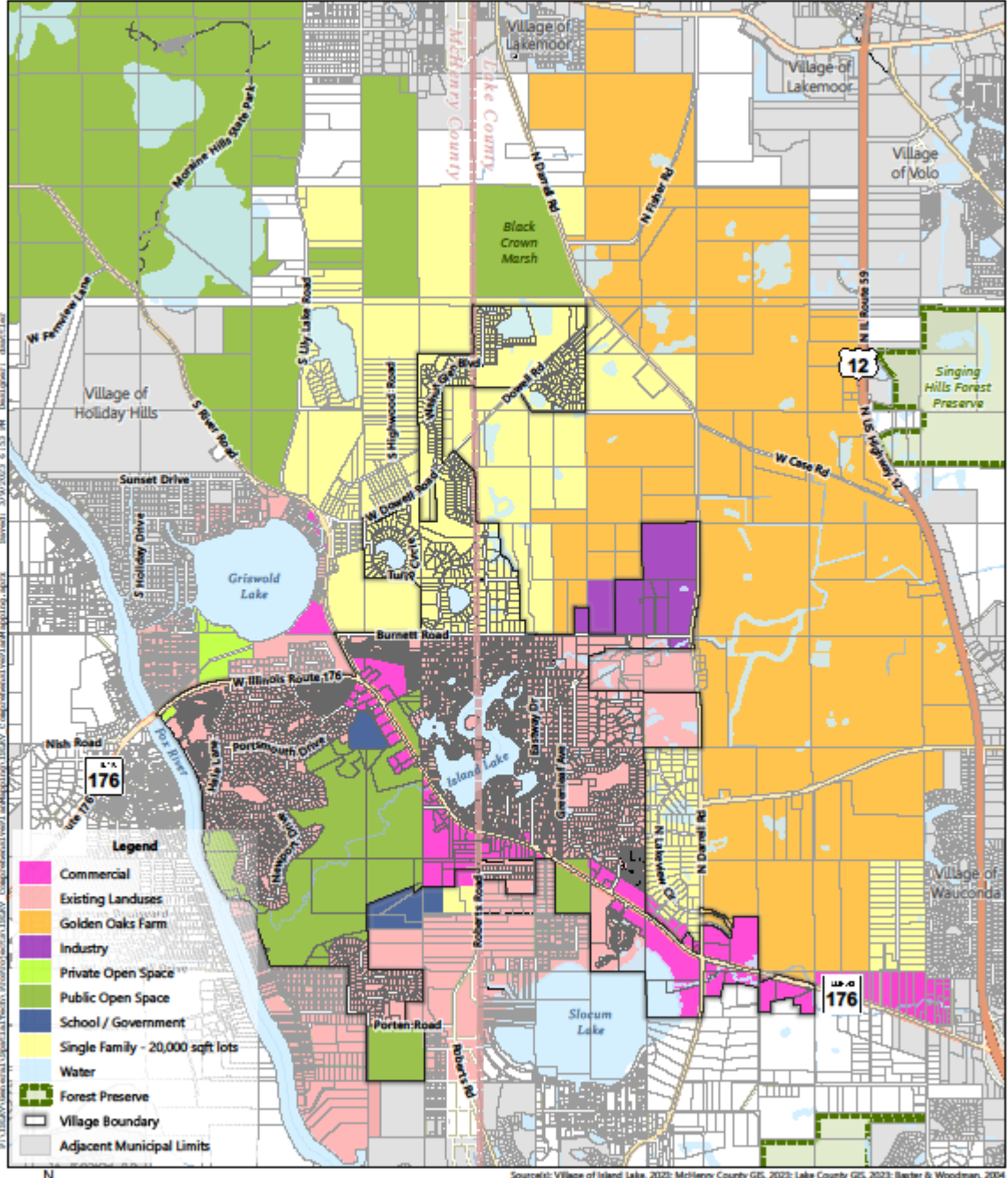
The last topic in this Land Use section is the utilization of a standard that allows 2.0 dwelling units per "gross" acre. Currently, the Village requires 20,000 square-foot lots, which, in effect, are about 2.0 dwelling units per "net" acre. The distinction between gross and net is important because it determines how flexible the Village will be when considering development proposals.

The use of the net standard forces the landowner to create lots of a fixed size. The gross standard requires the developer to cluster dwelling units, thus preserving open space or land for recreational uses. Given an area that contains many natural features such as creeks, wetlands, and hills, the gross standard seems logical. Abuse of the gross standard is seen when landowners try to pack dwelling units into one location, producing a community where dwelling units are built too close together.

To avoid the latter situation, owners of smaller properties are required to use the gross standard as if it were a net standard. In other words, owners of small parcels are required to create lots of approximately 20,000 square feet. If, in the end, the result was preservation of a natural feature such as a wetland, would consider slightly smaller lots. The more flexible uses of the gross standard will be reserved for parcels of 40 acres or more.

The Village will review development proposals for larger tracts with the intent of preserving natural features. Clusters of different density dwelling units could be blended with substantial preservation of natural features. The Village will remain cognizant that the gross standard will be used to take advantage of the environment, rather than allowing developers to take advantage of the Village's standards

# LAND USE MAP



Map 5 - Land Use Map

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES



When the Village considered various growth alternatives, it was fully aware that each alternative would impact its community facilities. The land uses contained in this plan are projected to result in more than 15,000 residents. The Village accepts this projection and will address the community facilities a population of this size requires. Community facilities are defined here as the Village Hall, police facilities, parks, schools, and Public Works buildings.

The consideration of development of Golden Oaks Farm is not included in this chapter due to the long-time lag before the Farm even begins development. The potential population impact of its development will require the Village to reassess its facilities' needs. At full build-out, Golden Oaks Farm could easily result in another 8,000-10,000 residents. At this time, the Village will move ahead with its facility planning based on a projection of 15,000 residents.

The current Village Hall will not provide sufficient room for the staff needed to provide services for 15,000 residents. The Village has already foreseen this space limitation. Only fiscal constraints prevent construction from moving forward. When Island Lake's resources allow, the Village will construct a new facility with between 20,000 and 40,000 square feet, depending on the needs of the government.

The Village commits to securing a sufficient quantity of open space to meet the needs of current and future residents. To accomplish this goal, the Village will amend its subdivision ordinance to insert the park donation standard used nationally. This standard states that the Village should obtain from developers 10 acres of open space per 1,000 residents moving into a development. Application of this new standard will advance the Village's on-going efforts to obtain usable open space for its residents.

The term usable is important. Active recreation, as opposed to passive recreation, requires flat, dry land. The Village commits to requiring developments to meet the open space standard with land suitable for active recreation. Land that is unsuitable for active recreation will be accepted, too, if it is abutting dry, flat land. However, unsuitable land will be accepted only as an addition to the amount of land required by the basic open space standard.



The current Village Hall and Police Station not only provides space for those two main functions, but also houses numerous recreational activities. When the Village Hall and police uses are moved to a new facility, the existing building will be given over entirely too recreational uses.

The senior program, Preschool, sports activities and many other uses will be able to offer expanded services.

The Village is currently served by mainly by School District 118 along with School Districts 15 and 156. It is therefore a desire of the Village to be incorporate into single school district to provide a single school identity/spirit within the Village. In cooperation with the Districts, the Village adopted ordinances that obtain land/cash fee from developers for the district. These fees assist District 118 to provide the capital facilities required to meet the educational demand of the Village's residents. The Village commits itself to continuing to obtain school land/cash fees from new development.

District 118 currently operates an elementary and middle school in the Village. Both are adequate to meet the Village's current requirements and both are sited on land parcels large enough to allow expansion if it is ever required. Anticipating its long-term growth needs, District 118 also acquired a parcel of land on which to construct a high school if demand requires such a facility.

The Village currently faces a shortage of adequate space to store and maintain its public works fleet. Space constraints force the Village to store almost half of the Village's equipment outside. This practice shortens the useful life of the equipment and increases maintenance expenses. To eliminate this storage practice, the Village will seek a location to build a new public works garage or equipment storage facility. No site has been obtained as yet, but, when sufficient funds become available, a new facility will be constructed.

Public works facilities can run the gamut from barely adequate to luxurious. Island Lake will avoid these extremes and will build a facility that meets the community's needs without an extravagant use of its resources.

## SUMMARY OF POLICIES

- 1) **Planning Boundary** - The Land Use Map illustrates the planning boundary of the Village of Island Lake.
  
- 2) **Population** - The Village will have approximately 15,000 residents at full build-out, excluding future development of Golden Oaks Farm.
  
- 3) **Housing**
  - a) The Village will encourage development of residential properties allotting for diversity, while maintaining patterns that preserve the environmental beauty of wooded areas, lakes and wetlands.
  
  - b) Maintain a high quality of residential community with a diverse range of housing designed to meet the needs of all residents.
  
  - c) The Village will encourage the development of senior housing.
  
- 4) **Traffic**
  - a) IL 176 will be the main arterial for traffic through the Village.
  
  - b) The Village will assist businesses as the Illinois Department of Transportation plans and implements expansion of IL 176.
  
  - c) Village will pursue efforts with the development of Dowell/Case Roads as an arterial street
  
  - d) Burnett Road will retain its residential nature and will not be transformed into an arterial street.
  
  - e) The Village will encourage the development of bike/cart paths as designated on the Road and Bike Path Map.

## 5) Economic Development

- a) The Village will encourage developers interested in commercial and office use to locate their facilities on vacant parcels along IL 176. To assist in this development, the Village will take the following steps:
  - i) Designate enough land to meet the commercial requirements of current and future residents.
  - ii) Provide access to Island Lake officials so landowners can meet with them to discuss potential development proposals.
  - iii) Offer reasonable flexibility in applying zoning regulations in order to enhance the attraction parcels in the Village will have for potential . commercial developers and operators.
  - iv) Advocate on behalf of owners of commercial and office development with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) as required.
  - v) Be open to considering economic incentive packages.
- b) Island Lake will enhance its existing downtown by taking the following steps:
  - i) Ensure that the interests of the Village's downtown commercial business are fairly represented in IDOT's IL 176 SRA study.
  - ii) Continue to review and update the 176 Corridor Plans that will analyze the downtown's strengths and weaknesses and identify methodologies to enhancing the area.
  - iii) Commit Village resources to develop relationship and expand a local business association.
  - iv) The Village will use public funds to leverage private contributions for .downtown redevelopment programs.
- c) Island Lake will increase visitor traffic and local sales to visitors and nature by taking the following steps:
  - i) Secure land located along the Fox River in order to make the river's edge a resource accessible to the public.
  - ii) Work with other government agencies to expand their holdings of natural areas and identify services that can be added.
  - iii) Seek methods to link the several existing natural resources.
  - iv) Create a promotional campaign that highlights the Village's natural areas and visitor services and work to have these included in county and regional promotional programs.
- d) The Village will work with Golden Oaks Farm to design a community compatible with the owners' vision of the Farm and the Village's vision for Island Lake by maintaining open communications with the Farm's owners and their representatives.

## **6) Natural Resources**

- a) Continue to protect the environment through state-of-the-art engineering regulations and the regulations it has in place. Additionally, embrace reasonable additions to these regulations and cooperate with regional efforts to improve natural resource protection.
- b) The Village will proactively manage and maintain the health of its natural resources.
- c) The Village will incorporate the national standard of 10 acres of park land per 1,000 population into its subdivision control ordinance and commit to requiring land donation in the form of dry, flat, usable land.
- d) The Village will cooperate with programs designed to address Slocum Lake's water quality and vigorously enforce its existing regulations on the northern shore.
- e) The Village embraces McHenry County and Lake County stormwater protection ordinances and will require developers to strictly conform to these regulations.

## **7) Utilities**

- a) Water
  - i) A projected population of 15,000 will require the Village to expand its water distribution facilities.
  - ii) Developers are expected to pay their fair share to build and maintain the Village's water distribution facilities.
- b) Sanitary Sewer
  - i) Developers will pay the necessary sanitary sewer tap on fees and support extension of sanitary sewer facilities.

## **8) Land Use**

- a) The Village adopts the land uses as shown on the Land Use Map of this 2023 Comprehensive Plan.
- b) With respect to the Golden Oaks Farm, the Village adopts the following policies:
  - i) A Planned Unit Development designation will apply to the entire site.
  - ii) The Village is prepared to negotiate a variety of land uses.
  - iii) The Village will seek a logical division of the property for annexation into Island Lake and other communities.
  - iv) The Village recognizes the potential economic and community development opportunities the site offers.
- c) A residential density standard of 2.0 dwelling units per gross acre will be applied to all parcels of 40 acres or more.

## **9) Community Facilities**

- a) The Village recognizes that a population of 15,000 residents will require expansion of community facilities.