

Open Space Plan – Comprehensive Plan Update

Village of Lombard
Department of Community Development

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Introduction

The purpose of the Open Space Plan is to develop a detailed inventory of open space parcels in the Village of Lombard, identify issues impacting open space, and promote best practices in open space acquisition and stewardship. Open space is an important quality of life concern because it provides recreational opportunities, aids in stormwater management and water quality, and adds to the overall suburban character of the Village.

The Plan identifies who is involved with open space, what open space currently exists, and which factors affect open space. The Plan also singles out key open space parcels and makes recommendations regarding the potential usage and/or development of those parcels.

Goals

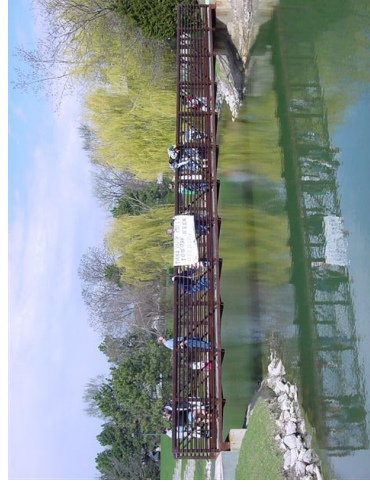
The goal of the Open Space Plan is to ensure that open space is preserved within the Village. Parts of this goal include incorporating open space objectives as part of the development process, as well as considering specific properties for open space acquisition and preservation.

Stakeholders and roles

Open space stakeholders fall into six general categories, each of which has a different role: the Village, Park Districts, DuPage County, DuPage County Forest Preserve District, schools, and homeowners associations.

Village of Lombard

The Village owns 95 acres of property, much of which is occupied by municipal facilities. The Village also owns a number of detention ponds.



The pond at the Village hall offers stormwater detention, and it is also stocked for fishing.

Park Districts

There are four Park Districts that own property within the Village: Butterfield, Glen Ellyn, Lombard, and York Center. Together, they manage 154 acres of land within the Village limits.

DuPage County

DuPage County has a dual role as both a property owner and a regulatory agency. The county owns and manages the Illinois Prairie Path and Great Western Trail, and they also have regulatory role regarding stormwater.

DuPage County Forest Preserve District

The Forest Preserve District is another large property owner, with over 88 acres of open space within the Village limits. The Forest Preserve also owns a significant amount of property within unincorporated Lombard.

Private Property Owners

Homeowners associations and other private property owners are charged with the ownership and maintenance of approximately 250 detention ponds throughout the Village.

Schools

Lombard's 16 schools, both public and private, are open space stewards. While the provision of open space is not necessarily their mission, they nevertheless are motivated to maintain a significant amount of open space in order to provide outdoor recreational areas for their students. These recreation areas range from open fields to football fields and tennis courts.



Cross country runners at Glenbard East make use of the school's expansive grounds.

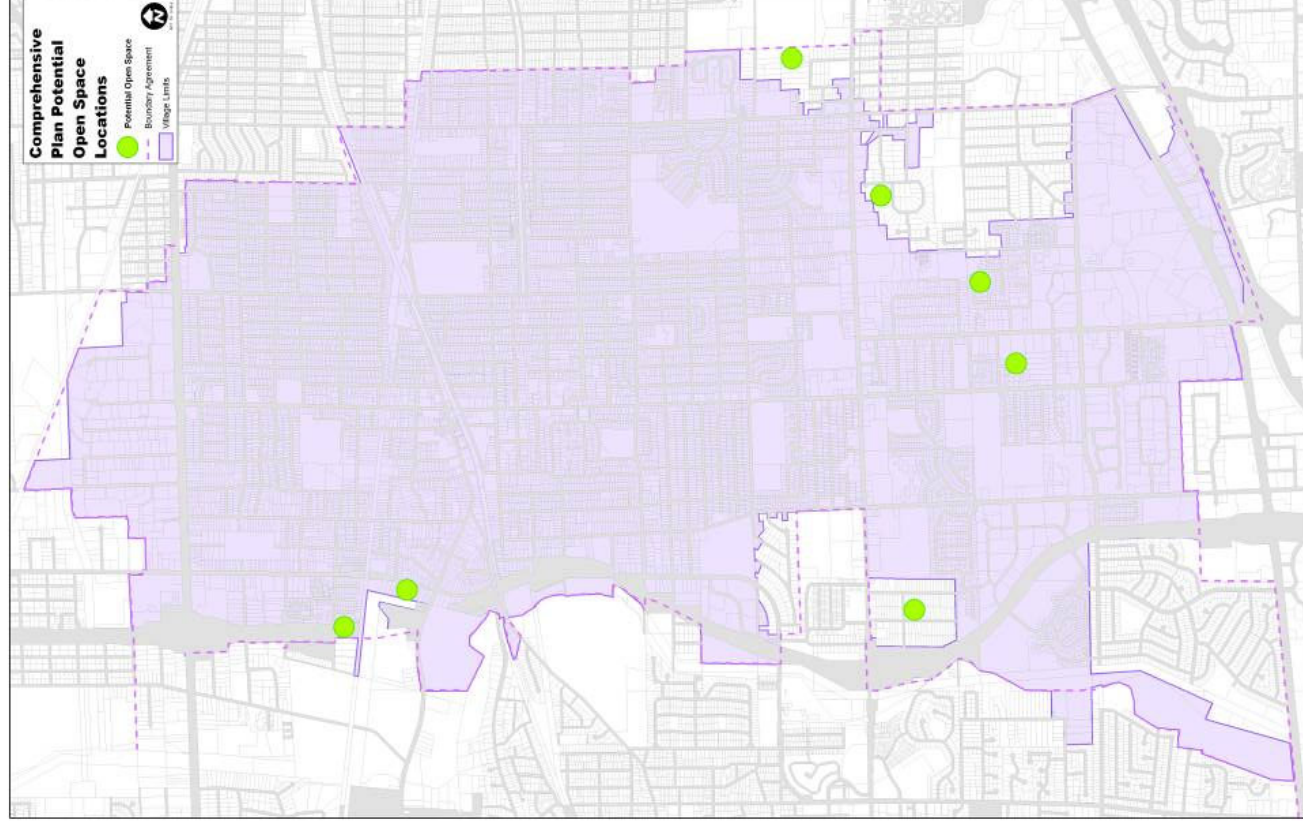
Existing policies

Comprehensive Plan

The Village's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 1998, has a few sections that pertain to open space and related issues. It notes that Lombard provides nearly 11 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which exceeds the National Park and recreation Association's standards of 10 acres per 1,000 residents. However, the plan also noted that some areas of the community are underserved and notes a number of new potential neighborhood parks locations. These parks, which are envisioned to be owned by the Park District, are recommended to be at least one-half acre.

Since the approval of the Comprehensive Plan, there have been a number of open space-related accomplishments and changes within the Village. Among these are:

- Recreational Facilities
 - Acquisition and construction of the Spray Park at 201 W. St. Charles Road;
 - Construction of the Crescent Tot Lot;
 - Installation of lighting and amenities along the Illinois Prairie Path;
 - Construction of Paradise Bay Water Park;
 - Funding secured and Phase 1 engineering completed for the proposed Great Western Trail bridge over Grace Street, the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, and St. Charles Road;
- Development Regulations
 - Acquisition of properties for flood control;
 - Inventory and inspection of private detention ponds;
- Village Policy Decisions
 - Implementation of the rain barrel reimbursement program;
 - Relocation of the Lombard Park District maintenance garage from downtown Lombard to Sunset Knoll;
 - Annexation of Western Acres golf course; and
 - Adoption of the Lilac Bikeway.



Park Districts

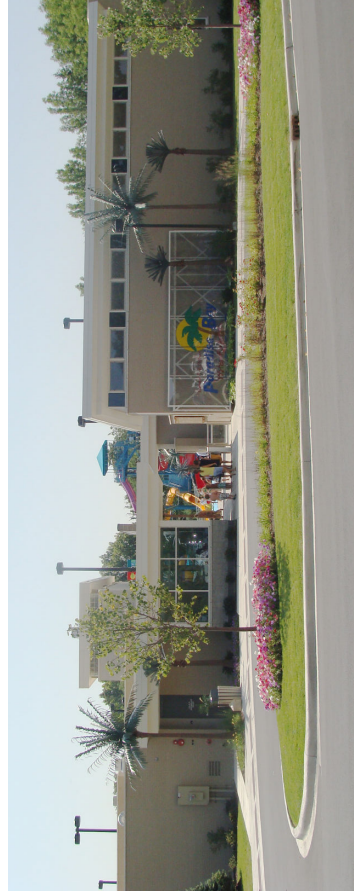
The properties within Lombard's ultimate boundaries fall within six different park districts, four of which offer parks and facilities to Lombard residents: Lombard, Glen Ellyn, Butterfield, and York Center.

Addison Park District has two unincorporated Forest Preserve properties bordering the Canadian National Railroad, and Oak Brook Park District has a vacant parcel and parking lot off Technology Drive. Due to their limited coverage, they and their facilities will not be covered in this report.

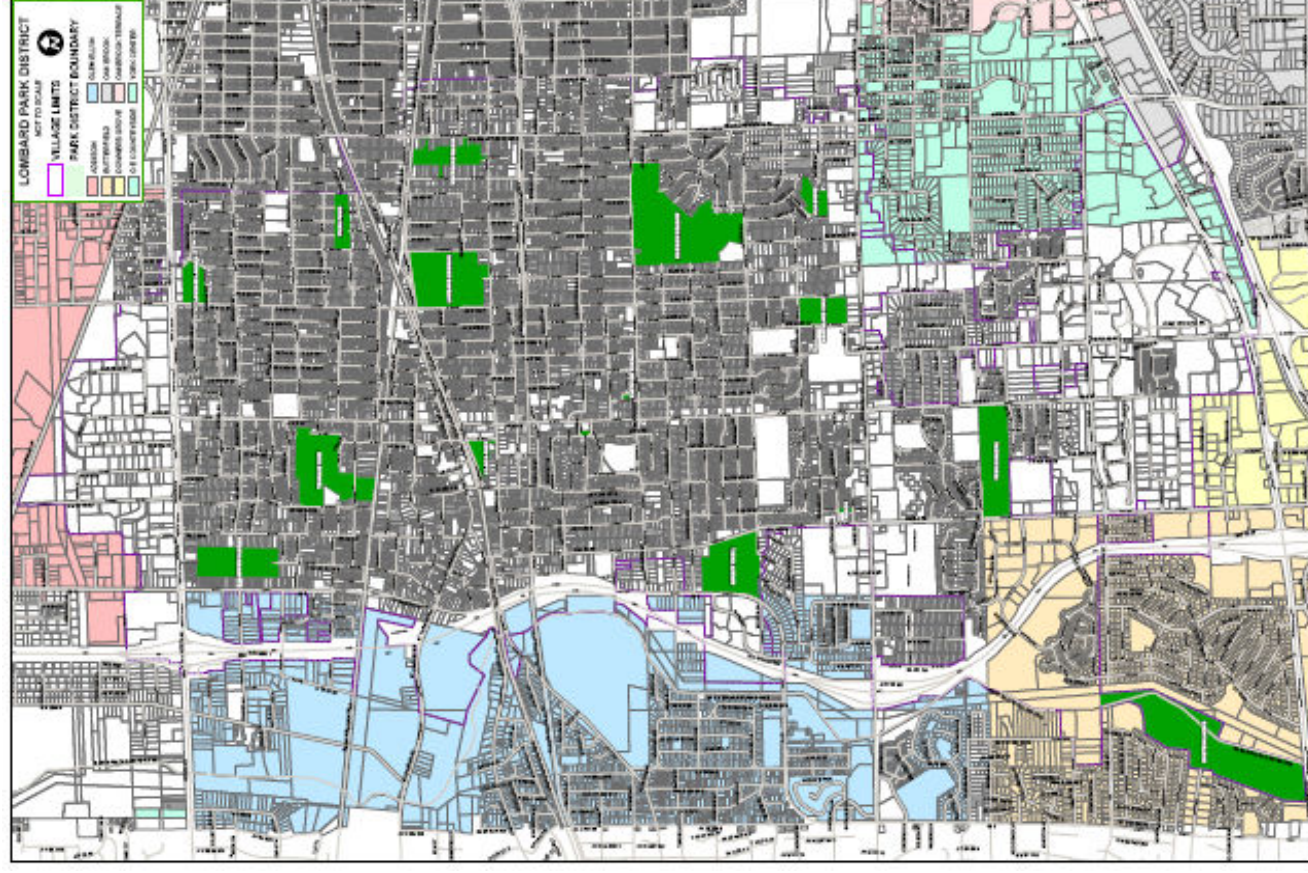
Lombard

The Lombard Park District adopted a 2004-2009 Comprehensive Plan that will be updated for 2010-2015. The 2004-2009 plan included completed projects such as the Water Spray Park, Crescent Avenue playground, and Paradise Bay Water Park. In addition to a strong focus on the Park District's operational issues, the plan stated an intention to "work with the Village to provide playgrounds and open space opportunities in areas of the community that are not currently served or restricted by traffic/train or natural obstacles."

The new plan, to be developed in 2010, will include planned projects such as a skate park at Madison Meadow, piers and a playground at Four Seasons Park, a gazebo and observation deck at Broadview Slough, and a variety of improvements to Sunset Knoll.



Lombard Park District's Paradise Bay Water Park was named the number one facility in the state for 2009 at the Illinois State Convention for Parks and Recreation.



Glen Ellyn

Approximately 134 Lombard homes are within the Glen Ellyn Park District's jurisdiction, encompassing the area north of the Great Western trail and west of Columbine Avenue plus the west half of the Flowerfield subdivision. However, Glen Ellyn has neither any parks nor recreational facilities in the Village nor any plans to construct such amenities. Glen Ellyn does require a cash or land donation (equivalent to 5.5 acres of land per 1,000 residents, or roughly \$3,500 per home¹) for all new construction. However, as a non-home rule community, the Village does not assess a park district impact fee for new development activity.

York Center

York Center Park District covers the southeast corner of the Village, south of Roosevelt and east of Fairfield. Much of this area is unincorporated, but more than half of the land is within the Village's ultimate boundaries. Their newest park is Knolls Community Park at 1416 S. Meyers Road (formerly the Waste Management property).

Butterfield

Butterfield Park District covers the southwest corner of the Village, south of 16th Street and west of Finley. As with York Center, much of the land (with the exception of the Foxworth subdivision) is currently unincorporated but within the Village's ultimate boundaries. Butterfield constructed a new recreational and aquatic facility in 2002 at 21W730 Butterfield Road.

DuPage County

DuPage County adopted a Regional Bikeway Plan that was updated in 2008. This countywide plan calls for a 10-year implementation of 307 miles of new bikeways that would link communities, recreational facilities, and employment centers. Proposed improvements though Lombard include the East Branch DuPage River Greenway Trail as well as a Meyers Road connection for the I-88 Central DuPage Bikeway. The plan also includes the Great Western Trail bridge over the busy crossing at St. Charles Road and the Union Pacific Railroad. Engineering for the bridge is underway, with construction anticipated for 2013. The 2003 Proposed Improvement Plan for the Existing DuPage County Trail System includes the Great Western Trail Grace Street Bridge, which will be a new grade separation that will allow

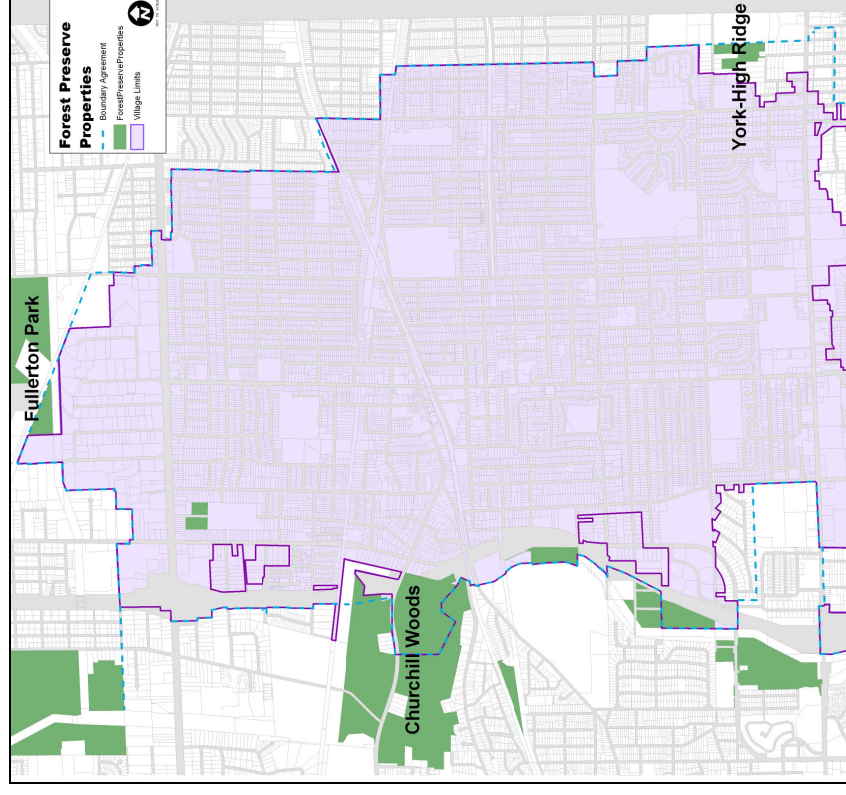
¹ Based upon Glen Ellyn Park District's fair market value of \$260,000 per acre of unimproved land and Lombard's 2005-2007 average household size of 2.45 persons.

the Great Western Trail to bridge Grace Street, the Union Pacific Railroad and St. Charles Road. The estimated cost of this project \$5.1 million.

In 2010, the County is working to remove the Churchill Woods Dam. This project is to improve dissolved oxygen levels, which was identified as a regulatory impairment for the DuPage River per the Total Maximum Daily Load program of the Clean Water Act. Subsequent to the dam removal there will be a resulting improvement in the river's habitat and spawning.

DuPage County Forest Preserve District

The Forest Preserve District does not have any sort of short-term or long-term facilities or acquisition plans as projects are undertaken on a case-by-case and funds-available basis, but there is comprehensive online information about their existing properties in and around Lombard.



Existing recreational facilities

Public facilities

Forest Preserve

The Forest Preserve District has one property (Broadview Slough) within Village limits and two forest preserves in unincorporated Lombard: Fullerton Park and York/High Ridge. Broadview Slough and York/High Ridge are undeveloped natural areas that are open to the public but offer no public parking. Fullerton Park is a 185-acre preserve that has approximately 12 percent of its area within Lombard's ultimate jurisdiction. Purchased for storm water retention in 1974, the preserve includes a model helicopter field and picnic tables.

Lombard Park District

The Lombard Park District has 16 parks within Village limits, ranging in size from the quarter-acre Water Spray Park to Madison Meadow's 86-acres.

Recreational facilities include Sunset Knoll Recreation Center and Fitness Center, Paradise Bay Water Park, Western Acres Golf Course, Lagoon Center, Lombard Community Building, and the Log Cabin.



Lombard Park District's sprinkler park offers an oasis for kids in downtown Lombard.

York Center Park District

York Center has two parks within unincorporated Lombard, Grammercy Park and Knolls Park.



York Center Park District's 0.5-acre Grammercy Park provides a playground and picnic area.

Butterfield Park District

Butterfield has one park within the Village limits (Brentwood Park) and two within unincorporated Lombard (Kensington and Hoffman parks).

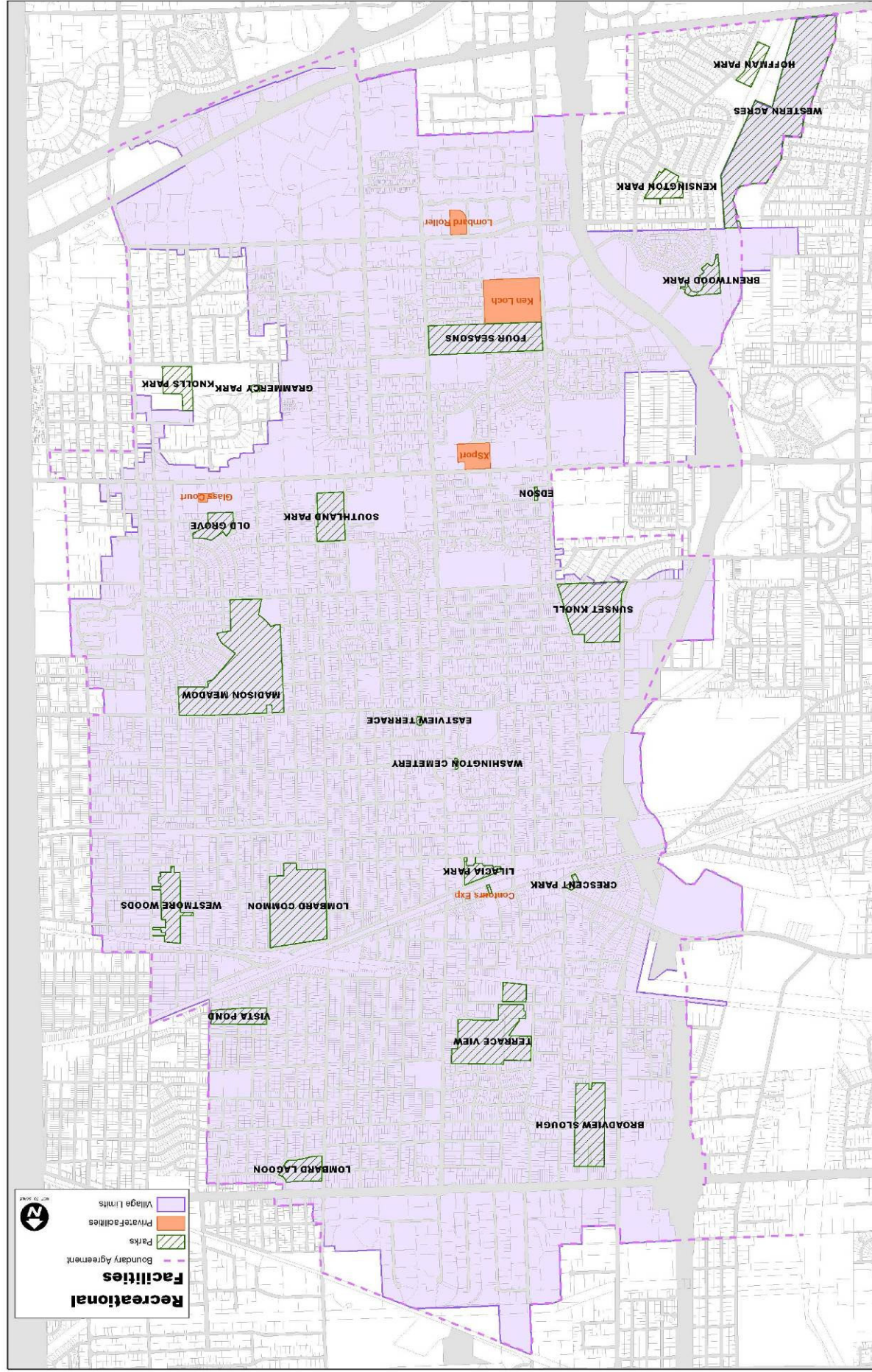
Private facilities

Indoor

Lombard has three private indoor fitness centers: Glass Court Swim and Fitness Club, XSport, and Contours Express. Lombard Roller Rink offers another indoor recreational option. Additional fitness class activities are offered through several private businesses.

Outdoor

Ken-Loch Golf Links is a short nine-hole golf course that is open to the public. Built in 1963, the facility offers a putting green and chipping area. The green fee of under \$20 includes unlimited replays.



Multi-use trails

The Village of Lombard is fortunate to have access to two established regional recreational trails – the Illinois Prairie Path and the Great Western Trail. There are also a number of regional trails currently being planned and implemented throughout the region, a few of which would traverse through Lombard. In order to take advantage of these regional trail systems, the 1998 Comprehensive Plan recommends that the Village develop a local trail system that links the two regional trails. Also, the local trail system should establish links between key activity centers, including: community facilities, high density residential concentrations and commercial and employment centers. From this recommendation, the Lilac Bike Way was created.

Existing Trails

Illinois Prairie Path

The Illinois Prairie Path spans approximately 61 miles in Cook, DuPage and Kane Counties in northeastern Illinois. A former right-of-way for the old Chicago Aurora & Elgin electric railroad, it was the first U.S. rail-to-trail conversion in the nation in the 1960's. Today, the Illinois Prairie Path is a multi-use nature trail, enjoyed by the public for non-motorized recreational use.

Great Western Trail

The Great Western Trail consists of three non-contiguous sections of an abandoned Chicago Great Western Railway corridor in Kane County, DuPage County and a section in Iowa that have been converted into biking and hiking trails. The Eastern Segment of the Great Western Trail, located in DuPage County, covers 12 miles of the former Great Western right-of-way from the Illinois Prairie Path's Elgin Branch in West Chicago east to the main stem of the Prairie Path in Villa Park.

Local Trails

In addition to the bike paths found in one of the many parks located throughout the Village, there are three existing local bikeways on the south end of town, extending along 22nd Street, on Finley between 22nd and Roosevelt, and along Elizabeth connecting 22nd Street with Four Seasons Park. Other local bikeways are planned to connect the Illinois Prairie Path and Great Western Trail with local parks and other amenities.

Proposed Trails

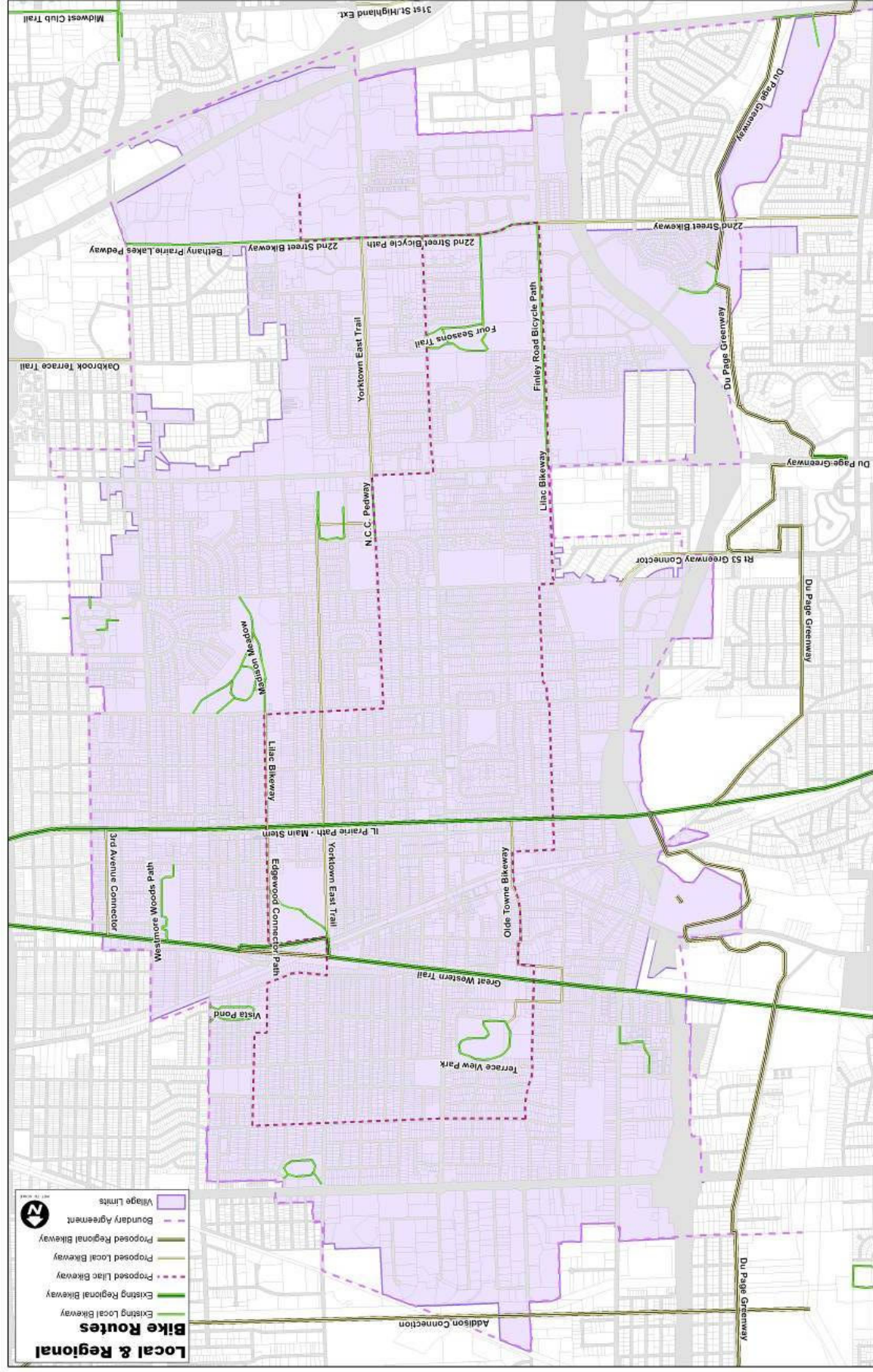
Proposed Regional Trails

The DuPage Greenway would be a major regional trail along the East Branch of the DuPage River, hugging Lombard's western boundary. The East Branch DuPage River Greenway Trail is a multi-jurisdictional project being implemented by affected communities, park districts, the DuPage County Forest Preserve District, and the DuPage County Division of Transportation. The goal of the trail is to link the North Central DuPage Regional Trail on the north with the Illinois Prairie Path, Great Western Trail, and the future Southern DuPage County Regional Trail to the south.

This trail, using a combination of off-road and on-road bikeways, will tie together the 10 forest preserves, including Churchill Woods. Through the Churchill Woods segment, the Great Western Trail and Illinois Prairie Path would become linked at the western border of Lombard. The trail will provide easy access to over 420,000 residents in central DuPage County, 29 local parks, 18 schools including College of DuPage and Benedictine University, and other destinations such as the Morton Arboretum. The trail also provides non-motorized access to employment centers, downtown areas, train stations, and other commute destinations. Communities with easy access to this new trail will include Bloomingdale, Addison, Glendale Heights, Glen Ellyn, Lombard, Wheaton, Lisle, Woodridge, and Bolingbrook. Currently, the trail is different phases of planning and implementation with the corresponding municipalities.

Proposed Lilac Bikeway

On March 6, 2008 the Village Board of Trustees voted to accept the Ad Hoc Trails and Transportation Safety Committee recommendations to make the necessary improvements in order to establish the Lilac Bike Way. The proposed Lilac Bike Way would traverse the central portion of Lombard - extending north from 22nd Street to Sunset Avenue and east to west from Vista Avenue to Finley Road. Per the recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan, the Lilac Bike Way would connect key activity centers by linking such areas as Yorktown, Lombard Commons, the Roosevelt Road Corridor and downtown Lombard. Also, a number of improvements were approved in order to bring the route into a safe usable condition includes: the installation of crosswalks, the widening of sidewalks, the installation sidewalk ramps, additional stop signs and other various right-of-way improvements.



Development regulations

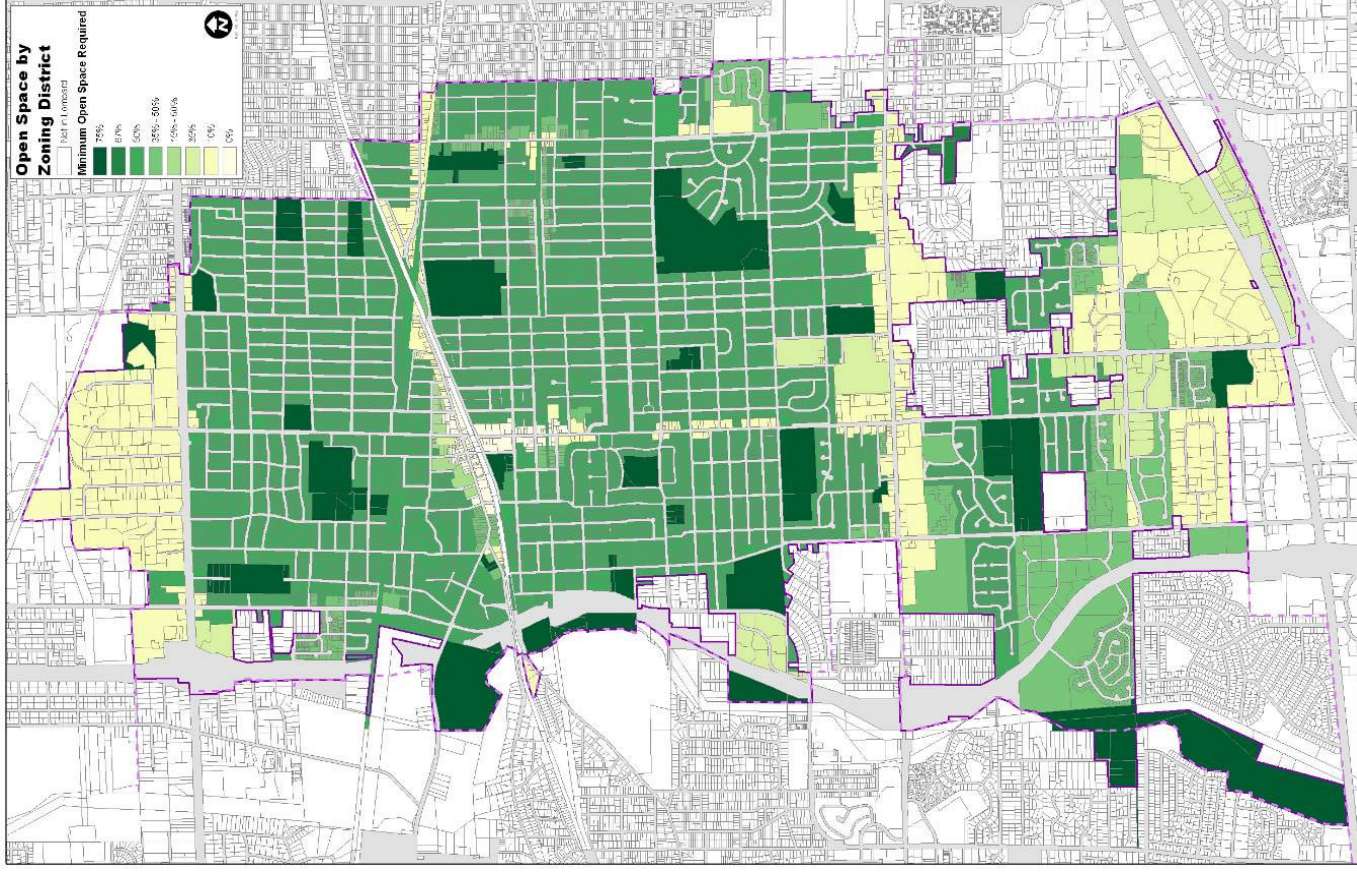
Zoning

The provision of adequate open space is itself one of the purposes of the Lombard Zoning Ordinance, which also lists a number of open-space related goals, including: adequate drainage, curbing of erosion, reduction of flood damage, environmental enhancement, the provision of public parks, and preventing overcrowding.

The Zoning Ordinance creates and preserves open space through required yards and a minimum required amount of open space on each lot. In the Zoning Ordinance, open space is defined as “is that portion of a lot or property maintained as lawn, garden, field, woods, wetland, or other natural landscape area and is free of buildings, structures and impervious surfaces.” This definition prevents structures such as decks, driveways, and patios from being counted as open space. The minimum required open space ranges depending on the intent and use of each zoning district, from zero percent in the Central Business District up to 75% in the Conservation Recreation District. Single-family homes and other R1 and R2-zoned properties, which account for half of Lombard’s zoned land area, are required to provide no less than 50 percent open space.

The open space requirement is a somewhat unique method of regulating bulk on a property. With the exception of Oakbrook Terrace, none of Lombard’s neighboring communities regulate the amount of total lot coverage (including all buildings, structures, and hard surfaces) throughout the village.

Many communities use alternative methods (such as floor area ratios, lot coverage, building setbacks, or maximum building footprints) to limit the size of buildings on a property. However, requiring a minimum amount of landscaped open space on each property provides direct environmental benefits that other methods cannot. Floor area ratios and similar bulk restrictions often exclude the visual impact of decks and patios. More significantly, they frequently allow property owners to pave an unlimited amount of the lot – up to 100%. This can (and does) lead to significant flooding issues. Lombard residents and property owners benefit from the open space requirement as it serves both to regulate bulk on a property and as a passive check on neighborhood flooding.



Stormwater detention

Pond utilization/ownership

Stormwater detention is a requirement of all new commercial and large residential developments. Generally, the detention occurs in earthen ponds that are the private property of the development. For new Village and Park District projects, detention is also required and again is generally in earthen ponds that detain water during storm events. These ponds can either be dry-bottom, which allows for other uses during dry periods such as athletic fields; or wet-bottom, which when combined with aerators or fountains, make for attractive centerpieces for walking trails, parks, etc. By way of example, Lombard Lagoons, Broadview Slough and Terrace View Pond are all Park District owned, wet-bottom detention facilities within open areas for the public to enjoy.

Special Management Areas

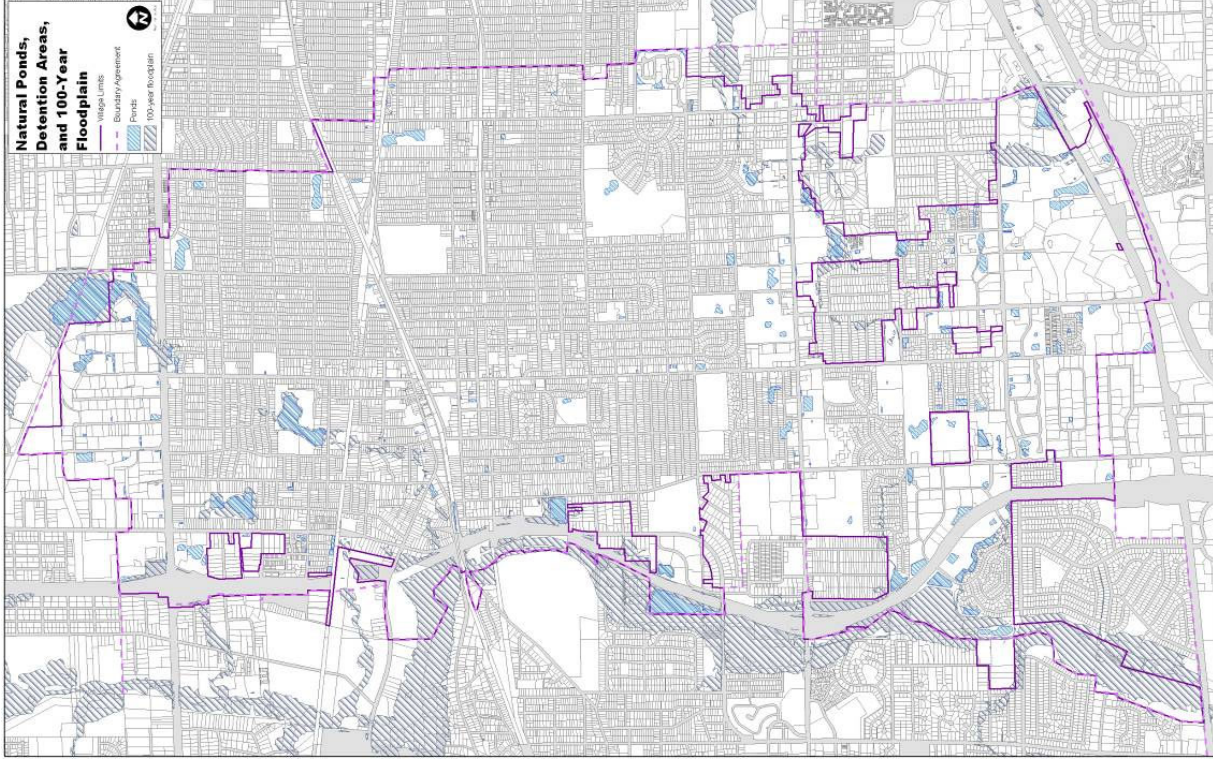
Floodplains, Wetlands and Natural Areas

The DuPage County Stormwater and Floodplain Ordinance controls development in Special Management Areas including wetlands and wetland buffers, riparian areas and regulatory floodplain. To minimize downstream flooding impacts, development is typically restricted in these areas. Additionally, wetlands are preserved during such projects and typically enhanced. These native areas are prime for viewing natural vegetation and some local wildlife. To ensure the ongoing functioning of these areas, conservation easements are typically required.

The ordinance also requires Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality. As of August 2008, all large scale developments within the County, including those in the Village, are required to both detain the stormwater run-off and treat the stormwater for pollutants. These treatment methods are generally referred to as BMPs, which use varying methods to control, capture, and treat stormwater pollutants. New developments will employ BMPs such as permeable pavers, green roofs, wetland-bottom ponds and other mechanical devices that remove the oils and greases and solids from the stormwater prior to it flowing off the site.

Conservation easements

A conservation easement is a legal document that is used to preserve open space and protect the environmental value of privately-owned land by restricting its use and development. Property owners are able to receive tax benefits in exchange for donating a conservation easement to a conservation organization or government entity (such as the Forest Preserve District) who accepts the responsibility to monitor the easement and enforce its terms. Several lots within the Village have conservation easements, including Christ the King Church, Our Lady of Lebanon Church, and a number of other residential and commercial properties.



Tools and Implementation

Key parcels

Forest Preserve unincorporated properties

The Forest Preserve owns properties in two key areas adjacent to the Village: on Grace Street north of North Avenue, and south of High Ridge Road near Willowbrook High School.

Ken-Loch Golf Links

Ken-Loch is a 29-acre private golf course that is wholly surrounded by the Village of Lombard, making it eligible for forcible annexation. The 1998 Comprehensive Plan designated this property for Estate Residential land uses. However, the 2009 Annexation Strategies Report stated that this property should only be annexed as part of a request and companion plan to enhance the open space/golf course amenity for the Village.

School sites used for purposes unrelated to student attendance

As noted in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, there are currently four school sites in Lombard used for purposes unrelated to student attendance. These include Peter Hoy, Fairwood, Highland Hills, and Green Valley. The school districts, park districts, or other agencies may identify a use for any of these facilities that may or may not include open space.

Recommendations

Annexation policies

Regarding Ken-Loch Golf Links, the Village should amend its previous annexation recommendations to ensure that the property remains in use as open space. The previously offered alternative of large-lot single family development would result in an irreplaceable loss of open space. Accordingly, the property should only be annexed as part of a request and companion plan to enhance the open space/golf course amenity for the Village.

The Village should also pursue the annexation of the Fullerton Park and York/High Ridge Forest Preserve properties within unincorporated Lombard (as shown on Page 4).

Development regulations

Maintaining the current open space requirements will continue to provide both aesthetic and stormwater benefits for Village properties. In order to ensure the maximum benefit from this regulation, the Village should continue to minimize any variations from the minimum requirements.

Bike routes and amenities

The Village should seek other amiable means of securing funds to establish the Lilac Bike Way to its full capacity. If the funding for the Lilac Bike Way is deemed too great for internal or external funding, it is recommended that the project be scaled back and emphasis be placed on providing a link between the Great Western Trail and Illinois Prairie Path through central Lombard, more specifically the downtown area.

To encourage cycling as both a recreational pursuit and a transportation option, the Village should identify locations where additional public bike racks and bike lockers should be located. Desirable sites could include linkages to public transportation, such as the Metra station and major bus stop locations.

Resources

DuPage County (<http://www.co.dupage.il.us/>)

- Proposed Improvement Plan for the DuPage County Trail System
<http://www.co.dupage.il.us/emplibrary/trailplanfinal2003.pdf>
- Regulatory Flood Maps
http://www.dupageco.org/dec/generic.cfm?doc_id=837
- Best Management Practices
http://www.co.dupage.il.us/stormwater/generic.cfm?doc_id=3547

DuPage County Forest Preserve District (<http://www.dupageforest.com/>)

Butterfield Park District (<http://www.butterfieldpd.com/>)

Glen Ellyn Park District (<http://www.gepark.org/>)

Lombard Park District (<http://www.lombardparks.com/>)

York Center Park District (<http://www.yorkcenterparks.org/>)

Village of Lombard (<http://www.villageoflombard.org/>)

- Flood Control Ordinance
<http://www.villageoflombard.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=497>
- Zoning Ordinance
<http://www.villageoflombard.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=501>
- Comprehensive Plan
- Public Works Department Environmental Information
<http://www.villageoflombard.org/index.asp?nid=331>