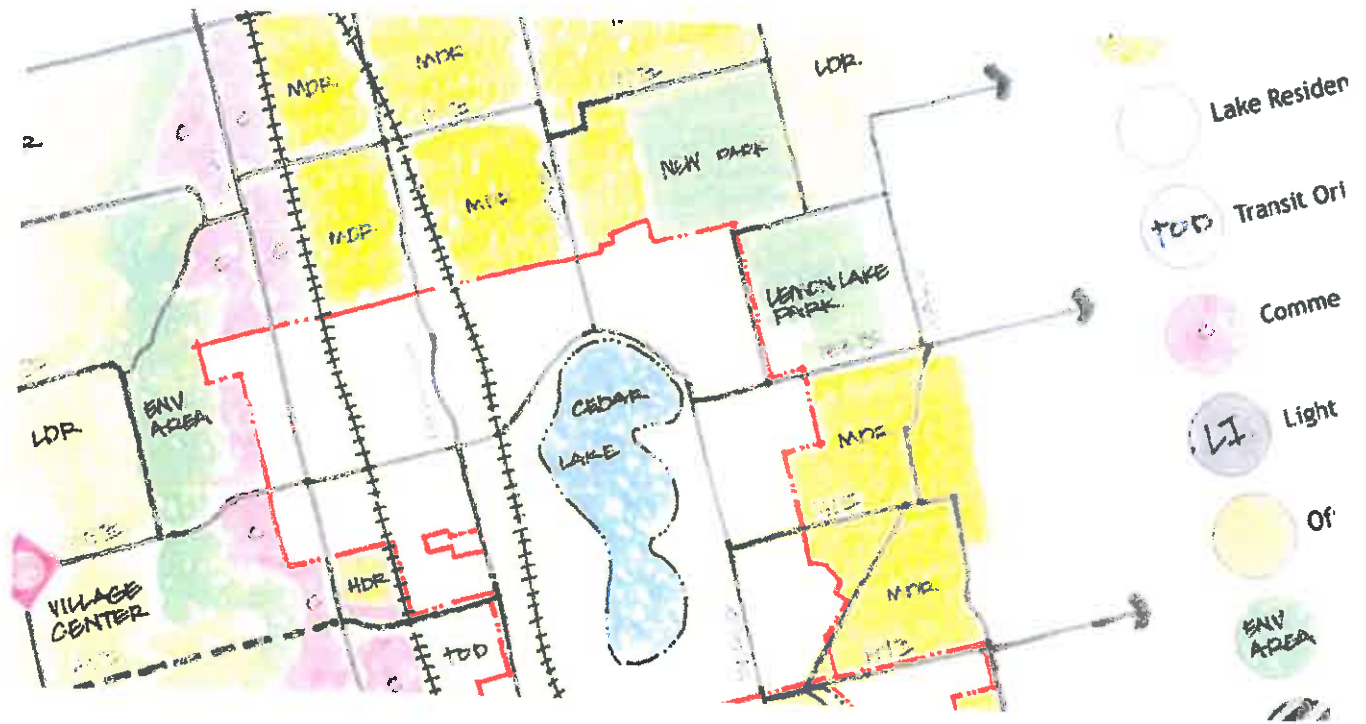




2012 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE Lake County, Indiana





2012 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE Lake County, Indiana

Town Council

Randell Niemeyer, Council President
Dale Poston, Vice President
Robert H. Carnahan
John C. Foreman
Ralph Miller
Patsy Casassa
Greg Parker

Plan Commission

Timothy Kubiak, President
Diane Cusack
Dennis Wilkening
Stacy Brooks
John Foreman, Town Council Liaison
Greg Parker, Town Council Liaison
Robert H. Carnahan, Town Council Liaison

Town Staff

Ian Nicolini, Town Administrator
Jen Montgomery, Recording Secretary
Town Engineer
David M. Austgen, Town Attorney
Adam M. Sworden, Town Attorney, AICP

With Assistance From

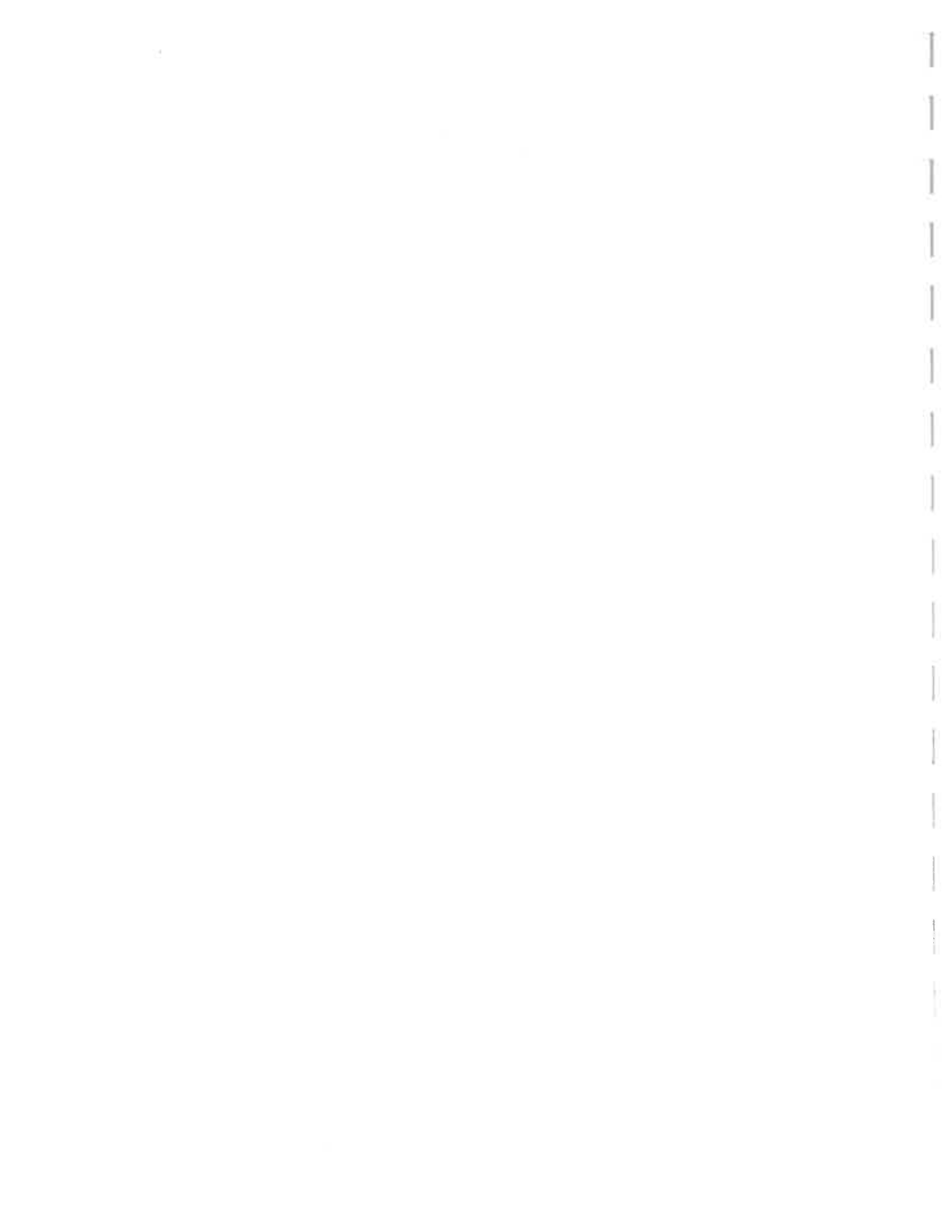
**AUSTGEN KUIPER & ASSOCIATES, P.C.**
130 N. Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307



LSL Planning, Inc.
277 E. 12th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202
www.lslplanning.com



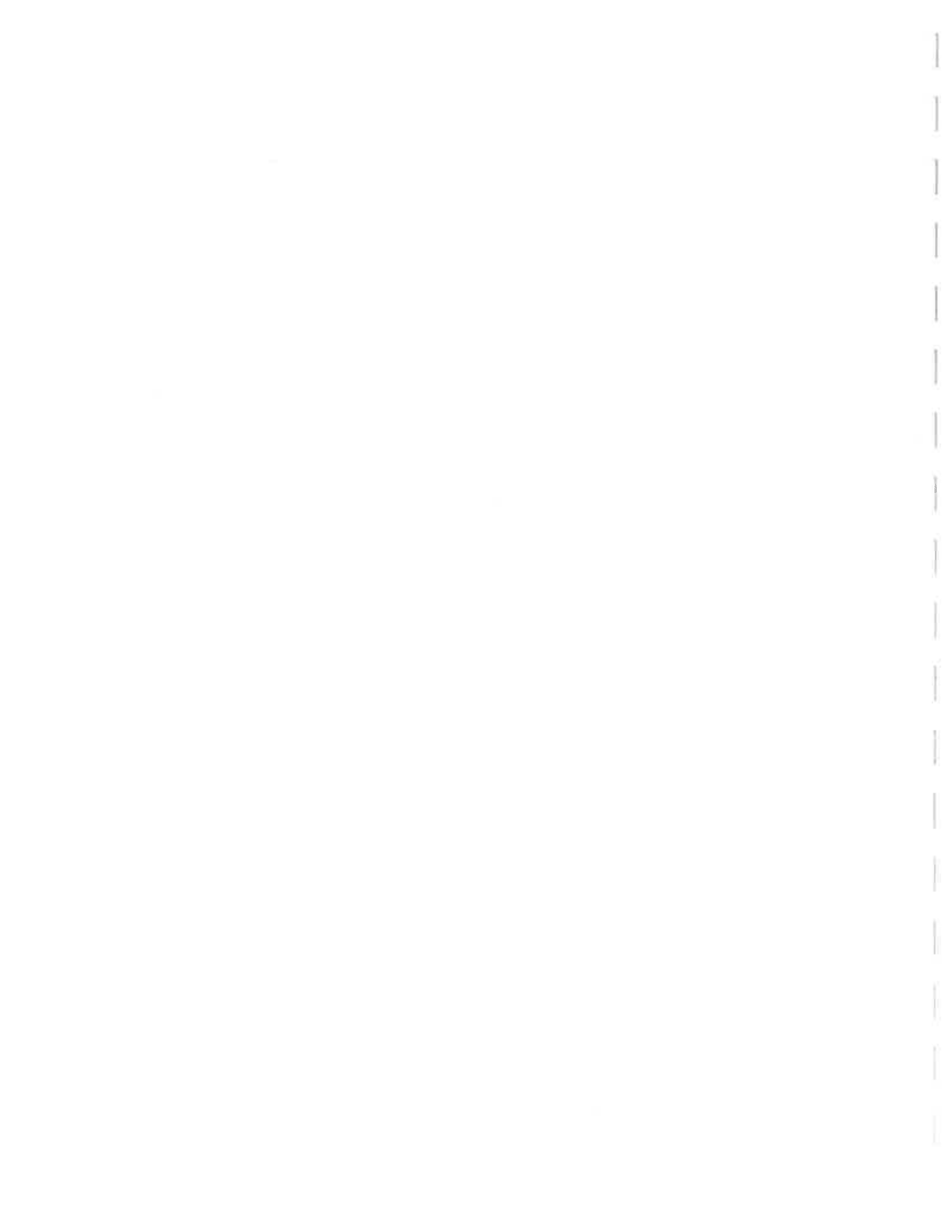
CBA
277 E. 12th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202
<http://cbastudios.net>





"Make big plans; aim high in hope and work remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will not die."

Daniel Burnham





CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

TOWN HISTORY	1-2
PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS	1-4
PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW	1-5
STATUTORY PLAN REQUIREMENTS	1-7
PLANNING PROJECT AREA	1-7
FIGURE 1: PLANNING STUDY AREA	

CHAPTER TWO

COMMUNITY PROFILE

INTRODUCTION	2-2
NATURAL FEATURES	2-3
EXISTING LAND USE	2-5
FIGURE 2: EXISTING LAND USE	2-6
TRANSPORTATION	2-14
FIGURE 3: EXISTING TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION	2-16
FIGURE 4: EXISTING PARKS, TRAILS & OPEN SPACE	2-17
UTILITY SERVICE AREAS	2-18
FIGURE 5: EXISTING UTILITIES & SERVICE AREAS	2-19
HOUSING PROFILE	2-22
EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUTING PATTERNS	2-24
GROWTH	2-25

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER THREE

ISSUES

COMMUNITY CHARACTER	3-2
LAND USE	3-4
COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT	3-9
STREETS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES	3-16
FIGURE 6: ILLIANA EXPRESSWAY PROPOSED ROUTE	3-18

CHAPTER FOUR
CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	4-2
COMMUNITY VISION	4-4
GOALS	4-4
OVERALL LAND USE ALTERNATIVES	4-6
FIGURE 7: TOWN LAND USE ALTERNATIVE	4-7
FIGURE 8: TOWN CENTER ALTERNATIVE #1	4-9
FIGURE 9: TOWN CENTER ALTERNATIVE #2	4-9
FIGURE 10: TOWN CENTER ALTERNATIVE #3	4-10
FIGURE 11: PLANNING AREA LAND USE ALTERNATIVE #1	4-12
FIGURE 12: FUTURE LAND USE PLAN	4-14

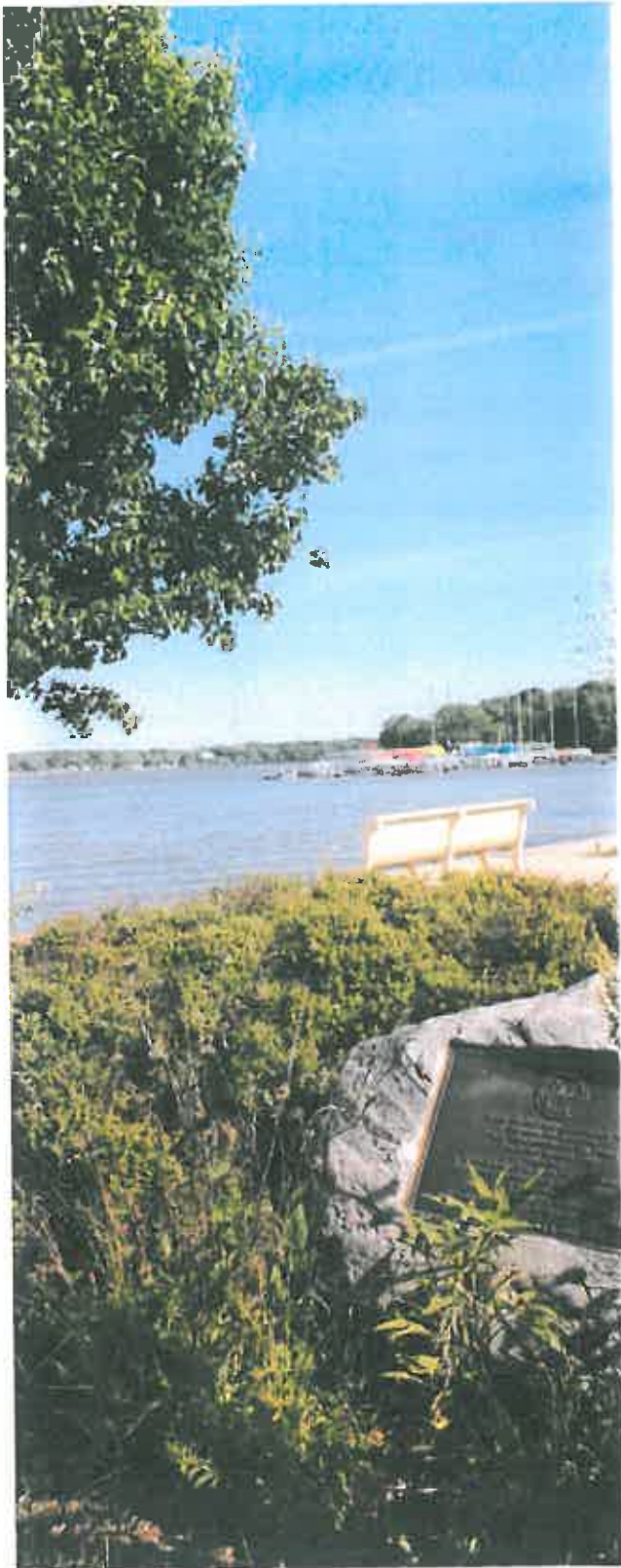
CHAPTER FIVE
FUTURE LAND USE

LAND USE PLAN	5-2
GENERAL LAND USE DESCRIPTIONS	5-2
SPECIFIC LAND USE PLAN ELEMENTS	5-16
FIGURE 12: LIVABLE CENTER CONCEPT PERSPECTIVE	5-17
FIGURE 13: WEST 133RD AVE. LIVABLE CENTER	5-20
FIGURE 14: U.S. 41 GATEWAY CONCEPT	5-25
CONNECTIVITY PLAN	5-37
FIGURE 15: TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION PLAN	5-38
FIGURE 16: PARKS, TRAILS & OPENS SPACE PLAN	5-39
FIGURE 17: CARRIAGE WALKS STREET SECTION	5-40
FIGURE 18: GREENWAY STREET SECTION	5-40
FIGURE 19: MULTI-USE PATH STREET SECTIONS	5-41
FIGURE 20: SINGLE SIDEWALK STREET SECTION	5-41
FIGURE 21: FUTURE UTILITIES & SERVICES AREA PLAN	5-46
FIGURE 22: TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE FUTURE ANNEXATION AREAS	5-49



CHAPTER SIX
ACTION PLAN

ACTION PLAN MATRIX	6-2
TABLE 9: IMMEDIATE ACTIONS	6-2
TABLE 10: MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS	6-5
TABLE 11: LONG TERM ACTIONS	6-6



Cedar Lake is a unique community in Lake County, indeed in all of Northwest Indiana. The town is inextricably connected to the lake of the same name, that was home to several Native American communities before pioneer settlement in the mid nineteenth century.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Town History

The lake is the focal point of the community and is a rare natural feature in this part of the country. The lake was formed by glaciers that otherwise left most of Northwest Indiana flat and dry. For the Native Americans and the pioneer settlers who first came upon Cedar Lake, it must have been a surprising sight. Cedar Lake is one of the largest inland natural lakes in Indiana, with approximately 787 acres of surface area. The large marsh south of the lake was undoubtedly part of the lake at one time, before the south shore area was drained. The Cedar Lake Marsh is one of the largest contiguous wetlands in the State of Indiana.

Early Settlement

By the 1870's the pioneers had platted small settlements around the lake, such as West Point, Fairport and Armour Town. The first school in Lake County, the Ball School, was built in 1838 (today's Jane Ball School carries on this tradition). By 1870, a post office was established as the Cedar Lake Post Office, providing the official name to the area.

The Monon Railroad arrived to the lake's western shore in 1882. The 2.5 mile section of the railroad that passed by the lake was considered the most scenic

section of the entire railroad. With the railroad came new residents, as well as entrepreneurs who recognized the value of the lake as a tourist destination.

Resort Days

Cedar Lake became a mecca for Chicagoans and others seeking a lakeside retreat. From the late 1800's into the early 1900's, Cedar Lake had over 50 hotels, several steamboat tour lines and numerous lakeside cottages. While nearby Crown Point's courthouse was a popular place for weddings, Cedar Lake became the location of choice for honeymoons. The railroad brought people from Chicago as well as from points south to enjoy the lake and the many entertainments in the area. Names such as Chicago retailer and philanthropist John G. Shedd, the Armour brothers (of meat packing fame) and famous foot doctor William Scholl are among those who contributed to the history of Cedar Lake during this era. Several ballrooms and pavilions dotted the lakefront, such as the Midway Gardens and the Lassen Pavilion, bringing in nationally-known bands to entertain area residents and visitors.

Today's Lake of the Red Cedars Museum was originally the Lassen Hotel and is the only surviving structure from Cedar



Lake's resort era. Part of the building was actually built on the west side of the lake to house workers engaged in ice cutting for the Armour Meat Packing Company. This building was slid across the frozen lake during the winter of 1919 and added to the Lassen. Before refrigeration, ice cutting was an important industry in the area, providing ice to the growing industries of the Chicago and Northwest Indiana metropolis. The Lake of the Red Cedars Museum preserves many photos and artifacts of Cedar Lake's resort and ice cutting heritage.

Change and Decline

Local citizens tried in 1914, 1933 and 1950 to incorporate the Town. After much vehement opposition, court hassles and expense, Cedar Lake was finally incorporated in 1970.

Although the resort days brought prosperity and growth, particularly with cottage subdivisions, by the 1940's greater mobility afforded tourists access to further destinations. As a result, Cedar Lake's popularity as a resort area began to decline. The hotels closed and were demolished, one by one. Although the Midway Gardens Ballroom survived into the 1980's, by 1990 the lakefront no longer hosted a variety of lodging, dining and entertainment. Cottages that were built as seasonal dwellings were converted to year-round dwellings, and the lakefront was lined mostly with homes of various sizes and a few marina businesses. Only a few businesses remain that draw people to the lakefront, such as the Dairy Queen and the Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center.

With the shift in emphasis, Cedar Lake's economy now relied upon year-round residents who found jobs in Chicago or

Northern Lake County. Since attracting visitors lost its importance, upkeep of many small homes declined. Town revenues also declined, and budgets could not keep up with street maintenance and other needs. By the end of the 20th Century, the Town had declined and evidence of its former glory was difficult to find. The general image of the Town, to residents and outsiders, was of a community in decline.

New Growth

However, through the 1990's the economy in the south Chicago suburbs and parts of Lake County continued to prosper. Towns such as Schererville and Merrillville began to grow, with many new homes, businesses and a large regional mall. People from Chicago and points beyond began to discover Northwest Indiana, with its cheaper land prices and easy connections to Chicago. Development began to extend ever further south, fueling the growth of small Towns like St. John. With inexpensive land and very highly regarded school districts, it was inevitable that this wave of activity would eventually reach Cedar Lake.

New subdivisions began to spring up in outlying areas, and in the mid '90s the Havenwood and Robin's Nest developments began a wave of quality single family subdivisions within the Town boundaries. Cedar Lake suddenly became a "hot" market, and new subdivisions were approved faster than they could be built. Additional land was annexed to the Town to accommodate sewer extensions and new developments. As of the writing of this Plan, there were nearly 2,800 dwelling units under construction, approved and awaiting construction, or in the planning approval phases.

In addition, two (2) other major changes may be just over the horizon that could significantly affect the Town's future. The State of Indiana has begun preliminary corridor studies for a new expressway that would connect Interstate 55, just over the state line in Illinois, to Interstate 65 in Indiana. This "Illiana Expressway" corridor is planned just south of the Town, with preliminary plans showing an interchange at US 41. This expressway has the potential to have a major impact on land use and development in the Town.

The Town may also benefit from an extension of the South Shore Transit rail line that connects South Bend and Northwest Indiana to Chicago. This extension, which is in the planning stages and has strong support from the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission and the area municipalities, would follow the existing CSX Rail line south from Hammond and go through Cedar Lake before terminating in Lowell. A station would be provided in Cedar Lake, and at least two locations are being considered. Providing easier transit access to Chicago would also likely fuel residential and commercial growth in the region.

In 2006 the Town Council recognized the need to plan for the future of the Town. It was hoped that growth would help fuel redevelopment of the existing portions of Cedar Lake, but not at any price. Town leaders realized that quality development needed to be guided by Town policies that set a higher standard. This Comprehensive Plan was born from the desire of Cedar Lake to take control of land development for a better future.

In 2012, the Town Council further recognized

the need to update the Plan to address changes to land use, updated demographic information following the release of the 2010 U.S. Census data, and recent planning efforts for the Illiana Expressway identifying two (2) proposed routes just south of the current Town's corporate boundary.

Previous Planning Efforts

Since incorporation, the Town has adopted only two (2) Comprehensive Plans to guide future development, including the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. If the plan is not revisited frequently and updated when necessary, it tends to be placed "on the shelf" and not consulted as time goes on. This 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update reconfirms the commitment made by the Town in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan to be proactive in identifying and planning for future change.

1980 Master Plan

The 1980 Master Plan was adopted in February 1980 and was compiled with the assistance of the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission. This plan used a "nominal group process" to solicit public input at several public meetings.



Consensus on issues and goals led to a plan that was centered on school and park facilities as the primary factor in siting and expanding residential neighborhoods.

The plan included implementation recommendations for parks acquisition and expansion (parks plans today are separate from the Comprehensive Plan), a thoroughfare plan and a land use plan. This plan did not propose major changes from the land use patterns in effect at the time, nor did it anticipate the kind of growth the Town faces today. For this reason, as well as the age of the plan, it is no longer effective for planning purposes.

2007 Comprehensive Plan

The 2007 Comprehensive Plan was adopted in July 2007 and is the current baseline and catalyst for future planning efforts within the Town. Being the first planning update in twenty-seven (27) years, the Town undertook extensive public input and outreach efforts, including key stakeholder interviews, to assess the Town's current and future land use needs and goals.

Planning Process Overview

The 2007 Comprehensive Plan was prepared in cooperation with the Town Staff, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, the Plan Commission, and the Town Council. The following is an overview of the planning process:

☒ **Project Kick-Off:** A meeting with the Steering Committee in November, 2006 provided an opportunity for the consultants to meet the Committee, tour the Town and learn about the Town from its residents. This meeting also began the process of data collection.

☒ **Public Involvement:** Once data collection was complete, Cedar Lake went well beyond the typical plan process for public outreach by conducting personal interviews, a focus group, a workshop open to the public and Public Workshops In a Box. Press releases were used before and after each event to further the outreach efforts. These efforts are described in more detail below. The results are discussed in Chapter 3.

☒ **Draft Plan Preparation** : Based on comments received through the public involvement process, a draft plan was prepared and reviewed by the appointed Steering Committee. The document was revised based on their comments and forwarded to the Plan Commission.

☒ **Adoption Process:** The Plan was adopted in accordance with Indiana Code. The Plan Commission held a public hearing on July 11, 2007, at which residents expressed opinions and had their questions answered. The Plan Commission recommended that the Town Council adopt the Plan.

Public Involvement Summary

Engaging the public and seeking community involvement was a priority in drafting the 2007 Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the vision, goals, and recommendations captured the values and ideals of the community. A variety of methods were employed for area residents to be involved. Workshops, focus groups, a steering committee and plan commission meetings, as well as independent take-home meetings called "Public Workshops-In-A-Box," allowed everyone a chance to participate.

☒ **Steering Committee:**

A 13-person Steering Committee was appointed by the Town Council to provide guidance and discussion on developing the Comprehensive Plan. The steering committee met with the planning consultants to direct the public participation process, review drafts, and make suggestions for the final plan.

☒ **Personal Interviews:**

One-on-one interviews with key Cedar Lake individuals early in the process provided an assessment of perceived challenges and opportunities for the Town. Asked to describe the ideal Cedar Lake, almost all participants chose words such as 'Progressive', 'Clean' and 'Prosperous'.

☒ **Public Forums:**

A focus group, public open house and "public workshops in a box" were conducted as part of discovering local issues, areas of concern and possible recommendations for future development. Nearly 300 people participated in one or more of these events.

☒ **Public Hearing:**

Once a draft of the plan was completed and was placed on file for review by the public, a public hearing was held to allow an additional opportunity for public comment. This was held at a Planning Commission meeting on July 11, 2007.

Cedar Lake Ecosystem

Restoration Project

Over time, Cedar Lake has degraded in both water quality and as an aquatic habitat. Sedimentation, runoff and nutrient

loading have all contributed to the lake's current condition. Until recently, there were no plans or controls to protect the lake or provide for its restoration.

In March 2005, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the Cedar Lake Enhancement Association, began a five year environmental restoration project, under the Corps' Section 206 ecosystem restoration authority. A main objective of this partnership is to restore and/or protect aquatic habitat for plants, fish, and other wildlife species. The overall project goals are:

1. Remedy problems in the watershed contributing to the degradation of Cedar Lake's ecosystem.
2. Restore fish and wildlife habitat and create a healthier lake ecosystem.
3. Increase biodiversity in the Cedar Lake ecosystem while reducing abundance of non-native species.
4. Improve water quality in Cedar Lake and reduce turbidity in the water column.

Throughout the creation of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, residents repeatedly expressed concern about the lake and its condition. These same concerns are present today and continued restoration and maintenance of the lake are a primary goal and focus in this update to the Plan.

Adoption Process

Indiana Code requires a Comprehensive Plan, including updates to same, be prepared by the Advisory Plan Commission and adopted by the legislative body of the Town. Once the final draft of the updated



Plan was completed and approved by the Planning Commission, a certified recommendation on its approval after a public hearing was forwarded to the Town Council. The Town Council approved the Comprehensive Plan by resolution on August __, 2012. A copy of the resolution is included in the Appendix.

Statutory Plan Requirements

Indiana Code, at IC 36-7-4-502, states that a Comprehensive Plan must contain at least three elements:

1. A statement of objectives for the future development of the jurisdiction;
2. A statement of policy for the land use development of the jurisdiction;
3. A statement of policy for the development of public ways, public places, public lands, public structures, and public utilities.

These requirements are addressed in Chapter 4, entitled "Concept Development", addressing goals and objectives of the Plan, and Chapter 5, entitled "Future Land Use Plan", which identified land use and public facility policies. Additionally, IC 36-7-4-503 provides a list of elements that may be included in a Comprehensive Plan. The Cedar Lake Comprehensive Plan is focused on future land use within the designated Planning Area, and makes recommendations regarding several of the other elements listed in the Indiana Code, such as public ways, transportation facilities, parks and open spaces, public buildings and institutions, public works and capital facilities planning, and thoroughfare planning.



Cedar Lake - the Town's most important resource

Planning Project Area

After analyzing the data and conferring with the Steering Committee for the update, the overall planning project area was defined to include the planned sewer service area and a flag-shaped area in the south-west that picks up the proposed Illiana Expressway corridor. This updated Planning Area is comprised of approximately 36 square miles (see Figure 1). The Planning Area extends west to the Indiana/Illinois state line, includes land north of Town to US 231 and south to 173rd Street, Lake Dalecarlia and the hamlets of Brunswick and Klaasville. A six-mile long section of US 41 connecting Cedar Lake with St. John and Lowell passes through the Planning Area. The area around 173rd Street was added to the Planning Area to include the B3 and A3S2 alternative proposed routes for the Illiana Expressway. Several existing subdivisions, as well as some established businesses and small industries in outlying areas are also included.















The following chapters of this Comprehensive Plan Update will focus on the entire Planning Area. Areas within the Town that are much more intensely

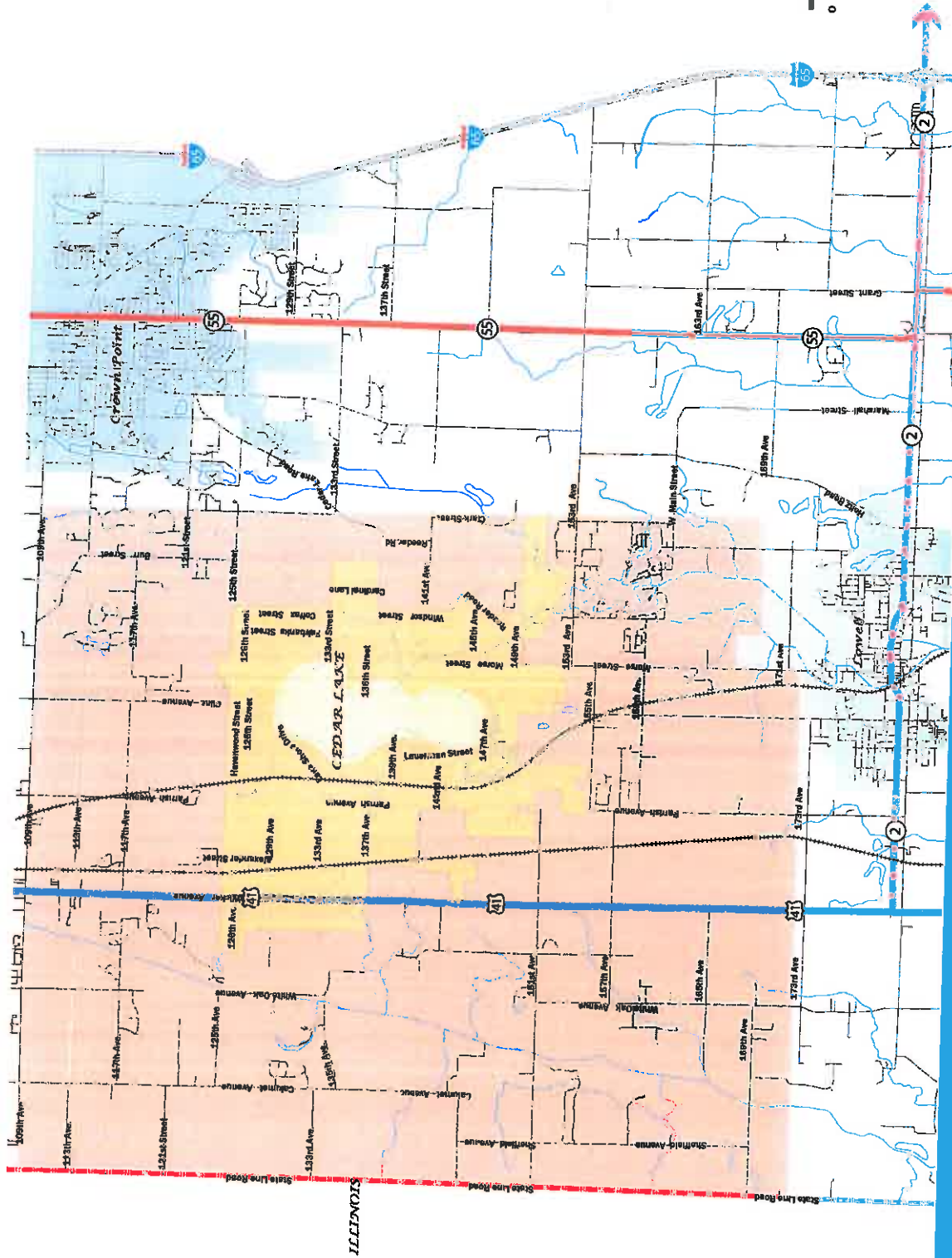
developed, or present particular planning challenges or goals, will be addressed in more detailed sub-area plans and maps. When the entire Planning Area is referenced, it is hereinafter referred to as the "Planning Area."



Figure 1
Town of Cedar Lake
Planning Study Area

Figure Legend

-  Town of Cedar Lake
-  Town of Lowell
-  City of Crown Point
-  State of Illinois
-  Planning Study Area
-  Route 55
-  Route 41
-  Route 2
-  Local Street
-  Interstate 65
-  Cedar Lake Boundary
-  State Boundary Line
-  Railroad
-  Streams







The Town of Cedar Lake is located in Lake County, Indiana with the town's western border approximately two (2) miles from the Illinois/Indiana border. Located only one (1) hour south of Chicago, the Town is ideally located near employment centers and major highways. The Town has easy access to U.S. Route 41 and Interstate 65.

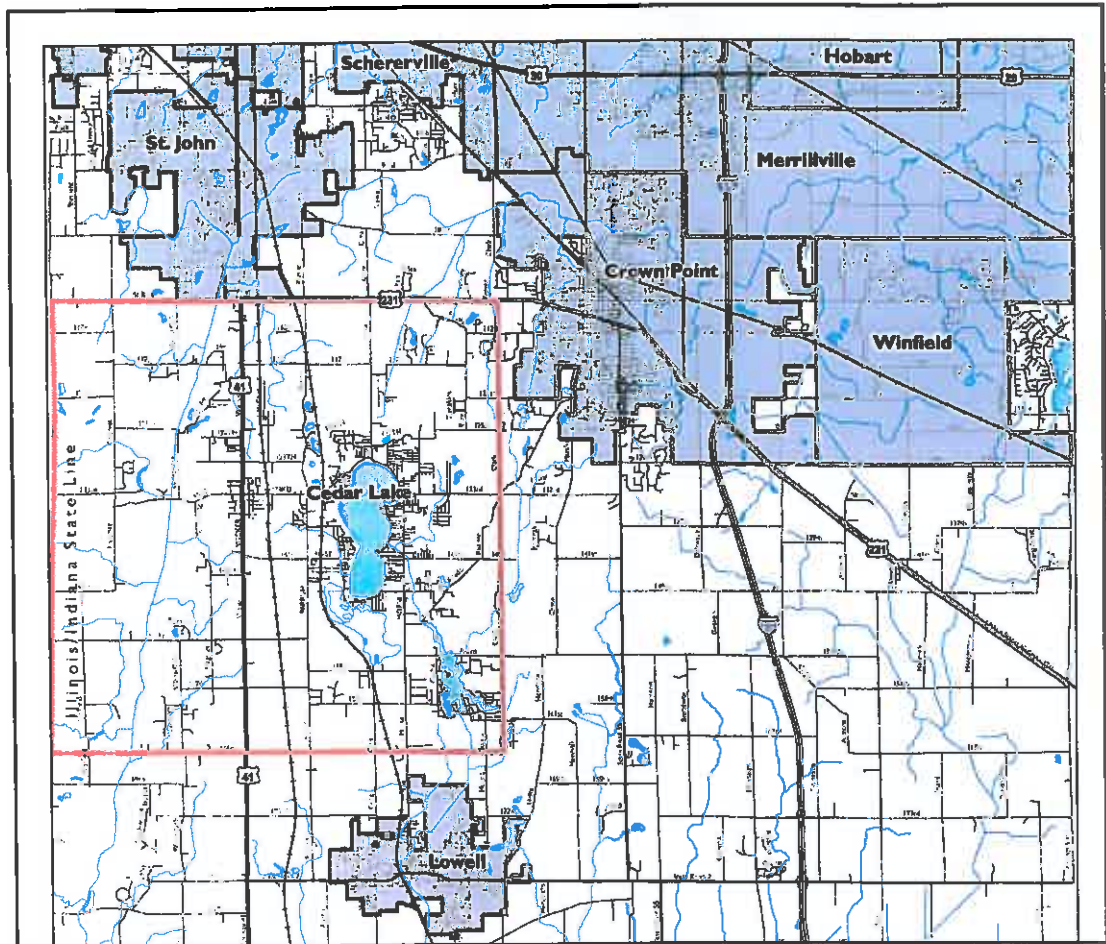
CHAPTER TWO
COMMUNITY PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

During the last 45 years, Cedar Lake (along with other communities in the vicinity (e.g., St. John, Schererville, Lowell, Crown Point, etc.) has experienced steady growth as the outlying southern suburbs of the City of Chicago have grown. This is in addition to the growth occurring from individuals and families leaving the immediate Chicago Metropolitan Area and the State of Illinois due to increasing taxes and the cost of living in and around the Chicago Metropolitan Area. This growth in the Town and surrounding communities of Northwest Indiana has spurred new residential development leading to several annexations within the Town.

While the majority of recent development in Cedar Lake has been residential, the influx of new residents has created a demand for additional commercial and industrial development. Presently, there are several commercial projects undertaking the planning process, with a few others preparing for and under construction. With the increase in residential and commercial growth, along with the influx of individuals and families from Illinois, the population of Cedar Lake is expected to increase dramatically over the next twenty (20) years, causing greater pressure on current Town infrastructure and creating demand for the expansion of municipal services. This increase may also occur more rapidly if the Illiana Expressway

Cedar Lake
Regional
Location



and/or Peotone/South Suburban Airport are approved and begin construction. This chapter will review and identify the characteristics of the Town's natural systems, land use, and people (demographics) that comprise Cedar Lake and its surroundings.

NATURAL FEATURES

During the public participation phase of the planning process for the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, most residents stated a need for improvements to Cedar Lake's natural environment. While a majority of responses focused on the lake itself, the integral relationship of other natural features (wetlands, topography, and vegetation) to the overall health of the lake watershed were also discussed. Figure 4 shows some of the major natural features within the Cedar Lake Planning Area.

Watershed Resources

Cedar Lake

The nearly 800-acre lake is central to the entire Town and the most significant contributor to the area's identity. Coveted for prime residential living, the majority of the lakefront is already developed. The lake is faced with many water quality related issues, such as direct storm water discharge, sewer system overflows, intensity of land development and an accumulation of sediment. Additionally, some areas around the lake are separated from access by public streets and private property, limiting access to the lake in some areas. According to a public opinion poll conducted by the Cedar Lake Ecosystem Restoration Project, nearly

78% of the respondents believe that the lake is degraded and needs improvement. In recent years, lake restoration efforts have received increased attention and agency coordination. In March 2005, the Army Corps of Engineers, along with the Town, began a five (5) year restoration project to improve overall water quality. The focus of this joint local/Federal effort will be to reduce the amount of sedimentation and nutrient loading, restore area wetlands and increase the filtering capacity of Cedar Lake Marsh.



Cedar Lake looking southwest from the Lighthouse Restaurant



Cedar Lake looking southeast from the scenic overlook on Lakeshore Drive

Lake Dalecarlia

Lake Dalecarlia is a smaller lake located south of the Town. This lake is an impoundment fed by Cedar Creek and owned by the Lake Dalecarlia Property Owners Association. Lake Dalecarlia was created as a summer resort in 1929 and is today a year-round residential community of approximately 1,300 residents surrounding a 180-acre lake. The area is served by its own sanitary sewer system, as well as its own post office, community center and convenience store. The lake has a unique sand, clay and shale lake bottom that keeps the lake bed from collapsing (which is a common problem for man-made lakes), resulting in less maintenance and cost to the property owners.

Wetlands

Wetlands are areas that are seasonably wet or saturated throughout the year. They are scattered throughout the Town of Cedar Lake and along its borders, with the majority of contiguous wetlands found along the edge of waterways. The largest wetland area, Cedar Lake Marsh, is located south of Cedar Lake. Wetlands are vital to the environmental quality of Cedar Lake and serve a variety of important functions, such as:

- Mitigating flooding by detaining and slowing the velocity of surface runoff;
- Controlling soil erosion and sediment loading in creeks and lakes;
- Providing filtering of surface runoff containing pollutants that contaminate groundwater;

- Providing links with ground water and improving overall water quality, and;
- Providing important habitats for wild-life and plants.

Woodlands

There are large contiguous tracts of woodlands along West Creek and northeast of Cedar Lake near the Main Beaver Dam Ditch-Headwaters. Public land holdings, such as Lemon Lake Park, provide large areas of natural woodlands for public recreation and enjoyment. Woodlands are important to Cedar Lake's quality of life since they act as buffers and moderate flooding, erosion, and noise and air pollution. Some of their benefits include:

- Protecting the Cedar Lake watershed and soils. Forest vegetation moderates the effects of winds and storms, stabilizes and enriches the soil, and slows runoff, allowing the forest floor to filter groundwater.
- Providing visual relief along roadways.
- Providing a rich and varied environment for plants and animals. Woodlands within the Town are mainly limited to street trees; however, pockets are also located near the wetlands to the south and east of the lake.

Soils and Topography

The physiographic conditions within the Cedar Lake region are characteristic of many Kankakee River basin communities, which as a result of the Wisconsinan glacier activities 15,000 years ago, created a low and level terrain. Elevations

within the area range from 660 to 780 feet above sea level. The overall topography of Cedar Lake is level with the highest elevations, up to 80 additional feet, to the north and northeast of Cedar Lake. Lower elevations found to the south of Cedar Lake near Cedar Lake Marsh have created local drainage issues such as standing water on streets and yards.

Cedar Lake's urbanization has engineered the landscape to accommodate development through the use of storm sewers, gutters and surface ditches to drain area lands. As a result, dependence on soil types to limit or design future development will have little influence in the urban areas of Town. However, development restrictions in undeveloped areas should be carefully evaluated to protect the area's ability to naturally infiltrate rain water and prevent excess storm water runoff. Many of these undeveloped areas contain loamy and clayey glacial till. In order to prevent excess soil loss, construction activities can be staged to minimize the amount of soil exposed to reduce the amount of erosion and runoff potential that may occur.

A large portion of soils in the Planning Area are hydric (wet) soils. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource and Conservation Service, hydric soils are defined as "a soil that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop a limited oxygen level in the upper part of the soil." This limited oxygen level prohibits many plants, other than wetland plants, from growing in these conditions. Future development in areas of hydric soils should be given careful site plan and improvement location permit review to provide for adequate

drainage, storm water management and on-site preservation of natural vegetation.

Existing Land Use



Much of the soil and natural features around the lake are hydric, especially those to the south where a large wetland/marsh habitat exists that acts as a filter for runoff into the lake.

Source: NRCS
Soil Viewer
2012





An understanding of existing land use patterns is a fundamental step in preparing a Comprehensive Plan. The analysis not only examines the positive and negative aspects of past land use decisions, but also to help predict future development trends, where development may occur and where potential conflicts may exist. Land use patterns develop according to geographic location, access to transportation, land use and zoning policies, and environmental, economic, social and cultural influences. The location of a building, the routing of a street or highway, construction of sanitary sewers, and many other factors affect, and have an effect on, the shape of existing and future land use patterns.

Figure 2, "Existing Land Use", shows the locations of current land uses within the Town. Parcel data is unavailable for the Planning Area outside Town limits.

Agriculture

The predominant land use in the Planning Area, particularly west of the Town, is agriculture. Soils are conducive to farming activities and active farms are evident throughout this area. Residential development has encroached upon farming in many areas, although much of this has occurred in woodlands and areas that may not be appropriate for farmland.

Residential

The predominance of small single family homes on small lots connected by narrow streets reflects Cedar Lake's heritage as a resort and lake community. Many of these homes were once seasonal cottages. Over time many of these cottages have been modified and expanded to accommodate year-round use. More recently, property owners have bought multiple lots adjacent to one another, demolished the existing cottages, and have built large-scale homes along the water's edge. This type of development is in stark contrast to the older cottage style and resort-like characteristics of Cedar Lake neighborhoods.

While cottage style development is currently the most typical residential pattern in Cedar Lake, the Town is experiencing an increase in suburban development. Much of the new growth is expected to be suburban in style, which is characterized by medium to large lots, homes

Cottage Homes located along the northwest waterfront off Lakeshore Drive



Farms along US Highway 41 on the west side of the Town.



set-back twenty (20) to forty (40) feet from the curb, street ending in cul-de-sacs and sidewalks along most streets.

The availability of large lots, neighborhoods with dramatic views, topography or proximity to recreational uses (such as golf courses) has also led to several high-end subdivisions within the Planning Area. As of the creation of this plan, there were nearly two thousand eight hundred (2,800) dwelling units of all types either under construction, approved and awaiting construction, or in the planning phases (see Approved Developments, Map 4). The pace and magnitude of this residential development is occurring much faster than the Town can keep up.

Commercial

Unlike the City of Crown Point, Cedar Lake does not have a well-defined or traditional downtown or central business district. Instead, commercial development is located in small clusters or corridors throughout the Town. The majority of commercial properties are located along US 41 and West 133rd Avenue in the western part of the Town. Since adoption of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, there has been an increase in development and redevelopment within these commercial corridors of the Town. Presently, there are several anticipate projects that may further spawn additional commercial redevelopment. In addition to the US 41 and West 133rd Avenue commercial corridors, there are also several commercial establishments located along North Lakeshore Drive, as well as along Morse Street, intermixed with cottage style homes. Other commercial pockets include the area just



Businesses located on Cedar Lake and just feet from Lakeshore Drive



Auto-Oriented Businesses located on West 133rd Avenue

north of the intersection of North Lakeshore Drive and East 133rd Avenue, often referred to as the Midway Gardens area, the intersection of Morse Street and 145th Avenue, and the Pinecrest Marina area.

Most commercial establishments in Cedar Lake are local or neighborhood in scale; they typically serve only the residents of the Town. With few exceptions, there is a lack of national or large-scale commercial properties in the Town and through the public participation process, citizens identified this as a concern. U.S. Highway 41 flanks Cedar Lake's western border. This major corridor has the capacity to accommodate large-scale national retail establishments. If one (1) of the two (2) proposed Illiana Expressway routes be built with an interchange on US 41 just

south of the existing Town boundary, the southern portion of the Planning Area is expected to see rapid commercial growth.

Industrial

Cedar Lake does not have an abundance of industrial uses. Most industrial properties are located in the Cedar Lake Industrial Park, along Schmal Street, off West 133rd Avenue. Apart from the concentration of industries in the industrial park, a concrete processing and extraction plant is located on West 133rd Avenue just east of the railroad viaduct. The plant is incompatible with surrounding land uses, as the majority of the property adjacent to the plant is residential. There are a few other industrial uses scattered around the Town and in the Planning Area. These stand-alone industries are mostly located near arterial streets within the Town.

Community Facilities, Parks and Historical/Cultural Resources

Parks are located throughout the Town. This includes the large municipal complex and Red Cedars Museum on the east-central side of the lake. The eighteen (18) acre municipal complex contains Community Park along with the Town Hall/Police Department and the Parks and Recreation Office. The municipal complex also serves as the location for community festivals and celebrations. This park was identified by residents as a favorite place in Town and should be preserved from development. The Lake of the Red Cedars Museum, Bible Conference Grounds, Cedar Beach Arts Center, and the Franciscan Friary are examples of cultural resources making Cedar Lake unique.

Small, neighborhood-scaled parks can be found throughout the community. Some of these parks provide structured recreational activities, such as Little League and soccer. While not within the Town boundaries, Lemon Lake County Park, adjacent to Cedar Lake, offers recreational opportunities for many Cedar Lake residents. This large park was recognized during the public participation process as a major asset to the area.

Lake of the Red Cedars Museum in the Cedar Lake Town Complex













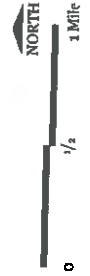
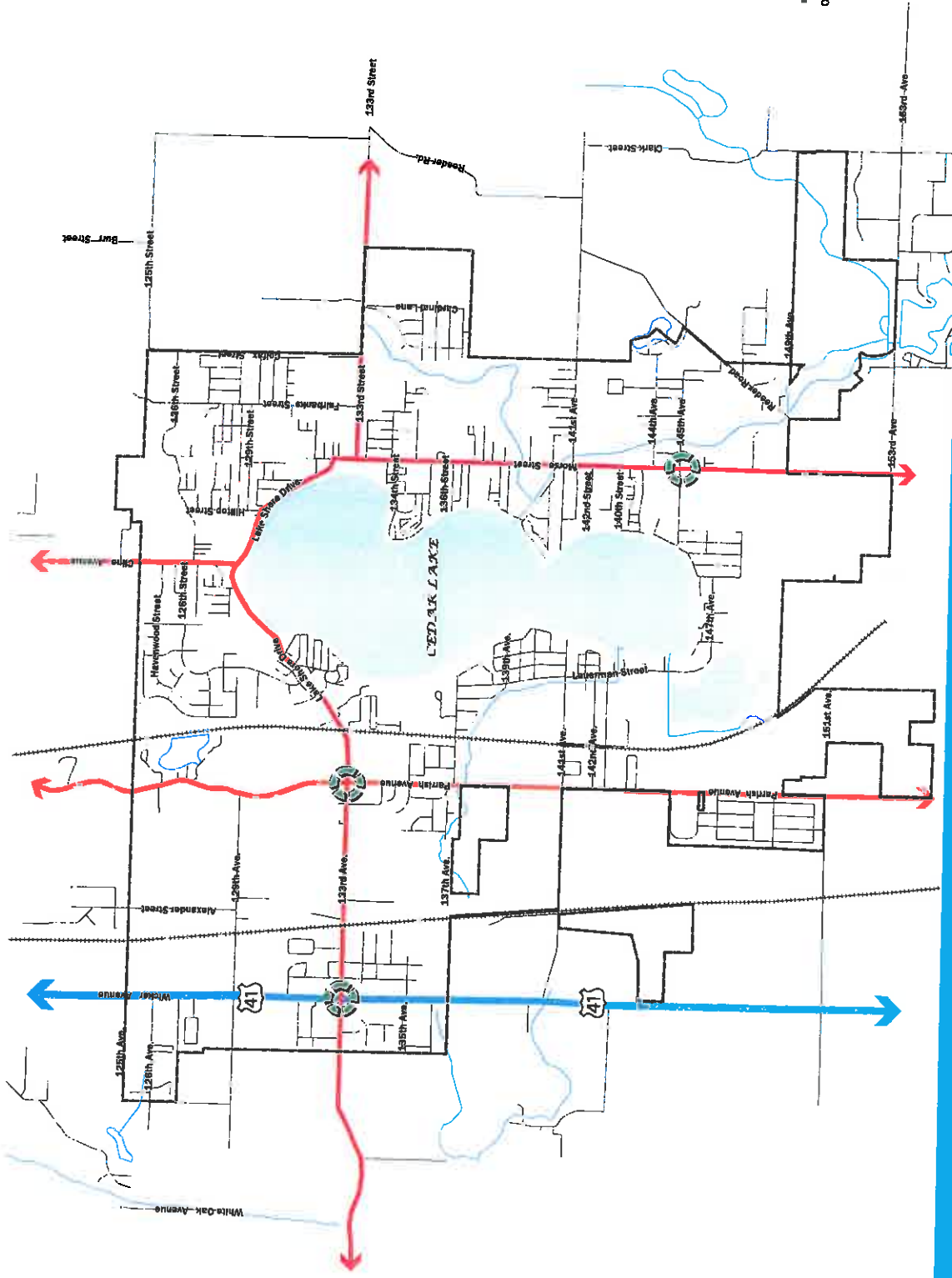
North Park near the intersection of Lakeshore Drive and Cline Avenue



Figure 3
Existing
Transporation
& Circulation

Land Use Legend

-  Town Parcels
-  Controlled Intersections
-  Local Street
-  Collector Street
-  Arterial Street
-  State Highway
-  Railroad
-  Streams
-  Town Corporate Boundary
-  Cedar Lake/Water



Transportation

In most communities, the location of land uses and their intensity is influenced by the transportation system and Cedar Lake is no exception. Streets are classified according to the Regional Transportation Plan adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission. These include principal arterials (through-highways), minor arterials (major corridors that connect to principal arterials and interstates), collectors (streets that connect neighborhoods and local streets to the arterial streets), and local streets.

Principal Arterial Streets

The only principal arterial is US Highway 41, which carries traffic to and from the area. Bordering the Town to the west, U.S. 41 has attracted a large number of commercial establishments because of its high traffic volumes. U.S. 41 is connected to the minor arterial system mainly by West 133rd Avenue, but also by 141st Avenue. The US 41-West 133rd Avenue intersection is a critical gateway into Cedar Lake, as many residents and visitors enter Town via this route.

US Highway 231 passes along the northern boundary of the Planning Area and is also a principal arterial. US 231 connects US 41 and Interstate 65, through downtown Crown Point.

Minor Arterial Streets

East/West Minor Arterials

- 133rd Avenue
- North Lakeshore Drive
- 141st Avenue, on the west side of the lake North/South Minor Arterials
- Parrish Avenue, between 141st and 133rd
- Morse Street
- Cline Avenue, on the north side of the lake

133rd Avenue is divided into two segments, West 133rd and East 133rd, with North Lakeshore Drive connecting these two segments around the lake. The combination of 133rd Avenue and North Lakeshore Drive is the main east/west thoroughfare in Cedar Lake. Because of their high traffic volumes these streets are in various stages of disrepair. Standing water caused by poor drainage causes further deterioration. This route is the most direct path from the west side of the Town to the east. East 133rd Avenue provides a connection to State Route 55, which connects Cedar Lake to Crown Point and provides a route to Interstate 65.

Morse Street serves as the main route north and south on the east side of the lake, while Parrish serves the same purpose on the west side. Cline Avenue provides a direct route from North Lakeshore Drive to US 231. Morse Street is the main route for travel south to Lowell and State Route 2.



Collector Streets

Collector streets provide access from local neighborhood streets to the arterial street network. Collector streets include Parrish north of West 133rd Avenue and south of 141st; Lauerman Street on the west side of the lake; 141st Avenue connecting Lauerman to Morse Street; and 149th/Reeder and Clark Street on the east side of the Planning Area.



US Highway 41 Traveling South into Cedar Lake from US Highway 231

Local Streets

Because of the Town's heritage as a cottage/resort community, many neighborhood streets and roads are narrow, poorly paved or unpaved, and have no sidewalks. Many of these streets were designed and constructed as simple access drives for the cottages and cabins surrounding the lake and cannot support the higher traffic volumes that result from year-round use. Because of topography and proximity to such a large body of water, many neighborhood roads experience poor drainage and standing water following rain or snow melt.



North Laked-shore Drive is one (1) of several minor arterial streets in Town.



West 133rd Avenue is a Collector/ Minor Arterial that bisects the middle of Town on both sides of the lake.

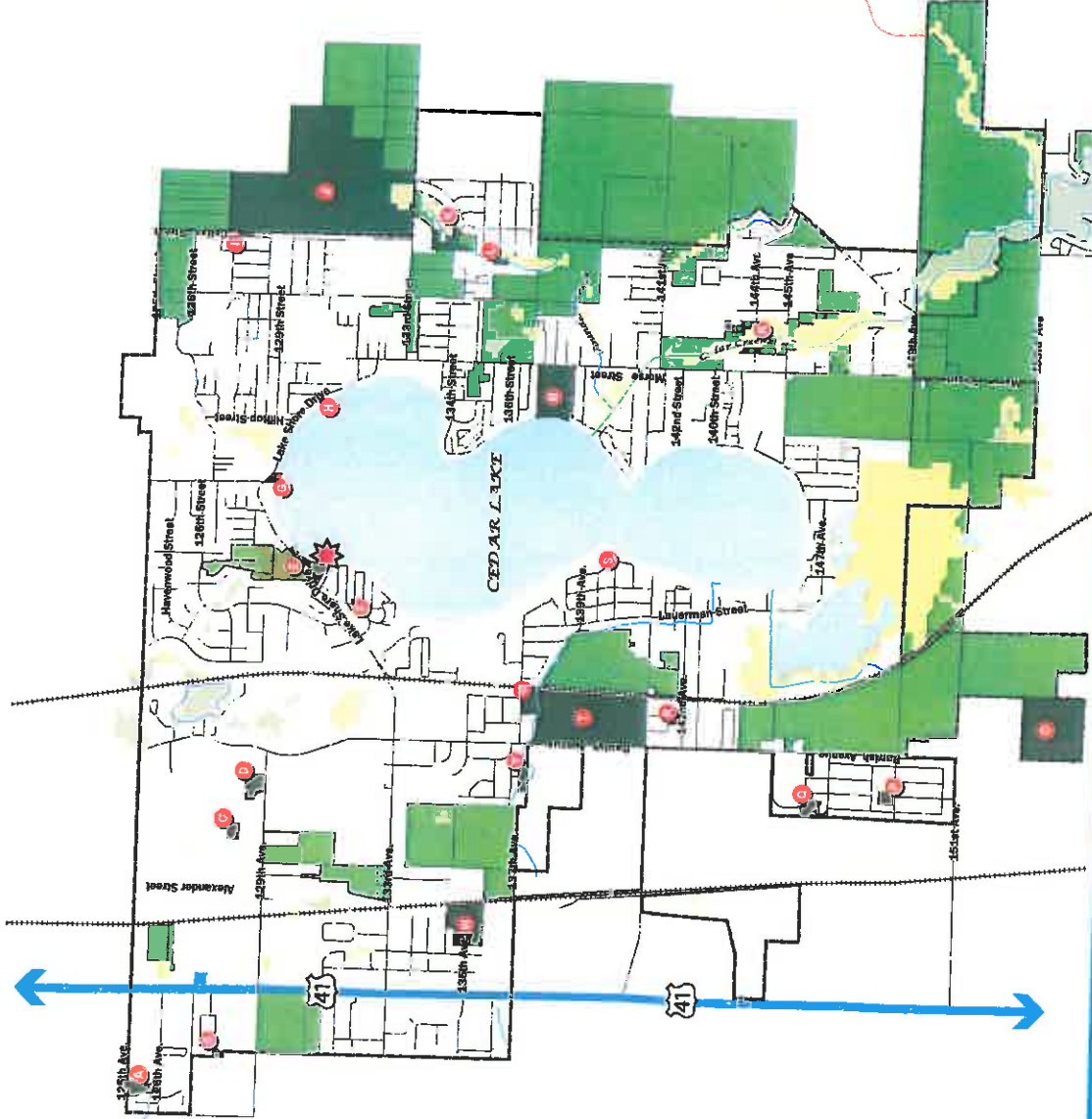
Figure 4
Existing Parks, Trails
& Open Space

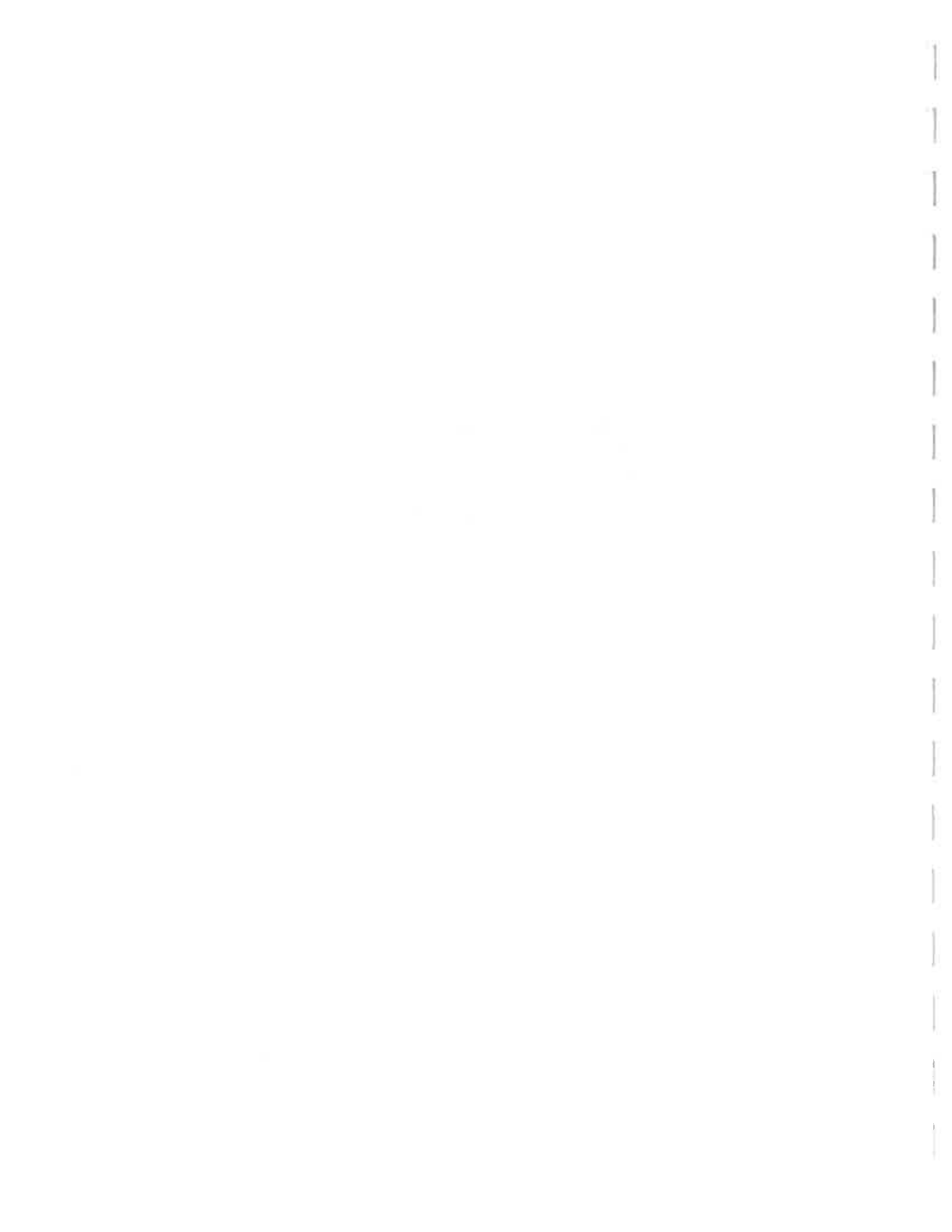
Figure Legend

- Town Parcels
- Park
- Open Space
- Wetland Area
- Floodplain/Floodway Area
- Scenic Viewpoint/Overlook
- U.S. Route 41
- Streams
- Town Corporate Boundary
- Cedar Lake/Water

Cedar Lake Parks

- August Oaks
- Henn Park
- Monastery Park
- Monastery Clubhouse
- Potawatomi Park
- Meyer Manor Park
- North Park
- Bartlett Park
- Krystal Oaks
- Lemon Lake Park
- Robin's Nest Parks
- Founder's Creek
- Town Complex
- Cedar Creek Park
- Parrish & 151st Park
- Lynnsway I Park
- Lynnsway II Park
- Cedar Crest Park
- Monon Park
- Union Station Park
- Kiwanis Park
- Utopia Park
- Hanover Park





Utility Service Areas

Water Service

Cedar Lake owns and operates the Cedar Lake Department of Waterworks which provides water utility services to customers on separate systems on the east and west sides of Cedar Lake (See Figure 5). Since acquiring the assets of Utilities Incorporated in 2010 and the assets of Robins Nest Water Utility in 2011, both systems have seen expansions to serve current and future needs and include providing water service targeted economic development areas including:

- The intersection of 129th Ave and Wicker Avenue to provide municipal water to US41 Corridor
- Wicker Avenue near 141st Ave to service the new Hanover Middle School and southern US 41 Corridor
- Intersection of 133rd Ave and Morse to provide water service to Town center corridor on Cedar Lake's east side.

Sewer Service

The sewer utility serving Cedar Lake is owned and operated by the Town. Cedar Lake shares wastewater treatment facilities with Lowell. The area of service for the municipal sewer utility currently extends beyond the jurisdictional boundary of the Town (see insert on this page). The Town has also developed a Conceptual Sewer Service Area (the purple area on the map) that significantly expands the existing sewer infrastructure. The

Conceptual Sewer Service Area will serve as the Planning Area for the conceptual development of the Comprehensive Plan. The jointly owned Cedar Lake-Lowell Wastewater Treatment Plant is being expanded to provide wet weather treatment which, in turn will increase the biological capacity of the shared plant and provide for the expansion of approximately 1,900 residential connections in Cedar Lake.












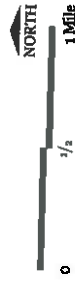
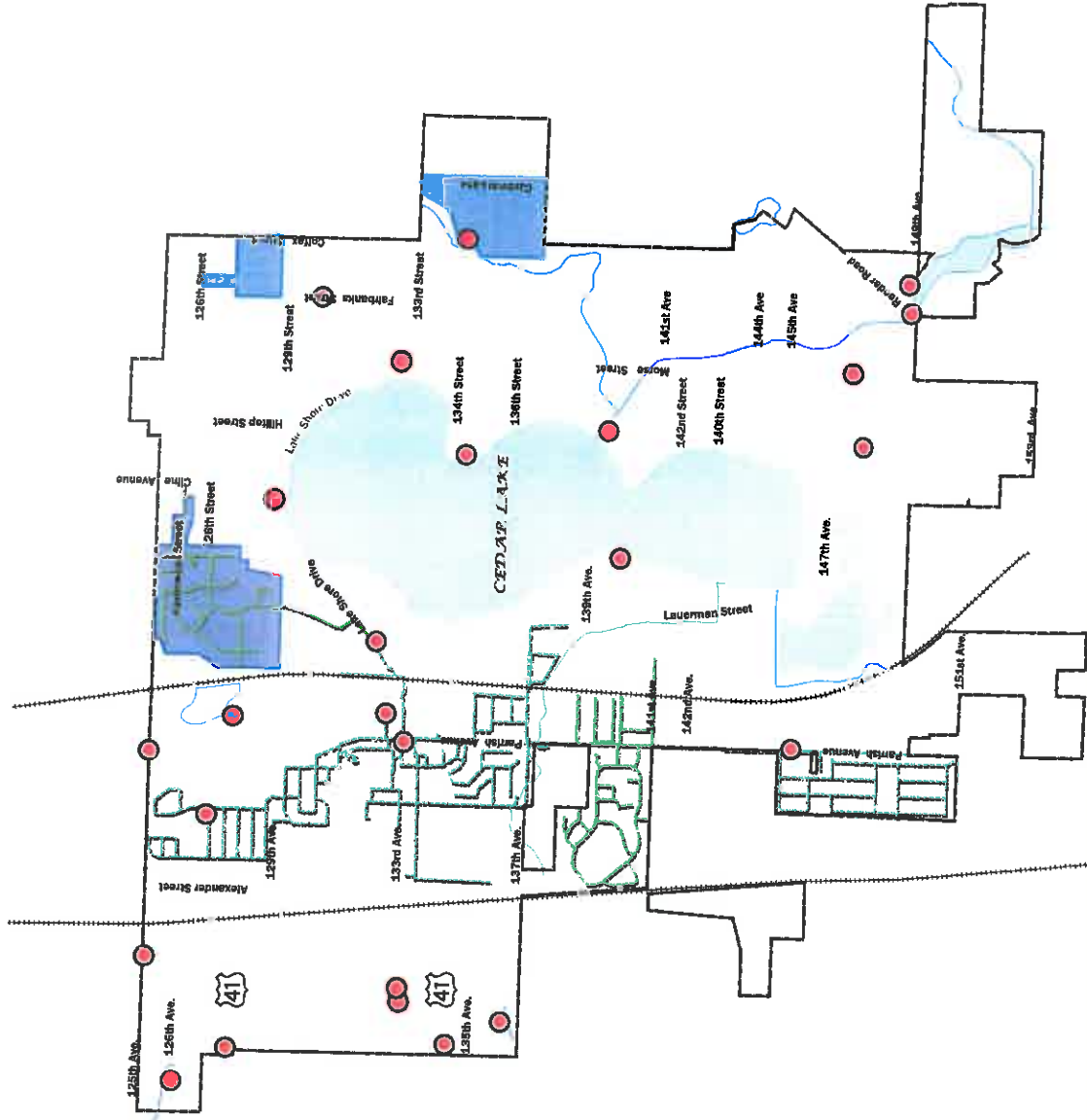
Sewer Service Area Identified by Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. for the 2007 Comprehensive Plan



Figure 5
Existing Utilities
& Service Areas

Figure Legend

-  Town Parcels
-  Current Water Service Area
-  Existing Water Line
-  Sanitary Service Line
-  Existing Sewage Lift Stations
-  Railroad
-  Streams
-  Town Corporate Boundary
-  Cedar Lake/Water





Housing Profile

- The overall number of households has increased, but average household size continues to decline
- However, the average household size in Cedar Lake is higher than other area communities, indicating that Cedar Lake is still a family town

Housing characteristics include total housing units, housing unit growth and changes, housing unit type, owner occupancy and housing value.

The 2010 Census (the most recent year for which housing data is available) reported 4,692 housing units in Cedar Lake, an increase of 27.5 percent from 2000 (see Table 1). The increase in the number of housing units is comparable to other communities nearby. Other neighboring communities continue to see higher growth percentages. Cedar Lake has experienced a comparable, albeit slightly less, rate of growth in housing.

Of the total number of housing units, 4,193 are occupied, which amounts to an 89.4 percent occupancy rate, of which 70.0 percent of all units are owner-occupied and 20.0 percent are renter-occupied (see Table 2). The owner-occupied housing units increase at a higher rate than the number of renter-occupied units from 2000 to 2010.

10.6 percent of housing units in Cedar Lake are considered vacant. Of these 499 units, 166 are considered seasonal. Sea-

sonal homes are expected as a part of Cedar Lake's housing mix, considering the resort atmosphere and desirable location near natural resources including the lake. Seasonal homes account for 3.5 percent of the housing stock in Cedar Lake.

According to the 2010 Census, the median value of single family homes in Cedar Lake is \$154,800 (see Table 3). This is higher than the average for Lake County (\$133,700) and compares favorably to neighboring communities. Cedar Lake saw the highest increase in home values from 2000-2010 compared to neighboring communities.

The age of housing stock in a community is often of concern because older homes that have not received proper maintenance can deteriorate. Approximately 62 percent of Cedar Lake's housing stock was built before 1970. However, the acceleration of housing starts since 1990 means that newer housing may someday outnumber the older housing stock.

General Characteristics

- The number of housing units has increased, albeit slower than other communities
- The ratio of owner occupied to renter occupied housing is increasing
- Despite the historical resort nature of the town, the number of seasonal dwellings is low
- Cedar Lake has an aging housing stock with values significantly lower than that of surrounding communities

Table 1.

Total Number of Housing Units			
Location	2000 Total Housing Units	2010 Total Housing Units	% Change 2000-2010
Cedar Lake	3,681	4,692	27.5%
Crown Point	8,166	10,976	34.4%
Lowell	2,809	3,620	28.9%
Merrillville	12,303	14,842	20.6%
St. John	2,847	5,047	77.3%
Schererville	10,006	11,883	18.8%

Table 2.

Occupied Housing Unit Classification			
Class	2000	2010	% Change
Owner-Occupied	2,487	3,235	30.1%
Renter Occupied	907	958	5.6%

Table 3.

Median Single-Family Home Value			
Location	2000 Value	2010 Value	% Change
Cedar Lake	\$97,200	\$154,800	59.3%
Crown Point	\$125,900	\$177,200	40.7%
Lowell	\$112,800	\$146,200	29.6%
Merrillville	\$101,300	\$132,700	31.0%
St. John	\$172,100	\$255,100	48.2%
Schererville	\$157,900	\$199,800	26.5%

Employment and Commuting Patterns

Income and Employment

- The income of Cedar Lake residents is consistent with Lake County and the State of Indiana
- Median Family and Median Household Income have increased significantly
- Only 4 percent of families live at or below the poverty level

The Census measures income in three ways; 1) median household, which is the average of all households (non-family and family); 2) median family, which is the average of all family households, including single parents, and; 3) per capita income, which averages all incomes among the entire population, including non-workers (such as children).

According to the 2010 US Census Data incomes in Cedar Lake are slightly less than county and state averages. However, incomes have increased at much higher rates than county and state averages. This income growth in individual and household incomes has closed the gap between county and state averages and has increased substantially when compared to the ten year period prior to 1999. These income increases generally lead to more economic activity, higher home values, and increased tax revenues. Approximately 6.1 percent of Cedar Lake families are classified as below the poverty level. This is considerably lower than the 12.2

percent of families in Lake County with incomes at or below the poverty level. The majority of working residents of Cedar Lake are employed in the educational services, and health/social assistance (21.3 percent), manufacturing (17.4 percent), and retail trade industries (14.5 percent). These sectors comprise 53.2 percent of the working residents of Cedar Lake.

Commuting Patterns

Considering Cedar Lake's distance from the Chicago employment market, it is not surprising that the majority of workers have a longer commute to work when compared to other areas. Cedar Lake, average commute time is 32.1 minutes. This is higher than the US average of 25.2 minutes and the Lake County average of 27.7 minutes.



IL 290/IN 294 Interchange

Growth

Growth Patterns

- Cedar Lake has grown steadily each decade since incorporation
- Cedar Lake is on the edge of an area of explosive growth, which shows signs of extending into Cedar Lake

The significant growth since 2000 in Cedar Lake can be attributed to an influx of new residents from the growth the Chicago area as well as residents moving from Chicago suburbs and northern Lake County communities. Workers are willing to locate in areas with longer commutes when housing is affordable. When combined with a rapidly growing commercial sector, Cedar Lake continues to see steady rates of growth.

Growth in those areas beyond sewer and water extensions has been mostly large-lot, single family homes spaced along existing roads, or in subdivisions of custom homes built on former farm land. Nearer the Town, developers have requested annexation so that they can take advantage of utilities such as domestic water and sanitary sewer services. This has allowed development of smaller lots and more dwelling units.

Population and Change

Cedar Lake has considerable growth in population over the past thirty years. With 2010 population of 11,560, Cedar Lake has grown by 52.3 percent since 1970 (see Tables 4 and 6). This rate has been considerably greater than growth rates in Lake County and the State of

Indiana. However, when compared to neighboring communities, Cedar Lake's growth has been more modest, despite comparable growth rates over the past ten years. The growth rates over the past ten years indicate a trend of strong growth. Prior to the 2010 Census, Cedar Lake was expected to see a 12 percent growth in population from 2000-2010. Cedar Lake's growth rates doubled these estimates as a result of the 2010 Census.

This trend is likely to continue as Chicago-employed commuters continue to expand the suburban fringe. In fact, the explosive growth of area communities points to an accelerated growth pattern in the future. Rapidly growing St. John and Schererville are running out of room to grow, and developers will increasingly eye Cedar Lake for new opportunities.

Expansion of the Chicago Housing Market

The south suburbs in Illinois and the Northwest Indiana area have only recently begun to see the kind of growth that has dominated housing markets in the areas north and west of Chicago. As land prices escalated in those areas, the cheaper land south and southeast of Chicago became more attractive.

School districts with strong reputations for quality brought families to the area and a demand for suburban housing and services. Developments such as Havenwood and Robin's Nest have created a perception that quality suburban neighborhoods are marketable in Cedar Lake, and many new housing developments have been built or are in the planning stages.

Household Number and Size

Consistent with population growth trends, Cedar Lake saw a dramatic increase in the number of households between 2000-2010 (see Table 4). Average household size has held steady over the past decade. According the US Census Bureau, a household includes all the people who occupy housing unit as their usual place of residence. Not all households contain families, since a household may comprise a group of unrelated people or one person living alone.

Population by Age

The median age in Cedar Lake is 34.7, which is an increase of .9 years from the 2000 median age. This is lower than the Lake County median age of 37.4 and the Indiana median average of 37.0. The largest age group in Cedar Lake is 35-54 which accounts for 30.3 percent of the population (see Table 7).

Most age groups in Cedar Lake have remained the same from 2000 to 2010. The most significant shift are found in the groups of people aged 35-44 (3.8 percent reduction), 45-54 (2.3 percent increase), and 55-64 (3.7 increase). There has been a continuing trend of slightly reduced populations of younger age groups in Cedar Lake. This trend can be seen in school-aged children (between the ages of 5-19) which comprise 21.8 percent of the population (down from 24 percent in 2000). However, it is important to mention that all population groups saw considerable increases in total population.

Like many communities, Cedar Lake is experiencing a trend of aging population. This could have an effect on economic, educational, recreations, and transportation needs of the community. The ageing population must be carefully considered in formulating future goals and determining needs of the community. Provision of lands for multi-family-development serving seniors will likely become a need in the future. In addition, Cedar Lake must also consider ways to entice younger residents to locate or stay in Cedar Lake. Encouraging young professionals and creative class residents will require a focus on multi-use developments, arts and culture, and recreational opportunities

Table 4.

Number of Households and Size				
Location	2000		2010	
	Households	Average Persons per Household	Households	Average Persons per Household
Cedar Lake	3,394	2.73	4,193	2.75
Crown Point	7,824	2.45	10,394	2.45
Lowell	2,697	2.74	3,392	2.71
Merrillville	11,678	2.57	14,842	2.58
St. John	2,800	2.99	5,201	2.94
Schererville	9,660	2.56	12,393	2.45

Table 5.

Population						
Location	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1970-2010
Cedar Lake	7,589	8,754	8,885	9,279	11,560	52.3%
Crown Point	10,931	16,455	17,728	19,806	27,317	149.9%
Lowell	3,839	5,827	6,430	7,505	9,276	141.6%
Merrillville	*	27,677	27,257	30,560	35,246	27.3%
St. John	1,757	3,974	4,921	8,382	14,850	745.2%
Schererville	3,663	13,209	19,926	24,851	29,243	698.3%
Lake County	516,075	497,190	475,594	484,564	496,005	-3.9%
State of Indiana	5,195,392	5,490,224	5,544,159	6,080,485	6,483,802	24.8%
* Information Not Available			** % Change 1970 - 2010			

Table 6.

40-Year Population Trend				
Location	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010
Cedar Lake	15.4%	1.5%	4.4%	24.6%
Crown Point	50.5%	7.7%	11.7%	37.9%
Lowell	51.8%	10.3%	16.7%	23.6%
Merrillville	*	-1.5%	12.1%	15.3%
St. John	126.1%	23.8%	70.3%	77.2%
Schererville	260.6%	50.9%	24.7%	17.7%
Lake County	-3.7%	-4.3%	1.9%	2.4%
State of Indiana	5.7%	1.0%	9.7%	6.6%
* Information Not Available				

Table 7.

Population By Age Group 2000-2010					
Age Group	2000	% of Population	2010	% of Population	% Change 2000-2010
Under 5	699	7.5%	838	7.2%	-0.3%
5--9	722	7.8%	892	7.7%	-0.1%
10--14	770	8.3%	879	7.6%	-0.7%
15--19	703	7.6%	754	6.5%	-1.1%
20--24	604	6.5%	732	6.3%	-0.2%
25--34	1,353	14.6%	1,708	14.8%	0.2%
35--44	1,697	18.3%	1,677	14.5%	-3.8%
45--54	1,251	13.5%	1,832	15.8%	2.3%
55--64	661	7.1%	1,253	10.8%	3.7%
65+	819	8.8%	995	8.6%	-0.2%
Total	9,279	100.0%	11,560	100.0%	24.6%

Table 8.

Income				
	Year	Cedar Lake	Lake County	State of Indiana
Per-Capita Income	1999	\$17,825	\$19,639	\$20,397
	2009	\$22,367	\$23,142	\$24,058
	% Increase	25.5%	17.8%	17.9%
Median Household Income	1999	\$43,987	\$41,829	\$41,567
	2010	\$55,726	\$48,723	\$47,697
	% Increase	26.7%	16.5%	14.7%





During the planning process the steering committee and public prioritized areas of concern. These were then analyzed and the conditions related to each helped formulate the goals and concepts developed in Chapter 4 and the specific land use elements and implementation actions outlined in Chapter 5.

*Four key topic areas: **Community Character, Land Use, Commercial and Industrial Development, and Streets and Public Facilities** were identified, explored and expanded throughout the public participation process. As a result, specific issues within each heading were identified, and the goals to address them have been developed.*

CHAPTER THREE
ISSUES

Community Character

“Community character” refers to both “the kind of community we are” and “the kind of community we want to be.” There are elements of the Cedar Lake of today that are worth preserving, and there are those that should make way for something better. In any case, residents have expressed a desire to “clean up” Cedar Lake’s image so they can be proud of the community, and visitors will want to come back.

Community Identity and Image

Cedar Lake residents still identify with the Town’s historic identity as a resort area, and the lake is still prominent as the community’s historic, geographic and cultural icon. The Town’s residents want to maintain that image. Indeed, the Town continues to be a popular warm weather destination for people in the area and the lake remains a draw. Community celebrations, such as the Fourth of July Summerfest, are successful tourist events.

However, the effects of several years of disinvestment and deferred maintenance have severely damaged the community’s image for both residents and visitors. Residents frequently note that in general, people have a negative attitude toward their Town. This is manifested in the lack of upkeep of several homes and businesses, as well as a lack of ability to keep roads and public facilities well maintained.

The issue of community identity and image is intertwined with nearly every other issue addressed by this Plan. Existing land uses, commercial and industrial development and streets/public facilities all affect and are affected by the community’s

ISSUES

- Community identity and image
- Visual impact and first impressions
- A divided community
- Valuing the heritage of the community

perception of itself. Therefore, a major emphasis of this plan is to promote land use, redevelopment and other means to correct the negative image of Cedar Lake.

“Town clock” on Morse facing Constitution Avenue



Visual Impact and First Impressions

A first time visitor to Cedar Lake will likely not leave with a positive image. While there are some quality neighborhoods and the lake is a beautiful asset, these may not be enough to offset the negative impression left by the current condition of many roads, homes and businesses.

Cedar Lake is disadvantaged by its location relative to major highways. US 41 is nearly two (2) miles west of the lake and the established portion of the community. In fact it is possible to cruise through Cedar Lake on US 41 and never know it is a Town of over 11,000 people. The few entry signs on US 41 and East 133rd Street, while attractive, are overwhelmed by their surroundings and do not really indicate an entry point or gateway to Cedar Lake. As a result, first time visitors who venture off US 41 may find themselves surprised to be within a densely built up area of homes and businesses surrounding a large lake.

A Divided Community

The Town of Cedar Lake is divided in several ways. Geographically, the lake divides the Town into east and west, each with its own characteristics. The line between Hanover and Center townships follows Cline Avenue and continues right down the middle of the lake. This line is also the dividing line between the Hanover and Center (Crown Point) school corporations, with children on the east side attending Crown Point High School and those on the west side going to Hanover Central High School. As Cedar Lake has grown and annexed to the south, the Town is now in two (2) more townships, West Creek and Cedar Creek,

which are also in different school districts.

The result of new growth has created a division between long time residents and those new to the community. This is an inevitable result of rapid growth, particularly when new development attracts people from a specific area (in this case, mostly from Chicago and the Illinois suburbs). New residents bring with them their notions of community, based on their life experiences. This can clash with the "established" way of doing things, as understood and lived by the long-time residents. In addition, newer development is often of a higher quality and higher cost than found in the existing neighborhoods, leading to a (at least implied) division between "haves" and "have-nots."

While most of these divisions are inherent and cannot be overcome, the Comprehensive Plan can be a tool for exploring means of uniting the community. As a positive first step, the public participation that is the basis of this plan was truly a community effort, with contributions from all over the Town and across a spectrum of interests, incomes and age groups.



Valuing the Heritage of the Community

A common thread during the planning process was that many residents prized Cedar Lake's past history as a resort community. This memory is kept alive in several ways, such as the excellent Lake of the Red Cedars Museum and the active local history association. Several residents also spoke nostalgically about well-remembered venues such as the Midway Gardens Ballroom on the lake, or the old Salesian School.

There is the danger that a community's heritage can be lost in the face of new development. As property values rise, it can be more profitable to tear down existing buildings and build new ones. The challenge is to determine how the historic resort character of Cedar Lake can be preserved while accommodating reinvestment and redevelopment.

Land Use

Growth Areas

As noted, growth has and will continue to be explosive in the Cedar Lake area. The majority of new development has been residential, as people from the Chicago area and beyond seek cheaper land and housing while taking advantage of high quality school systems. Non-residential development has not been as robust. However, as residential development continues apace, market realities will make the Cedar Lake area more attractive for commercial developers.

ISSUES

- Growth areas
- Lakefront development
- Neighborhoods
- Incompatible land uses

The predominant land use in the outlying portions of the Planning Area is agriculture, as well as scattered existing subdivisions of single family homes. There are some scattered businesses, mostly located near major road intersections. West of the Town, West Creek cuts from south to north through the Planning Area. The creek is centered on a wide floodplain that is some of the lowest land in the area.

Lakefront Development

After being "discovered" by Chicago-area developers, land on the lakefront has become more expensive. Much of the existing lakefront development is very dense, with small cottages close together that result in blocking lake views. Recently, at the south end of the lake, much larger and more expensive homes have been built where several lots have been consolidated.



MEYER MANOR

Located on the northwestern shore of Cedar Lake, the Meyer Manor Subdivision has been identified as an area in need of an image update. The former tight-knit cottage community has been transformed into a tired-looking collection of year-round homes in need of rehabilitation and upkeep. The subdivision is constrained by a bluff along North Lakeshore Drive and the waterfront, with limited ability to widen and improve the local road network. Improvements to this residential development can be achieved by making it a capital improvement program priority, by creating a homeowner association and by enforcing property maintenance codes. Roads in this area were recently reconstructed in 2010.

Other new residential development is at a higher density and scale. The Sunset Harbor condominium project on the lakefront at the foot of East 133rd Avenue is an example. Although the developer placed the buildings to preserve lake views from East 133rd Avenue, the remaining water views are blocked by very large and imposing condominiums. There is continued pressure to rezone land along the lakefront so that similar high-density structures can be built, with the potential of "walling off" the lake from public view.

Neighborhoods

Northern Neighborhoods

The north end of the lake, north of 133rd Avenue and North Lakeshore Drive, is known for its sloping hillsides, views of the lake and the place where the Midway Gardens Ballroom once stood. A mix of commercial, industrial and residential land uses occur in this neighborhood. The former Midway Gardens site, now the home of a popular Dairy Queen restaurant, anchors the area and is a crowded gathering place in the summer. Other major sites include the Boys and Girls Club and MacArthur Elementary School.

While a collection of businesses draws people to the lakefront, there is no central focus or cohesiveness to this area. Related commercial issues, as well as for North Lakeshore Drive, are described in more detail in the Commercial issues section, below.

Older neighborhoods in the area are faced with a lack of residential and business maintenance and poor road conditions. Residents have good access to parks and businesses, but access to the lake, except for the boat ramp near the Chamber of Commerce Visitor's Center, is lacking. Inconsistent land uses, with commercial and industrial areas adjacent to homes, has been a disincentive to redevelopment.



Entrance to the Havenwood Subdivision

Cedar Lake Town
Hall, Community
Park



The main road serving the area, North Lakeshore Drive, is relatively narrow and businesses are close to the street, with vehicles forced to back out of the sites to access North Lakeshore Drive. There is a lack of cohesive and safe ingress and egress to most sites. Views to the lake are limited, especially east of Cline Avenue. West of Cline there are spectacular views at the top of the bluff, but there is little space for parking or access to the overlook area.

New subdivisions further north provide a stark design contrast to the existing neighborhoods. The Havenwood Subdivision provides its own community park and is built around wetlands and open spaces. All of the streets have curb, gutters and sidewalks. New developments, such as Krystal Oaks, are being built in the middle of some of the older and established neighborhoods. Further north is one of the largest undeveloped properties within the Town limits. The site of the former Salesian School and Home is a rolling, tree-filled site awaiting development. West of Havenwood is a mix of old and new developments, including a Franciscan Friary on Parrish Avenue. The former Monastery Golf Club, across from the Friary, is being transformed into a new single and two family development. The former club house has been donated to Cedar Lake and is being used as a Community Center.

Eastern Neighborhoods

The most significant feature on the east side of the lake is the 18-acre Community Park. Although views to the lake are interrupted by the Town Hall, the park provides soccer fields, lake access and is a central civic location for community events and festivals.

Many lakefront neighborhoods repeat the pattern established throughout the Town: small, cottage style homes in various conditions, on narrow streets. The Cedar Point Park Subdivision, between the Community Park and Sunset Harbor, includes lakefront land and a significant promontory with spectacular views to the lake. However, many homes are badly deteriorated and some streets are so narrow that two (2) vehicles cannot pass. Redevelopment and improvement of this area is hampered by the difficulty of acquiring so many home sites. The Town recently completed reconstructing roads in this area in early 2012.

New subdivisions are being constructed along the eastern Town limits. The Robin's Nest Subdivision is a neighborhood of high quality homes on streets with curb, gutter and sidewalks. There is a proposal to construct a similar development just east of Robin's Nest, which is currently under consideration. Other new subdivisions are being constructed outside Town limits as the area between Cedar Lake and south Crown Point becomes more desirable.

Several large wetland tracts in the area are owned by the Town. These wetlands surround the Cedar Creek basin. These wetland areas lend themselves to natural corridors that may accommodate passive recreation activities and trails. However, there are many homes that encroach into the area, bringing with them drainage and runoff issues and concerns.



Multifamily dwellings on the lake near Pine Crest Marina

Southern Shore

The southern shore consists of properties south of 145th on the east side of the lake and 142nd on the west side of the lake. This area is located in a topographical depression and is within close proximity to the Cedar

Lake Marsh. This particular land area receives a significant portion of land basin drainage to the low-lying wetland area.

The South Shore Neighborhood Association owns and maintains a park on the southern shore of the lake. This park is only open to Association owners and their families. The park is located on a beautiful strip of land, with access to the lake and spectacular views of the lake. There are no public parks or lake accesses in this area. The only opportunity for the public to use the lake is at the Pinecrest Club, which operates a private beach, open to the public for a fee.

Recently, a former trailer park at the southern tip of the lake was demolished and re-subdivided to provide three (3) spectacular home sites. Three large, architecturally impressive homes have been built at this location. This development may indicate a trend toward acquisition and assembly of lots along the lakeshore for larger homes. Land prices may also encourage higher density uses such as apartments and condominiums, similar to those recently built in other areas on the lake, resulting in blocking lake views and access.

SOUTH SHORE NEIGHBORHOOD

Proximity to the Cedar Lake Marsh wetland and related soils in this low-lying territory has resulted in tremendous stress to neighborhood roads, with locally famous potholes. Drainage is an evident problem, with many residential yards suffering frequent flooding. The area contains predominantly residential zoning, with many rental units. Trash has accumulated along area roadways near the wooded wetlands, creating an image issue. Goals for this neighborhood should include a building maintenance enforcement program.

Townhomes and condominiums on the lake's western shore



However, both large homes and condominiums are a departure from the traditional development in this area. The Plan will need to guide development regarding the style and density of dwelling units on the lakeshore. Near the southwest corner of the lake, the Pinecrest Club and Marina anchors the area, with an RV park and some marginal multi-family buildings spreading northward along the lakeshore. While the marina appears to be a reasonable use of waterfront property, the other uses do not add to the neighborhood and the area would benefit from redevelopment. Uses would need to provide a transition

between the marina development and the established neighborhoods on the west side of the lake. Provision of additional public access to the lake should be a priority.

Western Neighborhoods

Housing on the west side of the lake is a mix of older, cottage style neighborhoods, newer multi-family lakefront development, and new, suburban style housing developments. A few commercial uses are sprinkled around this area, usually surrounded by established residential neighborhoods. This area includes the Cedar Lake Bible Conference Grounds, an area institution since 1923.

New lakefront development has taken the form of large single family homes or townhouse and condominium developments. A large condominium building is located just south of a townhome development with several units in a single building. The massing of buildings creates a significant barrier to lake views and neighborhood connections to the lake.

COMPATIBILITY AND CONCENTRATION OF LAND USES

Residential and commercial/industrial land uses are not compatible for a variety of reasons. Noise, smells and activity associated with commercial and industrial uses conflict with the desires of most homeowners for quiet living. While some accommodations can be made to allow commercial uses near residential sites, industrial uses should not be in such locations unless very substantial land separations and buffers can be used.

Zoning can be used to concentrate commercial uses to appropriate locations, called commercial nodes, where businesses can locate without worrying about nuisance complaints from adjacent homeowners. Adequate buffers between the commercial and residential uses can insure that nearby homes are not impacted by commercial activity. Access management can mitigate traffic conflicts and provide a safe means of ingress and egress.

Further inland, development is more suburban in nature. Two large, contiguous tracts of land on the north side of 141st Avenue are approved or planned for a total of 1,047 new dwelling units. As this area is developed, former farm fields will take on a decidedly suburban character. Traffic on 141st is expected to increase as a result.

Commercial and Industrial Development

As discussed earlier, commercial development has not kept pace with the rapid residential growth. This is

expected to change as new residents move into the area. Should the planned Illiana Expressway be built along the south edge of Town, an increase in commercial development will surely follow, particularly near any interchanges.

Recently, there have been public meeting workshops and planning sessions where the Illiana project team has prepared an analysis of several routes. The most favorable routes from both a commercial transportation prospective, and for commuters/travelers

are the routes proposed just south of the Town. These routes may become more advantageous if the proposed Peotone/South Suburban Airport is constructed.

There are several existing commercial corridors, with available and vacant buildings, that could grow and/or redevelop. In some areas, residential and commercial/service businesses share the same streets, leading to mismatched land uses and traffic access problems. In almost all commercial or industrial areas, there is the same problem with upkeep and aesthetic quality that plagues the residential areas of the Town.

Industrial development has lagged behind commercial and residential building. Given the significant amount of commuters from the Cedar Lake area to job centers in northern Lake County and in or near Chicago, Cedar Lake has the potential to serve as an employment center. For example, there has recently been increased interest in industrial expansion within the Town's lone industrial park.

ISSUES

- U.S. 41 Corridor
- West 133rd Avenue
- North Lakeshore Drive
- Other commercial development
- Industrial development
- Town center focus area



US 41 corridor, looking south from W. 133rd Avenue

Signs on US 41



West 133rd Avenue corridor



During the planning process, residents expressed a strong interest in improving the business corridors and attracting a greater variety of businesses to the

area. Currently, residents drive south to Lowell, north to St. John/Schererville, or northeast to the Merrillville area to meet much of their shopping needs. One (1) resident expressed dismay that Lowell, a smaller community in population, has much more in the way of shopping and services than does Cedar Lake.

US 41 Corridor

US 41 is a major Lake County traffic artery, passing through St. John, Schererville and Highland before its intersection with Interstate 80/94. From West 133rd Avenue north to the Interstate, land uses are mostly commercial, with concentrations of large shopping centers and big-box retail north of Cedar Lake. South of West 133rd, the highway turns rural as it travels beyond the Chicago/Hammond/Gary metropolitan area.

There is little or no access management on U.S. 41; the traffic light at West 133rd Avenue is the only full access traffic control. Nearly every business and residential structure along the corridor has one or more curb openings. South of West 133rd, the highway is divided by a grass median, so full access is restricted, but each lot fronting the highway still has a separate curb opening.

Because of the nature of the established land use pattern, there is little or no opportunity for pedestrian improvements along the highway.

Commercial Development

The intersection of US 41/West 133rd Avenue is the most intensely developed portion of this corridor. Many businesses are in disrepair or in need of upkeep and maintenance. Several of the buildings and signs are quite old or in poor condition and give the impression of a tired, aging business center. Newer development, such as the strip shopping center near 129th Avenue, is of higher quality and could have improved with access management and site planning guidelines.

Commercial/Residential Conflicts

Commercial development along US 41 is impacted by nearby residential uses on the highway and behind the commercial corridor. The existing residential development has been there a long time and predates much of the commercial development (in fact, before the Town was incorporated, the residential enclave centered on US 41 and West 133rd was considered a separate community, called Cook.

As a result, many commercial lots with frontage on US 41 are constrained by shallow lot depths as they back up to developed residential neighborhoods, particularly on the east side of the highway. This has the effect of limiting the types of uses that can be accommodated and increases the number of curb cuts along the road. In addition, in many places there is not enough room to provide any kind of buffer between the commercial uses and the residences. This has the long term effect of lowering residential property values.



Hanover Central High School, West 133rd Avenue

West 133rd Avenue

West 133rd Avenue is similar to US 41 in many places, where the depth of commercial land is limited by nearby residential uses. Generally, the character of development is single use buildings, each with its own curb opening. The north side of 133rd is a mix of commercial and institutional uses, such as the Catholic church and cemetery, the Hanover Central High School campus, the South Lake District Library and the Hanover School Corporation administration building. The south side of 133rd is mostly business, along with the entrance to the Cedar Lake Industrial Park.

The quality of commercial development is inconsistent with some newer buildings that have used site design improvements, such as landscaping and higher quality architecture. However, the overall impression of the corridor, with the exception of the new library and the high school, is of dated buildings and signs. Curb openings are haphazard and in some areas could lead to conflicting turning movements.

Recently, there has been an increase in interest by national commercial retailers for parcels along the West 133rd Avenue

corridor. CVS pharmacy is presently preparing for construction of a new building at the southeast corner of 133rd Avenue and US 41. There are also other retailers with land use approvals for other sites along West 133rd Avenue, some that would benefit from redevelopment from their current use.

The largest commercial development in the community, the Lincoln Plaza shopping center at West 133rd Avenue and Parrish Avenue is very outdated and suffers from lack of upkeep.

The parking areas are in poor condition and the signs are unattractive. However, recent approval for the construction of a Strack & Van Til Grocery Store looks to redevelop a large portion of Lincoln Plaza, including many site improvements. This redevelopment of the plaza that places a major commercial tenant that will draw many customers may result in redevelopment of other areas of the plaza.



Current Strack & Van Til Grocery Store- Demolition Work on 133rd Avenue within Lincoln Plaza Shopping Center

Redevelopment Issues

West 133rd Avenue is the main road into Town, providing access from US 41 to the lake and the developed neighborhoods. As such, it makes a powerful visual impression on residents and visitors. Unfortunately, because of the general disrepair, lack of upkeep, and haphazard mix of uses, this corridor does not provide an inviting gateway to Cedar Lake. The Town recently completed reconstruction of the roadway, including new curbs and sidewalks, upgraded lighting, and left turn lanes. These improvements have helped encourage redevelopment of the adjoining private properties and have reduced the number of vehicular and pedestrian circulation issues along the busy corridor. However, the corridor still has many constraints concerning cross-access management, the number of curb-cuts and shallow commercial lots backing up to residential neighborhoods.

CVS is currently constructing a new store at the intersection of 133rd Ave. and Route 41





Improvements to 133rd Avenue

Redevelopment has generally occurred along the lakefront on the south side of the road, and has mostly consisted of tearing down homes on several adjacent lots and replacing them with a multiple-family building. This has the effect of further blocking views to the lake by the massing of buildings that wall off views of the lake and creates a sense of excess density along the waterfront.

North Lakeshore Drive

West 133rd Avenue becomes North Lakeshore Drive after it passes under the CSX Rail viaduct. North Lakeshore continues around the north end of the lake, providing spectacular views of the lake from some of the highest elevations in the Town. The corridor dips south along the lakefront and ends just north of East 133rd Street, blending into Morse Road.

North Lakeshore Drive is a hodgepodge of businesses, restaurants and bars, service clubs, multiple family developments and single family homes. There is no order to this development; businesses are adjacent to single family homes, which are adjacent to apartment buildings, etc. Businesses along the corridor also suffer from a relative lack of lot depth, resulting in parking lots that are not separated from the road way. This results in haphazard parking lot arrangements and unsafe vehicle access along with a visual eyesore to area residents. Some homes and businesses are so close to the road that the only space available for parking is directly in front of the building, causing vehicles to back directly into the busy roadway.



A recently finished Restaurant along Lakeshore Drive.



Many new businesses are moving in and around the Sunset Harbor Residential Development at 133rd Avenue and Lakeshore Drive



Other Commercial Development

Random, stand-alone commercial development can also be found scattered throughout the Town, often inconsistent with surrounding development. For instance, businesses and homes coexist along Morse Street, all the way south to 145th Avenue.

While there are a few commercial nodes where a commercial development is appropriate (Morse and 145th Avenue, along with the Pinecrest Marina area are such examples), most of the remaining commercial development is within residential neighborhoods. These land uses are often too intense for neighborhoods, such as the bar/restaurant near the south edge of the lake, or the auto-oriented business at the southeast corner of Lauerman and 139th Avenue. The updated plan includes identification of existing and new commercial nodes and promote new commercial development and redevelopment to occur within these areas. This will aid in reducing the number of incompatible land uses adjacent to each other. Additionally, identification of such areas will assist in providing improved vehicular and pedestrian circulation and access by affording opportunities for cross-access, shared parking and reducing the number of curb cuts along roadways.

Industrial Development

Cedar Lake Industrial Park

Cedar Lake's only industrial park is accessed from West 133rd Avenue. Plans to add fifteen (15) lots are currently under consideration. Expansion of the park is limited by its location near the recently approved Centennial Development.

Uses in the park include a concrete plant, a recycling center and an electrical contractor. The Norfolk Southern Railroad runs along the west side of the park. Although there was an attempt to provide an entrance feature to the park, this, along with the other portions of the central street, has not been maintained. The park does not appear to have covenants or other means to ensure a quality appearance (or if there are covenants, they are not enforced). Part of the park is behind a formidable, tall chain link gate that walls that portion off from public access.

Other Industrial

There are other industrial sites scattered throughout the Planning Area. Like some of the commercial businesses, these sites are often located adjacent to residential development with little or no buffering between residential land uses.



Cedar Lake Industrial Park

Livable Center Focus

Through the public participation process, residents noted that Cedar Lake does not have a Livable Center/Town Center or downtown focus area. Since the Town is a compilation of several communities that at one time were considered independent of one another, there is no central business area that provides a sense of community focus and identity.

While it was generally agreed that a Livable Center of some kind is desirable, the location for it was in question. The historic Midway Gardens area on the northeast corner of the lake was the most frequently mentioned option. This area appears to have many advantages, but is constrained by the relative location of North Lakeshore Drive to the lakefront.

Other locations mentioned by residents include the area on North Lakeshore Drive near the Chamber of Commerce (just east of the foot of Cline Avenue) and the Lincoln Plaza shopping center area at West 133rd Avenue and Parrish Avenue.

Since Cedar Lake has never had a Livable Center, several criteria should be considered in determining a location. With the lake being the focal point of the Town, a lakefront location has advantages over locating on an existing commercial corridor. There was also discussion of the fact that the west side of the Town has the majority of shopping and dining opportunities, so an east side location for a Livable Center may be desirable. Finally, an understanding of the Town’s heritage should be taken into account, since Livable Centers/Town Centers traditionally reflect the historic places of a Town’s founding as well as the focal point of the Town’s history and culture.



Midway Gardens area, near the lake

FORMER MIDWAY GARDENS

This site was once home to a popular dance hall and hotel, and now contains a small concentration of commercial buildings including restaurants and a local convenience store. Several commercial sites are vacant and in need of adequate parking in an area limited by available space. The area around the Dairy Queen is a popular location for area residents to gather with friends and enjoy lakefront views. Redevelopment options for the site may be restricted due to available land without the purchase of surrounding home sites for potential expansion. In addition, the location of North Lakeshore Drive relative to the lakefront limits opportunities for lakefront amenities. However, because of its location and historic importance, this site is prime for redevelopment.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

New development and redevelopment often focus on physical infrastructure only, such as streets, sidewalks, lighting and buildings. Green infrastructure is just as important for a community's image and is a low-cost element of any town improvement project. Green infrastructure is the interconnected network of open spaces, waterways, and natural areas that provide wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities and help maintain the sustainability of the region. A good implementation of green infrastructure would use future sewer rights-of-way, such as the West Creek corridor, for greenway development, pathways and parks.

Streets and Public Facilities

Existing Street Conditions

ISSUES

- Existing street conditions
- Potential regional impacts
- Cedar Lake

As stated elsewhere, the overall condition of streets within the Town is poor. Potholes, deteriorating pavement, failing pavement edges, inadequate substructure and lack of adequate drainage all afflict the roads within the Town. Many roads have inadequate right-of-way width to construct improvements, such as ditches or storm sewers.

Potential Regional Impacts

Illiana Expressway

The Illiana Expressway is a proposed highway connecting Interstate 55 in Illinois with Interstate 65. (See 6 on the following pages) The Illiana would intersect I-65 near Crown Point, Indiana pass south



South Shore area street in poor condition

of Cedar Lake and terminate at Interstate 55. The 63 mile highway is intended to give travelers an alternate route across northern Illinois and Indiana in order to bypass the often heavily congested Interstate 80/94 corridor through northwest Lake and Porter counties.

The Illiana was originally proposed to extend eastward from Interstate 65 and connect to Interstate 94. This portion of the project has been set aside due to local opposition in the area surrounding the proposed interchange at Interstate 94. An option touted by Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels is for the Illiana to be a private toll road similar to other toll roads in Indiana and Illinois. No decision has been reached on this issue.

On May 24, 2012, the Illinois House passed "quick-take" legislation giving the State the power to acquire private property for the proposed expressway without ensuing long-term eminent domain legal proceedings.

Because of the Illiana's close proximity to Cedar Lake, the community will be greatly impacted by the new traffic corridor. There is potential for two (2) highway interchanges south of Cedar Lake on U.S. 41. Land uses surrounding highway interchanges typically consist of commercial, office, and light or heavy industrial development. The installation of two (2) interchanges would spark tremendous growth in Cedar Lake.

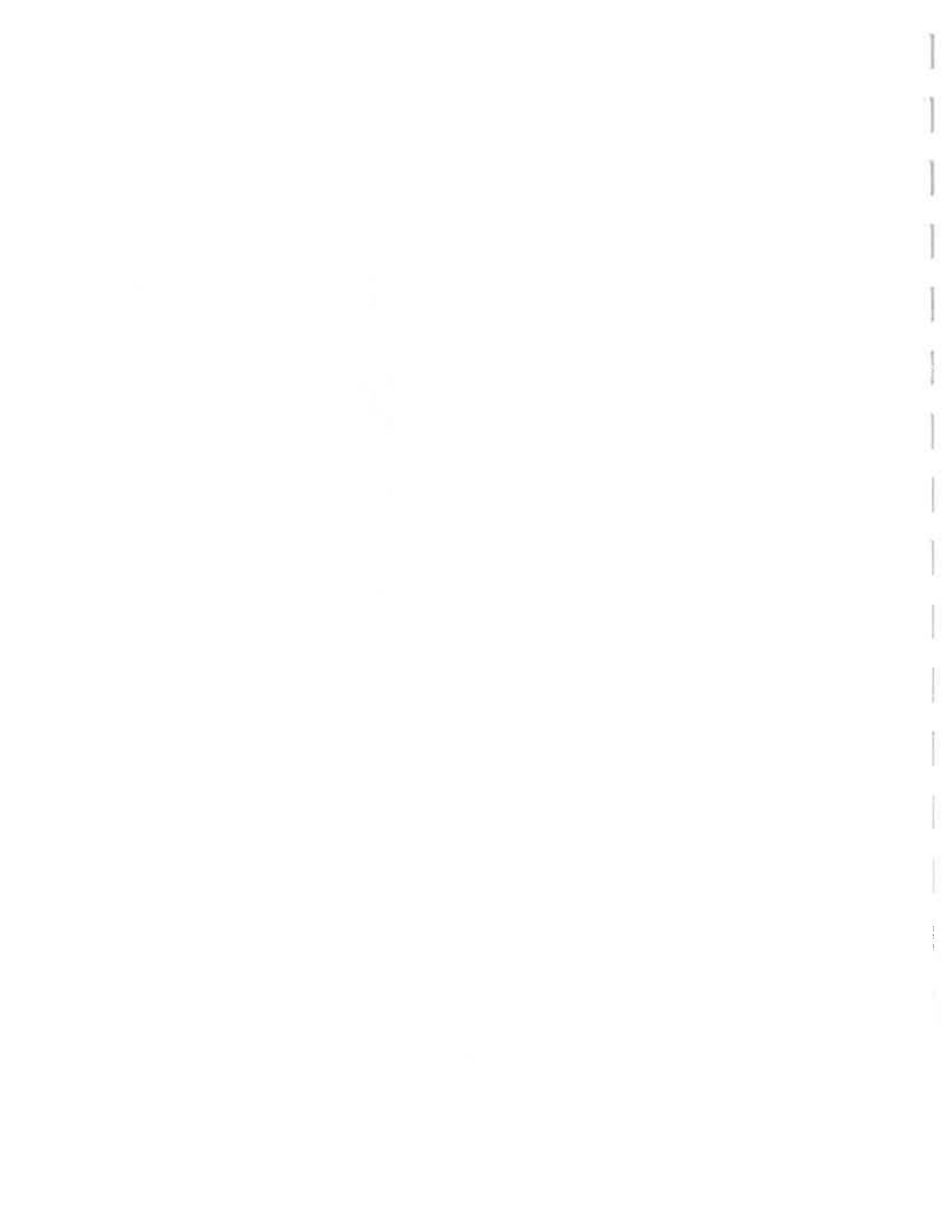


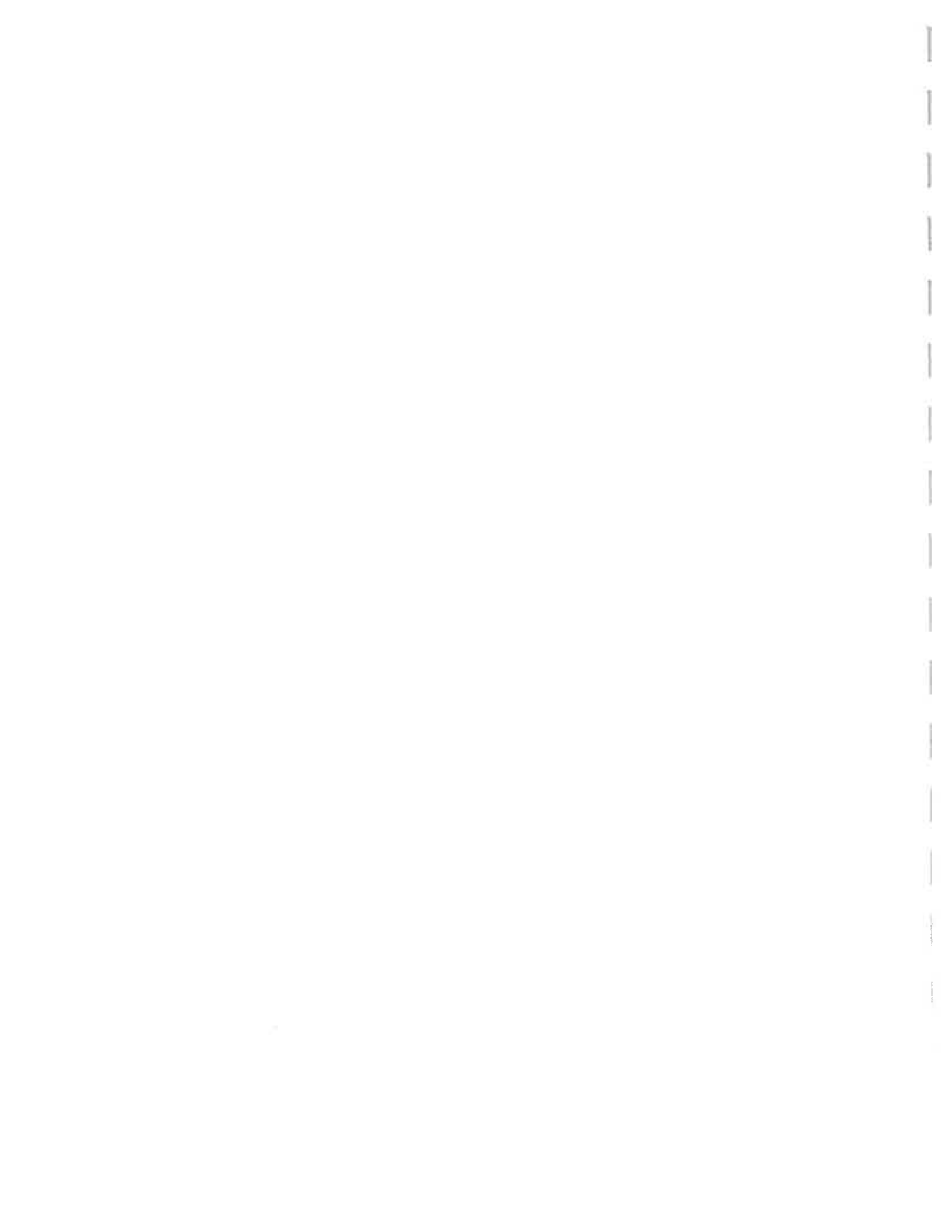
Intersection of US 231, US 41, and an alternate route to I-65 just north of the Town Boundary along US 41. This is a highly congested area with heavy truck traffic that may be alleviated by the construction of the Illiana Expressway between Indiana and Illinois.



Traffic along US 41 just south of the intersection shown above during the morning commuting hours.







South Shore Commuter Rail Extension

As the Chicago suburbs continue to expand outward from the city center, public transportation must also keep pace. The South Shore Rail Line transports commuters from downtown Chicago, along the southern shore of Lake Michigan and through Northern Indiana to South Bend. Recently, the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) completed a feasibility study concluding that an extension of the South Shore Rail Line to the Town of Lowell would offer the most ridership increase to the South Shore Line. The feasibility study was part of the public outreach and planning program, called the West Lake Corridor New Start Studies, used to identify and define a study area where NICTD would work with communities to develop alternatives for extending the South Shore Commuter Rail Line.

Two (2) of the four (4) proposed routes include rail stops in Cedar Lake. With direct access to a commuter rail line, Cedar Lake could expect to see an even greater increase in residential development as Chicago-employed suburbanites seek affordable housing further from the city center in communities with direct commuter rail access to downtown Chicago.

Cedar Lake

The lake is central to the entire Town, and the ability to achieve a clean and high quality lake will be an important challenge for Cedar Lake's future. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' Ecosystem Restoration Project, will assist in restoring and improving overall water quality. While the waterfront is a catalyst for development, that same development can threaten the quality and long term sustainability of this important resource. Management of development and infrastructure along the coast line is vital to maintaining the long term viability of commerce, tourism and the quality of life in Cedar Lake.

SouthShore
Commuter Line



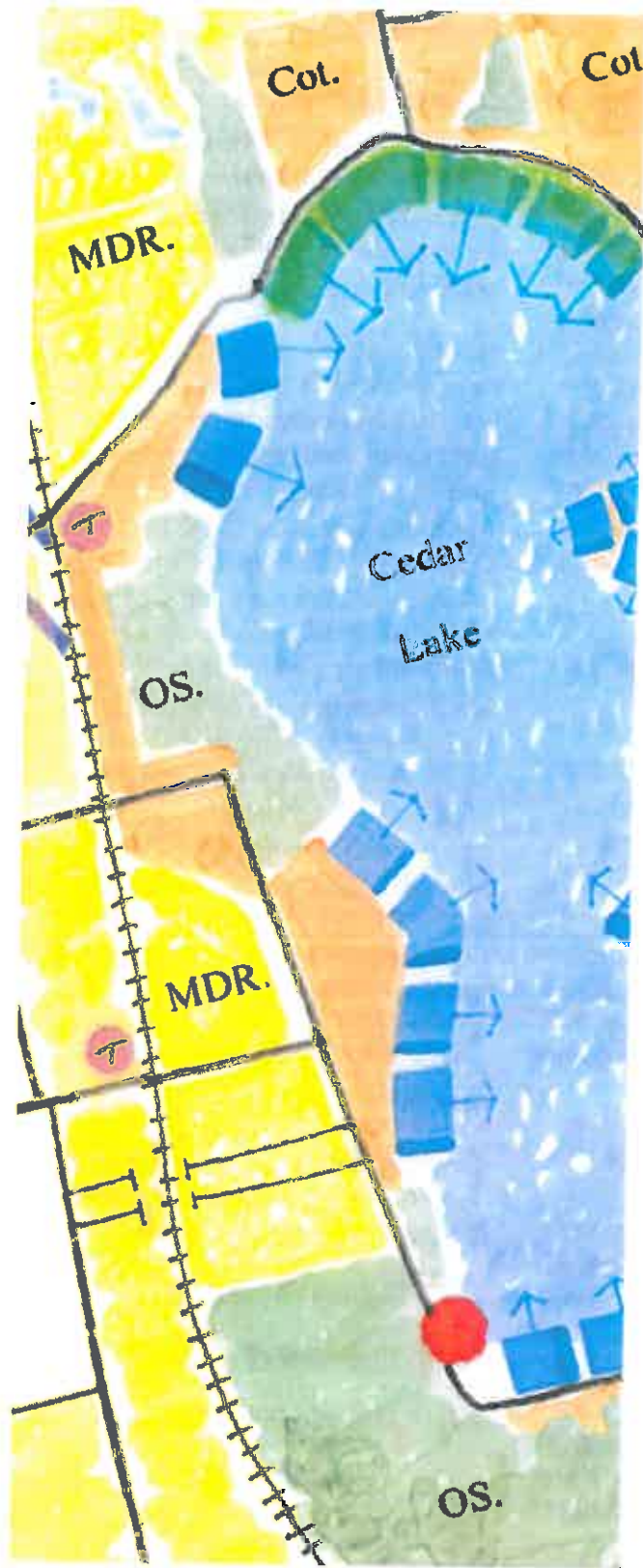
LAKE ISSUES

Channeling: Increasing the shoreline of Cedar Lake through the digging of canals and bays increases the potential for nutrient loading, increases boating access that can eventually exceed the lake's carrying capacity and creates stagnant water conditions. In order to protect the water quality of Cedar Lake for future generations and maintain the improvements made through the Ecosystem Restoration project, new development should not be allowed to create new lakefront by dredging channels or bays. Development should avoid sensitive areas like floodplains, wetlands, environmental areas, and high risk erosion areas.

Impervious Surface: To prevent increased sedimentation and stormwater runoff, new development and redevelopment along the lakeshore should be designed using low impact development techniques. Required parking lot design review, lot coverage maximums, vegetative cover requirements and density reduction should be a priority for water quality protection.

Capital Improvements: Aging infrastructure can have a significant impact on water quality if sewer lines and storm water drains are not functioning properly. Prevention of non-point source pollution, such as sediment runoff, storm water discharges and nutrient loading, can enhance the efforts of the Cedar Lake Ecosystem Restoration Project. By improving and repairing lakefront infrastructure, water quality can be improved.





While knowledge of the past and present of the community is the beginning of making the plan, the desires and dreams of the residents are the foundation of the plan. Through various means of involving the public, various concepts were developed that reflect public perceptions and desires for the future. In addition, a vision and goals to achieve that vision were developed. This chapter describes this process and the concepts that are the results.

CHAPTER FOUR
CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

Public Participation

Key Stakeholder Interviews

Local leaders in the area met with the planning team at the beginning of the preparation of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan to discuss Cedar Lake challenges and opportunities. Community leaders representing development, business, schools and government provided valuable input in the original assessment of Cedar Lake needs. Topics of discussion included a proposed vision, the condition of existing business corridors, recreational and community facilities, public facilities, neighborhoods, housing and local roads. These interviews were valuable in organizing the approach for general public involvement.

When asked what the greatest challenge for Cedar Lake would be, it was interesting to note that for area stakeholders, it was a matter of improving the perception of the Town among area residents and visitors. By improving community image and embracing change, Cedar Lake has enormous potential to evolve into a prosperous and thriving community.

Public Workshops in a Box

In order to get an 'accurate snapshot' of community sentiment, officials turned to the residents and the business community. Early in 2007, the planning process reached literally into the living rooms of Cedar Lake residents to learn their interests and concerns. A technique called Public Workshops in a Box introduced the public to the Compre-

hensive Plan and invited their detailed thoughts about the community and their neighborhoods. The approach meant that people who otherwise could not attend a typical Town hall meeting, or weren't comfortable speaking in front of an audience, still participated in determining the Town's future.

Nearly sixteen (16) households and groups hosted a meeting in their living rooms, classrooms and meeting halls, with each workshop averaging almost eight (8) people, for a total of one hundred twenty-six (126) participants. Detailed instructions for the hosts accompanied questionnaires completed by everyone in attendance, along with guidelines to encourage discussion among members of each group. Priorities were set by the groups themselves and residents could identify their concerns by actual physical location using maps provided by Cedar Lake. All meeting materials were returned to the Town for later analysis and the results provided guidance for drafting goals and objectives. Examples of the workshop materials and the tabulation of the workshop results are found in the Appendix.

The most common responses from the 2007 Comprehensive Plan workshops focused on five (5) key issues:

1. Roads/infrastructure
2. Cleanliness/Lake Improvements
3. More Commercial Development
4. Aesthetic Improvements

5. More Recreational Opportunities

Focus Group

Over forty (40) key stakeholders, personally invited by members of the Steering Committee for the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, attended an evening meeting on March 14, 2007, to focus on four (4) main topic areas that appeared most frequently from the results of Public Workshops in a Box. Participants discussed things that they like or dislike about Cedar Lake within each topic area. Common themes were identified and summarized into goal statements. The participants then prioritized the goals. The full tabulations of the responses is in the Appendix. A summary of the most important issues per topic area follows:

Streets and Public Utilities

1. Improve major roads (i.e. surface, widen, curbs, etc)
2. Drainage problems on roads
3. Sidewalks/Pedestrian Connections
4. Public Access to Lake/Beach/Boardwalk

Community Character

1. Clean up image
2. Develop ordinances (i.e. nuisances, tree preservation, architecture)
3. Move utilities underground
4. Beach area/Better access to lake



Focus Group discussion

Commercial and Industrial Development

1. Boardwalk commercial area
2. Industrial development located south of Town
3. Recreation oriented (i.e. walking, bike rental, etc.)
4. Image improvement for existing businesses

Land Use

1. Continue lake dredging/improvements
2. Enforce building maintenance ordinances
3. Develop regional commercial/industrial on U.S. 41
4. Need more recreational/open space

Top 3 Locations for a Town Center

1. North side of lake near Dairy Queen
2. West side/Lincoln Plaza Area

3. East and West of Chamber

Public Workshop

One hundred and twenty-two (122) people gathered at Hanover Central High School on April 26, 2007, to view the initial concept maps of Cedar Lake and the surrounding Planning Area. The concept maps were developed through the extensive public meeting process and inventories of natural resources, infrastructure and development patterns. Respondents also viewed two (2) concepts for a Town center in the Midway Gardens area, and favored the Town Center Concept 2 (see Figure 9), with an extensive park-like atmosphere around the lake, while others suggested that the planning team look at other options, such as the existing Town hall site. The concepts are explained in more detail later in this chapter.

Developing the Vision and Goals

During the 2007 Comprehensive Plan process, the Steering Committee agreed on an overall vision for Cedar Lake that reflected the values of the community as expressed through public comment. The Community Vision statement defines what the Town is trying to accomplish. Goals were then identified as more specific means of achieving the Vision. The following Community Vision and Goal statements provide the foundation for the following chapters of this plan.

Community Vision

Cedar Lake will be a premier destination location, offering its citizens pristine water features and thriving residential neighborhoods, exemplary municipal services and a vibrant, diverse business community. Cedar Lake will provide a well balanced mix of land uses that will serve the needs of a growing population, while striving to maintain the natural amenities that give Cedar Lake its sense of place and identity.

Goals

Economy and Business

A need for more commercial and local business opportunities was identified by area residents as an important issue early on in the planning process. Over 88% of the results of the 'Public Workshops in a Box' rated the condition of the existing business corridor along West 133rd Avenue as "fair" to "poor." In addition to new commercial and light industrial uses, residents would like to see existing businesses improve their 'road side image' through aesthetic improvements such as better building design, landscaping, lighting and signs. Opportunities to develop a walkable commercial corridor that complements the lake front is a desired element for future development. With a vision statement that strives for a 'vibrant, diverse business community', the following goals provide guidance for future growth and development:



Goal: Establish an identity for Cedar Lake that will unify the Town and its commercial areas.

Goal: Create a sustainable business environment that provides attractive places and quality development experiences for patrons, while considering the costs and restraints of development.

Streets and Utilities

The condition of Cedar Lake's infrastructure was one of the most important issues expressed by area residents. Many lakeside neighborhoods experience drainage problems and major roads lack curbs, gutters and sidewalks. While it is acknowledged that many area roadways are limited to spot improvements by the existing development pattern, these goals will serve to guide future street improvements and area redevelopment to meet the vision statement for "exemplary municipal services."

Goal: Improve the safety and physical condition of neighborhood street networks so they operate at an acceptable level of local services.

Goal: Create and fund a capital improvements program.

Goal: Improve access and circulation on the U.S. 41 corridor.

Goal: Maintain and improve infrastructure, utilities and public services to meet the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

Housing and Natural Environment

Existing lakeside neighborhoods are beginning to show their age with many areas of worn infrastructure and housing. With a relatively older housing stock than surrounding municipalities, new development and redevelopment is expected to raise housing values. Public comment received throughout the process revealed that the community as whole would support aesthetic improvements through more rigorous code enforcement and design standards. The following goals support strong, attractive neighborhoods as the backbone of the community.

The natural environment of Cedar Lake is very important for area residents. The preservation of the lake and natural features such as area wetlands and woodlands received strong support. New development should incorporate natural feature preservation into their proposals, and existing natural resources, such as area waterways and wetlands should be protected from residential encroachment through natural feature setbacks. In order to achieve the vision of "pristine water features and thriving residential neighborhoods," these goals provide guidance for future development that respects the valued natural environment.

Goal: Improve the physical and social environments of each distinct residential neighborhood in an effort to elevate the overall quality of life in Cedar Lake.

Goal: In all aspects of local planning and policy, protect and improve the Town's prized natural features, such as Cedar Lake, wetlands, trees and woodlands.

Goal: Reclaim segments of the lakeshore to provide both visual and physical access for the general public.

Community Facilities and Recreational Amenities

A top priority for many residents during public comment for the 2007 Comprehensive Plan was the desire for more recreational opportunities. In addition to improving area roadways, providing pedestrian linkages through sidewalks and bike paths were also identified during focus groups and interviews. Improving access to the lake will allow area residents and visitors an opportunity to enjoy a day of picnicking, walking and riding bikes and is seen as a major focus of future Cedar Lake area improvements. In order to create opportunities for area residents, the following goals are provided for community facilities.

Goal: Maintain and improve public services, buildings and spaces, and recreational amenities within the Town to meet the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

Goal: Provide pedestrian linkages between all types of uses within the Town so residents have an optional means of travel to local

destinations that will capitalize on providing views of the lake.

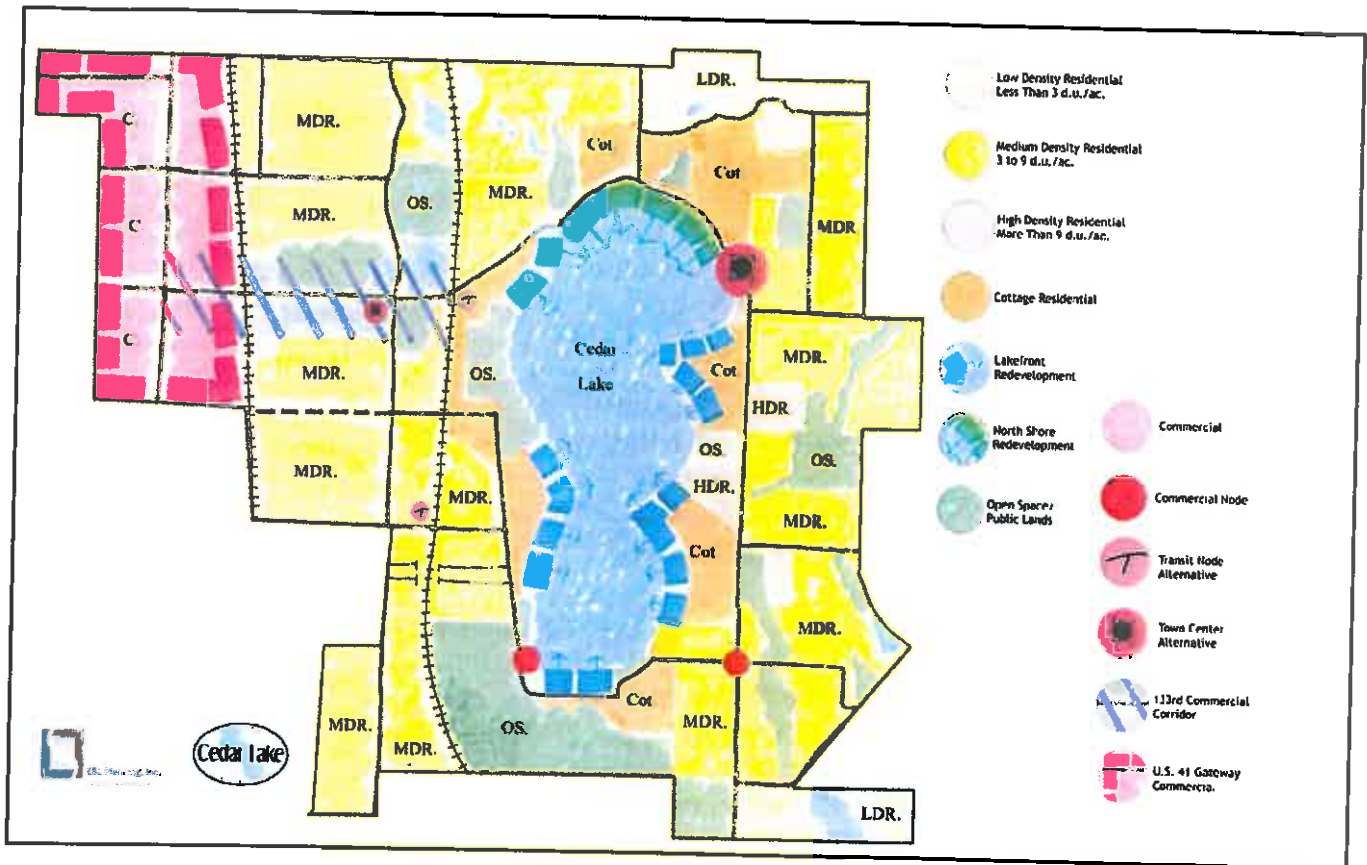
Overall Land Use Alternatives

The above vision and goals were the foundation for developing the initial land use alternative concepts. The public's vision for the future of Cedar Lake accounts for existing infrastructure and utilities, natural features and approved development plans, which also influence future growth and development. The plan alternatives were then presented to the public at a workshop to solicit feedback and determine preferred future land uses.

Cedar Lake Town Land Use Alternative

Within the existing Town, the street and land use pattern provided the basic framework for establishing the Town Land Use Alternative (Figure 7 on the next page), which, combined with the other alternative plans and considerations for the future construction of the Illiana Expressway, provided the framework for the Future Land Use Plan (see Figure 12) as part of this 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update. The lake is the central focus of the plan alternative. The concept plan is divided into the following described categories. The intended uses, scale, and character of development within each of these individual designations work together to offer a viable Town area that emphasizes small commercial nodes and neighborhood development.

Figure 7. Town Land Use Alternative



Lakefront Redevelopment

- The lakefront is a prime asset in the community that attracts residents, as well as non-residents, for serenity and enjoyment of the water. Public access is not as strong as it should be and many residents expressed this concern during the planning process. New lakefront development is proposed along the north and northwestern shores of Cedar Lake and also incorporated into the Town Center alternative.
- The waterfront areas near the Town Complex and the Chamber of Commerce provide the only areas for public lake access. Connecting these areas with

non-motorized pathways, green spaces and parks would preserve the public's use and enjoyment of the Town's most valued asset.

- Comments regarding the protection of viewsheds and opportunities for increased public recreation along the waterfront were considered during the conceptual planning.

North Shore Redevelopment

- Identified for its potential to provide increased access to the lake and recreational opportunities, this area captures a significant vista overlooking Cedar Lake. Many residents felt this area pro-

vides a significant view of Cedar Lake and requested more access to it.

Residential

- Maintaining the historic cottage atmosphere, while encouraging improvements and redevelopment, is important for area residents. Cottage residential areas are shown near the lakefront.
- Undeveloped areas containing natural features such as wetlands and woodlands are an important element of the community's character. Low and Medium Density Residential is proposed in these areas to prevent excess loss of these natural features.
- Cedar Lake residents find existing neighborhoods such as Havenwood and Robin's Nest to be 'family-friendly' environments. Continuing this density of development, the majority of planned residential is in the form of Medium Density Residential.

Open Space/Public Lands

- Increasing opportunities for recreation and lake access is a main priority for area residents. Open space areas are prioritized on the concept plan to protect area water quality, preserve green space and increase land area for parks and recreation.

Commercial and Industrial

- More commercial development, in the form of restaurants, shopping, and hotels, was one of the five (5) most important issues identified through the Public Workshops-in-a-Box'

- New light industrial uses should be located south of Town and incompatible industrial locations should be phased out of residential areas.

- New large-scale commercial uses should be focused onto U.S. 41. Local retail is encouraged around the perimeter of the lake at designated commercial nodes. Lakeside commercial uses should be coordinated in design and appearance using a 'theme' concept, such as nautical and/or boardwalk.

- Commercial development on US 41 is constrained by the presence of existing single family neighborhoods on both sides of the highway. Development must be cognizant of existing neighborhoods, but must also promote conversion of some of those areas to commercial. Sufficient parcel depth is needed to accommodate more desirable development.

- Commercial uses on West 133rd Avenue should be community oriented and well designed. Buildings should be oriented to the street.

Livable Center Alternatives

The focus group meetings revealed that the historic Midway Gardens area was a place where people gathered for evening entertainment and social activities. The Dairy Queen area is known as a central gathering spot to enjoy views of the lake.

Two (2) plans were designed for this area to provide a central focus area located on the lake. Livable Center Alternative 1 (Figure 8) shows a well-developed



Figure 8.
Livable Center-
Alternative #1

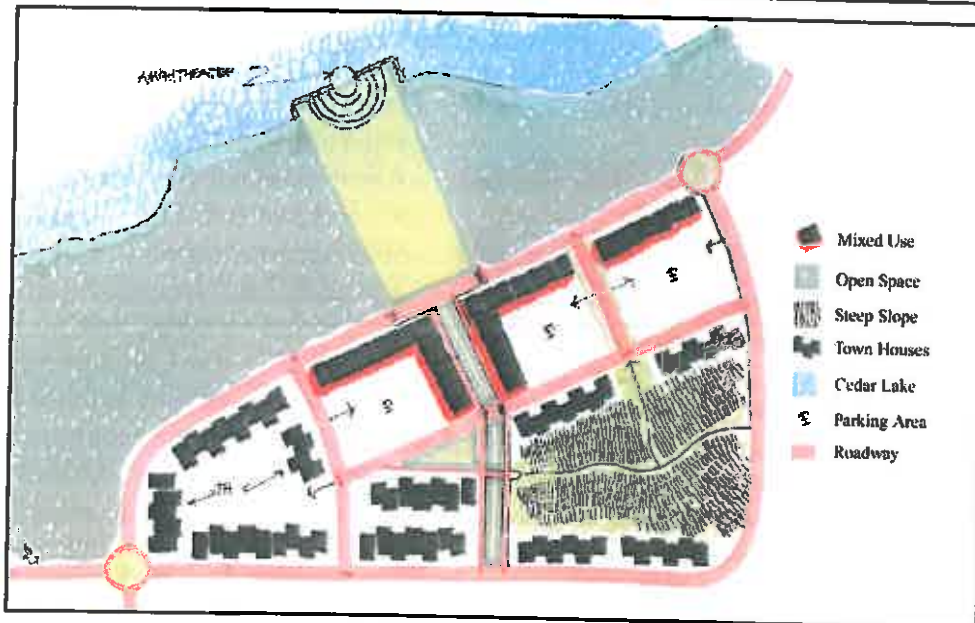


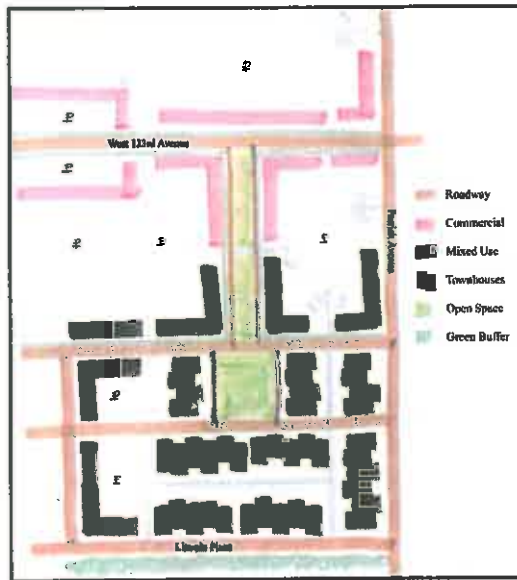
Figure 9.
Livable Center
Alternative #2

mixed use area centered on a relocated North Lakeshore Drive, moved away from the lake to provide more area between the road and the water's edge. The mixed use area is centered on a public green that provides access to some of the businesses and the lake. The buildings would feature retail and en-

tertainment uses on the first floor, with dwellings or offices above. Surrounding the mixed use area are medium to high density dwellings such as townhomes and/or small apartment buildings.

Livable Center Alternative 2 (Figure 9) shows a scaled down mixed use area

Figure 10.
Town Center
Alternative 3,
West 133rd Ave.



avored Alternative 2. However, there was also public sentiment for a Town center development on the west side of the lake, near West 133rd Avenue and Parrish. Livable Center Alternative 3 (Figure 10 to the left) shows a development just west of Parrish on the site currently occupied by Lincoln Plaza. This redevelopment would put a mixed use area centered on a road leading south from West 133rd Avenue to a central green faced by businesses and dwellings. Presently, the Lincoln Plaza area is under redevelopment for the new Strack & VanTil Grocery Store. This may become a catalyst for redevelopment of the remaining areas similar to the Livable Center Alternative.

Example of
boardwalk
shops oriented
to the
waterfront



located on the land side of the road, which has also been moved inland. The mixed use area also contains businesses on the first floor with dwellings or other businesses above. Townhomes and apartments are nearby. The mixed use area overlooks a large public green, with several acres of lakefront land, which could contain a variety of passive and active recreation uses. A "ring road" provides secondary access around the north and east sides of the area and allows a bypass of the business area.

Later in the process, the Steering Committee and Plan Commission identified a fourth possibility, near the Town Hall on the lakefront. The Town Hall site could accommodate a Town Livable Center with small shops and restaurants accessed from a boardwalk that would be focused to the lake and provide a place to stroll and sit along the lakefront. This site is disadvantaged by its isolation from local arterial and collector roads, but may be successful as part of the Town Hall/Community Center, if those facilities remain in their current locations.

Of these two (2) alternatives, Steering Committee and public sentiment

After much discussion with the Steering Committee, the Midway Gardens area was chosen as the best site. A concept using Livable Center Alternative 2 is developed in detail in Chapter 5. Should one of the other sites ultimately become

the location, a detailed plan could be developed at that time.

Cedar Lake Future Land Use Plan

During the preparation of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, public input and the Steering Committee led the preparation of various alternative land use plans. Figure 11 was the first land use plan alternative that considered what future land use should be if the Illiana Expressway is constructed. The basis for the the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update Future Land Use Plan (Figure 12) was developed with the expectation that the proposed Illiana Expressway south of Town will be constructed. This new expressway corridor will create tremendous potential for commercial and industrial opportunities along the highway frontages and at the interchanges. Locations for potential land uses were designed to incorporate existing and potential new infrastructure, along with priorities heard from area residents regarding natural features, walkability and strengthening a sense of identity for the Town.

However, if the expressway is never constructed, the intensity of uses in and around the proposed corridor, as identified in Figure 6 "Illiana Expressway Proposed Route", should be changed to more Low Density and Medium Density Residential uses with corresponding commercial areas for same.

Residential

With so much available land within the Planning Area, Cedar Lake can provide an extensive market for new residential housing. The majority of land planned around the Town of Cedar Lake is proposed for Medium Density Residential, extending the natural density pattern that occurs in the newer developments beyond the lake. High density housing, such as apartments, is planned for property to the south of the Expressway location to supply additional housing near planned employment centers and provide a transition from commercial uses to residential uses. Low Density Residential is promoted along the edges of the Planning Area, to naturally blend in with the existing land use pattern of agricultural uses and to promote the preservation of on-site natural features, such as woodlands.

Transit Oriented Development

To capitalize on potential new transportation opportunities, such as the light rail, a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is proposed along the rail line. Mixed use development, such as commercial, housing and parking will provide an opportunity for local travelers and those wishing to explore Cedar Lake to be able to access convenient services in the immediate vicinity of the rail line. The transit oriented development concept is explored in more detail in Chapter 5.

Commercial

Cedar Lake does not have any major commercial services in the form of 'super store' development. Area residents expressed an interest in a major grocery store and other large-scale centers. The plan, however, locating industrial south of Town was supported in the focus group session. Area lands are proposed along the interchange of the expressway for future light industrial uses.

pressway, medical research and high-tech uses could be located along this corridor.

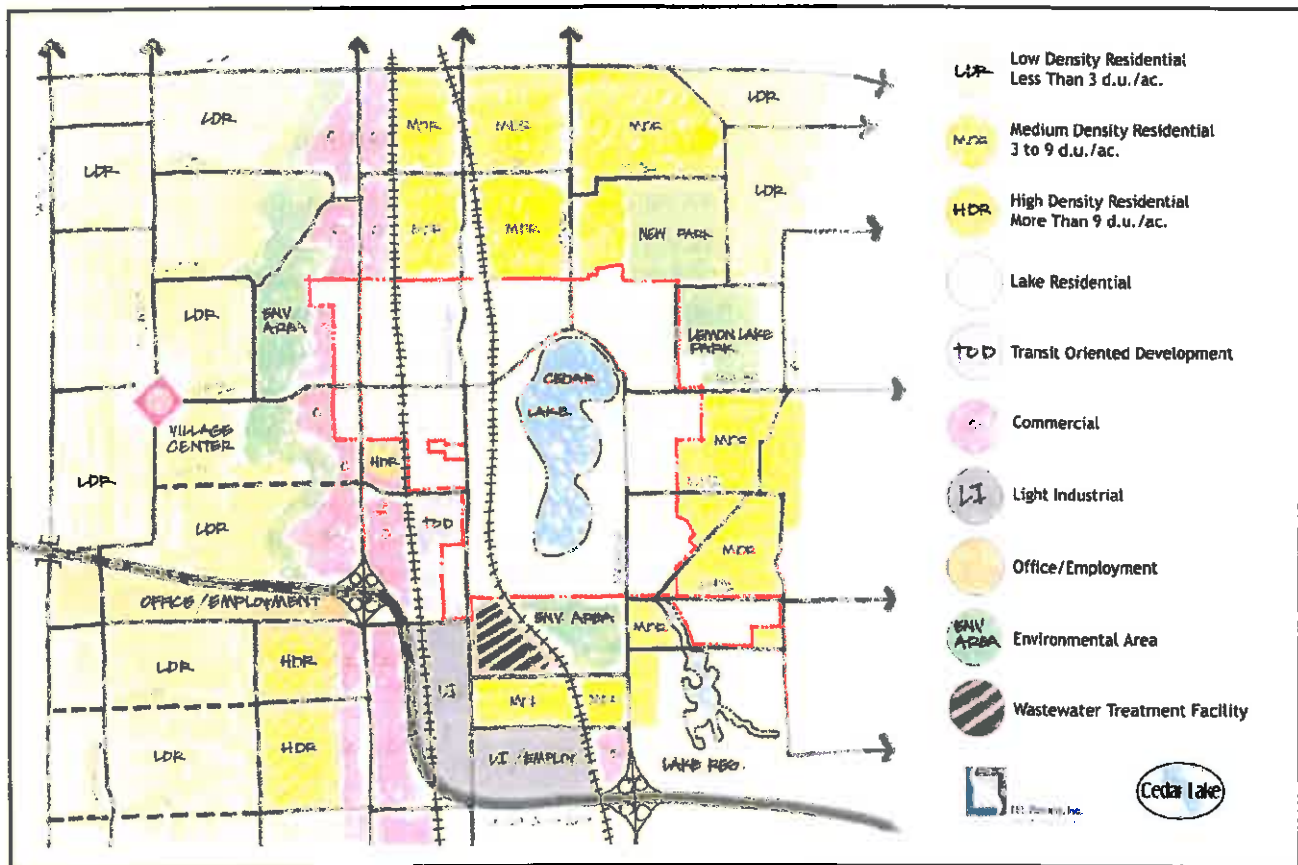
Environmental Areas

The Planning Area has several key natural features that provide natural storm water management in the form of low lying wetlands and woodlands that should be preserved. Development in this area should be sensitive to natural features.

Office/Employment

With an expanding residential community and a new expressway, Cedar Lake has an opportunity to provide for new employment centers. Located south of the ex-

Figure 11: Planning Area Land Use Alternative #1



commercial hub servicing the surrounding communities.

Light Industrial

Area residents did not feel that additional light industrial was necessary in the Town area. However, locating industrial south of Town was supported in the focus group session. Area lands are proposed along the interchange of the expressway for future light industrial uses.

Office/Employment

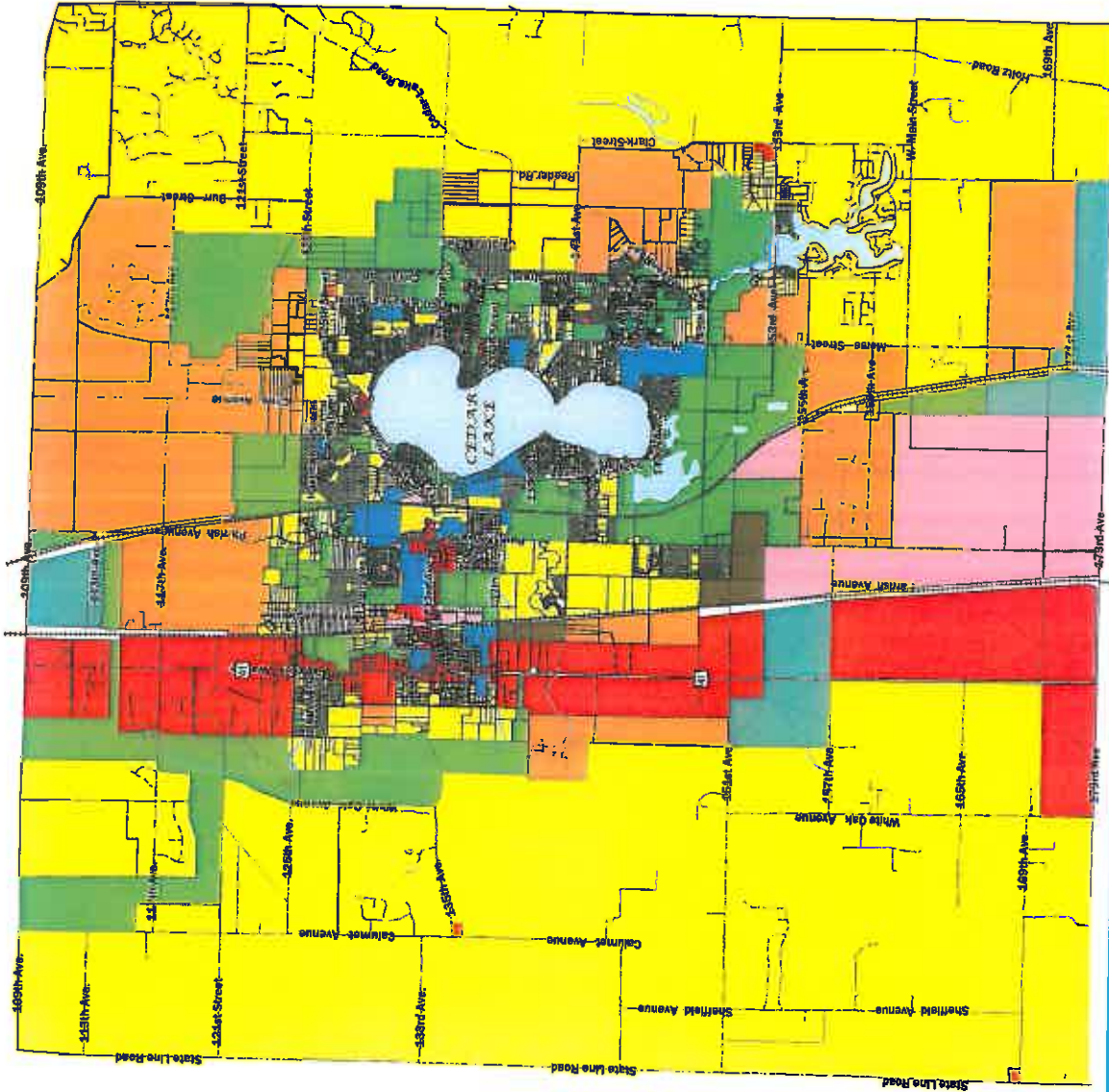
With an expanding residential community and a new expressway, Cedar Lake has an opportunity to provide for new employment centers. Located south of the expressway, medical research and high-tech uses could be located along this corridor.

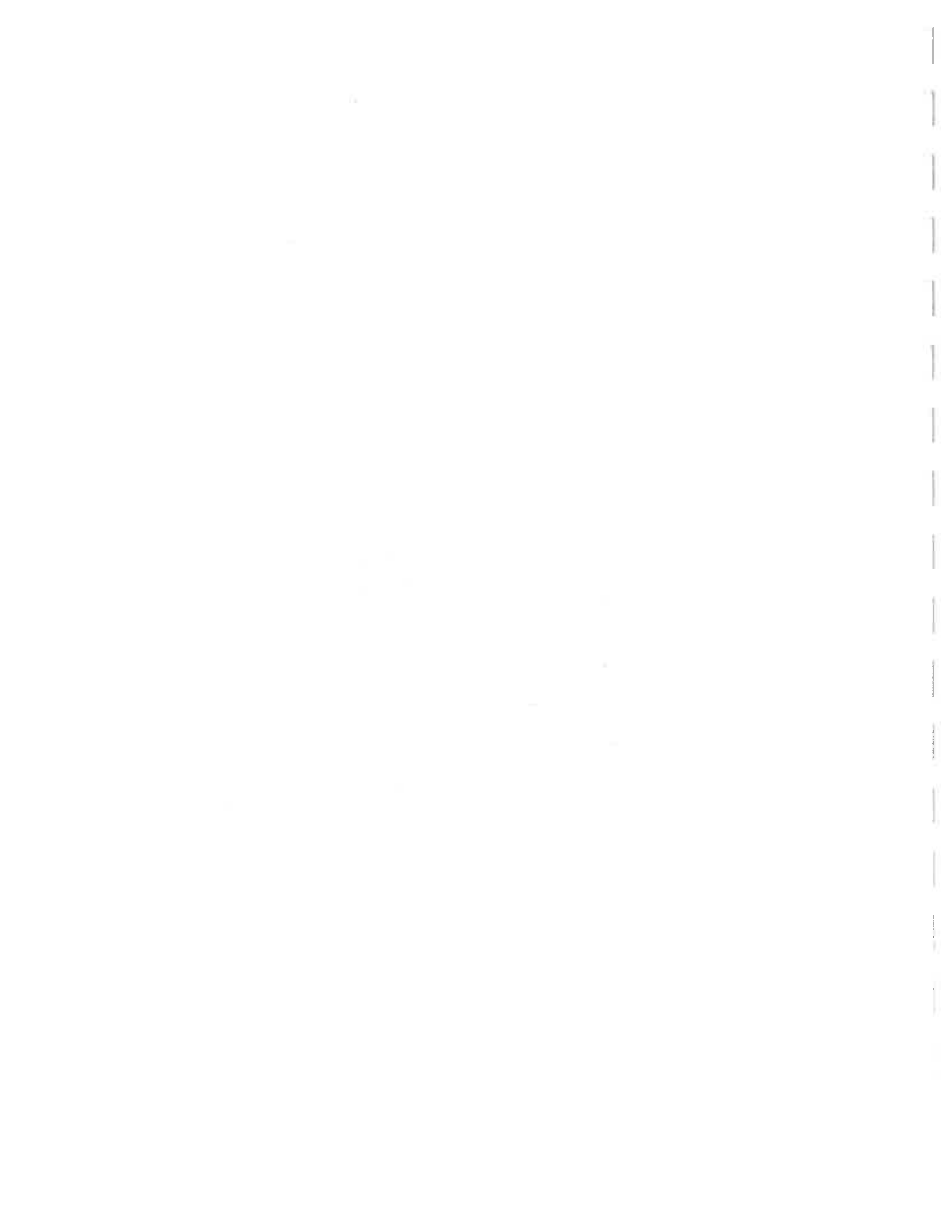
Environmental Areas

The Planning Area has several key natural features that provide natural storm water management in the form of low lying wetlands and woodlands that should be preserved. Development in this area should be sensitive to natural features.

Figure 12
 Future Land Use Plan

- Land Use Legend**
- Low Density Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - High Density Residential
 - Commercial
 - Office
 - Industrial
 - Public/Semi-Public
 - Parks/Open Space
 - Railroad
 - Streams
 - Cedar Lake/Water







Through the process of understanding the community, engaging the public, defining a vision and goals, and developing alternative land use concepts, a future land use plan has evolved. This plan and its elements, described in detail in this chapter, are intended to guide Town Officials as Cedar Lake continues to grow, change, redevelop and improve.

CHAPTER FIVE
FUTURE LAND USE

Land Use Plan

The land use designations, as depicted in the Future Land Use Plan (Figure 12), considers the existing land uses which should remain and those which may be appropriate to change in the future. The Future Land Use Plan also considers the various implementation recommendations identified in the following sections herein. Specific plan elements are then described in detail.

The Land Use Plan assumes that the Illiana Expressway will be built. However, should the project be deleted from all future INDOT consideration, the concept plan elements from the Overall Land Use Alternative 2 should be employed, along the southern portion of US 41 and within the other areas which would have bordered the Illiana.

The plan shows extensions of major roads, to complete road networks and provide connectivity between areas and neighborhoods of the Town and development area.

General Land Use Descriptions

Low Density Residential

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ELEMENTS:

- Single family, low density
- Sensitive to natural surroundings
- Buffers between residential development and agricultural uses

The Low Density Residential (LDR) designation recognizes the rural, estate-style development that has already occurred in many areas and proposes that future development follows a similar pattern. The majority of the LDR designation is located in the western portion of the Planning Area. This area is farthest from Town services and is appropriate for the types of large-lot single family development desirable to those who seek a “country” lifestyle.

Much of this area is actively used for agricultural activities. Given the relative isolation of most of these areas, it is likely that development of the most far-flung properties will be in the future, perhaps beyond the time horizon of this plan. However, given the pace of development in Northwest Indiana, continually favorable market conditions could result in all of this area being proposed for development much sooner.

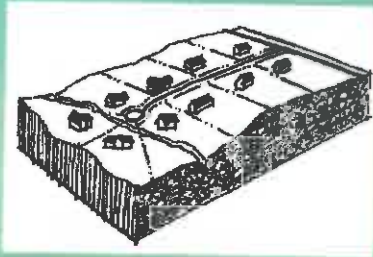
Description

LDR developments will generally have the following characteristics:

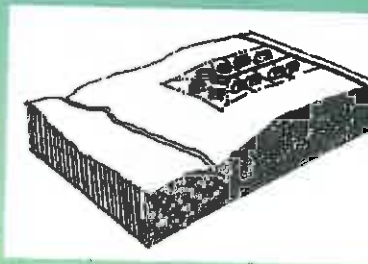
CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

Encouraging “cluster” development is one tool that helps to preserve open space while still allowing residential development in low and medium density development areas. For instance, as an incentive to preserve a percentage of property in open space, the property owner can be allowed the same density on the remaining percentage as would be allowed for the entire property. Additional incentives such as density bonuses could be used to provide more open space, require significant setbacks to preserve rural and small-town character, and protect natural features.

The example of the traditional subdivisions below has a ten (10) acre lot size with no shared open space. The entire parcel is consumed by individual lots. The example on the right has a two (2) acre maximum lot size with the remaining eight (80) acres preserved as open space. The undeveloped property around the home sites has a deed restriction that prevents future development and may be owned by the people in the subdivision or designated as a conservation easement and donated to a local land conservancy. While both examples provide the primary use of residential development as recommended for this classification, the cluster development option consumes less land and provides opportunities for open space connections.



Traditional Subdivision



Cluster Development

- Uses shall be generally limited to single family developments, with an average density of less than three dwelling units per acre (3 du/a). Most developments will likely be even less dense, with an average density of less than one (1) unit per acre.
- Developments are sensitive to the natural environment. Open spaces are preserved, keeping stands of trees as much as possible and respecting steep slopes (over 18%). Large development setbacks and site

clearing limits can help to preserve the country atmosphere and prevent over-use of the land.

- Clustered development (see sidebar, above) is encouraged.
- This designation recognizes that existing agricultural uses may continue for many years into the future. Therefore, new single family subdivisions must take into account the effects of living near active farming.

Typical low density residential neighborhood with lots averaging 1/2 an acre or more.



Typical low density residential lot in a more urban configuration similar to the many homes in the Town's Older Neighborhoods.



Buffers, including generously landscaped strips and tree screens can help to minimize dust and odors. Subdivisions near animal confinement operations should be placed to take advantage of prevailing winds.

Implementation

1. Create appropriate zoning designations for larger lot development. Districts located more than ¾ mile from existing Town limits may be appropriate for minimum lot sizes as large as three (3) acres. Areas closer to Town limits should be limited to developments with minimum lot sizes of 15,000 square feet or above.

2. Create zoning requirements that allow for clustered development. Preservation of at least thirty percent (30%) of the property in perpetual open space should be required before cluster development is allowed. Permit density bonuses in exchange for more open space, preservation of natural features, etc.

3. As part of the subdivision approval process, require buffers and other nuisance-mitigation techniques for developments adjacent to active farming operations.

Medium Density Residential

ELEMENTS:

- A mix of residential dwelling types: single family detached, town-homes, duplexes and multiple family.
- Where possible, land set aside for parks and trail links. Sidewalks are required.
- Enforce maintenance codes.
- Improvements to existing streets and public facilities.

The Medium Density Residential (MDR) land use designation allows for a variety of dwelling types and densities. However, the dominant land use is single family, detached residential.

This designation is found in the undeveloped areas near the Town limits, as well as most of the residential areas within the Town located away from the lake.

The MDR designation includes the existing South Shore Country Club. As the conversion of the former Monastery Golf Course to residential use has shown, it is possible that this land may be developed in the future. Because of its location, MDR is the most appropriate designation for this property.

Description

MDR developments will generally have the following characteristics:

- Average overall densities range from three (3) to nine (9) dwelling units per acre.
 - High quality single family, detached dwellings, such as those found in the Havenwood or Robin's Nest subdivisions, are the dominant land uses. For those currently developed areas that are designated MDR, future redevelopment should be of similar quality and character.
 - In appropriate areas, higher density developments, such as duplexes and townhomes, should be encouraged. These areas include neighborhoods near the commercial corridors or near industrial development; areas adjacent to lands designated High Density Residential or Cottage Residential; or areas near the railroad lines. More generous setbacks and buffers between MDR and more intensely developed lands should be required.
 - As raw land is proposed for development, care should be taken to ensure there is adequate accessibility to park land. Any development over twenty (20) acres should dedicate land within the subdivision or provide high quality park land in close proximity.
- Pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and parks, as well as pedestrian access to the lake, are important elements. Sidewalks should be required in all subdivisions.
 - In existing neighborhoods, maintenance codes should be enforced to prevent deterioration. It may be necessary in some areas to target buildings for demolition, in anticipation of neighborhood redevelopment.
 - To encourage improvements to private property, neighborhood streets should be upgraded or replaced. This should include drainage improvements.

Implementation/Form-Based Code

1. Zoning districts that provide for smaller- lot single family development, duplexes and townhomes should be adopted, including the possibility of adopting form-based codes to promote pedestrian oriented development and scale. Single family developments should have a density no greater than five (5) dwelling units per acre, duplex and townhome developments should not exceed nine (9) dwelling units per acre. Site development requirements should include buffers between MDR developments and more intensely developed lands, to be provided on the property of the more intensive use.
2. Subdivision regulations should require land dedications, or where dedication is not feasible, payment of impact fees in accordance with applicable Indiana law. A separate impact fee ordinance would also be necessary to implement this element.

3. Subdivision regulations should also require sidewalks on both sides of the street whenever possible. If right-of-way widths do not provide enough space, then at least one side of the street should have a sidewalk.

4. Parks and recreation plans and funding should be directed toward providing pedestrian connections and trails to allow non-motorized access to other neighborhoods, parks, schools, business areas and the lake.

5. Maintenance codes should be enforced, and adequate funding and personnel should be provided. Funds to demolish buildings that are unsafe or in particularly poor condition should be budgeted. Some of this cost can be offset through tax liens or, if the owner defaults, through tax sales.

6. A capital improvements program or similar process that prioritizes neighborhood streets for upgrade or replacement is necessary. Experience shows that private property owners upgrade their properties when the public streets and facilities are improved.

High Density Residential

ELEMENTS:

- High quality apartment and condominium developments with on-site amenities
- Buffering between HDR and lower density developments

The High Density Residential (HDR) designation encompasses those areas that are already developed (or approved for development) with higher density condominium or apartment developments. In addition, some currently undeveloped areas near commercial corridors, rail lines or the Illiana Expressway are proposed for the HDR designation.

Example of Medium Density Residential on narrow single-family lots



Example of Medium Density Duplex units off of W. 133rd Avenue

The dominant land use in this designation is higher density condominium or apartment-style complexes. These developments are characterized by buildings containing four or more dwellings and usually have multiple buildings accessed from common drives and parking areas.

Generally, the height and bulk of these buildings prevent views to the lake and create a wall at the water's edge, giving the lakefront a fortress-like quality. Many residents expressed a desire to preserve lake views whenever possible. The Sunset Harbor development is included only because it has been constructed. All other lakefront development should be subject to the Lakefront Redevelopment Element described later in this chapter.

The Plan shows new HDR areas west of US 41 and south and west of the proposed alignment of the Illiana Expressway. These areas provide a transition between the commercial uses planned for US 41 and the more rural LDR areas to the west. Should the Illiana Expressway not be built, Low

Density Residential (LDR) development, with some HDR along the west side of US 41, is appropriate. This alternative is shown on the Planning Area Land Use Concept Alternative 2, Figure 10 (Pg. 4-10).

Description

HDR developments will generally have the following characteristics:

- High quality apartment and condominium developments, with amenities serving the residents, such as pools, club houses, etc.

- Densities exceed nine dwelling units per acre.
- Adequate buffering between HDR developments and lower-density residential developments. When HDR is adjacent to more intensive uses, those uses should provide buffers.
- On site pedestrian systems, connecting buildings and services within the complex, should connect to sidewalks in the adjacent right-of-way. These, in turn, connect the complex to other neighborhoods, parks, schools, business areas, and the lake.

Implementation/Form-Based Code

1. Create zoning districts on lands where high density residential development is appropriate.
2. Through the improvement location permit review process and/or form-based codes in the zoning ordinance, require high quality developments, with on-site amenities serving the residents and an overall design that promotes pedestrian friendly scale and walkability.



High Density Residential units along Cedar Lake

3. Through both the improvement location permit requirements, subdivision regulations, and/or form-based codes, require both internal and perimeter sidewalks and other pedestrian improvements, particularly in those areas highlighted on the Connectivity Plan (see below).

4. Require that the minimum standards for building materials used on the exterior of homes is a masonry standard.

Lake Residential

ELEMENTS

- Low density, low intensity development, where appropriate
- Preserve natural features and prevent erosion
- Maintain the natural environment

This designation encompasses the existing Lake Dalecarlia development in the southeast corner of the Planning Area.

No changes are recommended to any existing land uses within the Lake Residential designation. Even if Lake Dalecarlia should ever be annexed to the Town of Cedar Lake, there does not appear to be any reason to consider any changes.



Lake Residential Homes stacked back-to-back along the northern waterfront.



Example of lakefront cottage-style home .



With careful planning and resource management, development in environmental areas can co-exist with natural features

Environmental Areas

ELEMENTS:

- High-quality passive and active recreation spaces
- Preservation of open lands and natural features
- Access to Cedar Lake
- Connections between neighborhoods and parks/open spaces

The Environmental Areas land use designation encompasses existing areas of woodlands, wetlands and watersheds as well as significant open space areas. The main Environmental Areas shown on the Future Land Use maps encompass the West Creek basin, west of the developed

Town. These lands are distinguished from those designated Open Space (next page) because limited, environmentally sensitive development may be permitted. Open Space lands are those that are targeted as permanent open space.



Wooded area along the northern edge of the lake.

Description

Characteristics of lands and development within the Environmental Areas include:

- Pockets of existing, undeveloped and undisturbed lands that are not suitable for development, such as wetlands and lowlands near watercourses. These areas should be preserved perpetually as open space to preserve native ecosystems and habitat for fish and wildlife. Limited passive recreation, where possible, is encouraged.
- The above areas are contiguous to undeveloped and undisturbed areas that may support limited development, such as woodlands and areas with sustainable slopes (less than 18 percent). Development on properties in these areas would generally be limited to single family, large lot developments on scattered sites. Clearing of wooded areas should be limited to only that amount of land needed to site a home and associated outbuildings and access drives. Cluster development (as described previously) would be especially appropriate in these areas.
- The area north of Lemon Lake County Park is a large wooded area that could support limited development according to the Environmental Area guidelines. However, this area may also

be prime expansion land for the County Park, in which case it should be considered as being in the Open Space designation.

Implementation

1. Identify specific properties with environmentally sensitive areas and take steps for their preservation, including pub-

lic donation or purchase, or sale/donation to conservation groups.

2. Create an overlay district in the zoning ordinance that places additional restrictions on lands within this designation, such as clearing restrictions, increased setbacks, and use of environmentally friendly stormwater management systems. The underlying zoning district should be the lowest density district.

Open Space

The areas designated as Open Space are those that should be protected from development, including lands currently in private ownership that should be acquired for public use. This designation includes existing parks, as well as undeveloped lands with significant parks, recreation or open space potential.

This designation is distinguished from the Environmental Areas designation in that these lands are intended to be kept perpetually undeveloped. The Environmental Areas designation allows limited development where impacts on natural features can be minimized.

Description

Characteristics of lands within the Open Space designation include:

- Existing park lands within the Town, as well as Lemon Lake County Park. These parks should be preserved, and where needed, expanded to provide both passive and active recreational opportunities to area residents.



Private Park Along Cedar Lake

- This designation includes the Cedar Lake Bible Conference Grounds, which, while private, provides significant recreational opportunities to a wide audience, and preserves a significant amount of land along the lakefront from development.

- Wetland areas are preserved as passive recreational space. These areas provide opportunities for pedestrian/bicycle paths and other recreation, such as a proposed canoe trail on Cedar Creek.

- Active recreation programs, such as sports leagues, day camps, etc., are located in areas to serve both area-wide and neighborhood residents.

Implementation

1. Existing park land should be preserved, and programs and facilities in the parks should be expanded. The Cedar Lake and Lake County Parks and Recreation Departments should continue to prepare parks and recreation plans and seek funding to maintain and expand park land, facilities and programs.

2. Additional land should be acquired for active and passive parks use. The Plan shows additional land for access to Cedar Lake, along North Lakeshore Drive, in the Pine Crest Marina area, and north of the Bible Conference grounds. In addition, the Plan recommends acquisition of lakefront land along North Lakeshore Drive. This element is described in more detail later in this chapter.



Lake of the Red Cedars Museum

3. Preservation of wetlands, significant woodlands and riparian corridors should be a priority. Construction of boardwalks and provision of access to streams (such as a canoe trail) provide opportunities for education and enjoyment of nature.

4. Parks should be well connected to neighborhoods and other activity areas. Trails and sidewalks should be planned to provide these interconnections (see Transportation Circulation Plan, Figure 15).



Hanover Central High School

5. The Town and County should continue to support public and private programs, such as sports leagues, summer day camp programs, and others, to provide a high quality of life for area residents and visitors.

Public/Quasi-Public

The Public/Quasi-Public designation includes public-owned land such as the Town Hall and Museum at the lakefront in Community Park, the Lake District Library, Hanover Central High School and Jane Ball Elementary School near West 133rd Avenue, and the MacArthur Elementary School on the east side. Uses in this designation are limited to government and quasi-government facilities such as government centers, libraries, and schools.

Office/Employment

ELEMENTS:

- Employment opportunities close to town
- High quality office and research developments
- Impressive architecture and landscaping

The Office/Employment land use designation is located between 151st Avenue and the proposed Illiana Expressway corridor. This land use is appropriate adjacent to freeways, and should be considered near the freeway no matter where the final corridor is ultimately located. Should the Illiana not be built, however, this area is appropriate for LDR development, as shown on the Planning Area Land Use Concept Alternative 2, Figure 10.

Description

Developments in the Office/Employment land use designation generally will have the following characteristics:

- Development includes offices, research facilities, laboratories and corporate headquarters, to provide well-paying, local employment opportunities
- Architecture and design are high quality. Buildings are placed to take advantage of the freeway frontage, providing a positive impression of Cedar Lake for freeway travelers.
- Buildings are located within business parks, providing amenities for employees,

such as walking trails and accessible open areas and natural features. Other amenities, such as an on-site day care facility, are encouraged.

- Landscaping is lush and well-designed. Monument signs are used to convey a sense of quality.

Implementation

1. The zoning ordinance should include an "office/employment" district, with uses limited to offices and research facilities. However, other uses serving employees within the business park, such as day care, personal services, restaurants, etc., should be encouraged.
2. Buildings should be located within business parks that are governed by restrictive covenants requiring high quality development and continued maintenance. Covenants should be written so that the Town can enforce maintenance provisions if this is not done properly by the owners.
3. Improvement location permit requirements in the zoning ordinance should require extensive landscaping, high-quality building materials, parking lot screening and monument identification sign(s).



Example of a High-quality Office Park

Commercial

ELEMENTS

- A mix of retail, service, entertainment and office uses
- Large-scale, regional commercial uses are best located on US 41.
- Encourage community-scale, neighborhood businesses in other commercial areas
- Create a Town Center
- Direct commercial development to appropriate locations
- Over time, eliminate nonconforming commercial uses, particularly in residential areas

The Commercial land use designation provides appropriate locations for retail, office and other business uses. Three (3) specific areas fall within this designation: the US 41 Corridor, the West 133rd Avenue Corridor, and the proposed Livable Center, are described in more detail in the Specific Land Use Plan Elements section.

The Future Land Use Plan assumes that the Illiana Expressway will be built. This expressway is expected to have a major impact on the US 41 corridor. The Plan shows the Commercial land use designation all along the US 41 corridor within the Planning Area, from north to south. Should the Illiana not be built, however, this level and intensity of commercial development is unlikely to occur or be needed. Instead, this area would be proposed for High Density Residential (HDR), which is appropriate given the expected traffic on US 41, even without the Illiana. The land use concept



“Big-box” design does not have to be generic and sterile. National retailers and franchisers can be convinced to work with local design requirements

without the Illiana Expressway is depicted on the Land Use Concept Alternative 2, Figure 10.

This designation realizes that there are specific areas within the Town and overall Planning Area where commercial uses of various types and intensity should be located. Existing commercial uses not within this designation are therefore not in appropriate locations, particularly those within established residential neighborhoods. The Plan encourages eventual conversion of these nonconforming businesses to uses that fit better into their surroundings.

Description

Developments in the Commercial land use designation generally will have the following characteristics:

- Uses include a mix of retail, service and office uses, to provide shopping and employment opportunities to residents, commuters and visitors. Businesses should be encouraged to provide market amenities such as restaurants near employment areas and lodging, and entertainment uses (such

as movie theaters, etc.) to serve the resident population.

- Large scale, regional commercial development is encouraged to locate along the US 41 frontage. This “big-box” development, however, should be required to follow design guidelines, access management requirements and landscaping requirements to ensure quality development and avoid the “blandness” of traditional commercial strips. The US 41 concept is developed in more detail later.
- Other commercial areas, such as East 133rd Avenue, the north end of Morse Street, the Pine Crest Marena and the Morse/145th Avenue intersection, should provide for community-scaled businesses that generally serve the local population. These developments should be compatible with neighborhood development and provide safe and adequate access and parking as well as meet design guidelines to ensure that commercial development enhances, rather than detracts from, surrounding development. The 133rd Avenue Corridor, because of its function as a gateway street, requires special treatment – this is described in more detail later.
- One of the major planning challenges facing the community is its lack of identity. There is a need for a Town center, a “focus” business area that would provide a sense of Town identity as well as a gathering and entertainment center. The Town Center concept is described in detail in the Specific Land Use Plan Elements section.
- New commercial development should be directed to designated areas and commercial nodes. Further expansion into

neighborhoods is discouraged. Existing individual commercial properties located in residential areas or other areas not planned for commercial uses should become nonconforming uses that are not allowed to expand or enlarge. Avoid “spot zoning” of isolated commercial businesses.

- Existing nonconforming commercial uses should not be perpetuated through variances or other exceptions that would encourage their continued nonconformity. Over time, nonconforming businesses should be converted to uses that are more compatible with surrounding uses.

Implementation

1. For implementation recommendations regarding the US 41 Corridor, the West 133rd Avenue Corridor and the Town Center, see the appropriate sections under the Specific Land Use Plan Elements.
2. Define zoning districts appropriate for community commercial areas, such as appropriate areas on the north side of North Lakeshore Drive, the Pinecrest area and the Morse/145th Avenue intersection. Limit uses to those that are scaled to the neighborhood. Require design review and access management to ensure that the developments enhance, rather than negatively impact the surrounding neighborhoods.
3. Rezone “spot-zoned” commercial uses isolated from designated commercial areas, making those commercial use(s) nonconforming. For any nonconforming commercial use, do not allow expansion or enlargement. The BZA should not grant variances to nonconforming uses unless all variance standards of review are met.

Light Industrial/Employment

ELEMENTS

- Industrial uses are located in appropriate areas, with access to major roads and railroads
- Uses are limited to low-intensity, non-polluting industries
- Design review for new industrial and business parks is required
- Buffers between industrial areas and residential uses are required

This land use designation provides for existing and new light industrial development, to provide local employment opportunities and provide business-to-business production and construction services (such as construction aggregates, etc.). The Plan acknowledges the existing Cedar Lake Industrial Park and provides additional lands for light industrial expansion and business parks.

Small, light industries and related testing, research and similar uses look for freeway and expressway frontage to provide exposure. The Plan shows areas adjacent to the proposed Illiana Expressway that traverse the area from north to south. Even if the Illiana Expressway is not built, these areas remain appropriate for light industrial uses because of their proximity to the rail lines. These areas have easy access to US 41 to travel north to Interstates 80-94, and to Morse Road, which provides access to Interstate 65 via State Route 2.

Description

Developments in the Light Industrial/Employment land use designation generally will have the following characteristics:

- Uses include light, non-polluting fabrication and assembly, testing and research, warehousing/logistics and similar, low-intensity manufacturing. Some more intensive uses, such as processing construction aggregates, may be appropriate near major roads will generally be no greater than 50,000 square feet. Business parks may include complementary uses that serve the employees in the park, such as day care and personal services.
- Development will generally take the form of business parks, with internal access roads, high quality landscaping and architecture, and covenants requiring maintenance to ensure a positive impression of Cedar Lake for travelers on the Illiana Expressway.
- Generous buffers where development abuts residential uses should be provided on the light industrial sites. Access management should be employed to prevent or mitigate conflicts between trucks and other light-industrial traffic and nearby residential areas. Trees and other significant landscaping to control noise and dust shall be used in appropriate areas.

Implementation

1. Zone appropriate locations into a light industrial zoning district, especially as the Illiana is completed. Restrict uses to those that are relatively low intensity, non-polluting and small-business oriented.

2. Discourage single use development and encourage development within light industrial business and research parks. Through the improvement location permit

process, require design review and open space within the park, to encourage high quality businesses that provide well-paying local jobs.

3. Require, in the zoning ordinance, generous buffers for industrial development and/or expansion near residential areas. Buffers should take the form of increased setbacks with vegetated strips and use of fast growing visual screens that also provide dust and sound suppression.



Sites with freeway frontage and well-designed landscape and signage are attractive corporate parks for businesses.

Specific Land Use Plan Elements

Livable Centers

The 2007 Comprehensive Plan identified the need for a Town Center. The goals for the Town Center concept were to create a “sense of place” and provide a central identity for the Town. Cedar Lake’s existing development patterns and geographic dispersal of population centers make the creation of a singular Town Center difficult. However, the principles of walkability, mixed use, infill development and targeted redevelopment are vital components to responsible growth and creating a unifying identity for the Town.

The 2011 Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) Comprehensive Regional Plan (2040 Plan) identified a strong consensus among communities in Northwest Indiana to encourage the development of, and investment in, Livable Centers.

Focused livable centers would provide a sense of identity for the entire Town as well as gathering places for shopping, dining and entertainment. Livable Centers focus on existing communities, leverage public investment to encourage an efficient pattern of population and employment growth which maximizes the use of areas already served by the network of existing transportation network and utilities. Redevelopment of existing facilities and efficient development of new facilities should focus on remaining compact in form and supporting a vibrant mix of retail, office, civic, institutional, and housing uses.

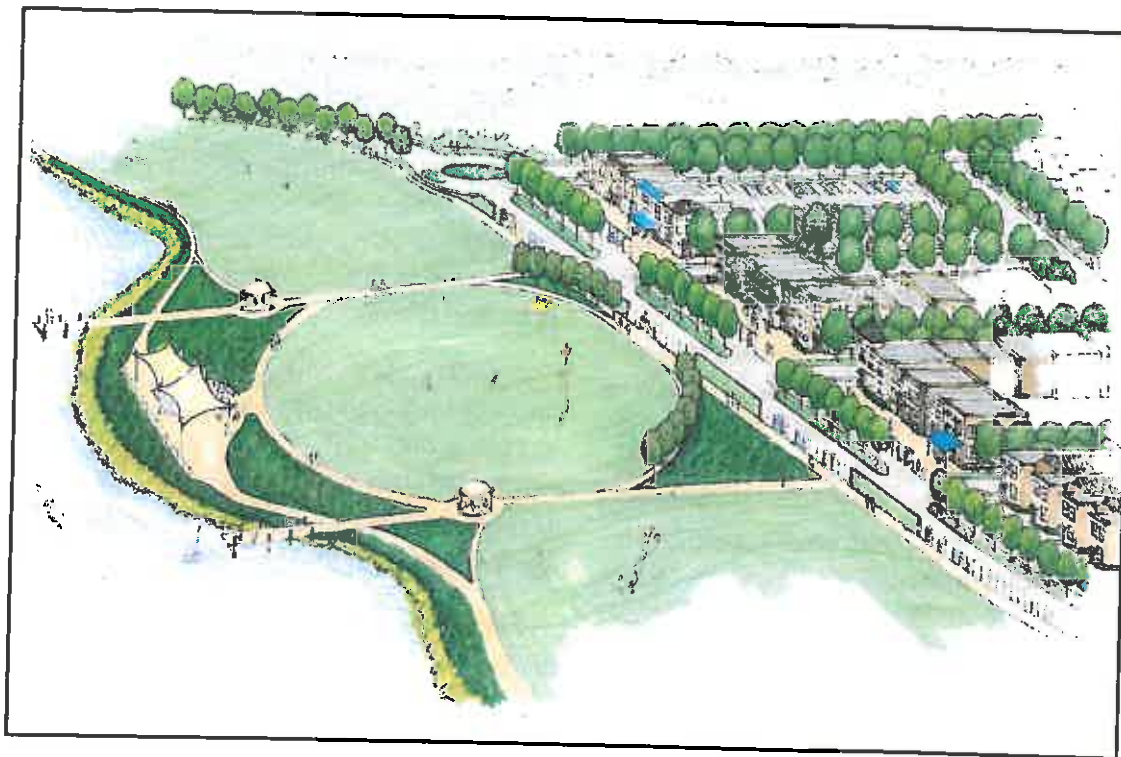


Figure 12
Livable Center Concept Perspective

As noted in the 2040 Plan and the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, two (2) areas have been identified as ideal locations for Livable Centers. The first location to consider is the area extending from the historic Midway Gardens area on the east side of the lake, south to incorporate Town Hall, The Lighthouse Restaurant and several lakeside cottage neighborhoods. This Livable Center Location takes advantage of the lake and celebrates it as a distinctive centerpiece of the community.

The second location is situated in the West 133rd Avenue Corridor and includes Lincoln Plaza, Hanover Community Schools, the Lake County Public Library, the Cedar Lake Community Center and several neighborhoods within walking distance to the Livable Center area. This Livable Center utilizes the proximity to new and redeveloped commercial and retail space, as well as a variety of housing options and several civic facilities as well.



The current site for the soon to be constructed Strack & Van Til Grocery Store in Lincoln Plaza. The second proposed Livable Center location.

Midway Gardens Livable Center Concept

The Midway Gardens Livable Center Concept (Figure 12) proposes a commercial street facing a large community open space between a relocated North Lakeshore Drive and the waterfront. Moving North Lakeshore Drive easterly provides more space for the community open space and increases the amenity value of developing within this Livable Center area. The commercial buildings would be mixed use, with retail, service and entertainment on the ground floor, and offices, small businesses or residences on the upper floor(s). Figure 12 shows an aerial perspective of how this concept may be developed.

A second loop drive to the east of the commercial center provides access to the townhome development within the Livable Center area. Within the Midway Gardens Livable Center, a boulevard oriented to the lake directs a person's view toward the lakefront. The area in the northeast corner of the site is a significant woodland area with steep slopes and vegetation that is proposed to be open space.

The unified streetscape elements described above would continue in and through the Livable Centers. In addition, street furniture, public art and landscaping elements will augment the streetscape elements to create an inviting and pleasurable pedestrian experience.

Midway Gardens Livable Center Design Guidelines

- Architecture should reflect the lake resort heritage. Relatively narrow (15-25 feet wide) 2-story commercial buildings with period facades should dominate the commercial area.
- Business uses include small, community oriented and specialty retail; restaurants; entertainment (dance halls, taverns, etc.) small service businesses (such as dry cleaners, shoe repair, etc.) and small offices (not including medical offices).
- Encourage non-motorized traffic within the Livable Centers with the inclusion of sidewalks, trails, and bicycle lanes within the design guidelines and development requirements. A non-motorized network should connect with civic and recreational areas as well as surrounding neighborhoods.
- Minimize building setback lines and provide prominent entrances for pedestrians, relying on on-street and rear parking areas.
- Two-story townhomes, with an orientation to the street and front porches, should be nearby to frame and support the business area.
- Signs should reflect the village character of the Livable Center. Well-designed, indirectly lighted wall signs and projecting signs should be utilized to draw attention to individual businesses. Freestanding signs and electronic display signs should be prohibited within the Livable Centers. Uniform streetscape elements should be

included to include planters, benches, and public art.

- Public open spaces should provide recreation and leisure opportunities to residents and visitors. The proposed lakefront open space shall be large enough to host community wide events that draw people from beyond the Town, such as the 4th of July Summerfest. This would allow expansion of these events beyond the confines of the Community Park.
- Parking areas are generally located behind buildings, but on-street parallel or angled parking is provided. The use of "reverse angled" on-street parking may be a preferred alternative (particularly on North Lakeshore Drive), so vehicles are not required to back into traffic.

Implementation

1. Create a Livable Center zoning district and rezone appropriately. Restrict commercial uses to low intensity, community oriented retail, service, office, civic, institutional and entertainment businesses. Residential uses should allow for townhomes and apartments; single family detached dwellings are discouraged.
2. Work with local road authorities and the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission to seek funds for relocating North Lakeshore Drive to the east.
3. Within the zoning ordinance, require design review for all new Livable Center developments to ensure that buildings, signs, public spaces, etc., reflect the desired historic resort character.

4. Promote Livable Center open spaces as public gathering areas and provide programs within them.

5. Within the subdivision regulations and as part of the development approval, require sidewalks throughout the Livable Center and provide pedestrian links to other neighborhoods, parks and business centers. Utilize Recreation Impact Fee Revenue and partner with the Cedar Lake Park Foundation to develop non-motorized transportation options in Livable Centers.

6. Reserve land within the designated Livable Centers for official public uses, such as the Town Hall and post office. As the Town grows and the existing facilities are outgrown, ensure they are located within the Livable Center area.

7. Focus the use of economic development incentives on projects located within Livable Centers which incorporate the design elements of the Livable Centers and encourage sustainable construction and site management.

8. Work with NIRPC and other governmental and nonprofit organizations to assist in planning and implementing the Livable Center concepts.

West 133rd Avenue Livable Center

The West 133rd Avenue Livable Center will continue to be the primary gateway to the Town from US 41 and will remain a commercial corridor with potential for mixed use development and targeted redevelopment. As Cedar Lake's "front door," this corridor should have a unique



character and provide a positive impression for visitors and residents.

Concept

The West 133rd Avenue element takes the traditional suburban style of commercial development and improves it, making the corridor unique from U.S. 41 and other suburban commercial corridors. Commercial buildings are street-oriented, with no more than one (1) double-loaded row of parking in front. The remaining parking can be provided in the rear or to the side of the buildings. However, side parking areas should be screened and kept from becoming a dominant streetscape feature. This concept is illustrated on Figure 13. In some areas of the corridor (for instance, the Cook area near the intersec-

tion with US 41), commercial development is constrained by the shallow depth of lots on West 133rd Avenue and the residential uses beyond. As more homes are built in the area and traffic on West 133rd Avenue increases, the value of nearby residential land is expected to increase as it redevelops as mixed use or is converted to commercial uses. This will allow for commercial properties with a depth of two hundred fifty feet (250') or more. At this depth, the concept proposed for this corridor is feasible and may better accommodate on-street and rear loaded parking.

Figure 13

West 133rd
Avenue Liv-
able Center



Design Guidelines

- Commercial uses include community and area wide businesses such as fast food restaurants, video stores, banks, auto-oriented uses, etc. Businesses are encouraged to be located within unified commercial strip buildings, but some stand-alone buildings (for uses such as banks and gas stations) may be appropriate at street corners.
- Form-based design guidelines should be applied within the livable center to encourage high-quality development. When practical, sustainable building technologies should also be encouraged.
- Commercial buildings are generally single story, with high-quality architectural elements that provide variety and interest along the façade. Buildings are separated from the street only by one double loaded row of parking that is landscaped to highlight the quality of design.
- Besides parking in front, additional parking is located in the rear and to the side of buildings. Parking lots visible from the street should be screened with landscaping and large expanses of paving should be broken up by landscaped islands. Side parking areas should be limited in size and number so they do not become a dominate land use along the corridor.
- Freestanding signs are low to the ground, monument style, and may be indirectly or internally lit. Sign bases should be landscaped. Building signs should use a variety of styles and colors; plain channel letter signs should be avoided.
- The numerous institutional uses along this corridor (the library, high school and Catholic church among them) provide anchors to this corridor and should be integrated into the commercial fabric. Interconnections between these uses and the commercial uses will improve traffic flow.
- Access to the commercial sites is managed by reducing curb cuts, using side streets for access and providing connections to adjoining uses via drives on private property.
- The streetscape elements described above are implemented along this corridor, including consistent lighting, landscape elements, and street signage.
- Design review and reviews for improvement location permits should emphasize high-quality architecture and landscape design.

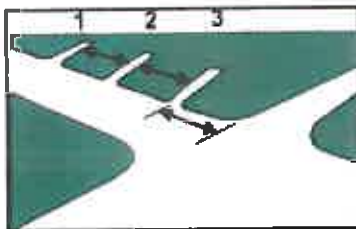
Implementation

1. Create a West 133rd Avenue Corridor Overlay zoning district. This overlay would incorporate the requirements of the general business district, but would also include specific site design requirements related to parking lot location, landscaping, and signs.
2. Create Form-Based Codes for development within the Livable Center to encourage high-quality architecture.
3. Require access management measures for development along the corridor as part of the development review.

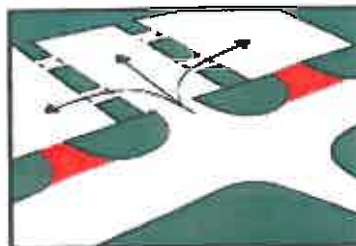
ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Control of the location and spacing of driveways or access points along the main roads will improve safety and help preserve the roadway's ability to carry traffic. Access management guidelines have two functions: to protect the public investment in the roadway by minimizing congestion and crash potential, and to allow property owners reasonable access to their properties. The goal of access management is to facilitate traffic operations and improve public safety along major roads. Access management looks at the following factors:

- **Number of Access Points:** Because the number of driveways allowed along major roads will affect traffic flow, ease of driving and crash potential, the number of driveways on a major road should be limited. Alternative access should be provided from side streets or driveway connections wherever possible.
- **Sight Distance:** Proper sight distance needs to be provided at driveways and intersections to ensure a vehicle can safely enter or exit the traffic stream.
- **Driveway Spacing:** Driveways need to be adequately spaced from intersections and other driveways to assist in the reduction of turning movement conflicts.
- **Interconnection:** Whenever possible, interconnections between adjacent uses should be provided so that travel from one site to an adjacent or nearby site does not require maneuvering out into the main traffic stream.



Driveway spacing:
Safe distances from
intersecting streets
and other drives



Provide connecting
drives between uses
to minimize curb
cuts



Limit median cuts
and provide them
in locations that
promote safe and ef-
ficient movements



Spacing of drives on
opposite sides of a
street:

Best: offset distance
prevents left turn
conflicts

Worst: Driveway off-
set too small, result-
ing in conflicting left
turns

Acceptable: drives are
designed opposite
one another

4. In the zoning ordinance, require design and improvement location permit review for all development within the corridor, to insure that it complies with the intent of this plan element.

5. Continue the streetscape elements plan through this corridor.

6. Use economic development incentives to encourage redevelopment and development activities which meet the goals of the Livable Center Concept as well as form-based codes. Developments which encourage sustainable technology and building techniques.

7. Improvements to 133rd Avenue should include "complete streets" including sidewalks, streetscapes, landscaping, decorative street lighting, and on-street parking in areas with shallow setbacks.



Example decorative lighting and plantings along public right-of-way.

Gateways and Streetscape Elements

Although Cedar Lake has some gateway signs that are attractive, they are not in locations that call attention to them and are not effective in providing a "sense of arrival." Cedar Lake needs gateways and streetscape elements that notify travelers that they have arrived in Cedar Lake. Consistent streetscape elements provide a unifying "theme" that identifies Cedar Lake to residents and pass-through traffic.

Concept

- Figure 14 shows a concept for a gateway on US 41 into the Town. Although this concept was created with the US 41/West 133rd Avenue intersection in mind, it could be used or repeated at any US 41 traffic



Streetscape Elements Examples

Additional examples of quality streetscape elements that should be promoted



Example of a closed road turned into a pedestrian mall with ornamental trees and benches that businesses front along



intersection within the Town. Differing pavement colors and materials, masterarm signals, and identifying signs highlight the entrance to the Town and help to draw in visitors. The overall effect is that Cedar Lake is a destination

- Other areas may be candidates for gateway treatments at a smaller scale. These should include attractive gateway signs that are in highly visible locations, with quality landscaping and indirect lighting. The entrances to the Town on US 41 at both the north and south ends, and East 133rd Avenue, Morse Street, and Cline Avenue, all at the Town limits, are candidates for this kind of gateway.

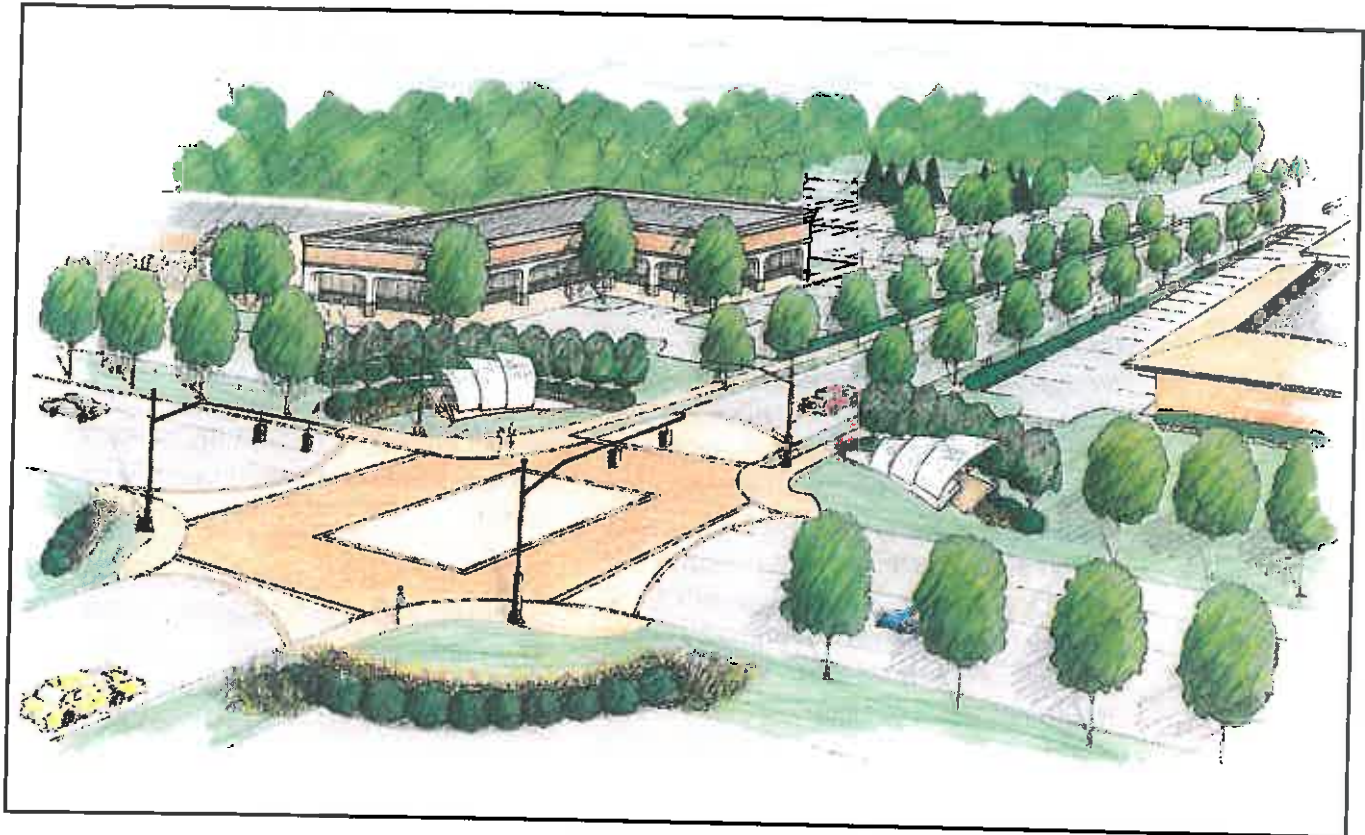
- Unifying streetscape elements are also a means of making Cedar Lake stand out for travelers and residents. Candidate corridors for a consistent streetscape theme include US 41, West 133rd Avenue, North Lakeshore Drive, East 133rd Avenue, and Morse Street from (at least) East 133rd Avenue to Constitution Avenue.

- Streetscape elements include consistent street lighting fixtures, signs such as street signs, banners and wayfinding signs, landscaping treatments at major intersections, street furniture in appropriate locations (such as within a Town center area) and, where appropriate, public art.

Implementation

1. Acquire land at designated gateway locations and, if necessary, clear it of existing buildings.
2. Create a gateway and streetscape elements “theme” that is consistent for

Figure 14. U.S. 41 Gateway Concept



all corridors where the elements will be employed.

3. Fund a streetscape and gateway program to construct the elements at the designated locations and corridors.

U.S. 41 Corridor

For most first time visitors to the Cedar Lake area, US 41 will be the means of access. Therefore, this arterial corridor can serve to set Cedar Lake apart from its neighbors and make the Town attractive and inviting.

Because of current and anticipated traffic volumes (particularly if the Illiana Expressway is built), much of this corridor is appropriate for regional “big box” develop-

ment and highway oriented commercial. This would be a continuation of the commercial character already present to the north, from Highland all the way through St. John. With both increased population and the potential for a freeway, it is expected that US 41 will become a major shopping destination, providing area residents with shopping and service opportunities that currently require travel to Lowell, Schererville or Merrillville. Large lots north of 125th Avenue would permit development of large stores and shopping centers. Similar opportunities exist south of 141st Avenue, and should the Illiana Expressway become a reality, strong market pressures will exist to develop large commercial areas near the US 41/Illiana interchange and road frontages.

Within the Town limits, however, from 125th Avenue south to 141st Avenue, much of the US 41 frontage is limited by relatively shallow lot depths and established single family neighborhoods. In the near term, this area calls for a different commercial development concept that recognizes these constraints, yet allows for quality development. As such, the concept in this area will be more like the West 133rd Avenue Corridor. The buildings shown facing US 41 on Figure 13 illustrate this element. However, the Plan recognizes that larger-scale commercial uses may find this area attractive; it is possible that a commercial developer could acquire and assemble residential lots adjacent to the commercial area to accommodate deeper lots and large-scale development. To implement this, the Gateway Commercial Overlay shown on the Future Land Use Map extends beyond the commercial area into the residential neighborhoods

beyond. This designation allows the existing residential uses to continue, but also allows for commercial expansion, should an opportunity occur in the future.

Additionally, with the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update, the Planning Area now extends south to 173rd Avenue along the US 41 Corridor. As the Planning Area extends to 173rd Avenue, the lot depths increase in depth south of 141st Avenue. Therefore, commercial development along this section of the Planning Area would be more easily developed for commercial uses.

Also, if the Illiana Expressway is constructed south of Cedar Lake, as is depicted in three (3) of the current proposed routes, this area will likely see an increase in commercial development, especially if an interchange is constructed at the intersection of the proposed route and US 41.

Concept

- The area between 125th and 173rd would be the "Gateway Commercial" area, with highway-oriented businesses in small strips or stand-alone buildings. Parking will generally be provided on the side of the buildings; where lot depths permit, however, a single- or double-loaded row of parking in front of the building is permitted. Side parking areas should be well landscaped so that they do not become a dominant feature along the corridor.
- Development in the Gateway Commercial area should be similar to the West 133rd Avenue Concept. However, the Gateway Commercial is also shown on the Future Land Use Figure as an overlay extending

Examples:
Quality "big-box"
development



east and west of the commercial area designation. Developers are not discouraged from acquiring the existing residential lands in order to provide for deeper commercial lots. Since there is a large amount of deeper commercial land available north and south of the Gateway Commercial area, it is not anticipated that demand for deep lots in this area will be high; however, the concept allows larger-lot commercial whenever possible.

- The areas north and south of the Gateway Commercial area should be reserved for large-scale, "big box" developments and highway oriented businesses. Parking areas may be located in front of the building and should be well landscaped, with both perimeter and interior landscaping.
- Building design should be of high quality, and when necessary, the Town should expect more than standard franchise design. Reviews for improvement location permits should include quality architectural and landscape design that meet the goals of the Town and not merely perceived marketing and/or cost saving measures on the part of the developer.
- Access to all sites should be managed to ensure safe and efficient access. Interconnection between properties should be a part of the site plan to prevent unnecessary traffic on US 41.
- Signs for stand-alone business should be low to the ground, monument style signs. Signs for business centers may be taller, but should not exceed fifteen (15) feet in height and should incorporate compact design elements to prevent "pole" style signs. The number of businesses allowed on a business center sign should be limited

to prevent sign clutter.

- On the commercial properties, buffers adjacent to established residential uses should employ landscaped strips, fences and walls to mitigate noise and visual impacts.

Implementation

1. Create a Highway Business District in the zoning ordinance and rezone land along the US 41 Corridor accordingly.
2. Utilize Planned Unit Development, the improvement location permit process, and other development tools to ensure high quality development.
3. Adopt design guidelines for commercial uses along the corridor that encourage quality design and landscaping.
4. Require landscaping around and within parking lots. Screen lots from view along the highway corridor as well as from adjacent residential areas.
5. In the zoning ordinance, create sign requirements for monument signs and business center signs, emphasizing standards to reduce sign clutter.
6. Through the improvement location process and in concert with INDOT, incorporate access management techniques.

**North Shore Redevelopment/
Open Space**

North Lakeshore Drive is a major corridor for traffic traveling from the east to the west side of Town. Nearly all of the traffic accessing the east side of Town from US 41 uses North Lakeshore Drive. Because of its location relative to the lake and the views it provides, North Lakeshore Drive can become a “show” street for Cedar Lake that firmly cements a positive view in the minds of residents and visitors.

Concept

The North Shore Redevelopment/Open Space plan element advocates an uninterrupted view of the lake from the street along nearly its entire length. This would require either purchase or dedication of land between the Cedar Lake lakefront and North Lakeshore Drive, for open space and lake access.

Many of the existing buildings along this corridor are nonconforming, for a variety of reasons. Redevelopment of many of these properties could not be completed under current zoning regulations. However, some property owners over the years have received variances or rezoning to allow for new development. The mix of residential and limited commercial uses on the north side of the drive could continue, provided that commercial uses have adequate lot depth to provide safe and accessible parking areas. Backing of vehicles into North Lakeshore Drive to egress from parking areas should be prohibited. The concept encourages new construction on the north side of the street to be limited to commercial uses or multiple family residential and lodging uses, again with the provision that lot depths permit safe vehicle ingress and egress.

Design Guidelines

- The streetscape elements described above should continue from the West 133rd Avenue corridor all along North Lakeshore Drive.
- Opportunities to provide turn-outs, parking areas and viewing platforms should be explored and constructed.
- A pedestrian path or sidewalk (preferably on both sides of the street, but where this is impossible, on the south side) should be provided along the length of the corridor, connecting east and west sides as well as the West 133rd Avenue corridor to the remainder of the Town and the planned Town Center.
- No new buildings should be permitted on the south side of the corridor, along the lakefront.

Lakefront development off North Lakeshore Drive



The North Shore Redevelopment/Open Space concept encourages public access to the lake, similar to this example



- New development on the north side of the corridor should be limited to commercial uses and higher density residential uses. Multiple family dwellings and small lodging uses (such as inns or bed and breakfasts) may be appropriate on hilltop locations, provided that buildings are of a smaller scale and do not exceed two stories in height. Such buildings must be carefully sited to avoid blocking lake views and creating a building “wall.”
- Commercial development is permitted and encouraged on the north side of the corridor, provided that adequate parking is provided that can be exited without backing into North Lakeshore Drive. Commercial uses should be buffered (with landscaping, decorative fencing/walls, etc.) from adjacent residential uses. Buildings should have an orientation to the street, with shallow front setbacks (no more than one row of parking in front, with any remaining parking to the side and/or rear) and employ high architectural standards. Signs should be monument style, indirectly lit, and low to the ground.

Implementation

1. Provide a means of funding to acquire land between North Lakeshore Drive and the lakefront to provide opportunities for permanent open space, lake access and preservation of views.
2. Do not permit the expansion of any nonconforming uses along the lakefront.
3. Where necessary, acquire right-of-way to allow for creating sidewalks and pathways. New development should be required to provide sidewalks as part of the development. Redevelopment or infill along the corridor should also be required to install sidewalks. A plan for funding and completing sidewalk networks should be adopted.
4. Fund and construct a unified streetscape along the corridor providing connectivity between this area, the east and west sides of the lake and the commercial areas.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

- Infill development is intended to encourage new construction within existing developed areas. This can be an effective means of providing new housing or businesses in established areas. To accomplish this, design guidelines and zoning requirements must be adopted for new building construction and renovation of existing structures. These requirements can address issues such as scale, proportion, window openings, exterior materials, etc. that respect the architecture of surrounding buildings. Infill can reduce negative impacts to property values by reducing the probability that negative or sharply contrasting impressions of neighboring properties will affect property sales. In residential areas, the most important benefit of infill regulations is the maintenance of the neighborhood character so new residences will blend in with the remaining homes on the block.

Large multi-family units blocking lakefront views should be strongly discouraged



Example of cottage style homes that should be promoted along Cedar Lake



New lakefront housing at the south end of Cedar Lake



Example of a lakefront cottage-style home that should be encouraged around Cedar Lake



Lakefront Residential

The Plan lists as a goal the provision and preservation of views to Cedar Lake from adjoining streets and other vantage points. The recent trend towards large multiple family buildings that block lake views is in opposition to this goal. The Lakefront Residential element allows for redevelopment of the lakefront while preserving visual access to the Town's most prized asset. Multiple family development is not permitted.

Concept

The escalating value of lakefront land has encouraged prior lakefront redevelopment to take the form of either income-producing property such as apartments or condominiums, or estate-style single family homes. To preserve lake views and prevent too much density at the lake front, this element proposes that lakefront development be limited to single family dwellings. This includes minimum separation between buildings, maximum lot coverage requirements, and maximum heights.

To help protect the lake, alternative stormwater management techniques are encouraged. This includes rain gardens, "green" roofs, vegetated swales, porous paving, etc. to prevent runoff of chemicals and decrease flooding.

Design Guidelines/Form-Based Code

- Single-family dwellings are permitted. In most locations, detached dwellings with attached garages are required.
- Attached single family dwellings may be permitted in appropriate locations, pro-

vided that there are no more than three (3) units in a building and that architectural variation is required to distinguish one single-family attached building from another.

- Minimum lot sizes and lot widths should allow for larger homes. These minimums should be increased for lots with attached single family units.
- Lot coverage (all structures, drives and other impervious surfaces) shall not exceed thirty-five percent (35%). Increases to this minimum could be considered if the property employs approved alternative stormwater maintenance techniques.
- Buildings on adjacent lots should maintain generous separations to allow for lake views. Minimum side yard setback requirements should allow for different distances on each side, so that there is some variation in building separation.
- Buildings should not exceed 2.5 stories in height. Variations in roof line, pitch, etc., should be required to provide variety and prevent a sense of a building “wall” along the lakefront.
- Buildings should be oriented so that lake views are maximized and the houses complement the surrounding area. “Snout” houses, with garage-dominated facades, are discouraged.

Implementation

1. Create a Lakefront Residential zoning district. Provide use restrictions and site development requirements as outlined above.



Cottage residential examples that should be promoted along Cedar Lake



2. Discourage or prohibit further multiple family development on the lakefront. Provide opportunities to meet market needs for this type of housing in other land use designations, such as Cottage Residential and High Density Residential.

3. Require administrative design review for new construction within the Lakefront Residential designation to ensure that development meets ordinance standards.

Cottage Residential

The historic, cottage resort character of Cedar Lake is an important part of the community's heritage. Unfortunately, the general condition of most of the existing neighborhoods provides few examples of quality remnants of this heritage.

The Cottage Residential element preserves this traditional pattern of development while encouraging quality redevelopment. Single family and two-family homes are the dominant land use, with attached single family townhouses and apartment buildings, with no more than four (4) units per building, allowed in appropriate locations. The established neighborhoods near, but not on, Cedar Lake are the locations proposed for this concept.

Concept

The Cottage Residential element encourages maintenance of the existing street grid in the established neighborhoods. Vacating streets or redesigning blocks to achieve a suburban, non-grid street pattern is prohibited.

New homes should be on a smaller scale, with the majority being one- or one-and-a-half-story single family homes. Home designs should reflect the cottage resort style, with bungalows and similar types as the dominant style.

Two-family homes may be considered, but should be incorporated into the single family fabric of the neighborhoods. Higher density development may be allowed farther inland. Streets that have Lakefront Development dwellings on the opposite side are not appropriate for multiple family development. Multiple family buildings should be distributed through the neighborhood, rather than concentrated in groups of buildings, to avoid an "apartment complex" effect.

Design Guidelines/Form-Based Code

- New neighborhoods should follow the established street grid. Cul-de-sacs are prohibited, except in very limited circumstances where this prohibition would encourage inappropriate development or where the prohibition would have the effect of denying reasonable use of the land.

- Smaller, cottage style homes should be limited to no more than one-and-a-half (1.5) stories in height. Homes should include elements that extend the private realm into the public realm, such as front porches. Detached garages, where necessary, should be located in side or rear yards.

- The 1.5 story height limitation also applies to two-family dwellings. There should not be more than two (2) duplex buildings on a block, and should not be

adjacent to each another. Duplexes should also employ elements such as front porches.

- Multiple family buildings should be limited to no more than four (4) units per building; Multiple family buildings cannot be located on a street that provides frontage to a Lakefront Development home. In addition, multiple family buildings should be separated so that there is no more than one multiple family building on a block, or on large blocks, at least 300 feet apart.
- Neighborhoods should be joined with sidewalks and pedestrian paths. New development should be required to provide sidewalks as part of the initial development. Redevelopment or infill on streets identified on the Connectivity Plan as priority streets should be required to construct sidewalks prior to completion of construction. A plan for funding and completing sidewalk networks should be adopted.

Implementation

1. Create zoning districts within the Cottage Residential areas that permit 1) single family homes only, and 2) a mix of single family, two-family and multiple family. Limit densities as noted above.
2. Create subdivision regulations that protect the existing street grid and require sidewalk construction.
3. Require administrative design review of all new construction within this designation, to ensure that it meets ordinance requirements.

Transit-Oriented Development

The potential location of a light rail commuter line in Cedar Lake offers an opportunity to advance development concepts that cater to rail commuters. The proposed rail line runs north-south through Cedar Lake, parallel to Parrish Avenue, and will provide public transit to northern Lake County and Chicago.

Future opportunities and further study of these areas should be monitored and considered once such extentions become more realistic.



Multi-Modal Transit-Oriented Development



Multi-Use trail connecting to commuter station

Redevelopment Areas

One of the frequently mentioned concerns raised during the planning process was that Cedar Lake should not become a community of haves and have-nots. This concern is well-placed because of development that is currently occurring along the lakeshore. Small cottages are being torn down, lots are being consolidated and large expensive homes and condominiums are being built in their place.

While this type of redevelopment may be desirable and can act as an economic stimulus for the community as a whole, the key question becomes once the lakeshore has been developed with exclusive homes and water views are available to only those who can afford them, how do inland residents reap the benefits of a community that has as its primary focus one of the largest inland lakes in the State of Indiana coupled with that question is once the lakeshore has been redeveloped, how can improvements to older residential areas be encouraged?

Although specific redevelopment areas have not been defined on the Future Land Use Plan, in general, older residential neighborhoods that are characterized as having sub-standard streets, that are poorly maintained, and that have small cottage sized homes on small lots could potentially qualify. While such neighborhoods may not benefit from direct lake frontage and views, if redevelopment is properly handled and key lakefront parcels are acquired for public use, such neighborhoods could interconnect with the lake front via "image streets" and smaller scale public parks and

green spaces. This concept is by no means new as such a pattern is reflected in many historic settings including Savannah, Georgia and our nation's capital.

As such neighborhoods redevelop, it will be important to define these key image streets and to pay particular attention to their urban design details, such as: street trees, pedestrian scale lighting, traffic calming measures such as roundabouts and boulevards, and increased setbacks to open up views and sidewalks that eventually lead to gracious waterfront parks at key locations. This democratic philosophy of viewing Cedar Lake as a resource that is open to residents and visitors alike will help speed the process of the community's rediscovery and revival. For instance, the Cedar Point Subdivision on the east side of the lake, because of its high vantage point and excellent views to the lake, combined with the relatively low value of much of the existing housing, may in the future, become a redevelopment area. This plan element provides a concept for considering such redevelopment.

Concept

Figure 12 (Page 5-17) shows a concept for redeveloping a lakefront area that provides open space on the lake, interconnected streets that maintain the historical street grid, and open areas that provide a quality neighborhood environment. Houses along the main "axis" streets are set back to provide open areas and landscaping that eventually lead to the lake. The entire neighborhood is connected by sidewalks that lead to the axis streets and go through the open areas on those streets, again emphasizing paths and views toward the lake.

Design Guidelines

- New redevelopment areas should respect the historic lake resort character of the community. Street patterns should replicate the existing grid.
- Uses in redevelopment areas should be consistent with the adopted zoning for the area, unless rezoning would result in a higher quality development.
- When appropriate, densities should be mixed, similar to the Cottage Residential element described previously.
- Home designs should also be compatible with the lake resort character of the community. Styles should range from cottages (similar to those described in the Cottage Residential element) to more highly stylized homes in traditional designs.
- Where possible, existing mature trees should be preserved and new, high quality landscaping should be included.

Implementation

1. When redevelopment occurs, tools such as Planned Unit Development should be used to ensure high quality site design to meet the goals of this plan.

Connectivity Plan

Throughout this chapter, the general and specific land use elements have emphasized pedestrian connections between neighborhoods, parks, schools and business areas. New development is expected to provide these connections, while infill and redevelopment projects are encouraged to construct segments.

Alternative transportation options and connectivity are vital to an increased quality of life within a community. The Town of Cedar Lake desires to incorporate a wider variety of transportation options for its residents and visitors. The following connectivity considerations are recommended as support for this effort and are reflected in Figures 17-20 (Pages 5-42, 5-43).

Connectivity and Wayfinding

- Provide logical connections between community destinations, including neighborhoods and commercial, educational, cultural, and historical points of interest.
- Provide a cohesive wayfinding signage system.
- Provide bike lanes, wherever possible, to promote non-motorized transportation.

Walkability

- Provide a safe means for residents and visitors to walk throughout the community.
- Provide separation between automobiles and pedestrians by implementing sidewalks, wherever possible.
- Provide multi-use trails/sidewalks to promote a variety of non-motorized transportation options.

Streetscape Improvements

- Gateways at key locations to strengthen and promote the community's identity should be connected through pedestrian improvements.

- Provide sidewalk, lighting, signage, curb, furnishing and pavement improvements to promote and support a cohesive theme based on the community's identity.
- Implement design development standards, which in turn will enhance the streetscape presence within the Town.

Traffic Calming Measures

- Provide enhanced pavement materials and designs to calm automobile traffic.
- Provide planted medians and crosswalks to calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety, where possible.
- Consider the use of traffic roundabouts to improve intersection safety.

Park and Recreation Opportunities

- Provide multi-use trail/sidewalk connections to parks, schools, and regional trails.
- Provide multi-use trail/sidewalk connections to and around the lake to enhance public recreational potential.
- Utilize multi-use trails to maximize and provide health benefits for the public.

Non-Motorized Connectivity Plans

The Transportation & Circulation Plan (Figure 15) and Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan (Figure 16) illustrate priority routes for trail and sidewalk connections between parks, schools, business areas and neighborhoods. As new development or redevelopment occurs, trail and sidewalk connections should be provided in con-



Off-street multi-use path

formance with the recommendations contained in those plans. However, not all areas can expect development or redevelopment any time soon. Therefore, it is important to prioritize certain corridors in order to concentrate public efforts. Also the plans show areas where future sidewalks and trails should be considered as those areas develop. The actual trails will follow the street or greenway patterns approved with the developments.

Multi-Use Paths

A multi-use path is generally eight feet wide or more, and accommodates both walkers and cyclists. The Connectivity Plans show multi-use paths along the major roadways that provide direct access to commercial areas and public uses.

Greenways/Multi-Use Trails

Multi-use trails within greenways follow natural corridors and are not along roadways. Figure 16, Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan, shows the planned trail from Lemon Lake Park following the creek beds and the Cedar Creek wetlands. Much of this area is already owned by the Town. These trails are focused on connecting natural areas to neighborhoods.

Sidewalks

Priority streets for sidewalk connections are shown on both maps. Sidewalks are generally five feet in width. Depending upon available right-of-way, the sidewalk is located along the curb line (carriage walks) or separated from the street by a landscaped strip. Whenever possible, it is best to separate the sidewalk from the street for safety reasons.

Multi-Use Trail/Sidewalks

Depending on the street, the destinations, and the expected use, these pathways could be 5-foot wide sidewalks or wider multi-use trails (eight feet (8') or wider).

Street Profiles

Figures 17 through 20 illustrate possible street rights-of-way that accommodate the sidewalks and paths proposed by the Connectivity Plan. These profiles were designed to accommodate the narrow rights-of-way on many existing streets. New streets should meet current specifications for width and other specifications.

All four profiles assume narrow streets of only eighteen feet (18') for travel lanes. Figure 17 shows a street with carriage walks along the curb lines. This profile also shows a bike lane, which may not be possible in all areas, but should be accommodated on priority streets where right-of-way does not permit a multi-use path. The right-of-way in this profile is only thirty-three feet (33'). Carriage walks may be necessary on streets where a greater percentage of the right-of-way is needed for travel lanes.

Figure 18 shows how sidewalks can be accommodated within a right-of-way as narrow as thirty-nine feet (39'). Sidewalks on both sides are separated from the travel lanes by a landscaped strip. Figure 19 illustrates a similar layout, but accommodates a multi-use path on one side of the street. This can be accomplished in a right-of-way that is only forty-two feet (42') wide.

There are some streets within Cedar Lake, however, that are even narrower. Figure 20 shows how a sidewalk can be provided on at least one side of a street that has a right of way of only twenty-eight feet (28').

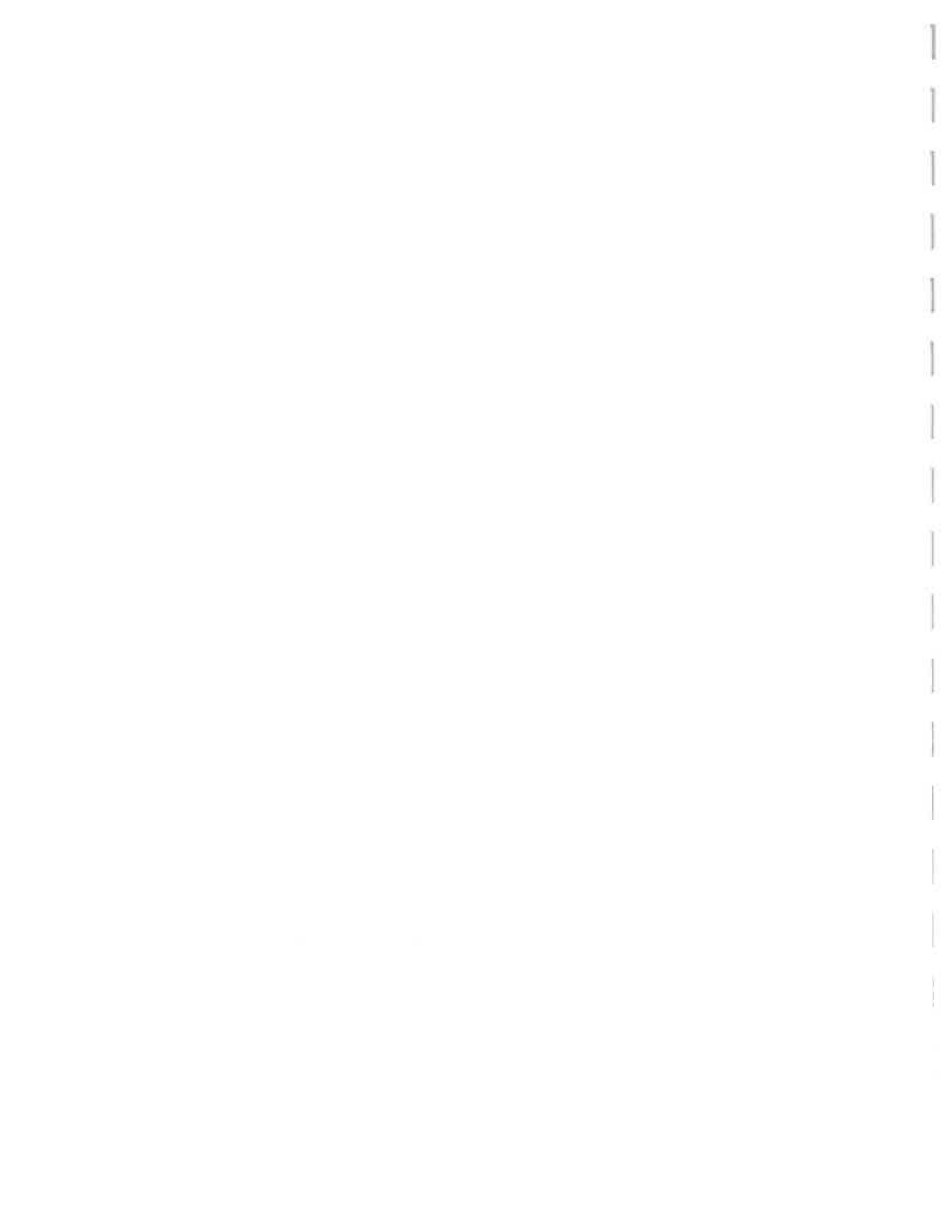


Figure 15
**Transportation &
 Circulation Plan**

Figure Legend

- Town Parcels
- Controlled Intersections
- Proposed Controlled Intersections
- Alternative to Controlled Intersection
- Proposed Gateway
- Local Street
- Collector Street
- Arterial Street
- State Highway
- Railroad
- Streams
- Town Corporate Boundary
- Cedar Lake/Water

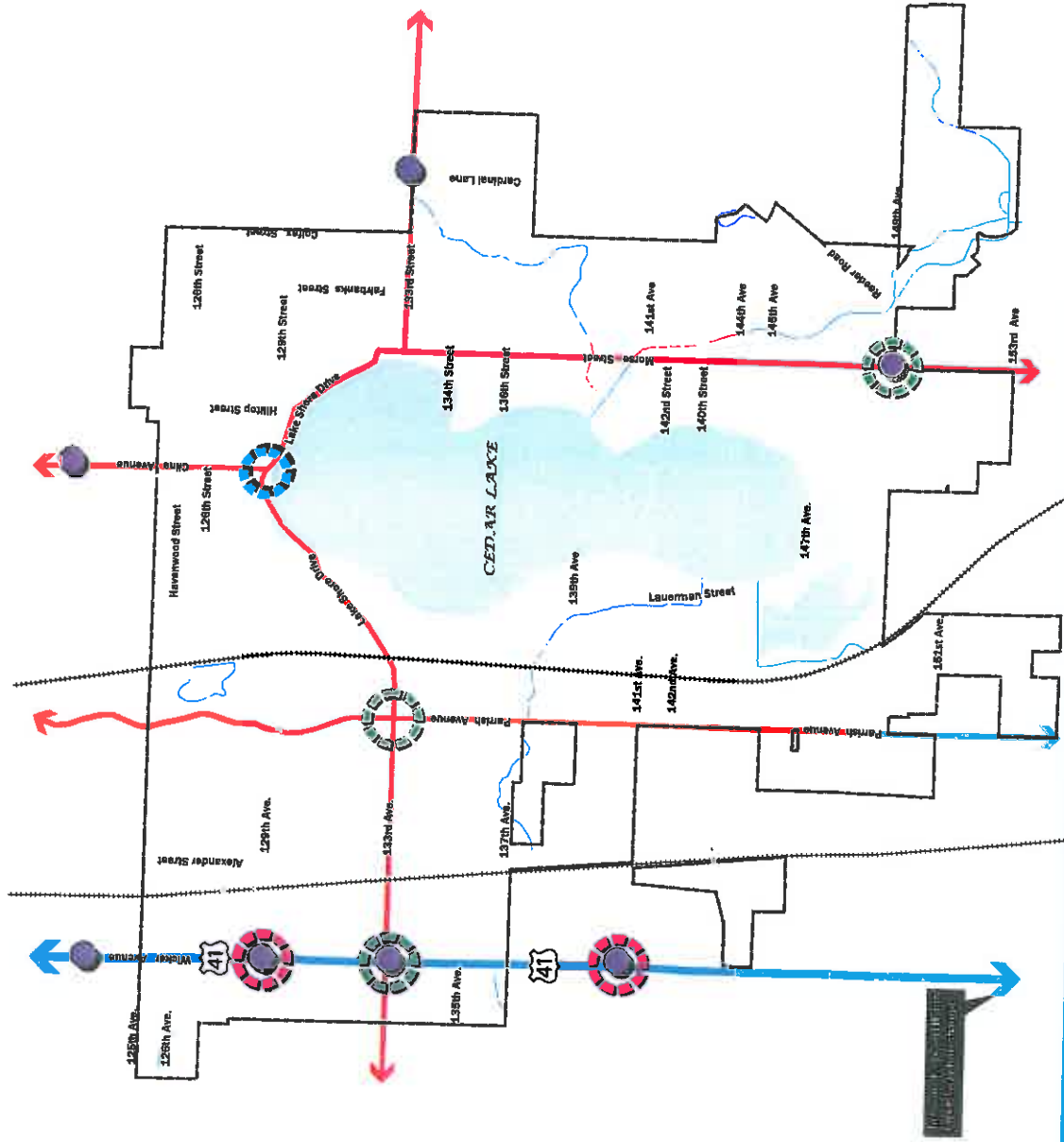




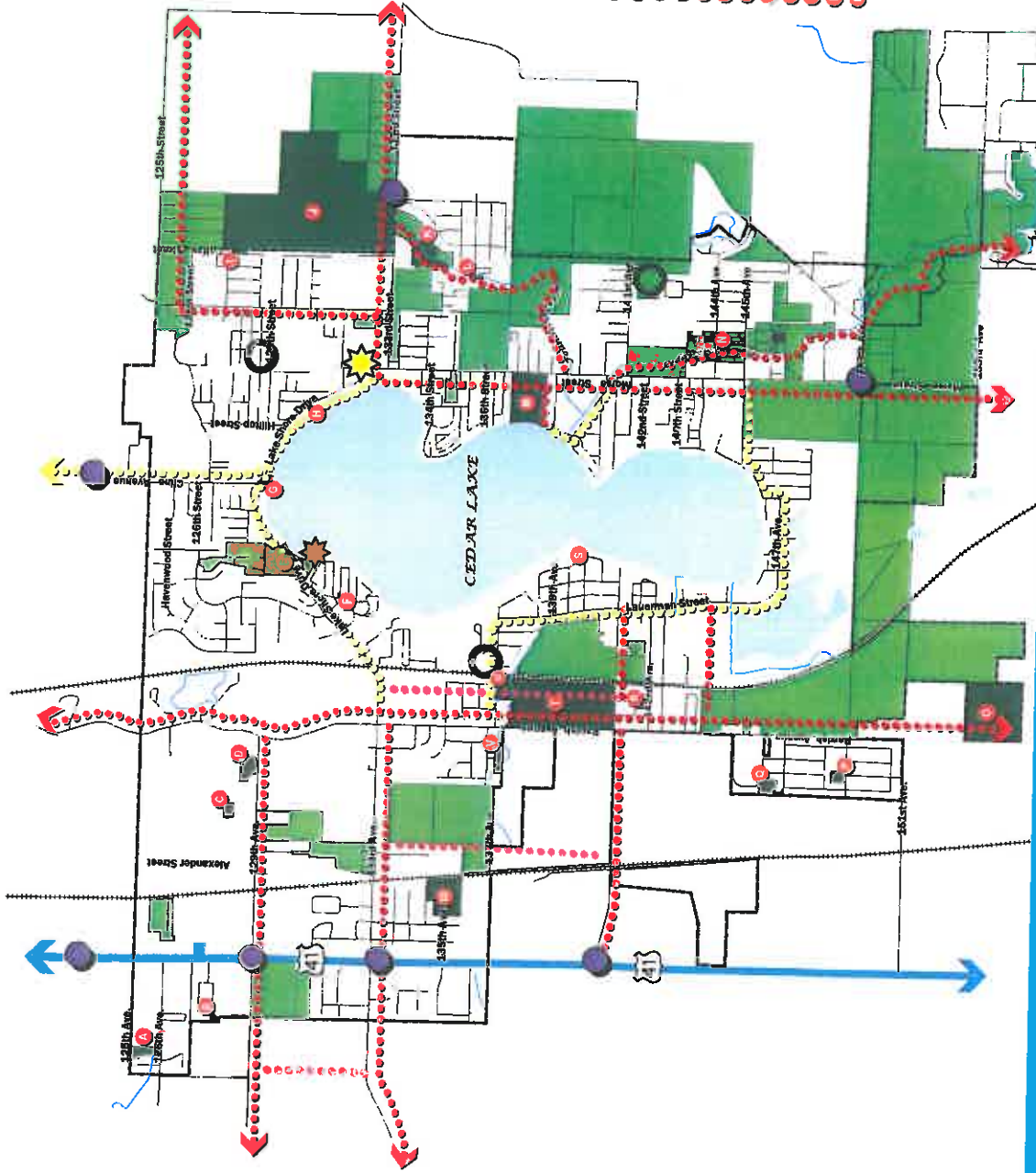
Figure 16
Parks, Trails & Open
Space Plan

Figure Legend

- Town Parcels
- Park
- Open Space
- Scenic Viewpoint/Overlook
- Proposed Living Center
- Proposed Gateway
- Proposed Park Location
- Proposed Sidewalks
- Proposed Multi-Use Trail
- Future Multi-Use Trail
- State Highway
- Streams
- Town Corporate Boundary
- Cedar Lake/Water

Cedar Lake Parks

- August Oaks
- Henn Park
- Monastery Park
- Potawatomi Park
- Meyer Manor Park
- North Park
- Bartlett Park
- Krystal Oaks
- Lemon Lake Park
- Robin's Nest Parks
- Founder's Creek
- Town Complex
- Cedar Creek Park
- Parrish & 151st Park
- Lynnsway I Park
- Lynnsway II Park
- Cedar Crest Park
- Monon Park
- Union Station Park
- Kiwanis Park
- Utopia Park
- Hanover Park





Connectivity Street Profiles

Figure 17.
Carriage Walks
Street Section

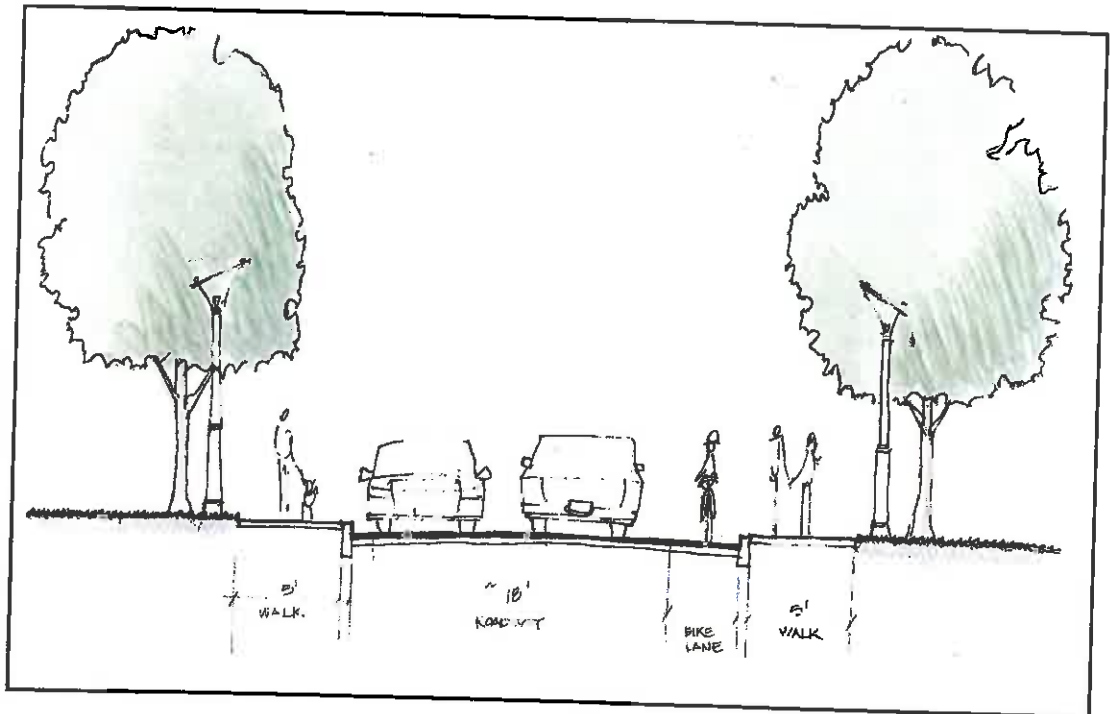
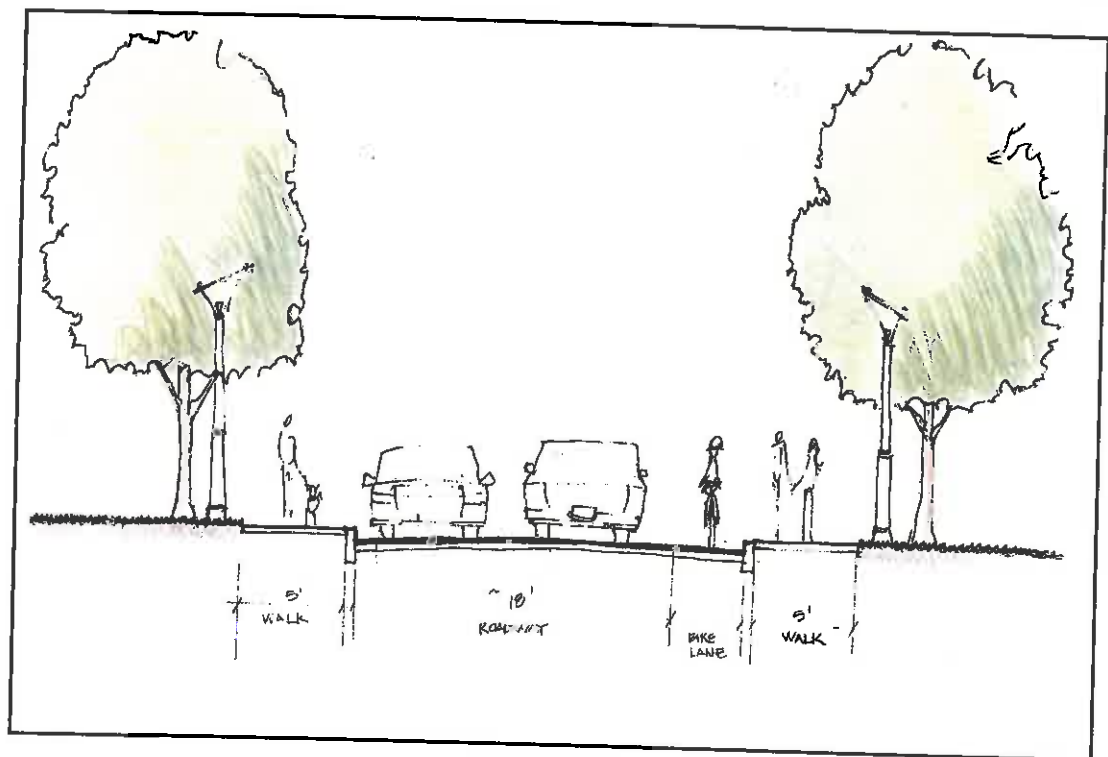


Figure 18.
Greenway
Street Section



Connectivity Street Profiles (cont.)

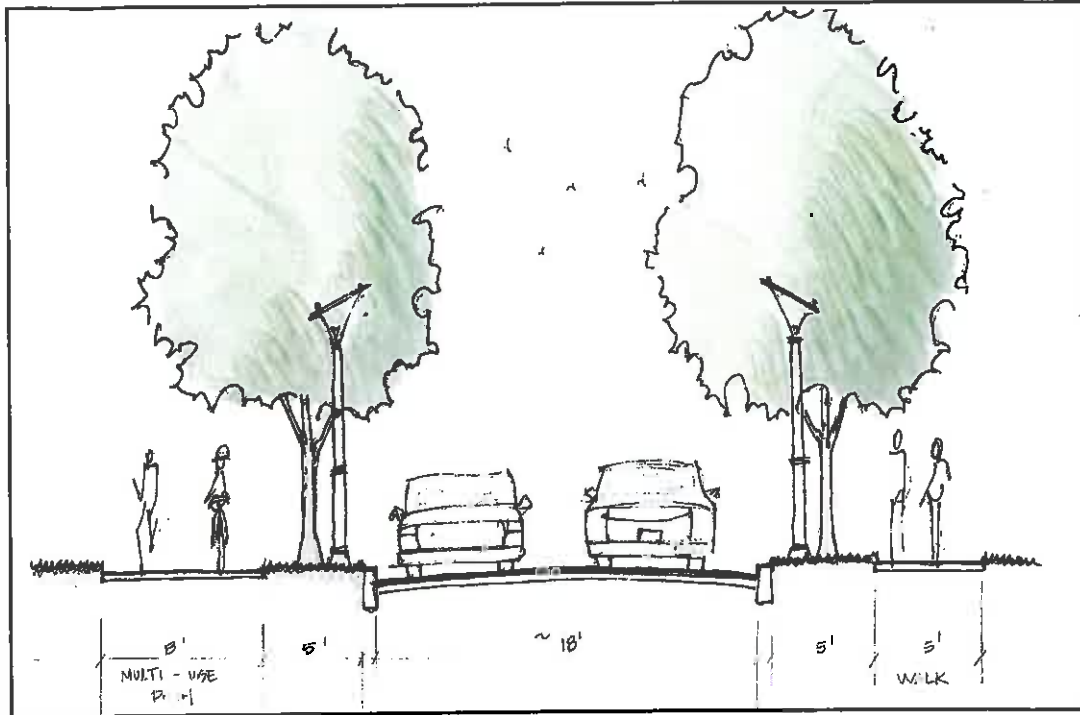


Figure 19.
Multi-Use Path
Street Section

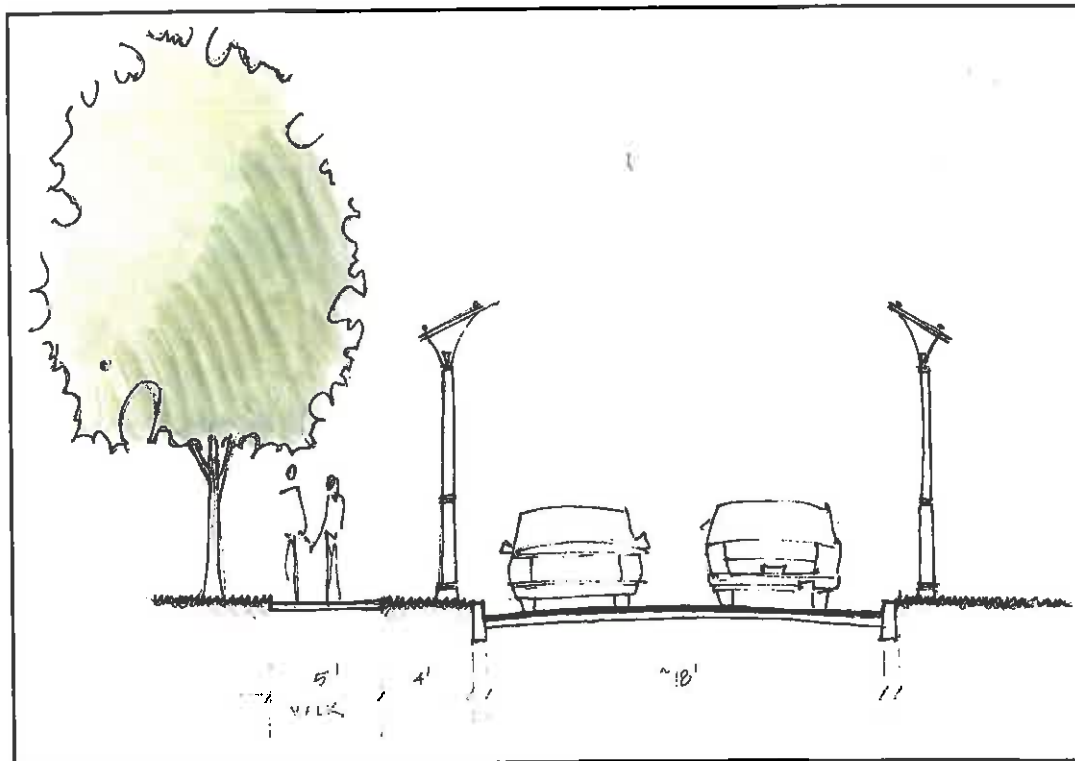


Figure 20.
Single Sidewalk
Street Section

Example: Multi-Use Trail/Side-walk



Other Implementation Actions

Zoning and Subdivision Code Updates

Throughout this chapter, the various general land use designations and specific plan elements have recommended using the zoning and subdivision codes to implement the plan. This will require complete revisions of the existing codes. In creating new ordinances, careful consideration of the Comprehensive Plan recommendations is necessary so that this Plan can be fully implemented.

In particular, the Zoning Ordinance will need to contain the following:

- New zoning districts to implement the general and specific recommendations of the plan.
- Detailed site plan review and improvement location permit review requirements to allow for implementing design review requirements.

- Strong Planned Unit Development guidelines and other tools to allow for negotiation with developers over site and building design.

- Emphasis on conversion of nonconforming uses to conformance.

- Access management along commercial corridors.

- Stronger sign regulations, emphasizing design and keeping sign heights lower. Billboards should be restricted to only the most heavily travelled corridors; the Town may also want to consider disallowing billboards altogether.

- Creation of overlay districts to address specific subarea requirements.

- The Subdivision Regulations should emphasize the following:

- Provision of sidewalks in all new residential developments and land divisions.

- Street widths and profiles that allow for pedestrian ways/trails and street trees.

Continued Lake Improvements

This Plan supports the continued improvement to water quality in Cedar Lake. The recommendations of the US Army Corps of Engineers should be completed. All development within the Cedar Lake watershed should respect the lake and employ all reasonable measures to prevent further sedimentation or degradation of water quality.

Developments near and on the lake should employ creative storm water management techniques to prevent runoff and chemical degradation. Use of phosphate-based fertilizers or other chemicals known to harm the water should be prohibited.

Capital Improvements Plan

The planning process identified a serious concern about the conditions of the streets. Experience shows that deferred maintenance of roads ultimately costs more, because of the higher cost of making repairs and the impact on property values.

It is necessary for the Town to create a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to identify sources of funding and prioritize improvements. Regular improvements to streets and utilities, including upgrading street profiles to include curbs, sidewalks, etc. usually lead to improvements on adjoining private property. This leads to increased property values and a higher taxable valuation. Therefore, over time, the projects in a CIP often pay for themselves and provide additional tax revenues.

Improvements to sanitary sewer and water are identified in Figure 21 (Page 5-48).

The Town should seek sources of initial funds for the CIP so that street improvements can begin as soon as possible. Some major projects along the main corridors can be a "jump-start" for the CIP and provide an impetus for funding future projects.

Redevelopment Funding

The Town should also seek sources of funds for commercial and residential redevelopment. The Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIF) already in the Town can be utilized to fund public improvements.

Where necessary, these districts should be expanded or new TIF districts created to fund the implementation of specific elements of this Plan, particularly the Livable Center(s), gateway and streetscape elements. Connection of the West 133rd Avenue TIF District to the Morse/Lakeshore/ East 133rd Avenue District via North Lakeshore Drive will provide a source of funds for the implementation steps outlined in this plan that affect those areas. In addition, expansion of the TIF district down East 133rd Avenue to Colfax, and south down Morse to include a connection via Constitution Avenue to the lake, has provided additional redevelopment opportunities.

For redevelopment of blighted areas, there are several state and federal sources of funds. In particular, Community Development Block Grants and other grants and loans targeted to low and moderate income communities can be used for acquisition and demolition to prepare a property for redevelopment.

Impact Fees

Indiana Code permits municipalities to impose impact fees on new development. Impact fees are defined in Indiana Code as charges "imposed on new development by a (government) unit to defray or mitigate the capital costs of infrastructure that is required

by, necessitated by, or needed to serve the new development.” The fees can be used for infrastructure improvements needed by or impacted by new development, and can also be used for acquiring parks and recreation facilities. However, the fees must be used for infrastructure that benefits the development; they cannot be used, for instance, to purchase park land on the other side of Town where the park is not likely to be used by the residents of the development.

Impact fees can also be used for roads, sewers, etc. that need upgrading so they can adequately serve the new development. A project that can be expected to impact substandard roads with new traffic can be required to pay impact fees to pay for (at least part of) the cost of upgrading the road. To create an impact fee ordinance, the Town must identify “impact zones” for each type of infrastructure covered by the impact fee. Then, the Town must identify the current level of service for each infrastructure type, and determine the “community level of service” based on the expected growth within the impact zone. This provides the basis for setting fees.

Based on the amount of growth and the condition of infrastructure, the Town should consider adopting an impact fee ordinance. Since Cedar Lake will remain a desirable market, developers will not forego building in the Town merely because it has adopted impact fees.

The Town took all necessary action to institute impact fees in accordance with applicable law in 2011.

Developer-Financed Project Reviews

The costs of new development should not be borne strictly by current residents. As more and more development occurs in the Town, projects become more complex. Town staff can become overwhelmed with the volume of project reviews. Thus, the Town undertook

and has since implemented all necessary Ordinances to shift the costs associated with Project Reviews to the developer who submits and application following the adoption of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. This has become a common practice for communities to adopt such policies that “development should pay its own way.”






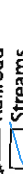


The costs currently paid by developers include the costs of plan review by engineers, planners and attorneys. This allows for the Town to provide a review of projects by professionals of the same rank as those who prepared the plans for the developers. This helps to avoid actions that may lead to unintended consequences and protects the Town from short-sighted developers who may not have the best interests of the Town at heart.

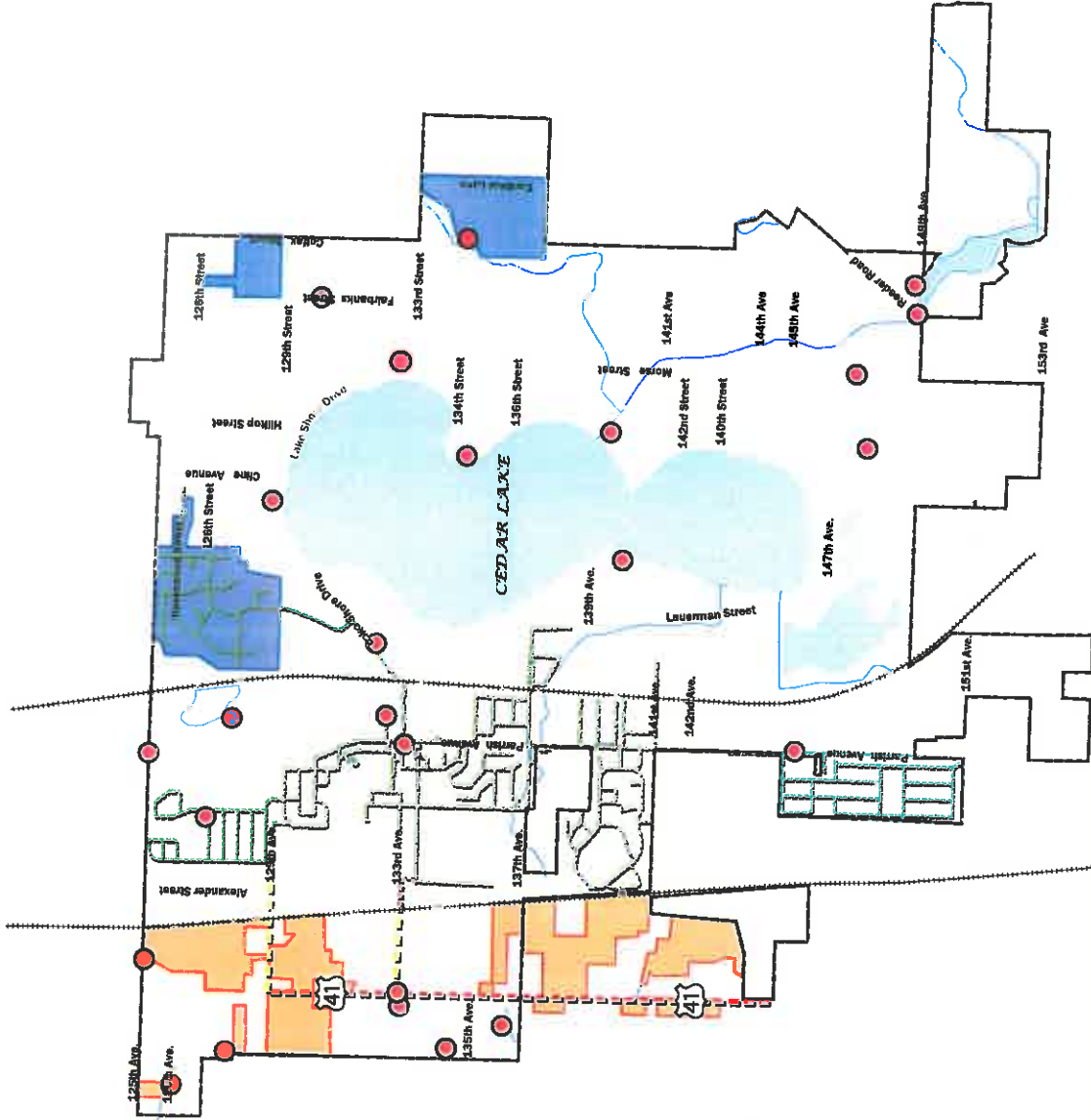
The applicant may also be required to deposit a minimum amount with the Town, who will hold those funds in an escrow account for use in paying said professional development review fees. As the account is depleted, the applicant must pay in funds to keep the account full. Upon final approval of the project, any remaining funds are returned.



Figure 21
Future Utilities &
Services Area Plan

Figure Legend

-  Town Parcels
-  Current Water Service Area
-  Future Water Service Area
-  Existing Water Line
-  Proposed Future 10" Water Line
-  Proposed Future 12" Water Line
-  Proposed Future 16" Water Line
-  Sanitary Service Line
-  Existing Sewage Lift Stations
-  Railroad
-  Streams
-  Town Corporate Boundary
-  Cedar Lake/Water



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

Community Facilities

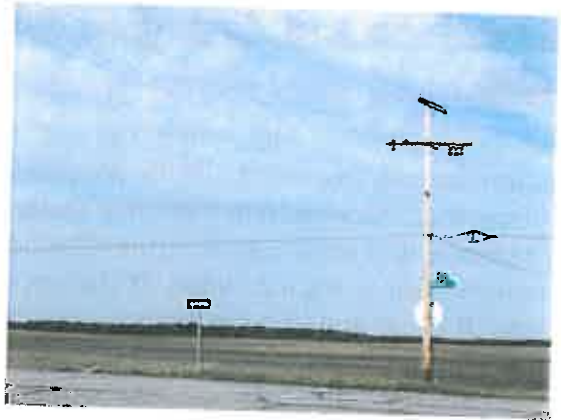
In addition to streets, this Plan encourages continued upgrades to community facilities. As the Town grows, some of the Town departments will outgrow current facilities. The Plan recommends relocating Town government buildings to a new Livable Center, once that area is identified and developed. The existing Town Hall can be removed from the Community Park, providing more park land and an unobstructed view to Cedar Lake.

The Plan also encourages private and quasi-public facilities for enjoyment and education of residents and visitors. Continued public support of the Town-owned Museum of the Red Cedars is important, as is support for new efforts such as the Cedar Lake Community Center. The Plan also supports community events such as Summerfest, by recommending additional land within the lakefront Town center concept that can be used to supplement the Community Park for large public events.

Planning for the Future

Future Annexation

This plan anticipates annexation extending the Planning Area limits. As land is annexed, amendments to the Future Land Use Plan and the Zoning Ordinance may be necessary. The areas that the Town currently is considering Annexing are identified in Figure 22 (Page 5-55), with a focus on the areas along Route 41 south of the existing Town Boundaries.



Farmland just west of U.S. Route 41 south of the existing Town Boundaries



U.S. Route 41 approaching 173rd Avenue near the proposed Illiana Expressway Corridor/possible future interchange.

Reviewing and Amending the Plan

Although this Plan has a time horizon of approximately ten (10) to twenty (20) years, many unanticipated changes may occur. Therefore, it is important that the Plan be reviewed on a regular basis. At the very least, the Plan should be reviewed annually to determine how well it continues to meet the needs of Cedar Lake, as well gauging the Town's success at implementing the various elements identified herein.

Rezoning and land use approvals that do not conform to this Plan are strongly discouraged. However, because of changing conditions, it is possible that certain land uses or projects that do not conform to this Plan would be appropriate. In such cases, the best course is to review the Plan and determine if it should be amended.

Conclusion

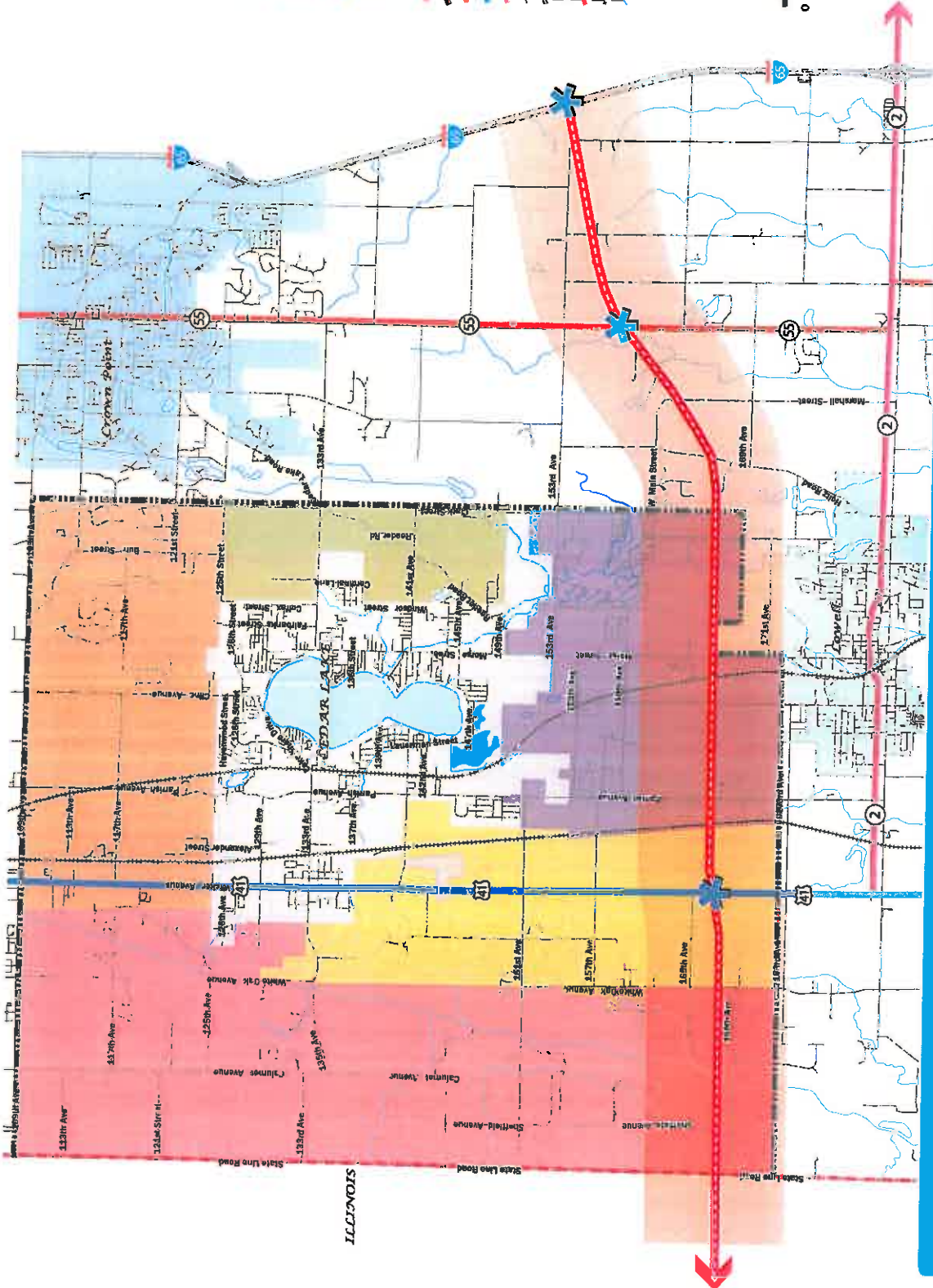
Cedar Lake is an old community and a young community. New development offers opportunities to plan for both future growth and redevelopment. New development can help support efforts to improve the existing Town.

This Plan represents the intent of the citizens of Cedar Lake to decide on the kind of future they want for their Town and to apply the tools to see that future become reality. This is an ambitious plan, but Cedar Lake needs to put the years of negative impressions behind them and unite in an effort to help the Town reach its potential. This Plan is a continuation of the efforts to reach the goals of the Community.

Figure 22
Town of Cedar Lake
Future Annexation
Plan

Figure Legend

- Town of Cedar Lake
- Town of Lowell
- City of Crown Point
- North Annexation Area
- West Annexation Area
- East Annexation Area
- South Annexation Area
- US 41 Annexation Area
- 1800' Expressway Buffer
- Proposed Interchange
- Proposed Expressway
- Planning Study Area
- US HWY 55
- US HWY 41
- US HWY 2
- Local Street
- Interstate 65
- Cedar Lake Boundary
- State Boundary Line
- Railroad
- Streams





The Future Land Use Chapter (Chapter 5) lists numerous action steps to implement the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter summarizes the action steps and prioritizes them so that the Town can implement the Plan in an efficient manner.

CHAPTER SIX
ACTION PLAN

Action Plan Matrix

The following tables list all of the actions and implementation steps, grouped by terms. Immediate projects can be started immediately and be completed within the first two (2) years after adoption of the Plan. Medium term projects generally will be those that can be completed within five (5) years of adoption of the Plan, and often contain elements that can be initiated sooner. Long term projects are those that will take more than five (5) years to complete. As with medium term projects, there are elements of long term projects that may need to be initiated in the short or long term to ensure that those projects are moving forward.

Within each term grouping, projects are sorted by priority. As circumstances change, priorities may change, and this may also cause a project to be moved up to a shorter term. Therefore, it is important to review this Plan on a regular basis to ensure that the

Action Plan is up to date and continues to serve the Town’s future land use planning needs.

Some of the actions listed in the tables below incorporate many of the individual implementation steps listed in Chapter 5. For instance, the short term action “Rewrite the Zoning Ordinance to implement the recommended actions and implementations” includes a number of specific implementation steps, such as creating appropriate zoning districts, creating overlay districts and a Planned Unit Development District, improvement location permit review design guidelines, requiring landscape buffers between residential and non-residential uses, etc. The rewrite of the Subdivision Regulations and creation of a Capital Improvements Plan also incorporate several of the individual implementation steps in Chapter 5.

Immediate Actions

Table 9.

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
1. Rewrite the Zoning Ordinance to implement the recommended actions and implementations	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Within 6 months after Plan adoption	High
2. Rewrite the Subdivision Regulations to implement street design, access management, connectivity and pedestrian trail recommendations	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Within 6 months after Plan Adoption	High
3. Review and revise Maintenance Codes, as necessary, to require improvements to properties	Staff, Town Council	Within 1 year	High



Immediate Actions (continued)

Table 9. (continued)

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
4. Create a Capital Improvements Plan	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Within 10 months of adoption of the Plan	High
5. Adopt a developer-financed review process	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Within 6 months	High
6. Adopt an Impact Fees ordinance	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Within 10 months	High
7. Seek additional funding sources for capital improvements, acquisition, etc.	Staff, Town Council	Within 6 months	High
8. Prioritize lands with natural features and seek funding for acquisition and/or protection	Staff, Parks and Recreation Commission, Town Council	Within 1 year	High
9. Work with property owners in the Midway Gardens area to coordinate redevelopment into a Town Center. Identify possible public/private partnerships and seek funding sources.	Staff, Town Council	Within 1 year	High
10. Adopt policies to prevent granting variances that allow continuation of nonconforming uses	Staff, Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Town Council	Within 6 months	High
11. Review the Plan after one year to ensure that action plans are being implemented and the Future Land Use Plan remains consistent with approvals and unforeseen events	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	After 1 year, then annually thereafter	High

Immediate Actions (continued)

Table 9. (continued)

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
12. Review current Tax Increment Financing Districts for eligible actions, and expand district boundaries if necessary	Staff, Town Council	Within 1 year	Medium
13. Identify "spot zoned" commercial and industrial properties in residential areas and rezone to the appropriate district	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Within 1 year	Medium
14. Prioritize locations for gateways and begin process of acquiring land, where necessary	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Within 1 year	Medium
15. Work with INDOT on access management guidelines for US 41	Staff, Town Council	Within 1 year	Medium
16. Design streetscape elements and seek funding through the Capital Improvements Plan, Federal/State transportation enhancements program, etc.	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Within 1 year	Medium

Medium Term Actions

Table 10.

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
1. Continue to seek additional funding sources	Staff, Town Council	Ongoing, for next 2-5 years	High
2. Acquire high-priority land for parks and lake access, particularly along North Lakeshore Drive	Staff, Town Council	Ongoing, for next 2-5 years and thereafter	High
3. As land is annexed in the planning area, zone properties in districts that are consistent with this Plan	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Ongoing, as land is annexed	High
4. Review the Future Land Use Plan for continued conformance to local needs	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Annually	High
5. Review and revise the Capital Improvements Plan, as necessary	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Annually	High
6. Plan, fund and construct a cohesive wayfinding system	Staff, Town Council	Over next 2-5 years	Medium
7. With the Chamber of Commerce or a Midway Gardens merchants association, promote businesses in the Midway Gardens town center	Staff, Town Council, Chamber or Merchants Association	Over next 2-5 years	Medium
8. Add multi-use trails, pedestrian improvements, etc. to parks and recreation plans to seek project funding through IDNR and similar sources	Staff, Parks and Recreation Commission, Town Council	At next revision of Parks and Recreation Plan, and ongoing thereafter	Medium
9. As multiple properties and tracts are acquired within neighborhoods, direct redevelopment efforts to be consistent with the recommendations of this Plan	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Ongoing, as redevelopment projects are proposed	Varies, according to project and location



Long Term Actions

Table 11.

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
1. Acquire additional land for parks and lake access	Staff, Parks and Recreation Commission, Plan Commission, Town Council	As land and/or funding becomes available	High
2. Review the plan on an annual basis	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Annually	High
3. Review and revise the Capital Improvements Plan, as necessary	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Annually	High
4. Continue to seek sources of funding	Staff, Town Council	As needed	High
5. Promote construction of the Illiana Expressway	Town Council, Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing	High
6. Promote commuter rail extension with a station in Cedar Lake	Town Council, Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing	High
7. As land is annexed near the Brunswick area, adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development ordinance	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	As land near Brunswick is annexed	Medium
8. Continue to implement specific action steps of this plan as land becomes available or as funding or other circumstances allow	Staff, Plan Commission, Town Council	Ongoing	Varies, depending on project and location

