

CHAPTER 7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Current Conditions

Overall: The Village has experienced a significant expansion in its local economy. This expansion includes the development of numerous commercial, light industrial, and office projects, including Country Faire Plaza, Center Street Square, Walden Square, the Atkinson Industrial Park, Maple View (Jewel/Osco) commercial project, and various individual free-standing commercial and light industrial buildings. Non-residential construction from 1992 through 2003 totaled 1,260,770 sq. ft. with a construction value of \$125,459,115. According to the Economic Development Commission, over 2,000 jobs were created in the local economy during this period and this non-residential development generates approximately \$2,600,000 property tax dollars to area schools each year.

Historic Downtown: The Village has also experienced revitalization in its historic downtown business district. This included a substantial amount of private investment in building renovations and greatly reduced building vacancies in the downtown area. Through investment in public improvements including streetscaping and road improvements, retention of municipal facilities within the downtown area, including the construction of expanded village hall and police facilities, the municipality encouraged this revitalization. The Village also entered into a long-term arrangement providing for the opening of a Municipal Historical Museum within the downtown. In order to encourage facade improvements designed to reflect the downtown's history, the Economic Development Commission (EDC) implemented numerous facade grants and low-interest loan programs, which were utilized by many downtown businesses for facade renovations. Currently, the Economic Development Commission is working toward implementation of the *Downtown Action Plan (Appendix A)* and the *Downtown Subarea Plan (Appendix B)*, which were adopted by the Village Board as a guide for further downtown progress. Pursuant to the Village's adopted *Business District Development and Redevelopment Plan (Appendix C)* in 2001, the Village purchased the 201 Center Street building, which will be sold for redevelopment purposes.

Route 83 Corridor: The Village has adopted the *Route 83 Corridor Streetscape Enhancement Plan (Appendix D)*, which includes specific signage, architecture, and landscaping plans to guide the development and redevelopment of the Route 83 Corridor into a cohesive business corridor. Implementation of this Plan began after the adoption of a *Route 83 Business District Development and Redevelopment Plan (Appendix E)* for this corridor. A number of new business structures have been built within the corridor pursuant to the standards included in these plans and some existing businesses have utilized EDC grant programs to improve their locations in accordance with the Plan. Recognizing the evolutionary nature of Route 83, which is transitioning from single-family residential to businesses uses, the Village has rezoned parcels within the corridor

for business uses pursuant to the *Route 83 Corridor Streetscape Enhancement Plan* (see *Appendix D*).

Atkinson Road Business Corridor: Since 1991, the Village has expended over \$4 million in road and utility improvements for this corridor. Atkinson Road (Route 120 to Washington Street) is the major north-south roadway which intersects Belvidere Road, Center Street, Brae Loch Road, and Washington Street, providing excellent vehicular access to the corridor; a pedestrian circulation system has been constructed as well. The corridor has developed into a multi-use office, commercial, and limited industrial business area. A new U. S. Post Office in the district further increases the area's visibility.

Route 45 Corridor: The Route 45 corridor (Route 120 to Washington Street) is a major north-south roadway carrying a high volume of area traffic. In past decades, development has occurred within the corridor, primarily outside the limits of the Village. Since the mid-1980's, development has occurred within the Village. Those sites within the Village that have undergone development or redevelopment have done so with the application of definitive development guidelines. There are some parcels within the Village that remain to be redeveloped and reflect the haphazard nature of County decisions on the development prior to annexation. Significant development sites in this corridor remain outside the Village and these also reflect the lack of County development regulation at the time of the initial development and/or the lack of County enforcement.

In addition to the recruitment and development of new businesses within the local economy, the Village has adopted the *Plan for Continued Success*, which supports the development of a private/public partnership to assist in improving the business climate for existing businesses. This includes the development of an implementation infrastructure in the form of a contract between the Village's Economic Development Commission and the Grayslake Area Chamber of Commerce to implement specific programs and services to assist current business and support the recruitment of new businesses.

The Future

Central Lake County will experience significant residential and employment growth in the next 20 years. Population projections adopted by the Northeastern Illinois Plan Commission (NIPC) forecast the addition of over 60,000 new residents in communities to the north and west of Grayslake. NIPC also forecasts an increase in employment from (1990) 14,000 to 31,000 in those communities.

The projected area-wide population growth will increase demands for products and services of all types in the central Lake County market. This growth, with its additional customers (both resident and business), will encourage new business locations within the Village.

In developing a plan for the continued economic development progress of the community, the Village will need to position itself to take advantage of the forecasted population and employment growth for central Lake County.

Planned transportation improvements will expand the road capacity of Route 45, thereby enhancing the business viability of this corridor. Regional transportation improvements like the proposed Route 53 extension would further place Grayslake in the midst of the region's transportation systems, improving the community's ability to attract new business and enhancing the access of existing business to regional markets, suppliers, and labor pools. Recommended improvements to Route 120 and Route 83 would also increase the business viability of these corridors. Peterson Road, on the Village's south boundary, will be a major east-west traffic corridor with business potential. This area known as the Central Range is expected to be the cornerstone of Grayslake's economic development efforts and a major economic engine for Lake County.

Goal: Take steps to expand the local economy by recruiting new business and encouraging the success of existing business to provide jobs, increase the availability of products and services to Grayslake residents and businesses, increase revenues to the Village for important Village services, and to provide ongoing non-homeowner revenues for schools and other taxing districts while maintaining the Village's standards for building and community quality.

Economic Development Action Plan:

- A. Expand the local economic development effort through expansion of the private/public partnership between the Village's Economic Development Commission and the Grayslake Area Chamber of Commerce.
 - 1. Facilitate the implementation of a new long-term services contract between the EDC and the Chamber of Commerce in order to provide services and programs for existing businesses.
- B. Consider financial support on a case-by-case basis for business or industrial uses which generate significant economic benefits through employment or other business activity.
- C. Aggressively pursue annexation of commercially viable parcels within major road corridors, including:
 - 1. The Route 45 corridor;
 - 2. Areas within the Peterson Road corridor and within the Village's sewer contract area.

- D. Build a cohesive Route 83 business area to expand our economy while improving community image through continued implementation of the *Route 83 Corridor Streetscape Enhancement Plan (Appendix D)*, through:
 - 1. Continued use and implementation of incentive programs to encourage redevelopment of existing properties in accordance with the Plan;
 - 2. Adherence to the Plan's architecture, landscape, and signage concepts for the corridor;
 - 3. Rezoning of property as requested by owners in accordance with the *Route 83 Subarea Plan (Figure 26)*;
 - 4. Development of a pedestrian circulation system within the Route 83 corridor.
 - 5. Continued support of road transportation improvements within the existing right-of-way on Route 83 north of Route 120 and south to Route 137 to improve traffic flow.

- E. Make available water and sewer utilities to key economic development parcels to encourage their development, through:
 - 1. The extension of water and sewer service into the Central Range Subarea, promoting the development of the Petersen Road Corridor;
 - 2. Agreements with Lake County for the provision of retail water and sewer service to properties that are annexed into the Village within the Route 45 corridor in areas shown in *Figure 42: Route 45 Water/Sewer Retail Service Area*.

- F. Continue to revitalize the downtown business district as one component of a village center, including:
 - 1. Continued implementation of the *Downtown Subarea Plan (Appendix B)* and the *Downtown Action Plan (Appendix A)*;
 - 2. The development of higher density residential to support the long-term vitality of the downtown area.
 - 3. Pursuing redevelopment of identified redevelopment sites (as depicted on approved *Business District Development and Redevelopment Plans (Appendix C)* through Village action including, if needed, public acquisition, to facilitate redevelopment;

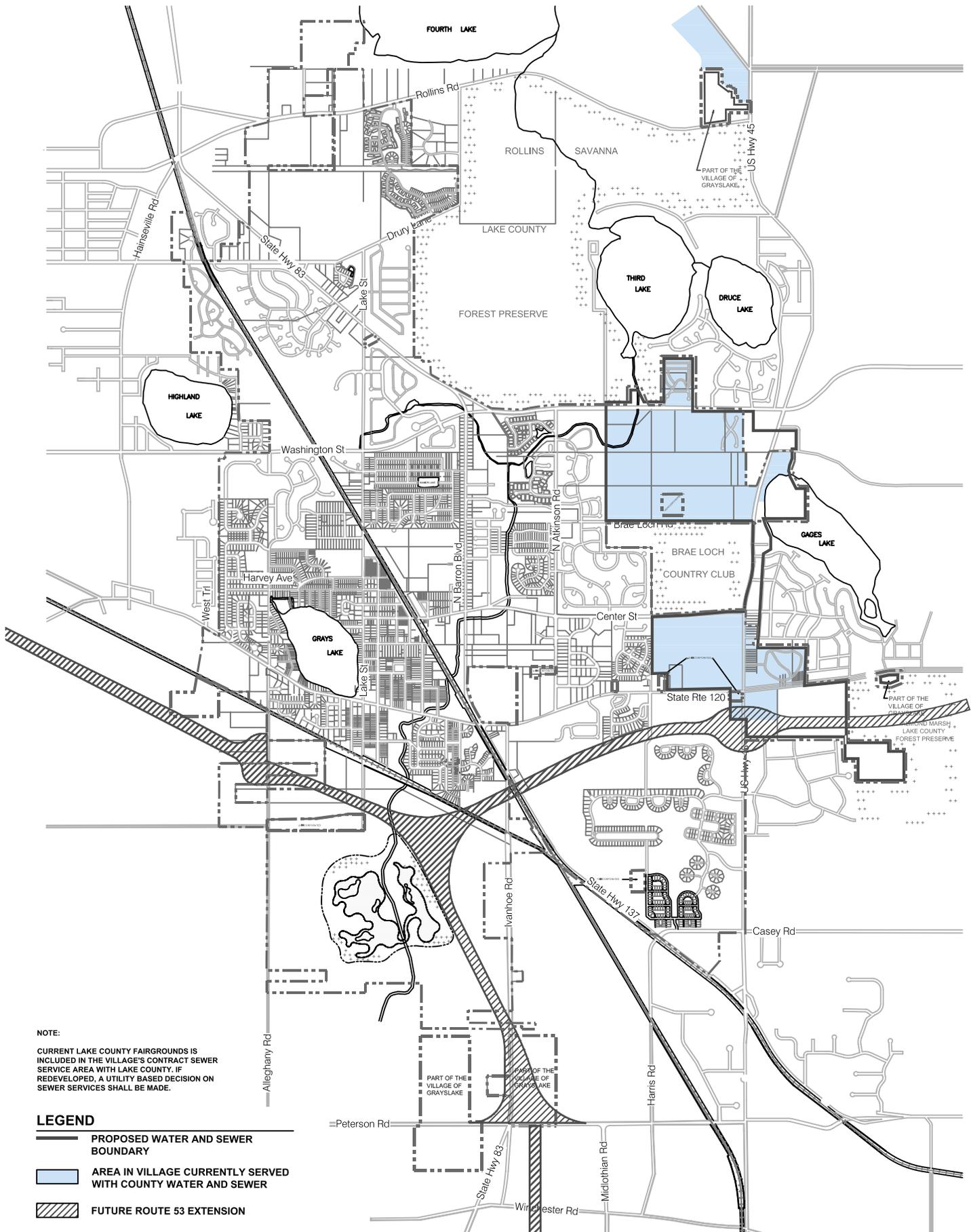


Figure 42:
**PROPOSED ROUTE 45 AREA WATER/SEWER
RETAIL SERVICE AREA**

- G. Build a cohesive Route 45 business corridor which expands our economy while improving community image. Implement the *Prototypical Commercial Area Improvement Plan: Route 45* as shown in *Figure 25*, including the use of facade and other grant programs.
- H. Implement the Central Range Economic Development Initiative, which will greatly expand the Grayslake and Lake County economies, through:
 - 1. The enactment of an intergovernmental agreement between Lake County and Grayslake as needed for the extension of sewer service to a portion of the Central Range area;
 - 2. Adherence to the specific development guidelines included in the Central Range Economic Development Initiative, including density, landscaping, environmental, and architecture standards.
- I. Commit resources to implement an ongoing advertising program for the recruitment of targeted businesses.
- J. Develop plans for gaining economic benefit from the presence of the College of Lake County, the High Technology Campus, and the University Center of Lake County, which are located within the community.
- K. In conjunction with the Lake County Fair Association, develop plans for commercial and exposition projects to expand tourist visits to the fairgrounds, surrounding properties, and Lake County.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

The scope of telecommunications infrastructure includes, but is not limited to, cables, broadcast and receiving antennae along with their supporting ground electronics and power supplies, antenna towers, and terminal junction and amplifier cabinets. Recent telecommunications infrastructure includes such innovations as fiber optic cable and cell towers that allow analog or digital transmission of voice, data and video/graphics. While needed to ensure that residents and businesses can communicate, the provision of easements for the necessary communications infrastructure is often an afterthought. The Village's policy is to provide reasonable access to telecommunications providers within public rights-of-way, consistent with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules and regulations.

Telecommunications services should be viewed as another utility, or family of utilities, with a complex array of requirements to support the present and future needs of residents, institutions, commercial activities and visitors. As society becomes more information-based, and as available technology becomes more powerful and complex, Grayslake must plan for and manage the incorporation of an infrastructure that supports this inevitable growth and technical change within the physical context of the Village.

There are a number of issues related to telecommunications infrastructure. Deregulation has greatly expanded the number of existing and potential future telecommunications providers that may maintain facilities both within public rights-of-way and on privately owned property. New providers may seek access within the community at any time. In order to coordinate and accommodate the telecommunications infrastructure needed to serve local residents and businesses, suppliers and vendors can assist the Village by providing “as built” information for their physical infrastructure facilities particularly within public rights-of-way. This information can then be incorporated into the Village’s geographic information database.

Telecommunications technology can be expected to continue to evolve. While many transmission lines will continue to take the form of overhead lines or buried cable, wireless technology involving antenna towers and ground support equipment are also part of the infrastructure mix. The Village is prepared to work with telecommunications vendors and suppliers, other local governmental units and neighboring communities to ensure that short-term and long-term needs are assessed and accommodated as appropriate.