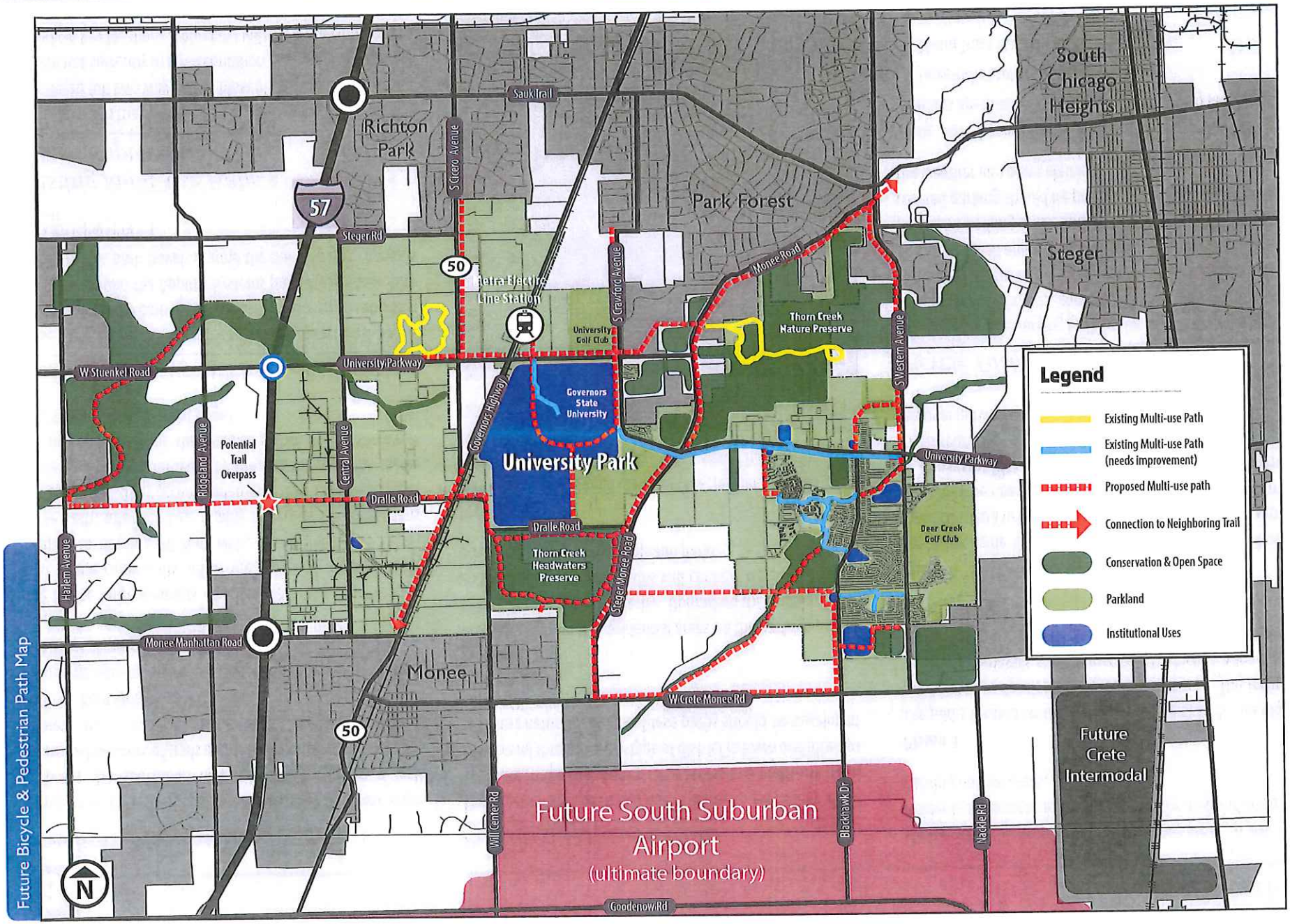
Future Bicycle & Pedestrian Path Map
Richton Park
Sauk Trail
S Cicero Avenue
57
Steger Rd
50
Metra Electric Line Station
S Crawford Avenue
University Golf Club
Monee Road
Park Forest
South Chicago Heights
Steger
Thorn Creek Nature Preserve
S Western Avenue
W Stuenkel Road
University Parkway
Governors State University
Governors Highway
University Park
Potential Trail Overpass
Ridgeland Avenue
Central Avenue
Dralle Road
Thorn Creek Headwaters Preserve
Steger Monee Road
Deer Creek Golf Club
Harlem Avenue
Monee Manhattan Road
Monee
W Crete Monee Rd
Future Crete Intermodal
Future South Suburban Airport
(ultimate boundary)
Will Center Rd
Blackhawk Dr
Nacke Rd
Goodenow Rd
N
Legend
Existing Multi-use Path
Existing Multi-use Path (needs improvement)
Proposed Multi-use path
Connection to Neighboring Trail
Conservation & Open Space
Parkland
Institutional Uses

Covered Bicycle Parking

Bicycle Signage

Denoting where bicyclists should be traveling will help keep riders and drivers safe. Posting informational signs will help direct bicycle and automobile traffic. While all the paths in this plan are separate trails, there will be times when bicycles will share the road with motor vehicles. Some streets may be used to connect multi-use paths in between construction phases. When this occurs signs should be posted to keep everyone informed and safe.

Sharrow Marker

Sidewalks

Pedestrian sidewalks travel through a majority of the single family neighborhoods in the Village. These sidewalks connect residents to the various parks and schools throughout the southeastern section of University Park.

A portion of these sidewalks are in poor condition and need to be repaired. The sidewalks are cracked, shifting, and disintegrating in many areas. Some of this damage can be attributed to flooding issues within the community and especially heavy storms such as Hurricane Ike in 2008. Broken and deteriorating sidewalks can lower property values and decrease the frequency of residents walking in the neighborhood.

To improve walk-ability and connectivity in this area, it is recommended the Village takes steps to repair the broken sidewalks. This may be accomplished by applying for state and federal grants which will help fund improvements. The Village may also investigate the feasibility of starting a sidewalk repair program. Sidewalk repair programs typically allow the Village and property owners to split the cost on sidewalk improvements. The City of Chicago has a very popular program and it could be used as a model for a future University Park program.

Transportation Improvements

Interstate 57 & University Parkway Roadway Improvements

The project consists of the complete construction of a new full access interchange along Interstate 57 at University Parkway in Will County. The project includes construction of the interchange ramps, signalized ramp terminals as well as replacement of the existing University Parkway bridge over Interstate 57 which will accommodate the future additional auxiliary lanes for the northbound and southbound Interstate 57, reconstruction widening of the of the roadway from approximately 800' west of Harlem Avenue to approximately 1800' east of Central Avenue. Roadway lighting, traffic signal, and drainage improvements are also included in the project. The proposed I-57 at University Parkway Interchange Project is divided into the following four major contracts:

University Parkway over I-57 Bridge

- Opened for bids on June 15, 2012
- Removal and replacement of the University Parkway bridge structure over I-57.
- Construction is currently complete.

Roadway Reconstruction

(Harlem Avenue to west of Ridgeland Avenue)

- Opened for bids on January 18, 2013.
- Widening and resurfacing of the roadway along Stuenkel Road from Harlem Avenue to west of Ridgeland Avenue
- Construction of turn lanes along University Parkway at the cross streets.
- Cross street improvements at Harlem Avenue.
- Permitting and drainage improvements associated with the above noted improvements.

Interchange Construction

(West of Ridgeland Avenue to east of Central Avenue)

- Bids scheduled for June of 2014
- Construction of new I-57 Interchange ramps for all movements to and from University Parkway.
- Widening and resurfacing of the roadway along University Parkway from west of Ridgeland Avenue to east of Central Avenue.
- Construction of turn lanes along University Parkway at the cross streets and interchange entrances.
- Construction of a sidewalk and bike path (or grading to allow future placement) along the north and south side of University Parkway, respectively.

First Step: University Parkway Bridge Replacement

- Cross street improvements at Ridgeland Avenue and Central Avenue.
- Removal and replacement of existing culverts along I-57 and University Parkway.
- Permitting, roadway lighting, traffic signal, and drainage improvements associated with the above noted improvements.

Roadway Reconstruction
(University Parkway from Central to Cicero)

- Bidding tentatively scheduled for April 25, 2014.
- Full roadway reconstruction along University Parkway from just east of Central Avenue to west of Governors Highway.
- Intersection and Traffic Signal improvements at Cicero Avenue.
- Permitting and drainage improvements associated with the above noted improvements.

Benefits

Some of the anticipated benefits from this project include:

- Aid in residential, commercial, and industrial development of undeveloped properties in the interchange area.
- Reduced travel time to and from I-57, thereby reducing energy consumption.
- Improved access between the regional job centers of Chicago, Kankakee, and far south suburbs and affordable suburban residential housing to the south.
- Accommodation of projected increased traffic demand for one of the fastest growing areas within the State of Illinois.
- Redistribute projected traffic demand, thereby easing congestion on adjacent I-57 interchanges and local roads.
- Improved access to desired destinations such as Governors State University, the industrial parks, and the University Park Metra station.
- Aid in economic development of the area.

University Parkway Rail Overpass

Description of Planned or Conceptual Improvements

The existing University Parkway at-grade rail crossing (CN-IC rail line) consists of two tracks and approximately 75 feet between tracks and the existing all-way stop at Governors Highway. This location has been previously identified as a location that would benefit from the construction of a grade separated structure.

Potential Impacts

The construction of a rail overpass would eliminate the existing at-grade rail crossing along University Parkway. This would improve east-west connectivity, enhance traffic operations, reduce travel delays, improve traffic safety, and improve existing freight rail operations. Future Metra operations would also benefit should they extend services to the south including the proposed South Suburban Airport. This project would also improve accessibility to the Metra station and GSU.

Proposed Actions

The approval, design, and construction of a grade separated rail structure can take considerable time. It is important to begin discussions with the railroad and the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) about the need for this overpass. As part of the process, it will be necessary to document potential safety benefits that would be achieved from the construction of the rail overpass. This type of improvement could potentially be eligible for funding from the Grade Crossing Protection Fund (GCPF) administered by the ICC. Plans for constructing an overpass should be closely coordinated with the planned I-57/ University Parkway interchange. Once a new interchange is constructed, it will enhance access to the Village and increase traffic along University Parkway.

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9 Green Infrastructure & Sustainability

Developers, policy-makers, and residents are encourage to incorporate sustainable practices into their short and long term plans. The purpose of implementing any sustainable practice is to promote a healthier and longer lasting lifestyle. This section will cover the Village's the **2008 Ike Flood, existing green infrastructure and existing sustainability efforts**, as well as provide suggestions for **future sustainable strategies** the Village could pursue.

2008 Ike Flood

Numerous sidewalk issues within the Village are recent in origin and date back to the 2008 IKE flood. Recovery efforts call for making the neighborhood sidewalk system clear and safe for local foot traffic. Shifting or heaving blocks, cracking, spalling, general disintegration or crumbling have been determined to lead to slum and contribute to additional blight concerns. All of these conditions have continued to be a growing problem (with further deterioration occurring) since the 2008 IKE flood disaster. The current state of the sidewalk system within the Village can be summarized with the word "horrific."

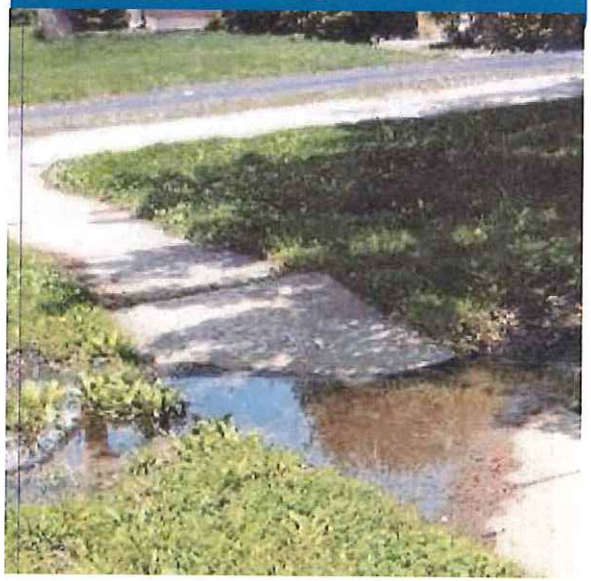
The 2008 IKE flood was in most cases a direct impact to the current conditions that brought forward blight and now are a cause for urgent need. The Village of University Park (similar to many other communities located within the southland region of northeast Illinois) has undergone detrimental hard times within the last 10 years—mainly because of the economy. High number of foreclosures, property vacancies, hazardous property conditions, tall grass and weeds, unsafe sidewalks and streets because of the 2008 IKE floods, and dilapidated conditions overall have caused blight.

It has been proposed that an application be submitted for sidewalk improvements to the community in an area that has urgent need. The proposed project was specific to sidewalks located along Blackhawk Drive from University Parkway to Olmstead Road; and along Hickok Avenue from Sullivan Lane to Blackhawk Drive. This project is for the well-being of residents. HUD's CDBG goals include projects of this nature that will address conditions which contribute to the deterioration of an area and alleviate existing conditions that pose a serious and immediate threat to the safety and welfare of the community.

Assuming that the sidewalk deterioration issue which has its causal roots in the 2008 IKE flood can eventually be addressed by a future project, the Village has not been sitting idle concerning the big picture items of stormwater and floodplain management. All new development and redevelopment plans undergo detailed review procedures to make sure these developments comply with Village ordinances and the Will County Stormwater Management Ordinance. Going forward, this is seen as one of the best ways to mitigate for flooding in an ongoing manner. Individual projects may only cause a slight benefit, but collectively these benefits will increase with each passing year. And if funding becomes available, some regional projects can be pursued and implemented as well.

Other ways to mitigate future flooding issues consist of some good-housekeeping items such as storm sewer inspections, catch basin cleaning, storm sewer repairs, ditch and stream cleaning, and other general maintenance. Along with such maintenance, public education and involvement will contribute to "mitigation awareness."

Examples of Sidewalk Damage from Ike Flood



Existing Green Infrastructure

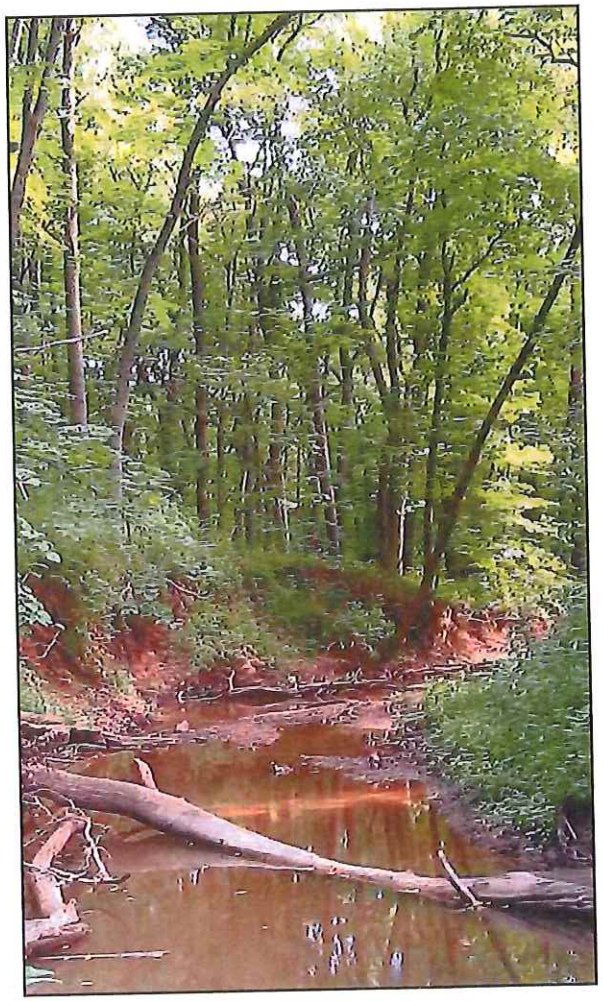
The Village of University Park has three major creeks and at least three minor creeks which have associated mapped floodplain or flood zones within its corporate boundaries. By mapped floodplain, it is meant that maps published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as part of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) have identified various flood zones associated with these creeks, and these boundaries are shown on maps known as Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). FEMA uses the terminology Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) to refer to these flood zones and the terms are often interchangeable. SFHAs are those areas that are subject to inundation (flooding) by what has been commonly called the 100-year flood. A 100-year flood should more appropriately be referred to as the "1% Annual Chance Flood," which is how FEMA refers to it. This means that in any given year there is a 1% chance of equaling or exceeding a flood event of this magnitude. As was noticed with the 2008 flood event and others, "100-year flood events" can occur more frequently than the misleading phrase "once every 100 years" implies. For this reason, the more appropriate reference is the 1% annual chance flood.

The 1% annual chance flood is also known as the "base flood" or "base flood event." When speaking of 100-year flood elevations or 1% flood elevations, these are also interchangeable with and commonly called "base flood elevations" or BFEs. A BFE is simply the 1% annual chance event flood (water-surface) elevation at a particular location along a watercourse or adjacent to a lake or ponding area. BFEs are used for regulation and insurance purposes. For example, when a new building is to be constructed near or adjacent to a mapped (or unmapped) floodplain within the Village, the building must be constructed at least two (2) feet higher than the BFE. This is referred to in the Village codified ordinances as the Flood Protection Elevation (FPE). Most municipalities in the area have FPEs that are one or two feet above the BFE. This is for the protection of all concerned.

For the major and minor creeks within University Park where the floodplains have been mapped, there are two types of flood zones that are predominant: 1) Zone A and 2) Zone AE. A Zone A floodplain is one for which no BFEs have been determined. And a Zone AE is one where the BFEs have been determined and stream has been studied. BFEs are usually determined through a modeling process that is not described here. However, it should be noted that some computer models are calibrated or measured against actual flood events such as the 2008 event to improve the accuracy of the BFEs.

Other flood areas exist within University Park and are shown as a lighter shaded (or dotted) Zone X. These areas are associated with the 0.2% annual chance flood (500-year flood) or areas where the 1% annual chance flood has average depths less than one foot or with drainage areas less than one (1) square mile. Areas outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain are shown as Zone X with no shading.

Another component of floodplains is the floodway. The floodway is an artificial boundary that is determined by a computer model and includes the channel of a stream and any adjacent floodplain areas that must be kept free of encroachment (blockages or earthen fill) so that the 1% annual chance flood can be carried without "substantial" increases in flood heights. Within the State of Illinois, the allowed increase is only one tenth (0.1) of a foot. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources – Office of Water Resources (IDNR-OWR) has jurisdiction over and regulates all activities within the floodway portions of floodplains. A permit process has been long-established for proposed activities within floodways. While many floodways are shown on FEMAs maps, not all floodways are shown. Zone A flood zones do not show floodways. For Zone A flood zones associated with streams, a floodway is considered present even though it is not shown on the map when the tributary drainage area of the stream is one (1) square mile or greater. For such cases, the permit process with the IDNR-OWR must be followed.



For all proposed activities in or near the mapped (and in some cases unmapped) floodplain areas within University Park, the Village has a responsibility and obligation under its codified ordinances and the Will County Stormwater Management Ordinance to review and approve these activities. This is for the benefit of all concerned and is meant to prevent adverse impacts to adjacent property owners. For proposed activities that involve floodplain fill or structures within the floodplain, the Village ordinance requires a corresponding excavation volume (known as compensatory storage) at least equal to one and one-half (1.5) times the volume of floodplain storage lost due to the fill or structure. This provides a safety factor for these activities and also serves as a partial deterrent to unnecessary filling of the floodplain.

Will County County-Wide All Hazard Mitigation Plan

In 2008, Will County adopted a Hazard Mitigation Plan for the entire County, including University Park. This plan is currently being updated, and should be adopted in 2014. As an All-County Plan, any flooding issues that may arise in University Park may be eligible for funding assistance since the Village is covered by an approved plan.

The Will County All Hazard Mitigation Plan is designed to meet the requirements of the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (PL 106-390) and provide a useful document to reduce the impact of hazards County-wide. The plan meets the Act's hazard mitigation planning regulations that require jurisdictions to have an adopted and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved Hazard Mitigation Plan to be eligible for mitigation grant funding. Although the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K) requires local governments to only address natural hazards, the Will County Emergency Management Agency thought it was imperative

A brief description of each of the three major and three minor creeks in University Park follows in their order of prominence:

Major Creeks

Deer Creek

Deer Creek is located within the southeast portion of the Village and generally flows in a southwest to northeast direction before exiting the Village in a more easterly direction. Within the corporate limits, a floodway boundary and BFEs have been determined and the stream has been studied.

Thorn Creek

Thorn Creek flows through the central portion of the Village in a southwest to northeasterly direction. The creek gives its name to the Thorn Creek Forest Preserve. Most of Thorn Creek has been studied with a floodway boundary and BFEs determined. A portion of the creek within the corporate limits has not been studied. Parts of the Villages of Monee and University Park form the headwaters (or beginning) of the Thorn Creek.

Thorn Creek Headwaters Preserve is owned by the Forest Preserve District of Will County. It is composed of 426 acres in Monee Township and primarily consists of agriculture land and wetlands located along Thorn Creek. Thorn Creek Headwaters Preserve is the largest undeveloped tract located in the headwaters area, and is located at the upstream end of a 5,865-acre high-quality natural corridor along Thorn Creek. The preserve is situated within an ice-margin glacial lake basin. It is one of the few local examples of an ice-margin lake basin with an intact "soil-scape", since most others have been developed, built-over and/or filled, Over one-half of the preserve consist of hydric soils; the original wetlands were drained in the mid to late 1800s to make way for agriculture.

Hickory Creek Tributary A

Hickory Creek Tributary A flows through the west central portion of the Village in a southeast to northwesterly direction and then westerly after crossing under Interstate 57 just north of Stuenkel Road. The proposed new interchange at University Parkway and Interstate 57 was required to meet typical floodplain requirements in regard to this creek. The headwaters of Forked Creek, currently located outside the corporate limits, is located just to the southwest of the proposed interchange.

Minor Creeks

Butterfield Creek East Branch

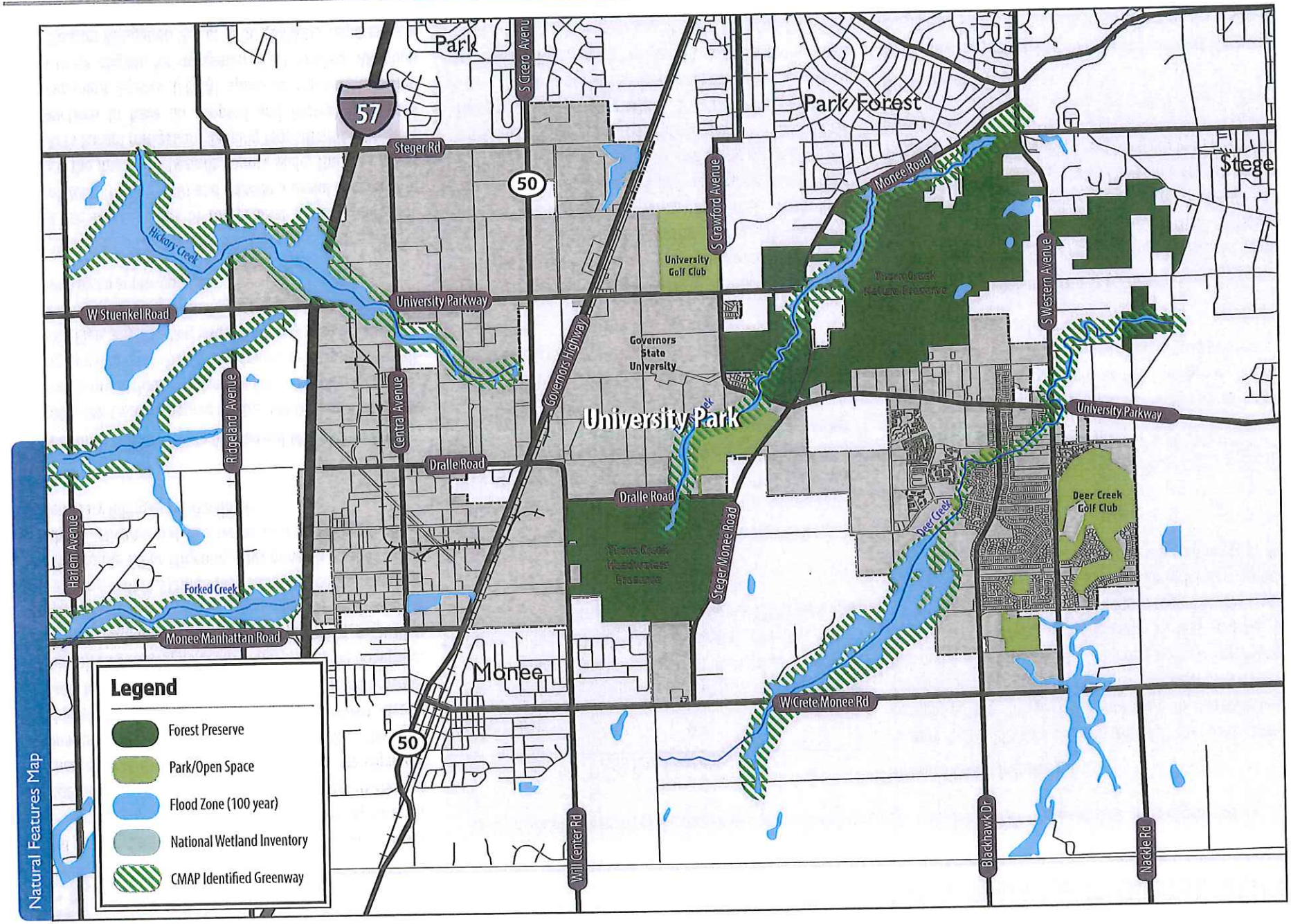
Butterfield Creek East Branch forms within the north-central portion of the Village near the Cook-Will County line. It flows from south to north and has been studied up to approximately one-half (½) mile south of Steger Road.

Butterfield Creek East Branch Tributary

The Butterfield Creek East Branch Tributary is located a little more than one-half (½) mile west of Butterfield Creek East Branch and also forms within the same area of the Village near the Cook-Will County line. It also flows from south to north. This tributary has been studied, but the study limit ends at the county line.

Black Walnut Creek

The headwaters of Black Walnut Creek form partially within the Village at the far southeastern corner of the corporate limits. This creek has not been studied within the Village or adjacent unincorporated area.


Natural Features Map
Park
S Cicero Avenue
57
Steger Rd
50
Park Forest
Monee Road
S Crawford Avenue
University Golf Club
S Western Avenue
Governors State University
University Parkway
W Stuenkel Road
Hickory Creek
Ridgeland Avenue
Central Avenue
Governors Highway
University Park
Dralle Road
Deer Creek Golf Club
Deer Creek
Steger Monee Road
Harlem Avenue
Forked Creek
Monee Manhattan Road
Monee
W Crete Monee Rd
Will Center Rd
Blackhawk Dr
Nackle Rd
Legend
Forest Preserve
Park/Open Space
Flood Zone (100 year)
National Wetland Inventory
CMAP Identified Greenway

to address all hazards, including technological and societal (including terrorism) hazards.

The 2013 update to the Will County County-wide All Hazard Mitigation Plan provides a first step towards identifying strategies and actions to prepare the community for natural, technological, and societal hazards. To ensure the integration of the County-wide All Hazard Mitigation Plan into existing emergency management operations and systems, the 2013 Will County Risk Assessment was updated and incorporated.

Existing Sustainability Efforts

University Park is currently utilizing the following sustainable projects:

Community Gardens

Community gardens allow residents within the community to grow their own organic food on small communal pltos. These gardens help promote a healthier lifestyle by getting citizens outside gardening and eating non processed foods. Gardens can also encourage interaction between everyone in the community and solve some of the issues raised by not having a grocery store within the Village. Presently, the Village has two community gardens:

Riegel Farm - The Village is responsible for the operation and maintenance of a community garden located on the Riegel Farm property.

Governors State University - This garden is run by the University and offers 52 plots for gardening. Ten of the plots are reserved for classes held at the school while the others are rented out to anyone else in the community.

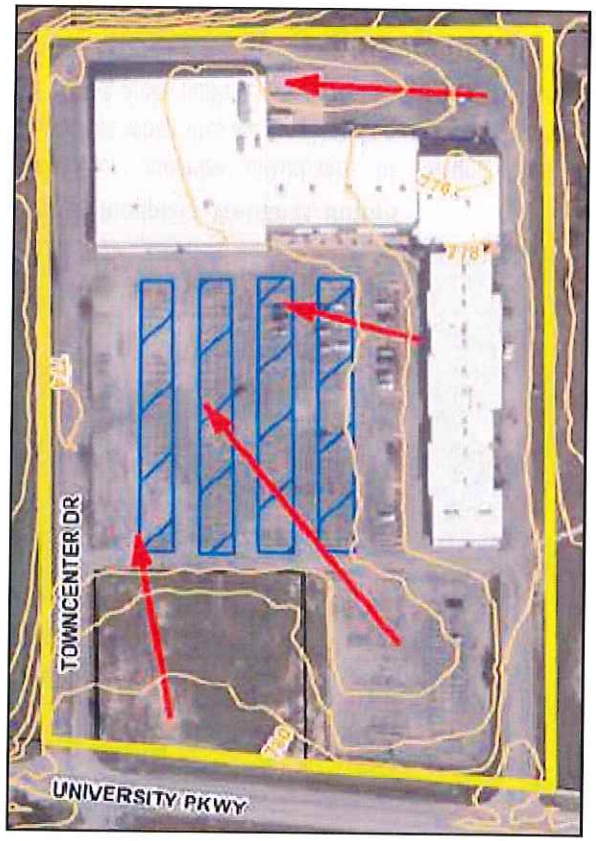
Town Center Parking Lot Infiltration Project

The Village has initiated a project to replace the asphalt parking stalls in the Town Center shopping center parking lot with permeable pavers. This will help limit stormwater runoff into the nearby tributaries. Since the shopping center is the location of the Village's Board Meetings, a Will County Health Department office, the Monee Township Assessor's office, a Trustee's and Mayor's office, and a Pace bus stop, the site is a highly visible location in the community, and a great opportunity for educational outreach as a demonstration project for future development within the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4).

The project generally includes upgrading portions of the existing parking lot from asphalt to permeable pavers. The locations of pavement replacement were determined to optimize the treatment of runoff from the existing parking lot; however, the area of the parking lot to be upgraded was limited by the Village's financial constraints.

The existing site of the Town Center was developed without stormwater management for volume control or pollutant control, which negatively impacts the water quality of the Thorn Creek Watershed, whose aquifer provides drinking water to area residents. The existing parking lot is drained by inlets and storm sewer that outlet to the northwest corner of the site with little to no infiltration or stormwater volume control. There is not a detention basin, settlement basins, or any infiltration areas on the current site and therefore the direct runoff from impervious area to the downstream ditch negatively impacts the water quality of Thorn Creek by reducing baseflow and exaggerating peak flows and volumes compared to predevelopment conditions. The impervious area also accelerates the transport of land-borne pollutants.

The completion of this development is the first step into alleviating the problems the parking lot creates and to be an example of sustainable practices in the future.



The Town Center Parking Lot Infiltration Project will include the removal of four portions of the existing parking lot asphalt and replacement it with permeable pavers. Permeable paver manufacturers recommend replacing parking stall areas (rather than drive aisles) when replacing a portion of the asphalt.

Future Sustainable Strategies

University Park has started its path towards a more sustainable future with the projects previously mentioned. The Village should continue to promote these types of projects throughout the community to be an example for future development. The following are strategies to incorporate so the Village may become a more environmentally conscious and healthier community.

General Recommendations

Implement Future Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

The Future Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan discussed earlier in this plan offers residents connections to businesses, parks, and municipal facilities without the use of an automobile. Implementing this plan will reduce residents' auto dependency and promote exercising.

Stormwater Management

Stormwater pollutants are negatively affecting the creeks and preserves in many communities, including University Park. Green infrastructure provides low energy stormwater management tools to reduce the presence of pathogens, nutrients, sediment, oil, grease, toxic chemicals, road salts, and heavy metals in the stormwater runoff reaching habitats and drinking water sources. Green infrastructure uses vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage rainwater where it falls.

Several examples and brief descriptions of green infrastructure include the following:

Rainwater Harvesting

Rerouting rooftop drainage to locations other than storm sewers and harvesting that water for other uses is an ideal way to handle stormwater onsite. For University Park, the best way to utilize this tool is to use rain barrels. Rain barrels are containers that collect rain water which can be used to for a variety of outdoor purposes such as watering a lawn. The Village should consider developing a program to encourage users to buy or rent rain barrels to use at their homes. Most rain barrels can be connected directly to a house's gutter to collect the water and contain a spout for a hose connection. While these barrels are not used year round, it is a good way to reduce residents' water usage during the spring and summer months.

Bioswales & Raingardens

Bioswales and raingardens are both vegetated swales that slow stormwater runoff and allow water to infiltrate back into the ground instead of into storm sewers or detention ponds. Bioswales are typically located adjacent to parking lots or within parking lot islands while raingardens may be located near buildings and in parkways. Both should be planted with native materials which will allow for the longest lasting and most durable swale.

Permeable Pavers

As mentioned before, the Village should look for more opportunities to install permeable pavers in existing or new parking facilities. These pavers help manage stormwater on site by reducing the runoff while filtering out pollutants and other debris.

Planter Boxes

Urban rain gardens adjacent to sidewalks, streets, and parking lots.

Constructed Wetlands or Wetland Detention Facilities

Increase filtering, infiltration, and evapotranspiration compared to traditional detention facilities.

Preserve Floodplain, Wetlands, Buffers

Eliminate or minimize disturbance of existing green infrastructure when sites are developed or other projects are done. These areas capture and slow runoff, improve water quality, and provide habitat.

Native Landscaping

While planting any type of plant for either a large development or a single parcel, the use of native grass, shrubs, and trees is strongly encouraged. Native species can withstand a wide range of temperature extremes, use less water, require less maintenance, and use less fertilizers.

The Village of University Park has previously requested funding to start incorporating green infrastructure into their stormwater management toolbox. The Village understands that green infrastructure is currently not the traditional stormwater management technique, it requires specific management and that it also often has higher upfront costs but the costs can be outweighed by the stormwater quality and environmental benefits.

Since some green infrastructure provides the secondary benefit of flood mitigation, it is especially important to the Village. In contrast to grey infrastructure, green infrastructure further reduces peak runoff flows and volumes that ultimately reach streams and rivers.

In order to restore, preserve, mimic, or enhance hydrologic function of the natural environment from the predeveloped region, new developments are encouraged to use green infrastructure as part of their site plans. Similarly, projects by existing businesses, including those by the Village, are also encouraged to incorporate green infrastructure into previously developed sites, for example, at the Village's Town Center property. Many studies and sources are available to guide green infrastructure efforts (USEPA, FEMA, IEPA, CMAP, CWP, CNT, AICS, etc.).

Energy

Alternative Energies

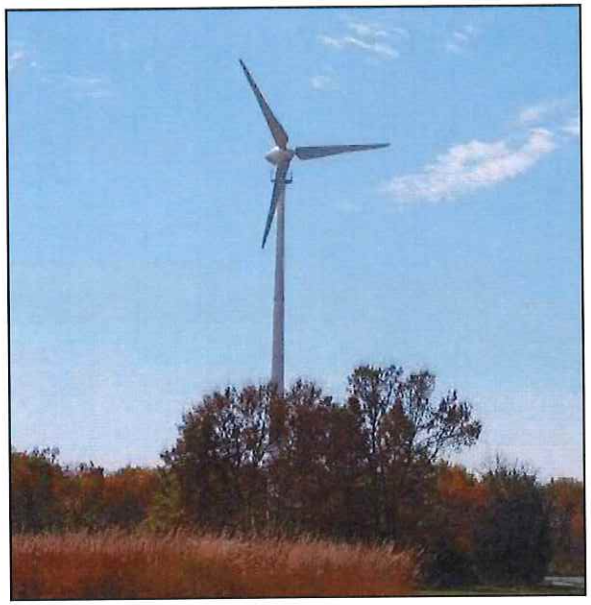
When discussing alternative energies there existing many options including geothermal, solar, and wind energy systems. These systems should be encouraged in new developments and when residents decide to update their existing homes.

While there are large alternative energy systems that can power an entire home, these systems may also be used on a much smaller scale. For example, a small solar array may be used to heat your water and lessen your dependency on natural gas. A project like this will not completely wipe out your utility bills, but it is a stepping stone for future sustainability and will save money over the course of time. These smaller projects are also useful for structures which are not set up for certain alternative energies, such as a building with no clear southern facing roof will not support a large solar panel array.

Smart Energy Design Assistance Center

For businesses and Village owned buildings, the State of Illinois has a program run by the Smart Energy Design Assistance Center (SEDAC) that provides free energy audits to help effectively reduce the use of energy in buildings. SEDAC is a great place to start when deciding what needs to be fixed or improved with respect to sustainable practices.

Wind Power



Solar Power

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10 Community Facilities

This section will cover a wide variety of community resources including **recreation, education and municipal facilities**.

Recreation

Offering a community a wide variety of recreational activities and opportunities is a great way to improve the residents' quality of life. Whether it's a place for adults to relax or a park for kids to play in, all recreational features help create community character.

Forest Preserve

A portion of the Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve is located within University Park's borders. The entire preserve consists of 997 acres of wooded land and is part of the larger Thorn Creek preservation system which covers approximately 1,600 acres of land across the region. University Park is a joint member of the Thorn Creek Woods Management Commission which also includes the Forest Preserve District of Will County, Park Forest, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

The preserve maintains almost two and a half miles of natural surface hiking and walking trails. It is also home to the Thorn Creek Nature Center. The Nature Center is an old converted church and is managed by Park Forest. While this amenity is not located within University Park, it can be considered a local feature which is accessible to residents of the Village. The preserve holds a variety of events, such as nature hikes and workshops, to get the local population involved with nature.

Golf Courses

Golf courses are a unique feature that provide the local population recreation and entertainment. University Park is home to two eighteen hole courses:

Deer Creek Golf Club

This privately owned golf course is located on the east side of town. This course offers 18 holes with views of natural vegetation and lakes. It also has a driving range, putting and chipping green, and an outdoor patio area that can hold up to 400 people.

University Golf Club and Conference Center

This championship golf course is owned and run by the Village of University Park. It is a symbol of community pride and offers 18 beautiful holes that wind around water, sand, and trees. The club house, The Urban Room, is a full service restaurant and bar, with live entertainment, weekend brunch, banquet and meeting facility that provides custom design for special event.

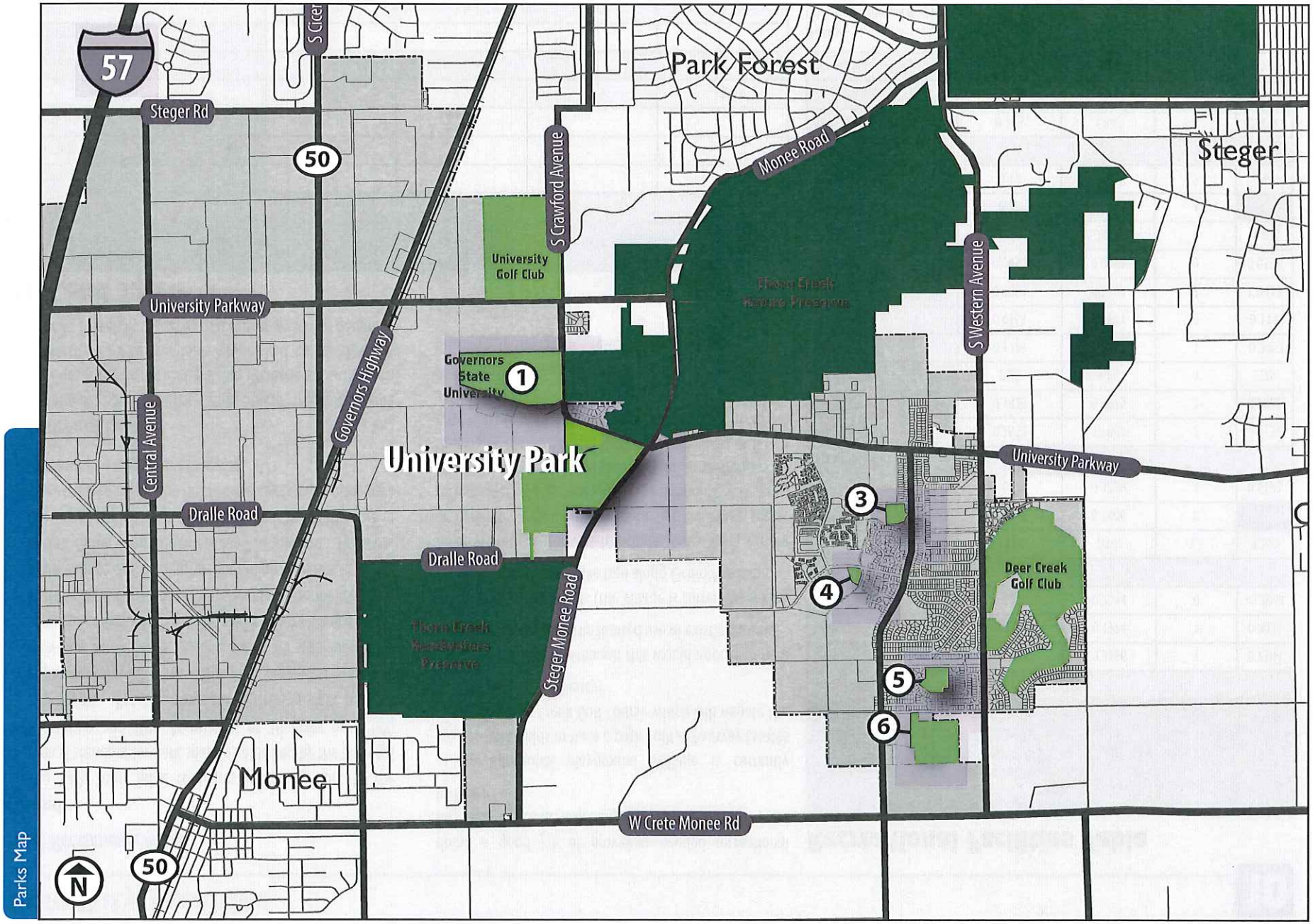
Parks

All of the parks within the Village are located near residential districts which keeps them within walking distance for a majority of citizens. Other than the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park, which is controlled by Governors State University, University Park's Parks and Recreation Department manages and maintains all off the parks in the Village. There are five parks which serve a multitude of purposes. There are playgrounds for children, a pool to cool off in the summer, and even a petting zoo for those who love animals.

Playground at Heritage Park

Legend

	Name	Description	Features
1	Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park	Set within the wild prairies of Governors State University, the collection consists of 28 works of art. The park provides tours of the area and focuses on providing educational outreach programs to build appreciation for contemporary art.	• Trails • Sculptures • Sitting Areas
2	Pine Lake	This area offers open space around two lakes which offers great views. A great place to fish and hold special outdoor events.	• Fishing • Rentable Shelters • Sitting Areas
3	Heritage Park	This is one of the oldest parks in the Village and is surrounded by residential uses. The lighting allows this facility to be open during the night and contains a concession stand for the hungry.	• Baseball Field • Basketball Courts (2) • Concession Stand • Playground • Tennis Courts (2)
4	Hickok Aquatic Center	This family oriented aquatic center offers fun for adults and children. The pool offers swim lessons, hosts private parties, and has a concession stand.	• Pool • Sand Volleyball • Zero Depth Pool • Water Slide
5	Riegel Farm Complex	Built in 1924, this farm now serves as a museum and petting zoo. This complex also includes sporting fields and can hold private parties. The Farm runs programs at its community garden which teaches residents how to grow fresh food.	• Petting Zoo • Baseball Field (1) • Tennis Courts (2) • Sand Volleyball (1)
6	Palmer Park	25 acres of large playfields and playground. This park offers rentable shelter areas and a concession stand for the hungry.	• Football Field (1) • Baseball Field (1) • Soccer Field (1) • Basketball Courts (2) • Playground (1)


57
Steger Rd
50
S Crawford Avenue
Park Forest
Monee Road
Steger
University Golf Club
University Parkway
Governors Highway
Governors State University
1
Central Avenue
University Park
S Western Avenue
University Parkway
Dralle Road
3
Dralle Road
Deer Creek Golf Club
4
Steger Monee Road
5
6
Monee
W Crete Monee Rd
50
N

Parks Map

Parks & Recreational Needs

Park Land

The Park Land Table compares University Park to the typical standard for park space established by the National Recreation and Park Association of 10 acres per 1,000 population. Per this standard, University Park is short approximately 22 acres from the suggested standard. However, the Village's existing parks are well located to serve the community. Given limited budgets, it is suggested that the focus for the near term should be on enhanced park maintenance and adding or upgrading facilities as funds permit rather than additional land acquisition. However, the Village should have a land/cash dedication ordinance in place that would require future developers to set aside park space for new development areas.

Park Facilities

Regarding park facilities, Recreational Facilities Table provides a comparison of existing recreational facilities in University Park to standards established by the State of Illinois. This analysis shows that University Park is generally doing a good job of providing needed recreational facilities. Deficiencies are highlighted in darker blue, and include:

- An additional playground (Village is currently accepting bids to have a park built in Fairway Estates by the Deer Creek Golf Course which will negate the playground deficiency)
- 2 tennis courts (although this would appear to be a low priority given the limited use of existing courts)
- Additional bike trails (the Village is currently seeking funding for a new bike trail along Cicero Avenue)

A community center which includes space for a variety of activities including classroom and meeting space, recreational space, and other components has been identified as a desirable addition to the offerings of University Park. Such a facility would meet a lot of potential programmatic needs, and should be considered as funding becomes available. A location along University Parkway near Village Hall would seem an ideal area given proximity to the Village's residential population.

Park Land Table

	Acres	NRPA Standard (ac./1,000)	Recommended Acres	Acres Surplus/Deficit
Community				
Hickok Aquatic Center	7.0			
Pine Lake Park	10.0			
Palmer Park	25.0			
Subtotal	42.0	7.5	52.5	-10.5
Neighborhood				
Heritage Park	6.0			
Subtotal	6.0	2.5	17.5	-11.5
Total	48.0	10	70	-22.0

Estimated Population: 7,000

Recreational Facilities Table

Facility	Average # in Illinois per 1,000 population (1)	Facilities Needed in University Park to match State Averages	Number in University Park	Surplus/ Deficit
Water-Based Facilities				
Fishing Piers & Docks	0.0408	0.2856	1	0.7144
Aquatic Centers/Pools	0.0282	0.1974	1	0.8026
Spray Grounds	0.0292	0.2044	0	-0.2044
Trails				
Trails (Miles)	0.163	1.141	1.5	0.359
Bike Trails (Miles)	0.1058	0.7406	0	-0.7406
Nature Trails (Miles)	0.0547	0.3829	1	0.6171
Sports Facilities				
Baseball Fields	0.2552	1.7864	2	0.2136
Softball Fields	0.1425	0.9975	1	0.0025
Basketball Courts	0.25	1.75	4	2.25
Soccer Fields	0.1779	1.2453	1	-0.2453
Skate Parks	0.0163	0.1141	0	-0.1141
Golf Course (18 holes)	0.0081	0.0567	2	1.9433
Golf Course (9 holes)	0.0051	0.0357	0	0.0357
Golf Course (disk or frisbee)	0.008	0.056	0	-0.056
Tennis Court	0.87	6.09	4	-2.09
Volleyball Court	0.19	1.33	2	0.67
Day-Use Facilities				
Picnic Shelters	0.206	1.442	4	2.558
Playgrounds	0.4035	2.8245	2	-0.8245
Dog Parks	0.0074	0.0518	0	-0.0518

Notes:

(1) Source: Illinois Recreational Facilities Inventory, 2008, except Tennis & Volleyball Court Standards which are from 1994 Inventory

'(2) Assumes 7000 population

Education

Having a variety of educational options can create an attractive atmosphere for any community.

School Districts

A majority of University Park is located within the Crete-Monee School District 201-U. This school district covers 80 square miles of south suburban land and is a pre-kindergarten through 12th grade unit school district. The district serves Crete, Monee, Park Forest, and University Park.

The only residents who do not attend all of the schools within this district are those located on the small selection of parcels north of Steger Road. These residents attend Rich South High School in Richton Park which is part of the Rich Township High School District 227.

Public Schools

The following schools are attended by the students of University Park:

Coretta Scott King Magnet School
This elementary school was the first school in the State of Illinois to receive authorization for the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program. The school emphasizes development on an internationally minded level. It admits a proportional number of students from the district and holds classes from kindergarten to 6th grade.

Crete-Monee Middle School
This school serves the District as the bridge for students in between elementary school and high school. It focuses on creating a team atmosphere and teaching students how to work together.

Crete Monee High School
This is the main high school that University Park students attend. Opened in 2007, the school offers a variety of facilities to develop well rounded students including a state-of-the-art 600-seat performing arts center, field house, and classrooms filled with the most up-to-date components in educational technology.

Crete Monee Sixth Grade Center
This school was opened in 2006 and brings the students from the four elementary schools together. There are preliminary plans for this school to expand to hold grades 6 to 8.

Talala Elementary School
This elementary school serves some of residents in the northern part of town. The school's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports system allows students to learn productive and acceptable ways in which to conduct themselves and interact with others.

Rich South High School
This high school serves the population on the northwestern part of town in Cook County and is located in School District 227.

Monee Elementary School
This school does not serve many residents in the Village. There are preliminary plans to expand this school to create extra space for Special Education and computer labs.

Monee Education Center
This center is used as an alternative learning environment for students in the region. It offers an Alternative Program, Truancy Alternative Program, Special Education Program, and a Transitional High School Program. The students attending this center are generally enrolled here for a semester or school year before they can be transitioned back into their original school.

Balmoral Elementary School
Children from University Park may attend this elementary school. The school's Bulldog Block Program allows each child to work at their reading level for a portion of each school day. Each grade level is committed to informing parents of their child's progress toward meeting state standards.

Crete Elementary School
Children from University Park may attend this elementary school. The school-wide Response to Intervention System supports all three tiers for reading and math through the use of myriad interventions. The interventionist team meets with each grade level team once a month to discuss individual student and small group progress.

Private Schools

The following are nearby private institutions which provide educational serves to University Park students:

Deer Creek Christian School

This school is a private religious institution that teaches students from pre-kindergarten to 8th grade.

Mother Teresa Catholic Academy

This school is a private religious institution that teaches students from pre-kindergarten to 8th grade and is a division of the Faith Movers Church.

South Suburban Christian Academy

This school is a private religious institution that teaches students from kindergarten to 3rd grade.

Governors State University

Governors State University has been offering a higher education to residents since 1969. The campus sits on 750 acres of land centrally located within University Park. The University's original goal was to provide upper level undergraduate courses and masters programs to older adults and those underserved by other colleges. They provide on campus child care and other classes during the day, night, and weekends to accommodate working adults.
In the fall of 2014, Governors State University will welcome its first official freshman class as the school has now become a four year accredited college. This expansion includes new on campus housing (Prairie Place), designed to accommodate 296 students.

The University offers a wide variety of programs through its four colleges:

- College of Arts & Sciences
- College of Business & Public Administration
- College of Education
- College of Health & Human Services

GSU also offers a dual degree program in conjunction with a number of area community colleges, including Prairie State, Joliet Junior College, South Suburban College, and the City Colleges of Chicago. The dual degree program offers guaranteed admission, a tuition rate lock, and other benefits.

In addition to their many academic programs, the University is home to important regional cultural resources like the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park and the Center for Performing Arts. The Sculpture Park has grown to include 29 works set within a natural prairie environment. It is open free to the public 365 days a year. The Center for Performing Arts offers programs throughout the year, including plays, musicals, comedy groups like The Second City, and a wide variety of concerts. GSU also offers a community garden, with plots available for residents or groups to raise their own vegetables.

Another major resource provided to both the Village and the region is the Illinois Small Business Development Center at GSU http://www.centerpointgsu.com/ . The Center offers a variety of seminars and programs and provides direct counseling to entrepreneurs in a variety of areas including business plan development, financing, and marketing. The Center is funded through a unique combination of sources, including GSU, the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

The University is currently implementing Strategy 2015, a 5-year strategic plan designed to implement the GSU Mission. Goals are centered on six key principals:

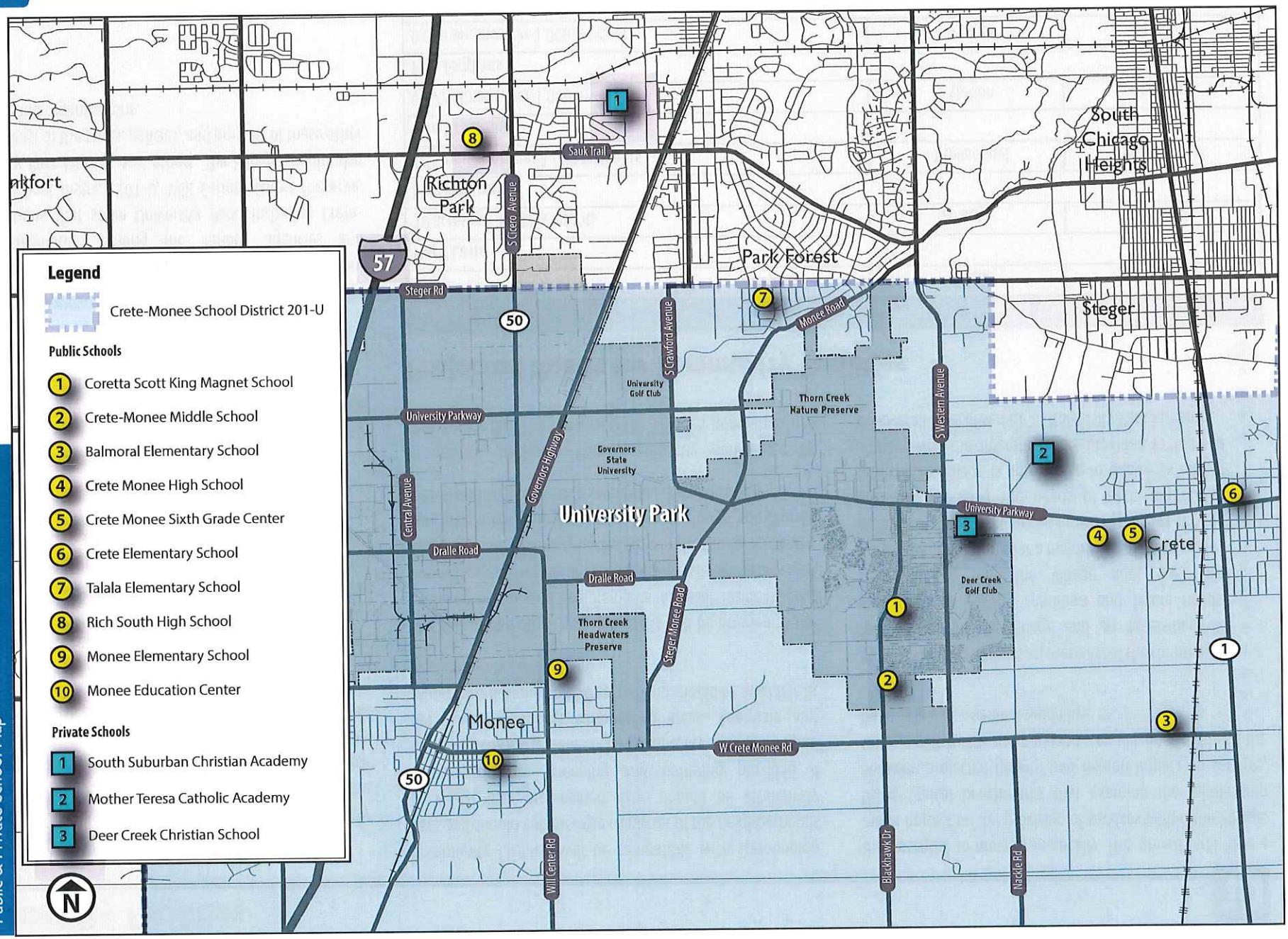
- Academic Excellence
- High Quality Faculty and Staff
- Continuous Process Improvement
- Visibility, Outreach, and Economic Catalyst
- Social, Ethical, and Environmental Responsibility
- Financial Growth and Sustainability.

The University has set a goal of growing from 4,475 full time equivalent students in 2007 to 7,000 in 2014. As a public state operated facility, GSU must rely on the State of Illinois for the majority of its funding. Given the State's current financial situation, funding for facilities expansion or improvements has been challenged. Current efforts are focused on renovation and upgrades to existing facilities rather than major expansions. There is a need for a large multi-purpose facility that can accommodate a variety of events and activities. Currently, graduation ceremonies are held off campus due to space limitations. GSU currently offers the lowest tuition rate of any state university.

The University is very interested in working with the Village to see University Parkway improved between Governors Highway and Crawford. This roadway provides the main access to campus. In addition to safety issues related to the railroad crossing noted in the transportation chapter, pot holes and the limited capacity of the roadway are major concern of the University.

The GSU Mission

Governors State University is committed to offering an exceptional and accessible education that imbues students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed in a global society. GSU is dedicated to creating an intellectually stimulating public square, serving as an economic catalyst for the region, and being a model of diversity and responsible citizenship.


Legend
Crete-Monee School District 201-U
Public Schools
1 Coretta Scott King Magnet School
2 Crete-Monee Middle School
3 Balmoral Elementary School
4 Crete Monee High School
5 Crete Monee Sixth Grade Center
6 Crete Elementary School
7 Talala Elementary School
8 Rich South High School
9 Monee Elementary School
10 Monee Education Center
Private Schools
1 South Suburban Christian Academy
2 Mother Teresa Catholic Academy
3 Deer Creek Christian School
N
Richton Park
Park Forest
South Chicago Heights
Steger
Crete
Monee
University Park
Governors State University
Thorn Creek Nature Preserve
Thorn Creek Headwaters Preserve
University Golf Club
Deer Creek Golf Club
Sauk Trail
Steger Rd
Monee Road
University Parkway
Dralle Road
W Crete Monee Rd
S Cicero Avenue
S Crawford Avenue
S Western Avenue
Governors Highway
Central Avenue
Steger-Monee Road
Will Center Rd
Blackhawk Dr
Nackle Rd
57
50

Municipal Facilities

Community facilities provide important services and necessary utilities that significantly to the overall "quality of life" of the community. These facilities include schools, fire and police protection, libraries, utility providers, administrative facilities and meeting spaces, religious facilities, and other public and semi-public uses.

The Community Facilities Plan is intended to help the Village plan for sufficient community facilities to be available to local residents and businesses in the future. It should be used by the Village and other organizations to ensure that appropriate sites are reserved for community facilities that will be needed in the future. It is important to emphasize that this Plan presents general policies and guidelines for community facilities. This Plan is not intended to pre-empt or substitute for the more detailed planning and programming which should be undertaken by the Village and other service agencies and organizations.

General Recommendations

The Village will promote continued cooperation, interaction, and collaboration among the various agencies and organizations that serve University Park, including Crete-Monee School District 201-U, Will County Forest Preserve, University Park Library, and others. The Village should also keep abreast of the plans, policies, and projects of these other agencies and organizations.

Community facilities will be compatible with surrounding uses and should enhance the character of the neighborhoods in which they are located. Sites should be attractively landscaped with screening and buffering provided if necessary. Traffic generated by community facilities should not adversely impact surrounding areas. Adequate and attractively designed off-street parking should be available at all community facility sites.

The Village and other service districts will be attuned to the changing needs and requirements of local residents and businesses, and new facilities and services should be provided if they become necessary or desirable in the future. As nearby agricultural areas are more intensely developed, community facility and service needs may change dramatically.

In general, University Park is currently well-served by community facilities. However, the Village's population has the potential to grow dramatically. This growth will have a major impact on the provision of services within the Village. Using typical benchmarks that examine the relationship between projected growth and related impact on services, such as police, fire and parkland, the Village should use the table below as a general guideline.

Provided in this section is an overview of the community facilities within the Village and an assessment of each facility's existing condition and future needs. Understanding that the Village does not have jurisdiction or control over a majority of the community facilities within its municipal limits, but by identifying and understanding the needs of each community facility, the Village is better able to gauge its role in working with the different service providers to improve the overall level of service to University Park residents.

Projected Needs for Community Facilities

Facility	2010 Population	2040 Population
	7,000	35,000
Park Land		
10 acres per 1,000 residents	70 acres	350 acres
Fire Personnel		
1.59 personnel per 1,000 residents	11 personnel	56 personnel
Fire Stations		
0.077 stations per 1,000 residents	1 station	3 stations
Fire Engines		
0.083 engines per 1,000 residents	1 engine	3 engines
Police		
2.3 personnel per 1,000 residents	16 personnel	81 personnel

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Village Hall and Other Village-Owned Facilities

Currently, the Village Hall accommodates the Finance Department, Village Manager, Village Clerk, a fire station, and the Code Enforcement Department. The building is not large enough to meet current space needs. Village Board and other community meetings are currently conducted at 90 Town Center in the shopping center owned by the Village. A plan to build a new facility was completed, but funding has not yet been allocated. The Village also maintains a cable television studio that is in need of major improvements, and the Town Center Shopping Center, which needs painting, ongoing maintenance, and landscaping around the outlot building.

The Community Facilities Plan identifies a "municipal center." Two potential locations for this facility should be considered; either near the existing Village Hall along University Parkway or in the TOD area. When the Village builds a new Village Hall, it should be located in the municipal center. A Village Hall can be a good civic anchor for the development of this area drawing in residents and visitors. The municipal center could also include a community recreational facility, such as multi-use gymnasium/health club. The Village should explore opportunities to partner with GSU, the YMCA, area hospitals, and other organizations to build such a facility.

Fire Department

The Fire Department operates two fire stations. Station #1 at 698 Burnham Road (adjacent to Village Hall) responds mainly to residential service calls, and Station #2 at 995 Central Avenue responds mainly to industrial service calls. Station #1 was renovated in 2009 and is adequately sized to meet needs in this portion of the community. Station #2 is an older facility that is either in need of major renovation or reconstruction to meet future community needs on the west side of the Village.

A concern of the Fire Department is provision of adequate services to GSU as they expand their programs and services, including the addition of new student apartments. The Village and the University should work closely to ensure that the Fire Department is well equipped to handle any increased demands caused by this expansion.

Another concern is with regard to aging equipment and the need for replacement engines. Like any vehicle, as fire equipment ages costs of repairs and downtime increase. It is important to establish a regular system of vehicle replacement to maintain the high level of service that residents expect. The following table provides a summary of existing vehicles and needs. It will be important for the Village to budget for equipment replacement, including identifying funding sources. While these vehicles can certainly be funded through general revenue, it may also be possible to fund equipment replacements through impact fees (annexation), and fire facility fee (building permit), TIF, grants, or some combination of these sources.

The Department has a full-time staff of one chief, one deputy chief, and 15 fire fighters/paramedics, and a team of paid-on-call staff available on an as-needed basis. The Fire Department and the Deputy Chief assists with building permits. Currently, this level of full-time staff meets the community's needs. The department has no plans to increase staffing but will reassess staffing if rapid growth increases calls for service.

A public safety issue for both the fire and police department is crossing the CN railroad. The Village currently has two at-grade crossings of the railroad at University Parkway and at Dralle Road. The University Parkway crossing is particularly problematic given the close spacing of the railroad with Governors Highway and the volume of traffic this roadway carries during peak Metra commuter or GSU student/faculty periods. When a train is blocking the crossing, emergency vehicles are forced to wait or find alternative routes which can significantly increase response times. The transportation section of this plan addresses this issue and explores solutions to improve these conditions through grade separation or other intersection improvements.

Fire Department Equipment

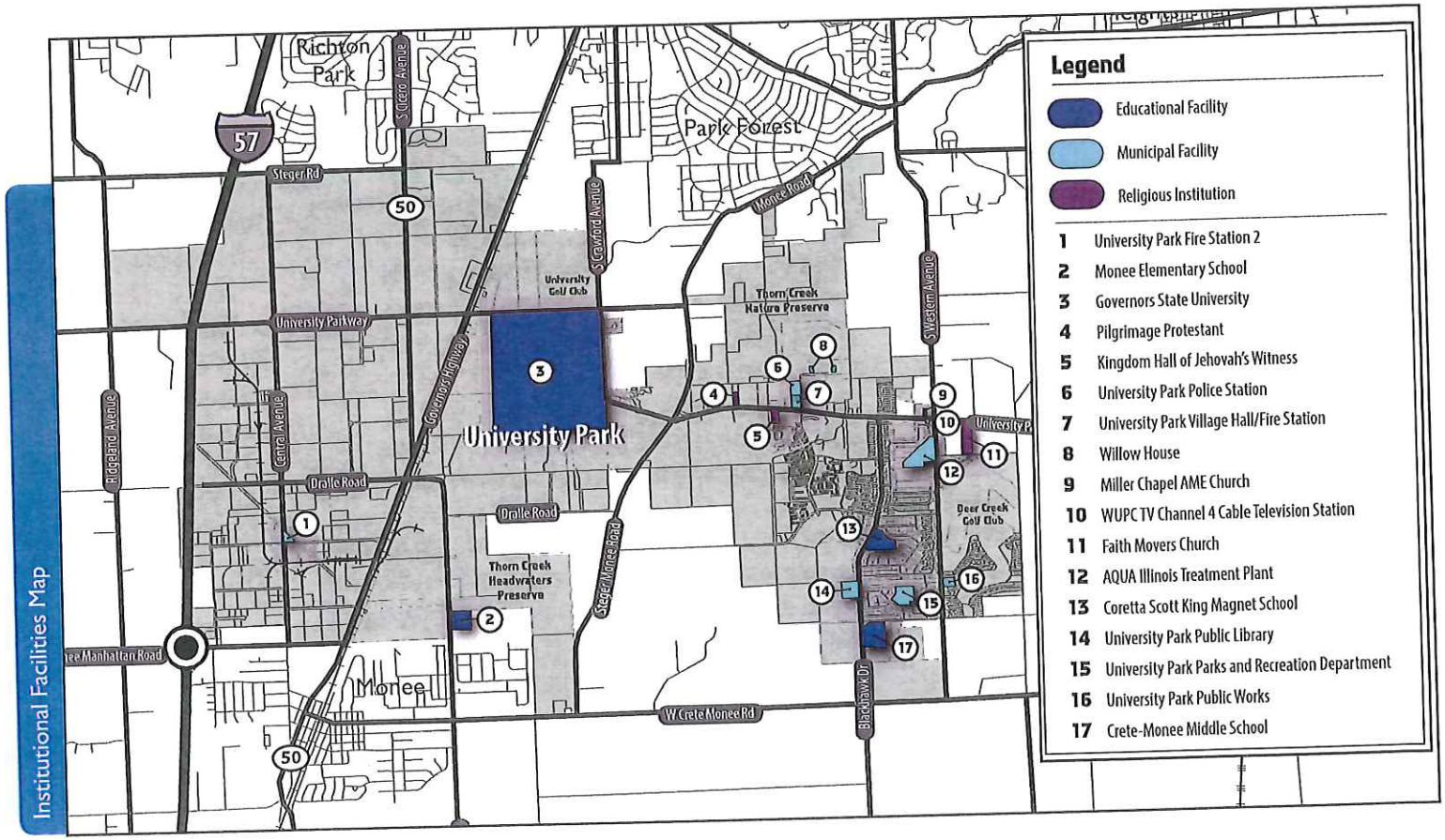
Type	Existing Vehicles	Notes
Ambulance	2 ambulances, purchased new in 2009	Ambulances are heavily used. It would be appropriate to replace these existing vehicles within the next 3 to 5 years (2017-2019)
Ladder Trucks	2, including a 2009 ladder truck acquired through a grant and a 2000 smaller ladder truck (bought used)	As funding allows, the smaller ladder truck should be replaced
Engines	2 engines, one a 1984 and one a 1988	Both engines are nearing the end of their useful life and should be replaced as funds are available

Police Department

The Police Department is located on Burnham Drive, adjacent to the Village Hall. The current facility is generally in good condition and was constructed in 2004 with a state-of-the art gun range. This facility is used for training not only for local staff, but as a regional training facility for other departments. However, some improvements are needed to enhance overall operations and efficiency, including updating of the evidence room and completion of a downstairs classroom for training. A security fence around the rear parking lot is also recommended.

The Department has a staff of 22 sworn police officers, two commanders and the police chief. The Police Department is assisted by the Will County Sheriff's Department when necessary. The County has jurisdiction over the unincorporated areas located within the Village. GSU has their own police/ security force and coordinates with the University Park police department for special events or as needed throughout the year. Current staff levels are appropriate to serve the current population. As the community grows, proportional expansion of the police force and facilities will be needed. This may include consideration of a satellite facility when the population exceeds 30,000 on the west side of University Park, perhaps near the west fire station.

The department's vehicular fleet is a major concern. While two new vehicles were recently added, the department is still operating with roughly half the optimal number of vehicles given the age of the existing fleet and maintenance issues. It is recommended that the Village create a capital improvement program that provides for a regular cycle of replacement for police vehicles.



Public Works

The public works department is located along Western Avenue near the southwest corner of Deer Creek Golf Club. The department is responsible for the roads and infrastructure which are not under the jurisdiction of the state, county, or private company (Aqua).

The local roads within the community are considered to be in poor condition. The department is currently working with the Village's engineering firm to create a 5 year improvement plan for local roads. This plan will identify which roads will need improvement the most and will allow the Village Board to prioritize improvements when budgeting for roadway maintenance. This plan should also include infrastructure needs along roadways, such as street lights, many of which are considered in poor condition or damaged.

The Public Works Department Vehicle fleet includes two tandem trucks for hauling large items and plowing snow, and two 1-ton pickup trucks. Some other equipment the department uses outside its fleet are hand tools, an air compressor, and an auger. It has been expressed that most of the vehicles and equipment within the department are old and not working properly. It is recommended that a plan such as the road improvement plan be implemented to provide a prioritized list of which equipment should be replaced.

Power Transmission

ComEd provides electric service to residents and businesses in the Village. In addition to the ComEd power service, there are two peaker power plants located in the industrial area of the Village. Peaker power plants generally run only when there is a high demand for electricity. Peaker power plants provide another reliable source of electricity within the Village.

Transmission lines supplying new development should be located underground wherever possible. Existing transmission lines currently located above ground should be relocated underground as streets are repaired and/or widened, as infill development occurs, or when repairs or upgrades are made to the lines.

Cable Studio

The Village is home to its very own cable television studio. This public access station was created to promote and develop community involvement in the use of cable television for cultural, educational, health, social service, community and other non-commercial. WUPC TV Channel 4 Cable Television Station is a non-profit organization that administers the use of the public access channel in the South Suburbs. The station teaches individuals the basics of the television industry while reporting community news and events.

Other Community Facilities

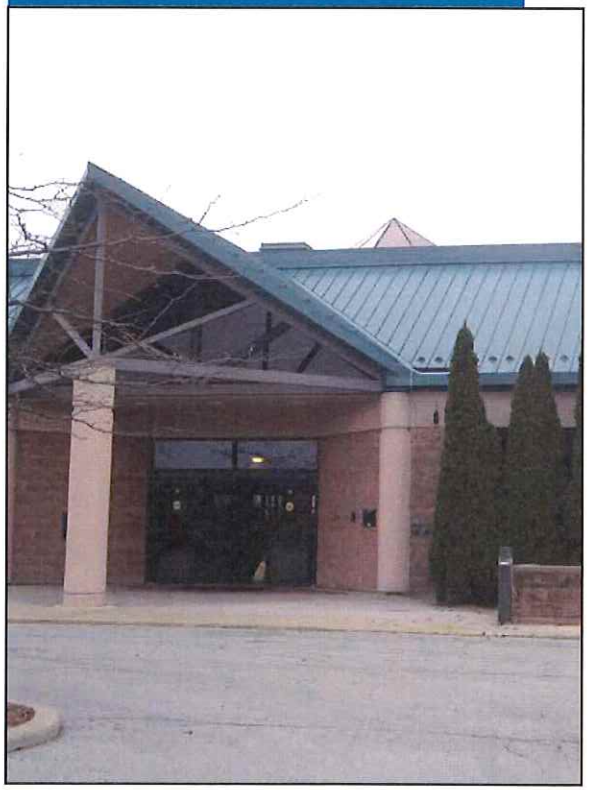
The Village is also home to a number of churches, including Pilgrimage Protestant, Miller Chapel AME Church, First Baptist Church of University Park, Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witness, and Willow House, a social service organization.

University Park Public Library

The University Park Public Library District provides services to all members of the community. The Library is open six days per week and provides materials in a variety of formats, public access to computers, public meeting rooms, and programs for all ages. The library is located in the community for convenient access to residents, and is adequately sized to serve the current population. The library's current needs are focused on technology.

The library is located at 1100 Blackhawk Drive on a six acre site. There is potential on-site to expand the library as needs arise in the future. The library is funded by a separate taxing district that primarily serves the geographical boundaries of University Park. Residents in nearby unincorporated areas may purchase a library card at the same tax rate applied to University Park residents. Residents of other communities who have library cards in good standing may use most services. The library is a part of the Reading Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) which provides library patrons in University Park access to materials at over 100 libraries throughout the state.

University Park Public Library



Private Utilities

The Village's water and sewer services are provided by Aqua Illinois, Inc.

Water System

University Park, as well as most communities in eastern Will County, utilizes the Silurian Dolomite Aquifer for its water supply. Aqua's University Park water system has four active wells and one standby well which are open to the Silurian Dolomite for a firm capacity of 4.3 million gallons per day. Aqua's University Park Water distribution system and storage facilities assets consist of approximately 48 miles of distribution mains ranging in size from 3" to 24" in diameter, 600 hydrants, and 3.3 million gallons of combined elevated and ground storage. In addition to the purification and distribution facilities, the Company has a booster pumping station within the Village of University Park.

On an average day the Village uses about 1.3 million gallons of water and on a peak day the Village uses about 3.3 million gallons of water.

The current water supply meets all Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) standards but residents and customers within the region complain about water hardness and iron. Aqua is currently petitioning the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) to expand its certified area. This will allow Aqua to install a pipeline from their Kankakee division to the University Park division which will supply softened, filtered water to the Village.

Sewer System

The Village's sewer system is also owned and maintained through Aqua Illinois. The system is designed to handle a daily average of 2.43 million gallons of sewage with a maximum of 6.44 million gallons. On an average day the system handles around 1.2 million gallons of waste. There are currently no plans to expand the sewer system as it exceeds the needs of the community. The treatment plant is located along Western Avenue just south of University Parkway.

Aqua maintains its sewer lines by conducting quarterly "jet outs" in certain areas. Jet outs use high pressure water to remove build up in pipes and prevent future replacement. In 2014, Aqua will spend approximately $1.7 million in capital investment which will be spent mostly on infrastructure improvements.

Eastern Will County Wastewater Planning Study

Will County commissioned an Eastern Will County Wastewater Planning Study which was completed by the Farnsworth Group in November, 2008. This study examined existing capacity and future needs for a six township area in eastern Will County which included all of the University Park planning area. Highlights of this study relative to University Park include:

- University Park (including both annexed and unincorporated areas to the west and east of the existing municipal boundary) is in the Deer Creek Facilities Planning Area (FPA).
- The plan split the Deer Creek FPA into two sections, using I-57 as the dividing line. The plan notes "the wastewater treatment for this area is currently provided by Aqua Illinois at the University Park Waste Water Treatment Plant. The current facilities are not adequate to provide collection and treatment for the projected ultimate wastewater flows within the entire FPA. Most of the area east of I-57 drains to the north and east as part of the Great Lakes/Calumet River Watershed, while the portion west of I-57 drains southwest into the Kankakee River Watershed. Although interim plans have been developed by others to serve areas on both sides of I-57 with existing facilities operated either by Aqua Illinois or by Thorn Creek Basin Sanitary District for approximately the next 20 years, it appears that portions lying west of I-57 would eventually need to be served by new facilities located future south or west."
- For more information, this plan is available on the County's web site at: http://willcountylanduse.com/resource/document/eastern-will-county-wastewater-study

This study highlights some of the challenges faced by University Park in providing sanitary sewer service to areas west of I-57. It will be critical for the Village to work closely with Aqua Illinois, and neighboring communities, to develop both short and long range plans to provide water and sewer service to this potential economic development area. Ideally, water and sewer piping would be incorporated into the planned University Parkway interchange to facilitate future growth and development in this area.

11 Implementation

The following implementation strategies are designed to serve as a starting point when prioritizing and budgeting for improvements designated in this plan. Each section in this plan has corresponding implementation strategies to allow each goal to be accomplished. This section is a guideline and may be modified as more specific developments and projects are planned.

The following recommendations will help the Village grow as a whole and meet the development goals in this Comprehensive Plan:

- Plan monitoring and updates
- Staffing
- Boundary agreements
- Annexation
- Funding Sources

Plan Monitoring and Updates

This Comprehensive Plan is based on currently available data regarding community conditions, development trends, and an understanding local issues. Over time, certain conditions or events may alter the information and recommendations in this document. As a result, this Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and updated periodically.

This Implementation section should be reviewed annually by the Village staff and Plan Commission and updated as appropriate. Specifically, completed projects and action steps should be crossed off the list to signify progress. New projects may be added as community issues arise.

The Future Land Use section and Transportation section of this document should be reviewed at least once every three years by the Village staff and Plan Commission. Depending on the development rate around the intersection at Stuenkel Road and Interstate 57, it may be advantageous to review and update this plan annually.

The entire Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed with appropriate amendments at least once every five years by the Village staff and Plan Commission. This will ensure the plan remains a relative and effective tool in guiding growth in University Park.

Zoning Ordinance Review

The Village's Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed and updated so it is consistent with this Comprehensive Plan. The alterations made to the ordinance should include but is not limited to improving the efficency of the development review

Every **1** year	Every **3** years	Every **5** years
Review and update the:	Review and update the:	Review and update the:
Implementation Section	**Future Land Use Section**	**Entire Comprehensive Plan**
	Transportation Section	

process, incorporating sustainable requirements within the zoning districts, and performance standards.

The review and update should be done initially after this plan is approved and should be continually update as conditions change within the Village.

Staffing

Staffing in smaller communities like University Park is always challenging, with limited budgets and multiple needs regarding growth and development. This plan outlines a vision and specific strategies to achieve that vision. However, without appropriate staff resources the ability of the Village to achieve that vision will be constrained. While the Plan Commission can assist in some of the efforts to implement the plan, it will take the dedicated leadership of a trained and motivated planner/economic developer to see the plan through to fruition.

As funds permit, it is recommended that the Village hire a staff planner/economic development specialist. The responsibilities of this new position would be to establish and maintain strong relationships with existing businesses, design and implement strategies to attract new businesses, manage the existing TIF Districts, and work with developers to review plans and expedite project approval if consistent with the vision established in this Comprehensive Plan.

Boundary Agreements

Boundary agreements are often developed between neighboring municipalities to define the outer extent of each community's future growth. Such agreements also make it clear to developers which municipality will have jurisdiction over their property. Without any agreements, developers will often propose annexation to adjacent municipalities to create competition for their development and try to obtain "the best deal." Typically, the best deal for the developer is not the best deal for the municipality and having to compete with neighboring communities is a huge disadvantage when trying to maintain community standards.

At the moment, University Park does not have any boundary agreements with its surrounding neighbors. It is recommended the Village come to an agreement with Monee, Frankfort, and Richton Park as soon as possible. These communities all have their current boundaries located within close proximity to Interstate 57. With the addition of the new interchange at Stuenkel Road, the surrounding land will be prime for new development. It will be beneficial for all the communities to come to an agreement to help the south suburbs profit together as opposed to fighting with one another.

Ultimately, it is also advised to reach agreements with Park Forest and Crete. The amount of developable land between University Park and these communities is much smaller than the previously mentioned towns, and these unincorporated areas do not currently have the same potential for large growth in the near future.

Intergovernmental Coorperation

One of the keys to implementation of the overall community vision is intergovernmental cooperation. University Park will need to partner with many local, regional, and state agencies to accomplish the goals of this plan. Some of these key partners in plan implementation include:

Crete-Monee School District 201-U

The Village should partner with the School District in efforts to prepare students for future careers.

Governors State University

GSU is one of the Village's major assets, and a close relationship with the University is critical. Understanding the University's growth plans, transportation needs, and opportunities for partnership will be a key to implementing this Comprehensive Plan.

Neighboring Municipalities

The plan recommends development of boundary agreements with neighboring communities to jointly plan for and develop land in a way that is both efficient and beneficial for all parties. By developing clear boundary agreements, municipalities can avoid competing for development and better plan for capital improvements. Cooperation with neighboring communities is also recommended to enhance efficient provision of services and potential joint purchasing. For example, it may be possible to share certain staff positions (building inspection is one example), or to cooperatively purchase supplies to create larger orders which often have reduced unit costs.

Monee and Crete Township

Townships provide multiple social services, and maintain roads in rural areas. University Park should coordinate with both townships to coordinate services and look for opportunities to share resources.

Will County

Will County has zoning authority for areas around University Park that are not already annexed into an adjacent municipality. The Will County Health Department plays a key role in inspecting food operations to ensure the safety of Village and County residents. The County Highway Department is also a key agency for coordination of major roadway improvements. The Forest Preserve District has major land holdings in and around University Park. Given

these key County roles, it is critical that University Park work closely with all County departments to coordinate planning and implementation activities.

South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA)/Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation (CSEDC)

Both organizations play a vital role in coordinating and supporting municipalities in the south suburbs. They provide a wealth of information regarding potential grants, maintain and operate a regional Geographic Information System, and have a very active economic development program.

Will County Center for Economic Development (CED)

The CED is a very active organization, primarily focused on expanding employment in the County with new industrial, intermodal, and warehouse facilities. The organization has been instrumental in expanding employment in the County, and given University Park's major industrial base this will be an important partner – particularly in expanding industrial uses on the west side of I-57.

Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)

IDOT controls major roadways in the area like I-57 and Cicero (Route 50). In addition, they provide funding for many other roadway projects. A close partnership with IDOT is essential in maintaining and expanding the Village's roadway system.

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

CMAP provides regional coordination and leadership in the areas of planning, transportation, and the environment. They also provide technical assistance to local municipalities. Establishing and maintaining a good relationship with CMAP will be beneficial to University Park from an educational and financial perspective.

Transit Agencies (RTA, Metra, Pace)

The plan highlights the community desire to expand the hours of Pace service in the Village. In addition, the potential for additional development in and around the commuter train station is a key plan recommendation that should be closely coordinated with RTA and Metra.

Annexation

The Village should focus its annexation efforts on properties west of Interstate 57. It is essential for the Village to ensure that any land considered for annexation will be able to be serviced by water and sewer systems, and has significant development potential for non-residential uses that could greatly increase the Village's tax base.

To address future annexations, it is recommended for the Village establish and maintain an open line of communication with property owners of potential annexed land.

New Interchange Construction

The new interchange at Stuenkel Road/University Parkway and Interstate 57 will lead to many opportunities. With construction of the new interchange starting this year it would be an ideal time to add a water main under Interstate 57. There is currently a line running along the east side of Interstate 57 but most of the developable land is located on the west side of the interstate. Installing a line to connect to the existing pipe would be the most cost efficient if it is done while the interchange is being constructed.

It is difficult for anyone, including Aqua, the Village, and developers, to invest a large amount of money on a project that does not yet have any existing water users. The Village should seek out the current property owners on the west side of Interstate 57 and form a partnership to try and fund this water line as soon as possible. The development of that land will be beneficial for all of the parties involved and will save everyone money in the long run if utility planning is done collectively.

Funding Sources

Property taxes and sales taxes are the most common funding sources to support operations and improvements within a municipality. However, there are several other channels which provide partial or complete funding for certain projects and improvements. The following is a summary of these potential funding opportunities that the Village may explore:

Development Impact Fees

Impact fees are paid by developers to offset the cost of additional public facilities such as roads, water lines, and parks needed to accomodate their developments. The revenue from these fees can be used to purchase land or construct new facilities. These fees are typically established as part of the annexation process.

Public/Private Partnership

The concept of a public/private partnership has become popular for municipalities. The basic approach is for a public agency to enter into an agreement with a private company or entity (Governors State University, for example) to help fund, build, or operate a facility. There are three primary incentives a public agency can offer:

- A free site
- Tax advantages
- Access to the facility

This approach may be used for the creation and operation of a recreation/community center in University Park. An example

of a public/private community center is the River Forest Community Center.

For information visit: www.rfcc.info

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

TIF is another approach to promoting a public/private partnership that has been effectively used in many communities throughout Illinois to encourage private development. University Park has experience using this technique and recently approved a new TIF around Town Center. TIFs are generally used to promote business and not residential development.

Public/Non-Profit Partnership

A public/non-profit partnership allows a public agency to utilize the specialized knowledge and resources of a non-profit organization (the Conservation Foundation, for example). Non-profit organizations can offer expertise without being paid by the public agency. These partnerships can be a fiscally efficient way to initiate programs within the Village.

Government Grant Programs

Certain federal, state, and local governmental grant programs relevant to University Park include the following:

Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD)

OSLAD is a state financed grant program that provides funding assistance to local government agencies. The funds may be used to acquire and/or develop land for public parks and open space. Projects can vary between small public parks to large community and nature areas. The program is financed by a percentage of the state's Real Estate Transfer Tax.

For information visit: www.dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newoslad1.htm

Park and Recreation Facility Construction Act (PARC)

PARC was created to provide grants to eligible local governments for park and recreation unit construction projects within the state of Illinois. The funds may be used to for land acquisition, development, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, and other improvements to new or existing recreational areas. It is important to note that permanent funding for the program has not yet been established, unlike the OSLAD program (above).

For information visit: www.dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newparc1.htm

Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) administers ITEP program funding for stand alone pedestrian and bicycle projects. Projects may include bike lanes, bike paths, pedestrian and bicycle structures, river crossings, railroad crossings, bicycle parking, signage, and other similar improvements. University Park may pursue this program to initiate the bicycle and pedestrain plan.

For information visit: www.dot.il.gov/opp/itep.html

Illinois Bicycle Path Grants Program

Another way to fund the bicycle and pedestrian plan would be to pursue a grant from the Illinois Bicycle Path Grant Program. This grant program provides funding to local governments to acquire, construct, and rehabilitate bicycle paths and related facilities.

For information visit: www.dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newbike2.htm

Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant Program for Stormwater (IGIG)

IGIG is administered by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to provide funding for local governments to improve the sustainability of their storm water management systems. The grant supports projects that use best management practices (such as permeable pavers) to better control storm water runoff and improve water quality in the community.

For information visit: www.epa.state.il.us/water/financial-assistance/igig.html

Community Service Block Grant Program (CSBG)

CSBG program is designed to provide a range of services which assist low-income people to attain skills and to offer immediate life necessities. The grants are administered by the

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and put an emphasis on self sufficiency efforts.

This grant may provide funding for a number of services, but for University Park the most likely funding will come from the nutrition service category. These funds may be used to construct and maintain community gardens and other educational nutrition initiatives.

Implementation Matrix

The implementation matrix on the following pages is a guide on how to accomplish key suggestions in this Comprehensive Plan. The matrix includes the following details:

- **Action Step**
  A general description of the strategy
- **Phasing**
  Frequency or timing of action steps to properly allocate resources. There are four types of phasing ranges:
  - Ongoing
  - Short Term (1 to 3 years)
  - Intermediate Term (4 to 6 years)
  - Long Term (7+ years)
- **Lead Partner**
  The Village department, agency, or organization primarily responsible for the action step
- **Partners**
  A department, agency, or organization that may be importnant to collaborate with
- **Resources**
  Physical, financial, or human resources needed to complete the action step
- **Plan Reference**
  Sections in the Comprehensive Plan that provide more detailed descriptions

Economic Development

The strategies for economic development implementation are located in the Economic Development section on pages ##-##.

Housing

ID	Action Step	Phasing	Lead Partner	Partner(s)	Resources	Plan Page References
H.01	Involve all appropriate Village departments and programs in the housing planning process to ensure a coordinated planning and implementation effort.	Ongoing	Village	All Village Departments	Staff Time	pg. 49
H.02	Partner with the Housing Authorities of Cook and Will Counties, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association (SSMMA), Will County Community Development Division – Land Use Department to evaluate options available to deal with and prevent blighted and foreclosure properties	Ongoing	Village	Housing Authorities of Cook and Will Counties, CMAP, SSMMA, Will County Community Development Division – Land Use Department	Staff Time	pg. 49
H.03	Require, permit and/or provide incentives for "open space" or "cluster" development to preserve green space within new subdivisions.	Ongoing	Village	Plan Commission	Staff Time	pg. 48

Housing (cont.)

ID	Action Step	Phasing	Lead Partner	Partner(s)	Resources	Plan Page References
H.04	Require applicants for rezoning and special use permits to prepare and submit with their applications an impact analysis addressing such issues as: projected increase in population and demand for school facilities and other public facilities, impacts on vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle traffic and circulation, water and sewer service needs, storm water run-off quantity and quality impacts, visual impacts, impacts to historic and environmental resources, etc. The analysis should address proposed measures to mitigate impacts of the above. The level of analysis required should reflect the size and potential impact of the project	Ongoing	Village	Plan Commission	Staff Time	pgs. 47-49
H.05	Meet with active residential developers to discuss the market and opportunities for new housing in University Park.	Ongoing	Village		Staff Time	pg. 47
H.06	Develop a zoning approach to require, permit and/or create incentives for the development of new residential neighborhoods that contain a mix of housing types	Short Term	Village	Plan Commission	Staff Time	pg. 47
H.07	Include in the Village's codes and manuals design provisions and performance standards improvements in the design quality of all residential development; provisions may include setback, orientation, street design, sidewalk, trail, and parking standards	Intermediate Term	Village	Plan Commission	Staff Time	pgs. 48-49
H.08	Implement a rental housing inspection and/or registration program to ensure that such housing is decent as well as affordable and to enforce occupancy restrictions and maintain records on approved rental units	Long Term	Village	-	Staff Time	pg. 47

Transportation

ID	Action Step	Phasing	Lead Partner	Partner(s)	Resources	Plan Page References
T.01	Pursue federal and state grant programs, such as the Federal Recreational Trails Program, the Illinois Bike Path Grant, and the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) to provide funding and development assistance to upgrade existing trails and installing new trails	Ongoing	Village	Parks and Recreation Department, Village Engineer	Staff Time, possible consultant assistance	pgs. 57-59
T.02	Pursue federal and state grant programs to fund sidewalk improvements, also investigate the feasibility of a Sidewalk Replacement Program	Ongoing	Village	Village Engineer	Staff Time	pg. 59
T.03	Improve and resurface University Parkway between Governors Highway and Crawford Avenue	Short Term	Village	Village Engineer, GSU, SSMMA, IDOT	Staff Time	pg. 59-60
T.04	Coordinate with PACE to add services at night and on the weekends	Short Term	Village	PACE	Staff Time	pg. 53
T.05	Coordinate with PACE to provide stops near the industrial park	Short Term	Village	PACE	Staff Time	pg. 53
T.06	Install a traffic signal which operates in parallel with the railway signal at the intersection of University Parkway and Governors Highway to alleviate immediate safety issues	Short Term	Village	IDOT	Staff Time, funding for improvement	pg. 61
T.07	Petition the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Canadian National (CN) to perform a feasability study for the construction of an overpass for University Parkway and Governors Highway/railroad intersection	Intermediate Term	Village	IDOT, CN	Staff Time	pg. 61
T.08	Pursue study on the feasability for a Dralle Road extension and overpass over Interstate 57 to Ridgeland Avenue	Intermediate Term	Village	IDOT	Staff Time, possible consultant fees	pg. 57-59

Transportation (cont.)

ID	Action Step	Phasing	Lead Partner	Partner(s)	Resources	Plan Page References
T.09	Realign Governors Highway to merge with Cicero Avenue to eliminate the intersection at University Parkway and Governors Highway	Long Term	Village	IDOT, Will County Highway Department	Staff Time, funding for improvement	pgs. 40-41
T.10	Build an overpass over Governors Highway and railway to eliminate all safety concerns and traffic flow issues	Long Term	Village	IDOT, Will County Highway Department, CN	Staff Time, funding for improvement	pg. 61
T.11	Pursue study on the feasability of Harlem Avenue and Steger Road intesection realignment	Long Term	Village	IDOT, Village of Frankfort	Staff Time, possible consultant fees	pg. 56
T.12	Work with developing property owners along the Steger Road extension to construct the roadway.	Long Term	Village	IDOT	Staff Time, Funding from developers	pg. 56

Green Infrastructure & Sustainability

ID	Action Step	Phasing	Lead Partner	Partner(s)	Resources	Plan Page References
GS.01	Continue to pursue grants from programs such as the Illinois Green Infrastructure Grant Program for Stormwater (IGIG) to construct green infrastructure like permeable paved parking lots	Ongoing	Village	Public Works Department, Parks and Recretion Department	Staff Time	pg. 68
GS.02	Encourage preservation of natural areas and green development practices during development and site review processes	Ongoing	Plan Commission	Village, Public Works Department, Parks and Recreation Department	Staff Time	pg. 69
GS.03	Work with organizations such as the Conservation Foundation to implement a rain barrel program	Short Term	Village	Public Works Department, Parks and Recretion Department	Staff Time	pg. 69
GS.04	Enlist the services of the Smart Energy Design Assistance Center (SEDAC) to audit current energy consumption in municipal facilites	Short Term	Village	SEDAC	Staff Time, funding for facilty improvements	pg. 70
GS.05	Add sections to the zoning ordinance that will encourage and incentivize alternate energy systems	Intermediate Term	Village	Plan Commission	Staff Time, possible funding for a consultant	pg. 70

Recreation

ID	Action Step	Phasing	Lead Partner	Partner(s)	Resources	Plan Page References
R.01	The Village should ammend the subdivision ordinance to require adequate space for parks, using a standard ratio of 10 acres of park space per 1,000 residents	Ongoing	Village	Parks and Recreation Department	Staff Time; Funding from developers or other sources to design and construct new parks	pg. 74
R.02	Pursue state grant programs, such as the Illinois Open Space Land Acquisition and Development Grant (OSLAD), to provide funding and development assistance for new park sites and recretional facilities	Ongoing	Village	Parks and Recreation Department	Staff Time	pg. 74
R.03	Pursue federal and state grant programs, such as the Federal Recreational Trails Program and the Illinois Bike Path Grant to provide funding and development assistance to upgrade existing trails and installing new trails	Ongoing	Village	Parks and Recreation Department	Staff Time	pgs. 57-59
R.04	Pursue state grant programs, such as the Park and Recreational Facility Construction Grant Program (PARC) to provide funding for a new recreation center and sports facility	Intermediate Term Long Term	Village	Parks and Recreation Department; possible partnerships with local organizations	Staff Time	pg. 74

Education

ID	Action Step	Phasing	Lead Partner	Partner(s)	Resources	Plan Page References
E.01	Coordinate with Crete-Monee School District 201-U periodically to assess the facility, staffing, and resource needs of the schools serving the community	Ongoing	Crete-Monee School District 201-U	Village	Staff Time	pg. 75
E.02	Support District 201-U efforst to exceed state standards	Ongoing	Crete-Monee School District 201-U	Village, GSU	To be determined	pg. 75

Education (cont.)

ID	Action Step	Phasing	Lead Partner	Partner(s)	Resources	Plan Page References
E.03	Collaborate with Governors State University periodically to assess the school's plans for future growth and development	Ongoing	Governors State University	Village	Staff Time	pg. 76

Municipal Facilities

ID	Action Step	Phasing	Lead Partner	Partner(s)	Resources	Plan Page References
CF.01	Establish a regular system of vehicle replacement for the fire department; possibly fund through annexation impact fees, fire facility fee building permt, TIF, or grants	Ongoing	Village	Fire Department	Staff Time	pg. 79
CF.02	Establish a capital improvement program to provide a regular system of vehicle replacement for the Police Department	Short Term	Village	Police Department	Staff Time	pg. 79
CF.03	Develop a schedule for Police Department facility updates; evidence room, classroom, fencing	Intermediate Term	Village	Police Department	Staff Time, funding for structure improvements	pg. 79
CF.04	Assess the potential for a new Village Hall and Municipal Center located near the TOD area as development grows	Long Term	Village	-	Staff Time, funding for new facilities	pg. 79
CF.05	Assess the potential to upgrade and renovate the Fire Department's Station #2; possibly fund through annexation impact fees, fire facility fee building permt, TIF, or grants	Long Term	Village	Fire Department	Staff Time, funding for structure improvements	pg. 79
CF.06	Assess the poptential to consruct a new police station facility on the west side of town; this should only be pursued after the population reaches arounf 30,000	Long Term	Village	Police Department	Staff Time, funding for new facility	pg. 80
CF.07	As the population grows, assess the potential for additions to the library	Long Term	Village University Park Public Library	Village	Staff Time	pg. 81