Stewardship of the natural environment, sensible approaches to growth, and commitment to Dark Skies are some of the core characteristics that define Homer Glen and separate it from the other municipalities across the Chicago region.

At the same time, it is the Village’s network of community facilities and assets that form a solid foundation upon which residents, businesses, and organizations can access resources, services, and opportunities that enable them to thrive.

This chapter summarizes the various community facilities and assets that make Homer Glen work. In addition, this chapter provides insights into how community facilities will manage the level of population growth anticipated by full buildout of the Future Land Use Plan, including projections for school enrollments and park space.
FIGURE 8.1
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & ASSETS MAP

LEGEND

Schools
Acquired School District Properties
Public/Institutional Uses
Religious Institutions
Parks & Recreation Facilities
Open Spaces
Forest Preserves
Agritourism
Healthcare
Floodplain
Municipal Facilities
1. Homer Glen Village Hall
2. Homer Township Administration Center
3. Homer Township Road District
4. Homer Township Public Library
5. Founders Crossing

Public Safety Facilities
6. Northwest Homer Fire PD Station #1
7. Northwest Homer Fire PD Station #2
8. Homer Township Fire PD Station #1
9. Homer Township Fire PD Station #2
10. Homer Township Fire PD Station #3

Utility Facilities
11. IAW Reclamation Facility
12. IAW Reclamation Facility
13. ComEd Goodings Grove Substation
14. ComEd Substation
15. ComEd Substation

Historic Sites
16. Austin-Welter Farm
17. Benjamin F. Russell House
18. John Lane Monument
19. Tilsy-Konow Bar
20. Old New Lenox Train Depot

Other Assets
21. Shady Oaks Camp
22. Bengston’s Pumpkin Farm
23. Konow’s Corn Maze
24. Farmington Lake

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & ASSETS MAP
VILLAGE FACILITIES

Located on a central civic campus along 151st Street, Village Hall is the primary municipal facility serving the community. All municipal services and Village officials generally operate out of Village Hall, which is an adaptive reuse of the former golf course clubhouse.

The type and level of services has generally served Homer Glen well since its incorporation in 2001. However, the Village is taking steps to garner greater control of how it serves the community, including the potential to establish a Parks Department and the July 2020 announcement that the Village is pursuing the transfer of road district stewardship from the Homer Township Road District, which includes maintenance of 18 miles of unincorporated roads. Also, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 10, the Village seeks the opportunity to own and operate the community’s water system under municipal management.

Steps like these may become more common place as the Village evaluates ways to control its own destiny with regards to managing growth and development in Homer Glen. The transferal of road jurisdiction is a strong sign that the Village has the capacity and will to take these steps when the time is right.

The Village maintains an exemplar system of financial reporting and annual State of the Village address. Along with the implementation of the 2018-21 Strategic Plan, this municipal stewardship facilitates the capacity to constantly monitor the impact that growth and development has on the efficiency of services and potential to expand, add, or contract out certain services.

The Mayor’s 2019 State of the Village Address indicates that the Village is financially stable, including an excellent AA+ S&P bond rating accentuating a ‘strong capacity to meet all financial commitments.’ As Homer Glen prepares for growth and development, it stands to reason that sales tax revenue and development fees will increase, which should continue to bolster the Village’s capacity to provide high quality services to the community.
TOWNSHIP FACILITIES

Homer Township is a proactive agency providing a variety of services and facilities from which the Homer Glen community benefits. The Township’s core facilities are located next to Village Hall on the central civic campus, including the Homer Township Administration Center, Public Library, and Road District. Township services include: property assessments, senior services, parks and open space, roads, and general assistance, such as social security, disability, and temporary assistance for people in need.

One of the Township’s 11 parks -- Town Center Park, which includes Kevin Killmer Field -- is located on the civic campus. The other parks are located throughout Homer Glen. Homer Township administers an open space program covering about 50 acres. In addition, the Township manages conservation easements in Wedgewood Highlands, Morris Park, and Trantina Park.

Located along Bell Road, Founders Crossing is a 31-unit affordable senior independent living facility that was built via referendum with a bond and has room for expansion. The site also includes a healing garden.

While Homer Township provides a range of services and facilities, it has some mandates that remain unfunded. As Homer Glen prepares for growth and development, the Township may assess its capacity to provide adequate services or consolidate them with other entities.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety in Homer Glen is comprised of police, fire, and emergency services. The Village currently contracts police services out to Will County Sheriff’s Office, which continues to be a strong partnership. While there is no indication that this arrangement will change, it will be worth monitoring as the Village experiences further growth, as it may create the potential for expanded police services beyond what the Will County Sheriff’s Office may be able to provide.

Fire and emergency services are provided primarily by four fire protection districts as listed below. Village growth will play a critical role in the capacity for the FPDs to provide adequate fire protection services. Community growth and water rates are two primary determinants to assess facility expansion. Impacts on FPD response times will also be a determining factor when locating new stations.
**HISTORIC SITES**

Will County recognizes four historic sites in Homer Glen: Austin-Welter Barn; Benjamin F. Russell House; John Lane Monument; and Tilsy-Konow Barn. Will County identifies several settlements, cemeteries, and farmsteads across Homer Township in its 2002 Rural Historic Structural Survey. These sites are shown on the map in Figure 8.1. The old New Lenox train depot, which was moved to the Konow’s farm in 2018 to be used for educational purposes, is planned to be named a Will County historic site.

The Village should continue to work with Will County to identify other historic sites and, if eligible, designate them as official County landmarks. Some sites may also have the potential to be considered for eligibility for listing on the National Register for Historic Places.

**RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS**

Homer Glen is home to a variety of religious institutions, including several churches and Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago. Homer Glen should continue to be a welcoming community for all religious beliefs and institutions.

**HEALTHCARE**

Homer Glen has experienced growth in healthcare facilities within Village limits, including Loyola Center for Health, Silver Cross Health, and the outpatient Dialysis Care Center. In addition, Victorian Village offers rehab and memory care services. Even though it is not a traditional healthcare facility, Shady Oaks Camp is a well-regarded recreational camp for children and adults with disabilities.

These healthcare facilities provide accessible services within Homer Glen for Village residents, particularly a senior population that has experienced the most growth (48.3%) of any age cohort since 2000. It also helps that Homer Glen has a growing slate of senior living options, including Victorian Village, Marian Village, Meadow at Marian Village, and Founders Crossing. There is also potential to provide additional senior living options as part of the multi-family residential and mixed use land uses, as depicted in the Future Land Use Plan Map in Chapter 5.

As highlighted in the Retail Market Analysis in Chapter 7, healthcare may be a potential growth industry in Homer Glen, particularly fueled by a mix of a growing senior population, new senior housing options, and concentration of existing healthcare facilities. While Homer Glen is home to small medical offices, there is potential to provide additional offices or facilities, particularly in a business park environment or mixed use development, as illustrated in the Subarea Conceptual Framework Plans in Chapter 4 and the Future Land Use Plan in Chapter 5.
SCHOOLS

The Village is primarily covered by two school districts: Homer Community Consolidated School District #33C and Will County School District #92. High school students from Homer Glen primarily attend school in Lockport Township High School District #205 in neighboring Lockport.

SCHOOL PROJECTIONS

Based on full buildout of the residential components of the Future Land Use Plan, the total population calculates to 58,875 residents, with roughly 19.3% (11,052 students) being of the school age of 5 to 19, or generally in grades K-12. Based on a standard ratio of 0.02 acres of school land per student, the K-12 school system serving Homer Glen’s future population will require at least 221 acres of land.

Currently, about 95 acres of land are devoted to schools within Homer Glen’s municipal boundary. Another 174 acres of land have been acquired by Lockport Township High School District #205 (108 acres on one site) and Homer Community Consolidated School District #33C (66 acres on two sites) for future expansion. This 269 total acres of future school land is more than adequate to cover the minimum 221 acres of land required to accommodate 11,052 students at full buildout.

Local school districts will likely continue to monitor the potential acquisition of land for future expansion as Homer Glen grows. Moreover, new residential developments may also set aside land, in coordination with school districts, to build new schools within emerging neighborhoods.

CHILDCARE FACILITIES

There is potential to provide more childcare facilities, particularly as parents add their names to wait lists even before their children are born. While childcare facilities are often provided by for-profit businesses, the school districts may also be able to step in with solutions, such as the expansion of the pre-K program at Young Elementary School.

2 Illinois School Consulting Service
FIGURE 8.2
SCHOOLS MAP

LEGEND

- **School District Boundaries**
- **Acquired School District Properties**
- **Public Schools**

**HOMER SCHOOL DISTRICT #33C**
1. Goodings Grove School (K-4)
2. Luther J. Schilling School (K-4)
3. William E. Young School (K-4)
4. Hadley School (5-6)
5. Homer Junior High School (7-8)

**WILL COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #92**
6. Reed Elementary School (2-3)
7. Oak Prairie Junior High School (6-8)

**LOCKPORT TWP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT #205**
8. Lockport Township High School (9-12)
PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

Homer Glen is currently served by a diverse network of parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces that cover a total of approximately 1,976 acres. These assets are shown on the map in Figure 8.3.

PARKS

Existing parks cover about 202 acres. Of the 22 parks and related open spaces in Homer Glen, 14 are maintained by the Village and eight by Homer Township. A significant portion of the parkland is comprised by Heritage Park, which is being built adjacent to Village Hall on the former golf course. Heritage Park covers 103 acres and provides a variety of active recreational facilities, trails, community gathering spaces, and interaction with the natural environment that defines Homer Glen. In January 2019, the Village Board approved designs for future phases to Heritage Park, including Active Core facilities, disc golf, and expanded events. In the fall of 2020, the Village announced the opening of a new playground at Glenview Walk Park.

PARK PROJECTIONS

As noted in the Village’s 2013 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Village adopted a standard ratio of 11 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents based on national standards. Full buildout of the Future Land Use Plan would generate a projected population of 58,875 residents, which would require at least 648 acres of park space.

The Future Land Use Plan accounts for 295 acres of land devoted to public parks and recreation. This means 353 acres of additional park space will be needed to accommodate full buildout of the Future Land Use Plan. Additional parks may be integrated into future residential neighborhoods, mixed use developments, and office and business parks, which emphasizes the various ways new park space may be added to Homer Glen’s inventory. In addition, the 1,429 acres of open space, such as forest preserves and natural areas, offer spaces for recreation.

Getting the Community Active

VILLAGE PARKS
Erin Hills Park, Evlyn’s Gate North Park, Glenview Walk Park, Goodings Grove Park, Heritage Park, Kingston Hills Park, Meadowview West Park, Prairie Garden, Stonebridge Park

TOWNSHIP PARKS
Culver Park, Sendra Park, Goreham Park, Lamers Park, Morris Park, Town Center Park, Trantina Dog Park, Yangas Park

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
Old Oak Country Club, Shady Oaks, schools

OPEN SPACES
Fiddyment Creek Preserve, Hadley Valley Natural Areas, Messenger Woods Natural Preserve, Messenger Marsh, Trantina Park Open Space, Homer Glen Marsh in the Erin Hills subdivision, Healing Garden at former Welter Farm site

NOTE: Some spaces extend beyond the Village’s municipal boundary

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**KEY PARK STANDARD**

11 acres of park space per 1,000 residents

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3 The National Recreation and Park Association recommends a ratio of between 6.25 and 10.50 acres per 1,000 residents.
**2019 Village Events**

**HomerFest** is Homer Glen’s premier annual summer festival with a reach of over 20,000 attendees. With family friendly entertainment, amusement rides, live music, a beer tent, food vendors, and the best firework display in Illinois, HomerFest has something for everyone! In 2019, HomerFest was held at Heritage Park for the first time.

The Village held its first **Movie Under the Stars** event in July 2019 as a way to showcase Heritage Park and the opportunities for community events in the park. Movie Under the Stars was a family-friendly outdoor movie showing with pre-show fun. The event also included food vendors on site with snacks available for purchase.

August 2019 saw the third annual **Chalk-It-Up!** - a free sidewalk chalk art contest on the sidewalks surrounding Homer Glen’s largest park. Families, professional artists, amateur artists, students, and anyone who wanted to chalk were welcome to leave their mark at the park! The event also included games, music, and treats for all!

In September, the Village held a grand opening celebration for the Active Core area of Heritage Park. “Explore the Core” brought residents out to the newly developed recreational area of the park. At the event, residents were able to test out the new Challenge Course; try their hand at pickleball, tennis, and volleyball; play lawn games like bags and bocce ball; use outdoor fitness equipment; and walk the paths through nature. The event also featured live music, snacks, food trucks, and crafts.

For Halloween, the Village held its first **Trunk or Treat** in October 2019. Residents were able to drop by for a free, ghoulish afternoon of trick-or-treating in our safe, family-friendly environment. Trick-or-treaters in costumes meandered decorated, candy-filled vehicle trunks and were rewarded with lots of treats!

The annual **Veterans Day Celebration** was again held in November at Konow’s Farm. Veterans and their families joined the Village for a day of fun, family & food to honor and recognize all of those who are serving or that have served our country.

In 2019 the Village of Homer Glen celebrated in a big way for the holiday season! The Village debuted a large light display that was featured in the Active Core area of Heritage Park. A holiday party **“Homer for the Holidays”** was held to officially light the exhibit and celebrate with the community. Photos with Santa, holiday crafts, seasonal refreshments, live music, and a train ride were all available during the party.
DISTRIBUTION OF PARKS
Equitable distribution of parks will be important as Homer Glen continues to grow, particularly into the Village’s southern section. Some neighborhoods, particularly older subdivisions, have no park space within close proximity. The Village’s 2013 Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides guidance for the addition of new parks, recreational facilities, and open space in Homer Glen, including a general standard that every resident should live within at least a half-mile of a park. The Parks and Recreation Committee maintains an internal prioritization system that specifies areas for new parks based on population density.

POTENTIAL PARKS DEPARTMENT
Community interest continues to grow to establish a Parks Department. Discussion will be ongoing, particularly as Homer Glen prepares for development, which would create a greater need for more parks to serve a growing population.

RECREATION
Homer Glen is served by a variety of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. Many of the parks in Homer Glen provide athletic fields and recreational amenities like trails, playgrounds, picnic areas, and fishing ponds. Current outdoor recreational facilities include Old Oak Country Club and Shady Oaks Camp, which cover about 192 acres. Old Oak Country Club is the only golf course in Homer Glen.

Homer Glen has a variety of private entities providing sports and recreational facilities, including pilates studios, a golf range, crossfit, and fitness gyms. Local schools also provide a variety of athletic fields and recreational facilities.

While the market will help fill any gaps in recreational opportunities to serve local residents, the potential for a Parks Department may also play a role in adding new programs and facilities.

KEY PARK STANDARD
½ MILE MINIMUM DISTANCE TO THE NEAREST PARK

BY THE NUMBERS
Below are key stats regarding Homer Glen’s current network of parks, recreation facilities, and open space.

- 22 TOTAL PARKS MAINTAINED BY THE VILLAGE (14) AND TOWNSHIP (8)
- 202 ACRES OF TOTAL PARK SPACE
- 4 NATURAL AREAS MAINTAINED BY THE WILL COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE THAT SERVE HOMER GLEN
- 1,793 ACRES OF FOREST PRESERVE AND NATURAL AREAS
- 17 MILES OF MULTIUSE TRAILS
- 2 CURRENT PARKS/OPEN SPACES THAT PROVIDE EQUESTRIAN TRAILS
- 8 PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN HOMER GLEN THAT PROVIDE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES OR PROGRAMS
POTENTIAL REGIONAL SPORTS COMPLEX

In 2019, the Village commissioned a study to assess the potential to establish a regional sports complex along 151st Street and south of the civic campus. In addition to providing athletic fields for local and regional teams, there is potential for spinoff economic development, such as hotels, restaurants, and shops.

OPEN SPACE

In addition to parks, Homer Glen is defined by its preservation of open space throughout the community, as shown in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Map in Figure 8.3. Natural areas maintained by the Forest Preserve District of Will County comprise the majority of open space in Homer Glen, covering about 1,793 acres.

Parts or all of the following four natural areas traverse through Homer Glen:

1. Fiddyment Creek Preserve
2. Hadley Valley Natural Areas
3. Messenger Woods Natural Preserve
4. Messenger Marsh

Open space amenities are also managed by Homer Township, including three sites within Homer Glen’s municipal limits: Trantina Park open space, Homer Glen Marsh in the Erin Hills subdivision, and the former Welter Farm site, which is now home to the Township’s Founders Crossing senior living site with a healing garden.

In addition to specifically designated open spaces like forest preserves and natural areas, other passive open spaces like wooded areas, creek greenways, vacant parcels, and agricultural land add to Homer Glen’s prominent cache of open space that underly its identity.

The Village has taken the first steps to initiate the development of its first ever Open Space Master Plan. The Environment Committee is working to identify a listing of the most distinctive open space areas that are worth protecting and which will enhance the beauty and environmental quality of the Village. The Open Space Master Plan will provide for a comprehensive analysis of the system that is made up of parks, open space, green infrastructure, and the greenway corridors that connect those elements (see Chapter 11 for more in depth discussion on the Open Space Master Plan).
EQUESTRIAN CULTURE

As part of its pastoral character, equestrian culture plays a unique role in defining Homer Glen. From horse trails and signage to private stables and boarding farms, Homer Glen is distinct in that it attracts people who value horses. As the Village prepares for growth, the community should nurture the local equestrian culture by providing a connected network of horse-friendly trails and resources that support stables, farms, and horse owners. Other communities in the region, such as Barrington Hills and Wayne, have programs that provide for equine recreation, including extensive private and public horse trail systems and horse boarding facilities. Collaboration with the Forest Preserve would also be beneficial to provide trails and other related facilities.
FIGURE 8.3
PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE MAP

VILLAGE OF HOMER GLEN
1. Erin Hills Park 1.5 acres
2. Evlyn’s Cote North Park 2.7 acres
3. Genvieu Walk Park 0.9 acres
4. Goodings Grove Park 3.5 acres
5. Heritage Park 103 acres
6. Kingston Hills Park 1.3 acres
7. Meadouviel West Park 0.9 acres
8. Prairie Garden 0.5 acres
9. Stonebridge Park 5.3 acres

HOMER TOWNSHIP
10. Culver Park 11.0 acres
11. Edmond J. Sendra Park 6.0 acres
12. Erin Hills HO Marsh 10.0 acres
13. Goreham Park 4.0 acres
14. Healing Garden –
15. Lamiers Park 9.0 acres
16. Morris Park 18.0 acres
17. Town Center Park 35.0 acres
18. Trantina Dog Park 18.9 acres
19. Trantina Farm 60.8 acres
20. Yangos Park 10.0 acres

FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF WILL COUNTY
21. Fiddyment Creek Preserve 300 acres
22. Hadley Valley Preserve 125 acres
23. Messenger Woods 444 acres
24. Messenger Marsh 620 acres

OTHER FACILITIES
25. Old Oak Country Club

LEGEND
- Floodplain
- Parks & Recreation Facilities
- Open Spaces
- Forest Preserves
- Agritourism
- Existing Trails
- Potential Trails

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**AGRITEOURISM & AGRIBUSINESS**

Given its serene, rural character and preservation of open space, Homer Glen is an ideal community to build up a market for agritourism and agribusiness. Establishments like Bengtson’s Pumpkin Farm, Konow’s Corn Maze, and the various horse stables already form a solid framework for agritourism.

Agritourism and agribusiness also help each other, with the potential to transform defunct barns and farm properties into restaurants, bed and breakfasts, and special event venues like Farmington Lake just outside Homer Glen in neighboring Mokena. In some ways, it is a creative approach to adaptive reuse and sustainability.

While the Future Land Use Plan in Chapter 5 does not specifically identify new sites for agritourism or agribusiness, such establishments should be explored if the opportunities present themselves. This may take a variety of forms, such as transforming an old barn into an event space, providing boarding for horses, or creating unique recreational and social spaces that take advantage of the pastoral landscape that characterizes Homer Glen’s identity.

> “The ‘greenest’ building is the one that already exists.”
> - Richard Moe, National Trust for Historic Preservation

The recommendations above are keyed into the overall Implementation Plan provided in Chapter 12, which outlines details such as phasing, partners, and potential funding resources to support Village officials in putting the Homer Glen Comprehensive Plan Update into action.