

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Background

The Village is situated on gently sloping land juxtaposed against steep ravines and bluffs. One major drainage divide runs north and south through the Village along Green Bay Road. The western half of the Village drains into the North Branch of the Chicago River via the East Skokie Drainage Ditch; the eastern half drains east into Lake Michigan.

One major flood plain lies within the Village. The flood-plain is associated with the East Skokie Drainage Ditch.

The Village is a part of a transitional zone separating the eastern deciduous forest from the midwestern prairies. Historically, forested areas in the Village and surrounding Lake County were composed of oak, hickory, maple and other hardwoods. Large portions of forested land were cleared to make way for farms during the early settlement of the area. Stands of relatively intact mature oak woodland still exist in the Village. Due to soil conditions, these trees developed broad, shallow root systems that are sensitive to earth disturbances associated with development.

The natural environment of the Village includes woodland, prairie, and wetlands, each supporting an independent community of plants and animals. Such areas include populations of green heron, great blue heron, kingfisher, sandpipers and painted turtles. Several community organizations are dedicated to preserving the natural resources within the Village.

Inventory

Water Quality

Water for the Village is purchased through the Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency ("JAWA"). JAWA provides the filtration of water for use by the member organizations. The filtration plant incorporates an advanced process of using ozonation, settling plates, and activated carbon filtration, a configuration being used for the first time in Illinois. This innovative treatment process enables JAWA to meet both current and future federal and state water quality mandates. See "Public Services and Infrastructure - Water System", for more detail regarding JAWA.

Ravines

The ravines, in addition to enhancing the natural beauty of the Village, act as the natural storm water drainage system for the Village. In 1995 the Park District completed a comprehensive inventory of ravine park and that report is available.

Lake Front

The Village has approximately 2.5 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. The Park District maintains the beach property located along Sunrise Avenue. The beach property includes two picnic shelters and washroom facilities, as well as an area designated for the Lake Bluff Yacht Club. The North Shore Sanitary District pumping station is also located on the lake front.

Trees

The Village has many large trees, the most prevalent species being Oak, Ash, and Elm. Many of the trees in the Village are over 100 years old. In January of 1994, the Village adopted a comprehensive Tree Ordinance. The Tree Ordinance is designed to prevent unnecessary damage to trees due to uniformed and insensitive construction or landscaping practices. The ordinance strives to balance the needs of the Village and the interests of private property owners.

Environmental Resources - Goals, Objectives and Policies

GOAL: Preserve the natural resources of the Village.

Objectives	Policies
<p>ER1. Preserve, maintain, and upgrade the Village's natural resources including: the lake front, the ravines and the open spaces found in the Village.</p>	<p>ER1-1. Develop standards to minimize topsoil erosion during construction and excavating activities.</p> <p>ER1-2. Work with the Park District to review the erosion problems in the ravine system and along the lake front. Assist the Park District whenever possible in developing and implementing solutions.</p> <p>ER1-3. Develop an ordinance regulating development near or in the ravines.</p> <p>ER1-4. Assist in the maintenance and cleaning of the ravines, floodplains, and drainage ditches within the Village.</p>
<p>ER2. Maintain, protect, and replace as needed public trees in the Village; encourage property owners to maintain, protect, and replace as needed trees within the Village.</p>	<p>ER2-1. Maintain an inventory the of Village trees.</p> <p>ER2-2. Develop a parkway tree replacement program based on an inventory of trees within the Village.</p> <p>ER2-3. Enforce the provisions of the Tree Ordinance.</p> <p>ER2-4. Encourage the regular inspection of trees in the Village for contagious diseases and take immediate steps to alleviate any potential disasters.</p>