



Chapter three

Land Use

Introduction

The Land Use element of this Plan helps guide the future growth and development of the community. It allows the city and residents to monitor the various land use types to ensure a proper balance is being maintained. The Land Use element is important as it sets the development patterns that could affect many of the other element sections throughout the Plan. The overall goal for this element section is to provide a healthy mix of land uses to allow Crystal Lake to remain a good place to live, work and play. Each specific land use category has its own set of goals, objectives and policies.

3.1 Existing Land Use

Crystal Lake is about 19.5 square miles and has ten land use categories; agriculture/rural, estate and urban residential are classified as single-family residential, multi-family residential that combines central urban and high density residential, parks and open space, public and semi public, commerce, office, and manufacturing. There is also some vacant land. The following chart identifies the City's current land use distribution.

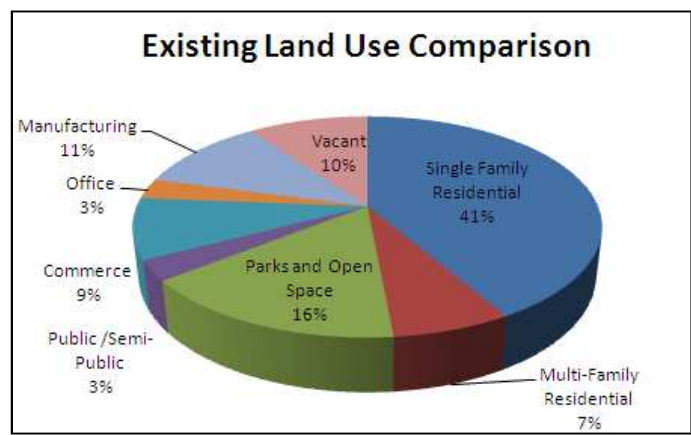


Fig. 3.1a

Encompassing 49% of the city is the residential land uses, with 42% of this being single-family. The residential land uses are distributed within six zoning districts. The majority of the residential land use areas are located in the center and western side of the City away from the industry and commercial areas. Prior to the 1950s, the city was a farming community developed with estate homes on small farm plots. It also had a number of resort houses built around Crystal Lake. As more people began to settle here permanently, a variety of residential uses became necessary. Crystal Lake is now a regional hub providing housing for people who work in the area as well as in Chicago and Wisconsin.

Commerce, Office and Manufacturing is 23% of the City's total land use. These three land uses are crucial in keeping a balance between the residential needs and business services. The Office land use allows for professional office development. Many of the skilled professionals that work in Crystal Lake also live here. This land use is also necessary to keep a healthy daytime population which supports the retail and restaurant uses. Manufacturing at 11% is the largest portion of the business uses. This is due to the nature of manufacturing which requires large properties for buildings, storage and possible rail access.

Open Space is the next largest land use category with 16%. Open space includes public and private recreation areas. Crystal Lake's two main water features are Crystal Lake and Three Oaks Recreation Area. The Crystal Lake Park District also maintains 41 parks throughout the City. Currently, there are a number of natural resources located in the Northwest Sub-Area which are counted as part of the underlying zoning district as these resources are on private property. The City will work to ensure that these are preserved and put into easements for future protection and will be recalculated to be included in the open space land use category or as a separate category for environmental features.

Public/Semi-Public land use is the property owned by a municipality or other government agency. Primarily, this is city, Park District and school district owned property. There are nine elementary schools, three junior high schools and three high schools in the City. Other community facilities include the Library, City Hall, utility facilities and company offices. Public/Semi-Public land uses only make up 3% of the city's total land use.

Vacant land use is a holding land use category. All of the property within the City's boundaries has an underlying zoning district. The City intends to grow smarter in the future limiting large lot single family uses far away from the City center or any services or utilities. Much of this vacant land is in the Northwest Sub-Area and under the Conservation Overlay District. Within the Conservation Overlay District standards are requirements for cluster development, transfer of development rights, preservation of natural resources, and mixed-use development.

3.2 Correlation between Land Use and Zoning

In order to link the Unified Development Ordinance with the Comprehensive Plan, there needs to be a correlation between land use categories and the underlying zoning districts. The chart on the following page provides the correlation between the broad based land use categories and the specific zoning districts.

A variety of zoning districts are able to be within each of the land use designations. This allows for flexibility in producing well rounded neighborhoods and allows the Comprehensive Plan to remain broad based.

The 2030 Comprehensive Land Use Plan illustrates 11 Land Use Designations; Agriculture/Rural Residential, Estate Residential, Urban Residential, High Density Residential, Central Urban Residential, Commerce, Office, Industry, Parks and Open Space, Public/Semi-Public and Mixed-Use.

With this Plan update, a new land use district has been created for Mixed Use. Mixed Use allows for a blend of commercial, office and residential uses. The mix of uses may be on one lot such as vertical uses with retail on the first floor and office or residential above. It may also be horizontal development with some areas of the development having retail uses and other lots developed with residential uses. There are three locations that are recommended to support this land use. The first is near Three Oaks Recreation Area where there are redevelopment opportunities. The second is the properties at Crystal Lake Avenue and Main Street where higher density residential and commercial uses would complement the Downtown area. The third location is the existing downtown. There are currently a variety of uses including second-story residential.

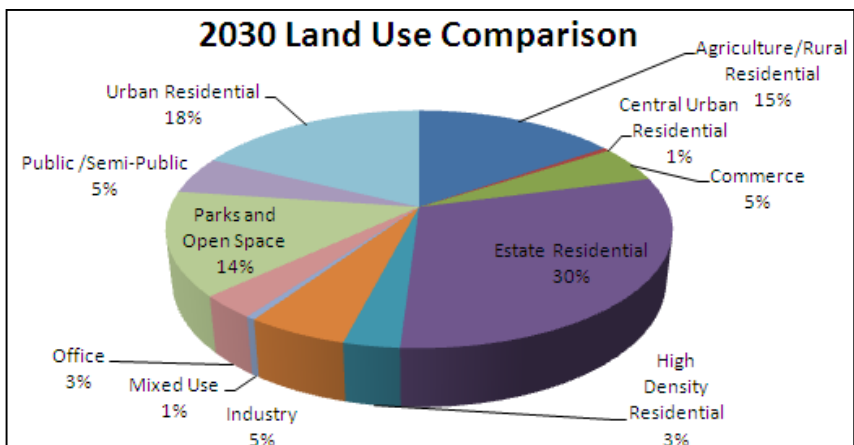
The City has 14 zoning districts; F Farming, E Estate, RE Residential Estate, R-1 Single Family Residential, R-2 Single Family Residential, R-3A Two Family Residential, R-3B Multi-Family Residential, B-1 Neighborhood Business, B-2 General Commercial, B-4 Downtown Business, O Office, M-L Manufacturing Limited, M Manufacturing, and W Watershed.

There are also two overlay zoning districts. The Conservation Overlay District generally covers properties in the Northwest Sub-Area and the Crystal Lake Watershed. The Virginia Street Corridor Overlay District covers properties in the Virginia Street TIF Corridor.

3.3 Land Use Categories

Establishing and maintaining a variety of land use categories is paramount in keeping the City well balanced for residents and visitors, employers and employees, and consumers and providers. After the establishment of the Land Use Map, careful review needs to occur when any changes to the map are proposed or at the annual comprehensive plan review.

The new land use map illustrates the following breakdown in land use percentages for the city.



<p>Residential</p> <p>Single Family Residence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Agriculture/Rural Residential ➤ Estate Residential ➤ Urban Residential 	<p>F Farming</p> <p>E Estate</p> <p>RE Residential Estate</p> <p>R-1 Single-Family</p> <p>R-2 Single Family</p> <p>W Watershed</p>
<p>Multi-Family Residence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ High Density Residential 	<p>R-3A Two Family</p> <p>R-3B Multi-Family</p> <p>W Watershed</p>
<p>Mixed Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Central Urban Residential ➤ Mixed-Use 	<p>R-2 Single Family</p> <p>R-3A Two-Family</p> <p>R-3B Multi-Family</p> <p>B-4 Downtown Business</p> <p>W Watershed</p>
<p>Non-Residential</p> <p>Commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commerce 	<p>B-1 Neighborhood Business</p> <p>B-2 General Commercial</p> <p>B-4 Downtown Business</p> <p>W Watershed</p>
<p>Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Office 	<p>O Office</p> <p>W Watershed</p>
<p>Industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Manufacturing 	<p>M-L Manufacturing Limited</p> <p>M Manufacturing</p>
<p>Open Space/ Natural Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Agriculture ➤ Parks and Open Space 	<p>F Farming</p> <p>Various other zoning districts depending on the open space</p>
<p>Civic Community Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Public and Semi-Public 	<p>Various zoning districts</p>
<p>Mixed Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mixed Use 	<p>B-1 Neighborhood Business</p> <p>B-2 General Commercial</p> <p>B-4 Downtown Business</p> <p>O Office</p> <p>W Watershed</p>

Main Goal: Balance the various land uses within the city to create more compact, mixed-use livable neighborhoods while providing a variety of housing, jobs, transportation options and business services.

	Supporting Actions	Success Indicators
3.3a1	Create an appropriate mix of land uses throughout the City.	Adoption of a Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map that allocates sufficient area to all 11 different land use designations.
3.3a2	Maintain compatibility with adjacent land uses throughout the City and with neighboring communities.	Approval of zoning requests which comply with the adopted Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. Approval of zoning requests that comply with boundary line agreements or complement neighboring community land use designations.
3.3a3	Allow for compact and mixed-use growth.	Approval of mixed-use projects through the PUD process. Establishment of a Conservation Overlay designation.
3.3a4	Encourage smart growth and green development.	Approval of projects that are developed according to the Conservation Overlay designation. Approval of projects that utilize the PUD process to create TOD or mixed-use walk able projects.

Key Element Details, Actions and Indicators

3.4 Residential



Goal:

Encourage a diversity of high quality housing in appropriate locations throughout the city that supports a variety of lifestyles and invigorates community character.

Residential land use is the dominant use in the City with over 5,000 acres. The Plan divides residential land use into 5 subset categories; Agriculture/Rural Residential (extremely low density primarily for residential farms), Estate Residential (low density lots of 3 acre+), Urban Residential (primarily single-family lots of ¼ acre and some lower density multi-family housing), Central Urban Residential (housing near the Downtown with different densities of single-family and multi-family) and High Density Residential (multi-family housing with densities of 5 units per acre or more). Urban Residential is the most prevalent category among the residential land uses.

The city needs to ensure there is an appropriate mix of housing types throughout the city. This Plan can be used to check the balance among the housing types as well as how residential land use is balanced with the other land uses.

The following table illustrates the average density ranges for each land use designation. The density, lot size, setbacks, FAR and other bulk standards are set by the Unified Development Ordinance.

Agriculture / Rural Residential	1/5 dwelling unit per acre or less
Estate Residential	1/3 dwelling unit per acre
Urban Residential	1-4 dwelling units per acre
Central Urban Residential	4-6 dwelling units per acre
High Density Residential	6-10 dwelling units per acre

	Supporting Actions	Success Indicators
3.4a	Encourage a diversity of housing types throughout the city, which satisfy wide-range needs for all persons regardless of age, race, religion, national origin, physical ability and economic level for existing and future city residents.	Approval of single-family residential developments. Approval of multi-family residential developments. Approval of senior living developments. Approval of assisted living developments. Approval of work force housing developments.
3.4b	Preserve and enhance the character and livability of existing residential area with architectural and development guidelines.	The adoption of a Neighborhood Overlay District. The use of the Pattern Book in reviewing residential building permit submittals..
3.4c	Provide for a reasonable rate of residential growth especially infill growth and mixed-use development which take advantage of existing city services.	Approval of minor subdivisions to increase infill lot potential. Number of building permits issued for new construction on infill lots. Retention of second story dwellings in Downtown.
3.4d	Promote safe, clean and well-maintained housing by encouraging regular repair and maintenance of housing.	The number of code compliance calls annually on residential properties. The number of adjudication fines for residential properties.

Key Element Details, Actions and Indicators

3.5 Commerce



Goal:

Maintain a dynamic and sustainable base of commercial uses that provides a solid tax base, goods, services and jobs to the city as well as the surrounding region through coordination in the Unified Development Ordinance, Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Commercial land uses are a vital component for the city's economic health. Commercial uses provide goods, services and jobs to residents and people in the surrounding communities. Commercial land use makes up 9% of the City's total land use.

The City has two significant commercial corridors, a minor commercial corridor and a downtown commercial area. The most significant commercial corridor is Illinois Route 14, also known as Virginia Street or Northwest Highway, which runs for over 7 miles through the City. Nearly every property along this stretch of roadway is zoned commercial or office. The second corridor is Illinois Route 31, which runs from the Wisconsin border to Oswego for over 58 miles and carries a significant amount of traffic and goods. Slightly over 4 miles of Route 31 is within the City's boundary. Both of these commercial corridors give the City significant opportunity to attract a variety of retail and service providers including big boxes and supercenters. Illinois Route 176 is a minor commercial corridor containing a mix of residential, industrial, commercial and office zoned properties. Route 176 could become more of a commercial corridor in the future, but there is a desire to protect open space view corridors on either side of the roadway as you travel westward. The City is also extremely lucky to have a healthy and vibrant Downtown. Within the Downtown retail area there is approximately 470,000 gross square feet of leasable area for retail, service and office uses. Downtown begins just south of Crystal Lake Avenue between Walkup Avenue and Main streets and runs north, taking in both sides of Walkup Avenue and Main Street, to Gates and Sherman Avenue. Downtown has significant historic buildings and is unique enough to warrant its own Downtown Comprehensive Plan included in the Appendix of this document.

	Supporting Actions	Success Indicators
3.5a	Promote, retain and attract businesses that provide a diverse tax base.	<p>The number of new “chain store” occupancies.</p> <p>The number of new “mom & pop” / small independent business occupancies.</p> <p>Continued operation and maintenance of the I Shop Crystal Lake website.</p>
3.5b	Encourage mixed-use developments that allow people to live, work and play in the same area, as well as support the transfer of goods and services between businesses and limit the number of traffic trips generated.	<p>The number of mixed-use development projects constructed.</p> <p>The redevelopment of Crystal Court.</p> <p>The number of properties zoned neighborhood commercial as reviewed annually.</p> <p>The number of cross-access and shared parking agreements between businesses.</p>
3.5c	Promote developments that conserve open space and unique natural features, provide for efficient internal circulation, and encourage quality landscaping and building design.	<p>The number of conservation subdivisions approved.</p> <p>The number of LEED buildings constructed.</p> <p>The number of LEED sites developed.</p>
3.5d	Encourage pedestrian amenities; such as bike racks and benches, and wider walkways, lighting and way-finding signage to encourage alternative means of accessing commercial sites.	<p>New sidewalks, street furniture, lighting and landscape installed through the Virginia Street Corridor streetscape project.</p> <p>The installation of Downtown way-finding signage.</p> <p>The installation of bike racks at commercial developments.</p>

Key Element Details, Actions and Indicators

3.6 Office



Goal:

Maintain and expand the availability of professional and research office in appropriate locations throughout the city to complement commercial and manufacturing uses.

Providing jobs for residents and members of the surrounding communities is critical to establishing a healthy daytime population, promoting a live, work, play environment and encouraging a skilled workforce. Office land use typically allows for professional services and some research uses. While some office uses can be found in some of the commercial areas, most are found along McHenry Avenue, Virginia Street, Route 176 and Downtown. These areas are expected to remain strong vital office locations.

	Supporting Actions	Success Indicators
3.6a	Encourage office development along major roadways, near transit stops and bicycle routes, and in proximity to residential uses.	The number of new office occupancies. The number of properties zoned office as reviewed annually

Key Element Details, Actions and Indicators

3.7 Industry



Goal:

Support manufacturing uses within the community which contribute to the regional and local economy and Crystal Lake’s live, work, play philosophy.

Industrial land use is the third largest land use in the City. The previous Comprehensive Plan land use map showed more manufacturing (industrial) land use, due to the former Vulcan Material and Meyer Material mining operations located around Rakow Road. These mining operations have since ceased so the land use has changed. Crystal Lake is fortunate to have a Union Pacific Railroad line running northwest/southeast through the City as well as a spur line running north to the City of McHenry. Most of the City’s manufacturing users are located along these rail lines. As manufacturing uses ship goods in and out of the area it creates links between businesses throughout the region and nationally.

Manufacturing users require a skilled labor pool and can bring residents and employees into the area or hire from the local population providing stability to the City. The manufacturing land use is most appropriate along rail lines, major transportation corridors and adjacent to other undesirable land uses. Because of the benefits of manufacturing land uses it is important to ensure that they are protected and do not create conflict between other less intense land uses.

	Supporting Actions	Success Indicators
3.7a	Expand and attract manufacturing users which provide jobs, services, and products strengthening the City’s economy	The number of new manufacturing company occupancies. The number of properties zoned manufacturing as reviewed annually.
3.7b	Encourage the redevelopment of “brownfield” sites, underused or abandoned manufacturing properties in the City, and reuse already existing structures or draw upon existing infrastructure.	The number of new tenant occupancies in existing buildings.
3.7c	Encourage businesses to adhere to regular maintenance of grounds and structure to maintain compliance with codes and ordinances.	The number of code violations issued to manufacturing properties. The number of annual pre-treatment inspections.

Key Element Details, Actions and Indicators

3.8 Open Space



Goal:

Preserve, protect and enhance the City’s open space and natural resources, through cooperative efforts with land owners, developers and conservancy groups.

There is a growing awareness and appreciation of the importance of open space and natural resources in determining the quality of life in the city. The Plan places an emphasis on the stewardship of the area’s open space and natural resources. Maintaining a sustainable live, work, play community requires a balance between developed land uses and undeveloped land uses, such as open space and natural resources.

	Supporting Actions	Success Indicators
3.8a	Large area of open space or natural areas should be preserved or created, in concert with cluster development or through a Transfer of Development Rights agreement.	The number of conservation subdivisions developed. The number of Transfer of Development Agreements executed. The number of properties donated or put into a conservation easement to a conservation group like MCCD, Openlands, Environmental Defenders of McHenry County, etc.
3.8b	Establish programs or policies which lead to better open space planning and natural resource preservation.	Adoption of the Green Infrastructure Vision plan. The coordination with the Park District on parks and open space projects.

Key Element Details, Actions and Indicators

3.9 Public and Semi-Public



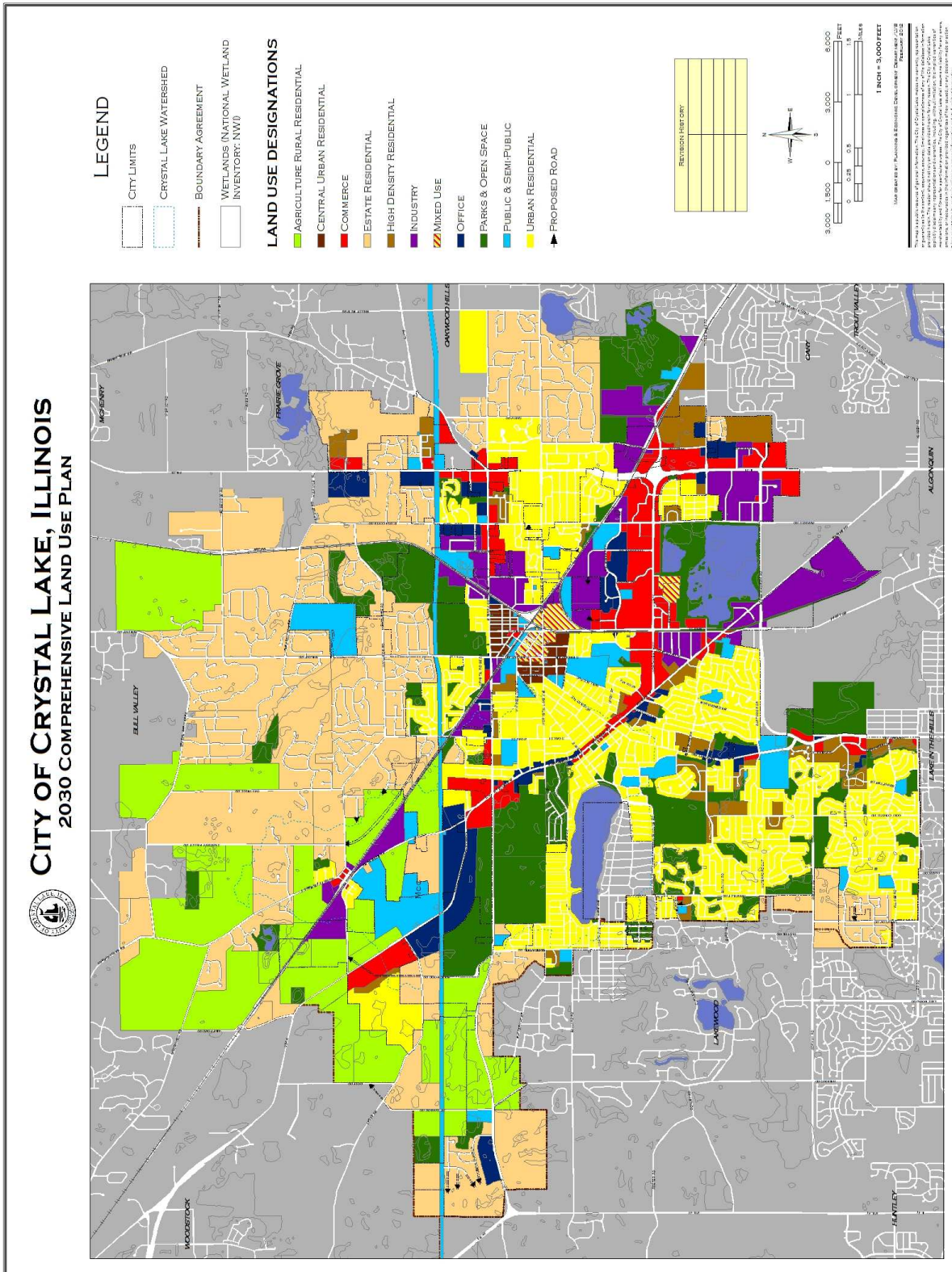
Goal:

Provide area for high quality public and semi-public facilities, such as schools, libraries, municipal facilities and private service providers, throughout the city to support the diverse and evolving needs of people in the city.

Public and Semi-Public uses are located throughout the city and are meant to serve the community in numerous ways. Public facilities are described as schools, libraries, park district facilities, as well as municipal services, such as fire rescue, police and administration. These uses are managed by separate public entities, each of which are funded separately through tax dollars and other revenues. Semi-Public uses include utilities, such as telephone and electric, hospitals and civic organizations. Public and Semi-Public facilities themselves are further discussed in the Community Facilities section of this plan.

	Supporting Actions	Success Indicators
3.9a	The City shall support the school districts, library, park district, neighboring municipalities, private service providers and other public and semi-public agencies.	<p>The annual evaluation of impact fees for schools, parks, libraries and municipal services, to ensure that fees keep pace with relative costs.</p> <p>The number of zoning approvals for public/semi-public projects.</p>

The variety and balance among the land uses is important and necessary to allow Crystal Lake to grow into a sustainable community providing jobs, services, recreation, products, employment and housing to the community.



(The full size Land Use Map is attached to the end of this document.)