

# HOMER GLEN *Dreams in Green*

For the past thirteen months the community of Homer Glen has been thinking about what it takes to be *green*. Homer Glen was selected to participate in the **Green Communities Demonstration Program**, one of only sixteen communities in the State of Illinois.

The purpose of the Green Communities Demonstration Program is to help communities identify environmental challenges and plan for a sustainable future. Homer Glen received a \$110,000 grant to engage citizens and community groups in a collaborative effort to establish a vision and long-term goals for improving local environmental conditions over the next twenty to thirty years.

Three visioning sessions have brought together a variety of stakeholders to address the environmental issues facing our community. During these workshops residents, farmers, landowners, and representatives of the business community developed an environmental vision. This *Green Vision of the Homer Glen Community* and accompanying goals and objectives outline the hope for the future and strategies for achieving this progressive vision.

Dozens of topics were discussed. In the end, participants determined that the following six categories were most important to the future environment of Homer Glen:

- *Community image and character*
- *Natural resources, habitat and wildlife*
- *Open space*
- *Parks and recreation*
- *Transportation*
- *Water resources*

It should be noted that a strong correlation exists between opinions expressed by stakeholders during the Green Community Visioning process and the Village's Comprehensive Plan development process. It appears Village residents concur in that portion of the Village's Mission Statement that reads, "We will strive to maintain open space, preserve our unique rural character, and safeguard our natural resources."

## *What do You Think About Being Green?*

Since this is a community vision your input is requested in finalizing the vision, goals, and objectives. Please take a few moments to review these drafts. Make suggested changes directly on this copy or use a separate sheet of paper for your comments.

*Send your comments by  
March 15 to:*

**Homer Glen Green Grant  
Steering Committee  
14331 S. Golden Oak Drive  
Homer Glen, IL 60491**

*or email:*

**greenvision@homerglen.org**



*Community and Nature . . . in Harmony*

# Green Vision of the Homer Glen Community

*An attractive, distinctive, and environmentally sustainable community that protects its valuable water resources, natural landscapes, wildlife habits, open spaces, and agricultural settings essential to the well-being and quality of life of Homer Glen residents.*

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Community Image and Character

**GOAL:** *Maintain and enhance an attractive and distinctive community that builds upon and preserves Homer Glen's countryside character, unique natural resources and abundance of open space.*

Note: 94.8% of the workshop attendees on April 26, 2003 agreed or strongly agreed with this goal statement.

### OBJECTIVES:

Promote attractive and well designed residential and commercial developments that meet community development goals.

Identify special character areas, tailoring growth to ensure that unique natural resources are supported and enhanced.

Create an attractive centralized and distinctive town center, with parks, recreation center, municipal building, and cultural center accessible by walking or multi-use trail.

Hire progressive planning and marketing consultants to work with the Village to develop a town center plan and implementation mechanism.

Minimize negative visual impacts of development such as light pollution, obtrusive or unsightly signage, and parking areas.

Maintain and enhance the village's rural atmosphere.

Safeguard Homer Glen's environmental features and natural resources as distinguishing features of the community.

Continue to involve community residents in planning, decision making, and plan implementation.

Find ways to preserve the agricultural uses that contribute to the rural character of the community.

Ensure community visual image within each district so that all parts contribute to overall village image.

Identify and protect historic structures, ruins, and sites to be preserved.

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## Natural Resources, Habitat and Wildlife

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**GOAL:** *Preservation, protection and enhancement of the existing and potential natural resources and wildlife habitat that are enjoyed by village residents.*

Note: 97.3% of the workshop attendees on April 26, 2003 agreed or strongly agreed with this goal statement.

### OBJECTIVES:

Prepare an area-wide inventory that identifies natural resources and habitats that are unique to Homer Glen.

Prepare a plan based on the area-wide inventory to preserve and manage existing and potential natural resources and habitats that emphasizes larger, connected areas rather than small, isolated pockets.

Educate residents about the role that natural resources and wildlife play in maintaining a high quality of life in the village and residents roles in protection and restoration efforts.

Adopt design guidelines and ordinances for new development that support the preservation and protection of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.

Develop incentive measures for landowners and developers to preserve and create natural areas, including the use of conservation easements.

Encourage natural landscaping on both public and private properties throughout the village.

Encourage access by community residents, especially children, to public wildlife habitats and natural areas.

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## Open Space

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**GOAL:** *Protection and enhancement of the extensive open space areas that are essential to the overall image and character of Homer Glen.*

Note: 91.9% of the workshop attendees on April 26, 2003 agreed or strongly agreed with this goal statement.

### OBJECTIVES:

Develop protection mechanisms, including ordinances where appropriate, for:

- Wetlands
- Agricultural lands
- Woodlands
- Floodplains
- Groundwater recharge zones
- Stream corridors
- Scenic views
- Sensitive soils
- Wildlife habitats
- Other natural areas

Develop an interconnected greenway system – an “Emerald Necklace” — that links open space throughout the Village.

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## Open Space, *cont.*

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### OBJECTIVES, *cont.*:

Protection and enhancement of the extensive open space areas that are essential to the overall image and character of Homer Glen.

Require land set-asides for open space as part of development process.

Retain an environmentally sensitive engineering/planning firm to review development proposals.

Develop a plan for open space protection and acquisition that encompasses the broad objectives of farmland protection, natural resource preservation, passive recreation, trails, sustainability, visual relief, and limited development densities.

Identify and implement ways to protect and maintain the agricultural roots and heritage of the Homer Glen area.

Maintain low density zoning that allows public uses of open space.

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## Parks and Recreation

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**GOAL:** *Develop a Parks and Recreation system that promotes healthy lifestyles by offering active and passive recreational opportunities for residents, employees, and visitors, and enhances the overall image and character of the community.*

Note: 92.5% of the workshop attendees on April 26, 2003 agreed or strongly agreed with this goal statement.

### OBJECTIVES:

Create the means and mechanisms to own, manage and maintain parks and recreation opportunities.

Cooperate with citizens, community groups, and various levels of government to develop an open space and recreation plan that reflects goals and objectives from the "Green Vision" process. This process should respect land differences for appropriate uses.

Develop design guidelines for development of commercial property that encourages trails development and offer recreation amenities for employees.

Develop guidelines for incorporation of trail systems, and linkages to existing and planned trail systems, into the site design plans for all significant commercial developments (see below).

Develop a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities for all, including special needs, such as neighborhoods, community parks, trails and open spaces that link to and complement the regional open space, parks, and recreation facilities in the Homer Glen area.

Develop a multi-use parks, commons, and recreation center as part of a new town center to create a central gathering place and activity area.

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## **Parks and Recreation, cont.**

### **OBJECTIVES, cont.:**

Develop a network of multi-use trails and pathways to provide connections between subdivisions, schools, parks, and commercial areas.

Identify creative funding mechanisms in order to achieve and implement park, open space, and recreation objectives.

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## **Transportation**

**GOAL:** *A coordinated, sustainable system of roadways, pedestrian facilities, recreational pathways and public transportation services that provides for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians and enhances the countryside character and environmental amenities of the Village.*

Note: 89.7% of the workshop attendees on April 26, 2003 agreed or strongly agreed with this goal statement.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

Promote the Homer Glen vision by requiring wide, naturally landscaped corridors for major roadways—for example, requiring 80-foot minimum right-of-way for the major roadway in new residential developments—and consider these features integral to the transportation plan. (Note that this is not recommending wide pavement widths.)

Develop a comprehensive network of multi-use trails and greenways to link residential subdivisions with schools, parks, shopping areas, public facilities, open spaces, forest preserves and other multi-use trails in the area.

Develop an integrated transportation and land-use plan for the Village that identifies an efficient pattern of land-use and transportation-system design that minimizes congestion and through-traffic on roads under Village jurisdiction.

Incorporate an assessment of the impact of regional transportation plans (for example, I-355, Caton Farms Road/Bruce Road/Strategic Regional Arterial plan) into the integrated transportation and land-use plan.

Improve transportation safety on existing roadways by evaluating the need for guardrails, street lighting, roadway profiles and other approaches.

Work with state and county transportation agencies to achieve these objectives along state and county routes into, out of and through the Village.

Work with regional agencies and neighboring municipalities to expand opportunities for public transportation within Homer Glen.

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## Water Resources

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**GOAL:** *Promote plentiful, high quality surface and groundwater resources that protect the quality of life for residents and all ecosystems, especially wetlands, by reducing the impacts on these systems.*

Note: 89.7% of the workshop attendees on April 26, 2003 agreed or strongly agreed with this goal statement.

### OBJECTIVES:

Gather and assess data needed to protect key water resource areas and to develop growth strategies. Data to be collected, which will help to determine carrying capacity, includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Hydrology and hydraulic studies
- Historic surveys
- Vegetation
- Floodplains, wetlands, etc.
- Soil analysis
- Longitudinal profiles
- Storm water runoff

Develop an education program that:

- Educates elected officials to provide authority and resources.
- Educates stakeholders (e.g., residents, landowners, business owners, developers) as to how land-use affects water resources and to promote low impact development and green development.
- Educates the educators, establishes environmental education in schools, develops interpretive signage for natural resource features and drainage, and establishes a "Watershed Watch" program and voluntary monitoring.

Develop and enforce protection mechanisms, including ordinances, which support water resource objectives and goals for:

- Wetlands
- Sustainable stormwater management
- Stream corridors
- Groundwater recharge and protection

Retain environmentally sensitive engineering/planning firms to review development proposals.

Tie in land use study with development of comprehensive plan.

Utilize design solutions that reduce impervious surfaces, bring water and stormwater to public attention, and increase use of native landscaping.

Tailor and adopt these templates as official guidelines for new development and redevelopment in Homer Glen.

Evaluate and implement options for sustainable wastewater facility planning and treatment that promote reuse, recharge, reduction, and minimization of impacts.





*Please plan to attend the  
May 21st celebration unveiling the  
Green Vision of the Homer Glen Community.*

*Festivities will begin at 6:00 PM  
at the Cross of Glory Church,  
163rd and Cedar Road.*

*Food and beverages provided.*

*Kindly RSVP by May 14 by phone or email:  
(708) 301-0632 • [greenvision@homerglen.org](mailto:greenvision@homerglen.org)*

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*Village of*  
**HOMER  
GLEN**

*Community and Nature . . . in Harmony*

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in  
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