



# VILLAGE OF POPLAR GROVE

"A Great Place to Call Home"

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## PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

**Wednesday, July 31, 2024 - 6:00 PM**

200 N. Hill Street, Poplar Grove, IL 61065

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### AGENDA

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ROLL CALL**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- [1.](#) Motion to approve Planning and Zoning commission meeting minutes from April 24, 2024

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** *(General Comments)*

**OLD BUSINESS**

- [2.](#) Comprehensive Land Use Plan Presentation, Studio GWA
3. Motion to discuss/approve Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**KM 07/29/2024**



# VILLAGE OF POPLAR GROVE

*"A Great Place to Call Home"*

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## PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

**Wednesday, April 24, 2024 - 6:00 PM**

200 N. Hill Street, Poplar Grove, IL 61065

**Commissioners – Jake Dykstra (Chair), Jessica Roberts,  
Don Sattler, Ed Wethington, Keith Richard, Nate Sroka, George Fowler**

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## MINUTES

### CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Roberts at 6:00pm

### ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Chairwomen Jessica Roberts  
Commissioner Amy Ekberg  
Commissioner Kim Krawczk  
Commissioner Nate Sroka  
Commissioner Melissa Robinson  
Clerk Karri Miller  
Attorney Aaron Szeto  
Building Official Ken Garrett

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Commissioner Sroka, Seconded by Commissioner Krawczk. Motion passed by voice vote.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to approve Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting minutes from October 25, 2023  
Motion made by Commissioner Krawczk, Seconded by Commissioner Sroka. Motion passed by voice vote

2. Motion to approve Planning and Zoning Commission meeting minutes from November 29, 2023  
Motion made by Commissioner Krawczk, Seconded by Commissioner Sroka. Motion passed by voice vote,
3. Motion to approve Planning and Zoning Commission meeting minutes from January 24, 2024  
Motion made by Commissioner Ekberg, Seconded by Commissioner Robinson. Motion passed by voice vote.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** *(General Comments)*

No public comment

**OLD BUSINESS**

4. Reconvene Case **2024-01**; Village of Poplar Grove, 200 North Hill Street (TA): The applicant, The Village of Poplar Grove, 200 North Hill Street, Poplar Grove, IL 61065 is proposing an amendment to the Poplar Grove Zoning Ordinance pertaining to Sections 8-2-3 Definitions; 8-7 Zoning Districts and Land Use Regulations to create a new subsection 13 to be entitled "Shipping Container"; 8-6-2 Agricultural/Rural District (A-1); 8-6-9 General Business District (GB); 8-6-10 Central Business District (CB); 8-6-11 Light Industrial District (LI); 8-6-12 Heavy Industrial District (HI) and Permitted Use(s) in accordance with Section 8-5-4 Text Amendment. The request will allow shipping containers in certain zoning districts.  
at 6:03 pm public hearing opened and Building Official Garrett was sworn in. Building Official Garrett reviewed the shipping containers and stated that the case was sent back to Planning and Zoning to consider alternative options for the base on which the shipping containers sit. He noted that if the shipping container is intended for human occupancy, he would recommend placing it on concrete. However, if it is just for storage, a gravel compact base would be acceptable.  
Motion made by Commissioner Krawczk, Seconded by Commissioner Sroka to include use of concrete if human occupancy and gravel base as minimum in the shipping container is used for storage .  
Voting Yea: Chairwomen Roberts, Commissioner Ekberg, Commissioner Krawczk, Commissioner Sroka, Commissioner Robinson

**NEW BUSINESS**

5. Comprehensive Land Use Plan Presentation, Studio GWA  
Ashley Sarver from GWA presented the comprehensive plan in detail. The slides are available at the clerk's office.
6. Motion to discuss/approve Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Motion to move item to May 24, 2024 made by Commissioner Ekberg, Seconded by Commissioner Krawczk. Motion passed by voice vote.

7. **Case 2024-02** The applicant Steve Thomas on behalf of Bel Air Estates, LTD has applied for an amendment to his existing Special Use/Planned Development with Special Use Permit Number 2018-03, which was originally granted to Steve Thomas at 11619 Illinois Route 76, Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065 (commonly known as the Poplar Grove Airport). The Village of Poplar Grove Zoning Code allows Planned Developments per section 8-5-8. The PIN Numbers of the property are as follows: 05-02-200-004, 05-01-100-011, 05-01-300-014, 05-02-200-006 and 05-01-101-010. The purpose of the proposed Special Use Amendment is to allow residential uses to be constructed within certain hangars within the Poplar Grove Airport. The property is currently zoned GB (General Business). As part of this Special Use Permit/Planned Development amendment, a new hangar is being proposed which will allow residences in the hangars.

Public Hearing opened at 6:58 pm, and Building Official Garrett reviewed the case.

Attorney Gino Gallazuo, on behalf of Steve Thomas, was sworn in at 7:07 pm and presented his client's case for the special use permit.

Steve Thomas was sworn in at 7:11 pm and answered questions from the commissioners.

**\*\*Public Comment:\*\***

- **\*\*Lorain Morries:\*\*** Stated she is in favor of the special use permit. She mentioned that both she and her husband are polite, and the safety plan presented by Steve Thomas is good, making her feel safe.

- **\*\*Fred Walling:\*\*** Mentioned that he is a Zoning Administrator and Building Inspector for a city in Wisconsin and that he supports the special use permit.

Steve Thomas also handed out letters to the commissioners from individuals who are in favor of the special use permit.

Public Hearing closed at 7:24 pm.

Commissioners asked questions and discussed the findings of fact.

Motion made to approve finding of facts by Commissioner Krawczk, Seconded by Commissioner Sroka.

Voting Yea: Chairwomen Roberts, Commissioner Ekberg, Commissioner Krawczk, Commissioner Sroka, Commissioner Robinson

Motion to approve case 2024-02 subject to building code and engineer and parking issues be deferred to the Board of Trustees to work out made by Commissioner Krawczk, Seconded by Commissioner Robinson.

Voting Yea: Chairwomen Roberts, Commissioner Ekberg, Commissioner Krawczk, Commissioner Sroka, Commissioner Robinson

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion made by Commissioner Sroka, Seconded by Commissioner Krawczk. Motion passed by voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm



*Village of Poplar Grove*  
**COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN UPDATE**

COPY OF ORDINANCE  
ADOPTING PLAN

COPY OF ORDINANCE  
ADOPTING PLAN

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## **Public Officials**

Village President: Don Sattler

## **Village Trustees:**

Jeff Goings  
Dan Cheek  
Elizabeth Straw  
Austin Davies  
Owen Costanza

## **Village Staff**

Katie Jaster, Deputy Village Clerk  
David Howe, Public Works Director  
Carina Boyd, Village Treasurer

## **Consultant Team**

Studio GWA  
Ashley Sarver, AICP  
Michael Smith, AICP Candidate

## **Redevelopment Resources**

Kristen Fish-Peterson, CEcD, EDFP  
Dayna Sarver, CEcD

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# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affordable/Affordability & Cost-burdened

Housing that is affordable to a given household is a unit which costs the household less than 30% of their gross income per month. Therefore, “affordable” does not mean it is less expensive than all other housing or that it is only for low-income households – instead it is relative to the household’s income. As defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), those spending more than 30% on housing are considered “cost-burdened” and those spending more than 50% on housing are considered “extremely cost-burdened.”

HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI)

This is the median family income calculated by HUD for each jurisdiction, in order to determine Fair Market Rents (FMRs) and income limits for HUD programs. HAMFI will not necessarily be the same as other calculations of median incomes (such as a simple Census number), due to a series of adjustments that are made (For full documentation of these adjustments, consult the HUD Income Limit Briefing Materials). If you see the terms “area median income” (AMI) or “median family income” (MFI) used in the CHAS, assume it refers to HAMFI.

Household Income

Adjusted household income, which includes the income of all members of the household at the time of the survey, adjusted for inflation to reflect the most recent year of the data release (e.g. 2013 dollars in the 2009-2013 CHAS data).

Vacancy

The ACS includes people at the address where they are at the time of the survey if they have been there or will be there more than two months. A housing unit occupied at the time of interview entirely by people who will be there for 2 months or less is classified as “Vacant - Current Residence Elsewhere”. Such units are included in the estimated number of vacant units. ESRI defines a vacant housing unit as “no one living in the dwelling, unless its occupant or occupants are only temporarily absent—such as away on vacation, in the hospital for a short stay, or on a business trip—and will be returning.”

# ACRONYMS

ACS: American Community Survey

MSA: Metropolitan Statistical Area

HUD: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

CHAS: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy

# Introduction

## Village Context

The Village of Poplar Grove is a community of approximately 5,119 persons located in Boone County in Northern Illinois. The village is adjacent to two Census Incorporated Places—The Village of Caledonia and the Village of Timberlane, both to the west—and one Census Designated Place, Candlewick Lake. The village has also established boundary agreements with the Village of Capron to the east and the City of Belvidere to the south.

The Village of Poplar Grove is situated amongst five townships: Poplar Grove, Boone, Bonus, Belvidere, and Caledonia. These townships render a number of core services under state statute, including property assessment and maintenance of township roads and bridges.

Poplar Grove is surrounded by productive agricultural farmland and is bisected to the south by Beaver Creek, a tributary of the Kishwaukee River. Single-family residences comprise the majority of land use within the village, while commercial businesses located along the village periphery located in the highway IL-76 and IL-173 corridor serve a variety of regional users.

The surface transportation network affords a high degree of mobility for motorists to access a variety of destinations throughout the region, including Machesney Park to the west (8 miles), Belvidere to the south (8 miles), Rockford to the southwest (19 miles), and Harvard to the east (12 miles). Base industries including Woodward, Collins Aerospace, and Stellantis are all within a 10-30 minute drive time. The village's proximity to the I-90 and IL-173 corridor to the west provides interstate access most notably to Wisconsin and the Chicago metropolitan region. For many community members, this proximity to many destinations via a vastly connected transportation

system is close enough for the village to leverage economic development opportunities while maintaining the small-town feel for which the village is known.

## What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a strategic document that serves as a guide for the village's physical, social, economic, and environmental development. More specifically, this Comprehensive Plan Update is:

**A Visioning Document:** This Plan is driven by a series of goals and objectives to help the community realize its potential over the next 10 years.

**A Facilitating Document:** This Plan will help village officials foster a wide range of initiatives in a cohesive, consistent manner, including development, redevelopment, recreation, transportation, conservation, and more.

**A Resource-Filled Document:** This Plan is a useful reference for land owners, business owners, and developers, helping them better align their goals with the village's goals for planning/development.

**A Complementary Document:** This Plan is designed to work alongside existing planning, budgeting, and regulatory documents used by the village. It is also a necessary component of future funding opportunities the village may wish to pursue.

This Plan was prepared in accordance with Illinois State Statutes (Chapter 65, Article 11, Division 12).

## The Comprehensive Plan: A 2024 Update

This Plan serves as an update to the previous Village of Poplar Grove Comprehensive Plan which was adopted in April 2009. The 2024 Plan Update is a strategic policy document which includes an overhaul of each plan element as well as the addition of an implementation strategy. Excerpts from elements in the 2009 Plan were used where appropriate; this includes content regarding village history, natural resources, and more. Further, maps and figures found in the 2009 Plan have been updated to better align with the latest data sources. These data sources are many, and include:

### Public Data Sources

**American Community Survey:** The American Community Survey ('ACS') is an ongoing survey that samples a small amount of the U.S. population every year. The ACS gathers information on topics also found in the decennial census. Households are randomly selected each year to complete the ACS. The Census Bureau generates estimates for the population in general based on response received.

**Boone County:** Many of the map layers illustrated in figures throughout the plan were produced by the Boone County GIS Department. The project team also referenced county-level planning documents including the 2020 Boone County Comprehensive Plan and the 2011 Stormwater Management Plan.

**Bureau of Labor Statistics:** The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is the principal fact-finding agency for the Federal Government in the broad field of labor economics and statistics. BLS data was referenced in the Community Profile section.

**Data USA:** Data USA is a comprehensive, open-source data analytics and visualization platform. The platform is considered a 'one-stop shop' for accessing publicly-available US Government data. Consultant staff used this data in the Housing and Economic Development sections of the plan.

Figure 1: Regional Context





**Illinois Department of Transportation:** The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) provides a variety of publicly-available data on surface transportation systems. Consultant staff referenced the state’s Functional Classification for each roadway as well Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) in the Transportation & Mobility section.

**Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium:** The Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics (MRLC) consortium is a group of federal agencies who coordinate and generate consistent and relevant land cover information at the national scale for a wide variety of environmental, land management, and modeling applications. The creation of this consortium has resulted in the creation of a nationwide land cover product known as the National Land Cover Database (NLCD). Consultant staff analyzed data from the NLCD in the Agricultural and Natural Resources section.

**Region 1 Planning Council:** Consultant staff referenced multiple plans in which Region I Planning Council (R1PC) produced completely or in part, including the 2020 Boone County Comprehensive Plan, 2021 Regional Greenways Plan, 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and FY2024 Transportation Improvement Plan. These plans include both qualitative and quantitative data sources compiled by R1PC, such as stakeholder input comments and map layers shown in the Agricultural and Natural Resources section.

**U.S. Decennial Census:** The United States Constitution requires a decennial census of 100% of the U.S. population. The latest census was conducted in 2020 and consisted of a short questionnaire to complete in one of three mediums: Phone, mail, or online, the latter of which offered for the first time in 2020. Consultant

staff analyzed data from the 2020 Decennial Census on a variety of topics including households, income, education, employment, race and ethnicity, and more. Additionally, consultant staff utilized national-scale mapping layers to verify county, township, and municipal boundaries.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture:** The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who occupy them. This census, which is conducted once every five years, looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income, and expenditures. Consultant staff analyzed data from the 2022 Census as appropriate for the Agricultural and Natural Resources section.

**Village of Poplar Grove:** The village furnished consultant staff with maps and plans that informed multiple plan sections.

Private/Licensed Data Sources

**ESRI:** The consultant team utilized data from Esri’s Updated Demographics suite, which provides data on a multitude of demographic and socioeconomic categories, including race and ethnicity, educational attainment, income, households, and much more.

**Placer:** Placer’s location analytics gives municipalities greater insight into visitor and consumer activity within and around the village. The company collection geolocation data from apps installed on mobile devices and shares in an anonymized, aggregated manner to ensure reliability and validity. The consultant team used this data to understand visitor trends and identify economic development opportunities.

## Planning Process, Community Engagement

This Comprehensive Plan update was conducted by Studio GWA and Redevelopment Resources (Referred through the report as ‘Consultant Staff’ and ‘Project Team’) from December 2023 to April 2024. The project began with a kickoff on December 18th, 2023 in which consultant staff met with village staff to outline the objectives for the plan, understand issues and opportunities, gather initial data, and much more. Consultant staff met virtually with village staff throughout the planning process to provide status updates and prepare materials for public consumption.

The plan was shaped by a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data sources. The project team utilized public and licensed data sources to better understand existing conditions and inform recommendations for multiple plan elements. Community input also shaped the plan, most notably through the Community Open House on Wednesday, February 21st, 2024. Notice of the Open House was distributed by means of a press release to the Rockford Register Star on February 5th, in keeping with the minimum 15-day notice required in the State of Illinois. Village staff also promoted the open house through the village’s website and social media channels.

Comments from village trustees and residents alike were centered around a number of themes, including:

**Housing:** A couple of attendees shared traits which attracted them to move to the area, including location, more space, and more value-for-money. One guest moved here specifically for the Poplar Grove Airport, and enjoys all the airport-related amenities that Bel-Air Estates has to offer. Other guests discussed topics related to future housing needs, including:

- **Infill Development:** Some guests mentioned the need for the community to grow ‘in’ before further growing out’. There are hundreds of platted lots that should be developed before any newly platted areas are approved.
- **Multifamily Development:** Some guests were averse to multifamily development, contrasting the character of the village with that of adjacent communities. One person expressed a desire to have housing specifically for people aged 55 and over.

**Economic Development:** Guests expressed a desire to

“spruce up” downtown, and proposed strategies like transitioning homes to walk-up businesses. Some mentioned that businesses don’t “seem to stay here long”, but also said that businesses would further diversify the tax base.

**Transportation:** Guests were generally pleased with their ability to reach a variety of destinations within a 15-25 minute timeframe. The Long Prairie Trail is a valued amenity used by community members regularly.

The final draft of the plan update was presented to the Planning Commission on April 24, 2024 and the Village Board on Wednesday, May 8, 2024. This final draft included completion of all plan elements detailed below and paired them with an implementation strategy to help village staff execute the recommendations stated throughout the plan

## How this Plan Works

The Poplar Grove Comprehensive Plan Update includes 7 elements:

- Community Profile
- Land Use
- Agricultural and Natural Resources
- Transportation and Mobility
- Government, Public Facilities, and Utilities
- Housing
- Economic Development

While each plan element has its own distinguishing objectives, they generally include the following outline:

- **Introduction:** Generally features an overview of what the respective element entails with some aims and objectives the element intends to accomplish;
- **Content related to Existing Conditions:** Includes detailed narratives, illustrations, and data visualization to document and analyze existing conditions;
- **Scenarios:** Some elements may include scenarios, with strengths/drawbacks associated with each, as a means to shape and information recommendations; and
- **Recommendations:** Includes goals, objectives, policies, and strategies, the latter of which align with the implementation strategy found at the end of the plan.

## Related Plans, Studies, and Reports

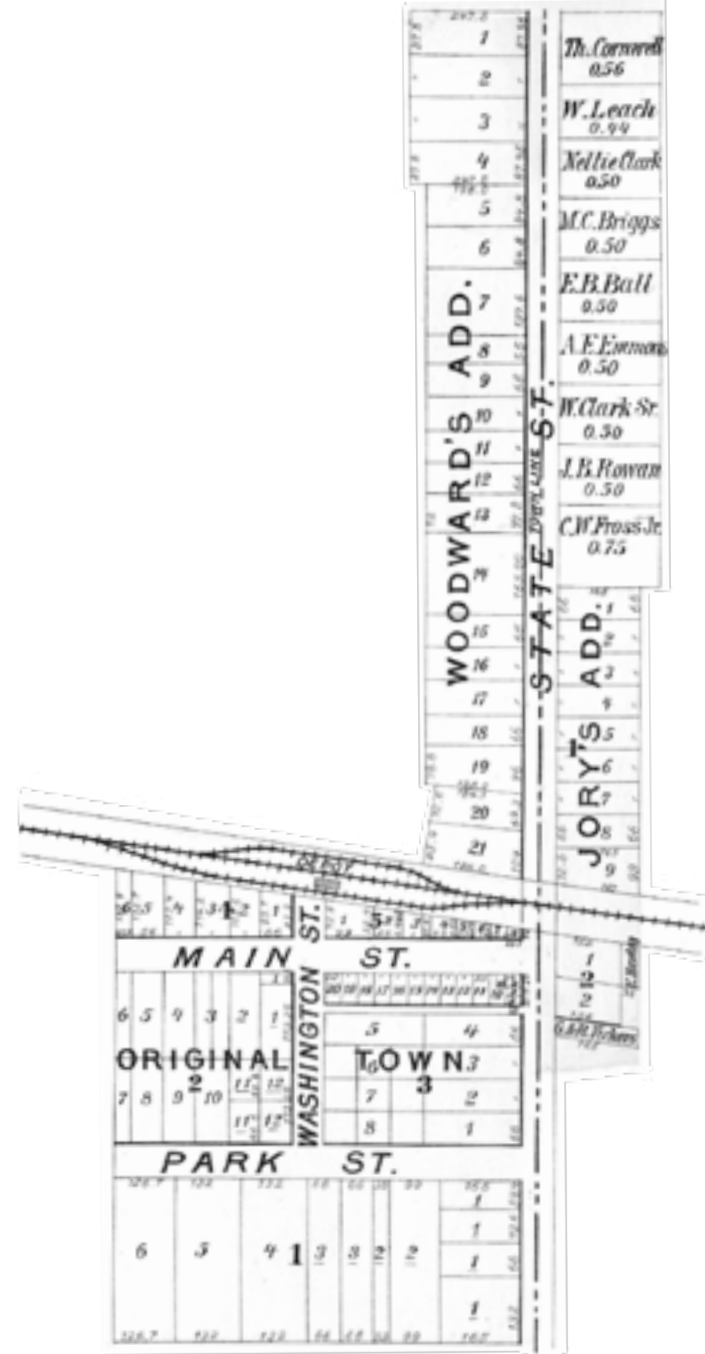
In keeping with the '3C' process of developing plan documents in a Continuing, Comprehensive, and Cooperative manner, this plan update is situated amongst many active, adopted planning and budgeting documents in the region, including:

- Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriation (Village of Poplar Grove)
- 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Plan (Village of Poplar Grove)
- Annual Financial Report (Village of Poplar Grove)
- Boone County Strategic Plan 2018-2013 (Boone County)
- Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan for the Rockford Region (Region 1 Planning Council)
- 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Rockford Region (Region 1 Planning Council)
- Annual Listing of Obligated Projects - Rockford MPO (Region 1 Planning Council)
- Transportation Improvement Program 2024-2027 (Region 1 Planning Council)
- Unified Work Program FY 2024 Rockford MPO (Region 1 Planning Council)
- 2021 Greenways Plan - Rockford MPO (Region 1 Planning Council)
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Rockford Region (Region 1 Planning Council)
- EDD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2021-2025 (Region 1 Planning Council)

## History of the Village

The village was originally platted on October 20, 1859, by Evi Sherman, Sr.<sup>1</sup> He laid out the town one-half mile south of the corners and named it Shermantown. At the time the population was 200 persons. The name "Shermantown" lasted only a short time. When the railroad depot was built in 1861, the name "Poplar Grove" was chosen because of a grove of poplar trees nearby.

Poplar Grove was incorporated as a village in 1895. The first village president was W.F. Edgell and the trustees were William Webster, Edwin Dimond, Steven Diamond, James Widdle, Thomas Wheeler, and Oliver Ray. The first town hall was built in 1907.



Excerpt from the 1886 Boone County Atlas. Source: Ida Public Library.

## SOURCES

1. Boone County Then and Now: 1835-1976, edited by Virginia B. Moorehead, Boone County Bicentennial Commission, Boone County, Illinois, 1976.

# Community Profile

## Demographic Profile

Poplar Grove is one of the few communities to have experienced growth over the last several years compared to some of its neighbors and larger jurisdictions (Figure 2). Furthermore, Esri predicts that Poplar Grove will lead its neighbors in population growth over the next five years (Figure 3).

### Population

Poplar Grove's population in 1960 was 460 persons. Over the next forty years, it grew to 1,368 persons. From 2000-2010 the village grew nearly 14% year-over-year. Growth has slowed over the last couple of years. Esri predicts that by 2028, the population of Poplar Grove will be approximately 5,165 persons.

Poplar Grove is one of the few communities to have experienced growth over the last several years compared to some of its neighbors and larger jurisdictions (Figure 2). Furthermore, Esri predicts that Poplar Grove will lead its neighbors in population growth over the next five years (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Annual Population Growth Rate (2020-2023)

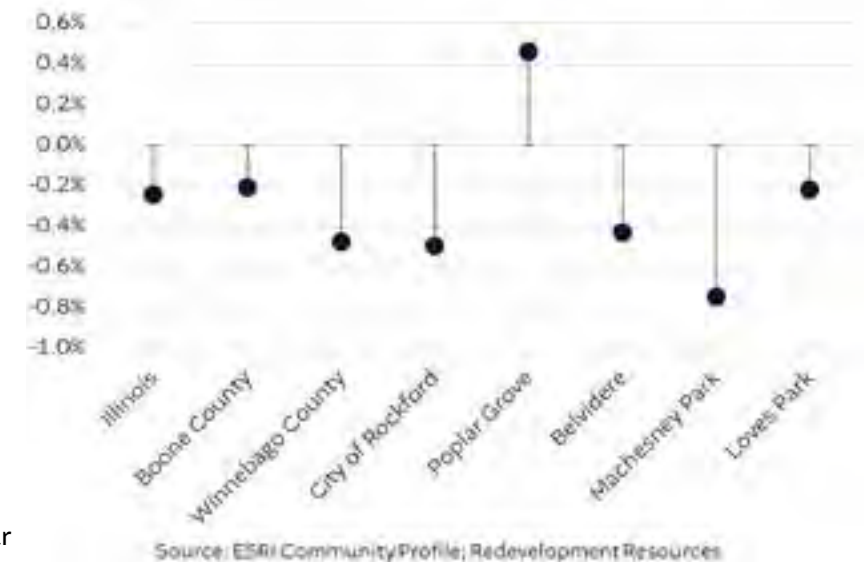
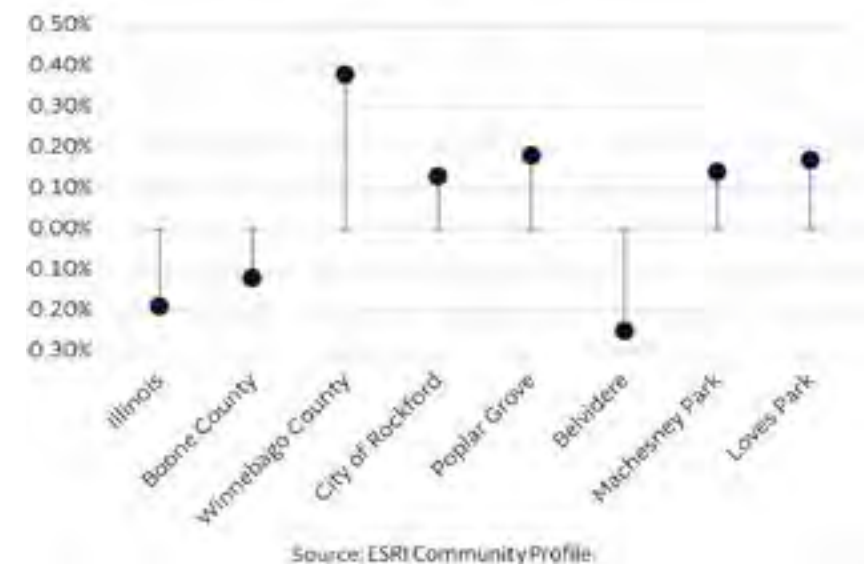


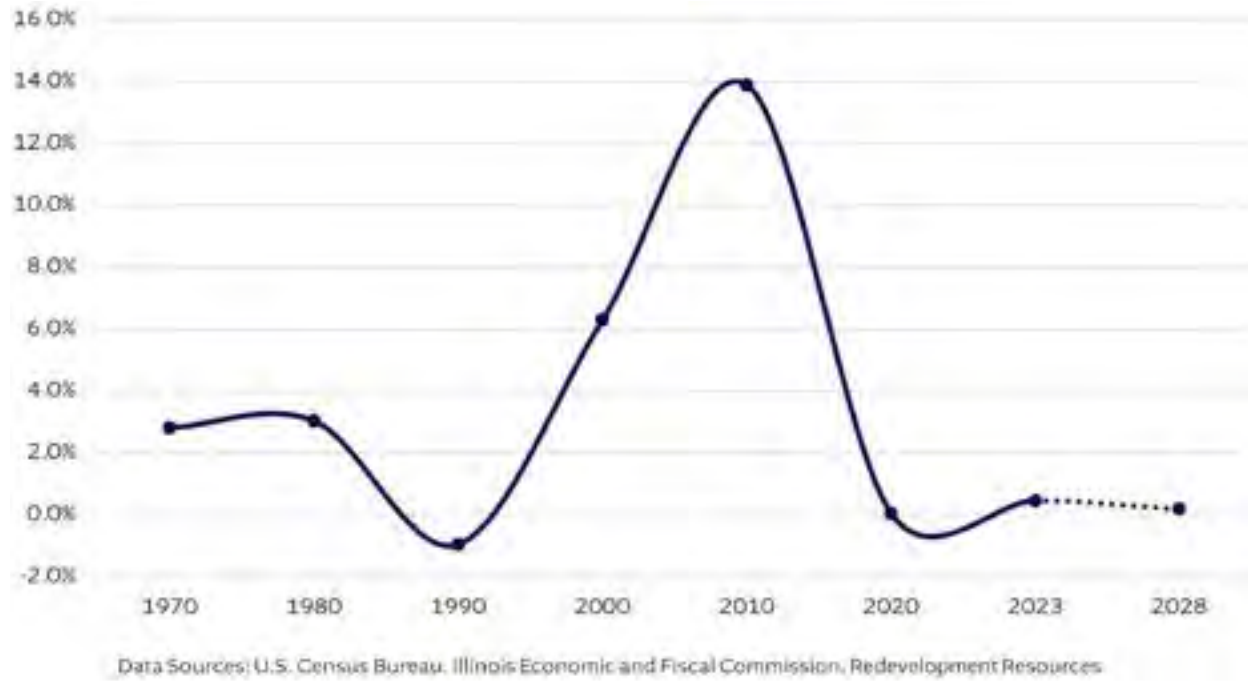
Figure 3: Annual Population Growth Rate (2023-2028)



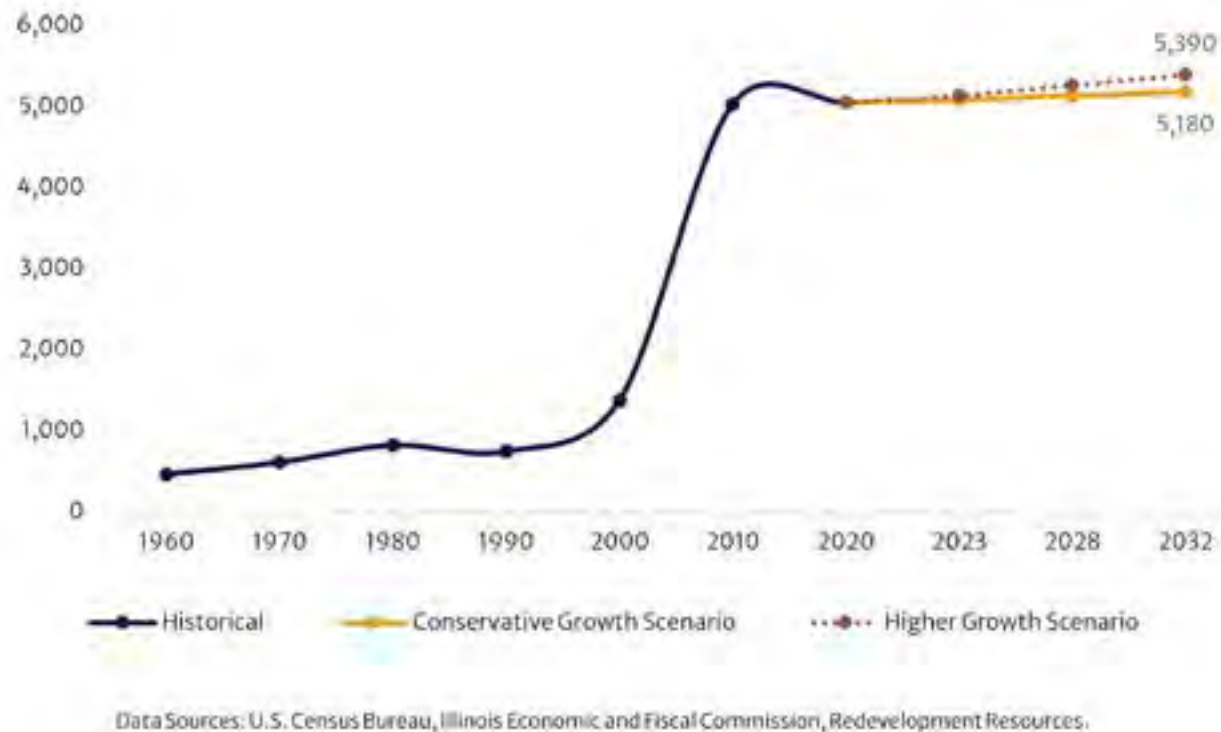
Assuming Poplar Grove maintains the 0.2-0.5%

compound annual growth rate it has had over the last three years through the next 10 years, Poplar Grove could grow to 5,180 – 5,390 persons by 2032.

**Figure 4: Poplar Grove Compound Annual Growth Rate (1970-2028)**



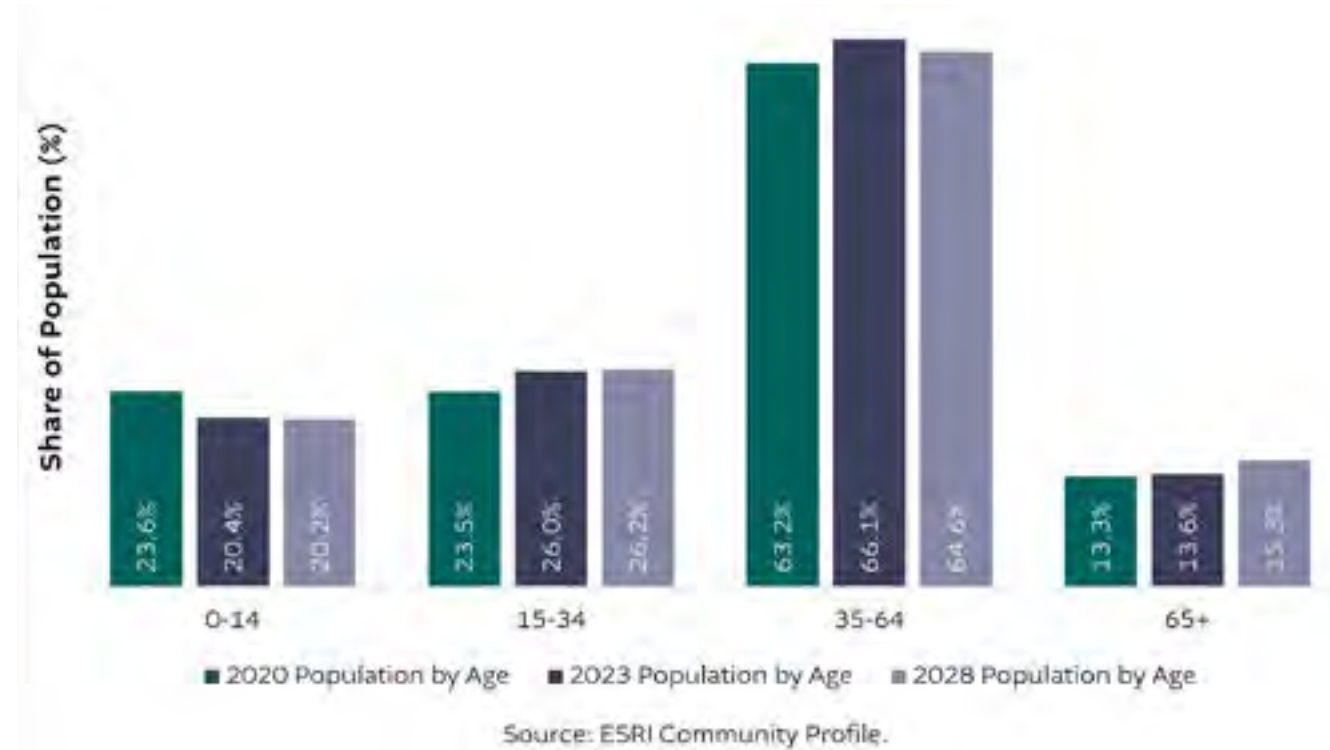
**Figure 5: Poplar Grove Population Trends and Projections (1960-2032)**



**Population by Age**

While population growth is predicted to decline among children and the prime working age cohort (35-64), growth is predicted for older children, young professionals, and retirees.

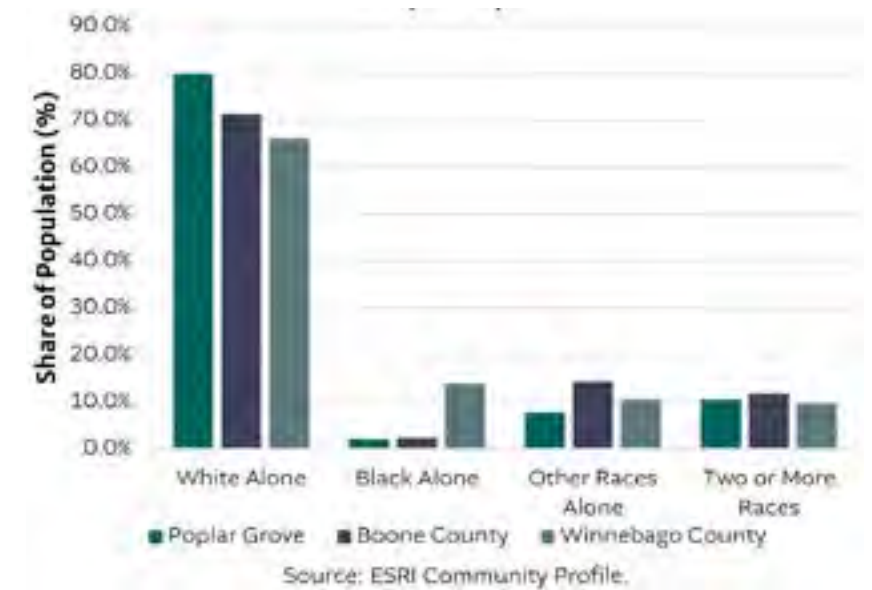
**Figure 6: Poplar Grove Population by Age Cohort (2020, 2023, 2028)**



**Population by Race**

If a company desires to diversify their workforce, they will need to attract diverse workforce talent from existing talent pools. The Village of Poplar Grove, however, is predominately white (79.8%) while Boone County as a whole is 71.4% white and Winnebago County is 66.0% white.

**Figure 7: Population by Race/Ethnicity Comparison (2023)**

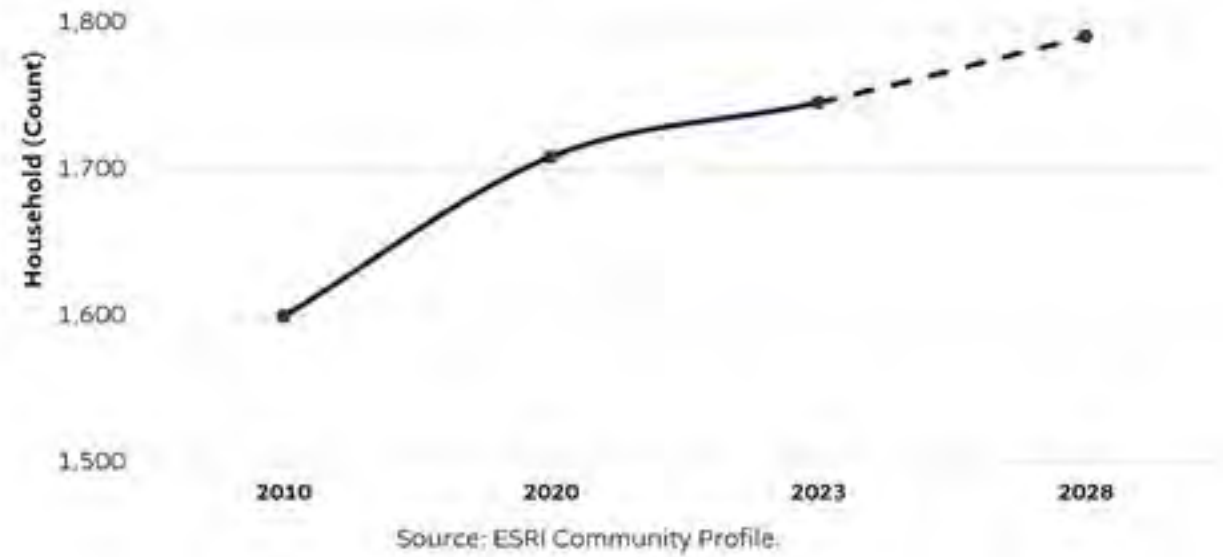


**Households**

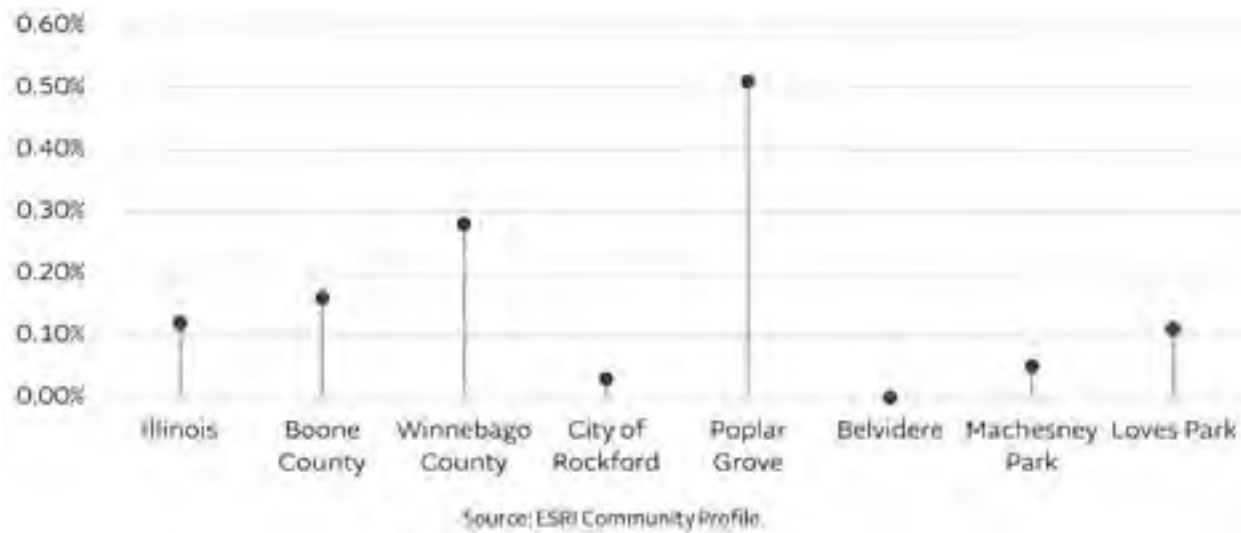
A Household refers to all the people who occupy a housing unit (e.g. house, apartment) as their usual place of residence<sup>1</sup>. This can include both related family members, unrelated people, or a person living alone.

The Village of Poplar Grove has not only grown in population, but also the number of households. This growth is also predicted to continue and to outpace its neighboring communities.

**Figure 8: Poplar Grove Household Trends**

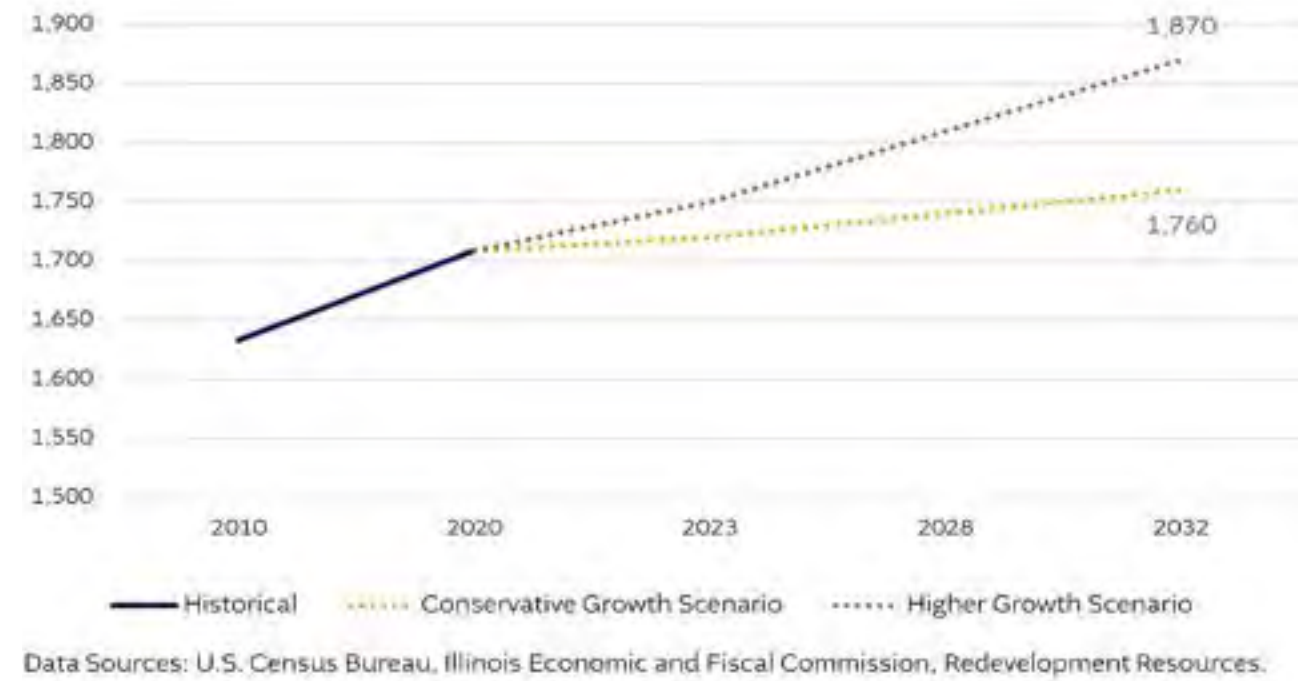


**Figure 9: Annual Household Growth Rate Comparison 2023-2028**



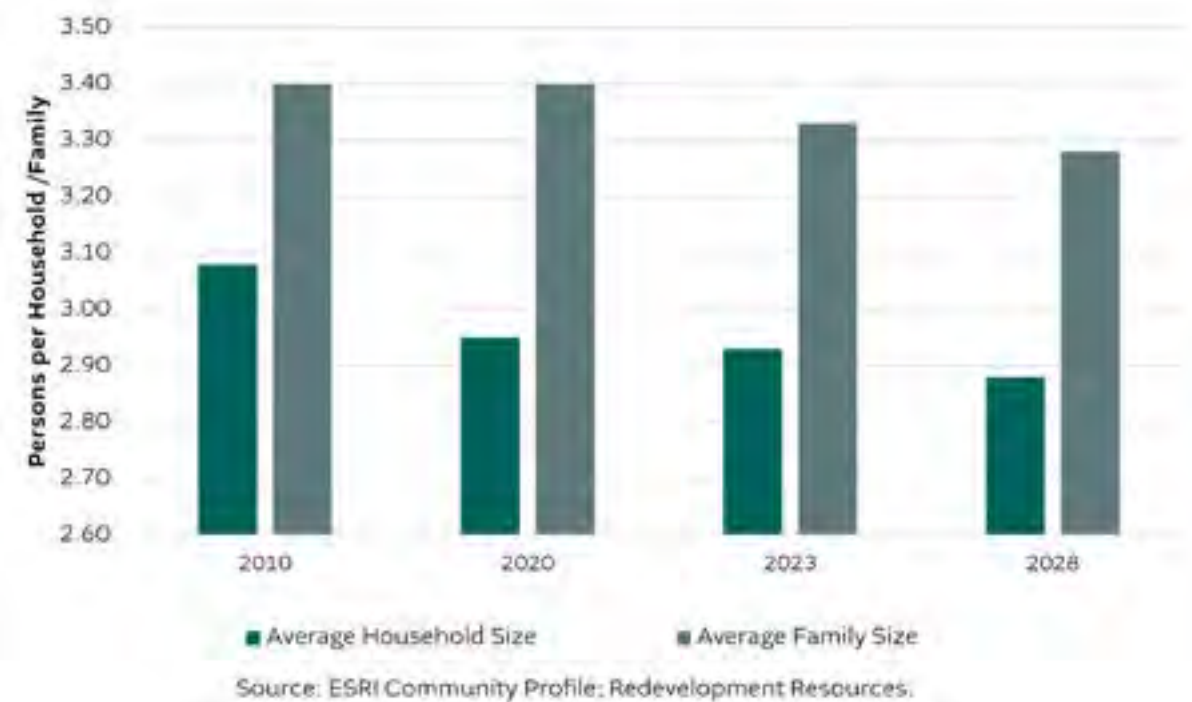
Should the village maintain a 0.2-0.7% compound annual household growth rate as it has in the past, by 2032, the number of households in Poplar Grove could be 1,760-1,870.

**Figure 10: Poplar Grove Household Trends and Projections (2010-2032)**



However, the number of people within each household is also predicted to decline. For example, the number of children couples choose to have, if any, may decline, or the number of roommates sharing a housing unit may decline. This impacts the size of future housing demand which we will discuss in the Housing section.

**Figure 11: Poplar Grove Household and Family Size Trends**



## Socioeconomic Profile

### Income

As of 2023 the median household income in Poplar Grove was \$92,992. This is approximately 24% more than the median household income for Boone County in the same year (\$74,902). ESRI forecasts median household incomes to rise for both the village and the county in 2028: \$104,761 (Poplar Grove) and \$81,593 (Boone County), respectively.

Figure 13 shows the percentage of household incomes in 2023 by range in both Poplar Grove and Boone County. In Poplar Grove, about 21% of households make less than \$50,000 per year, 31% make between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per year, and nearly 48% make \$100,000 or more per year. In Boone County, nearly 32% of households make less than \$50,000 per year, 33% make between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per year, and 35% make \$100,000 or more per year.

Figure 12: Median Household Income Overview

Median Household Income	Poplar Grove	Boone County
2023	\$92,992	\$74,902
2028	\$104,761	\$81,593

Figure 13: Households by Income (2023)

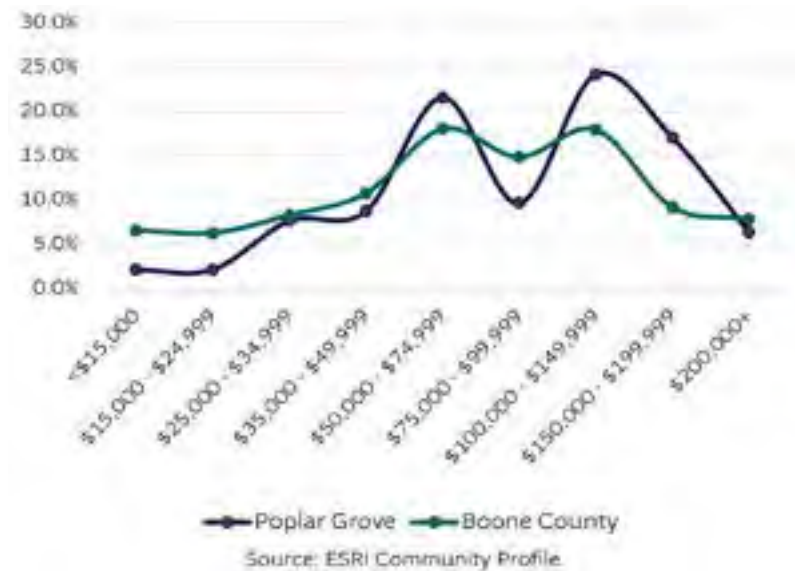
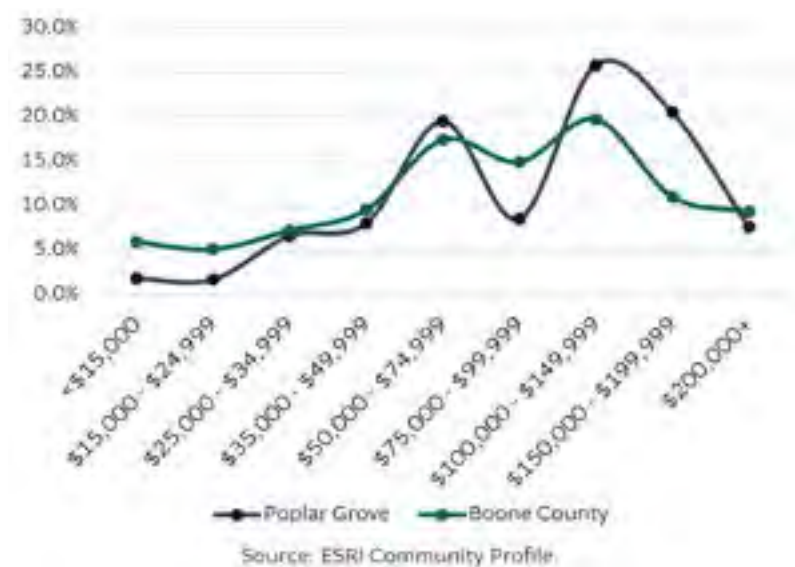


Figure 14: Households by Income (2028)



### Educational Attainment

Of Poplar Grove residents aged 25 years and over, 97% have at least a high school diploma or equivalent and nearly 72% have at least some college education.

Compared to Boone County, the village has higher rates of individuals whose educational attainment includes at least a high school diploma or equivalent. Village residents with at least some college education is also higher than the county: 69% to 55%, respectively. This is important, as wages are generally determined by educational attainment and experience with few exceptions.

### Employment

As of 2023, there are 2,866 workers aged 16 and older in the labor force. Of these workers, over 93% are employed. Figure 16 illustrates the employed states of the labor force by age segments. Village residents aged 25-54 comprise the largest share of the labor force at nearly 62%, while village residents aged 55-64 make up 17% of the labor force.

Figure 15: Population 25+ by Educational Attainment (2023)

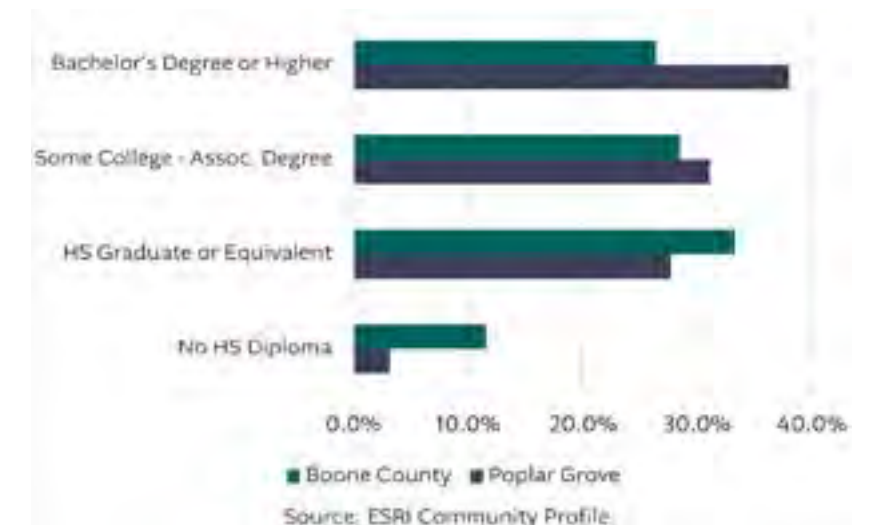


Figure 16: Civilian Population 16+ in Labor Force (2023)



Looking at industries in which Poplar Grove residents work, either within or outside the village, the Service industry maintains the largest share of employment at 40%. Manufacturing (17%), Transportation (10%), and Construction (9%) are next largest sources of employment, while Retail Trade (6%) and Fire/Insurance/Real Estate (4%) rank toward the bottom.

**Figure 17: Employed Population Aged 16 and Older by Industry (2023)**

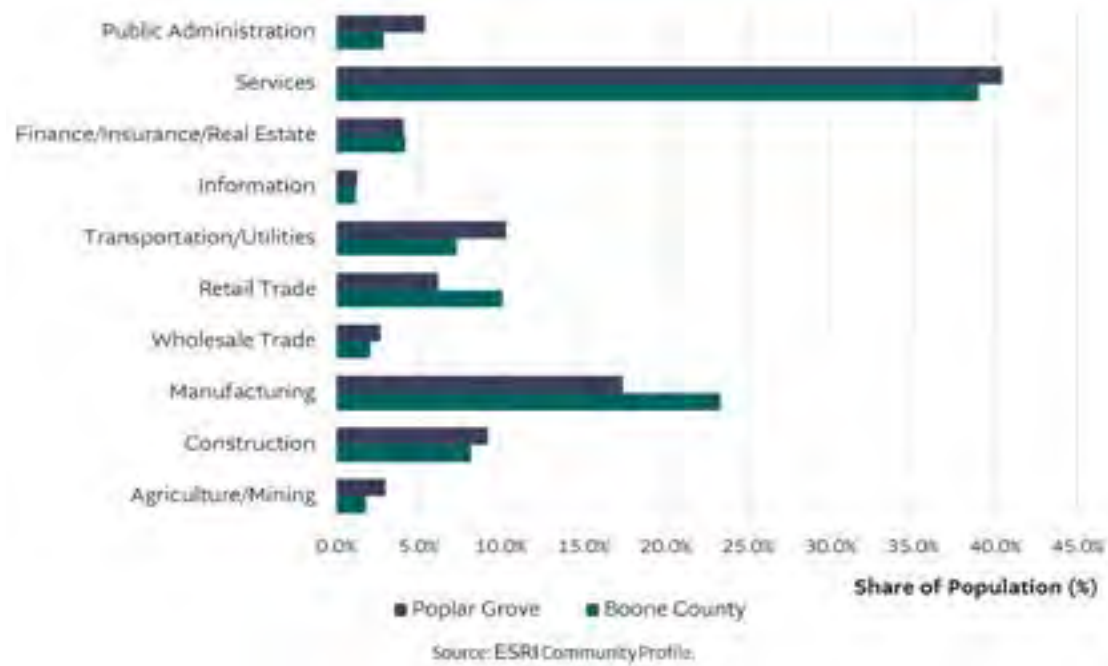


Figure 18 shows the percentage of the employed population by occupation in both Poplar Grove and Boone County. The Management/Business/Financial and Professional occupations maintain the large share of employment (27% and 26%, respectively). This is proportionally higher than the county-level counterparts. Conversely, the share of employed individuals in the Services and Production occupation is larger in Boone County than it is in the village. Other occupations maintain a similar or near-equal share, such as Transportation/Material/Moving and Installation/Maintenance/Repair.

**Figure 18: Employed Population Aged 16 and Older by Occupation (2023)**



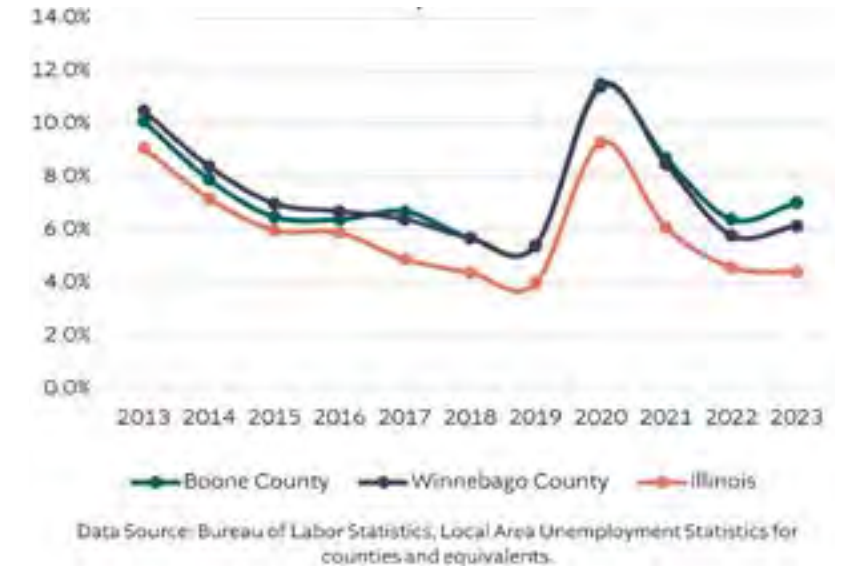
**Employment**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics does not provide unemployment data for communities of less than 25,000 in population, therefore the project team evaluated the unemployment rate of Boone County compared to Winnebago County since they are both part of the Rockford MSA. Over the last ten years, the unemployment rate of Boone and Winnebago County has closely followed or been identical to one another. Starting in 2022, however, the division between the two counties widened.

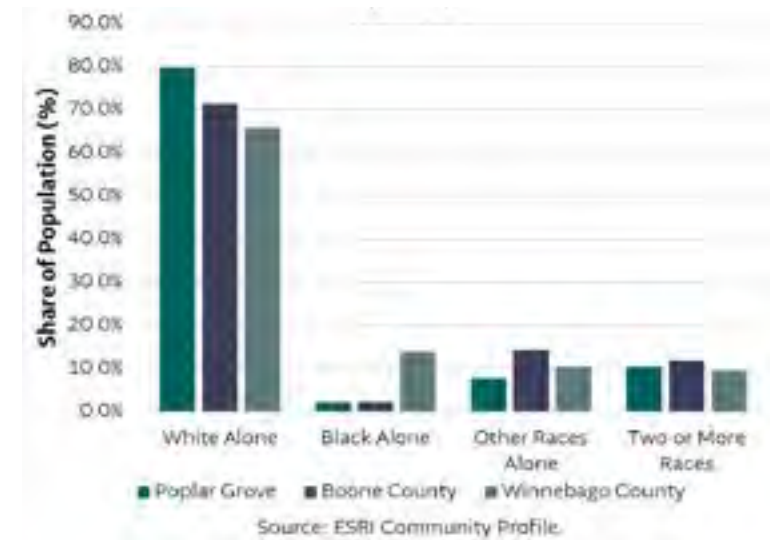
**Population by Race**

The racial composition of a community is one metric in a mosaic of metrics to assess access to resources, employment, quality of life, and health outcomes. Furthermore, McKinsey & Company, a globally recognized strategy and management consulting firm, found that “companies in the top quartile for gender or racial and ethnic diversity are more likely to have financial returns above their national industry medians<sup>2</sup>.” If a company desires to diversify their workforce, they will need to attract diverse workforce talent from existing talent pools. The Village of Poplar Grove, however, is predominately white (79.8%) while Boone County as a whole is 71.4% white and Winnebago County is 66.0% white.

**Figure 19: Unemployment Rate Trends Comparison**



**Figure 20: Population by Race/Ethnicity Comparison (2023)**



“... measuring differential experiences, treatment, and outcomes across racial categories is necessary to track disparities and to inform policymaking to achieve greater social justice.”<sup>3</sup>

-American Sociological Association, “The Importance of Collecting Data and Doing Social Scientific Research on Race.”

**SOURCES**

1. United States Census, “Glossary” Page. <https://www.census.gov/glossary/?term=Household>
2. McKinsey. “Why Diversity Matters”. <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/why-diversity-matters>
3. American Sociological Association. “The Importance of Collecting Data and Doing Social Scientific Research on Race.” Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association; 2003. pg. 4



# Land Use

## Introduction

In the context of municipal planning, the term “Land Use” refers to the different purposes for which land may be used. While these purposes are functional in their individual classification—residential, commercial, industrial, civic, and conservation uses, for example—their collective form plays a significant role in creating the community the village aspires to become.

Long-range land use plans provide a framework for municipalities to identify future land use needs in general, guide future preservation and development for public and private uses in particular, and spatially arrange said uses in an orderly, compatible manner. At their best, long-range land use plans help municipalities accomplish multiple objectives, including:

- Encouraging orderly, cohesive development patterns;
- Cultivating community character and a unique sense of place;
- Minimizing land use conflicts;
- Protecting natural environments; and
- Providing efficient municipal service delivery.

The Land Use element of the plan includes information on existing land use, development patterns, and zoning classifications within the Village of Poplar Grove. It references relevant content from previously adopted plans and studies and incorporates data from other elements within this plan related to issues, trends, and opportunities. Put together, these items inform a Future Land Use Plan that identifies a preferred physical development for the village.

Upon adoption by the Village Board, the Land Use element of the plan becomes a guide for the village’s official zoning map and for making decisions related to a variety of matters, including development phasing, associating developments with public improvements, and zoning and subdivision decisions. It should be stressed that this element is a guide.

Zoning is the legal mechanism by which the village controls how land is used. The village’s zoning map is linked to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), and together they regulate land use. Working in tandem with village staff, the Village Board as well as the Planning & Zoning Commission is responsible for interpreting the land use plan and enforcing the zoning ordinance.



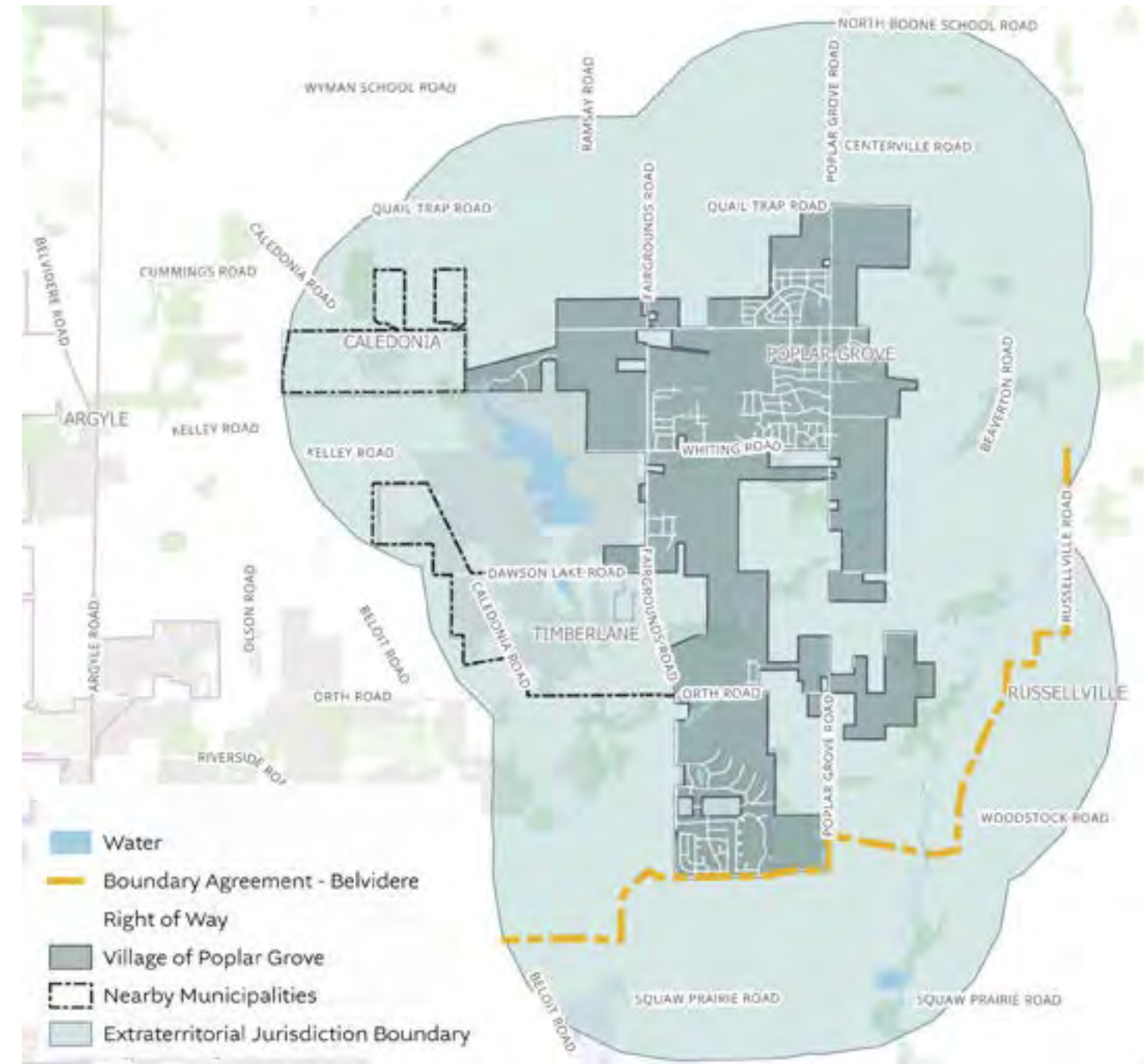
## Planning Area

As authorized by Illinois state statute, municipalities have the ability to plan for unincorporated areas contained within 1.5 miles of its municipal limits. This is known as its Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), a boundary which is illustrated in Figure 21.

The village has established boundary agreements with the City of Belvidere to the south. A boundary agreement between the Village of Poplar Grove and the Village of Capron expired July 10, 2020, and a renewed agreement could be not verified at the time of this plan update. The Village is also adjacent to Candlewick Lake, an official Census-Designed Place, to the west.

### Boundary Agreements

Figure 21: Planning Area



## Existing Land Use

Figure 22 illustrates existing land uses in and around the Village by a variety of different categories described below. These categories are referenced from map layers obtained from Boone County, and their descriptions align with category descriptions found in both the 2029 Boone County Comprehensive Plan and the Boone County Code of Ordinances.

### Agricultural



Land used for row crops, animal husbandry, pastures, or agritourism in rural locations. Residential development is typically limited to farmsteads. In most cases there are no dwelling units on the lot and the parcel is classified as a designated farm by the Boone County Assessor's Office.

### Exurban Residential



Consists of rural, small estate residential development in areas not expected to have centralized water and/or sewer facilities in the near future. Land use in this category can also include agricultural pursuits, equestrian uses, and land conservation in areas which are physically unsuitable for intensive urban development.

### Single-Family Residential



Detached residential development serving individual families. This land use features a range of housing typologies from traditional, smaller-scale housing on small lots with minimal setbacks to contemporary, larger-scale housing on large lots with deep setbacks or large acreage.

### Two-Family Residential



Typically attached residential development consisting of duplexes, apartments, townhomes, condominiums, and senior housing.

### Multi-Family Residential



Typically attached residential development consisting of apartments, townhomes, condominiums, and senior housing. Dwelling units can include at least 3 or more dwelling units per building. Mobile home parks are also included in this category.

### Commercial



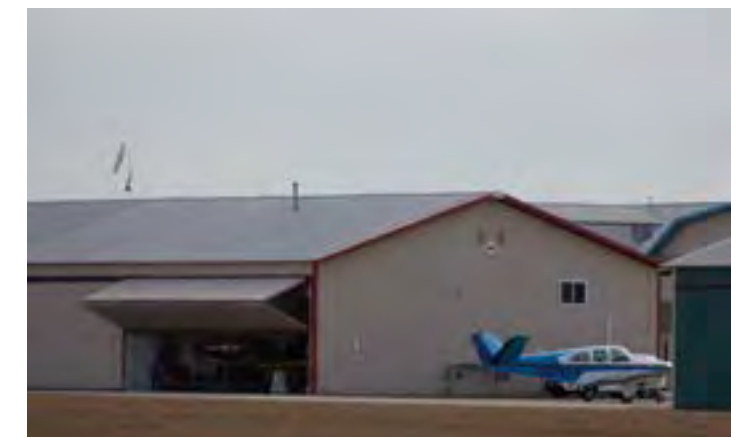
Land used for retail, restaurants, hotels, office space, or a similar use. Uses in this category exist in both traditional (e.g. downtown) and suburban-style building typologies.

### Industrial



Land used for manufacturing, factories, warehouse/storage, or large-scale production. Can consist of smaller uses assembled in industrial park-style development as well as large, stand-alone sites typically exceeding 1 acre.

### Airport



This designation exclusively references the Poplar Grove Airport, a privately-owned general aviation facility. Residential uses associated with the airport are associated with the Single-Family Residential land use described above.

**Institutional**



Land used for churches, schools, fairgrounds, assisted living facilities, government or public safety buildings, public utilities, cemeteries, or other civic-oriented land uses.

**Open Space**



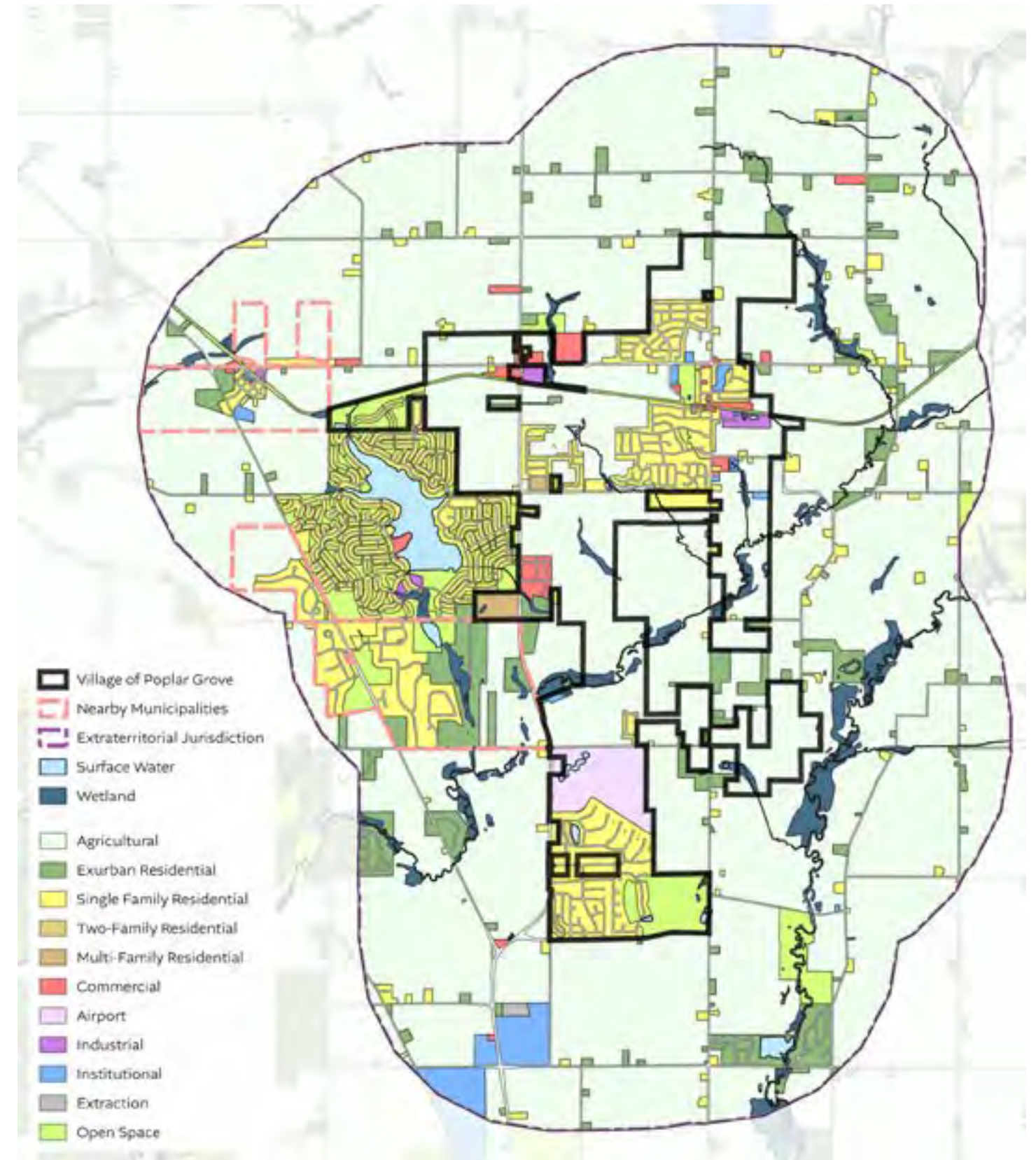
Land used for parks, conservation areas, golf courses, camp grounds, or other outdoor recreation facilities. There are no dwelling units located on these parcels and many sites exceed 10 acres. This land use category is distinct from wetlands and flood plains despite many parcels being situated within or nearby said areas.

**Extraction**



Land used for mines or quarries on a collection of parcels usually greater than 40 acres.

**Figure 22: Existing Land Use**



**Figure 23: Existing Land Use within Extraterritorial Jurisdictional Boundary**

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Agricultural	30,022	69.01%
Exurban Residential	1,497	3.44%
Single-Family Residential	2,269	5.22%
Two-Family Residential	21	0.05%
Multi-Family Residential	57	0.13%
Commercial	183	0.42%
Industrial	60	0.14%
Airport	250	0.57%
Institutional	363	0.83%
Extraction	14	0.03%
Right of Way	7,316	16.82%
Open Space	1,453	3.34%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43,403</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Existing Land Use Pattern Within the Village**

For many years, land use within the Village has typified a small, rural community. County roadways in tandem with the former Chicago & Northwestern Railroad were defining features of the village’s land use. Compact land uses clustered around the rail line and North State Street (Route 32); businesses included retail, commercial, and agricultural establishments, and residential development is in keeping with the dense, walkable land use found in many pre World-War II traditional developments.

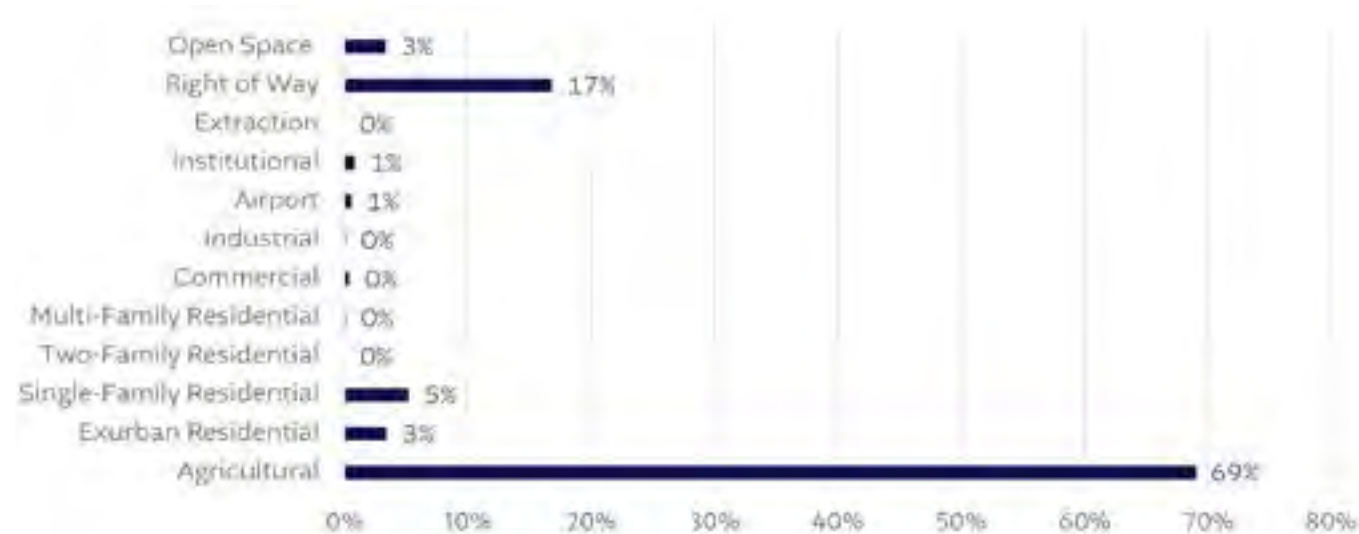
The Village is not unlike many small towns in that its growth pattern has been markedly residential, with subdivisions on curvilinear streets radiating outward from the village’s center in the last few decades. The 2029 Boone County Comprehensive Plan attributes this growth pattern to the “housing boom” of the 1990s into the 2000s, a period in which the county experienced large population growth.<sup>1</sup> In addition to demand of single-family residential homes, the increased population also facilitated commercial development along major corridors. This automobile-oriented development is especially present on the northern and western boundaries of the village, with commercial retail flanking state highways and serving local and regional users alike.

Figure 25 summarizes the existing land use within the Village of Poplar Grove. At the time of this plan update, the Village is comprised of 2,499 parcels of land on 4,961 acres within a 7.72 square mile boundary.

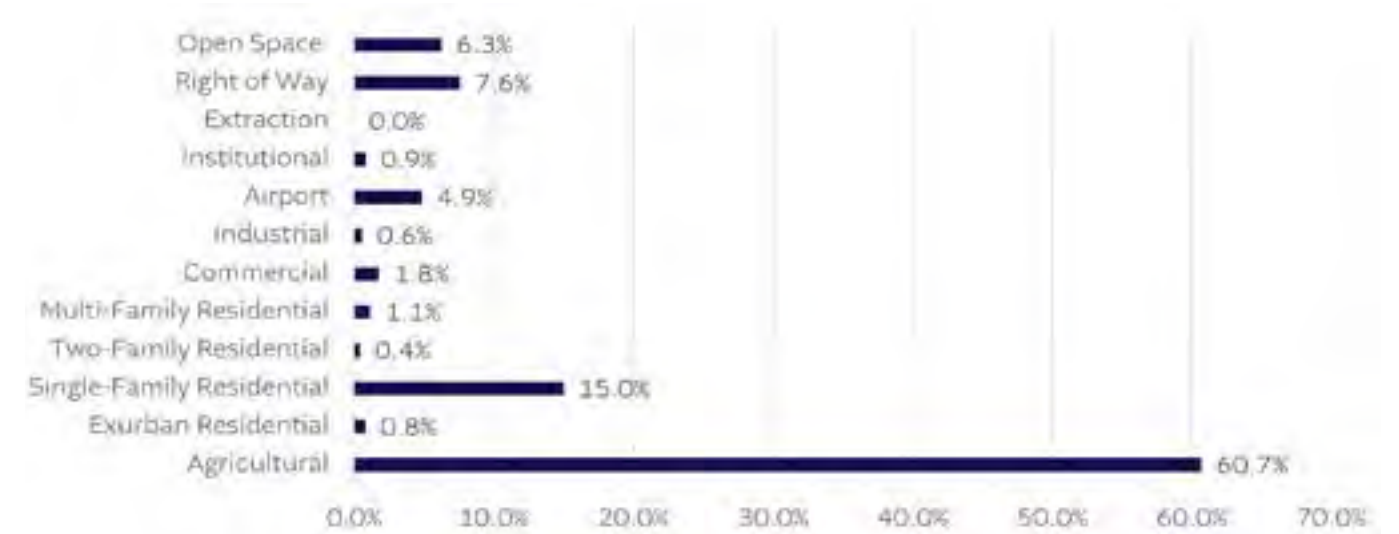
**Figure 25: Existing Land Use within Village Boundary**

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Agricultural	3011.00	60.7%
Exurban Residential	40.72	0.8%
Single-Family Residential	745.02	15.0%
Two-Family Residential	20.73	0.4%
Multi-Family Residential	56.76	1.1%
Commercial	87.80	1.8%
Industrial	28.92	0.6%
Airport	241.45	4.9%
Institutional	42.19	0.9%
Extraction	0.00	0.0%
Right of Way	375.37	7.6%
Open Space	310.67	6.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,961</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 24: Bar Chart of Existing Land Use within Extraterritorial Jurisdictional Boundary**



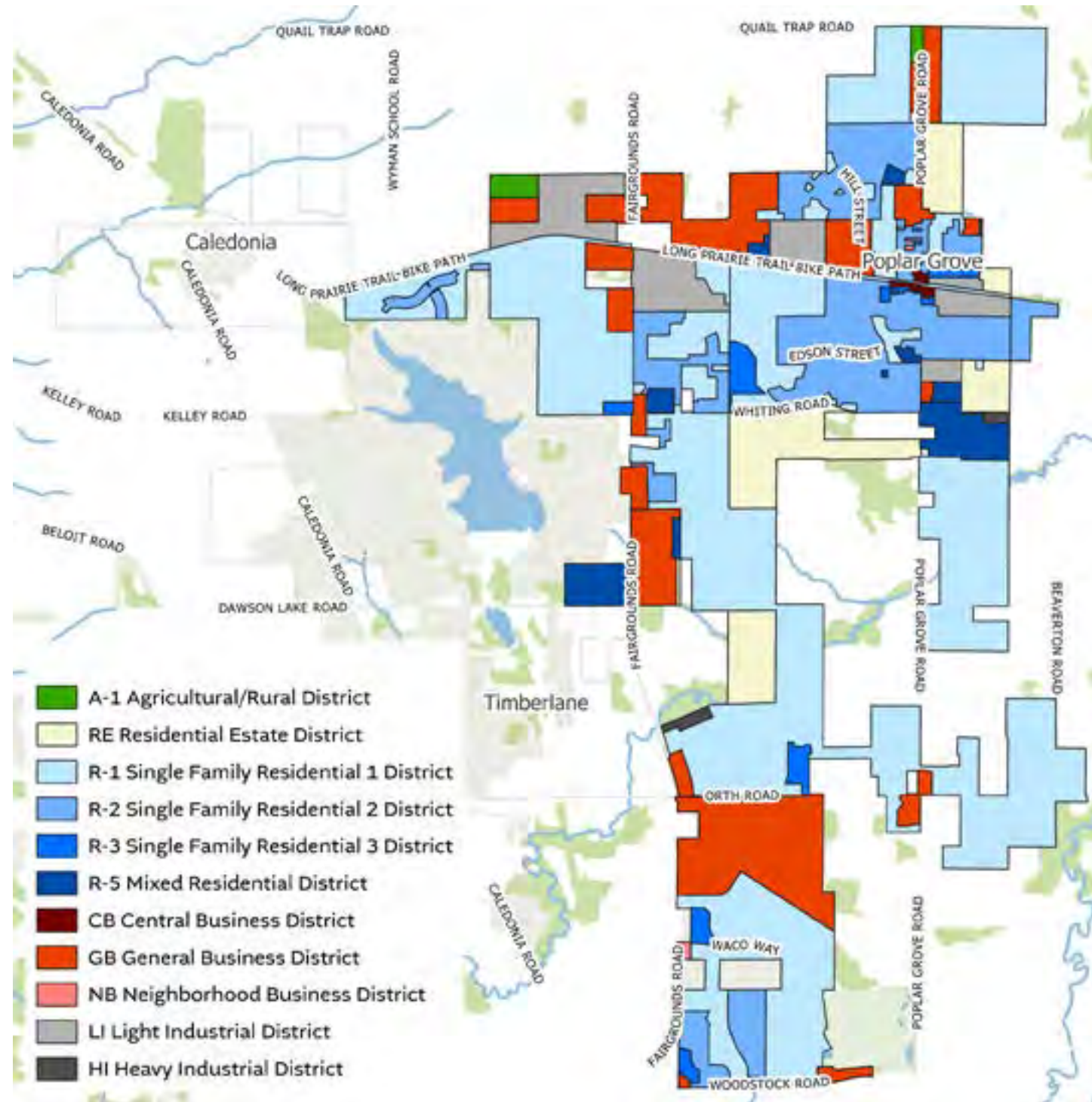
**Figure 26: Bar Chart of Existing Land Use within Village Boundary**



## Current Zoning

Poplar Grove's zoning currently consists of 11 zoning districts including 1 agricultural, 3 business, 2 industrial, and 5 residential districts.

Figure 27: Current Zoning



The Zoning Ordinance was established March 13, 2012 and last amended on April 9, 2012.

Figure 28: Table Summary of Current Zoning Classifications

Category	Description	Acres	% of Total
Agricultural/Rural District	A-1 (40 ac)	27.99	0.6%
Business Districts	CB Central Business	8.39	0.2%
	GB General Business	720.26	14.6%
	NB Neighborhood Business	15.68	0.3%
Industrial Districts	LI Light Industrial	271.39	5.5%
	HI Heavy Industrial	5.96	0.1%
Residential Districts	R-1 Single Family (20,000 sqft)	2504.33	50.8%
	R-2 Single Family (10,000 sqft)	755.29	15.3%
	R-3 Single Family (7,000 sqft)	90.99	1.8%
	R-5 Mixed Residential (3,000 sqft)	168.77	3.4%
	RE Residential Estate (10 ac)	358.78	7.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>4,928</b>	<b>100%</b>

The following is a basic description of each of the zoning districts. The full detail of uses and regulations can be found in the city's zoning ordinance.

### Agricultural District

**A-1, Agricultural-Rural District:** This district is intended to permit development that is solely of a rural community character. The land use standards for this district permit very low density single-family residential development at one dwelling unit for every 40 gross acres, as well as a variety of agricultural related uses. The A-1 District shall either serve as a development/conservation designation (preserving and protecting agricultural activities such as hobby farming and rural residential areas) that will not be developed further or as a holding zone which allows for interim land uses (agricultural and low density single-family residential uses compatible with farming).

### Business Districts

**CB, Central Business District:** This district is intended to provide a range of large and small commercial development as well as some institutional and higher-

intensity residential uses in the downtown area. This may be accomplished by providing incentives for infill development and redevelopment, allowing minimal building setbacks and no requirements for on-site parking or landscaping.

**GB, General Business District:** This district is intended to permit both small and large scale high quality commercial and institutional development that is compatible with the overall suburban character of the village. A wide range of commercial uses including retail, lodging and office uses are permitted within this district. Most new and infill commercial development will be in the GB District.

**NB, Neighborhood Business District:** This district is intended to permit low-intensity, high-quality, small-scale office, commercial and institutional development that is compatible with residential neighborhoods and located at appropriate areas within or directly adjacent to residential development. Requirements of this district are intended to ensure that the nonresidential uses allowed in the NB District are compatible with the residential uses adjacent to or within the district.

### Industrial Districts

**LI, Light Industrial District:** This district is intended to permit high-quality industrial and office uses at intensities compatible to the suburban-character of the Village. This is accomplished in part through relatively low maximum buildable site area. The primary difference between this and the HI District is that the typical industrial activities will be indoors and not produce high levels of noise, exhaust, odors and other nuisances typically associated with more intense industrial activities.

**HI, Heavy Industrial District:** This district is intended to permit a wide variety of indoor and outdoor industrial land uses and other land uses not permitted in any other zoning district. This does not mean that all land uses are permitted in this district. The HI District also provides space for land uses that have the potential to produce more of a nuisance to adjacent properties; in this district the potential nuisances on adjacent properties are minimized.

### Residential Districts

**R-1, Single-Family Residential 1 District:** The purpose of this district is to allow for the development of single-family detached residences at low densities so as to preserve the suburban residential character of the area. Regulations include a minimum lot area of 20,000 square feet, a dwelling unit separation of 30 feet, and a minimum floor area of 2,000 square feet.

**R-2, Single-Family Residential 2 District:** The purpose of this district is to allow for the development of single-family detached residences at moderate densities to accommodate existing developments within the Village. In order to maintain lots and structures within older

neighborhoods which often cater to mixed incomes, some multi-family housing may be permitted by special use. Regulations include a minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet, a dwelling unit separation of 12 feet, and a minimum floor area of 1,500 square feet.

**R-3, Single-Family Residential 3 District:** The purpose of this district is to allow for the development of single-family detached residences at high densities to accommodate existing developments within the Village. Regulations include a minimum lot area of 7,000 square feet, a dwelling unit separation of 20 feet, and a minimum floor area of 840 square feet.

**R-5, Mixed Residential District:** This district is intended to permit residential development that has a higher density than other residential districts with two or more dwelling units per building. Various types of residential uses are permitted within this district: two unit structures, townhouses and multiple-family buildings. Regulations include a minimum lot area of 3,000 square feet, a dwelling unit separation of 20 feet with 0 feet along a common wall, and a minimum floor area of 840 square feet.

**RE, Residential Estate District:** This district is similar in purpose as the Agricultural/Rural District (A-1), except that it allows for low density single-family residential development, as well as hobby farming, but not a wide range of agricultural activities or livestock. Similar to the A-1 District, this district can function as either a development/conservation designation or as a holding district. As a development/conservation district, the ultimate build out of the land would be a maximum of one dwelling unit per ten acres. This allows for the potential to permanently protect areas of the Village for very low density residential development for those who want to live in a countryside environment.



Moscato's Pizzeria is located in the village's downtown, which is zoned 'CB' for Central Business District.

### Future Land Use

Figure 29 illustrates future land use within the village.

The Future Land Use Map is a policy tool that is used to inform zoning decisions. As such, the map illustrates general land use types. Specific distinctions are located in the village's Zoning Ordinance. Additional layers of relevance have been noted in the legend; this includes:

- Nearby Municipalities
- Community Separation Areas
- Pre-Annexation Areas
- Extraterritorial Jurisdictional Boundary
- Wetlands
- FEMA Flood Zones (100-year, 500-year)

Generally, village officials may consult the Future Land Use Map during the following events:

- **Rezoning requests:** This helps determine if the request aligns with the desired future land use.
- **Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance:** This ensures that proposed zoning changes align with the desired future land use.

The Future Land Use Map in this report is designed to reflect the language found in the existing Zoning Ordinance. These documents work in tandem and must be aligned accordingly. Village officials seeking to make any changes to either the Future Land Use Map or the Zoning Ordinance must be done in a way that ensures ultimate alignment between both documents.

### Recommendations

#### Goals

- Promote land use in a way that encourages orderly, cohesive development patterns, reinforces community character and a unique sense of places, minimizes land use conflicts, protects natural environments and resources, and provides efficient municipal service delivery.

#### Objectives

- Promote development that advances economic growth and provides an efficient land use pattern
- Ensure a desirable mix of land uses that build the tax base and justify infrastructure improvements
- Maintain regionally competitive property values

### Policies

- Consult the Land Use section of this plan in general, and the Future Land Use Map and section recommendations in particular, when reviewing rezoning requests, updating the Zoning Ordinance, or otherwise making specific land use decisions.
- Avoid 'leapfrog' development patterns that blur distinct boundaries between land uses, such as resident development and agricultural land. Instead, direct new development to adjacent existing development for ease and economy of extending utilities and infrastructure.
- De-concentrate the development of higher-density residential development throughout the village by incorporating into multiple neighborhoods rather than a select one or two.
- Encourage a mix of uses in new larger scale developments to accommodate employment, housing, and shopping demand.
- Preserve and enhance the historic character of the downtown by encouraging compatible new development and redevelopment.
- Maintain the Boundary Agreement between the Village of Poplar Grove and the City of Belvidere.
- Amend the Village Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with all state statute changes and evolving residential demands.

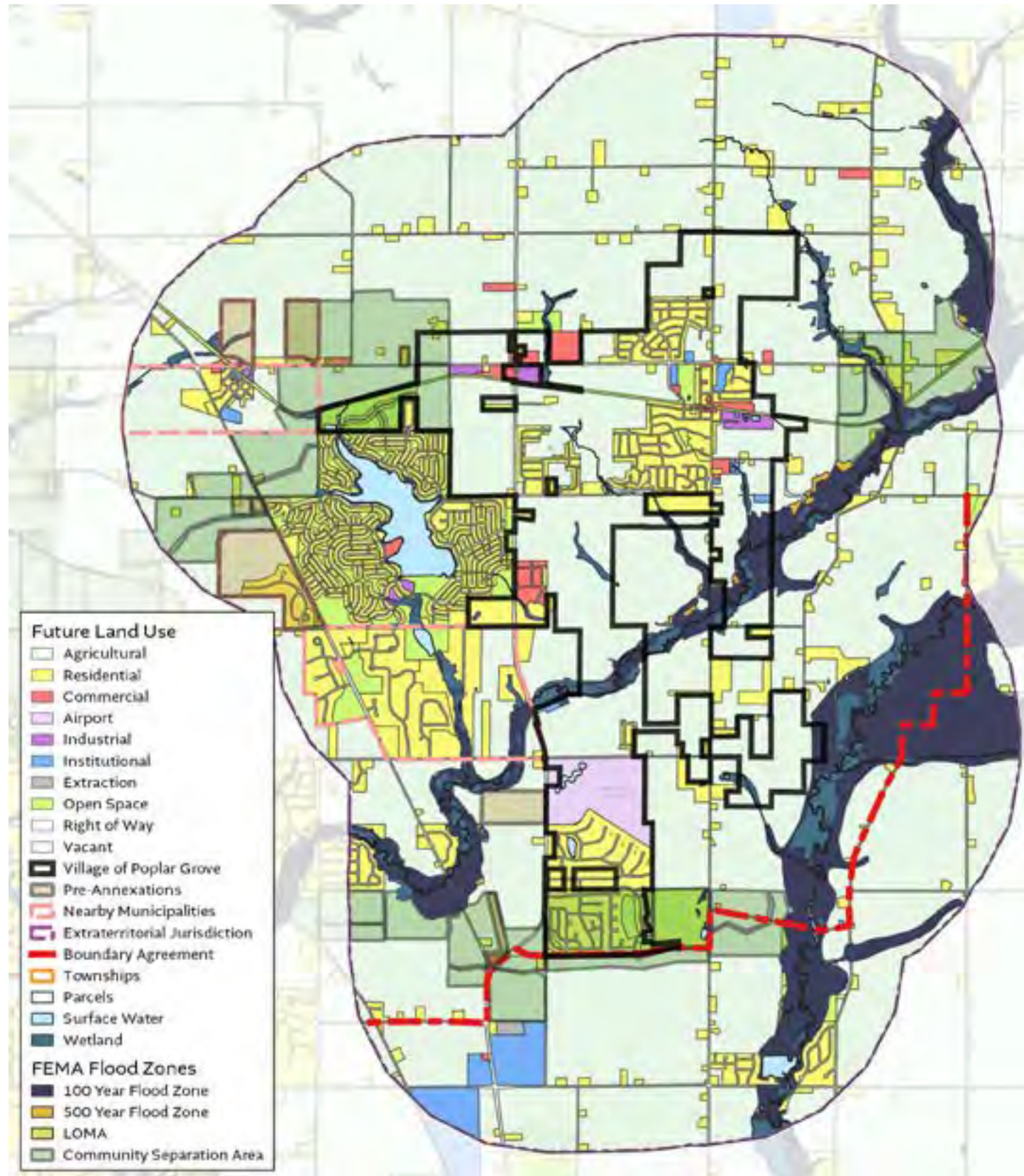
### Strategies

1. Establish a boundary agreement between the Village of Poplar Grove and the Villages of Caledonia and Timberlane. This was an earlier recommendation in the previous plan but was never executed.
2. Re-Establish a boundary agreement between the Village of Poplar Grove and the Village of Capron. A 20-year boundary agreement between the Village of Poplar Grove and the Village of Capron was established on July 10, 2000. That agreement expired July 10, 2020, and a renewed agreement could not be verified at the time of this plan update.
3. Enhance non-motorized accessibility between developments by developing sidewalks and trails.
4. Promote more compact neighborhood design, aligning with traditional development patterns, to encourage efficient development and use of resources.
5. Develop framework for future industrial/business park opportunities.

### SOURCES

1. Boone County, Region 1 Planning Council. "Boone County Comprehensive Plan, 2029".

Figure 29: Future Land Use



# Agricultural & Natural Resources

## Introduction

Among the many land uses characterizing the Village of Poplar Grove, the presence of farmland throughout the community is perhaps the most significant. Agricultural uses have shaped the landscape well before the village's incorporation, and agriculture occupies the majority of land use both within and around the village boundaries to date. During the February 21 Community Open House, residents expressed pride over their agricultural heritage as well as a need to use and conserve farmland responsibly.

Of equal importance is the need to conserve natural resources, particularly in undeveloped areas such as woodlands and land within the 100 year floodplain. The region touts a high-quality network of creeks, streams, and rivers in general, and the presence of Beaver Creek and Piscasaw Creek in particular are valuable assets to the community.

Boone County Conservation District owns 98 parcels of land, nearly all of which is designated as conservation in its land use, and much of which exists within the extraterritorial jurisdictional boundary relevant to the village's planning process. Piscasaw Fen, Tuttle Clarkson, and Funderburg are just a few of the conservation areas located in close proximity to the village.

This section includes an overview of the existing land cover in the planning area, which is helpful for distinguishing between man-made/developed conditions and natural/un-developed conditions. The section also summarizes data related to the county's agricultural and natural resources while illustrating 'No-Growth' areas to inform the Future Land Use Map. Village officials should strive to maintain a balance between all land uses, planning for how land should and should not be developed, and accounting for how agricultural and natural resources should be preserved.



## Land Cover

Figure 30 visualizes land cover in the planning area as of 2021 using spatial data from the National Landcover Database (NLCD). As mentioned above, land use and land cover are interrelated yet maintain distinct meanings. Land use presupposes human activity and is a basis for future land use planning. Land cover includes both natural characteristics and human constructions built on the land's surface.

Over 3,000 acres are currently being used for agricultural purposes, accounting for nearly 61% of all land use within the village. Most of this agricultural land is zoned generally for low-density residential use.

Figure 30: Land Cover in Planning Area

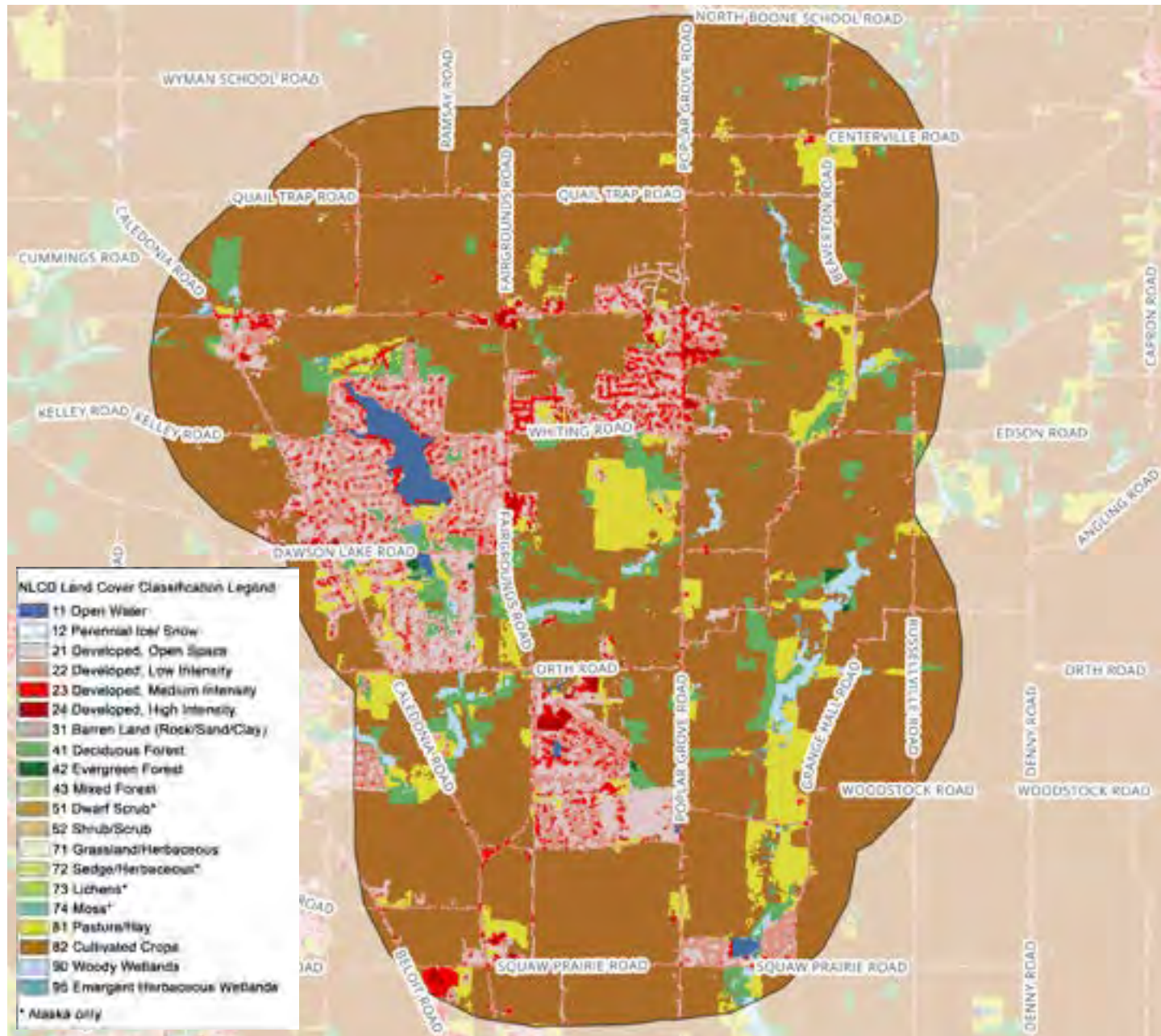


Figure 31: Land Cover, Boone County

Land Cover Type	Cell Count	Area (acres)	Percent	Adjusted Area (acres)
Open Water	2,784	619.1	0.32%	594.7
Developed, Open Space	43,774	9,735.10	5.07%	9,351.5
Developed, Low Intensity	50,453	11,220.5	5.85%	10,778.3
Developed, Medium Intensity	11,460	2548.6	1.33%	2,448.2
Developed, High Intensity	4,229	940.5	0.49%	903.4
Barren Land	914	203.3	0.11%	195.3
Deciduous Forest	52,262	11,622.8	6.06%	11,164.8
Evergreen Forest	828	184.1	0.10%	176.9
Shrub/Scrub	1,541	342.7	0.18%	329.2
Herbaceous	7,010	1,559.0	0.81%	1,497.6
Hay/Pasture	39,433	8,769.7	4.57%	8,424.1
Cultivated Crops	642,957	142,990.2	74.53%	137,355.6
Woody Wetlands	3,331	740.8	0.39%	711.6
Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands	1,726	383.9	0.20%	368.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>862,702</b>	<b>101,860.3</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>184,300.0</b>

## Agricultural Resources

Within the village boundaries, the land zoned for agricultural use is minimal: 28 acres, which accounts for just 1% of the village's land area. However, the existing land use map shows that over 3,000 acres are currently being used for agricultural purposes, accounting for nearly 61% of all land use within the village. Most of this agricultural land is zoned generally for low-density residential use.

The village is surrounded by productive agricultural land as well. Agriculture comprises 30,022 acres of all land within the extraterritorial boundary, accounting for 69% of all land use in this area. Much of this land is considered 'prime farmland' due to its soil and moisture supply and growing season.

The following agricultural profiles are based on county-level data from multiple sources including the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium (MRLC).



**NLCD Agriculture Classes**

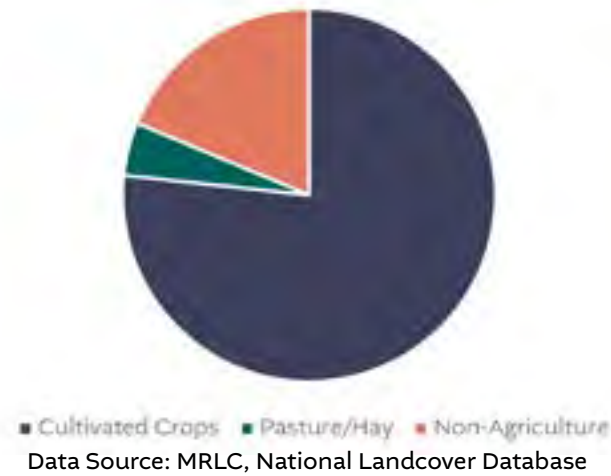
NLCD Agriculture classes include land used for production of annual crops as well as areas intensively managed for livestock production. In Boone County, the land cover consists of Cultivated Crops (76.7%) and Pasture/Hay (4.6%).

**Agriculture Change**

From 2001 to 2021, approximately 5.4 square miles of agriculture were lost in Boone County. This agricultural land, which consisted largely of cultivated crops, was changed to open space or developed at various scales of intensity.

Figure 33 summarizes data on the number and size of farms in Boone County from 2012-2022. During this ten-year period, the number of farms has decreased 13.3%. Figure 34 segments this data into a range of acres per farm. Notably, farms with fewer than 9 acres of farmland decreased 19% (19 farms total) from 2017-2022, farms with 70-99 acres decreased 53% (16 farms total), and farms with 1,000-1,999 acres decreased 30% (6 farms total) during the same time period.

**Figure 32: Agriculture Classes**

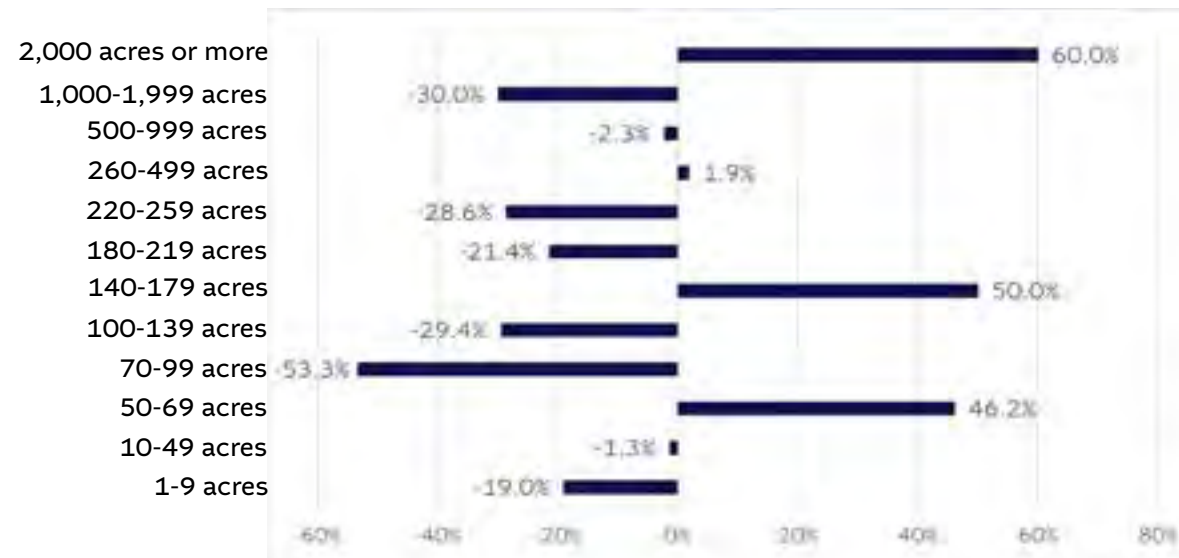


**Figure 33: Summary, Number of Farms, Boone County**

	2022	2017	2012	Difference 2017-2022	Difference 2012-2022
Number of Farms	416	457	480	-9.0%	-13.3%
Land in Farms (Acres)	124,244	113,500	131,660	9.5%	-5.6%
Average Size of Farm (Acres)	299	248	278	20.6%	7.6%

Data Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

**Figure 34: Size of Farm, Total Number**



Data Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Figure 35 shows the change in farm size from 2017-2022 by acres. The number of acres in both the 140-179 acre and 2,000+ acre categories show substantial increases: 52.5% and 86.6%, respectively. These two categories account for 17% of the total among of farmland acres in the county.

**Figure 35: Size of Farm, Total Acres**

	2022	2017	Difference, 2017-2022
1-9 acres	390	539	-27.6%
10-49 acres	3,605	3,392	6.3%
50-69 acres	1,108	801	38.3%
70-99 acres	1,231	2,535	-51.4%
100-139 acres	1,385	1,947	-28.9%
140-179 acres	1,382	906	52.5%
180-219 acres	2,161	2,804	-22.9%
220-259 acres	1,191	1,637	-27.2%
260-499 acres	18,265	18,411	-0.8%
500-999 acres	29,519	29,438	0.3%
1,000-1,999 acres	19,245	27,096	-29.0%
2,000 acres or more	44,762	23,994	86.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>124,244</b>	<b>113,500</b>	<b>9.5%</b>

Data Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Agriculture plays an outsized role in both the county’s land use and the county’s character. The 2020 Boone County Comprehensive Plan states that agriculture is one of its “overarching themes”, citing that the county maintains an agricultural heritage. Stakeholder engagement sessions during the county planning process revealed that residents not only recognized the economic benefit of agriculture but also were “passionate about the protection of the county’s prime farmland”. In fact, the most prioritized land use strategy as indicated by stakeholders was to “preserve prime agricultural land and open space.”





## Natural Resources

### Watershed

A watershed is an area of land that channels water to a common waterway, such as a creek or a river. Poplar Grove is located within the following two watersheds:

**Beaver Creek:** This watershed occupies the central third of Boone County and is approximately 70 square miles (28,543 acres)

**Piscasaw Creek:** This watershed occupies the lower third of Boone County and is approximately 31.6 miles (27,178 acres).

Figure 36 illustrates both watersheds as well as the water bodies and flood zones within the planning area.

### Water Bodies

Both Beaver Creek and Piscasaw Creek are tributaries of the Kishwaukee River. Previous plans and reports related to both water bodies include:

- Beaver Creek Watershed Action Plan (CMAP, 2008);
- Piscasaw Creek Subwatershed Plan (KREP, 2005);
- Boone County Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan (2011).

Earlier regional plans indicate that Beaver Creek and Piscasaw Creek have sustained high ratings for their biological integrity, aquatic life, and water quality. These plans also state items of concern, such as existing severe streambank erosion on segments on

Beaver Creek and the future effects posed from urban development (e.g. surface runoff).

### Floodplain

A floodplain is an area of low-lying ground adjacent to a river. Floodplains are beneficial in a number of ways; they recharge groundwater supply, filter out contaminants, and deposit nutrients.

Figure 36 illustrates the 100-year and 500-year floodplain within the planning area. An area is determined to be a 100-year floodplain if it has a 1% chance of being flooded within a 100-year period, and an area is determined to be a 500-year floodplain if it has a 0.2% annual chance of flooding within a 500-year period. Most of the land located within the 100-year floodplain is considered a regulatory floodway, a designation which restricts land development or filling in such an area.

The floodplains buffering Beaver Creek and Piscasaw Creek provide flood risk reduction benefits to the community by slowing runoff and storing floodwater.

### Wetlands

Wetlands are an important habitat and food source for wildlife. They mitigate the effects of flooding and help control erosion. Wetlands also play an important in maintaining water quality, as they filter both urban and agricultural runoff before they enter the groundwater supply.

Figure 36: Watershed, Water Bodies, Wetlands, and Floodplains in Planning Area

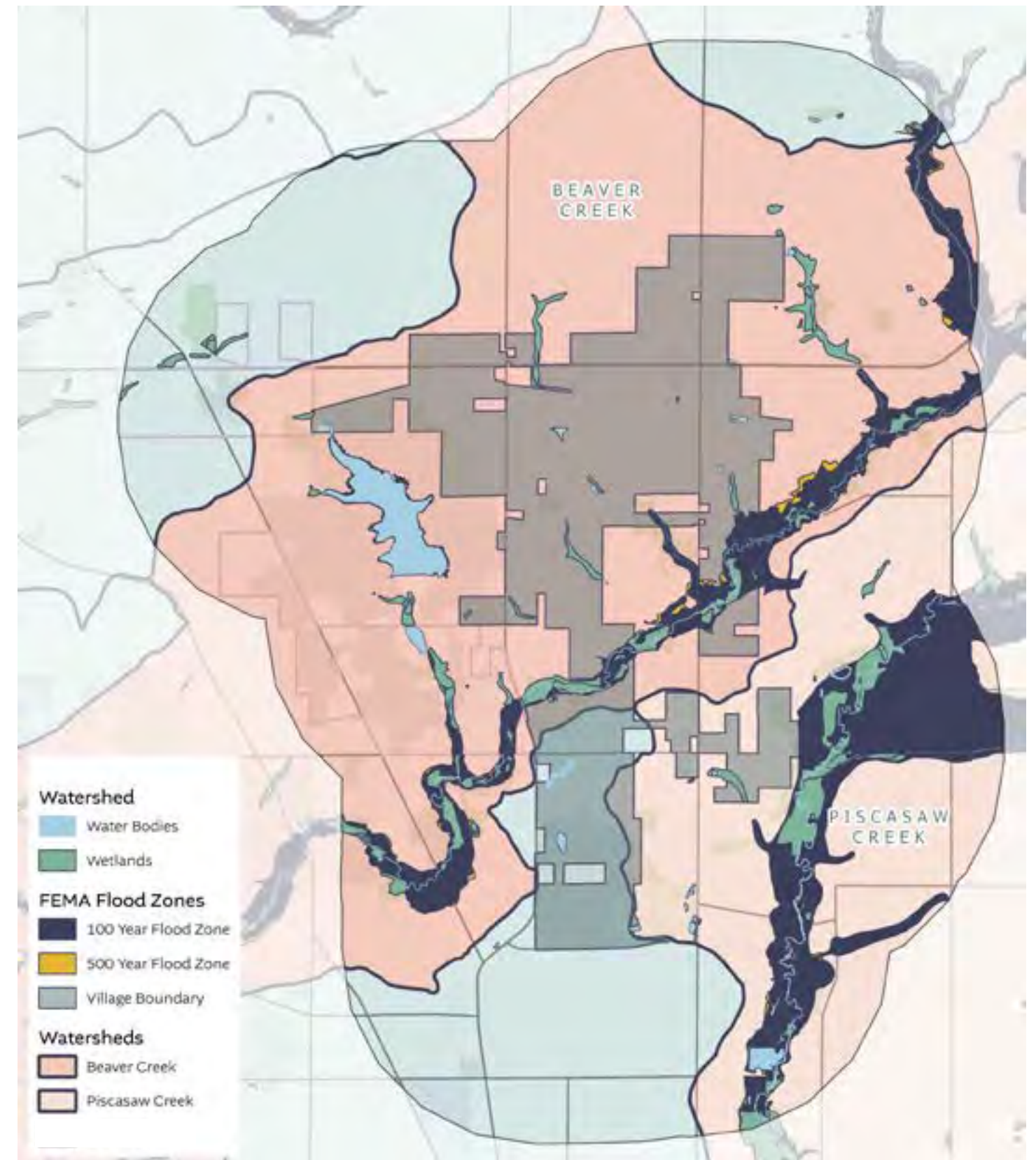


Figure 36 illustrates where wetlands are located in the planning area, using data provided by Boone County GIS. There are types of wetlands present in the planning area: Woody or Forested Wetland, and Emergent Herbaceous Wetland. NLCD data indicate that wetland land cover change has been quite nominal from 2001-2021, resulting in a net gain of 0.01 acres. It should be noted that some wetland types may have changed in recent years and do not show in the map. For example, the acquisition of land now known as Funderburg Conservation Area by the Boone County Conservation District may undergo wetland restoration that could result in a change to the wetland type.

**Forests**

Forests are an essential component of a healthy ecosystem. NLCD data indicate that 5.1% of Boone County’s land cover is Upland Forest. The land cover map (Figure 30) shows that most of the forested land cover is comprised of deciduous trees (approximately 13.8 square miles). Many of these forested areas exist in the riparian zones of Beaver Creek and Piskasaw Creek, described below. 0.36 square miles of forest has been lost since 2001. NLCD data attribute this primarily to varying degrees of development.

**No-Growth Areas**

The 2020 Boone County Comprehensive Plan includes a sub-section in its Land Use element titled on ‘No-Growth Areas’. According to the plan, the purpose of establishing no-growth areas is to “identify land that should be protected and where future development should be discouraged.”

Figure 37 is a map excerpt from the county’s comprehensive plan and illustrates layers which are helpful for identifying both growth and non-growth areas in the planning area. As the legend states, the ‘Critical/Sensitive Area Priority Acquisition’ consists of property located in the floodplain as well as steep slopes, a 150-foot buffer around all hydrology, and any special areas identified as priority for acquisition. While the majority of these areas exist outside of village boundaries, village officials should consider how future plans and capital improvements will align with the county’s growth and non-growth aspirations.

Additionally, the Boone County Comprehensive Plan details a number of land protection policies for the conservation of agricultural land cover and land within each respective watershed. These policies include:

**Agricultural Policies**

**A-1 Zoning – Agricultural Preservation Area District:** The Boone County Zoning Code includes an A-1 zoning classification which is designed to “maintain, enhance, and conserve prime agricultural soils, protect sensitive natural features, and prevent nonagricultural development.” The classification allows only agricultural and one single-family home on a lot, and it applies primarily to parcels in unincorporated areas.

**Agricultural Areas Program:** The Agricultural Areas Conservation and Protection Act allows landowners to enroll their property in an “Agricultural Area”. This is a voluntary designation which temporarily protects the land from being developed. Upon enrollment, the land is protected for ten years, and subsequent re-enrollment can extend protection every eight years.

**Agricultural Conservation Easement:** An Agricultural Conservation Easement (ACE) is a 99-year contract with automatic renewal between landowners and a public entity. The contract stipulates that only certain types of development can occur on the property. ACEs are created through the Boone County Agricultural Conservation Easement and Farmland Protection Commission.

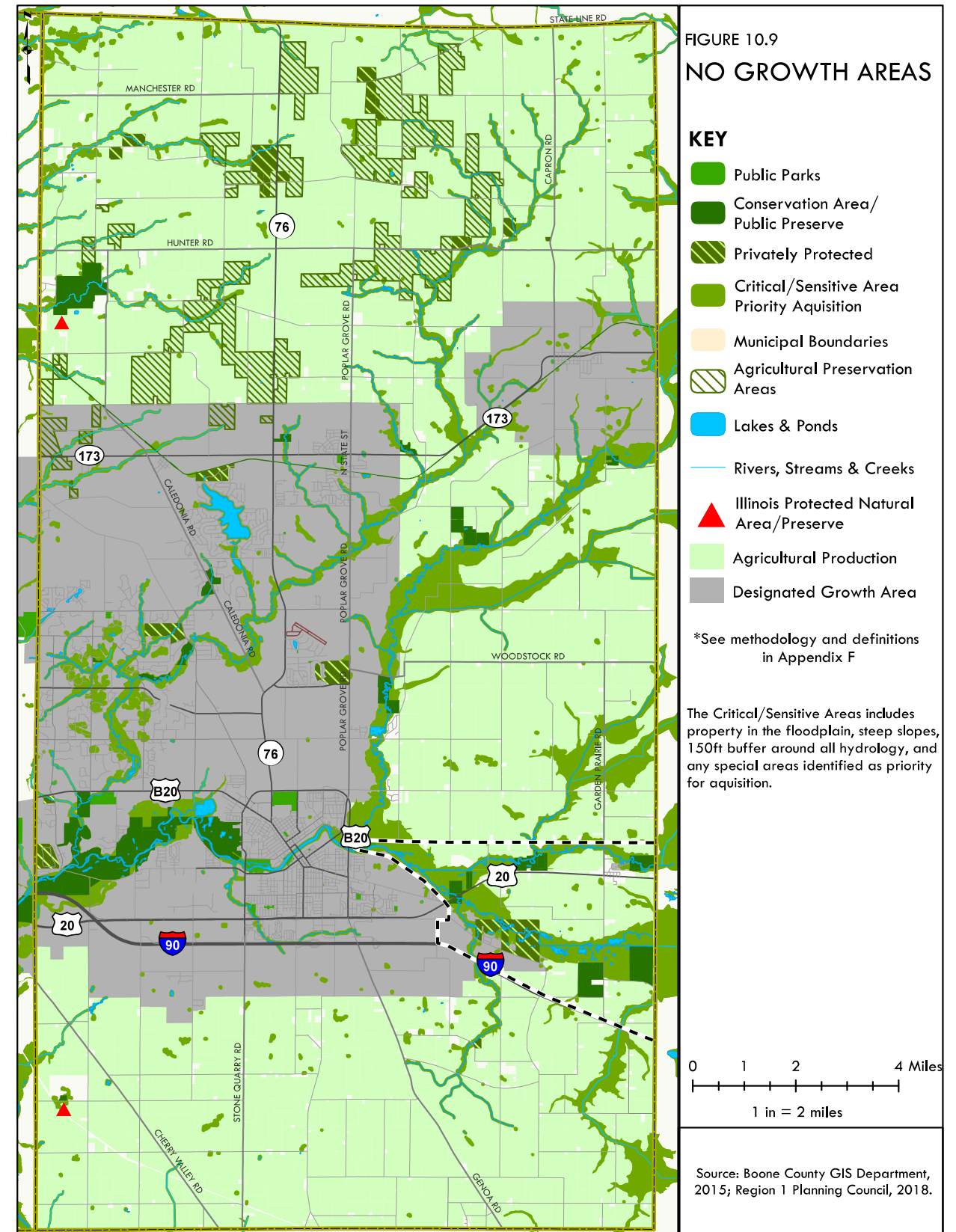
**Greenway- and Floodplain-Related Policies**

Greenways refers to a network of ‘green infrastructure’ including forests, prairies, wetlands, riparian areas, land within the floodplain, and recreational amenities such as parks and trails. The Regional Greenways Map, produced by Region 1 Planning Council strategies on greenways in Boone County. This includes:

- Amending zoning codes to facilitate conservation projects and greenway projects that increase community access.
- Protecting or acquiring new property in areas where greenway routes are proposed (shown in the Transportation & Mobility section).

The Poplar Grove Zoning code includes ample language in multiple chapters regarding the discouragement of development within the floodplain. Any development proposed to be located within the floodplain must receive a development permit by the Village President. The proposed development must meet the requirements stated in the ‘Development Permit’ chapter of the code (Ord. 2012-012, 3-13-2012).

Figure 37: No-Growth Areas in Boone County, Excerpt from County Comprehensive Plan



## Recommendations

### Goals

- Preserve agricultural and natural resources within village boundaries .
- Plan for extension of public services in a way that reduces impact on productive agricultural areas and minimizes environmental impact.
- Prioritize infill development and redevelopment over greenfield, new-construction development to further preserve agricultural land.
- Promote a compact, orderly greenfield development pattern to further preserve agricultural land and use land more efficiently.

### Objectives

- Minimize negative externalities of development on natural resources and agricultural production.
- Promote existing assets and expand opportunities for their effect on the economy and local livelihoods.

### Policies

- Avoid intensive development within the floodplain and floodway.
- Establish standards for development, especially those in or near the floodplain for permeable surfaces, native plantings, bioswales, and other site-appropriate mitigation effects.
- Support local agriculture and food production. Identify any barriers that may exist.

### Strategies

1. Coordinate with other regional agencies including Region 1 Planning Council, Boone County Conservation District, Boone County Soil and Water Conservation District on agricultural and natural resource preservation opportunities outside village boundaries.
2. Coordinate with other regional agencies including Region 1 Planning Council, Growth Dimensions, and others on growth opportunities that do not compromise on the rural character and agricultural heritage for which this area is known.
3. Implement stormwater management strategies that reduce the effects of agricultural runoff
4. Provide resources for public and private property owners on best management practices to promote

- conservation of natural resources.
5. Promote the role of agriculture and agri-tourism in the economy via Boone County Fair and other related event opportunities.

# Transportation & Mobility

## Introduction

Like many communities, most of the space that is considered the public realm in Poplar Grove is the right-of-way between private property. This right-of-way, which includes roads, streets, trails, and more, comprises nearly 8% of all land use within the village and nearly 17% of all land use within the extraterritorial jurisdictional boundary. This use of public space may seem small to some, but it plays an important role not only in the conveyance of goods and services but also in our collective health and quality of life.

Transportation networks shape land use patterns, oftentimes dictating our modal choices and trip frequencies. These everyday, individual decisions can contribute—positively, or negatively—to outcomes the village aspires to achieve, including economic prosperity, social connectivity, public safety, and more.

This section of the plan spatially examines the existing conditions which characterize the transportation network in the planning area. It also includes an overview of travel behavior, anticipated capital improvements, and detailed recommendations.

## Existing Conditions

### Functional Classification

Figure 38 illustrates the roadway network both within the village and its 1.5-mile extraterritorial jurisdictional boundary. The colors given to each road illustrate their functional classification. A breakdown of the total lane-miles associated with each roadway classification is provided in Figure 39 as well. Local Streets, which provide the highest degree of accessibility, comprises the largest amount of roadways at just over 100 miles, or 64% of the total.



Photo Credit: Village of Poplar Grove

Figure 38: Functional Classification of Roadways in Planning Area

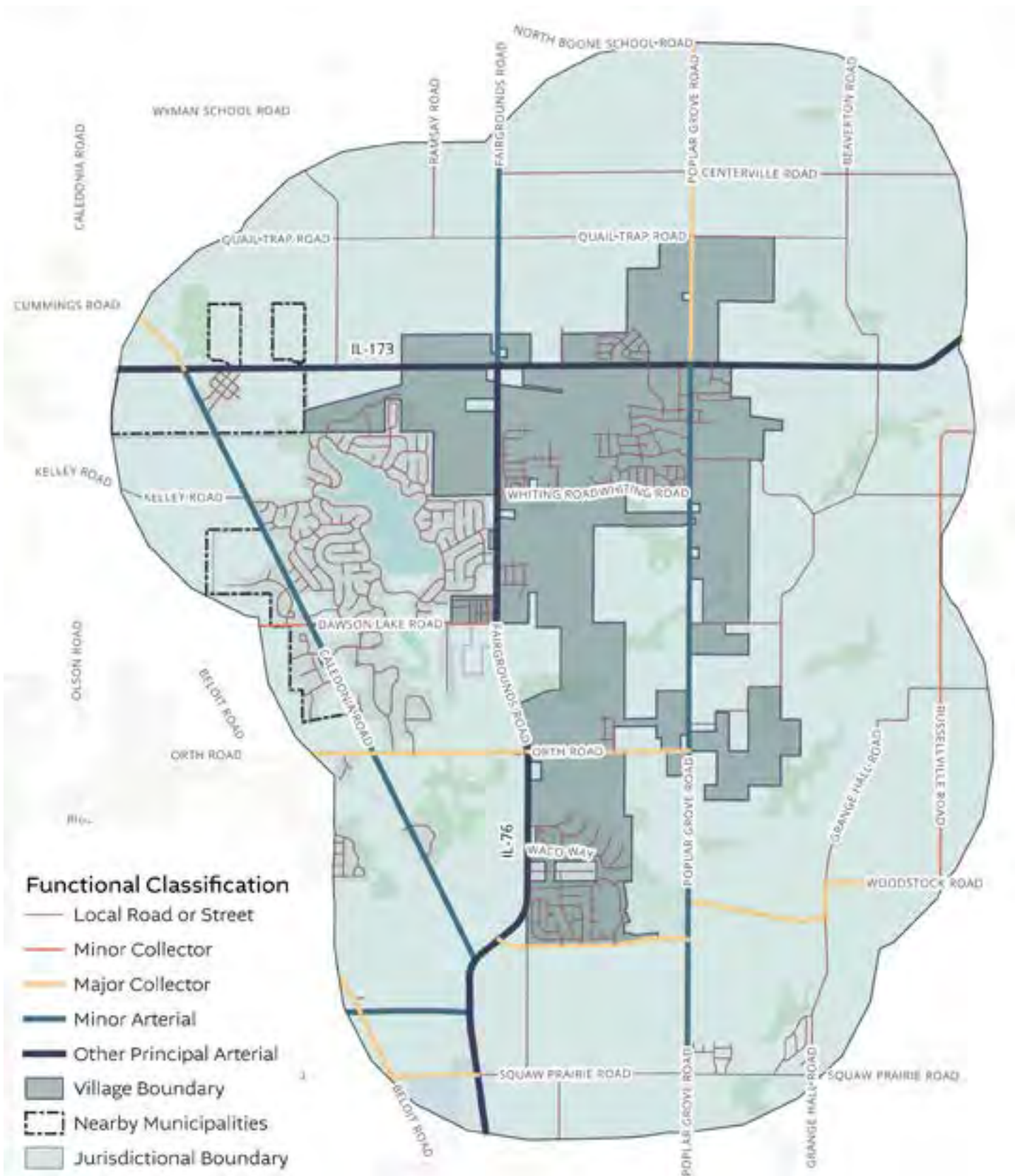


Figure 39: Mileage of Roadway per Functional Classification in Planning Area

Classification	Segment of Roadway (Miles)	% of Total
Other Principal Arterials	16.1	10%
Minor Arterials	15.5	10%
Major Collectors	15.9	10%
Minor Collectors	9.8	6%
Local Streets	100.9	64%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100%</b>

Functional classification is the process by which roadways are grouped into classes in accordance with the type of service they are intended to provide. This process is based on the premise that roadway users travel through a network of roadways (as opposed to individual roads and streets), and that each roadway has a particular role to play in assuring an efficient, logical trip process. Key to this process is understanding the type of service that each roadway is intended to provide. Roadway users have two primary travel needs—access, and mobility—and each roadway class is intended to address one or both of these needs to some degree.

Roadway segments are classified within a hierarchical structure, beginning with Arterials at the top, followed by Collectors, and Local Streets at the bottom. Arterials provide the highest degree of mobility and the lowest degree of access, as they are typically associated with long-distance, free-flow travel on high-capacity roadways. Local Streets provide the highest degree of accessibility and the lowest degree of mobility, as they give multiple entrance and exit opportunities for users to reach their homes, workplaces, and other destinations.

The following is a brief summary of the functional classifications for each roadway within the planning area.

**Other Principal Arterials:** Illinois Routes 173 and 76 are designated as Other Principal Arterials and provide the highest levels of mobility in the planning area. These roads are typically characterized by higher speed limits, wide shoulders, and dedicated turn lanes as right-of-way affords. Traffic control is limited to signalization at select intersections. Accessibility is limited, typically consisting of at-grade access to other arterial or collector roadways or destinations with larger land uses (e.g. agricultural).

**Minor Arterials:** Connect Principal Arterials to Collector Roads to serve county-wide and/or intra-state travel demand. For example, Caledonia Road and Poplar Grove Road are designated as Minor Arterials. Roadways existing outside the village and outside an adjacent municipality are typically owned



Principal Arterial



Minor Arterial

by Boone County, Poplar Grove Township, or another township. Road segments are typically two-lane paved rural roads with higher speeds, minimal shoulders. Traffic control is limited, consisting of stop signs to Principal Arterials.

**Major Collectors:** Connect Local Streets and Arterials over a longer distance than Minor Collectors while serving larger population clusters. For example, Prairie Green and adjacent subdivisions are served by Woodstock Road, a Minor Collector, and The Trails at Dawson Creek is served by Orth Road, also a Minor Collector. Road conditions are similar to those found in Minor Arterials. Traffic control is limited, consisting of stop signs to Minor Arterials.



Major Collector

**Minor Collectors:** Connect Local Streets to Arterials, albeit over a shorter distance. In rural areas like Poplar Grove, minor collectors serve small population clusters (e.g. a residential subdivision) and are spaced accordingly. Road conditions are similar to those found in Minor Arterials. Traffic control is limited, consisting of stop signs to Major Collectors.



Minor Collector

**Local Streets:** Provide direct access to homes, businesses, and other amenities. Within the village, these streets are typically characterized by low speed limits, on-street parking, sidewalks, amenities near the right-of-way (e.g. benches, street lighting), and narrow travel lanes compared to other classes. Through-traffic mobility is limited, and traffic volumes are typically the lowest among other classes.



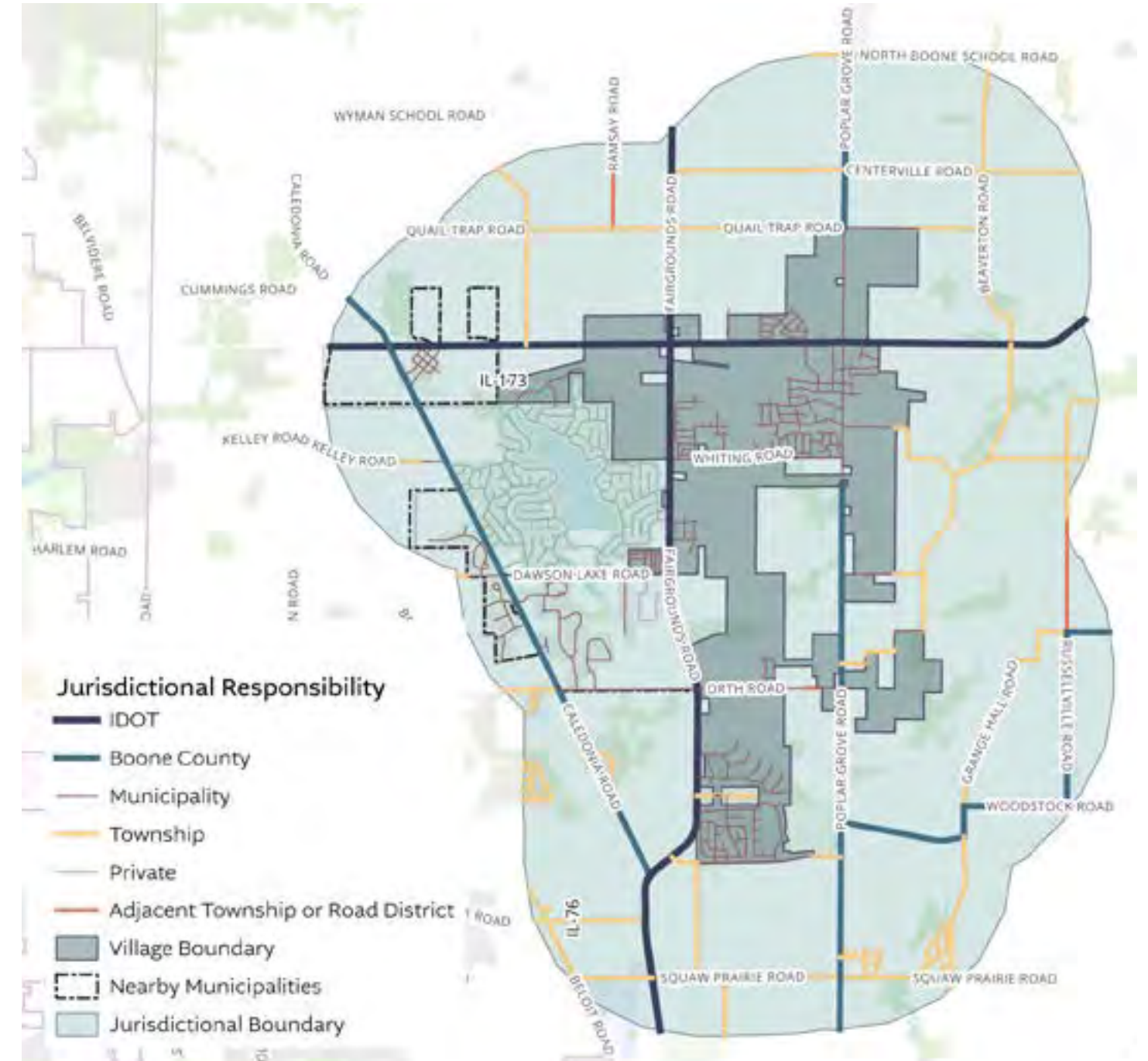
Local Streets

**Jurisdictional Responsibility**

Figure 40 illustrates the jurisdictional responsibility for each roadway segment in the planning area. Illinois Routes 173 and 76 are classified as Principal Arterials which fall under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Boone County Highway Department is responsible for minor arterials such as Caledonia Road, Poplar Grove Road, and

Woodstock Road. Roadways owned by municipalities are largely classified as Local Streets; an exception is the segment of Poplar Grove Road which runs through the boundaries of Poplar Grove. Township road segments are typically classified as Collectors and exist outside of municipal boundaries. Finally, road segments labeled 'Private' are located within Candlewick Lake, a gated community.

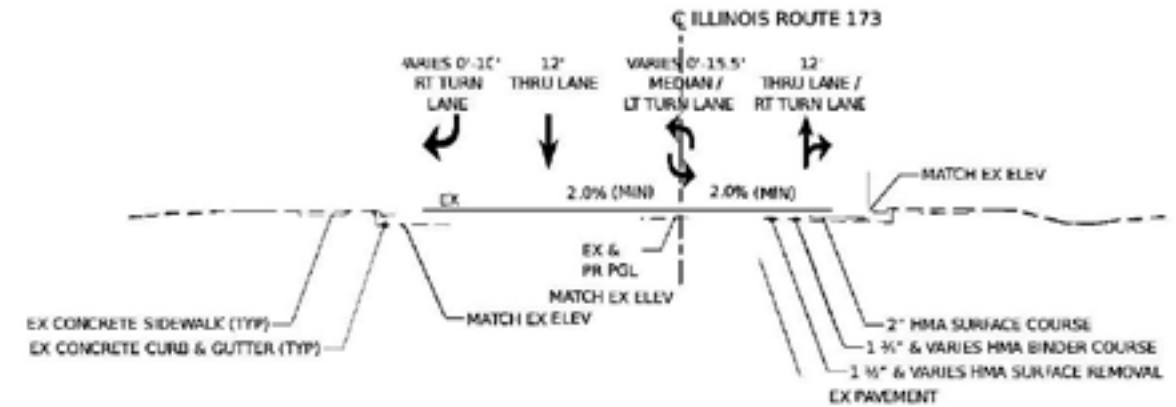
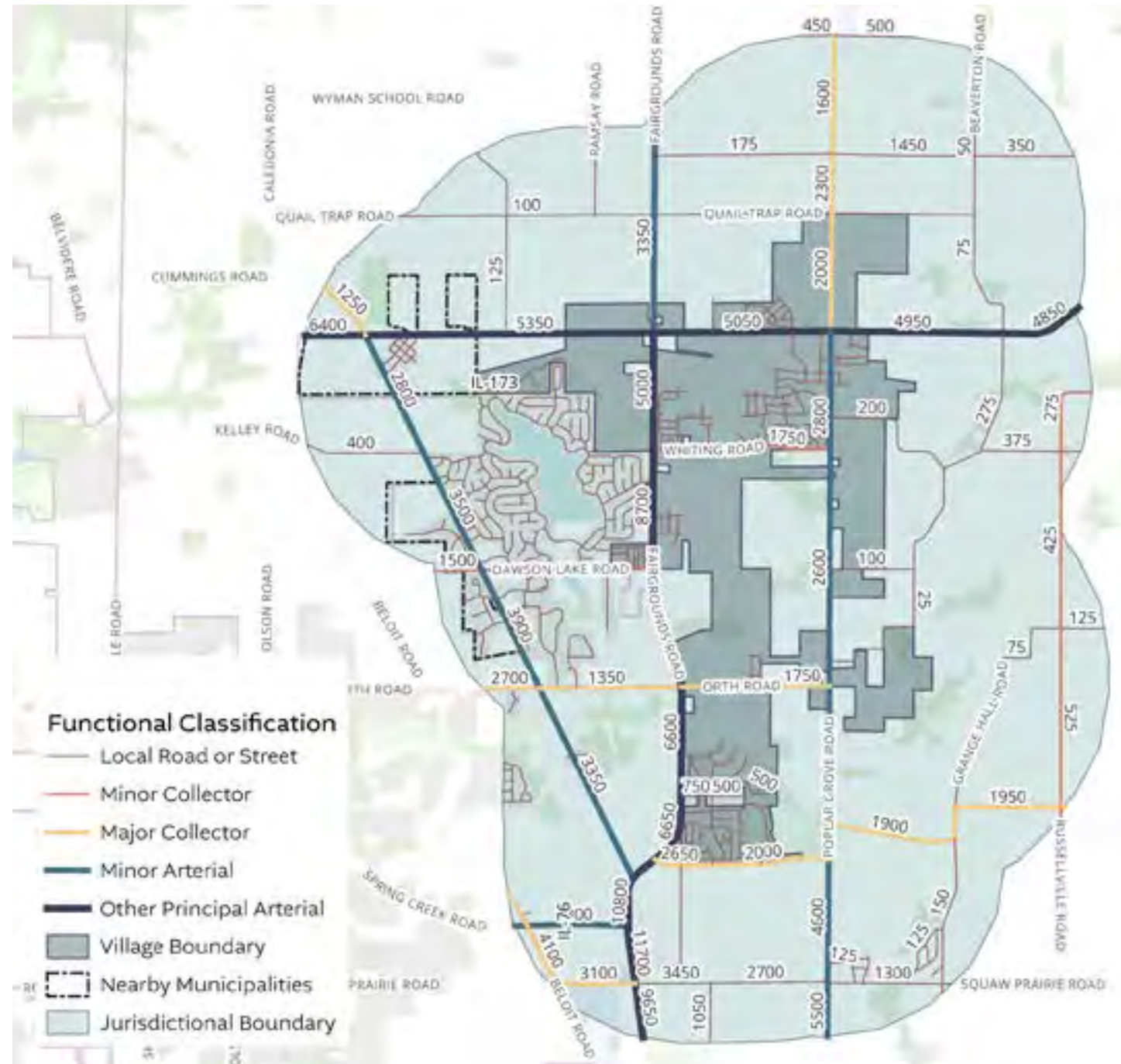
**Figure 40: Jurisdictional Responsibility of Roadways in Planning Area**



**Traffic Volumes, Roadway Capacity**

Figure 41 illustrates the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) of select roadways in the planning area. AADT is one of many variables which shape the functional classification of a roadway. Local Streets were omitted from the map display given their low traffic volume.

**Figure 41: Average Annual Daily Traffic of Roadways in Planning Area**



Plan and profile view excerpt of IL-173 reconstruction, segment within Village, described below. Source: IDOT

The Boone County 2020 Comprehensive Plan references the regional Travel Demand Model (TDM) which is managed by Region 1 Planning Council (R1PC). According to their model, “a majority of the roads in Boone County are operating at or below half of their designed capacity”. There are exceptions which exist outside the planning area, such as segments of U.S. Highway 20 and Irene Road near the US. Highway 20 to I-90 interchange. The county’s comprehensive plan also details the volume-to-capacity ratios on select roadways. Otherwise known as a V/C ratio, the concept is a level-of-service measure used to compare traffic volume and roadway carrying capacity. The only road segments listed in the report that fall within the planning area are as follows:

- IL-76: Woodstock Road to US Hwy 20 Business.
- IL-173: Belvidere Road to IL-76.

**Capital Improvements**

Below is a brief summary of anticipated short- and long-range capital improvements relevant to the planning. Capital improvement plans are iterative documents that subject to change by multiple factors, including funding, prioritization of other projects, and more. The below list is not inclusive and will almost certainly change in the years following the adoption of this plan. Nonetheless,

**Local**

The Village of Poplar Grove Public Works Department produces Pavement Maintenance Programs. These programs consist of resurfacing, patching, curb-and-gutter work, and various other projects to ensure that their respective road segments are in a state of good repair. Cooperative projects including Poplar Grove Township and Boone County can be listed in

the program as well. The Pavement Maintenance Program plans within a 3-year timeframe and is updated annually.

**County**

Upcoming projects within Boone County include a bridge replacement on Woodstock Road over Piscasaw Creek, the construction of which is planned for 2026. Other mid-range, locally-sponsored roadway projects (for FY 2031-2040) include:

- An extension of Orth Road from Poplar Grove Rd to Denny Road;
- An extension of Woodstock Road from Poplar Grove Road to Grange Hall Road;
- An extension of IL-76 from Woodstock Road to Townhall Road; and
- A new road or extension of IL-76 from Caledonia Road to I-90.

**State**

IDOT District 2 is responsible for capital improvements on state-owned roads within the planning area. Notable projects include:

- Intersection safety improvements at IL-173 and Caledonia Rd;
- Reconstruction of IL-173 roadway segment (0.4 mi) to McHenry County Line (est. year of construction 2026); and
- Reconstruction of IL-76 roadway segment, 0.1 mi north of Woodstock Rd to 0.2 mi south of Spring Creek Rd.
- Reconstruction and widening of IL-76 from Belvidere City Limits to Caledonia Rd (this is a mid-range item within the FY 2031-2040 timeframe).

**Vehicle Commute Trips**

The transportation network in the planning area is designed to facilitate motorist trips, and this is reflected in the trip behavior of one type of roadway user: Employed workers aged 16 and over who commute to work.

**Means of Transportation**

Figure 42 summarizes the means of transportation to work for Poplar Grove residents during the years 2018-2023. Single-occupant vehicle trips are the predominant mode, which is not dissimilar from other rural- and suburban-originating commute trips in Northern Illinois. After the decrease in single-occupant trips in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, single-occupant trip has now exceeded previous years. Conversely, carpool and public transportation trips are at their lowest during this time period. Given that the vast majority of jobs exist outside the study area, it will be important for village officials to consider alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel for its residents, especially with trips that are destined to larger employment clusters.

**Travel Time to Work**

Figure 43 summarizes the travel time to work for both Poplar Grove and Boone County. The largest share of employed Poplar Grove residents (34.1%) have a commute time ranging from 20-24 minutes. This timeframe allows residents to access a variety of employment destinations in both Boone and Winnebago County.

**Figure 42: 2018-2023 Means of Transportation to Work for Poplar Grove Residents**

Means of Transport	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Drove alone	89.0%	89.5%	82.2%	77.0%	81.9%
Carpooled	6.7%	6.2%	7.9%	14.3%	10.7%
Public Transportation	0.4%	0.5%	0.7%	0.9%	0.5%
Walked	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Bicycle	0%	0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%
Taxicab, Motorcycle, Other	0.8%	1.0%	1.9%	1.6%	2.2%
Worked from Home	3.0%	2.8%	6.4%	5.5%	3.9%

Data Source: 2022 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates.

**Figure 43: Travel Time to Work for Poplar Grove Residents**

Travel Time to Work	Poplar Grove	Boone County
Less than 10 minutes	7.1%	14.2%
10 to 14 minutes	5.0%	13.1%
15 to 19 minutes	11.8%	12.4%
20 to 24 minutes	34.1%	17.4%
25 to 29 minutes	6.2%	7.5%
30 to 34 minutes	8.4%	11.5%
35 to 44 minutes	8.1%	6.3%
45 to 59 minutes	14.2%	8.4%
60 or more minutes	5.3%	9.2%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	27.9	26.9

Data Source: 2022 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates.

**Place of Work**

Figure 44 summarizes the place of work of Poplar Grove residents. Of residents who work in the State of Illinois, over two-thirds (67%) of residents work outside their county of residence--likely Winnebago County—and nearly 31% of residents work in Boone County.

**Commuter Inflow-Outflow**

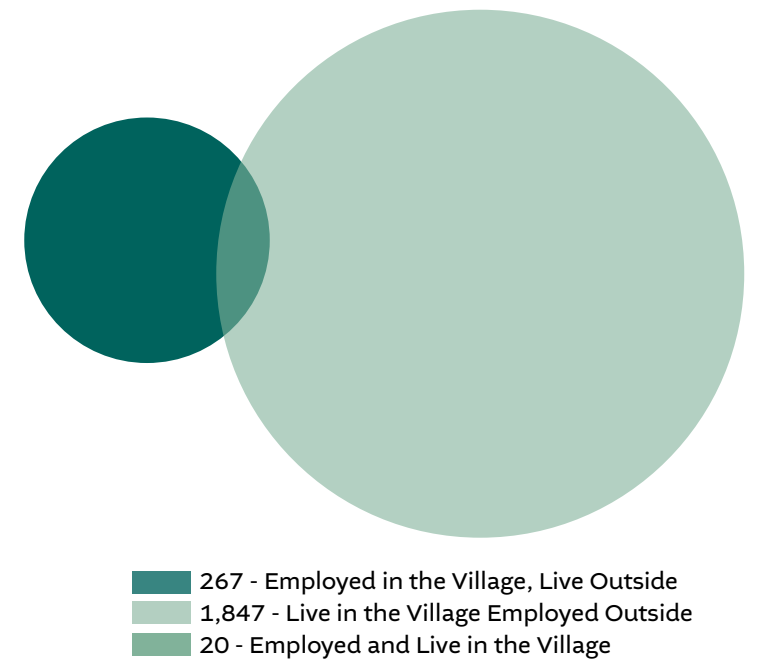
According to 2021 data from OnTheMap, a tool which uses U.S. Census data as well as data from Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) to show where workers live and work, 20 people both live and work in Poplar Grove while 1,847 residents commute out and 267 workers commute in. That means about 7 percent of jobs in the village are held by village residents and 93 percent of village residents who work commute elsewhere.

**Figure 44: Place of Work for Poplar Grove Residents**

Place of Work	Poplar Grove	Boone County
Worked In State of Residence	98.3%	95.2%
Worked in county of residence	30.9%	36.5%
Worked outside county of residence	67.4%	58.7%
Worked Outside State of Residence	1.7%	4.8%

Data Source: 2022 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates.

**Figure 45: Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2021**



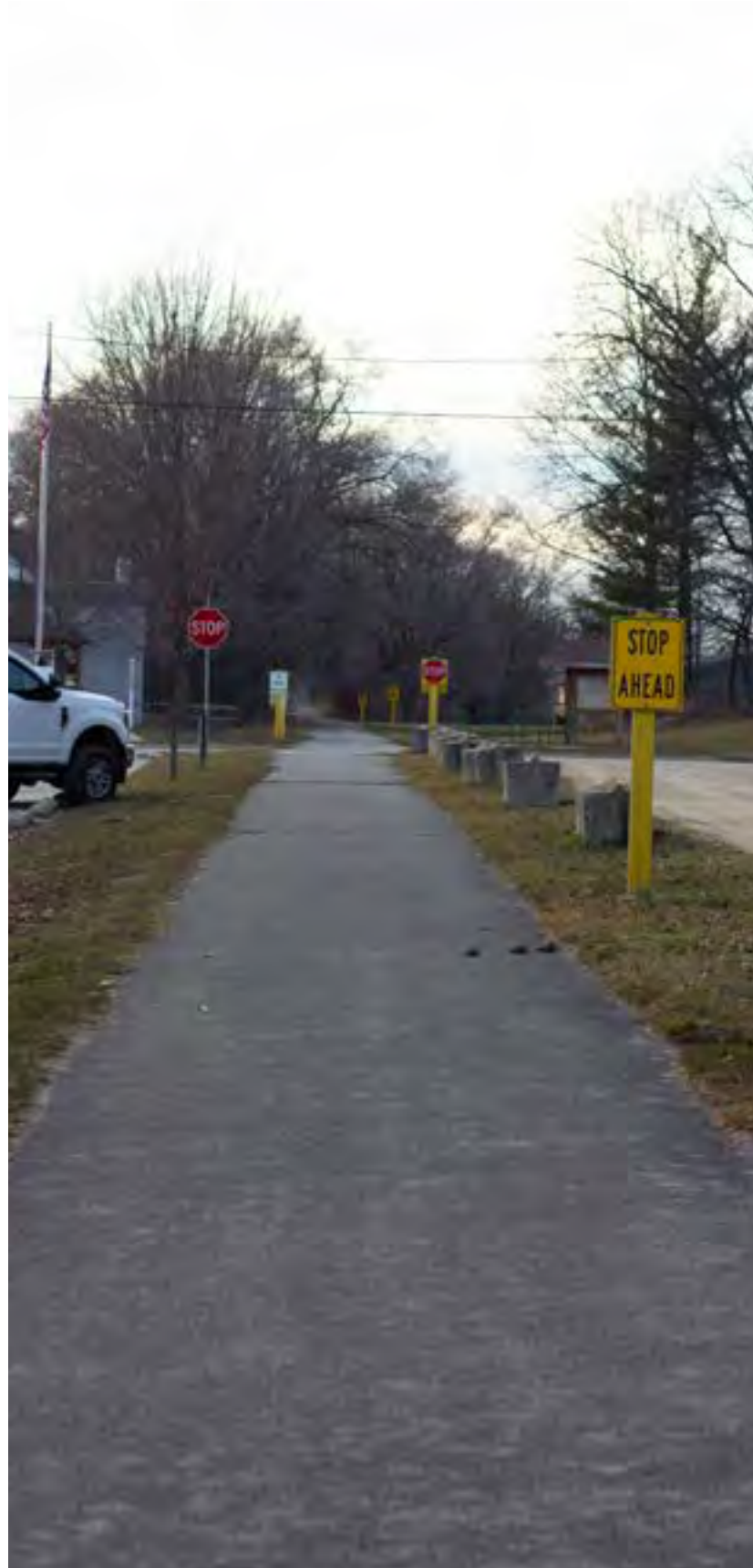
Data Source: U.S. Census, LEHD Data



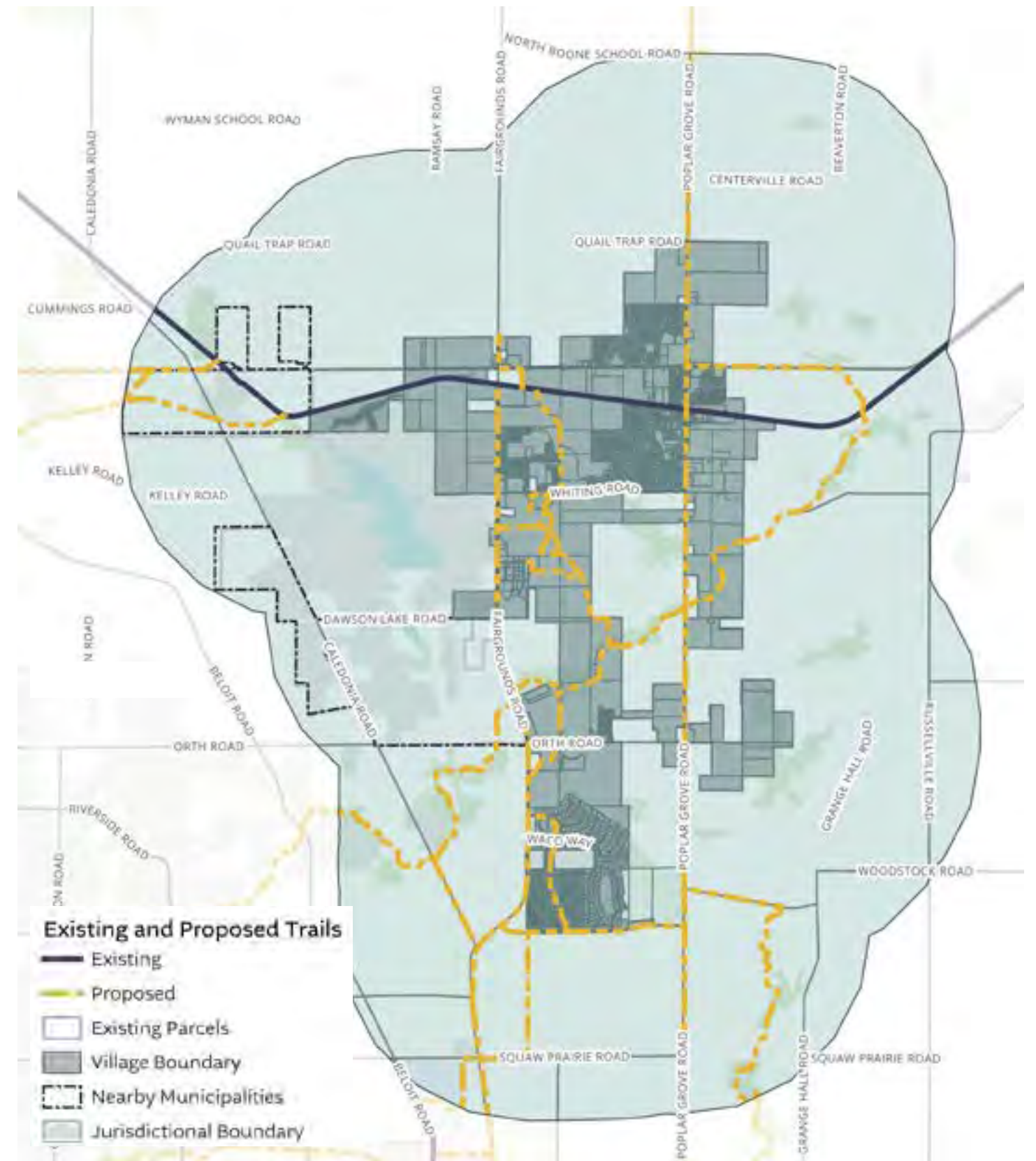
**Trail Network**

Figure 46 illustrates both the existing and proposed regional trail network within the planning area. The Long Prairie Trail (LPT) is the sole existing trail shown on the map. The trail bisects northern Boone County by running from the Boone/McHenry County line through the villages of Capron, Poplar Grove, and Caledonia to McMichael Road in Winnebago County. To access the trail, parking lots are provided in all three villages and at the trail's intersection with the Boone/McHenry County Line Road. The LPT is owned and operated by the Boone County Conservation District.

Proposed trails shown in the map are extensive. Some trails run parallel to existing roadways, and would likely be constructed as off-street multi-use paths in tandem with upcoming road construction projects. Other trails appear to connect existing and proposed neighborhoods to each other. Notably, a greenway is proposed alongside Beaver Creek within the 100-year floodplain. The construction of such a greenway would be a valuable amenity to residents and visitors alike, providing recreational access while improving trail connectivity throughout the area. Village and County officials are encouraged to reference the 2021 Regional Greenways Plan, which provides guidance on land acquisition, protection, collaboration with other public agencies, and much more.



**Figure 46: Existing and Proposed Trail Network in Planning Area**



**Airports**

Poplar Grove Airport is a privately-owned general aviation facility located on the southwest portion of the village boundaries along Illinois Route 76. The airport is generally characterized as a ‘fly-in’ neighborhood, given the presence of Bel-Air Estates to the south and the marked absence of business aviation customers in the area. The airport is operated by Poplar Grove Airmotive and also includes a fixed-base operation, maintenance facility, flight school, and more.

**Transit**

Transit services are provided by Boone County Public Transit (BCPT). BCPT is a county-wide transportation service that is available to all residents of Boone County, regardless of age. The agency offers demand-response service which provides door-to-door transportation at the origin and destination of your choice within the county. Transit rides are available weekdays from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Saturday. Per-trip fares are nominally priced. This program has recently been bolstered, expanding the hours significantly and providing connections to Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD). This expansion in services was purposeful with the goal to accommodate people in an affordable and reliable way to and from employment locations.

Boone County’s ridership in fiscal year 2022 was 5,321. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted transit ridership of all types nationwide, and BCPT was no different; according to the state’s Highway and Multimodal Improvement Program, BCPT experienced losses of 10-50% during the 2018-2022 fiscal year. That said, transit service in the region is a lifeline for residents who rely on public transit to reach their destinations, and recent Rural Area Formula Grants 5311 represents continued investment on behalf of the state to fund public transportation in rural areas with populations less than 50,000 persons.

**Recommendations**

**Goals**

- Provide a transportation system that is safe, connected, and accessible to all users.
- Ensure transportation infrastructure is reliable for residents, visitors, and commerce.

**Objectives**

- Ensure roadways are maintained in good condition.
- Coordinate with regional jurisdictions on transportation planning efforts.
- Increase connectivity amongst neighborhoods to key commerce hubs.
- Promote the airport as a community asset.
- Increase active transportation opportunities; i.e. walking and biking.

**Policies**

- Incorporate active transportation options into planned roadway improvements where possible and appropriate.
- Coordinate with regional transportation facilities and planning efforts with IDOT and Boone County.
- Encourage neighborhood connectivity through physical continuation of roadways and sidewalks to adjacent subdivisions and neighborhoods.
- Promote a complete and safe sidewalk network that connects key destinations to neighborhoods.
- Require sidewalks and/or multi-use paths for new residential and commercial developments.

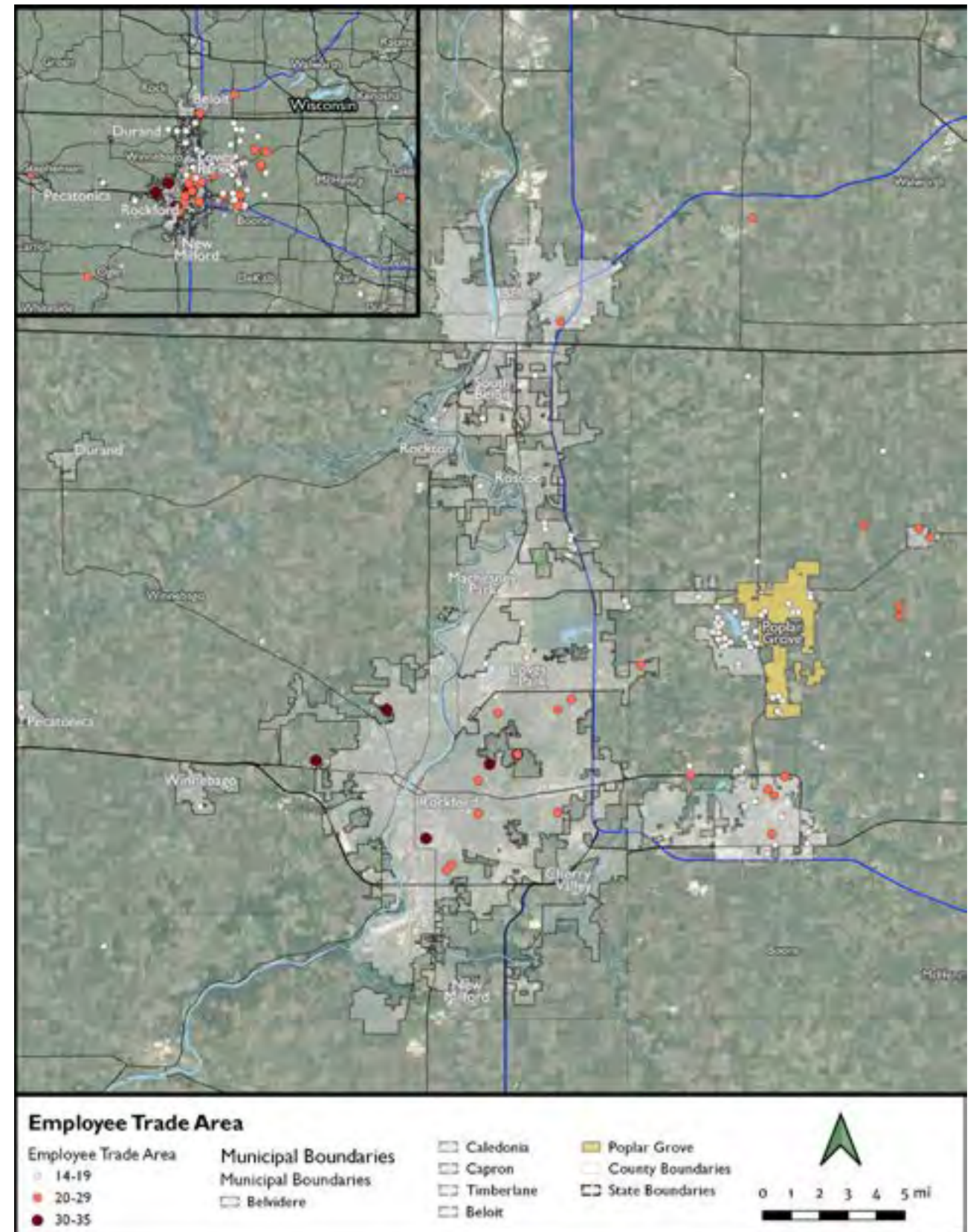
**Strategies**

1. Improve connectivity between neighborhoods via multi-use path or sidewalks
2. Install speed bumps or additional demarcations on the roadway at trail crossings
3. Pursue additional funding for trail improvements including trailhead amenities and signage.
4. Install additional signage in the Village and surrounding area to direct people to downtown from Rt. 173.
5. Identify key agricultural equipment routes and prioritize maintenance issues.
6. Prioritize key high-traffic intersections for traffic control devices and safety measures.
7. Analyze roadway capacity and circulation within the area of potential new industrial/ business park at Rt. 173.

**SOURCES**

1. Boone County Then and Now: 1835-1976, edited by Virginia B. Moorehead, Boone County Bicentennial Commission, Boone County, Illinois, 1976.

Figure 47: Employee Trade Area Map



# Government, Public Facilities, & Utilities

## Introduction

The core functions, services, and facilities of a municipality are essential for creating a safe, attractive, and healthy community for residents, businesses, and visitors. This chapter provides background information on these key municipal services, the facilities in which they operate, and the many public-sector and private-sector entities delivering a wide range of services: Education, recreation, public safety, electricity, and much more.

## Government

The Village of Poplar Grove is a non-home rule community that operates under a Village President/Board-of-Trustees form of government. The elected governing body consists of a Village President and six trustees. The Board of Trustees sets policy for the Village, adopts ordinances and resolutions, and approves the annual budget. Trustees serve at-large, meaning they each represent the entire community and not a specific area.

Standing committees and commissions include the Committee of the Whole, Finance and Public Works Committee, Ordinance Committee, Communication Committee, and the Planning and Zoning Commission.



## Municipal Services:

**General Administration:** General administration for the Village is managed by the Village Clerk, a position which is elected at large. At the time of this plan, the village also employs staff for the following positions:

- **Administration:** Deputy Clerk, Village Treasurer, Accounting and Billing Clerk, and a Customer Service Representative
- **Public Works:** Public Works Director, three full-time employees, and one seasonal employee.

Other public services are rendered through both public- and private-sector entities, including:

- **Public Safety:** Boone County Sheriff's Department
- **Fire and EMS:** North Boone Fire District #3
- **Public Education:** North Boone CUSD 200, Belvidere CUSD 100
- **Building, Zoning, & Code Enforcement:** B&F Construction
- **Village Engineer:** McMahan & Associates
- **Village Attorney:** Sosnowski Szeto LLP Roxanne Sosnowski & Aaron Szeto
- **Public Works:** Boone County, various contracted services as needed.

The village provides a variety of municipal services to the public through the following departments:

**Water & Sewer Department:** The village owns and operates its own water facility as well as two wastewater treatment facilities. In 2017 the village entered into a five-year contract with TEST, Inc to provide testing and management of water/wastewater operations. They work closely with the Public Works Department to provide a seamless operation.

**Public Works Department:** Under this department, the village maintains 33 miles of roadway as well as its water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer infrastructure. In tandem with third-party contractors, Public Works handles snowplowing of all village-owned roads and properties, retention pond mowing/maintenance,

roadside ditch mowing/tree trimming, parkway tree maintenance/installation/removal, sidewalk repairs, street sign installation, maintenance of all village-owned buildings, properties, and equipment, pesticide application and mosquito abatement, maintenance of 5 village-owned parks, and much more. The village also maintains agreements with Boone County on road maintenance.

## Intergovernmental Relations: Neighboring Municipalities

As mentioned in the Land Use section of the plan, the village has established boundary agreements with the Village of Capron to the east and the City of Belvidere to the south.

The village has executed an intergovernmental agreement with Candlewick Lake, an unincorporated, gated community to the west, regarding emergency water access. The agreement states that Candlewick Lake can temporarily tap into Poplar Grove's water if they experience an emergency that results in a loss of water service.

## Intergovernmental Relations: Other Organizations and Agencies

Beyond the municipalities that surround the village are other regional organizations and agencies with which the village interacts. These groups can provide professional resources, such as identifying funding sources, for village-related or multi-jurisdictional projects. These groups include but are not limited to:

- Boone County
- Boone County Conservation District
- Growth Dimensions Economic Development
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)
- Region 1 Planning Council (R1PC)



## Public Facilities

### Municipal

Core municipal functions are conducted on multiple village-owned properties. This includes:

**Village Hall:** Located at 200 Hill Street, this facility was constructed in 2006 and houses administrative offices and board chambers for the village.

**New Public Works Facility:** Located at the southeast corner of East Park Street, this facility is under construction at the time of this plan with substantial completion by February 2024. The future facility will be used for maintenance and storage purposes.

**Existing Public Works Facility:** Located at 201 Edson Road, this property is used for maintenance, materials storage, fleet storage, and more. This facility will continue to be owned by the village and used for public works purposes in addition to the new public works facility.

**Water Facilities:** Proper water pressure is maintained by a combination of gravity and four elevated pedestal water-spheres (Towers). The towers are located approximately at 203 IL-173 (south of the Poplar Grove Cemetery), 4420 Menge Lane, 2404 County Road 1 (West of Poplar Grove Road), and 220 Boeing Trail (in the Knolls of Boone subdivision).

Total water storage capacity is 450,000 gallons. There are five active wells, and four pump houses. Multiple wells allow for the repair and maintenance to be performed without interrupting water service in the Village.

**Wastewater Treatment Facilities:** The village owns and operates two wastewater treatment facilities. The North Plant is located at 610 South State Street; built in 2006, this plant has a capacity of 500,000 gallons per day (GDP). The South Plant is located at 12211 Illinois Route 76. This has a 250,000 GDP capacity with a 1,000,000 GDP expansion.



### Recreational

This section is distinct from simple open, green space and refers specifically to recreationally-oriented land uses with some degree of facilities to which the public is invited. The following recreational amenities are located within the boundaries of the village:

**Lions Park:** Located on Illinois Route 173 between Hill and Summit Streets, Lions Park includes playground equipment, baseball and softball diamonds, a basketball court, a walking path, tennis court, and much more. Lions Park is maintained by the Poplar Grove chapter of Lions International.

**Poplar Grove Dog Park:** Located across the street from Village Hall, the Poplar Grove Dog Park was established in 2021 and consists of a large fenced-in green space.

**Veteran's Memorial Park:** Located at the northwest corner of West Main Street and State Street, Veteran's Memorial Park includes a monument, shelter, and green space. The park is nestled in the village's traditional downtown and is located next to the downtown segment of the Long Prairie Trail.

**Bel-Air Park:** Located in Bel-Air Estates near the intersection of Waco Way and Beech Bay Road, Bel-Air Park includes children's playground equipment and green space.

**Brugger Park:** Located in the Sherman Oaks neighborhood, Sherman Oaks Park includes children's playground equipment and green space. In 2018, the village installed additional playground equipment.

**West Grove Neighborhood Park:** Located in the West Grove neighborhood at the intersection of Chanden Boulevard and Chickory Lane, West Grove Neighborhood Park was built in 2017 and consists of playground equipment and green space.

**Long Prairie Trail:** A portion of the Long Prairie Trail passes through the village is a significant recreational facility that is provided by the Boone County Conservation District (BCCD). This trail is discussed specifically in the Transportation and Mobility section of the plan.

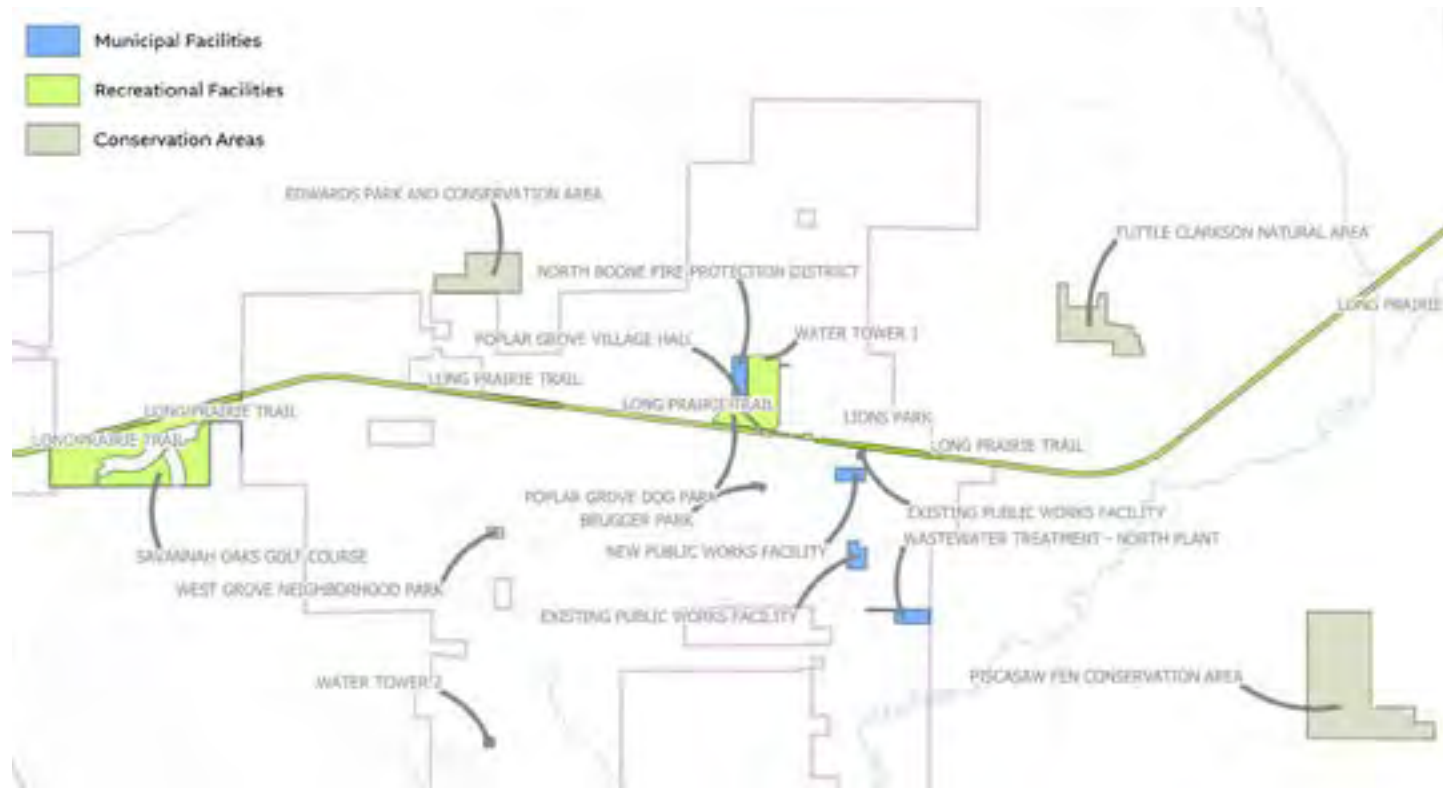
There are many other publicly-owned and privately-owned recreational amenities within the planning area. Notable amenities include:

**Timber Pointe Golf Club:** An 18-hole golf course located on Woodstock Road near the southern edge of the village boundaries. The club also includes a restaurant and event venue and is programmed with events regularly.

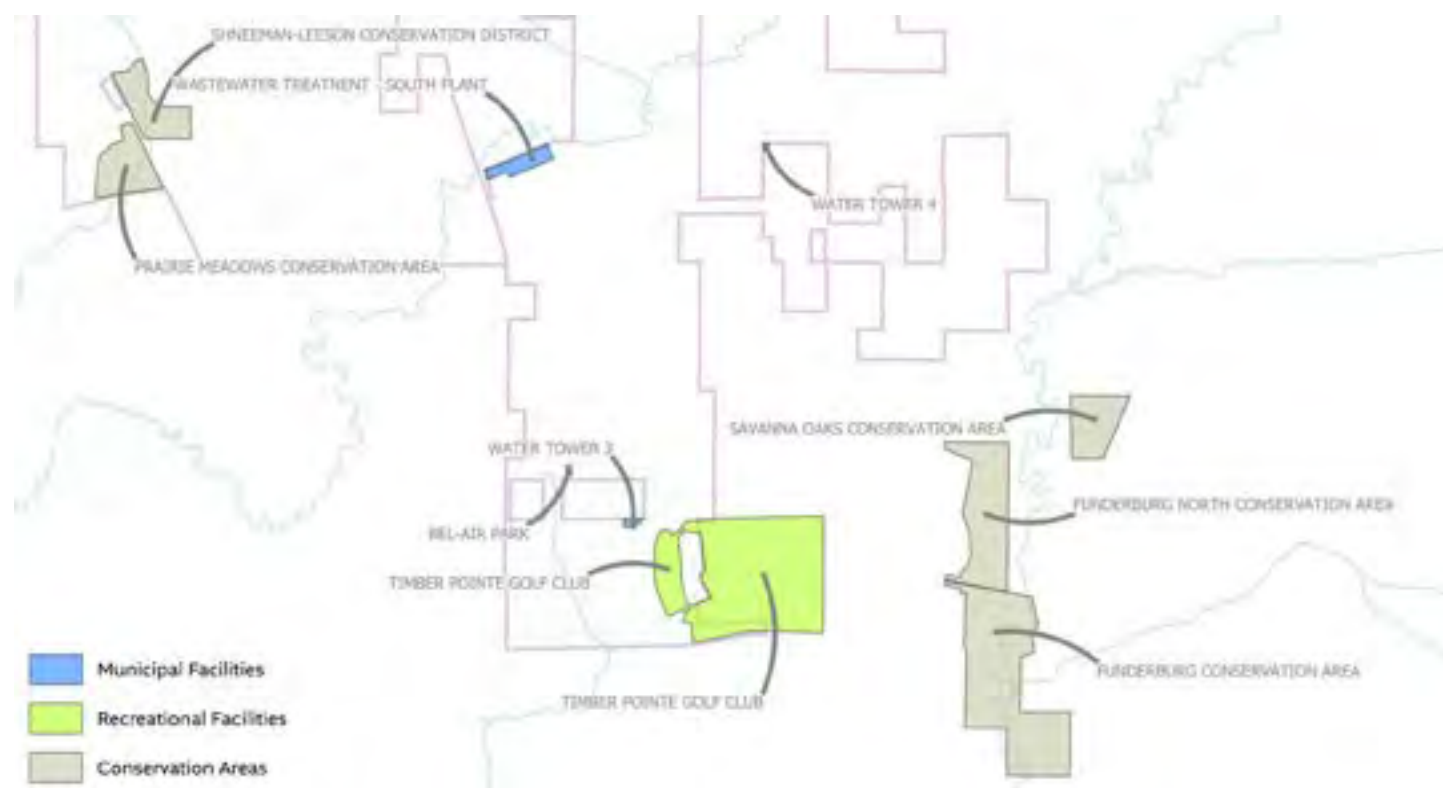
**Savannah Oaks Golf Course:** A 9-hole golf course and club house located in Candlewick Lake. The course is open to non-residents.

**Conservation Areas, Boone County Conservation District:** BCCD owns 98 parcels of land in Boone County, nearly all of which is designated as conservation in its land use, and much of which exists within the extraterritorial jurisdictional boundary relevant to the village's planning process. Piskasaw Fen, Tuttle Clarkson, and Funderburg are just a few of the conservation areas located in close proximity to the village.

**Figure 48: Municipal and Recreational Facilities, Conservation Areas - Northern Extent**



**Figure 49: Municipal and Recreational Facilities, Conservation Areas - Southern Extent**



During community engagement, residents expressed interest in seeing additional recreational opportunities for children aged 13+, additional play area for children of all ages at the park adjacent to Village Hall, and expansion of winter activities and programs.

**Other Institutional**

**School Districts:** The K-12 education system in Boone County is comprised of two school districts: North Boone Community Unit School District (CUSD) 200, and Belvidere CUSD 200.

**Figure 50: Community Unit School Districts and Facilities Serving Poplar Grove**

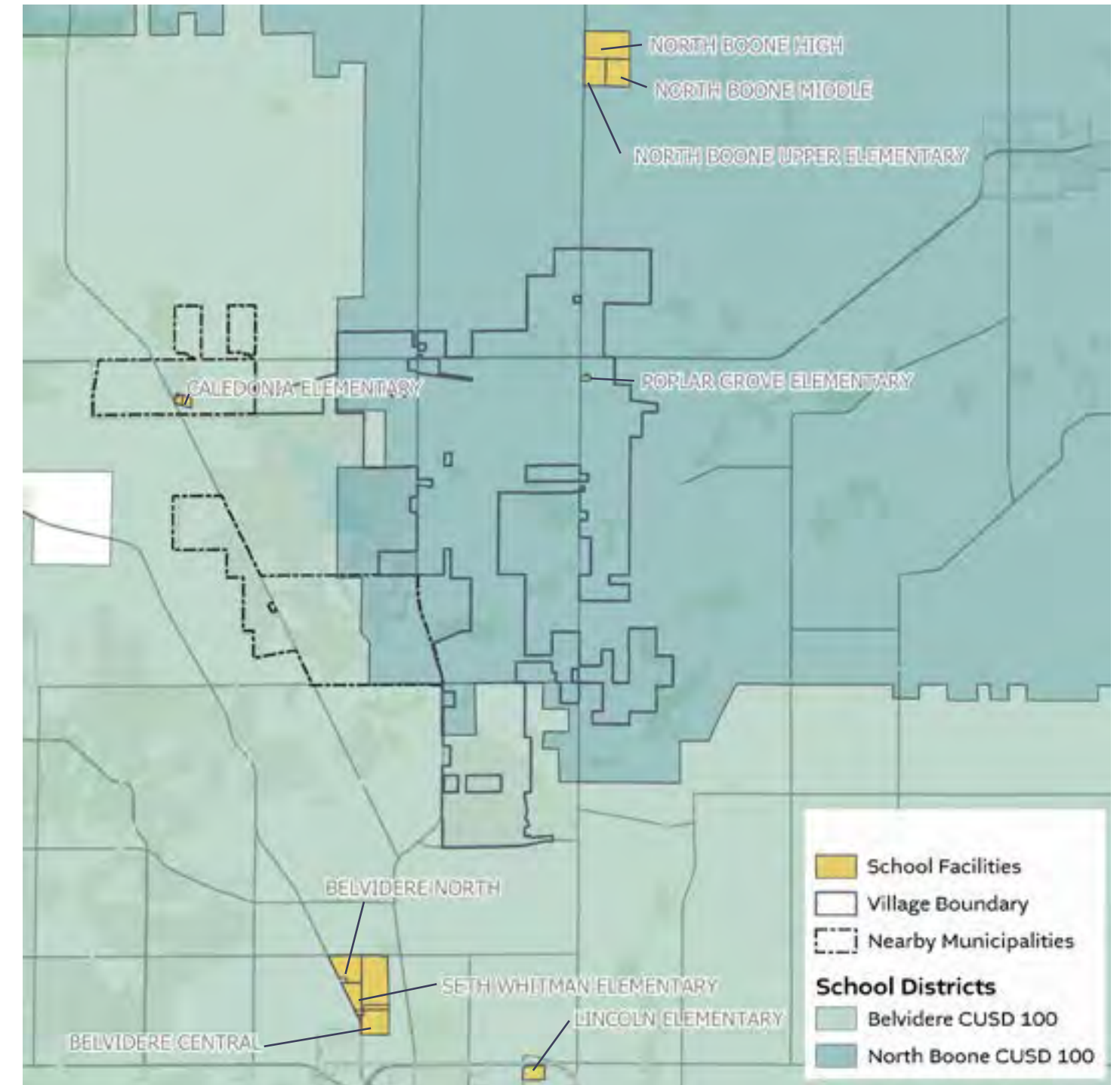


Figure 50 illustrates the boundaries of both school districts as well as the boundaries of Poplar Grove and respective municipalities. The North Boone CUSD service area includes the majority of Poplar Grove as well as Capron and unincorporated rural areas in the northern portion of Boone County.

The district consists of six schools: Three elementary schools, one upper elementary school, one middle

school, and one high school. Figure 51 shows the North Boone CUSD schools which serve Poplar Grove residents.

Figure 52 shows student enrollment from 2018-2023. Approximately 1,512 students were enrolled in North Boone CUSD as a whole during the 2022-2023 school year. The district maintained a 93% graduation rate during the same timeframe as well.

**Figure 51: North Boone CUSD Schools Serving Poplar Grove**

School Name	Address	Grades
Poplar Grove Elementary	208 N. State Street, Poplar Grove, IL 61065	K-4
North Boone Upper Elementary	6200 N. Boone School Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065	5-6
North Boone Middle School	17641 Poplar Grove Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065	7-8
North Boone High School	17823 Poplar Grove Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065	9-12

**Figure 52: 2018-2023 Enrollment of North Boone CUSD Schools Serving Poplar Grove**

School Name	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	5-Year Average	% Difference 2018-2023
Poplar Grove Elementary	275	272	262	243	247	244	257	-11%
North Boone Upper Elementary	273	243	236	237	239	218	241	-20%
North Boone Middle School	226	266	282	240	237	237	248	5%
North Boone High School	503	478	453	469	489	505	483	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,277</b>	<b>1,259</b>	<b>1,233</b>	<b>1,189</b>	<b>1,212</b>	<b>1,204</b>	<b>1,229</b>	<b>-6%</b>

The Belvidere CUSD primarily serves the City of Belvidere and unincorporated rural areas in the southern portion of Boone County. The district includes 10 schools: Five elementary schools, two middle schools, two high schools, and one STEM academy. Poplar Grove residents who live within the boundaries of Orth Road to the North, Woodstock Road to the South, Poplar Grove Road to the East, and Illinois Route 76 to the West are served by the following Belvidere CUSD schools listed in Figure 53.

Figure 53 shows student enrollment from 2018-2023. Approximately 7,501 students were enrolled in Belvidere CUSD as a whole during the 2022-2023 school year. The district maintained an 82% graduation rate during the same timeframe as well.

It should be noted that student enrollment numbers for Figures 52 and 54 excludes:

- Students who were given vouchers to attend private schools; and
- Students placed by their parents in private schools whose tuition is paid for by their parents, but who received special education services from their home district.

**Figure 53: Belvidere CUSD Schools Serving Poplar Grove**

School Name	Address	Grades
Caledonia Elementary School	2311 Randolph Street, Caledonia, IL 61011	PreK-5
Lincoln Elementary School	1011 Bonus Avenue, Belvidere, IL 61008	Prek-5
Seth Whitman Elementary School	8909 Beloit Road, Belvidere, IL 61008	Prek-5
Belvidere Central Middle School	8787 Beloit Road, Belvidere, IL 61008	6-8
Belvidere North High School	9393 Beloit Road, Belvidere, IL 61008	9-12

**Figure 54: 2018-2023 Enrollment of Belvidere CUSD Schools Serving Poplar Grove**

School Name	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	5-Year Average	% Difference 2018-2023
Poplar Grove Elementary	348	398	429	371	406	402	392	16%
North Boone Upper Elementary	537	560	544	535	513	551	540	3%
North Boone Middle School	524	677	638	619	640	655	626	25%
North Boone High School	977	974	962	939	911	901	944	-8%
North Boone High School	977	974	962	939	911	901	1433	-8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,901</b>	<b>4,041</b>	<b>4,019</b>	<b>3,882</b>	<b>3,861</b>	<b>3,905</b>	<b>3,935</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Fire/EMS:** District 3 Headquarters for North Boone Fire and EMS is located at 305 West Grove Street and is directly adjacent to village hall.

**Cemetery:** Located at 236 West Grove Street, the Poplar Grove Cemetery is managed by Poplar Grove Township.

### Private Utilities

In addition to the municipal services listed above, village residents and businesses receive the following services from the following entities:

- **Electricity:** ComEd
- **Gas:** NICOR
- **Internet:** Includes Comcast, Mediacom, SURF Internet, and Frontier. Satellite and wireless mediums available. At the time of this report, fiber internet has been installed along Illinois Route 76 along the village's western boundary. Fiber installation is likely to increase within the region in the coming years.
- **Refuse and Recycling:** MDC Environmental

### Recommendations

#### Goals

- Prioritize public health and safety.
- Deliver efficient, effective municipal services that exceed expectations of all community members.
- Integrate system-wide facility and utility needs in all land use planning endeavors.

#### Objectives

- Coordinate facilities and utilities (both public- and private-sector) planning in tandem with key elements from this Plan, not least Land Use, Transportation & Mobility, Housing, and Economic Development.
- Extend utilities and services in such a way as to not disturb or compromise the quality of adjacent natural or recreational resources.
- Collaborate with multiple organizations and agencies to better optimize facilities and services.
- Distribute costs for facilities, services, and utilities in a sustainable, equitable manner.

### Policies

- Amend applicable ordinances in order to facilitate recommendations in this plan element.
- Optimize the use of existing facilities and utilities while planning for orderly extensions that align with the Future Land Use Map.
- Ensure that municipal facilities have the necessary capacity in general, and equipment in particular, to accommodate future growth.
- Ensure that municipal utilities have the capacity to accommodate future growth.
- Ensure that key municipal services have the requisite staffing needs to be performed effectively in all seasons.
- Maintain ongoing communication with other public- and private-sector service and utility providers to ensure their planning efforts are incorporated appropriately.
- Continually explore shared-service and intergovernmental agreements that help the village optimize their time and money costs (e.g. sharing municipal staff, cooperative purchasing, swapping services, consolidating services, renting equipment)

### Strategies

1. Work with other governmental entities to plan and budget for future Fire, EMS, and Police staffing and facility needs.
2. Create a long-range Facilities Improvement Plan to ensure all facilities are in a state of good repair and can serve the current needs. Municipal services will need to scale concurrently with population growth, which will have implications for facilities planning.
3. Explore resource-sharing opportunities that give community members greater access to recreational amenities. In the 'Recommendations' section of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the village recommended that they explore intergovernmental agreements to help develop, build, maintain, and expand access to recreational facilities.
4. Create a Park and Open Space Master Plan. The plan could provide guidance on a variety to park-related tasks, including analyzing facility needs, acquiring land, siting new facilities as appropriate, and connecting facilities. The creation of a Park and Open Space plan is a key component of receiving federal and state grant monies for park facility upgrades.



### Housing Characteristics

The American Community Survey estimates that as of 2022, there were 1,722 housing units in Poplar Grove. Of those units, 87.1% were single-family homes and 68.1% have been built since 2000. The Sherman Oaks Neighborhood which has 313 parcels and the Prairie

Green Neighborhood which has 429 parcels, are fully built out. The Westergren neighborhood and West Grove neighborhood were also started, but still have several vacant lots. Of the 370 Westergren parcels subdivided, only 28 have homes built. West Grove has 168 subdivided parcels of which 128 parcels have been built upon.

Figure 55: Housing Units by Type (2022)

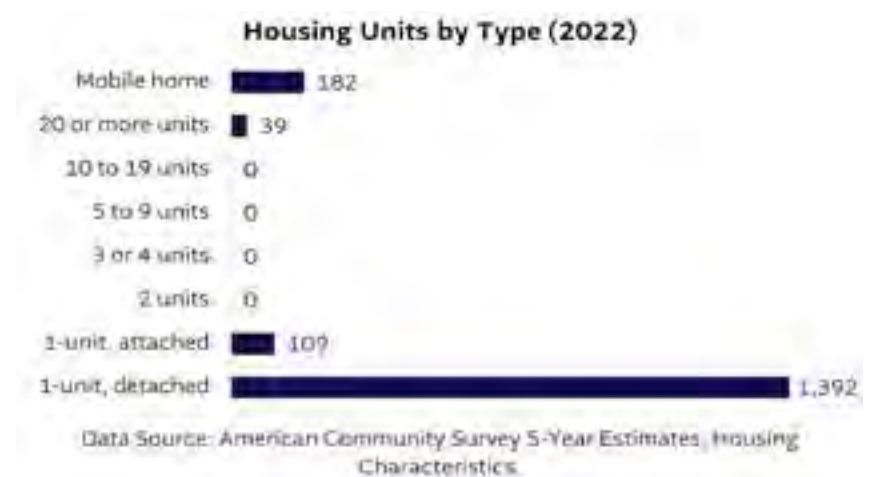
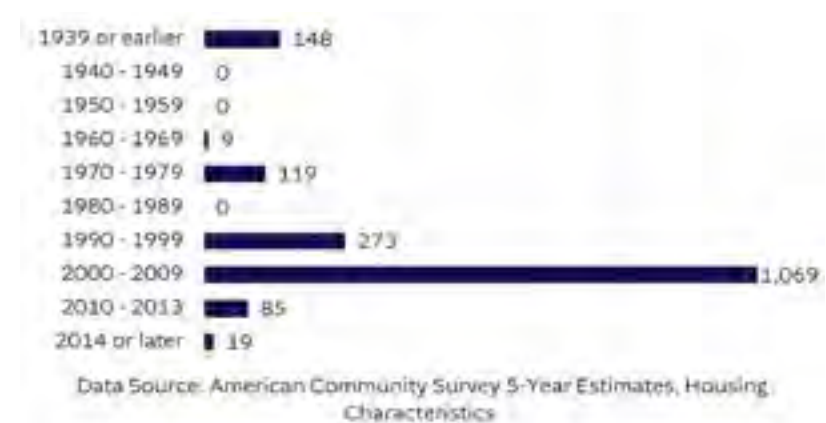


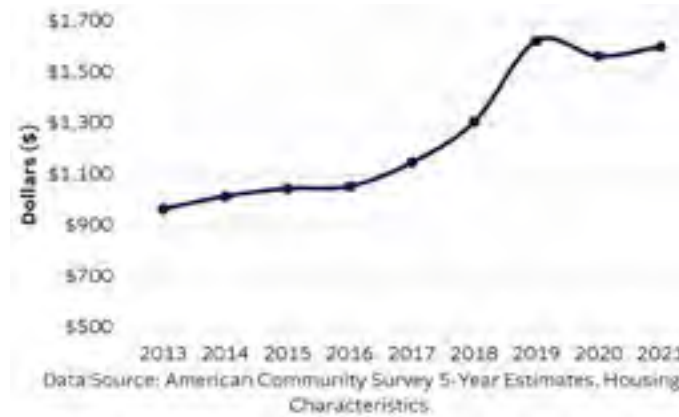
Figure 56: Housing Units by Year Built



## Median Rent

Rent has increased, on average, 6.8% year-over-year since 2013 from \$966 per month to \$1,602 per month. However, the average annual wage for all industries in Boone County has only increased by an average of 2.5% year-over-year.

Figure 57: Median Rent (2013-2021)



## Affordability

According to HUD’s CHAS latest data, there are 40 renter households and 225 owner households that are cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened in Poplar Grove. The following table and chart break out those households by tenure, cost-burden, and income cohort.

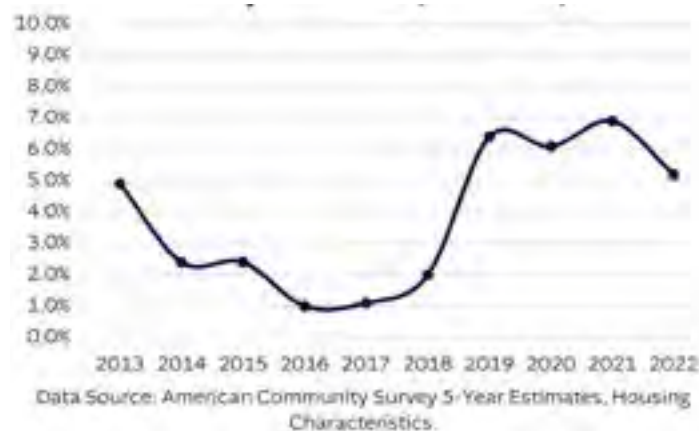
	Renter Households Only		Owner Households Only	
	Cost burden > 30% < 50%	Cost burden > 50%	Cost burden > 30% < 50%	Cost burden > 50%
HI <= 30% HAMFI	0	10	0	0
HI >30% to <=50% HAMFI	0	0	55	20
HI >50% to <=80% HAMFI	30	0	95	10
HI >80% to <=100% HAMFI	0	0	25	0
HI >100% HAMFI	0	0	20	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>30</b>

Note: “HI” means “Household Income”. See the glossary for definitions.

## Vacancy Rate

Vacancy hit an all-time low in 2016, according to the ACS, at 1.1%, yet sharply increased to 6.1% in 2019. This is likely due to new housing development occurring at the time and vacancies have been decreasing since then. Arthur Nelson, author of Planner’s Estimating Guide: Projecting Land-Use and Facility Needs, states “Some amount of vacant residential units is needed to facilitate the free movement of population and choice of reasonable alternatives. The number of vacant units, usually expressed as a percent of total habitable units, carries by such things as growth rates and tenure characteristics of renters and buyers.” Based on best practices and household growth projections, Redevelopment Resources recommends an owner-

Figure 58: Vacancy Rate Trends (2013-2022)



occupancy vacancy rate of 1% and a rental vacancy rate of 3% for a combined vacancy rate of 4%. The Village of Poplar Grove’s combined vacancy rate is estimated to be 4.2% which is the lowest in the region.

## Housing Demand

Assuming the number of households in the village continues to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 0.2%-0.7%, the village maintains an overall vacancy rate of 4% over the next ten years, and the village captures a portion of the 3,400 estimated new jobs to the region, by 2032 an additional 269 to 904 units will be needed. This will help Poplar Grove grow its residential base and ensure ongoing new revenue for the Village. Fortunately, the Village has more than 540 vacant residential parcels that have already been subdivided which could provide up to 884 units. There are approximately 40 additional residentially zoned parcels that have not yet been subdivided which could provide up to an additional 5,200 units. The following two charts and maps highlight the vacant, subdivided parcels by zoning and illustrate the established neighborhoods.

Figure 59: Regional Comparison of Vacancy Rate (2023)

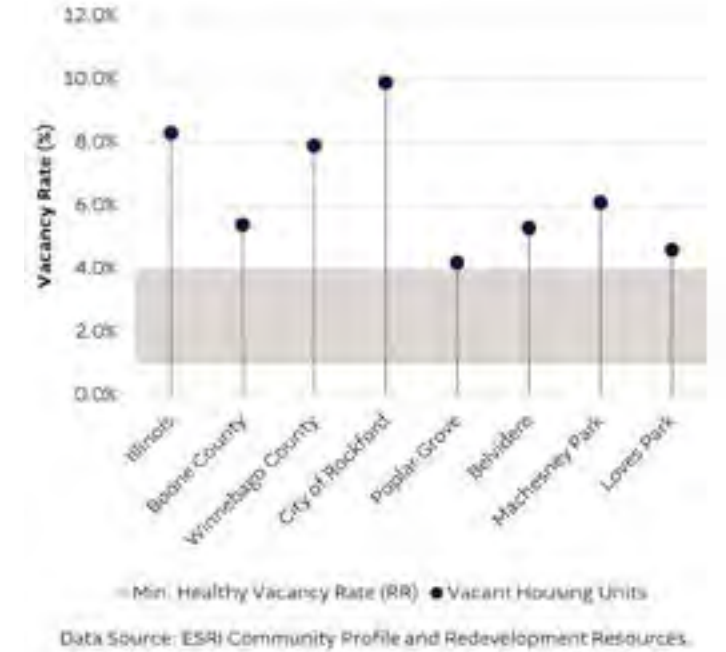


Figure 60: Subdivided Vacant Parcels by Neighborhood

Neighborhood	Count	Acres
Barmore’s Subdivision	1	0.3
Bel-Air Estates	17	18.7
Bullard’s Addition	2	0.4
Burled Woods	20	8.1
NKJ Acres	1	0.3
Olson Woods	39	10.8
Pine Woods	2	2.3
Prairie Green	10	7.4
Pulliam Addition	1	0.2
Ravens Crest	4	1.2
Sherman Oaks	5	1.8
Sherman Town	1	0.3
Westgren	335	96.7
West Grove	66	21.2
All Others	40	314.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>484.4</b>

Figure 61: Subdivided Vacant Parcels by Residential Zoning District

Zoning	Vacant Parcels (Ct.)	Total Acreage from Vacant Parcels	Potential Homes (Ct.)
R-1 Single Family (20,000 sqft)	35	33.3	72
R-2 Single Family (10,000 sqft)	470	137.8	600
R-3 Single Family (7,000 sqft)	30	8.1	50
R-5 Mixed Res. (3,000 sqft)	1	9.1	132
RE Res. Estate (10 ac)	8	296.3	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>484.4</b>	<b>884</b>

## SOURCES

1. Nelson, Arthur. “Planner’s Estimating Guide: Projecting Land-Use and Facility Needs.” Routledge, First Edition, 2004.



Figure 62: Vacant, Taxable, Subdivided Parcels by Residential Zoning District

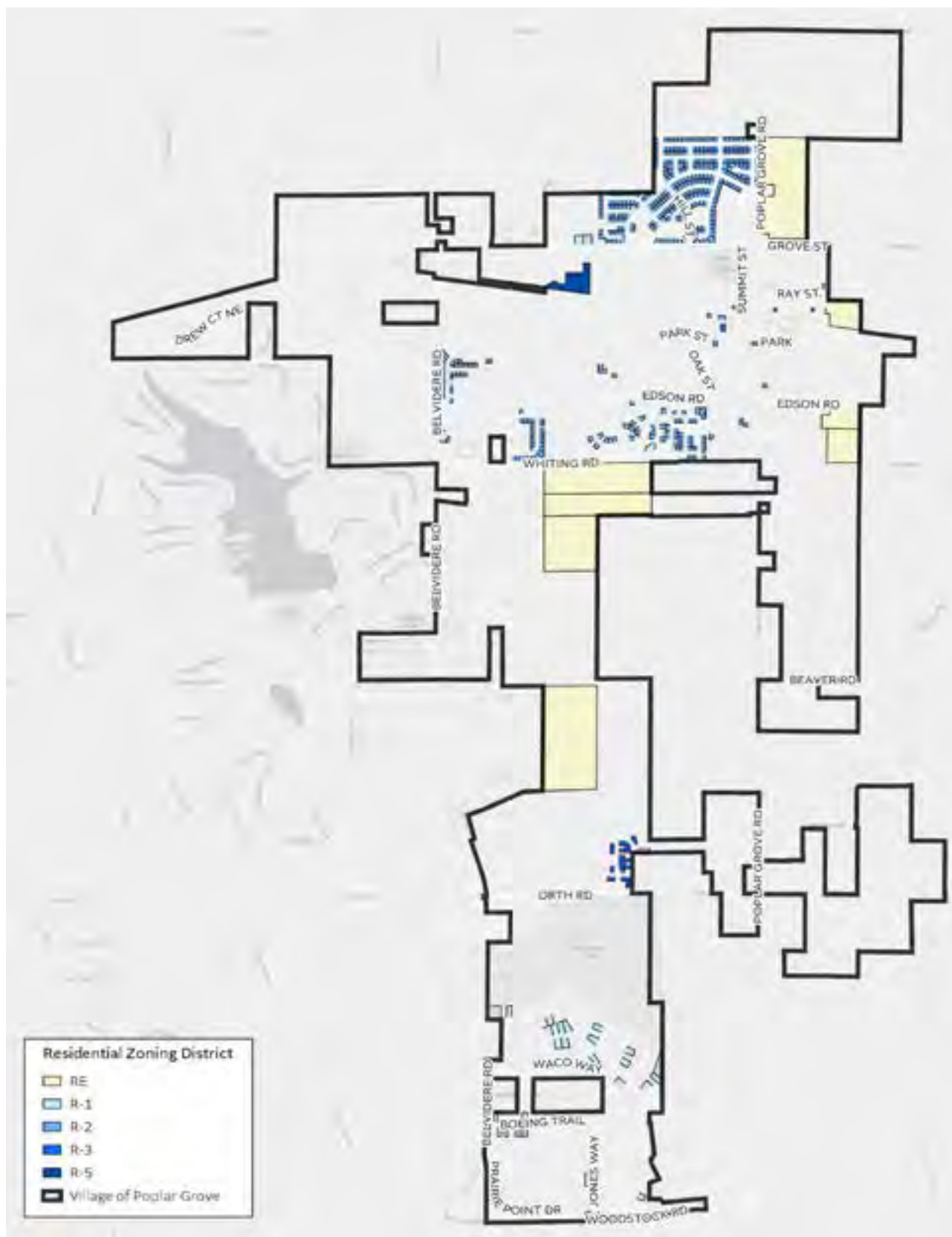
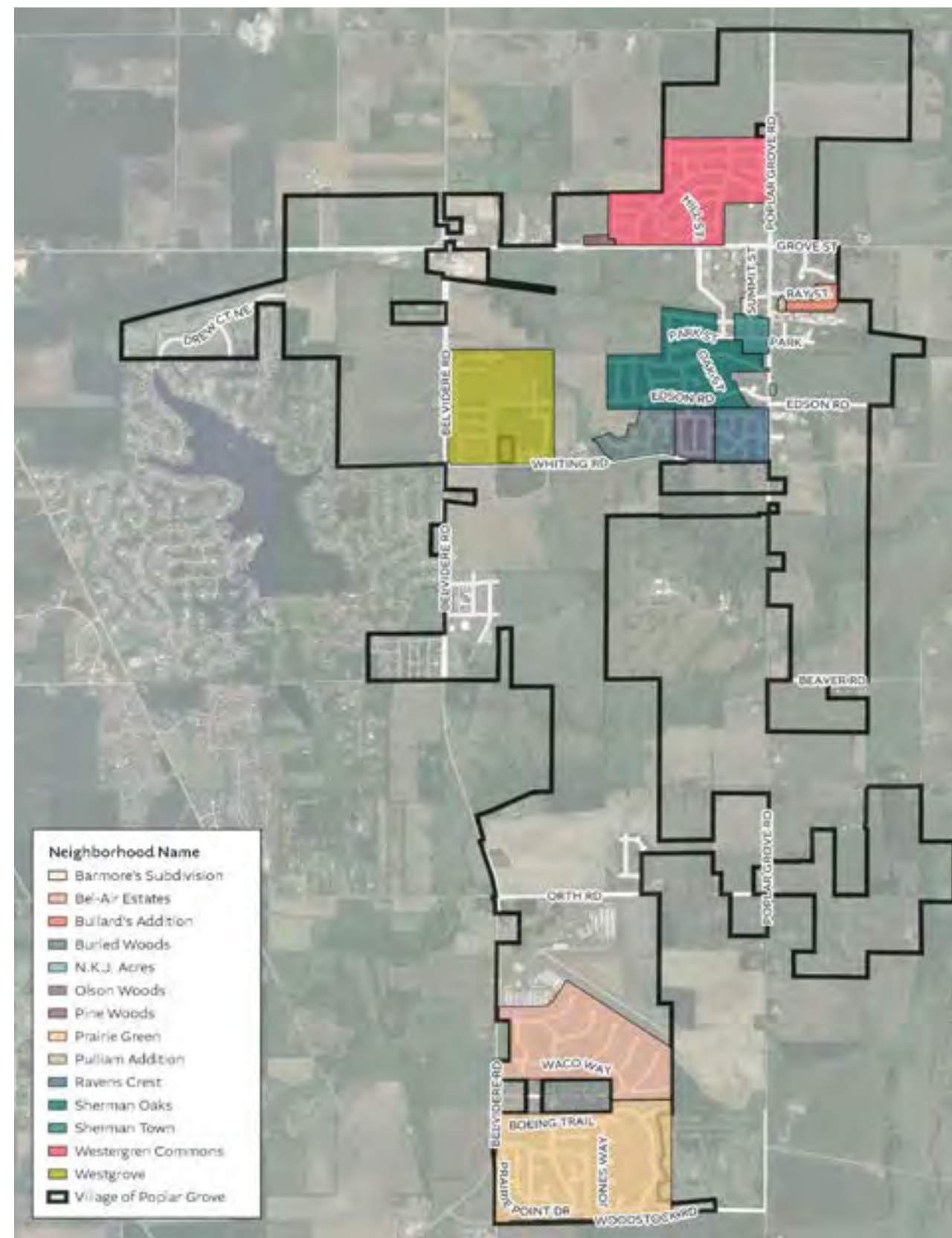


Figure 63: Residential Neighborhoods within the Village



To meet the demand for housing, the village should direct developers to the subdivided lots, and discuss with them the opportunity to create density, such as the development of duplexes and four-plexes on these lots. Due to the number of new jobs proposed for Boone County between Stellantis re-engaging, General Mills' growth, and others as reported by Growth Dimensions, it is a great opportunity for Poplar Grove to be ready to provide housing to these employees new to the area.

From interviews, it was revealed there is not a good option for senior citizen residential in Poplar Grove. It will be imperative to create a place for people to continue to live in the village when they are no longer able to stay in their single-family homes independently. Consider a way for a developer to include independent living condos or supported living units in their development proposals. Consider undertaking a feasibility study to determine the number and timeline in which demand for senior housing will be at a critical need, so, if possible, the village can be out ahead of that critical need.

Additionally, input from residents at community engagement sessions revealed that there is a preference for locating multi-family or denser housing near commercial amenities such as those along Rt. 173 and Rt. 76.

## Recommendations

### Goals

- Develop 5-10 undeveloped lots in existing subdivisions per year for the next 5-10 years.
- Support the development of duplex and four-plex residential units where possible.
- Encourage the development of housing in the "missing middle" - units that are smaller and more affordable than typical single-family homes on large lots.
- Investigate opportunities to create housing for the 55+ demographic.

### Objectives

- Attract local contractors to develop lots in existing subdivisions.
- Ensure zoning is appropriate for transitioning up to 20 lots in a single-family subdivision to lots that could hold a duplex or four-plex.
- Create a marketing plan to market lots to residents, and packages of lots to builders.
- Seek to provide housing specifically for people aged

55 and older.

### Policies

- Ensure zoning is appropriate to facilitate duplex and four-plex developments in existing subdivisions.

### Strategies

1. Create an email database of local contractors who could build houses in existing subdivisions.
2. Develop an email outreach campaign to housing contractors to invite them to visit Poplar Grove, see the open lots and discover the opportunities available to them to develop housing in Poplar Grove.
3. Chart out the approval path for contractors to get housing approved, making it as easy and seamless as possible.
4. Identify and approve which lots in the subdivisions could be developed as duplex and four-plex housing units.
5. As developers/contractors come on board to develop lots, market the lots and houses to potential residents prior to the homes being completed. Work with contractors willing to develop the first home on speculation and create a database of interested buyers so they can continue to build as buyers are available.
6. Help the contractors market their homes to potential new residents. Coordinate a "Live in Poplar Grove" campaign and market it to new employees to the area.
7. Draw on the positive experience of other new residents to the community, gathering testimonials and sharing their story to why they chose to live there and why they are happy living in Poplar Grove.
8. Conduct a feasibility study for housing for people over age 55 to determine the exact demand, and then work to meet that demand if one exists.

# Economic Development

## Economic Profile

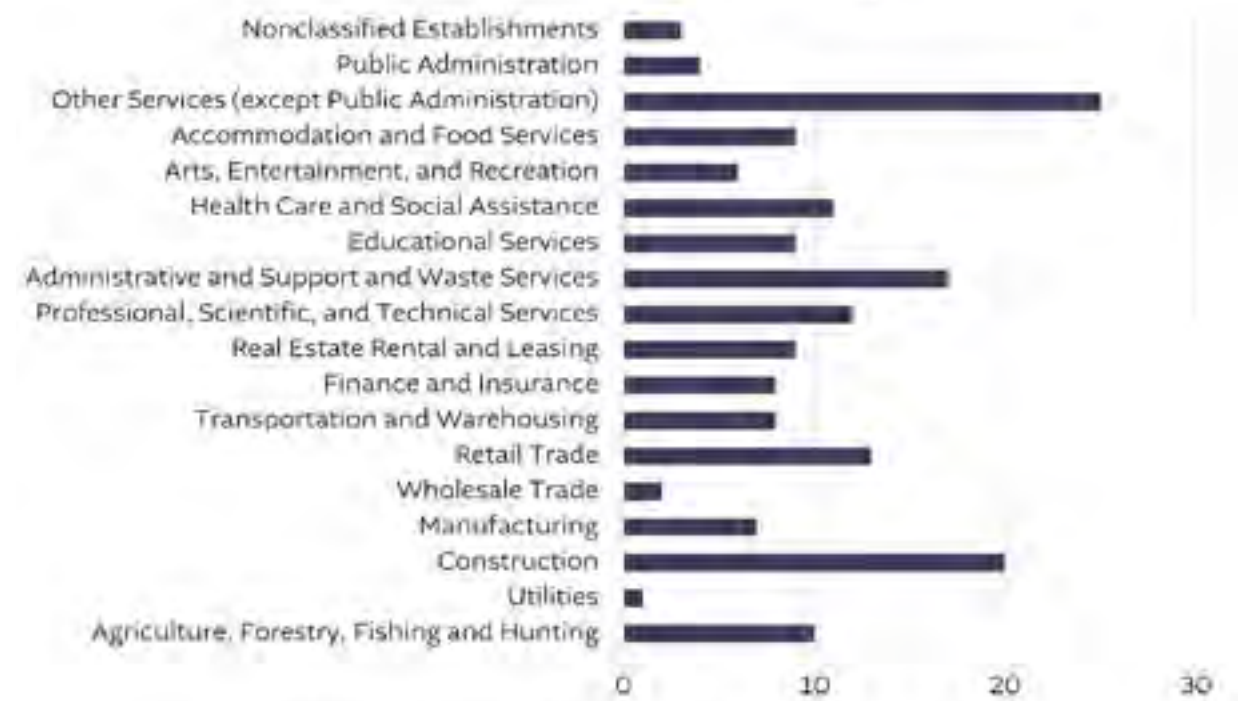
### Industry & Business

Poplar Grove is home to over 170 small businesses ranging from a single employee to 214 employees. Communities similar in size, median incomes and proximity to larger metro areas have approximately 170-400 small businesses that range in size from a single employee to 300. The current business mix indicates an economy primarily serving residents' needs, like a typical bedroom community. A bedroom community is one where many residents reside but work elsewhere.

The largest employers in the village are as follows in no order:

- North Boone Community Schools District No 200
- Stephen R Thomas & Associates
- Timber Pointe Golf Club
- Escuela De Litzzy
- Poplar Grove Airport
- Capron Rescue Squad District
- Village of Poplar Grove
- Alpaca Pines LLC Farm & Fiber Mill
- Snyder Pharmacy

Figure 64: Number of Poplar Grove Businesses by Industry



Data Source: DataUSA / Data Vu, Redevelopment Resources

The following figure demonstrates the unmet demand within a ten-mile radius of Poplar Grove. Businesses in these categories will fill the gap by offering a good or service that is in demand. Residents of Poplar Grove are spending money in these categories, and there is an opportunity for them to spend that money within the Village, rather than elsewhere.

To attract new business to Poplar Grove, it is important to understand the needs (demand) of the community from a retail and service mix. But there are also businesses that can be successful in Poplar Grove from an industry sector perspective, which will create jobs and potentially attract more residents. Residents reported wanting more fast-food restaurant options, and a Kwik Trip (or other expanded convenience store option).

Boone County is expecting significant job growth from expansions (General Mills, Walmart, Midwest Refrigeration Service, and others) and the re-energizing of the Stellantis operation.

The \$5 billion investment into equipping the facility in Belvidere for electric vehicle manufacturing will employ approximately 4,000-5,000 people. This much economic activity will have a spillover effect on Poplar Grove, and it will be important to be ready to capture the growth the community is ready, willing and able to. This could come in the form of a significant number of new housing units, as well as ancillary business growth to serve the business growth to the west.

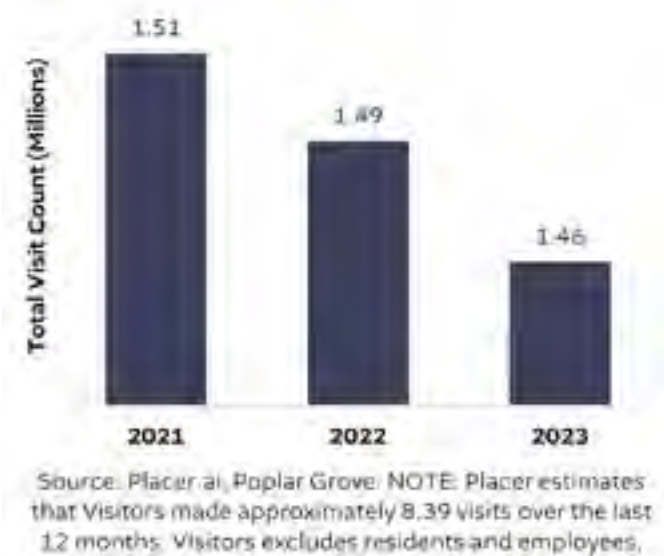
One sector worth exploring is the contractor services sector. There are several businesses which serve the contracting industry. With Poplar Grove's proximity to other growing areas, businesses in the contractor service industry would do well to locate in Poplar Grove. They would have access to growth areas in Belvidere and Machesney Park. Construction is a strong sector for Poplar Grove, and it would be wise to capitalize on that.

Promotion of agri-tourism is an economic development strategy worth exploring; however, it is not advised that the Village invest significant financial resources into it, as the jobs created from this strategy are not typically family-sustaining jobs. Where there is an opportunity to capture economic activity because of an existing agri-tourism attraction, that would be of benefit to the village. This economic development approach was expressed as of-interest to Poplar Grove residents to bring in business while maintaining the rural community feel. Business types that were desired by residents and that would be directly or complementary

**Figure 65: Unmet Demand within Ten-mile Radius**



**Figure 66: Annual Visit Trends**



to agri-tourism included bed and breakfasts, equestrian facilities offering horse-riding experiences, wineries, antique shops, and wedding/event venues.

Downtown has opportunities for new business while highlighting rural recreational opportunities like the multi-use trail that runs through downtown. There is a concentration of two-story commercial structures downtown that could be prime candidates for rehabilitation and reuse, with retail on the main floor and residential on the upper story. With any vacant

buildings, try to meet with the owner and encourage them to fill with high quality tenants. Host an annual meeting of downtown property owners along with the downtown improvement committee that has been working to spruce up downtown. Share goals and create a plan to improve downtown for businesses and residents.

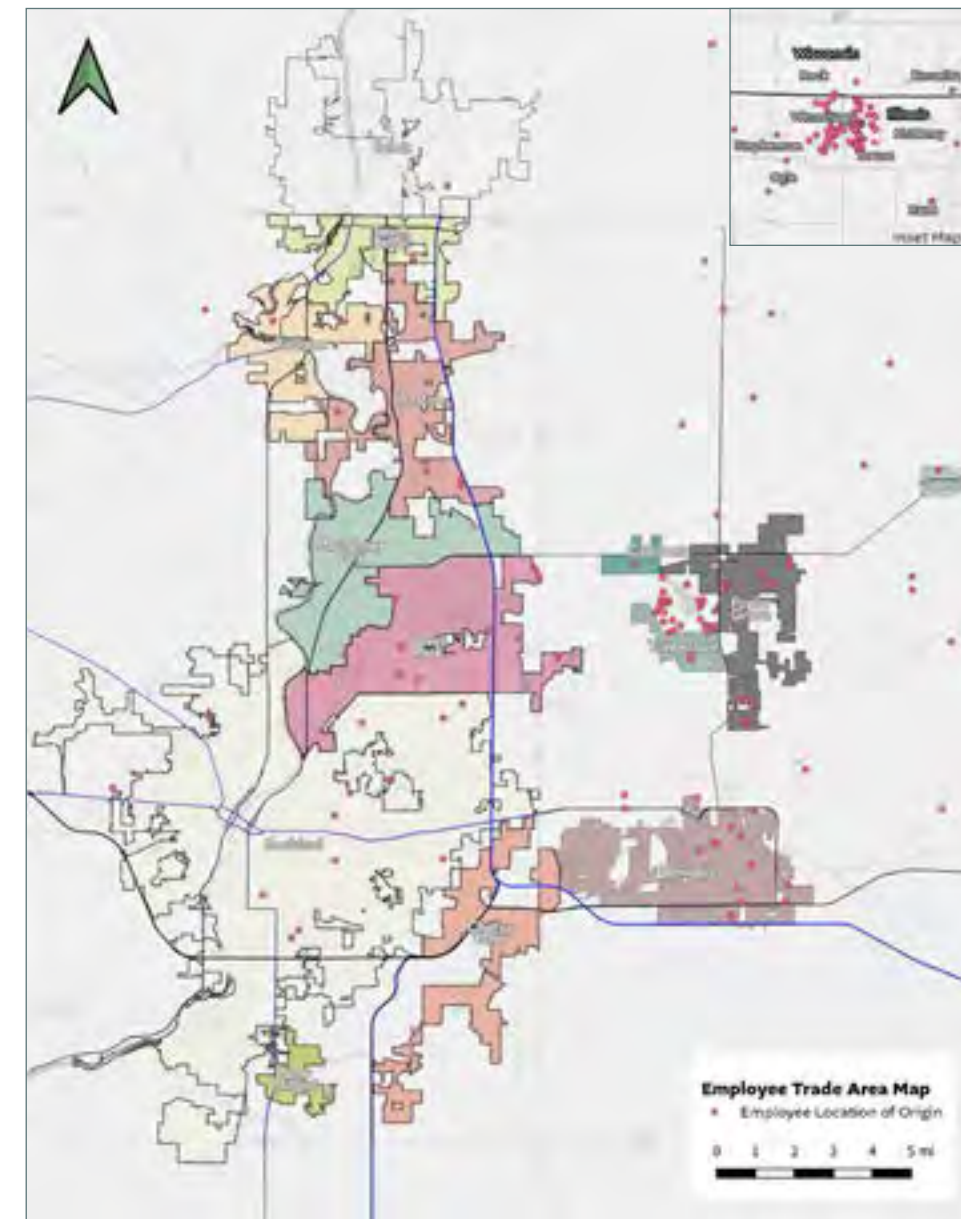
The village may also want to consider being flexible with zoning in the adjacent single-family homes along Poplar Grove Road, to house walk-up businesses, capitalizing on the traffic that passes by. These would likely

accommodate local, mom-and-pop type businesses.

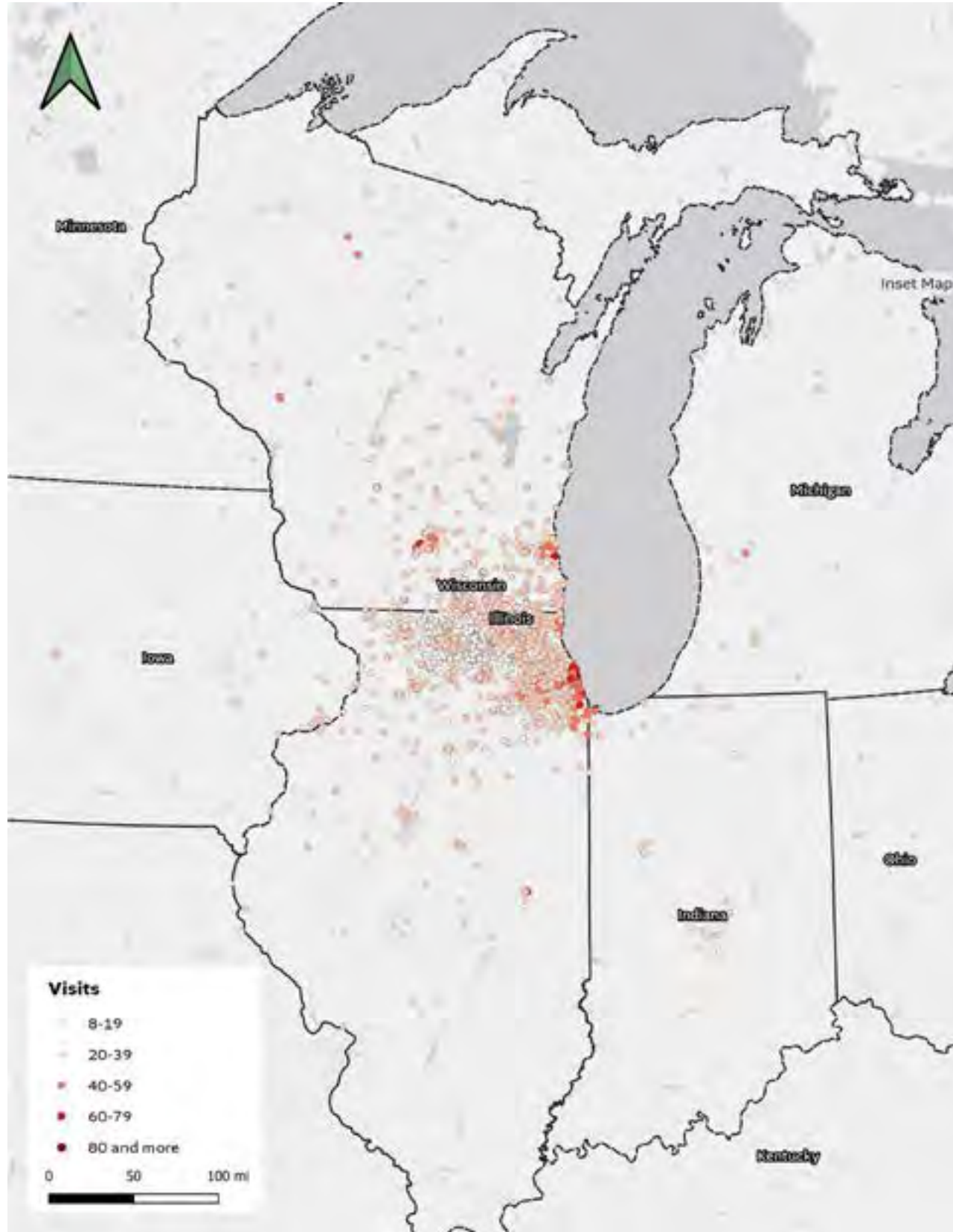
**Commute**

Many employees that work in Poplar Grove commute as far as Stephenson, Ogle and McHenry Counties for work in Poplar Grove. Average commute time is 28 minutes. Please see the transportation chapter for more information on commuting, as well as traffic counts. Traffic counts are meaningful to businesses, particularly on Hwy. 173, Hwy, 76, and Poplar Grove Road.

**Figure 67: Employee Trade Area Map**



**Figure 68: Visitor Trade Area Map**

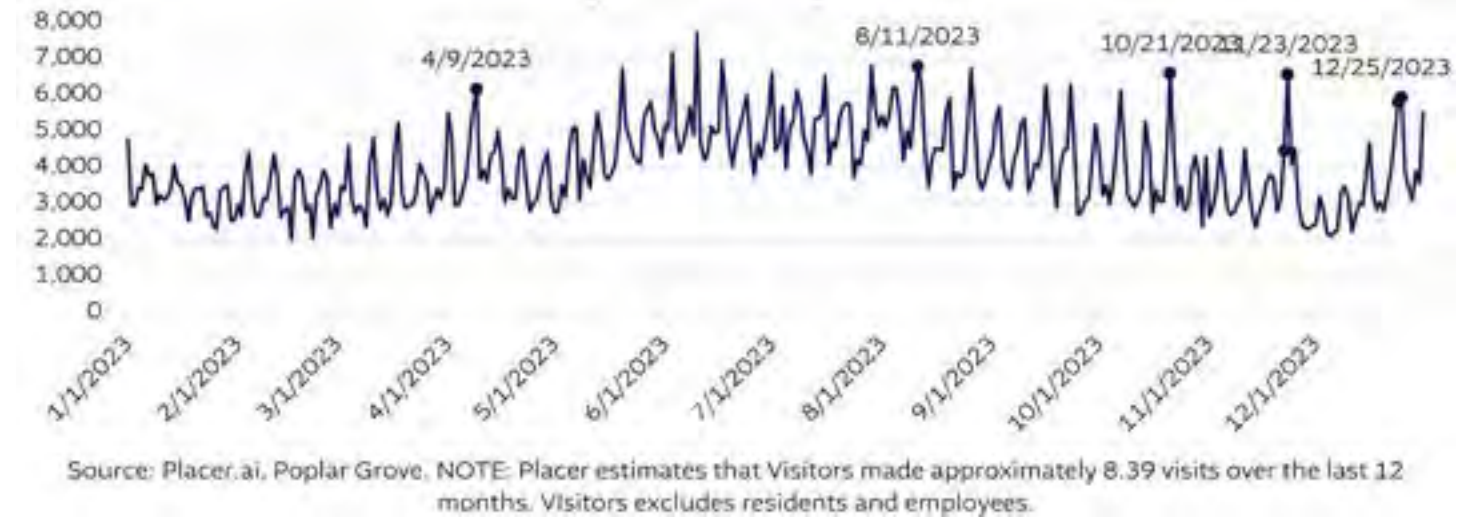


**Trade Area**

Communities need quality data analytics about their physical spaces to attract prospective commercial uses. Foot traffic patterns are not only a measurement of a vital commercial area, but understanding these patterns

can provide municipalities with the knowledge and insights to plan effectively for local events. The project team analyzed data from Placer on visitor and consumer activity within the village.

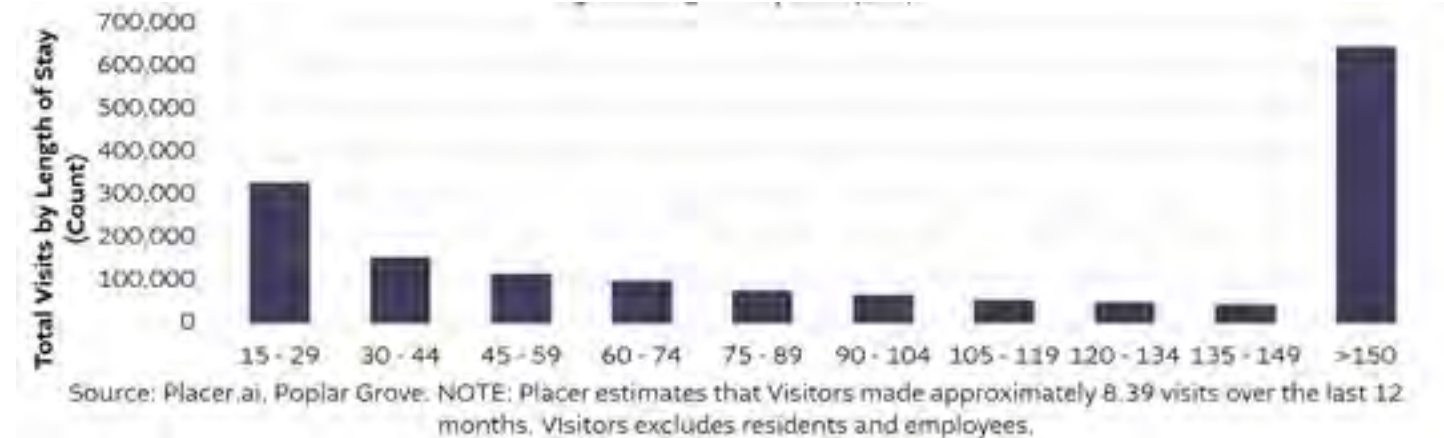
**Figure 69: Visits per Day (2023)**



**Figure 70: Daily Visit Trends (2023)**



**Figure 71: Length of Stay Trends (2023)**



See Figure 67. Trade Area map and Figure 66. Annual Visit Trends.

Visits to Poplar Grove by visitors have declined over recent years. The most popular days to visit are holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter with a few other exceptions. Most visits also occur on weekends rather than weekdays and last longer than 2.5 hours. Business travel may be captured within the visitor travel data; however, it is important to consider the high traffic commercial corridors from the perspective of business attraction and how important these corridors are to business-to-business enterprises.

**Organizational Structure**

Growth Dimensions is the economic development organization that serves Poplar Grove. Their work focuses on business attraction, expansion, and retention for Boone County. The organization lists available commercial property on their web site. Poplar Grove staff should meet periodically with Growth Dimensions to make sure opportunities are shared and the village can act in a proactive manner when preparing for economic growth.

**Community Assets**

Airport - The Poplar Grove Airport is a community asset that can be capitalized upon for economic growth. Although it is privately owned, many private pilots travel through this airport for executive travel. This airport is also an economic driver when it hosts events, such as fly-ins. The village should consider undertaking a



hotel feasibility study to make sure it isn't missing an opportunity to capture those who might need a place to stay when they fly into the Poplar Grove Airport.

Access – Poplar Grove does not have direct access onto I-39/90 but with Hwy. 173 and Hwy. 76, there is easy access to and through the village. The traffic on these two highways presents significant access to potential customers for businesses located along these routes. Land along Hwy. 173, particularly to the west of the village, property at the intersection of Hwys. 173 and 76, and then south along Hwy. 76 should be maximized for its commercial development potential.

**Recommendations**

**Goals**

- Market available commercial land.
- Identify future available commercial land to be developed when existing land is built out.
- Work to attract construction trades shops and offices.
- Focus on improving downtown.

**Objectives**

- Create a database of available commercial lots regardless of ownership to market the Village.
- Begin conversations with landowners to identify land for the next commercial area to be developed.
- Increase the number of construction offices, shops, yards and businesses serving the construction industry. Poplar Grove could become a cluster for this industry.
- Improve the tenant mix and use of commercial buildings in downtown Poplar Grove.

**Strategies**

1. Identify all available commercial property and post it on a map on the website with the type of zoning and preferred uses. See [http://machesneypark.org/available\\_properties/index.php](http://machesneypark.org/available_properties/index.php) as an example. Share this database with Growth Dimensions so it can be promoted on their web site too.
2. Look at potential commercial land on the map and reach out to landowners in the area to see if/when they may be interested in selling.
3. Meet with contractors in Poplar Grove who already have a shop or office there. Ask for prospects from them, of businesses in their industry who may want to relocate to Poplar Grove. Consider electricians, plumbers, engineers, architects, siding and gutter

installers, roofing contractors, brick and masonry specialists, window sellers/installers, cabinet makers, and others which may be interested in an affordable place to do business with easy access to new commercial and residential developments in other communities. Keep this conversation open and seek opportunities to welcome new businesses in this sector.

4. Meet quarterly with the group that has organized itself to spruce up downtown and include all property owners. Impress upon them the opportunity to capture residents and tourists.
5. Work Growth Dimensions for any downtown-related grants that could be available and/or consider creation of a program to target this area.
6. Investigate the Enterprise Zone (through Growth Dimensions) for larger grant opportunities to rehab larger, more blighted property into development that contribute to the tax base and positive traffic generation for downtown.
7. Market the fact that the Village will waive impact fees for new development.
8. Investigate opportunities to serve the executive travel market with executives who come into the airport. Meet with airport officials to brainstorm any needs that could be filled in the market and serve these travelers.
9. Conduct a hotel feasibility study to determine if there is demand from the executive travel at the airport, the seasonal travel to local agri-tourism attractions, and to host contractors and others traveling through the area for work.
10. Explore development of business/light industrial park off Rt. 173 and Rt. 76 and utilizing the Enterprise Zone to promote its development.

# Implementation

The implementation matrix can be used as a stand-alone document to guide future decision-making and planning. This matrix captures the Strategies presented in the Recommendations at the end of each chapter and then identifies potential partners, funding, and timeline.

This matrix can be used as a work plan and is recommended to be part of a bi-annual check in to verify status of the community's goals. As this is a living document, the elements of this matrix may be modified to adjust any component, either adding to or discarding certain elements that may no longer be relevant.

Land Use			
Strategies	Partners	Funding	Timeline
1. Establish a boundary agreement between the Village of Poplar Grove and the Villages of Caledonia and Timberlane. This was an earlier recommendation in the previous plan but was never executed.	Village of Caledonia, Timberlane, Boone County	n/a	2025
2. Re-Establish a boundary agreement between the Village of Poplar Grove and the Village of Capron. A 20-year boundary agreement between the Village of Poplar Grove and the Village of Capron was established on July 10, 2000.	Village of Capron, Boone County	n/a	Q3 2024
3. Enhance non-motorized accessibility between developments by developing sidewalks and trails.	Residential developers, IDOT	Itep, AARP Grants, CIP Allocation, TAP Funds, STBG, HSIP	Ongoing, starting with new
4. Promote more compact neighborhood design, aligning with traditional development patterns, to encourage efficient development and use of resources.	Village Staff, Boone County	Village staff time, County staff time	2025 and ongoing
5. Develop framework for future industrial/business park opportunities.	Village Staff, Growth Dimensions	Village staff time, GD staff time	Q3 2024

## Agricultural and Natural Resources

Strategies	Partners	Funding	Timeline
1. Coordinate with other regional agencies on agricultural and natural resource preservation opportunities outside village boundaries.	Village Staff, Boone County Cons. District, Boone County Soil & Water Cons. District, Natural Land Institute	Village staff time, regional partners' staff time	2025 and ongoing
2. Coordinate with other regional agencies on growth opportunities that do not compromise on the rural character and agricultural heritage for which this area is known.	Village Staff, R1PC, Growth Dimensions, Winnebago Boone Farm Bureau	Village staff time	2025 and ongoing
3. Implement stormwater management strategies that reduce the effects of agricultural runoff.	Village Staff, Winnebago Boone Farm Bureau, BCSWCD	Village staff time, regional partners' staff time	2025 and ongoing
4. Provide resources for public and private property owners on best management practices to promote conservation of natural resources.	Village Staff, Local Business/Property Owners, BCCD, BCSWCD, Natural Land Institute	Village staff time, regional partners' staff time	2025 and ongoing
5. Promote the role of agriculture and agri-tourism in the economy via Boone County Fair and other related event opportunities.	Village Staff, Boone County, Growth Dimensions, Fair organizers, 4H	T-Mobile Hometown Grant, 4H student projects, AARP, Project for Public Spaces	Q3 2024 and ongoing

## Transportation and Mobility

Strategies	Partners	Funding	Timeline
1. Improve connectivity between neighborhoods via multi-use path or sidewalks	Village Staff, Residential developers, IDOT	Itep, AARP Grants, CIP Allocation, TAP Funds, STBG, HSIP	Ongoing, starting with new
2. Install speed bumps or additional demarcations on the roadway at trail crossings	Village Staff, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)	STBG, HSIP, CIP Allocation	2026
3. Pursue additional funding for trail improvements including trailhead amenities and signage.	Village Staff, BCCD, Boone County	League of American Bicyclists (Community Spark Grant), America Walks (Community Change Grant), STBG, HSIP, TAP, Project for Public Spaces (Community Placemaking Grants), CIP Allocation	2026

## Transportation and Mobility (cont.)

Strategies	Partners	Funding	Timeline
4. Install additional signage in the Village and surrounding area to direct people to downtown from Rt. 173.	Village Staff, IDOT	AARP Grants, General Fund	2025 and ongoing
5. Identify key agricultural equipment routes and prioritize maintenance issues.	Village Staff, IDOT	Staff Time, STBG, HSIP	2025 and ongoing
6. Prioritize key high-traffic intersections for traffic control devices and safety measures.	Village Staff, IDOT, Boone County, Growth Dimensions	ITEP, STBG, HSIP, TAP	2025 and ongoing
7. Analyze roadway capacity and circulation within the area of potential new industrial/business park at Rt. 173.	Village Staff, Growth Dimensions, Boone County	Village Staff time, Growth Dimensions staff time, EDA	2025

## Government, Public Facilities, and Utilities

Strategies	Partners	Funding	Timeline
1. Work with other governmental entities to plan and budget for future Fire, EMS, and Police staffing and facility needs.	Village Staff, Fire, EMS, Police, Sherriff	Staff Time	2025 and ongoing
2. Create a long-range Facilities Improvement Plan to ensure all facilities are in a state of good repair and can serve the current needs.	Village Staff, consultant group	CIP Funding, General Fund	2026
3. Explore resource-sharing opportunities that give community members greater access to recreational amenities.	Surrounding communities, Boone County, Boone County Conservation District, Rockford Park District	Staff Time	2025 and ongoing
4. Create a Park and Open Space Master Plan.	Village Staff, consultant group, surrounding communities	Staff Time, CIP Funding, General Fund	2026

## Housing

Strategies	Partners	Funding	Timeline
1. Create an email database of local contractors who could build houses in existing subdivisions.	Village Staff	Staff Time	Q3 2024
2. Develop an email outreach campaign to housing contractors to invite them to visit Poplar Grove, see the open lots and discover the opportunities available to them to develop housing in Poplar Grove.	Village Staff	Staff Time	Q3 2024 and ongoing
3. Chart out the approval path for contractors to get housing approved, making it as easy and seamless as possible.	Village Staff	Staff Time	Q4 2024
4. Identify and approve which lots in the subdivisions could be developed as duplex and four-plex housing units.	Village Staff	Staff Time	Q3 2024
5. As developers/contractors come on board to develop lots, market the lots and houses to potential residents prior to the homes being completed. Work with contractors willing to develop the first home on speculation and create a database of interested buyers so they can continue to build as buyers are available.	Village Staff, local Realtors	Staff Time	2025 and ongoing
6. Help the contractors market their homes to potential new residents. Coordinate a "Live in Poplar Grove" campaign and market it to new employees to the area.	Village Staff, local Realtors	Staff Time	2025 and ongoing
7. Draw on the positive experience of other new residents to the community, gathering testimonials and sharing their story to why they chose to live there and why they are happy living in Poplar Grove.	Village Staff	Staff Time (use social media)	2024 and ongoing
8. Conduct a feasibility study for housing for people over age 55 to determine the exact demand, and then work to meet that demand if one exists.	Village Staff, outsourced to contractor/consultant	EDA, General Fund	2025

## Economic Development

Strategies	Partners	Funding	Timeline
1. Identify all available commercial property and post it on a map on the website with the type of zoning and preferred uses.	Village Staff, local Realtors, Growth Dimensions	Staff Time	2024 and ongoing
2. Look at potential commercial land on the map and reach out to landowners in the area to see if/when they may be interested in selling.	Village Staff, Village Board Members, Realtors	Staff Time	2025 and ongoing
3. Meet with contractors in Poplar Grove who already have a shop or office there.	Village Staff, Village Board Members	Staff Time	2025 and ongoing
4. Meet quarterly with the group that has organized itself to spruce up downtown and include all property owners.	Village Staff	Staff Time, T-Mobile Hometown Grant, AARP	Q3 2024 and ongoing
5. Work Growth Dimensions for any downtown-related grants that could be available.	Village Staff, Growth Dimensions	Staff Time	Q4 2024 and ongoing
6. Investigate the Enterprise Zone for larger grant opportunities to rehab larger, more blighted property into development that contribute tax base and positive traffic generation for downtown.	Village Staff, Growth Dimensions	Staff Time	Q4 2024 and ongoing
7. Market the fact that the Village will waive impact fees for new development.	Village Staff, Growth Dimensions	Staff Time	Q4 2024 and ongoing
8. Investigate opportunities to serve the executive travel market with executives who come into the airport. Meet with airport officials to brainstorm any needs that could be filled in the market and serve these travelers.	Village Staff, Growth Dimensions, Airport	Staff Time	Q4 2024 and ongoing
9. Conduct a hotel feasibility study to determine if there is demand from the executive travel at the airport, the seasonal travel to local agri-tourism attractions, and to host contractors and others traveling through the area for work.	Village Staff, consultant group	General Fund, DCEO Office of Tourism Grant	2025 -2026
10. Explore development of business/light industrial park off Rt. 173 and Rt. 76 and utilizing the Enterprise Zone to promote its development.	Village Staff, Growth Dimensions, regional developers, local businesses	Staff Time, Enterprise Zone, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), DCEO	2026+