

VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 - 7:00 P.M.

Members of the public may view and participate in the meeting via:

- In person at the Village Hall Board Room, 40 E. Center Ave.
- Online: lakebluff.org/VirtualSEC
- Dial-in: [\(312\) 626-6799](tel:3126266799). Enter meeting ID [824 8670 7053](https://lakebluff.org/Channel19). Press # when prompted for a Participant ID.
- The meeting will be live-streamed at lakebluff.org/Channel19

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Consideration of the February 18, 2025 Meeting Minutes
3. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors (Public Comment)
The Chair will allocate fifteen (15) minutes during this item for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the Sustainability and Community Enhancement Ad Hoc Committee on any matter not listed on the agenda. Each person addressing the Sustainability and Community Enhancement Ad Hoc Committee is asked to limit their comments to a maximum of five (5) minutes.
4. General Business
The Sustainability and Community Enhancement Ad Hoc Committee will entertain requests from anyone present to modify the order of business to be conducted.
 - a) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Presentation by Eileen Kennedy of Baxter & Woodman
 - b) Draft Lighting Ordinance Discussion (With Presentation by John Barentine of Dark Sky Consulting, LLC)
 - c) Community Wildlife Habitat Designation Discussion (With Presentation by Sue Raymoure of Growing Native Habitat Lake Bluff)
5. Village Staff Report
6. Member's Report
7. Chair's Report
8. Adjournment

The Village of Lake Bluff is subject to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting, or who have questions regarding accessibility of the meeting or the facilities, are requested to contact Clara Gable at (847) 283-6889 or TDD number 234-2153 promptly to allow the Village of Lake Bluff to make reasonable accommodations.

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT AD HOC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

February 18, 2025

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

The meeting of the Sustainability and Community Enhancement Ad Hoc Committee (SEC) of the Village of Lake Bluff was called to order on Tuesday, February 18 at 7:04 pm.

The following members were present:

Members: McCamie Cole
 Marietta Hance
 Lilly Mengelkoch
 Sophia Twichell
 Brian Rener, Chair
 Michael Buoscio (Virtual)

Absent: None

Also Present: Clara Gable, Assistant to the Village Administrator (AVA)
 Aidan Burling, Administrative Intern
 Lauren Chermak, Administrative Intern

AVA Gable stated that a quorum of the SEC is physically present and that a member of the SEC, Michael Buoscio, has requested to join the meeting virtually in accordance with Village policy and will be authorized unless a motion otherwise is made and approved.

2. Consideration of the December 2, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes

Member Twichell shared minor edits to the minutes concerning the spelling of her name.

A motion was made by Member Twichell and seconded by Member Cole to approve the minutes as amended. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

3. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors (Public Comment)

There were no public comments.

4. General Business

a. Evaluate the Village's Seasonal Gas-Powdered Leaf Blower Regulations

AVA Gable shared that at the last SEC meeting, this item was discussed and ultimately a recommendation from the SEC was given to the Village Board to consider extending the gas-powered leaf blower from a seasonal ban to a year-round ban, explore enhanced enforcement options, and extend the current school district exemption for another year. She continued by sharing that the Committee of the Whole ("COW") discussed the SEC's recommendation at its January 13, 2025 meeting. The COW expressed their concerns about implementing a year-round

ban on gas powered leaf blowers, as it seems the current battery powered technology may not yet be a viable alternative to gas-powered leaf blowers. Additionally, the COW talked about possibly requiring landscapers to register. At the end of the COW's discussion, they decided to refer this matter back to the SEC to evaluate potential policy changes to: 1) expand the existing seasonal ban to limit the use of gas-powered leaf blowers to smaller windows during the spring and fall months and 2) discuss potential enforcement mechanisms.

Member Twichell asked why Evanston was not listed in the summary table provided in the packet, as they have implemented a year-round ban. AVA Gable replied that because the COW did not recommend the Village pursue a year-round ban at this time. Staff wanted to focus on communities with similar ban restrictions that they were considering. However, that is something Staff can further pursue if the SEC would like. Chair Rener added Evanston did not participate in the original 2022 working group that studied gas-powered leaf blower bans on the north shore because they pursued the leaf blower ban individually.

Chair Rener asked what the specific gas-powered leaf blower ban date ranges are currently for each of the communities listed in the summary table. AVA Gable replied that most if not all communities listed exclude the months of April, October, and November.

Chair Rener focused the discussion suggesting the SEC first outline the proposed gas-powered leaf blower ban dates and then move to discuss registration options.

Member Hance thanked Village Staff for putting the packet together and stated she found it interesting that the 2022 working group's recommendation was not to pursue a 12 month ban at this time. She continued noting how she thinks naming specific months where gas-powered leaf blowers are allowed is helpful and easier to remember, in the process of continuing to work toward a 12-month ban. She continued to highlight some of her key takeaways from reviewing the packet. Member Hance suggested hosting a panel discussion, using the other communities nearby with a leaf blower ban as well as landscapers so that the SEC and the Village residents can learn more.

Member Cole and Chair Rener echoed Member Hance's comments. Member Cole added that despite the Village's efforts to advertise and pursue an eventual 12-year ban, the Village is seeing pushback from residents and great support for an increased ban.

Member Buoscio stated he liked to see that other communities will be looking at full year bans; he noted someone has to eventually be the first step in fully banning gas-powered leaf blowers. Member Buoscio emphasized the importance of educating residents, specifically in more sustainable outdoor clean up practices and the dangers gas-powered leaf blowers pose. Member Buoscio agreed with pursuing a more restrictive gas-powered leaf blower ban using set months to designate the time of the ban, but emphasized the need for public education as a key component of its success. Additionally, he offered it may be beneficial to ask landscape companies to participate with the Village in pursuing these bans.

Chair Rener informed the SEC that the original working group included landscape companies in its discussions and suggested that they should be brought back into this conversation.

Member Twichell mentioned that the current ban has received a lot of positive feedback from Village residents to date and recalls only one resident requesting a variance regarding this ban. She stated that while she still stands by the idea of a full ban, if it helps the community adjust by approving a more gradual ban, she also understands the need to do that. However, Member Twichell stated she is worried about adding registration for landscapers due to the administrative burden then could have on Staff.

Member Twichell asked if these communities are the only ones considering pursuing a 12-month ban and if there are other communities the Village could look into for a more comprehensive review. AVA Gable replied separate from Evanston, the Village also reached out to Wilmette, but did not hear anything back. She continued stating the Village mainly was focusing on gathering updated information from the 2022 working group, but can look into additional communities as well.

Member Mengelkoch asked if the Village had any specific information on how many landscapers currently have electric leaf blowers. Member Twichell noted that licensing would allow the Village to better gather this data. AVA Gable added that the Village currently does not have any type of registration so they do not have a great method to collect that type of data. However, other communities in the area that do require some sort of registration, such as Highland Park. A short conversation continued.

Chair Renner moved to discuss licensing options. He felt licensing was a good idea for the Village to pursue and that it should help with enforcement concerns. Chair Renner, shared that at first licensing should be used to get compliance and the fee could be waived for smaller businesses. He continued explaining how insurance requirements could function in terms of registrations.

Member Cole expressed his concern about the administrative toll licensing may have on Village Staff. Chair Renner echoed his comments.

Member Hance noted in the additional summary research, that population size could be added as a factor to consider. For example, she expressed that the Village may not have the infrastructure for a code enforcement officer to handle leaf blower violations such as Highland Park does. Chair Renner discussed the idea of landscapers receiving a small sticker for their trucks after registering with the Village and this could assist in enforcement.

Member Cole asked if this registration would be annual. Chair Renner replied that he doesn't see it as a yearly thing, but maybe as the leaf blower regulations get updated, this could be when landscapers need to come in for a new sticker. A conversation continued on registration options for landscapers.

Member Cole asked if the SEC needed to make a recommendation to the Village Board at this meeting. AVA Gable answered that the SEC could but they could also wait until a future meeting so Staff can come back with any additional information necessary. A discussion continued on when best to give a recommendation to the Village Board.

AVA Gable added that when speaking with other municipalities, some will reevaluate their ban in the coming years, so to consider this as a part of the conversation. Chair Renner mentioned it would be useful to coordinate when the other communities are reevaluating their bans. A short discussion continued.

AVA Gable said that the Village used Highland Park's list of landscapers to relay initial communications regarding the seasonal ban, so this is a helpful communication tool. Member Hance discussed how she appreciated the Village Board's efforts in working with the SEC to enhance this leaf blower ban over time. A conversation continued.

Member Buoscio echoed the SEC's comments and shared information he found on a Santa Cruz study on how they transferred to electric leaf blowers including: the cost of maintenance, the cost of gasoline, investing in new batteries and more. He shared his takeaway was that leaf blower technology is very close to being industrially ready if not already, and that the SEC's role can be in education and bringing people into this discussion.

Chair Renner noted that it may be a good idea for members of the original working group members to come together to find a middle ground. Additionally, he asked the SEC to consider what their recommendation concerning Lake Bluff School's should be in terms of an exemption from the ban. Member Hance discussed how best to support the schools to comply with the ban. Member Cole added to the discussion by talking about the cost of an electric leaf blower highlighting the savings in fuel costs. Following a conversation, the SEC agreed that Lake Bluff Schools should not receive a permanent exemption on the leaf blower ban and suggested a one-year exemption to the ban for fundraising efforts.

Chair Renner opened the discussion for public comment.

Village Resident, Christine Klawitter, stepped up to the podium. She thanked the SEC for their consideration of the gas-powered leaf blower ban. She shared her insights on her review of the working group's 2022 report, emphasizing the need for resident input on this matter. Ms. Klawitter continued to discuss how there has been a large petition put together in support of a year-round ban to be reevaluated soon. She also offered ideas on how the Village can continue to limit the use of gas leaf blowers.

Chair Renner and Member Twichell thanked Ms. Klawitter for her thoughtful comments and noted their commitment to working toward a full ban.

Member Buoscio added he liked the idea of pursuing particulate or sound study options for the Village. Chair Renner agreed this would be a good idea, but was concerned with the cost of these studies. A short discussion continued.

Member Buoscio asked if there was a way to share more specific information and educational material to residents in the Village newsletter, for example. Member Twichell agreed with Member Buoscio's comments. Member Hance also highlighted an article submitted by Ms. Klawitter that she found helpful on the use of leaf blowers in neighborhoods.

Chair Renner concluded the discussion stating the SEC would like to recommend a 9-month gas powered leaf blower ban, only allowing the use of gas leaf blowers in the month of April, October and November. Additionally, he stated the SEC was open to landscaper registration, but in a way that would not burden Village staff and create a hardship for smaller landscapers.

Member Hance asked if this new ban would apply to both commercial landscapers and residents. After a brief discussion, the SEC decided yes.

Member Hance added she liked the idea of getting members of the 2022 working group together again and emphasized that it would be helpful to invite members of the SEC and residents to participate in these upcoming discussions. Chair Renner agreed and reviewed the possible formats the meeting could take place and a discussion continued.

Chair Renner added the SEC is recommending the Lake Bluff Schools have a one-year extension to get electric leaf blower equipment that complies with the seasonal ban. Member Hance asked when this extension would officially start. AVA Gable answered it would begin once the new draft ordinance was approved by the Village Board.

Ms. Klawitter, stepped up to the podium. She asked what the SEC's thoughts were on enforcement other than registration and asking for licensure. Member Cole replied that this was a good question and stated they briefly discussed this at the last meeting. He continued stating the first offense could be a verbal warning, but after this have the penalty fall on both the resident and the landscaper. He feels issuing a fine would be a good place to start. Chair Renner emphasized that having a sticker would help with enforcement. Ms. Klawitter shared the City of Evanston publishes their list of approved landscapers and this could be a good idea for the Village to consider. A short discussion continued.

6. Village Staff Report

AVA Gable shared that tomorrow night's PCZBA is meeting will discuss the Village's Draft Comprehensive Land Use Plan update and that there are some sustainability recommendations within that as well. So, she invited the SEC to provide comments and look at the plan.

Member Twichell asked when the Village is looking to receive comments by. AVA Gable said they are looking to start the public hearing for this in March, but comments can be made before or after that.

Both AVA Gable and Chair Renner stated the Village has been working on the draft lighting ordinance with the Village's consultant. Chair Renner added the consultant will be present at the next SEC meeting to help answer questions.

7. Member's Report

Member Hance shared that her family is participating in the Village's Hefty ReNew Orange Bag program, but the only ways to purchase the bags are online. AVA Gable shared that they are working to get the Hefty bags in local stores, but they understand the frustration in trying to purchase the bags.

Member Hance added that maybe there is the option for the SEC to have a table near the Farmers Market to help advertise the SEC's initiatives. A discussion on this continued.

Member Twichell asked how much the Hefty ReNew bags cost. Member Hance stated that she did not know the cost for a box of bags. Member Twichell talked about how the drop off aspect of the program could be a barrier for a lot of residents who do not want to drive to the Public Works facility to recycle their bags. Member Cole stated there have been more people who adopted this program this year in comparison to last and discussed how the program is slowly growing. The SEC continued to talk about this shortly.

Member Cole shared how he met with a professor of Environmental Science teacher at Lake Forest High School. He talked about her interest in bringing more sustainable programming to the High School and what her thoughts were about getting high school volunteers to help the SEC create extra credit video projects. As high school students are incredibly busy throughout the day, he suggested that the SEC reach out to middle schoolers. Member Twichell asked if he had received feedback from the High School's New Media program, which focuses on video content creation. A short conversation continued.

8. Chair's Report

Chair Renner expressed that the dumpsters Public Works center are in great demand, but it is difficult to pack up all your recyclables and get to the center and the bins are full. So, he offered the Village look into getting an extra dumpster bin, specifically for box and paper collections.

Additionally, with the concern of recent bird flu cases, Chair Renner asked if the Village would be able to possibly get some educational materials from the Lake County Health Department that they could share with residents on how to stay safe. Member Twichell agreed and added, maybe there is something the Village could send out to chicken owners specifically. The discussion continued.

Chair Renner also brought to the SEC's attention how much energy AI takes to run in comparison to normal search engines. A short conversation continued.

9. Adjournment

As there was no further business to come before the SEC, Member Hance moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Cole seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote at 8:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Drew Irvin
Village Administrator

MEMORANDUM



TO: Chair Rener and the Sustainability
and Community Enhancement Ad Hoc Committee

FROM: Clara Gable, Assistant to the Village Administrator
Lauren Chermak, Administrative Intern

DATE: March 14, 2025

SUBJECT: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Presentation

As the SEC may recall, The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) is a federal permit program authorized to state governments by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In 1972, the United States passed the Clean Water Act which prohibits anybody from discharging “pollutants” through a “point source” into a “water of the United States” unless they have an NPDES permit.

As a NPDES permit holder, the Village of Lake Bluff is permitted to discharge stormwater. One of the requirements for having a permit is public education. The Village is required to provide educational material about stormwater to four audiences (residents, industry, commercial, and construction). The purpose of this is to provide information about stormwater and how different actions may impact it. Eileen Kennedy of Baxter & Woodman will give an educational presentation to the SEC regarding the NPDES.

Attachments:

1. PowerPoint Presentation

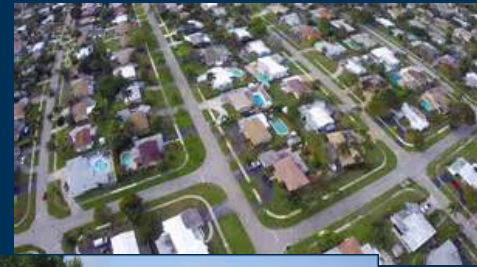
Village of Lake Bluff

Stormwater Quality Program

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)
Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program

Eileen Kennedy, EIT

SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT AD HOC COMMITTEE
March 18, 2025



Stormwater Quality Program

- Municipal stormwater runoff can contribute various pollutants to local surface waters, and contribute to water quality impairments
 - Sediments
 - Nutrients (Phosphorus, Nitrogen)
 - Fertilizers / Pesticides
 - Metals
 - Bacteria
 - Detergents / Oil and Grease
 - Trash and Debris



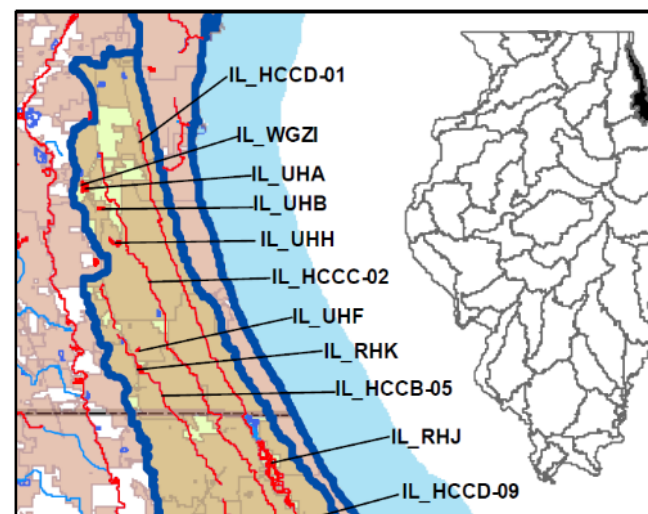
Stormwater Quality Program

- The Village is required by Illinois EPA to implement best management practices (BMP) to prevent or reduce pollutant discharges from its storm drain system to protect local surface water quality
 - Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4)
- The Village complies with its MS4 Permit from Illinois EPA
 - Requirements for stormwater pollution prevention practices
 - Water quality monitoring and outfall inspections
 - Municipal staff training
 - Program documentation and reporting



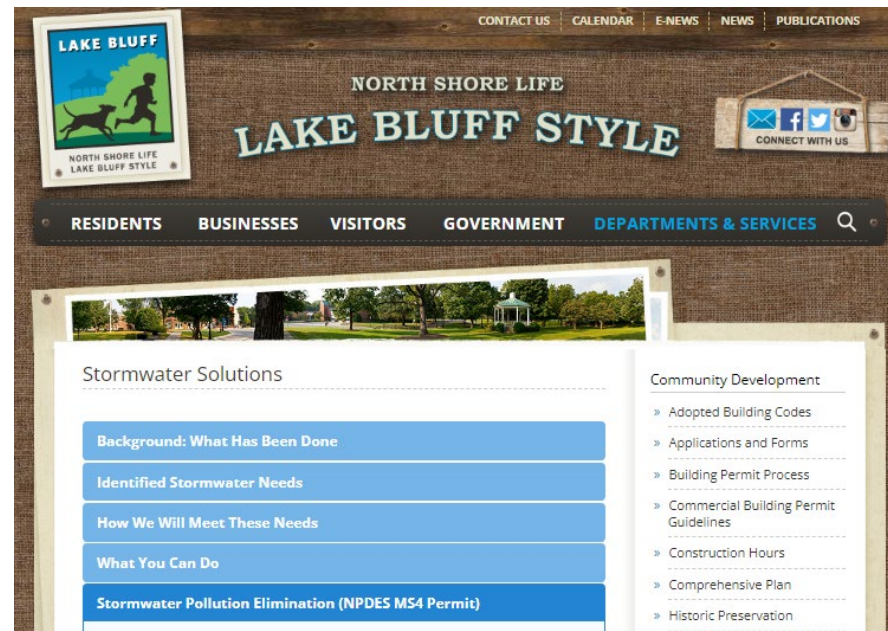
Local Impairments and Pollutants of Concern

- Illinois EPA Impaired Waters List (303d)
 - Lake Michigan
 - Skokie River
 - Pettibone Creek
- Impairment Parameters
 - Nutrients (Phosphorus)
 - Chlorides
 - Dissolved Oxygen
 - Sediment
 - Fecal Coliform



Required Program Documentation

- Stormwater Management Program Plan (implementation plan)
- Notice of Intent (program commitments to Illinois EPA)
- Annual reports (implementation progress to Illinois EPA)
 - All available on the Village's Stormwater Solutions website:
 - <https://www.lakebluff.org/departments-services/community-development/1067-stormwater-solutions#stormwater-pollution-elimination-npdes-ms4-permit>



Minimum Control Measures (Program Areas)

- Six Minimum Control Measures have been established
 - Public Education and Outreach on Storm Water Impacts
 - Public Involvement / Participation
 - Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
 - Construction Site Storm Water Runoff Control
 - Post-Construction Storm Water Management in New Development and Redevelopment
 - Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations
- Best Management Practices (BMP) must be established and implemented in each program area



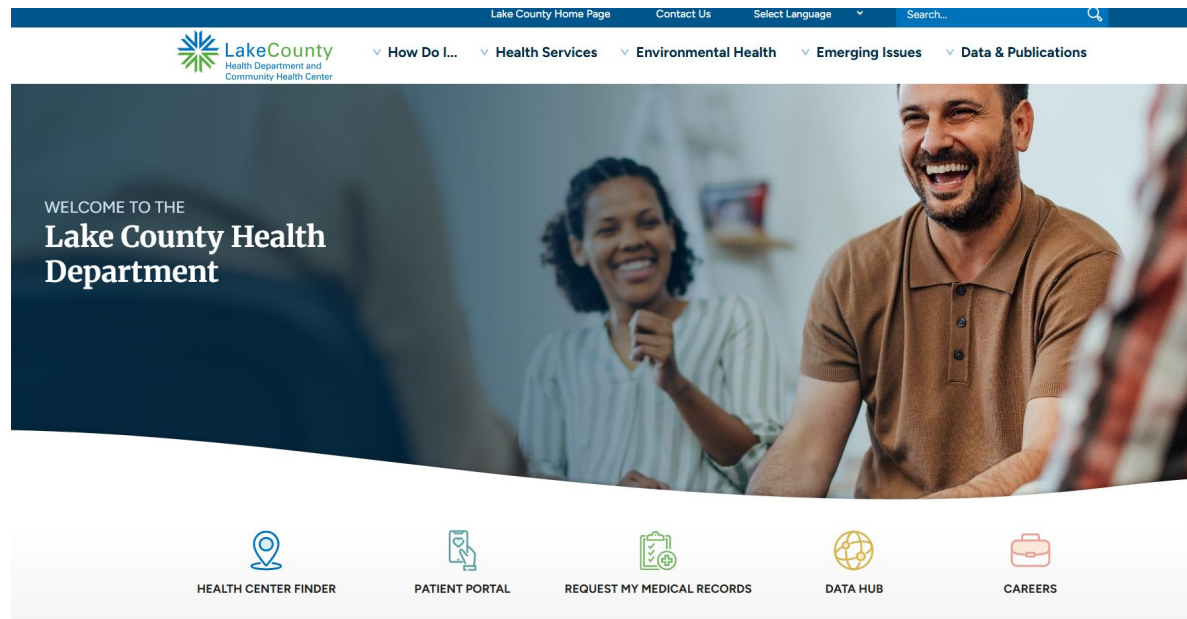
Stormwater Outfall Inspections

- Stormwater outfalls are inspected annually during dry weather
 - Evidence of pollutant discharge
 - Illegal or improper connections to the storm drain system
 - Structural issues



Water Quality Monitoring

- Required to perform water quality monitoring and assessment to evaluate program effectiveness
- Four locations are sampled annually
 - Skokie River (North and South)
 - Stormwater outfalls to Lake Michigan
 - The Lake County Health Department (LCHD) samples Lake Michigan Beaches
- Village staff visually inspect stormwater outfalls routinely



Required Staff Training

- Annual employee training on best management practices for:
 - Fleet and building maintenance, parks maintenance
 - Storm water system maintenance
 - Roadway maintenance and winter deicing
 - Recognizing illicit discharges
 - Material handling, waste management, and spill response



Residential Waste Disposal and Recycling

- Residents have several waste disposal and recycling resources available:
 - Waste collection
 - Recycling
 - Paper
 - Cardboard
 - Metal
 - Glass
 - Landscape waste and composting
 - Electronic wastes
- <https://www.lakebluff.org/residents/sanitation#recycling-service>

Household Waste, Recycling, and Composting

The Village of Lake Bluff is committed to providing timely, sustainable, and cost-effective waste removal by offering services like weekly landfill waste pick-up, recycling, composting, garden and e-waste removal for Village residences.

Quick Reference

Collection Cart Sizes

Landfill Waste Service

Recycling Service

Groot will collect all recycling presented on the first weekly waste pickup (Monday/Tuesday). Backdoor recycling is available as an a la carte service option for an additional fee.

Please Recycle:	Do Not Recycle:
• Clean paper and cardboard products, including cartons • Cans: Aluminum, steel, and tin • Glass bottles and jars • Most plastic products (showing icons #1-5 and #7)	• Materials in plastic bags. Don't bag your recycling! • Soiled paper (e.g. used napkins and diapers) • Paper cups • Medical waste • Clothing, shoes, textiles • Styrofoam (#6), wood, plastic film • Batteries • Mirrors, light bulbs, window glass, ceramics • Electronics

Other Recycling Ideas. Green Minds of Lake Forest and Lake Bluff publishes an app to help you find facilities where you can recycle those items not accepted by the Village. [Click here for details.](#)

Landscape Waste and Curbside Composting (Food Scrap) Service

Bulky Waste, Electronic Waste, and Other Items

Stormwater Quality Information

- Information about the impact that stormwater discharges may have on local water quality, and what you can do, is available on the Stormwater Solutions website
 - After the Storm
 - Rivers and Streams Begin at your Front Door
 - Storm Sewers – Rivers Beneath our Feet
 - Fertilization
 - Going Native
 - Lawn Watering
 - Managing Your Household Chemicals
 - Pet Waste and Water Quality
 - Rethinking Yard Care

Stormwater Solutions

Background: What Has Been Done

Identified Stormwater Needs

How We Will Meet These Needs

What You Can Do

Stormwater Pollution Elimination (NPDES MS4 Permit)

The same network of storm sewers that takes water away from property can also carry pollutants into our streams, creeks, ravines, and Lake Michigan. The Village participates in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) which has regulated sources of water pollution since the enactment of the Clean Water Act in 1972.

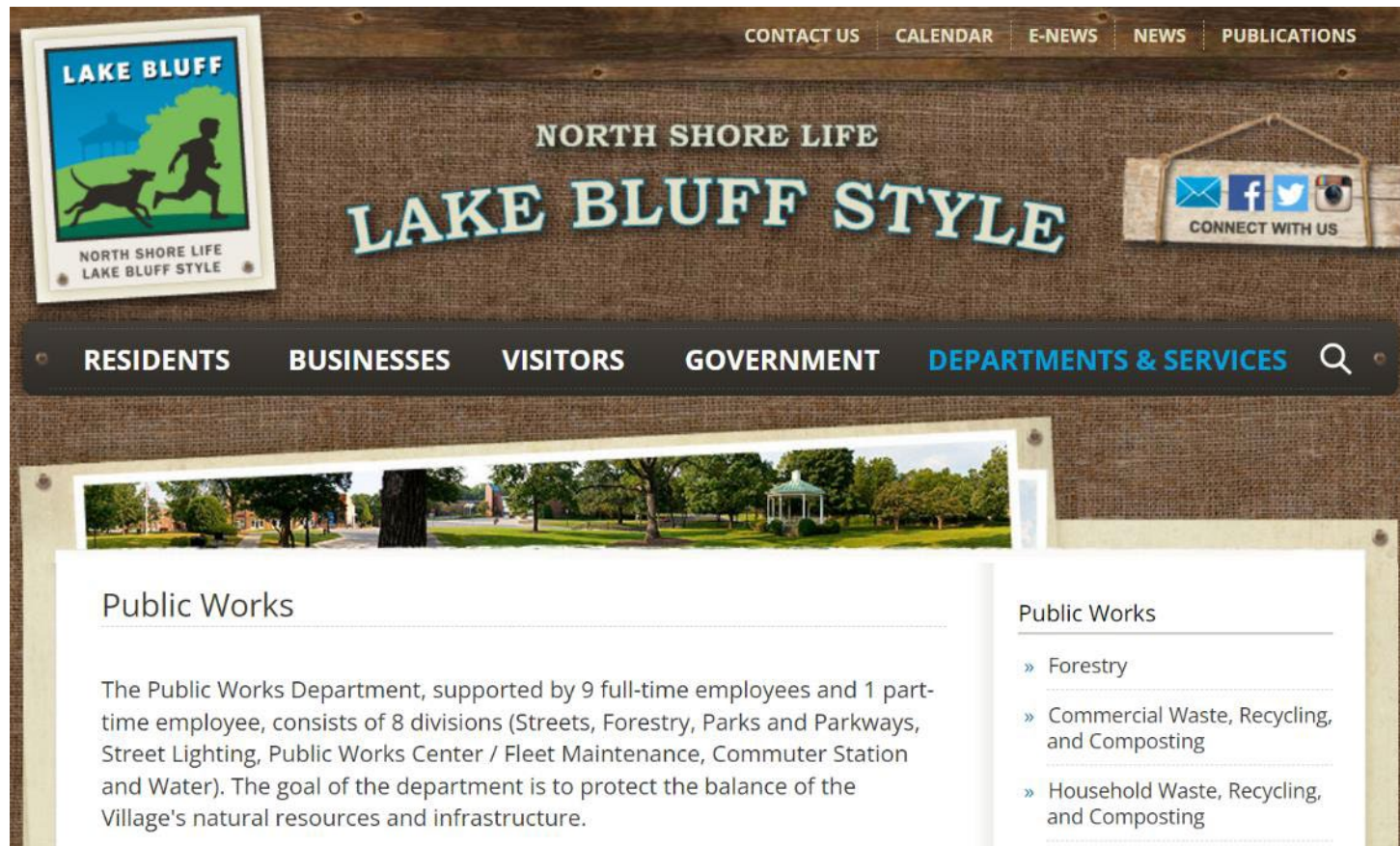
Call the Village's Stormwater Hotline at 847-234-2153 to report any suspicious discharges to the storm sewer system or a body of water.

To learn more about the impact that stormwater discharge may have, take a look at these resources:

- [After the Storm](#)
- [Rivers and Streams Begin at your Front Door](#)
- [Storm Sewers – Rivers Beneath our Feet](#)
- [Fertilization](#)
- [Going Native](#)
- [Lawn Watering](#)
- [Managing Your Household Chemicals](#)
- [Pet Waste and Water Quality](#)
- [Rethinking Yard Care](#)

Local Stormwater Quality Program Contact

- For questions or additional information on the stormwater quality program, or to report a water quality issue, contact the Public Works Department at 847-234-0774.



Required Program Documentation

- The MS4 Permit is currently in renewal by Illinois EPA
 - New permit and new requirements expected this year



General Storm Water Permit for Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4)

2021 MS4 Permit Renewal Notice: The MS4 Permit is in the process of being reissued. Until this permit is reissued you will continue to operate under the expiring MS4 permit. The timeframe for the renewal will most likely occur by March 2024. If you have not submitted an NOI for Renewal, please do so as soon as possible. Please note we have new Renewal & Waiver NOIs.



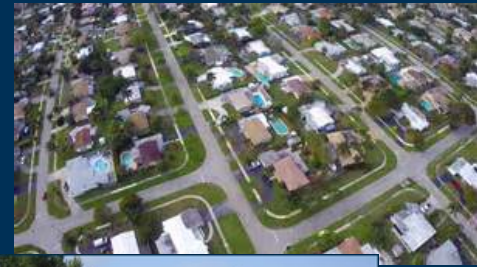
Village of Lake Bluff

Stormwater Quality Program

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)
Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program

Eileen Kennedy, EIT

SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT AD HOC COMMITTEE
March 18, 2025



MEMORANDUM



TO: Chair Rener & SEC Members

FROM: Clara Gable, Assistant to the Village Administrator

DATE: March 14, 2025

SUBJECT: Draft Lighting Ordinance Update

As you may recall, the Village's 2019 Sustainability Plan suggested that zoning code amendments restricting harmful and excessive private and public lighting be considered.

At the direction of the SEC, Village staff contracted John Barentine, Principal Consultant of Dark Sky Consulting, LLC, to review the SEC's draft lighting ordinance for a second time. Mr. Barentine recently completed his review, a copy of which is included in your packet.

The SEC may want to start with a high-level discussion of Mr. Barentine's review, which may extend to future SEC meetings. As stated by the SEC at the last meeting, the SEC's overall goal is to recommend lighting suggestions to the Village Board.

Mr. Barentine will be present via Zoom at the SEC meeting to discuss the draft lighting ordinance and answer any questions the SEC may have.

Attachments

1. Draft Lighting Ordinance.
2. Draft Lighting Map.
3. John Barentine's (Dark Sky Consulting, LLC) Review of the Draft Lighting Ordinance.

TITLE (9? 10?)

CHAPTER XX: OUTDOOR LIGHTING

10-XX-XX PURPOSE

This chapter governs lighting within the Village, in order to fulfill the objective identified in the Village's Sustainability Plan of combatting light pollution within the Village.

Objectives: The regulation of lighting also accomplishes the following objectives:

- A. Minimize light pollution and glare resulting from the use of outdoor lighting;
- B. Promote efficient and cost-effective lighting and to conserve energy;
- C. Encourage preservation, to the greatest practical extent, of natural nighttime darkness;
- D. Encourage quality outdoor lighting design and prevent inappropriate, poorly designed or installed outdoor lighting;
- E. Reduce unwanted light that would enter homes and businesses at night;
- F. Provide adequate light for safety and security;
- G. Incorporate responsible lighting design into all new construction projects;
- H. Recognize that certain holidays and special events may have unique lighting needs; and
- I. Follow the IES and DarkSky International's Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting:
 1. **Useful:** All light should have a clear purpose
Before installing or replacing a light, determine whether light is needed. Consider how the use of light will impact the area, including wildlife and the environment. Consider using reflective paints or self-luminous markers for signs, curbs, and steps to reduce the need for permanently installed outdoor lighting.
 2. **Targeted:** Light should be directed only to where it's needed
Use shielding and careful aiming to target the direction of the light beam so that it points downward and does not spill beyond where it is needed.
 3. **Low level:** Illumination should be no higher than necessary
Use the lowest light level required. Be mindful of surface conditions, as some surfaces may reflect more light into the night sky than was intended.
 4. **Controlled:** Light should be used only when it is useful
Use controls such as timers or motion detectors to ensure that light is available when it is needed, dimmed when possible, and turned off when not needed.
 5. **Warm-colored:** Use warmer-color lights where possible
Limit the amount of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light to the least amount needed. Light where you need it, when you need it, in the amount needed, and no more.

10-XX-XX DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this title, the following terms, phrases, and words shall have the meanings given herein:

Footcandle (FC). A quantitative unit measuring the amount of light (illumination) falling onto a given point. One footcandle equals one lumen per square foot.

Fully shielded. A light luminaire constructed, installed and maintained in such a manner that all light emitted from the luminaire, either directly from the light source or a diffusing element, or indirectly by reflection or refraction from any part of the luminaire, is projected below the horizontal plane through the luminaires lowest light emitting part.

Mounting height. The vertical distance from the ground directly below the centerline of the luminaire to the lowest direct-light-emitting part of the luminaire.

IES. The Illuminating Engineering Society, a non-profit professional organization of lighting specialists that has established recommended design standards for various lighting applications.

Isocandle plan. A demonstration or topographic of light distribution over a given area.

Light source. The device in a lighting luminaire that provides illumination, typically a bulb, florescent tube, or light emitting diode (LED).

Luminaire. A complete lighting unit consisting of a light source(s) and ballast(s) (when applicable) together with the parts designed to distribute the light, to position and protect the light sources, and to connect the light sources to the power supply. A luminaire does not include any mounting hardware such as poles.

Lumen. A quantitative unit used to identify the amount of light emitted by a light source. A light source is generally rated in lumens. The luminous flux emitted within a unit solid angle (one steradian) by a point source having a uniform luminous intensity of one candela. Purchased fixtures typically include a lumen rating.

10-XX-XX REGULATED ACTIVITIES

This Chapter shall apply to all exterior residential and non-residential (including public) lighting, including illumination from outdoor signs that impact the outdoor environment. No person shall install or maintain any light luminaire unless such luminaire meets the requirements of this Chapter. If an existing light luminaire is removed, replaced, moved, upgraded, or otherwise changed, it shall only be replaced with a conforming light luminaire.

10-XX-XX LUMINAIRE STANDARDS.

A. Maximum Luminaire Emissions.

1. Fully Shielded. For fully shielded building-mounted luminaires, the maximum permitted light output per luminaire and the maximum permitted luminaire height shall be:

Lighting Zone	Zoning District	Maximum Light Output (lumens)	Minimum Height (feet above grade)	Maximum Height (feet above grade)
LZ0	Parks	X	X	X
LZ1	Residential (Single Family)	1,400	N/A	20
LZ1	Residential (Other Than Single Family)	2,800	N/A	10

LZ2 or LZ3	Other (Non-Residential and Non-Park)	17,500	Greater than 10	30
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2. Other Than Fully Shielded. For luminaires that are not fully shielded, the maximum permitted light output per luminaire and the maximum permitted luminaire height shall be:

Lighting Zone	Zoning District	Maximum Light Output (lumens)	Maximum Height (feet above grade)
LZ0	Parks	X	X
LZ1	Residential	700	10
LZ2 or LZ3	Other (Non-Residential and Non-Park)	1,400	15

- B. Color Temperature. The maximum correlated color temperature (CCT) of any light source shall be equal to or lower than 3,000 Kelvin degrees to help support the natural nighttime environment.
- C. Architectural Façade Lighting.
1. Upward-Aimed Façade Lighting. Upward-aimed façade lights are subject to the lumen output restrictions applicable to luminaires that are not fully shielded luminaires. However, Upward-aimed façade lights shall be fully shielded, fully confined from projecting into the sky by eaves, roofs, or overhangs; and will be mounted as flush to a wall.
 2. Downward-Aimed Façade Lighting. Downward-aimed façade lighting shall be fully shielded and mounted as flush to a wall as possible.
 3. No Reflective Surfaces. No light shall be aimed at any reflective architectural surface, such as polished metal or glass.
- D. Prohibited Luminaires. No luminaire may be installed that violates the standards of this Section or that:
1. Distracts by flickering, flashing, blinking, scrolling, rotating, or varying in intensity except in response to a time or motion lighting control.
 2. Is upward aiming above 90 degrees, except as otherwise permitted herein.
 3. Is a laser light source.
- E. Exempt Luminaires. The standards of this Section shall not apply to the following luminaires:
1. Regulatory Lighting. Any lighting required by local, state, or federal agencies, to the extent that such requirements are inconsistent with this Section.
 2. Temporary Lighting. Any lighting used for emergency, repair, construction, special events, or similar activities.

3. Right-of-Way Lighting. Any public lighting that is located within the right-of-way.
4. Underwater Illumination. Any underwater lighting used to illuminate swimming pools or fountains.
5. Landscape or Ornamental Lighting. Any lighting used to illuminate landscaping, paths, or similar outdoor features. Landscape lighting must be controlled using timers and may not be upward facing. Self-contained solar-operated light luminaires where no luminaire emits more than 100 lumens do not require timers.
6. Seasonal Lighting Displays. Lighting displays from November 15 through January 30 of the following year.
7. Strings of Lights. Suspended strings of lights that are either:
 - a. On a property used as a single-family dwelling; or
 - b. Around, in, or over outdoor dining areas for eating and drinking establishments only where all of the following are true:
 - 1) Each incandescent bulb emits less than 25 lumens.
 - 2) Each LED bulb emits less than 50 lumens.
 - 3) The lights are only on when the outdoor dining area is in use.
8. Outdoor Sports Lighting. Any lighting used for outdoor recreational facilities must be controlled using timers and may not be upward facing.
9. Security Lighting. Any lighting used for security purposes must be controlled through the use of motion sensors.
- F. Lighting Controls. Outdoor lighting controls should conform with the Village's latest adopted version of the International Energy Conservation Code (with Illinois Amendments).

10-XX-XX SITE STANDARDS.

- A. Maximum Total Light Emissions. The total light output from all luminaires on any zoning lot shall not exceed a certain ratio of lumens per developed acre (see chart below). Luminaires (other than fully shielded) may not exceed 10% of all installed lumens. A zoning lot used for single-family residential purposes shall be presumed to satisfy this requirement and need not demonstrate conformity.

Lighting Zone	Zoning District	Lumens Per Developed Acre
LZ0	Parks	X
LZ1	Residential (Single Family)	10,000
LZ1	Residential (Other Than Single Family)	20,000
LZ2 or LZ3	Other (Non-Residential and Non-Park)	50,000

B. Light Trespass.

1. General Standard. All outdoor lighting shall be designed, installed, and maintained in order to minimize light trespass onto adjacent properties and rights-of-way.
2. Performance Standard.
 - a. The light source of a luminaire shall not be visible at the property line on which the luminaire is located;
 - b. For adjacent non-residential uses, the illuminance at the property line shall not exceed 1 foot-candle; and
 - c. At any property line “abutting a residential lot”, the illuminance at the property line shall not exceed 0.5 foot-candle.

- C. Hours of Operation. For zoning lots used non-residentially, hours of operation should conform with the Village’s latest adopted version of the International Energy Conservation Code (with Illinois Amendments). For residentially used lots, hours of operation shall be midnight to 5 am.

10-XX-XX SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS.

- A. Required Technical Submissions. Applications for permits for projects involving outdoor lighting, except for single-family residential projects, shall contain documentation that demonstrates the proposed lighting complies with the provisions of this Chapter. Submission is required at the time of site plan or building permit application and shall contain, but not be limited to, the following, all or part of which may be part of or in addition to other required processes and permits until Titles 9, 10, and 11 of the Municipal Code:
1. Photometric Plan. A point-by-point footcandle array or isocandle plan in a printout format indicating the location and aiming of illuminating devices.
 2. Location and Height. The location and height above grade of all proposed and existing light luminaires on the subject property.
 3. Schedule of Luminaires. The type, initial luminaire lumen rating, color rendering index, and wattage of each light source.
 4. Technical Specifications. The general style of the light luminaire such as cutoff, lantern, coach light, globe, and a copy of the manufacturer's catalog information sheet and IESNA photometric distribution type, including any shielding information such as house side shields, internal, and/or external shields.
 5. Light Controls. Control descriptions including type of controls (timer, motion sensor, time clock, etc.), the light luminaires to be controlled by each type, and control schedule when required;
- B. Waiver for Minor Projects. The Building Commissioner may waive the requirements in subsection A of this Section for small independent projects on less than one-quarter acre, provided the applicant has provided all other required information and can otherwise demonstrate compliance with this article.

10-XX-XX DEVIATIONS.

- A. Purpose. The provisions of this Chapter cannot possibly address every specific situation to which they may have to be applied. Many such situations can be addressed by adjusting the specific

provisions of this Chapter in light of the general and specific purposes for which the provisions have been enacted.

- B. Deviation Authority. In conjunction with approval of a site plan, deviations may be granted in implementing the strict standards of this Chapter. Said deviations do not require a finding of hardship or that the deviation will create compensating public amenities. Deviations shall be recommended and approved in the same manner as site plans pursuant to Section 10-2C-5.
- C. Criteria for Deviations. A deviation may be granted where any one of the following criteria is satisfied:
 - 1. Special Circumstances. There are special circumstances or conditions applying to the land, buildings, or outdoor light luminaires for which the deviation is sought, which circumstances or conditions are peculiar to such land, buildings or outdoor light luminaires and do not apply generally to the land, buildings or outdoor light luminaires in the vicinity.
 - 2. Professional Standards. Both:
 - a. The use is subject to a special use permit, or is a use that is otherwise rare or uncommon within the Village; and
 - b. The proposed lighting levels are consistent with recommendations from the IESNA for the use or activity to be undertaken.
 - 3. Historic Features. Where all of the following are true:
 - a. The lighting luminaire is located on a property designated as a landmark or recognized as a contributing property to a designated historic district;
 - b. The lighting luminaire is of historic significance to the property; and
 - c. Removal of or a modification to the lighting that would otherwise be required to come into compliance with the requirements of this Chapter would have an adverse impact on the historic character of the property.

10-XX-XX NON-CONFORMING LIGHTING; GRANDFATHERING; AMORTIZATION.

- A. Purpose. This Section is intended to (i) gradually eliminate inappropriate and substandard lighting practices throughout the Village in a manner that minimizes unnecessary costs to property owners; (ii) allow property owners to realize a reasonable value from existing lighting systems rendered non-conforming by this Chapter; and (iii) ensure that property owners who voluntarily choose to improve their lighting systems are not placed at a competitive disadvantage relative to the owners of non-conforming lighting systems.
- B. General Standard; Amortization. The outdoor lighting of all non-residential properties in the Village shall be brought into compliance with the standards of this section no later than XX, XX 2029, a date 4 years subsequent to the adoption of this Chapter. Residential properties will need to comply in the event of that the Major Project Threshold is met after XX, XX 2031, a date 7 years subsequent to the adoption of this Chapter.

- C. Fee Adjustments; Early Adoption Incentive. The following discounts shall apply wherever a non-residential property owner proposes to replace a non-conforming lighting system with a completely conforming lighting system:

Complete Application Received:	Site Plan Review Fee Discount (if applicable):	Discount for Portion of Building Permit Fee Consisting Of Lighting:
Prior to XX, XX 2027 (Less Than 2 Years)	50%	75%
Between XX, XX 2029 and XX, XX 2031 (Less Than 4 Years)	0%	25%
After XX, XX 2029 (Overdue)	0%	0%

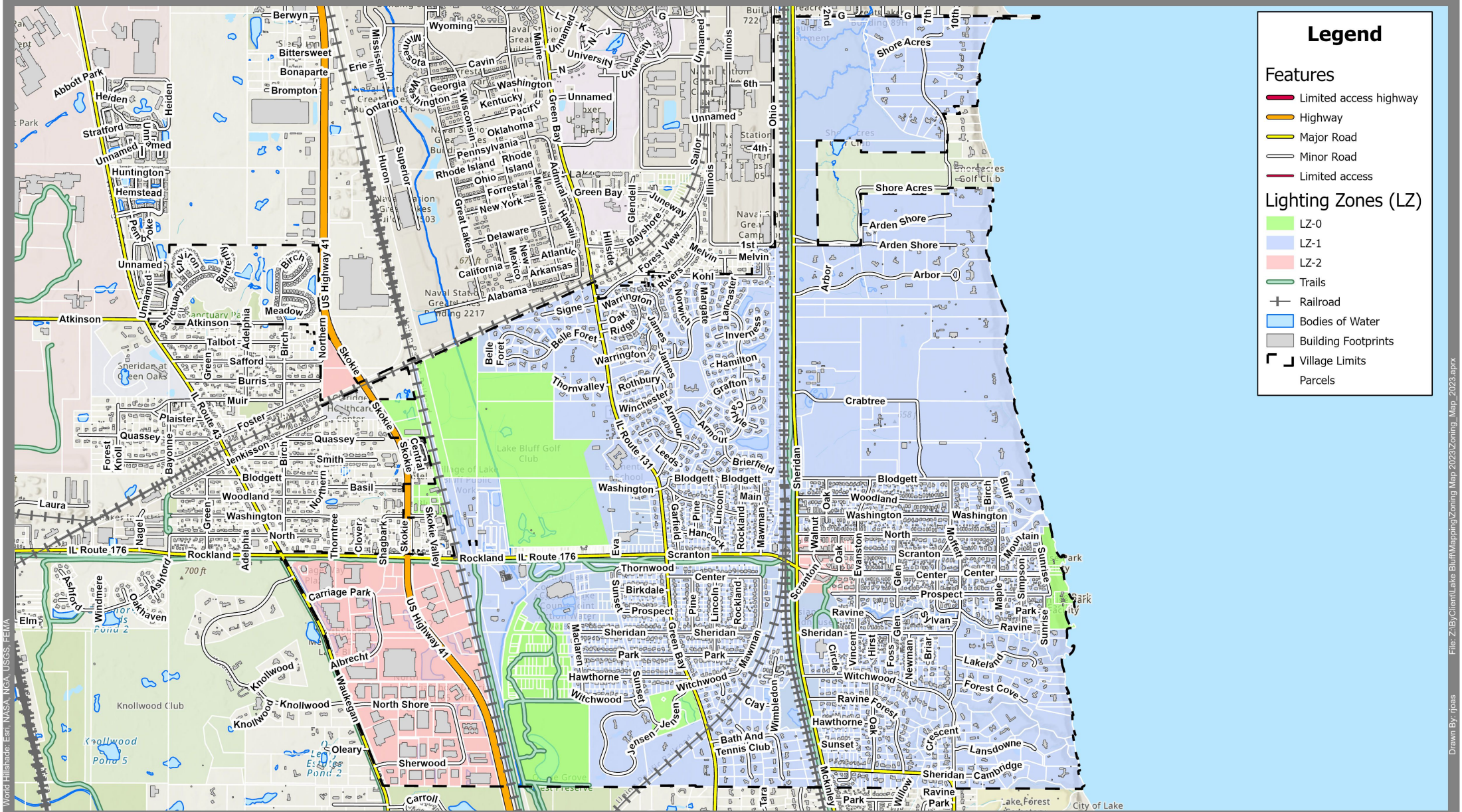
- D. Loss of Grandfathered Status.

1. No Replacement of Grandfathered Luminaires; Maintenance Exempted. Whenever a non-conforming luminaire is removed, replaced, moved, upgraded, or otherwise changed, the replacement luminaire must be brought completely into compliance with this Chapter. Routine maintenance is permitted for all existing luminaires, including changing the light source, ballast, starter, photo control, lens, and other required components.
 - a. Exception: Color Temperature. No light source may be replaced with a light source with a color temperature in excess of that permitted by Section 10-XX-XX(B), unless the owner demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Building Commissioner that no light source with an acceptable color temperature is available for the luminaire.
2. Percentage Replacement Threshold. Whenever more than 20 percent of the original luminaire count of a site is replaced or proposed for replacement with conforming luminaires, the owner shall be required to bring the entirety of the site into conformity with this Chapter.
3. Major Project Threshold. Owner of residential properties in the Village shall be required to bring the entirety of their site into conformity with this Chapter where any of the following occur relative to a given lot's conditions after XX XX, 2032, the effective date of this Chapter:
 - a. Renovation or addition with a total cost exceeding 25 percent of the assessed market value of the building.
 - b. Expansions or additions exceeding 25 percent of existing floor area.
 - c. Any combination of additions or reconstruction of 50 percent or more of the paved area used for on-site parking.

4. Cessation of Use. No lighting system that has been abandoned or willfully removed from operation for a period of longer than 30 days shall be restored to use unless in full compliance with this Chapter.

E. Extension of Amortization Schedule

1. Factors for Extension. It is anticipated that the general amortization period provided in this Section will be adequate to provide all property owners with a reasonable value from any non-conforming lighting improvements before they must be replaced. However, the Building Commissioner may extend the amortization period in order to avoid causing an economic hardship based on his consideration of the following factors:
 - a. The owner's investment in improvements and other assets on the property before the time the improvements became non-conforming.
 - b. Any costs that are directly attributable to the compliance date, such as demolition and reconstruction expenses.
 - c. Any return on investment since inception of the non-conforming systems, including net income and depreciation.
 - d. The anticipated annual recovery of investment, including net income and depreciation.
2. Extension Binding Upon Owner. The Building Commissioner may provide a date certain for the conclusion of the non-conforming lighting use. All non-conforming lighting systems on the site must cease operations on that day and may not operate thereafter except in complete conformity with this Section. The owner shall sign and acknowledge the revised amortization schedule in writing in a form provided by the Building Commissioner. Said document shall be filed with the Lake County Recorder of Deeds and any requirements, regulations, restrictions, or conditions thereto shall be a covenant running with the land benefitting from the extended schedule.
3. No Late Application. No application to extend the amortization schedule shall be accepted after the date listed for full compliance in subsection B of this Section.



Legend

Features

- Limited access highway
- Highway
- Major Road
- Minor Road
- Limited access

Lighting Zones (LZ)

- LZ-0
- LZ-1
- LZ-2
- Trails
- Railroad
- Bodies of Water
- Building Footprints
- Village Limits
- Parcels

DARK SKY CONSULTING, LLC



MEMORANDUM

To: Drew Irvin, Administrator, Village of Lake Bluff, Illinois

From: John Barentine, Principal Consultant

Date: February 5, 2025

Subject: Lake Bluff draft lighting ordinance

1. Summary

This memorandum provides an analysis of an updated draft version of an outdoor lighting ordinance proposed for the Village of Lake Bluff, Illinois (hereinafter referred to as the “Village”). It identifies and describes the outdoor lighting regulation best practices used to evaluate the updated draft (Section [2](#)). These best practices center on eight core policy principles against which the 2024 and 2025 draft ordinance versions are compared (Section [3](#)). The memorandum concludes with recommendations for changes to the draft are included in order to better align the result with best practices (Section [4](#)). Where alternative options exist for various provisions, they are delineated and explained.

2. Policy and dark-sky best practice bases of this analysis

In order to properly evaluate the provisions in the draft ordinance in terms of their suitability toward the goal of reducing light pollution, we must first choose a reference of best practices. In the subsections that follow below, we identify a series of such best practices that relate to sustainable lighting design, installation and operation that are intended to reduce light pollution while providing for public safety and amenity. We used these references in analyzing the current version of the draft code update to make the recommendations specified in Section [4](#) of this document.

2.1. Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting

The [Illuminating Engineering Society](#) (IES) is a professional organization of lighting designers and engineers. [DarkSky International](#), formerly known as the International Dark-Sky Association

(IDA), is the world's premiere non-governmental organization advocating for light-pollution reduction and conservation of the natural nighttime environment. In June 2020, IES and IDA jointly published "Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting",¹ a set of five simple ideas to guide the use and regulation of outdoor lighting. The Five Principles, reproduced below, draw from the most effective, evidence-based lighting practices and distill this knowledge into a series of simple concepts cast in language that is accessible by the public.

1. **Useful:** All light should have a clear purpose
2. **Targeted:** Light should be directed only to where it's needed
3. **Low level:** Illumination should be no higher than necessary
4. **Controlled:** Light should be used only when it is useful
5. **Warm-colored:** Use warmer-color lights where possible

The organizations recommend that *"if light is deemed useful and necessary, follow these guidelines to prevent, or when that's not possible, minimize light pollution."*

2.2. 'Values-centered outdoor lighting'

In January 2021, the IDA Board of Directors adopted a resolution it referred to as "Values-centered outdoor lighting".² The resolution is an elaboration of the Five Principles and a clear statement that none should be considered in isolation from the others. The resolution states:

1. *Responsible outdoor lighting must consider all five principles in its design and installation and only through attention to all five principles will light pollution be minimized to its practical extent.*
2. *Where existing fixtures are replaced, the project should demonstrate how they will reduce light pollution, or at a minimum not increase it.*
3. *Where new installation or lighting retrofit projects are proposed, they should be guided by an assessment process to determine if such lighting is necessary and responsible.*
4. *To reduce skyglow, glare, spill light, and over-lighting, indoor and outdoor lighting should contain and minimize the emission of light beyond the intended target. Light emitted towards or above the horizon can have extraordinarily high environmental impacts.*
5. *To prevent overlighting, actual illumination levels should be as close as reasonably practical to the minimum values recommended by accredited professional bodies (such as IES and CIE) and appropriate for the task and environmental setting. IDA will collaborate with professional bodies to ensure that recommended illumination values are well-founded in science.*

¹ <https://darksky.org/resources/guides-and-how-tos/lighting-principles/>.

²

<https://darksky.org/app/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2021/08/BOARD-policy-application-of-light-FINAL-June-24-2021.docx.pdf>.

6. *New installations should have active controls to reduce illumination levels or extinguish lighting completely based on time of day or occupancy. Such controls are currently underutilized in outdoor lighting and can substantially reduce light pollution and save energy. Energy conservation codes are increasingly calling for active controls.*
7. *The spectral content, or color, of light should be limited to only what is necessary for the task. Because of the disproportionate impact on the nighttime environment, particular attention should be paid to reducing the total emissions of short-wavelength or “blue” light (defined for the purposes of this resolution between the wavelengths of 380 nm and 520 nm) through light source spectrum management.*
 - a. *To minimize negative environmental impacts, IDA recommends using lamps rated at 2200K CCT, Phosphor-Converted Amber LED, or some filtered LED.*
 - b. *When higher than 2200K CCT is necessary to meet lighting objectives, keep the total emission of blue light into the environment as low as reasonably possible through low intensities, careful targeting, and reduced operating times.*
 - c. *Near sensitive sites, such as conservation areas, sensitive wildlife habitat, ecological reserves, parks, astronomical observatories, or stargazing sites, IDA recommends that lighting installations use 0% blue light and a narrower spectrum of emission.*
 - d. *Critically sensitive environments should be kept naturally dark.*

2.3. Responsible Outdoor Lighting at Night (ROLAN) manifesto

In December 2022 IDA published the “Responsible Outdoor Lighting at Night” (ROLAN) manifesto.³ Building on the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs),⁴ the ROLAN manifesto “sets out ten core principles for external illumination and a plan of action to implement positive change in the lighting community to lead to a more sustainable, healthier, and safer future for all.”⁵

1. *Everyone should have the right to access darkness and quality lighting, and light needs to be used and distributed fairly without discrimination.*
2. *Start your design with darkness and only add light if it supports nocturnal placemaking and protects a view of the stars.*
3. *In all projects, strive to maximize the benefits of outdoor light at night by creating legible, safe spaces and journeys, simultaneously limiting each project’s environmental and financial costs.*
4. *Apply the Five Principles of Responsible Outdoor Lighting in all lighting projects.*
5. *Collaborate with researchers from different disciplines and specialties, such as astronomers, ecologists, biologists, lawyers, etc., so they can provide expertise on unfamiliar topics.*

³ https://darksky.org/app/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2022/12/ROLAN-manifesto-white-background_low-res.pdf.

⁴ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

⁵ <https://darksky.org/news/responsible-outdoor-lighting-at-night-rolan-manifesto-for-lighting/>.

6. *Educate your clients about the importance of ROLAN.*
7. *Ensure the community you work with is an active stakeholder and participant in all lighting projects. Enquire about their needs and wishes at night, and provide them with access to information to make informed decisions.*
8. *Embrace technology by asking for support from the lighting industry to ensure that night-time biodiversity is sustained and energy consumption is reduced. Engage with the lighting design industry to deliver an appropriate lighting solution.*
9. *A circular economy should be integrated into the brief, design, specification, and manufacturing process of your project, as well as its installation.*
10. *After project completion, visit the site at night with community stakeholders, to verify that your lighting design was fully implemented and meets ROLAN principles.*

2.4. International Dark Sky Community program guidelines

Since 2001, when Flagstaff, Arizona, was designated by IDA as a “dark-sky city”, the organization has designated over 200 locations worldwide as International Dark Sky Places (IDSPs). The accreditation program “certifies communities, parks, and protected areas around the world that preserve and protect dark sites through responsible lighting policies and public education.”⁶ Its five categories include International Dark Sky Communities (IDSCs). It defines an IDSC as a “a town, city, municipality, or other legally organized community that has shown exceptional dedication to the preservation of the night sky through the implementation and enforcement of a quality outdoor lighting ordinance, dark sky education, and citizen support of dark skies.”⁷

The IDSC label applies specifically to the built environment, with outdoor lighting policy at its core. Its requirements in its program guidelines⁸ have come to be recognized as the ‘gold standard’ in nighttime preservation through municipal policy. Those requirements are reviewed and below.

1. **Shielding:** All lighting fixtures over 1000 initial lamp lumens should be fully shielded such that their light emissions are directed downward toward the intended target rather than shining up into the sky.
2. **Spectrum control:** The emission of short-wavelength light should be appropriately limited. DarkSky recommends that for general outdoor lighting applications the correlated color temperature of light not exceed 3000K.
3. **Unshielded lighting site limits:** The total amount of unshielded light on a given land parcel should be limited through means such as a limit on lumens per net acre or a total site lumen allowance in unshielded luminaires.

⁶ <https://darksky.org/what-we-do/international-dark-sky-places/>.

⁷ <https://darksky.org/what-we-do/international-dark-sky-places/dark-sky-place-types/>.

⁸ <https://darksky.app.box.com/s/o6c1d7o9axk19coocfr5rrk5i3qfh175/file/1327502581392> (PDF).

4. **Over-lighting prevention:** The total light emissions from luminaires in all shielding states should be limited based on developed acreage or by adhering to international standards for allowable illuminance values on a per-application basis. This reduces or even eliminates wasted light by prompting better design, installation and operation of outdoor lighting.
5. **Regulation of special lighting applications** such as publicly owned lighting, outdoor sports lighting, and illuminated signs. DarkSky suggests best practices for regulating each of these special uses of outdoor lighting.
6. **Amortization of existing, non-conforming outdoor lighting:** Lighting that does not comply with local regulations should be brought into full compliance with the law no more than ten years after its enactment.

2.5. The Model Lighting Ordinance

In response to requests from dark-sky advocates and the public for guidance on enacting quality, comprehensive outdoor lighting ordinances, in June 2011 the IES and IDA jointly published the Model Lighting Ordinance (MLO).⁹ Drawing on what was then understood about lighting research and best practices, the MLO aimed to function as model legislation that councils could adapt to their local circumstances. Its main features include:

- Introduction of five “lighting zones”¹⁰ to classify the intensity of land use, with appropriate lighting levels for each. Zones range from LZ0, designed for pristine natural environments and limited or no outdoor lighting, to LZ4, for limited application in areas of extensive development in the largest cities.
- Limits on the amount of light allowed for use on any particular land parcel
- Use of ANSI/IES TM-15-20’s “BUG” (Backlight, Uplight, and Glare) classifications for outdoor lighting fixtures to ensure that only well-shielded fixtures are used; no uplight for area and street lighting is allowed in any zone
- Two means of achieving technical benchmarks (the “prescriptive” and “performance” methods)

The MLO also implements the BUG (Backlight-Uplight-Glare) rating system introduced by IES in 2007 and amended in 2011.¹¹ This scheme assigns allowable light emissions in three broad volumes and replaces the earlier IES ‘cutoff’ nomenclature describing the emission pattern of luminaires; see Figure 1.

⁹ <https://darksky.org/resources/guides-and-how-tos/model-lighting-ordinances/>.

¹⁰ <https://darksky.org/resources/guides-and-how-tos/lighting-zones/>.

¹¹ Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, Luminaire Classification System For Outdoor Luminaires (IES TM-15-07), 2007; amended 2011 as IES TM-15-11. TM-15 was further modified in 2020 as [IES TM-15-20](#).

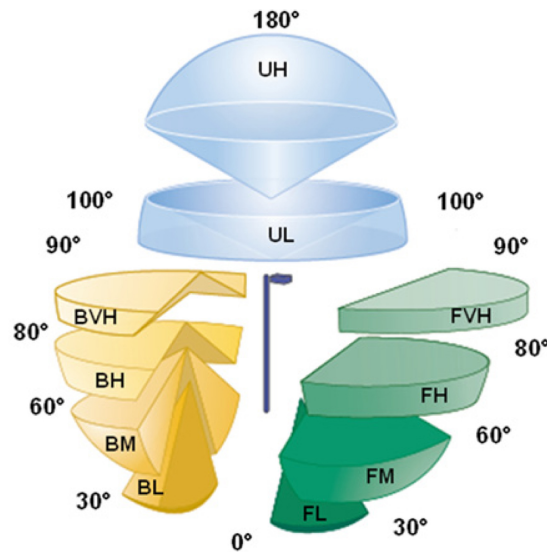


Figure 1. Graphical depiction of the IES 'BUG' Rating system consisting of backlight (yellow), uplight (blue) and glare (green) light emission zones in which acceptable values are given in IES TM-15-07. Each emission zone is further subdivided into regions defined according to the indicated angular ranges with respect to the local nadir (0°).

Further features and innovations of the MLO include:

- Lighting controls are required for all lighting, including both astronomic timers as well as dimming capabilities (Sec. III(C))
- Curfews for all lighting that involves lowering light levels at the curfew hour by at least 30% (Sec. III(C)(2))
- Total light emission restrictions for non-residential land parcels that can be determined using one of two methods (Sec. IV)
- Full shielding of all lighting and appropriate lumen limits for residential land parcels (Sec. V)
- Guidance for lighting types allowed by special permission only, such as high-intensity sources, lasers, searchlights, outdoor athletic facilities and parking structures (Sec. VI)
- An amortization schedule for existing, non-conforming lighting (Sec. VII)
- Street and roadway lighting is not addressed in the main body of the document, but rather in an annex that gives specific prescriptions for this type of lighting (Sec. IX)

2.6. Other examples of lighting policy best practice

Some ideas that are increasingly expressed in outdoor lighting ordinance provisions are not explicitly mentioned in the policy references above. However, they are consistent with the spirit of these recommendations. We briefly describe each below.

2.6.1. Statements of legislative intent

Recitations and other language in the preambles of outdoor lighting ordinances serve to establish the factors that motivated their enactment and the goals of the lawmakers who frame their provisions. Including these statements in ordinances guides their implementation and enforcement, and they can help judges to better interpret the intended meaning of ordinances.

2.6.2. Light trespass

“Light trespass” is a condition in which artificial light emitted from a luminaire on one property, not inclusive of light incidentally scattered or reflected from adjacent surfaces, is directed in such a manner that the light source is visible from any other property. Light trespass that diminishes the use or enjoyment of a property by its owner has been found to be a form of nuisance under the common law.¹²

2.6.3. General curfew

This idea proceeds from the presumption that most lighting is not needed and serves no practical purposes during the overnight hours when there is little or no human presence in an area. A general curfew calls for most outdoor lighting to be dimmed and/or extinguished between a particular hour of night and dawn or sunrise of the following day. The curfew hour can depend on lighting zone, land use, or other considerations, and certain situations (e.g., businesses open to the public 24 hours a day) can be exempted from this requirement.

2.6.4. Prohibitions

For a variety of reasons, codes sometimes completely prohibit certain types of lighting and/or lighting applications. Some examples are advertising searchlights; laser light sources; landscape/architectural uplighting; certain lamp types; and lighting that dynamically varies its output by intermittently fading, flashing, blinking, or rotating.

2.6.5. Exemptions

Similarly, certain kinds of lighting are granted exemption from the provisions of outdoor lighting ordinances. These exemptions may be total or partial. Common exemptions include holiday

¹² Johnson, A.L. “Blinded by the Light: Addressing the Growing Light Pollution Problem”. *Texas A&M Journal of Property Law*, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 461-480 (2015).
<https://scholarship.law.tamu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1032&context=journal-of-property-law>.

lighting; lighting of swimming pools and similar water features; lighting used by emergency first responders; and lighting required by any legal jurisdiction higher than the municipality.

2.6.5. Permitting of temporary and permanent lighting installations

Whether an installation of light is temporary or permanent, it should be subject to some form of plan review that ensures that the law is followed. For temporary installations, permits should be limited in duration and the number of times that they can be renewed. These installations may be granted exemption from regulation by the outdoor lighting ordinance; however, the applicant should be required to show that the installation will adhere to the requirements of the ordinance to the greatest practical extent possible. Plan review for permanent installation should be conducted early in the permitting process, and it should be followed by inspections of lighting as installed to ensure compliance with the outdoor lighting ordinance before a certificate of occupancy is issued.

3. Comparison of the updated ordinance draft and dark-sky best practices

In the following subsections, the text of the ordinance draft is compared against light pollution reduction principles in the policy and practice sources described in Section [2](#). The findings inform a series of ten recommendations presented in Section [4](#). For each item, we reference our 2024 evaluation of the first version of the draft and compare it to what we found in the current (2025) version.

3.1. Shielding

2024: Subsection A of “Luminaire Standards” contained a prescription for light shielding that depended on both the intensity of the light source and the type of use (specifically, residential versus non-residential). Full cutoff shielding was required for individual sources exceeding 700 lumens on residential uses and 1400 lumens on nonresidential uses.

2025: This provision is unchanged since the earlier version.

3.2. Spectrum control

2024: Subsection C of “Luminaire Standards” set a correlated color temperature (CCT) limit of 4300 K for all sources, exceeding the recommended limit of 3000K for most lighting

applications in order to limit the emission of harmful short-wavelength (blue) light into the nighttime environment.

2025: Color temperature is now addressed in Subsection B of “Luminaire Standards” and sets a CCT limit of 3000 K for “any light source”. However, “Non-Conforming Lighting; Grandfathering; Amortization” Subsection D(1)(a) offers an exception to this requirement if *“the owner demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Building Commissioner that no light source with an acceptable color temperature is available for the luminaire.”*

3.3. Unshielded lighting site limits

2024: This draft version did not set any particular limit for the amount of unshielded lighting that can be installed on a parcel. Given that the draft allowed unshielded luminaires below the lumen thresholds stated above, a property owner could effectively thwart the intent of the ordinance by installing many individual luminaires, none of which individually reached the shielding threshold.

2025: Subsection A of “Site Standards” now provides that *“luminaires (other than fully shielded) may not exceed 10% of all installed lumens.”*

3.4. Over-lighting prevention

2024: Subsection A of “Site Standards” imposed a limit on the installed outdoor lighting of 100,000 lumens per acre irrespective of the shielding state of the lighting. For this purpose, the lumens used in the calculation were to be *“the manufacturer’s initial lumen rating at the end of 100 hours of operation”*.

2025: Subsection A of “Site Standards” now states limits on the number of installed lumens per developed acre in all shielding states: 10,000 lumens for single-family residential uses; 20,000 lumens for residential uses other than single-family; and 50,000 lumens for other “Non-Residential and Non-Park” uses. These figures are not inconsistent with typical allowances in other U.S. municipalities for comparable land-use zoning.

3.5. Light trespass prohibition

2024: Light trespass was defined in the Definitions section as *“unwanted light spilling onto an adjacent property and/or an excessive brightness (i.e. glare) is occurring in the normal field of vision.”* Subsection C of “Site Standards” stated a general policy that called for all outdoor lighting to be *“designed, installed, and maintained in order to minimize light trespass onto adjacent properties and rights-of-way.”* Three performance standards followed:

1. *The light source of a luminaire shall not be visible at the property line on which the luminaire is located;*
2. *For adjacent non-residential uses, the illuminance at the property line shall not exceed 1 foot-candle; and*
3. *At any property line “abutting a residential lot”, the illuminance at the property line shall not exceed 0.5 foot-candle.*

2025: The definition of light trespass in the 2024 version is dropped. The same trespass thresholds in that version are retained in Subsection B of “Site Standards”. We noted previously that the numbers quoted for each case are consistent with figures appearing in many other U.S. municipal ordinances.

3.6. General curfew

2024: This was addressed in Subsection D of “Site Standards” as “Hours of operation”. Exempting street lighting, it permitted all luminaires to be operated at maximum intensity from 30 minutes before sunset and the later of 10pm or one hour after the close of normal business hours. It did not include a parallel standard for lighting to be extinguished on the morning side after sunrise. After the evening curfew hour, lighting whose application is characterized as ensuring “safety and security” would have been allowed to remain on provided that it was dimmed to 25% of its maximum intensity.

2025: “Hours of Operation”, now Subsection C of “Site Standards”, now reads: *“For zoning lots used non-residentially, hours of operation should conform with the Village’s latest adopted version of the International Energy Conservation Code (with Illinois Amendments). For residentially used lots, hours of operation shall be midnight to 5 am.”* This wording makes it unclear whether any particular curfew hour exists.

3.7. Regulation of publicly owned outdoor lighting

2024: This draft version contained no such provision. Subsection F(c) of “Luminaire Standards” exempted “any public lighting that is located within the right-of-way”.

2025: The “Regulated Activities” section now states that the code is applicable to *“all exterior residential and non-residential (including public) lighting”*. However, “Luminaire Standards” Subsection E(3) exempts from regulation *“[a]ny public lighting that is located within the right-of-way.”* That sets up a direct conflict between the two provisions.

3.8. Amortization of existing, non-conforming lighting

2024: Subsection B of “Non-conforming lighting; grandfather; amortization” would have established a ten-year amortization period for existing non-conforming lighting in the Village, a time period consistent with best practice.

2025: Subsection B of “Non-conforming lighting; grandfather; amortization” now amortizes existing, non-conforming lighting on non-residential properties within four years of the enactment date of the updated code. A seven-year amortization period applies to residential properties only when the “Major Project Threshold” of “Non-conforming lighting; grandfather; amortization”, Subsection D(3) is triggered.

4. Recommendations

Based on the above analysis, we suggest the following improvements to the draft:

4.1. General recommendations

The following observations and suggested changes are noted:

- **Shorten all instances of “light luminaire” to simply “luminaire”.** The word “light” is redundant and unnecessary.
- **Drop mentions of “fixture” in the text in favor of “luminaire”.** These terms are used interchangeably, but they are not strictly interchangeable.
- **Clarify the intent of referring to “building-mounted luminaires”** in “Luminaire Standards” Subsection A(1) when stating the maximum per-luminaire light emission thresholds. It is currently unclear whether the same standard also applies to, e.g., pole-mounted luminaires.
- **Consider replacing the letter “X” in allowance tables with “0”,** or otherwise state in words that “X” means something is disallowed in the stated circumstances. “X” may not convey the intent to, for example, disallow permanently installed outdoor lighting in Lighting Zone 0.
- **Drop mention of Lighting Zone 3 (LZ3).** Lake Bluff really doesn't have any situations that would properly be labeled LZ3, which the IES defines as “Moderately High Ambient Lighting”. That would be something more like the downtown core or commercial district of a bigger U.S. city.
- **Consider instituting a formal process for permitting temporary lighting installations,** as exempted in “Luminaire Standards” Subsection E(2) for special events. Lighting used in true emergency situations can be entirely unregulated. For repair and construction work, the lighting should be permitted and the user should be obligated to comply with the ordinance to the greatest degree possible, to at least ensure that lighting does not shine directly onto adjacent properties or into public rights of way.

- **Place some reasonable restrictions on the use of “Landscape or Ornamental Lighting”,** which is otherwise exempted by “Luminaire Standards” Subsection E(5). At a minimum, this kind of lighting should be subject to site lumen limits specified in “Site Standards” Subsection A.
- **“Seasonal Lighting Displays”, exempted from compliance in “Luminaire Standards” Subsection E(6), should be subject to regulation beyond simply a range of permitted dates.** Reasonable limits could include lumen caps and a curfew hour. Regarding the permitted dates (November 15 through January 30), it is thought that setting date ranges like this may run afoul of First Amendment concerns.
- **We recommend against exempting string lighting from regulation in any particular situation,** as in “Luminaire Standards” Subsection E(7)(a) for residential uses. At a minimum, this lighting should be subject to curfews and limited in intensity. Otherwise it has a tendency, especially in residential zones, to be a source of nuisance. Fully exempting it also allows seasonal lighting to essentially become permanent, which conflicts with Subsection E(6).
- The prescription for string lighting lumen allowances “Luminaire Standards” Subsection E(7)(b)(1)-(2) allows different lumen values for different lamp types. There is no good reason for making such a distinction. **We recommend setting a single lumen threshold irrespective of the lamp type.** Furthermore, as written this allows for an unlimited amount of string lighting to be installed. We recommend capping this to some reasonable number, whether an absolute number of lumens or something like lumens per linear foot of string length.
- **To the items listed in “Submission Requirements” Subsection A(3) (“Schedule of Luminaires”) add “correlated color temperature”.**

4.2. Definitions

Certain changes to the definitions section are suggested:

1. **Add a definition of “Correlated Color Temperature”.** The IES [defines](#) CCT as *“the absolute temperature of a blackbody whose chromaticity most nearly resembles that of the light source.”* To this might be added language to the effect that “Correlated Color Temperature is typically expressed in units of kelvins (K).”
2. **Add a definition of “illuminance”.** This term is used in “Site Standards” Subsection B(2)(b)-(c). It is also implied in the definition of foot-candle: *“amount of light (illumination) falling onto a given point”*, which means the same thing as illuminance. The IES [definition](#) of illuminance is “The areal density of the luminous flux incident at a point on a surface.”

3. **Use “IES” instead of “IESNA”.** The organization has consistently discontinued the reference “of North America” since 2010 and is now known as “IES”. Instances of “IESNA” remain in the current draft.
4. **Return to a definition of “light trespass” dropped since the previous draft.** The IES [definition](#) is “*the encroachment of light, typically across property boundaries, causing annoyance, loss of privacy, or other nuisance.*” A more practical definition we suggest is “a condition in which light emitted from a luminaire on one property, not inclusive of light incidentally scattered or reflected from adjacent surfaces, is directed in such a manner that the light source is visible from any other property.”
5. **Consider adding IES definitions of Lighting Zones.** In order to make the intent behind matching the Lighting Zones to Zoning Districts, I recommend defining the Lighting Zones according to the definitions in the [Model Lighting Ordinance](#).
6. **Add a definition of “developed acre” if it does not appear elsewhere in the zoning code.** In the current draft lighting ordinance, the term is used in “Site Standards” Subsection A without a definition. If it is defined elsewhere, make sure a reference to that definition appears in the draft.
7. **Add a definition of “initial lumens”.** This is necessitated by the wording in “Submission Requirements” Subsection A(3) that refers to the “initial luminaire lumen rating” of lighting. There is no IES definition of this term. We suggest something like: “*the number of lumens of light emitted by a luminaire when the lamp is new, not accounting for any depreciation due to the age of the lamp or environmental conditions that may be detrimental to its performance.*”

4.3. Amortization of existing, non-conforming luminaires

“Non-Conforming Lighting; Grandfathering; Amortization” Subsection B in the current draft of the code update provides for amortization of existing, non-conforming luminaires on both residential and non-residential uses with specified sunset dates for the end of exemption from compliance. However, it limits the reach of this provision in the case of residential uses to situations where the Major Project Threshold is met. This seems to imply that unless that circumstance occurs, amortization does not apply to residential uses. To otherwise exempt residential properties from an amortization period except for situations such as major renovations is inconsistent with dark-sky best practice. **We recommend imposing an amortization period on residential uses, regardless of whether the Major Project Threshold is met, not to exceed ten years.**

We further note that “Non-Conforming Lighting; Grandfathering; Amortization” Subsection E allows for indefinite extension of the grandfathering period for legal non-conforming

luminaires “in order to avoid causing an economic hardship”. This is not unreasonable, but the current language is a blank check that potentially allows owners of such lighting to avoid replacing it until it fails. **We recommend stating an absolute upper limit to allowable extensions such that exemptions do not become effectively permanent.** Most outdoor lighting equipment will fail in place and require replacement on a timescale of roughly ten years. **We recommend that any extensions so granted not exceed that duration.**

4.4. Shielding

As an optional consideration, if Lake Bluff intended to apply for the the International Dark Sky Community designation at some later date, the shielding allowance for “Other Than Fully Shielded” lighting stated in “Luminaire Standards” Subsection A(2) exceeds that allowed by DarkSky International for unshielded lighting. **Consider lowering the shielding threshold for “Non-Residential and Non-Park” uses to no more than 1,000 lumens per luminaire.**

4.5. Security lighting and the use of motion sensors

Since the 2024 draft, the code language now refers explicitly to “Security Lighting” in “Luminaire Standards” Subsection E(9), requiring that “any lighting used for security purposes must be controlled through the use of motion sensors.” This is a reasonable position that enables lighting for this application in a way that is consistent with the Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting. That said, motion-sensing switches for outdoor lighting applications are often poorly deployed and regulated. To that end **we recommend that if security lighting is to be allowed with no other limitations, the motion-sensing requirement should be tightened up accordingly:**

1. The duration of illumination upon each event triggering the motion sensor should not exceed five (5) minutes, after which the switch automatically shuts off; and
2. The motion sensitivity is set so as to trigger only on the movement of large objects such as animals and people; and
3. The motion-sensing switch fails by default into the “off” setting.

4.6. Correlated color temperature limit exemption

Subsection B of “Luminaire Standards” in the current draft sets a CCT limit of 3000 K for “any light source”. But “Non-Conforming Lighting; Grandfathering; Amortization” Subsection D(1)(a) enables legal non-conforming luminaires to be re-lamped with sources exceeding 3000 K if “the owner demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Building Commissioner that no light source with an acceptable color temperature is available for the luminaire.” We feel that this kind of scenario is highly unlikely unless a property owner insists on using a particular kind of luminaire down to

the details of the manufacturer and model. 3000 K is now a standard product offering across a wide range of outdoor lighting products sold in the U.S., so it is difficult to imagine that a suitable alternative at an acceptable CCT would not be available for any particular luminaire. **We therefore recommend striking this provision.**

4.7. Lumens caps

The current draft imposes site limits in units of lumens per developed acre in “Site Standards” Subsection A. However, it seems to exempt residential uses from demonstrating compliance either in plan review or post-installation inspection: “*A zoning lot used for single-family residential purposes shall be presumed to satisfy this requirement and need not demonstrate conformity.*” It is unclear why residential uses should be exempted from demonstrating compliance with this provision when it would not be exempted from demonstrating compliance with other code elements as a matter of routine. It seems to imply the impossibility of enforcing this part of the code. **We recommend against this.**

4.8. Public lighting

In the current draft, “Luminaire Standards” Subsection E(3) continues to exempt “*any public lighting that is located within the right-of-way*” from adhering to the provisions of the ordinance. This is inconsistent with dark-sky lighting best practice and sets a bad example for the community when the ordinance obligates private property owners to follow the law. This does not mean that publicly owned lighting should be subject to all of the same requirements as private lighting, but it should observe at least the basics such as shielding and color temperature.

We again recommend that the Village remove the blanket exemption from the draft and consider replacing it with a statement that indicates where, when and under what circumstances it will install lighting on public properties. Ideally the default position of the Village would be to *not* use light unless it adheres to the Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting, including a clearly identifiable purpose. Its use should also be conditioned on the provision of adaptive controls that dim or extinguish the lighting at times when it is not needed.

Alternate option: The Village could choose not to codify a warranting statement in the ordinance itself but instead to affect one through a policy memo from the Village Administrator.

4.9. Outdoor sports lighting

The current draft version now deals with outdoor sports lighting only by exempting it in “Luminaire Standards” Subsection E(8) with the proviso that “*any lighting used for outdoor*

*recreational facilities must be controlled using timers and may not be upward facing.” This is a good start, but **we continue to recommend that the Village add comprehensive regulations for outdoor sports lighting to the ordinance consistent with DarkSky International guidance.** In particular, we recommend adopting the elements of the International Dark Sky Community guidelines specific to athletic field lighting:*

- 1. IES lighting guidelines (RP-6) are followed according to the appropriate class of play*
- 2. Field lighting is provided exclusively for illumination of the surface of play and viewing stands, and not for any other applications*
- 3. Illuminance levels must be adjustable based on the task (e.g., active play vs. field maintenance)*
- 4. Off-site impacts of the lighting will be limited to the greatest practical extent possible*
- 5. A strict curfew requirement (e.g., lights must be extinguished by 10pm/2200h or one hour after the end of play, whichever is later) is observed*
- 6. Timers must be installed to prevent lights being left on accidentally overnight by automatically extinguishing them*

4.10. Sign code

The sign code (Chapter 10) regulates aspects of illuminated signs that may either conflict with the provisions of the draft lighting code or that otherwise do not follow best practice. **We recommend that the Village consider amending the sign code as needed to modernize it,** especially with respect to the regulation of electronic displays, and to harmonize its content with the lighting code.

MEMORANDUM



TO: Chair Rener & SEC Members

FROM: Clara Gable, Assistant to the Village Administrator
Lauren Chermak, Administrative Intern

DATE: March 14, 2025

SUBJECT: Growing Native Habitat Lake Bluff National Wildlife Federation Certification

On February 28, 2025, Village Staff received an email from Sue Raymore, a resident and member of the Growing Native Habitat Lake Bluff group. Ms. Raymore expressed her group's interest in pursuing an Illinois Community Wildlife Habitat Certification for the Village (through the National Wildlife Federation). The National Wildlife Federation is the largest nonprofit conservation education and advocacy organization in the United States. This Certification focuses on promoting natural landscapes, planting native plant species, reducing the use of pesticides, and integrating wildlife-friendly practices into sustainability plans. Other communities in Illinois who have earned this certification include the Cities of Evanston and Highland Park.

While the Growing Native Habitat Lake Bluff group is in the early stages of the application process, they want to inform the SEC of their interest in this Certification, the actions they are taking to earn this, and opportunities for the Village to consider supporting these efforts. Members of the Growing Native Habitat Lake Bluff group will present their progress to the SEC and answer any questions they may have.

Attachments

1. Growing Native Group Interest Communications from Sue Raymore and Growing Native.
2. Community Wildlife Habitat Certification Requirements.
3. Highland Park gets 'Community Wildlife Habitat' Designation Article.
4. Lake County News Sun Wildlife Article.
5. National Wildlife Federation Neighbor-Friendly Wildlife Gardening Article.
6. LBOLA Preservation Map.

From: [susan raymoure](#)
To: [Lauren Chermak](#)
Cc: [Ann Vertovec](#); [Lisa Schwarz](#)
Subject: Growing Native Habitat Lake Bluff - SEC March 18
Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 7:46:05 AM
Attachments: [News Article Lake County News-Sun Waukegan IL February 1 2025 p3.pdf](#)
[News Article Lake County News-Sun Waukegan IL February 1 2025 p1.pdf](#)
[Community Wildlife Habitat Certification Requirements - Google Docs.pdf](#)
[Neighbor-Friendly-Wildlife-Gardening.pdf](#)
[LBOLA Preserves Map-2.pdf](#)

Lauren,

The name of our group is "Growing Native Habitat Lake Bluff" with possible edits based on discussion with SEC and the school district. The boundaries of our "community" are the Elementary School District 65 to be as inclusive as possible.

Here's some documents to include for the SEC members.

An article from the local Tribune on the certification of Highland Park as the 2nd city in the state to be certified

A document showing the requirements to get the certification In this document labeled Community Wildlife Habitat, I've highlighted in red the areas where we hope SEC/Village can help/support us.

A sample flyer we will use in our outreach to the community

A map of the LBOLA preserves, village, school and park district - we will speak to all of these districts.

There is a cost of \$25/site to get certified. Any help getting the village owned properties certification cost would help.

We are also looking for grants to cover our costs.

We look forward to meeting with the SEC !

Sue Raymoure

National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat Certification Requirements



To achieve certification through the National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program, you must create or restore wildlife habitat in your community and do education and outreach.

First, a certain number of homes, schools and common areas must **become National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitats** by providing the four basic elements that all wildlife need: food, water, cover and places to raise young. The NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat program also requires sustainable gardening practices such as using rain barrels, reducing water usage, removing invasive plants, using native plants and eliminating pesticides. These requirements are based on population – see chart below.

Second, communities **earn education and outreach points** through a flexible checklist that includes educating citizens at community events, hosting a native plant sale, organizing a stream clean up, bringing new partners to the effort and hosting workshops – see pages 2 and 3.

Property Certification Requirements:

Activity / Type of Certification	Points
For each <i>home</i> certified, including townhomes and apartments	1
For each <i>common area</i> certified, including public parks, HOA common areas, businesses, places of worship, farms, universities and municipal buildings	3
For each <i>school</i> certified as an NWF Schoolyard Habitat - Pre-K - 12 or nature center	5

VERIFICATION: Homes that were certified more than 15 years prior to a community's registration date must be verified. Schools certified more than 5 years prior to a community's registration date must be verified.

Minimum Habitat Certification Points	Sliding Scale Based on Population Size
20	500 or Less
40	501-1,000
100	1,001-5,000
150	5,001-10,000
175	10,001-15,000
200	15,001-20,000
225	20,001-25,000
250	25,001-50,000
300	50,001-100,000
400	100,001-300,000
500	300,001-500,000
750	500,001-1,000,000
1000	1,000,001 or More

Education and Outreach Requirements:

Registration Goals – 40 Points Required	
Activity	Points
Name your NWF Community Wildlife Habitat project	5
Identify your Team Leader & Habitat Team Members (typically 3-7 total) & Register as NWF Volunteers	5
Set up system for tracking progress (journal, google doc, etc.)	5
Establish project goals & vision for one, three and five years with a budget	5
Submit your community summary for the NWF website	5
Complete the Community Assessment Form	5
Attend NWF Welcome Webinar for New Communities	5
Create plan for keeping all Habitat Team Members in regular communication	5
One member of your Habitat Team becomes an NWF Habitat Steward or Habitat Host Volunteer (not avail in all areas) (up to 5)	5
Send out a press release for about your community registration	5
Hold a call with NWF's state affiliate in you state if they are active in this program (NWF can facilitate)	5
Meet, call or otherwise connect with another Community Wildlife Habitat in your area (NWF can facilitate)	5
Obtain letter of support from community government officials (mayor, county commission, HOA president)	10
Pass a proclamation announcing your community's registration at your city council meeting	10
Plan & organize a kick-off celebration	10

Outreach Goals – 50 Points Required	
Activity	Points
Improve your community's weed ordinances or other public policies to make them more wildlife-friendly	10
Work with municipal or other local park agencies to convert parkland to wildlife-friendly landscapes	10
Provide Garden for Wildlife information at a booth or table at a community event (up to 3 events)	5
Coordinate a stream cleanup, tree planting, invasive species removal, native plant rescue, native plant sale, trail clean-up, family nature event or other restoration event (up to 10 events)	10
Work with local nurseries to label and/or provide native plants	10
Each Habitat Team Member that serves on a community board or council related to environmental issues (up to 3)	5
Each presentation to an organization not yet associated with your project (up to 5)	5
Other Community Project (please discuss with NWF staff)	TBD

Education Goals – 40 Points Required	
Activity	Points
Create an information kiosk or permanent display at a public place (rec center, library, school) where the community can learn about the project (up to 3 kiosks / displays)	10
Create an NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat project brochure or fact sheet specific to your community	5
Create a website or web page where community members can learn about your project	10
Create and maintain a Facebook page or group or other social media site for your project	10
Write a regular column in your community newsletter or newspaper paper to about your project	10
Secure a feature article in the local media about your project (up to 3 feature articles)	10
Secure a radio or TV interview or PSA on your project	10
Host a workshop to educate community members about wildlife gardening (up to 5 workshops)	5
Create & distribute a native plant list for your community	5
Hold a garden tour that features certified habitats (up to 3 garden tours)	10
Create a demonstration garden at a public site with educational signs (up to 3 demonstration sites)	10
Launch a campaign to educate the community about an iconic plant or animal species for your community (i.e. - Baltimore's focus on the Oriole)	10
Recruit another community to register as an NWF Community Wildlife Habitat (up to 3)	5
Other Education Project (please discuss with NWF staff)	TBD

Administration Goals – 20 Points Required	
Activity	Points
Maintain and submit to NWF your online or paper project notebook / log	5
Identify the individuals that will make up the post-certification Habitat Team (typically 3-7 people)	5
Donate 5 wildlife, garden or other project-related photos to NWF	5
Per new volunteer registered with volunteer team (up to 10)	3
Per partner organization affiliated with your project (up to 5)	5
Each grant application submitted to support project (up to 3)	10
Participate in an NWF Community Wildlife Habitat conference call (up to 4)	5



Growing Native Habitat Lake Bluff is registered in the National Wildlife Federation Community Wildlife Habitat program and working towards certification.

Certifying individual properties is a large component of the Community Wildlife Habitat program. All properties including homes, common areas, schools, and nature centers can be certified using the [Certified Wildlife Habitat website](#). There are five elements that every property must contain to become a Certified Wildlife Habitat®:

- **Food**
- **Water**
- **Cover**
- **Places to Raise Young**
- **Sustainable Practices**

National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat Certification Requirements

Highland Park gets ‘Community Wildlife Habitat’ designation

By Joseph States

Highland Park has become the second municipality in Illinois to earn a “Community Wildlife Habitat” designation from the National Wildlife Federation after a two-year push by city residents. Members of Habitat Highland Park, which began organization efforts two years ago, were recognized during Monday’s City Council meeting. One of those volunteers,

Candice Dalrymple, talked about how the group came about, and why the designation was important. The National Wildlife Federation (NWF), founded in 1936, is one of the largest nonprofit conservation organizations in the country. It runs the Community Wildlife Habitat program, which recognizes wild-life-friendly municipalities. Dalrymple moved to Highland Park during the pandemic, which she said drove her to be more

invested in the outdoors and the environment. When she first heard of the NWF and the Community Wildlife Habitat program, she was dismissive. “Why is that important? Who cares about a merit badge?” she recalled thinking. But her feelings changed when she learned more. “It’s not just a merit badge,” Dalrymple said. “It means there’s a network of waystations established throughout the town where butter-

flies, hummingbirds and other kinds of pollinators that are critical to biodiversity in our area, can go.” The designation is given to communities with a sufficient proportion of certified, wild-life-friendly properties and environment-related education and outreach. Residents can get their gardens certified by the NWF if they meet certain requirements, such as sufficient food and water sources, native plants and sustain-

able gardening practices, meaning no herbicides or pesticides. Dalrymple, along with a small group of fellow eco-minded residents, got together to form Habitat Highland Park, and began organizing efforts to achieve the community-wide certification. She said they connected with various area organizations, including the environmental group Go Green, **Turn to Wildlife, Page 3**

Wildlife

from Page 1

the League of Women Voters and the Rotary Club. The collaboration helped significantly speed up the certification process for residents, Dalrymple said.

When Dalrymple learned the city had been certified last fall, she was thrilled. It was proof of a concept the NWF has put “considerable thought” into — how the actions of individuals and small groups can have a butterfly effect, and how small actions can start a conversation in a community.

“I can’t tell people, ‘Let’s pull together and change what ExxonMobil is doing with its gas production,’” she said. “That’s not possible. So what could we do in terms of individual contributions to our local communities that are in control of every single person?”

The NWF program encourages the cultivating of native plants, something Dalrymple said she was completely unaware of a few years ago. Native plants are generally better for the environment, requiring less watering because of their deeper root systems.

“Many of the beautiful plants we see all around the houses in the Chicago area ... are imported from Asia and Europe,” she said. “They’re beautiful, no

question about that, but they require a lot of cultivation and different kinds of chemicals to keep them healthy.”

Native plants also provide food for pollinators such as butterflies, which have seen increasingly dire assessments in the U.S. According to the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, a nonprofit focused on invertebrates, five butterfly species have gone extinct since the 1950s, with an additional 29 listed as endangered nationwide.

“I think people are not aware there are a large number of our species under threat,” Dalrymple said. “They’re declining and we may not even have them. We can’t lose these important pollinators because they are part of the food chain that ultimately results in the food and vegetables we have on our tables.”

Informing people about wildlife — whether plant, bug or animal — and the dangers they face will be part of Habitat’s ongoing community outreach efforts, Dalrymple said, including with the local schools.

“People are really eager to be a part of a program that is good for nature and good for the town, but they need to know about it,” she said. “They need to understand what they can contribute. Education and outreach is really critical.”



Neighbor-Friendly Wildlife Gardening

The typical American landscape of lawn and ornamental plants doesn't offer much habitat for birds, bees, butterflies and other wildlife. Using native plants and creating a wildlife habitat garden might seem strange to your neighbors. A wild-looking landscape can stand out in suburban or urban areas or even violate municipal or Homeowners' Association landscape codes.

The good news is that a wildlife habitat garden doesn't have to look messy and wild. Remember, when you create a garden or landscape that helps wildlife, you are an ambassador for the idea of natural landscaping. You want your neighbors to be excited about what you've done, not to turn them off to the idea of restoring habitat.

Did you Know?

Avoid conflicts with your neighbors by explaining natural landscaping and the benefits it brings to wildlife and your local environment.

Tips & Info

Neighbor-Friendly Wildlife Gardening Tips

The following tips can help you to avoid misunderstandings about your natural landscape and could even encourage neighbors to try new gardening practices:

1. **Design your landscape** to mesh with your neighborhood aesthetic, especially your front yard. If you plant natives you'll provide wildlife with great habitat even if it doesn't have a "wild" look.
2. **Before you begin creating your wildlife habitat garden**, explain to your neighbors what natural landscaping is and why it's important for the local environment.
3. **Review your Homeowners' Association rules**, community covenants or local weed ordinances that may apply to your property. If landscape rules are overly restrictive, get involved to update them to accommodate natural, wildlife friendly landscapes.
4. **Use native plants with pretty blooms**, interesting foliage and colorful berries that are appealing to people as well as wildlife.
5. **Reduce the size of your lawn**, but you don't need to eliminate it totally. If you do keep some lawn, maintain it without pesticides and fertilizers.
6. **Start small or in phases as you transform the total landscape**. Starting small gives neighbors time to get accustomed to your yard's look.
7. **Ornamental birdbaths, garden benches, statues and water features** add visual interest and make things seem less wild-looking.
8. **Borders, paths, hedges, plant islands and fences**, frame garden areas and add a neat appearance.
9. **Limit the number of bird feeders**. Rake up spilled seed and hulls weekly.
10. **Avoid feeders or brush piles** in places where rats could be a problem, and avoid brush near homes in fire-prone areas.
11. **Register your yard or garden as a Certified Wildlife Habitat** with the National Wildlife Federation and post a yard sign. This lets your neighbors know you've created a landscape with purpose and that wildlife and your local environment are benefiting from it.



Focus on attracting birds and butterflies. Most people love these kinds of wildlife and will welcome your efforts to create a garden that supports them.

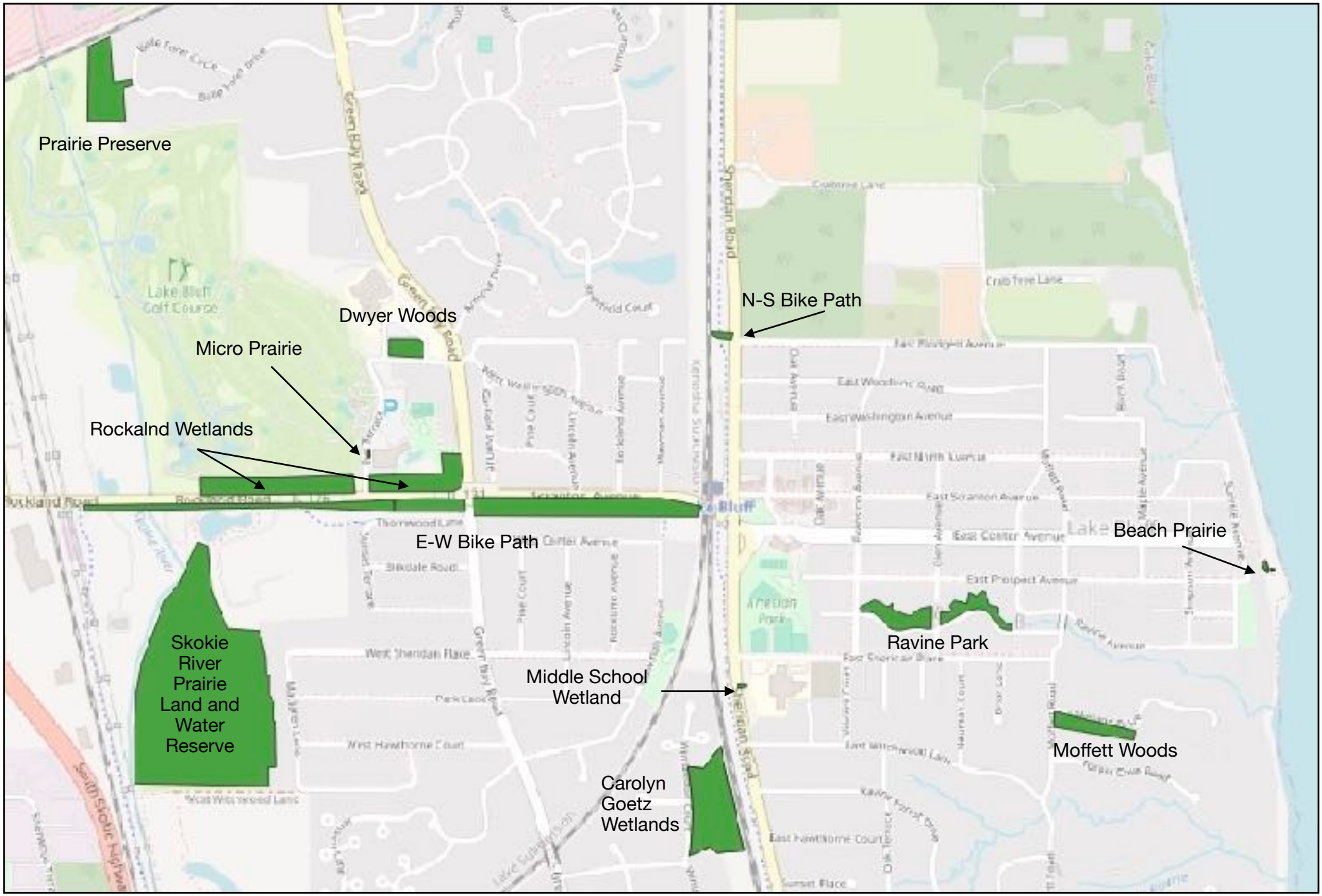
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Join the Garden for Wildlife™ Movement!

Join the growing movement of people making a difference for wildlife where they live, work, learn, worship, and play! Just go to [nwf.org/garden](https://www.nwf.org/garden).





Prairie Preserve

Dwyer Woods

Micro Prairie

Rockalnd Wetlands

Skokie
River
Prairie
Land and
Water
Reserve

E-W Bike Path

Middle School
Wetland

Carolyn
Goetz
Wetlands

N-S Bike Path

Ravine Park

Beach Prairie

Moffett Woods