

## **Chapter 12**

### **Gateway Economic Development Plan**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter contains detailed land use and development recommendations for the Rt. 173/I-94 interchange area, or the “Gateway Economic Development Area,” as depicted in Figure 12.1. The Gateway Economic Development Plan is based on the Intergovernmental Agreement Between The Village Of Old Mill Creek, The Village Of Wadsworth, And Lake County Regarding The Route 173/I-94 Interchange (the “Rt. 173 Intergovernmental Agreement”). The Villages are adopting similar plans.

The Gateway Plan is intended to create a cohesive entry, or gateway, into Lake County and the adjacent communities. It promotes high quality economic development that will provide desirable jobs, a strong diversified tax base, and convenient community services for local residents. The Gateway Plan establishes land use and development standards. It also establishes criteria for providing sewer, water and other infrastructure and services within the gateway area.

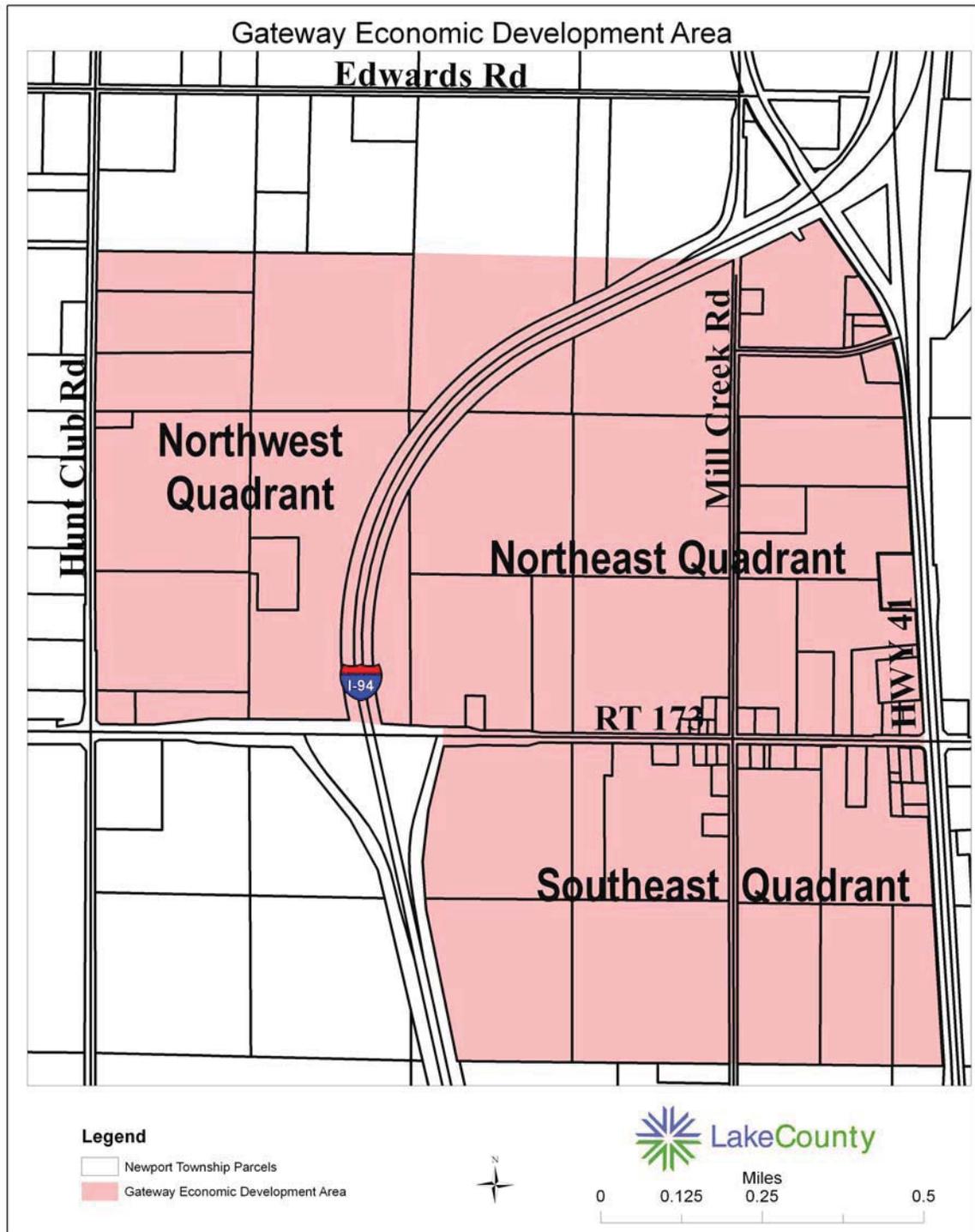
The land uses and development standards provided in this Chapter build on the recommendations contained in the *Economic Development Feasibility Study for I-94/Rt. 173 Interchange* report, which was prepared for the Rt. 173 Corridor Council by Economics Research Associates (ERA). The proposed development standards rely heavily on design guidelines developed by the Route 12 Corridor Planning Council with the assistance of the Lake County Department of Planning, Building, and Development. The proposed development standards also draw upon design concepts prepared for the Village of Vernon Hills by Rolf C. Campbell & Associates, Inc.

#### **Future Land Use and Zoning**

This Chapter of the Regional Framework Plan is accompanied by a revised countywide Future Land Use Map. The revised map replaces the Future Land Use Map that was adopted by the County Board on November 9, 2004. The revised Future Land Use Map designates the gateway economic development planning area as the “Gateway Economic Development Area.”

The Route 173 Gateway Economic Development Plan will be implemented through the Gateway, GW, Zoning District. The GW Zoning District contains detailed land use and development standards, as specified in the Rt. 173 Intergovernmental Agreement. The GW Zoning District allows the uses specified on the Conceptual Land Use Map, which is discussed below. Property owners seeking to rezone land to the GW Zoning District will utilize the Planned Unit Development process. All development proposals within the Gateway Economic Development Area are subject to intergovernmental review as discussed in the Development Review Process section of this Chapter.

Figure 12.1



**Conceptual Land Use Map**

Figure 12.3 contains a Conceptual Land Use Map for the Gateway Economic Development Area. The map designates four distinct land use types: Office/Research, Office/Light Assembly/Warehouse, Retail/Service, and Residential. The Conceptual Land Use Map is intended for illustrative purposes. Property owners may submit applications that vary from the Conceptual Land Use Map as long as they are consistent with the *intent* of the map.

The most important features of the Conceptual Land Use Map are the preservation of parcels immediately adjacent to the Rt. 173 and I-94 interchange for high-quality Office/Research development and the preservation of land along the Rt. 173 and US 41 frontages for Retail/Services Development. The interior portions of the planning area are designated for Office/Light Assembly/Warehouse uses. Residential use is restricted to the northwest quadrant, away from the interchange and Rt. 173. (The quadrants are identified on Figure 12.1.) This area is less suitable for commercial development due to its location and the large amount of wetlands.

The table in Figure 12.2 shows the overall proposed mix of land uses by quadrant. Of the 800 acres in the planning area, 326 acres, or approximately 41% of the land, is designated for Office/Light Assembly/Warehouse. Approximately 14% is designated for Office/Research and nearly 28% is designated for Retail/Service. Approximately 17% of the planning area is identified for Residential use.

**Figure 12.2**  
Gateway Economic Development Area  
Conceptual Land Use Mix

Land Uses	Land Use Acres			Total Acres
	Northeast Quadrant	Southeast Quadrant	Northwest Quadrant	
Office/Research	34	26	97	108 *
Retail/Service	105	68		222 *
Office/Light Assembly/Warehouse	178	148	NA	326
Residential	NA	NA	132	132
Potential Future Interchange	8	NA	4	13
<b>Total Acres By Quadrant</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>800</b>

\*Assumes a 50/50 split of Office/Research and Retail/Service uses in the Northwest Quadrant.

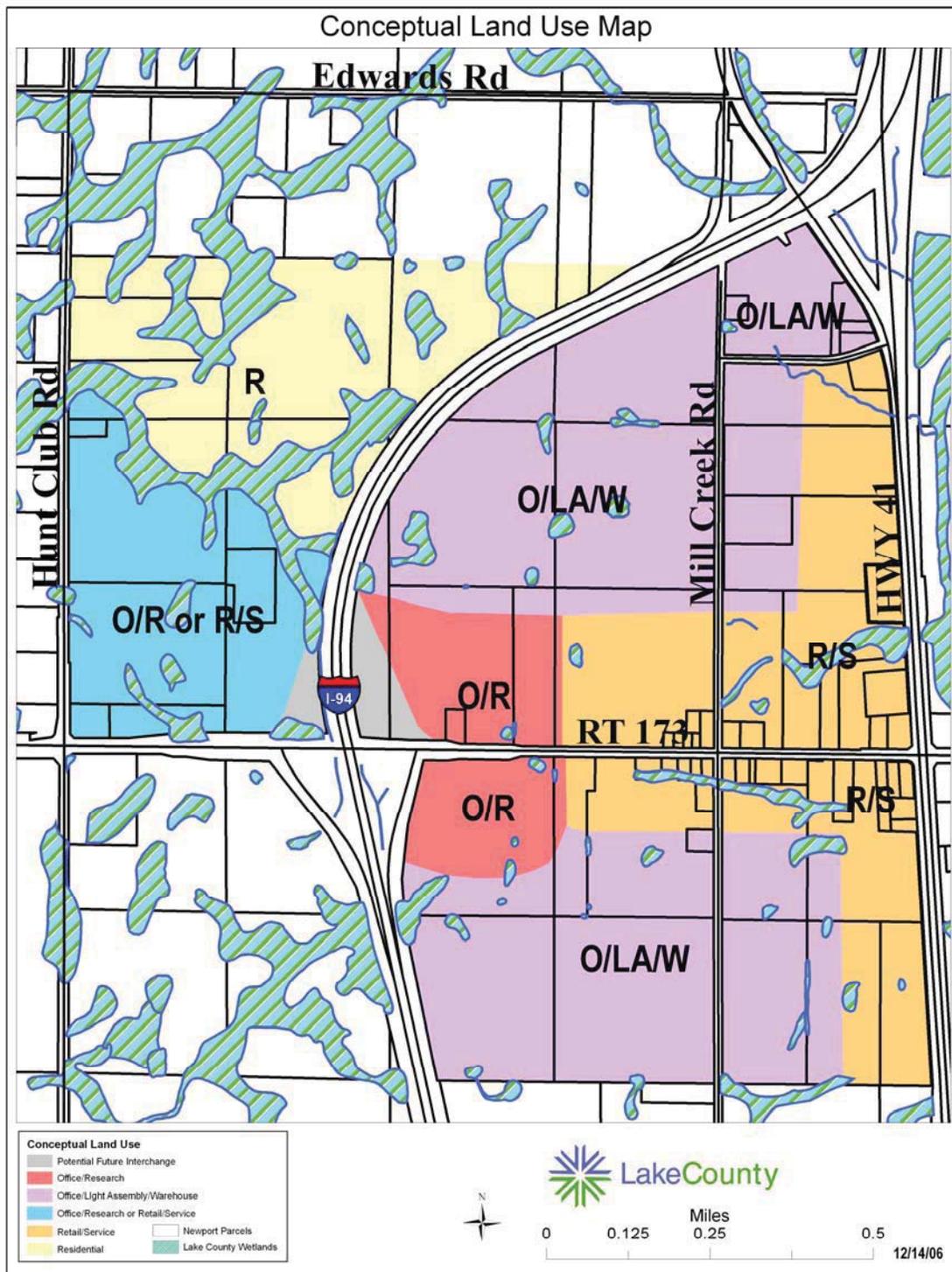
**Uses and Development Standards**

These Land Use And Development Standards are intended to accommodate the following allowed uses:

- Office/Research
- Office/Light Assembly
- Retail/Service
- Residential

For each of the allowed commercial uses, development standards, including maximum Floor Area Ratios (FAR), building heights, and Impervious Surface Ratios (ISR), are provided below. Residential uses are defined based on minimum lot sizes and densities.

Figure 12.3



1. Office/Research Development Standards

- a. Permitted Uses: office, office park, and research park developments, financial institutions
- b. Auxiliary Uses: retail or service uses that serve only the principle use
- c. Prohibited Uses: heavy manufacturing<sup>1</sup>, assembly, and warehouse uses
- d. Max FAR: 40% per individual lot; 30% for the development
- e. Max ISR: 60% per individual lot; 45% for the development
- f. Max building height: 50 ft
- g. Min lot size: 2 acres
- h. Min lot width: 220 ft
- i. Building Setbacks:
  - i. Front/Corner – 50 ft (note: no parking in front yard setback)
  - ii. Interior Side – 30 ft
  - iii. Rear – 30 ft

2. Office/Light Assembly Development Standards

- a. Permitted Uses: office, office park, and research park developments; light assembly<sup>2</sup> uses
- b. Auxiliary Uses: warehouse, whole sale, distribution, and retail or service uses that serve only the principle use; auxiliary uses should not occupy more than 50% of the gross building area.
- c. Prohibited Uses: heavy manufacturing and motor freight terminals
- d. Max FAR: 40%
- e. Max ISR: 60%
- f. Max building height: 50 ft
- g. Min lot size: 2 acres
- h. Min lot width: 220 ft
- i. Building Setbacks:
  - i. Front/Corner – 35 ft (note: no parking in front yard setback)
  - ii. Interior Side – 20 ft
  - iii. Rear – 25 ft
- j. Minimum Construction Value: \$75 per square foot, in 2006 dollars

3. Retail/Services Development Standards

- a. Permitted Uses: All types of retail sales and service uses that serve the public
- b. Non-sales tax generating uses (office, financial, clinic, government) are limited to 25% of the ground floor area; non-sales tax generating office-service uses may occupy 100% of the upper floors
- c. Max FAR: 40%
- d. Max ISR: 70%
- e. Max building height: 35 ft
- f. Min lot size: 20,000 sf
- g. Min lot width: 100 ft

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Heavy manufacturing’ refers to basic processing and manufacturing of materials or products predominately from raw material with the potential for significant external effects to the community and environment.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Light assembly’ refers to processing, compounding, assembling, and packaging finished or semi-finished products in a manner which produces little external effects to the community or the environment.

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- h. Building Setbacks:
  - i. Front/Corner – 50 ft
  - ii. Interior Side – 12 ft
  - iii. Rear – 12 ft

### 4. Residential Development Standards

Residential Development Standards are defined consistent with the Residential Countryside district, as defined in Old Mill Creek’s October, 13, 2003, Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

The average range of residential density for the entire area is anticipated to be between 0.2 and 0.3 units per acre. In these areas, typical lots will range from two (2) to five (5) acres with additional open space areas, which may include agricultural uses to preserve the rural character of the area. In extremely unique circumstances caused by environmental opportunities or constraints, two (2) acre lots may be allowed with provisions that the remainder of the land subdivided is retained in open space and/or agricultural uses (Old Mill Creek, 2003:12.2).

### Building and Site Design Standards

#### 1. Natural Resources and Open Space

Each development should protect and enhance existing natural resource areas and provide open space areas in keeping with the semi-rural nature of the surrounding communities. In addition to natural open space areas, it may also be appropriate to provide formal open space, such as a village square or building courtyards, as a focal point of the development. All open space areas should feature amenities such as benches and walkways. Buildings should be oriented to take advantage of open space views and access. The protection of natural resources and provision of open space should be addressed early in the Planned Unit Development design process.



**Encouraged:** Formal (pictured) and informal open space

#### 2. Stormwater Management

A unified stormwater management system should be designed for the entire development area. To the greatest extent possible, stormwater conveyance and storage should utilize the naturally occurring drainage patterns and wetlands. Detention basins should be designed using Best Management Practices (BMPs). Detention basins with native wetland vegetation are encouraged; basins with hard, man-made edges are discouraged. Stormwater management should be addressed early in the Planned Unit Development design process and not as an afterthought.



**Discouraged:** Square, man-made shorelines

The stormwater management system should be integrated into the open space and pedestrian circulation plan. Incorporation of fountains to create water features are encouraged. Buildings should be oriented to take advantage of views of attractive water features and wetlands.



**Encouraged:** Building oriented towards water feature.



**Encouraged:** Natural contours and pedestrian circulation

### 3. Circulation

#### Automobile Circulation

The northeast quadrant (as identified in Figure 12.1) will have a new access point to Rt 173, roughly centered between the existing Mill Creek Road and the tollway. The northeast quadrant will have one primary access point onto Mill Creek Road and a secondary access point primarily intended to serve truck traffic to the Office/Light Assembly/Warehouse uses.

The southeast quadrant (as identified in Figure 12.1) will have a new access point onto Rt 173 directly parallel to the northwest quadrant access point. The southeast quadrant will also have one primary access point onto Mill Creek Road. A secondary access point for truck traffic may also be permitted.

Roadways should be designed to allow circulation between various buildings and uses within the entire subject area without exiting onto Rt. 173. Roadways should be designed to minimize conflicts between automobile and truck traffic.

The primary access roads will be designed as boulevards for a distance of at least 200 yards from the intersections with Rt. 173. The central median should be planted with a variety of deciduous and evergreen plantings to ensure year-round foliage. Use of annuals is encouraged to ensure maximum color during Spring, Summer, and Fall.

A well-designed entrance monument is encouraged for both the north and south primary access roads. The entrance monuments should be designed to complement the building architecture and be consistent with the signage and landscaping requirements established in this document.

#### Pedestrian Circulation

Walking within and between the various uses contained within the overall development plan should be encouraged through the provision of sidewalks along internal roadways and/or foot paths through the open space element. The sidewalk and foot path network should be designed to provide for future possible connections to adjacent developments.

#### 4. Building Design

The architectural guidelines for buildings are intended to require development that is compatible in scale and appearance with the semi-rural, open space character of the Rt. 173 Interchange area. Whenever possible, green building design should be considered. Green building design is the practice of increasing the efficiency with which buildings use energy, water, and materials, and reducing the negative impacts of buildings on human health and the environment.

A uniform design pallet of building materials, colors, and architectural design should be applied throughout the entire subject area. Building elements and other uses, such as vehicle parking, that are incompatible with the surrounding character, should be screened from view from adjacent properties and roadways, including I-94. These guidelines are not all-inclusive; it may be necessary to address additional design elements during the review of individual project proposals.

##### Building Façades

All building façades that are visible from adjacent major roadways should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing. This includes the side and rear façades of buildings that are visible from Rt. 173, I-94, and US 41. Aesthetically pleasing design can be accomplished by employing the same design elements to the side and rear façades that are often only given to front façades. Visible building façades should have a defined base, middle, and top.

##### Building Massing

Big box architecture, whether on retail or Office/Light Assembly/Warehouse buildings, is discouraged. Large wall expanses (whether long or tall) should be eliminated through vertical and horizontal articulation (changes so the wall is not a straight horizontal or vertical line) and the use of architectural projections, such as porticos, and recesses. Large wall expanses can also be broken through the use of pilasters, columns, canopies, and windows. Changes in building heights and rooflines can also be utilized to soften the visual impacts of long building walls. Changes in façade materials and colors can improve the appearance of large buildings, but, alone these changes are not sufficient to eliminate the visual impacts of large wall expanses.



**Discouraged:** Long, blank building walls visible from adjacent major roadway



**Preferred:** Building wall divided by entranceways

### Building Height

Building heights should gradually transition from low buildings to tall buildings. Where necessary, this transition can occur within a single building by designing the building with a larger, single-story base and a taller (multi-story or high-ceilinged warehouse) center.

### Building Entrances and Windows

Building entrances should allow for easy access from parking areas and public open space. Primary building entrances should be easily identifiable through the use of design elements such as canopies, porticos, recesses, or archways. Buildings doors and windows should be pedestrian scaled.

In addition to providing natural lighting for occupants, windows should be utilized to soften building appearances, displaying merchandise, and inviting customers into buildings. Windows should be appropriately sized, arranged, and designed to enhance the overall appearance of the building. Multi-paned windows, windows with a vertical orientation, and windows with a well defined frame or sill are preferred.



**Encouraged:** Recessed entranceways



**Discouraged:** Featureless, window-dominated entranceway

#### Façade Materials and Colors

In order to complement the semi-rural, open space character of the Rt. 173 interchange area, the use of natural building materials and colors is encouraged. Desirable building materials include brick, terra cotta, and natural stone, such as limestone and river stone. The exclusive use of synthetic materials, such as EIFS/Drivvit, and pre-cast concrete is discouraged.



**Encouraged:** Natural stone façade

Building colors should be natural, earth tones. Dark tones should be utilized at building base and lighter tones for upper levels. The color selection for architectural elements such as roofs, awnings, cornices, eaves, and sills should complement the main building color.

#### Roof Styles and Materials

Roof styles and variations can add visual interest to all buildings, but should remain consistent with the overall building design. Buildings should be designed with a fascia and cornices that provide a transition between the wall and roof. Arched and pitched roofs and roof features such as dormers and cupolas are encouraged. Flat rooflines are discouraged, unless part of a green roof, which are encouraged. A green roof is a roof of a building that is partially or completely covered with soil and vegetation planted over a waterproofing membrane.



**Encouraged:** Pitched roof with appropriate fascia and cornice



**Discouraged:** Parapet conveys a two-dimensional appearance



**Discouraged:** Flat roof and no significant fascia or cornice

### Mechanical and service area screening

All roof top mechanical equipment should be visually screened from sight from all public access areas and adjacent properties and roadways. Ground level mechanical equipment, trash collection, and loading areas should be appropriately screened from view from all public access areas and adjacent properties and roadways.

### 5. Lighting standards

Lighting should be provided to ensure the safety and security of building occupants and customers. A uniform lighting plan, including buildings and pole lights, should be designed for the entire subject area. Lighting should be designed and scaled to create an attractive, friendly pedestrian environment. Pathways should be lit with low bollard lights. Lighting intensity should be differentiated based on the location and uses. All light fixtures should be shielded. All lighting should be designed to minimize glare on adjacent properties.

### 6. Parking

Parking spaces should be provided for each building in accordance with the off-street parking standards established in the Lake County Unified Development Ordinances as now in effect or modified in the future. Parking lots should be located to the side and rear of buildings, when possible. Parking is not allowed in the required front/corner building setbacks. Shared parking is encouraged. Parking lots should provide well-defined walkways that minimize pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.

Parking should be clustered in sections separated by building and landscape islands. Landscape islands should be sufficient in area to accommodate a variety of plant species. Parking lot landscaping that balances deciduous and evergreen plantings to ensure year-round foliage is encouraged. Parking lots should also have adequate perimeter landscaping to screen them from adjacent properties and roadways. Consideration should be given to using semi-impervious paving and bio-swales to reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality.



**Discouraged:** Large, unbroken parking areas

### 7. Outdoor Storage

Outdoor storage is discouraged. All storage of materials, equipment, and commercial vehicles should occur within approved structures designed for that purpose.

## 8. Signage Standards

Signage should meet all standards provided in the Lake County Unified Development Ordinance, as now in effect or amended in the future.

### Sign Types

Each building tenant should only be allowed one wall sign. Corner tenants may have a sign on each façade facing the street. The sign should be mounted on the wall or on an awning or other entrance feature. Wall signs should not extend above the roof line (eave).



**Preferred:** Consistent wall signage on multi-tenant buildings

Free-standing signs should be of a monument type. Pole signs are discouraged. Freestanding signs should emphasize horizontal rather than vertical massing. The surface of monument signs should contain visible indentations or see-through spaces of appropriate dimensions at appropriate intervals to avoid overt massing, where applicable. Landscaping should be provided around the base of freestanding signs.



**Preferred:** Monument sign with landscaping

## Signage Composition

Softer, subtler alternatives to prominent corporate logos are preferred. For multi-tenant buildings and developments, consistent lettering, colors, and sign designs should be used on all wall signs and monument signs.



**Preferred:** Softer alternative to typical corporate sign

The sign text should consist of no more than 2 fonts or sizes. Italicized, bold and plain text should not be mixed. The use of images, pictures and logos should be minimized but, if used, should be simplified in appearance and integrated into the site's overall architectural and color schemes. Solid lettering is preferred over highlighted or accented lettering.



**Discouraged:** Highlighted and accented lettering

## Signage Colors

The sign and any background should together consist of no more than 2 colors or shades of the same color. The signage color scheme should match or complement the color scheme of the building. Primary, white and “day-glo” colors should be avoided.



**Preferred:** Mounted sign letters consisting of only one color

### Signage Materials

Polished, glossy, shiny, or reflective sign surfaces are discouraged. Matte, natural, brushed, patina-like or burnished surfaces are preferred. Plastic or glass surfaces are discouraged. Wood, stone, brick, masonry or metal materials are preferred.

### Signage Lighting

Natural (soft halogen or incandescent) lighting is preferred. Over-bright or fluorescent lighting should be avoided. Internal illumination and protruding overhead lights or lamps should be avoided. Lighting devices should be hidden or integrated into architectural features or landscaping. Lighting should be focused and only so bright as to effectively illuminate the sign surface. For mounted letters, back-lighting is preferred.



**Preferred:** Back-lighting softly illuminates mounted letters

For freestanding signs, ground-based external lighting is preferred, subject to the above guidelines. Ground-based light sources should be concealed within landscaping.

## 9. Landscaping and Screening

Landscaping and screening should meet all standards provided in the Lake County Unified Development Ordinance, as now in effect or amended in the future. The guidelines presented below represent additional guidelines. The guidelines are not all-inclusive; future discussions may elicit additional requirements for landscaping based on new concerns or changing conditions.

All development should contain adequate exterior buffer yards that are bermed and landscaped so as to preclude views of buildings, loading areas, truck parking lots, and other undesirable views from adjacent uses, properties, and roadways. For screening purposes, fences may be used in conjunction with berms and landscaping.

Desirable views of office and retail buildings should be preserved from adjacent roadways and properties with compatible uses. Partial views of well-designed Office/Light Assembly/Warehouse building front façades as well as side and rear façades that achieve aesthetically pleasing 360-degree design, may be permissible from adjacent roadways and properties with compatible uses.

Loading docks and truck parking areas should be screened from view from all public (customer) access areas, including public access areas on the same property or development. In order to minimize undesirable views, locating loading docks and truck parking area back-to-back between adjacent Office/Light Assembly/Warehouse buildings is encouraged.



**Preferred:** Large building setback and landscaped berm



**Discouraged:** Inadequate building setback and landscaping

The view of parking lots should be partially obscured or softened through landscaping, staggered landscaped berms, or preserved natural vegetation. Extensive area of mowed or manicured turf grass should be avoided.



**Preferred:** Landscaped berm reduces visibility of parked cars



**Discouraged:** Wide, trimmed grass strip

Existing woodlands should be preserved and enhanced. Trees should be planted in random clusters, rather than straight rows. Like-species should be grouped only to maintain continuity. Formal landscaping should be limited to small areas. Landscape areas should incorporate a complementary mix of deciduous and evergreen species, while emphasizing deciduous species.



**Preferred:** Deciduous/Evergreen mix, with deciduous predominating

Cluster varieties of species sizes (canopies interspersed with understories, bushes and groundcover). Emphasize hardy native species (limit predominance of non-native or ornamental species). Minimize the use of formal hedges. Incorporate groundcover and/or bushes into landscaping, while limiting the predominance of groundcover and/or bushes.



**Discouraged:** Predominance of bushes, particularly if only one species

Landscaping should maximize seasonal colors by including perennial flowers and opportunities for planting annual flowers that bloom in Spring, Summer, and Fall.

Earthen berms should undulate naturally and have varying heights and setbacks. Berms should be landscaped with a variety of plant species, as otherwise required in these landscaping guidelines. Extensive areas of turf grass on berms should be avoided.

At intersections, provide soft massings of landscaping to complement signage and to provide a focal point, while not impairing visibility of buildings nor impairing traffic safety. Bike and pedestrian pathways should be integrated into landscaping to soften visibility, separate from vehicle traffic, and promote safety.

#### 10. Supplemental Performance Standards – Noise

All on-site equipment should operate in accordance with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's noise regulations (Title 35, Subtitle H, Chapter 1 of the Illinois Administrative Code) as now in effect or amended in the future.

### **Infrastructure and Services**

Achieving the primary goals of this plan to create a cohesive entryway with high quality economic development will require the provision of adequate infrastructure and services, namely sewer and water, to the Gateway planning area. The County and adjacent municipalities anticipate that the needed infrastructure extensions will be funded through the private development process.

#### Sanitary Sewers

It is anticipated that the Gateway planning area will eventually receive sewer service from the Mill Creek sewage treatment plant, which serves the Northeast Lake Facility Planning Area (FPA) Special Service Area (SSA). Individual properties are expected to be annexed into the SSA, as they are developed in accordance with the Gateway Economic Development Plan. The annexation of properties into the SSA will proceed using Lake County Public Work's SSA amendment and permitting processes.

While the Northeast Lake FPA SSA already extends to the southwest corner of the Rt. 173/I-94 interchange, there are no existing sewer lines in the vicinity. The Mill Creek Sewer Treatment Plant is located approximately 3.5 miles to the south. Extending sewer lines to the Gateway Economic Development Area will require a substantial investment that will only be possible as part of a major development project. When it is extended, the sewer service infrastructure may need to be designed to allow its expansion to serve other property within the Gateway Economic Development Area. Limited development may be allowed without public sewer as long as it is designed to allow connection to public sewer when it becomes available.

#### Water Supply

High quality economic development within the Gateway Economic Development Area is also predicated on the eventual extension of an existing public water supply or the creation of a new public water supply to serve the area. The County and adjacent municipalities anticipate that the water supply infrastructure will be funded through the private development process. The water supply infrastructure may need to be designed to allow its expansion to serve other properties within the Gateway Economic Development Area. Development may be allowed using private well water systems if public water is not available or appropriate for the development.

#### Other Impact Fees

The Gateway Economic Development Plan is not intended to encourage large amounts of residential development. However, any residential development that does occur within the Gateway planning area should be expected to pay appropriate school impact fees. In order to provide for necessary infrastructure improvements and in order to provide the desired level of community services, additional impact fees or host community fees may be necessary.

#### **Development Review Process**

Development within the Gateway Economic Development Area is subject to intergovernmental review by the Village of Old Mill Creek and the Village of Wadsworth. When processing development applications, the County will ensure that the Villages receive copies of the application and all relevant plans relating to the application. The Villages will be allowed to provide verbal and/or written comments on the application throughout the County's decision making process. It is the intent of the County to encourage development that conforms to this Chapter of the Regional Framework Plan and to discourage new development that is inconsistent with it.

#### **Conclusion**

As stated in the introduction to this Chapter, the Gateway Economic Development Plan is based on the Intergovernmental Agreement Between The Village Of Old Mill Creek, The Village Of Wadsworth, And Lake County Regarding The Route 173/I-94 Interchange. The Gateway Economic Development Plan is intended to create a cohesive entryway into Lake County and the adjacent communities. It promotes high quality economic development that will provide desirable jobs, a strong diversified tax base, and convenient community services for local residents.

Lake County, Illinois

**Sources**

Rt. 173 Corridor Council, 2006 (January), *Economic Development Feasibility Study for I-94/Rt. 173 Interchange*, prepared for the Rt. 173 Corridor Council by Economics Research Associates (ERA).

Village of Old Mill Creek, 2003 (October 13), *Village of Old Mill Creek, Illinois, Comprehensive Land Use Plan*.

Village Of Old Mill Creek, Village Of Wadsworth, and Lake County, 2006, “Intergovernmental Agreement Between The Village Of Old Mill Creek, The Village Of Wadsworth, And Lake County Regarding The Route 173/I-94 Interchange.”