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Lakemoor gets help with future vision

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Lakemoor officials want to capitalize on the village's natural assets.

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By [Mck Zawislak](#)

With a population of just under 5,800, Lakemoor rightly can be considered a small town, at least by suburban standards. But village officials have big hopes and are beginning in earnest to look ahead.

In the coming weeks, details of how that vision will be shaped will be unveiled to residents. A community meeting is set for Jan. 19 as the formal introduction.

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"People should really be excited. Having an up-to-date, well-thought-out, well-made plan for future development and future growth is key," said Village Administrator David Alarcon.

While Lakemoor leaders have a passel of ideas for improvements, experts from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning will guide the effort to update the comprehensive plan.

That help comes at no cost to the village as part of a regional grant.

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“One thing we’ve been looking to do is create an image for Lakemoor, to define who we are and where we want to go,” said village Trustee Matt Dabrowski, whose day job is a municipal planner for Arlington Heights. “This is a community project.”

Lakemoor straddles Lake and McHenry counties and has considerable frontage

along routes 120 and 12, including the four corners at that intersection. The namesake lake and surrounding natural areas also put the village in a unique geographic setting.

The village’s comprehensive plan was last updated about eight years ago but is considered “too general and outdated given today’s conditions and challenges,” according to the village’s application to CMAP for assistance. Village codes also are antiquated and inconsistent, the request said.

“We think it can be improved to better address the assets and opportunities in the community,” said Jason Navota, senior planner for CMAP, the planning agency for the seven counties comprising northeastern Illinois.

“We’re just the technical resource to help them create a vision.”

In October 2010, the agency received a \$4.25 million federal grant to help implement its new “GO TO 2040” comprehensive regional plan by jump-starting local efforts.

The need for planning help was evident, as the agency received 220 applications for its Local Technical Assistance Program. Sixty-four were selected, with 42 started and 21 fully under way. Another six communities have received cash grants.

Efforts in Lake County include a comprehensive water resources project in Lake Zurich; a local food system plan for Liberty Prairie Conservancy, based in Grayslake; a Lake County sustainability plan; an inventory and analysis of plans and studies in Waukegan; and, a transportation plan in Wheeling.

Lakemoor was chosen, in part, because it needed the help and potentially faces big changes, Navota said. The value of CMAP’s assistance is around \$100,000 — what the agency estimates a community would have to pay a consultant to update a comprehensive plan.

Among the reasons to update the Lakemoor plan are to prepare for potential development at routes 120 and 12, with the challenge of extending utilities to the area.

Another is the possibility that Route 120 east of Route 12 someday could be improved as part of the Route 53 extension, which would have the largest potential impact on the village.

“If that happens, our town will explode,” Mayor Todd Weihofen said.

The next step in what is expected to be a yearlong process is to get feedback from the public and elected officials.

“It’s the design of how you want the village to be built and how you want it to grow,” Weihofen said. “We’re trying to move in the right direction.”