

The Ten Guiding Principles for Prairie Crossing

1. Environmental protection and enhancement. Prairie Crossing's land was purchased to safeguard its open spaces, which differentiates this project from most developments. Greenways are being constructed and houses placed to protect the environment. Farming and landscape maintenance will be conducted according to a land management plan and environmental guidelines.
2. A healthy lifestyle. More than 10 miles of trails and a large lake with beach and boat dock provide opportunities for healthy outdoor exercise, with an indoor fitness center also available. A resident farmer supplies fresh organic vegetables, flowers, and fruits to the community, or individual garden plots are available for a small cost.
3. A sense of place. Prairie Crossing is squarely rooted in its central Lake County location. Landscape and architecture are inspired by the prairies, marshes, and farms of the area. Streets are named after native prairie plants and the early settlers who frequented the site. The community buildings—an historic barn, a schoolhouse, and a farmhouse—remind us that others have lived on this land before, and that others, to whom we have responsibility, will live here after us.
4. A sense of community. We believe that community and conservation can go hand in hand. The trails and gardens of Prairie Crossing are designed to be places where people can meet to enjoy and care for the land. Volunteer activities with neighbors will be possible through the Liberty Prairie Conservancy, which organizes stewardship programs throughout the 2,500-acre Liberty Prairie Reserve. From the outset Prairie Crossing has sought to work collaboratively with its neighbors, seeking to achieve unusual synergies with homeowner associations, highway officials, and local businesses as well.
5. Economic and racial diversity. Prairie Crossing welcomes residents of all races. Its founders believe that a mix of incomes and races is essential to the future of our society. They are keeping costs and prices down so that some homes will be within the range of families needing affordable housing in Lake County.
6. Convenient and efficient transportation. Prairie Crossing lies within a triangle of three major roads: Routes 45, 137, and 120. A new station serving both O'Hare and Chicago has opened on land adjacent to Prairie Crossing. Trails will lead to the new station, the College of Lake County, the Liberty Prairie Reserve, Grayslake High School, and local stores and restaurants. The Illinois Tollway Authority plans to locate an interchange on the eastern leg of the Route 53 extension, within a quarter mile of Prairie Crossing's main entrance. This would provide convenient access to the Tri-State Tollway and western suburbs.
7. Energy conservation. In the conviction that reduction of energy use is essential to our environmental and economic well-being, buildings are being constructed to reduce energy consumption by approximately 50 percent, compared to new homes elsewhere in the area. A community-wide recycling program reduces energy spent. Prairie Crossing has also been designed to encourage walking and biking as alternatives to short trips by automobile.
8. Lifelong learning and education. Opportunities for education, from child care to college instruction, will be offered on site or within a half mile at the College of Lake County. Informal learning takes place at the community-supported garden and animal barn, through programs at the community center and on field trips to the Liberty Prairie Reserve.
9. Aesthetic design and high-quality construction. Land planning and architecture have been conducted specifically for the Prairie Crossing site by professionals widely known in their fields. High standards of design and execution throughout Prairie Crossing are a priority for the owners.
10. Economic viability. Prairie Crossing is being developed by families who wish to see the conservation community concept replicated elsewhere. They have made every effort to insure that the project is economically feasible and have carefully budgeted for long-term success.