

# Master Plan Summary Report

CITY OF GRAND LEDGE



This page has been left intentionally blank.

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Goals and Objectives</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Master Plan Strategies</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Future Land Use Plan</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Future Land Use Categories .....	17
Regional Long-Range Planning .....	25
Cooperative Development Agreement .....	26
<b>Master Plan Issues to Consider</b> .....	<b>28</b>
Housing .....	28
Neighborhoods .....	32
Sustainability & Resiliency .....	33
Economic Development .....	34
Industrial Development .....	35
Infrastructure Enhancement/Expansion .....	36
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>38</b>

### List of Maps

Map 1. City of Grand Ledge: Future Land Use Map .....	19
Map 2. City of Grand Ledge and Regional: Future Land Use Map .....	23





## Introduction

The City of Grand Ledge has a history of developing and implementing long-range plans that have resulted in a well-maintained, stable community. In the past, these plans tended to focus on the built environment and did not anticipate significant changes happening in or around the City.

In 2022, the State of Michigan and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) sought to promote job creation and economic development across the state. That effort included the identification a number of Michigan Manufacturing Innovation Campuses (MMICs) that would be attractive for high-tech manufacturing facilities. One of those sites is located in close proximity to the City of Grand Ledge, in Eagle Township. In the late fall of 2022, the Township received an inquiry about developing a 1,200-acre area in the southeastern portion of the Township. A development of this type/scale had not been anticipated previously by the Township or any of the local communities, including Grand Ledge. Communities in the region may wish to examine their long-range plans to prepare for economic development, even if it is not occurring directly within their boundaries. **If regional and statewide attraction efforts are successful, the City of Grand Ledge is positioned to benefit and should consider strategies to maximize economic spillover and advance the City's long-term goals.**

The MMIC site is strategically in close proximity of the Lansing Regional SmartZone, an area designated to promote and support technology-based economic development in the Lansing Region. The SmartZone is a partnership between the City of East Lansing, City of Lansing, Ingham County, East Lansing Public Schools, Lansing School District, Lansing Community College, Michigan State University Foundation, and Michigan State University. Target industries within the SmartZone include AgTech and Food Innovation, Insurance Services and InsurTec, MedTech, Accelerator, and Life Sciences, and Mobility and Autonomous Technology.

In addition to the development of the MMIC site, **other recent developments in the area surrounding Grand Ledge should be a consideration for long-term planning and economic development.** These developments are important considerations as the City plans for new housing opportunities and seeks to identify complementary commercial sectors and industries for growth.

- **Ultium Cells- Delta Township.** In 2019, GM and LG formed Ultium Cells, a partnership to advance goals for battery technology and construct new battery cell plants in the United State. Ultium Cells announced a \$2.6 billion investment in a new Delta Township plant with production expected to begin in 2024. The new plant will be located next to GM's Lansing Assembly Plant at the intersection of I-96 and I-96 and will create 1,700 new jobs once fully operational. The City of Grand Ledge will be able to capture economic spillover by planning for this growth with new opportunities for housing workers and attracting commercial and service-oriented businesses. In addition to the Ultium Cells plant, GM announced they will be investing \$510 million in the Delta Township Assembly Plant and Lansing Grand River Assembly Plant to upgrade their production capabilities.

- **Shyft Group - Charlotte.** In February 2023, Shyft Group announced plans to invest and expand their facility in Charlotte to continue production of electric vehicles. The new expansion project will culminate in \$16 million of investment and is expected to create 680 new jobs in the region. The Shyft Group's expansion represents yet another success in regional efforts to support and advance the EV market and its growing technologies.
- **University Health Park- McLaren Hospital - Lansing.** In Spring 2022, McLaren Hospital opened its new state-of-the-art facility within the University Health Park in the City of Lansing. The new 750,000 sf hospital campus represents \$600 million in new investment and is home to over 1,000 physicians, researchers, educators, and other members of the academic and medical team. The combination of McLaren's investment and strategic partnership with MSU, along with the Lansing Economic Area Partnership's focus on medtech and attraction efforts, provides a favorable climate to attract additional investment in the medical industry.

This summary report is intended as a review of the current plan to identify areas where further guidance for future planning and zoning decisions may be needed should a large-scale development occur nearby; however, regardless of that specific site, it is clear that regional economic activity will continue to grow in other neighboring communities, including Delta Township, Lansing and others. This study includes an assessment of the current plan's relevant goals and objectives and will recommend areas that may need additional study in the short- and long-term.

### Guide to this Report

This report starts with a review of the final draft 2022 Master Plan's goals and objectives. Within each section, the following guides may be included: "Questions to Consider" and "Opportunities for an Update."

### Purpose of a Master Plan

A Master Plan addresses future land uses and community development, and other community features in a coordinated fashion. It should provide a clear statement of community goals and objectives, establish a vision of the future, and include plans to achieve the vision. If followed carefully, the Master Plan will have a lasting impact on the built and natural environment. Decisions made when the Plan is developed will likely be implemented over short-term, medium-term, and long-term timelines as specified in the Implementation Plan.

This Master Plan study will review and recommend refinements that the Planning Commission may wish to make to goals, objectives and future land use descriptions as identified and described in the 2022 Master Plan, which is intended to guide future decision-making processes related to land use and development, as well as overall community quality of life. It will also outline future implementation strategies to implement the plan's vision, which may include additional study of specific issues.

## Relationship between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance

The Master Plan is not an ordinance, it does not change the zoning of anyone's property, and it does not have the force of law. It is a set of policies and strategies to enhance and improve as well as guide new development in a community over a long planning horizon.

Zoning is a regulatory mechanism for controlling how land is used. It has the force of law. The Zoning Ordinance controls land uses based on today's conditions.

While the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map regulate how land is developed, the Master Plan and its maps and policy statements are intended to guide land use decision-making for 10-20 years. The Master Plan is a community's "vision," while the zoning ordinance provides the rules that shape development to that vision. State law requires that the zoning ordinance be based on a plan. Therefore, the Master Plan forms the basis upon which zoning decisions are made. With a valid Master Plan in place, zoning decisions consistent with the plan and ordinance are presumed by the courts to be valid.

The recommendations of the Land Use Plan have a long-range planning horizon and do not necessarily imply that short-range rezoning is appropriate.



## Goals and Objectives

This chapter includes a recap of the 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update's goals and objectives. Observations and opportunities start and end the sections in this chapter, with additional questions to consider alongside each goal that are intended to prompt discussion. The Draft Master Plan Update cites several factors that were considered in preparation of the future land use plan (text from the draft plan):

- **Growth in the metropolitan area.** The pace of development will be influenced by the economic health and growth in the Lansing metropolitan area.
- **Existing land use.** With only a few exceptions, the existing land use pattern in the City is representative of proper planning and zoning principles and should be preserved. Commercial and office uses are generally located along the City's major corridors and in the central business district, while industrial uses have been confined to the industrial park and the industrial area located on the west side of N. Clinton Street. There are some large tracts of undeveloped vacant land in the City that are master planned primarily for residential land use. In addition, the City has entered into an agreement with Oneida Township for development of several large tracts of land adjacent to the City.
- **Incompatible uses.** A primary goal of the future land use plan is to eliminate incompatible land uses and to prevent future land use incompatibilities by designating specific areas for future commercial, office, and industrial uses. Commercial and office development should continue to be concentrated along Saginaw Highway, Charlevoix Drive, S. Clinton Street and the central business district. New industrial development should be confined to the Grand Ledge Willis industrial park and along Promec Drive to its south located at northeast corner of the City on the east side of Clinton Street/M-100. Low impact offices and multiple family residential development should continue to be located in areas where it provides a transition and buffer between commercial activity and lower density residential neighborhoods.
- **Infrastructure.** The capacity of the existing and planned sewer and water systems and the road network, dictate the intensity of uses that may be served without creating capacity deficiencies or the need for unplanned capital improvements.
- **Economic development.** The land use plan designates areas for new business uses which provide opportunities to diversify the City's employment base and tax base.
- **Preferences.** The desired land use pattern is intended to promote a diversified tax base, create additional employment opportunities, provide services for residents, preserve natural features and land along the Grand River, and accommodate a mixture of land uses and housing opportunities.
- **Regional land uses.** The City must consider the existing land uses outside of its boundaries in order to plan for future uses that will be compatible therewith, particularly in the event of annexations.

These factors reflect an awareness of how external forces (regional growth and land uses) may impact local needs and demands (understanding and mitigating negative impacts of certain land uses, supporting a healthy economy and providing housing opportunities). Understanding this background helps inform the foundation of the Master Plan Update.

## Master Plan Strategies

The Master Plan identifies “specific strategies” that are further outlined in the document. While often Master Plans provide strategies that are short-term in nature (usually found in the Implementation Chapter), the strategies included in this plan could be read as the plan’s “guiding principles.” These are noted in the text as follows:

1. Ensure new development, renovations and redevelopment is compatible with the existing historic character, including land uses, site design and building architecture.
2. Balance land uses to provide a sound tax base for community facilities and services.
3. Invigorate the community’s most unique built feature - the downtown.
4. Carefully manage land uses and access along major roadways to provide vibrant, safe and attractive corridors through the City.
5. Maintain and expand the non-motorized pathway system and arrange land uses to ensure Grand Ledge remains a “walkable” community.
6. Implement a complete streets policy to integrate people and place in the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of transportation networks.
7. Promote both public and private investments to retain and enhance the City’s character.
8. Preserve and enhance use of the City’s greatest natural assets, the Grand River, riverfront parks and the ledges.
9. Preserve the historic heritage of the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.
10. Continue public investment in community facilities and improve delivery of emergency and other City services.
11. Provide specific direction for proper development of large undeveloped sites.
12. Upgrade the transportation system for both motorized and non-motorized travel using the best traffic management tools available and through coordination with the MDOT and the implementation of a complete streets policy.

It may be helpful to group these principles/strategies into the following “buckets” (the numbers refer to the strategies above; note some strategies may fall into more than one bucket):

- Transportation/Walkability (4, 5, 6, 12)
- Small town character (1, 4, 7, 8, 9)
- Economic Development (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11)
- Community facilities and services (6, 7, 9, 12)
- Environmental stewardship (8)



### Questions to Consider

- Do the factors on the previous page adequately discuss potential growth in the metropolitan area?
- How does the statement on infrastructure essentially determining the growth of the City align with economic development and regional growth?
- The Master Plan includes goals throughout the document. How do they align with the strategies and “buckets” identified here?
- Are there any strategies that require modification to meet changing or new conditions in the community?
- Are there any new strategies needed for issues that the plan does not address?
- How do these strategies relate to the plan goals, discussed on the pages ahead?

### Opportunities for an Update

It will be important to revisit the factors on the previous page to include the potential for significant high impact development as part of the growth in the metropolitan area. Further, the guiding principles/strategies should also address how new development is considered (during the life of the Plan).

Goals of the Draft Master Plan Update are found throughout the document. The first ones relate to specific sites that may be available for planned unit/residential development, and these goals will be listed following the larger goal categories in the future land use discussion.

## Natural Features Goals

- Preserve the quality of life and character of the community by retaining and protecting its valuable natural resources.
- Integrate natural features such as woodlands and wetlands into new developments and ensure that it is designed to protect the quality of the features.
- Protect the quality of the Grand River and its tributaries while at the same time promoting it as one of the City's greatest assets.

### Discussion.

The three goal statements align with the specific plan strategy related to the preservation of the City's unique natural resources (although it does not directly capture the unique qualities of the ledges). **Promoting the Grand River as one of the City's "greatest assets," also reflects both "community character" and, potentially, "economic development."** The integration of natural features into new developments is more of a "how" to preserve natural features, rather than a long-range goal in and of itself, but speaks to the way in which the City would like new development to respect existing natural features and protect them for future generations.

The plan's draft format shows the changes from the last plan; in the current draft, there is a shift from simply "retaining," "preserving," or "maintaining," elements, to being more proactive with respect to directing land use policies and development standards that relate to the preservation of natural features.

The plan could take this proactive approach a step further in seeking not only to preserve, but to enhance the City's natural resources. This could start by conducting baseline environmental assessments (like the one cited for the 7 Islands Dam) that would provide the City with an understanding of current water quality, tree canopy coverage, plant qualities (identifying invasive species, for example) and wildlife (including endangered species, which could be identified through a Michigan Natural Features Inventory - see <https://mnfi.anr.msu.edu>).



### Questions to Consider

- The Draft plan discusses preservation of woodlands and wetlands, but does the City have a good understanding of the quality and quantity of its natural features?
- Has the Planning Commission considered strategies of adding trees and promoting native species, including local pollinators?
- Do development standards align with these goals in terms of impacts to stormwater, flooding, water quality and hazardous materials?

### Opportunities for an Update

Understanding the quantity and quality of natural features can help with future protection and enhancement. Anticipating substantial new development in the area provides an impetus to build a more solid foundation of understanding the inventory and health of the City's natural features and can lead to new or refined standards for natural features protection and enhancement.

## Community Facilities and Services Goals

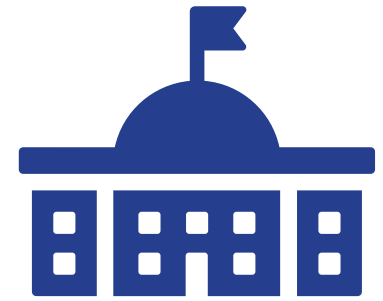
- Provide quality responsive and cost-effective services to the community such as prompt response to public inquiries, zoning enforcement, inspections, maintenance of public facilities and roads, recreation and recycling.
- Improve emergency response times through modifications to the transportation system to meet the needs of the entire service area.
- Continue to improve the park and recreation system, including by implementing the goals and objectives of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- Assist with efforts to improve the environment through best management practices for stormwater management and consideration of the environmental impacts regarding all major capital improvements and municipal operations.
- Provide safe quality drinking water and sanitary sewer services through continuous improvements to the systems.

### Discussion

These goals relate to the efficient provision of services and acknowledge the value of local government in terms of providing for public safety, recreation and environmental protection. The text that follows in the draft plan primarily addresses the need to evaluate specific public facilities, including DPW, the Grand Ledge Emergency Services Authority, and utilities (sewer and water) to ensure they are adequate for current and future needs. Certainly a large-scale manufacturing/industrial project in the area will put development pressure on the City of Grand Ledge. This may include residential/workforce housing as well as related/support commercial and industrial developments. **Future study should include an assessment of community service capacity, identify funding sources and project timelines to upgrade, should that be needed.**

The plan's first and third goals speak largely to services and should also be accompanied by a study of what level of service is expected by residents and how well those services are being provided, given the current resources provided. The capital improvement plan (CIP) is wisely mentioned in this section, and the CIP planning process (through the Planning Commission) can be really useful for the City and its residents to understand the balance between the provision of services and maintenance and improvement of facilities with available resources (human and financial). The Master Plan is one of the important resources needed in directing and informing the CIP. There are opportunities to provide clearer direction in the Master Plan to aid in planning capital expenses in the future.

While the first bullet speaks to responsiveness, the draft plan could go further and discuss the development review process, which affects property owners, businesses and developers as well as residents and is related to the overall goal stated in this section. **An effective and efficient review process provides certainty and consistency, saving time and money.** One action strategy should be to review the Zoning Ordinance to ensure development standards align with Master Plan goals. In addition, a review of the development review process, as provided for in the ordinance, will shed light on where the process could be improved for efficiency as well as where criteria could be made more specific to ensure more consistent results.



### Questions to Consider

- How does new regional development impact the demand for public services by current and future residents?
- How can the Master Plan guide the development review process so that it is effective, efficient and results in the kind of development the City wishes to see?

### Opportunities for an Update

Understanding local demand for services and the level of service expected by the community can guide decision making based on local capacity and resources. The Master Plan could break down the Community Facilities and Services goals with focused objectives relating to the provision of services, infrastructure, community facilities and long-range capital projects.

**The Master Plan may also address the development review process to improve development outcomes.**

## Motorized Transportation Goals

- Address deficiencies in the existing transportation systems and plan for system expansions to accommodate support current and future development.
- Implement traffic calming measures to promote a pedestrian-friendly community.
- Maintain existing roadways and plan for reconstruction of roads that are in a state of deterioration.

### Discussion

These goals speak specifically to motorized transportation - primarily the personal vehicle - with a clear focus on safety and aesthetics related to local and regional roadways.

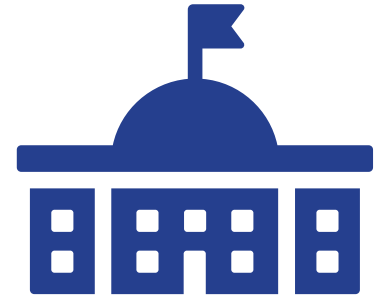
The plan identifies the jurisdictional complexities involved with some of the important commercial corridors and regional roadways and the draft plan notes the need to nurture partnerships to make improvements to the regional transportation network.

Current transportation-related concerns noted in the plan include traffic speed, truck traffic, railroad delays and aesthetic issues. Specific recommendations include traffic calming improvements, access management improvements, the addition of a gateway informational sign/landscaping, and an additional river crossing to improve local connectivity.

The draft plan describes four new roads or road connections that would alleviate traffic and provide improved connectivity. New development brings new traffic concerns, including more vehicles on the roads. **The Plan's discussion on an additional railroad crossing and river crossing for vehicles are identified needs that may be warranted sooner should significant new development occur in the region. This type of improvement could further support regional development by allowing traffic to flow more efficiently from north to south.**

**Regionally, new development in surrounding communities could bring a change to the road network; changes locally may be needed to accommodate new and/or widened roads, if that becomes needed.** While both M-100 and M-43 (Saginaw Highway) are state trunklines, they appear and function differently. M-43 is provides an important link east to I-96 and serves as a commercial corridor. M-100 also serves commercial uses, but is primarily a more locally-traveled roadway currently. There is a potential that this could change over time with regional development activity.

As noted in the draft plan, a traffic study should be an implementation item to fully explore the current and potential demand, current and potential levels of service and needs for the future. Ongoing communication and collaboration with the Michigan Department of Transportation is essential.



### Questions to Consider

- The plan focuses primarily on the personal vehicle for motorized transportation; has any other form of motorized transportation been addressed, such as public transportation?
- Has the City considered micro-mobility options, such as e-bikes, to bridge the gap in a transportation network?

### Opportunities for an Update

The efficient and safe transportation of people and goods is an important factor in community prosperity. The draft plan could make reference to local public transportation and discuss whether current service is sufficient for current residents as well as those in the future.

The state trunklines into and through the City provide both opportunities in terms of access for jobs, housing and commerce, while also posing challenges in terms of a lack of local control, traffic congestion, speed and safety. **The Master Plan should reinforce the important working relationship and communication needed between the City and the Michigan Department of Transportation.**










## Non-Motorized Transportation Goals

- Continue to provide and expand a comprehensive, multi-modal pathway system throughout the community that promotes walkability and use of non-motorized modes of transportation.
- Ensure that facilities are designed to be safe and accommodate a variety of users.
- Increase accessibility by linking pathways to various points of interest within the community.
- Close the gaps in the existing sidewalk and non-motorized pathway system and expand the system to serve new development as it occurs.

### Discussion

Along with the motorized transportation goals, the non-motorized transportation goals strive for a complete transportation network. The draft Master Plan recognizes the importance of a safe non-motorized transportation network in the City from both a recreational and transportation perspective. Additional benefits are noted as well.

Sidewalks and pathways are mentioned but not specifically defined. These distinctions may be helpful in understanding who will use these facilities (see image below). Depending on age and confidence of the user, the planning and funding of such transportation facilities may vary. The draft plan does not note whether there are any development requirements for sidewalks with new development, and this could help clarify who shares in the responsibilities of the transportation network.

TYPE OF USERS	BARRIERS TO CONSIDER
 <b>Children</b>	Smaller and less visible from driver's seat
 <b>Seniors</b>	Lower visual acuity and slower riding speeds
 <b>Women</b>	Concerns about personal safety and traffic stress. Prefer buffers or barriers from vehicular traffic lanes
 <b>People Riding Bike Share</b>	People biking to transit or making one-way trips rely on comfortable and easily understandable bike structure
 <b>People of Color</b>	Fear of exposure to theft, assault, or being a target for enforcement
 <b>Low-Income Riders</b>	Rely extensively on bicycles to ride to work. Access to continuous and safe facilities
 <b>People with Disabilities</b>	Use adaptive bicycles that require wider envelope and operate at lower speeds
 <b>People Moving Goods or Cargo</b>	Cannot be accommodated by facilities designed to minimal standards
 <b>Confident Cyclists</b>	Constitute a smaller percentage of total users, most often male, who may choose to ride in mixed traffic conditions, but often prefer All Ages and Abilities facilities

Source: National Association of City Transportation Officials, *Who is the "All Ages & Abilities User?"*



### Questions to Consider

- Has the City discussed a specific millage for sidewalks and/or pathways?
- As noted previously, have e-bikes been identified as another mobility option? Where might they be permitted?

### Opportunities for an Update

Significant new high impact development will impact non-motorized transportation as well as motorized. Providing new and expanding/maintaining existing non-motorized facilities will be essential in mitigating the impacts of motorized travel and to provide transportation opportunities to current and future residents.

It may also be helpful to illustrate the non-motorized facilities in adjacent communities, if any, to promote the completion of a regional non-motorized transportation network.

## Neighborhood Development Goals

- Preserve the historic, small-town character of the existing neighborhoods.
- Ensure new residential development creates neighborhoods that embody sound community design and are consistent with the traditional character of the community.
- Promote neighborhoods that possess their own unique and definable sense of identity while also being integral parts of the community.
- Provide safe and convenient access to recreational facilities.
- Ensure that zoning decisions result in proper land use transitions between commercial and residential uses.
- Ensure that in-fill development has is compatible in design with the architecture of the existing homes and character of the neighborhoods in which they will be located.
- Provide a well-balanced, sound and diverse mixture of housing types to serve the needs and income levels of all residents in the City..

### Discussion

The goals relating to neighborhood development largely address the appearance and form of housing, although the last bullet does address providing a mix of housing types. The draft plan focuses on single-family homes in three different settings, based on era constructed, which have resulted in some variation in homes in the City. Architectural standards and building materials are described, with guidance to minimize the appearance of garages and aspire to fit in with nearby homes.

Early in the draft plan, the demographics are discussed, and show that 41% of the population is over age 50 (median age is 41.4 years and nearly one in five is over age 65), the number of people per household is declining and the number of households are increasing. New development will likely bring new residents to the community; some of them may be younger people in the workforce and people with families. Housing for the City should address all facets of current and future residents.

The draft plan acknowledges “multiple family housing,” which includes a wide range of non-single family homes, from duplex (two-family) units to apartments. There can be a big difference between a duplex unit and an apartment building, however, that the plan does not address in this section. **There may be areas and circumstances in which a 2-, 3-, or 4-unit home can fit in with other larger homes and provide additional housing opportunities. In addition, other housing types, including accessory dwellings, could be discussed as part of a larger housing strategy. This community-wide housing strategy could explore the current and projected demographics of the community and provide an understanding of future housing needs.**

Thriving communities provide a wide spectrum of housing options to support all residents. The availability of “attainable” housing helps accommodate everyone from young adults who are just beginning to live on their own, to older residents looking to downsize while staying in the community. While there is no universal definition of “attainable housing,” The term was recently defined by the Urban Land Institute as “non-subsidized, for-sale housing that is affordable to households with incomes between 80 and 120 percent of the area median income (AMI).”



### Questions to Consider

- Where will new housing be needed? What housing types could be added that complement the housing types that currently exist and meet the needs of today's residents and future residents?
- The plan notes that signs identifying subdivisions should be prohibited; has the Planning Commission considered how neighborhoods can serve as a needed link between the individual and the overall community?

### Opportunities for an Update

The draft plan could explore further who current and future residents are and what types of housing they would like and could afford. **Identifying more housing types and providing guidance as to how to blend multi-unit homes within neighborhood areas. The plan could also define, and discuss how to implement, “workforce housing.”**

The senior housing section could be updated to note other options in addition to exclusively senior or “home for the aged” facilities.



## Saginaw Highway Corridor Goals

- Limit the number of access points and carefully manage spacing and placement to preserve street capacity, reduce crash potential, and improve the environment for non-motorized travel.
- Ensure new construction and building renovations are harmonious with the established “character” of Grand Ledge.
- Maintain strong visual relationships and continuity between existing and future development
- Continue efforts to create a safe environment for pedestrians and non-motorized traffic
- Construct service drives to allow travel between uses outside of the roadway to increase safety and convenience for motorized and non-motorized traffic
- Enhance the corridor through the installation of decorative lighting, landscaping and signage to create a sense of place along Saginaw Highway that is unique to Grand Ledge

### Summary of Objectives

These goals strive to improve the appearance and pedestrian/motorist safety of the M-43/Saginaw Highway corridor. As noted previously, this is an important regional roadway that provides easy access to I-96, and then east to Lansing. Planning for this corridor should recognize the importance of its appearance and function by promoting property maintenance/upgrades, supporting business development, improving safety and implementing walkability strategies.

The draft plan provides guidance for signs, landscaping, architecture, lighting and access management that will help provide direction for future zoning changes. It could go a few steps further by articulating the types of goods and services needed and wanted in the City.

The mix of uses in the corridor is not addressed and the access to businesses is not discussed, except for the good direction on access management. As an auto-oriented corridor, it will naturally feature different businesses than the CBD, which is discussed on the next page. However, that does not mean that the area has to develop with more “strip commercial” project; rather, being selective and intentional about development could lead to more mixed use projects that are a wiser use of land.

Understanding the local and regional market can help the City be more proactive in attracting the kinds of businesses that will fit with the City’s needs and be able to adhere to the City’s appearance standards.

### Questions to Consider

- What is the character of this corridor? Does it provide local goods and services or a wider regional draw?
- What is the impact on this corridor by future development? Would it be seen as a “spin-off” area where additional commercial and potentially industrial users would locate or would it remain more for community goods/services?
- Would multi-family and/or workforce housing be appropriate to some degree in this area?

### Opportunities for an Update

**Improving development processes, along with having the right land (size, type, connectivity) and key infrastructure, greatly encourages the kind of development the community wants and needs.**

A market study could be useful in understanding the current business mix and potential demand for new goods and services; this can be the first step in creating a proactive recruitment program. In addition, understanding the market can help the City phase development where it makes sense, rather than allowing leapfrog/sprawling development.

## Central Business District Goals

- Ensure the economic viability of the downtown through a diversified mixture of complementary commercial, office, residential, and civic uses.
- Preserve the historic, small-town character of the downtown.
- Maintain and strengthen the “sense of place” that the downtown creates for the City of Grand Ledge.
- Ensure that renovation of buildings in the downtown retain or are improved to become consistent with existing buildings that contribute to the historical and architectural character.
- Ensure new infill development is compatible with the downtown’s historic architecture, scale, proportion, and character.
- Ensure proper land use transitions and between the downtown district and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

### Summary of Objectives

The goals largely reflect what seems to be the draft plan’s overall goal of ensure that existing development is maintained and preserved and new development fits in with the historic character of the community.

Early in the section, the draft plan nicely articulates the features that contribute to the feel of downtown. Historic buildings are noted to contribute to the unique identity of the City. When the discussion turns to uses, the draft plan supports a mix of commercial, office and residential uses that can contribute to activity and vitality throughout the day. The discussion on housing could expand beyond the recommendation for housing on upper floors of multi-story buildings and look to other opportunities within the downtown and fringe areas. Further, the discussion of maintaining civic uses and public spaces downtown adds to that point. The draft plan details architectural and design standards to help new infill buildings fit in and complement the existing fabric of downtown. Specifically, the Master Plan offers a good opportunity to illustrate/guide potential infill/redevelopment sites like the Bridge Street Plaza and bank site in the center of downtown.

The discussion of street trees notes their contribution to downtown and this topic could be further explored by understanding current tree canopy downtown and the condition of downtown trees. The section from the previous plan suggested a marketing strategy for the CBD. It is unclear from the draft plan whether this was completed or simply removed. As noted in the previous section, understanding the makeup of CBD (or simply, “downtown”) along with the wants and needs of the market could lead to a proactive recruitment strategy that benefits the entire community.



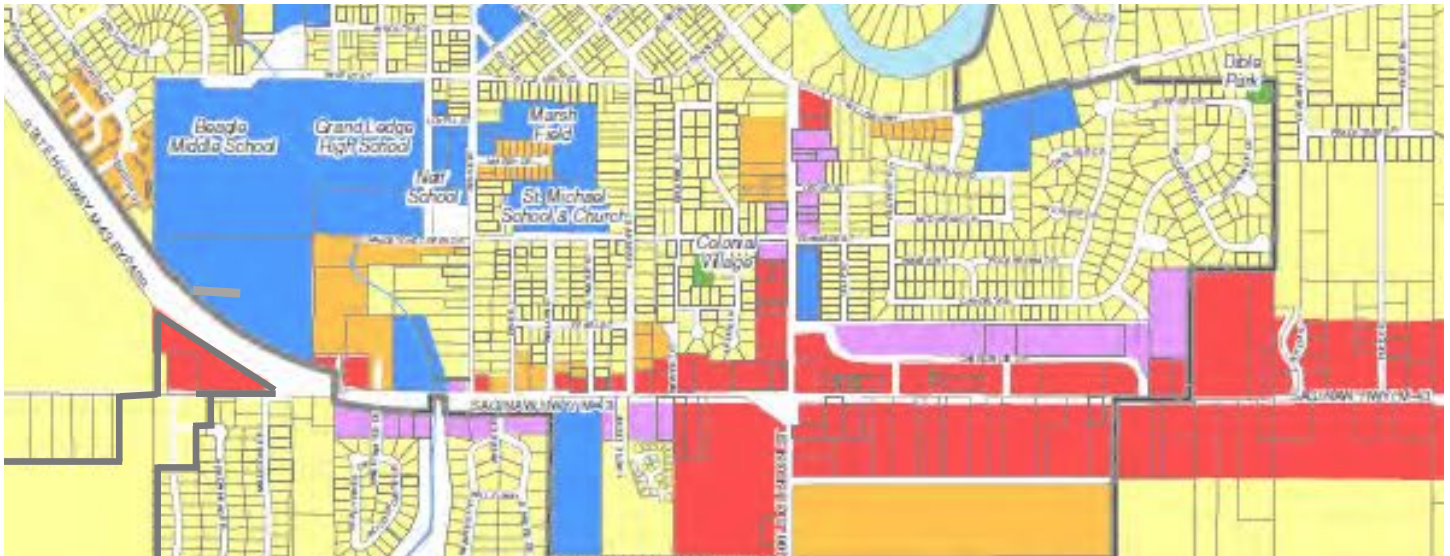
### Questions to Consider

- New development could lead to an increased interest in downtown - what is the mix of businesses? Does it serve the local community and attract visitors?
- What kinds of destinations could be a draw for the future?

### Opportunities for an Update

As noted on the previous page, a market study could be useful in understanding the current business mix and potential demand for new goods and services; this can be the first step in creating a proactive recruitment program.

The draft plan also speaks to the value of residential dwellings downtown on upper floors - an update could discuss how many units may exist now and what the potential might be. Additional housing opportunities are discussed ahead in this report.



## Future Land Use Plan

This chapter discusses the future land use categories and 2018 Future Land Use map. There may be updates that the Planning Commission wishes to consider.

### Questions to Consider

- Do these land use categories make sense within the context of existing development and anticipated future development?
- Do the land use descriptions provide enough information to guide land use decisions?
- Is there enough guidance for to allow for a variety of housing, commercial and industrial-related uses?
- Does the zoning map align with the FLU map? Could any zoning districts be consolidated for clarity and simplification?

The Future Land Use Map is prepared to serve as a policy depiction for the City regarding future land use changes, investments in public improvements, and future zoning decisions. The Master Plan is intended to be a working document to assist in providing for the orderly development of the City, as well as assist the community in its effort to maintain and enhance a pleasant living environment while fostering the preservation of agriculture and open space. The Future Land Use Map illustrates the intent of the Master Plan.

As part of the development of the Master Plan, the existing land uses and goals for land uses are considered when creating the Future Land Use Map and associated designations. This Master Plan review considers the 2018 Future Land Use (FLU) map, as, based on our review, the designated areas do not appear to be changing in this update. Any updates to the Future Land Use Map should be based on consideration of a number of factors, which include:

- Citizen opinion and input
- Existing land use
- Natural features
- The existing Future Land Use Map
- Population projections and characteristics
- Community facilities
- Socio-economic considerations
- Traffic and circulation
- Regional growth

All these factors should be taken together in a balanced way to provide a sustainable vision for the future.

## Future Land Use Categories

In order to guide the development of future land uses throughout the City, distinct land use categories are established, as noted in the draft plan and presented below.

### Single Family Residential

Single family residential development occupies the majority of the land within the City. This category encompasses areas that are established residential neighborhoods with single family homes and vacant parcels that should be developed for single family residential use. The details of how some of these areas should be developed are described in the residential development subarea plan in Chapter 5.

There are a few parcels scattered throughout the City that are designated for single family residential use but are currently being used for residential dwellings of two or more units and, in a few cases, commercial businesses located within areas that are either predominately or exclusively being used residentially. Although these uses will likely remain for some time into the future, the City does not find them to be desirable or compatible with the areas in which they are located, nor are they consistent with the basic principles of land use planning. If opportunities for redevelopment or reuse of these sites become available, they should be brought into conformance with the zoning ordinance, and hence, the future land use plan contained herein. These properties should be designated as residential on the zoning map in order to make them nonconforming so that they cannot be reused or redeveloped in the event of damage or destruction, except in conformance with the zoning ordinance.

As a City with a strong the potential for future growth, it is important to plan beyond its boundaries. Although much of the land in Oneida Township surrounding the City is designated in its master plan for agricultural operations, recent land use trends and a strong housing market indicate that some of these areas may be ripe for residential development. The regional future land use plan, therefore, designates the majority of the areas in Oneida Township immediately surrounding the City for residential use.

The City amended its zoning ordinance in recent years to permit higher density single family residential development. This amendment was in response to concerns from the community that smaller single-family dwellings (700-1,000 square feet in area) on reduced lot sizes were necessary to accommodate the housing needs of empty nesters, retirees, young professionals, small families and other segments of the population that desire to own rather than rent, but do not want to have to maintain

a 1,400 square foot home on an 8,450 square foot lot as required prior to the amendments zoning ordinance. The City should encourage this type of development, particularly in locations adjacent to existing higher density residential uses or non-residential uses, as it would provide housing for a segment of the population that is currently underserved in that regard.

### Opportunities for an Update

It appears that most of the City and surrounding areas are designated as single family residential. In this land use description, the draft plan points out that the zoning ordinance now permits smaller dwellings on smaller lot sizes.

**This land use category could also include duplex, triplex or quadplex homes in specific areas (with the 3-4-plexes on corners or other intersections, to further add more residential homes in a neighborhood setting.**

### Multiple Family Residential

Multiple family residential designations include areas for buildings with two or more dwelling units. Although, by ordinance, density is calculated based on the number of rooms in the structure, these developments typically are a minimum of 6-8 units per acre. It is important to provide and plan for multiple family development within the City in order to offer a variety of housing options for residents. Multiple family units above the businesses along Bridge Street are strongly recommended as they can have a very positive impact on the vitality of the central business district. Multiple family developments also provide an effective transition between single family residential uses and high intensity commercial and industrial uses.

There are numerous multi-family residential buildings in various locations throughout the City, some of which are incompatible with the predominantly single family neighborhoods in which they are located. These uses are not encouraged and should be phased out as opportunities present themselves to do so. The majority of the larger multi-family apartment complexes are located along major roadways such as M-43/Saginaw Highway and M- 100/Clinton Street. These uses generate a higher concentration of activity and require larger sites and direct access or access that is in close proximity to major thoroughfares.

East of M-100 and north of the railroad tracks on Grand Manor Drive is a small strip of multiple family dwellings that is nestled between existing industrial development and the railroad tracks.

The land use pattern in this area is predominantly industrial which has resulted in noise, unappealing views of outdoor storage and light glare that has had a negative impacts on the quality of life for the residents of the neighborhood over the years. Conversion of this area to industrial use or providing a better buffer between it and the adjoining industrial property and railroad tracks should be considered if there becomes an opportunity to do so.

The area east of M-100 should develop in a manner that creates a natural transition between the commercial uses along M-43 and the agricultural and residential uses south of the City's boundaries. This pattern has already begun with the recent development of the relatively high-density Arcadian apartments on S. Clinton Street. The density should become less intensive approaching Oneida Township in order to ensure that it is compatible with the adjoining and nearby single family uses and agricultural operations. Appropriate development in this areas would be duplexes, attached single family complexes, small lot single family neighborhoods or homes for the aged.

Guidelines and recommendations for the design of future multiple family residential developments are described in the residential development subarea plan in Chapter 5 of the draft Master Plan.

## Opportunities for an Update

The draft plan mentions some "incompatible" multi-family dwellings that should be "phased out." Perhaps there is some additional information about what makes these dwellings incompatible and whether there is anything about them that could improve their compatibility moving forward.

There may be opportunities to explore less rigid adherence to strict traditional zoning that is heavily focused on uses; instead, more flexibility of uses could allow for business improvements and create more walkability by having commercial activities near residential areas. Focus could be more on understanding perceived and real conflicts that could be better addressed through zoning and general code standards.

The discussion of a small housing area that could be more appropriate as industrial could be bolstered by strategies to assemble parcels for redevelopment and finding new housing opportunities to replace those being removed.

## Planned Unit Development

The Planned Unit Development (PUD) designation identifies sites that are appropriate for residential development of varying densities with accessory commercial use or commercial use along road frontages. Due to specific characteristics directly related to the site, there are a number of constraints that require departure from conventional site design in order to accomplish a successful project that both the City and developer can appreciate. Through the PUD ordinance, the developer should be allowed flexibility from the zoning ordinance requirements and standards to develop the site, provided an overall benefit is achieved for the community.

On the future land use map (Map 4) the PUD sites are numbered. For the development of each site, the City has established a specialized goal that should be accomplished in order to maximize the full potential of the property. Below is a description of how the City intends for each of these sites to be developed.

### PUD #1.

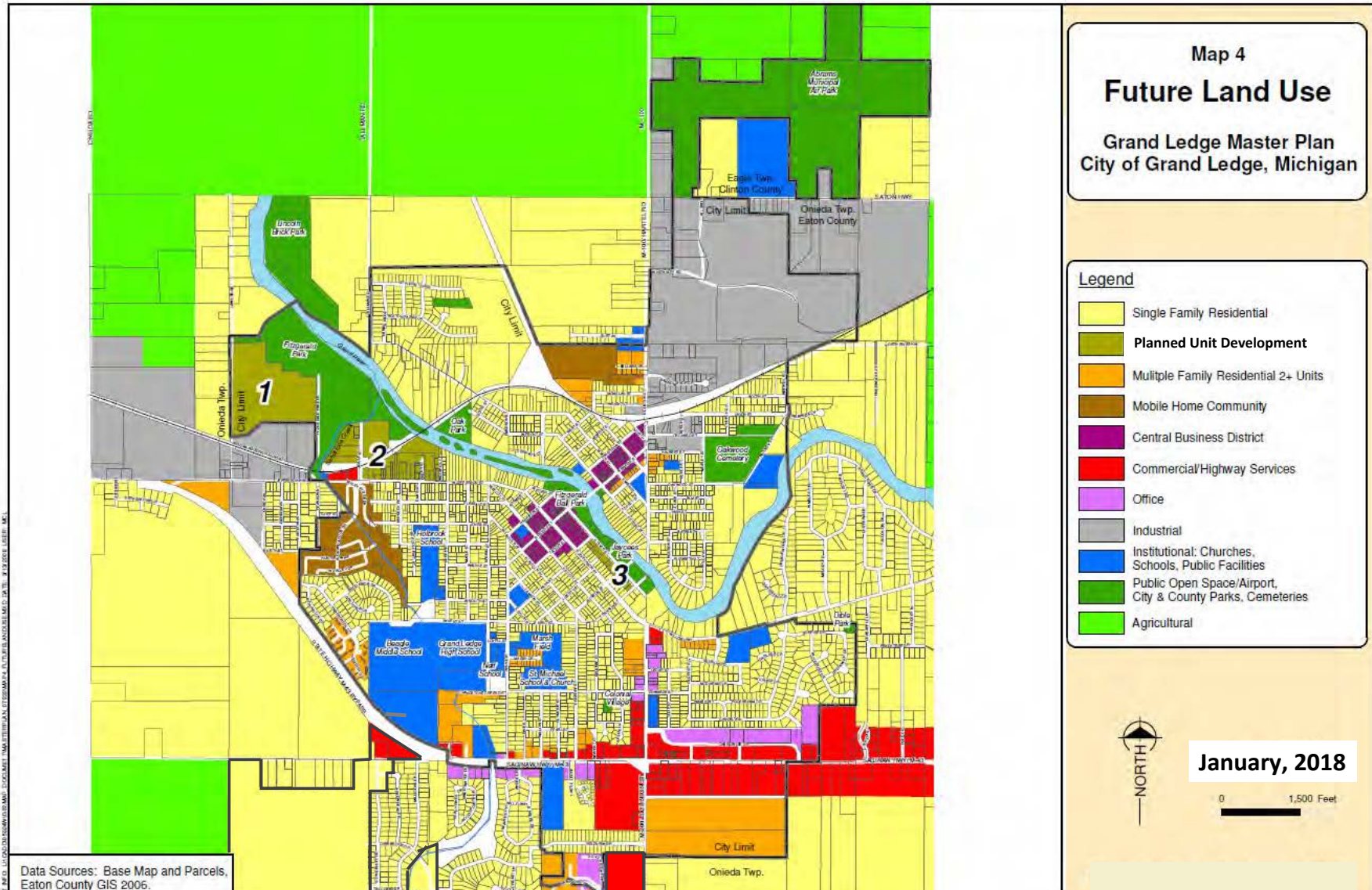
This site is located in the northwestern corner of the City fronting on Lawson Road. It shares the eastern boundary with Fitzgerald Park. This site presents a few key issues/ constraints that need to be addressed in the development of the plan. These include the following:

- Adjacent to Fitzgerald Park
- Valuable natural features
- Nearby industrial development
- Significant frontage on Lawson Road
- Secluded from the rest of the neighborhoods
- Agricultural and single family residential to the north and west

**PUD #1 Goal:** Develop a single-family residential neighborhood that maintains the traditional neighborhood characteristics of Grand Ledge with safe access to Lawson Road and adjacent residential neighborhoods while protecting the natural features of the site and the abutting park and preventing negative impacts that may result from the nearby industrial development.

To maximize the potential for this site and accomplish this goal, there are a number of methods that could be employed. First, to prevent impacts from the industrial area, the City could consider allowing the home sites to be smaller than the minimum lot size and clustered away from the industrial uses, providing a well-designed buffer area. The density of the development could also be higher than typical single family of 5 units per acre to serve as a transition between the industrial and single-family

Map 1. City of Grand Ledge: Future Land Use Map



development in the surrounding area. In fact, it may be desirable to cluster the homes or allow for attached housing to allow for more open space. Further, proper clustering of the units will allow for flexibility to protect woodlands on the site and along the border of the park to the greatest extent possible.

The road system for the development should provide safe access and a connection to future development to the north. The right-of-way should be utilized in a manner that preserves the traditional neighborhood character of the City. Although it is secluded from the other neighborhoods, they should be designed under the same concepts that are described for single and multiple family residential development. For instance, sidewalks and street trees should be provided with building entrances oriented to the street. A pathway connection should be accomplished that will link the development with the rest of the City.

## Opportunities for an Update

In the list of opportunities and constraints that introduces this area, two things stand out: proximity to other industrial uses and the lack of connectivity to existing or planned residential neighborhoods. It may be worth additional discussion as to whether, despite the great park access, this area might be more attractive for research/development, office/industrial headquarters or campus-like development, particularly with easy access to M-43 and proximity to the railroad.

## PRD #2

This site is located just east of PRD #1 and is accessed via Gulf Street that runs north off of W. Jefferson Street. The east side of this development area is Little Fitz Park. The City believes there is a lot of potential in this area that cannot be overlooked. This site is planned for high density residential use. The density will be necessary to finance the significant infrastructure improvements that will be necessary to prepare the area for development. Gulf Street is currently a narrow, dirt road that would need to be constructed to City standards which will include, curb and gutter, sidewalks, street trees, lighting and a full storm drainage system. In addition, all other utilities will need to be extended/upgraded to serve future development.

The site possesses the following characteristics that warrant the need for a planned development designation:

- Adjacent to Fitzgerald Park
- Presence of natural features such as a woodlands and Sandstone Creek
- Railroad tracks
- Mobile home park on the south side of West Jefferson Street
- Existing marginal uses on the site and surrounding area
- Renovated industrial building to multiple family

**PRD #2 Goal:** Redevelop the area in a manner which preserves and takes advantage of the natural features on the site and results in high-quality development that is considered a significant re-investment in the area, that may serve as a catalyst for additional improvements to the area.

The rail line that runs along the south border of the area designated for high density residential use has been a deterrent to development of the area to its north. The rail line is very active, and can cause rather long wait times to cross. A buffer zone should be established along the railroad tracks to offset noise and safety concerns. Extensive measures must be taken to prevent the clearing of trees and to protect the Sandstone Creek, which feeds into the Grand River.

The area south of the railroad tracks along W. Jefferson Street is characterized by commercial land uses that do not provide an attractive entrance to future residential development north of the tracks. The plan supports redevelopment into convenience type commercial uses that would serve the residents of the area. New commercial development along W. Jefferson Street should be designed in a manner that would be harmonious with and would complement rather than detract from new residential use to its north.

To ensure that the project is desirable and that it promotes high quality redevelopment in the area, certain site design elements should be incorporated. First, the site should be configured so that the required parking areas are in the rear, located adjacent to the railroad tracks. Second, an effective buffer should be installed between the parking area and the railroad tracks to screen and minimize the impacts of noise from railroad activity. Thirdly, the site should be designed to preserve the woodlands to the greatest extent possible and, finally, buildings should possess high quality architecture and materials which are consistent with the traditional neighborhood character of the community.

**Opportunities for an Update**

It is noted that with the acquisition and development of Little Fitz Park, there may not be sufficient land available for a PRD-type of development. For the remaining area, an improved access over the railroad could make this an attractive place for higher-density residential. Particularly with its park access and views of the river. The City may wish to facilitate discussions with the railroad on improving this access.

**PRD #3**

This area is located on the south side of East River Street. The site faces Jaycees Park and offers an exceptional view of the Grand River. Existing office and residential uses of the properties are not the highest and best uses of the area, given the value of its view and access to both the river and downtown. Redevelopment of this area has phenomenal potential that can only be maximized through a PRD development option. Findings include:

- View and access to the river
- Close proximity to downtown
- City Park across the street
- Shallow lots
- Steep topography
- Mixture of existing land uses
- Adjacent single family residential
- Minimal traffic

**PRD #3 Goal:** Redevelop this strip of valuable residential land in a manner which maximizes its views to the Grand River and its access to the CBD while preserving the surrounding single family residential character of the neighborhood.

The vision for this site is to develop “row housing,” or townhouse

style development along the street front. Parking can be accommodated through a rear driving lane that accesses a carport or garage in the back of the unit and angled parking can be accommodated on the street. The buildings should be predominantly brick with entryways that are oriented to the street and sidewalk. Front porches and/ or stoops are encouraged along with other site elements that create a

**Opportunities for an Update**

It is hard to tell from the map or description how large this site may be. But opportunities to add housing in the compact manner described make sense, particularly in areas with views and access to open space, such as the park and its location near downtown.

pedestrian oriented environment such as benches and street lights along the roadway.

**Mobile Home Community**

There are 2 large mobile home communities within the City limits. These are located south of West Jefferson on the west side of the City and west of M-100 in the northern portion. These communities are located appropriately within the City. They have also been generally well-maintained and have not caused any issues of compatibility with adjoining single family residences. The City should continue to monitor the condition of these developments and ensure they remain this way and offer a safe residential environment. These developments are important to the City because they offer another option for housing besides apartments, single family houses and condominiums.

There are no additional area devoted to areas designated in the plan for additional mobile home communities for a few reasons. To begin with, the land acreage that the existing developments encompass is comparable to the land use acreage in the City being used for multiple family residential use. The City, thus, believes that there is already ample provision for

**Opportunities for an Update**

It may be helpful to understand the density of housing in these two communities as they provide an affordable and safe housing option. Allowing new housing types, such as tiny homes, pre-manufactured homes and park models could replace older mobile home units in the future at a similar density/lot size arrangement.

this type of housing. Equally important, the sites that remain available for development present a number of issues such as the preservation of natural features and have largely been designated for Planned Unit Developments.

### Central Business District

The Central Business District (CBD) is the heart of the Grand Ledge community. It is a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented business district characterized by historic buildings, distinctive streetscaping features and the Grand River crossing through its center which provides unique recreational opportunities. The CBD includes a mix of offices, diverse retail uses, restaurants, a theatre, and various governmental, civic, and institutional uses that draw many people to the area and generate a significant amount of activity on a daily basis. New development or redevelopment within the CBD should be consistent with and only serve to enhance its existing character.

Through infrastructure improvements such as parking lot development and reconstruction, park improvements and a building façade grant program, the City has demonstrated its devotion to maintaining the strength and vitality of the Central Business District. Customer-oriented businesses such as retail, office, personal service and food service establishments should continue to be located at the storefront level of the buildings. The upper levels should be used for residential units. A mix of residential, office and commercial, and other uses complement each other in a downtown environment as each use generates activity for the other uses.

#### Opportunities for an Update

From a future land use perspective, encouraging a mix of uses is a good strategy for creating a vibrant downtown. The downtown area does have many unique and beautiful historic buildings that contribute to a special sense of place; however, there could be opportunities to identify infill for vacant or underutilized parcels as well as to assess mid-to late- 20th Century buildings that do not contribute as much to downtown. One notable opportunity for redevelopment is the PNC bank on the corner of E. Jefferson and S. Bridge Streets. This one-story building with drive-through is located at the main intersection in the CBD. A new 3-story building here could house the bank and provide additional residential opportunities. Further, ground-floor residential may not be inappropriate on roads considered “secondary” to downtown business traffic. There is a potential to mix housing in with fringe areas of downtown.

### Commercial/Highway Services

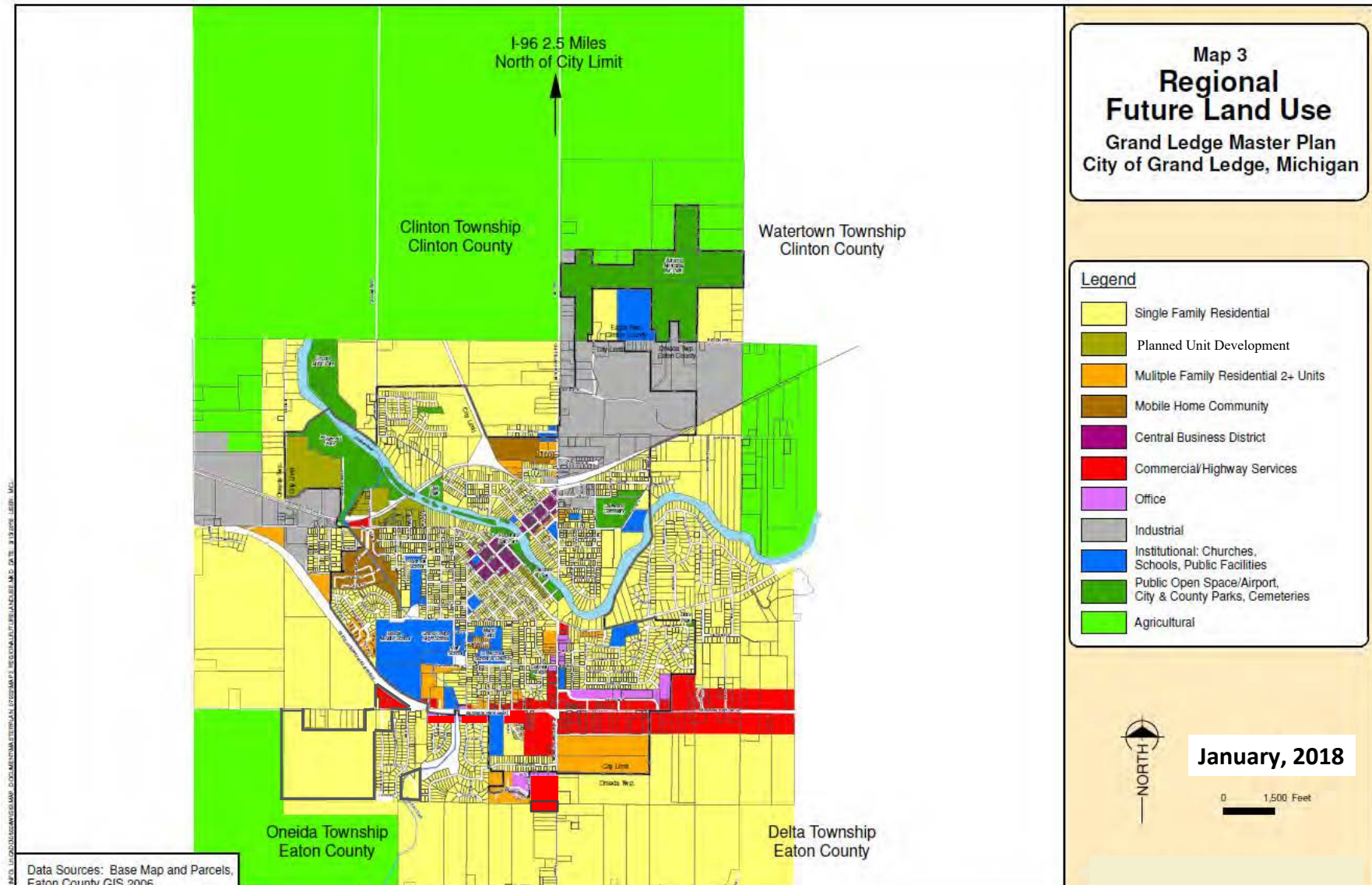
Automobile oriented businesses are primarily located along Saginaw Highway /M-43 and run a few blocks north and south along Clinton Street/M-100. Specific recommendations on the design and development of this corridor are addressed in the subarea plans. To summarize, the key design issues include:

- Access management
- Architectural design guidelines
- Landscaping/ screening
- Lighting
- Pedestrian Circulation

#### Opportunities for an Update

The future land use description speaks only to the automobile-oriented nature of these commercial corridors. The area plan that follows (which includes goals for the corridor that were discussed earlier) focuses largely on aesthetics. Good design standards are included, but there could be a further exploration of how the City expects these corridors to position themselves to serve the local population as well as potentially serve more regional needs.

Map 2. City of Grand Ledge and Regional: Future Land Use Map



## Office

Office development includes uses such as professional offices, medical clinics, and banks. These are primarily located along Saginaw Highway, Charlevoix Drive, and S. Clinton Street. Offices serve as effective transitions between residential and commercial uses and are generally compatible with adjoining residential uses. Offices typically do not draw large volumes of traffic, particularly in comparison to many commercial uses. They are also generally quiet with limited outdoor activity and hours of operation that do not extend into the late evenings.

### Opportunities for an Update

The future land use description describes how office uses function, but the text could be expanded to indicate building form and planning for future uses. The areas designated office on the FLU map appear to be developed in a suburban style - with parking in front and large building setbacks. There appear to be some undeveloped properties that could provide opportunities for new businesses. It also may be helpful to understand the occupancy rates of office properties and whether there may be a need to expand the permitted uses in the office areas to allow flexibility for property owners and ensure these areas remain vibrant.

## Industrial

Industrial operations include uses such as manufacturing, assembly, and warehousing. New industrial development is concentrated at the northern end of the City in The Grand Ledge Willis Industrial Park and along Promec drive to its south. Site design and screening methods should be required to off-set any negative impacts of industrial operations on adjoining residential uses.

### Opportunities for an Update

The future land use description describes where industrial uses are planned and how to protect nearby residential uses from negative impacts. However, there are several undeveloped and under-developed parcels that have a potential to set the stage for additional growth of industrial/manufacturing/technology businesses, bringing jobs and increasing the tax base. These industrial areas are within two miles of I-96 and in very close proximity to the potential development area in Eagle Township. Should a high-tech/manufacturing use develop there, spin-off and supporting industrial businesses may find this area attractive. Regardless, the City may wish to consider being more proactive in terms of understanding the advantages that these areas have (infrastructure, rail and highway access, proximity to recreation, housing and a downtown setting, to name a few) and create a vision for how the City believes industrial areas could develop.

## Institutional

Churches, Schools, Public Facilities. Institutional uses provide important services to the community and should be retained. If institutional sites become vacant, they should be reused for other institutional uses that serve the social, spiritual, educational and humanistic needs that are an extremely valuable part of all communities. This will ensure that residents will always be provided adequate community facilities.

### Opportunities for an Update

Institutional uses, such as places of worship, schools and other public/civic uses are, as noted, an essential part of every community. While ensuring properties remain available to such uses, it may also be worth considering if there are any areas so designated that could potentially serve another purpose. For example, depending on their location, some buildings could potentially be converted to residential uses or other use that could serve nearby residents/businesses. Additional study could be done to better understand viability of some of the uses and whether permitting more flexibility in terms of use could ensure long-term sustainability.

## Public Open Space/Airport

City and County Parks, Cemeteries. These areas are public sites that should be preserved for the community and enhanced as opportunities present themselves. Preserving views and access along the river is important to the preserving the character of the community and should continue to be protected. The other unique element to the City's public space is the Abrams Municipal Airport. The airport approach plan and layout plan as approved by the Michigan Aeronautics Commission are hereby incorporated, by this reference, as part of this document. The future use, development, and improvements to the airport are and should continue to be an integral part of the City's capital improvement programming.

Similar to the institutional category, no new sites are designated for public open space simply because there is no publicly owned land available that is of sufficient size and appropriately located to serve as public space.

### Opportunities for an Update

While most of the areas designated as public open space/parks/airport, etc. are developed as such, as noted previously, it may be worthwhile to explore whether any additional ancillary uses could be permitted to provide additional flexibility and offset costs associated with the ongoing maintenance and operations of these facilities.



## Regional Long-Range Planning

To the north of the City, Eagle Township, under the planning and zoning jurisdiction of Clinton County, is primarily designated as agriculture on the FLU map; however, the County is currently reviewing the Comprehensive Plan for the southeast corner of the Township, given its recent designation as a development site by the MEDC.

To the east, areas in Delta Township are designated "low density" single-family in their Comprehensive Plan (2013); this means anywhere from 0.5 to 5.0 units per acre. However, most parcels appear to be developed with single family homes on large lots; only a few parcels of sufficient size to be developed further with residential. The significant investment and jobs coming from the GM Delta Assembly Plant suggest that additional economic activity is foreseen in the area. This doesn't necessarily mean sprawling development between it and the City of Grand Ledge. Good regional planning recognizes the need for economic development, concentrated in areas that not only are relatively easy to serve with utilities, but also that have a built environment and land uses that support growth with related and needed commercial and housing opportunities. Accommodating growth in concentrated areas minimizes development pressure in other areas.

Watertown Township, to the northeast, is primarily designated agriculture and rural residential. It is unlikely to see significant residential development.

## Cooperative Development Agreement

Effective January 1, 2022, the City of Grand Ledge and Oneida Charter Township negotiated a Cooperative Development Agreement (CDA), permitted under Public Act 425. This agreement assures the availability of municipal utilities and municipal services for economic development projected within the Cooperative Development Area. It is the stated intent to “enhance the property values, tax base, employment opportunities and the general economic vitality of both the City of Grand Ledge and Oneida Township.”

The areas included in the development area are set into two categories (Tier 1 and 2). Tier 1 parcels are in Oneida Township and are already served by utilities. Owners of Tier 2 parcels may request to be part of the City and receive services.

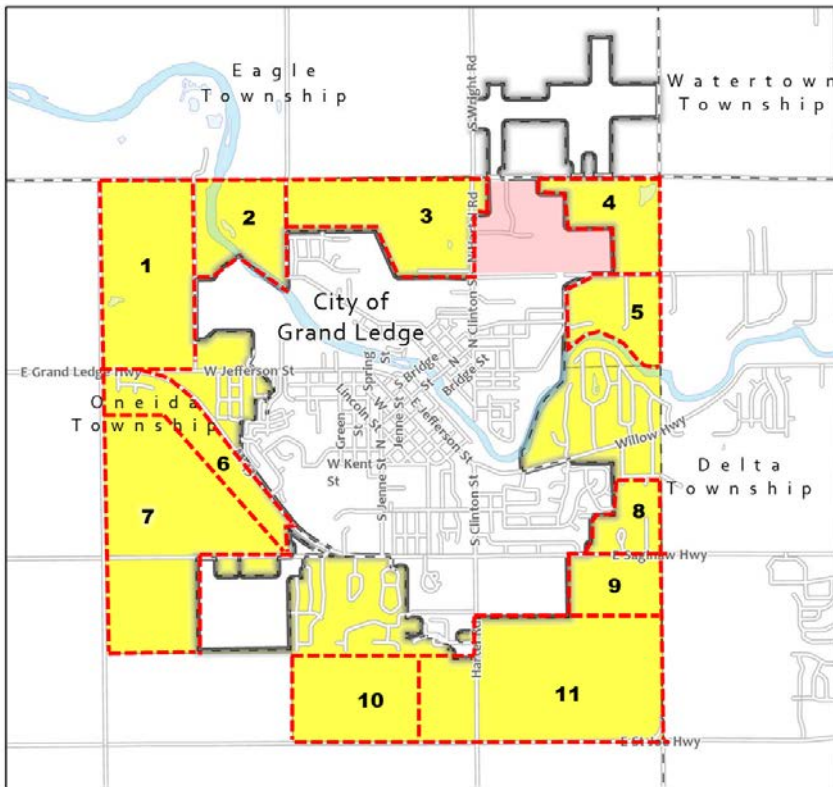
Most of the Cooperative Development Areas is undeveloped, presenting the City with some significant employment-generating commercial and industrial opportunities. In particular, this area is adjacent to the area identified by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) as one site of sufficient size and location to suit high-tech manufacturing. While the available lands in the Cooperative Development Area do not appear to be of the same magnitude in size, they still present good opportunities for spin-off development.

With the proximity of the GM Delta Assembly Plant (roughly a 10 minute drive from the City), the portion of the Cooperative Development Area south of the City presents some opportunities for meaningful growth. This could include business/manufacturing in the southeast corner and residential (workforce housing) south and southwest of the City. The area north of the City could serve as good locations for additional job-creating businesses, particularly with the proximity of the airport and access of M-100 to reach I-96. This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Additional study of this area could lead to a better understanding of its attractiveness for development and help the City create a marketing strategy to attract the kind of development that would be meaningful long-term to the City.

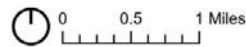
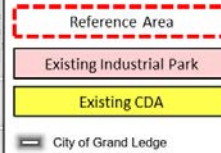
**Issues to Consider.** In our review of the Cooperative Development Area, we note the following about existing and potential development. A map corresponding to the areas referenced in the table to the right is provided on the following page as a way to generally describe existing and potential conditions. These are discussed more in the next section.

Cooperative Development Area Issues to Consider	
1	This 300 acre site may be suitable for industrial use, particularly near the railroad and M-43 frontage. Currently, the southern portion is actively used for industrial with rail access. Extending Oneida Rd. north over the Grand River could provide alternative truck access as well as public safety access within the entire city.
2	The Grand River Corridor runs through this area, making it attractive for large lot/suburban style residential with access to the river and park. West of the river, this area could also be appropriate for mixed density residential to offer workforce housing with a variety of home and lot sizes (single-family, duplex, triplex, quadplex) that would complement the neighboring Meadow Woods East residential development.
3	This site is south of the MEDC’s MMIC site and includes land which is owned by Michigan State University. The site has access to M-100 and I-96 to the North, in addition, its proximity to the airport, rail spur, industrial park, and National Guard make it attractive for industrial development. Alternatively, this site’s adjacency to existing residential neighborhoods and areas intended for future residential development position it as a strategic location for additional housing, especially workforce housing to serve a possible manufacturing facility. Commercial development along the M-100 frontage could serve the nearby industrial park users and residential neighborhoods in the North. The City should remain flexible and adaptive when considering development options for and around this site.
4	This area has opportunity to expand for industrial uses with rail access and a location that is adjacent to the existing industrial park.
5	Adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods, this area would be attractive for mixed density residential, offering workforce housing with a variety of home and lot sizes (single-family, duplex, triplex, quadplex). New development should preserve and complement the natural assets in this area.

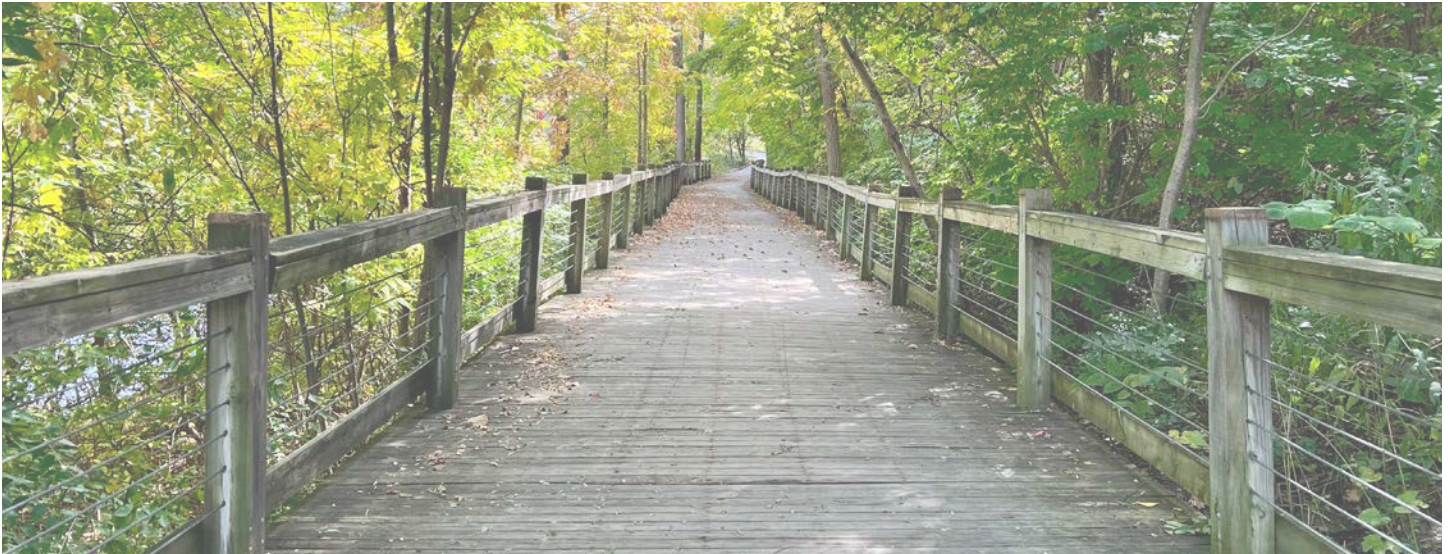


**Cooperative Development Area**  
Clinton County, Michigan

Map of Grand Ledge Cooperative Development Area and reference areas correspond with the descriptions outlined in the table, "Cooperative Development Area: Issues to Consider".



6	<p>This area has M-43/Saginaw Highway access, with frontage that could be attractive for commercial uses, especially a grocery store or market. However, that access is limited; the development of a “slip street” or alternative commercial access point will provide safe access to additional development in this area, rather than multiple driveways on Saginaw Highway. Shifts to rezone this area as commercial should occur gradually and only as existing commercial areas are built out and demand necessitates. A park or recreational space could be developed here to serve surrounding residential neighborhoods.</p>	9	<p>This area has frontage on Saginaw Highway and easy access to I-69/96, making it an appropriate location for community commercial uses that support existing and future residents.</p>
7	<p>This area has limited connectivity, and may be most amendable to large lot suburban style housing, with some mixed density residential closer to area 6. Development could be phased in this area to allow the frontage to be developed first.</p>	10	<p>This area is south of existing residential areas and has minimal access, presenting challenges for commercial or industrial uses. Additional mixed residential to complement existing neighborhoods would be appropriate to enhance connectivity and promote walkability. A park with recreational uses to serve the surrounding neighborhoods may be desirable as this area develops.</p>
8	<p>Adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods, this area would be attractive for mixed density residential, offering workforce housing with a variety of home and lot sizes (single-family, duplex, triplex, quadplex). An infill development strategy that includes a mix of uses compatible with existing commercial should be applied to the M-43 corridor.</p>	11	<p>With M-100 access and frontage, this portion of the Township is easily accessible for workers employed at the GM Delta Plant and the new battery plant to the southeast. An internal road or drive to access M-43 would further enhance connectivity. This area could support additional development, including a mix of residential housing adjacent to the existing residential in Delta Township. Strategies to attract workforce housing to support the surrounding employment centers should be considered.</p>



## Master Plan Issues to Consider

This section is intended to highlight current issues for the City to consider in conjunction with long-range planning, particularly with respect to regional development and the Cooperative Development Agreement. They are not the only issues, but they are issues that are highly connected to ongoing livability of communities, particularly as significant development occurs in and/or around the City.

### Housing

A thriving community needs people. A variety of housing options addresses lifestyle choices, affordability, and serves the needs of a diverse population that enriches the community. How can a community provide more housing options? By preserving single-family homes in existing neighborhoods (supporting homeowners with maintenance, code enforcement and neighborhood infrastructure) and adding more housing. The draft plan notes the opportunities of downtown housing in mixed use buildings and well as identifies areas for single-family housing.

#### Attainable Housing

Attainable housing is housing that is affordable to people earning around the Area Median Income (AMI). Households living in attainable housing and earning between 80% and 120% of the AMI should not need to spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

The draft plan includes statistics on median owner-occupied housing values and the percentage of owner-occupied units as compared to neighboring communities. Further research into Census data (2020) shows there are 3,656 housing units, of which, nearly 2/3 are single-family homes. About 27% of housing units are multi-unit structures (more than one living unit per structure).

In many communities, young adults and the elderly have limited housing options due to a combination of their lower income levels along with the pricing and availability of housing. This kind of financial challenge can impact people of all ages. The general rule of thumb based on guidance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is to spend a maximum of 30% of a household's income on housing costs, yet many people find themselves spending more on housing, leaving less of their income available for other household expenses. Finding attainable housing can be challenge and it can stress family finances.

It may not be thought of in the calculation of housing costs, but transportation costs impact household expenses as well. The Center for Neighborhood Technology compiles data based on a variety of sources to create a “Housing + Transportation Affordability Index.” Their analysis typically shows that residents living in areas considered “affordable” in terms of housing costs less than 30% of median household income may often incur higher transportation costs. They suggest that housing and transportation costs combined should not exceed 45% of median household income. In the City of Grand Ledge, the average housing costs are about 24% of income, while transportation costs are about 24% of income. Together, these two expenses consume about 48% of the household income for Grand Ledge residents, which suggests the City is an affordable place to live. **Strategies to maintain this affordability include ensuring the housing supply is adequate, well-maintained and the variety meets the needs of current and future residents. Additional strategies include making the community more walkable and ensuring jobs are located nearby, both of which reduce transportation costs.**

### Aging in Place

The median age in Grand Ledge is 41.4 years; nearly one in five residents are over age 65. It is important for to plan for aging members of the community so they are safe and connected to the larger community. The draft plan addresses “homes for the aged,” and while such facilities are essential for caring for older residents, the needs of older adults go beyond housing, and include access to transportation, opportunities for socialization, and access to services.

Some of the issues related to aging in place include home design and maintenance, as well as ensuring goods and services are conveniently located so older residents have the opportunity to stay independent as long as possible. Making a community accommodating for older residents also makes it good for people of all ages.

### Opportunities to Expand Housing Options

What makes an area desirable for housing? In Grand Ledge, the draft plan focuses on walkability and proximity to parks, schools, downtown and other commercial areas. This makes sense as it **concentrates housing where the built environment exists - reducing the need for significant infrastructure expansion and increased long-term costs of maintenance.**

That said, most of the City proper is built-out with respect to housing. This does not mean there are no opportunities to add housing. **In addition to making downtown housing in mixed-use buildings more attractive, additional housing strategies could include:**

- **Accessory dwelling units:** Accessory dwellings (ADUs) are complete living spaces that are secondary to another primary living space on the property. ADUs can be an opportunity to provide housing choices that are affordable, accessible, and manageable, regardless of age. They can be contained within the primary home (basement, attic, or attached garage). They can also be detached from the home in their own structure. Allowing ADUs is a good way to add more housing opportunities within existing neighborhoods



Examples of Accessory Dwellings

- **Missing Middle Housing.** Missing middle housing is housing types that fall between single-family and traditional multiple family housing types. They include housing units that can appear to be single-family, but could be duplex (2 units), tri-plex or quad-plex units. These types of buildings can be blended into existing single family areas (often at corners or ends of blocks) near commercial areas, including downtown. Missing middle can also include townhomes and “cottage courts.” All of these housing types could be added to undeveloped infill lots in the City - near downtown, parks and between existing single-family neighborhoods.



Examples of duplex (left above) and four-plex (right above) that resemble single-family structures. Cottage courts (below) show compact homes, often around a common green or amenity.



- **Mixed Residential.** The missing middle housing types noted above can be great infill opportunities but can also comprise entire neighborhoods, especially when combined with single-family homes, creating a mixed residential neighborhood. These neighborhoods can serve a variety of price-points and living options. The key factor in all these housing types is a compact building form, highlighted by walkability. These types of neighborhoods could be added in Cooperative Development Areas on the south side of the City where some traditional suburban housing developments exist.



Examples of mixed residential neighborhoods (Woodstock, GA, above and Macomb Township, MI, below, and Franklin, TN, bottom) that combine single-family homes with townhomes and apartment buildings.



## Additional housing opportunities

- **Downtown.** Downtown could offer more opportunities for housing, including those above the ground floor. For properties off the primary downtown streets, restrictions on ground floor living could be lifted. Fringe areas of downtown where older housing has been converted to non-residential uses could also present an opportunity for “horizontal mixed use,” allowing residential units to mix with less intense office/commercial uses. Some of these residential structures could be converted into two-, three- or four-plex units.
- **Cooperative Development Areas.** The Cooperative Development Areas to the west of the City appear to be fairly rural and agricultural, so housing options here should be thoughtfully considered. M-43 provides good access into the City, but because the area further west is still quite rural, and it is challenging to easily access I-96, This area doesn’t seem to have the development pressure other areas have. Furthermore, the Grand River and CSX railroad line both have the effect of creating “islands” of disconnected land. Rather than let suburban/large lot residential homes and subdivisions pop up in the area west of M-43 and west of Lawson Road, the City may wish to develop an incremental housing plan that would phase housing in closer to existing development first, and keep outlying areas intact for future, more intentional housing development.

## Complete Streets

Complete Streets is a term used to describe a transportation network that includes facilities for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and other legal users. **Complete streets provide transportation choices, allowing people to move about their communities safely and easily.** The draft plan does address transportation, with separate goals and strategies for motorized and non-motorized transportation.

The draft plan does discuss making the transportation network safer through traffic calming and access management techniques that make all travel safe and efficient. It also discusses the importance of providing a safe, efficient non-motorized pathway system that provides links to various land uses throughout the City that gives residents choices about their modes of travel.

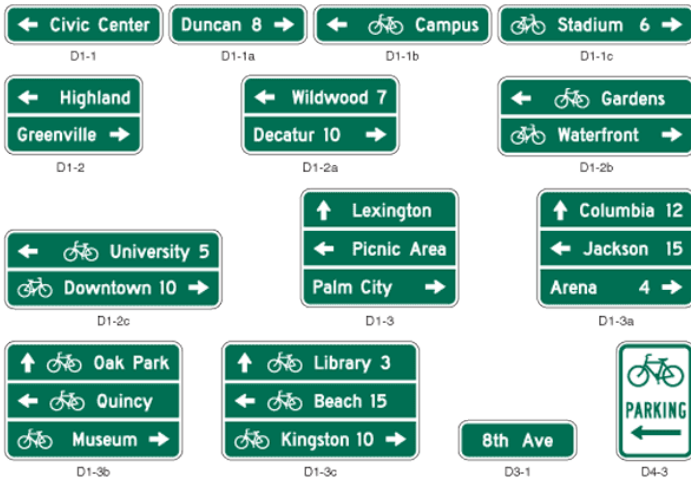
Opportunities to further these goals include promoting public education about roadway planning and decision making to help residents and property owners understand the short- and long-term goals of transportation projects. The plan should state that transportation infrastructure decisions should be in alignment with the land use recommendations of the Master Land Use Plan.

Consistent with the observations on the aging community, the plan should explore opportunities for alternative transportation methods for those who don’t have access to a car or choose not to drive.

## Transportation Network Enhancements

**Not every street needs to accommodate every user, but the transportation network as a whole should support the mobility of all residents to important destinations, including downtown, parks, civic spaces, neighborhoods, schools and nearby commercial areas.** As noted in the previous section, there are several parts of the City and Cooperative Development Areas that are isolated - not only due to the river and railroad, but also to the automobile-oriented roads that run into and around the City. A key focus for creating a cohesive community and optimizing investment is to make connections where they are missing today. These should include:

- Complete sidewalks on Jefferson Street, M-43/Saginaw Highway, M-100 (both north and south of the City)
- Ensure that new residential neighborhoods connect to each other, rather than allowing isolated developments that dead-end or cul-de-sac.
- Improve crossings over the railroad to provide additional safety, access and connectivity.
- Provide efficient routes for trucks that minimize their impact on downtown and residential areas.
- Add additional river crossing(s) for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Explore road diets and the addition of bike lanes
- Identify roads that could be marked with “sharrows,” which alert motorists to share the road with bicyclists (usually on less heavily traveled roads)
- Identify bike routes that can be signed to help people travel throughout the City.



Examples of bike route signage that shows the distances to popular destinations.



Examples of a sharrow (above) and dedicated bike lane (left). Pavement markings help alert motorists that cyclists may be present.

## Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are the fundamental building blocks of a community. More than just the area in which people live, neighborhoods also include shops, restaurants, parks, places of worship and schools. They tend to be the places where we can attend to at least some of our daily needs within close proximity of where we live. The draft plan only mentions neighborhoods to the extent that it discourages subdivision signs to limit the extent to which people think of themselves as residents of “x” subdivision, rather than City residents.

However, neighborhoods can serve as a needed link between the individual and the overall community. Often, neighborhoods draw together people of similar ethnicities, incomes and life circumstances. Sometimes they have defined boundaries based on streets or natural features. Neighborhoods are connected by physical elements like streets and sidewalks as well as by loose or formal social connections, like a neighborhood watch program, neighborhood association, time bank or phone chain.

Well-connected neighborhoods are better able to share information about the community at large, encourage civic participation in events and activities, and raise awareness of resources that may be available for people when they’re needed. In disconnected neighborhoods, people may be less likely to feel they’re part of the overall community and may miss out on opportunities to participate in civic life. This presents challenges for local governments as well as schools, businesses and service organizations. Strengthening neighborhood connections helps tie the community together and improve quality of life for all.

Planning at the neighborhood level can provide an opportunity to engage more people because the topics have more immediacy and relevance. It can take advantage of some built-in neighborhood networks, where they exist, that provide another avenue for communication and outreach. While often neighborhood groups get active when faced with a controversial development project (as evidenced by the common term NIMBY – Not in My Back Yard), proactive neighborhood engagement might better prepare a community for new development/redevelopment.

In the City of Grand Ledge, planning at the neighborhood level could explore the following:

- **Geographic boundaries.** Think of neighborhoods in terms of walkability – a ten- to 15-minute walk radius – generally one half to one mile. Are there physical boundaries such as the river, busy streets, highways, rail lines, large facilities or other barriers that serve as limits to one’s walkability in a neighborhood or otherwise serve as an edge to a clear district?
- **Demographics.** What are the characteristics of the neighborhood? Understanding the income, race, age and household makeup of a neighborhood can help shed light on where issues of equity may need to be addressed.

- **Land uses.** To be walkable and serve some of the daily needs of its local population, a neighborhood needs more than just homes. Are there a mix of uses – perhaps not within the neighborhood, but at its edges, that provide destinations for neighborhood residents? Is there a school, library, park or other community facility that helps define the neighborhood?
- **Transportation networks.** How do people travel within and out of the neighborhood? Are there non-motorized transportation facilities like sidewalks and/or shared-use paths?
- **Historic Assets.** Are there any significant structures that are only found in a specific neighborhood? Historic structures like homes and schools can contribute to the character of a neighborhood – depending on their condition.
- **Natural Resources and Environment.** Are there any natural resources in the neighborhood? How do those resources connect to other neighborhoods or even beyond the community's borders?
- **Public realm.** Are there public spaces like parks, plazas or civic spaces that give the neighborhood the opportunity to engage? Sidewalks and streets should be considered as part of the public realm. How do homes and other land uses in the neighborhood interact with the public realm – particularly its streets and sidewalks?
- **Social network.** Is there an existing social network in the neighborhood for the facilitation and delivery of news and information? How does the neighborhood access community resources offered locally and regionally?
- **Context.** Where is the neighborhood within the context of the community as a whole? What boundaries – physical or social – separate neighborhoods from each other or important community assets? How can individual neighborhoods better interact with other neighborhoods as well as contribute to an improved overall community?

The draft plan addresses many of these factors, and additional study could better create an understanding of what “neighborhoods” may exist in the City and how they can further other planning goals.

## Sustainability & Resiliency

The draft plan discusses the protection of natural resources, including the Grand River, but does not directly discuss sustainability and resiliency. As we plan for the future, many of the challenges we will face are related either directly or indirectly to our place in larger systems, both natural and man made. We often have little direct local control over these systems, **but adapting to change and discovering our role in contributing to the health of these systems is nonetheless essential to planning for a community that can survive and thrive even in the face of the most severe challenges.**

A changing climate has far-reaching implications for Michigan's agricultural and tourism economies, waterfront development, and communities with older stormwater management infrastructure. It is likely that the City of Grand Ledge has experienced heavy rain events that have led to property damage and decreased mobility and should anticipate that flooding will continue to occur in the future, damaging property, impairing access to parts of the City, and creating financial distress for local residents and businesses.

As the frequency and intensity of severe weather events continues to increase, communities will experience economic disruption. For instance, rising temperatures and more very hot days may effect the timing of summer festivals and tourism. Communities must be prepared to anticipate the local effects of regional climate trends.

Though they are related, resiliency and sustainability are not the same. Sustainability focuses on decreasing or eliminating the detrimental future impacts of our current activity. Resiliency recognizes that our built environment will be subject to stresses and is the practice of designing that environment in a way that can endure those stresses.

Planning for resiliency must consider that some threats are ongoing, persistent stresses (like chronic poverty, etc.), while others are sudden shocks, single events that disrupt the day-to-day functioning of the community. Weather events like snow storms and public health crises are examples of sudden shocks that should prompt communities to ensure they're prepared to provide residents with needed resources. This is another opportunity to tap into a local neighborhood structure.

### Local Efforts to be a Resilient Community

A follow-up to this Master Plan could include a resiliency plan for the future. This plan will identify threats and create actionable steps for mitigating these threats. Some of the action items that would likely be included are provided here:

## Environmental

- Reduce waste
- Reduce pollution
- Reduce resource extraction
- Limit human impact on natural systems
- Limit impacts of economic activity on human and natural health

## Social

- Provide facilities, services to least connected and least able citizens
- Maintain shared facilities for ongoing use and enjoyment
- Encourage and support programs and activities that allow residents to meet others and work towards collective goals

## Economic

- Balance short-term monetary gain with long-term stability
- Consider future costs of infrastructure
- Consider costs of mitigating future impacts of sudden shocks versus cost of recovery

### Address Persistent Stress - Ongoing conditions that weaken the fabric of a community.

- Update aging infrastructure
- Understand needs of aging residents in terms of housing affordability, home maintenance, health and wellness resources, and access to social networks and transportation
- Understand local economic conditions and barriers for business growth. Plan for and encourage economic diversity

### Prepare for Disruptive Events - Sudden shocks are individual events that require real-time management and recovery strategies.

- Create and maintain a communications network to provide residents and business owners with up-to-date information
- Identify community shelter facilities
- Simplify and streamline processes for administrative tasks such as site plan reviews

## Economic Development

Planning for economic development helps communities leverage benefits that can enrich quality of life, improve public services, and enhance opportunities for economic mobility. Long term planning efforts should consider goals and strategies to stimulate job creation, increase tax base, and raise property values. The draft plan should expand on economic development opportunities for commercial, industrial, and downtown development, and consider the potential impact that the development of a nearby Michigan Manufacturing Innovation Campus (MMIC) could have and how to strategize for such development to be of the greatest benefit to the City.

**Focus Areas.** Within the broader scope of economic development, the Master Plan Update should include consideration of important focus areas to include long-term development strategies that align with the needs of the community and stimulate the local economy. In addition to considering Downtown Development, the City should consider other commercial and industrial development, as well as the appropriate uses to attract ancillary growth within the Cooperative Development Area where services are adequate to support more intensive and economically impactful uses than what currently exists.

### Downtown Development

A thriving downtown enhances community identity and strengthens the local economy by serving as a catalyst for **cultural, social, and economic activity**. Planning for downtown development means considering the appropriate balance of residential, office, and commercial uses to drive foot traffic and spur additional investment. As noted earlier, there are opportunities to provide additional housing options in and near downtown. In addition, communities should invest in street furniture, public art, sidewalks, and other amenities to provide a unique and inviting experience for residents and visitors. Downtown should be well connected to other residential, commercial, and recreational hubs within the City with complete streets and accommodations for non-motorized transportation. Downtown streets should be primarily focused on people rather than cars and trucks. This is challenging with the state trunkline serving as the “Main Street” for downtown, and requires additional communication and collaboration with MDOT as noted previously.

The draft plan does not mention the Downtown Development Authority and its role in supporting downtown. The DDA's webpage indicates many priorities aimed at improving aesthetics

and amenities downtown. These include improvements to parks, streetscape elements, parking, pedestrian safety and wayfinding, just to name a few. Additional efforts that the DDA may be considering, but don't appear on the website at this time, could include:

- Create an inventory of undeveloped and under-utilized properties downtown
- Conduct a market assessment to understand what gaps may exist in the local economy
- Understand the potential for residential development (i.e., how many residential dwellings exist downtown and what is the potential to add more through conversion of other space)
- Create a business retention and recruitment plan to attract businesses that could be successful in the City, based on the market assessment findings.

### Other Commercial Development

Commercial development is important for the City to provide the goods and services that residents need, while creating local employment opportunities and generating tax revenue. In addition to downtown, there are other "convenience" and regional businesses that are located along commercial corridors in the City. The draft plan highlights updated standards that have been crafted in recent years to improve the appearance of uses in these areas, but additional considerations for commercial uses may be warranted.

The City may wish to conduct a market study to identify target commercial sectors for growth; the Covid-19 pandemic had a profound and transformative effect on many aspects of the commercial real estate industry. Since 2020, more office workers have been provided opportunities to work remotely and retailers have shifted their sales towards e-commerce. With that, during this same time period, new business formation and entrepreneurial growth reached an all-time high, stimulating new opportunities to attract local and innovative Main Street businesses. The City may wish to consider strategies to support entrepreneurial growth and re-imagine industries that are no longer expanding.

Additional efforts to improve communication between residents, the City and businesses could promote the City's positive identity in the region. The City may consider the following strategies when planning for commercial development:

- Create proactive plans to encourage entrepreneurship and growth for diverse businesses of all sizes to promote a balanced local economy

- Research opportunities to provide incentives for commercial development
- Offer flexibility in zoning to encourage property owners and tenants to upgrade existing commercial sites
- Work with local businesses to promote the City's positive identity and business-friendly climate
- Consider economic development tools, such as corridor improvement authorities or business improvement districts, to leverage additional private investment.
- Identify sites within the Cooperative Development Area that are well-connected, offer high-visibility, and are located in close proximity of the MMIC site or other areas of economic activity to serve new commercial uses that meet the needs of the growing population and workforce
- Support and engage existing businesses, particularly in the M-43 corridor with cleaning up sites, adding sidewalks and improving facades. Additional efforts could focus on the east side of Clinton Street, south of downtown. Explore a revolving loan fund and/or grant program to further incentivize positive change (directed by design standards).

### Industrial Development

Industrial development serves as a key driver of economic growth. **Industrial uses that manufacture goods and export them outside the City help expand the local economy by increasing the general circulation of dollars to be spent locally. In addition, these and other industrial uses have the potential to stimulate significant job growth and tax base revenue.** Although demands for infrastructure can be intensive, industrial growth often presents new and unique opportunities to improve and expand community infrastructure and public services.

With that, **planning for industrial development requires a careful consideration of negative externalities, neighboring uses, and the context of development.** Industrial development should be in areas that are buffered from residential uses and well-connected to highways and freight. The Master Plan should consider whether there are opportunities for industrial development within the Cooperative Development Areas, and include strategies to plan for them as complementary to

surrounding areas. In addition, the City could work with LEAP to identify target industries and consider attraction strategies that will bolster the development of vacant land into productive employment centers. The City should create an inventory of available industrial sites and vacant land to consider land assembly and future infrastructure needs, as well as market opportunities for investment.

The draft plan does not go into too much detail in planning for the future of the industrial areas, nor does it discuss the Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA) that has been in place in the City for nearly 25 years. The LDFA was created to assist with financing local infrastructure needed to stimulate and support industrial investment.

According to a 2019 LDFA presentation (on the City’s website), the Willis Industrial Park is 75% developed and 55% occupied. A restated TIF plan was prepared in 2019 to run through 2028. The City may wish to clarify how “developed” is defined in terms of buildings and infrastructure.

The updated TIF plan broadly describes physical improvements needed to spur future development, including “road construction, completing streets, improving traffic flow, high gigabyte fiber connectivity, and traffic and engineering studies. Property acquisitions may include but are not limited to expansions, acquiring and removing blight, acquiring property to improve road connectivity and traffic flow, and acquiring and leasing facilities to qualified companies.” A better connection between the goals of the LDFA could be conveyed in the draft plan.

The Cooperative Development Areas provide unique opportunities to expand industrial/business activities, particularly in the southeast corner as well as north of the City, expanding upon the City’s industrial park.

Transportation improvements in and around the City are needed to improve safety, access and connectivity, as noted earlier. Specifically, an additional bridge crossing that accommodates vehicles (and potentially also a pedestrian-only bridge) will alleviate traffic that has the potential to disrupt downtown circulation. **Efforts will need to be made to ensure additional routes are not promoted to bypass to downtown, but rather to provide an alternative to facilitate public safety and economic activities throughout the City.**

Economic Development Strategies to Consider	
Business Attraction and Retention	Identify target industries and incentive opportunities to attract and retain commercial and industrial businesses
Identify Spillover Opportunities	Support talent attraction efforts through workforce housing, downtown development, and partnerships with local educational institutions
	Identify opportunities for ancillary development to provide goods and services that will support the region’s growing workforce
Market Study	Identify industries and commercial sectors that are growing,
	Identify sectors whereby Grand Ledge’s location and regional economy present a competitive advantage
Economic Development Plan	Create a comprehensive economic development plan, with strategies for local investments that will create tax revenue and jobs, often in the form of capital improvements or incentive programs.
	Identify partners from local and state economic development agencies, academic institutions, and the private sector to help implement economic development goals
Identify Funding Opportunities	Identify programs at the state or federal level to support new commercial and industrial development, as well as workforce housing
Future Land Use Plans	Examine opportunities for development and identify them on the future land use map; updated descriptions to further explain intent and vision
Placemaking and Gateways	Consider strategies to leverage existing community assets with placemaking enhancements
	Enhance gateways to provide a welcoming and distinguishing entrance into the City

## Infrastructure Enhancement/ Expansion

The quality and availability of municipal services, such as sewer and water, are key to attracting and retaining development, supporting high property values, and creating opportunities for increased density. The City should reflect on its service provisions and consider known opportunities for improvement, maintenance, and efficiency enhancements. Although a capacity study is currently underway, the City should plan for the type of growth and uses desired, and consider what additional infrastructure needs may be required to fulfill unmet demand.

The draft plan does not discuss infrastructure in detail, particularly as it relates to providing flexibility of uses, enhancing the industrial areas and adding new housing. An update should also include:

- Road network capacity and levels of service
- Availability and capacity of water and sewer lines
- Drinking water quality
- Electrical capacity/stability of the grid
- Availability of broadband
- Stormwater facilities
- Refuse and recycling
- Public safety - while this may not be commonly considered “infrastructure,” understanding the capacity of local public safety services, including police, fire, EMS, etc. are critical for planning for the future.

The City may wish to include updated maps of infrastructure and identify opportunities for additional connections and improvements. The City may also seek to include recommendations for state and federal grants and agencies offering funding support and assistance to install and maintain infrastructure to further community development goals.

Additional Economic Development Strategies to consider area provided on the next page.



## Conclusion

This Master Plan Study represents a review of the final draft Master Plan. Given external regional economic development activities, the City of Grand Ledge has the opportunity to prepare for those external impacts as well as potentially capitalize on economic development within the City. As noted at the beginning of this report, the Master Plan can reflect an awareness of how external forces (regional growth and land uses) may impact local needs and demands (understanding and mitigating negative impacts of certain land uses, supporting a healthy economy and providing housing opportunities). Understanding this background helps inform the foundation of the Master Plan Update.

### Next Steps

- **Planning Commission Review & Discussion.** The Planning Commission receives and discusses the findings in this report, and directs updates to the draft Master Plan as appropriate.
  - » The Planning Commission discussed the CDA concepts specifically at their June and July meetings and their feedback is incorporated in the “issues to consider” tables on pages 26-27.
- **Master Plan Revision/Master Plan Amendment/Area Plan/Land Use Study.** While the Master Plan was essentially in its final form, the Planning Commission may find that revising sections to incorporate updated information more helpful long-term when creating implementation items. Alternatively, the study area could be the focus of an Area Plan that would be considered an amendment to the Master Plan. Still another alternative could be a land use study focused on the CDA concepts. Such a study could inform a Master Plan/Area Plan in the future.