

Master Plan

City of Farmington Oakland County, Michigan



ADOPTED
July 13, 2009

I hereby certify that the City of Farmington Planning Commission adopted this City of Farmington Master Plan, in accordance with Section 43 of Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended. After holding a public hearing on April 13, 2009, the Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission on July 13, 2009.



Terri Sutton, Planning Commission Secretary

Date: 7.15.09

Master Plan

City of Farmington Oakland County, Michigan

Adopted by the City of Farmington Planning Commission
July 13, 2009

This Master Plan represents over six months of dedicated work by the elected and appointed officials, staff and consultants of the City of Farmington. Specifically, the following Officials and Staff deserve special recognition.

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City of Farmington Master Plan



Chapter One: Introduction

Master plans are guides for the future that recommend how communities should be developed, maintained and redeveloped in order to meet their future goals. A sound master plan helps maintain a logical land use pattern and community character that will produce a highly desirable community. A plan also allows residents, business owners and developers to make property investments with a reasonable expectation of what will happen to their surroundings in the future.

The master plan goals and future land use plan will assist City leaders in substantive, thoughtful decisions that consider the long-term implications for the community. These community-wide implications may not be immediately apparent to the individual property owner or citizen, but the impacts of each decision are linked and become visible over time. Poor planning decisions are difficult to eliminate; most linger forever. The master plan can be viewed as a community blueprint for the future, a mechanism to help ensure each decision fits as part of the whole.

Among the many reasons for the master plan are the following:

- Present a future land use map that illustrates how land use patterns will be maintained.
- Provide a legal basis for zoning and other regulations for the type, intensity and character of development.
- Outline specific strategies to address situations where one land use is not compatible with an adjacent land use.
- Desire to provide a sustainable community, a land use pattern which translates into a diversified tax base to support the desired facilities and services with reasonable tax rates.
- Provide specific recommendations for redevelopment along main thoroughfares.
- Provide a basis and framework for more detailed planning of specific public improvements and facilities.
- Coordinate land use recommendations with infrastructure improvements.



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The City prepared its original master plan in 1966. This was replaced by a new master plan in 1998. This plan reflects an update to the 1998 master plan and serves as the City's policy statement for how the community will continue to be maintained, developed and redeveloped.

The City continues to refine its zoning ordinance and other land development regulations in response to changing conditions, goals and the law. The City's Downtown Development Authority has also adopted an urban design plan for the downtown business district.



Chapter Two: Community Profile

History

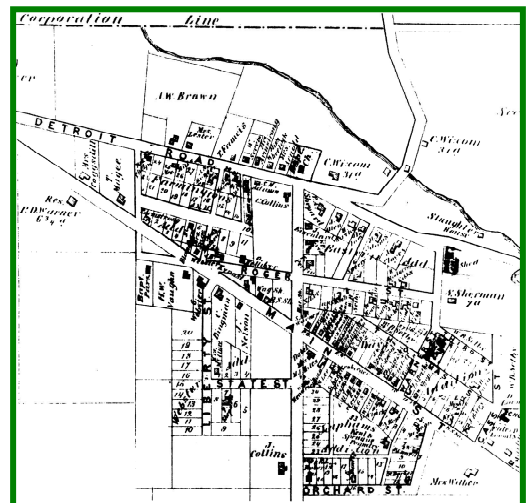
Farmington's character is rooted in a long history as one of the oldest communities in Oakland County. The area was first settled in 1824 by Arthur Power, a Quaker from Farmington, New York. Soon after, in 1825, Dr. Ezekiel Webb established the first Post Office and became Farmington's first postmaster and physician. The first school was established several years later in 1828. During the time of slavery, Farmington served as a station on the Underground Railroad.

In 1827, Farmington Township was established by the Legislative Council of the Michigan Territory. Farmington was officially incorporated as a village in 1867. Town meetings were held in a variety of locations until the completion of the Town Hall (now the Masonic Temple shown on the right) in 1876. Farmington became a home rule city in 1926.

Farmington was the home of Michigan's 26th Governor, Fred Warner, who served from 1905 to 1911. The Warner Mansion, located on Grand River Avenue, is now a museum maintained by the Farmington Historical Commission.

Until the 1950's, Farmington was considered a small village that primarily served the area's farming community. However, during the post-war building boom, suburbanites began to move out from Detroit, transforming Farmington into a suburban area.

During the late 1960's, the City annexed 500 acres, which extended the western boundary of the City to Halsted Road. Further expansion of the City's boundaries was limited when the surrounding Farmington Township was incorporated as the City of Farmington Hills in 1973.



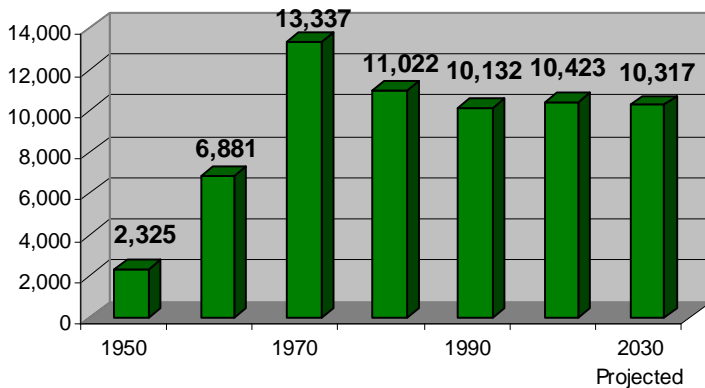


City of Farmington Master Plan

Farmington's long history can still be seen in the historic buildings downtown and in the surrounding neighborhoods, which make up an essential part of the community character and give the City a strong sense of place.

Population and Household Projections

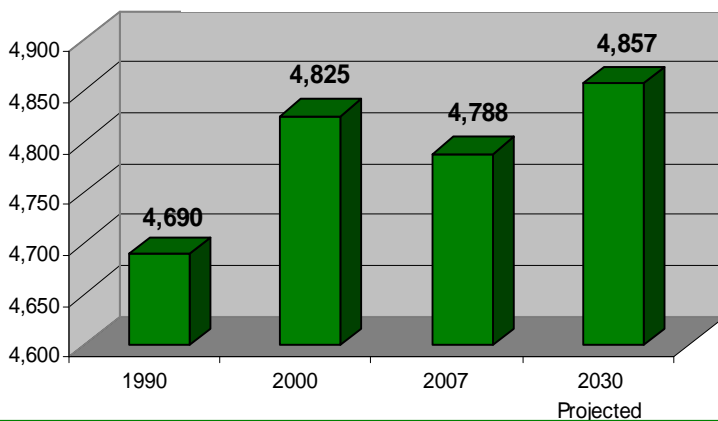
**Figure 2-1:
Population Trends – 1950 to 2030
City of Farmington**



The City's population was 10,423 persons in 2000. At that time, the City had a total of 4,825 households and an average household size of 2.13 persons per household. Though Farmington's population has been in decline since 1970, recently it increased slightly from 10,132 in 1990 to 10,423 in 2000.

The City is currently built-out, with future residential construction activity existing in the form of infill development and redevelopment. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) projects that while the number of households will increase slightly, the population will remain nearly constant. This is attributed to a trend of decreasing household size, from 2.13 in 2000 to 2.10 in 2030.

**Figure 2-2:
Household Trends – 1990 to 2030
City of Farmington**



When considering the future for the City of Farmington, it is important to understand its context in the immediate vicinity as well. The City of Farmington is almost entirely surrounded by the City of Farmington Hills. The City of Farmington Hills is substantially larger than the City of Farmington, and so trends in Farmington Hills are likely to affect growth in Farmington. Likewise, the many amenities and attractions in Farmington are likely to serve residents of both communities.



**Table 2-1:
Population Trends
Farmington and Farmington Hills, 1990 - 2030**

	1990	2000	2035 Projected
Farmington	10,132	10,423	10,317
Farmington Hills	74,614	82,111	76,823
Total	84,746	92,534	87,140

Source: SEMCOG

Population trends for both communities are summarized above in Table 2-1. While recent trends show a slight increase in population, SEMCOG projects a decline in both communities' population by 2030. This is due in a large part to the trend of decreasing household sizes and an increase in the number of empty-nester households. Both communities should work to ensure an appropriate mix of housing types is provided that will help retain existing residents.

Income, Employment and Education

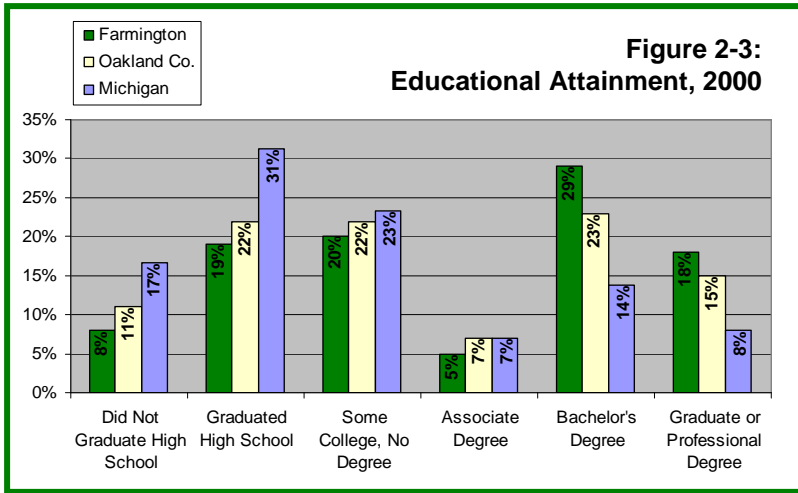
The City's median household income was \$56,442 in 2000, which represents a 37.5% increase from 1990. Farmington's household income levels in 2000 were slightly lower than that of Oakland County, which had a median household income of \$61,907.

The City's total labor force was 5,367 persons in 2000 with 98.5% of those employed. Farmington's unemployment rate in 1990 was 3.0%, which improved by 2000 to 0.9%. Employment in the City is strong as compared to Oakland County, which maintained unemployment rates of 3.7% in 1990 and 2.5% in 2000. Table 2-2 shows the industries that employ Farmington residents.

**Table 2-2:
Workforce Employment by Industry
Farmington, 2000**

Industry	Percent of Workforce
	2000
Agriculture, mining and natural resources	2%
Manufacturing	10%
Transportation, Communication and Utility	4%
Wholesale Trade	4%
Retail Trade	23%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	11%
Services	44%
Public Administration	3%

Source: SEMCOG



According to the U.S. Census, in 2000, educational attainment in Farmington was relatively high in comparison to County and state averages. The percent of Farmington residents attaining a Bachelor's Degree or higher surpasses those of both the County and State.

Housing

Table 2-3 shows the distribution of housing within Farmington, and the comparable cities of Birmingham, Rochester, Royal Oak, Berkley, Plymouth and Northville, according to the 2000 Census.

This comparison indicates that the City of Farmington contains the highest percentage of multiple family homes relative to other communities. Conversely, it also contains fewer single family homes than the average

comparable community.

The higher ratio of multiple family homes in Farmington explains why, in 2000, over 34% of City residents were renters.

Because Farmington is largely developed, residential building permits have begun to taper down. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

reported zero building permits were issued in 2006 and 2007. Annual averages in years prior are also slim, with an average of 4 new dwelling units constructed per year between 2001 and 2005. Of those, the majority of

**Table 2-3:
Dwelling Unit Type Distribution**

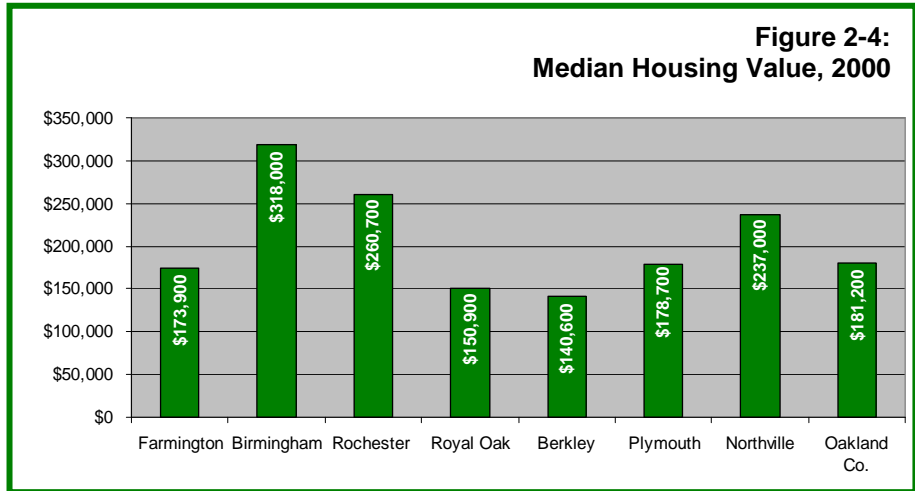
	City of Farmington		Other Comparable Cities (averages)	
	Housing Units	Percentage	Housing Units	Percentage
Single family detached	2,736	55%	6,752	69%
Single family attached	252	5%	482	5%
Multiple family	2,003	40%	2,563	26%
Mobile home and other	0	0%	14	0%
Total housing units	4,991	100%	9,470	100%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census



permits issued were for construction of townhomes or attached condominiums rather than single family detached homes. This supports the theory that residents are seeking more manageable and affordable homes as they age and their lifestyles change.

Figure 2-4 shows the value of homes in Farmington is slightly lower than the average of other communities in the area and the County overall. However, home values in Farmington are on the rise; fewer homes in 2000 were less than \$150,000 in value than was reported in 1990. According to the U.S. Census, in 2000, zero homes in Farmington were valued less than \$50,000, compared to 55 homes in 1990. The median value also increased from \$107,300 in 1990 to \$173,900 in 2000.



Community Character

Central Business District

The central business district is a typical mid-western, small-town setting with a variety of uses, small lots, buildings built up-to the front lot line, and a quaint historic appearance. The structures within the downtown are a mixture of one and two story buildings. The downtown streetscape is characterized with wider sidewalks, pedestrian furniture, formal street trees, ornamental streetlights and on-street parking.

The central business district is centered at the intersection of Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road. In addition to the elements that define the urban form and character of the downtown, several key landmark buildings define Farmington as a distinct place. These include the Farmington Civic Movie Theater's marquee sign, the Village Mall, the Masonic Temple and the plaza on the northwest corner of Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road.



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The City has a Downtown Development Authority that has implemented a number of downtown improvements, including streetlights, street trees and pedestrian furniture. The DDA has developed a specific urban design plan for the downtown that recommends a number of improvements and modifications to the downtown shopping district. Elements of the Downtown Master Plan are discussed further in Chapter Five. However, since the Chapter Five discussion is only a summary of the Downtown Master Plan recommendations, any development or redevelopment within the Downtown Development Authority boundary should refer to the recommendations of this plan as well as those in the Downtown Master Plan.

Residential Neighborhoods

The residential neighborhoods within the City have varied characteristics. A positive attribute to the City is the mixture of housing type, size, age and price. This provides housing opportunities for a full range of family sizes and incomes, as well as resident age groups. This mixture includes smaller homes on small lots, large homes, townhouses, condominiums, apartments and senior housing.

Neighborhoods to the north and west of the central business district are the oldest homes in the City. Many of the structures in these neighborhoods are historic and are in good condition. It is necessary for this plan to focus on retaining this quality residential character.

In the eastern portion of the City are older neighborhoods that contain more modest homes on smaller lots. While these neighborhoods are largely in good condition, there are some areas that are beginning to show decline. Of particular concern are lots around the perimeter of the neighborhoods that abut commercial development. The older commercial lots along major roads



such as Grand River Avenue and Orchard Lake Road tend to be shallow and provide limited opportunities for buffering between uses.

The neighborhood in the southern portion of the City along Farmington Road is an established neighborhood with housing stock that is in relatively good condition. Flanders Elementary School, located internally within this neighborhood, contributes to the quality neighborhood setting. Proper buffering of adjacent land uses will protect this neighborhood from any potential adverse impacts from industrial uses along Eight Mile Road and commercial uses along Farmington Road.

The more modern subdivisions in the western portion of the City are stable and in good condition. The quality of this area needs to be maintained and the neighborhood protected from more intense development around the M-5 and I-96 interchange.

Historic District

The City of Farmington's Historic District, surrounding the central business district on the north and west sides, encompasses much of the original settlement dating back to the early 1800's. Some of the significant structures within this district include: the first Post Office and residence of first town doctor, built in 1825; the oldest existing frame house in the City, built in 1824; the Masonic Temple and former Town Hall, built in 1876; the Quaker and Oakwood Cemeteries; and the residence of former Governor Fred Warner, presently the Farmington Historical Museum. A vast majority of the homes in the Historic District are mid-western examples of historic Michigan Farmhouse, Greek Revival, Gothic, Victorian and Bungalow architecture.

The Farmington Historic Commission maintains historic records and documents for the City. They review and comment on construction or renovation projects, and any demolition proposals within the Historic District. The Historic Commission should review and comment on all proposed demolition or relocation projects within the District, based on established guidelines for such consideration.

Historic properties in Farmington are considered to be those that are located with in the established Historic District (see map) and those listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Sites on the National Register must



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meet the National Criteria for Evaluation, which involves an examination of the age, integrity and significance of specific sites. These criteria are summarized below:

- **Age and Integrity.** Sites may qualify if the property is old enough to be considered historic (generally at least 50 years old) and whether it still presents the same appearance as it did in the past.
- **Significance.** To be considered “significant,” sites must be associated with important historical events, activities, developments, people, architecture, landscape, engineering or potential archeological investigation.

Commercial Corridors

The major roadway corridors through the City are largely developed as commercial, intermixed with residential. Because these corridors are heavily traveled by both residents and visitors to the community, they are a key element in defining the character of the community.

Grand River Avenue: Traveling westward from Detroit along Grand River Avenue, one enters the City of Farmington just west of the intersection of Grand River Avenue and the M-5 Freeway. At this location, the eastern edge of the City, Grand River Avenue transitions from a boulevard to a five-lane road and M-5 traffic splits off and travels west as it approaches the I-696 Expressway. This portion of Grand River Avenue is characterized by older strip commercial uses on small lots. Many of the structures are built up-to the front lot line with a limited amount of open space or parking in front. The shallow lot sizes often cause front yard parking to be located within the Grand River Avenue right-of-way or in some cases, has required parking to be moved to the rear yard, which also contributes to conflicts with neighboring residential uses. The shallow lot sizes contribute to land use conflicts (noise, lights, blowing debris, views, etc.) with the residential neighborhoods immediately to the rear, and has lead to complete redevelopment, especially near Violet Street, where land annexation has allowed for more reasonable commercial lot sizes.

The intersection of Grand River Avenue with Orchard Lake Road is a principal node and gateway into the community. This intersection marks a change in the character of development lining Grand River Avenue from



smaller more shallow lots to larger development sites. Buildings tend to be setback a short distance from the front lot line and parking is typically located in the side or rear yards. The larger lot sizes provide additional area to the rear of the buildings providing larger open spaces that act as a buffer from the abutting residential neighborhoods.

The intersection of Grand River Avenue and Power Road is located approximately half way between Orchard Lake Road and the downtown district. There is a smaller node of commercial uses at this intersection. While it contains a mixture of uses, including automotive service and repair, many of the uses fulfill a neighborhood service function as well. From this point westward, a mixture of smaller individual businesses intermixed with residential uses, gradually transitions into the central business district.

Entering the central business district, the setbacks from the roadway decline and the downtown streetscape, with formal street trees, ornamental streetlights and on-street parking, becomes more prevalent. In addition, Grand River Avenue narrows to four lanes through the downtown.

The central business district, centered at the intersection of Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road, is distinctly marked by the urban form and key landmark buildings. Continuing westward from the downtown, Grand River Avenue passes through the center of the Farmington Historic District. This area is dominated by historic residential structures that line Grand River Avenue to the western edge of the Historic District at Oakwood Cemetery. Despite the relatively high traffic volumes on Grand River Avenue, this area retains a quality residential charm.

Westward beyond the historic portion of the City, Grand River Avenue becomes a five-lane road lined with strip commercial development, intermixed with large apartment complexes. Traveling westward from Oakwood Cemetery, there is a distinct change in the streetscape character. The road becomes wider, buildings are set back further from the road with large front yard parking lots, and there are fewer mature street trees. These elements all contribute to an environment that is more accommodating to the automobile and less pedestrian friendly.

At the far western edge of the City, the M-5 Freeway intersects Grand River Avenue. This interchange is a major gateway to the community, providing



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connections with I-96, I-696 and I-275. The character of this intersection is largely dominated by automobiles. This intersection is not an environment that is hospitable to pedestrians, nor does it have a definable or unique character to delineate a gateway to the community.

Farmington Road: Farmington Road is the principal north-south road through the center of the City. The road enters the City at Eight Mile Road from Wayne County to the south. The intersection of Farmington Road and Eight Mile Road serves as a small commercial node that is shared between the cities of Farmington, Farmington Hills and Livonia. In addition to a small area of commercial development along Farmington Road, there is a large area of industrial uses along Eight Mile Road just east of Farmington Road. The cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills have a joint beautification committee that is working on streetscape improvements for Farmington Road between Eight and Nine Mile Roads

Farmington Road at the Nine Mile Road intersection, just south of the M-5 Freeway, is another major commercial node. This serves as the southern gateway to the central portion of the City. The M-5 Freeway overpass tends to be a physical barrier separating the Nine Mile area from the City's downtown.

Beyond the M-5 Freeway overpass, Farmington Road passes through a mixture of residential and commercial land uses entering the downtown. The downtown is distinctly marked at the intersection with Grand River Avenue and the Masonic Temple. The landscape plaza serves as a landmark.

North of the downtown, Farmington Road passes through a historic residential neighborhood with the First Baptist Church at the road's terminus. Shiawassee Street serves as a key landmark terminating the view at the end of the road.

Passing through the Rouge River Valley, northbound Farmington Road traffic jogs eastward along Shiawassee Street. This street passes down a steep descent to the bridge over the Rouge River. Upon crossing over the river, the roadway enters into a large open public space located in the river valley. This is marked by the City park along the river and the surrounding hillsides occupied by the Farmington School District administration building and Our Lady of Sorrows Church and School.



At a location immediately east of the Rouge River Bridge, Shiawassee Street intersects with Farmington Road, which continues north. Farmington Road meanders northward up a steep ascent through a residential neighborhood to the City limit at Ten Mile Road. This area's residential character, located on rolling topography, continues into the neighboring City of Farmington Hills.

River Valley

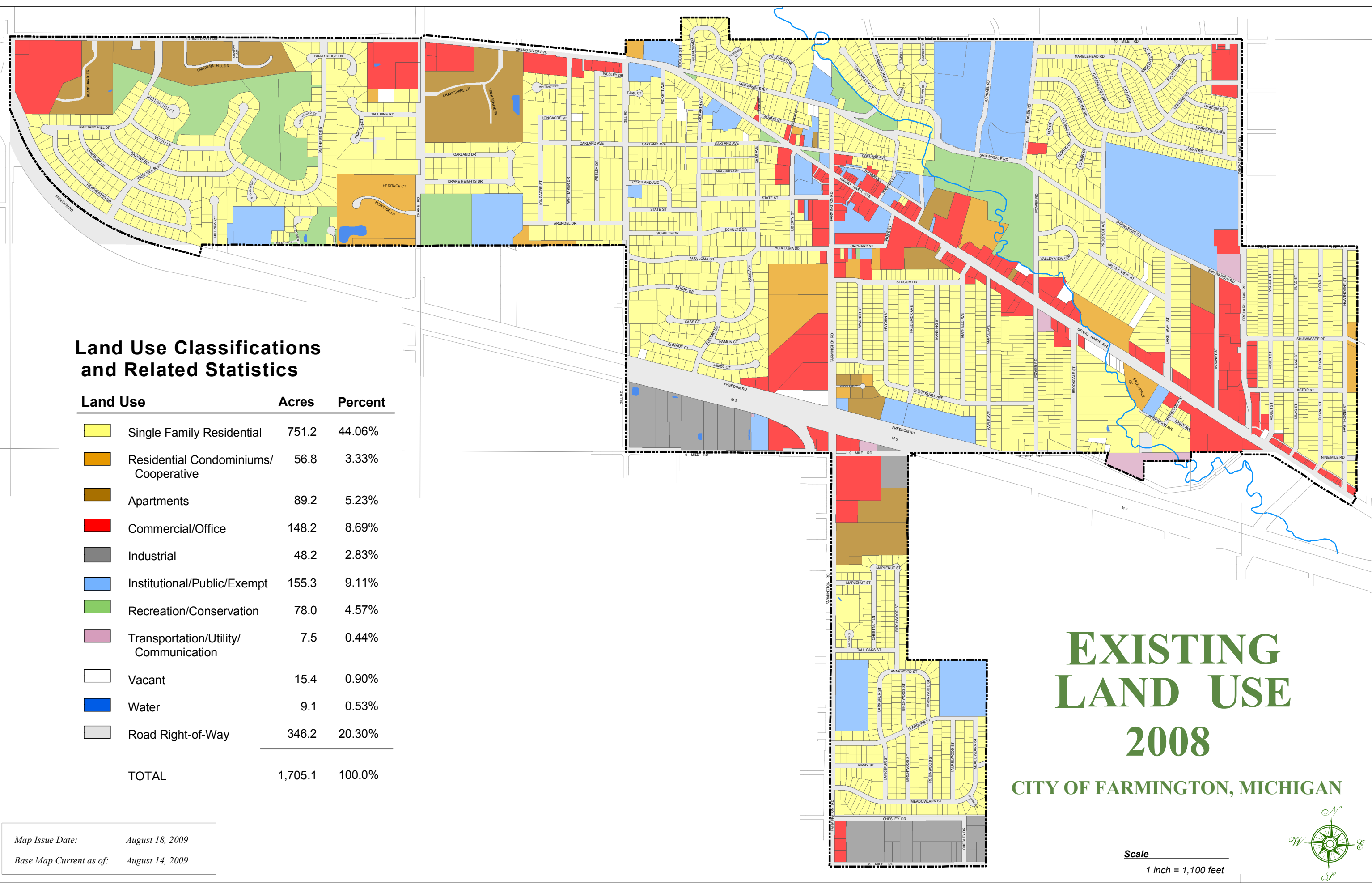
The Upper Rouge River drains from Farmington Hills southward through the north and eastern portions of the City. The river valley is a distinct topographic feature that contributes to Farmington's unique character. The northern segment of the river's floodplain is occupied by City parkland. Much of the riverbank in the eastern portion of the City is under private ownership.

Shiawassee Park, located along the river, is a central node of civic functions with the school district administration and Our Lady of Sorrows overlooking the valley on the northern slopes. The river ties into the Grand River Avenue corridor near Power Road and flows through the eastern portion of the City. The river valley can be used as a natural greenway corridor to provide pedestrian linkages throughout the City.





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Land Use Classifications and Related Statistics

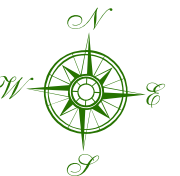
Land Use	Acres	Percent
Single Family Residential	751.2	44.06%
Residential Condominiums/ Cooperative	56.8	3.33%
Apartments	89.2	5.23%
Commercial/Office	148.2	8.69%
Industrial	48.2	2.83%
Institutional/Public/Exempt	155.3	9.11%
Recreation/Conservation	78.0	4.57%
Transportation/Utility/ Communication	7.5	0.44%
Vacant	15.4	0.90%
Water	9.1	0.53%
Road Right-of-Way	346.2	20.30%
TOTAL	1,705.1	100.0%

Map Issue Date: August 18, 2009
 Base Map Current as of: August 14, 2009

EXISTING LAND USE 2008

CITY OF FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN

Scale
 1 inch = 1,100 feet





Chapter Three: Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives have been developed in order to set a framework for the policy statements of the Farmington Master Plan. In general, the goal of the master plan is to maintain a quality “small-town” character and mixture of uses to provide a sustainable and attractive community with a tax base to support desired public services.

Downtown

- Ensure the economic viability of the downtown business district by preserving the diverse mixture of complementary commercial, office, and civic uses and injecting additional residential uses to support them.
- Strengthen the spatial and architectural character of the downtown and encourage development and redevelopment that embraces the historic character of Farmington, including many traditional storefronts, pedestrian scale and orientation and buildings close to the road.
- Reinforce the central square as the focal point for activity in the downtown and create important gathering places for visitors, residents, and workers.
- Cultivate a walkable and vibrant downtown with several areas of interest that attract activity all day and into the evening yet still provide a safe environment suitable for all residents.
- Develop a consistent, solid building line along the streetscape so there is ample space for businesses and residential uses and elements of interest.
- Promote a mixture of land uses that support the walkable environment, provide entertainment, and offers needed services.
- Capitalize on Farmington’s location within a centralized area of the larger Metropolitan region to become a shopping and dining destination for residents from other nearby suburban communities.
- Increase access and views to the Upper Rouge River and Shiawassee Park with linkages to businesses and the center core of downtown.



- Improve access and circulation into and through the downtown for cars and vehicles, but not at the expense of pedestrian safety and comfort, which should remain the highest priority for downtown circulation and safety improvements.
- Provide a pedestrian circulation system that promotes an atmosphere of comfort and interest for people.
- Increase parking space opportunities that are convenient for all activity areas.
- Seek to inventory buildings and sites with potential historic significance in advance of redevelopment.
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing structures that contribute to the City's historic character. In particular, historic homes in proximity to downtown should be encouraged to remain for uses like offices, live-work units, or multiple-family dwellings.
- Promote use of the Main Street Oakland County program and tax incentives offered by the State and Federal Historic Preservation Offices.
- Require an historic assessment for buildings within the City's Historic District as part of any renovation plans that have the potential to damage or remove significant historic features.

Neighborhood and General Commercial

- Create definable neighborhood shopping nodes that will provide an individual sense of place and a unique identity.
- Allow commercial frontages to be maintained for compatible commercial uses while protecting the quality, character and privacy of adjoining residential neighborhoods.
- Minimize the impact of nonconforming heavy-commercial and industrial uses with the eventual goal of relocating these uses to industrial areas.
- Promote commercial redevelopment through streamlined review procedures and clear zoning regulations that include an appropriate amount of flexibility.



- Enhance the long term viability of the City’s commercial districts by encouraging a diverse mixture of complementary commercial, office, and residential uses.
- Strengthen the spatial and architectural character of commercial buildings through development and redevelopment that embraces the historic character of Farmington, including traditional storefronts, pedestrian scale and orientation and buildings located close to the road.
- Promote a mixture of land uses with local shopping and services that are integrated into the neighborhood in a manner that creates a walkable environment.
- Improve access and circulation for cars and vehicles, but not at the expense of pedestrian safety and comfort, which should remain a priority for circulation and safety improvements.
- Provide a pedestrian circulation system that promotes an atmosphere of comfort and interest for people.

Housing and Neighborhoods

- Maintain a well-balanced and diverse mixture of housing types, opportunities and prices in the City.
- Continue to promote home renovations and improvements that will make the City’s housing stock competitive in modern housing markets. A housing study could be pursued to identify gaps in the housing market or areas where redevelopment should be pursued.
- Provide additional opportunities for home ownership through conversion of rental properties to condominiums or infill redevelopment with condominiums.
- Ensure proper land use transitions between commercial and residential areas with buffering; walls; landscaping; low level, shielded lighting; and screening of waste receptacles and loading areas.
- Preserve the historic character of neighborhoods.
- Ensure new infill development has compatible design with neighborhood architecture and character.



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- Preserve sound housing and neighborhoods that provide for a quality residential community.
- Enforce housing standards to prevent blight and ensure properties are maintained to protect the investment of nearby homeowners.
- Ensure compliance with state and federal laws such as the Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Provide for proper pedestrian links between residential uses and other destinations like the area parks or downtown.
- Increase access and views to the Upper Rouge River and Shiawassee Park with linkages to businesses and the center core of downtown.
- Provide a pedestrian circulation system that promotes an atmosphere of comfort and interest for people.
- Improve access and circulation for cars and vehicles, but not at the expense of pedestrian safety and comfort, which should remain a priority for circulation and safety improvements.
- Educate property owners and establish development standards and guidelines that distinguish appropriate renovations from those that will compromise historic quality.

Industrial

- Encourage the continued redevelopment and upgrade of industrial areas such as building renovation, landscaping, replacement of lighting, screening of storage and parking lot paving.
- Relocate nonconforming industrial uses from commercial districts to areas specifically designated for industrial use in the City and surrounding area.
- Ensure that light industrial uses fit within the context of the community with small lots and nearby residential neighborhoods.
- Allow for a mixture of consumer service uses that are industrial in nature, such as automotive repair, home/garden supplies/contractors, and self-storage, which would be less compatible with other commercial areas.
- Ensure proper transitions and buffers between industrial uses and other non-commercial uses.



Community Facilities

- Provide educational, recreational and civic facilities and programs to serve the residents of the City, in cooperation with surrounding communities and other agencies, and groups.
- Create an integrated network of parks, schools and other civic uses that are strongly linked to neighborhoods and the downtown.
- Provide open public spaces that enhance the City and provide a source of civic pride and artistic expression.
- Provide open public space, plazas and landmarks as sites develop or redevelop, such as at the entrances to the City.
- Maintain a public utility system capable of meeting the demands of the City into the next century.
- Enhance the overall environment for pedestrians to create a safe and desirable environment for non-motorized travel and recreation.
- Increase access and views to the Upper Rouge River and Shiawassee Park with linkages to businesses and the center core of downtown.
- Provide a pedestrian circulation system that promotes an atmosphere of comfort and interest for people.
- When possible, historic sites should be available to the public.
- Maintain a commitment to protecting historic buildings in the City's care/ownership to the highest standard possible to create a model for private restoration projects.

Transportation

- Provide for efficient and safe traffic circulation in consideration of pedestrian comfort and safety by designing streets to meet the needs of all modes of travel.
- Prioritize pedestrian safety, especially near downtown, through careful streetscape design and safe road crossings. Needed crosswalk and sidewalk improvements must be continually evaluated to ensure residents are provided with the safest non-motorized system possible.



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- Work toward providing a continuous non-motorized path network (pedestrian, bicyclist and handicapped) throughout the City to connect residents with shopping, civic and recreational destinations.
- Provide easily accessible, identifiable and convenient parking to serve the varied uses in the downtown.
- Close unnecessary driveways, or those not adequately spaced from intersections or other driveways, along major commercial corridors to preserve street capacity and promote safety.
- Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation on improvements to Grand River Avenue and M-5 in order to meet the needs of City residents as well as the region.
- Work with the City of Farmington Hills to upgrade the shared streetscapes of Farmington Road, Grand River Avenue and Orchard Lake Road.
- Increase access and views to the Upper Rouge River and Shiawassee Park with linkages to businesses and the center core of downtown.
- Provide a pedestrian circulation system that promotes an atmosphere of comfort and interest for people.
- Encourage development and expansion of alternative transportation options throughout the City, especially those that reduce emissions and improve the quality of life for residents.



Chapter Four: Land Use

This chapter evaluates the land use patterns of the City of Farmington. Beginning with a description of the City’s existing land use pattern, regional influences and desires of the City, a summary of key issues was developed to help focus attention on important land use issues in the City. Key issues are assessed relative to the goals and objectives in order to guide future land use decisions. This is then developed into a future land use plan that helps to guide development and redevelopment of the City in support of the goals and objectives.

Existing Land Use

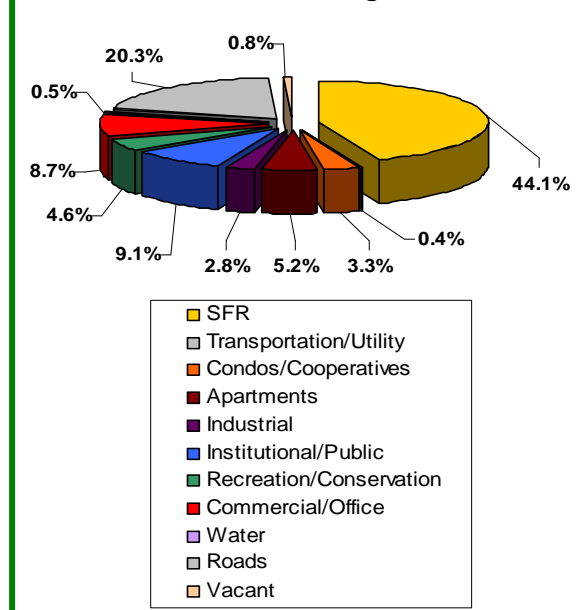
Farmington is characterized as a stable community with a balanced mixture of land uses. Each land use category is described below, and the distribution of land uses is summarized in Table 4-1 and illustrated in Figure 4-1:

**Table 4-1:
Existing Land Use, 2007**

Land Use	Total Acres	Percent of City
Single Family	752	44.1%
Residential Condos/Cooperative	57	3.3%
Apartments	89	5.2%
Commercial/Office	148	8.7%
Industrial	48	2.8%
Institutional/Public	155	9.1%
Recreation/Conservation	78	4.6%
Transportation/Utilities	8	0.4%
Vacant	14	0.8%
Water	9	0.5%
Road Rights-of-Way	346	20.3%
TOTAL	1,705	100%

Source: City of Farmington Assessor

**Figure 4-1:
Existing Land Use, 2007**





City of Farmington Master Plan

Residential



Single Family Residential: Not surprisingly, single family residential is the most prevalent land use in the City. Encompassing over 44% of all land in the City, detached single family homes are found within existing established subdivisions predominantly developed between 1940 and 1980. Densities vary from one neighborhood to another, however, individual lots are generally small to moderately sized, typical of traditional cities and development patterns during this time. While the minimum lot size allowed under current zoning is 8,500 square feet, typical lot sizes range upward from 5,000 square feet in some of the older neighborhoods in the eastern and central portions of the City, to 22,000 square feet in the newer subdivisions in the western portion of the City.

Residential Condominiums: A growing trend in today's residential market is the development of attached single family residential dwelling units. Attached units can include duplexes, townhomes, attached condominiums or other owner-occupied condominium buildings containing more than one dwelling unit. These types of residential projects are distinct from single family uses because they are typically developed as attached condominiums, many with common open spaces and yards. However, they also differ from apartments by offering ownership possibilities. Attached single family residential is often developed at a lower density than multiple family, but higher than single family developments. This, in combination with fewer maintenance and utility costs associated with condominium style living, provides a more affordable housing option for residents. The largest attached condominium development in Farmington is Heritage Village located at Drake and Freedom Roads.



Apartments: While there are locations of multiple family housing throughout the City, the majority of the larger multiple family complexes are along the Grand River Avenue Corridor. There are a variety of multiple family dwellings in the City including a high-rise senior housing facility and two-three story apartment complexes.

Commercial

Commercial/Office: The City contains a wide variety of commercial land uses including larger multi-tenant strip shopping centers and individual



businesses on single lots. Types of commercial uses include automotive, retail, personal service and office.

At the eastern edge of the City along Grand River Avenue and Orchard Lake Road, there is an extremely diverse mixture of commercial land uses including office, retail and automotive maintenance shops. In some instances, though, there are examples of fragmented or haphazard locations of incompatible commercial uses. As a result, the commercial area's ability to create a strong synergy, which is desired in a commercial district, becomes limited. The west end of the Grand River Corridor has been developed into larger strip shopping centers, some of which may have redevelopment potential.

The City's central business district is included in this general category. Centered around the intersection of Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road, Farmington's downtown is characteristic of a historic small City downtown with a mixture of uses situated in a compact, pedestrian oriented community. Many of the structures in the downtown are historically significant. While a majority of the uses in the downtown tend to be pedestrian-oriented, there are some uses that tend to be more auto-oriented and create gaps in the traditional downtown structure.



Industrial

Industrial land uses are located in the southern portion of the City between M-5 and Nine Mile Road, and along Eight Mile Road. Because these areas are the southern gateways to the community, these industrial locations have an effect on the perceived character of the City. Many of the industrial business owners have been upgrading the quality of the older industrial buildings and sites.



Some uses on Nine Mile Road have been converting to general commercial uses. Conversions of this type should consider the surrounding land uses and the potential traffic impacts general commercial may have on the local neighborhoods. In addition, because of the limited industrial land in the City, conversions should also consider the general availability of industrial land in order to maintain an appropriate mix of land uses.



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Institutional/Public



The City contains a significant amount of land dedicated to public and quasi-public uses. There is a large amount of public/quasi-public land in the northeast quarter of the City centered on the River Valley. The former 47th District Court, owned by the City of Farmington, is currently vacant and available for redevelopment. Other uses designated as public and quasi-public include the following:

- City Hall
- City Library
- Public Safety
- Public Services
- Public Parks
- Schools
- Churches
- Cemeteries

Regional Context

The land use distribution for the City of Farmington was compared with that of other similar, older, small suburban cities. The nearby cities of Birmingham, Berkley, Rochester, Royal Oak, Northville and Plymouth were used for comparison. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) produces standardized reports for all communities it serves, and includes an evaluation of the land use mix in each community. It is important to understand that the data used for this comparison varies from

the figures provided by the City of Farmington and as shown in the existing land use section of this Chapter. We believe the City’s data is more accurate; however, for purposes of this comparison, SEMCOG’s data was used because it provides the same analysis for all communities.

The relative percentage of each City’s total area that is dedicated to each land use was compared, and is shown in Table 4-2. An examination of the land use distribution in Farmington compared to these other communities yields the following observations:

**Table 4-2:
Comparison of Land Use Area Distributions**

	Farmington	Average of Other Comparable Cities
Single Family Residential	57%	61%
Multiple Family Residential	9%	5%
Commercial & Office	12%	7%
Institutional	9%	6%
Industrial	4%	5%
Transportation & Utilities	2%	2%
Outdoor Recreation	4%	8%
Agriculture	0%	0%
Grassland & Shrub	0%	1%
Woodland & Wetland	2%	3%
Water	0%	0%
Under Development	0%	1%

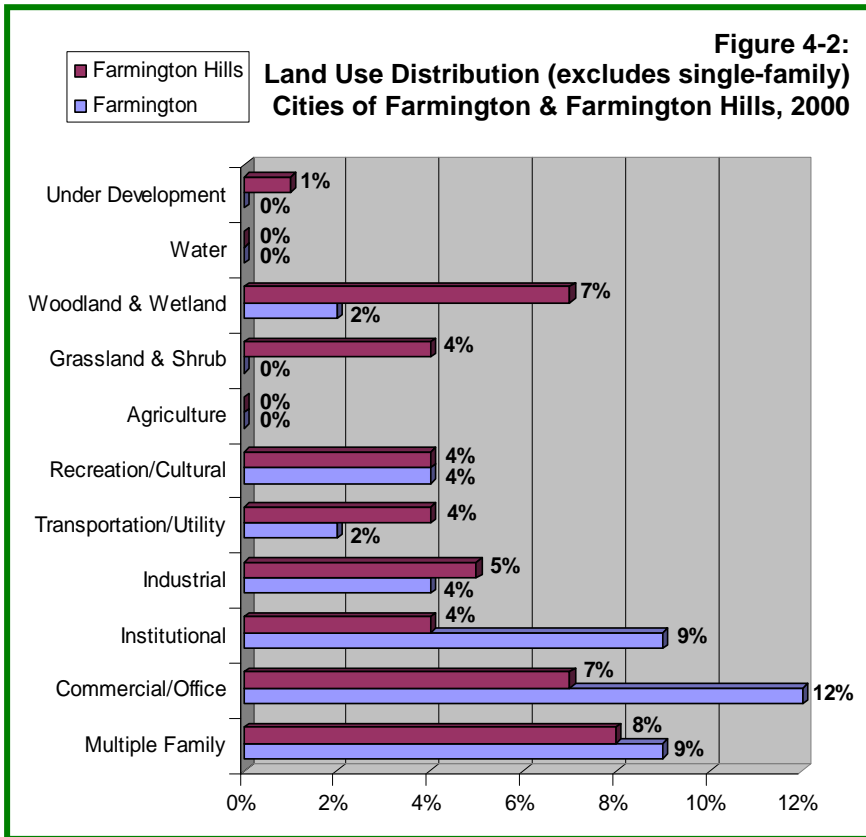
Source: SEMCOG



- Farmington has slightly less land area dedicated to single family residential, but contains almost twice the amount of multiple family residential land.
- Five percent more land in Farmington is dedicated to commercial and office uses than in the comparable cities.
- Farmington has more land area dedicated to institutional uses such as City facilities, schools and churches, but contains almost half the amount of outdoor recreation land than the comparable cities.
- Only slightly less land in Farmington is dedicated to industrial uses.

In addition to other comparable communities with traditional downtowns, land uses in Farmington were compared to Farmington Hills. Table 4-3 compares all of the land uses in both cities and Figure 4-2 on the following page shows the mix of all non-residential land.

Table 4-3:		
Comparison of Land Use Area Distributions		
Cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills, 2000		
	Farmington	Farmington Hills
Single Family Residential	57%	56%
Multiple Family Residential	9%	8%
Commercial & Office	12%	7%
Institutional	9%	4%
Industrial	4%	5%
Transportation & Utilities	2%	4%
Outdoor Recreation	4%	4%
Agriculture	0%	0%
Grassland & Shrub	0%	4%
Woodland & Wetland	2%	7%
Water	0%	0%
Under Development	0%	1%
Source: SEMCOG		



The land use mix provided in each community shows that, while the residential mix is comparable, the City of Farmington maintains a relatively higher percent of commercial and institutional uses, while the City of Farmington Hills contains more woodland, wetland and vacant (grassland and shrub) land. This is not surprising given the fact that Farmington Hills developed around Farmington, which was established as a center of commerce in the early 1900s. However, in general, both communities maintain a desirable mix of land uses.

Development patterns in the City of Farmington Hills are generally less compact than in the City of Farmington. SEMCOG reports that in 2000, the overall residential density

in Farmington was 4.40 dwelling units per acre, compared to 2.55 units per acre in Farmington Hills. The fact that Farmington was largely developed prior to 1970 when more compact development patterns were prevalent has resulted in a higher overall density. The City of Farmington Hills developed a bit later, when larger lot sizes were required and more suburban development patterns emerged.

The more compact development pattern of Farmington provides an advantage in terms of sustainability. In terms of roads and utilities, the linear feet of infrastructure to maintain per household will typically be less. The compact pattern is also more conducive to a walkable, pedestrian-oriented community.



Future Land Use

The future land use plan establishes land use categories, illustrates the location of planned land uses and provides strategies for implementation. This section also provides a rationale for the placement of preferred land uses and the intensity of those uses. The plan serves as the primary policy guide for future land use decisions, investment in public improvements and coordination of public improvements and private development.

The plan presents an idealized future indicated by the growth patterns in the City. The plan, however, also provides the practical guidance local decision-makers need regarding today's issues. It is the intent of the plan to assist in the orderly development and redevelopment of the City and to assist the community in enhancing its vision for the future.

Use of the Plan

The master plan map is separate and distinct from the City's zoning district map, which is a current (short term) mechanism for shaping development. The plan categories generally correspond to zoning districts, however, there are some overlays to allow for specific site conditions. The plan should be consulted as one criterion to judge the merits of a rezoning or redevelopment proposal. Suggested zoning criteria based on standards recommended by a number of planning organizations and case law are listed below:

- ✓ Is the proposed rezoning consistent with the policy statements and future land use plan? If not, have conditions changed or has information been provided to justify a deviation from the plan? The Planning Commission could require an amendment to the plan before approval of a contrary zoning request or give reasons for the modification on the record. This will help ensure the integrity of the plan.
- ✓ Is the timing for the zoning change correct?
- ✓ Is there reason to believe that the property owner cannot reasonably develop the site with any use under the current zoning classification? The right to a "reasonable" use of the property is not necessarily the most profitable use.
- ✓ Are all of the permitted uses allowed under the requested zoning district compatible with surrounding land uses and zoning?



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- ✓ Is the site capable of accommodating the list of uses permitted under the requested zoning classification, including lot area, setback and parking requirements?
- ✓ Is there sufficient public infrastructure (street, sewer and water capacity) to accommodate the host of uses allowed under the requested zoning classification?
- ✓ Is the proposed change in keeping with the intent to protect the public "health, safety and welfare?" If not, is mitigation being proposed to accommodate the impacts?

Factors Considered

There are some specific factors that influence the future land use pattern in Farmington. These factors include:

- **Existing land use:** The City is mostly built-out with stable land use patterns. Wholesale changes to the existing land use pattern would be unlikely. The locations of most existing commercial and industrial developments are appropriate and the community land use patterns have evolved around these existing land uses.
- **Relationship of uses:** The future land use plan strives to diminish incompatible land use relationships, by creating nodes of commercial areas that are properly sized and provide transitions to surrounding residential areas.
- **Natural features:** The principal natural feature in the City is the Rouge River and its associated wetlands, floodplain and surrounding topography. These natural features are integrated into the plan with the intent of creating attractive and interesting neighborhoods and overall community.
- **Existing Master Plan:** The original Master Plan, adopted in 1966 served as the foundation for the current version of the Master Plan. The future land use plan contained in the previous plan has been re-evaluated based upon current trends and conditions.
- **Infrastructure:** While the entire City is served by sewer and water, proposed future land uses must consider the availability and the capacity of the infrastructure system. In particular, the capacity of the road network defines the intensity of uses that may be served



without adversely impacting traffic operations. The availability of community facilities such as schools, parks, police and fire protection places limits on service to land use, particularly the density of residential uses.

- **Market conditions:** Market conditions for the different types of uses were considered, even though they will change during the 20 year time frame of this plan.
- **Desires of the City:** The land use patterns desired by City officials and property owners has been expressed with the objective of diversified housing opportunities, commercial services, civic uses to serve residents, and complementary mixture of uses.

Regional Influences

Farmington's relationship to adjacent communities and the larger metropolitan area has had an impact on the development of the City.

- Almost entirely surrounded by the City of Farmington Hills, the City of Farmington is clearly impacted by land use decisions and activities there. The City of Farmington Hills is generally characterized by a more suburban development pattern than the City of Farmington. In addition, the City of Farmington has emerged as a center of commerce for both cities, which has resulted in less commercial land uses and more open space uses in the City of Farmington Hills.
- Farmington shares its extreme southern boundary with the City of Livonia, which has also emerged as a desirable place to live and work. Livonia and other surrounding communities like Farmington Hills, Southfield and Novi, collectively help to create a prosperous regional economy, from which the City of Farmington benefits.
- The M-5 Highway traverses the City from northwest to southeast. Generally following the Grand River Corridor, M-5 provides convenient connections to the Interstates of I-96, I-275 and I-696 to the northwest and to 8 Mile (M-102), a major collector to the southeast. Relatively recent extensions of M-5 (the Haggerty Connector), has increased access to the northern communities of Walled Lake, West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills.



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Future Land Use Recommendations

The Future Land Use Map is a guide intended to assist in decision-making. The City of Farmington's future land use plan focuses on maintaining and enhancing the stable community character and balanced mixture of land uses. The proposed land use areas are described as follows, with illustrative examples for each land use.



Example of traditional single family neighborhood

Single-Family Residential: Single family residential areas are almost exclusively subdivided and developed with detached single family dwellings. The plan recommends maintaining the current well-balanced mixture of single family residential neighborhoods. As pointed out in the Community Profile section of this Master Plan, Farmington has a relatively small percentage of single family residential dwellings and land use area when compared to similar cities in southeast Michigan. Because of this, the plan recommends maintaining much of the existing single family residential and seeking opportunities to create additional single family residential through infill development. Other opportunities to strengthen the existing housing stock should also be pursued. The City may consider programs to encourage home renovation or expansion, such as façade improvement or low interest loan programs, as a way to continually appeal to a variety of family types and interests. Today's market demands larger homes that include such features as open floor plans, larger living areas, additional bathrooms and master suites. To compete, existing homes in Farmington may need to be renovated or expanded to include these features. In addition, façade improvements may be needed to help create more architectural variety than what is typically found in older neighborhoods. Some renovation concepts are provided in Appendix A to help the City and its residents determine some residential redevelopment options.



Example of townhouse dwellings

Multiple-Family Housing: Locations are identified for multiple family housing including townhomes or attached condominiums, senior housing and apartment complexes. As pointed out in the Community Profile section of this Master Plan, Farmington's proportion of multiple family residential to single family residential dwellings is relatively high when compared to similar cities in southeast Michigan. Because of this, the plan does not recommend converting existing single family residential areas to multiple family, but instead redeveloping existing multiple family areas with newer housing stock. A goal of the plan is to develop more owner-occupied



housing that contributes towards a compact, walkable community. Townhouses and attached condominiums would be consistent with this goal.

Neighborhood Centers: This land use category refers to commercial uses of a smaller scale and lower intensity land uses on small lots with limited parking and low traffic volumes. The types of uses in the neighborhood commercial areas should be limited to retail, restaurants and personal service establishments necessary to meet the daily needs of City residents. This area can also include banks and small-scale office service uses such as offices for insurance agents or real estate brokers, large scale commercial uses or uses that are heavily auto-oriented should not be encouraged in these areas. These neighborhood centers are located in close proximity to the residential neighborhoods they serve and should include design elements that are compatible with surrounding residential uses. While most buildings in this category will be single story, second floor offices or apartments should be allowed.



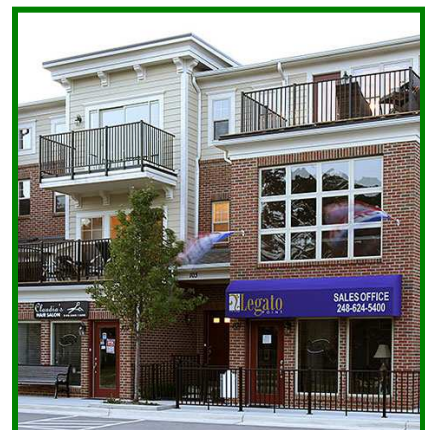
Example of bank with offices

General Commercial: This commercial designation refers to larger scale and more intense commercial uses including larger multi-tenant strip shopping centers. Types of commercial uses include retail, restaurants, personal service and office. These uses will tend to be located on large sites, have larger buildings, provide more expansive off-street parking and include truck-unloading areas. These uses should be further separated from surrounding residential areas through the use of larger setbacks, physical barriers and transitional land uses. General Commercial areas typically do not include residential uses; however, future redevelopment of some of the outdated shopping centers could look at creating a new mixed use environment. This would need to be done through a complete redevelopment of the area to transform from an auto-oriented center to a mixed use neighborhood and would best be handled under a Planned Unit Development.



Example of retail shopping center

Mixed Use: This designation applies to areas along Grand River Avenue outside of the downtown that could also benefit from redevelopment with a mixture of uses. It is intended to accommodate both commercial and residential uses in a fashion that is mutually complementary. Retail uses could take advantage of exposure to Grand River Avenue and upper story residential would help to contribute towards a more compact, pedestrian and transit-oriented land use pattern. These could include buildings that are vertically integrated with residential above retail uses. Live-work units are



Example of mixed use building with residential above retail



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Existing buildings in Downtown Farmington

another potential for these areas. Mixed use areas should be comprehensively developed to allow for shared access, parking, stormwater management, and provision of pedestrian plazas.

Central Business District: The City's central business district should continue to contain a mixture of uses situated in a compact, pedestrian oriented downtown. Uses should include retail, restaurants, personal service establishments, office and residential. Within the central business district, retail and restaurants should be encouraged on the first floor with office and apartments on the second floor. The commercial uses on the first floor should stimulate sidewalk level activity. Apartments on the upper floors create a 24-hour population within the downtown and office uses create additional daytime activity to help support retail businesses. Infill development around the edges of the downtown with townhouses will also help maintain a strong downtown population.



Example of office building with ground floor service uses

Office: While the various commercial designations include office uses intermixed with commercial, an area has been designated exclusively for office uses. This area contains larger office buildings with a multitude of uses, such as medical office centers. In contrast to the central business district, office uses in this area should be more suburban in nature with stand-alone buildings, larger setbacks and individual parking lots.



Example of light industrial building

Industrial: The industrial areas include typical manufacturing uses, industrial services such as contractors and other heavy commercial uses such as major automotive repair facilities. The location of industrial uses along 8 Mile and 9 Mile Roads provides high visibility of these sites for commercial uses.

Public/Quasi-Public: Locations designated for public/quasi-public land uses are reserved for public buildings, parks, schools, museums, religious institutions, cemeteries and other similar community organizations.

If there is any redevelopment of public sites for non-public uses, such as with the former District Court building or school facilities, proper land use relationships must be maintained to ensure design and uses are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The Planned Unit Development (PUD) option contained in the Zoning Ordinance would be a good approach for this type of redevelopment. PUD provides design options to permit flexibility in



the regulation of land development and innovation in design for the following:

- The relatively large size of sites allows coordinated development and transitional land uses within the site to ensure compatibility with the surrounding area.
- Clustering residential units can be used to preserve common open space and natural features such as trees, topography and key views.
- Compatible land uses or residential types can be mixed on the overall site in a manner not allowed under a more conventional zoning district. This could allow for a mixture of smaller scale neighborhood commercial or office uses on a larger site along with multiple family and single family housing. The different land uses within the site can be arranged to be compatible with and relate to adjacent land uses.
- Uniformity in design can be achieved for larger, mixed-use PUD's through coordination of architectural styles, landscaping, ornamental lighting, pedestrian circulation and vehicular access.

Greenway Overlay: The Upper Rouge River, which originates in Farmington Hills, flows from the northwest to the southeast through the eastern portion of the City of Farmington. A large part of the river flows through and is a key attraction at the City's Shiawassee Park. Access to the park is provided through various road connections as well as through pedestrian bridges over the river. Sidewalk connections from nearby neighborhoods and downtown also provide access. Numerous residents and visitors frequent the park for both active and passive recreational activities. The park maintains several amenities including a playground, several baseball diamonds, tennis courts, pavilions and paved pathways exist throughout the park, especially along the river. For this reason, the City envisions a greenway along the entire length of the Rouge River to help provide an area for future pedestrian links to these parks and other destinations. This linear park should include both sides of the river where pathways and riverside parks may be developed in the future. The objective for this greenway is to provide pathway extensions and connections to downtown, other regional parks and local destinations. Specific recommendations to achieve this objective are discussed in Chapter Six.



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Historic District Overlay: Historic buildings throughout the City should be given special care when considered for modifications, additions or renovations. Most commonly they include homes within the City's Historic District, and downtown commercial buildings. However, other buildings may have significance that have not been formally recognized. While renovations or alterations to buildings in the City's Historic District are subject to additional review and restrictions that help to protect their integrity, these others are susceptible to large scale modifications and even complete demolition. In an effort to provide incentives to protect these structures, the federal, state and county governments have developed programs that reward historic preservation. The City of Farmington encourages adaptive reuse of significant structures, and highly recommends private owners of such buildings consider the following tax incentives and programs when considering renovations or modifications:

- **Federal Tax Credits:** The federal government offers a 20% income tax credit for certified rehabilitation projects. Administered by the National Park Service and IRS in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Office, this program is available to income-producing property such as commercial, industrial or residential rental projects.
- **Michigan Rehabilitation Tax Credit:** The Michigan State Historic Preservation Office offers a 25% tax credit that can be more broadly applied to both income-producing and owner-occupied property. Tax credit is available to buildings within the Historic District and any sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and are applied toward state income and business taxes.
- **Historic Preservation Fund:** This grant program is available to Certified Local Governments and supports work including 1) building surveys; 2) registration; 3) planning; 4) public education; 5) restoration planning; and 6) restoration.
- **Main Street Oakland County:** Oakland County offers assistance to participating communities in the county with traditional downtowns like Farmington. In addition to providing educational, mentoring, planning and evaluation services aimed at advancing local community planning in their downtown, the Main Street Oakland County program offers technical assistance to property owners with needs assessments, on-site review and recommendations, and can even help with architectural assistance. The program partners with



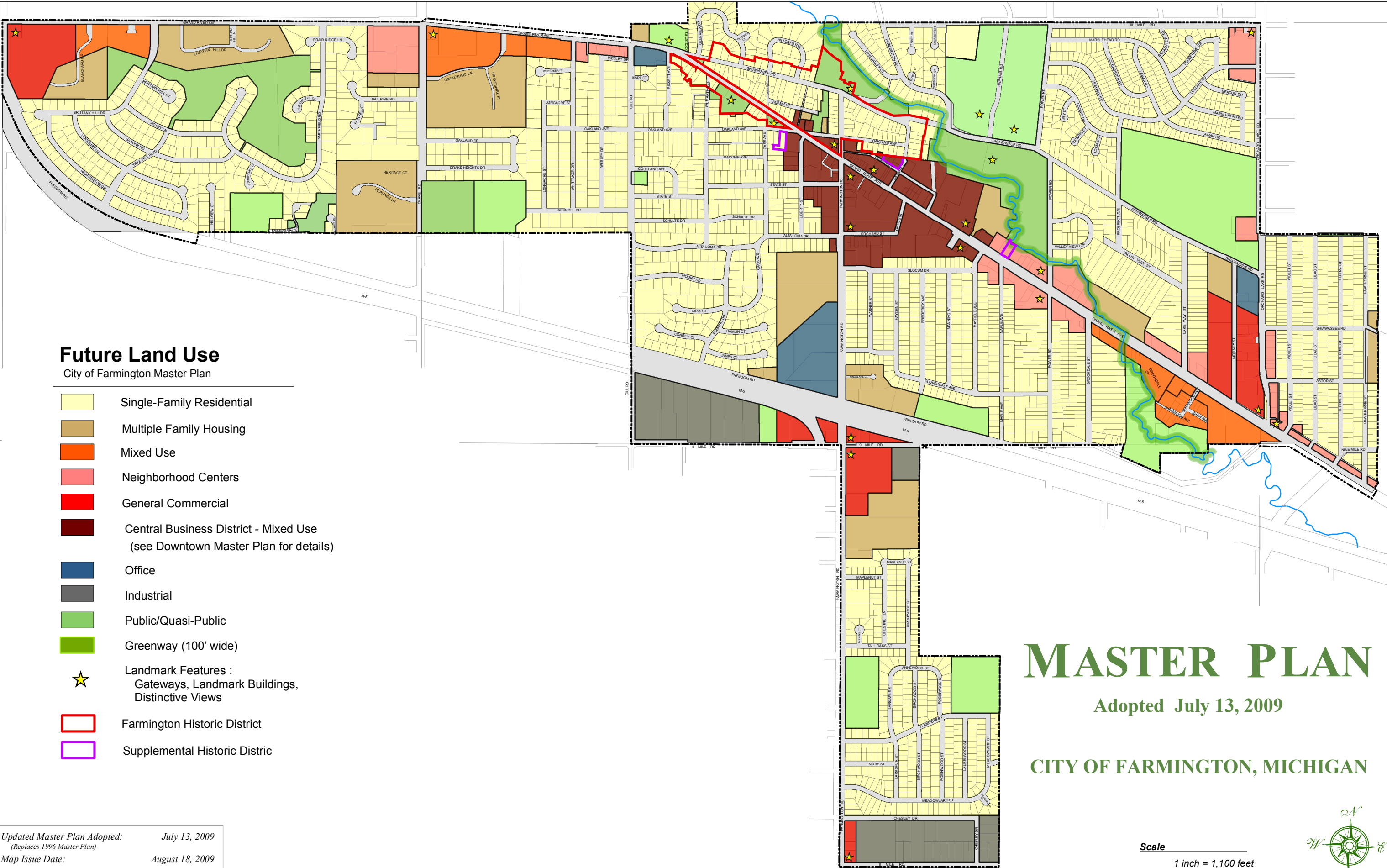
the State Historic Preservation Office to provide a comprehensive package for both communities and property owners.

Farmington's downtown is compact and well-defined, and demand for parking and building expansion downtown may cause some buildings that surround it to be targeted for demolition. Of particular concern are the properties located within both the Central Business Future Land Use District and the Historic District overlay (see map on page 2-7). Some locations in these areas have been designated on the zoning map as RIP, Residential Parking, which intends to convert sites on the fringe of the Central Business Zoning District into expanded parking facilities for downtown businesses and buffer areas for nearby residential uses. Since the goal for redevelopment downtown can be construed to conflict with the Historic Commission's goals for preservation, this Master Plan recommends that each site be discussed as development interests arise. It is not a goal of this Plan to seek redevelopment of these sites per se, rather to suggest that early discussion, before formal applications are made, are the best time to address these concerns, not after costly planning and engineering have taken place.

While the need for parking is a justified concern for the CBD, where possible, structures that contribute to the City's historic character, contain significant architectural features, or mark a place or person in history should be considered for adaptive reuse instead of total demolition. Adaptive reuse involves analysis of older sites and buildings to identify significant features and development of a site-specific plan to protect them while still maintaining reasonable use of the building for such uses as offices or rental residential units. However, this is not to suggest that all buildings surrounding downtown should be preserved. The fate of buildings must balance the benefits of historic preservation with that of downtown revitalization. Both endeavors are important to the overall success of the City; therefore, where the demonstrated need for parking outweighs the cultural significance of an existing building, demolition may be most appropriate. Decisions whether to demolish or reuse existing homes surrounding downtown should be made in concert with the City's Planning Commission, Downtown Development Authority and Historic Commission to ensure the utmost care is given and all options are explored before demolition occurs. If possible, an inventory and analysis of these sites should be conducted to provide future developers with clear direction.



City of Farmington Master Plan



Future Land Use
City of Farmington Master Plan

- Single-Family Residential
- Multiple Family Housing
- Mixed Use
- Neighborhood Centers
- General Commercial
- Central Business District - Mixed Use
(see Downtown Master Plan for details)
- Office
- Industrial
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Greenway (100' wide)
- Landmark Features :
Gateways, Landmark Buildings,
Distinctive Views
- Farmington Historic District
- Supplemental Historic District

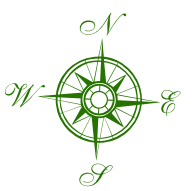
Updated Master Plan Adopted: July 13, 2009
(Replaces 1996 Master Plan)
Map Issue Date: August 18, 2009
Base Map Current as of: August 14, 2009

MASTER PLAN

Adopted July 13, 2009

CITY OF FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN

Scale
1 inch = 1,100 feet





Chapter Five: Sub-Areas and Redevelopment

This chapter discusses some areas of the City in more detail, prescribing more specific recommendations and suggestions that will advance the vision for these areas. Because much of Farmington is developed, most of the future development activity will be in the form of infill, redevelopment or remodel of existing sites. Recently, the City of Farmington became a Charter Member of the Michigan Suburbs Alliance (MSA), a non-profit organization committed to strengthening inner-ring suburbs through policy reform, innovative redevelopment strategies and regional cooperation. Their “Redevelopment Ready” program aims to assist mature suburbs in anticipating redevelopment in a way that encourages the activity. Targeted strategies to accomplish meaningful redevelopment and promote MSA’s vision are discussed throughout this Chapter.

Central Business District

Farmington’s Central Business District has evolved into a unique mixture of uses and buildings that create a vibrant downtown. The desired form of development within the downtown is retail on the first floor, with residential and offices on upper floors. This mixture of uses creates more vitality and strengthens the downtown because the different uses create activity on the streets during different times of the day. While the downtown is relatively small in scale, having some office workers within the area helps support the daytime market for commercial uses, particularly restaurants. Upper story apartments and residential neighborhoods within close proximity to the downtown are also encouraged. This maintains a population within the downtown in the evening hours and enhances its vitality.

The current mixture of uses should be continued and enhanced. While specific uses will be dictated largely by market factors, the City needs to ensure that a proper mix of uses are permitted in the downtown that can evolve in a fashion that is mutually supportive of a strong and viable downtown. The City also needs to ensure that the physical manifestation of the downtown, including architecture, building height, building location in relation to surrounding uses and design of parking areas





City of Farmington Master Plan

fosters a strong and viable central business district that continues to be a desirable place to live, shop and work.

The City of Farmington commissioned development of a Downtown Master Plan in 2004. While that Plan remains effective on its own, for sake of providing a comprehensive resource, the goals and strategies for improving land use, parking, circulation and building design recommended for the downtown have been summarized in this Plan.

It is important to understand the administrative dynamic between the City of Farmington and the Farmington Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The DDA holds its own authority and responsibilities and maintains its own vision strategies for downtown Farmington, as illustrated in the Downtown Master Plan and the DDA/Tax Increment Financing Plan. This Master Plan is drafted on behalf of the City Planning Commission, which is a legally separate entity than the DDA. This Plan does not intend to recommend changes to any DDA plan or policy. Rather, it presents the City's overall long-term land use goals for all property in the City. The downtown area of the City benefits from oversight by the DDA, and in many cases, development plans are reviewed by both the Planning Commission and the DDA. Where this Plan recommends administrative changes, they relate solely to the practices of the Planning Commission and the general City administration.

Please refer to the Downtown Master Plan for more complete design guidelines and recommendations for downtown.

Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan is where the vision for Downtown Farmington begins to take shape. This plan offers direction on the types of uses appropriate in downtown and takes it a step further to provide a potential building and parking layout plan for those uses. These recommendations not only address the use of existing buildings, but also recommend where in-fill buildings should be constructed and where redevelopment should occur.

Public Spaces: All successful downtowns offer public spaces for gathering and convenient routes to access businesses, parking and adjoining neighborhoods. Public open spaces in the form of parks and plazas provide



open space for enjoyment of residents and shoppers and provide visual elements that enhance the variety and identity of the downtown. Downtown Farmington offers some of these elements, including a new pavilion built near Riley Park. The Walter E. Sundquist Farmington Pavilion was built in 2005 and is now a local gathering place and home of a weekly Farmers and Artisan Market in the summer. Currently, visibility to the Shiawassee River is not provided from the downtown. The City should implement the following strategies to develop public spaces throughout the downtown that offer comfortable places for visitors to gather and circulate:

- Link Riley Park and the pavilion with pathways and open space to the river and consider creative ways to address the steep slope at the river bank.
- Protect and enhance existing civic uses such as the City Hall and the Library.
- Concentrate pedestrian generating uses together and focus pedestrian facilities nearby.
- Orient buildings toward each other so there is activity on both sides of the street.
- Improve access to parking with convenient locations and through-block and through-building connectors.



Example of an appropriate downtown public gathering space

Pedestrian Environment: The desired form of development downtown includes pedestrian elements that are largely defined by the design of buildings that line the sidewalks. The downtown contains a variety of buildings and site elements, many of which create a positive pedestrian environment. There are also some elements of the downtown that are not conducive to creating a comfortable pedestrian environment. Elements that detract from the positive pedestrian environment are parking lots, driveways, blank walls and garage doors, which in the downtown are largely located in the rear yards, allowing for proper pedestrian activity along the road frontages. Providing a safe interface between motorized vehicles and the pedestrian is critical in the downtown to maintaining a level of comfort for those visiting the area. Areas of particular concern include pedestrian crossings over the highly traveled corridors of Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road.



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The following features contribute to an interesting and pedestrian friendly downtown. Many of these principles are also applicable to redevelopment of other commercial nodes throughout the City, but particular attention should be given to the downtown area, where pedestrian activity is most prevalent.



Curb extension/sidewalk flare to reduce crosswalk width

- **Road Crossings:** Design of crosswalks is critical to ensuring proper safety for pedestrians and vehicles. Safety hazards exist where the non-motorized system crosses individual driveways, or where they meet at a road intersection. Crosswalk improvements should include the following:
 - Pavement markings should clearly indicate to motorists where pedestrian activity will occur. Vehicles must not block these areas.
 - Maintain clear vision zones at all intersections to increase visibility for motorists, pedestrians and bikers, all of whom need to be aware of potential conflicts.
 - Narrow the roadway at crossing points by installing sidewalk flares and curb extensions or medians and raised islands within the roadway to create a safe haven for pedestrians and bikers. This will reduce the number of lanes a pedestrian must cross and increases their perceived safety.
 - Provide adequate lighting at intersections so pedestrians and bikers are safe at all hours.
 - Include overhead flashers to indicate non-signalized crossing points. Mid-block crossings can be further enhanced by using pavement markings or texture and signage at the motorists' eye level.
 - Consider restrictions of right turns on red at high volume intersections, as most motorists fail to consider the pedestrian when turning.
 - Include medians in the design or redesign of intersections, especially where a high volume of pedestrian activity is expected. Medians provide safer crosswalk options for all residents.
-
- **Proper Scale:** Development and redevelopment needs to be consistent with the historic architecture, mixture of uses and compact layout of a traditional small town. The density and design of



development needs to be at a scale that puts uses within a walkable distance. There should be a complementary and integrated mixture of employment, shopping, entertainment, civic and residential uses within a walkable town. Residential uses need to be within walkable distance to shopping and recreation opportunities.

The actual central business district should be maintained at a size that is within reasonable walking distance of the surrounding neighborhoods. The downtown is currently ½ mile across, which is an ideal size. Additional commercial development should concentrate on infill and redevelopment, as opposed to expanding the boundaries of the downtown. To reinforce the downtown as a distinctive place, it is important that there be a proper transition between the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

- **Pedestrian Circulation:** The downtown needs an integrated pedestrian circulation system which conveniently links the downtown with surrounding neighborhoods, provides strong connections between uses in the downtown and is unified with public gathering places.
- **Relationship to Pedestrian:** Buildings should be designed to relate to the pedestrian scale. Pedestrians respond differently to different building frontages. The most attractive and comfortable building frontages to pedestrians are storefronts with large windows and displayed merchandise. Commercial structures need to have windows that relate to the public sidewalk and provide interest. Building entrances should utilize windows, canopies and awnings; provide unity of scale, texture, and color, and provide a sense of place. In addition, long blank walls along the sidewalk should be avoided.
- **Street Trees:** The City currently has a street tree-planting program. Over time, trees will need to be replaced as they overgrow their environment. Planting trees and landscaping along a roadway can provide a sense of comfort for the pedestrian, but recent research suggests streetscape elements can also improve road safety by increasing driver awareness and perception. While the placement of trees along main commercial streets needs to give a proper sense of rhythm and enclosure, consideration also needs to be given to the relationship of trees to buildings. Where possible, trees should be



Example of pedestrian-friendly streetscape



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planted at lot lines to properly frame the building as seen from the street and opposing sidewalk. As trees are replaced, their location should be determined with consideration given to the spacing from other trees and the architecture of the adjacent buildings.

- **Street Lights:** The City currently has very high quality ornamental lighting throughout the downtown. This lighting style can be implemented in other appropriate locations of the City, particularly along the commercial sections of Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road. Using a consistent style of lighting within the various commercial areas of the City can be a unifying feature. Ornamental lighting also reinforces linkages by leading pedestrians to other areas of the City, i.e. parks, civic plazas, etc.



Example of inappropriate building line – inconsistent building line



Example of inconsistent building facades

Residential and Business Uses: Downtown Farmington currently offers a mixture of businesses including retail shops, services, restaurants, and professional offices. Despite the variety of businesses, additional uses and services are needed that serve daily needs of residents living in and near downtown. Businesses also keep limited hours, so later in the evening and on the weekend there is limited activity at times when residents are most available to visit downtown. Also, buildings are spread out in downtown with minimal physical connection, creating several areas of inconsistent building facades. Residential use is lacking in downtown, which is important to supporting businesses. In order to create a vibrant mixed use downtown that offers appropriately located businesses, services, and residential opportunities, the City should consider the following strategies:

- Maximize the use of land through multiple story buildings, mixed-use buildings, high density residential, and multiple level parking.
- Focus commercial activity to the core of downtown at Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road, and Grove Street and at the street level of buildings.
- Limit commercial uses to high activity generators such as retail shops, personal service uses, restaurants, bars, and theaters.
- Support accessory outdoor dining and sales in appropriate locations to bring activity to the street front.



- Promote in-fill construction to create a consistent building line and streetscape along all downtown streets, especially Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road.
- Infuse downtown Farmington with residential uses to create more day, night, and weekend activity.
- Locate stand alone residential on the fringe as a transition, and promote townhouse style housing downtown.
- Create a residential/office activity area on the south side of downtown at Farmington Road and Orchard Street.

Historic Preservation: The City contains significant historic, architectural and cultural resources that are a major asset to the community. There are numerous examples of exceptional architecture in the downtown. The Planning Commission needs to carefully consider renovations to older structures in order to ensure that the historic character of these buildings is retained. In addition, development or redevelopment in the historic district and central business district should be designed in keeping with the existing building character.



Landmarks: Landmarks are features that create a distinct community center and focal point such as the Masonic Temple. Landmark features are shown on the future land use plan at key locations such as at entry points into the City at prominent corners and at the end of visual corridors. Landmarks are intended to announce entry into the City, provide a sense of place at key locations, and create visual focal points at the end of vistas.

Corner Locations: Special treatment to the corners of street intersections is an important and effective means to create community landmarks. Buildings located on corner lots can be designed to become very distinct and prominent architectural features. The shapes and views created by the angle of Grand River Avenue through the City provides a remarkable opportunity to create interest in the City of Farmington and diversity from the other surrounding communities that are dominated by a regular grid pattern. Special consideration towards architecture and site elements should reflect the importance of the building's corner location and create a positive visual landmark. The Village Mall at the corner of Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road is an excellent illustration of this principle.



Parking Plan

Parking is a crucial element in ensuring the success of Farmington's downtown. Past discussions with businesses and the Economic Restructuring Committee revealed that offering convenient parking that meets the demands of all businesses should be a priority. Downtown parking plans should consider the following recommendations:

Parking Spaces: There are approximately 2,370 parking spaces in downtown. They are primarily found in public and private off-street surface parking lots, with fewer public on-street parking opportunities. The Downtown Development Authority recently completed a Parking Study of the downtown that indicates parking occupancy is approximately 44%. Parking occupancy for on-street and public off-street parking spaces were much higher, 78% and 50% respectively. Optimal occupancy is between 85% and 90%. The Parking Study indicates that while the existing parking supply exceeds current demand, they anticipate the need for more spaces throughout the downtown, based on a 10-year prediction of redevelopment and new demand. The Study recommends the City proactively plan for the development of parking decks to help meet future demand if various downtown sites are redeveloped.

The strategies listed below offer ways to efficiently use the limited land area in the downtown to offer ample parking opportunities and accessibility to serve businesses and other uses:

- Provide a balanced parking plan that increases the amount of parking in the downtown to meet existing and future parking demands.
- Maximize use of limited land area through efficient, unified parking lot design where parking is consolidated for several uses.
- Accommodate on-street parallel parking on State Street, Alta Loma Street, New Orchard Street, Thomas Street, and School Street within the boundary of the DDA.
- Study the feasibility of on-street parking on both sides of Farmington Road within the downtown area in place of (2) travel lanes.
- Add sidewalk flares or extensions to protect parked cars and define travel lanes.



- Accommodate on-street or angled parking, whichever is most feasible, along newly created streets near the central park area and along Grove Street.
- Consider opportunities for parking structures in three locations to maximize use of the land: Warner and Thomas Street, at the parking lot south of Grand River Avenue, and north of Grand River Avenue east of School Street.
- Concentrate the majority of parking spaces in the core of downtown north of Grand River Avenue, west of Warner Street; and south of Grand River Avenue west of Grove Street. Consider these areas the highest priority for parking improvements.
- Disperse parking areas throughout downtown to provide convenient parking in all activity areas.
- Provide rear entries to businesses from parking lots.
- Improve pedestrian connections between parking areas and buildings.

Parking Enhancement: Parking lots are commonly the first impression of a downtown. A tour of Downtown Farmington reveals the need to focus on enhancing the views of parking areas. The City should provide well-designed parking areas for visitors of downtown that reflect the welcoming, high quality image of Farmington. The following strategies are designed to accomplish this goal:

- Require enhanced parking structure design to limit visual impact through building materials, landscaping, and development of ‘liner’ buildings so that businesses are located at the street level of the structure.
- Maintain parking areas to the rear of buildings, screened from view along the streetscape while still providing convenient access.
- Enhance the appearance of parking lots through landscape and green space.
- Improve pedestrian circulation through the parking lots to the sidewalk system and building entrances.
- Buffer parking areas from adjoining residential areas.



Design Guidelines

Design guidelines are needed to ensure the vision for Downtown Farmington is carried out during site development. These design guidelines will serve as a basis for building design, landscaping, circulation, lighting, and signage decisions.



Example of mixed-use/live-work building with commercial storefront

Downtown Buildings: During development of the Downtown Master Plan, various stakeholders expressed concern about losing the quality historic character of Downtown Farmington. Some downtown buildings are not cohesive with the desired character and include a wide mix of design styles from traditional to suburban. The suburban style buildings typically are one story with horizontal building lines and less ornate architectural detail. While creativity in design is encouraged, stark contrasts in building design can undermine the overall integrity of the block. The following building design elements should either be required or strongly recommended in the downtown:

- **Location:** Buildings should be placed at the zero lot line front yard setback. The intent is to create a continuous block face which is composed of buildings with similar proportions, setbacks, orientation, rhythm of fenestration, etc. Because buildings on corners are highly visible, they should be especially distinct in their architectural detailing. If possible, they should provide for outdoor pedestrian activity, such as café style seating in front of their building to entice visitors.
- **Pedestrian Scale:** Pedestrian scale can be achieved with large detailed windows at street level, awnings, and wall and column details to provide interest at eye level for pedestrians. All elements should be articulated to break down large structures into smaller components.
- **Architecture:** Building architecture and building materials should contribute to the overall small-town character as a place that has history and substance. Each structure needs to have its own identity and provide variety to the streetscape, but in general should consider the following:
 - Building materials should be durable, high quality, natural materials, such as stone or brick. Accent materials should be used to provide detail to enhance and not distract from the



overall building design. Shiny, neon or loud colors should not be used.

- Transparent windows should comprise a large portion of the ground level façade of commercial uses. Upper stories should contain less glass: the ratio of void to solid of the upper story façade should create a consistent rhythm from one building to another.
- Because of the mixture of uses that are in close proximity, the appearance of the rear facades of nonresidential buildings need to be considered in addition to the front facade.

- **Compatibility:** In general, buildings should incorporate architectural styles, materials, and colors that are consistent with surrounding buildings. This should not be construed as to suggest each building should look identical. Rather, it is intended to direct development so the scale, rhythm and architecture create an appealing environment for the pedestrian. Architectural and building design should represent the individuality and creativity of the land owner, but should not be done in a way as to distract from the overall character of the block. Therefore, in order to contribute to the overall character of downtown, building design should consider the following elements:

- Building stories should be clearly delineated between each floor using cornice lines or other type of architectural detailing.
- Buildings should provide individual elements such as archways, cornices, and colonnades to make them distinctive.
- Attached buildings should maintain consistent cornice lines and rhythm of openings.
- Architectural styles should complement the historic character and not distract.
- All roof mechanical equipment to be screened from view.

- **Lighting:** Lighting should be shielded and used to softly highlight architectural features without glare. Only natural colored light should be used; neon or flashing lights should not be allowed.
- **Access:** Primary access to all buildings should be placed along the street. A rear entrance should be provided when the rear of the building is located near parking areas and public spaces. This entrance should be detailed appropriately to invite patrons.



Example of compatible architecture with mixed uses

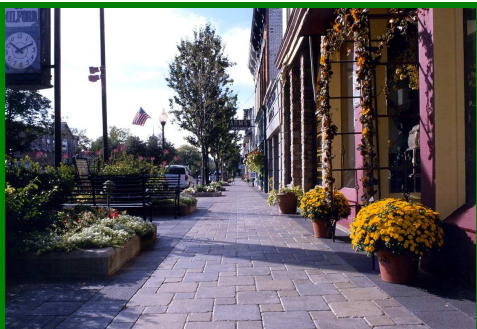


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Streetscape and Landscape Plantings: The streetscape and landscaping around downtown in several areas is minimal or nonexistent. Several buildings are paved from their façade to the curb and lack street trees, planters, plantings, pots, furniture, etc. In addition, the perimeters of parking areas as well as the interiors have little landscaping or streetscape amenities for pedestrian interest and safety.



Existing Grand River Avenue streetscape in Downtown Farmington



Example of varied planters in streetscape



Existing ornamental street lights in downtown Farmington

- **Street Trees:**

- Street trees should be used in a continuous manner to provide pedestrian scale and define the street corridor.
- Street trees should be consistently spaced, near the curb line, and parallel to the street.
- Varieties of trees should: vary from street to street, be hardy to the climate, have minimal leaf litter, be free of thorns, berries or seeds, and reach a mature size of 30-50' height and 15-30' width.
- Street trees should be located so that they don't block traffic sight lines, architectural features, signage, or pose other safety issues.
- Street trees to be placed in curbed planters wherever possible instead of in tree grates.

- **Landscape Plantings:** Landscaping should be included in streetscape design to frame and accent prominent vistas, landmarks and significant architecture and in pedestrian areas to emphasize the entry location and provide interest and welcome to patrons. Landscape plantings should not be placed where they impede circulation. Artificial plantings should not be used, and plantings should be appropriate for the urban environment: hardy and thornless in well maintained beds free of weeds and litter. Window plantings, terrace and roof top gardens are encouraged.

- **Lighting:** Ornamental pole lights identical to or similar to those along the Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road should be used for new development and along pedestrian sidewalk connections, plazas, pocket parks, civic areas, etc.

- **Street Furniture:** Street furniture to be used in downtown should include: benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, ground and hanging pots, moveable table and chairs, etc. Style should be timeless and consistent with the architecture of downtown, yet



flexible enough to blend to the architectural diversity of all downtown buildings.

- **Fences and Walls:** Fences and walls should be used to provide screening with materials appropriate to the adjacent buildings. Quality durable materials, such as stone, masonry and iron should be used with sufficient detail and enhanced with landscape plantings.
- **Outdoor Seating, Pocket Parks and Plazas:** Outdoor pedestrian areas and public spaces should be encouraged throughout downtown with visible links to uses and neighborhoods. Public facilities, such as drinking fountains, restrooms, telephones and outdoor music and/or speaker systems should also be considered.
- **Signs and Awnings:** Design of signage should consider the building architecture and materials. Signs and awnings should complement the building façade, and should not be located or mounted in a way that obstructs significant architectural features or that damages the façade. Where possible, wall or hanging signs are preferred over freestanding signs. All signs should be constructed of quality materials and should maintain a pedestrian scale that does not compete with other signs. Translucent plastic signs which have internal lighting, billboard or large billboard type signs should not be allowed.

Redevelopment Strategy

The City needs to encourage and embrace redevelopment activity, but must ensure that in doing so it continues to maintain the vision for downtown as discussed above. Often, redevelopment is encumbered by a set of existing conditions, upon which a redevelopment plan is based. Buildings scheduled for redevelopment are likely to have been constructed many years ago and do not adhere to the zoning and building codes of today. Therefore, some flexibility in site and building design is required. In addition, because of the complex nature of redevelopment activity, and the potentially higher costs associated with retrofitting existing buildings, the City needs to consider streamlined policies, ordinances and review procedures that actually encourage redevelopment. The following strategies are recommended as a way to encourage downtown redevelopment. These strategies may also be applied to other commercial areas of the City:



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Regulatory Flexibility: Many of Farmington’s buildings were built with integrity and quality, and can be restored, renovated and redeveloped into a viable use. To encourage retention of existing buildings over complete reconstruction, the City needs to provide regulatory flexibility so existing conditions can be considered during plan review. Established setbacks, location of parking, driveways, window and door placement, and structural building design often dictate how a site or building can be redeveloped, and local ordinances need to respect these items and focus on improving items that can be changed, like landscaping, exterior building materials, signage and buffering.

Streamlined Review Process: The City of Farmington currently relies on the Planning Commission to review any redevelopment plans presented. The City should consider allowing administrative review of certain redevelopment plans if they meet various measurable criteria. Projects meeting the highest standard for redevelopment could be allowed a shorter review, which creates an incentive for developers to use higher quality design and building materials. For projects that need more flexibility, review by the Planning Commission can still be offered, whereby additional waivers or deviations from these administrative standards can be granted. Using this approach, developers will see that the length of their review will be determined by their commitment to providing a quality redevelopment project.



Residential Neighborhoods

There are a number of factors that make the City of Farmington an attractive place to live. These include the small town atmosphere within close proximity to major employment centers in the surrounding metropolitan area, the availability of a wide variety of housing types and prices, the quality community character and the abundance of community facilities such as exemplary schools, parks, religious institutions, and other City facilities.

Neighborhood Preservation and Resident Retention

The value of homes in Farmington is increasing due its desirable location, but measures must be taken to ensure the housing stock remains desirable to current and future residents. Today, homeowners seek larger homes with larger living areas, additional bathrooms and larger master suites. Growing families often require additional living and bedroom areas as well. In Farmington, where the housing stock is generally smaller and sometimes older than in surrounding communities, this Plan seeks to retain existing families and residents in a number of ways:

Strengthen Community Pride: Through the various recommendations for the downtown, neighborhoods and community facilities proposed, this Plan seeks to lift community pride as an amenity more valuable than any else. A strong sense of belonging in a community will often override urges to seek other, larger homes. In communities like Farmington, an attractive downtown that is accessible by pathways along with local parks and schools can strengthen the desirability of neighborhoods where larger lots are unnecessary since children have other places to gather and play.

Home Ownership: Establishing strong residents is a key component in building community pride. Providing opportunities for home ownership is perhaps the best way to increase local awareness and improve neighborhood conditions. The City should encourage development of owner-occupied housing, either through conversion of existing multiple-family apartments into condominium or co-op units, or through larger scale development or redevelopment. Providing owner-occupancy is not something that can be regulated into reality. Rather, the City must provide the needed incentives and regulations that encourage development of units that provide a single entrance for every unit rather than community entrances. Often, attached

Great Neighborhoods...

- Have distinct centers and edges
- Are of a walkable scale
- Balance a mix of uses and activities
- Include interconnected streets and pathway systems
- Have street systems that create a comfortable, safe environment
- Include living areas and front entries as the prominent home feature
- Use unifying elements to help identify the neighborhood
- Embrace their historic, cultural, and civic resources
- Have a formal organization



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single-family development in forms such as duplexes or townhomes include the amenities desired in single-family neighborhoods in a more urban setting that is attractive to young professionals as well as empty nesters. Where possible, the City should pursue State and Federally funded programs, such as those provided by the Michigan State Housing and Development Authority, to provide additional financial assistance to local residents.

Home Maintenance: The residential neighborhoods within the City are generally well maintained. The historic homes, even those along Grand River Avenue, retain a high quality single family residential integrity. The City should continue the policy of maintaining these neighborhoods as single family residential. Conversion of single family residences to non-residential uses should be discouraged. Where infill development or redevelopment is proposed, the physical composition of such development needs to be in



keeping with the existing character of the neighborhood. The prominence of garage doors along the public street should be minimized and other features such as porches, and windows accentuated. The architectural styles of homes should be in character with the existing homes in the area.

Tree Replacement and Diversity: Many of the trees within these neighborhoods are mature and will begin to decline becoming susceptible to disease and wind damage. The City should systematically replace these trees as they begin to die to ensure that there is a cycle of introducing new trees into these neighborhoods.

Pedestrian Links to Community Core: The neighborhoods within the western and southern portions of the City are more removed from the downtown and the community facilities of the downtown and Rouge River Valley. Efforts should be made to create stronger pedestrian linkages between these outlying neighborhoods and the center of the City, or to provide new neighborhood centers that may provide needed goods and services to residents in these areas.



Pedestrian Safety: Pedestrian activity with residential neighborhoods needs to be safe and convenient. Elements such as lighting, maintenance, and proper crossing enhancements will bring comfort to sidewalk and pathway users, which will encourage more use. Maintaining a strong interconnection between neighborhoods, local parks and community amenities will also increase pedestrian activity. On local streets where pedestrian and vehicular activity conflict, roads should be designed to prioritize the pedestrian using traffic calming or other physical design elements.

Blight Prevention: While areas of blight are limited, the City needs to continue to enforce the blight ordinance and other ordinances to ensure that a pattern of decline does not begin.

Consider Emerging Trends: In order to retain existing residents and families, the City needs to respond to changing trends and demands. For example, because many communities are experiencing increasing senior populations, various needs for housing and medical care are also increasing. The City should perform regular reviews of local ordinances and regulations to ensure desired trends are supported. This could include allowing mother-in-law apartments in appropriate locations, or encouraging varied housing types such as assisted living, convalescent care, or nursing homes. Conversely, if the City experiences increases in school age children, it should consider development of additional neighborhood parks or encouraging additional day care facilities.

Redevelopment Strategy

Where necessary to increase livability and retain families, certain home improvements could be considered. Smaller home sizes can lead to loss of residents, especially growing families who need additional living space. Some basic renovation concepts are offered in Appendix A of this Plan, to give property owners some renovation ideas they might consider for their homes. Because retention of community character is a theme of this Plan, redevelopment or expansion of homes should not be done at the expense of existing neighborhood character. The suggestions given in the appendix should not be mistaken for pre-approved renovation plans, rather they are intended to spark the interest of homeowners to improve their homes as an alternative to moving out of the community. Any home renovation or



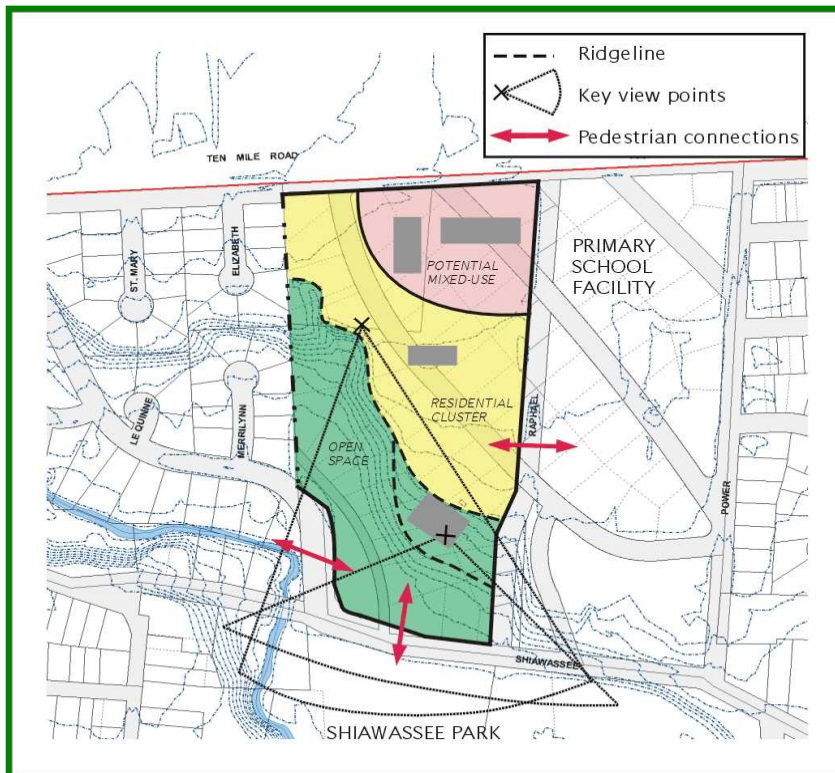
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expansion that alters the exterior of the building should carefully consider architecture, scale and character of existing homes along the block.

Larger scale residential redevelopment should provide housing types that may not already be provided in the Farmington housing market. New neighborhoods or residential developments must consider the context in which they are located, and should provide ownership opportunities in an array of forms that will provide options for the aging and disabled population as well as for individuals and growing families.

Ten Mile Road/Power Road Sub-Area: The City of Farmington maintains strong neighborhoods; however, the form and variety of homes in the City could be expanded. Opportunities for new residential development have been discussed throughout this Plan, but have focused on redevelopment of small residential sites rather than larger construction. One site, located at the southwest corner of Ten Mile Road and Raphael has been identified for potential new residential construction. Owned by the Farmington Public

School District, this site is currently used for school administrative and bus storage purposes. The northwest portion of the site is owned by the City of Farmington. While re-use of the site is not especially imminent, ideas for redevelopment of the site are provided to guide any future redevelopment plans.



The southwestern portion of the site is currently used for recreational purposes by school students as well as neighborhood residents. The hillside that falls below the ridge has been used historically as a sledding hill and is a highly used and treasured local amenity. The City works cooperatively with the Farmington Public Schools to operate and maintain the sledding hill and open space. One concern if this site is

developed is the potential loss of this area for recreational use, which is why it is recommended to be preserved. While maintaining this public space



within a privately-owned development may not be feasible, the City should work with future owners of the site to ensure that recreational use of this portion of the site is maintained as much as possible.

The site is conducive to residential redevelopment given its location and topography. Surrounding uses include residential neighborhoods to the north, west and southwest; Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School to the east and Shiawassee Park to the south. The natural topography of the site suggests residential development along the ridge of the property would provide spectacular views of both the park and the Rouge River that runs south of the site. Plans for redevelopment of this site should consider the following guidelines:

- Existing undisturbed areas of the site should remain as open space. This will provide a meaningful connection to Shiawassee Park, and will preserve the natural beauty of the site currently enjoyed by the community.
- Where feasible, use of the undeveloped areas of the site should remain for public recreational use. The City and future developers of the site should consider development options, incentives, or public/private partnerships or agreements to accomplish this.
- Residential development should be provided in clusters atop the ridge of the property. Provision of owner-occupied single-family or attached single-family (i.e. duplexes, townhomes, etc.) units is preferred.
- Limited office and commercial uses that serve the immediate neighborhoods may be allowed near the northeast corner of the site, where re-use of existing buildings is possible. Mixed use is encouraged to help maintain a residential component to the commercial development.
- Proper transitions from any non-residential use should be provided, especially at the eastern boundary of the site where it abuts existing neighborhoods. Transitions can include buffers and screening, but will preferably be in the form of a gradual transition from non-residential uses to attached single-family units to detached single-family homes.
- Pedestrian connections should be provided to Shiawassee Park and to the school facility, as well as to any greenway trail system that may be developed along the Rouge River in the future.



Commercial Sub-Areas

A common theme with this Plan is the desire to become “redevelopment ready” by considering the possibilities for renovated sites and uses in advance of the actual development activity. Certain areas, including local commercial and general commercial areas within the City were evaluated with this idea in mind. The sub-area plans provided in this Chapter are intended to provide visual images that embody the desired development form. They should not be confused with specific redevelopment plans, rather, they show how existing commercial buildings, strip commercial centers and large expanses of pavement can be converted to a development form that embraces the pedestrian in an environment that is both vibrant and safe.

Neighborhood commercial areas are intended to provide a mix of daily goods and services within walking distance of residential neighborhoods, providing an alternative to motorized transportation. It is expected that, through expansion of the permitted uses in some of these areas, some residential uses in the form of mixed-use development, will emerge in these areas. Some may find the smaller scale of neighborhood commercial areas more desirable for residential than more active areas of the City. While many still seek the living environment created downtown, others may find that over time these areas are more suitable to their needs.

General commercial areas, on the other hand, should include more intense uses that draw from a broader market. Therefore, inclusion of residential uses should be somewhat limited to minimize negative impacts. However, the concept of mixed-use is still desired, but should be included through planned unit development options rather than true mixed-use.

Grand River Avenue/Power Street

This location serves as a neighborhood commercial service node. It is beyond walking distance for shoppers in the downtown and does not provide a large enough scale to be considered a general commercial area like the intersection of Orchard Lake Road at Grand River Avenue. Therefore, the Plan recommends this area be developed as a smaller scale neighborhood commercial node. The intersection is currently characterized by parking and auto-oriented gas stations, which does not present the neighborhood



character or scale desired. The following recommendations should be considered for this area:

- Redevelopment of this area should focus on creating a distinct neighborhood commercial node centered at the intersection of Power Road. Redevelopment should include pedestrian-friendly design with buildings built to the front lot line and streetscape elements.
- The zoning district applied to this node should allow low intensity commercial uses that serve the surrounding neighborhoods.
- While maintaining strong pedestrian linkages along Grand River Avenue is important, strong linkages need to be developed to the neighborhoods north and south of the area along Power Road. This location is also well suited to provide pedestrian links to the downtown and greenway trail system along the Rouge River.

Orchard Lake Road/Ten Mile

This neighborhood center also serves as a gateway from Farmington Hills and I-696 to the north. Due to its proximity to the highway, some auto-oriented uses have emerged on the northern corners of this intersection, which are located outside the City limits. The only corner of this intersection within the City limits is the southwestern corner. To the extent permitted within the City's jurisdiction, the following recommendations are offered for this area:

- The zoning district applied to this node should allow small-scale or low-intensity commercial uses that serve the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Adequate buffers, such as brick walls and lower level lighting, should be provided between the commercial and surrounding residential uses.
- The City should work with Farmington Hills on upgrading the streetscape image of Orchard Lake Road and to develop a more specific redevelopment plan for all corners of the intersection that is more pedestrian oriented.



Grand River Avenue/ Orchard Lake Road

This portion of Grand River Avenue contains commercial land uses that take on various development forms, from development with buildings located close to the street and parking in the rear, to more suburban style development with large front yards. This commercial area acts as a gateway into downtown from communities to the east, including portions of Farmington Hills, Redford Township and Detroit. Development in this area should present a character that transitions into the urban environment.

In general, a consistent building line and development pattern should be sought along the corridor. Intersection improvements that enhance the aesthetics of the area should be pursued, as this is the first commercial area seen by those entering the City from the east. Particular attention should be made to the pedestrian environment here, as it currently acts as a more auto-oriented commercial destination. A concept plan was developed for this area that shows one possible redevelopment option (see left). While redevelopment of this area is not required to match the concept plan, it is intended to show how the area could be redeveloped into a mixed-use and pedestrian friendly environment, as illustrated in the sketch provided. The recommendations below are intended to support this concept plan:



The recommendations below are intended to support this concept plan:

- Encourage redevelopment of a form that provides the more urban setting desired for Farmington's commercial areas. Buildings should be built up to the road to create a pedestrian scale street character. Taller buildings can help to enclose the wide rights-of-way of Grand River Avenue and Orchard Lake Road with first-floor retail/commercial uses and residential above.



- Commercial uses can include general commercial and service uses. Integrated mixed use buildings could be considered along Orchard Lake Road, Grand River Avenue and Mooney Street.
- Encourage compact, pedestrian-oriented development that allows residents of this area to easily walk to local businesses.
- Promote streetscape enhancements, including street trees, wider sidewalks and other amenities to reinforce the pedestrian environment. Commercial uses should incorporate café seating or other outdoor pedestrian areas.
- Redevelopment on the south side of Grand River Avenue should incorporate the existing winery building as part of a mixed use, adaptive reuse.



- Uses on the south side of Grand River Avenue should overlook and integrate the river as an amenity to any redevelopment plan.
- Rear yard parking lots should be developed and integrated with existing alleyways and service drives of adjacent businesses along Grand River Avenue and Orchard Lake Road.
- Access management along Grand River Avenue should be pursued to improve the efficiency of the roadway, especially where secondary access is provided via side streets and rear drives.
- Provide the necessary buffers and screening at the rear of commercial uses to protect adjacent residences. Rear yard parking lots need to include sufficient landscaping and screening to buffer their impact from residential land uses. Outdoor lighting impacts need to be minimized as well.



- Seek to maintain and continue a zero front yard setback that narrows the road corridor and presents a scale that is appropriate for pedestrians.



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- Consistent, low-level signage should be encouraged along the corridor as opposed to taller freestanding signs. Removal of obsolete or dilapidated signs should be sought in favor of more wall and awning signs that support the urban character of the corridor.
- This location may also provide the opportunity for infill residential with brownstone style townhouses as part of a compact, walkable neighborhood.



Grand River Avenue/Drake Road

The neighborhood center at this intersection currently provides an auto-oriented character. Orienting commercial buildings closer to Grand River Avenue provides a more enticing pedestrian environment. Existing development along Grand River Avenue should be redeveloped to present a higher quality character, supported by more owner-occupied residential uses behind. The concept plan to the left offers one redevelopment option for this area, which includes an integrated pathway system intended to attract residents to the redeveloped commercial areas.





This concept plan is based on the following recommendations for this neighborhood center:

- Taller buildings should be considered that include a mix of land uses. Buildings should front on Grand River Avenue.
- Commercial buildings should present an improved architectural style from the existing dated facades. Redeveloped buildings should reflect a style consistent with the established character of Farmington's existing neighborhoods.
- Relocate parking areas to the rear and sides of the commercial buildings along Grand River Avenue, and encourage shared parking to minimize the need for larger lots. Maintaining several smaller parking areas allows pedestrians to walk to these businesses without crossing large expanses of pavement.
- The 25-acre apartment complex could be redeveloped into townhomes. This would provide for larger owner-occupied dwellings at a density close to the current apartment complex.
- The area should include a pedestrian circulation system that is integrated in both the commercial and residential areas.
- Generally, developments should be designed to accommodate the pedestrian and support public transit.





Grand River Avenue/M-5



Significant upgrades to the appearance of the commercial node adjacent to the M-5/Grand River Avenue interchange should be considered. The existing commercial plaza was developed using more suburban site design elements, and features large-scale, single-story retail buildings with a substantial amount of parking in front. The desirable location of this site with access to M-5 makes it a likely candidate for redevelopment. The following recommendations provide a range of options from modifications to the existing plaza, to complete redevelopment:

- The current use of the property could be upgraded with face brick and architectural detailing for the buildings. Significant landscaping in the form of large deciduous trees should be introduced into the parking lot and along the site frontage in order to alleviate the massive scale of this vast open parking lot. In addition, the height of light fixtures and sign areas should be reduced.
- Additional buildings could be developed as outlots along Grand River Avenue. These “liner” buildings would help create more of a sense of enclosure along Grand River Avenue and make it a more pedestrian scale.
- Larger-scale redevelopment could be in the form of a “lifestyle center” that intensifies the amount of commercial use, but in a form more oriented to pedestrians.
- The site could be entirely redeveloped into a planned unit development that includes residential uses at the periphery of the site or above commercial uses.
- Office development on this site would be consistent with the planned land uses on the north side of Grand River Avenue in Farmington Hills. A large-scale office development in this location would capitalize on the proximity to I-696 and I-275. The site is large enough to allow for high rise office with large setbacks maintained from the single family residential neighborhood to the south.



Sustainable Design

The interrelation of the environmental component of the master plan with the land use component is most visible with the establishment of land use categories. While most of the City is already developed, there remains a possibility of redevelopment as discussed earlier in this Chapter. Sustainable design identifies ecological, infrastructural, and cultural characteristics of a site and/or building and its related open spaces which result in harmonious integration with the natural environment. The intent is to encourage optimal use of natural or existing features in architectural and site design such that a building's energy use is reduced and the natural environment is thereby enhanced. Standards for sustainable design seek to:

- Reduce the energy use required for lighting, heating and cooling of structures.
- Reduce the energy use required for transportation within the City.
- Encourage design that promotes non-motorized transportation alternatives like walking and biking.
- Reduce on-site water usage.
- Reduce the off-site runoff of stormwater.
- Protect existing trees and vegetation.
- Promote higher density infill development where the infrastructure capacity exists.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

The United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) provides the benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings and site design. New developments and revitalization of existing ones can be LEED-certified based on qualifying guidelines. It has been tested and seen that LEED-certified buildings have lower operating costs, promote healthier neighborhoods and conserve energy and natural resources that lead to development that is sustainable over the long term. While LEED-certified buildings are highly encouraged, this Plan seeks to encourage energy-efficiency and use of sustainable design principles wherever possible. The



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City supports use of LEED standards, in whole or in part, to further these objectives.

LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in a number of key areas of human and environmental health:

- Sustainable site development including infill development that is well integrated with the surrounding community, supportive of transit and non-motorized transportation.
- Use of pervious pavers in surface parking lots along with sustainable design concepts like rain gardens in open spaces, and landscaped areas to improve storm water quality, and reduce storm water quantity, reduce the heat island effect and minimize light pollution.
- Water efficiency through low-irrigation landscaping and building water use reduction.
- Placing, orienting and configuring buildings on site to minimize energy use by means of day light, solar heating, natural ventilation and shading from vegetation or other buildings.
- Energy and atmosphere performance through optimizing energy efficiency and utilizing renewable energy sources.
- Materials selection that includes recycled and renewable building materials and waste reduction techniques.
- Indoor environmental quality.

In addition to LEED buildings, there is a LEED for Neighborhood Development Rating System that integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green building into a system for neighborhood design. The location and compact urban fabric of Farmington is ideally suited for the principles promoted for LEED neighborhoods:

- Reduce the impacts of urban sprawl, or unplanned, uncontrolled spreading of urban development into areas outside of the metropolitan region, and create more livable communities by encouraging development on infill sites that are closer to existing town and city centers, in areas with good transit access, including previously developed sites or sites adjacent to existing development.
- Encourage healthy living by emphasizing the creation of compact, walkable, vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods with good connections



to nearby communities. Research has shown that living in a mixed-use environment within walking distance of shops and services results in increased walking and biking, which improve human cardiovascular and respiratory health and reduce the risk of hypertension and obesity.

- Encourage compact development patterns and the selection of sites that are within or adjacent to existing development to minimize habitat fragmentation and preserve areas for recreation.
- Increase transportation choice and decrease automobile dependence by locating development near downtowns, neighborhood centers and town centers where convenient transportation choices such as buses, car pools, bicycle lanes and sidewalks are typically more available, as well as locations that produce shorter automobile trips.

Low Impact Development

The City should also endorse design methods such as cluster developments or Low Impact Development (LID) which provide strategies to improve the quality of receiving waters by encouraging on site storage and treatment of stormwater. Conventional methods to remove stormwater use underground piping to mitigate natural drainage patterns and floodplains. This conventional removal of stormwater creates pollution by discharging untreated water from urban runoff into local waterways.

LID is a comprehensive technology-based approach to managing urban stormwater. Stormwater is managed in small, cost-effective landscape features located on each lot rather than being conveyed and managed in large, costly pond facilities located at the bottom of drainage areas. The source control concept is quite different from conventional treatment (pipe and pond stormwater management site design). Hydrologic functions such as infiltration, frequency, and volume of discharges, and groundwater recharge can be maintained with the use of reduced impervious surfaces, functional grading, open channel sections, disconnection of hydrologic flowpaths, and the use of bioretention/filtration landscape areas. LID also incorporates multifunctional site design elements into the stormwater management plan. Such alternative stormwater management practices as on-lot microstorage, functional landscaping, open drainage swales, reduced imperviousness,



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flatter grades, increased runoff travel time, and depression storage can be integrated into a multifunctional site design.

Gateways

A ‘gateway’ is the entranceway to the City that creates the initial visual impression about the City’s character and identity. The various commercial nodes along Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road each have their own distinct character.



Gateway features can be used to announce the key gateways into Farmington. Gateways exist where major roads or pedestrian pathways enter into Farmington. Entryways should include features such as “Welcome to Farmington” signs, and should also include identifying landscaping, knee-walls, sculptures or other structural elements. The key is to develop a design theme that repeats itself at the various entryways into the City so those entering feel a connection with the City regardless of where they visit. Though not every element must be used at every

entryway, a selection of several correlating elements should be used to maintain consistency. Gateway design can be as minimal or extensive as desired, and can be used to promote the nature of various areas such as the historic or central business districts within the community.

Downtown Gateways: The gateways to Downtown Farmington are from the south: at Farmington Road and M-5; from the east on Grand River Avenue at Lakeway Street; from the west on Grand River Avenue at Shiawassee Road; and from the north at Farmington Road and Shiawassee Road. These gateways currently lack any dramatic elements that would signify to someone traveling along the roadway that they are approaching Downtown Farmington. A consistent design concept should be created for enhancements at each of the four primary gateways into downtown Farmington to create a sense of arrival and attract attention to this vital area of the community.

- Provide a consistent “Welcome to Downtown Farmington” sign at each gateway.



- Include vertical elements, such as street trees or decorative railings depending on available space, into the streetscape at the gateway to create a “closed-in” traffic calming atmosphere.
- Consider the feasibility of a small boulevard at each gateway to incorporate gateway elements.
- Utilize landmarks such as the Masonic Temple to create distinction, focal points and enhance the entry experience into downtown.

Commercial Signage: Signage is an aspect of site design that has a major effect on a commercial corridor. While having adequate signage to advertise and draw customers is important for the viability of a business, uncontrolled proliferation of large unattractive signs not only degrades the appearance of the community, but also distracts motorists. Where gateway or community entrance signs are proposed, they should be of similar design to those being installed at the various City parks and public buildings. This will assist in providing a unifying theme.

- Sign standards for the community should be strictly enforced. Signs should be located in relation to buildings, landscaping, natural features and other signs.
- Consolidation of signs at shopping centers should be encouraged.
- Sign base materials and color should match or complement the building materials. Canopy signs should be regulated in regards to size, color and back lighting.
- Portable (temporary) signs and banners should be prohibited or at least heavily restricted.
- Sign designs should be required as part of site plan review. The design should illustrate the proposed sign size, height, material, colors and lighting.

Transitions

One of the many benefits afforded the City is its rich history. This history has also created land use arrangements that, as resident needs and desires change, may not properly accomplish the City’s current vision. Many of the historic land use patterns have created conflicting land uses within close proximity to one another. These issues stem largely from factors such as



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shallow commercial lots that back up to residential areas, older strip commercial development and the existence of nonconforming uses that do not contribute to creating a unified neighborhood and community shopping nodes.

Commercial Uses: Conflicting land uses have been caused by historic development patterns, or through gradual changes to various uses. The City should continue to enforce all property maintenance and Zoning Ordinance requirements to ensure these land uses do not create undesired impacts to the community or surrounding neighborhoods.

- The nonconforming heavy commercial or light industrial uses, such as extensive outdoor storage or automobile repair, should gradually be eliminated from the neighborhood and community retail areas. The City should maintain restrictions on expansions of nonconforming uses with the intent of encouraging their relocation to industrial areas. When these businesses are reviewed by the City for minor modifications, they should be required to provide screening or other aesthetic improvements to mitigate their impact on surrounding land uses.
- Nonconforming uses should not be encouraged to expand. Site improvements that do not extend the scope of the use should be encouraged to maintain a quality development; however, thriving nonconforming uses should be considered for relocation to more appropriate sites within the City that can provide the needed room for expansion.
- The City should evaluate the list of permitted commercial uses in each area for their appropriateness within a particular shopping district.

Transitions Between Uses: In areas where more intense commercial uses abut residential uses, certain site design elements can help mitigate potential impacts. While it is a goal to eliminate conflicting land use patterns, where this is not likely or possible, the following design concepts should be applied:

- Setback standards between commercial and residential should be required based upon the scale, height and size of the buildings.



- Design standards should be adopted for the façade of commercial buildings that are visible from residential areas. Standards should be adopted for materials, colors, scale and rooftop HVAC equipment screening for the sides of buildings that are visible from residences.
- The Parking District in the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to include additional standards for landscaping and screening. The combination of brick walls and canopy trees will provide some relief by buffering parking lots from nearby residences.
- The City may allow some expansion of rear yard parking into the adjacent residential subdivision where all of the following conditions can be satisfied:
 - The shift in the line between commercial and residential needs to be logical in relation to existing or intended land uses. The ultimate line between uses should follow a logical line that minimizes incompatible relationships.
 - Where a rear parking lot will be across the street from a remaining residence, views should be considered and appropriate screening provided.
 - Commercial parking lot access should be restricted from residential streets.
 - Sufficient setbacks, screening and landscaping should be provided. The City should continue to require brick walls between commercial and residential uses. Parking lots need to provide internal and perimeter landscaping to minimize the aesthetic, lighting and air quality impacts.
- Additional standards should be adopted for location and screening of parking lots, loading areas, trash receptacles and other accessory structures.
- Lighting needs to be maintained at low levels and shielded away from adjacent residences.



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Chapter Six: Transportation and Community Facilities

The network of streets, sidewalks and pathways in Farmington provide various ways to move about the City. Various aspects of the system can be designed or modified to improve safety, circulation patterns, congestion and the overall environment and quality of life. This Chapter seeks to address both the motorized and non-motorized environments in a way that provides the most efficient transportation system, but that also promotes use of each mode type including automobile, bicycle, bus or foot travel. The design of roads can impact the comfort level for pedestrians, and the design of pedestrian facilities can impact motorist awareness. Where possible, these design elements should be used to improve the transportation system for all users.

As the City continues to evolve, the methods of travel will adjust to various desires and lifestyles. Environmental and cost of living issues will continue to emerge that will likely shift citizens' travel choices away from the single-occupant automobile toward more carpooling, transit and non-motorized options. Anticipating this shift, the concept of "Complete Streets" has emerged, which maintains equal focus on all modes of travel through both road and pathway design and modified development patterns. Complete Streets are intended to accommodate and enable safe travel for all system users. To accomplish an effective Complete Streets policy, the City should:

- Revise development design manuals to encompass all modes of travel, and accommodate their needed amenities during development review.
- Educate officials, staff and citizens to the importance of alternative transportation options and the safety concerns facing each user.
- Develop ways to evaluate how existing and newly implemented improvements are affecting the system.



Motorized Transportation

The road network for the City is generally developed as a grid network of interconnecting streets. Future road improvements will be in the form of improvements to existing roads and adjustments to intersections. These



modifications require detailed traffic engineering studies that are beyond the scope of this plan. However, some general policy recommendations as traffic relates to the master plan are offered below:

Road Widths

Roadways are often designed to efficiently carry traffic. Unnecessarily wide streets in a downtown or residential environment can lead to higher vehicle speeds and reduce the suitability of the environment for pedestrians. In addition to increased vehicle speeds, wider streets increase the distance a pedestrian must cross at an intersection. Also, the area available for other amenities, such as sidewalks, street trees and even on-street parking are lost to the wider vehicle travel lanes. Finally, retail within a successful downtown thrives on the exposure of high traffic volumes moving slowly past storefronts. The City should consider these other factors in conjunction with traffic flow to determine appropriateness of road widths.

On-street Parking

In addition to the width of the road section, the width of travel lanes and vehicle speeds can be significantly reduced through the introduction of on-street parking. Entering a section of road with parallel on-street parking generally causes motorist to slow. The on-street parking also has the benefit of providing convenient parking for retail uses in the downtown. There is currently limited on-street parking along Grand River Avenue; the City may wish to expand on-street parking within the downtown.

Street Connections

The City has a relatively complete road network of interconnected streets. Occasionally, residents become concerned with traffic speeds and cut-through traffic on residential streets. The response of residents is often to request the City close street connections. Closing streets is generally not an appropriate solution; it often only transposes the problem to another street. Where traffic calming measures are needed, other less drastic measures should be considered such as choke points, where sections of roads are narrowed to force motorists to slow significantly, or the introduction of on-street parking. These traffic-calming measures will reduce speeds and road capacities while still maintaining access for traffic and emergency vehicles.



Any traffic calming measures need to be investigated as part of a comprehensive traffic study that fully explores the repercussions of the traffic modifications.

Access Management

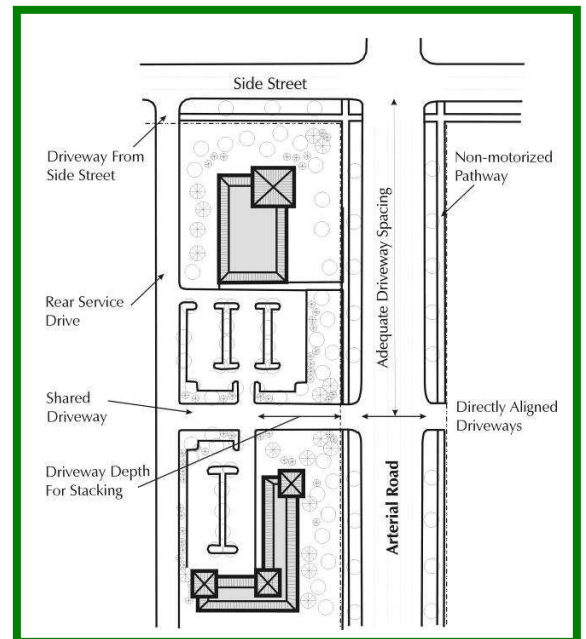
The goal of access management is to provide standards that will facilitate through-traffic operations and improve public safety along Grand River Avenue and other major City streets. The access guidelines have two functions: 1) to protect the public investment in the roadway by minimizing congestion and accident potential, and 2) to provide property owners with reasonable, though not always direct, access. These guidelines generally relate to the site plan of a particular development, but also include the public right-of-way area.

Number of Driveways: The number of driveways allowed, particularly along Grand River Avenue, will affect traffic flow, ease of driving, and accident potential. Every effort should be made to limit the number of driveways; and encourage access off side streets, service drives, frontage roads, and shared driveways. Access to a parcel should consist of either a single two-way driveway or a pair of one-way driveways. Certain developments, such as large apartment complexes and major shopping centers, generate enough traffic to consider allowing more than one driveway. Where possible, these second access points should be shared with adjacent uses.

Shared Driveways, Frontage Roads and Service Drives: Sharing or joint use of a driveway by two or more property owners should be encouraged. This will require a written easement from all affected property owners during the site plan approval process.

Sight Distance: The minimum sight distance required for a vehicle to enter or exit the traffic stream on an arterial roadway from a side street or driveway should be determined by MDOT or the City. However, a safe sight distance can be estimated as the distance an oncoming vehicle travels in eight seconds, at the posted speed limit.

The section of Grand River Avenue in the western portion of the City has some sight distance problems due to the rolling topography.





Driveway Spacing and Locations from Intersections: Driveway spacing from intersections should be required along major roads to minimize impacts to intersection operation. Where possible along major roads such as Grand River Avenue, the distance, on the same side of the street, between a driveway and an intersecting street should be 100 feet. If the amount of street frontage is not sufficient to meet these criteria, then the driveway should be constructed along the property line farthest from the intersection, or a shared access system should be developed with the adjacent site furthest from the intersection.

Driveway Spacing from Other Driveways: Along major streets, driveway spacing should be required to avoid conflicts between vehicles turning right or left from adjacent driveways. In order to prevent left turn conflicts, where possible, driveways should be aligned with those across the street or offset a sufficient distance to avoid left turn conflicts.

Significant Corridors

Like gateways, the views along primary street corridors provide important visual impressions about the City's character and identity. Aside from the corridors associated with the neighborhood centers discussed above, two of the City's primary corridors are specifically discussed below. However, all roads in Farmington have the potential to impact driver awareness and perception of the City. All roads should be designed to match the desired function and character of the area they traverse. For example, neighborhood streets should be narrow in design to promote slower vehicle speeds and should prioritize the needs of the pedestrian, where major arterial roads should accommodate faster vehicle speeds and ensure proper function and efficiency of travel. Various elements including the form and function of buildings, sidewalk width and placement, street amenities like lighting and benches, and landscaping can shape the streetscape. Road improvement projects should consider these elements and tailor their design according to the desired road function.

Downtown Corridors

It is important that the Master Plan address efficient and safe movement of people within and to downtown whether it is by vehicle, bicycle or on foot. The circulation system links visitors, shoppers, customers, workers, and



residents to their destinations. Thus future improvements and enhancements must ensure that people are not only provided convenient access but are offered a comfortable and enticing environment.

Grand River Avenue: Grand River Avenue is a major road under MDOT jurisdiction. As a state route, Farmington must endure truck traffic and high volumes of traffic passing through downtown. Although it is important for the success of downtown to have high traffic volumes, these conditions jeopardize its quiet, pedestrian-oriented character. The street itself is 50 feet wide and varies from 2 to 4 lanes of travel. A challenge to traffic flow is the excessive driveway cuts along the road that contribute to congestion. Improvements to Grand River Avenue should be made so there is a balance between accommodating supportable volumes of traffic while maintaining its important role in defining a pedestrian-oriented and inviting atmosphere in the downtown. The following elements should be considered when planning any improvements to Grand River Avenue:

- Eliminate and consolidate access points and driveways along Grand River Avenue.
- Slow traffic with on-street parking and streetscape elements while still accommodating current and expected traffic volumes.
- Work with MDOT to improve signage at the M-5/Grand River Avenue connector to increase use of the by-pass and minimizing 'pass-through' traffic.
- Provide sidewalk flares to shorten crosswalk distances for safer and easier pedestrian use.
- Ensure that all new road and streetscape design details promote effective year round maintenance and long-term durability.



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Farmington Road, south of downtown:

- Wide open
- Highway feeling



Farmington Road downtown:

- Narrow sidewalks
- Suburban-style building style and placement



Existing Orchard Street designed as a service alley.

Farmington Road: Farmington Road is the major north-south connection in the downtown business area. South of Grand River Avenue, the road is under the jurisdiction of the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) and to the north is a City street. In 2003, Farmington Road, north of Grand River was reconfigured with a narrow boulevard and on-street parking to promote traffic calming. South of Grand River, Farmington Road is 44' wide with 4 traffic lanes and no on-street parking. The sidewalks are narrow, with extremely limited pedestrian crossing opportunities, and several residents noted they felt unsafe. This street profile is more typical of suburban development, and inconsistent with downtown character. Traffic volumes may be light enough to require 2 traffic lanes, rather than 4 within downtown. Finally, several wide driveways and parking lots disrupt the building lines and these also contribute to the suburban character. The character of Farmington Road should be changed from “suburban” to a downtown “village” environment while still maintaining its function of an important travel route. The City should pursue the following strategies to accomplish this:

- Investigate options and evaluate impacts with the RCOC to eliminate one southbound lane and one northbound lane (each 11' wide). Reconfigure the street, as it becomes feasible, to provide wider walks and on-street parking.
- Infill wide open parking areas, consolidate and narrow driveways to provide a more unified and less interrupted building line and hide parking and service areas from view to give pedestrians fewer and shorter drives to cross.
- Provide safe mid-block crosswalks for pedestrians. Utilize curb extensions where feasible to shorten the crosswalk distance. Paint or change materials to delineate crosswalks. This will increase the likelihood of people visiting more of the downtown and improves connection to the downtown from adjoining neighborhoods.



- Ensure that all new road and streetscape design details promote effective year round maintenance and long-term durability.

Other Streets: Certain streets should be designed to provide an appealing downtown character. Careful design of secondary streets can encourage pedestrian activity, disperse vehicular traffic and provide more on-street parking. Particular attention should be paid to Orchard, Grove and State Streets. Orchard Street handles a considerable amount of “bypass traffic” and should present a more cohesive character to the downtown rather than the current “service alley” character. Grove Street can be improved to create a more hospitable atmosphere for pedestrians through wider sidewalks, use of landscaping to protect pedestrians from vehicular traffic, and additional greenspace. State Street currently maintains a hard streetscape, and could be softened using landscaping, ornamental lighting and pedestrian scale amenities.

The following strategies should be used to improve the character of secondary roads in the City:

- Add landscaping to soften harsh views of utilities, parking lots and blank building walls.
- Provide walks that feel safe through landscaping and on-street parking. Also, reduce the number and width of driveways.
- Ensure that all new road and streetscape design details promote effective year round maintenance and long-term durability. Provide bike routes and well placed bike parking, where appropriate, to promote safe travel and ease of use.
- Close off Orchard Street to through-traffic and convert it to a service vehicle area for the existing shopping center to the north and proposed development to the south. With the development of a new street in front of the shopping center, the function of Orchard Street, as it is today, is diminished and ultimately creates two access points to Farmington Road that are too close together.
- Extend Grove Street south, then west to create a new east-west street connection to Farmington Road that is further south. This will create an additional route aside from Farmington Road and Grand River Avenue and also creates new



Existing Grove Street:

- Suburban layout
- Not inviting to pedestrians



Existing State Street streetscape



opportunities for the properties in this area for redevelopment and redesign due to new street frontage.

General Commercial Corridors

South Farmington Road: Upgrading this streetscape will require a joint effort between the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills. Recommended improvements include the following:

- From the south, this intersection serves as not only the entrance to Farmington, but also Oakland County. Community entrance markers should be placed at the intersection of Farmington Road and Eight Mile Road. The east and west sides of the street can have identifying signs for both respective cities.
- The City should continue to work with Farmington Hills on upgrading the streetscape image along Farmington Road between Eight and Nine Mile Roads. This could include street trees and ornamental street lighting, similar to that existing in the downtown.
- The area of Farmington Road and Nine Mile Road should be an area of special focus for the City. The M-5 exit ramp, this intersection and the M-5 underpass serve as an entrance to the City's downtown. Aesthetic improvements should be required to the corners of the intersection of Farmington and Nine Mile Roads as these sites redevelop.
- The number and location of driveways is a particular concern near the intersection of Farmington and Nine Mile Roads due to high traffic volumes and close proximity to the M-5 exit ramp. Any redevelopment to sites in this area needs to consider access management.
- Aesthetic improvements including landscaping, lighting and decorative fencing should be made to improve the pedestrian environment on either side of Farmington Road under the expressway to improve the currently uninviting environment.

West Grand River: This corridor serves as the entrance to the City from the west and I-96. This area between M-5 and downtown is more suburban in nature, containing large regional retail buildings and excessive parking. The



recommendations here are intended to make this a more human-scale environment that ties it into other areas of the City.

- The residential area between Halsted and Drake Roads should be maintained as a more naturalistic parkway. Large deciduous trees should be maintained along the outer edge of the Grand River Avenue right-of-way. The trees selected should eventually grow to a height sufficient to provide proper scale in relation to the wide road cross section in this area, such as Oaks or Sycamores.
- The commercial centers between Drake and Gill Roads should be gradually upgraded over time to aesthetically be tied together and relate to the surrounding residential areas. As sites are redeveloped, building architecture and landscaping needs to be upgraded. Parking lot lighting should be lowered. The size of signs should be minimized as they are replaced.

Transit

Transit (bus) service in Farmington and Metro Detroit is provided by the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) Program. This program allows local communities or groups to become partners with SMART and to share operating responsibility based on a community's specific needs. In Farmington, SMART provides two types of public transit service for those who do not drive, do not own vehicles, or those that wish to conserve use of their vehicle.

- **Fixed Route Line-haul Service:** Offers specific time points along an established route.
- **Community Transit:** Assists with a community transit service to help meet the specific needs of seniors.

It is important to consider transit as a valuable asset to the transportation system because it offers an alternative to the private automobile, thereby reducing congestion on the roads and offering an





affordable form of transportation. Fixed route service currently runs along the main corridors of Grand River Avenue and Orchard Lake Road. A regional transit hub is located in the City of Farmington Hills on the Oakland Community College campus, off of Orchard Lake Road near the I-696 interchange. Finally, a park and ride facility is provided at the City's west end on Grand River Avenue that is intended to serve commuters who work in Detroit.

Transit Oriented Development

To support the viability of transit use, it is important that new development or redevelopment projects consider the pedestrian in its design. When reviewing new development or redevelopment projects, the following site design concepts should be encouraged or required:

- Reduce building setbacks and move parking to the rear to create a better sense of scale for the pedestrian. A properly established building line helps to demarcate walkway locations and protects pedestrians from traffic within a parking lot.
- Place buildings near intersections with crosswalks to make the built environment more pedestrian-oriented and keep parking behind buildings and away from the corner of the lot nearest the intersection.
- Enhance pedestrian access between points of origin and transit stops, and between transit stops and destinations.
- Establish separate walkways throughout larger parking lots by using pavement markings, colored or textured concrete, landscaping and curbs.
- Consider entrance design that maintains a defined travel lane rather than one that widens into a vast parking area where motorists tend to cross several parking lanes in a fashion inconsistent with the intended circulation pattern. In other words, design entrances so the motorists' focus remains on a defined path where crossing pedestrians are more likely to be noticed.
- Develop an access management plan for critical corridors that does not require large improvements at once, but that can be implemented on a lot-by-lot basis. Establishing policies for needed driveway



closures and consolidations well in advance of redevelopment allows the City to require these improvements as part of the development process, lessening the financial burdens on the City. The benefits of access management to the motorized system are discussed earlier in this chapter, but they are just as important for pedestrians and bicyclists because they can reduce the number of potential conflict points, focus the attention of motorists and provide safe waiting areas for pedestrians.

System Improvements

New stop locations should be considered along Grand River Avenue and Orchard Lake Road, if large development or redevelopment is proposed. Design considerations are needed to ensure disabled residents have safe access to all transit stops, and all stops should include pedestrian elements such as bus shelters, benches, signage and wider sidewalks that, in combination, provide an attractive environment that will encourage use of the transit system. This requires a well integrated pedestrian network and transit/pedestrian oriented development patterns.

Non-Motorized Transportation

The City of Farmington is fortunate to contain an extensive system of sidewalks along most streets, except for some of the newer residential areas located west of Gill Road. The City also maintains wider pathways through some of their parks, and wider sidewalks downtown. In general, the City should work to augment these systems so they are interconnected and attractive to pedestrians, cyclists and other recreationalists. The following recommendations seek to provide these connections and improve the overall non-motorized environment.

Pedestrian Circulation

Most streets and parking areas provide little to encourage pedestrians to walk in downtown. Shortcuts to downtown from the neighborhoods to the south and east are blocked by a fence or wall. Narrow walks, numerous driveways, and close proximity to vehicular traffic all contribute to pedestrians feeling uncomfortable or unsafe. Gaps between buildings and long distances between crosswalks encourage driving from business to business instead of



walking. To help address these concerns, and to improve the safety and convenience of pedestrian circulation at main road crossings, between parking lots and buildings, and from neighborhoods, the following strategies should be pursued:

- Provide landscaping and downtown streetscape amenities for a pedestrian scale and detail that is best seen while walking.
- Reduce vehicular conflict by decreasing the size and number of driveways.
- Create openings in parking lot fence and wall buffers and install walk connectors, which will be short cuts to downtown from outlying neighborhoods.
- Improve the safety of crosswalks by reducing the walking distance with sidewalk flares and incorporate signage and utilize pavement delineation to alert motorists of the pedestrian crossing area.
- Centralize parking areas to encourage users to park once and walk from business to business.
- Provide a new visible walk connection from the center of downtown to Shiawassee Park.
- Stagger buildings and provide gaps for pedestrian short cuts and refuge areas.
- Create a safer, more comfortable pedestrian environment through wider sidewalks, landscape buffers and lighting.

Coordination and Connectivity

High quality non-motorized systems are those that are continuous, and that provide access to various destinations. Breaks in the sidewalk or pathway system can prevent use by cyclists or those in wheelchairs. To maintain proper accessibility and preserve the high quality pedestrian environment of the City, various gaps in the sidewalk system should be completed and the following strategies considered:

- The design of non-motorized trails should follow their function and volume of use. Certain routes along major roads that connect major pedestrian routes or destinations such as parks and schools may require a wider pedestrian path, such as eight or ten feet wide. These



wider paths are able to accommodate a greater amount of pedestrian traffic as well as varied uses such as pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Where possible, sidewalks should be provided on both sides of a street, especially those within and around downtown or near schools.
- Farmington should continue to work with Farmington Hills to develop a regional non-motorized path system. Coordinated planning along shared roadways, such as Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road, should be done to ensure pedestrian routes and compatible amenities are provided on both sides of these major streets.
- Connections to recreation areas located outside Farmington should be provided, such as to Heritage Park in the City of Farmington Hills.

Safe Routes to School

Particular attention to safety is needed near schools, where young children walking to school are likely to be unattended by an adult. The Michigan Department of Transportation manages a new program called “Safe Routes to School.” The program is designed to encourage walking or biking to school by providing a safer environment for children. This initiative is expected to gain momentum because it offers state money for physical improvements and programs aimed at increasing students’ use of the non-motorized system as a means to and from school. While the program requires each school to prepare an action plan in order to qualify for funding, the City can assist in coordination and engineering assistance for schools wishing to participate.

Accessibility

Disabled residents often rely heavily on public transit as their primary means of travel and non-motorized systems to access transit. However, their unique needs are often overlooked when designing them. When considering improvements to these systems, the following considerations should be included:

- Pedestrian signals that produce an audible sound to indicate signal changes can be installed at critical intersections.





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- Maintain a consistent intersection design, so disabled users can easily anticipate where a bench, pedestrian crossing button, or shelter is located.
- Install textured materials, such as brick or stamped concrete, at the edges of sidewalks to indicate where the walk ends and the motorized travel lanes of the road begin.
- Include medians in the design or redesign of intersections, especially where a high volume of pedestrian activity is expected. Medians provide safer crosswalk options for all residents.

Crosswalk Improvements

User safety is of particular concern where sidewalks and pathways intersect with motorized travel routes. Safety hazards exist where the non-motorized system crosses individual driveways, or where they meet at a road intersection. In these areas, the following improvements should be considered:

- Pavement markings should clearly indicate to motorists where pedestrian activity will occur. Vehicles are not permitted to block these areas.
- Maintain clear vision zones at all intersections. This can increase visibility for motorists, pedestrians and bikers, all of whom need to be aware of potential conflicts.
- Narrow the roadway at crossing points by installing road medians or raised islands within the roadway to create a safe haven for pedestrians and bikers, or by eliminating on-street parking and extending the sidewalk closer to the road. This will reduce the number of lanes a pedestrian must cross and increases their perceived safety. These sorts of elements can also enhance the aesthetic environment by providing planting areas or resting areas.
- Provide adequate lighting at intersections so pedestrians and bikers are safe at all hours.
- Include overhead flashers to indicate non-signalized crossing points. Mid-block crossings can be further enhanced by using pavement markings and signage at the motorists' eye level.

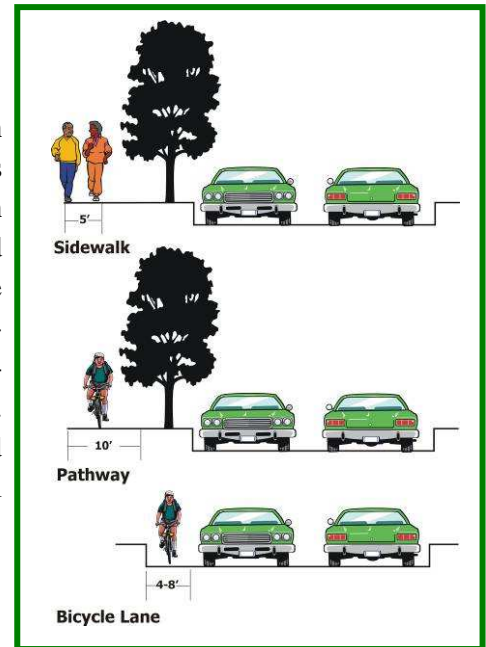




- Consider restrictions of right turns on red at high volume intersections, as most motorists fail to consider the pedestrian when turning.

On-Street Bike Lanes vs. Separated Paths

While not widely recognized, design of sidewalks and pathways can discourage use by bicyclists. Bicycles using sidewalks or shared pathways often encounter slow pedestrians, multiple driveways and intersection signals that interrupt their flow. All of these factors can slow their speed of travel, and discourage bicycle activity. Alternatively, on-street bike lanes allow bikers to travel at higher speeds, and give them the right-of-way over intersecting traffic and pedestrians. Bikers using designated on-street lanes share the road with motorists and are more visible to them. The City should consider adding bike lanes along routes commonly used by bicyclists. Bike lanes require some public education during the initial stages of use, but can provide desirable travel alternatives in the long-term.



Community Facilities

The City of Farmington enjoys the benefit of numerous public facilities such as schools and parks. While these facilities are present throughout the City, there is a concentration on the north side of the downtown along the Rouge River valley. There is a need for recreational opportunities that are distributed more evenly throughout the community.

This plan recommends focusing on key connections within the path system to strengthen the linkages to the neighborhoods and downtown, and tie the community together.





Shiawassee Park

As the main park in the City, Shiawassee Park provides residents with both active and passive recreation opportunities. To improve use of and pedestrian access to the park, the plan recommends the following:

- The Rouge River should be developed as a greenway with pedestrian paths connecting the various parks, neighborhoods and commercial centers.
- Sidewalks should be installed along the park side of Shiawassee and Power Streets to complete the local sidewalk system.
- Farmington should work with the City of Farmington Hills toward creating a coordinated greenway of parks along the Rouge River to connect Shiawassee Park and Heritage Park.
- Redevelopment of sites along the river should include riverfront pathways that connect to a regional system and consider direct bridge connections to the park.

Recreation

Shiawassee Park acts as a wonderful resource for those seeking a destination for picnics, ball games or general play and other regional parks offer adequate recreational destinations. However, the best communities contain parks at the regional, community and neighborhood levels. Many of the neighborhoods in Farmington could be improved with a neighborhood park or playground. Small parks that serve the immediate neighborhood are beneficial since they provide easily accessible recreation within close proximity to homes and integrate open space into neighborhoods.

The following recommendations should be considered when planning for recreation:

Land Acquisition: The City should consider purchase of land in existing neighborhoods that are isolated from current recreational facilities as it becomes available. Neighborhood parks can be as small as a platted lot or as large as a block. In any case, it should not be interrupted by streets or other barriers like railroad tracks and should be developed to continue the system of sidewalks that link to a more regional pathway system.



Non-Motorized Pathways: With the numerous athletic fields and facilities already provided in the area, the residents of Farmington are generally well served by active recreation opportunities. One exception is the need to provide for safer bicycling throughout the City. Needed amenities include on-street bike lanes, especially near downtown, where the likelihood of bicycle commuter traffic is greater, bike routes and wider bike paths for recreational biking. To become more bicycle friendly, the City must include these amenities in their streetscape design, and discuss regional pathways during development reviews and at regional meetings where cooperation with neighboring communities can serve to strengthen pathway connections and increase their use.

Passive Recreation: Passive recreation involves activities that are more soul satisfying than physically gratifying. Passive parks provide areas for nature viewing, scenic pathways, resting areas or other amenities that provide a pleasant atmosphere without the need for costly physical improvements. One particular opportunity for passive recreation is the Rouge River corridor, which provides such an atmosphere. The City is fortunate to have preserved portions of the river corridor through development of Shiawassee Park. Planned improvements to the park include improvements to the river walk, expansion of the trail system and purchase of additional land. In addition, the City should include additional resting and gathering areas within the downtown, as the DDA implements its Downtown Master Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan.

Community Services

Public Services: Farmington currently provides excellent public services in an efficient manner. This is likely due to the compact nature of development that allows full use of infrastructure and minimizes drive time for emergency service calls. As a developed community, this plan does not recommend expansions to the sewer and water systems, nor does it suggest any major road improvements. However, the City should continue to provide the high level of services in a cost-effective way. This requires continuous review of local policies, fee structures and procedures. In addition, the City should continue to maintain the various parks, schools, and public buildings as strong focal points in the community. Development, renovations and



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additions to public buildings should be designed to be distinctive and should project the desired community image.

Schools: A unique characteristic of Farmington are the location of several local schools within neighborhoods. Schools located within neighborhoods often act as anchors that provide valuable recreation for children as well as other community services. One particular benefit of locally-based schools are the reduced cost of transportation. Because of the compact development patterns and strong residential base, schools in Farmington have remained in operation, while those in other communities are beginning to close in favor of larger school complexes in outlying areas. The following are some ways the City can support schools and ensure their longevity:

- The City of Farmington should continue to support traditional and compact neighborhood design. Provision of pedestrian links to schools helps maintain them as neighborhood centers.
- Work with the local school district to determine their plans for future expansion and needs for same. Where improved school sites are needed, the City should advocate for neighborhood-based schools rather than larger complexes that require bussing services.
- Support local “Safe Routes to School” and neighborhood watch programs designed to improve safety for children walking to school.
- Continue to provide recreational facilities within proximity to schools so cooperative programming can be considered.



Chapter Seven: Implementation

In order for the City’s Master Plan to be an effective document for the future, community leaders need to work toward implementation. This chapter summarizes the goals and the recommendations described in Chapter Three and serves as a quick reference for the Planning Commission and others to monitor progress or serve as a checklist for implementing the Plan. Please refer to Chapter Three for the full list of goals. In addition, a Zoning Plan was prepared to help establish a relationship between the future land use categories described in Chapter Four. Together, the recommendations below provide the basis for implementation of this Plan, and should be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant and contains the most current information and practices.

Implementation Strategies

Table 7-1 identifies major steps and projects designed to maintain and improve the City of Farmington. Implementation of these items will have a positive impact on the character and vitality of the community. They will also help the City deal with the increasing pressures of growth and related impacts. Many of the implementation recommendations presented herein will require the close cooperation of many bodies. The final column in the table indicates the primary group(s) responsible for implementation. For brevity, abbreviations were used in most cases. Those abbreviations are as follows:

- PC: Planning Commission
- CC: City Council
- DDA: Downtown Development Authority
- DPW: Department of Public Services
- HC: Historic Commission
- TSB: Traffic and Safety Board
- CRD: Community Resources Department
- Staff: Building Department, City Manager, Administrative and Support Staff, including City consultants



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**Table 7-1
Implementation Strategies**

Strategy	Timeframe			Duty
	Short	Long	Ongoing	
Downtown				
Review the Zoning Ordinance to make sure it allows a diverse mix of uses downtown, and injects additional residential uses to support them.			*	PC, Staff
Ensure local regulations encourage development and redevelopment that embraces the historic character of Farmington.	*			PC, HC, DDA, Staff
Cultivate a walkable and vibrant downtown that attracts activity all day and into the evening yet still provides a safe environment.		*		PC, CC DDA, TSB
Reinforce the central square as the focal point for activity in the downtown.			*	CC, PC, DDA
Develop a consistent, solid building line along the streetscape.			*	PC, DDA
Recruit appropriate new businesses to capitalize on Farmington's potential to become a shopping and dining destination for residents from other communities.		*		DDA, CC
Increase access and views to the Upper Rouge River and Shiawassee Park with linkages to businesses and the center core of downtown.		*		PC, CC, DDA
Improve access and circulation into and through the downtown for cars and vehicles, but not at the expense of pedestrian safety and comfort.	*			TSB, CC
Provide a pedestrian circulation system that promotes an atmosphere of comfort and interest for people.	*			CC, DDA
Increase parking space opportunities that are convenient for all activity areas.	*			CC, DDA, TSB
Neighborhood and General Commercial				
Create definable neighborhood shopping nodes that provide a sense of place and a unique identity.		*		PC, CC, Staff
Ensure the Zoning Ordinance allows for maintenance of commercial frontages while protecting the quality of adjoining residential neighborhoods.	*			PC, CC, Staff
Minimize and relocate nonconforming heavy-commercial and industrial uses to planned industrial areas.		*		CC, Staff
Encourage mixed-use in the downtown and allow for residential uses in other business districts to help support economic activity.	*			PC, DDA, CC, Staff



Strategy	Timeframe			Duty
	Short	Long	Ongoing	
Promote commercial redevelopment through streamlined review procedures and clear zoning regulations that include an appropriate amount of flexibility.	*			PC, CC, Staff, DDA
Housing and Neighborhoods				
Ensure local ordinances allow for a diverse mixture of housing types, opportunities and prices in the City.			*	PC, CC, Staff
Pursue a housing study to identify gaps in the housing market.		*		CC, Staff
Work with State and local businesses and agencies to expand opportunities for home ownership.	*			CC, Staff
Ensure proper land use transitions between commercial and residential areas.			*	PC, CC, Staff
Preserve the historic character of neighborhoods.			*	PC, CC, HC, Staff
Provide regulations that allow infill development when compatible with neighborhood architecture and character.	*			PC, CC, DDA, Staff
Enforce housing standards to prevent blight and ensure property maintenance.			*	DPS, CC Staff
Ensure local regulations require compliance with state and federal laws such as FHA and ADA.	*			Staff
Provide for proper pedestrian links between residential uses and destinations like parks or downtown.		*		CC, DDA, DPS
Industrial				
Encourage the continued redevelopment and upgrade of industrial areas.			*	PC, CC, Staff
Relocate nonconforming industrial uses to specifically-designated areas.		*		PC, CC, Staff
Ensure that light industrial uses fit within the context of the community with small lots and nearby residential neighborhoods.			*	PC, CC, Staff
Allow for consumer services such as automotive repair, home/garden supplies/contractors, and self-storage, which are more appropriate in industrial areas.	*			PC, CC, Staff
Ensure proper transitions and buffers between industrial uses and other non-commercial uses.	*			PC, CC, Staff
Community Facilities				
Provide educational, recreational and civic facilities and programs in cooperation with other communities, agencies, and groups.			*	CC, CRD



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Strategy	Timeframe			Duty
	Short	Long	Ongoing	
Create an integrated network of parks, schools and other civic uses that are strongly linked to neighborhoods and the downtown.		*		PC, CC, DDA, Staff
Provide open public spaces that enhance the City and provide a source of civic pride and artistic expression.			*	CC, DPS, Staff
Require open public spaces, plazas and landmarks be incorporated into plans as sites develop or redevelop.		*		PC, CC, Staff
Maintain a public utility system capable of meeting the demands of the City into the next century.			*	CC, DPS
Transportation				
Provide for efficient and safe traffic circulation by designing streets to meet the needs of all modes of travel.	*			CC, DPS, TSB, Staff
Prioritize pedestrian safety, especially near downtown, through careful streetscape design and safe road crossings.	*			CC, DPS, DDA TSB, Staff
Continue to evaluate crosswalk and sidewalks to identify needed improvements.			*	CC, DPS, DDA TSB
Provide easily accessible, identifiable and convenient parking to serve the varied uses in the downtown.		*		CC, DDA, DPS, TSB
Close unnecessary or poorly spaced driveways along major commercial corridors to preserve street capacity and promote safety.			*	CC, PC, TSB, DPS
Work with MDOT on improvements to Grand River Avenue and M-5 to meet the needs of City residents as well as the region.		*		CC, TSB, Staff
Work with the City of Farmington Hills to upgrade the shared streetscapes of Farmington Road, Grand River Avenue and Orchard Lake Road.		*		CC, PC, TSB, DPS, Staff



Zoning Plan

According to the newly adopted Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008), this Zoning Plan was developed to provide a relationship between the future land use categories and recommendations presented in this Plan to the zoning districts of the City’s Zoning Ordinance.

The intent is that changes to the zoning map over time will gradually result in better implementation of the objectives encouraged in the Future Land Use Map. In some cases, the City may wish to initiate certain zoning changes as part of an overall zoning map amendment. Other changes to the zoning map will be made in response to requests by landowners or developers.

The following table provides a zoning plan indicating how the future land use categories in this Master Plan relate to the zoning districts in the Zoning Ordinance. In certain instances, more than one zoning district may be applicable to a future land use category. Notes are provided to guide the City in determining the appropriate zoning district based upon the context of the surrounding area.

**Table 7-2
Zoning Plan**

Master Plan Future Land Use	Zoning District	Min Lot Area/DU	Notes
Residential			
Single-Family Residential As a built-out City, platted lot sizes and zoning districts are well-established over the history of the City’s growth, as described in the notes to the right.	R1 Single-Family Residential	8,500	Predominant district that applies to the core around the CBD and the eastern portion of the City.
	R1A Single-Family Residential	10,050	Infill district located at western half of City between Gill and Drake Road
	R1B Single-Family Residential	12,500	Infill district located at western end of City west of Drake Road
	R1C Single-Family Country Estates	15,000	Located at western half of City between Gill and Drake Road
	R1D Single-Family Residential PUD	18,000	Located at western end of City west of Drake Road
	R1P Single-Family Parking		Located adjacent to a non-residential district
Multiple-Family Residential	R2 Two-Family	4,250	No locations planned for this district
	R3 Multiple-Family	2,000	Predominant multiple family zoning throughout all areas of the City



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Multiple-Family Residential, cont.	R4 Multiple-Family (1 BR)	-	Applied to one limited location along East Grand River Avenue – no new locations
	R5 Deluxe Multiple-Family	4,356	Infill locations as transition between non-residential and single family residential
	R6 Single-Family Cluster	10,890	Located at western end of City west of Drake Road
Business Districts			
Neighborhood Centers	C2 Community Commercial		Smaller neighborhood shopping centers
General Commercial	C3 General Business		Larger shopping centers
Mixed Use	C2 Community Commercial		Smaller redevelopment sites
	Planned Unit Development		Larger scale redevelopment
Central Business District	CBD Central Business District		Downtown district
	OS Office Service		Along transitional edges between CBD and single family residential neighborhoods
Office	O Office		Larger office sites
Industrial			
Industrial	IND Industrial		8 and 9 Mile Road corridors
Public			
Public/Quasi-Public	Single family districts and CBD		May exist in most districts



Appendix A: Housing Redevelopment Options

As part of the overall goals to become “redevelopment ready,” the City of Farmington has prepared a summary of various housing redevelopment scenarios, developed through the *Northeast Ohio First Suburbs Consortium**. Because architecture is relatively similar throughout the Midwest, these examples may be applied in Farmington, as illustrated on the following pages.

It is important to note these examples are given as a means to create interest for residents and homeowners who, due to growing families, need additional living space or other amenities not currently provided in their home. These redevelopment scenarios are recommended as a way to retain existing residents and families that may have no other alternative than to sell their home in favor of larger homes in other communities. These should not be mistaken for pre-approved plans; rather, they present concepts that residents may wish to consider for their homes. Of course, as with any redevelopment, homes need to maintain a similar character to that of the existing block, and redevelopment activity that detracts from the existing neighborhood should not be approved. In addition, any plans to expand or renovate existing homes must still adhere to local review procedures and plan review.

* A full copy of [Bungalows: Unit Designs and Neighborhood Improvement Concepts](http://www.fscdc.org/pdf/Bungalows%20FSC%20Housing%20Initiative.pdf) can be obtained from the Ohio First Suburbs Consortium: 40 Severance Circle, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118; Phone: (216) 291-2855; or from:
<http://www.fscdc.org/pdf/Bungalows%20FSC%20Housing%20Initiative.pdf>

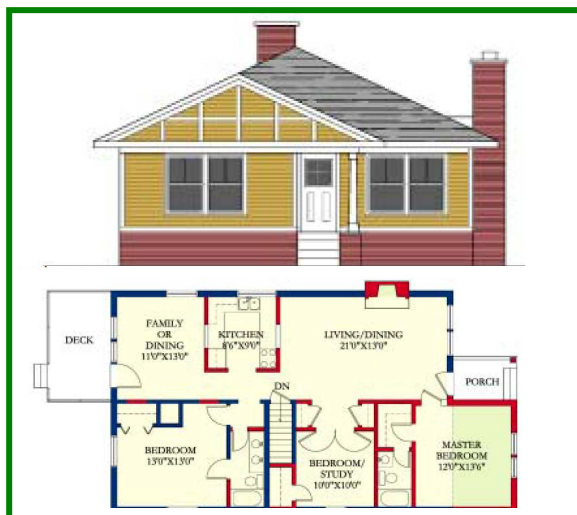


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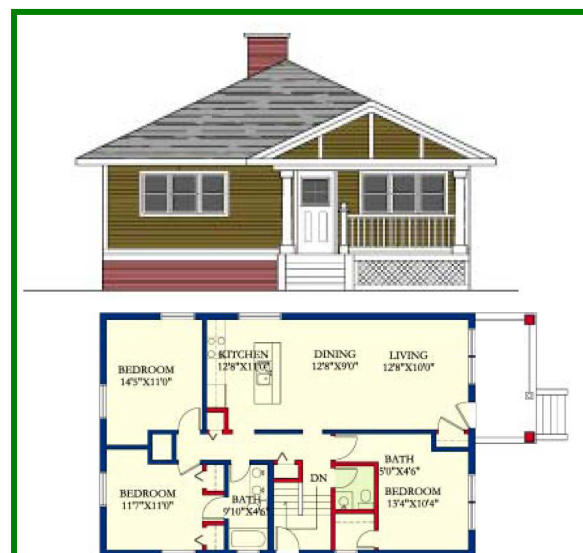
BEFORE

Ranch-Style Home: Additions to or remodeling a ranch home can increase its marketability. Two examples of redevelopment are offered here to allow homeowners two cost options that may increase their home value.



OPTION A: Building Addition

This example shows how a small addition along with façade improvements can increase the attractiveness of an older bungalow. The floor plan below includes a new front porch and rear deck. The new layout of the house allows direct access to the rear yard from the living area and boasts a new fireplace, larger kitchen, larger master bedroom with new attached bath, as well as a flexible third bedroom that can be used as a den.



OPTION B: Interior Remodel

This example illustrates how a small bungalow can be remodeled with little expansion to fit modern market demands. The original house was renovated to include an open floor plan and larger master bedroom. It includes a new porch addition only.



Bungalow Style Home: Bungalows like these are found throughout Farmington. Simple additions to standard bungalows can enhance the visual appeal of the home, while more extensive additions can change the architectural character.



OPTION A: Second Story Gable Addition
This second story gable addition to the original home allows use of the first floor as living space. The new layout offers additional bathrooms, bedrooms along with separate kitchen and dining room.

OPTION B: Conversion to 2-Story Colonial
Adding a second story and full-width front porch presents a more colonial style. The addition to the second floor accommodates all bedrooms leaving the first floor available for living space, which has been reorganized to an open layout.



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BEFORE

Western Bungalow Style Home: With its basic architecture and small size, these bungalows will likely require some attention in order to attract modern homebuyers. Additional living space can be added through redesign of the first floor, or by adding a second story addition, as shown below.



OPTION A: First Floor Addition

The façade changes addition transforms this typical bungalow into a craftsman style home. The new floor plan includes a larger kitchen/dining area, and additional half bath. The full-width front porch addition, with its tapered columns and overhanging eaves presents a more desirable craftsman style.



OPTION B: Second Story Addition

Adding a second story makes this home more attractive in today's market. The new floor plan includes new living space and has been remodeled dramatically to include an open floor plan. The second floor includes two large bedrooms, one that includes an attached bath to create a master suite.