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Laying the Groundwork for Change.

Downtown Wayne has undergone significant changes in the last 50 years. Policies, public and private investment, initiatives, and shifts in consumer habits have transformed the city center from a bustling shopping district with adjacent residential to a primarily suburban commercial area. Just as past decisions resulted in major changes to the character of the area, Downtown Wayne stands at a crossroads, with key choices to be made that will guide it through future decades.

This Plan represents a variety of recommendations to provide opportunity for changes, including urban-style infill development and redevelopment, targeted business recruitment and retention for niche and underserved sectors, improvements to downtown parking, circulation, and streetscape to revitalize the pedestrian environment, reinvesting in traditional neighborhoods, and mixed-use developments and buildings that support a vibrant, bustling downtown.

Implementation will be gradual, through incremental steps over time, driven by both public capital investment and private development, and often through collaboration or partnerships of the public and private sectors. Work will be initiated by the City and/ or other agencies such as MDOT or Wayne County for the downtown as opportunities arise, implemented by balancing priorities, cost, and available funding.

Implementation will be accomplished through a variety of means, including public capital improvements such as street enhancements and extensions, parking lot improvements, and public parks. While some public investment may be necessary to act as a catalyst for development, many projects can be accomplished through public/private partnerships as improvements and redevelopment of Downtown Wayne occurs. This chapter serves as the action plan to initiate and monitor implementation of the plan recommendations in the public realm, such as infrastructure improvements, regulatory changes, city-owned property, and road agency transportation improvements that will support and encourage private investment.

The city must lead the future completion of the concepts outlined in this plan. The background and vision established in this plan provide the appropriate base to make this Plan a reality.

Regulatory Changes: Downtown Overlay.

Currently, a number of different traditional zoning districts regulate the uses and structures permitted in the downtown area, separating uses, requiring high ratios of on-site parking, and placing maximums on building height and size. The plan recommends the implementation of one or more downtown overlay zones (could be one for predominantly residential areas and another for predominantly business areas) which can be more flexible in use and include additional standards related to mass, character, and form of the buildings. This mixed-use district would lie over the current zoning districts, typically 'taking effect' when redevelopment of a property takes place (non-conforming status of existing uses is not affected). The intent of is to develop a fully integrated, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented environment based on the vision and goals outlined in this plan.

Because buildings are the primary defining feature to the streetscape, a downtown overlay could be designed to ensure that buildings provide a proper relationship to the streetscape and other adjacent buildings to define the streetscape and maintain a pedestrian-oriented downtown form. This approach can regulate building lines, setbacks, building height and parking lot location to achieve appropriate scale along streetscapes. Minimum height, maximum parking, and more stringent design standards can be incorporated to require buildings to fit into the urban form, rather than focus on limiting their intensity. A downtown overlay could allow a greater mixture of uses, but tie the use to the required building form; buildings would contain the Downtown's traditional commercial and office uses, while also providing opportunity for infill and conversion residential units.

Prioritizing the Plan.

To reflect public and private roles in attaining the vision for downtown, the implementation strategy is divided into three prioritized groups: opportunity sites, capital projects, and ongoing project efforts. With a timeframe of at least 20 years, implementation will occur incrementally, over time, as

opportunities arise. As the plan unfolds, each set of implementation strategies (and priority and timing of actions) may need adjustment based on changes such as funding becoming available, changes in the market, or based on relative success of completed projects.

Opportunity Sites. Even where private investment is the main factor in developing the key opportunity sites identified in this plan, public-private partnerships to assist in land assembly, minor infrastructure improvements, and successful project design. The top five opportunity sites, based on maximum ‘spin-off’ benefit in implementing other sites, are:

1. Infill development of former Wayne Theater site and renovation of historic storefronts block on northwest corner of westbound Michigan and Wayne Road (in conjunction with parking area/Sims Street capital project).
2. Westchester Towers redevelopment into townhomes, apartments, and/or condominium units (in conjunction with Main Street connector from eastbound Michigan capital project).
3. Northeast corner of westbound Michigan and Second Street redevelopment of strip mall into mixed-use, downtown-style development.
4. Infill development of parking/suburban commercial blocks north and south of Metro Place Center (in conjunction with Main Street Extension and possibly with on-going mixed-use core public park project).
5. Infill compatible character residential in west and east Brush Street neighborhoods.

Capital Projects. Specific capital projects pivotal to plan implementation that would require public funding and implementation, listed in order of priority.

Sims Street Extension (see Chapter 5). Primary responsibility will lie with the city to make this improvement in conjunction with the reconfiguration of the parking area. Both will be maximized if combined with the renovation and truncation of several of the

traditional storefront structures that protrude into the rear parking at uneven intervals.

NW Corner Parking Area Redevelopment/reconfiguration and Promenade/Alley (see Chapter 4). Will include reconfiguration of parking in conjunction with Sims Street extension to make rows oriented perpendicular to Wayne Road, level out the grade, and create a promenade/boardwalk style sidewalk along the rear of the renovated storefront buildings that is at the same elevation at Michigan Avenue to allow entrances into first-floor retail from both ends.

New access to Veteran's Plaza (see Chapter 5). One-block connection from eastbound Michigan Avenue to Veteran's Plaza adjacent to the parking structure.

Main Street Connector from EB Michigan (see Chapters 4,5) (in conjunction with Westchester Towers opportunity site). This short connection from eastbound Michigan to Main Street would provide one-way connection just after the one-way pairs begin. A wayfinding sign directing traffic to turn in would provide a direct, visible access to all eastbound traffic.

Main Street Extension Elizabeth to Newberry (see Chapters 4,5) (in conjunction with infill development around Metro Place Center).

Newberry Extension Michigan to Wayne Road (see Chapter 5) (with MDOT and WCDPS). To re-establish the grid and restore connectivity to the west Brush Street neighborhood, work with MDOT (jurisdiction along Michigan) and WCDPS (jurisdiction along Wayne Road). Possible signal may be needed at the Newberry/Michigan intersection.

On-going Projects.**Westbound Michigan Avenue Striping and Lane Use. (High)**

Approach and negotiate regularly with MDOT to implement minor improvements to westbound Michigan Avenue, including the elimination or reduction in length of left turn lanes on westbound Michigan Avenue west of Wayne Road for on-street parking and the elimination of right-turn lane from westbound Michigan Avenue to northbound Elizabeth Street.

Wayne Road Improvements. (High) Initiate study with Wayne County Department of Public Services to implement improvements along all or parts of Wayne Road, including reintroducing on-street parking, with or without bump-outs, installing enhanced crosswalks, and installing a center landscaped median in select areas in the center left-turn lane area.

Downtown Marketing and Business Recruitment/Retention Program. (High) Pursuant to the results of the market study, potential downtown overlay, and development recommendations for this plan, a strategy should be developed to market the downtown development sites and businesses to developers and business operators. Attracting businesses that serve undersupplied sectors and/or are ready to make a significant investment in creating a solid, successful business in the downtown are critical to creating the synergy needed to establish Downtown Wayne as a regional destination to shop, live, work, and do business.

Implement Downtown Overlay Zone(s). (High) Refine draft ordinance language produced as part of this plan and take it through the adoption process to implement regulations that support the plan as soon as possible.

Non-motorized/Wayfinding Enhancements. (Medium) Initiate planning, design, and phasing for implementing the non-motorized connectivity improvements outline in Chapter 5, including wayfinding signage to encourage use and access to and from the parks and pathway along the Riverfront Parkway.

Façade Improvement Program. (Medium) Establish downtown-wide façade improvement program that is more aggressive, pursues grants and other funding sources, and covers the downtown including residential.

Wayne Road Gateway Enhancements. (Medium) Overhead arch or other low-profile sidewalk-side features that can fit within the right-of-way but provide clear, themed entranceway to the downtown.

Expansion of Streetscape Improvements. (Medium) Expand the themed streetscape treatment to side streets and residential streets in the downtown area, including Brush Street, Second Street, Sims Street (east of Wayne and as part of any extension west), Main Street/Park Street west of Elizabeth, and eastbound Michigan Avenue.

Establish Official Historic Districts in Downtown Area and Adjacent Neighborhoods. (Medium) Per the historic preservation elements of this plan, preserving and maintaining historic buildings, neighborhoods, and districts strongly supports the goals of preserving the historic and civic heritage and captures Wayne's unique, storied history as part of the downtown's unique identity. The city should evaluate the strength of historic buildings and neighborhoods and then pursue state and/or national designation to protect the heritage. Strong districts on initial observation are the "Tree Streets," "Riverview Highlands," north side of Sims Street east of Second Street, Park and Main Streets west of Elizabeth, and the length of Brush Street and connecting cross-streets.

Eastbound Michigan Avenue Road Diet. (Low) Initiate study with MDOT of potential to implement the 4-lanes to 3-lanes road diet on eastbound Michigan Avenue, with bump-outs and on-street parking, in advance of projects and/or funding that may become available.

Future Potential Commuter Rail Station Enhancements. (Low) Continually pursue and advocate to site future permanent commuter rail stop in the City of Wayne.

Michigan Avenue Gateway Enhancements. (Low) Overhead or curb-lawn streetscape-style entry way elements to clearly demark the entrance into downtown and call out the arrival at a destination for through travelers.

New Urban Park in Mixed-Use Core. (Low) Work with Parks department for opportunities to site a public park in the island area in between the one-way pairs to support a more urban environment.

Recommendation/Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Opportunity Sites.			
1. Infill development and renovation – NW corner of Michigan/Wayne		5 Years	
2. Westchester Towers redevelopment into medium density residential.		5 Years	
3. Redevelopment: NE corner of WB Michigan/Second Street.		5 Years	
4. Infill development of parking north and south of Metro Place Center.		5 Years	
5. Infill compatible character residential in Brush Street neighborhoods.		5 Years	
Capital Projects.			
Sims Street Extension.	City	High	
NW Corner Parking Redevelopment & Promenade/Alley.	DDA	High	
New access to Veteran’s Plaza.	City	Med	
Main Street Connector from EB Michigan.	MDOT	Med	
Main Street Extension Elizabeth to Newberry.	City	Low	
Newberry Extension Michigan to Wayne Road.	Various	Low	
On-Going Projects.			
Westbound Michigan Avenue Striping and Lane Use.	MDOT	High	
Wayne Road Improvements.	WCDPS	High	
Downtown Marketing and Business Recruitment/Retention Program.	DDA	High	
Implement Downtown Overlay Zone(s).	PC/CC	High	
Non-motorized/Wayfinding Enhancements.	DDA	Med	
Façade Improvement Program.	DDA	Med	
Wayne Road Gateway Enhancements.	WCDPS	Med	
Expansion of Streetscape Improvements.	DDA	Med	
Establish Official Historic Districts in Downtown Area and Adjacent	PC/CC	Med	
Eastbound Michigan Avenue Road Diet.	MDOT	Low	
Future Potential Commuter Rail Station Enhancements.	City	Low	
Michigan Avenue Gateway Enhancements.	MDOT	Low	
New Urban Park in Mixed-Use Core.	PARKS	Low	

Funding.

Financing and implementing the recommendations of this plan should look to a long list of available public, private, local, state, county and federal funding sources. Some programs aim at capital improvement projects, while other programs offer loans or grants to encourage new development. There are several City, State, and Federal programs, such as the Federal Transportation Appropriations Act (currently SAFETEA-LU), Highway Improvement Act, State Recreation Funds, Corridor Improvement Act, and DDA, available to assist in these projects, especially along a state trunk line (Michigan Avenue pairs) or where significant jobs will be created. Because the qualifications and structure of these programs change frequently, regular discussion with local representatives from MDNR, MDOT, FHWA, and other State and Federal funding agencies is important. A brief list is included below, with more details found in the appendix.

Local funding authorities.

- Downtown Development Authority/Tax Increment Financing.
- Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

Grants.

- Michigan Brownfield Redevelopment and Site Reclamation Grants.
- Clean Michigan Initiative Brownfield Redevelopment Loans and Revitalization Revolving Loans.
- Michigan Site Assessment Fund .
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grants. MSHDA offers CDBG for the following programs:
 - Economic development planning.
 - Downtowns and gateways.
 - Economic development infrastructure.
 - Public works.
 - Unique and innovative projects.
- Michigan Urban Land Assembly Program.
- Waterfront Redevelopment Grants.
- Transportation Economic Development Fund.
- Transportation Enhancement Program.
- Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program.
- MDOT Small Urban Program.

Next steps.

The individual project concepts illustrated in this plan will need further refinement as the plan unfolds. This includes more final study, design, and refined cost estimates of projects, detail design elements and schematic layouts. Once the schematic design process is completed and approved, construction documents can be prepared for implementing various elements of the plan.

The DDA and the City should work to market the opportunities identified in this Plan to the development community. This may be a role for DDA personnel. The City should use this plan as a tool to recruit developers and inspire the development community to help the DDA achieve the vision laid out in this Plan.