

5 | Circulation & Parking

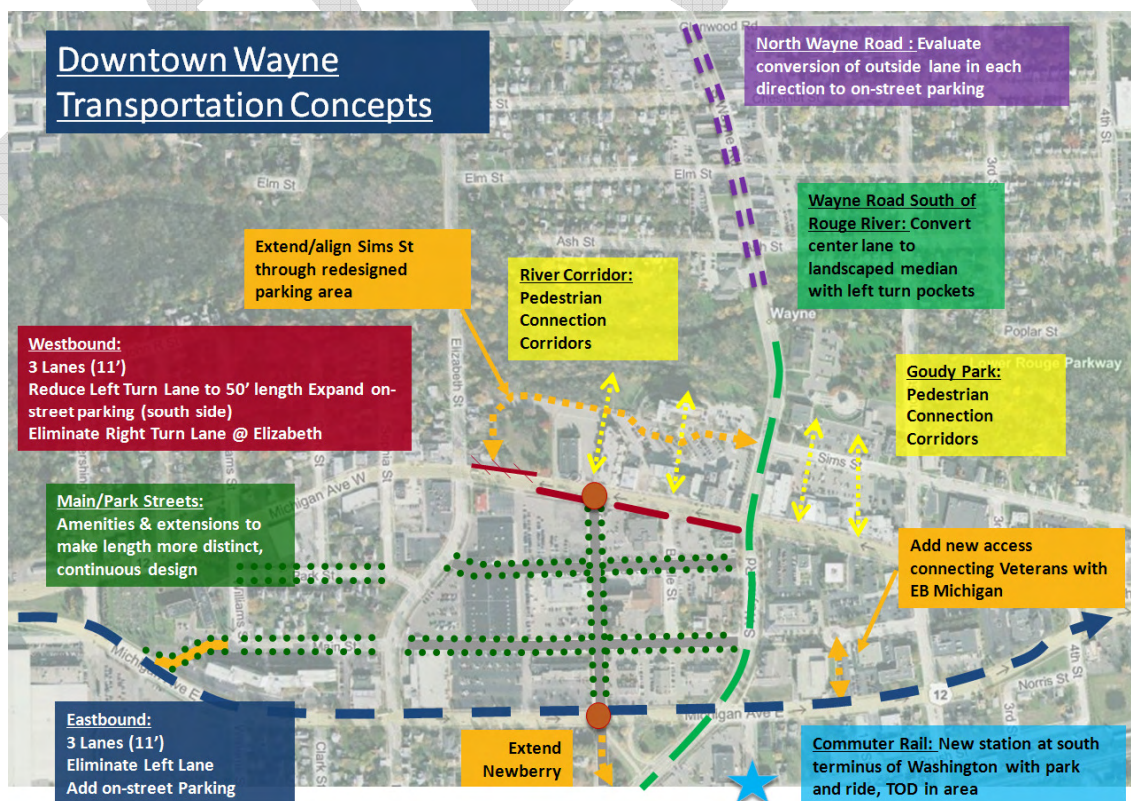
Downtown Parking & Circulation Strategy.

Downtown Wayne has a somewhat disconnected system of local public streets to connect downtown with the residential neighborhoods, and primary roads to carry motorists through the downtown (Wayne and Michigan one-way pairs). Existing circulation issues include confusing routes, cul-de-sac side streets, one-way circulation, disconnected parking areas interspersed with former grid pattern, and incomplete parallel routes to the one-way pairs. Downtown auto speeds are perceived to be too high, especially along the primary roads, and street design and traffic control favors autos over pedestrians.



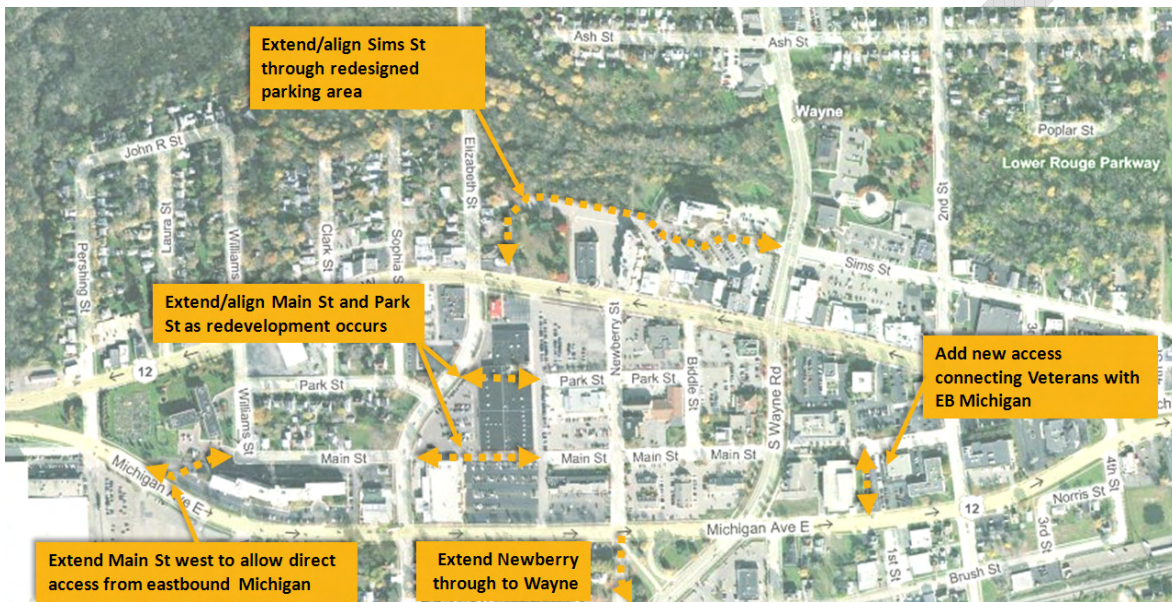
The redevelopment plan proposes a set of standards for pedestrian-scale, traditional downtown streets, with parking mostly in the side and rear of buildings. Wide street and lane widths, and large building setbacks with front parking can contribute to excessive speeds. Reduced width for travel lanes or the number of travel lanes in combination with the location of infill development have been designed to foster safe pedestrian environment.

The transportation recommendations complement the redevelopment plan.



Extending and Connecting Existing Streets.

Wayne's original grid street pattern was significantly impacted by the one-way pairs that were added several decades ago. The lack of through and connecting streets in between and around these one-way pairs makes accessing the Downtown confusing and negatively impacts walkability and connectivity. The following extensions/connections are critical to improving accessibility to Downtown Wayne.



Extending and connecting key streets improves circulation, restores more of the original 'grid' layout, and provides better access to downtown.

Sims Street. With a signalized intersection at Wayne Road, Sims Street is an asset to circulation in and around the retail core area. In conjunction with redesigning the rear parking areas west of Wayne Road, extending Sims through to the cemetery would boost this historic block and cohesively tie together the river corridor, theater, and housing developments.

Main Street. Once the spine of downtown's grid, Main Street is little more than a disconnected side street and access drive. Extending a one-way eastbound Main Street access, and extending at least a more pronounced parking drive and sidewalks through from Newberry to Elizabeth is critical to linking the residential neighborhood the west with the retail core.

Veterans Plaza Connector. Confusing one-way street and parking structure entrances, cul-de-sac side street, and poor pedestrian

connections would be significantly improved with a two-way access between eastbound Michigan and Veterans Plaza.

Newberry Street. The redevelopment plan places emphasis on walkable streets and connectivity to break up the large districts with more connections. To this end, Newberry should be extended south of eastbound Michigan to Wayne Road, and studied for signalization to aid vehicular and non-motorized traffic.

Michigan Avenue (US-12) One-Way Pairs.

For much of the 1990’s and 2000’s, the Michigan Avenue one-way pair configuration has generally been 4 lanes in each direction, with one lane of on-street parking on a part of westbound Michigan Avenue. Current and projected traffic volumes show excess capacity that should be able to be effectively accommodated by three through lanes (with turn lanes at certain intersections), as westbound now functions well.



Current and projected traffic volumes along Michigan Avenue should be handled effectively with 3 lanes in each direction.

Westbound Michigan Avenue. A recent construction project resulted in MDOT striping the left-most through lane of westbound as a dedicated turn lane and on-street parking lane between 4th and Elizabeth Streets, making westbound a 3-lane one-way configuration. The dedicated left turn lanes (between Wayne and Elizabeth) are long and promote high-speed traffic, and could be more effectively used for some additional on-street parking. MDOT should truncate the left-turn lane to 50’ and replacing it with on-street parking, and removing the right-turn lane at Elizabeth.

Eastbound Michigan Avenue. While eastbound was not part of the construction project on westbound, volumes and observed traffic patterns support turning one of the four through lanes into on-

street parking, most likely on the south side of the street to provide parking and a physical buffer between residential uses and the heavy traffic along Michigan Avenue. The parking may need to be on the north side of the street to allow it's width to be used for dedicated turn lanes at Elizabeth, Newberry, and Wayne.

Wayne Road.

As the main north-south road through the city, Wayne Road connects the downtown to Westland's Ford Road and Westland Mall commercial areas, and provides a route for commuters accessing Michigan Avenue. Currently under the jurisdiction of Wayne County, the road is a 5-lane cross section (with a center left-turn lane) with little excess right-of-way for parking or even wide sidewalks and landscaping.



The county reconfigured the street to be 5-lanes around 1990 to handle more through traffic. Since then, the city has invested in property and constructed municipal parking lots behind many of the businesses to help them remain viable. This plan recommends evaluating on-street parking and installation of center medians to address uncomfortable traffic speeds and lack of right-of-way for landscaping/gateway features

To calm traffic, improve the environment for pedestrians and bicyclists, and improve aesthetics of this traditional shopping area, the city should engage the county in negotiations to enhance the street with on-street parking and center landscaped medians.

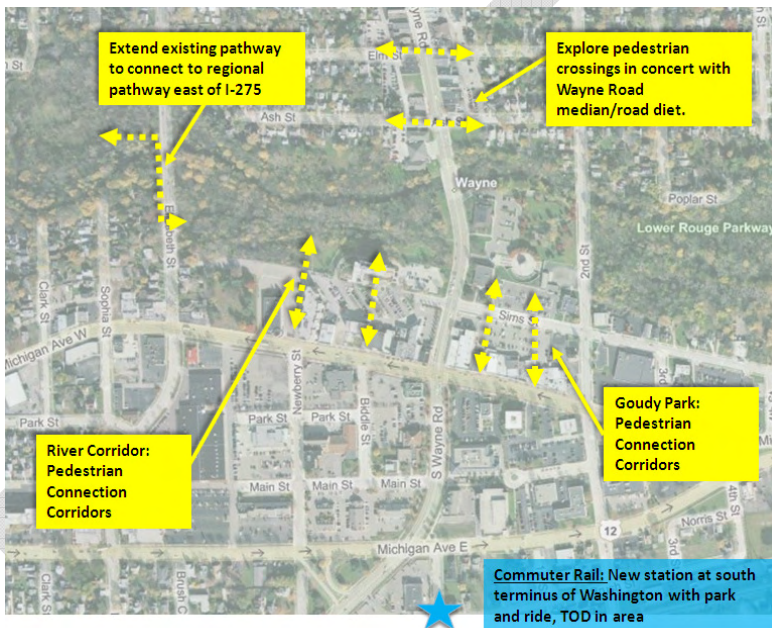
Reintroducing On-street Parking. The lack of parking and proliferation of businesses set right up to the street wall along the north portion of Wayne Road would be a top priority for reintroducing on-street parking. Two alternative treatments are to convert the outside lanes to parking and install bump-outs at intersections, or a less permanent treatment would just be to stripe the outside lanes for parking and add meters and signage. Lower traffic volumes mean either treatment could more easily be implemented on Wayne Road south of eastbound Michigan Avenue, if the city and area businesses desire.

Wayne Road could benefit from improved aesthetics and calmer traffic if enhancements are implemented.

Installing a Landscaped Median. Especially in the area between the Rouge River and the railroad viaduct, the center left turn lane along Wayne Road is only utilized at a few spots. Installation of a landscaped median (with left turn pockets at higher volume turn areas) for the approximate width of the current lane would provide refuge for more pedestrian crossings, aesthetic enhancements, and calm traffic moving through the downtown. The median treatment would have similar benefits extended the length of Wayne Road.

Non-motorized and Transit.

Connectivity with existing sidewalks, pathways, and recreational amenities has tremendous potential as an asset of the downtown area, especially if a commuter rail station is added.



Long blocks and lack of signalized crosswalks makes connectivity limited across the downtown. Several recommendations would improve wayfinding, enhance visibility and use of facilities, and support a future commuter rail stop.

Non-Motorized Connectivity. Connecting the long blocks parallel with Michigan Avenue to the River Parkway and path requires more prominent design including textured pavement, wayfinding signage, and landscaping to demark the connection and call attention from Michigan Avenue.

Transit Enhancements/Commuter Rail Station Area. A number of assets are already in place within a 5-minute walk of the potential rail station; promoting investment in wider sidewalks, wayfinding signage, and streetscape amenities will support a vibrant station and maximize benefit of other redevelopment projects.

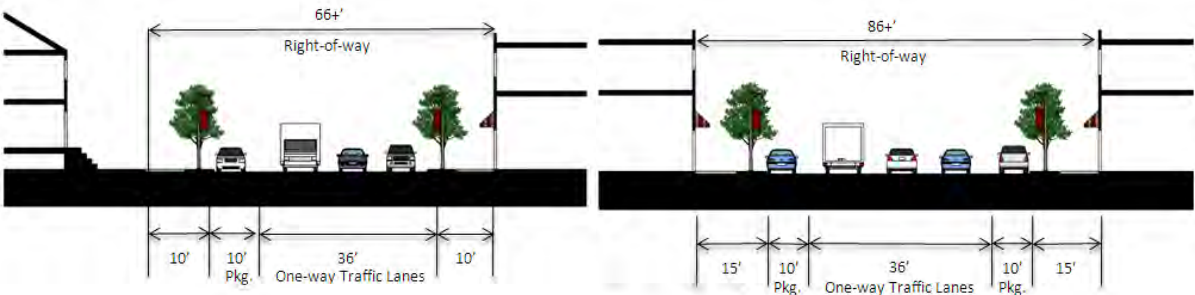
Cross sections. As construction projects, redevelopment, and streetscape enhancements arise, the City should work with the county and MDOT to revise the street character throughout the downtown in support of the vision and revitalization plans set forth in this plan. The following general cross-sections support the goals of this plan in making downtown walkable, easy to navigate, and having a more urban liveable form.

Eastbound/Westbound Michigan Avenue. While one-way pairs are not the most ideal configuration for downtown character and form, they are a safe and effective way to move traffic through a corridor. To more effectively balance the through traffic and local traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists, the cross section should feature narrower (and only 3 through) lanes, on-street parking, streetscape enhancements, and buildings built close to the street whenever possible. Eastbound generally has less right-of-way than westbound, meaning eastbound only one side can have on-street parking in a 3-lane cross section.

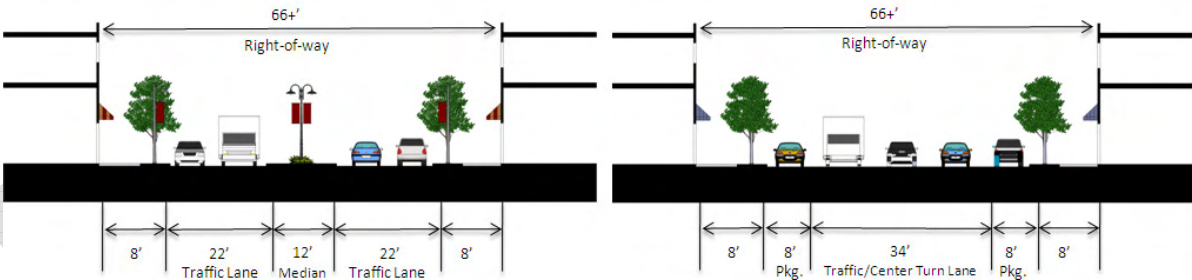
Wayne Road. As recently as the 1980's, Wayne Road north of the Rouge River had on-street parking on both sides of the street. Traffic volumes haven't increased much, although the city has invested significant funds to purchase, clear, and construct municipal parking lots behind many businesses to offset the impacts of losing the on-street parking. Still, the city should regularly evaluate and discuss with the county (which has jurisdiction) the merits of reintroducing on-street parking with a 3-lane cross section, or introducing a median in the center lane with no on-street parking. Limited distance between buildings and traffic and risky 5-lane crossings present a hostile environment for pedestrians. On-street parking and/or a median island would calm traffic, buffer pedestrians, and provide refuge for those crossing the street.

Standard Downtown Streets. Aside from Michigan Avenue and Wayne Road, the other downtown streets should generally follow a consistent format: a narrow street width (40') with 2-lane traffic (1 lane each direction), with on-street parking on both sides of the street. Streets with heavier traffic such as 2nd, Elizabeth, and Sims, may require an additional center left-turn lane to accommodate turns, especially at signalized intersections. "Bump-outs" and wide, aesthetic sidewalks should be included to promote pedestrian foot traffic and downtown environment.

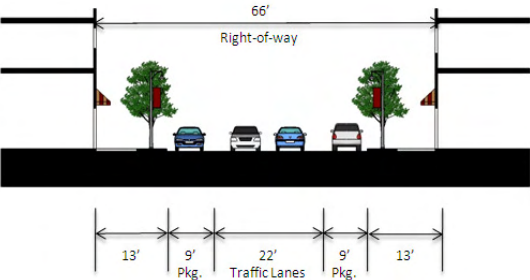
Eastbound/Westbound Michigan Avenue.



Wayne Road.



Standard Downtown Streets.



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