



# City of Plymouth Planning Commission

## Special Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, November 6, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.  
City Hall & Online Zoom Webinar

City of Plymouth  
201 S. Main

[www.plymouthmi.gov](http://www.plymouthmi.gov)  
Phone 734-453-1234

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89057677842>

Passcode: 459405

Webinar ID: 890 5767 7842

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
  - a) Roll Call
2. **CITIZENS COMMENTS**
3. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**
4. **COMMISSION COMMENTS**
5. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**
  - a) **SP 24-08:** 0 PARKING LOT-ARTHUR & WIL (008 04 0022 300) and 0 PARKING LOT-IRVIN CHURCH (008 04 0063 300), Special land use and site plan review for parochial school playground located in an existing parking lot at what is commonly known as 1151 William. The property is zoned R-1, Single-Family Residential.
6. **MASTER PLAN DISCUSSION**
  - a) Review of draft chapters on public engagement, future land use, transportation, implementation, and background studies
7. **REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**
8. **ADJOURNMENT**

*Citizen Comments - This section of the agenda allows up to 3 minutes to present information or raise issues regarding items not on the agenda. Upon arising to address the Commission, speakers should first identify themselves by clearly stating their name and address. Comments must be limited to the subject of the item.*

Meetings of the City of Plymouth are open to all without regard to race, sex, color, age, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, disability, or any other trait protected under applicable law. Any individual planning to attend the meeting who has need of special assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should submit a request to the ADA Coordinator at 734-453-1234 ext. 234 at least two working days in advance of the meeting. The request may also be submitted via mail at 201 S. Main St. Plymouth, MI 48170, or email to [clerk@plymouthmi.gov](mailto:clerk@plymouthmi.gov).

# City of Plymouth Strategic Plan 2022-2026

## GOAL AREA ONE - SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

### OBJECTIVES

1. Identify and establish sustainable financial model(s) for major capital projects, Old Village business district, 35<sup>th</sup> District Court, recreation department, and public safety
2. Incorporate eco-friendly, sustainable practices into city assets, services, and policies; including more environmentally friendly surfaces, reduced impervious surfaces, expanded recycling and composting services, prioritizing native and pollinator-friendly plants, encouraging rain gardens, and growing a mature tree canopy
3. Partner with or become members of additional environmentally aware organizations
4. Increase technology infrastructure into city assets, services, and policies
5. Continue sustainable infrastructure improvement for utilities, facilities, and fleet
6. Address changing vehicular habits, including paid parking system /parking deck replacement plan, electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, and one-way street options

## GOAL AREA TWO – STAFF DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING, AND SUCCESSION

### OBJECTIVES

1. Create a 5-year staffing projection
2. Review current recruitment strategies and identify additional resources
3. Identify/establish flex scheduling positions and procedures
4. Develop a plan for an internship program
5. Review potential department collaborations
6. Hire an additional recreation professional
7. Review current diversity, equity, and inclusion training opportunities
8. Seek out training opportunities for serving diverse communities

## GOAL AREA THREE - COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY

### OBJECTIVES

1. Engage in partnerships with public, private and non-profit entities
2. Increase residential/business education programs for active citizen engagement
3. Robust diversity, equity, and inclusion programs
4. Actively participate with multi-governmental lobbies (Michigan Municipal League, Conference of Western Wayne, etc.)

## GOAL AREA FOUR - ATTRACTIVE, LIVABLE COMMUNITY

### OBJECTIVES

1. Create vibrant commercial districts by seeking appropriate mixed-use development, marketing transitional properties, and implementing Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) practices
2. Improve existing and pursue additional recreational and public green space opportunities and facilities for all ages
3. Develop multi-modal transportation plan which prioritizes pedestrian and biker safety
4. Improve link between Hines Park, Old Village, Downtown Plymouth, Plymouth Township, and other regional destinations
5. Maintain safe, well-lit neighborhoods with diverse housing stock that maximizes resident livability and satisfaction
6. Modernize and update zoning ordinance to reflect community vision
7. Implement Kellogg Park master plan

### Planning Commission 2024 Goals

1. Complete the master plan review
2. Engage in a training session
3. Review a compatibility ordinance

***“The government in this community is small  
and accessible to all concerned.”***

-Plymouth Mayor Joe Bida November 1977

**City of Plymouth**  
**Planning Commission Public Hearing Notice**  
201 S. Main Street Plymouth, Michigan 48170  
Website: [www.plymouthmi.gov](http://www.plymouthmi.gov) Phone: (734) 453-1234 ext. 232

A special meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on Wednesday, November 6, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. located at City Hall and online via Zoom to consider the following:

**SP 24-08:** 0 PARKING LOT-ARTHUR & WIL (008 04 0022 300) and 0 PARKING LOT-IRVIN CHURCH (008 04 0063 300), Special land use and site plan review for parochial school playground located in an existing parking lot at what is commonly known as 1151 William. The property is zoned R-1, Single-Family Residential.

Due to a procedural error this public hearing is being re-noticed.

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Publish: Tuesday, October 22, 2024



## Administrative Memorandum

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City of Plymouth  
201 S. Main  
Plymouth, Michigan 48170

[www.plymouthmi.gov](http://www.plymouthmi.gov)  
Phone 734-453-1234  
Fax 734-455-1892

To: Planning Commission  
From: Greta Bolhuis, AICP, Planning and Community Development Director  
Date: November 4, 2024  
Re: OLGC Public Hearing

As you are aware, the applicant petitioned the Planning Commission for special land use and site plan approval for 0 PARKING LOT-ARTHUR & WIL (008 04 0022 300) and 0 PARKING LOT-IRVIN CHURCH (008 04 0063 300), commonly known as 1151 William. It was brought to our attention that the public hearing was not opened or closed, which is a requirement of the hearing. The administration has re-published the legal notice in the paper and re-sent letters to those property owners within 300 feet of the subject properties. The Commission will need to properly open and close the hearing and then vote upon the matter again.

For your convenience, I have included the motions made at the September 11 meeting on the following page. Sally's review is available upon request.

Please note that the non-use variance to allow an accessory use on a property without a principal building was granted by the ZBA on October 3, 2024. The draft minutes are attached.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me directly.

***Motion #1***

Silvers offered a motion, seconded by Hawthorne, to approve SP24-08 for special land use.

***Findings of Fact***

The property meets the objectives of the master plan.

The parking use exists and is in line with present uses.

**Conditions**

The structure would remain open to the public outside of school hours.

***Motion #2***

Saraswat offered a motion, seconded by Hawthorne, to approve the site plan for SP24-08.

***Findings of Fact***

The setback requirements are not applicable because play structures are not considered a structure by the ordinance.

The dumpster and screen have already been relocated and addressed.

***Condition***

The approval is contingent on approval of a variance by the Zoning Board of Appeals for the location of an accessory use not on a parcel with a primary structure.



City of Plymouth  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, October 3, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.

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City of Plymouth  
201 S. Main  
Plymouth, Michigan 48170-1637

[www.plymouthmi.gov](http://www.plymouthmi.gov)  
Phone 734-453-1234  
Fax 734-455-1892

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Jim Burrows called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Vice Chair Burrows, Members Robert Mengel, Mike Pappas, Rebecca Smith

Excused: Chair Joe Elliott, Member Mike Devine

Also present: Planning and Community Development Director Greta Bolhuis

**2. CITIZENS COMMENTS**

There were no citizen comments.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES**

Pappas offered a motion, seconded by Smith, to approve the minutes of the September 5, 2024 meeting.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED

**4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Smith offered a motion, seconded by Pappas, to approve the agenda for the October 3, 2024 meeting.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

**5. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

a. Z 24-16, 0 PARKING LOT-ARTHUR & WIL (008 04 0022 300) and 0 PARKING LOT-IRVIN CHURCH 008 04 0063 300: Non-use variance to construct a play structure on a zoning lot that does not have a principal building. The property is zoned R-1, Single-Family Residential.

Bolhuis clarified that the variance request was only for parcel 008 04 0063 300 and the other parcel on the agenda was struck from the agenda item.

Burrows told the applicant that only four members of the ZBA were in attendance, meaning three of four would have to vote yes for the item to pass. He offered the applicant an opportunity to delay the variance request until five were present and three of five would have to vote yes for the item to pass. The applicant said he would like to move forward at this meeting.

Applicant Msgr. Todd Lajiness briefly reviewed the project, stating he was seeking approval for a playscape in the school's parking lot. Architect Joe Phillips said the zoning ordinance excludes playscapes from building and structure definitions.

***Citizen Comments***

There were no citizen comments.

***Board Member Discussion***

The group discussed the request and noted that the Planning Commission requested the applicant go before the Zoning Board of Appeals. They reviewed images of the playscape and the applicant reiterated that neutral colors would be used, and it would be open to the public outside school hours.

***Motion***

Pappas offered a motion, seconded by Smith, to approve the placement of the playscape as presented.

Smith offered a friendly amendment with the following findings of fact.

***Findings of Fact***

The lot has been used for this purpose for many years.

Dual lots create a unique challenge to having a play structure on a lot that is separate from the primary structure.

Pappas accepted the friendly amendment.

***Condition***

The variance is limited to parcel 008 04 0063 300.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

**7. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

There were no board member comments

**8. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no reports or correspondence.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Pappas offered a motion, seconded by Mengel, to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

## CHAPTER 2 PUBLIC INPUT

Photo Place Holder – City Commission Meeting in one of the Parks?

The City of Plymouth recognizes that public input is essential in the process of updating the Master Plan. Along with reviews and discussions at Planning Commission meetings, a statistically significant resident survey was conducted, two public engagement sessions were held, and transportation information was collected at a public event.

The City funded a telephone survey which was conducted by EPIC-MRA based in Lansing. The survey interviewed 264 adult residents of the City of Plymouth the week of September 11, 2023.

The first public engagement session was held in Old Village on March 20, 2024. A survey was completed by 32 individuals at the end of the session. The second public engagement session was held at the Plymouth Cultural Center on April 24, 2024, with 36 individuals completing the survey at the end of the session.

In order to gain insight on transportation related matters, data was collected from residents and non-residents at the Spring Artisan Market held in Kellogg Park on April 20, 2024. The Planning Commission collected paper surveys from 23 residents and 30 non-residents.

Specific topics were the focus based on changes and learnings over the past 5 years since the current Master Plan was adopted on September 17, 2018. The following presents the information gathered on the topics.

### **Desirable Characteristics**

At the public engagement sessions, 8 characteristics were reviewed related to the Old Village and Downtown areas of the city. Preservation of historic buildings was consistently identified for both areas by over 90% as the most important characteristic. Buildings set back similarly from the street and variable building styles were clearly 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in importance.

### **Pedestrian Amenities**

8 pedestrian amenities were asked to be ranked by importance at the engagement sessions for Old Village and Downtown. While not in the same order Benches, Trash Cans, Signalized Pedestrian Crossings and Planters were always in the top four. Bike Racks and Bike Lanes were consistently in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> place while Directional Signage and Drinking fountains were identified as the lowest priority.

### **Entry-Level Home Buyer Accessibility**

Housing stock and housing diversity was a topic covered at the engagement sessions. When the participants were asked if it was important that the City of Plymouth be accessible to entry-level home buyers, 83% responded yes, 12% responded no and 6% were unsure.

### **Multi-Family Housing**

The September 2023 survey asked participants their opinion related to whether the city has *Too*

*Many, Too Few, or the Right Amount* of multi-family housing. The *Right Amount* received a majority of responses at 58%, with *Too Many* and *Too Few* equal at 17%. To gather information on specific multi-family housing types, the engagement session surveys asked the question for Duplexes, Triplexes, Apartments and Townhomes. The responses were consistent with the survey results showing slight variation based on the housing type.

## Duplexes

Residents were asked if they favor or oppose allowing duplexes to be built in single-family neighborhoods as part of the September 2023 survey. The response was 37% *Favor* with 52% *Opposed*. The feedback from the engagement session surveys had only 29% respond in *Favor* of with and equal 35% *Opposed* and 35% *Unsure*.

## Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

As this is an unfamiliar topic, a description of accessory dwelling units was provided prior to asking participants if they would *Favor* or *Oppose* the city allowing this type of dwelling unit to be established on the second level of detached garages as part of the September 2023 survey. There was a strong majority support (59%) for allowing ADUs as described. The engagement sessions covered this topic as well and those survey responses also showed a majority (54%) in support; however, 22% did respond that they were unsure.

The engagement session reviewed various forms of ADUs, and the survey asked a follow-up question on which types of ADUs would the participant support. Above garages, both detached and attached again received over 50% support.

A third question was asked on the engagement session surveys to identify participants opinion's on parking, should ADUs be allowed. When asked if parking for ADUs be required on private property, 63% responded yes.

## Size and Mass of Single Family Homes

When asking for opinions on the size and mass of homes built in the city, COVID was used a frame of reference. When asked if homes build since COVID were appropriately sized, the

September 2023 survey results were close with 46% *Yes* and 48% *No* responses. The survey responses from the engagement sessions had a strong *No* response of 78%.

The September 2023 survey went on to ask participants if the Plymouth City ordinances should *Increase, Decrease, or Not Change* the existing size and mass specifications. One half of respondents opted for the status quo, with slightly under four-in-ten expressing a preference for a decrease in the size and mass specifications.

To approach size and mass from a different perspective, the surveys for the engagement sessions asked participants their opinion on whether homes built since COVID were compatible with surrounding homes. 71% responded *No*. It was then asked if the city should investigate ways to encourage and retain character in each neighborhood. 97% responded *Yes*.

## Height of Single Family Homes

The September 2023 survey asked participants their opinions about the height of single family homes built since COVID and if the city should *Increase, Decrease, or Not Change* the ordinance specifications. A majority of participants responded that the home heights were appropriate (66%), and ordinances should not be changed (65%).

## Height of Detached Garages

As with single family homes, the September 2023 survey asked participants their opinions about the height of detached garages built since COVID and if the city should *Increase, Decrease, or Not Change* the ordinance specifications. Again, the majority of participants responded that the detached garage heights were appropriate (76%), and ordinances should not be changed (66%).

## Tree Ordinance

The tree ordinance adopted in 2017 aimed at protecting, preserving, and reforesting the tree canopy. Participants of the September 2023 survey were asked whether it had done *Enough, Too Little, or Too Much* in achieving the stated aim. A plurality of respondents reported the

ordinance had done “enough” (49%) with nearly three-in-ten (29%) reporting “too little”.

### **Landscape Ordinance**

The city adopted an ordinance in January of 2023 establishing a minimum square footage of landscape area on all residential properties. The September 2023 survey asked whether it had done *Enough*, *Too Little*, or *Too Much*, to protect and enhance the landscape areas of the city. A plurality of respondents again reported the ordinance had done “enough” (42%) with only 21% responding that “too little”.

### **Form-Based Codes (FBCs)**

The City of Plymouth currently has Euclidean Zoning Ordinances which has protected neighborhoods from incompatible uses but does not provide walkable design and mixture of uses that exist in the City's best places, like Old Village and Downtown. In 2023, the Planning Commission guided the research of a “test” form-based zoning district for the Old Village area. While implementation of a FBC is at least 2 years out, community engagement and education will be required. An overview of FBCs was given at the engagement sessions. When surveyed if they would be interested in learning more about FBCs, 78% responded yes with 67% responding in 2024 as opposed to 2025 or when the work begins.

## CHAPTER 3: GOALS

The goals for development in the City of Plymouth were developed using public input from the Master Plan survey, public meetings, and many Planning Commission discussions. These goals complement the City Commission’s Five Year Strategic Plan, adopted by the City Commission on January 18, 2022, and should be re-evaluated on an annual basis for compatibility with the plan. How these goals may be accomplished is discussed in subsequent chapters of this Master Plan.

| City Commission Strategic Plan Goal Area                    | Guiding Master Plan Goals for Land Use   |
|---|--|
| Goal Area One – Sustainable Infrastructure                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage appropriate home sizing &amp; massing</li> <li>• Encourage environmentally sensitive, sustainable development</li> <li>• Encourage historic preservation</li> <li>• Maintain and enhance the tree canopy</li> </ul>   |
| Goal Area Two – Staff Development, Training, and Succession | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify yearly training opportunities and conduct joint sessions on land use and development topics</li> <li>• Include all relevant planning, zoning, and development information in orientation packets for boards and commissions</li> </ul>   |
| Goal Area Three – Community Connectivity                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a welcoming environment for, citizens, commercial business &amp; industry</li> <li>• Apply form based codes where appropriate to foster a high-quality public realm</li> <li>• Complete requirements to obtain and maintain RRC certification</li> </ul>  |
| Goal Area Four – Attractive, Livable Community              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for a variety of land uses that creates a dynamic environment supportive of residences, community institutions, and businesses.</li> <li>• Modernize and update zoning ordinance to reflect community vision</li> <li>• Improve street mobility, connectivity &amp; safety</li> <li>• Plan for vehicular needs, including parking</li> </ul> |

## FUTURE LAND USE

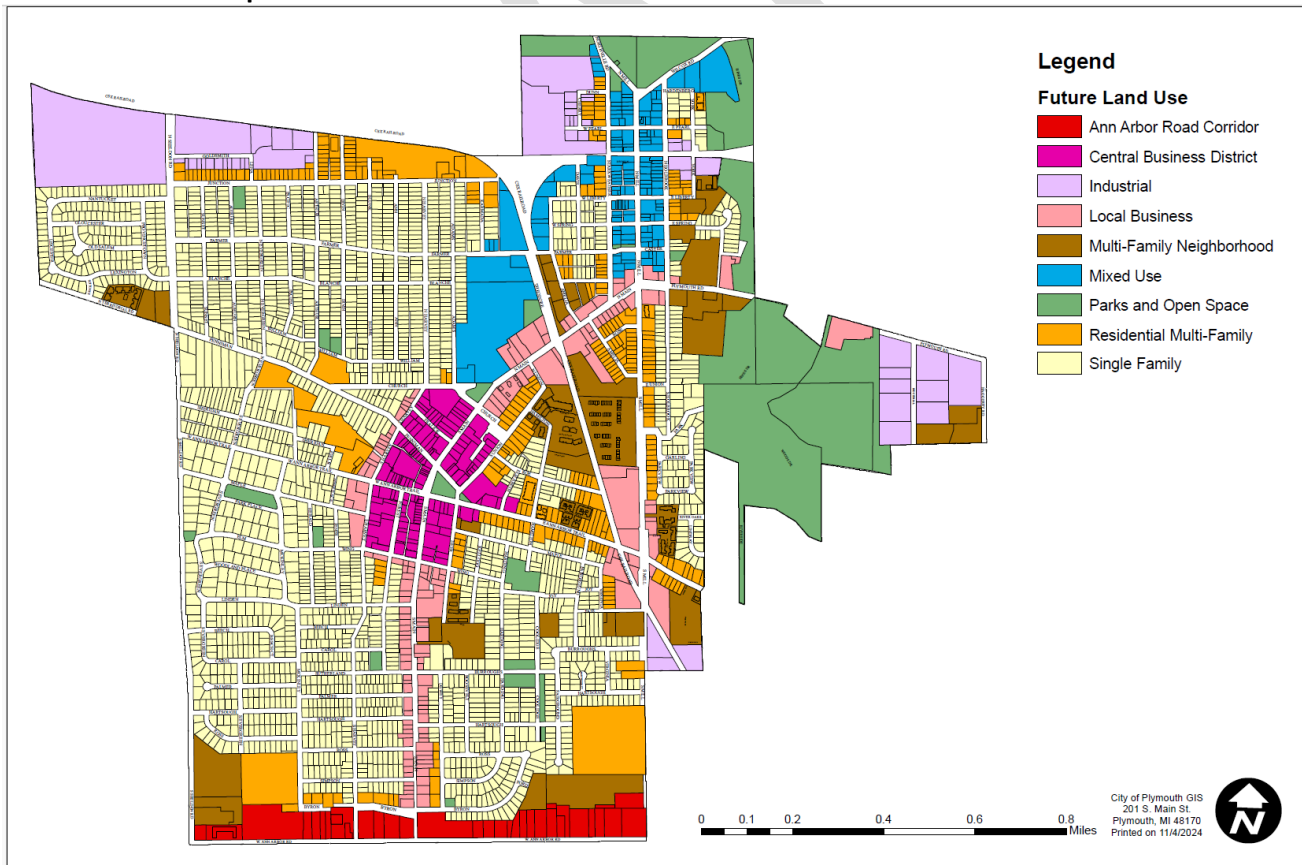
### Introduction

The future land use chapter identifies the desired characteristics of the various land uses. Appropriate future land uses are described and mapped in this document. Each category coordinates with the proposed changes noted in the zoning plan.

The future land use plan and future land use map are intended to be policy documents and decision-making guides to promote informed public and private decision-making for the betterment of the community. It is important to note that future land use designations are not the same as zoning districts or zoning ordinance standards. They are designations on a plan that provide guidance on appropriate land uses if a lot were to be redeveloped in the future. The designations and map will guide future zoning ordinance updates to achieve the goals of this document.

The land use classifications on the future land use map provide the basis for evaluating future rezoning requests. Zoning actions that are consistent with the future land use map usually receive deferential and favorable judicial review if challenged. The Master Plan should be the principal source of information in the investigation of all rezoning requests. The City may initiate rezoning as necessary to place land in conformance with the future land use map, or it may wait for property owners to come forward on a case-by-case basis.

### Future Land Use Map



### *Residential Vision Statement*

*Homes in the City of Plymouth shall contribute to the character and desirability of the City. They shall maintain the walkable character of the neighborhoods, with appropriate heights relative to the street, and appropriate distance from sidewalks. They shall be built size-appropriate to their lots, allowing adequate space and sunlight to neighboring homes. They shall maximize green space and trees and minimize non-permeable surfaces to allow for both the continued forestation of Plymouth and increase water infrastructure sustainability.*

### **Single-Family Residential**

Areas planned for Single Family Residential are typically arranged in a traditional grid pattern. Most of the core single-family residential areas are connected to the historic downtown and the historic corridors. There are a range of residential building types, with houses of worship, schools, and small parks intermixed. The majority of residences are single-family homes, but duplexes are scattered throughout the core neighborhoods. These areas occupy most of the residential development in the city and are characterized by original plats that are 25 to 50 feet wide. In general, the lot sizes, widths, and building setbacks are small, with many of the existing homes and lots not meeting current zoning ordinance requirements. Homes in this land use category are generally placed the same distance from the street with front porches and detached garages in the rear of the property.

There are some areas of single-family residential that were developed in a more suburban manner. Many of these neighborhoods are regulated by a single plat or condominium plan with associated rules or restrictions. Areas include what is typically referred to as “subdivisions,” such as the New England Village neighborhood on the west side of town or Starkweather Condo on the north side of Plymouth Road. In most cases, the street network is designed to carry traffic into the neighborhood, not through it. Streets are wider and are more winding than streets in the core single-family residential areas, often including cul-de-sacs. Lot sizes, widths, and setbacks in these areas are larger than in the core single-family residential areas.

### *Strategies*

The zoning in these areas should allow for a mix of uses currently in those neighborhoods. Through the existing land use map, Plymouth has found many duplexes in these neighborhoods. Those neighborhoods can also be an opportunity for more housing choices and types, such as accessory dwelling units. To allow for additional density and housing choice within the neighborhoods, the city may want to consider additional standards to ensure that those dwelling units that are not single-family homes fit into the desired character of the neighborhood. Additionally, a strong rental inspection program is important to ensure that rental units, whether in houses, accessory buildings, or larger buildings, are safe and clean dwellings.

The zoning in these areas should allow for the original plat to dictate parcel size, when the street or block deems it appropriate. New lots created in this designation should be developed at a lot size that is compatible with the surrounding properties. Repurposing vacant lots should be the priority, so demolition and infill development does not degrade tree canopy, home affordability, and historic and architectural character.

*Applicable Zoning Districts: R-1*

### **Multi-Family Residential**

Multi-Family Residential areas were developed in a range of residential building types which includes duplexes, triplexes, multiplexes, townhouses, small apartment buildings, and groups of condominiums with houses of worship and small parks intermixed. This designation aims to allow the “missing middle” housing types that are desirable as a residence. It is the priority of this area to increase the number of housing units in a manner that is consistent with the adjacent areas while serving as a transition between commercial districts and single-family neighborhoods. These areas allow for additional density to occur while still preserving the character of adjacent single-family neighborhoods. These areas can also host accessory dwelling units under appropriate circumstances.

#### *Strategies*

Multi-family residential may take a variety of different forms and it is important that a variety of housing types that are desirable to current and prospective Plymouth residents can be constructed. Existing structures within this designation should also be considered for adaptive reuse into multi-family buildings. Increasing density within existing building footprints is a desirable method of adding dwelling units. Standards for multi-family homes should be evaluated to ensure that the design of such development fits into the surrounding area and supports the needs of the community. A strong rental housing program also ensures that existing and new development are safe and clean places to live. A building type inventory would assist in understanding the makeup of existing multi-family residential areas and what housing types are missing.

*Applicable Zoning Districts:* RT-1, RM-1

### **Multi-Family Neighborhoods**

Multi-family Neighborhoods were designed for a single type of housing per site and include large blocks of apartments and townhouses. It may be appropriate for these neighborhoods to include “missing middle” types of housing in a higher density than in the multi-family residential designation. The streets here are typically private and are not connected to the larger grid network of Plymouth. Traffic is meant to be directed into and out of the neighborhood through one or two entry points. These neighborhoods often include large surface parking areas for residents and visitors. These higher-density neighborhoods are encouraged to meet the City’s need for housing in a wider range of price points and to offer options which are accessible by means other than personal vehicle. A single site may be able to support a mixture of housing types and unit offerings and should not be limited to one building type per site.

#### *Strategies*

In the multi-family residential zoning district, the types of permitted housing were expanded, however, obstacles still exist that prevent redevelopment. These barriers can be reduced by removing the room number density formula, reviewing parking needs especially for properties close to downtown, and allowing additional height/stories where appropriate. In targeted areas, missing middle type housing constructed in a higher density may offer desirable housing types in a neighborhood context. Completion of a building type inventory may offer insight into necessary changes.

Built multi-family neighborhoods are unlikely to change significantly in the future unless they are fully redeveloped. Some of the multi-family neighborhoods are aging and in need of maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation to remain desirable. The city should encourage investment in these areas.

These neighborhoods should aim to increase the city’s total number of dwelling units while balancing the need for vehicular circulation, parking, landscaping, and other site amenities. Standards for new

multi-family developments should be evaluated to ensure that the design of such development supports the needs of the community. A strong rental housing program also ensures that existing and new development are safe and clean places to live.

*Applicable Zoning Districts:* RM-1, RM-2

### **Old Village – Mixed Use**

The Old Village area was built on a traditional grid pattern centering along the railroad line. Historically, this area hosted a mixture of industrial, hospitality, restaurant, service, retail, religious, and residential uses. Many of these same uses exist today. Care should be taken to protect the commercial corridors comprising the downtown village area of W. Liberty between Starkweather and Mill, Starkweather between W. Liberty and Farmer, and Mill between W. Liberty and W. Spring.

The Old Village character area has a range of residential, commercial, and industrial building types and land uses. Buildings should be setback from the street uniformly and preservation of existing buildings is a priority. Buildings in this area should be adaptable so they can shift between residential and commercial uses as demand changes.

The city is interested in adopting a form based code to guide the development of Old Village. More study of the existing building types and engagement of the business owners and residents is necessary. Generally, desirable building types throughout the area are houses, duplexes, multi-family buildings, and downtown/commercial mixed use. The mixture of commercial and residential land uses should be carefully considered on a block by block basis. Commercial uses should not negatively impact existing or future residential, however, there is an understanding that homes may be located adjacent to businesses that permit late night hours of operation.

### *Strategies*

The intent of the form based code is to preserve and protect the development pattern that occurred prior to the control of traditional zoning. A preliminary form based code was drafted for Old Village in 2023. To adopt the code, a detailed building type inventory must be completed to determine which building types are compatible with each block/corridor. Additional study of street types and site types is also necessary.

Obstacles exist that prevent meaningful intermixing of residential and business land uses. Stringent special land use requirements for commercial uses should be reconsidered. Parking requirements need to be balanced with the physical confines of existing sites and should not be dictated by land uses. Consideration could be given to on-street parking and other public parking while safeguarding neighborhood streets whenever possible.

*Applicable Zoning Districts:* RT-1, RM-1, RM-2, MU, B-1

### **Local Business**

Local Business is designed for office uses and convenient shopping, dining, and services for residents of nearby residential areas. The desirable building types in this area include standalone single-use buildings, mixed use buildings, and former homes. This area serves as a transition area between single family neighborhoods and higher traffic volume streets. Local business has been applied to smaller lots that can accommodate various uses in a harmonious design, but there are some larger lots that could be redeveloped. Should redevelopment occur, adaptive reuse of existing structures should be prioritized.

This category could accommodate residential uses on upper levels. Local Business would not include intensive business types or businesses that depend on high volumes of vehicle traffic. Generally, buildings should have uniform setbacks with parking located at the rear of the building or integrated and hidden within any new construction.

#### *Strategies*

Eliminate strip mall type developments when possible. Parking should be located at the rear of buildings and away from street frontages. Parking and site circulation should be shared across property lines whenever practical. Shared parking agreements should be encouraged. Adaptive reuse and preservation of historic buildings is desired. Protect business uses by prohibiting residential uses on the first floor unless developed at a higher density of multi-family residential. Improve sidewalk conditions to give pedestrians buffered landscaped space away from the edge of the street. Development should include pedestrian oriented site amenities like bike parking, pedestrian sidewalks and pathways, and inviting outdoor spaces where appropriate.

*Applicable Zoning Districts:* B-1, O-1, O-2

#### **Central Business**

The central business area provides the central gathering place and commercial area of the city, accommodating pedestrian access to local businesses, restaurants, and entertainment, as well as office and upper-level residential uses. It serves the retail, office, convenience, and service needs of the entire City. The central business area promotes uses which provide convenient pedestrian shopping and services along a continuous retail frontage. Much of the area is served by centralized parking under the City's control. The Plymouth Downtown Development Authority boundary is closely matched to the central business designation.

#### *Strategies*

The central business designation is supported by the DDA infrastructure and strategic plans and the Kellogg Park Historic District. The intent is to maintain a vibrant, desirable downtown with thriving businesses that have a variety of offerings. Adaptive reuse of existing buildings, especially outside of the historic district, will help maintain the existing character and charm of the downtown area.

Care should be taken to strategically increase parking supply through public-private partnerships, land acquisition, and efficient parking space layout across private properties. Consideration of parking requirements for new buildings and businesses should be a priority. Examine parking options downtown to determine whether minimum parking requirements are needed or only necessary for some land uses, such as residential.

The central business area is another place that could benefit from form based code requirements. Analysis should include a building type inventory, street and site types, and consideration of public spaces and parking areas.

*Applicable Zoning Districts:* B-2

#### **Ann Arbor Road Corridor**

The Ann Arbor Road Corridor is the broadest and most-intensive commercial land use category. This area is located on the automobile dependent Ann Arbor Road and benefits from the exposure of high-traffic volumes. While these uses are generally accessed by vehicle, pedestrian access across the site is

desirable. Businesses include a wide range of retail and service establishments, including drive-through restaurants, auto-service establishments and commercial uses serving a regional clientele. Limited residential uses may be appropriate on upper levels but are considered a subordinate use to the principal commercial intent of this designation. Buildings in this corridor are typically single land use, but a mixture of commercial land uses are desirable within buildings. Parking should be located behind or along the side of buildings. Improvements to pedestrian circulation to and through sites should be prioritized, especially for land uses that will serve the adjacent residential neighborhoods. The intent of the corridor is to provide a cohesive streetscape with consistent signage, landscaping, and fencing. Ideally, buildings would be setback from the street in a consistent manner and curb cuts should be limited to reduce the potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

#### *Strategies*

This corridor's zoning standards were developed in partnership with Plymouth Township. The intent of the district is a unified corridor of consistent land use regulation. While the regulations have produced the desired results, there are some requirements that are showing their age and make development and adaptive reuse of existing buildings challenging. Any amendments to this corridor should be undertaken cooperatively with the Plymouth Township Planning Commission, the Township Downtown Development Authority, and corridor businesses. Parking requirements should be reviewed to ensure that parking lots are designed to serve the building, not the land uses. Reduction to the number of curb cuts throughout the district is a priority for vehicular and pedestrian safety.

*Applicable Zoning Districts:* ARC

#### **Industrial**

The Industrial land use designation is intended to primarily accommodate wholesale activities, warehouses, and light industrial operations whose external and physical effects are restricted to the immediate area having only a minimal effect on surrounding districts. This designation is also structured to permit manufacturing, compounding, processing, packaging and assembling of finished or semi-finished products from previously prepared materials. Research and development land uses are appropriate for this designation and the increased use of technology to mitigate typical industrial-type nuisances is encouraged. Uses that are more conducive to a residential community are encouraged.

Buildings in this area are typically single land use, but a mixture of industrial land uses may be suitable within single buildings. Parking should be located behind or along the side of buildings, unless parking in the front offers a better buffer for the street.

#### *Strategies*

Industrial land uses are changing due to increased automation and evolving business and customer demands. Heavy industrial land uses are considered incompatible with Plymouth's increasingly residential character, however, industrial land uses support employment opportunities for residents and the city tax base. It is important that standards are in place for existing businesses to grow while protecting the quality of life in adjacent neighborhoods. It is important that employee and truck parking be provided on-site so on-street parking is minimized. Site circulation should provide safe pathways for pickups, deliveries, parking, and storage. Truck routes should serve industrial areas and should provide adequate passage into, through, and out of the city.

*Applicable Zoning Districts:* I-1, I-2

### **Parks and Open Space**

Parks and Open Space areas include existing city owned parks, playgrounds, and cemeteries, and county owned Hines Parkway. Other properties that are considered for recreational land use in the future have been given this designation. This land use category is intended to protect parklands and open space from future development that does not consider the public benefit of retaining such land.

#### *Strategies*

If properties owned by regional, public organizations become available, the city should consider acquiring the property for parks and recreation land uses. Public-private partnerships for vacant land that could be used for recreational purposes is another desirable option. Parks and playground areas in neighborhoods should be served by on-street parking. Larger, formal recreation uses and facilities that serve people outside of the immediate vicinity should be served by off-street parking.

*Applicable Zoning Districts:* R-1, POS

DRAFT

# TRANSPORTATION PLAN



## Introduction

Transportation infrastructure is the backbone of a community, allowing residents and visitors to easily and safely move from home, to work, to play. These routes serve the driving public, as well as people who walk, use a wheelchair, or ride a bicycle to their destination. Well planned and maintained roads and sidewalks also feed the economic engine of a community's commercial district and create dynamic places where people want to gather and enjoy a high quality of life.

In 2010, the State of Michigan legislature signed into law the Complete Streets amendments. Public Act 135 defines complete streets as "...roadways planned, designed, and constructed to provide appropriate access to all legal users in a manner that promotes safe and efficient movement of people and goods whether by car, truck, transit, assistive device, foot, or bicycle."

This chapter of the Master Plan looks at how the transportation system works in the City of Plymouth for all users. While this chapter does not identify specific improvements for particular routes, it is the basis upon which a more detailed plan could be developed in the future.

This chapter:

- Provides an overview of existing transportation routes in the city, and existing opportunities for regional bicycle or pedestrian connections with adjoining communities.
- Describes the city's current policies on road and sidewalk maintenance.
- Provides overall strategic goals for future improvements to Plymouth's transportation network for all users.
- Identifies priorities for future road and sidewalk improvements as roadway projects are implemented.

### ***What are Complete Streets?***

*Complete Streets provide facilities that allow all users, irrespective of their age or abilities, to use the street as a mode of transportation.*

*A Complete Street allows pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and those with disabilities to easily and safely use roads in their community.*

*Communities with Complete Streets policies help to ensure that roadways accommodate all users, not just motorists.*

# TRANSPORTATION PLAN

## Existing Conditions

### Regional Setting

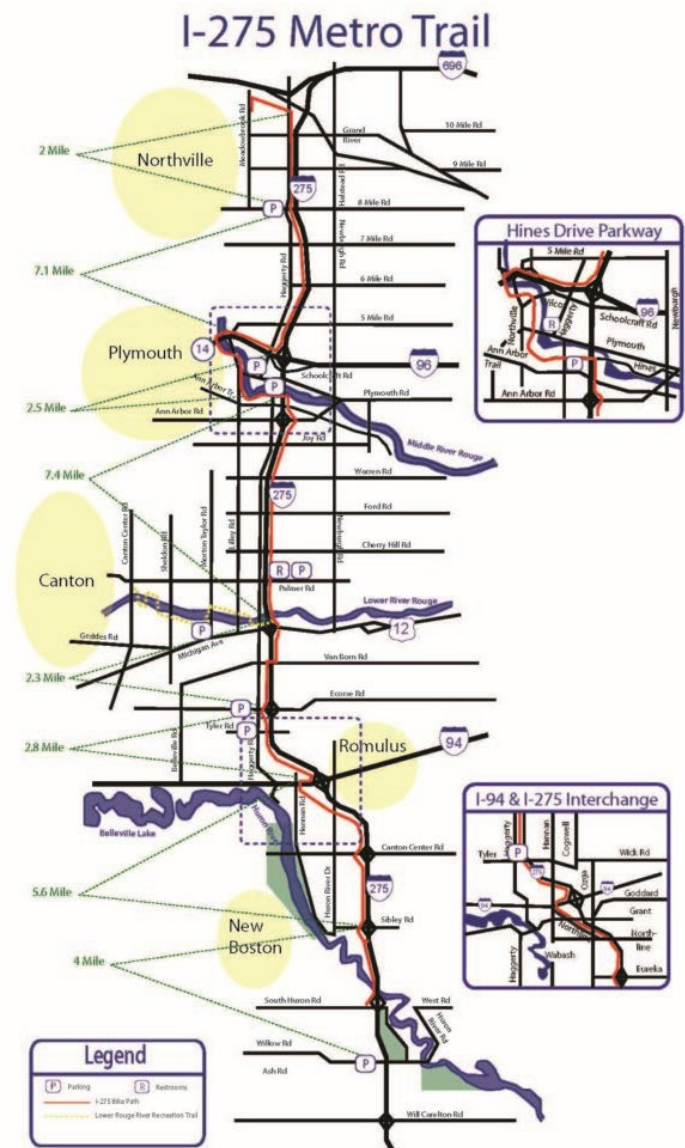
Before making improvements to the city's transportation system, it is important to consider how the local system connects with adjacent transportation systems. This is true not only for Plymouth residents wanting to travel to other communities or nearby destinations, but also to allow visitors to come and enjoy all that Plymouth has to offer. Plymouth's downtown is a prime destination for many visitors given the broad array of annual events and dynamic downtown environment. Helping visitors reach the city by various modes of transportation will only increase its popularity.

There are various ways cyclists can access downtown Plymouth via the street network. Primary points of access from the street network to downtown include Penniman, Ann Arbor Trail, and Main Street. Improvements should make the connection between Hines and downtown more pedestrian and bike friendly.

Plymouth is connected to the I-275 Metro Trail by the Hines Park Pathway system, shown on the map to the right. The Hines Park Pathway is a 17-mile shared-use pathway which begins in Dearborn and ends in the City of Northville. The I-275 Metro Trail is a 42-mile stretch from Novi to Monroe. The I-275 trail network has been the focus of significant regional improvements outside of the city limits. Currently, Plymouth only has three entry points into Hines Park at Wilcox Rd., Park, and Riverside Dr. An unmaintained, unofficial path exists at Plymouth Road. Creating pedestrian and bike access to Hines at Plymouth Road should be a priority in the future. Although the city has no jurisdiction over these trail networks, collaborative cooperation should be shown towards any opportunities that arise for improvement of the area within Plymouth's city limits.

### Plymouth's Road Network

Plymouth is conveniently located near the regional highway system and can be accessed



directly via Sheldon Road and Ann Arbor Road at interchanges located just outside the city limits. These main roads narrow down into local roads once within the city's boundaries, which form the grid around which Plymouth's neighborhoods and commercial districts are organized. Transportation improvements must be based on the current use, condition, and type of the existing roads in the network. The illustration titled "Existing Conditions" (Figure 11) on page X classifies each road according to the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) hierarchical functional system. This road classification corresponds to roadway traffic volumes. Plymouth's road network includes four classes of roads as described below.

# TRANSPORTATION PLAN

## MDOT National Functional Classification

Code 1 – Interstates

Code 2 – Other Freeways

Code 3 – Other Principal Arterials

Code 4 – Minor Arterials

Code 5 – Major Collectors

Code 6 – Minor Collectors

Code 7 – Local

Uncoded -- not a certified public road

- Principal arterial roads run relatively long distance and service travel movements to important traffic generators, such as dense commercial areas or employment centers. Sheldon Road, North Territorial Road (west of Sheldon), Ann Arbor Road, and Plymouth Road (east of Mill St.) belong in this category.
- Major collector roads funnel traffic from residential areas to arterial roads, with some providing direct access to residences. They include Main Street, Starkweather, Mill/Lilley, Farmer, Penniman, and Ann Arbor Trail.
- Minor Collector roads serve more through-traffic than a local road but are not as heavily traveled as a major collector. These roads may directly serve schools, business districts and public functions but are less important than major collectors. Streets in this category include Church Street, Harvey, and Wing.
- Local roads are neighborhood streets that provide access to residences and include all other streets in Plymouth.

## *Plymouth's Sidewalk and Bicycle Facilities*

Almost all of Plymouth's streets have a sidewalk on one or both sides of the street. Only a few formal bicycle amenities, such as bike lanes or shared-use paths exist within the City. Recent street improvements included the addition of bike lanes between Ann Arbor Road and Ann Arbor Trail on South Main and shared lane markings on Harvey. Harvey has also been marked with shared lane markings between Penniman and W. Ann Arbor Trail. Many residents perceive the arterials such as Sheldon Road, Ann Arbor Road, and Mill/Lilley Street as unsafe and challenging

because of the heavy volume and fast traffic flow. This concern was also voiced about using a bicycle through downtown Plymouth.

## *Plymouth's Destinations*

An important element of planning any transportation system is to identify the destinations that the system must serve within a community. The destinations are classified by land use, type of user, and the way the user reaches the destination. The "Existing Conditions" map (Figure 11) shows the various destinations within and adjacent to Plymouth, including shopping/entertainment districts, schools, community facilities, and parks.

## Survey Responses on "Bicycles"

The September 2023 Citizen Survey asked respondents about bike lanes and bike racks. One-third shows up as the proportion of respondents who were of the opinion that *More* bicycle lanes are needed in the city. Only 15 percent reported their belief that there are *Too Many*, with the balance expressing the opinion that there were *Enough* (21%) or were undecided (6%) on the question. These proportions shifted, however, when it came to opinions about the number of bicycle racks needed. For bike racks, nearly half of respondents (47%) reported *More* were needed, compared to the one-third who believed there are already *Enough*.

For those who expressed that *More* lanes or racks were needed for bicycles, a follow-up open-ended question accepted up-to-two responses as to where the respondent would like to see them located. In the case of bike lanes, Ann Arbor Trail, Main, Penniman, and Harvey together received over half of all of the over fourteen specific responses. As for more bike rack locations, *Downtown* captured nearly one-in-four responses and together with *Kellogg Park* (20%) and *Near Parks* (12%), the three locations account for more than half of thirteen site-specific responses.

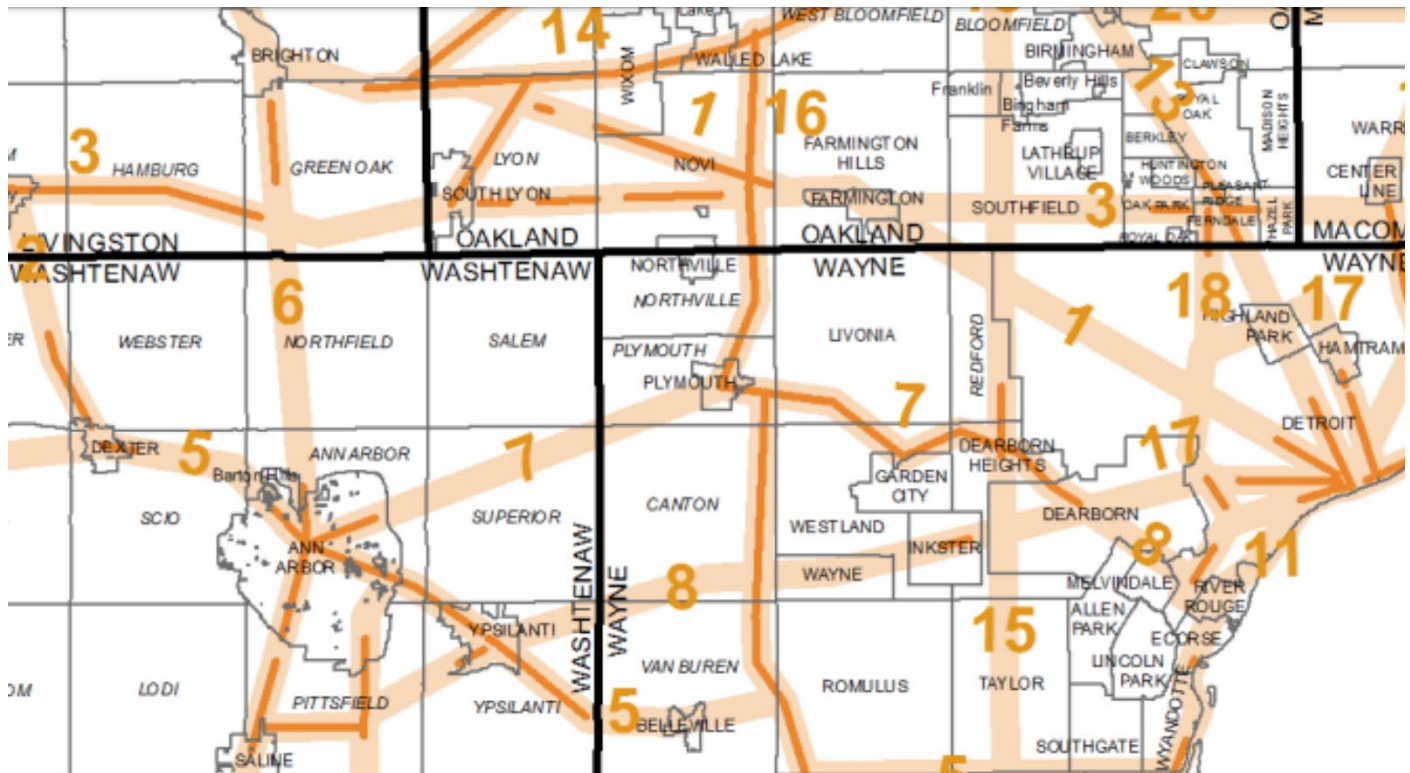
# TRANSPORTATION PLAN

## Surrounding Communities

The communities surrounding the City of Plymouth have planned improvements to their transportation networks, particularly for pedestrian and bicycle users (or “non-motorized” transportation facilities). Since transportation networks help people get around their own community, as well as help people move between communities and beyond, the following describes how the region and neighboring communities are

how to increase the connectivity, use, and safety of the system for all residents.” The plan identifies existing and planned non-motorized facilities in the seven-county region and identifies opportunities for filling in the gaps.

The Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Corridors map is shown below. The dark orange represents existing infrastructure for both walking and biking and the light orange represents regional bicycle



planning for future non-motorized transportation facilities. Knowing these goals will allow Plymouth to collaborate with neighboring municipalities, and efficiently coordinate mutually beneficial non-motorized projects with its neighbors.

## Southeast Michigan

On a regional scale, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) has developed the Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel Plan for Southeast Michigan (2020) in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Transportation. SEMCOG is the regional planning organization for southeast Michigan. The purpose of the 2020 Plan is “to establish a common vision for bicycling and walking in the region, and provide guidance on

and pedestrian corridor.

The Ann Arbor to Detroit Corridor (7) utilizes the Hines Park Bikeway and shared use paths and routes along the Plymouth Road corridor and sidewalks and protected bike lanes along Michigan Avenue in Detroit. This corridor links Southeast Michigan to Canada. In February 2024 the Gordie Howe Bridge connected to Canada’s 14,864 mile Trans Canada trail and became the first international bridge border crossing on “The Great Trail”.

The Walled Lake to Lake Erie Metropark Corridor (16) connects Walled Lake to Flat Rock through

# TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Plymouth and utilizes the M-5 Metro Trail, I-275 Metro Trail, and Downriver Linked Greenways.

## *Plymouth Township*

The City of Plymouth is completely surrounded by Plymouth Township. The Township has addressed transportation and complete streets in their recent Master Plan. While they don't have jurisdiction over their roadway system, they do strive to work with Wayne County, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and SEMCOG to implement non-motorized facilities where possible. In 2020, the Township completed a comprehensive Sidewalk Inventory to provide a long range guide for the planning and prioritizing of sidewalk installations. They found 194,583 linear feet (36.85 miles) of sidewalk gaps.

Goals the Township has included in its Master Plan for this effort are listed below:

- Coordinate with Wayne County and the MDOT to accommodate a non-motorized pathway system throughout the Township to support pedestrian and bicycle travel as part of roadway improvement projects.
- Promote linkages and better connections between the downtown Plymouth, Hines Park, schools, and other community destinations; this includes the installation of crosswalks, and other traffic calming measures.
- Develop a plan with Wayne County and SEMCOG to connect into the regional non-motorized system, including Hines Parkway, and increase the roadway shoulder/install bike lanes in conjunction with the plan.
- Work with Wayne County and surrounding municipalities to develop preferred routes for truck traffic.
- Implement the sidewalk gap program, with a priority to extend continuous sidewalks along/at: Ann Arbor Trail, N. Territorial, Wilcox; Powell Road, from Ridge to Beck; Ann Arbor Road; McClumpha; and Canton Center, between Joy Road and Ann Arbor Road.

## *Northville Township*

The entire document is available on SEMCOG's website at <https://www.semco.org/bicycle-and-pedestrian-mobility>

Northville Township established a Pathways Advisory Committee in 2021 and took "field trips" to study the current system. After a Pathway Gap Analysis, six pathway projects were prioritized to pursue.

- North side of Six Mile Road, between Northville Road and the Ravines subdivision
- North side of Six Mile Road, east and west of Beck
- South side of Seven Mile Road between Edenderry Drive and Fish Hatchery Park
- East side of Silver Spring Drive, north of Seven Mile
- East side of Bradner Road, Meads Mill Middle School to Whisperwood subdivision
- North side of Arcadia Ridge, into Marv Gans Community Park

## *City of Northville*

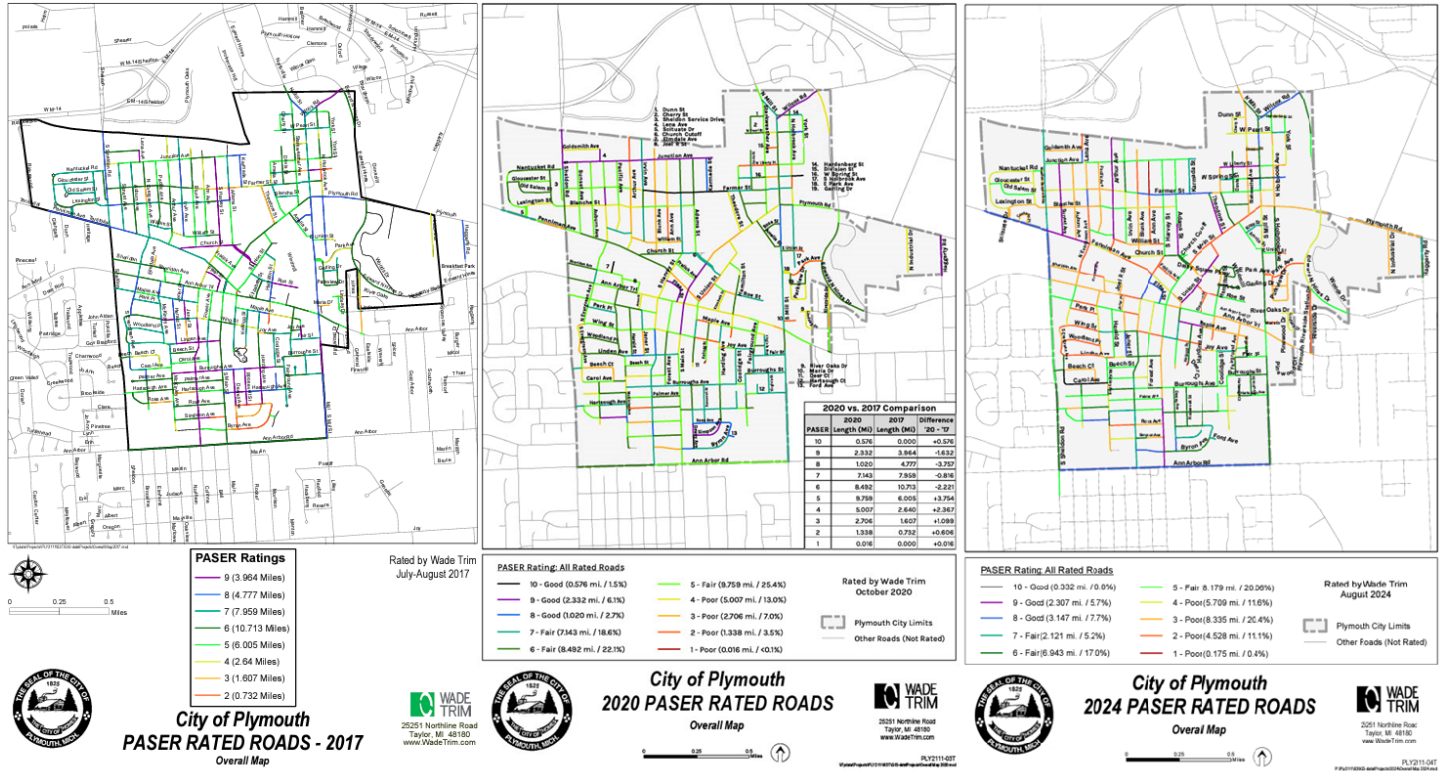
The City of Northville's Non-Motorized Plan, adopted in 2014, articulates a system of pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the city. Similar to Plymouth, Northville has a well-established network of sidewalks. This plan proposes to address sidewalk gaps and add new bicycle routes for short-term and long-term implementation. For Plymouth residents, Northville's downtown is a destination that is accessible by bicycle or sidewalks along Sheldon Road and Hines Park Pathway.

## **Existing Policies**

The City has adopted policies regarding street and sidewalk maintenance and repairs. It is important to note that a few streets in the City of Plymouth are County or State roads, including Mill Street, Sheldon Road, Wilcox Road, Plymouth Road, and Ann Arbor Road. The city has no jurisdiction over these roadways and rights-of-way.

## *Streets*

# TRANSPORTATION PLAN



In 2017, 2020, and 2024, the city completed comprehensive assessments of the condition of the city’s road system to plan for future repairs/replacement. The road scoring system is called PASER, which is an acronym for PAVement Surface Evaluation and Rating. Roads are given a score from 0 to 10, with 10 being a newly paved road and 0 being a completely deteriorated surface. The maps above show the ratings over the past three assessment periods.

The city has an annual infrastructure plan/program which as of 2024, has reconstructed approximately XX miles of streets since 20XX. Of the 9.1 miles of road currently rated poor as of 2020, the city has replaced XX miles. The remaining XX miles will be completed by 20XX.

Planning for the annual infrastructure program considers underground utilities improvements, PASER score, and use of the right-of-way. The program goals should include using the right-of-way appropriately and most efficiently. The needs of the roadway and prioritizing said needs should be considered when selecting streets for the program. This includes improving the pedestrian

elements and what the current and desired pedestrian experience of the roadway is like. These matters are considered by the City Commission, Department of Municipal Services, the Street Administrator, and the City Engineer.

## Sidewalks

The sidewalk program is implemented by the Department of Municipal Services. They inspect a different quadrant of the city each year and determine repairs based on the criteria reviewed and enacted by the City Commission.

## Primary and Secondary Transportation Routes

Plymouth’s vehicular system is well established. Therefore, improvements to the City’s transportation network in this Plan focus on ensuring the city is also walkable and bikeable. Figure 12 on the next page depicts the priority routes and connections for Plymouth identified through a paper survey of visitors to the Spring Artisan Market in Downtown Plymouth April 2024 and a workshop with the Planning Commission. While all these routes currently have existing sidewalks, there are opportunities to improve

# TRANSPORTATION PLAN

certain walks, as well as a need to establish facilities that better accommodate bicycle travel.

The map also shows secondary routes that should also be considered for improvement once the primary routes have been improved, or if the primary routes are ruled-out after further study by transportation professionals. The map represents a long-term vision and is intended to serve as a guide for future funding, design, and implementation, either independently or as a consideration of future street improvement projects.

1. Primary Vehicular Routes, colored yellow, include Main Street, Starkweather Street, Harvey, Farmer, Penniman, and Ann Arbor Trail. These roadways have been identified as the main routes used by vehicles to reach various destinations in town, or to connect with the larger roadway system surrounding the city. (Note that the existing conditions on Penniman (i.e., retaining walls and narrow travel lanes) make this street unfavorable as a future bicycle route.) The information is provided on this map to provide context, identifying the major roads where vehicular traffic has priority.

2. Primary Bicycle Routes, colored blue, are the routes selected for consideration for future bicycle amenities. These routes would allow bicycle access to most of the City's destinations, as well as connection to the Hines Park Trail, and regional bicycle network.

3. Primary Pedestrian Routes, colored red, were selected to coordinate with new bicycle amenities and provide safe pedestrian travel along Main Street and around downtown Plymouth.

## Goals for Transportation Improvements

Desired transportation improvements encompass the pedestrian environment, roads and rights-of-way, parking, and the effect of buildings on the public realm.

1. Create a comfortable and safe pedestrian environment by slowing vehicle traffic from driveways and within parking lots. Prioritize pedestrian accessibility and clear walking paths. Make pedestrian environments desirable spaces by adding the following elements:

- Widen sidewalks for outdoor dining, furniture, and activities. (Standard is 5 to 6 feet)
- Street furniture (benches, planters, trash cans)
- Street trees
- Reduced traffic speed through street design
- Pedestrian-scaled street lighting
- Bicycle parking
- Pedestrian-activated crossing lights
- Bulb-outs and curb extensions at intersections
- On-street parking that buffers pedestrians from vehicles

2. To the greatest extent possible parking should be located at the rear or side of a building. Reduce parking requirements and incentivize alternative or shared parking arrangements to reduce the area dedicated to parking and increase the area available for employment, housing, parks, public art, or other amenities. On-street parking is preferred to off-street, and it may be appropriate to count toward any parking minimums.

3. The placement of buildings is almost as critical as their uses. Creating a continuous and inviting walkable street requires consideration of the public realm. In new development areas, placement for wider sidewalks that allow outdoor dining, sandwich board signage, and other street furniture is desired. The building facade should have large clear windows and have clear accessible entry from both the parking areas and sidewalk.

## Goals for Non-Motorized Improvements

The Primary and Secondary Transportation Routes map illustrates the following goals for future pedestrian and bicycle improvements throughout Plymouth. These goals are provided to guide decision-making when resources are available. For example, if improvements are noted on the Primary and Secondary Transportation Routes

# TRANSPORTATION PLAN

map within the boundary of a major road project, or if a goal could be accomplished as a component of a major road project, the City Commission could consider adding one or more non-motorized transportation features to the project if funds allow. These goals are also provided to identify potential grant-funded projects.

1. Create a comprehensive non-motorized plan incorporating public input and technical expertise.
2. Provide a clear bicycle connection between Ann Arbor Road and Hines Drive through downtown Plymouth.
3. Create a bicycle network that connects the residential neighborhoods with schools, parks, and downtown Plymouth, including the Plymouth Library and the Plymouth Cultural Center. This system should create a loop through the neighborhoods.
4. Improve sidewalks to eliminate any existing obstructions, add landscape buffers/street trees between walks and abutting streets, and widen walks to provide safer, more comfortable pedestrian travel ways. Opportunities for improvements are identified with capital letters on Figure 12 and are described under the “Notes” heading on the map legend.
5. Study and improve pedestrian crossings at the following intersections:
  - a. Starkweather and Farmer
  - b. Main St. and Church
  - c. Main St. and Fralick
  - d. Main St. and Wing
  - e. Main St. and Burroughs
  - f. Main St. and Hartsough
  - g. Harvey and Wing
  - h. Mill St. and Farmer (Wayne County)
  - i. Starkweather and Northville Rd. (Wayne County)
  - j. Hines Drive and Park St. (Wayne County)
  - k. Hines Drive and Wilcox Rd. (Wayne County)

6. Explore funding options for future expansion of the pedestrian path along Tonquish Creek between Evergreen and Sheldon Road.

7. Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections into Hines Park and construct a new connection route at/near Plymouth Road in the city or in Plymouth Township.

## Non-Motorized Best Practices

Six non-motorized best practices have been identified as desirable within the city of Plymouth. It is recommended that these best practices are implemented in appropriate areas throughout the city as determined by transportation professionals and citizen input.

### 1. Sidewalks

Sidewalks are for pedestrians and are located within road rights-of way. They consist of concrete pavement and are separated from the roadway by a landscape strip or buffer area. Ideally, a buffer of 5 to 6 feet is preferred, which is a width that can accommodate healthy growth of street trees. In Plymouth, older existing sidewalks are between 3.3 and 5.5 feet wide. Any new sidewalk construction must comply with current ADA standards which require a 5-foot minimum width as well as ramps at roadway intersections. City sidewalks could be widened depending on the number of pedestrians who are expected to use the sidewalk at a given time. Generally, recommended widths for sidewalks are 5 feet on local residential streets and 8 to 12 feet in downtown-type areas. When full street reconstruction is planned as part of the annual infrastructure program the boulevard area should be increased when it is safe and efficient to do so.

### 2. Pedestrian Refuge Islands and Bulb Outs

Refuge islands improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists crossing streets. These islands are generally raised or curbed longitudinal spaces placed mid-block, between street intersections. Refuge islands separate opposing lanes of traffic, reduce pedestrian crossing distances, act as a

# TRANSPORTATION PLAN

traffic calming feature, and increase the visibility of the crosswalk to motorists. Bulb outs offer the same pedestrian protection measure by extending the sidewalk into the roadway. They improve safety by reducing crossing distance, improving visibility of pedestrians, and reducing the street width.

### 3. On-Street Shared Lane Markings

Bicyclists sharing roadways with cars are appropriate for most roads having low daily volumes or speeds. Most local residential streets in Plymouth are currently suitable for shared roadway bicycling with no additional improvements necessary. Shared roadways are also appropriate on streets having higher traffic volumes and moderate speeds with provision of an increased shared lane width and/or shared lane markings. Shared roadways and streets with shared lane markings are desirable in locations where the road right-of-way is limited or where it is not feasible to create a dedicated bike lane.

A “sharrow” is used to mark the shared lane. Sharrows are chevrons pointing in the direction of vehicle traffic to indicate where a bicyclist would ride. They provide a visual cue that bicycles are expected on the roadway and indicate the zone bicyclists should ride on. They are typically used on roadways where there is not enough space for bicycle lanes, or which connect gaps between other bicycle facilities. Introduced in 2004, sharrows have been adopted by many cities across the U.S. and have been incorporated in the new editions of the federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines.

### 4. On-Street Bicycle Lanes

Bicycle lanes include designated lanes on roadways that incorporate striping, signing, and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists. They are one-way and a minimum of five feet wide. A minimum of three feet rideable surface should be provided where the joint between the gutter pan and pavement

surface is smooth. If the joint is not smooth, four feet of rideable surface should be provided.

According to the Federal Highway Administration (1994), bicycle lanes are appropriate on roadways having daily volumes that exceed 4,000 or car speeds that exceed 30 mph.

Where parking is permitted, bicycle lanes should always be placed between the parking lane and the motorized vehicle lane. The recommended lane width for this location is five to six feet. An important consideration in the design of bicycle lanes is the location of bicycle lanes at intersections. Guidance for pavement markings and signs at intersections is contained in the Michigan Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD).

To accommodate bike lanes, Plymouth could pursue a “road diet,” which reduces the number of vehicle lanes and/or vehicle lane widths to accommodate space for bike lanes.

### 5. On-Road Paved Shoulders

A paved shoulder is the part of the roadway that is adjacent and contiguous to a regular vehicle travel lane without curb and gutter. Paved shoulders intended for bicyclists’ use are at least four feet wide. When motorist speeds exceed 35 mph, additional width is recommended. A 2-foot buffer adjacent to a bike lane or paved shoulder will provide greater distance between cars and bicyclists thereby increasing safety.

Plymouth has only a few roadways that are not constructed using curb and gutter, and they are under the jurisdiction of Wayne County. While the city does not control these roads, it could, if it deems appropriate, communicate its desire for paved shoulders on these roads to the County as part of a future road project.

### 6. Other Bicycle Features

Providing amenities such as bike stations/rest areas along non-motorized routes can make the system more inviting to users. Basic amenities

## TRANSPORTATION PLAN

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may include a bicycle rack, shade structure, benches, trash receptacle, and a water fountain. Additional amenities can include a dedicated bicycle rest area or bicycle repair station including an air pump, kiosk displaying a map of the area, sheltered bicycle rack, restrooms, shower and changing facilities, or bicycle lockers. A bike repair station currently exists on the north side of Plymouth's public library.

# IMPLEMENTATION

The Implementation chapter of the Master Plan translates the goals outlined in Chapter 3 into actionable steps. Without clear implementation strategies, the Master Plan's vision cannot be realized. To ensure success, the city has developed a thorough process for establishing annual implementation actions across various Departments, Boards, and Commissions. This process, along with the key strategic documents it incorporates, is detailed below.

## **City Strategic Plan**

In 2017, the city held its first Strategic Goal Setting Session, a facilitated meeting involving the City Commission, Department Heads, and key employees from various departments. During this session, participants discussed and identified mutual expectations for the City Manager, Mayor, Commission Members, and Department Heads. The session then focused on developing a shared vision for the city's future, outlining major strategic goals and specific one-year tasks.

After the session, the City Manager and Department Heads reviewed the draft of the one-year tasks to assess their feasibility, and a final draft was proposed for possible revisions and adoption by the City Commission. This process established an annual goal setting framework, which has been conducted each year since. These sessions take into account the information provided in the other processes described below.

## **DDA Five-Year Strategic Action Plan**

In 2018, The DDA approved their 5 Year Action Plan that established the strategic visioning document for the downtown district with goals and related tasks. The DDA approved the **2024 DDA Five-Year Strategic Action Plan** in August 2024. This plan is included as part of the Downtown Sub Area Plan on page **XX**. Status updates and completed tasks are reported to the board at every regular DDA meeting.

## **Recreation Master Plan**

The City Commission adopted the **Joint Plymouth Community Parks + Recreation Master Plan 2018-2022**. The Plan included goals, objectives and a 5-Year Action Plan. In December 2023, the City Commission adopted the **5 Year Parks + Recreation Master Plan 2024-2028**. This document includes an Action Program which outlines the direction that the city would like to take over the next five years in order to maintain and improve recreation opportunities within the community. The Action Program includes goals and guidelines as well as a table of capital improvement priorities.

## **Zoning Audit Implementation Report**

The Planning Commission conducted a zoning audit which was started in late 2022. The objective of the audit was to identify:

- Ordinance language that is inconsistent with other laws
- Outdated ordinance language
- Inconsistencies with the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map

This effort resulted in a **Zoning Audit Report** and a **Zoning Audit Implementation Report**. This report established the goals for the next 5 years for the Planning Commission. These reports are included in the Appendix.

Briefly the Zoning Audit Implementation Report is as follows:

# IMPLEMENTATION

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Year 1</b>    | Complete Master Plan Update   |
| <b>Year 2</b>    | Complete the 26 items identified by the Audit that could be undertaken in a quick update to the Zoning Ordinance.                                     |
| <b>Years 3-4</b> | Complete the remaining, more complex changes identified such as reorganization or consolidation of articles and the addition of form-based districts. |
| <b>Year 5</b>    | Evaluate zoning changes and implement any needed changes to correct any mistakes or inconsistencies with the new Zoning Ordinance.                    |

## Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Improvement Plan is the document within the City Budget that prioritizes high-cost public improvements such as streets, sewers, buildings, and parks. The schedule is based on the priorities for various needs and desires of the community, coordinated with the City's ability to pay for them. The capital improvement program is a part of a dynamic planning process, which may change based on circumstances and availability of funding sources.

Capital improvement projects generally refer to the construction, expansion, or renovation of physical facilities that are relatively large, expensive, and permanent in nature. These projects can have a significant effect on the extent and direction of development depending on the type of capital improvement.

Statutory provisions require Planning Commission involvement in the development of the Capital Improvement Plan, but the Planning Commission has officially deferred responsibility of preparing the Capital Improvement Plan to the City Commission. A detailed listing of specific capital improvements is included in the City of Plymouth Annual Budget.

## Funding Mechanisms

There are a variety of funding mechanisms that exist to accomplish expensive, larger scale projects outlined in this Plan. However, the City Commission and City Administration will have to determine the best funding mechanism that best accomplish the stated objective. The city currently uses a variety of funding mechanisms. These include Tax Increment Financing in the Downtown Development Authority area and Brownfield Redevelopment Act Financing. Other financing options are available but should be deemed appropriate based on the project. Funding mechanisms are currently not being used in the city that may be pursued are Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Special Assessment, and Corridor Improvement Authority. Still other funding options are state and federal grant programs like those offered by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Department of Housing and Urban Development, or Michigan State Housing Development Authority.

## Plan Updates

The Plan should not become a static document. The Planning Commission should evaluate and update portions of the Plan on a periodic basis. The Planning Commission should set goals to review various sections of this Plan on an annual basis. **The Master Plan should also be coordinated with the City's Recreation Master Plan to provide proper, long range planning for recreation activities and improvements.**

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## City of Plymouth Snapshot

### Population

The 2020 U.S. Census reported the City of Plymouth's population totals 9,370. SEMCOG estimates indicate that by the year 2040 Plymouth's population will decrease by approximately 1,000 people. Given the current demand for new housing units, specifically higher density developments, it seems unlikely that this will be the case.

The 2020 Census indicates that 44% of Plymouth's population is between the ages of 35 and 64, which is the largest demographic percentage in the community as of 2020. SEMCOG forecasts that by 2035 the 35-64 year old age group will decrease in size to approximately 40 percent of the City's population, while the 65 and older age group will increase to nearly 23 percent of the total population. The median age in the City of Plymouth as reported in the 2020 U.S. Census is 44.3 years.

### Housing

According to the 2020 U.S. Census data, there are 4,700 housing units within the City of Plymouth. Of the total housing units, 60 percent are detached single family residential homes (ACS 2022). The remaining 40 percent of housing units are attached single family and two apartments or more. The 2020 Census reports that 67 percent of the housing units within the City of Plymouth were reported as owner-occupied.

The 2022 American Community Survey estimates that 69 percent of households include only one or two people. Approximately 19 percent of housing units have one bedroom, 56 percent have two or three bedrooms, and 24 percent have four or more bedrooms. It is important to consider if and how current housing units are meeting the population's needs when planning for the current and future housing needs of the community.

Significant single-family residential construction has been taking place in the city for the last few years. This includes tear downs and rebuilds, additions onto existing homes, and remodeling projects. The City of Plymouth is a destination and has been a driving force in the development and re-development of many single-family homes and properties within walking distance of downtown, neighborhood parks, and schools. Additionally, there has been significant growth in multi-family structures in the city in the form of high-end condominiums and apartments. It appears that the growth of multi-family developments may continue for the next several years.

The Plymouth Housing Commission is the local Public Housing Agency. It operates the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program, which assists people with rent subsidies. The catchment area for this program is approximately a 10 mile radius with 30 units located in the city proper. This program currently has a waiting list of 2,000 people. The demand for housing, especially units for senior citizens and for handicapped individuals, is clearly a demand and the city may wish to consider how to meet this demand using zoning, planning, and social service programs.

### Senior Housing and Services

The Tonquish Creek Manor complex has 104 apartments and offers residents a cafeteria, work and recreation spaces, a garden and small park, and houses the local Meals on Wheels program. Rents are based on income and residents must be at least 62 years old.

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The City of Plymouth, in partnership with Plymouth Township, offers the Senior Transportation program which provides transportation for the City's senior population to and from doctor appointments, physical therapy, grocery shopping, and recreational opportunities.

Plymouth Township operates the Plymouth Community Council on Aging (PCCA) which is a non-profit corporation that was organized to coordinate programs and services which address the needs of senior citizens in the greater Plymouth Community, County of Wayne, and State of Michigan. The PCCA works with many local agencies to ensure that seniors receive assistance, health and wellness information, and enjoyable social events.

It is likely that the need for senior services is going to increase in future years. Consideration should be given to aging in place, retrofitting existing housing units, and creating lifelong livable communities especially thoughtful of those with limited mobility and those without personal vehicles.

## **Downtown**

Downtown Plymouth is a regional destination for recreation, shopping, services, and dining. In addition, the housing growth in surrounding communities has increased the demand for leisure and entertainment activities associated with the city's commercial center.

The Downtown Development Authority was established in 1983 to facilitate business growth and development in the Downtown District. Projects include construction of the central parking deck, physical improvements to the streetscape, and a new landmark fountain in Kellogg Park in 2021 as well as marketing strategies and event planning. The Downtown Development Authority is working to expand the current public parking supply as well as making further improvements to Kellogg Park.

## **Library**

The Plymouth District Library collection contains over 200,000 items including books, movies, music, video games, science kits, Wi-Fi hotspots, and more. The library serves both the City of Plymouth and Plymouth Township, a population just over 37,000 as estimated by SEMCOG (2023) and a library card is available to anyone who lives, works, or goes to school in Plymouth. PDL participates in statewide lending through the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) which allows cardholders access to the statewide catalog and eResources. The library serves as a significant community hub and maintains strong partnerships with local and regional community groups, governments, schools, businesses, and cultural organizations.

Plymouth's rich history has included the library for over 100 years. Strong community support has resulted in a dedicated perpetual millage, a robust Friends organization, and more than 100 volunteers. Pre-pandemic, over 1,000 visitors a day used the library to participate in programs, use meeting and study rooms, borrow materials, use technology, and connect with others.

## **Police**

An effective, efficient police force is one of the most important services the city provides. Plymouth has had an extremely low rate of overall crime, (a measure comparing crime statistics of every community in

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Michigan) for as long as records have been kept. With its central location, almost every call taken by the Plymouth Police can be responded to in less than three minutes.

There are 16 full-time officers, including the Chief, working for the Police Department, located within the City Hall building on Main Street. The number of officers is consistent with national standards that suggest there should be at least one to 1.5 officers for every one thousand citizens. The department has a detective bureau with two detectives, a crime prevention officer, as well as a weighmaster.

## **Fire Services**

The City of Plymouth fire and emergency medical services are delivered via an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Northville. The City of Northville provides the City of Plymouth with approximately 60 part-time, paid-on-call firefighters and EMS responders. The City of Northville operates two fire stations in the City of Plymouth. A fire station is located at Plymouth City Hall and an additional fire station is located at the corner of Spring St. and N. Holbrook in Old Village. Despite being paid-on-call, emergency response times are within national averages and standards. Automatic Mutual Aid arrangements are in place with neighboring communities, which allow resources to be shared on a pre-arranged basis in response to structure fires, mass casualty incidents, or large scale evacuation efforts. Additionally, the City of Plymouth is in partnership with the not-for-profit Huron Valley Ambulance to provide Advanced Life Support Medical Response as well as hospital transport services for residents of the city.

## **Department of Municipal Services (DMS)**

The Department of Municipal Services provides a wide variety of services to residents, business owners, and visitors. DMS employs seven full-time laborers and relies on part-time and seasonal help. The duties of the laborers are numerous and often change with the seasons, while other services are provided year round.

Spring seasonal responsibilities include cleaning up debris and leaves in all parks and public properties, street sweeping city-wide, and prepping Kellogg Park for summer events by laying topsoil and grass seed. Summer duties include set up, staffing, and clean up of special events; rebuilding manhole structures and catch basins on city streets; overseeing infrastructure projects like new roads, water mains, or sewer mains; inspecting and repairing playground structures; and inspecting and overseeing sidewalk replacement. In the fall DMS completes bulk leaf pickup throughout the city and flushes, maintains, and winterizes all fire hydrants. During the winter, responsibilities include all those associated with snow and ice removal on public properties including city owned buildings and parking lots and city streets. Other winter duties include responding to emergency water main break repairs and frozen service lines.

Year round services include those such as the brush chipping program and cemetery operations. Other annual services are trash cart maintenance, tree trimming and maintenance, and street maintenance. Fleet maintenance is another year round project and includes repairs to all equipment and city owned vehicles.

## **Recreation**

The City of Plymouth Recreation Department serves tots to seniors within the entire Plymouth community. There is a wide variety of programming that is offered including athletics, fitness classes, summer camps, and special events. Over 90 different programs are offered throughout the year.

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Plymouth offers its citizens a variety of open space and recreational opportunities. Parks and open spaces are essential in developing physically and socially balanced children, while providing adults with a place for constructive use of their leisure time. Open spaces maintained and served by a carefully conceived recreation plan are important components in maintaining Plymouth as a desirable place to live.

In 1972, the Cultural Center, a multipurpose building used for skating, recreational classes, meetings, and events was constructed. This facility is heavily used for recreational and civic activities. To save money and be leaders in clean energy solutions, the city converted the ice arena to geothermal power in 2010. This was the first geothermal powered ice rink in the State of Michigan.

## **Parks and Playgrounds**

Together, the 17 City-owned parks total just over 22 acres, giving an average park size of 1.3 acres. An inventory and location of the City Parks is provided in the Appendix. Apart from Massey Field and the Cultural Center, the parks owned by the city are small, neighborhood spaces that offer playground equipment, picnic benches, and small open spaces. Massey Field and the Cultural Center offer more active recreation areas and activities such as tennis, softball, shuffleboard, and indoor ice skating.

The Plymouth Gathering Place is used for community events, such as the numerous festivals, special events, and the Farmer's Market.

As their names attest, individual parks have been sponsored by civic groups for more than ten years. The agreements between the groups and the city are informal in nature. Civic groups are often tapped for assistance with maintenance projects and annual park beautification efforts. While the parks take the name of the sponsor group, the parks are City-owned and remain public.

Additional recreational lands within the city are owned by Wayne County. Almost 60 acres are contained in the Middle Rouge Parkway. The Hines Parkway, totaling over 2,000 acres, is a series of drives and bikeways that stretches from Northville to Dearborn. Besides offering areas for passive and active recreation as well as organized sports, the Parkway has many areas set aside for wildlife and enjoying nature.

An additional eleven acres of recreational space is contained within the two existing public schools and the old Central Middle School, now Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex (PARC). PARC has a football field, track, tennis courts, and pickleball courts. While East Middle School and Smith Elementary School cater primarily to school activities, public access is allowed to the playgrounds, fields, and basketball hoops.

## **City Commission**

The City Commission together with the City Administration developed a Strategic Plan in January 2017 to provide a five year vision for the City of Plymouth. The vision was distilled into four goal areas with key objectives. Each year, the City Commission and City Administration discussed and selected one year tasks that could be accomplished that calendar year. The exercise was repeated in 2022 for another five years. The City Commission and City Administration continue to review the plan annually, usually in January, in conjunction with a professional facilitator. It is anticipated that in 2026 a new five-year vision will be discussed.