



City of Plymouth Planning Commission

Regular Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, August 13, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.
City Hall & Online Zoom Webinar

City of Plymouth
201 S. Main
Plymouth, Michigan 48170

www.plymouthmi.gov
Phone 734-453-1234

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84308650731>

Passcode: 525411

Webinar ID: 843 0865 0731

1. CALL TO ORDER
 - a. Roll Call
2. CITIZENS COMMENTS
3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
 - a. Approval of the August 13, 2025 meeting minutes
4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
5. COMMISSION COMMENTS
6. PUBLIC HEARINGS
7. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. Review Finalized Master Plan
8. NEW BUSINESS
9. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE
10. 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.

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, 35th 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.)

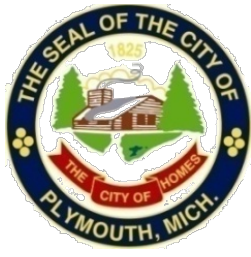
GOAL AREA FOUR - ATTRACTIVE, LIVABLE COMMUNITY

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

2025 Planning Commission Goals

1. Adopt the master plan
2. Complete “quick” zoning ordinance amendments (zoning audit)
3. Complete the multi-family/housing ordinance amendments (MSHDA Grant)
4. Work toward completing a residential compatibility ordinance



Plymouth Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 13, 2025 - 7:00 p.m.
Plymouth City Hall 201 S. Main
Plymouth, Michigan 48170

City of Plymouth
201 S. Main Street
Plymouth, Michigan 48170

www.plymouthmi.gov
734-453-1234

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Kyle Medaugh called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Present: Vice Chair Kyle Medaugh, Commissioners Joe Hawthorne, Marni Schroeder, Trish Horstman (arrived at 7:03 p.m.), Katie Rossie, Dave Scott, Zach Funk

Excused: Commissioner Sidney Filippis and Chair Hollie Saraswat

Also present: Planning and Community Development Director Greta Bolhuis, Economic Development Director John Buzuvis, and Planning Consultant Sally Elmiger

2. CITIZENS COMMENTS

There were no citizens comments.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Hawthorne moved to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2025 meeting as written. Funk seconded.

Vice-Chair Medaugh abstained.

The motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Hawthorne made a motion to approve the agenda as written for the August 13, 2025 meeting. Schroeder seconded.

The motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Horstman apologized for arriving late.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Review Finalized Master Plan

Vice-Chair Medaugh outlined the city's master plan update, noting the state law mandating a review every 5 years for necessary updates. The existing plan, adopted on September 17, 2018, initiated its review on March 8, 2023. The commission opted for revisions instead of a full replacement.

Vice-Chair Medaugh noted that subcommittees conducted work for nearly two years on public engagement and future land use. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended the draft master plan to the City Commission on March 19, 2025. The City Commission subsequently passed Resolution 2025-25 on April 7, 2025, to release the draft for a 63-day review and Resolution 2025-36 on May 5, 2025, to assert its right to approve or reject the master plan as the final adoption step.

Planning & Community Development Director Bolhuis detailed the changes made to the future land use

map and designations, including:

- Combining low and medium density single-family residential
- Combining low and medium density multifamily residential
- Combining office into local business
- Combining low and high density mixed use into a single designation
- Eliminating the institutional designation and changing applicable properties to parks and open space, mixed use, local business, central business, and multifamily as appropriate
- Designating public schools as multifamily neighborhoods
- Redesignating existing large industrial sites on Junction as industrial
- Designating religious institutions as multifamily

Director Bolhuis explained that the public engagement subcommittee held three in-person engagement sessions and received community feedback at various meetings. She noted that since April 2025, several changes were made to the draft, including clarification that the master plan is a visionary document, not law, and removal of language discussing the rezoning process.

Vice-Chair Medaugh opened the public hearing at 7:13 PM.

Michael Gladchun, 1000 West Ann Arbor Trail, voiced concern about the proposed master plan's future land use changes.

Scott Lorenz, 1310 Maple Street, opposed the change of the Lutheran Church, Christian Science Church, and Catholic Church properties to multi-family residential.

David Pierce, 1147 West Ann Arbor Trail, advised against upzoning properties along the creek.

Mary Gladchun, 1000 West Ann Arbor Trail, discussed the difference between zoning rules and the master plan.

Ron Picard, 1373 Sheridan, stated that the current level of multi-family units is appropriate and increasing it does not align with residents' preferences.

Ellen Elliott, 404 Irvin, advocated for keeping the aforementioned parcels designated as single family.

Vice-Chair Medaugh closed the public hearing at 7:24 PM.

During board discussion, Commissioner Hawthorne expressed concern about changing the church properties to multi-family, noting that public input indicated residents weren't looking for more townhomes but rather affordable first-time homebuyer opportunities. He favored keeping the properties designated as single-family.

Commissioner Horstman agreed with maintaining single-family and felt that the PUD process gave Planning Commission an option for a multi-family development.

Commissioner Funk clarified that some of the properties in question were already designated as multi-family in the current future land use map and changing them to single family would actually be "down-zoning" them.

Planning Consultant Elmiger explained the relationship between the master plan and zoning, noting that rezoning is supposed to comply with the master plan, and a master plan amendment would be required before rezoning could occur if it wasn't consistent.

Commissioner Hawthorne preferred to keep the Lutheran Church and OLGC properties designated single family. Commissioner Scott agreed.

Commissioner Funk explained the sub-committee's rationale was that if those properties stayed single family the options would be staying as a church/school or demolish the entire site whereas if they became multi-family there may be opportunities for a different type of redevelopment.

Commissioner Schroeder expressed concern about continuing to rely on survey data from September 2023, noting that the city needs more multi-family housing to provide entry-level opportunities. She suggested that if the properties remain single family, they would likely be developed as expensive "mega houses" if sold.

Commissioner Rossie noted that these lots are particularly important in a built-out city, which might warrant postponement.

Planning Consultant Elmiger suggested providing additional information about potential development scenarios and housing styles for the properties in question to help inform the commission's decision.

After discussion, the commission decided to postpone action on the master plan to gather more information.

Motion by Commissioner Hawthorne, seconded by Scott, to postpone action on the review of the finalized master plan until September's meeting with a request to city administration to provide details of possible density scenarios of single and multi-family for further explanation and discussion.

There was a voice vote.
The motion carried unanimously.

b. Amendment to Zoning Ordinance 78-123 I-1, Light Industrial District

Director Bolhuis explained that the city attorney affirmed that Plymouth's zoning ordinance does not allow for special land use conditions to be eligible for a variance request. The city has received two special land use applications unable to meet conditions outlined in the ordinance.

She explained that pet daycare was identified in the 2023 zoning audit as a modern land use the city's ordinances could allow. The closest current use is a commercial kennel, which is a special land use in I-1 light industrial districts. The proposed amendment would limit the maximum number of dogs to 100, restrict outdoor areas to be set back from residential properties, require a 6-foot privacy fence, and prohibit outdoor areas in required setbacks.

Vice-Chair Medaugh opened the public hearing at 8:04 PM.

Joe Elliott, 404 Irvin Street, identified himself as chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals. He supported the two special land use changes being discussed but opposed granting the ZBA authority to allow special land use variances.

Representatives from Happy Hounds Daycare & Boarding stated they were seeking the amendment to modernize the ordinance to allow them to operate at a new location on Goldsmith. They noted they have operated on Main Street for 21 years without issues.

Vice-Chair Medaugh closed the public hearing at 8:08 PM.

Commissioner Horstman expressed concern that the amendment specified the number of animals but not the size of the space required. She suggested adding language about space requirements per animal or referencing state regulations. Director Bolhuis noted there are state and county laws that would further restrict space requirements.

The commission discussed adding a condition requiring applicants to specify animal occupancy as part of site plan review.

Motion by Commissioner Funk, seconded by Commissioner Scott, to recommend approval of the amendment to the city commission with the amendment that as part of special land use review, any application will assess the number of animals being housed.

There was a voice vote.

The motion carried unanimously.

c. Amendment to Zoning Ordinance 78-161 ARC, Ann Arbor Road Corridor District

Director Bolhuis explained that the Planning Commission previously discussed the outdoor play space special land use condition for childcare in the Ann Arbor Road Corridor. The proposed amendment would eliminate the requirement to provide 500 square feet of outdoor space per child while retaining the minimum outdoor play space of 3,000 square feet.

She also noted a second amendment to eliminate the requirement that goods and services be sold at retail on the premises, as suggested in the 2023 zoning audit, since it may prohibit e-commerce and online sales.

Vice-Chair Medaugh opened the public hearing at 8:23 PM.

Pete Mundt, 643 N Harvey, asked for clarification that the change would align the language between the township and city while still adhering to state law regarding space requirements for children. Director Bolhuis confirmed this was correct.

Vice-Chair Medaugh closed the public hearing at 8:24 PM.

During discussion, Director Bolhuis noted that the state of Michigan's minimum requirement for outdoor play space is 1,200 square feet, so the city's 3,000 square foot requirement is more than double the state minimum.

Commissioner Schroeder expressed support for the changes, noting that the current requirements are excessive compared to existing childcare facilities in Plymouth.

Motion by Commissioner Funk, seconded by Commissioner Horstman, to recommend to the city commission for approval amendment 78-161 for ARC as written.

There was a voice vote.

The motion carried unanimously.

d. Amendment to Zoning Ordinance 78-408 Jurisdiction and 78-409 Exceptions

Director Bolhuis requested to withdraw this item from consideration after hearing comments from the Zoning Board of Appeals chair and further discussion at the table. She indicated that clarification was still needed regarding whether it is legally allowed to give the Zoning Board of Appeals permission to consider special land use conditions.

Director Bolhuis withdrew the item.

7. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

9. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Vice-Chair Medaugh provided an update on the Zoning Audit Sub-committee, noting they are making good progress on addressing short-term items identified in the audit. He indicated they plan to bring forward some proposed changes soon.

Commissioners Funk briefly discussed the MSHDA Grant Sub-committee's work, which is looking at design guidelines and housing types that could fit the character of Plymouth neighborhoods.

City Commissioner Minton asked for clarification on the condition added to the light industrial district amendment. Vice-Chair Medaugh explained it requires applicants to specify animal occupancy as part of the site plan review. Minton also complimented the Planning Commission on their public outreach efforts for the master plan.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Hawthorne made a motion to adjourn. Schroeder seconded.

There was a voice vote.

The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.



Administrative Memorandum

City of Plymouth
201 S. Main
Plymouth, Michigan 48170

www.plymouthmi.gov
Phone 734-453-1234
Fax 734-455-1892

To: Planning Commission
From: Greta Bolhuis, AICP, Planning and Community Development Director
Date: September 5, 2025
Re: Master Plan Discussion

As you are aware the Planning Commission has been working diligently to complete the Master Plan update since early 2023. The Planning Commission reviewed the draft Master Plan on August 13, 2025 and recommended postponement to allow staff to present additional information regarding residential densities on a few institutional properties where a change to the future land use map was presented. Since that discussion, the Planning Commission has received emails voicing concerns with the proposed designation of Smith Elementary School and East Middle School as Multi-Family Neighborhood. The following pages outline the current zoning densities permitted by the zoning ordinance, the future land use designation and suggested density of the property in the 2018 Master Plan, and the future land use designation and suggested density of the property in the 2025 Master Plan. The multi-family densities listed below signify the net density of the sites. Site features like roadways, parking lots, landscaping, etc. are not included as part of these calculations and would likely reduce the site's overall dwelling unit density.

It is important to note that the MSHDA Grant sub-committee is actively working to eliminate the outdated "total number of rooms" calculation that is currently in the multi-family zoning ordinance. The goal is to equalize density for the total number of units, not the number of bedrooms inside the unit. The MSHDA grant activities relevant to the Master Plan update are to review existing and desired multi-family building types and update the future land use regulations to accommodate those building types and densities.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Current Zoning Density Calculations and Allowances

R-1, Single Family – minimum lot area 7,200 square feet (6 units per acre density)

RT-1, Two-Family – minimum lot area 7,000 square foot lots which is 3,500 per dwelling unit (12 units per acre density)

RM-1, Multi-Family – minimum lot area 10,000 square feet and density of lot area divided by 1,300 = total number of rooms allowed. Take the calculated total number of rooms allowed and divide by the number of bedrooms + 1. One bedroom = 2 rooms, two bedrooms = 3 rooms, three bedrooms = 4 rooms.

For a 10,000 square foot lot:

- 3.8 one-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- 2.56 two-bedroom units (11 units per acre density) or
- 1.92 three-bedroom units (8 units per acre density)

RM-2, Multi-Family – minimum area 10,000 square feet and density of lot area divided by 900 = total number of rooms allowed. Take the calculated total number of rooms allowed and divide by the number of bedrooms + 1.

One bedroom = 2 rooms, two bedrooms = 3 rooms, three bedrooms = 4 rooms.

For a 10,000 square foot lot:

- 5.5 one-bedroom units (24 units per acre) or
- 3.7 two-bedroom units (16 units per acre) or
- 2.77 three-bedroom units (12 units per acre)

2018 Master Plan

Single Family Low Density 2-5 units per acre

Single Family Medium Density 6-9 units per acre

Multi-Family Low Density 6-12 units per acre

Multi-Family Medium Density 12-18 units per acre

Multi-Family High Density 18-27 units per acre

2025 Master Plan

Single Family 2-5 units per acre and 6-9 units per acre

Residential Multi-Family 6-12 units per acre and 12-18 units per acre

Multi-Family Neighborhood 18-27 units per acre

OLGC 2.340 Acres

Current Zoning Density Calculations

Single Family – 14 7,200 square foot lots (6 units per acre density)

Two-Family – 14 7,000 square foot lots (28 total units) (12 units per acre density)

Multi-Family (RM-1) – 78.41 rooms allowed

- 39 one-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- 26 two-bedroom units (11 units per acre density) or
- 19 three-bedroom units (8 units per acre density)

Multi-Family (RM-2) – 113.26 rooms allowed

- 56 one-bedroom units (24 units per acre density) or
- 37 two-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- 28 three-bedroom units (12 units per acre density)

2018 Master Plan

Single Family Medium Density

Density of 6-9 units per acre

2025 Master Plan

Residential Multi-Family

Adjacent to single family land uses: Density of 6-12 units per acre

St. Peter's Lutheran Church 3.49 Acres

Current Zoning Density Calculations

Single Family – 21 7,200 square foot lots (6 units per acre density)

Two-Family – 21 7,000 square foot lots (42 total units) (12 units per acre density)

Multi-Family (RM-1) – 117.03 rooms allowed

- 58 one-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- 39 two-bedroom units (11 units per acre density) or
- 29 three-bedroom units (8 units per acre density)

Multi-Family (RM-2) – 169.04 rooms allowed

- one-bedroom units (24 units per acre density) or
- two-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- three-bedroom units (12 units per acre density)

2018 Master Plan

Single Family Medium Density

Density of 6-9 units per acre

2025 Master Plan

Residential Multi-Family

Adjacent to single family land uses: Density of 6-12 units per acre

Christian Science Church 2.07 + 0.180 = 2.25 Acres

Current Zoning Density Calculations

Single Family – 13 7,200 square foot lots (6 units per acre density)

Two-Family – 14 7,000 square foot lots (28 total units) (12 units per acre density)

Multi-Family (RM-1) – 75.39 rooms

- 37 one-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- 25 two-bedroom units (11 units per acre density) or
- 18 three-bedroom units (8 units per acre density)

Multi-Family (RM-2) – 108.9 rooms

- 54 one-bedroom units (24 units per acre density) or
- 36 two-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- 27 three-bedroom units (12 units per acre density)

2018 Master Plan

Mixed Use Low Density

No density listed

2025 Master Plan

Residential Multi-Family

Adjacent to single family land uses: Density of 6-12 units per acre

Adjacent to commercial and industrial land uses:
Density of 12-18 units per acre

Smith School 8.80 Acres

Current Zoning Density Calculations

Single Family – 53 7,200 square foot lots (6 units per acre density)

Two-Family – 54 7,000 square foot lots (108 total units) (12 units per acre density)

Multi-Family (RM-1) – 294.86 rooms allowed

- 147 one-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- 98 two-bedroom units (11 units per acre density) or
- 73 three-bedroom units (8 units per acre density)

Multi-Family (RM-2) – 425.92 rooms allowed

- 212 one-bedroom units (24 units per acre density) or
- 141 two-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- 106 three-bedroom units (12 units per acre density)

2018 Master Plan

Institutional

No density listed

2025 Master Plan

Multi-Family Neighborhoods

Density of 18-27 units per acre

East Middle School 14.42 acres

Current Zoning Density Calculations

Single Family – 87 7,200 square foot lots (6 units per acre density)

Two-Family – 89 7,000 square foot lots (178 total units) (12 units per acre density)

Multi-Family (RM-1) – 483.18 rooms

- 241 one-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- 161 two-bedroom units (11 units per acre density) or
- 120 three-bedroom units (8 units per acre density)

Multi-Family (RM-2) – 697.93 rooms

- 348 one-bedroom units (24 units per acre density) or
- 232 two-bedroom units (16 units per acre density) or
- 174 three-bedroom units (12 units per acre density)

2018 Master Plan

Institutional

No density listed

2025 Master Plan

Multi-Family Neighborhoods

Density of 18-27 units per acre

City of Plymouth
Michigan



2025
Master Plan

City Commission Resolution

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Table of Contents

Chapter 1	Introduction	<i>pages 1 - 4</i>
Chapter 2	Public Input	<i>pages 5 - 8</i>
Chapter 3	Goals	<i>page 9</i>
Chapter 4	Future Land Use	<i>pages 10 - 20</i>
Chapter 5	Sub Area Plans	<i>pages 21 - 33</i>
Chapter 6	Transportation	<i>pages 34 - 48</i>
Chapter 7	Implementation	<i>page 49 - 54</i>
Chapter 8	Background Studies	<i>pages 55 - 58</i>



Chapter 1: Introduction

The City of Plymouth is located halfway between Ann Arbor and Detroit in Western Wayne County. The city is home to the vibrant downtown and Old Village areas, strong neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and recreation opportunities. The city represents opportunities for residents and the surrounding communities.

A lot has changed in the city and in the region since the last Master Plan was adopted. Our physical landscape has been shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic and large and small scale redevelopment, infill development, and new development throughout Plymouth community. To begin the Master Plan update, the City of Plymouth launched a community-based process to engage residents. This document is the road map for land use, development, transportation, and housing that is based on a shared community vision and is cognizant of

the current demographics and market conditions.

What is a Master Plan?

The City of Plymouth Master Plan sets forth a vision for our community. It is a guide that all city boards and departments can use to help make planning and development decisions. The Plan communicates a vision for future land uses. Planning is a process and requires residents, property owners, business owners, city officials, staff, and others – all with diverse backgrounds, ideals, and visions – to work towards a common vision of our built environment. This common vision is achieved through discussions, surveys, and open public meetings. The Master Plan seeks to clarify who we are, where we are, and where we are going. Moreover, the Master Plan is the culmination of past, present, and future visions of city planning.

The Master Plan identifies goals for Plymouth's future to express long-term expectations and addresses the fundamental issues that the city expects to face in the future. By using the Master Plan as a guide, city boards and departments can coordinate land use planning activities towards outcomes that best fit with the long range goals outlined by the Master Plan.

The Master Plan consists of two main components: text and map. The text of the Plan should be consulted for a description of policies that apply to specific areas or features. The Future Land Use Map is intended to illustrate the desired locations of certain land uses in the community. Other maps are included throughout the Plan to provide additional details not mentioned in the text. If there is inconsistency between the text of the Plan and the map, the text will control city policy.

Under the Michigan Planning Act (Act 33 of the Public Act of 2008), communities are required to review their Master Plan every five years and update it if needed. Plymouth's previous Master Plan was most recently amended in 2018. The 2018 adoption fully replaced the 2011 Master Plan which had been updated in 2009. The 2009 version fully replaced the previous Master Plan adopted in 1996.

Connection between Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance

The Master Plan is a long-term policy document that provides guidance for community development over a period of 5 to 20 years. The plan is based on community input and outlines goals and objectives related to areas such as economic development, housing,

transportation, and infrastructure. ~~While not a law itself, the~~ The Master Plan must be reviewed every five years as required by state law and serves as a foundation for future planning. The Master Plan is not intended or expected to serve as law.

The Future Land Use Plan, a visual component of the Master Plan, maps out potential land use categories and details the types of uses, densities, and design standards that may be considered for zoning changes. It serves as a framework for future development, ~~and shows possibilities, not guaranteed changes with changes requiring community input.~~

In contrast, the Zoning Ordinance is a legal document that regulates land use in the present. It dictates specifics such as building size, form, placement, and parking requirements, and must comply with federal, state, and case law. The Zoning Ordinance implements the Master Plan and is legally enforceable. Similarly, the Zoning Map is a legal document that identifies zoning districts and outlines what types of land uses and buildings are permitted. It is also enforceable by law and can only be changed through a formal rezoning process, which includes public hearings and approval from the Planning Commission and City Commission.

Who Creates and Maintains the Plan?

The City of Plymouth Planning Commission is the primary agency responsible for the preparation and final approval of the Master Plan. Supported by staff and consultants, it is the role of the Planning Commission to develop a land use plan and support its implementation.

The Master Plan is a document that must be embraced by the City of Plymouth leaders.

While ultimately the responsibility of the Planning Commission, the Master Plan must inspire consistent decision making throughout the community. The Plan serves a larger purpose to inspire and guide city initiatives and foster innovative community development.

How Will the Plan be Used?

The Master Plan will be used in numerous ways across different timeframes. On a day-to-day basis, city staff will rely on the Plan to guide their work, including discussions with developers, drafting zoning amendments, and making recommendations to the Planning Commission or City Commission. It will also serve as a reference for neighborhood groups, local investors, and non-profit organizations. On a month-to-month basis, elected officials will use the Master Plan when making decisions about land use, setting city policies for development, improving infrastructure, and shaping regulations and budgets. Annually, the Master Plan should be evaluated to ensure it still aligns with the city's goals. Regular audits will help assess progress and identify necessary revisions or updates, ensuring that the Plan remains relevant and continues to have broad community support.

Who Makes Development Decisions?

Development decisions in Michigan are permitted by and regulated through two main laws: the Planning Enabling Act and the Zoning Enabling Act. While many other local, state, and federal laws come into play, these two laws outline the basic steps that a local government must take to plan for and regulate development within its boundaries. These laws balance the rights of the property owner with a local government's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its residents.

Reviewing and approving development proposals can be a complex process. In many instances, various boards and departments are responsible for reviewing and approving new development in Plymouth.

The following describes, in general, the responsibilities of the city:

Community Development Department (CDD)

The City's Community Development Department is the initial contact between the city, developers, and residents. It receives all development applications and supporting materials. The department also assists developers with informational requirements and procedures outlined in the Zoning Ordinance. The Building Official, Fire Marshall, and various specialty inspectors work with applicants once the development proposal has been approved by the appropriate commission. Plans submitted to these officials are reviewed for conformance with applicable codes and ordinances. These professionals ensure that construction meets the Plymouth Zoning Ordinance, Michigan Building Code, the Michigan Residential Code, and/or State and National Trade Codes.

Planning Commission (PC)

The responsibility of the Planning Commission is to guide and advance the efficient and coordinated development of the city in a manner that will promote the health, safety, and general welfare of its residents. The Planning Commission has the primary responsibility for reviewing development proposals. The Planning Commission reviews projects to ensure that development adheres to the City's Master Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and allows a reasonable use of the property. Note: The Planning Commission does not review

proposals for individual single-family or two-family residences.

City Commission (CC)

Some proposals, such as a Planned Unit Development or re-zoning a property, must be reviewed and approved by the City Commission. The Planning Commission conducts an initial review and makes a recommendation to the City Commission. The City Commission then makes the final decision based upon criteria and requirements in the Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

The Zoning Board of Appeals hears variance requests from property owners or developers who, because of hardships or practical difficulty, cannot meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and feel there is a unique circumstance that limits the applicability of certain requirements.



Photo Credit: Pete Mundt

Historic District Commission (HDC)

The City of Plymouth has a Historic District that is enabled by the Local Historic Districts Act (PA 169 of 1970). In general, properties surrounding or adjacent to Kellogg Park are within the boundaries of the Historic District. If

development is proposed on a property within the Historic District, the proposal must also go before the Historic District Commission for consideration, review, and approval.

The Historic District Commission uses the National Park Service's Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation to review projects within the district.

Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

Plymouth implemented a Downtown Development Authority in 1983, which was enabled through the Downtown Development Authority Act, PA 197 of 1975, and has since been replaced by PA 57 of 2018. DDAs are designed to be a catalyst in the development of a community's downtown district. They provide a variety of options to fund public improvements in the downtown district. These improvements not only benefit residents and visitors but also help create a favorable environment for businesses to thrive. The DDA does not have any authority to review development proposals on private property.



Chapter 2: Public Input

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 contracted with the Lansing based firm EPIC-MRA to conduct a telephone survey. The survey interviewed 264 adult residents of the City of Plymouth in the week of September 11, 2023.

The first Master Plan 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.

The topics that these various public engagement events and the phone survey covered are organized below by topic heading with the resulting quantitative input. The qualitative input has been integrated into the applicable chapters of the Master Plan.

Desirable Characteristics

At the public engagement sessions, respondents were asked to identify building characteristics that they considered important in the Old Village and Downtown areas of the city. The characteristics included:

- Preservation of historic buildings
- New and infill construction
- Buildings are set back similarly from the street
- Buildings are set back variably from the street
- Consistent land uses across floors
- Variable land uses across floors
- Consistent building styles
- Variable building styles

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 2nd and 3rd in importance.



Pedestrian Amenities

Respondents were asked to rank eight pedestrian amenities by importance at the engagement sessions for Old Village and Downtown. While not ranked in the same order

by all respondents, *Benches*, *Trash Cans*, *Signalized Pedestrian Crossings* and *Planters* were always in the top four. *Bike Racks* and *Bike Lanes* were consistently in 5th and 6th 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*. Twelve percent 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. *Right Amount* received a majority of responses at 58%, with *Too Many* and *Too Few* responses equal at 17%. To gather information on specific multi-family housing types, the engagement session surveys asked the same question about Duplexes, Triplexes, Apartments and Townhomes. The responses for each specific multi-family type were consistent with the survey results for overall multi-family housing, but showed 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 an 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. The description was: "An

accessory dwelling unit is defined as a smaller, independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a detached single-family

home and could be utilized as a rental or short-term rental. It is also commonly referred to as an "ADU" or "mother-in-law suite"." There was a 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 the participant would support and referenced the image to the left. Above garages, both detached and attached again received over 50% support.

A third question was asked about participants' opinions on parking, should ADUs be allowed. When asked if parking for ADUs should be required on private property, 63% responded Yes.

Size and Mass of Single Family Homes

When asked about the size and mass of homes built in the city, COVID was used as 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. Seventy-one percent responded No. It was then asked if the city should investigate ways to encourage and retain character in each neighborhood. Ninety-seven percent 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 the 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*. It is important to note that in February 2024, the ordinance was amended to eliminate tree removal and mitigation regulations on private property.

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 21% responding that *Too Little* had been accomplished.

Form-Based Codes (FBCs)

The City of Plymouth currently has Euclidean Zoning Ordinances which has protected neighborhoods from incompatible uses but does not allow for a 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, participants were asked if they would be interested in learning more about FBCs and seventy-eight percent (78%) responded Yes.



Chapter 3: Goals

The goals for development in the City of Plymouth were developed using public input from the Master Plan surveys, public meetings, and many Planning Commission discussions over the last several years. These goals complement the City Commission's Five-Year Strategic Plan, last adopted by the City Commission on January 18, 2022. How these goals may be accomplished is discussed in subsequent chapters of this Master Plan. The guiding values and goals are based on input from the public and city officials.

Guiding Values and Goals

Plymouth is a leader in sustainable infrastructure.

- Encourage environmentally sensitive, sustainable development.
- Address changing vehicular habits.
- Improve street mobility, connectivity, and safety.
- Plan for vehicular needs, including parking.
- Maintain and enhance the tree canopy.
- Encourage historic preservation.

Our staff, boards, and commissions are well trained.

- Identify yearly training opportunities and conduct joint sessions on land use and development topics.
- Include all relevant planning, zoning and development information in board and commission orientation packets.

The city thrives when we all work together.

- Promote a welcoming environment for residents, visitors, commercial business, and industry.
- Apply form based codes where appropriate to foster a high-quality public realm.
- Complete requirements to obtain and maintain Redevelopment Ready Communities certification.

Plymouth is an attractive, livable community.

- Encourage appropriate home sizing and massing.
- Create lifelong neighborhoods of diverse housing for various income levels.
- Plan for a variety of land uses that create a dynamic environment supportive of residences, community institutions, and businesses.
- Modernize and update zoning ordinance to reflect community vision.



Chapter 4: 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.

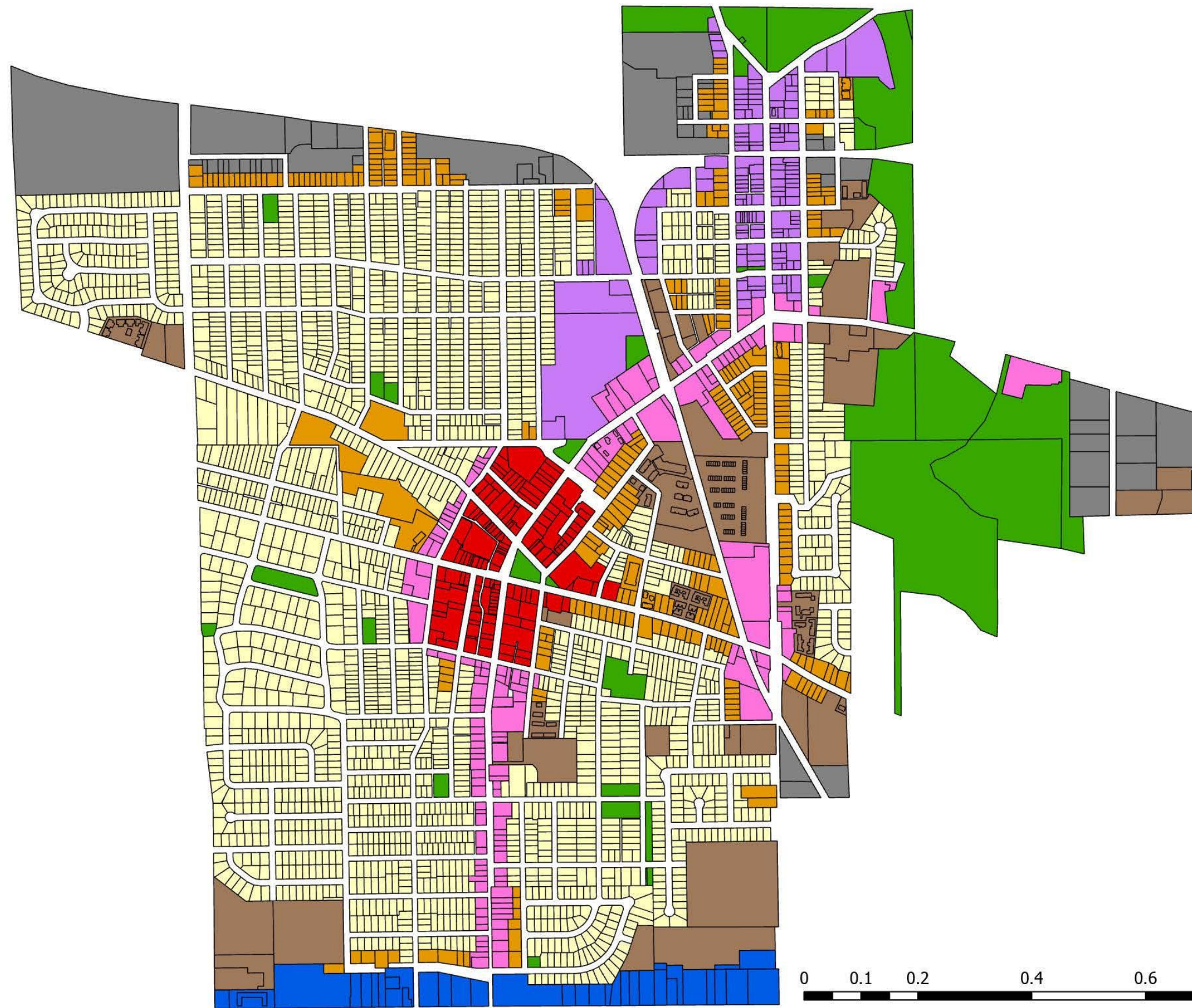
The text in this chapter and Future Land Use Map are intended to be policy documents and decision-making guides to promote informed public and private decision-making for the betterment of the community. It is important to note that future land use designations are different from zoning districts or 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 are more defensible if challenged in court. The Master Plan should be the principal source of information in the investigation of all rezoning requests. The City may initiate a rezoning to conform with the Future Land Use Map, or it may wait for property owners to come forward on a case-by-case basis~~

Residential Vision Statement

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



Legend

Future Land Use

- Parks and Open Space
- Single Family
- Residential Multi-Family
- Multi-Family Neighborhood
- Mixed Use
- Local Business
- Central Business District
- Ann Arbor Road Corridor
- Industrial

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8
Miles

City of Plymouth
201 S. Main St.
Plymouth, MI 48170
Printed 08/06/2025





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 with lot widths of 25 to 50 feet wide. In general, the lot sizes, widths, and building setbacks are small by today's standards, with many of the existing homes and lots not meeting current zoning ordinance requirements. Homes in this land use category are generally situated the same distance from the street, have front porches, and have detached garages at the rear of the property. Density in this area is between six and nine homes per acre and should not exceed two stories in height.

There are some areas of single-family homes that were developed in a more suburban format. 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 in these more suburban neighborhoods 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. Density in this area is between two and five homes per acre and should not exceed two stories in height.

Implementation Strategies

The zoning in these areas should preserve the existing character of each neighborhood but allow for a mix of compatible residential uses and building types that are traditionally found in those neighborhoods. The strategies below could allow for limited additional density, more housing type choices, while ensuring alternative dwelling unit options fit into the character of the neighborhood.

- 1) One option to consider are duplex units. The current R-1 zoning district does not permit these unit types, but there are a few historic duplexes scattered throughout this district. There may be specific locations that establishing a slightly higher density by incorporating duplexes could be appropriate. The city may want to consider additional standards to ensure that those dwelling units fit into the existing character of the neighborhood and adjacent corridor.
- 2) Another option to consider are Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). Where, and to what degree, ADUs are permitted could be studied and an ordinance with design and functionality standards considered.
- 3) Related to both strategies, 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.

New lots created in this designation should be developed at a lot size that is consistent with the surrounding properties. Repurposing vacant lots should be the priority, so demolition and infill development does not degrade neighborhood character, 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 include 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. See the image below.

What is Missing Middle Housing?

Missing Middle Housing is a range of house-scaled building with multiple units – compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes – located in a walkable neighborhood. They are called “Missing” because they have typically been illegal to build since the mid-1940s and “Middle” because they sit in the middle of a spectrum between detached single-family homes and mid-rise to high-rise apartment buildings, in terms of form and scale, as well as number of units and often, affordability.

family neighborhoods. These areas can also host accessory dwelling units under appropriate circumstances.

Multi-family residential density is dependent upon the housing type and the neighborhood character. In areas where single-family land uses are adjacent, duplexes and small multiplexes that match the appearance of single-family homes are more appropriate.



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-

Density in this application is up to twelve (12) units per acre. In areas where commercial and industrial land uses are adjacent, townhouses and stacked multiplexes at higher densities are more appropriate. Density in this application is between twelve (12) to eighteen (18) units per

acre. In no instance should building heights be taller than two and one-half (2.5) stories.

Implementation Strategies

Multi-family residential may take a variety of forms and it is important that a variety of housing types that are desirable to current and prospective Plymouth residents can be retained and constructed. Consideration should be taken to ensure housing is universally designed to enable and empower a diverse population by improving human performance, health and wellness, and social participation. Existing structures within this designation should be considered for adaptive reuse into multi-family buildings. Increasing the number of housing units within existing building footprints is a desirable method of adding dwelling units without changing neighborhood character.

The Zoning Ordinance should enable the neighborhoods Plymouth desires. Many resources have been developed to assist communities such as Michigan Municipal League's Pattern Book Homes for the 21st Century Michigan, Michigan Association of Planning's Zoning Reform Toolkit, Michigan State Housing Development Authority's Statewide Housing Plan, and the Michigan Zoning Atlas. The 2023 Zoning Audit indicates that desired building types and densities outlined above are not possible under current Zoning Ordinance standards and should be amended. Changes to the RT-1 District include expanding the permitted uses to include triplexes and other "missing middle" housing and clarify minimum lot size and floor area per dwelling unit. Changes to the RM-1 District include eliminating the room number density calculation, clarifying minimum lot size and floor area per dwelling unit, and reducing the minimum distance between buildings. Parking

requirements should be reviewed to ensure adequate, not excessive, off-street parking is provided. A strong rental housing inspection program also ensures that existing and new development are safe and clean places to live.

Applicable Zoning Districts: RT-1, RM-1



Multi-Family Neighborhoods

Multi-family Neighborhoods were originally designed for a single type of housing per site and included large blocks of apartments and townhouses. Typically, these neighborhoods are large, standalone sites, located on higher traffic roadways and they often have a self-contained, private road network. However, in the future a single site may be able to support a mixture of housing types and unit offerings. It may be appropriate for these neighborhoods to include a mixture of "missing middle" types of housing in a higher density than in the multi-family residential designation. For example, a site might be able to accommodate the arrangement of multiple duplexes or triplexes. The streets within these neighborhoods 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. Density in this area is between eighteen (18) to twenty-seven (27) homes per acre and should not exceed four stories in height.

Implementation 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 in the Zoning Ordinance, reviewing parking requirements especially for properties close to downtown or public transit stops, and allowing additional height/stories where appropriate. In targeted areas, missing middle type housing constructed in ~~the~~ density outlined above between eighteen (18) and twenty-seven (27) units per acre may allow a different type of neighborhood character than the traditional apartment and townhouse offering. 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, however, additional units could be retrofitted in appropriate locations within existing building footprints. Additional units could also be created by adding additional stories or buildings on the appropriate sites. 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. Adaptive reuse of aging apartment buildings is important to ensure safe, desirable housing units exist in Plymouth.

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.

New multi-family neighborhood development on sites greater than five (5) acres should provide area for parks, recreation, and/or open space. Alternatively, if property owned by public organizations become available, the city should consider acquisition of all or part of the land for park and recreation purposes.

Standards for new multi-family developments should be evaluated to ensure that the design of such development supports the needs of the community. Consideration should be taken to ensure housing is universally designed to enable and empower a diverse population by improving human performance, health and wellness, and social participation. 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 area has a range of residential, commercial, and industrial building types and land uses. New buildings should be located on the lot in a consistent pattern like the historic buildings, and set back from the street uniformly with the remainder of the block. Preservation of existing historic buildings is a priority. Buildings in this area should be designed to be adaptable so they can shift between residential and commercial uses as demand changes. Density in this area should be between twelve (12) and eighteen (18) units per acre and should not exceed three stories in the downtown village and two stories in the surrounding neighborhoods.

The city is interested in adopting a form-based code to guide any infill development in Old Village. More study of the existing building types and engagement of the business owners

and residents is necessary to develop this code. 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 uses; however, there is an understanding that homes may be located adjacent to businesses that operate late into the evening.

Implementation Strategies

The intent of the form-based code is to preserve and protect the existing development pattern that occurred prior to the control of traditional zoning. A preliminary form-based code was drafted for Old Village in 2023. To refine and ultimately 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.

Zoning obstacles exist that prevent meaningful intermixing of residential and business land uses. Stringent special land use requirements for commercial uses should be evaluated. Parking requirements also need to be balanced with the physical confines of existing sites and should be dictated by building square footage, or other standards that acknowledge the historic development layout of the area designed before automobiles. 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

The Local Business future land use category is designed for office uses and convenience 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 preserved and repurposed for commercial uses. 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 at a density between twelve (12) and eighteen (18) units per acre. 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 from view of the road or nearby residential properties within any new construction.

Implementation Strategies

Strip mall type developments should be eliminated through redevelopment when possible. Parking should be located at the rear of buildings and away from the street frontage. Parking and site circulation should be shared across property lines whenever practical. Shared parking agreements between adjacent

or nearby properties should be encouraged. Adaptive reuse and preservation of historic buildings is desired. Business uses should be protected by prohibiting residential uses on the first floor unless developed at the edges of the area in a manner that provides a buffer between commercial and other residential land uses, and at a higher density of multi-family residential. In no instance shall a residential development create a gap-tooth condition within the existing commercial corridors. If multi-family development is the desired use for a site as determined by the Planning Commission, then it should be developed at a density of greater than twelve (12) units per acre but no more than twenty-seven (27) units per acre. Sidewalk conditions should be improved 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. Zoning should be reviewed to consider if and where modern land uses should be in the local business districts and under what circumstances.

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 at a density of eighteen (18) to twenty-seven (27) units per acre. 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.

Implementation 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. Preservation of, and 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. Evaluation 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 may 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 corridor 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. Residential density should be between eighteen (18) to twenty-seven (27) units per acre. Buildings in this corridor are typically single land use, but a mixture of commercial land uses are desirable within buildings and across parcels/lots. 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.

Implementation 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. Zoning should be reviewed to consider if and where modern land uses should be in the corridor and under what general circumstances.

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 in close proximity are encouraged.

Buildings in this area are typically occupied by a 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 other locations offers a better buffer for the street.

Implementation 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 high quality of life in adjacent neighborhoods. It is important that employee and truck parking be provided on-site so on-street parking conflicts are minimized. Site circulation should provide safe pathways for pickups, deliveries, parking, and storage. Truck routes on more heavily traveled streets should serve industrial areas and should provide adequate passage into, through, and out of the city. Zoning should be reviewed to consider if and where modern land uses should be in the districts and under what general circumstances.

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 envisioned for recreational land use in the future have also 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.

Implementation Strategies

If properties owned by regional, public organizations become available, the city should consider acquiring sites suitable 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

Zoning Plan

Future Land Use Category	Appropriate Land Uses	Zoning
Single Family	Single family, institutions, parks	R-1
Residential Multi-Family	Single family, small multi-family, "missing middle" housing, institutions, parks	RT-1, RM-1
Multi-Family Neighborhood	Multi-family	RM-1, RM-2
Mixed Use	Mixed use, offices, retail, services, institutions, parks, multi-family, "missing middle" housing, single family	RT-1, RM-1, RM-2, MU, B-1
Local Business	Mixed use, offices, retail, services, institutions, upper story residential, multi-family at edges	B-1, O-1, O-2
Central Business	Offices, retail, services, restaurants, institutions, upper story residential, parks	B-2
Ann Arbor Road Corridor	Offices, retail, services, restaurants, multi-family	ARC
Industrial	Manufacturing, warehouses, offices	I-1, I-2
Parks and Open Space	Parks	R-1, POS

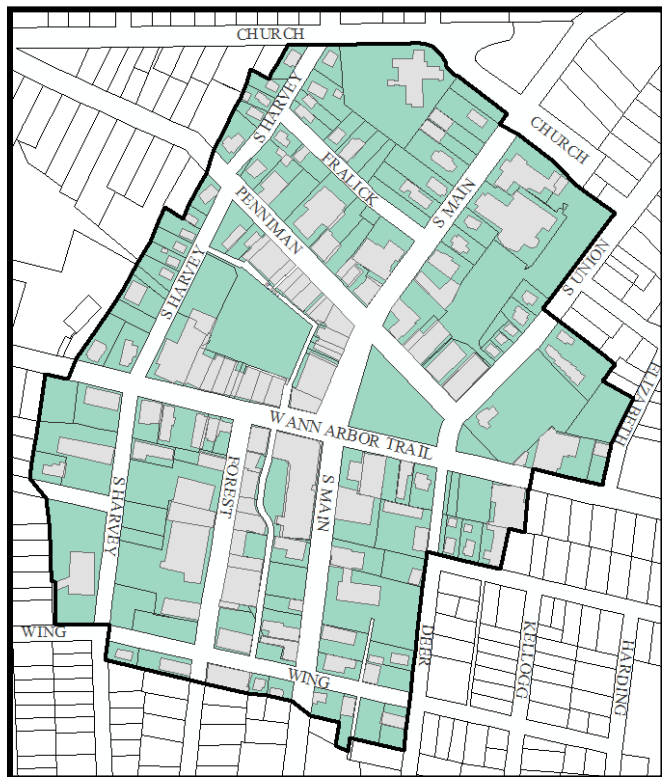


This chapter provides more detailed ideas of how specific areas in the city could be developed in the future. It puts to paper design principles for setbacks, building height, pedestrian amenities, open space, and other topics. This guidance works with the future land use designations and provides more detailed directions for development in particular areas of the city.

The sub-area plans address the following sections of the community:

1. Central Business/Downtown area
2. Old Village area
3. North and South Main Street areas
4. South Mill Street area
5. Ann Arbor Road Corridor

Central Business/Downtown Sub Area Plan



Planning Framework and Land Use

- The City of Plymouth's downtown is a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly environment characterized by an attractive collection of retail shops, restaurants, offices, residences, parks, and public amenities.
- The continued growth and development of downtown Plymouth is enhanced by development policies which foster this long-range vision.
- Land use policies for the downtown encourage a mix of land uses including retail, restaurant, office, residential, park,

and public uses. This mix of uses is supported by the B-2 zoning district classification.

- Land uses which promote the interface of building occupants and public areas are encouraged. This includes outdoor cafes and attractive retail window displays.

Form and Site Design

- To encourage development which reinforces pedestrian activity along streets, building fronts shall be placed at the street right-of-way line or no more than twelve feet back from the right-of-way.
- Building architecture should be compatible with sidewalk areas and provide an attractive interface between buildings and pedestrians. Quality architecture shall be emphasized with generous window areas, building recesses, and architectural details.
- Architectural interest should be provided by using color, texture, and materials, with special details for primary building entrances.
- Downtown real estate should be prioritized for employment, housing, parks, public art, or other amenities, not cars and parking. Determine if the current minimum parking requirements are needed or are only necessary for some uses, such as residential.



Photo Credit: Chamber of Commerce

- A form-based analysis should be conducted for the Downtown Sub Area. The analysis should include a building type inventory, analysis of street types, and designation of public space and parking areas.



Photo Credit: Pete Mundt

Streetscapes and Public Spaces

- The DDA has identified long-term improvement projects to the downtown. These include brick paver upgrades, traffic signal mast arms, landscaping, and general improvements.
- Kellogg Park is a main downtown Plymouth attraction. The city should manage the park in a manner which complements nearby businesses, promotes community activities and festivals, and maintains park quality.
- The city should promote plazas open to the public, outdoor cafes and pedestrian areas which provide attractive green space and pedestrian amenities.
- The city should maintain and enhance its quality streetscape and public sidewalk areas. Permeable brick pavers, landscaping, lighting, public art, street furniture and attractive signage are important components of the downtown ambiance.

Parking and Circulation

- The City and DDA should continue improvements of the central parking deck and acquire additional public parking at strategic locations.
- New parking lots and structures must make a positive contribution to the street edge and pedestrian areas.
- Where possible, surface parking areas should be screened with perimeter landscaping, knee walls, or ornamental fencing.
- Public parking areas should be connected to the central business areas through well-maintained sidewalks and pedestrian passageways.
- If new parking structures are developed, the city should integrate retail buildings and pedestrian amenities within the structure.
- The city should maintain an attractive wayfinding system which easily identifies public parking, shopping, and community facilities.
- Additional on-street parking should be striped whenever possible.

DDA Strategic Plan

In August 2024, the Downtown Development Authority Board approved their 5 Year Action Plan that is the strategic visioning document for the downtown district. A summary of the goals and related tasks are listed below:

2024 DDA Five-Year Action Plan	
Goal/Tasks	
Enhance DDA District Aesthetics & Function - Streetscape Improvement Plan	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use DDA Infrastructure Plan as a framework to build on. 2. Enhance aesthetics, function and activating spaces, using industry best practices. 3. Make landscaping consistent across the DDA. 4. Revamp trees, planters, brick pavers. 5. Evaluate patio/outdoor dining opportunities. 6. Review opportunities to maximize and increase sidewalk areas/pedestrian/commerce opportunities to improve pedestrian safety. 7. Incorporate eco-friendly, sustainable practices into DDA by reducing impervious surfaces, incorporating rain gardens, prioritizing native and pollinator-friendly plants, and maintaining a mature tree canopy. 	
Enhance DDA District Aesthetics & Function - Proactive Community Engagement Plan	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educate residents and business owners about the Streetscape Improvement Plan project. 2. Gather community input. 3. Educate downtown stakeholders of plan. 	
Improve Parking - Maximize the Number of Parking Spaces	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-assess parking desires of parking patrons/users via user input, needs study, or other methods. Work with the Planning Commission and businesses. 2. Work with property owners of private lots to optimize layout, number of spaces, and increase efficiency/capacity. 3. Analyze more efficient parking space design (Pull-in vs. parallel vs. angled, etc.). 4. Work with the Planning Commission to review the approach to businesses providing parking. Look for a more collective approach. 5. Review opportunities for additional parking spaces. 	
Improve Parking - Other	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incorporate electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. 2. Evaluate one-way street options. 	
Improve Pedestrian Safety - Pedestrian Crossings	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create Consistent Approach to Determining Pedestrian Crossing Facilities. 	
Improve Pedestrian Safety - Address Tree Issues	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop tree replacement plan. 2. Tree grates or alternative surfacing around trees. 	
Improve Pedestrian Safety - Other	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure consistent sidewalk trim/brick work throughout the DDA. 2. Implement vehicle management features that slow cars, reduce traffic, etc. 3. Address uneven sidewalk pavement. 4. Develop a plan to activate alleys and sidewalks. 5. Eliminate obstacles on sidewalks and pedestrian crossings (such as light poles, planters, etc.). 6. Provide input to the City Commission on proposed Multi-modal Transportation Plan 	

Kellogg Park - Turf Issues

1. Explore natural/synthetic alternatives to turf grass.
2. Look into better turf management.

Kellogg Park - Brick Pathways

1. Create brick pathways that are consistent with the downtown in Kellogg Park.

Kellogg Park - Other

1. Update the Kellogg Park landscape plan, including pollinator-friendly plants, rain gardens, and maintaining a mature tree canopy.
2. Evaluate the health of existing trees.
3. Incorporate East Penniman, or use of this street, into Kellogg Park functions.
4. Add security cameras.

Support Businesses - Public Wi-Fi

1. Evaluate public Wi-Fi in DTP.

Support Businesses - Support Business Goals

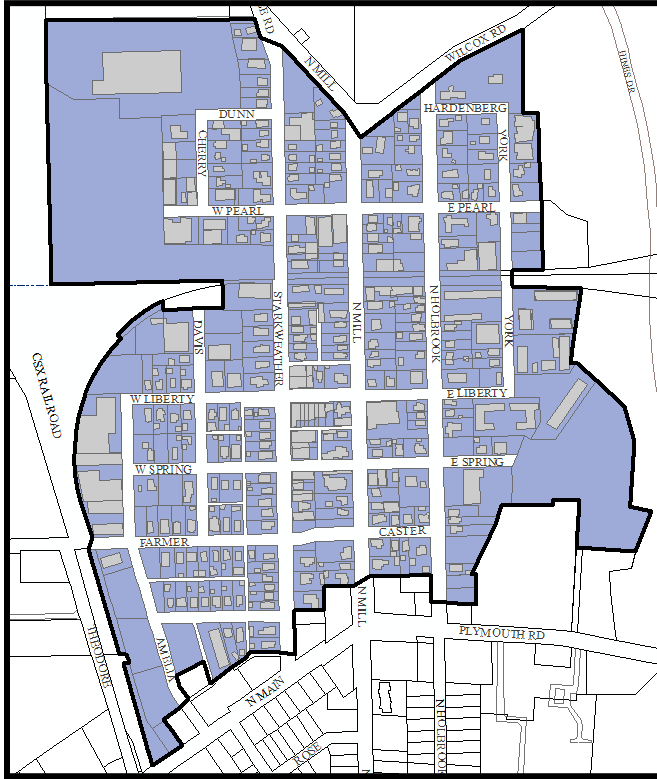
1. Continue community events.
2. Quantify value of proposed CC & DDA improvements to businesses.
3. Encourage business involvement in DDA programs.
4. Use Redevelopment Ready Communities program as a guide to market vacant properties.
5. Implement programming to create connections to other parts of the community.

Other - Implement More Art Projects in the DDA

1. Invisible paint that appears when it rains, with messages such as "Thank you for shopping Downtown Plymouth."
2. Add more street art/painted artwork.



Old Village Sub Area Plan



Planning Framework and Land Use

- The Old Village area should be a compatible mix of residential, office, commercial and light industrial uses.
- The land uses should be arranged in a manner which complements the historic character of the Old Village.
- Intensive commercial uses which have a negative impact on nearby residential areas should not be allowed.



- Upper level residences located above first floor commercial or office uses are encouraged.
- Light industrial uses shall be allowed to continue but shall be buffered and screened from nearby residential uses.
- The mix of land uses will allow higher residential density in order to promote the Old Village vitality and pedestrian ambiance.
- Pedestrian and vehicular connectivity between Old Village and downtown and Old Village and Hines Park should be explored and enhanced.
- Old Village shall serve as an attractive, well-designed gateway into the City of Plymouth.
- Land uses which promote the interface of building occupants and public areas are encouraged. This includes outdoor cafes and attractive retail window displays.



Form and Site Design

- Liberty Street between Starkweather and Mill Streets shall function as the village center for the Old Village with a collection of restaurants, taverns, and shops.
- Historic architecture shall be preserved.
- Streetscape improvements including lighting, sidewalk enhancements, pedestrian amenities, and landscaping should be implemented.

- To prevent excessive light pollution, outdoor lighting should be useful, targeted, and controlled.
- Variable setbacks ranging from zero to fifteen feet shall be established on an average block basis in order to maintain block integrity.
- Building heights shall not exceed 2-3 stories in appropriate areas.
- The city should promote public and private plazas, and attractive green spaces for gatherings.
- Old Village land area should be prioritized for employment, housing, parks, public art, or other amenities, not cars and parking.
- Determine if the current minimum parking requirements are needed or are only necessary for some uses, such as residential.
- A detailed building type inventory should be conducted for the Old Village Sub Area to supplement the form-based analysis that was conducted for the area in 2023.

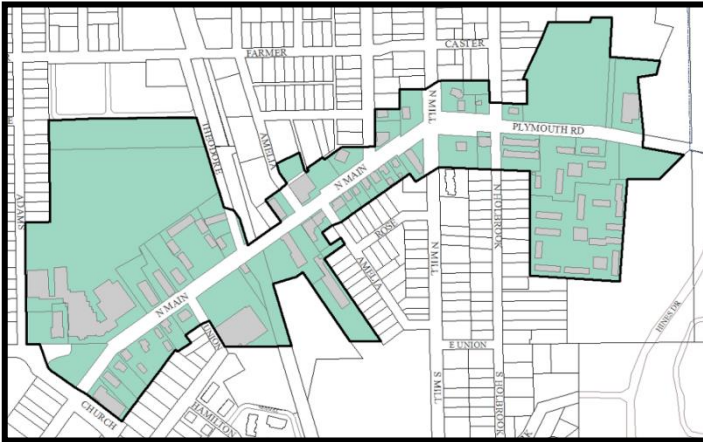
Parking and Circulation

- The Old Village shall promote a safe and attractive pedestrian circulation system.
- The mix of residential and commercial uses will promote pedestrian scale development.
- Sidewalks in the village center area should be wider with barrier free ramps at intersections.
- The city should explore converting private parking areas into municipal controlled lots.
- On-street parking should be promoted as a viable alternative to off-street parking for the village center area and commercial areas.
- Intersections should be improved to increase the visibility of pedestrians and other vehicles.
- Dedicated crosswalks should be added to strategic locations.

- The maximum number of on-street parking spaces shall be striped whenever possible.



North and South Main Sub Area Plan



Planning Framework and Land Use

- South and North Main Street should be a mix of residential, office and commercial uses arranged in a compatible framework with adjoining single-family neighborhood areas.
- Intensive commercial uses such as drive-through restaurants, gas stations and large format retail should not be allowed.
- Local Business (B-1) type uses are permitted, which can be situated on limited-size lots, and which provide appropriate buffers to adjoining single-family residential uses.
- South and North Main shall serve as an attractive, well-designed gateway to the downtown area for vehicles and pedestrians.



Form and Site Design

- Where possible, the following streetscape improvements should be implemented: additional street trees, decorative street lighting, public art, and gateway or welcome signs.
- Locate parking at the rear of buildings. Share driveways and parking areas between uses/lots.
- Landscape strips or decorative knee walls should separate front yard parking and sidewalk areas.
- Adjoining single-family residential areas should be properly buffered by means of landscape strips, berms, and/or screening walls.
- To encourage development which reinforces pedestrian activity along streets, building fronts shall be placed at the street right-of-way line or no more

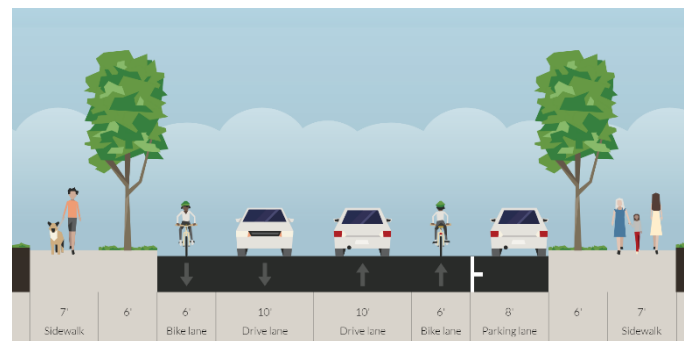
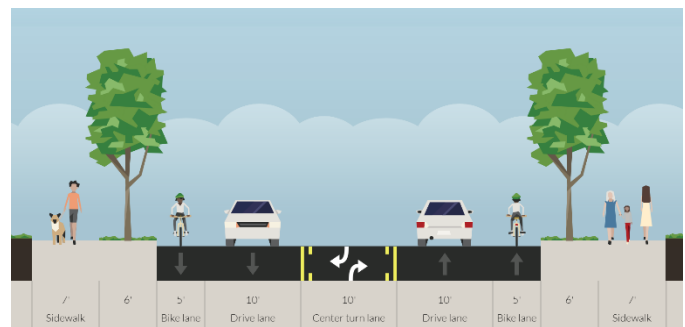
than fifteen feet back from the right-of-way.

- Consider if a form-based analysis should be conducted for the North and/or South Main Street Sub Area. The analysis could include a building type inventory, analysis of street types, and designation of public space and parking areas.

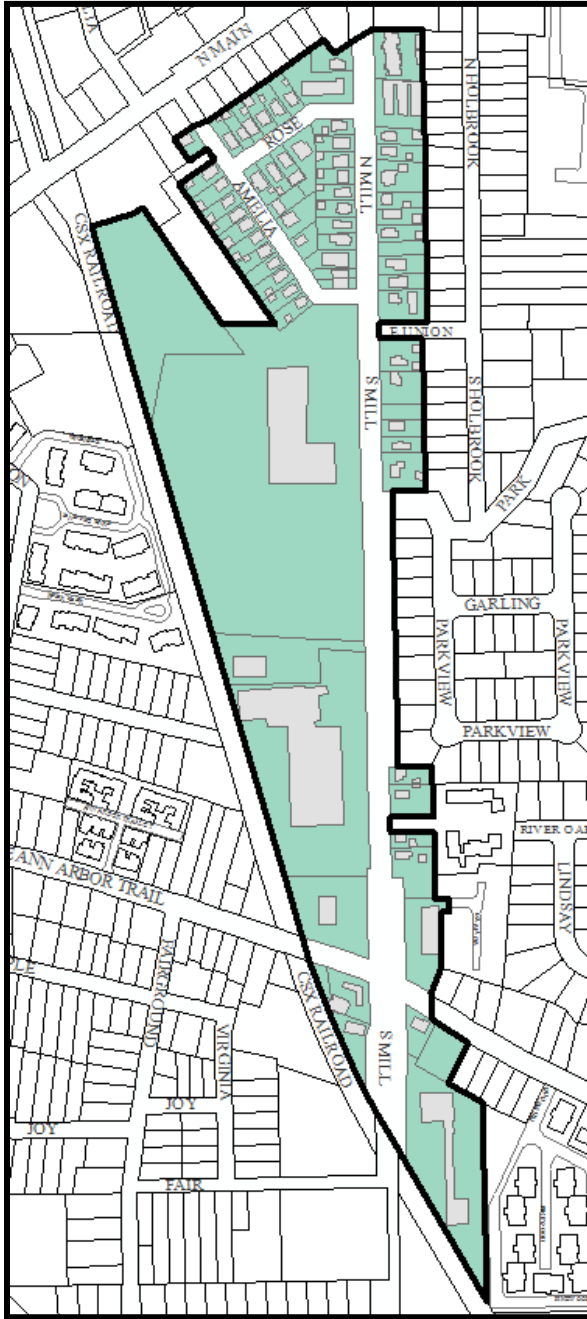
Parking and Circulation

- South and North Main Streets should provide a safe and attractive pedestrian corridor leading to Downtown and Old Village.
- Pedestrian improvements should consider greater sidewalk width, additional landscaping and street trees, placement of light poles and streetlights, and barrier-free ramps at intersections.
- Where feasible, pedestrian refuge islands, bulb outs, and other traffic calming solutions should be considered at various points along North and/or South Main Street. Pedestrian crosswalks should be clearly identified with signage and cross bars. Crosswalks should be added and maintained in locations that connect pedestrians to shopping/entertainment districts, schools, community facilities, and parks.
- The city should consider alternative road cross sections such as two through lanes, parking lanes, and bicycle lanes. Safe and efficient vehicle stacking on North Main by the railroad tracks should be considered in any North Main roadway improvements.
- Include access management standards within the Zoning Ordinance to minimize curb cuts and turning conflicts. The access management standards of the ARC District are a possible starting point.

- Consider whether the number of off-street parking spaces required for new and infill development should be a function of the total size of the building, rather than the land use.



South Mill Sub Area Plan



Planning Framework and Land Use

- South Mill provides redevelopment opportunities for mixed use development including single family residences, multi-family residences, recreation, neighborhood commercial and industrial uses.
- Existing single family and multi-family uses should be maintained and buffered from industrial uses.
- Neighborhood commercial uses such as local business retail and service are designated for the intersection of Ann Arbor Trail and South Mill.
- Retain existing industrial uses around the railroad as appropriate, as they provide important employment opportunities and tax base for the city.
- The former Lumber Mart site provides a prime redevelopment opportunity for ~~a~~ mixed use or residential development.

Form and Site Design

- As redevelopment along South Mill occurs, streetscape improvements should be implemented and should include additional street trees along the corridor, landscape screening along industrial properties ~~and the school bus yard~~, and landscape strips and decorative knee walls at key commercial intersection of Ann Arbor Trail and South Mill.
- Gateway/entryway sign should be installed at South Mill near City limits.
- Provide unified streetscape elements along the South Mill corridor.

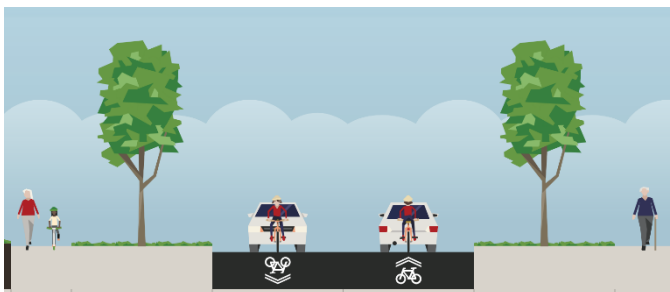
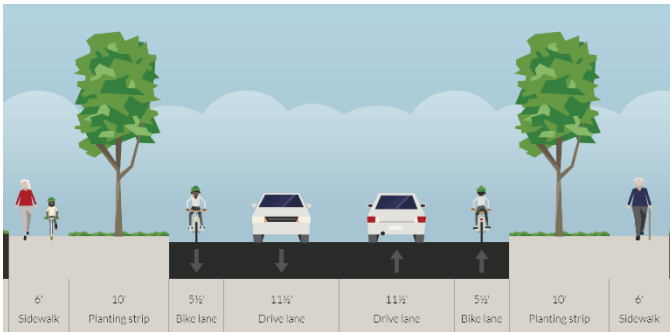


Parking and Circulation

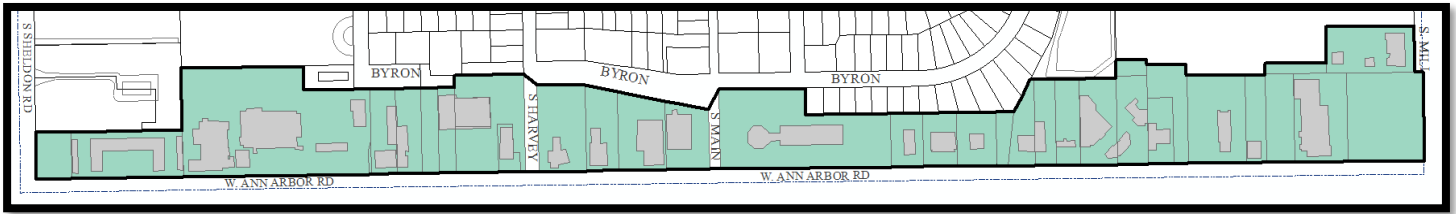
- Wayne County should improve South Mill by re-paving with two travel lanes, bike paths, curbs, and sidewalks.
- Storm sewers and curb inlets should be included in future road re-construction.
- Coordinate long term road improvements with Wayne County such as access management strategies, curb cuts, deceleration lanes and turning lanes.
- Parking should be located at the rear of buildings where practicable. Redundant commercial and industrial driveways should be eliminated.



HAWK Signal near Sydney Blvd and Park St provides a mid-block pedestrian crosswalk.



Ann Arbor Road Corridor Sub Area Plan

**Planning Framework and Land Use**

- The Ann Arbor Road Corridor is characterized by a variety of retail and service businesses that are best accessed by automobile.
- This district was developed in partnership with Plymouth Township and as such cannot be changed without consultation with and agreement from their Planning Commission.
- Land use policies for Ann Arbor Road primarily encourage professional offices, personal service establishments, restaurants and food service, and auto-oriented businesses.
- Land uses that promote pedestrian movement and accommodation are encouraged.

Form, Site Design, and Streetscapes

- The Ann Arbor Road Corridor has clearly defined design guidelines and streetscape requirements including specifications on signage, landscaping, fencing, building materials, and lighting.
- As more buildings are changing ownership and changing uses, sites are being improved which requires compliance with the district's streetscape standards. It is expected that this will continue in future years.
- Public spaces can be greatly improved in this area. Increased sidewalk widths, inviting street furniture, and fewer curb cuts could make this area more pedestrian friendly.
- Ann Arbor Road is a state road, and all improvements in the right-of-way are under the purview of MDOT. Wayne County maintains the two roads (Sheldon and S. Mill/Lilley) that create the east and west edges of this sub area.

Parking and Circulation

- The Ann Arbor Road Corridor is auto centric and relies on efficient parking and circulation around buildings and on sites.
- Traffic calming solutions should be explored for the corridor which may include curb bump outs, smaller curb cuts, parking lot islands, and pedestrian refuge islands.
- The graphic below provides various options for parking lot layouts. It is important that all parking within this sub area functions efficiently to limit potential harm to pedestrians and other motorists.
- Lower speeds should be encouraged along Ann Arbor Road.



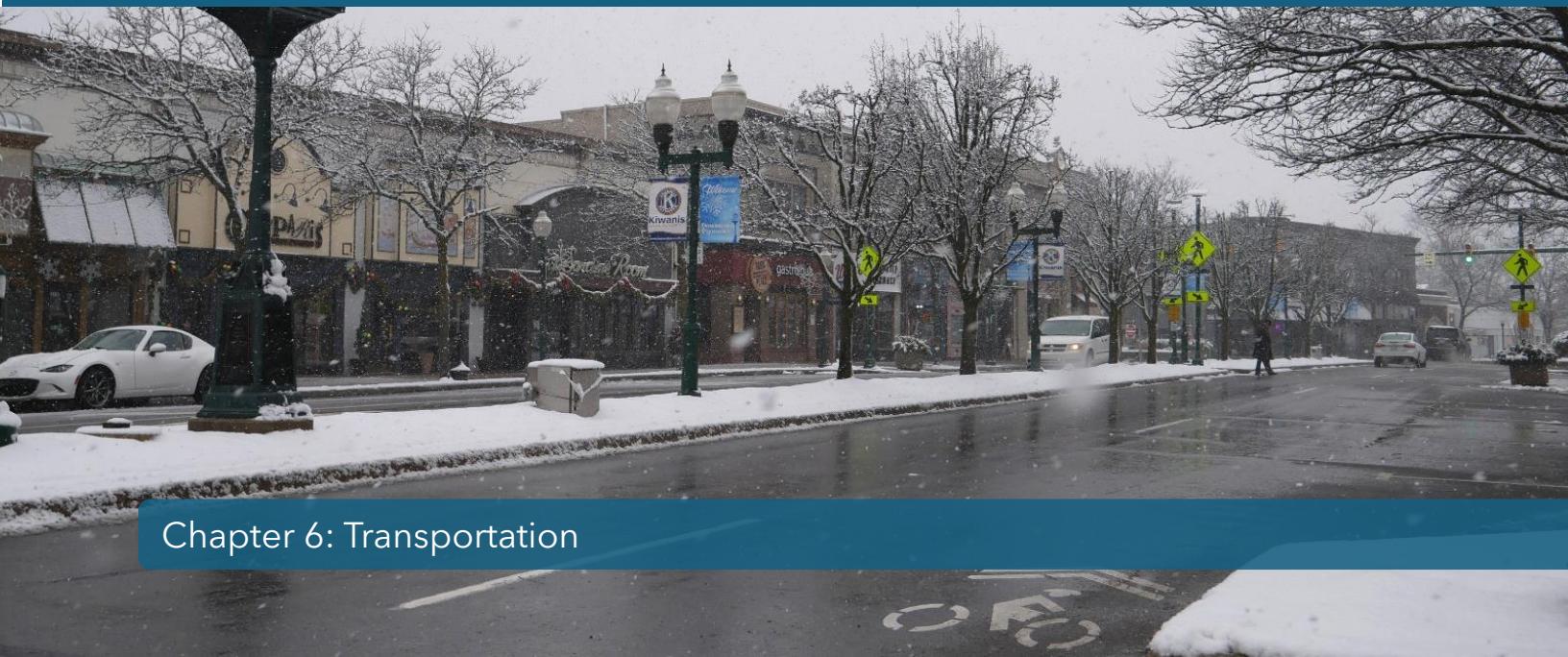
Plymouth Township's Ann Arbor Road Corridor Sub Area Plan

Background

In 1998, Plymouth Township and the City of Plymouth formed a joint Ann Arbor Road Corridor (ARC) District, which contains specific criteria for landscape, signage, and the appearance of buildings. The purpose of the joint zoning district was to create a visual cohesiveness on both sides of Ann Arbor Road and to foster a sense of place. To that end, the Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has financed major streetscape projects along the Township portion of the Ann Arbor Road Corridor. It is the Township's perspective that continued investment in the Ann Arbor Road Corridor will help to prevent blight and ensure that this area remains a viable location for business.

Key Concepts

- As the prime commercial thoroughfare in Plymouth Township, the Ann Arbor Road Corridor has been recognized as a key focal area of the community.
- The requirements of the ARC District for landscape, signage, and the appearance of buildings help to improve the visual continuity of the area and foster a sense of place.



Chapter 6: Transportation

Introduction

Transportation infrastructure is the backbone of a community, allowing residents and visitors to move from home, to work, to play easily and safely. 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."

In January 2025, the Governor signed legislation eliminating the ability for Wayne County communities to opt-out of county transit property tax. This may bring SMART buses into the city's transportation network.

Further study beyond the scope of this Master Plan may be required to plan for a future that includes public bus transit.

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 use roads easily and safely in their community.

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

Existing Conditions

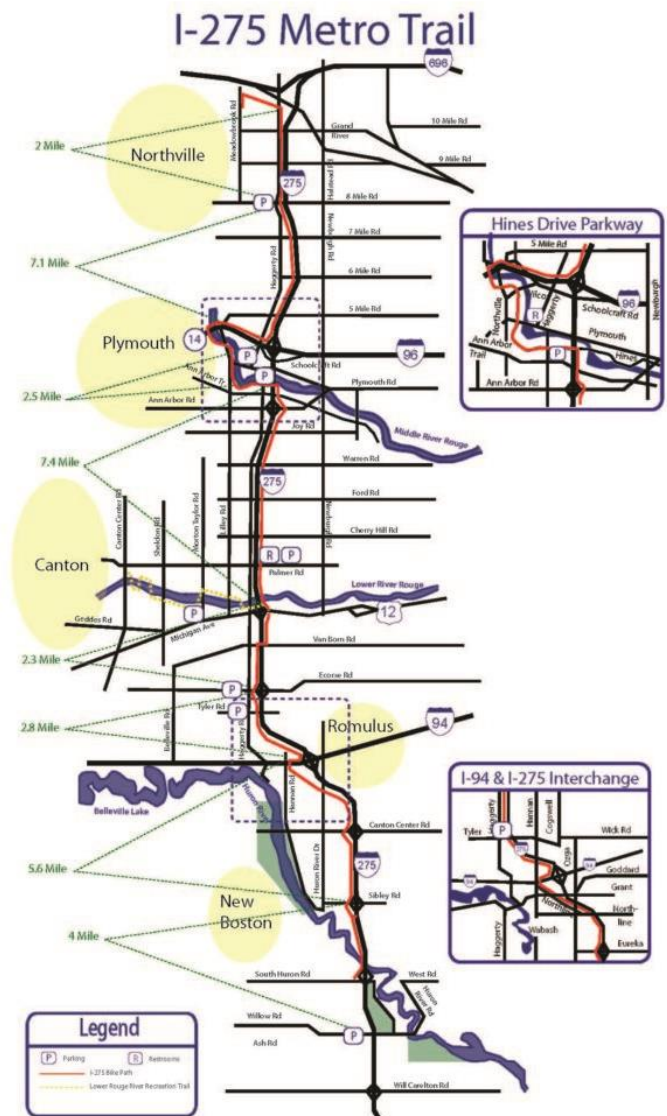
Regional Setting

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 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 a dynamic downtown environment. Helping visitors reach the city by various modes of transportation will only increase its popularity.

There are several 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) 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 five classes of roads as described below.

MDOT National Functional Classification

- 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, Ann Arbor Road, and Hines Drive belong in this category.
- Minor arterial roads are similar in function to principal arterials, except they carry trips of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators. Roads in this category include Northville, Wilcox, Mill, Plymouth, Main Street, N. Territorial, Penniman, and Ann Arbor Trail.
- Major collector roads funnel traffic from residential areas to arterial roads, with some providing direct access to residences. They include Starkweather, Penniman between Harvey and S. Union, and Ann Arbor Trail.
- Local roads are neighborhood streets that provide access to residences and include most other streets in Plymouth.
- Non-certified roads in Plymouth are residential courts, dead-ends, cul-de-sacs, or roads circulating traffic within a housing complex.

Transportation Survey Results

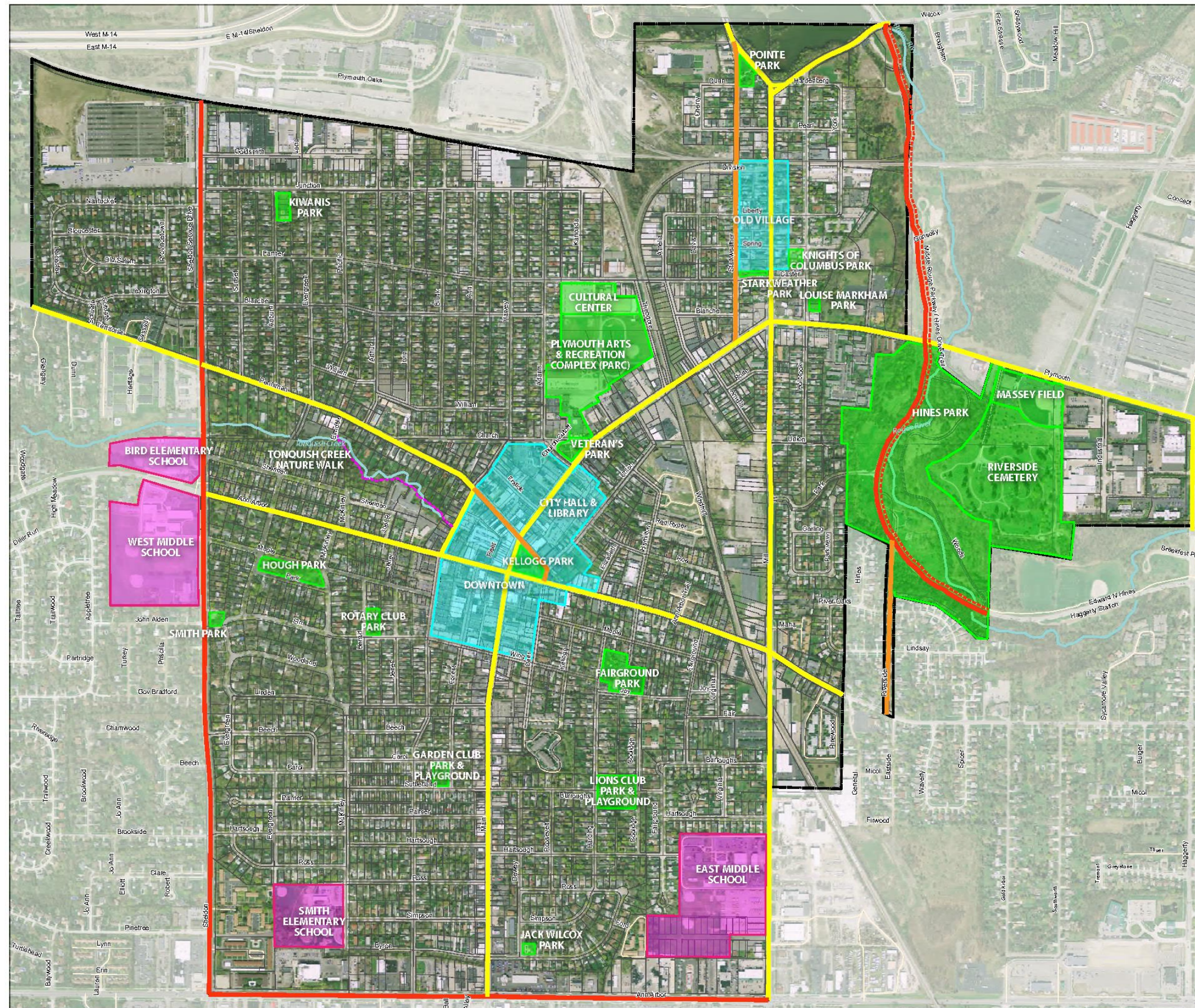
Planning Commissioners and staff spoke with individuals at the Spring Artisan Market on Saturday, April 20, 2024. Two different surveys were presented to respondents depending on if they identified as a resident of the City of Plymouth or not a city resident.

City residents were asked what places they visit and the method of transportation they most often use. Residents reported that they *Walk* to their destination a majority of the time (53%), *Drive* 36% of the time, and *Bike* 10% of the time.

Non-residents were asked how often they visited the city and what brings them to town. The majority of respondents (56%) reported an average of 2.8 *Visits per Week*. Respondents reported the majority of their visits were to attend *Events* (80%), to eat and drink at *Restaurants/Dining* (83%), and to shop *Shopping/Retail* locations (73%). Non-residents reported they primarily find a parking spot available on the *Street/Roadway* (53%) and in *Public Parking Lots* (47%).

Both surveys asked *What sidewalks/bike pathways should be prioritized for improvements such as pedestrian signals, bike lanes, or surface repairs?* and *Are there any other transportation improvements you would like to see within the city?* The qualitative responses were utilized to update this chapter.



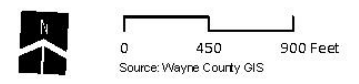


- PRINCIPAL ROUTES**
- Principal Arterial - Other
 - Minor Arterial
 - Major Collector
 - Walking Path
 - Walking / Biking Path

- DESTINATIONS**
- Neighborhoods / Districts
 - Parks
 - Schools

**FIGURE 11: EXISTING
TRANSPORTATION
CONDITIONS**

City of Plymouth, Michigan



Carlisle/Wortman Associates
March 2025

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

A crucial 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"

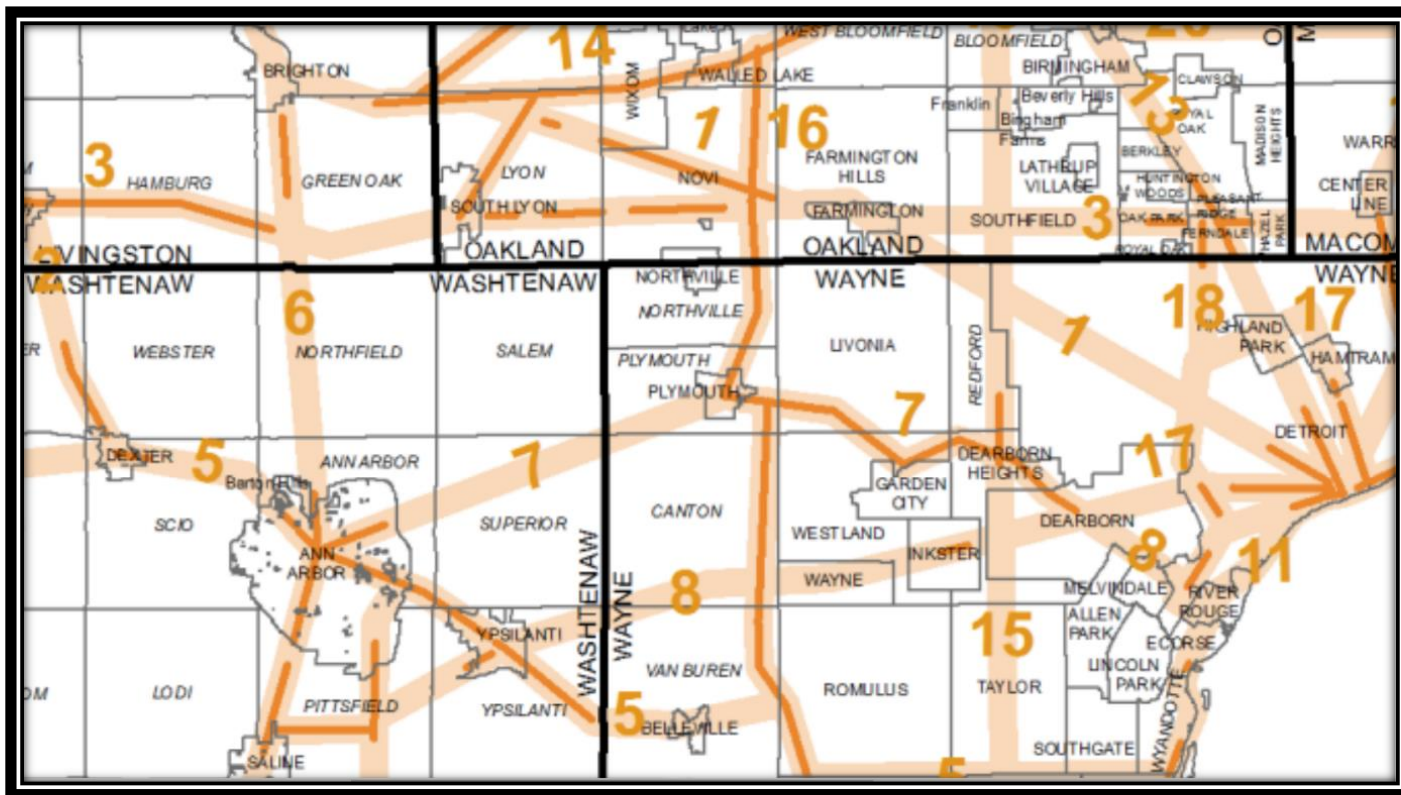
The September 2023 Citizen Survey asked respondents about bike lanes and bike racks. One-third of respondents thought *More* bicycle lanes are needed in the city. Only 15 percent reported their belief that there are *Too Many*, with the balance expressing the opinion that there were *Enough* (21%) or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

For those who said that *More* bike lanes or bike racks were needed, 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 were named by over half of all 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.

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 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 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.

SEMCOG’s Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Corridors map is shown above. The dark orange lines represent existing infrastructure for both walking and biking and the light

orange lines represent planned regional bicycle and pedestrian corridors.

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

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



Plymouth Township

Plymouth Township surrounds the City of Plymouth. 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.



Photo Credit: Pete Mundt

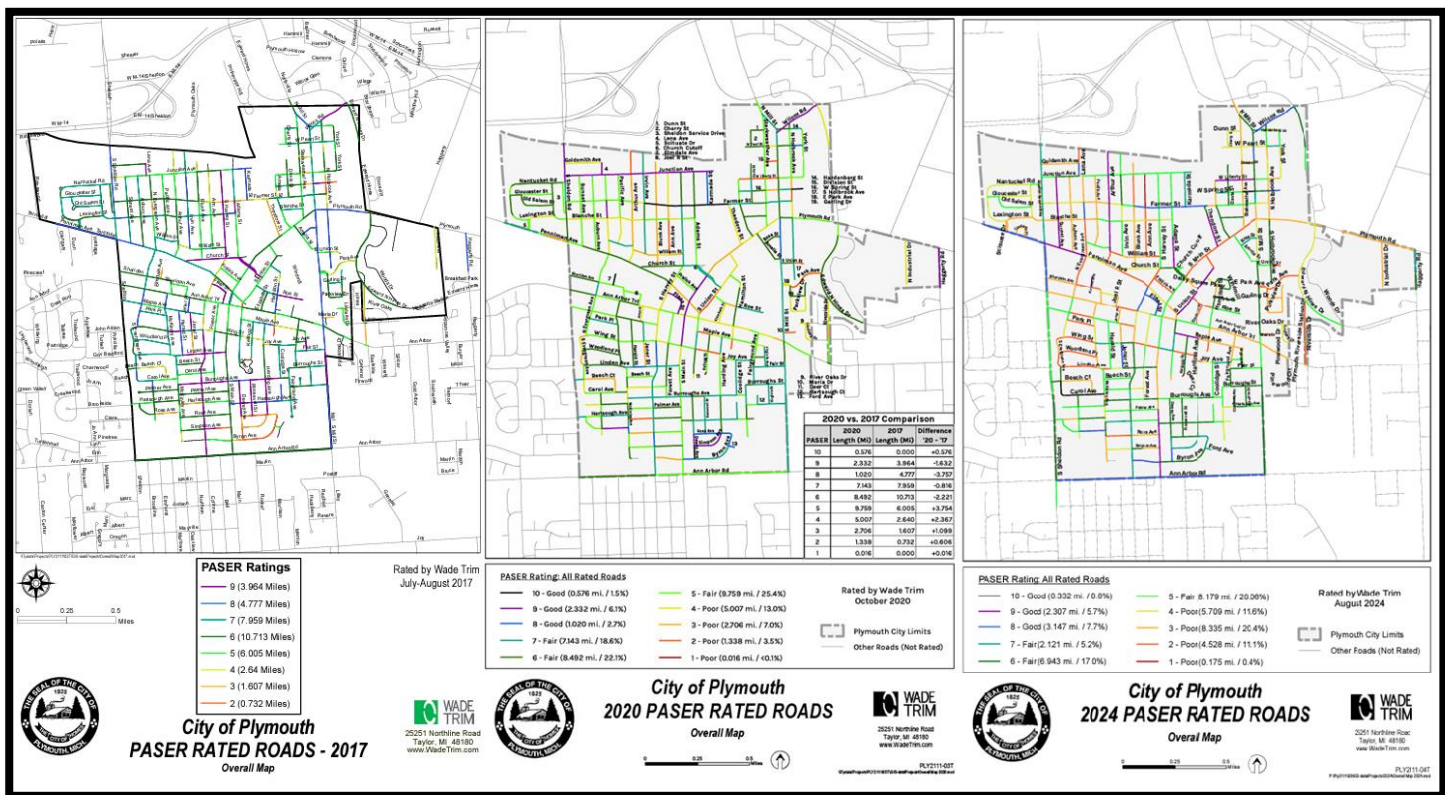
Goals the Township has included in its Master Plan for this effort are listed below:

- 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 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

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. Like 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 on 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, Northville Road, Wilcox Road, Plymouth Road, and Ann Arbor Road. The city has no jurisdiction over these roadways and rights-of-way.

Improvements that are identified for County or State roadways later in this document are dependent upon those organizations' approval and financial backing.

Streets

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 of 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.

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 City's Sidewalk Replacement 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.



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 reducing the number of driveways and curb cuts, and 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 and identifying the responsible parties and funding mechanisms for their long-term maintenance:
 - 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 whether it is appropriate to count existing on-street parking toward any parking minimums should be studied.

3. Create a continuous and inviting walkable street by requiring new development to consider the public realm when locating buildings on a site. In new commercial development



areas, placement of 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 pedestrian entryways from both the parking areas and sidewalk.

4. Study and improve motorized traffic patterns at the following intersections:
 - All railroad crossings
 - Ann Arbor Trail and Sheldon (Wayne County)

- N. Main/Plymouth Rd. and Mill/Lilley (Wayne County)



Photo Credit: Pete Mundt

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. The Primary and Secondary Transportation Routes map illustrates opportunities for future pedestrian and bicycle improvements throughout Plymouth. Figure 12 on the next page depicts the primary routes and connections for walkers and bikers in Plymouth that were identified through a paper survey of visitors to the Spring Artisan Market in Downtown Plymouth April 2024 and Strava Metro Heatmaps. While the city has very few sidewalk gaps, there are opportunities to improve certain walks, as well as to establish features that better accommodate bicycle travel. 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

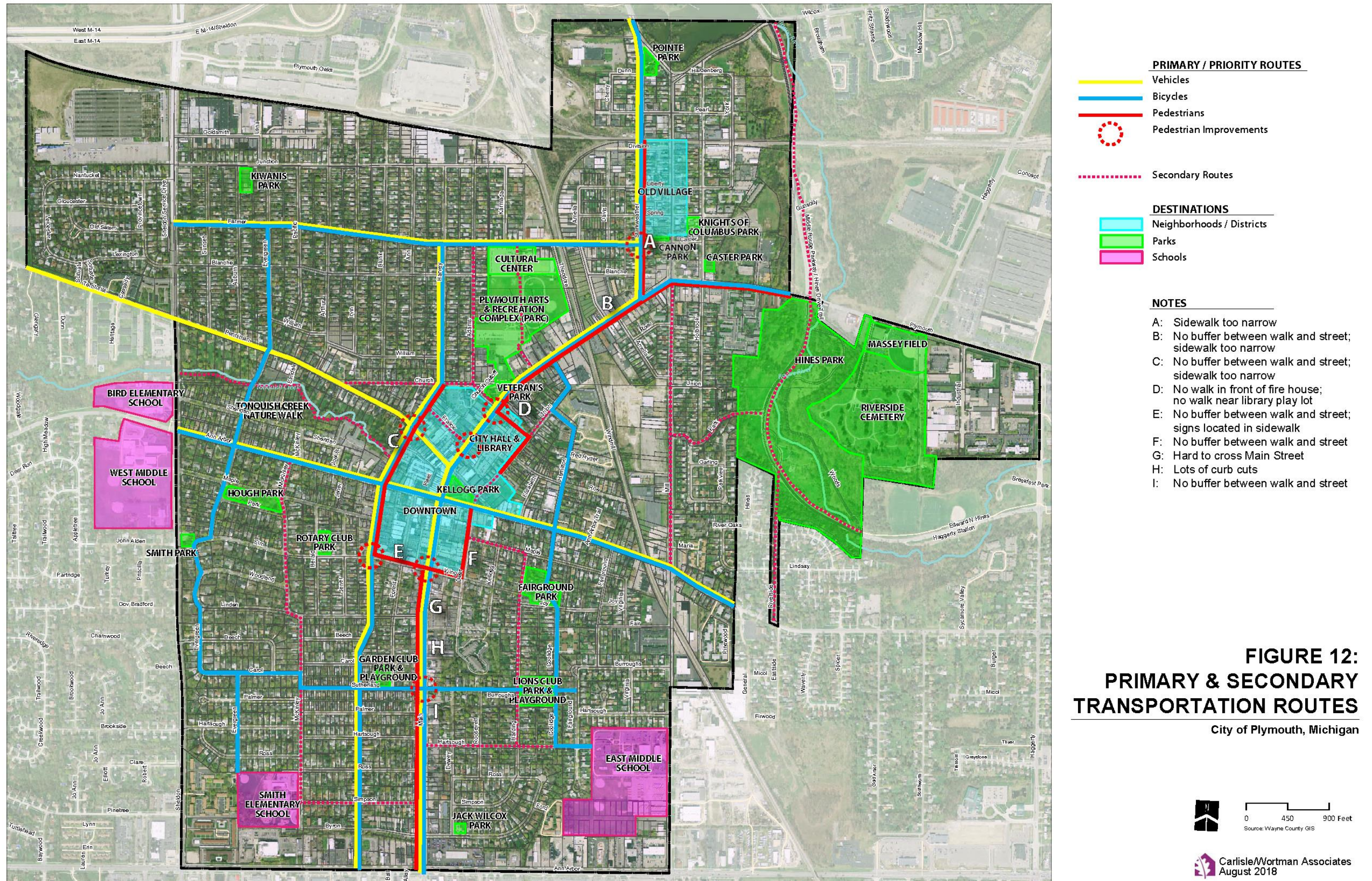
Trail. These roadways have been identified as the main routes used by vehicles to reach various destinations in town, or to connect with the larger roadway system surrounding the city. (Note that the existing conditions on Penniman (i.e., retaining walls and narrow travel lanes) make this street unfavorable 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(s) 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.
4. Secondary Pedestrian Routes, colored dashed red, show routes that should 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. Additionally, specific improvements are identified on the map under "Notes".



What is the Strava Metro Heatmap?

Launched in 2014, Strava Metro data constitutes a representative sample that enables powerful analyses of the overall population. The Strava Metro Heatmap shows Strava activities overlaid on a map of the city, with brightness as a factor of density of GPS points. The heatmap can be used to understand which parts of the network are being used most and least often. Although the data is confidential, these maps may assist transportation professionals when developing transportation related improvements.



Opportunities for Non-Motorized Improvements

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 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, listed in no order of importance, 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, connect sidewalk gaps, add landscape buffers/street trees between walks and abutting streets, and widen walks to provide safer, more comfortable pedestrian travel ways. Specific 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 (Note: The Wayne County improvements listed here will require agreement by and coordination with Wayne County):
 - Starkweather and Farmer
 - Main St. and Church
 - Main St. and Fralick
 - Main St. and Wing
 - Harvey and Wing
 - Mill St. and Farmer/Caster (Wayne County)
 - Mill and Liberty (Wayne County)
 - Starkweather and Northville Rd. (Wayne County)
 - Hines Drive and Park St. (Wayne County)
 - 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 five 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 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.



Example of an existing Pedestrian Refuge Island
on Ann Arbor Trail

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 (2015), bicycle lanes are appropriate on roadways having daily volumes that exceed 4,000 or car speeds that exceed thirty 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.

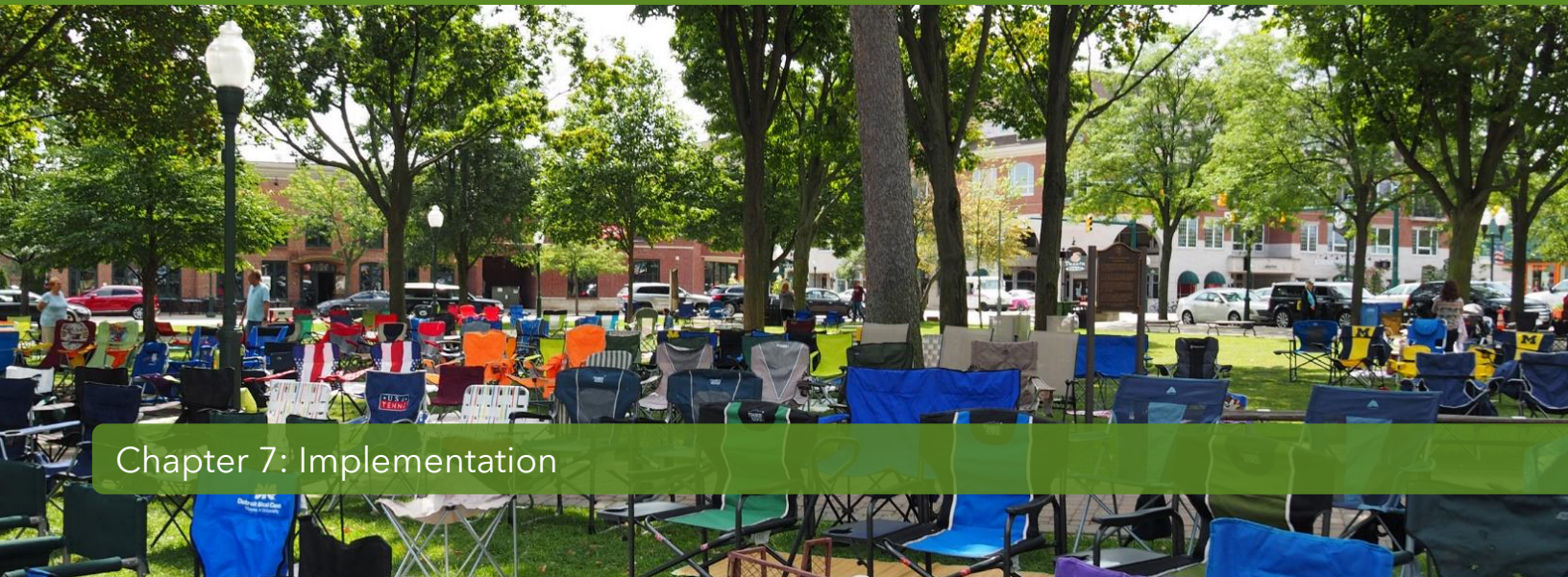
5. Paved On-Road Shoulders

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 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.



Chapter 7: 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

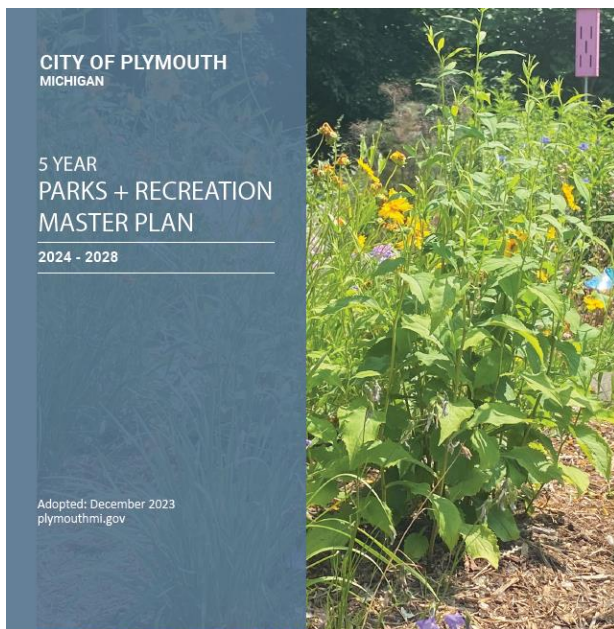
and adoption by the City Commission. This process established an annual goal setting framework, which has been conducted each year since. These sessions consider the information provided in the other processes described below.

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 15](#). Status updates and completed tasks are reported to the board at every regular DDA meeting.



Photo Credit: Pete Mundt



Recreation Master 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 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 completed in late 2023. 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. Briefly the Zoning Audit Implementation Report is as follows:

Year 1	Complete Master Plan Update
Year 2	Complete the twenty-six items identified by the Audit that could be undertaken in a quick update to the Zoning Ordinance.
Years 3-4	Complete the remaining, more complex changes identified such as reorganization or consolidation of articles and the addition of form-based districts.
Year 5	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 list of specific capital improvements is included in the City of Plymouth Annual Budget.

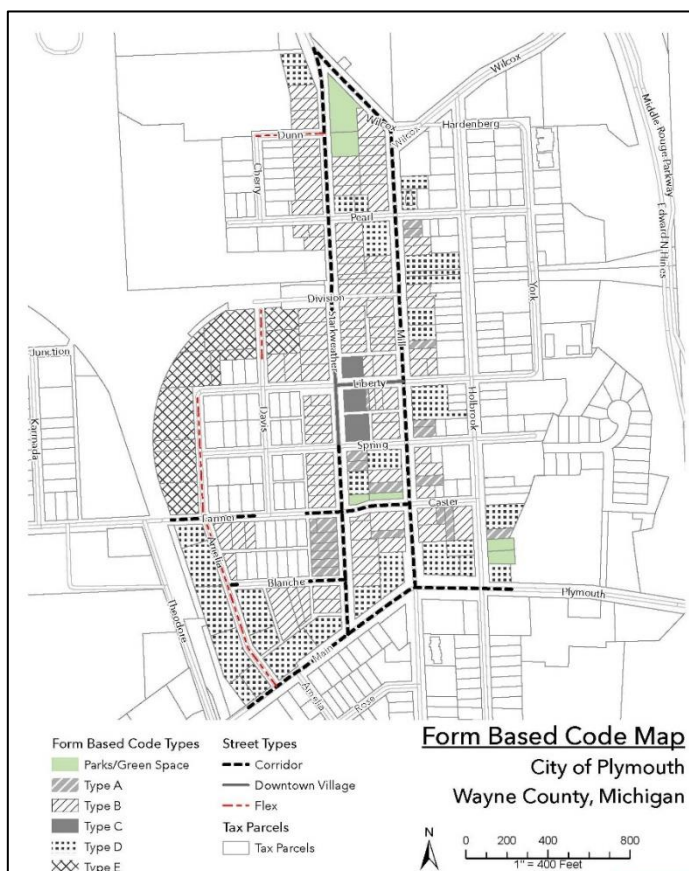
Form Based Codes

Conventional zoning focuses first on regulating use, specifically on what is allowed and not allowed. The City of Plymouth has a use based, or Euclidean, Zoning Ordinance. While use based zoning has protected neighborhoods from incompatible uses, it has not delivered the walkable design and mixture of uses that exist in the City's best places, such as Downtown and the Old Village.

A form based code regulates not only use, but the type of building as well. In existence for over a decade, form based zoning treats parcels differently based on size and street type within the same zoning district. Areas that are appropriate for a form based zoning district are the Downtown, the Old Village and Mixed Use Future Land Use categories.

In 2023, the Planning Commission guided the development of a "test" form-based zoning district for the Old Village area. The Form Based Code Map on this page lays out a regulating scenario where an Old Village Form Based Code would require downtown type buildings with zero setbacks on Liberty and Starkweather, limit the uses and building types on streets like Mill and Plymouth based on size and location, and allow a wide range of buildings and uses on Amelia.

In order to implement the "test" zoning district, the height, setback, and bulk regulations for each type of building needs to be calibrated to match the best design in the Old Village for



those buildings and/or the design the City would like to see in the future. To develop other form based zoning districts, a building type survey should be conducted. The suggested building forms are shown to the right. Finally, as with any major zoning change, the businesses and residents should be educated as to what a form based code is, informed of proposed changes, and consulted as to whether those changes are appropriate.

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 funding mechanism that best accomplishes 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 that may be considered are Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Special Assessment, and Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA). 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, and Michigan State Housing Development Authority.

tackled within one year of the Master Plan's adoption. Short-term items should be accomplished within three to four years of the adoption of the Plan. Mid-range actions should be accomplished within 5 to 7 years of the Plan's adoption, while long term actions should be tackled within 10 years

Implementation Matrix

Implementation is the primary way to carry out the desired goals and priorities set forth in the Master Plan. The following implementation matrix matches the various regulatory, capital improvement related, and partnerships/programmatic/promotional goals with the City Commission's Strategic Plan goals and assigns a timeline, responsibility, and a possible funding source. Continuing items should be regularly reviewed on an ongoing basis. Immediate priority items should be



Photo Credit: Pete Mundt

Implementation			
Tasks		Timeline	Responsible Party
Ordinance and Policy Updates			
Execute the 2023 Zoning Audit Work Plan.		Short	CDD, PC, CC
Readopt the Zoning Map.		Long	CDD, CC
Review and update the zoning ordinance to ensure regulations are consistent with the desired development outcomes in each zoning district.		Ongoing	CDD, PC, CC
Create a form based code for Old Village that includes design elements and uses that are consistent with the area plans for that district.		Mid	CDD, PC, CC
Ensure clear definitions and requirements are included in necessary sections of the ordinance.		Short	CDD, PC, CC
Adopt ordinance requirements that prioritize pedestrian activity within and around development.		Mid	CDD, PC, CC
Economic Development			
Focus on retention and growth of existing businesses.		Ongoing	ED, CDD
Take an active role in marketing the city.		Short	ED, CDD
Support and coordinate efforts with regional economic development strategy.		Long	ED, CDD, WC
Promote a welcoming environment for commercial business and industry.		Mid	ED, CDD, PC
Develop an economic development strategy that connects the Master Plan and capital improvements.		Short	ED, CDD
Infrastructure			
Continue to invest in public infrastructure, including streetscape design and public spaces as well as water and sewer systems.		Ongoing	DMS, DDA
Maintain the tree inventory which quantifies the number and monitors the health of trees in public spaces.		Ongoing	DMS
Ensure new trees planted contribute to a diverse tree canopy and will thrive in our climate.		Short	DMS
Create a comprehensive non-motorized plan incorporating public input and technical expertise		Long	CDD, DMS
Housing			
Allow accessory dwelling units in strategic locations.		Short	CDD, PC, CC
Eliminate or reduce minimum dwelling unit size requirement.		Mid	CDD, PC, CC
Keep houses and lots appropriately sized for each neighborhood and increase residential densities in areas where the underlying plat supports it.		Short	CDD, PC, CC
Monitor appropriate home sizing and massing and amend ordinances if necessary.		Ongoing	CDD, PC, CC
Determine the existing and desirable multi-family building types and amend ordinances to allow them.		Short	CDD, PC, CC
Conduct a housing market study and amend the Zoning Ordinance based on findings.		Long	CDD, PC, CC
Redevelopment Ready Communities			
Become a certified Redevelopment Ready Community.		Short	CDD, PC, CC
Encourage the redevelopment of transitional districts or underdeveloped sites.		Mid	ED, CDD
Maintain an opportunities site map that provides development potential information for available sites.		Long	ED, CDD

Implementation		
Tasks	Timeline	Responsible Party
Transportation and Parking		
Continue to invest in pedestrian facilities through the development of a strategic nonmotorized plan. This should include an inventory of pedestrian facilities and a plan for maintenance, enhancement, and extension.	Long	DMS, CDD, CC
Study and improve pedestrian crossings at downtown intersections.	Short	DMS, DDA
Make public sidewalks more inviting by adding sidewalks where gaps exist, eliminating existing sidewalk obstructions, and increasing the width of landscape buffers and street trees in the right-of-way.	Long	DMS, CC
Provide a clear bicycle connection between Ann Arbor Road and Hines Drive through downtown.	Long	DMS, CC
Create a bicycle network that connects neighborhoods with schools, parks, and downtown.	Long	DMS, CC
Strategically place bike racks in downtown and Old Village and monitor their usage.	Mid	DMS, DDA
Build additional midblock crossings. Add RRFB to existing mid-block crossings along busy roads	Long	DMS
Allocate funding to incorporate complete street best practices into street repaving and replacement projects.	Long	DMS, Finance
Review and reduce the required number of parking spaces per dwelling unit or link the parking requirements to the number of bedrooms.	Short	CDD, PC, CC
Adopt commercial parking standards that are based on building square footage, not land uses. Consider payment in lieu of parking in areas outside of Downtown.	Short	CDD, PC, CC
Adopt standards that encourage shared parking access and locates parking behind buildings.	Short	CDD, PC, CC
Connected Community		
Continue to provide information to citizens and the business community using the City's website and listserv.	Ongoing	ED, CDD, CM
Ensure consistency in branding and messaging in the City's online presence, in printed material, city decorations or signs, and any City correspondence	Short	CDD, CM
Create a unifying streetscape that connects South Main to downtown and extends along North Main.	Long	ED, CDD, DMS, CC
Support and coordinate efforts with other city plans.	Ongoing	CDD, Recreation
Training		
Provide city staff and elected and appointed officials opportunities to participate in various trainings.	Short	CDD, DDA

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 all the city's plans to provide proper, long-range planning for activities and improvements.



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 increase by approximately 200 people. Given the current demand for new housing units, specifically higher density developments, this projection seems low.

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 meet 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 since the early 2000s. 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 rental subsidies. The catchment area for this program is approximately a ten mile radius with thirty 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 individuals with disabilities, 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.

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 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 sixteen 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.



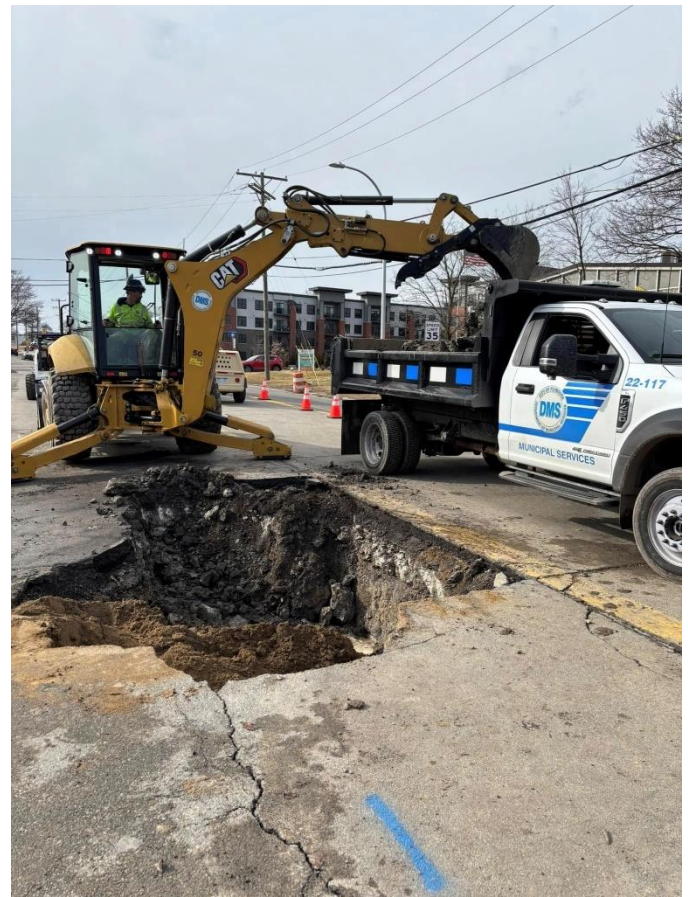
Department of Municipal Services (DMS)

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.

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. 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.



Bolhuis, Greta

From: Scott Lorenz [mailto:scottlorenz@westwind.us.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 12:21 PM
To: Group - Planning Commission
Cc: Group - Commission
Subject: Planning Com: This Master Plan Is a Non-Starter

Dear Planning Commission,
I'm not going to mince words. This proposed Master Plan is a non-starter.

Of particular concern is the idea of converting the floodplain along Tonquish Creek, bookended by the Lutheran Church and the Christian Science Church, into multi-family housing.

(See Map below and FEMA map)

https://msc.fema.gov/arcgis/rest/directories/arcgisjobs/nfhl_print/mscprintb_gpserver/j511aa7ee1be94a6dbd603abdfa3d0a63/scratch/FIRMETTE_2e0c7325-7555-4f7f-a8c7-09e2d55b7c71.pdf

Either Carlisle/Wortman missed that entirely, or this is a calculated move to greenlight another Champion-style development. Have we learned nothing?

People in this town have spoken loud and clear: we don't want multi-family housing jammed into the middle of established residential neighborhoods. The City's own survey backs this up:

- 58% say we already have enough multi-family housing.
- Only 17% want more.
- Most oppose duplexes in single-family zones.

Yet the draft plan still pushes "missing middle" housing, "transition areas," and density creep into R-1 neighborhoods. This opens the door for developers and makes it harder for residents to push back.

Residents rose up and said *NO* to that kind of development in the middle of our neighborhoods. Why is this being ignored?

One more thing, it takes a special kind of nerve or obliviousness to designate property owned and OCCUPIED by the Catholic Church AND the Lutheran Church as Multi-Family.

Wait until THEY find out!

Even if they moved, why would you even think for a moment that putting multifamily housing in a highly desirable single family residential area would be a good idea?

I'm asking you to:

1. Remove any language that allows multi-family housing in R-1 zones.
2. Keep the Christian Science Church, Catholic Church and Lutheran Church property zoned as-is.
3. Respect the overwhelming public input.
4. Slow this process down and engage the community properly before finalizing anything.

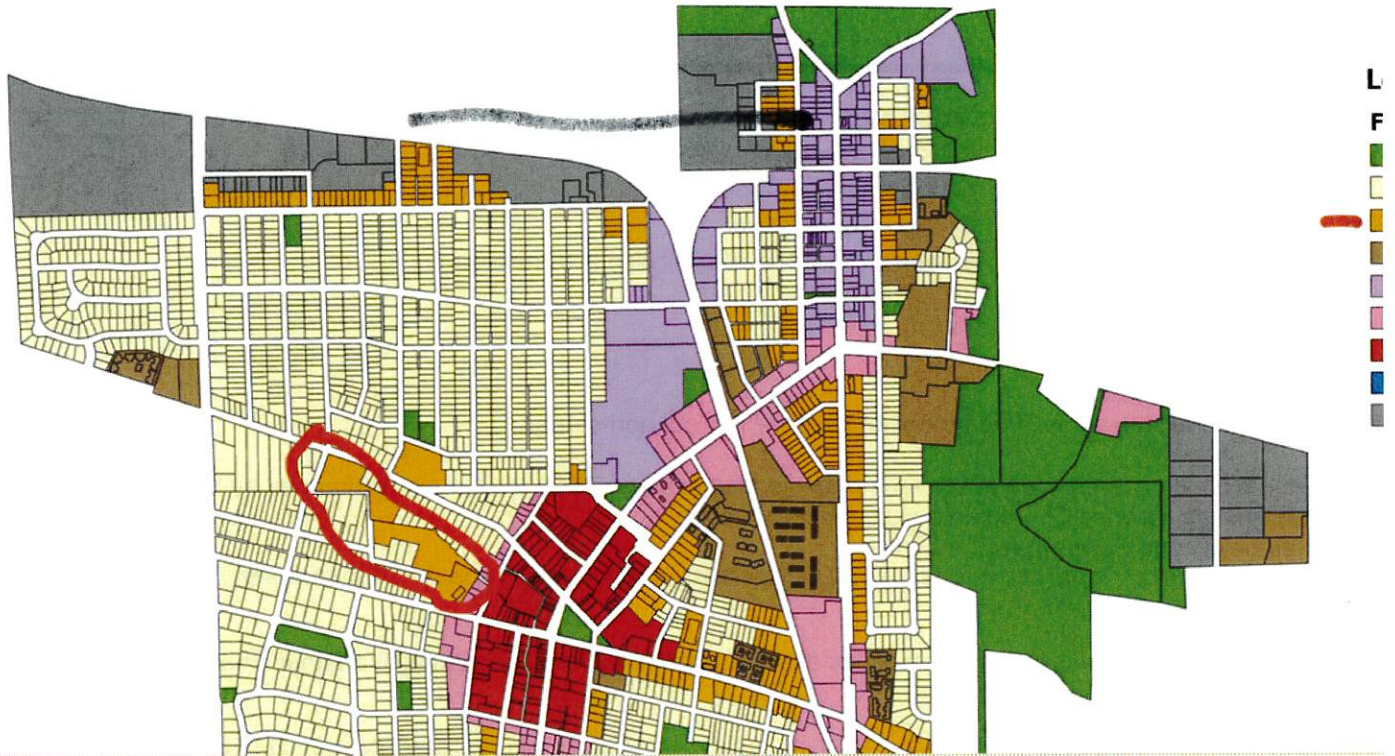
Plymouth's character isn't a problem to solve—it's the reason people live here. Let's protect it.

Remember, it's your job too to [KeepPlymouthCharming.com](https://www.KeepPlymouthCharming.com)

Thank you for your time.

Scott Lorenz
1310 Maple Street
Cell: 705-705-2214

scottlorenz@westwind.us.com



****CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents. **

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Kathryn Dudley [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2025 10:27 AM
To: Group - Planning Commission; Group - Commission
Subject: Request for Revisions to Ensure the Master Plan Reflects Plymouth's Long-Term Vision

Dear Commissioners,

I'm writing as a resident who cares deeply about Plymouth's future and believes our Master Plan should reflect not only growth potential, but also the long-term stability, safety, and quality of life we all value. I know how much time and expertise goes into creating this document, and I appreciate the effort and dedication it represents.

That's why I'm concerned that the current draft includes provisions that seem **at odds with the public feedback** gathered during this process. From the City's own surveys:

- A clear **majority want to preserve** the character and walkability of existing neighborhoods.
- **58% believe Plymouth already has the right amount** of multi-family housing; only 17% want more.
- **Most oppose** introducing duplexes or other high-density housing types into single-family areas.

Despite this, the plan introduces "limited additional density," promotes "missing middle" housing types, and establishes "transition areas" adjacent to R-1 neighborhoods. These terms, while seemingly benign, could make it far easier to justify rezoning requests in the future — potentially impacting property values, traffic flow, and even the environmental resiliency of flood-prone areas.

To better align with both public sentiment and responsible long-term planning, I ask that the Commission:

1. Remove language that enables multi-family encroachment into established R-1 neighborhoods.
2. Preserve the current zoning of the Christian Science Church property and similar parcels.
3. Explicitly prioritize the protection of floodplains and other environmentally sensitive areas.
4. Expand opportunities for meaningful, accessible public input before adoption.

A truly successful Master Plan is one the community feels ownership of — a plan that balances growth with preservation, safeguards property values, and strengthens Plymouth's unique identity for decades to come.

Thank you for your service and for considering these recommendations in the spirit of collaboration and shared vision.

Warm regards,

Kathryn and David Szary

1107 W. Ann Arbor Trail

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Rob [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2025 11:22 AM
To: Group - Planning Commission
Subject: Master plan feedback

Hi Planning Commission,

I know it's a bit late to give master plan feedback, but with all the recent dialog around multifamily zoning I figured I would send this anyway:

I have seen a lot of negative feedback about traffic on Ann Arbor Trail, particularly in the context of the Christian Science site's future land use, but I am deeply concerned about the lack of emphasis on the root cause, which appears to be school traffic for Bird Elementary and West Middle School clogging up Ann Arbor Trail. PCCS does not provide bus service for elementary students who live within a mile of their school (~90% of the city), or 1.5 miles for middle school students (the entire city).

School bus service to kids in the city could dramatically reduce peak-hour traffic on Ann Arbor Trail. Keep in mind that parents create round trip traffic twice per day when they drive kids to school, which is double what you'd see in an office environment, so school buses are a particularly high ROI in terms of reducing traffic.

I understand that you don't control PCCS transportation policy, but you are in a unique position to push the issue by alluding to it in the master plan, and/or passing a resolution urging PCCS to change their bus policy.

This brings me to my second point - the transportation section of the master plan doesn't even mention public transportation. This is another great way to cut traffic if it's done right, and with the upcoming millage, we should make sure our master plan is set up to make the most of our future tax dollars.

Thanks for all you are doing for the city,
Rob Mengel
1293 S Harvey

****CAUTION: This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents.****

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Scott Lorenz [mailto:scott.lorenz@westwindcos.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2025 4:19 PM
To: Group - Planning Commission
Subject: "Zoning Changes Won't Fix Affordability—They'll Undermine Plymouth"

To the Plymouth Planning Commission,
At the meeting last night, it became painfully clear that the Commission continues to push a narrative that simply doesn't hold water. The idea that zoning changes to encourage more multifamily housing will somehow solve affordability issues is not only misguided, it's fundamentally flawed.

Let's be honest: prices are what they are. You're not going to change them at the zoning level. People want to move to Plymouth because it's desirable. That desirability doesn't automatically mean it must be affordable to everyone. We are not obligated to dilute the character of our community to chase a false promise of affordability. I'd love to live in Maui too, but it's not affordable, and no one's out there trying to rezone Maui to make it happen for me. The same logic applies here. Desirable places come with a price tag, and that's not something zoning can, or should, try to manipulate.

What multifamily housing does accomplish is lining developers' pockets. It allows them to profit off the charm and character that current residents have spent decades cultivating. Injecting high-density development into established residential areas is not in the interest of taxpayers. It's not about affordability, it's about exploitation.

And since Commissioner Marni Schroeder seems to dismiss the survey done in 2023 as the "community has changed a lot since then," let's talk about the most recent and most visible one: **the 200 signs with 'STOP the CHAMPION PUD' placed throughout Plymouth, and the hundreds of residents who voiced their opposition to multifamily housing at the Christian Science Church site.** That's the most robust feedback you've received—more than any formal survey or stakeholder meeting you've conducted! If you claim to care about public input, then you need to listen to that.

But you CHOSE to IGNORE this!

Frankly, the Commission's handling of this issue has been ill-prepared, uninformed, and, at times, an embarrassment to the community. Katie Rossi's comments were out of touch, and Schroeder's dismissiveness toward public sentiment is unacceptable. This isn't leadership. It's a disconnect.

While a few commissioners showed genuine courage by listening to the community, the majority missed a critical opportunity to stand with the people they serve. This wasn't just about zoning, it was a chance to affirm trust, respect, and shared values. And for many on the Commission, that chance was lost.

We deserve better. Plymouth deserves better.

Remember, www.KeepPlymouthCharming.com It's YOUR Job TOO!

Scott Lorenz
1310 Maple Street
Cell: 248-705-2214
[mailto:scott.lorenz@westwindcos.com]

****CAUTION: This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents.****

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Tom Doneth <tdoneth@officeinstallations.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 30, 2025 4:20 PM
To: Group - Planning Commission
Subject: Master Plan

Dear planning commissioners, I do not agree with your plan to make all church and school properties multi-family zones. The citizens of Plymouth have made it clear that we do not want this in our master plan. I assuming you know who hired you and how we feel about this plan. Please call with any questions. I reside at 1442 Sheridan Street Plymouth, MI 48170. I have lived in the City of Plymouth for 24 years.

Cheers,

Thomas J. Doneth, President/Founder

Office Installations, Inc.

[REDACTED] 22 E. Executive Drive

[REDACTED] Westland, Michigan 48185

[REDACTED] Cell: 248-670-1688

Corporate Office Michigan- [REDACTED] 34-729-3800 x 100

[REDACTED] tdoneth@officeinstallations.com

[REDACTED] www.officeinstallations.com

SDVOSB



OFFICE
INSTALLATIONS



Schedule

Contract # 47OSMA22D08NZ



Member Best Practice Group



FacilitiesServicesNetwork

Visit us at: www.facilitieservicesnet.com

****CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents. **

Bolhuis, Greta

From: SUSIE PATROSSO [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, August 30, 2025 10:30 PM
To: Group - Commission; Group - Planning Commission
Subject: Master Plan

This is getting ridiculous! I have never been so disappointed in our leadership in Plymouth! It appears that only greed is important to our city commission and planning commission. Do you not care about your Plymouth residents? About the charm of our quaint city? The Master Plan is a disgrace and pushing it down our throats in such a despicable manner is disgusting! I can only hope that the truth comes out before the election and people realize who are behind this!

Karen Patrosso

1456 W. Ann Arbor Trail

Sent from my iPhone

****CAUTION:**This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents.**

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Patty Jamison <innishca@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2025 12:04 PM
To: Group - Commission; Group - Planning Commission; Sincock, Paul
Subject: Master Plan - High Density, Groundhog Day & Respectful Decorum

Good afternoon to all on this Labor Day weekend -

Paul, first & foremost thank you for your years of service to Plymouth - may your retirement be as rewarding as your career - CHEERS to both you and Traci, the second act is about to begin!

RE: Master Plan - Proposed High Density

I am not in support of the most recent Master Plan changes specific to density allowances, changing school parcels and churches from R-1 to R-2.

RE: Groundhog Day

The majority of time working with City Commissioners and Planning Commissioners feels as if residents are trapped in monotonous, repetitive and unchangeable cycle.

RE: Respectful Decorum

I hope and pray our City Administration could conduct a HR review as it pertains to respect for others and residents is a priority, it has become at times uncomfortable and unsettling at city and planning commission meetings as to some of the recent interactions between commissioners, in the city since 1982, this only can be described as a cultural shift in respectful decorum, and sadly has bled over to verbal and written communication with residents from city officials.

September is a new month!

Thank you for your time -
Regards,
Patty Jamison
255 North Harvey
Plymouth, MI 48170

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Cara Polak [mailto:look2inside@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, September 1, 2025 10:05 AM
To: Group - Planning Commission
Cc: Group - Commission
Subject: STOP: Remove New Density Allowances from City Master Plan

To the Members of the Plymouth Planning Commission:

To our dismay, we have learned that there are those who seem to have lost their caring for our beautiful city. It appears that they have been working with developers in making decisions for our City's future without our residents' knowledge or consent. Please STOP this subterfuge immediately!

We ask that you immediately remove the planned density allowances of the following parcels from the Master Plan...and keep the churches and school parcels zoned as R-1 until the community is effectively engaged regarding the topic of density.

- Christian Science Church - 1100 W. Ann Arbor Trail
- St Peter's Lutheran Church - 1343 Penniman
- Our Lady of Good Counsel School - 1160 Penniman
- Smith Elementary School - 1298 McKinley Street
- East Middle School - 639 S. Mill

The Plymouth Master Plan is supposed to be based on the *community's* long-term vision, and we, the members of this community, have not been given the opportunity to discuss this--nor provide our input on what density we would like or should have in the future.

It does not speak highly of the integrity of those who would take steps that could adversely affect the current residents. Why is it felt that Plymouth's current residents should no longer have a stake or a say in what happens to our community?

As 37-year residents of this fair city, we ask that our email be included in the agenda of the Planning Commission Meeting when the topic is on the agenda so that it can be documented as part of the public record.

Thank you,

Joe & Cara Polak
636 Herald Street

****CAUTION: This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents.****

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Darlene Carrier [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2025 7:41 PM
To: Group - Planning Commission
Subject: Keep Plymouth beautiful by a non-density change

I am opposed to the recent density changes for OLGC, East Middle school, Christian Science, St Peter Lutheran. Please keep these parcels rated as R-1.
(At the very least offer Plymouth residents the option of a fair vote!!)

Darlene Carrier
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

****CAUTION:**This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents. ******

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Greg Jamison [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 7:06 AM
To: Group - Planning Commission; Group - Commission
Subject: 1: City master plan being proposed. 2: growing rat infestation.

1: I am concerned about the standards of units per acre and building heights is changing our neighborhoods and doesn't fit our city. A Survey of residents demonstrates almost the entire population is opposed to changing the zoning from single family to multi family and tall buildings. The planning committee and city commissioners need to get on board with the people they represent. I'm also concerned because I have repeatedly seen both committee's seemingly ignore we the people.... again.

2: On another subject is the recent appearance of rats growing in our neighborhood. I understand the city's stand is that the City can't do anything so we citizens have to take care of it ourselves. I've lived here 43 years without rats and pay too much in taxes while rats live free now. Incidentally other nearby cities have addressed rats so it's possible for our city.

Sent from my iPhone

****CAUTION:**This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents.** _____

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Sheri [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 8:24 AM
To: Group - Planning Commission; Group - Commission
Subject: Master Plan commentary

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

I recently learned that the latest revision of the Master Plan proposes changing several parcels of land from single-family to significantly higher-density zoning. Notably, schools and churches currently zoned as single-family residential are being considered for multi-family, four-story developments. This represents a substantial shift that could dramatically alter the character of the surrounding neighborhoods and increase traffic congestion.

Given the scale of these changes, it seems essential that the community be more involved in the decision-making process. Mill Street already struggles with traffic during peak hours, and parking is challenging even at current density levels. Additionally, I'm concerned about the environmental impact—more concrete and less green space could worsen flooding, which Plymouth already experiences during heavy rain events.

I also reviewed the April 7 Master Plan document and noticed that the resident survey results do not appear to support the proposed higher-density zoning. This discrepancy raises further questions about whether the plan reflects the community's priorities.

In short, I urge the Commission to allow for more public discussion and input before approving any changes to the Master Plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sheryl Petras

361 E. Spring St.

****CAUTION: This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents.****

Bolhuis, Greta

From: •Lou Mika [mailto:lou.mika@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 6:30 PM
To: Group - Commission; Group - Planning Commission
Subject: Master Plan opposition

Remove the density allowances from the Master Plan and keep the churches and school parcels zoned as R-1. Density is fast becoming a detriment to Plymouth, especially with the many train crossing blockages already adding to the problem. We are a small town experiencing growing pains that are threatening the ambience that makes our city unique. Currently we are the envy of many surrounding communities; the Master Plan – as it stands with 3-4 story structures and increased density – will compromise our much loved identity.

Louis Mika
Mika & Associates

--

****CAUTION: This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents.****

Bolhuis, Greta

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 3, 2025 7:48 PM
To: Group - Planning Commission
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Master Plan
Attachments: image001.emz

Hello Everyone,

I would like to cover three items related to the Master Plan.

1. Suggested Edit for Page 2

I noted that the latest version of the plan included in the August agenda reflected some of the suggestions I shared in my July 31, 2025, email. Those changes are a step in the right direction; however, page 2 remains problematic. Attached is a graphic outlining two concerns and a recommended edit. This edit would clarify the Master Plan's purpose and prevent it from being misused to justify rezonings or PUDs before zoning ordinances are updated. As correctly stated on page 10, the purpose of the Master Plan is to "guide future zoning ordinance updates to achieve the goals of this document." That intent should be reflected consistently throughout the document.

The Master Plan identifies goals for Plymouth's future to express long-term expectations and addresses the fundamental issues that the city expects to face in the future. By using the Master Plan as a guide, city boards and departments can coordinate land use planning activities towards outcomes that best fit with the long range goals outlined by the Master Plan.

The Master Plan consists of two main components: text and map. The text of the Plan should be consulted for a description of policies that apply to specific areas or features. The Future Land Use Map is intended to illustrate the desired locations of certain land uses in the community. Other maps are included throughout the Plan to provide additional details not mentioned in the text. If there is inconsistency between the text of the Plan and the map, the text will control city policy.

Under the Michigan Planning Act (Act 33 of the Public Act of 2008), communities are required to review their Master Plan every five years and update it if needed. Plymouth's previous Master Plan was most recently amended in 2018. The 2018 adoption fully replaced the 2011 Master Plan which had been updated in 2009. The 2009 version fully replaced the previous Master Plan adopted in 1996.

Connection between Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance

The Master Plan is a long-term policy document that provides guidance for community development over a period of 5 to 20 years. The plan is based on community input and outlines goals and objectives related to areas such as economic development, housing,

transportation, and infrastructure. ~~While not a law itself, the~~ The Master Plan must be reviewed every five years as required by state law and serves as a foundation for future planning. ~~The Master Plan is not intended or expected to serve as law.~~

The Future Land Use Plan, a visual component of the Master Plan, maps out potential land use categories and details the types of uses, densities, and design standards that may be considered for zoning changes. It serves as a framework for future development; ~~and shows possibilities, not guaranteed changes with changes requiring community input.~~

In contrast, the Zoning Ordinance is a legal document that regulates land use in the present. It dictates specifics such as building size, form, placement, and parking requirements, and must comply with federal, state, and case law. The Zoning Ordinance implements the Master Plan and is legally enforceable. Similarly, the Zoning Map is a legal document that identifies zoning districts and outlines what types of land uses and buildings are permitted. It is also enforceable by law and can only be changed through a formal rezoning process, which includes public hearings and approval from the Planning Commission and City Commission.

Who Creates and Maintains the Plan?

The City of Plymouth Planning Commission is the primary agency responsible for the preparation and final approval of the Master Plan. Supported by staff and consultants, it is the role of the Planning Commission to develop a land use plan and support its implementation.

The Master Plan is a document that must be embraced by the City of Plymouth leaders.

This paragraph continues to be problematic. The term "possibilities" will allow developers to argue that the Master Plan implicitly supports a proposed zoning change or PUD simply because Future Land Use Map shows a category that would allow such development. The statement "It serves as a framework for future development and shows possibilities, not guaranteed changes" is misleading. It is not a framework for future development.

Recommended Edit:

The Future Land Use Plan, a visual component of the Master Plan, maps out potential land use categories and details the types of uses, densities, and design standards that may be considered for future zoning ordinance changes. These land use categories are not regulatory, do not override existing zoning, and may not be used as a basis for approving rezonings, variances, or Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) until formally adopted through the public zoning ordinance amendment process."

2. Surveys

At your August meeting, the question of the age of the surveys came up. It appeared that some of the newer commissioners may not have been aware of the surveys conducted at the two Master Plan engagement sessions in 2024. Currently, these surveys can only be found within the agenda packet for the June 12, 2024, Planning Commission Meeting.

I believe these surveys should be posted on the city website with the other City Surveys on these pages:

<https://www.plymouthmi.gov/cms/one.aspx?portalId=12421732&pageId=20294769>
<https://www.plymouthmi.gov/cms/one.aspx?portalId=12421732&pageId=20231726>

I would also like to see them included in the Planning Commission Meeting agenda when the Master Plan is discussed again.

3. Density

I recommend removing specific density numbers from the Master Plan at this time. While we've asked questions about multi-family housing, building character, size, height, and mass, the community has never had a real opportunity to consider or voice opinions on density. This was a key concern during the Champion PUD, and residents are now aware and paying closer attention.

I agree we need a better way to measure density. The Planning Commission should engage and educate the community so that residents can help determine the appropriate densities, building types, and locations for Plymouth.

The Master Plan can be updated at any time. From experience, zoning changes are challenging because they directly affect property owners. Since the 2018 Master Plan, the only change related to the Future Land Use Plan we were able to achieved was creating the Parks and Open Space District in 2020. If we want a real chance to implement the ideas in this new plan, we must bring the community along.

By taking out specific density numbers now, we can invite the community into the discussion, build consensus, and increase the likelihood of successfully updating zoning ordinances in the future. The community should be part of the solution, not the problem.

If any of you have questions or would like to discuss don't hesitate to call or email me.

Have a Great Day!

Karen Sisolak
939 Penniman Avenue
Plymouth MI

****CAUTION: This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents.****

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Steven Gamache [mailto:steven@gamache@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 4, 2025 8:46 AM
To: Group - Planning Commission; Group - Commission
Subject: 2025 Master Plan

I'd like to comment on the 2025 Master Plan proposal.

I'm against the changes from R1 to multi family for the churches and school properties. I don't think this would be in the best interest of these neighborhoods.

Regarding the change for Old Village from 2 to 3 story buildings; I'm in favor of this proposed change. I think the main corridors of Old Village could tolerate the additional story without it looking out of place and destroying the unique character of Old Village.

Thank for allowing me to comment

Steve Gamache

1351 Linden St, Plymouth, MI 48170

****CAUTION: This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents.****

Bolhuis, Greta

From: Matt Holmes [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 4, 2025 4:31 PM
To: Group - Planning Commission; Group - Commission
Subject: Master Plan

Hello City and Planning Commissioners.

We are writing today as we have just become aware of some details in the City Master Plan.

The plan proposes allowing 3 story buildings in Old Village - mixed use area.

We are not for this proposal and ask for that particular language to be removed from the Master Plan.

Given that there are already so many "issues" with zoning and parking for each and every new business that opens in Old Village it doesn't make sense to approve something like this now in a Master Plan.

We've been to enough meetings to know that citizens and commissioners agree that so many of these old zoning regulations need to be reviewed and revamped moving forward. So again, not the time to just add language that could not only add to some of these issues but also change the whole look and feel of The Village.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kristi and Matt Holmes

633 Starkweather

Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer

****CAUTION: This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents.****

Bolhuis, Greta

From: mailforheather (null) [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 4, 2025 4:42 PM
To: Group - Planning Commission
Subject: Master Plan/Mixed Use

Planning Commission:

I am the owner of three properties in Old Village.

It seems like every time I turn around there is an attempt by the city to develop (destroy) Old Village.

When my home was purchased in 1996, there was a plan to establish a historic district here that would protect the historic in Historic Old Village. Didn't happen.

Then there was an Old Village Development Authority. When that wasn't going the way the city intended, it was quickly shut down.

The last time the Master Plan was worked on, it initially called for changing the main corridor to local business (including my and all my neighbors' homes). My family and I put a lot of volunteer time into researching and meeting with some on the board to keep the main corridor mixed use - to maintain the culture of Old Village for residents AND businesses.

NOW the Mixed Use designation would allow three story buildings? That would completely destroy Old Village. Would you want a three story development next to your single family home? Next to a house that is converted into apartments? Next to a business in a converted historic building? Randomly placed throughout the neighborhood?

Mixed Use was adopted here to preserve the unique character of Old Village. Allowing three story buildings would be a gross misuse of the zoning with the unintended consequence of destroying the character and aesthetic of this charming up-and-coming area of Plymouth.

Heather Doughty

Sent from my iPhone

****CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of your organization. Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments. Contact the sender by phone to validate the contents. **