

A VISION FOR GROWTH AND CONSERVATION IN

THE VILLAGE OF BERRIEN SPRINGS

&

ORONOKO CHARTER TOWNSHIP MICHIGAN



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Berrien Springs, MI

The Village of Berrien Springs and Oronoko Charter Township are two political jurisdictions within one rural community in the heart of Berrien County - the most southwestern county of Michigan. Located about twelve miles from Lake Michigan, they are set in a thriving agricultural area within the Saint Joseph River valley. This diverse community also hosts Andrews University, a Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher learning. Together, the village, the township, and the university draw people from throughout Michigan, Indiana, Chicago, and from around the world.

A VISION FOR GROWTH AND CONSERVATION IN

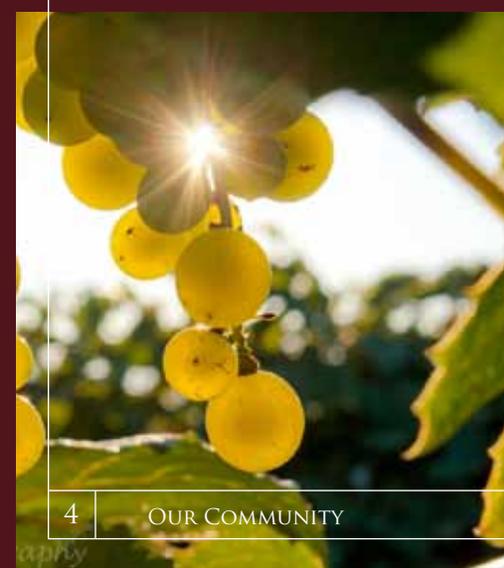
THE VILLAGE OF BERRIEN SPRINGS

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ORONOKO CHARTER TOWNSHIP MICHIGAN



This document was prepared for the citizens of Berrien Springs and Oronoko Charter Township to inform public debate and policy decisions about opportunities for growth and conservation. The proposals within this document were self-initiated and unsolicited, but are intended to illustrate useful advice and long-term possibilities for actual implementation. They were collaboratively prepared in 2011 by twenty-six Andrews University graduate students and their three professors, who proudly live and practice within the local community.



About this Work

Illustrating Opportunities for Growth and Conservation

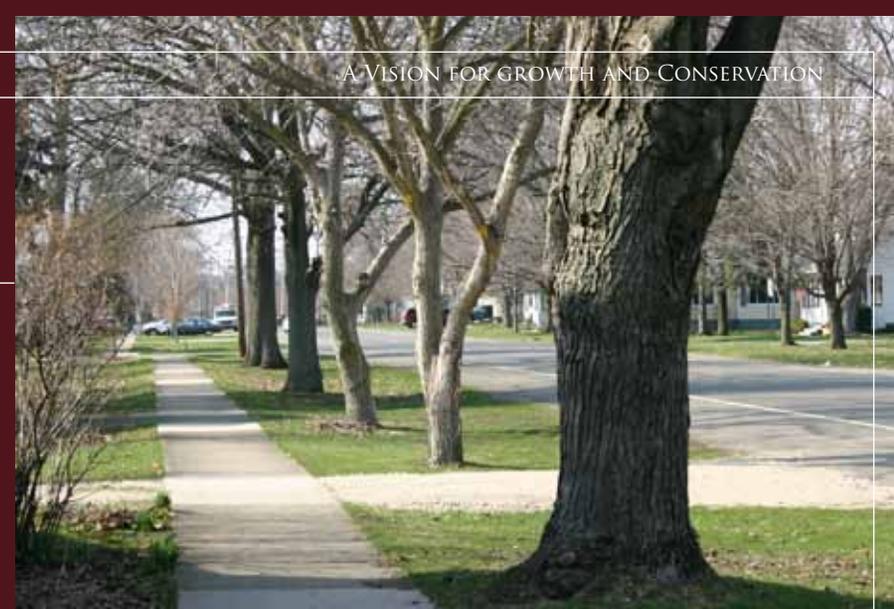
The diverse community of Berrien Springs and Oronoko Township values hard work, strong relationships, natural beauty, and faithful stewardship of resources. Much has been achieved since the village was platted in 1831, and local citizens are preparing an inheritance for future generations.

This place is blessed with fine historic courthouse grounds, a functioning downtown, productive businesses, diverse neighborhoods for raising families, excellent parks, a proud selection of good schools, one of the Midwest's most significant youth fair grounds, an internationally renown denominational university, a river with world-class fishing, and a spectacular agricultural landscape with thriving farms. Already, planning is underway to build one of the region's most significant event arenas, and the continuing growth of Andrews University has brought a highly reputable performing arts center. Its central location within Berrien County is conveniently accessed by US-31, M-139, and a university airpark. This is a good place, and homegrown pride is evident at Shamrocks games, award-winning youth fair exhibitions, and graduation ceremonies. All of these good things should be conserved.

But as in most rural communities, the population is aging as younger people leave to find work elsewhere. Some properties are becoming difficult to maintain, and those with means are choosing to live elsewhere and commute. Economic development has slowed together with the nation, and the community has yet to attract certain businesses to adequately serve fair and university events. The investment in the US-31 bypass has hardly been leveraged for new local employment or other opportunities. The economic benefits of tourism have been limited, despite a nearby tourist market that thrives on the proximity to Chicago, Lake Michigan, and an authentic agricultural landscape. Despite state investment in M-139, new business along it has been limited and much of the road remains dangerous for young and old pedestrians. As the population slowly declines the costs of maintaining amenities, public institutions, and infrastructure are likely to increase. The community must grow in some way if it is to have a prosperous future.

The voters' past disagreements about future wastewater service crystallize at least one of the challenges that come with growth and conservation issues. There have and will continue to be good reasons to support and to oppose an expanded sewer system in the community - this document intends not to take sides on this issue. But one lesson that can be taken from past debates is that there is no tangible vision for what type of growth should occur and what type of place should be conserved. Of course, most of us have an image in our minds, and both Berrien Springs and Oronoko Township have carefully crafted masterplans describing community values and outlining strategic goals. But a tangible vision is made complete through illustration, by describing form and content, by understanding appearance and character, by visually showing how things might work.

This document does not pretend to illustrate the vision or consensus of our community. The proposals herein are just that - proposals that have been shaped without solicitation or broad public input. But this document does seek to illustrate, with care and confidence, what kinds of growth and conservation opportunities might be available. Skeptics might question this as mere academic theory. But sometimes a picture can speak a thousand words about previously unrecognized opportunities for well-being, restoration and prosperity.



VILLAGE OF BERRIEN SPRINGS

THE MASTERPLAN, ZONING, AND COMMUNITY INTENTIONS

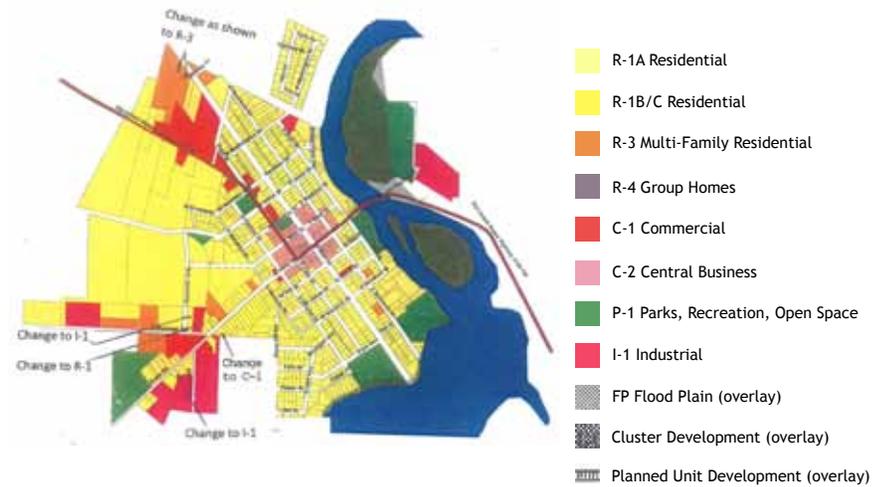
The proposals within this document seek to build upon the existing land use policies of Berrien Springs (pop. 1,800 on 0.9 square miles), particularly the masterplan and the zoning ordinance.

A masterplan is a general and comprehensive document that summarizes relevant data and information, records community priorities and values, outlines strategic goals, and describes planning processes appropriate for local development. Its Future Land Use Map illustrates intended local land use in the long term. The Berrien Springs masterplan (updated 2007) describes important community goals that the proposals in this document seek to address. This includes the preservation of a 19th century character, the complimentary development of available property, the revitalization of downtown, continued recreational development, a diversity of quality homes, and attracting more tourism to the area.

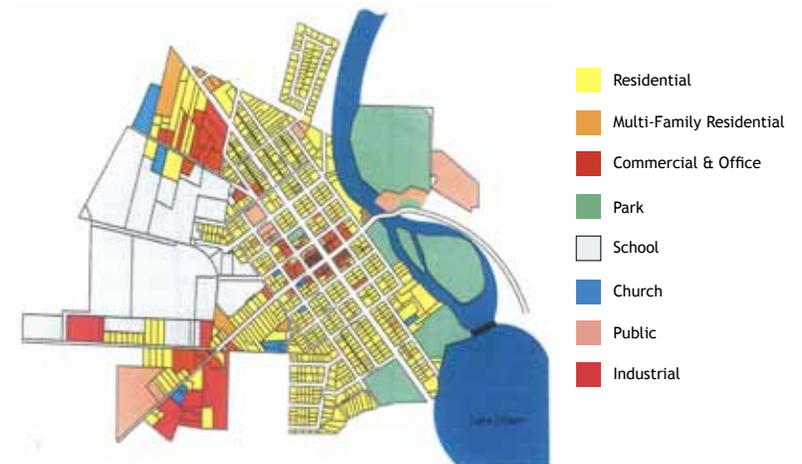
A zoning ordinance regulates land by stating local laws. Conventionally, land is zoned according to one or more uses and specific entitlements and restrictions apply to each zone, as shown on the Zoning Map. The Berrien Springs zoning ordinance (updated 2007), zones most land for village-density residential use, with some set aside for businesses, parks, and multi-family housing. The most significant differences visible in the Future Land Use Map are changes in designation to reflect existing conditions more accurately, mostly on school, church, and village property. The otherwise similar maps suggest that the future of Berrien Springs is intended to be one of relative stability and careful maturation rather than radical change. The design and planning team sought to honor this intention, albeit with a recognition that a land-locked and fully developed village can only grow from within.

This document includes proposals for three selected study areas in Berrien Springs (see p. 8), each representing a different context of zoning, existing development, and opportunities for growth and conservation. The first proposal focuses on the historic central business area (C-2). The second proposal looks at the historic Cass Street corridor (mixed zoning, including R-1 residential, commercial, and public). Finally, the third proposal studies the commercial area west of Kephart Lane (C-1).

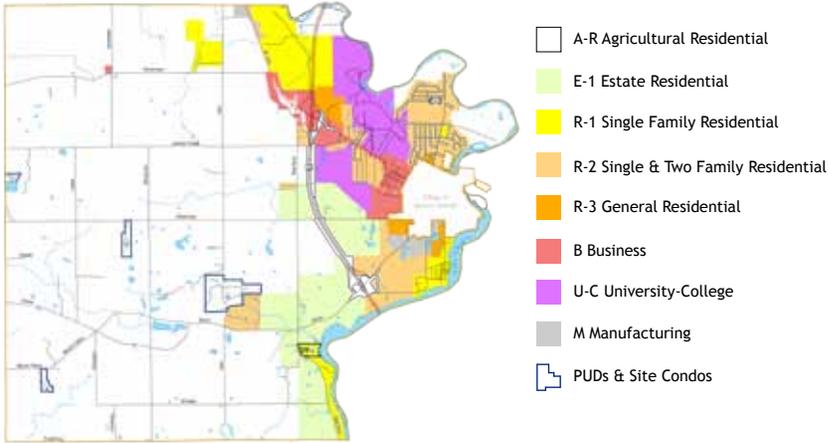
ZONING MAP



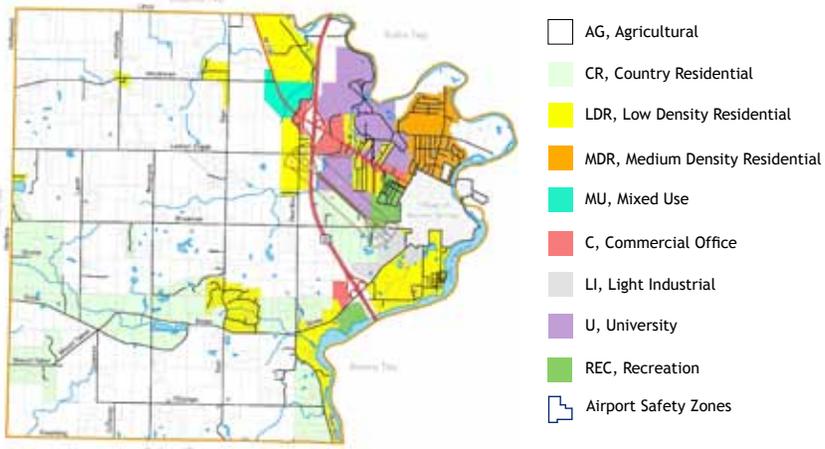
FUTURE LAND USE MAP



ZONING MAP



FUTURE LAND USE MAP



The proposals within this document also seek to build upon the existing land use policies of Oronoko Charter Township (pop. 9,193 on 33 square miles), including its masterplan and zoning ordinance. The Oronoko Charter Township masterplan (adopted 2010) describes important community goals that the proposals in this document seek to address. This includes the preservation of productive farmland and recognition of agriculture’s underlying significance. Other goals include the conservation of natural lands, the protection of water quality, quality parks, the promotion of agricultural tourism, and the cultivation of productive relationships with Berrien Springs and Andrews University. This emphasis on conservation is evident in the Zoning Map and directly informs masterplan goals regarding new development, which is intended to include housing, commerce, and meaningful employment opportunities. New development is to be environmentally sustainable, walkable and pedestrian-oriented, include a diversity of housing opportunities, and be well connected to natural lands, employment centers, and commercial activity.

Much of this future development along M-139 depends on the provision of public water and wastewater services, which the masterplan identifies as a long-term goal. With this in mind, the Future Land Use Map suggests specific areas for this type of development, especially near the US-31 bypass. The zoning ordinance (adopted 2011) supports these intentions in general, although the details of the entitlements and restrictions may not necessarily deliver the intended physical form of walkable, mixed-use development.

This document includes proposals for three selected study areas along M-139 in Oronoko Charter Township (see p. 8), each representing a different context of zoning, existing development, and opportunities for growth and conservation. The first proposal focuses on the area surrounding Apple Valley Market, opposite the fair grounds (B). The second proposal looks at the area east of the US-31 bypass (B and R-3). Finally, the third proposal studies the area west of the US-31 bypass and surrounding the Kerlikowske Farm (B, R-1, and A-R).

THE MASTERPLAN, ZONING, AND COMMUNITY INTENTIONS

ORONOKO CHARTER TOWNSHIP



The dashed white circles represent 1/4 mile radii - about the distance covered by a five-minute walk.

ORONOKO CHARTER TOWNSHIP

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

LEMON CREEK

M-139/OLD US-31

BERRIEN COUNTY YOUTH FAIR

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY AIRPARK

VILLAGE OF BERRIEN SPRINGS

SAINT JOSEPH RIVER

KEPHART LANE

FERRY STREET

RED BUD TRAIL

US-31/ST. JOSEPH VALLEY PKWY.



1.

MARKET SQUARE

This central business area of Berrien Springs was selected to illustrate growth and conservation opportunities that exist within the community's historic downtown. The study area includes the area around Ferry Street, the bridge, and Harding's Market.

2.

CASS STREET

This corridor in Berrien Springs was selected to illustrate growth and conservation opportunities that exist within the heart of a historic neighborhood. The study area runs from Memorial Park, past the courthouse and the library, to Saint Joseph Avenue.

3.

SHAMROCK CROSSING

This active Berrien Springs area was selected to illustrate growth and conservation opportunities that exist in automobile-oriented commercial areas. The study area includes the area around the Phillips 66 gas station opposite the football field.

4.

APPLE VALLEY PLAZA

This Oronoko Township site was selected to illustrate growth and conservation opportunities that exist in strip commercial areas. The study area includes the area around Apple Valley Market, adjacent to Andrews University and the fair grounds.

5.

LEMON CREEK CENTER

This largely undeveloped site in Oronoko Township was selected to illustrate growth and conservation opportunities adjacent to the bypass. The study area roughly surrounds the Andrews Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church and Cooper Chevrolet.

6.

RED BUD VILLAGE

This area in Oronoko Township was selected to illustrate growth and conservation opportunities that exist in agricultural areas. The study area west of US-31 roughly corresponds to the area intended for "Mixed Use" by the 2010 Future Land Use Plan.

1. CONSERVING NATURAL & AGRICULTURAL LANDS



Local citizens in Berrien Springs and Oronoko Township value the preservation of natural places and farmlands, which are foundations to a complete and prosperous rural culture. Economically, this supports thriving farms and agriculture-based tourism. Socially, this cultivates community cooperation and raising families in tune with nature. Environmentally, land stewardship helps to protect wildlife habitat and water quality. New development is often a concern because of its potential to harm rural culture. The Township’s masterplan recognizes this challenge and has identified specific areas to contain development. Also, Township and Village policies generally promote compact development patterns that help to conserve land. This document intends to reaffirm such conservation efforts and seeks to meaningfully connect residents and the economy to the rural landscape and culture.

2. A STRONG TOWN WITH A SENSE OF PLACE



Strong towns are viable places, both in the near and long-term. Viability requires courageous leadership, near-term fiscal solvency, as well as the ability to cover long-term financial commitments. It demands a diversity of age groups that can grow the local population, and it requires a vibrant economic diversity that can keep local business thriving. Such places build infrastructure and amenities to cultivate private sector investments that can sustain their maintenance without harmful taxation. They build for meaningful employment, for raising children, and for growing old. They build to enable genuine public life, every day. Growth and conservation efforts should cultivate a strong and beautiful sense of place unique to Berrien Springs and Oronoko Township, especially to promote a tourism economy, attract new residents, and to draw businesses to local community advantages.

3. MAKING THE MOST WITH WHAT WE HAVE



Stewardship of local resources demands a careful consideration of what is available and what has already been invested. Existing infrastructure can be used more efficiently before new infrastructure is added. In developed areas, vacant and marginally used land can be considered as growth opportunities. In light of long-term maintenance commitments and a declining population, especially in land-locked Berrien Springs, open and underutilized properties can be promoted for infill development. Careful taxation, zoning, and leadership can encourage restoration and new construction such areas. In Oronoko Township, parking lots and areas unsuitable for farming can be retrofitted for thriving neighborhoods and business activity. If new infrastructure is proposed, private sector investment should conserve rural lands and be sufficient to warrant the public’s investment.

4. FLEXIBLE PLACES FOR DIVERSE CHOICES



From its origins as a ferry stop to its days as county seat, from its agricultural roots to the arrival of Andrews University, this place has prospered with changing circumstances. Buildings and infrastructure can be made more flexible for changing market conditions, and zoning can play a significant role in promoting flexibility over single use environments. Flexible buildings, streets, and neighborhoods promote diverse opportunities for retail, offices, trades, and light industrial businesses. They can also accommodate residents and visitors, young and old, students and families, diverse incomes and cultures. But flexibility does not mean that every place is anyplace. Flexible places provide distinct choices: rural homes and village neighborhoods, homes with large yards and with small yards, opportunities to drive and to walk, places to sell and places to produce, spaces for public and private life.

5. BUILDING WALKABLE PLACES



Walkability is increasingly seen as foundational to human health, daily community interaction, environmental conservation, and long-term fiscal sustainability. The Village of Berrien Springs is already designed for walking, which is especially evident on public holidays. But decades of auto-centric development have discouraged walking here and in the developed parts of Oronoko Township. Truly walkable places are comfortable, convenient, and safe for pedestrians of all ages. Walkability promotes tourism because genuinely walkable places tend to be vibrant and attractive destinations. Home-buyers seek neighborhoods where children can safely walk to school, adults can conveniently walk to work or the store, and where walking is a joy. Significantly, walkability can reduce the scale of costly infrastructure. The goal is not for everyone to walk, but to add value by offering walking as a pleasant and safe choice.

6. PROMOTING HEALTH & WELLNESS



Rural life in Berrien Springs and Oronoko Township offers a rare opportunity for healthy life choices within a thriving natural and agricultural landscape. Care should be taken to protect this environment, its beauty, and its watershed, partly because they are foundational to a thriving tourism economy. Walkability is an important part of health and wellness, not only because it encourages daily exercise and an outdoor lifestyle, but also because it can help to make streets safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Pedestrian access to natural and agricultural lands from developed areas can promote healthy activity and a strengthened community relationship to local farming. Places set aside for community farmers markets can encourage social interaction and a healthy diet based on locally grown foods. Places set aside for rest, recreation, and worship help to shape a complete life of health and wellness.

PLACES THAT WORK AND ARE LOVED

PRINCIPLES FOR PLANNING AND BUILDING COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITIES ARE WHOLE ENTITIES

The physical elements of a community are part of a larger whole: a rural landscape, a neighborhood, a village. To consider these elements as somehow physically unrelated is to misunderstand what helps communities thrive and sustain themselves. Our modern planning concept of land-use segregation, which has its origins in European social engineering experiments, is not serving us well. The elements of community are increasingly disconnected from each other, demanding an ever-expansive and costly infrastructure to sustain them. Meanwhile, the spaces between buildings are increasingly neglected and lose their power to add lasting value to communities.

Most development should be either rural in nature or part of a walkable neighborhood structure. Development that is neither demands extensive infrastructure and makes little place for nature, agriculture, or public life. Such areas attract no tourism and don't provide competitive settings for vibrant locally-owned commerce. Thinking holistically about development means thinking about street design, complimentary land uses, and building design at the same time. It means thinking about how to meaningfully enable a broad range of community elements within walking distance while protecting freedom of choice and quality of life. What follows is an introduction to some of the fundamental principles that guided the design proposals within this document.

T1 - NATURAL ZONE

The Natural Zone is set aside to protect natural lands from development. Its purpose is to offer sanctuary for wildlife, native species habitat, and important wetlands. This includes public parks and nature preserves. Infrastructure here is minimal.



T2 - RURAL ZONE

The Rural Zone is reserved primarily for agriculture and its related human activities. This includes working farms, rural places for agricultural tourism, country homes, and country stores. Infrastructure here includes country roads but limited services.



T3 - SUB-URBAN ZONE

The Sub-urban Zone is typically found at neighborhood edges and is primarily residential, but with limited opportunities for other uses. Density is lower and is defined by generous landscaping. Infrastructure here is walkable, albeit for limited purposes.



T4 - GENERAL URBAN ZONE

The General Urban Zone is home to much of the neighborhood fabric, including a mixed distribution of single family and multi-family homes, appropriate commercial opportunities, and civic institutions. The infrastructure here is considerably walkable.



1. Neighborhoods are Sized to be Walkable.

Typically, this means that one can walk from the center to the edge within five minutes (about 1/4 mile). The Berrien Springs neighborhoods south and north of Ferry St correspond to this size.

2. Neighborhoods have an Integrated Network of Walkable Streets

Walkable streets accommodate vehicles and pedestrians safely, comfortably, and conveniently. Interconnected blocks are sized to offer many routes for pedestrians and vehicles, dispersing traffic.

3. Neighborhoods accommodate a Mix of Land Uses

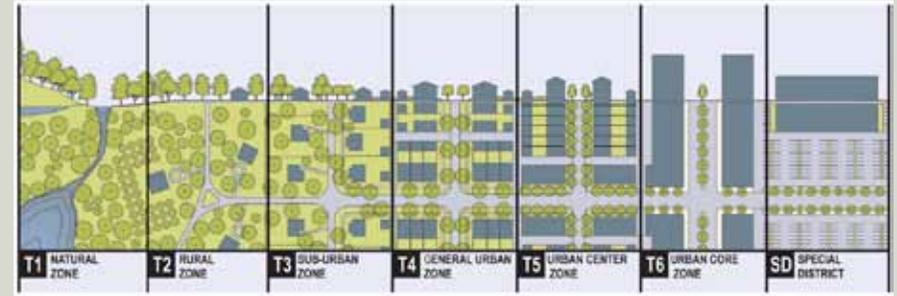
A broad range of uses, including residential, commercial, sacred, and recreational, have a place in neighborhoods. This means that their arrangement and design must be complimentary to each other.

4. Neighborhoods reserve Special Sites for Special Buildings

Special buildings of a shared significance, such as civic buildings and churches, deserve special placement within the neighborhood. This reaffirms the order of community and shapes memorable places.

5. Neighborhoods have Identifiable Centers and Edges

Distinct centers reaffirm community identity, promote vibrant commerce, and improve transportation efficiency. Edges preserve identity, order, and the natural and agricultural lands beyond.



THE RURAL-TO-URBAN TRANSECT

The Rural-to-Urban Transect is a theoretical framework and was developed as an alternative to the predominant planning and zoning model that emphasizes the segregation of land uses. Discovered by Andrés Duany in the 1990s and inspired by the order of ecological habitats, Transect-based zoning has become one of the principal alternative methods by which to organize human settlement patterns (See appendix for more resources). Even if not used as an actual tool for zoning, Transect theory can still help to make choices about how to develop and build coherent environments.

The Rural-to-Urban Transect arranges all elements of nature and urbanism along an inter-dependent continuum of complete and distinct environments. Every type of street, building, lot, landscape, and arrangement has a place within the Transect, but every Transect zone accommodates a range of uses. This helps us to identify what kinds of complimentary designs are appropriate where without segregating the elements of community.

Communities can use the Transect to develop Form-based Codes instead of conventional zoning. Such a code would prioritize the quality of the public realm but give much more flexibility to property owners in terms of use and density. Transect-based codes can therefore yield a relatively predictable outcome as a whole, even though the private sector enjoys increased choices and entitlements.

The images on the left illustrate typical examples of Transect zones in Michigan. The Transect in Berrien Springs/Oronoko Township includes T1 through T5 (T6 is and would not be present here). Elements that are not part of neighborhoods (airports, factories) are placed in Special Districts (SD). In contrast to the current model of segregation and automobile-dependence, a Transect-based approach to planning and zoning would offer true choices for development, dwelling, and commerce.

T5 - URBAN CENTER ZONE

The Urban Center Zone is typically found at community centers and includes a broad range of commercial, residential, and other uses. Density here is higher and the infrastructure is very walkable, including broad sidewalks and slow vehicular traffic.



T6 - URBAN CORE ZONE

The Urban Core Zone is usually found in regionally significant city centers and includes an intensive mix of uses. Density here is highest within the region and the infrastructure is the most walkable, with very slow vehicular traffic.



MARKET SQUARE



These views looking northwest illustrate the present conditions at Ferry Street and Mechanic Street (left) and a proposal for long-term redevelopment (above). In the proposed view, new mixed-use buildings have replaced the vacant one-storey building (formerly TJ's). These new buildings front onto a redesigned plaza, designed for parking and pedestrian market activity. Harding's Market has been retrofitted with a new deli storefront. New mixed use buildings line the other side of Mechanic Street, and the historic brick house has been expanded as an inn. A new monument graces the south side of Ferry Street, and new rooftops can be seen stepping down towards the river. The intention is to shape a strong sense of place and a vibrant, functioning destination at this important gateway to the community.

Market Square: A Sense of Place

In Berrien Springs, Ferry Street’s central business area already is a classic village main street. Handsome historic buildings line the downtown to house functioning businesses fronting onto pleasant sidewalks. The bridge funnels area traffic through here, which has helped to support downtown restaurants, a growing hardware store, and a supermarket - an exceedingly rare phenomenon in villages of this size. Its well-connected and walkable scale benefits nearby village residents and visiting fishermen, who enjoy the proximity to the Saint Joseph River.

Despite these obvious advantages, the center of Berrien Springs has struggled to attract more visitors, businesses, and residents. This is partly because key areas of downtown are not especially friendly to pedestrians and lack a strong sense of place. The intersection of Ferry Street and Mechanic Street is particularly challenging because it forms the front door and first impressions of the place. This area is currently dominated by asphalt parking, limited pedestrian crossings, high traffic speeds coupled with limited visibility, residual grass areas, utilities, and blank building facades. This kind of arrangement poses a serious problem for promoting tourism, public life outdoors, and local investment in a pedestrian-based retail environment. It also unnecessarily separates downtown from the river, one of the village’s greatest assets.

Another area of concern is the corridor on Mars Street, which is equally dominated by parking lots, utilities, and blank building facades. Because of this, Mars Street forms somewhat of a barrier between the walkable and livable north neighborhood and the downtown. As in all small downtowns, merchants and citizens have struggled with the question of parking, and much of this area is currently set aside for off-street parking. This places a land-locked village in a difficult position in which increased pedestrian-based development is discouraged by the prominence of a utilitarian and automobile-oriented environment. Off-street parking does little to increase the tax base, and no vibrant and economically diverse downtown has ever had “plenty of parking” unless carefully managed.

The proposal for this downtown area seeks to use land and existing infrastructure more efficiently by shaping functional and memorable places, by increasing overall density and tax base, by suggesting a greater range of residential and commercial opportunities, and by making more use of on-street and shared parking. The proposal does not assume a local government take-over of land, but local government can shape policies and tax structures to encourage the private sector to implement this or a similar proposal.

AREAS WITH A WEAK SENSE OF PLACE



This diagram illustrates which areas of downtown Berrien Springs currently suffer from a weak sense of place. This proposal targets these areas.

EXISTING CHALLENGES TO A STRONG SENSE OF PLACE



This diagram illustrates what factors discourage pedestrian activity and contribute to a weak sense of place.

Market Square: Phasing

Implementation can occur in phases, as market conditions warrant and property owners are willing. Here is a hypothetical sequence:

- Proposed Buildings
- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Crossings
- Proposed Infrastructure



EXISTING

This diagram shows the existing conditions. The strong sense of place at the corner of Ferry Street and Main Street is immediately recognizable, as all buildings work together to form public space.



NEAR-TERM

A first step is the construction of the plaza and the new deli facade for Harding's. Also critical to this phase is the construction of the new and larger mixed-use building to the southwest.



MID-TERM

New development on vacant land and parking areas can take place incrementally. This includes townhouses and live-work units on Mars Street, as well as similar buildings along the drive to the river.



LONG-TERM

The long-term phase includes the replacement of the existing Ridge & Kramer building, as well as the expansion of the historic brick house into a full downtown inn.



EXISTING SITE PLAN KEY

- 1 Harding's Friendly Market
- 2 Ridge and Kramer Auto Parts
- 3 Water Tower
- 4 Former TJ's Building
- 5 Saint Joseph River
- 6 Rotary Island Park
- 7 US Post Office
- 8 Off-Street Parking Lots
- 9 Ferry Street
- 10 Main Street
- 11 Mechanic Street

The image above shows the existing conditions in the downtown study area and should be compared to the illustrative plan on the right page.

Illustrative plans represent a kind-of long-term vision and should be understood in that

sense. As work begins on such a project, the details of the proposal would naturally change in response to unforeseen and changing circumstances. This illustrative plan seeks to demonstrate how a challenging environment can be transformed into an opportunity by plugging into the existing assets and strengths of the place.

Care should be taken to support the presence of diverse businesses, but especially a supermarket, as local markets make pedestrian-based living viable. This is why this proposal shapes the existing market parking lot into a parking plaza: to benefit the town and the market. Industry studies suggest that outdoor farmers markets and other pedestrian-based activities fronting the entrance can attract additional customers to supermarkets. The design also ensures continued visibility, not only for Harding's but also for the new frontages flanking the plaza (see page 14). Ultimately, all of Ferry Street would benefit from this nearby pedestrian anchor.

The plan also emphasizes the introduction of new dwelling units, especially to satisfy under-served markets. New townhouses, live-work units, and loft apartments help to activate the area at all times of day.



ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN KEY:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| ① Harding's Friendly Market | ⑤ U.S Post Office | ⑨ Hardings Market Square | ⑬ Ferry Street |
| ② Water Tower | ⑥ Proposed Townhomes | ⑩ Proposed Mixed-Use Buildings (Formerly TJ's/Kramer) | ⑭ Main Street |
| ③ St. Joseph River | ⑦ Proposed LiveWork Buildings | ⑪ Proposed Bed & Breakfast | ⑮ Mechanic Street |
| ④ Rotary Island Park | ⑧ Public Parking Lots | ⑫ New Deli Facade on Harding's Market | |

This illustrative plan shows the proposed final build-out of the study area, including building footprints and important trees. The goal is to shape a plaza where the bridge and the downtown meet and to make more use of the immediately surrounding neighborhood. This could help to transform downtown Berrien Springs into a greater tourist attraction and a more frequently used destination for local residents.

Market Square

This bird's eye view shows the existing conditions from the east. Clearly visible are the challenging environment upon entering the village from the bridge and the handsome intersection at Ferry and Main. Also visible are the underutilized areas on Mars Street.

A major problem is the fast speed at which vehicles enter the village. This is mostly due to the design of the bridge, which encourages high speeds that conflict with the pedestrian-based environment. The problem is compounded by limited visibility that results from the change in elevation. In general, the Village should work with the State to reduce speeds as much as possible, a posted speeds and enforcement can help here. But speeds will naturally remain elevated as long as the environment encourages it with wide pavement and wide spaces for drivers to feel comfortable in. This proposal suggests that speeds can naturally be reduced by narrowing the space with a tree line in the south planter strip. (see image on page 19). US Department of Transportation studies have revealed that decreasing the width of space naturally slows drivers down. With the DOT's approval, trees can be planted on the inclining median to help reduce speeds to an safe and comfortable level. In pedestrian environments this means maximum speeds of 25 MPH, as 35 MPH and above most likely result in fatalities in the event of a crash. Slower speeds are also preferable for pedestrian-based retailers, who in small communities depend on incidental drive-by business to thrive.



View of downtown Berrien Springs and Ferry Street from the east.

EXISTING PARKING DISTRIBUTION

This diagram illustrates how parking is currently distributed in the study area. Notice that on-street parking is limited in areas with bisected by parking lot curb cuts. Also noticeable is that the existing off-street parking lots include very wide driving lanes between straight-in parking spaces - a condition that is not particularly efficient in terms of land use.



- Parking Allotment
- Undesignated Parking
- Lot Parking
- On Street Parking

This image illustrates the proposed conditions in downtown Berrien Springs. Central to this is the new market plaza and its adjoining buildings. The proposed arrival experience includes a tree-lined entry ascending from the bridge and terminated by a new monument at the top of the bluff. This is followed by a view into the market plaza and down Ferry Street. The goal is to shape a functional but attractive first impression upon entering the village.

This image also shows how new units east of Mechanic Street can benefit from their proximity to the river. Upper level loft apartments are intended to enjoy river views. The market plaza includes a pedestrian area reserved for farmers markets and similar activities. The plaza also accommodates parking around its entire perimeter. Harding's Market has been retrofitted with a new deli facade facing the plaza, which is intended to attract additional customers. The entire plaza is paved with pedestrian-scaled decorative pavers. Heritage Square in Granger, Indiana demonstrates how this can be successfully done in this climate.

The new mixed-use building fronting the southwest side of the plaza includes a continuous colonnade at ground level. This is intended to maximize floor space above and to encourage outdoor pedestrian activity adjacent to the parking area.

The new arrangement does include a new parking lane that accesses Ferry Street. This requires approval from the State DOT but should be considered for the obvious benefits, especially if traffic speeds can be successfully reduced. The access lane is only intended for parking egress and right-turn only.



Proposed bird's eye view of downtown Berrien Springs and Ferry Street from the East.

PROPOSED & SHARED PARKING DISTRIBUTION

This diagram illustrates the proposed distribution of parking. Much more use has been made of on-street parking, including new diagonal parking on Mars Street and new parking on Mechanic Street. Despite the introduction of the plaza, the new arrangement actually increases parking for the supermarket and the area. Except for the plaza, all off-street parking occurs behind buildings.



- Parking Allotment
- Undesignated Parking
- Lot Parking
- On Street Parking



Views looking northeast on Ferry Street, towards Mechanic Street and the Saint Joseph River valley. The image to the right shows the present conditions.



DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT



- Proposed buildings
- Existing buildings that encourage pedestrian activity
- Proposed pedestrian and vehicular infrastructure
- Existing sidewalks that encourage pedestrian activity
- Proposed planted gateway and urban trees
- Existing urban trees & woodlands

The top view shows the proposed conditions on Ferry Street looking northeast. On the left one can see the proposed mixed-use building to replace the vacant former TJ's, which is thought to have structural problems. The new building is much larger but compliments the scale of existing buildings. Its ground level includes a colonnade, which allows views into the plaza even from this vantage point. Also visible are the new trees and signage of the market square. The corner building northeast of Mechanic Street is intended to have a presence as well and, together with the new monument, frames the view into the valley beyond. Utilities have been buried at this location. This view is intended to show how the market square development can be complimentary to the existing business environment on Ferry Street.

The diagram to the left illustrates this overall development concept in plan.

Market Square

The proposal for roughly 14 acre study area is intended to demonstrate how increased growth and development can compliment the existing fabric of downtown Berrien Springs. It also hopes to show how the conservation of existing assets, buildings, and spaces can be beneficial. The existing study area includes one single-family dwelling unit and three apartments. It includes just over 70,000 sq ft of gross commercial space and 0.66 miles of thoroughfare infrastructure.

The proposal adds 16 dwelling units to the area, including loft apartments above commercial space, attached townhouses on Mars Street, live-work units at the corners of Mars & Main and Mars & Mechanic, and live-work units along the drive leading to the river.

The proposal also includes over 18,600 sq ft of new commercial space. 9,300 sq ft of this is in addition to existing space: the Ridge & Kramer building and the former TJ’s restaurant are proposed to be replaced and enlarged. Both building have proven to be difficult to lease, and the former TJ’s is thought to have structural problems. Also, both buildings do little to improve the pedestrian-based environment at this time.

The most significant investment in this proposal is the almost 22,000 sq ft parking plaza, which is proposed to include pavers and is located on private property. This proposal suggests that the plaza should remain private, but that a public-private partnership might advance its construction. Of course, this only makes sense if that investment is then leveraged against new mixed-use development and tax-base to its southwest and northeast sides.

Beyond the plaza, relatively little infrastructure investment is made. The remaining properties are promoted for development by enabling increased zoning entitlements, reducing parking requirements, and by structuring attractive property taxes. Private investment here, however, is unlikely to occur unless the Village embraces and commits to a long-term vision and enables redevelopment by offering good terms for publicly held land.

PROPOSED COMMERCIAL USES



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL USES



MASTERPLAN GOALS

A summary of principles and goals from that were responded to through the design process.

Increase possibilities for economic development.

This plan proposes a market plaza at Harding’s Market that would act as a community anchor and pedestrian destination.

In keeping with the Masterplan: p. 27 Goal 2

The plan also encourages variety and stability through mixed-use buildings that could accommodate variety of retail, service, residential.

In keeping with the Masterplan: p. 28 Objective 3.03

New construction on underutilized and vacant lots makes use of existing land while enhancing street-front activity.

In keeping with the Masterplan: p. 29 Objective 5.02

A new inn or hotel located downtown to offer visitors accommodation in close proximity to the town center.

In keeping with the Masterplan: p. 11 Table 1 - Community Weaknesses 3

New types of residential opportunities open the housing market up to additional residents.

In keeping with the Masterplan: p. 16 Finding 5 and p. 28 Objective 2.01

Enhance and preserve historic character.

Pedestrian-friendly frontages continue the tradition of walkable town center at human scale.

In keeping with the Masterplan: p. 26 Objective 1.02

Shared-parking and on-street parking arrangements provide adequate parking for downtown businesses while preserving street front character often lost in parking lots.

In keeping with the Masterplan: p. 27 Objective 1.07, and 1.14

A visual entry way into the village through landscaping and building arrangement can create a strong sense of place.

In keeping with the Masterplan: p. 28 Objective 2.02

Strengthen public safety.

Safe pedestrian and vehicular movement through the Downtown - pedestrian crossings and sidewalks, improved street design

ZONING CHALLENGES

Residential Zoning Challenges:

1. Setbacks, front yards, side yards and building grouping requirements in this proposal are not possible with the current zoning requirements.

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Article IV - R1 Sections: 4.06, 4.09A, 4.09D, 4.09F, 4.10, 4.09E

These changes are necessary due to dramatic topography.

2. The duplicated, standardized plans used by the cottages are not encouraged by current zoning.

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Article XV - General Provisions Section 15.08

Duplicated, standardized plans for the cottages will create a stronger visual entrance to the village than individually designed cottages, and could appeal to prospective developers.

Central Business District Zoning Challenges:

1. Side-yards abutting residential district do not conform to 8’ side-yard requirement.

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Article XI: Central Business District (CBD) Section 11.10B

To enhance the public realm and make the Central Business District more activated and attractive to pedestrians it is important to reduce the amount of inactive space such as requiring side yards beside residential buildings next to CBD buildings and spaces. By adapting the lots near the CBD to more urban standards of side yards the effect created in the Harding’s Plaza any street activating initiatives will be enhanced and encourage integration between the down-town area and it’s supporting neighborhoods.

2. Buildings on corner lots conform to setbacks of previously constructed buildings and do not have the required 30’ triangle of no-obstructions on the corner

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Article XV: General Provisions Section 15.10 Corner Lots

By reducing the required 30’ triangle of no obstructions at the corners of urban streets this plan is able to reinforce the traditional early 1900’s down-town visual effect. Holding street corners with buildings also helps to reduce traffic speed and make crosswalks safer and more comfortable for pedestrians, further enhancing the downtown experience.

EXISTING & PROPOSED BIRD’S EYE



Market Square: Policy Issues

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

Parking Zoning Challenges:

1. Proposed parking arrangement relies heavily on shared parking arrangements and does not conform to the requirement to provide parking equal to the sum of separate requirements for each use. Permeable pavers are recommended for surface treatment versus the asphalt and concrete required by the zoning ordinance.

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Article XVII—Off-street Parking and Loading Sections 17.01, 17.02, 17.03, 17.04

Downtown businesses need adequate parking to remain competitive with other suburban businesses, but this may detract from the pedestrian friendly environment promoted by downtowns. To solve this problem this plan has created a parking arrangement that utilizes shared parking between compatible uses such as apartments (use during evenings and nights) and services (use during business hours).

2. Permeable pavers offer a sustainable approach to paving that is also pedestrian friendly. Permeable pavers allow water to drain directly into the ground which filters dirty water run-off from parking lots before it reaches Lake Chapin and the Saint Joseph River. This is a responsible choice for managing water treatment and natural water resources. (For additional resources see appendix)

Integrated Future Land Use Strategy Challenges:

There is an inconsistency between the Zoning Ordinance and the Future Land Use Map 2025. The Existing Land Use Map identifies Lots 150-00 (Village Parking Lot), 117-00 (Water Tower), 78-00 (Harding’s Employee Parking Lot) as “Public” lots. The Future Land Use Plan designates these lots as “Public” lots (see above). The Current Zoning Map designates these lots as C-2 Central Business District (i.e., mixed-use development with build-to lines etc), but the lots are vacant and do not conform to the CBD requirements. We infer that the Future Land Use Plan designates these lots as “Public” lots in order to accomplish Objective 1.07 (provide parking for business to remain competitive in CBD).

Providing parking on these lots would detract from the active downtown that the local community has stated as a goal. By instead maintain these lots as CBD lots it would allow for the sort of mixed use development that is desirable for enhancing long-term commercial quality, “small town feel,” pedestrian-friendly downtown etc. Instead of down-zoning these key lots into additional parking lots, allow future development to keep the benefits of CBD in downtown. Parking and other transportation issues should be addressed by recognizing transportation, live-ability, and placemaking needs.

Residential:

Variations:

Setbacks and yard requirements: appeal to Section 7.08 of Zoning Ordinance and use a “Variance due to Site Conditions” to get approval for non-conforming setbacks, front yards.

Regarding Lot Coverage and standardized plans: appeal to Master Plan Objective 2.01, 2.02, 6.04, based on the fact that the cottages can be designed as a strong visual entryway to the village, while also being appealing to developers because of the standardized plans.

Central Business District:

Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance:

Appeal to the Master Plan Objective 3.01, propose to allow for downtown buildings abutting residential district and buildings on corner lots to conform to setbacks of previously constructed buildings to better enhance the street wall and keep vehicular traffic slow, and the downtown more pedestrian-friendly.

Parking in CBD:

Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance:

By appealing to the Master Plan Objectives 1.02, 1.07, 1.14, propose to enable the sort of shared parking arrangements that is adequate for downtown businesses to remain competitive, while also enhancing the sort of character that promotes long-term commercial quality and encourages tourism.

Integrated Future Land Use Strategy:

In order to achieve the sort of vibrant mixed-use downtown desired by the Master Plan, it is recommended that the Future Land Use Map 2025 be amended to match the current zoning map.

EXISTING ZONING MAP & FUTURE LAND USE MAP



These two sections of the existing zoning map (left) and the future land use map (right) illustrate the down-zoning issue discussed above.

Please view page 6 for a color key.

CASS STREET



These views looking southeast on Cass Street illustrate the existing conditions (left) and the proposed neighborhood center (above). The proposed view shows new mixed-use development on the left, fronted by convenience parking surrounding a small neighborhood plaza. The plaza occurs at the intersection of Cass Street and Saint Joseph Avenue and includes a fountain, trees and some benches. The plaza, which is paved with pavers, is thought of as a minor neighborhood destination but is also intended to visually welcome drivers to Berrien Springs as they enter this important and historic gateway corridor. The courthouse and library grounds are visible in the distance, as is a new public pavilion. The residual space to the right is developed as a compact four-unit apartment building. All architecture is intended to compliment the historic courthouse character.

Cass Street: Restoring the Center of a Neighborhood

Historically, Cass Street was the undisputed civic center of the Village of Berrien Springs. The former Union School used to stand on what is now Memorial Park. Historic drawings show people walking in front of the old courthouse, and old photographs reveal a handsome row of trees lining the street. Churches, some fine homes, and a parsonage were also found on this corridor, which welcomed travelers from the northwest. Cass Street was a central anchor to the neighborhood surrounding it.

Today, the court house museum still stands here, and despite the presence of an excellent community library, Cass Street is not a pleasant or safe street to walk on. From the perspective of visitors, much of the corridor is lined with strip commercial businesses, vacant land, parking lots, and irregularly planted trees. Local residents try to avoid walking here and some properties have installed tall board fences or shrubs to mitigate the impact of the swift stream of traffic. Despite the prevalence of green space, the diagram at top right illustrates that very little of it is actually usable, especially near the street. In other words: relatively little of the green space is actually adding value to the neighborhood.

This proposal suggests that Cass Street can be restored as an active, pleasant, and safe center to the neighborhood and the village. Much of this depends on the design of public space, especially Cass Street itself and the parks that line it. But any infrastructure investment should be leveraged against new development to attract new residents, increase the tax base, and promote more tourism.

Therefore, the proposal also identifies a broad range of private sector development opportunities. This includes new and improved mixed-use development at the intersection of Cass Street and Saint Joseph Avenue (see p. 24) and a senior housing cottage court at Main Street and Hamilton Street (see p. 29). Also included are a series of "Mansion Flats" - multi-family buildings designed to look somewhat like large stately homes - as well as offices and live-work units. Finally, the southeast side of Memorial Park is proposed to include a row of townhouses fronting directly onto the park.

The goal of this proposal is to illustrate how new infill development can compliment the existing neighborhood and community assets to bring much-needed investment, full-time residents, and visitors.

OPEN SPACE WITH VARYING DEGREES OF USEFULNESS



PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION OF LAND USE



Cass Street: Phasing

Implementation can occur in phases, as market conditions warrant and property owners are willing. Here is a hypothetical sequence:

	Proposed Buildings		Existing Buildings
	Planted Areas		Trees



NEAR-TERM

The near-term includes the development of immediately available land, including for senior cottages, townhouses, "mansion flats", and live-work units.



MID-TERM

The mid-term includes the retrofit of Cass Street into a boulevard and the construction of buildings that are unlikely to move forward without this improvement.



LONG-TERM

The long-term includes the redevelopment of commercial properties, the construction of civic buildings, and the improvement of the library garden.

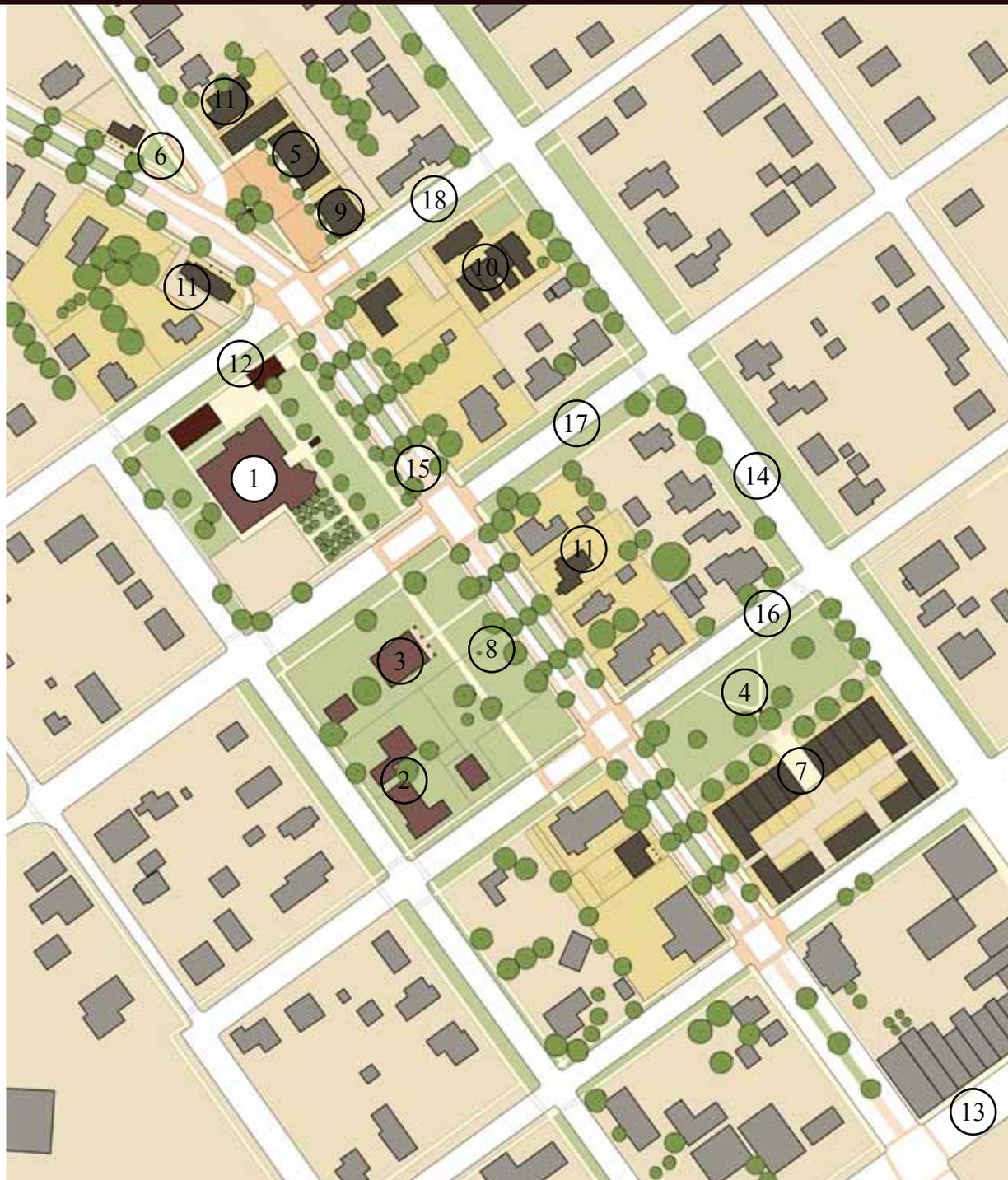


EXISTING SITE PLAN KEY:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
|  Berrien Springs Community Library |  Laundromat |  Cass Street |
|  Berrien County Historical Society |  Vacant Gas Station |  W. Madison Street |
|  Historic Court House |  Ferry Street |  W. Union Street |
|  Memorial Park |  Main Street |  W. Hamilton Street |

The image at top right shows the existing conditions in the study area and should be compared to the illustrative plan on page 27. Illustrative plans represent a kind of long-term vision and should be understood in that sense. As work begins on such a project, the details of the proposal would naturally change in response to unforeseen and changing circumstances. This illustrative plan seeks to demonstrate how a challenging environment can be transformed into an opportunity by plugging into the existing assets and strengths of the place. A major purpose of the proposed interventions in this area is to attract new residents, boost tourism, improve pedestrian safety, and increase the tax base. Today, Cass Street is somewhat of a liability regarding all of these goals:

1. The appearance and noise of Cass Street do not help in lifting nearby residential property values.
2. The existing road design is not safe for walking along or crossing, especially for children. While the local schools and library are within walking distance, this road makes walking for children impractical for many parents. This means that the neighborhood can't effectively capture the value of its proximity to schools.
3. The public green spaces immediately adjacent to Cass Street are not very usable due to their perimeter design and the negative impact of the road. This means that the parks can't be leveraged for their full potential and value.
4. The appearance and speed of Cass Street does little to encourage local tourism, despite the beautiful courthouse grounds. Visitors are more likely to value a historic place when its surrounding environment is whole and promotes pleasant recreational walking.
5. The existing commercial development along Cass Street is not designed to be memorable or make a place that is valued for more than immediate services. This will inevitably result in a loss of taxable commercial value, especially if competing environments are developed elsewhere. It also does little to raise surrounding residential property values.



Another way to understand this missed opportunity is to point out that a quarter mile of expensive existing infrastructure is home to only eight homes and under 16,000 gross sqft of commercial space. A land-locked village with declining population can not afford this kind of return.

The transformation of Cass Street’s design can encourage renewed investment into this historic neighborhood. First and foremost, it would make Cass Street an attractive address for certain dwellings, offices, live-work units, and tourism-related businesses such as Bed & Breakfasts. This illustrative plan shows a broad range of 56 additional dwelling units and an additional 11,000 sqft of commercial space near Cass Street, which would become a prominent and stately corridor within the community. Beyond this, a transformed Cass Street would also make the surrounding neighborhood more attractive for potential home-buyers and new residential construction. To the northwest, where Cass Street runs into Saint Joseph Avenue, a small neighborhood center already exists because of the convenient location for thru-traffic. This plan proposes that this neighborhood center be more formally shaped to include an attractive public space at this important junction. Increased entitlements and reduced parking requirements can make higher densities possible here, which can help to offset the costs of new private sector investment. To the southeast, Memorial Park is proposed to be fronted by new townhouses. The density here is intended to be higher, which compliments the proximity to the downtown and maximizes the value of the park.

EXISTING SITE PLAN KEY:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Berrien Springs Community Library | 7 Proposed Townhomes | 13 Ferry Street |
| 2 Berrien County Historical Society | 8 Proposed Civic Green | 14 Main Street |
| 3 Historic Court House | 9 Proposed Livework | 15 Cass Street |
| 4 Memorial Park | 10 Proposed Senior Housing | 16 W. Madison Street |
| 5 Public Laundromat | 11 Mansion Apartments | 17 W. Union Street |
| 6 Vacant Gas Station | 12 Public Pavilion | 18 W. Hamilton Street |

Cass Street

This plan does not propose for local government to take over private property. Instead, together with a transformation of Cass Street, changes to the zoning ordinance and a concerted effort to promote design guidelines for this corridor can help to encourage the private sector to invest in a long-term vision.

This plan proposes that all historic buildings be preserved and all new buildings be designed to compliment the architecture of the historic fabric. Live-work units, mixed-use buildings, offices, and apartment buildings can be designed to speak a common, simple, and dignified architectural language. Apartment buildings can be scaled to appear as stately homes that blend in with the residential character. And commercial building frontages can be designed with the human scale in mind.

In this place, an architectural unity of diverse building types can help to promote a coherent environment for the historic courthouse and future tourism support businesses. More importantly, architectural unity can help diverse land uses to coexist in a complimentary fashion, which helps to safeguard property values in mixed-use environments.

Finally, pedestrian-scaled building frontages and aesthetic traditions rooted in timeless design principles can help to set Berrien Springs apart from the clutter of other lifestyle options that home-buyers must consider. Especially seniors might value such a place for retirement, provided that the appropriate quality housing is available within walking distance to downtown and other area amenities.

These comparative bird's eye views are intended to demonstrate how sensitively the proposed redevelopment is set within the existing neighborhood fabric.

The proposed view clearly shows the improved mixed-use center at the bend of M-139, where Saint Joseph Avenue meets Cass Street. Also visible is the boulevard improvements and the new townhouses at Memorial Park. The intention is to add value to the entire area by transforming Cass Street from a liability into an amenity.



Existing bird's eye view of Cass Street from the west



Proposed bird's eye view of Cass Street from the west

Cass Street: *Diverse Opportunities*

A broad range of dwelling & commercial opportunities are proposed for the Cass Street corridor. Illustrated are some suggested architectural elevations.



LIVE-WORK



MIXED-USE



BUSINESS INCUBATOR



4 UNIT APARTMENT BUILDING



"MANSION FLATS"

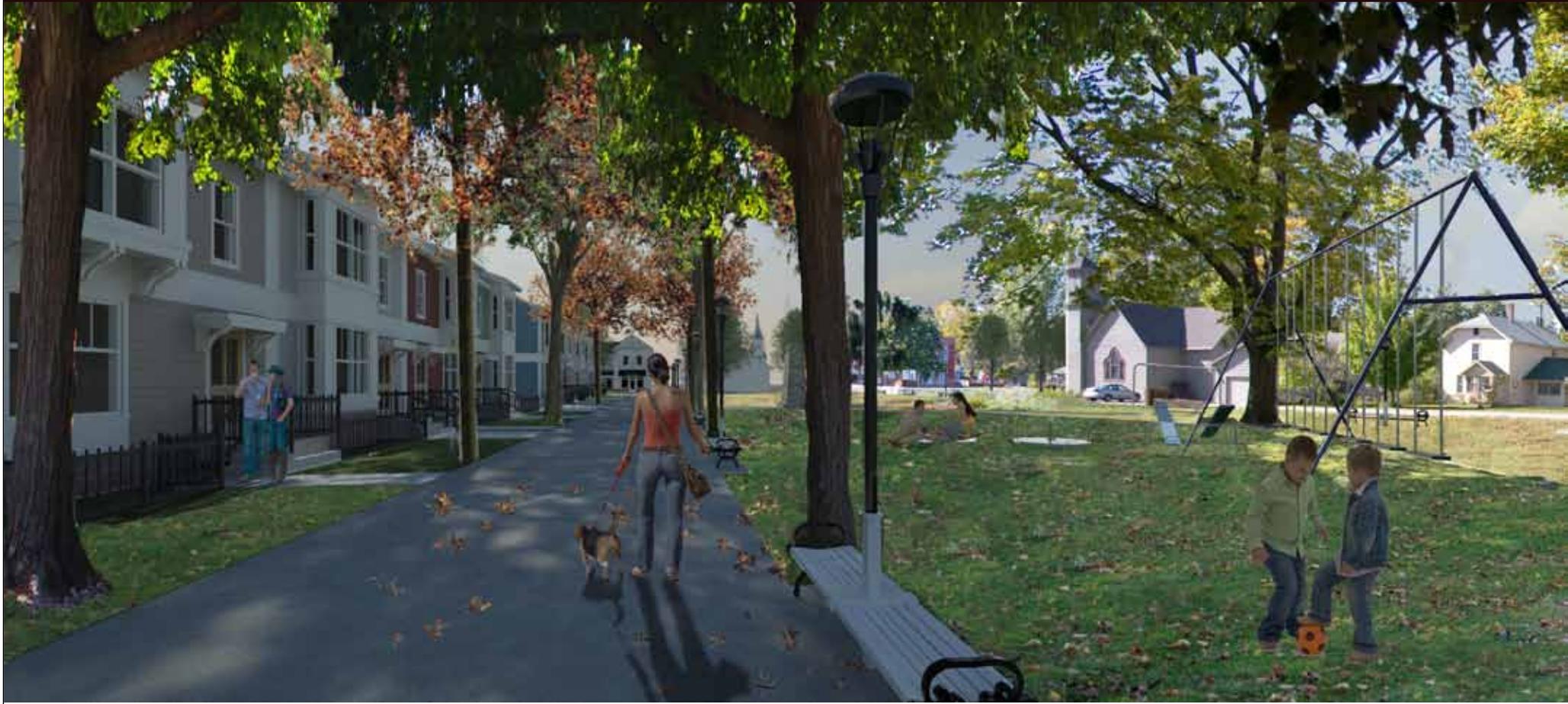


SEMI-ATTACHED LIVE-WORK



View of a proposed senior cottage court, located at the corner of Main Street and Hamilton Street.

Cottage courts are useful development tools to substantially increase density while preserving low-density character in an existing neighborhood. Cottage courts arrange a grouping of small dwelling units (attached, semi-attached, or detached) around a shared outdoor courtyard. This appeals especially to the senior markets because the cost and maintenance of individual units is low, but some attractive outdoor space is provided.



Views of Memorial Park in central Berrien Springs. The view shows existing conditions as seen from the east (below) and proposed conditions (above) with new townhouses on the left.



Memorial Park serves as a valuable amenity to area residents, especially because of its playground. The seasonal landscaping and the memorial itself are beautiful ornament to the village’s north neighborhood. Unfortunately, only six houses front onto this public investment, and half of these are rental units that don’t leverage the value for property improvements. Also, at least half of the park’s southeast side is lined by a public parking lot, which does little to increase the tax base at such a convenient location. This proposal lines the southeast side of the park with ten attached townhouses fronting directly onto the park. With parking and services behind, the project could be developed as planned unit. The homes, fronting onto a wide public path, would enjoy views over Memorial Park and would be attractive to those seeking low-maintenance properties within walking distance of downtown and good schools. The presence of homes would also improve the safety of the park.

Cass Street

The retrofit of Cass Street into a safe, pleasant, and comfortable thoroughfare is of strategic importance in order to capture the value of existing properties and civic amenities. The current design encourages fast vehicular speeds and is unsafe for crossing. The existing sidewalks are immediately exposed to the roadway and offer no safety or comfort for pedestrians walking along the street. The nature of this road is of real concern for those interested in attracting new residents and investment to the immediate vicinity.

The proposed Cass Street retrofit transforms the corridor into a boulevard. To conserve resources, the proposal maintains the existing curb and storm-sewer alignment. The center of the road includes a planted median with trees, which is interrupted to provide left turn pockets at key intersections only. The sides of the roadway are converted to colored asphalt or pervious pavers (depending on resources) and become parallel parking spaces. New tree planters are introduced here at regular intervals but are separated from the curb with a french drain to permit continued stormwater conveyance. Parallel parking and trees naturally slow traffic, reduce the need for off-street parking, and provide a protective buffer for pedestrians who walk on the existing sidewalks. This street assembly has been designed in accordance with the recommended practices for walkable thoroughfares set forth by the Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE). See appendix.



View of the existing conditions on Cass Street in front of the library.



Existing view of the lawn fronting the library, looking southeast (above). The proposed conditions (left) show how new tree lines and paths can help to make this area usable for human occupation. The current condition is simply too vast and exposed to be comfortable for rest or activity, so the space adds no tangible value to the neighborhood or the library. The proposed view is taken from a new pavilion that can be used for community events. The idea is for the paths and benches of the library garden to align with and correspond in character to the courthouse grounds, for a focused view of the tower.

MASTERPLAN GOALS

A summary of principles and goals from that were responded to through the design process.

Strengthen public safety.

To strengthen public safety for pedestrians and motorists this plan proposes to implement a boulevard and on-street parking along Cass Street that could reduce the width of the street, consequently making the crossing more pedestrian friendly.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Objective 1.03

This plan proposes on-street parking that would serve as a buffer between pedestrian sidewalk and car lane. On street parking could also decrease traffic speed substantially.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Objective 1.14

The crosswalks proposed in this plan throughout the site would also increase the safety of the pedestrian. By defining that area with a different pavement surface it would help drivers to identify this area as a pedestrian friendly zone.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Objective 2.03

Reinforce quality places for livability and tourism.

This plan introduces a strategy for adapting this site into a public destination by improving public green spaces, making them more usable and more inviting to the public.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Objective 2.02

The plan maintains the historic character of the site by designing buildings that would fit the architectural style and fabric of early Berrien Springs.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goal 1 and Objective 1.02 and Objective 1.08

Encourage economic development.

The diversity of housing options provided through for in this proposal seeks to meet the market needs, and also could provide a more stable customer base for commercial developments on the site.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goal 2 and Goal 6 and Objective 6.03

The proposal encourages mixed-use buildings that combine commercial uses with upper stories of residential or offices use.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Objective 1.06 and Objective 3.03

ZONING CHALLENGES

Building Type Challenges - Townhomes:

The proposed townhouses facing Memorial Park are not possible under the current zoning requirements for CBD because attached residential is not provided for as a recognized residential type. Attached residential is allowed in Single Family Residential District for use, but it does not conform to the setback, lot area, and lot coverage requirements. Another area that would offer a challenge for the proposed townhomes is their duplicated building type which is not allowed for under current zoning.

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Article XI Article IV Article XV

The proposed building type of townhomes or attached residential would offer a new form of housing to Berrien Springs to diversify the options for housing and possibly attract new residents to the area. Because of its urban form townhomes offer a positive transition from the Central Business District into the adjoining neighborhoods. The townhomes would create a distinctive backdrop for Memorial Park through their duplicated plans. With townhomes facing the park it may become an even safer place for children to play because the park now has 'eyes on the street' from the surrounding residential buildings and a more public presence which can encourage people to be more respectful of a public place.

EXISTING & PROPOSED BIRD'S EYE OF CASS STREET



Cass Street: Policy Issues

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

Building Type Challenges - "Mansion Flats" and Senior Housing:

"Mansion Flats" and Senior Housing are other efforts to diversify the housing options in Berrien Springs. The proposed Mansion Flats on vacant lot across the courthouse are not possible through the current Commercial District's permitted uses. Also the Senior Housing and Mansion Apartments are not possible because of lot metric requirements and because they are located closely to other group home residential buildings.

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Article X Article VIII

Mansion Apartments and senior housing would offer different options for housing in Berrien Springs, and increase the possible density of the area. Adjusting the required lot metrics of these proposed buildings would allow them to seamlessly fit into the existing village neighborhood. Because of the dignity of the proposed Mansion Apartments and Senior housing and the care with which they have been adapted to fit into the neighborhood, these new buildings may enhance the local character rather than detract from it as other rental and temporary housing sometimes does.

Parking Requirement Challenges:

Off-street parking requirements are not fully met on parts of the site proposal.

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Article XVII, Section 17.04

The Masterplan encourages minimizing on-site parking requirements by promoting shared parking and on-street parking. These forms are provided in the site plan as an alternative to traditional on-site parking. Adding on-street parking would also help slow down traffic and make this a more pedestrian friendly environment.

EXISTING ZONING MAP



This section of the existing zoning map illustrates how land uses are currently zoned along the Cass Street corridor. It should be noted that the land zoned for commercial use (red) has different entitlements and restrictions compared to the downtown business area (pink). As they are, commercial zoning requirements are not likely to promote a walkable, mixed-use environment unless provisions are made to encourage or require this.

Additionally, off-street parking requirements alone would strongly discourage a coherent and pedestrian-friendly environment here. For this reason, this plan proposes to significantly reduce off-street parking requirements in favor of on-street and shared parking solutions. Land-locked villages are not well-served by designated large amounts of land as unproductive parking lots.

Building Types - Townhomes:

Adjust Zoning:

In the non-conforming Central Business District part of the site adjust the zoning to Residential and adjust requirements for lot metrics. This would allow for the proposed type of attached single family residential units. The Master Plan's Goals 2 and 6 give emphasis to economic development and diversity of housing. This type of development would be beneficial to the economic growth of the town due to the fact that it is a more dense type of housing meaning additional tax revenue. Diversity of housing types that may address housing needs as outlined in Goal 6 - 6.03 in the Master Plan along with expanding the market needs for which the current zoning scheme only allows for 1 type of housing in the market. The proposed mansion apartment located across from the courthouse would not conform to the current zoning map but it would conform to the future land use map. We encourage the zoning change from commercial to residential due to the fact that surrounding buildings are of residential use currently and are non-conforming.

Building Types - Mansion Apartment and Senior Housing:

Amend the Zoning Ordinance

Amend Section 8.03 to allow for variances on proximity requirements.

The different apartments and senior housing proposed on site are in close proximity of each other and they are separated by major thoroughfares and by a neighborhood center. This development would also help boost economic development on the neighborhood center (Goal 2). They are also directed towards different housing needs within the village allowing for a diversity of building types (Goal 6).

Parking Requirements:

Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance:

Amend zoning ordinance to allow for flexibility in parking requirements to include on-street parking in parking calculations according to zoning ordinance.

Reference Resources Page



SHAMROCK CROSSING

Existing (right) and proposed view (above) of the gas station area opposite Shamrocks' high school football field in Berrien Springs.



Shamrock Crossing: Retrofitting a Center of Activity

One of the community’s most active pedestrian commercial centers was never designed for pedestrian use. The area opposite the football field is one of the busiest places in Berrien Springs. The combination of gas station, drugstore, fast-food restaurants, and the nearby school grounds make for an active combination. Plenty of left turns, the presence of Kephart Lane, and a busy car wash round out a recipe for potential collisions and pedestrian injuries. At the same time, the presence of vacant land and extensive, inefficient pavement along the community’s busiest thoroughfare present a serious infill and redevelopment opportunity. This is especially true for a land-locked community. The entire environment, however, is currently designed almost exclusively for the automobile, which makes meaningful interventions especially challenging. Furthermore, some might argue that a gas station can not serve as an appropriate anchor for pedestrian-based development.

This proposal suggests that this area, dubbed Shamrock Crossing, can indeed be retrofitted for increased development and valuable placemaking. The gas station is already a significant destination, including for informal social gathering on game days and during other times. This is partly due to the immediate proximity to the football field and schools, which can be clearly seen across Saint Joseph Avenue (M-139). The station and its surrounding businesses generate a lot of traffic, which new businesses can only benefit from. The entire site is within easy walking distance to much of Berrien Springs, which increases its potential as a pedestrian destination. Finally, significant property is rendered virtually inaccessible mid-block, and property owners might have an interest in new infrastructure enabling access to developable land. This proposal seeks to build on these issues to improve the village’s second center and expand its opportunities.

PROPOSED PARKING DISTRIBUTION



- Building’s “Parking Shed”
- Parking For Single Buildings
- Shared Parking
- Buildings Included In Parking Study

This diagram illustrates how off-street, on-street, and shared parking areas are distributed in the proposed redevelopment plan of Shamrock Crossing.

A “parking shed” refers to the parking area that is designated to serve a particular building or group of buildings.

PROPOSED USES



- Retail
- Industrial
- Live/Trade
- Residential
- Civic

This diagram illustrates the proposed distribution of land uses in Shamrock Crossing. Due to the gas station, residential opportunities are limited.

But the new street makes provisions for live-trade units designed for the practice of trades and the housing of tradesmen.

Shamrock Crossing: Phasing

Implementation can occur in phases, as market conditions warrant and property owners are willing.

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Proposed Buildings |  Existing Buildings |
|  Proposed Demolished Buildings |  Sidewalk Improvements |
|  Street Surface Improvements |  Landscape Improvements |



EXISTING

The existing plan shows the considerable open and undeveloped space that exists between structures. Most paved areas are not efficiently used for driving or parking.



NEAR-TERM

The near-term implementation includes the construction of a new building in front of the car wash. A small, interim crossing island is installed in this phase.



MID-TERM

The mid-term shows a new building in front of Kozy's and a new and expanded Rite Aid, which includes a drive-thru pharmacy. This phase also includes a new crossing on M-139.



LONG-TERM

The long-term shows the construction of a new street, extending Cass Street towards the northwest. New live-trade buildings are proposed in this location to foster the trades. See page 39.

EXISTING SITE PLAN KEY:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ① Rite Aide Pharmacy | ⑥ McDonald's |
| ② Phillips 66 Gas Station | ⑦ Village Seventh-day Adventist Church |
| ③ Pizza Hut | ⑧ Saint Joseph Avenue (Old US 31) |
| ④ Berrien Springs Mini-Storage | ⑨ Kephart Lane |
| ⑤ Shamrocks Football Field | ⑩ North Cass Street |



The image at top right shows the existing conditions in the study area and should be compared to the illustrative plan on page 37. Illustrative plans represent a kind of long-term vision and should be understood in that sense. As work begins on such a project, the details of the proposal would naturally change in response to unforeseen and changing circumstances. This illustrative plan seeks to demonstrate how a challenging environment can be transformed into an opportunity by plugging into the existing assets and strengths of the place. A major purpose of the proposed interventions in this area is to attract new business and trades and to improve pedestrian safety. The attraction of additional residents is a secondary purpose of this plan.

The existing area is challenging because it is almost entirely designed for the automobile. Outside of the Berrien Springs Village limits, M-139 is named Old-US 31. That name is often used even in Berrien Springs, even though the formal name really is Saint Joseph Avenue. This misnomer suggests that the street is really thought of as continuation of the highway strip, rather than a village avenue. Formal names such as Saint Joseph Avenue seem inappropriate for highway strips. But this plan proposes that the street can be reestablished as a pleasant, safe, and vibrant village avenue. The word avenue comes from the French word for "arrival". In this sense, the transformation of Saint Joseph Avenue can genuinely establish a sense of arrival for a great village. This would be especially true on game days, when the athletic and community activity of the football field would be complimented by welcoming village buildings to the north.



This illustrative plan shows a long-term vision for how development could surround the existing gas station and other assets. The gas station remains fixed partly because underground tanks are prohibitively expensive to move. The designed grouping of building surrounding the station entirely preserves the existing underground infrastructure and truck-service routes in order to minimally affect operations. In the long-term, the existing canopy is intended to be replaced with a more elegant version, and station paving is proposed to be colored or textured. The convenience store is proposed to be replaced with a larger, multi-story building that makes more use of the real estate. The second stories of all new buildings surrounding the gas station can be available for office space, as residential uses would not be desirable here. The entire composition is intended to remain private property, but with a deliberate public and pedestrian-based spirit.

One of the most significant aspects of the proposal is the eventual replacement of the Rite Aid pharmacy and drugstore. The new enlarged building more closely follows contemporary industry standards and is located at the corner of Kephart Lane and Saint Joseph Avenue. This new building is located in a currently vacant area, which permits construction while the old building remains in use. The new building includes a drive-thru pharmacy window at the rear, adjacent to the dedicated off-street parking. Convenient on-street parking is available on Kephart and Saint Joseph Avenue, and the store's entrance remains prominently located at the corner.

Because this retail model is likely to include blank facades on two or three sides, thin "liner buildings" have been proposed on the south and west facades. These buildings are deep enough for small retail and cafes and can be lined around blank walls in order to make use of valuable real estate frontage facing the football fields and the gas station.

Another important aspect of the design is the introduction of a new east-west street that continues Cass Street towards the northwest and potentially to Apple Valley (see page 39). The illustrative plan shows this street used for live-trade buildings. These are buildings used for the practice of trades on the ground level (i.e.: welders, metal workers, etc.) and used for residential purposes above. This residential market can more easily tolerate the gritty environment of the area and can simultaneously serve an important part of the population.

ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN KEY:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| ① Proposed Rite Aide Pharmacy | ⑤ Village Seventh-day Adventist Church | ⑨ Saint Joseph Avenue (Old US 31) |
| ② Phillips 66 Gas Station | ⑥ Proposed Commercial Buildings | ⑩ Kephart Lane |
| ③ Shamrocks Football Field | ⑦ Proposed Apartment Buildings | ⑪ North Cass Street |
| ④ McDonald's | ⑧ Proposed Residential Buildings | ⑫ Proposed Street |

Shamrock Crossing

With a size of about 12 acres, this study area represents an opportunity to test the limits of infill and retrofit development. If it were not for the land-locked status of the Village, challenging opportunities such as this may not even be considered. However, this proposed plan adds thirty-five new dwelling units and more than 100,000 sq ft of gross commercial space to the tax base, which almost doubles the efficiency of return on infrastructure investment.

The views in this proposal also show that such an intense land use can have a definite village scale and character. Building footprints are kept smaller, partly because of preexisting property boundaries. Even large buildings can be designed to compliment a smaller, pedestrian-based community.

An important part of the proposal is the eventual redesign of Saint Joseph Avenue (M-139) as a boulevard. Similar to Oronoko Township's long-term plan for Old-US 31, a boulevard median can help to naturally slow traffic, enhance the sense of arrival for visitors, and provide crossing islands for pedestrians. In this case, the planted medians have been kept clear of tall plants or trees to ensure visibility for safety and convenience. At key intersections, such as at Kephart Lane, the boulevard median is interrupted for rumble strip left-turn lanes (see page 37). The thoroughfare has an especially unique design to promote slow vehicular speeds and safe pedestrian crossing near the gas station - see page 41.

These two bird's eye view illustrates how the proposed long-term build-out dovetails around the existing assets, including the gas station infrastructure. The proposed view clearly shows how the new buildings fronting Saint Joseph Avenue also look over the Shamrocks football field. This would be an excellent location for a cafe or restaurant to receive the many fans that attend football games here. Also visible is the convenient on-street parking available for the new Rite Aid on Kephart Lane.



View of the existing study area from the south.



View of the proposed long-term build-out from the south.

Shamrock Crossing



An existing view (above) of the gas station and its proposed transformation (right). The gas station remains the center of activity but becomes a place that can anchor other businesses and safer pedestrian activity. Underground tank locations and truck service routes remain unchanged in this design.



A side-note of this proposal is the study of how an expanded Village street grid can help to access available land that is currently difficult to develop. The superblock defined by Kephart Lane, M-139, George Street, and Main Street includes significant vacant and underutilized properties that are difficult to access. This is a common problem with large blocks, and new public streets can make these properties more accessible, which potentially increases the tax base.

The proposed street network would also improve pedestrian accessibility for the surrounding neighborhoods. This can help to improve safety, as hidden and unfrequented parts of the village would see an increase in human presence.

A final benefit of this proposed street network is the potential connection of Cass Street with George Place and possibly to Apple Valley beyond. This would create an alternative east-west route to M-139 for local traffic and could relieve traffic somewhat on Saint Joseph Avenue.

Considering that the Village already has wastewater service available, this area seems especially ready for increased development of a complimentary nature.



BLOCKS, STREETS & CONNECTIVITY



- Vacant Land With Development Potential
- Underutilized Land With Development Potential
- Difficult To Develop Land Locked Parcels
- Proposed New Streets
- Village Of Berrien Springs Boundary

This diagram shows how the larger superblock between Kephart, M-139, George Street, and Main Street can be accessed for increased and improved development. Much of this land is currently vacant or underutilized due to access limitations, and new streets could change this. A new east-west street can also provide an alternate route to M-139 for local traffic, potentially connecting Cass Street with Apple Valley. The white circle indicates a 5-minute walk.



Existing (left) and proposed (above) views looking north at Kephart Lane and M-139 / Saint Joseph Avenue. The proposed view shows the new and expanded Rite Aid drugstore entrance and adjoining buildings, some of which look over the football field. Also visible is an improved fence design for the football field.

Shamrock Crossing: Pedestrian & Vehicular Safety

As was mentioned before, this study area already has plenty of pedestrian activity. Development simply needs to catch up with the existing activity in order to provide a safer and more prosperous environment. A safer street design on Saint Joseph Avenue (M-139) would also help to identify this area as part of the Village and integrated it more seamlessly into the neighborhood fabric. In this proposal, Kephart Lane becomes more like a neighborhood street with sidewalks rather than a suburban roadway. All of this helps to add value to the north neighborhood of Berrien Springs, which is immediately across the street.

The existing view of the intersection at Kephart and M-139 reveals how underutilized and automobile-dominated the infrastructure is. A better use of this infrastructure would include more buildings, as discussed on the previous pages. New buildings can also help to shape pedestrian-friendly environments. Buildings close to the street naturally slow down traffic, according to US Department of Transportation studies. Buildings with many openings, especially at ground level, help to keep the environment interesting and emphasize the human presence to enhance perceived safety. Even smaller elements such as the proposed new football field fence can contribute to slower vehicular speeds: more than chain-link fences, crafted artifacts such as this can suggest to drivers that they are in an active pedestrian environment.

The redesign of Saint Joseph Avenue focuses on the predominant crossing area near the gas station and McDonald's. A diagram below illustrates the existing and dangerous conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. The long-term vision includes a slow-velocity shared space with texture paving and crossing islands. In contrast with a conventional left-turn lane, this design helps to preserve most left-turn movements but at a much slower speed. Drivers know to slow down and will naturally slow down due to the vibrations caused by the proposed textured pattern. The presence of new buildings will also eliminate some curb cuts, which will help to reduce potential conflict points in the road.

This boulevard assembly was designed according to recommendations for walkable urban thoroughfares as set forth by the Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE). See appendix for more information. The shared crossing space is a more progressive concept that is not found in the ITE manual, but precedent for this type of solution on state highways within urban contexts exists in other parts of the United States. However, it is important to understand that the State Department of Transportation is unlikely to even consider such a design until the land use warrants it. Today, the land use is exactly the opposite: dominated by auto-centric transportation and strip development. This means that any hope in civilizing Saint Joseph Avenue as a genuinely walkable street must begin with the redevelopment of private properties as higher density, pedestrian-based places. It becomes clear then that local leadership in consensus-building, zoning, taxation, and the enabling of development must significantly precede Michigan DOT action.

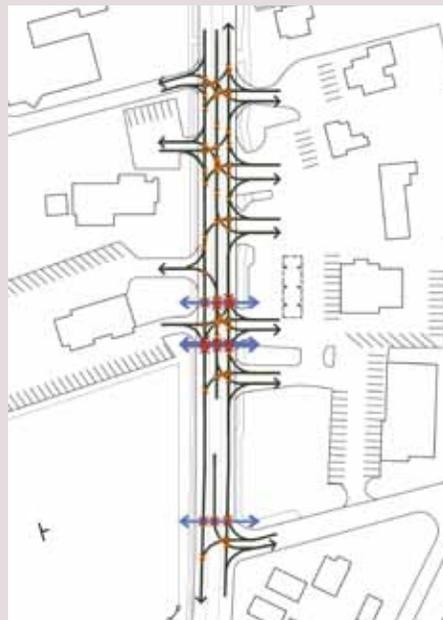
EXISTING PEDESTRIAN & VEHICULAR TRAFFIC CONFLICTS

This diagram is perhaps the most important diagram related to the Shamrock Crossing proposal, because it illustrates how many conflict points there are on this busy part of M-139.

Much of these potential conflict points exist due to the sheer number of curb cuts and drives that access M-139 at this location. The resulting staggering of left turns, especially during the busy hours of peak demand, cause a significant concern for vehicular safety.

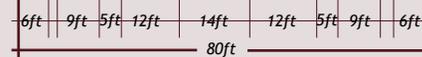
This is compounded by the presence of significant numbers of pedestrians. Most of these pedestrians are students and children, who cross near the McDonald's and Kephart Lane on their way from and to school. This activity occurs at many times of day, including lunch hours and during football events.

This safety issue alone should prompt a reconsideration of thoroughfare design and land use policy at this location, which rivals downtown Berrien Springs in activity but does not have the appropriate, pedestrian-based form.



- Existing Pedestrian Crossing
- Automobile Travel
- X Pedestrian - Automobile Conflicts
- X Automobile Conflicts

PROPOSED SECTION OF SHAMROCK CROSSING ON ST. JOSEPH AVENUE



This diagram illustrates the proposed redesign of Saint Joseph Avenue (M-139) at the busiest crossing area. The boulevard here becomes a slow-velocity shared space with textured paving and crossing islands. This way, most turning movements are preserved but slow speeds and islands ensure safety.

MASTERPLAN GOALS

A summary of principles and goals from that were responded to through the design process.

Strengthen public safety.

This plan proposes pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, bike lanes, and improved street design to provide safer routes for all methods of transportation.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Objectives 2.03 and 4.02

Increase possibilities for economic prosperity.

1. This site is currently a major activity center and convenient destination for many daily needs and services. This function may be enhanced by improving the destination appeal to customers and businesses. To do this, underutilized land is proposed for additional development that will allow for growth within the Village while maintaining high standards for quality public space.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Objectives 2.01 and 6.04

2. New commercial and residential buildings are planned to be flexible so they can meet changing market demands. A new street is also proposed to allow landlocked parcels to be developed and accommodate additional growth within the Village.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Objectives 2.01, 6.04, 2.01, 6.03, 2.03, 2.01, and 1.11.

Preserve historic character.

New streets continue historic grid of small blocks. This may ease traffic and congestion on St. Joseph Avenue and will attempt to increase connectivity throughout the different neighborhoods of the Village of Berrien Springs.

The architecture and aesthetic appeal of new buildings is grounded in local historic construction patterns and will promote a continuation of the early nineteenth century that residents of Berrien Springs value.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Objectives 1.11, 1.01 and 1.02

Enhance visual appearance.

Enhanced streets, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and street-scaping may attract new residents and businesses to this area, as well as improve conditions for existing residents and businesses.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Objectives 1.02, 1.03, 2.03, and 4.02

ZONING CHALLENGES

Lot Metrics Challenges - Density:

The buildings proposed on this site are not possible through current zoning regulations because of the standards for lot coverage, area, widths and lot setbacks. In each of these areas the proposed plan asks for smaller lots with smaller setbacks and larger amounts of lot coverage.

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Sections 10.10 and 16.06

This proposal suggests these changes to current zoning because of the possible positive effect they would have on the public realm in this active area of Berrien Springs. Smaller lots would allow for greater density which would increase the tax base in this area. Higher density could make pedestrians feel safer and more comfortable in a space that is now dominated by automobiles. This area of the Village of Berrien Springs is already an active place in the community, this plan takes advantage of the underutilized portions of the site and adapts them in a way that makes the space more accessible to development and activity potential.

EXISTING & PROPOSED BIRD'S EYE OF SHAMROCK CROSSING



Shamrock Crossing: Policy Issues

Building Type Challenges - Accessory Units:

In the residential portions of the site live-above garages and other options for accessory dwelling units are proposed. These residential options, however, are not possible through current zoning.

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Section 27.01

Accessory units on this site would offer additional options that add variety to the available market-based housing choices. Accessory units could also increase the density and variety of housing in this area and provide a customer base for the new proposed commercial buildings.

Parking Requirement Challenges:

Some buildings that are proposed do not provide the minimum amount of parking spaces required by the current zoning ordinance.

Refer to Village Zoning Ordinance: Section 17.04 C, 17.03 4, and 17.04 E

The calculations for parking requirements, however, do not take into consideration on street parking and shared parking arrangements, which could improve the overall character of the site.

EXISTING ZONING MAP



This section of the existing zoning map illustrates land zoned for commerce in red, land zoned for village residential use in yellow, and land zoned for multi-family dwellings in orange.

A look at the Future Land Use Map (see page 6) reveals that almost all of the land to the south of Saint Joseph Avenue (M-139) is intended to be preserved for schools and churches. This means that the area northwest of Kephart Lane represents the only significant growth opportunity on the west side of the Village of Berrien Springs. Existing zoning shows this land to be segregated by use, which decreases its economic flexibility and encourages development patterns that are not compatible with the masterplan's overall intentions.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

Option A - Amend the Zoning Ordinance:

Because this is a major activity center the Zoning Ordinance could be amended to allow for the density proposed through lot metrics. This may be achieved through an optional or mandatory Overlay Zone which would allow for increased densities. An Overlay Zone could also address issues such as shared parking and accessory units. See appendix for more information.

Option B - Variance:

Developers could apply for variances for lot metrics and coverage amounts to achieve the desired result, however there would be a large amount of variances required to make the density of this plan possible. Variances would also be required to make shared parking and accessory units possible.

Option C - A Planned Unit Development:

Applying for this area to be developed as a Planned Unit Development would allow for the flexibility to make lots denser, but it would be difficult to achieve because the requirements for PUDs require a larger amount of land than this site encompasses and would need to be adjusted to apply for more than residential development. One way to implement a PUD would be to amend Section 13 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow owners of several medium-sized or smaller lots to work together to take advantage of rezoning to Planned Unit Development (overlay) District. See appendix for more information.



These images illustrate the existing Apple Valley strip shopping center (right) and the proposed development of Apple Valley Plaza (above) fronting onto Old US 31 (M-139). The proposal includes new mixed-use buildings fronting onto a parking plaza, which helps to maintain good visibility for the existing supermarket. Light fixtures, paving details, and trees have been replaced with more human-scale designs. The proposed sign is attached to the building on the left. This view also shows how Old US 31 is redesigned to be a boulevard that enables safer and more comfortable pedestrian crossing to the county fair grounds on the opposite side.



APPLE VALLEY PLAZA

Apple Valley Plaza: A Neighborhood near Campus & Fair

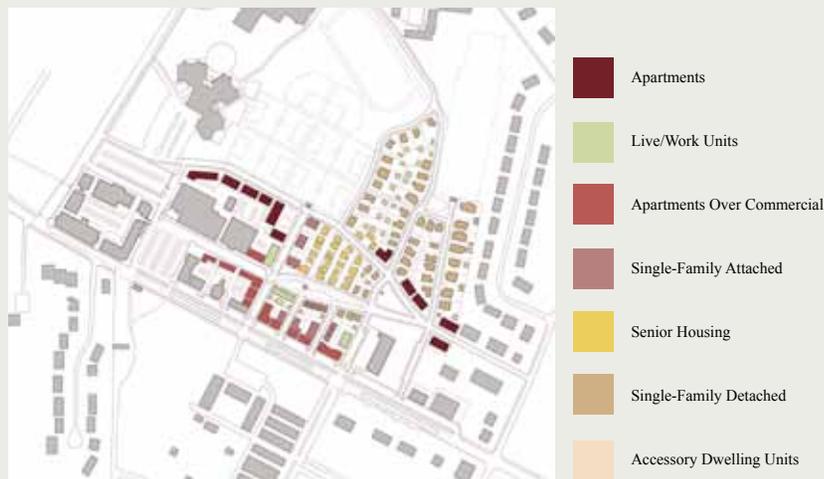
The area surrounding the existing Apple Valley Market may be one of Oronoko Township's most promising sites for development. The site is well-connected, visible, and includes a broad frontage along Old US 31 (M-139). As a unique and successful grocery store, Apple Valley already has a large loyal customer base that visits the site on a regular basis. The site also includes various other businesses that benefit from this anchor store. The northwest part of the site includes an important medical center that serves a large part of the local community. Much of the remaining site is paved and underutilized or consists of undeveloped fields. To the north, a large and semi-informal area of athletic fields serves the nearby Andrews Academy and Ruth Murdoch Elementary School, which are within immediate walking distance. Immediately to the west and opposite Garland Avenue is the campus of Andrews University - the heart of the campus is a 10 minute walk from the property. To the south and opposite Old US 31 are the Berrien County Youth Fair grounds. These grounds host one of the most significant youth fairs in the American Midwest and are planned to include a major events arena that is likely to significantly boost the number of visitors in future years and year-round. Given the necessary wastewater service and the right market conditions, all of these factors indicate an enormous potential for development in this location.

This proposal suggests that this area can be developed as a mixed-use, walkable neighborhood to expand services to the local university community, to serve the county fair grounds, and to provide additional housing and commercial opportunities for the community in general. The development proposal can be roughly divided into two areas: a primarily commercial area to the west centered upon Apple Valley Market, and a primarily residential area to the east, where the site adjoins existing multi-family and single-family homes near George Street. The commercial uses are primarily grouped around the parking lot fronting Apple Valley Market. Most of this parking area is preserved to welcome automobile-based customers. Other commercial opportunities line a local access lane parallel to Old US 31, which gives these businesses good visible frontage onto the highway and towards the fair grounds. All commercial areas, however, are woven into the neighborhood street fabric, which enables walking and biking for local residents, university students, and fair visitors. The residential uses are primarily located away from Old US 31 on neighborhood-scaled streets and blocks. Denser dwelling types are concentrated near the highway and the existing big box stores, while single-family homes are towards the northeast. Cottage courts targeted towards senior residents are proposed near the center of the neighborhood, where they would be ideally located within walking distance to the market and more.

POSSIBLE COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION



POSSIBLE RESIDENTIAL DISTRIBUTION



These two diagrams illustrate a hypothetical distribution of proposed land uses. Both, the distribution of commercial uses (top) and residential uses (below) include a broad range of proposed types.

Apple Valley Plaza: Phasing

Implementation can occur in phases, as market conditions warrant and property owners are willing. Here is a hypothetical sequence:

- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings



NEAR-TERM

The first phase is proposed to include a hotel and new mixed-use development to shape the parking plaza. This assumes the relocation of the Horn Archeological Museum.



MID-TERM

The second phase includes the construction of senior cottage courts and mixed-use development fronting onto Old US 31. A new green makes for an immediate sense of place.



LONG-TERM

As the market matures, the long-term includes the construction of apartment buildings behind Apple Valley and continued mixed-use infill near Apple Valley Market.



FINAL BUILD-OUT

The final build-out includes new neighborhood blocks of single-family home lots and a limited multi-family area connecting directly to George Street.



EXISTING SITE PLAN KEY:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| ① Apple Valley Market | ⑥ Community Gardens | ⑩ Horn Archeological Institute & Museum |
| ② Berrien County Youth Fair Grounds | ⑦ Neighbor to Neighbor | ⑪ Andrews University Campus |
| ③ Ruth Murdoch Elementary School | ⑧ United Federal Credit Union | ⑫ Old US 31 (M-139) |
| ④ Andrews Academy | ⑨ University Medical Center | ⑬ Garland Avenue |
| ⑤ Soccer Fields & Running Track | | |

The image above shows the existing conditions in the study area and should be compared to the illustrative plan on page 47. Illustrative plans represent a kind of long-term vision and should be understood in that sense. As work begins on such a project, the details of the proposal would naturally change in response to unforeseen and changing circumstances. This illustrative plan seeks to demonstrate how a challenging environment can be transformed into an opportunity by plugging into the existing assets and strengths of the place.

A major purpose of the proposed interventions in this area is to broaden opportunities for dwelling and commerce, to more fully serve the needs of the university and the fair grounds, and to make the highest and best use of the existing (and proposed) infrastructure. This illustrative plan hopes to make a persuasive argument that quality and complimentary development can indeed occur on this relatively narrow site currently dominated by strip development.



ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN KEY:

- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| ① Apple Valley Grocery Store | ③ Soccer Fields & Running Track | ⑤ United Federal Credit Union | ⑦ Andrews University Campus | ⑨ Parking Plaza | ⑪ Hotel | ⑬ Garland Avenue |
| ② Berrien County Youth Fair Grounds | ④ Neighbor to Neighbor | ⑥ University Medical Center | ⑧ Proposed Mixed-Use Buildings | ⑩ Proposed Residential Neighborhood | ⑫ Saint Joseph Avenue (Old US 31) | |

Apple Valley Plaza

Apple Valley Market's existing building is entirely preserved in this proposal. To harmonize the building with the new development, it is suggested that the building be repainted and receive new storefront windows and awnings. The market continues to face the existing parking lot, as grocery stores must preserve visibility and the convenience of grocery cart shopping for drivers. The existing University Medical Center is also preserved in its current configuration, although its grounds have been altered to permit new buildings at the block perimeter. The Horn Archeological Institute and Museum has been proposed for demolition - it is assumed that this institution would move to the Andrews University campus in the future. The resulting configuration includes new mixed-use commercial buildings fronting onto the central parking plaza. A hotel is proposed for the corner of Old US 31 and Garland Avenue, which could conveniently serve both the university and the fair grounds. Additional mixed-use or live-work buildings are proposed on Garland Avenue. The proposal includes a pedestrian path mid-block that directly links the Apple Valley parking plaza with the Andrews University campus. Behind Apple Valley Market are apartment buildings that face onto the athletic fields. These apartment buildings are more likely to cope with the proximity to the bulky rear service facade of Apple Valley Market. These apartments would be very conveniently located for Andrews University students and young families.

These two images show the existing view of the Apple Valley Market area (right) and the proposed final build-out (below). The images show just how close Ruth Murdoch Elementary School and Andrews Academy are to the area - significant amenities within walking distance for families with children.

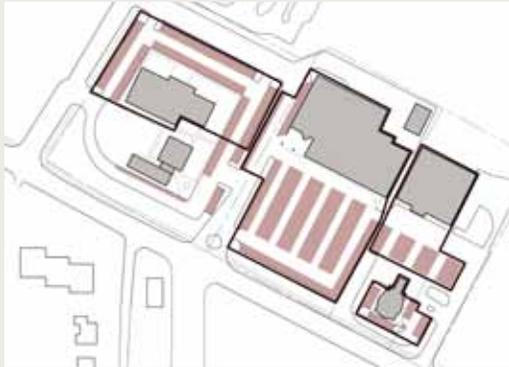


The proposed image illustrates how the existing University Medical Center would remain in its current location, although some of its parking would be relocated to the north. The perimeter of that block includes a new hotel and additional mixed-use development.



Apple Valley Plaza: Parking

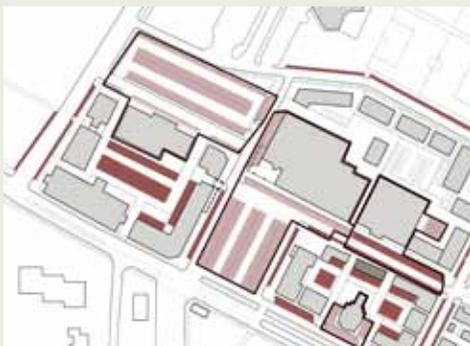
EXISTING DESIGNATED PARKING



- Shared Parking
- Building's Parking Shed
- Parking For Single Buildings
- Buildings Included In Parking Study

This diagram illustrates how designated off-street parking is currently distributed on the site.

PROPOSED DESIGNATED & SHARED PARKING



- Shared Parking
- Building's Parking Shed
- Parking For Single Buildings
- Buildings Included In Parking Study

This diagram illustrates how the proposed parking distribution could work.

The existing parking arrangement is rather inefficient and does not make good use of the land or existing infrastructure. The main parking lot is much larger than necessary - full capacity is generally only reached on Youth Fair Days, when the free parking is used by fair visitors who then walk across Old US 31. The remaining parking lots are mostly oversized and rarely near capacity. Much of the site is occupied by redundant drives, some of them literally parallel to each other. In addition, many of the parking lanes are unnecessarily wide. The proposed parking configuration seeks to preserve much of the existing convenience of automobile-based commerce but also enables the development of new buildings and parking service areas:

The area north of the medical center has been redesigned for 134 spaces, which can also serve as overflow parking for other uses. The hotel includes 66 parking spaces mid-block. The drive-up entrance to the hotel can also be here. Because most hotel parking will occur over-night, daytime use can be shared with the medical center for increased convenience. Apple Valley retains 156 parking spaces within the parking plaza and 18 parking spaces to its west. All other parking provisions are based on Urban Land Institute recommended practices.

A key component of the parking and transportation plan is the provision of a local access lane parallel to Old US 31, beginning at the parking plaza and heading southeast. This local access lane fits comfortably in front of the existing United Federal Credit Union and includes on-street diagonal parking. The local access lane allows the development to emphasize comfortable sidewalks and walkable neighborhood storefronts - conditions that would be difficult to implement directly on Old US 31. It also provides visible convenience parking and slow local traffic speeds. The images show the existing view looking southeast (below) and the proposed view local access lane parallel to Old US 31 (bottom).



Apple Valley Plaza: *Connecting to Existing Assets*

CONNECTION TO EXISTING ASSETS



One of the greatest benefits of this site is its proximity to existing community assets within easy walking and easy biking distance. The diagram on the left shows a quarter mile walking radius circle - about the distance covered by a five-minute walk.

The obvious assets include Andrews Academy and Ruth Murdoch Elementary School to the north, but also the community garden and the athletic fields, which have been reorganized to be more compact. To the west is the campus of Andrews University. Faculty and students might find this neighborhood attractive due to this proximity. It is anticipated that the reorganized commercial center would become a more active social gathering place simply because of its improved sense of place, with obvious benefits for retailers. To the south are the Youth Fair Grounds and its future events center, which would benefit from the walkable amenities and hotel nearby. This also presents an excellent outreach opportunity to a broad audience for Andrews University, which owns much of the land in question. Finally, existing residents near George Street are more conveniently connected to the area with a network of walkable streets.



These images show the existing view of the athletic fields looking northwest (below) and the proposed conditions (left). The proposal illustrates how a walkable neighborhood development could benefit from its proximity to the athletic fields and schools. The design helps to improve safety on these fields as local residents have a clear view over the neighborhood street towards the soccer fields. Neighborhood streets are designed to accommodate parallel parking, which can be used by those using the soccer field. The proposed view also shows a small bathroom and storage pavilion with an attached picnic shelter.





Apple Valley Plaza

The buildings within this proposal have been designed to complement the historic architecture of the Andrews University. The historic core of the campus features broad Collegiate Gothic architectural proportions, and the buildings in this neighborhood are intended to echo that character without replicating it.

The buildings are intended to include some brick and stone facing, but mostly stucco exteriors to control costs. The building forms are generally simple and most of their character comes from the proportions of the forms and openings. It is suggested that the buildings within this project would be governed by architectural guidelines.

The reason that Andrews University's campus architecture was chosen as the source of inspiration is because Andrews University owns the majority of the land in question and would undoubtedly be associated with the project, at least due to its proximity to the campus. For Oronoko Township, this is an opportunity to promote a university-based neighborhood that serves both the campus and the fair at the same time.



These images show the existing view looking northwest towards Apple Valley Market (above) and the proposed redevelopment of that same view (top).

The proposed view shows a new neighborhood green surrounded by attached townhouses to the left, live-work units to the right, and mixed-use commercial development straight ahead. The commercial street leading into the distance runs directly in front of Apple Valley Market, which is slightly out of view from this vantage point. This commercial street also includes the existing Auto Zone and Family Dollar stores, which would now feature on-street parking and mid-block parking across the street.

In the distance is a tower over a public archway, which marks the start of the path that leads to Andrews University. The intention of the illustration is to show how the character of the development can be entirely different than the existing strip development.

MASTERPLAN GOALS

A summary of principles and goals from that were responded to through the design process.

Encourage possibilities for economic development.

This proposal seeks to present a high standard for existing and new commercial developments that is attractive and easily achievable. Some of the economic development tools that were used include diversifying the options of employment opportunities, increasing flexibility of buildings to respond to market changes and, encouraging economical parking arrangements. Another aspect that may increase possibilities of economic development is employing density as a motivator for higher quality public spaces, making them more attractive and inviting to a broader range of people.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goal 4

Protect the natural environment through sustainable practices.

Low-impact development is encouraged by proposing smaller lots which increases density allowing for more units on a parcel thus conserving natural open space and lowering infrastructure costs. Water management on the site is addressed through carefully located green areas and permeable surfaces which allows water draining from the site to filter naturally before it drains into local watershed areas such as the Saint Joseph River and Lake Chapin.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goal 7

Craft complete neighborhoods.

By providing a variety of affordable, mixed-housing options, with vehicular and pedestrian-oriented connections to shopping and employment opportunities this plan reinforces the goals of the Masterplan that address shaping new and existing neighborhoods into complete places to live.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goal 9

A variety of affordable housing options, small-scale parks, recreational parks and community gathering spaces are provided that encourage positive community relations. Public and private areas for recreational and leisure activities are located close to residential uses and schools to encourage healthy living. Also, connections are proposed both physically and visually, to Andrews University and the surrounding community. By strengthening connections to surrounding areas the benefits of possible new development on this site could extend to nearby areas of Berrien Springs.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goals 6, 10 and 12

ZONING CHALLENGES

Lot Metrics Challenges - Density:

This site is situated on two very different zoning areas, Business District and University/College District. The University/College District has few regulations governing public space because of the special uses that take place on this land. The Business District, however, has regulations that address many parts of the public realm. The area of lot metrics addresses minimum lot areas, widths, depths, required setbacks, build to lines, and gross floor area allowed. The lot metrics of this proposal are not possible through current zoning because the lots proposed are smaller than is allowed.

Refer to Township Zoning Ordinance: Article 11.05, 11.06, 12.05, 12.06

This proposal offers residential and commercial places that make efficient use of space and offer quality public spaces. To do this, however smaller lots with greater amounts of lot coverage are necessary. Buildings shape public space; to make places inviting and attractive streets and public places need to feel enclosed and sheltered by the buildings that surround them. This means that building setbacks decrease, and building frontages become a part of the public realm. Small lot widths also contribute to a sense of place by not offering gaps or holes in the street face that feel empty or unsafe. All of these changes to standard lot coverage amounts increase density which offers a greater return on investment to both developers and the township.

Building Use Challenges:

Some of the uses that are proposed are not possible through current zoning of this site. In the Business district residential uses are not provided for.

Refer to Township Zoning Ordinance: Article 4

This proposal suggests residential uses in a business district because the density and amount of commercial offered is enhanced by a strong local residential base. The amount of commercial land that is needed is less than what has been zoned for because this area may not be able to support more commercial uses. Economic use of space allows for additional residential to be included on the commercial land without detracting from the amount of commercial benefits that this site offers.

EXISTING & PROPOSED BIRD'S EYE OF APPLE VALLEY PLAZA



Apple Valley Plaza: Policy Issues

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS



TRANSECT-BASED REGULATING PLAN

This image illustrates a proposed Transect-based Regulating Plan, as might be used as part of an Overlay Zone or even a Planned Unit Development (PUD). In Transect-based zoning, each zone would have considerable land use and density flexibility, but property frontages would meet certain expectations to enable a coherent public realm. For a general understanding on Transect-based zoning, see pages 12-13.

- Natural Zone
- Rural Zone
- Sub-Urban Zone
- General Urban Zone
- Town Center Zone
- Special District
- Civic Buildings

Option 1 - Optional Incentivized Overlay Zone:

An optional, incentivized overlay zone would allow for opportunities that do not exist under current zoning. The optional overlay zone may reduce the requirements for setbacks, lot widths, or parking to preserve the Township's traditional neighborhood pattern. The overlay zone would be used to further the development and conservation goals of the Township as outlined in the Master Plan. See appendix for more information.

Option 2 - Mandatory Overlay Zone:

In order to fulfill the goal of the masterplan and to prevent down-zoning, one could adjust the zoning ordinance to provide for a mandatory overlay zone throughout the entire site boundaries. The benefit would be a more predictable outcome and allow for long-term infrastructure.

Option 3 - Rezone to PUD:

An alternative to the current zoning ordinance would be to apply for a special land use permit, as allowed by the business district, in order to have a Planned Unit Development (PUD). Our design proposal meets all the required standards of a PUD by encouraging housing density, proposing setbacks from property lines, and developing patterns in harmony with the objectives and goals of the Master Plan. One requirement that would have to be adjusted is the stipulation that a PUD in Oronoko Charter Township can only occur on land held by one stakeholder. The requirements for PUDs, however, could be adjusted to allow more than one stakeholder participate in a development project.

EXISTING ZONING MAP



Most of the existing site is zoned for commercial use at this time. The northern part of the site is zoned for university use.



These images show the existing view looking south from Old US 31 (right) and the proposed view from approximately the same vantage point (above). In the long term, Old US 31 is proposed to become a boulevard condition with local access lanes on each side. The local access lanes, which can be built early on and largely outside of the state DOT right-of-way, permit slower local traffic, convenient on-street diagonal parking, and comfortable sidewalk conditions. This enables the design to dove-tail a walkable neighborhood into an automobile-oriented highway. The local access lanes are then lined with commercial land uses that can cater to the regional traffic on US 31. The image shows a corner plaza lined with a restaurant and a cafe. To the right is a new neighborhood street that leads south towards a major employment center and high tech business park in the distance.



LEMON CREEK CENTER

Historically, development has always followed transportation routes and especially intersections, where activity is busiest. Downtown Berrien Springs is located where the ferry once stopped. Apple Valley Market sits where the highway meets Andrews University. The area surrounding the interchange of Old US 31 (M-139) and US 31 is attractive to entrepreneurs because business needs customers and employees, and traffic connects these. Some businesses have already located here, although development has been limited partly due to the lack of wastewater services.

Lemon Creek Center: A Gateway Neighborhood

This proposal suggests that highway-based development need not be place-less suburban sprawl or a visual clutter of strip development. Of course, sign ordinances and other zoning tools can help to make an automobile-oriented environment more attractive. However, should wastewater service be provided, under the existing zoning ordinance, the area near this interchange is almost certainly to develop as a relatively generic area of highway motels, business parks, and strip development. Considering the necessary public investment in infrastructure, this seems like a missed opportunity, especially because automobile-based development does not tend to perform well in terms of tax revenue per acre. Beyond this, the community would end up just like any other highway interchange with not particular competitive advantage or sense of place to promote broadly profitable tourism or entrepreneurship. Instead, this project proposes that the area can be developed as a walkable, mixed-use, and relatively compact neighborhood center anchored by an integrated high tech business campus or similar major employment center. Such development yields a significantly higher return on infrastructure invested, serves as a genuine opportunity for quality housing in the community, offers an attractive location for new businesses including major employers and high tech-businesses, establishes a strong sense of place to promote tourism, and captures significant development to protect farmland beyond.

PROPOSED COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION



- High Tech Business Park
- Additional Commercial Space
- Business Incubators
- Live/Work Opportunity
- High Tech / Light Industrial
- Hotel

This diagram illustrates how commercial uses are proposed to be distributed. This is a hypothetical distribution and land uses could easily be readjusted to include more commercial space as the market warrants it.

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DISTRIBUTION



- Apartments Above Commercial
- Townhouses/Attached Single Family
- Apartment Buildings
- Live/Work
- Detached Single Family
- Senior Housing

This diagram illustrates how a broad range of residential uses can be mixed within the site. In general, density is highest towards Old US 31, with apartments and attached single family units. Most detached single family lots are located at the site perimeter and within the woodlands.

Lemon Creek Center: Phasing

Implementation can occur in phases, as market conditions warrant and property owners are willing. Here is a hypothetical sequence:



NEAR-TERM

The first phase includes the construction of a major employment center, such as high tech businesses, near US 31. This helps to lay a solid economic foundation for the neighborhood and community.



MID-TERM

The second phase includes the completion of a mixed-use neighborhood square and the development along Old US 31, including its proposed local access lanes, a hotel, and other commercial uses.



LONG-TERM

The third phase includes the completion of development on the south side of the property and the gradual redevelopment or infill on Lemon Creek Road. Also a light industrial center at the airpark.



COMPLETE

The final phase includes a broad range of residential lots but also commercial development to the north of Old US 31, which is largely owned by Andrews University.

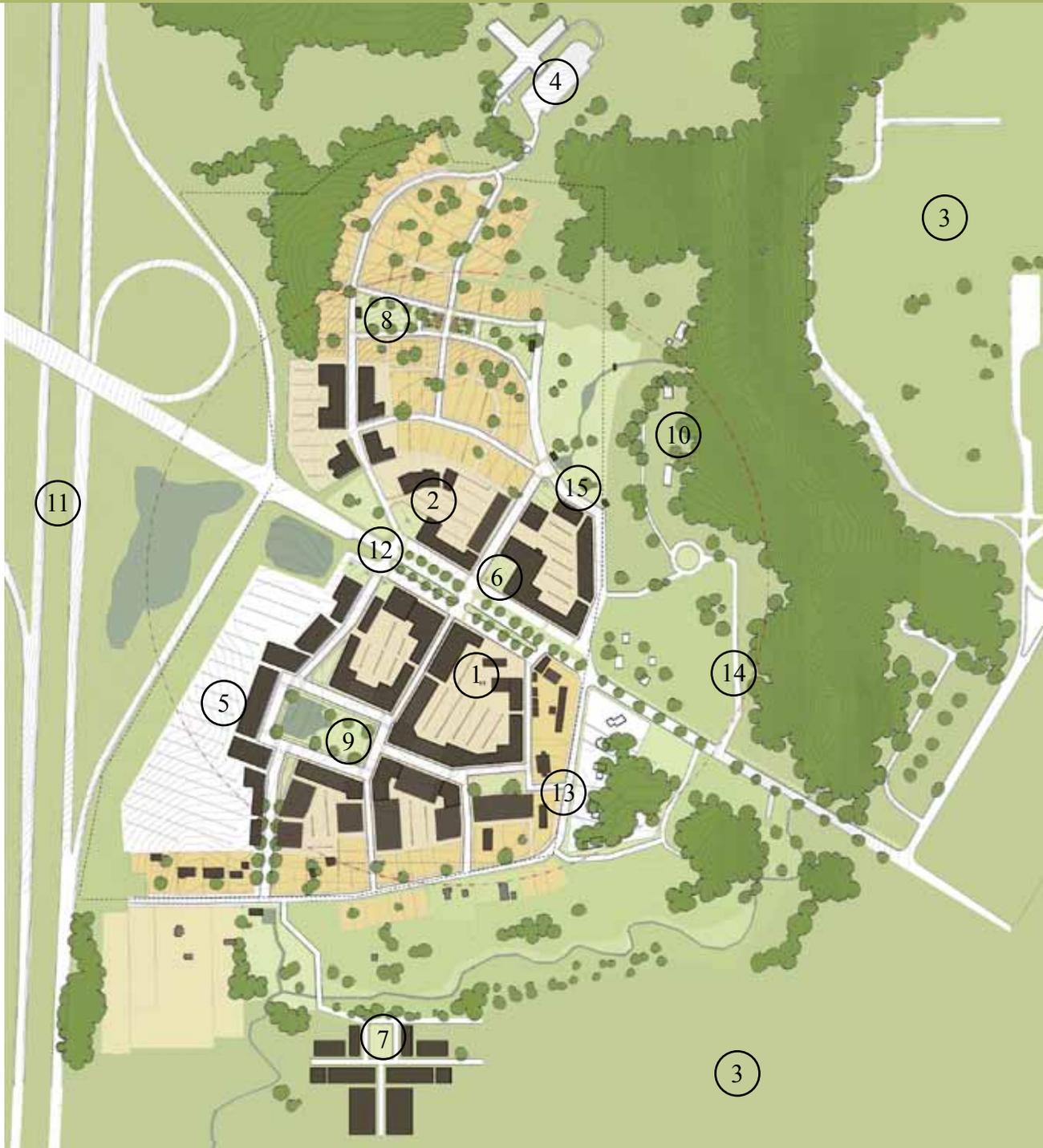
EXISTING SITE PLAN KEY:

- ① Bob Cooper Automotive
- ② BP Gas Station
- ③ Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church
- ④ Andrews University
- ⑤ Timber Ridge Manor
- ⑥ Highway US 31
- ⑦ Old US 31 / M-139
- ⑧ Lemon Creek Road
- ⑨ Campbell Drive
- ⑩ Valley View Drive
- ⑪ Lemon Creek



This project was tentatively named Lemon Creek Center because it is located on Lemon Creek and Lemon Creek Road. Real places should be named for real things, and this neighborhood plan seeks to respect and build upon the natural and man-made assets that exist already. To the south of Old US 31, the existing site gradually slopes and drains south towards Lemon Creek. To the north, the rolling and wooded terrain is bound by the creek and residential properties on Valley View Drive on the east side.

The western boundary of the 130 acre site is entirely defined by highway US 31. Towards the east, the heart of Andrews University is about a ten minute walk away, although few trails and no sidewalks exist at this time. Residents of the local retirement home (Timber Ridge Manor) to the north are frequently seen on wheelchairs navigating past traffic, even though the infrastructure is not intended for pedestrians. Much of the site is undeveloped, but some businesses and an active Seventh-day Adventist church exist along Old US 31. Lemon Creek Road, which includes a number of dwellings parallel to the creek, terminates into the east side of US 31.



The image on the opposite page shows the existing conditions in the study area and should be compared to the illustrative plan on this page. Illustrative plans represent a kind of long-term vision and should be understood in that sense. As work begins on such a project, the details of the proposal would naturally change in response to unforeseen and changing circumstances. This illustrative plan seeks to demonstrate how a challenging environment can be transformed into an opportunity by plugging into the existing assets and strengths of the place.

This plan is designed to sensitively introduce neighborhood infrastructure onto the land. The rolling land to the north includes winding streets that work with the existing topography to limit cut-and-fill and to naturally drain the site to promote local infiltration. The flatter land to the south includes a more rectangular grid that is shifted to shape important views and to dovetail into Lemon Creek Road.

What is currently thought of as a site by the highway is transformed into a diverse environment. Neighborhoods that blend into wooded areas, surround public squares, and face pleasant streets. The only part of the project that is deliberately oriented towards highway US-31 are larger office buildings and similar businesses. They in turn blend right into the neighborhood, thereby buffering all other uses from the presence of the highway. To the south, a small light industrial business park has been located near the Andrews University airport.

ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN KEY:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1 BP Gas Station | 6 Hotel | 11 Highway US 31 |
| 2 Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church | 7 Airport Business Center | 12 Saint Joseph Avenue (Old US 31/M139) |
| 3 Andrews University | 8 Community Gardens | 13 Lemon Creek |
| 4 TimberRidge Manor | 9 Community Square | 14 Campbell Drive |
| 5 Corporate Offices and Parking | 10 Lemon Creek Park | 15 Valley View Drive |

Lemon Creek Center

One reason that this site has so much development potential is because it is simultaneously located next to a major highway and almost immediately adjacent to Andrews University. Conventional suburban development patterns are unlikely to take full advantage of this, but a compact, walkable, mixed-use pattern can.

If wastewater service were to be provided in the future, this site becomes attractive to major employers and high tech businesses who seek a well-connected location within the region. Locating such businesses within the community has obvious benefits. Locating such businesses on this particular site means that the community's two largest employment centers would be within actual walking distance of the site. The presence of M-139 and the interchange means that neighborhood retail could be viable on this site. The case for a compact, walkable neighborhood fabric could hardly be stronger, especially because such development could provide a much higher return on infrastructure investment. With appropriate zoning measures, such development could also provide a strong sense of place as a first introduction to travelers.

The bird's eye view to the right shows how a walkable neighborhood fabric can co-exist with a highway and large business buildings. Commercial blocks feature shop-fronts on the sidewalk and additional parking mid-block. The Andrews Korean Seventh-day Adventist church has been preserved as a neighborhood landmark.

These images show an existing bird's eye view looking southwest (right) and the proposed development (below). Clearly visible in the foreground is the modified section of Old US 31 (M-139) and its commercial frontages. Lining Highway US 31 is a major employment center in the form of high tech businesses. These buildings buffer the neighborhood from the highway but also enjoy great highway visibility. Their large parking areas can be seen between the highway and the office buildings.





Lemon Creek Center

These two images show the existing view looking west in the fields south of Old US 31 (right) and a proposed view from approximately the same vantage point. The proposed illustration shows a high tech office complex fronting a public square. The complex, illustrated in white, has been designed with multiple smaller buildings. This is partly to shape buildings that are complimentary to a neighborhood scale, and partly to allow the buildings to be phased in over time and to enable long-term flexibility. The buildings have been positioned to buffer the neighborhood from the highway beyond.



The public square is intended to give the office buildings an attractive and prestigious address within the community, partly to attract quality employers. The square also features attached townhouses, some of which can be seen on the left. This integrated relationship between employment, dwelling, and commercial activity is becoming increasingly attractive for businesses seeking to retain quality staff, provide for convenient lunch opportunities, and maintain meaningful community relations. The presence of nearby housing also enables some employees to walk to work. Eddy Street Commons and the immediately adjacent Innovation Park at Notre Dame is a local successful example of such a development model in nearby South Bend, Indiana.

The square is also designed to double as an attractive stormwater management device. It includes a landscaped retention basin that is part of a larger network of Light Imprint stormwater conveyance, detention, and infiltration areas. The square is also available for outdoor community events and helps to shape a sense of place within a new community by the highway.

The architecture of Lemon Creek Center has been deliberately designed to echo historical forms and proportions but with contemporary detailing and components. This is only a hypothetical recommendation that may be attractive to progressive employers and businesses, but other architectural styles could certainly be employed instead.



These two images show the existing view looking south at the Andrews Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church from the site's northern half (left) and the proposed view of approximately the same area (above). The proposed view includes detached single-family homes that face onto a neighborhood green, which runs east towards the Lemon Creek valley. The residential lots are serviced by rear lanes, which keeps garage doors away from the fronts and helps to use land more efficiently. The green includes a small community garden. Careful development of detached homes can help to preserve existing trees that currently dominate this area.

Lemon Creek Center

Lemon Creek Center: Careful Street Infrastructure

Lemon Creek Center has been designed to take maximum advantage of existing and proposed infrastructure. Conventional suburban development patterns, which would likely prevail under the existing zoning ordinance, would not effectively leverage the relatively large public investment necessary to provide wastewater service and improved road transportation. In today's economy, it is not prudent to spend significant sums on a new sewer line to connect only a handful of future strip offices and retailers. This neighborhood plan could easily accommodate more than 1500 diverse dwelling units and 400,000 sq ft of commercial space if necessary, although market conditions may not warrant this and this is not necessarily recommended. Neighborhood plans are fundamentally flexible to adjust land use and density as market conditions demand: the same grid in central Saint Joseph today features fundamentally different land uses and densities compared to a century ago, and yet it remains the same grid, similar infrastructure, and equally lovable and prosperous place. Such flexibility is important because it allows development to adapt to different market conditions over time.



Existing view of Old US 31 looking east from the bypass interchange.

This flexibility is possible because complete neighborhood streets are fundamentally places first, defined by buildings that are relatively close to the sidewalk and front onto them as complimentary facades. These buildings and streets are designed for the human scale and walking, providing shade and comfort with trees, and are well-connected to the rest of the neighborhood. The street environment adds value to each house because it is memorable, greater than the sum of its parts. Streets are not roadways. They are complete environments. Their design can also help to naturally convey and locally infiltrate stormwater. This helps to preserve water quality and can reduce the extent of conventional inlet-and-pipe systems, which saves costs.

All of this requires a different approach towards zoning, planning, and development. Targeting long-term value means thinking differently about short-term gains. This type of development is not the easiest, partly because our regulatory system and real estate habits are designed to enable different development patterns. But this type of development is possible and likely represents a preferred long-term outcome, for fiscal, social, and environmental reasons. Fortunately, the Oronoko Township Master Plan recommends the use of Form-based Codes to achieve master plan objectives. A Form-based Code is one tool that can help to facilitate this type of project.

PROPOSED SECTION OF OLD US 31 (M-139)



Proposed section of modified Old US 31 with local access lanes.

QUALITY PUBLIC SPACE



- Water Features
- Parks, Squares, Plazas
- Existing Woodlands
- Civic Buildings
- Andrews University

This diagram illustrates the location of open space and public space. The network of streets, parks, squares, and plazas has been designed to help drain the site more naturally, which limits stormwater pollution and inlet-and-pipe infrastructure.

MASTERPLAN GOALS

A summary of principles and goals from that were responded to through the design process.

Preserve rural land by building compact places.

Residential Lot sizes from 30-80’ wide and Commercial lots with 0’ setbacks ranging in size from 2000sqft to 12,000 sqft increase density and create a place where greater lot coverage is desirable.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goals 1, 5, & 11

Mix uses for variety and flexibility.

The proposal suggests a way of approaching zoning that is not based on use but on the form of buildings that upholds a high quality of public space. This allows for a greater variety of use and avoids down zoning of lots from commercial to residential.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goals 4, 8

Make places walkable.

Aspects of this plan that encourage walkability include a dense street network and a wide variety of activities located within a five minute walk. It also includes pedestrian connections to AU and nearby neighborhoods.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goals 9, 10

Build quality places for both commercial and residential use.

Space has been reserved for parks and urban civic greens. Frontages of buildings and walkable, comfortable streets also add to the design making the place attractive and live-able to visitors and residents.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goals 7, 12

ZONING CHALLENGES

Lot Metrics Challenges:

The lot requirements including lot area, lot width, lot coverage percentages, and setback requirements used in this plan are not possible using current zoning regulations. This proposal allows for smaller lots, lot widths and setbacks with larger lot coverage percentages.

Residential Lot sizes from 30-80’ wide and commercial lots with 0’ setbacks ranging in size from 2000 sqft to 12,000 sqft increase density and create a place where greater lot coverage is desirable.

Refer to Township Zoning Ordinance: Articles 6-13

Existing zoning allows for 90’ minimum lot widths and 45% maximum lot coverage. This does not enhance the goals of the Masterplan because it does not allow for density and promotes inefficient residential development subdivisions. This plan offers a different option for future development that both preserves rural land and offers attractive and efficient options for commercial and residential development.

Mix of Uses Challenges:

Mixed Use buildings are only allowed as a contained development within commercial zones. This proposal allows for a diversity of uses both within lots and in adjoining lot uses. The definition of mixed use that this proposal uses does not conform to current land use zoning.

Refer to Township Zoning Ordinance: Articles 18.23, 11.03, 3.18

There are several benefits in allowing for a mix of uses. One is the market stability that many options can bring; by offering many different choices a plan has a greater opportunity to succeed through different market changes. Another benefit is the vibrancy that a mix of uses can bring to a street or neighborhood. This activity could create an atmosphere that is attractive to visitors and may bring people from around the region to this location for commercial and social activities. Through offering mixed use options stakeholders don’t have to worry about their land being down-zoned from commercial to residential.

EXISTING & PROPOSED BIRD’S EYE OF LEMON CREEK CENTER



Lemon Creek Center: Zoning

Walkability Challenges:

Pedestrian connections and walkability are important aspects of the Masterplan but are not specifically provided for in the Zoning Ordinance. Some current zoning regulations will create difficulties for future development to occur in the manner suggested by this plan. Areas where standards of good walkability are not encouraged through current zoning include: Density, Landscaping, and Streets and Alleys

Refer to Township Zoning Ordinance: Density: Articles 6-13, Landscaping: 3.14, Streets and Alleys, 5.04

Making places walkable is a comprehensive approach that not only offers the opportunity and ability for people to walk throughout their community through sidewalks and crosswalks, but also makes it likely for people to walk. This can be made possible through making streets friendly and safe by encouraging pedestrian friendly building frontages and by reducing vehicular traffic speed by placing buildings close to the street. Another way to make streets more pedestrian friendly is to use buildings to create an outdoor room in the street that makes pedestrians feel safe and enclosed. Offering destinations for people to walk to such as parks or stores could also encourage pedestrian activity.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

Solution 1 - Optional Overlay Zone:

A way to reinforce current zoning and more effectively execute the intent of the Masterplan would be to institute an optional overlay zone. An overlay zone is a regulating tool that is designed to produce a specific effect for a localized area by offering alternate zoning options that enhance existing zoning.

Examples of uses for this zoning tool are to preserve architectural character in historic districts, protect delicate natural environments or to encourage specific types of economic development.

An overlay zone would offer an optional set of zoning regulations (such as a Transect-based Form-based Code) that would enable Oronoko Township to achieve its goals for compact neighborhood development on this site and therefore preserve other areas of the township for agricultural and natural use. See appendix for more information.

Solution 2 - Mandatory Overlay Zone:

Because future infrastructure such as sewer and water systems may soon be implemented on this site it is important for the township to carefully plan potential development. An optional overlay zone could act as an implementation tool for a set period of time and then be adopted as a mandatory special zoning district. This would allow the Township to more closely monitor the development of this area and possibly achieve a more complete result. A mandatory overlay zone could also offer predictability to the built environment that stakeholders may appreciate.

An overlay zone would be especially calibrated to this area through research and public discussion and then adopted to the current zoning ordinance.

Solution 3 - Planned Unit Development:

Another option for implementation of this plan would be through a large scale private development facilitated through a planned unit development. A planned unit development is a special area of the zoning ordinance that relaxes many regulations to allow developers to be innovative and economic. This plan follows the requirements of PUDs in the Zoning Ordinance by making economic use of space, using a parcel of land larger than 10 acres, providing common open spaces and recreation areas, providing landscaping and a pleasant pedestrian environment.

The largest difficulty in using a PUD to implement this plan is the large amount of commercial buildings that drive the scheme. In a PUD buildings that are primarily commercial in use may not be built until 70% of residential units are built. Therefore a PUD could be more beneficial for the North half of the site where residential may be the primary building type.

Adjustments could be made to the zoning regulations for PUDs in Oronoko Township to make this development possible. This may include allowing different stakeholders to join together and form the PUD and incentivizing for commercial investments along with residential developments.

EXISTING ZONING MAP



REGULATING PLAN



- Natural Zone
- Rural Zone
- Sub-Urban Zone
- General Urban Zone
- Town Center Zone
- Special District
- Civic Buildings

RED BUD VILLAGE

These two images show the existing view looking northwest on Old US 31 at the Kerlikowske Farm (bottom) and a proposed view taken approximately from the same vantage point (top). The proposed views shows preserved vineyards and new neighborhood homes beyond. The farm is preserved as a community farm and includes additional buildings.



The Future Land Use Map of the Oronoko Township Master Plan identifies an area northwest of the US-31 bypass as an area for “Mixed Use” (see page 7). This designation is intended for relatively compact, mixed-use, and walkable development and assumes the provision of wastewater services on this side of the bypass. The provision of such services is anticipated to require a substantial investment, partly because the sewer line would need to run down Lemon Creek Road towards Berrien Springs to avoid the limited access interchange. Any development enabled by wastewater services would consequently need to be relatively significant in order to justify the public expense. A Mixed-Use development as

outlined by the Township Master Plan helps to ensure that the resulting tax base will eventually be sufficient and result in a long-term benefit for the community. Furthermore, by capturing significant growth within a relatively small area, this future land use would help to preserve the Township’s remaining agricultural and natural lands from suburban sprawl. In most respects, the Township Master Plan has carefully considered all of these issues and has even suggested the consideration of Form-based Codes to enable walkable development patterns.

On the other hand, this study area of approximately 250 acres could accommodate most of the historic fabric of the Village of Berrien Springs. The sheer size of the site and its implied development potential should give the community pause before proceeding with such an undertaking. The likely economic shifts within the community and the possible scale of unforeseen consequences deserve an especially careful consideration. This proposal should therefore be seen as somewhat of a test that helps to illustrate possible consequences given favorable market conditions. In the end, the design team decided to develop a proposal that would show the best long-term use of the land in the event that wastewater service was provided at this location.

Red Bud Village

Agrarian urbanism is a growing movement that combines the principles of compact, mixed-use, walkable neighborhood development with an economy and culture rooted in agriculture. A major premise of agrarian urbanism is that agricultural activity and agricultural landscapes constitute a tangible lifestyle amenity that increases the value of the development for those who chose to live there. This can be seen as an alternative to a golf course community, for example, where community gardens and farms replace the links as the development's central feature. Home-buyers in such places seek a lifestyle that is deeply defined by growing food in community, for social, economic, and environmental benefits. See appendix for more information.

This site is located just northwest of the US 31 bypass interchange and currently includes the Kerlikowske Farm on Old US 31. One of the highest elevation points in the county, this site enjoys sweeping views of rolling vineyards and orchards. By identifying it as future mixed-use, the master plan clearly foresees this area to eventually lose much of its agricultural landscape. In an attempt to conserve that which is good, this proposal therefore seeks to advance a model that can preserve an agricultural character, lifestyle, and economy through development. It is for this reason that this plan intends to propose an agrarian village defined by agricultural edges, community gardens, farms, rural architecture, equestrian centers, and agricultural tourism. The hope is that this may be an appropriate model for this community and that it might enable a renewed relationship with the land, even as urban growth spreads out towards the northwest along Old US 31. It is a model that intimately binds development with agriculture, urban with rural, and growth with conservation.

These images show the existing view looking northeast over an existing pond on the north part of the site (below), and a proposed view taken roughly from the same vantage point. The proposal includes several cottages on the far side of the pond intended for local resort development. That side of the pond features considerable woods, which are intended to be preserved.

The view is taken from a proposed village center park, located on the southwest side of the pond on Old US 31 (M-139). The pond itself is retrofitted to plug into a larger stormwater management system that promotes local, natural infiltration.



Red Bud Village: Phasing

Implementation can occur in phases, as market conditions warrant and property owners are willing. Here is a hypothetical sequence:



NEAR-TERM

The first phase occurs where the sewer line is likely to arrive as it runs north on Red Bud Trail from Lemon Creek Road. It includes mixed-use development located on Old US 31 off the interchange.



MID-TERM

The second phase includes the retrofit of the existing business park/subdivision north of Old US 31. Primarily residential uses are intended for the northern part of the site, backing up into woodlands.



LONG-TERM

The long-term phase includes the construction of a second neighborhood center near Hinchman Road. It also includes residential and small farm lots at the agricultural edge.



COMPLETE

The complete build-out includes the completion of the second neighborhood center north of Hinchman Road and the development of the resort complex east of the pond.

EXISTING SITE PLAN KEY:

- 1 Kerlikowske Farm
- 2 Greenstone Farm Credit Services
- 3 Natural Land
- 4 Agricultural Land
- 5 Highway US 31
- 6 Saint Joseph Avenue (Old US 31/M139)
- 7 Edgewood Road
- 8 Red Bud Trail
- 9 E. Hinchman Road



This proposal has tentatively been named Red Bud Village because it is located at the intersection of Red Bud Trail and Old US 31 (M-139), which runs diagonally through the

approximately 250 acre site. The western half of the property is dominated by Kerlikowske Farm, a successful grape growing business with beautiful rolling vineyards sloping towards the southwest. Towards the north, the site includes the intersection of Hinchman Road. The northeastern part of the property is largely defined by woodlands and significantly rougher terrain, including a man-made pond that traces its origins to a gravel pit. The southeastern side of the site is bound by US 31 and its interchange. A small and partially implemented suburban business park exists here. The southwest corner of the Red Bud Trail intersection is planned to include a new headquarters buildings for the Seventh-day Adventist Church Lake Union Conference. It is worth noting that initial wastewater service is likely to arrive from the south on Red Bud Trail, which helps to establish a framework for phasing development. Also, the State DOT currently owns a significant right-of-way on this part of M-139.

The image above shows the existing conditions in the study area and should be compared to the illustrative plan on this page. Illustrative plans represent a kind of long-term vision and should be understood in that sense. As work begins on such a project, the details of the proposal would naturally change in response to unforeseen and changing circumstances. This illustrative plan seeks to demonstrate how a sensitive environment can be transformed into an opportunity by plugging into the existing assets and strengths of the place.



Red Bud Village is roughly designed as two distinct neighborhoods. This is warranted partly because the site is so large, but also because the natural features of the land demand a sensitive response that naturally defines two halves of development. To the northeast of Old US 31, rough wooded terrain and a significant natural drainage path divide the site. To the southwest, a beautiful viewshed over vineyards roughly corresponds to a seasonal drainage path. Both of these areas have been preserved to conserve water quality, improve stormwater management, protect views and woodlands, and to avoid unnecessary cut-and-fill.

The southeastern neighborhood is intended to plug into the opportunities that would naturally arise from highway proximity. The very eastern parts of the site are therefore intended for highway-oriented development, including commercial and clean light industrial uses. At the same time, these parcels are designed to integrate into a walkable neighborhood pattern, wherein Old US 31 becomes a kind of main village street over time. A hypothetical Lake Union Conference office design has been located in the plan, with mixed-use development occurring in the partially vacated State DOT right-of-way. The existing business park can be retrofitted over time to increase density and a greater mix of uses. Residential lots are concentrated towards the north side of this neighborhood, near the woodlands.

ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN KEY:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Expanded Kerlikowske Farm Complex | 8 East Neighborhood Center |
| 2 Greenstone Farm Credit Services | 9 Highway US 31 |
| 3 Natural Land | 10 Old US 31 (M-139) |
| 4 Agricultural Land | 11 Edgewood Road |
| 5 Community Church | 12 Red Bud Trail |
| 6 Community School | 13 E. Hinchman Road |
| 7 West Neighborhood Center | 14 Water Tower and Inn |

Red Bud Village: An Agrarian Community

These two images show an existing view looking southwest over Old US 31 and Kerlikowske Farm (right), and a proposed view of the proposed west neighborhood center taken roughly from the same vantage point. The proposed view shows a large neighborhood green that crosses over Old US 31 (M-139), which in the long-term is proposed to become a village main street. Mixed-use storefront buildings fronting onto Old US 31 can be seen to the right. The village green is terminated by a proposed church, which is flanked by a small neighborhood school or Kindergarten. In the distance are the preserved vineyards. The existing Kerlikowske Farmstead, visible on the far left, has been preserved but modified to include a local farm market and working farm buildings intended to manage the agrarian village's holdings. The green is also lined by neighborhood homes fronting onto walkable streets that connect residents to the neighborhood centers and the farmlands beyond.



The ability to have pedestrian access to natural and agricultural lands has been paradoxically limited in most modern rural communities. The constricting patterns of suburban sprawl and automobile-centered development patterns are largely to blame for this. If future generations are to develop a meaningful relationship to our natural and agricultural legacy, development needs to enable convenient and safe access to such landscapes, especially for children, young people, and those who do not engage in the agricultural economy. Pedestrian-based neighborhood patterns such as the one proposed here can immediately connect residents to these places, which also helps to boost the economic value of the place.



Red Bud Village

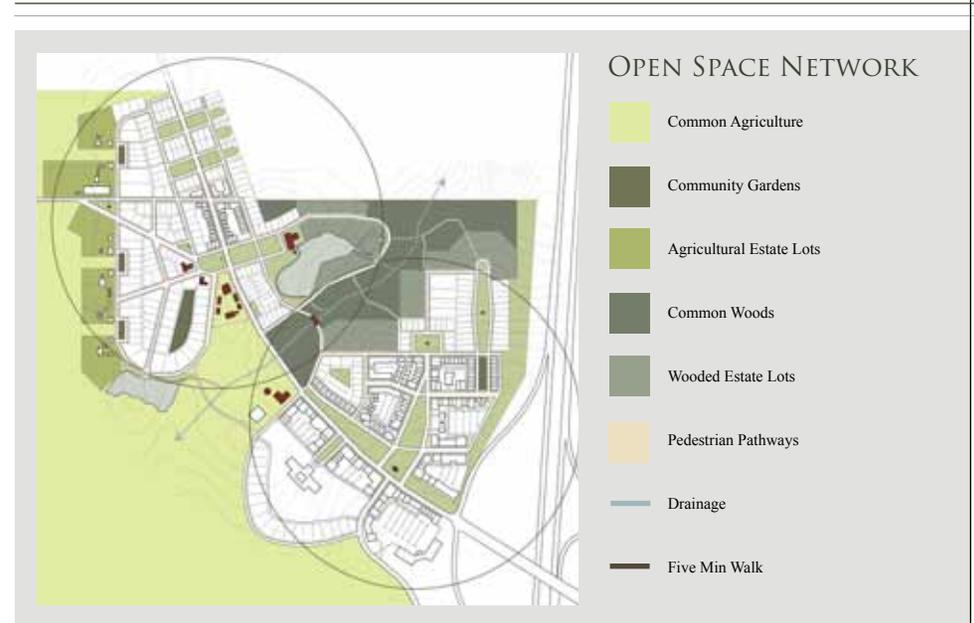


Existing view looking west from Old US 31, just north of Hinchman Road (top). See text below for further information.



Designed for at least 900 dwelling units, this plan preserves almost 40% of natural and agricultural lands within the selected site boundary. Beyond this, the implied development intensity has the ability to capture a majority of future township growth and can therefore help protect much larger areas of farmland and native habitat. Within the site, the plan preserves approximately 21 acres of woodlands, more than 60 acres of agriculture, and 14 acres of neighborhood parks, greens, and community gardens. All development is within easy walking distance of these beautiful and productive amenities, which helps to market the project as an agrarian community. Kerlikowske Farm is located at the tip of the southwestern view-shed preserve, which helps drivers on Old US 31 remain visually connected with agricultural landscape beyond. Generous private agricultural estate lots and wooded estate lots are located at the neighborhood perimeters, but with provisions for pedestrian trail connections into the landscape beyond.

The images above illustrate an existing view looking west just north of Hinchman Road (above left), and a proposed view of a neighborhood street in approximately the same location (top right). The street and path network has been designed to naturally lead pedestrians and views towards the open landscape, which helps to give homes a rural view even when well within the neighborhood. This view shows the vineyards in the distance and suggests how relatively compact neighborhood patterns can help to preserve an essentially rural character.



The diagram above illustrates the plan's open space network, preserves, and agricultural and woodland estate lots. Also visible is the reinforced natural drainage pattern, which uses two ponds to help control stormwater and double as attractive amenities.

Red Bud Village



This image illustrates a hypothetical cottage court located within Red Bud Village. Cottage courts, sometimes referred to as bungalow courts, include relatively small cottages that are grouped to face towards a common pedestrian green space, with parking and services occurring behind. This helps to reduce the size of individual private yards while still providing an attractive amenity for the residents. Because of their arrangement, cottage courts can achieve significant densities (10-20 units to the acre) and yet compliment and coexist with other less intensive land uses. This helps to make more use of local infrastructure while preserving a certain quality of life. Cottage courts are popular with seniors, students, empty nesters, singles, and young families because they decrease private maintenance and are more affordable. They can also be adapted for agricultural workers.

Red Bud Village has been illustrated as an agrarian neighborhood development that includes traditional structures which echo historical forms. Neighborhood houses and homes that look over the countryside are designed according to the best of local architectural traditions. Mixed-use and commercial buildings have a distinct village center character that is intended to promote an agrarian culture, attractive dwelling opportunities, and agricultural tourism. Building footprints in the west neighborhood are relatively small, partly in deference to the existing community areas to the east. The proposed east neighborhood is proposed for significant highway-oriented development, albeit within a similar same range of character. However, all of this is based on hypothetical assumptions that don't necessarily align with future market conditions or community goals.

Development in this area could easily correspond to the proposals made for Lemon Creek Center or other sites. The "look" of the proposal is therefore not the key issue here. Rather, it is the pattern of compact, mixed-use, walkable development that should be identified as the key benefit in making good use of public infrastructure investment, conserving natural and agricultural lands, promoting land use flexibility over time, and establishing a sense of place that can advance tourism and provide great and diverse places for a complete community life.



This image below illustrates the proposed neighborhood center conditions on Old US 31 (M-139) in the long term. The road is proposed to evolve into a slow speed, mixed-use environment that supports the surrounding development and shapes a strong sense of place.

The diagram below shows a hypothetical distribution of land uses in Red Bud Village. A traditional street network and Form-based Code can provide flexibility in land use over time, in order to respond to changing market conditions.



Red Bud Village: Diverse Land Use Opportunities

MASTERPLAN GOALS

A summary of principles and goals from that were responded to through the design process.

Preserve Natural and Agricultural Land.

By concentrating new development in this area other land in Oronoko Township will be preserved for agricultural and natural land. In addition to preserving land offsite 20 acres of agricultural land is maintained on-site to enhance development and retain the agricultural character of the area. Lots in the proposal are reserved for working farms, and the whole plan is based on a progressive agricultural technique, the agricultural urbanist model.

Existing woodland and dry creek bed are preserved through this plan, water retention and management are integrated into existing natural features. Efforts to reduce impervious surfaces throughout the site will allow water to be filtered naturally before it reaches local water retention areas.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goals 1, 2, 3

Strengthen comprehensive planning.

Because public sewer and water connections may soon be possible in this area it is important to offset the cost of this major infrastructure investment by offering enough new development to make it worthwhile.

This plan offers an example of what sustainable future development could look like. It suggests building quality places for both commercial and residential use. To do this a mix of businesses and residential types are necessary. To improve conditions for mixed use development reduced minimum lot areas, minimum lot width, setbacks, and maximum lot coverages is encouraged for a more economic use of land. One area that land is often underutilized is extra parking. By providing on-street & mid-block parking public space can be more effectively shaped into positive spaces without the hindrance of large parking lots.

A complete phasing plan allows for growth over time as need occurs. Continuing comprehensive planning is also necessary to keep communities from becoming stagnant.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goals 4-8

Create a complete place for people to live.

Complete places include houses but reach to the complete environment. In this plan housing is varied to offer many options to prospective residents. Streets and neighborhoods are shaped by the way buildings face the street and care has been taken to include sidewalks, community gardens, pedestrian paths, parks, and open civic spaces. To achieve a public space where pedestrians feel comfortable building setbacks need to be smaller to give a feeling of enclosure. Other aspects of this community feature the unique agricultural character that already exists in this area. A community farm stand, views to the surrounding agriculture and integrated local farms make this plan a place that enhances the best of what Berrien Springs also has to offer.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goals 9, 10, 12

Enhance tourism and marketing.

This plan offers a way to promote Berrien Springs and Oronoko Township as a unique agricultural destination for the area. Agrarian urbanism offers a way for residents to experience rural agricultural living that is also centered around a community. This approach to development for Oronoko Township will offer an attractive gateway to Berrien Springs from the US-31 interchange at M139.

In keeping with the Masterplan: Goal 11

ZONING CHALLENGES

Lot Metrics and Density Challenges:

The lot sizes, setbacks, and lot coverage standards that this proposal suggests are not possible under current zoning regulations.

The primary purpose of these challenges to zoning is to increase density, which would allow for mixed use development (Goal 4 of the master plan) and justify the expansion of the public water and wastewater systems along M-139 (Goal 5 of the Master Plan).

Refer to Township Zoning Ordinance:

Article VI Section 6.06 A, B, C, E

Article VII Section 7.06 A, B, C, E

Article VIII Section 8.06 A, B, C, E

Article IX Section 9.06 A, B, C, E

Article X - Section 10.06 A, B, C, E

Article XI - Section 11.06 A, B, C, D, F

EXISTING & PROPOSED BIRD'S EYE OF RED BUD VILLAGE



Red Bud Village: Policy Issues

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

Parking Surfaces Challenges:

The illustrative plan is not possible because of regulations in the current zoning ordinance about off-street parking areas that are designated to be paved with pervious materials.

Parking surfaces are conventionally non-pervious materials that do not allow for water to filter naturally through the soil. Because of the amount of development there are many surfaces including streets and roofs that are not able to allow water to filter naturally, by allowing pervious paving in parking areas it will reduce the negative impact of run-off water on local water supplies.

This method, combined with a comprehensive water drainage plan will continue responsible natural and ecological preservation.

*Refer to Township Zoning Ordinance:
Article XVI Section 16.03 I. 3*

Purchase Development Rights:

Our first recommendation is that the township secure the agricultural identity of the community by making an offer to Purchase the Development Rights (PDR) of the farmland in the center of the site*. We also suggest the township request the woodlands adjacent to the farmland be donated to the township in an effort to preserve this natural feature (Goal 2 of the Master Plan).

Optional Overlay Zone:

Our second recommendation is that the township adopts an incentivized optional overlay zone for mixed use. This would be in accordance with the township's master plan (Goal 4). The overlay can be integrated into the administration of the existing zoning ordinance. Existing businesses on the site would not be negatively affected by the overlay (no down-zoning). The flexibility offered by an optional overlay zone may also increase public and political acceptance. However, the outcome of an optional overlay is unpredictable and may result in development patterns reflective of the underlying zone. See appendix for more information.

Re-Zone Site:

An alternate recommendation to an optional overlay is to rezone the entire site. This would also be in accordance with the township's master plan and ensure it more control over future development. Existing businesses on the site would not be negatively affected by the rezone (no down-zoning). Rezoning may hinder political and public acceptance. Rezoning this site will still require the township to take steps preserve its farmlands and woodlands.

Planned Unit Development:

Another alternate recommendation is to develop the site as a planned-unit development (PUD). Because it may prove difficult to find one developer willing to develop the entire site, the township could choose to initiate a PUD with more than one owner.

REGULATING PLAN

This regulating plan illustrates how a Transect-based Form-based Code can help to guide physical growth while maintaining density and land use flexibility.

The plan includes two Special Districts to accommodate automobile-based development. Density is highest towards Old US 31 and feathers out towards the natural and agricultural edges.

Please see pages 6 and 7 for more information about the Transect.



APPENDIX

VERY USEFUL RESOURCES

Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach
An ITE Recommended Practice
by Institute of Transportation Engineers
ITE, 2010

Form-Based Codes in 7 Steps: The Michigan Guide to Livability
by Leslie Kettren et al
CNU Michigan, 2010

Form-Based Codes:
A Guide for Planners, Urban Designers, Municipalities and Developers
by Daniel Parolek, Karen Parolek, and Paul Crawford
Wiley Press, 2008

Light Imprint Manual: Integrating Sustainability and Community Design
by Thomas Low
Civic by Design, 2010

New Urbanism: Best Practices Guide, Fourth Edition
by Robert Steuteville, Philip Langdon and Special Contributors
New Urban News Publications, 2009

Principles of Urban Retail Planning and Development
by Robert Gibbs
Wiley Press, 2012

Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Redesigning the Suburbs
by Ellen Dunham-Jones and June Williamson
Wiley Press, 2011

Garden Cities: Theory & Practice of Agrarian Urbanism
by Andres Duany & Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company
The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment, 2011

THANK YOU

THE VILLAGE OF BERRIEN SPRINGS

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 Sheri Kesterke, Clerk

ORONOKO CHARTER TOWNSHIP

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A Vision for Growth and Conservation:
 THE VILLAGE OF BERRIEN SPRINGS & ORONOKO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
 Michigan

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CREDITS AND DISCLAIMER

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