

City of Romulus  
*Wayne County, Michigan*

# Master Plan

Draft: June 2016



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

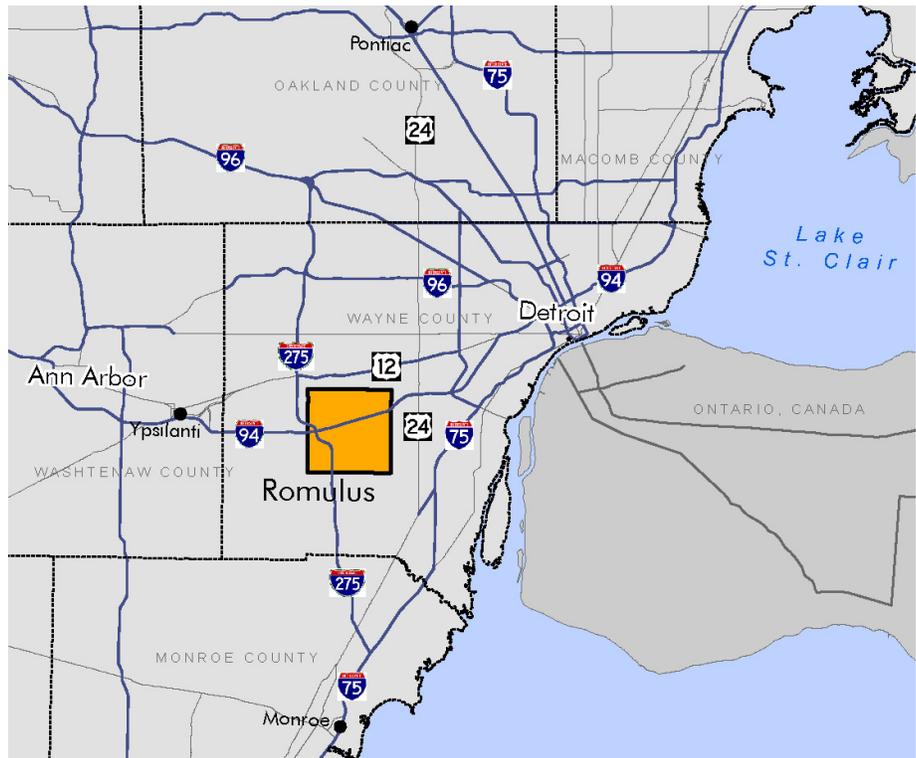


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## Appendix

Existing conditions are summarized in a separately published appendix to this plan.



## A. An Introduction to Romulus

Opportunities abound in the city of Romulus, where small town charm meets international transportation and commerce. Located in the south central portion of Wayne County, approximately 17 miles southwest of Downtown Detroit, Romulus maintains its character yet offers wonderful economic possibility. Home to the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport, the city provides a first impression for over 36 million people who pass through the airport each year.

The earliest settlement in the area was built in 1826 near Van Born Road and Henry Ruff Road by Samuel Polyne, a French-Canadian. The Township of Romulus was formed in 1835, named after the mythological Greek twins 'Romulus and Remes', the sons of Mars, the God of War. Construction of two railroad lines in 1870 and 1880, now known as the CSX and Norfolk and Southern Railroads, marked the beginning of significant development in the area. This expansion of the transportation system was a catalyst for the future development of a train depot and passenger station, a horse livery stable, livestock holding and processing center, an icehouse and the Baxter Hotel, located on the southwest corner of Shook and Goddard Roads.

By the early 1900s, Romulus had its own bank, post office and a community center, Grange Hall, at Sterling and Goddard Roads. In 1927, an airport was established in the center of the community that has evolved into an important transportation landmark. Significant growth of the airport during the 1940s has distinguished Romulus from other metropolitan Detroit communities, and in 1970, Romulus was incorporated as a city. From this strong foundation, Romulus has evolved into a thriving city, balancing a strong employment base and bustling

This plan updates the 2009 Master Plan and reflects the 2015 Envision Romulus framework where applicable.

industrial areas while maintaining its residential character and small town charm.

## Regional Influences

Romulus' regional context has had a profound impact on development in the city. The following regional influences have helped shape the city into what it is today:

### *Access to Transportation Facilities*

There is no doubt that Romulus' placement amongst several key transportation facilities have elevated it to a place recognized throughout the region. Building upon the historic impacts of local railroads as discussed above, the following transportation facilities have contributed to the city's current growth patterns.

- *Access to I-94 and I-275.* Travelers are provided with links to key Michigan destinations including Ann Arbor, Lansing, Detroit, and Port Huron through these interstate highways. This prime accessibility has elevated the desirability of Romulus as a location for businesses and residential development.
- *The Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport.* Located in the heart of the city, the airport has evolved into a thriving international transportation hub, and the 12<sup>th</sup> busiest airport in the U.S. The airport has spurred demand for development and commercial centers to serve travelers such as hotels, and rental car facilities. Industrial businesses also see benefits in locating close to air freight facilities. Metro and Willow Run Airports have initiated large-scale planning and development efforts aimed at increasing commerce in and around the airports. Specific projects include a ring road concept to connect the airports and Aerotropolis businesses into a system of freight-oriented thoroughfares, which have been considered in this planning effort. Impacts from the airport also need to be considered to ensure that residences are not planned in high airport noise zones.

### *Neighboring Communities*

This planning effort would not be complete without considering the impacts Romulus' planning and development practices have on neighboring communities. The development, land uses, and current zoning of the following communities were reviewed to ensure compatible land uses are planned in Romulus.

- *The cities of Wayne and Westland.* These cities adjoin Romulus along Van Born Road. The development here is largely developed as a mixture of commercial, industrial and residential uses. The collective draw created by development in all cities has mutually beneficial effects.
- *City of Taylor.* Romulus shares its eastern boundary with the City of Taylor. The two city's land use patterns are somewhat consistent with predominantly industrial uses at the north end transitioning to commercial and residential at the southern end of the Inkster Road corridor. Like Romulus, Taylor is involved in Detroit Region Aerotropolis,

#### **Goal**

Throughout the plan, goals are highlighted in red.



Actions are highlighted in blue. For a complete list of implementation tools, and timeframes, see Chapter 7.



a joint planning effort with other communities, Wayne County and the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport to stimulate economic development in the region. It proposes programs, procedures and needed infrastructure investments designed to provide a coordinated street system to link metro and Willow Run airports with related development in the area, including a ring road system for improvements to Harrison, Inkster, Eureka and I-94.

- *Huron Township.* Located to the south is Huron Township, a rural community occupied by agricultural uses. Large areas of the township are planned to be developed into light industrial, research and development, commercial, and high density residential as part of an economic development effort in connection with Wayne County.
- *Van Buren Township.* The land use patterns in Van Buren Township align with those in the city of Romulus. The Visteon facility at Ecorse Road and Hannan generates opportunities for both Romulus and Van Buren. Although located outside of Romulus, the city will likely experience increased traffic, visibility, and housing demands generated by the facility.

## B. Opportunities

In addition to the regional perspective, a number of opportunities and constraints were considered during this planning process.

### Future Development

There are undeveloped sites of many sizes throughout the City that can accommodate new services, neighborhoods, and businesses. As future growth occurs, the city can benefit from improved building appearances such as landscape buffers for industrial sites, that offer a positive reflection of Romulus. Areas of opportunity are described below. These areas have a high potential for continued development that is coordinated with the each area's character.

- Regional planning efforts including both public and private interests have the potential to generate significant future growth. Partnerships with Wayne County and adjoining communities have produced regional planning efforts such as the Detroit Region Aerotropolis.
- Downtown provides a valuable community focal point, seen as a local hub by residents. Available land could accommodate entertainment attractions, restaurants, shopping, recreation, housing, and offices. Development should provide quality architecture and uses that respect the scale and context of the existing downtown. Existing structures should be revitalized to reflect the traditional and historic nature of the downtown and quality image that elicits civic pride. A pedestrian-scaled and friendly environment, complete with public open space, encourages walkability and increased investment.
- The Wayne Road Corridor provides opportunity for new commercial, including retail, restaurants, and a



## Romulus Opportunities Map

supermarket. Improved streetscape amenities should be included in new developments to enhance the quality of the corridor.

- With its proximity to the airport, the Southern Gateway, located at the interchange of I-275 and Eureka Road, has emerged as an important entrance to Romulus with potential to become a major employment center. This includes large-scale industrial uses, such as businesses that provide logistics, supply chain management and international trade.
- East Airport, with access to the airport and major roadways, attracts industrial uses. Those that are currently in the highest demand are trucking and contractors' outdoor storage yards as a principal use. In order to limit uses that may be too intense for the area, but allow for more intense uses that are attracted to the area, the area should be emphasized as a logistics hub and zoning made to permit airport related commercial uses with design standards that limit adverse impacts on adjacent residential districts.

### Future Residential Growth

Romulus has well-established, traditional neighborhoods and picturesque rural areas. It is important in attracting new residents to capitalize on opportunities while maintaining this variety of housing.

- The city offers an attractive variety of residential environments. It is not uncommon to find large single family lots, hobby farming, and horses.
- There are many areas where future residential development of various types and densities could be supported.

## Future Transportation Improvements

The city has significant access to important transportation systems including two rail lines, two airports (Detroit Metro and Willow Run), and two major interstates.

- The city's street system has capacity to accommodate expected increases in traffic. The city is investing in its non-motorized transportation system, making it easier to walk and bicycle throughout the city.
- The regional Detroit Region Aerotropolis effort includes needed transportation improvements that will open up transportation routes and stimulate development.
- The city has the potential to benefit from stimulus money provided by the federal government that is aimed at combating the declining economy by funding transportation-related projects.

## C. Constraints

While there are abundant opportunities in the city, the following factors can limit the city's ability to achieve its ultimate goals.

- Physical barriers in the City like the expressways, the airport, and rail lines make it more difficult to unify neighborhoods, and conveniently access municipal services, schools, and businesses.
- The current land use patterns, sporadic in some areas, have created some undesired land use relationships, such as residential adjacent to industrial trucking uses, which have made it difficult for the City to define a unified character for these distinct areas.
- A lack of diversity in high density housing options such as attached single family, townhouses, mixed-use buildings, independent senior living, or lofts, may be deterring future residents.
- Though the airport and interstates pull significant traffic into the city, other factors have not resulted in the type of regional commercial uses desired by its residents and city officials. Residents wish to see more commercial uses that provide items and services such as groceries, clothes, housewares, entertainment, and dining to serve their daily needs.
- Romulus does not have jurisdiction over many of the streets and drains within the City limits. This constrains the city's control over maintenance, funding, and priority for improvements.
- An established infrastructure and several existing structures limit options to improve roadways in terms of realignment, widening, or streetscape elements.
- Until more recent years, little emphasis has been placed on developing an interconnected non-motorized pathway system in the City.
- The City lacks the level of revenue needed to offer strong community facilities and services in comparison to nearby

communities who compete for development.

- With a higher tax rate in both the City and Wayne County, Romulus is at a competitive disadvantage when promoting its location for economic development.

## D. What is a Master Plan?

The master plan is a document created by the City of Romulus Planning Commission and adopted by the City Council to guide the future growth and development of the community. A sound master plan helps ensure that Romulus remains a highly desirable community in which to live, work, or visit. This can be accomplished by preserving and enhancing the qualities of the community that the residents, businesses and property owners consider important.

The master plan identifies and analyzes the city's physical elements to create a set of goals, policies and recommendations to direct decisions regarding future land use, neighborhood improvements, transportation improvements, and special strategies for key areas in the city. Because the plan offers a balance between the interests and rights of private property owners with those of the entire community, it effectively assists City leaders in making substantive, thoughtful decisions for the community which considers long-term implications.

### Using the Master Plan

The City Council, Planning Commission, and the public should strive to continuously use and refer to this document in order to:

- Review development proposals against the goals and objectives of the master plan.
- Review rezoning requests for consistency with the City's rezoning criteria including existing conditions, the future land use map, the appropriate timing of the change, consistency with the goals and policies of the master plan, and potential impacts on the City.
- Provide a basis for amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to help realize and enforce plan goals.
- Understand expectations for the future land use pattern and desired land use types in the community to guide new development and redevelopment.
- Identify and recommend physical improvements to important resources such as roadways, access management, streetscape and entryways, non-motorized pathways, parks, and public facilities.
- Provide specific design standards related to buildings, landscaping, and other site improvements for development and redevelopment throughout the community.

## The Differences between a Master Plan and a Zoning Ordinance

The master plan provides a general direction for future

development, and while it does not change the zoning of or any zoning regulations applying to any property, implementation of the plan will be through zoning ordinance text and map amendments. Some of the other differences between the master plan and the zoning ordinance are listed below.

Master Plan	Zoning Ordinance
Provides general policies, a guide.	Provides specific regulations, the law.
Describes what should happen in the future – recommended land use for the next 20 years, not necessarily the recommended use for today.	Describes what is and what is not allowed today, based on existing conditions.
Adopted under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended.	Adopted under the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended.
Includes recommendations that involve other agencies and groups.	Deals only with development-related issues under City control.
Flexible to respond to changing conditions.	Fairly rigid, requires formal amendment to change.

### The Planning Process

This plan updates the city's comprehensive planning process that was used when developing the 2004 and 2009 Master Plans. Extensive participation from the public, regional agencies, public officials, City staff, and experts on various specialty areas provided the underlying basis for the 2004 and 2009 plans.

Because the main purpose of this update was to streamline the plan document and reflect the visioning effort, public participation was limited to planning commission meetings. The 2015 Envision Romulus public participation was used as a benchmark to assess the city's priorities, which are reflected in this plan update. This document was prepared primarily in cooperation with the Planning Department, the Community and Economic Development Department, the Planning Commission, and City Council.

## A. Introduction

Land use is a term that describes how a particular piece of property is being used. Planning for future use is important to understand because it significantly shapes a community's character and quality. In order to create this vision for the future, it is important to know what exists today because that becomes the framework for the future. Next, the City needs to understand its priorities in terms of its character and quality.

This chapter evaluates the land use patterns of the City of Romulus. Beginning with an analysis of the city's existing land use pattern, an understanding of regional influences, planned projects, and desires of the City, a summary of key issues was developed to help focus attention on important land use issues in Romulus. In order to address key issues, the chapter includes goals and objectives to be used to guide future land use decisions. To further support the goals and objectives, a future land use plan is provided for the entire city and for special sub-areas.

### *Key Neighborhood Concepts*

- Retain elements of the mixed-use, urban land use pattern
- Provide diverse residential options
- Create nodes of commercial to serve neighborhoods
- Concentrate regional commercial uses
- Create new opportunities for business development
- Eliminate the sporadic pattern of industrial land uses

## B. Land Use Goals and Objectives



**Goal No. 1** Create a diversified and balanced mixture of land uses that will support the economic vitality, tax base, and livability of the City.

### *Objectives*

- a. Respect the current mixed-use development pattern for its unique character and convenience for residents while improving land use relationships.
- b. Provide residential areas that offer varying degrees of density and housing.
- c. Accommodate commercial and office development in various forms to balance the needs of immediate neighborhoods, the community as a whole, and the region.
- d. Eliminate isolated locations of nonconforming commercial and industrial development with the exception of planned local business that complements neighborhood development.
- e. Designate areas for office research, light industrial, and heavy industrial operations that support the high level of market demand in the City in proper locations to minimize adverse impacts on remaining development.
- f. Continue to accommodate public facilities and institutional uses.
- g. Encourage the gradual elimination of non-conforming uses in accordance with the plan.

**Goal No. 2** Provide a solid residential base that will accommodate expansion of existing neighborhoods, protect residential areas from incompatible land uses, offer a variety of housing opportunities, and support the needs of Romulus residents.

### *Objectives*

- a. Identify locations for additional residential to expand the boundaries of existing residential neighborhoods and promote infill redevelopment.
- b. Offer nodes of neighborhood commercial at some major intersections to service nearby residents.
- c. Protect areas for low density/rural residential in the southwest and northwest areas of the City as identified in the Opportunities Map.
- d. Distinguish opportunities for diverse, quality high density residential that could include attached single-family, senior housing, and more innovative housing options in the downtown, Vining Road Development District, and other areas of concentrated development.
- e. Promote Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) in areas such as existing neighborhoods and in downtown as identified on the Opportunities Map.
- f. Allow some opportunities for neighborhood commercial uses within residential areas provided it is located on major roadways, a market demand is demonstrated, and the use is part of a larger development project.

**Goal No. 3** Provide commercial and office uses that offer a diversity of services for different target markets, are appropriately located for convenience and safety, and maximize the design potential to create aesthetic business areas in the City that reflect the intended character of the area.

*Objectives*

- a. Create a commercial and office development pattern that is grouped together in strategic locations on main streets that creates limited concentrations of activity, rather than uncontrolled commercial growth along the corridors.
- a. Promote redevelopment of vacant and underutilized commercial property at strategic nodes.
- b. Encourage uses and design that promotes pedestrian-oriented shopping and dining and reflect the historic, traditional downtown character in the Central Business District.
- c. Offer small nodes of neighborhood commercial uses such as pharmacies, banks, dry cleaners, and convenience stores at main intersections near neighborhoods to provide goods and services compatible with the residential character of the surrounding area.
- d. Allow mixed-use within nodes that integrate residential development into neighborhood commercial areas.
- e. Provide regional commercial development to offer shopping, service, and dining establishments of a larger scale along major corridors to service the City and pass-by traffic without adverse impacts on traffic flow or nearby residential areas.
- f. Ensure commercial areas reflect the quality and character of Romulus through site and building design standards that ensure proper circulation, access management, landscaping, architectural design, and other elements.
- g. Evaluate land use decisions for compatibility with Federal Aviation Administration regulations near the airport to protect both surrounding landowners and the airport from negative or harmful impacts.

**Goal No. 4** Provide an organized pattern of various industrial land uses that is flexible for business development, properly minimizes negative impacts such as noise and truck traffic, is located away from residential areas, and reflects a quality image of the City.

*Objectives*

- a. Consolidate industrial development to areas in the City separated from residential to minimize impacts and improve the quality of life for residents.
- b. Orient industrial development on major roadways to ensure direct routing for truck traffic to main routes that can handle high volumes and heavy cargo loads such as Inkster, Middlebelt, and Ecorse Road.
- c. Eliminate isolated locations of industrial development, particularly on the west side of the City, to allow revitalization and expansion of neighboring residential areas and the downtown.
- d. Consolidate heavy industrial operations such as manufacturing and major trucking in the East Airport Area that is adequately buffered from residential and has sufficient infrastructure to support such operations.

- e. Promote development into “industrial parks” with shared and coordinated design such as storm water management, circulation, and screening.
- f. Maintain areas for strictly light industrial to serve as a transition or land use buffer between more intense industrial and other areas of the City.
- g. Expand the diversity of industrial-type uses through offering planned areas for office research uses that serve as high intensity office areas that likely require trucking, indoor storage, and light assembly or testing.
- h. Use design standards that apply to the different industrial designations to ensure land use compatibility and quality design regardless of use such as outdoor storage screening, orientation of overhead doors, landscape enhancements, setbacks, and long-lasting building materials.

## Goal No. 5 Promote development and redevelopment of sites and buildings that fulfill the City’s land use goals and maximize the desirability of the City for future development.

### Objectives

- a. Promote efficient and streamlined development review process.
- b. Use the City’s resources for incentives and a source of funding to stimulate development and redevelopment of priority areas.
- c. Utilize the resources of the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to encourage development and redevelopment of contaminated sites.
- d. Coordinate land use and development strategies for the downtown with the Downtown Development Authority to promote continued reinvestment.
- e. Establish procedures and conformance standards that apply to different levels of redevelopment projects beginning with building re-occupancy.

## Goal No. 6 Incorporate open space elements into the land use pattern in a manner that creates an interconnected, unified system and provides green space, recreation, and/or protects sensitive natural features as applicable.

### Objectives

- a. Require open space in new development proposals.
- b. Participate in implementation of regional greenway systems.
- c. Develop guidelines for open space to ensure it meets key goals of this plan.
- d. Link open space through a comprehensive pathway system.

## C. Key Land Use and Development Issues

- The airport is a significant land holding in the center of the city. Its international draw creates opportunities for economic development and revitalization for the city and region. Its size and performance impacts, however, creates

a barrier for the remainder of the city and strongly influence surrounding land use decisions.

- The city's greatest hidden and untapped resource is its downtown. The downtown currently offers a traditional downtown mixture of residential, civic uses, and much needed convenience commercial services in a quaint environment. Special attention is needed for this area and is addressed in a separate sub-area portion of the land use plan.
- The current stock of commercial uses in the city is geared toward pass-through visitors and does not provide a sufficient amount of service and retail uses that are needed on a daily basis. The Southern Gateway and Vining Road Development District are new development areas that will present new opportunities in the city for this type of development and are given special attention in a separate sub-area portion of the land use plan.
- Over the years, industrial development has dominated the land use pattern and has occurred in all areas of the city with no clear boundaries causing adverse impacts to be corrected in the future.
- Commercial development has occurred along major roadways such as Merriman Road, Ecorse Road, Wayne Road and Middlebelt Road in a manner that is sporadic and sprawling and has resulted in impacts to abutting residential, creates aesthetic challenges, and creates traffic flow problems with the high number of driveway cuts.
- Although a compatible mixture of uses is encouraged, identifiable neighborhoods are needed and existing neighborhoods should be expanded, not reduced.
- With the delineation of residential areas, the City must also focus on allowing a variety of housing types to supplement the typical single family neighborhoods.
- The airport noise compatibility study prepared by the airport (called the F.A.R. Part 150 study) was analyzed in developing the land use plan to ensure compatibility. In 2004, the airport updated the study and the new projected noise exposure maps were incorporated into the recommendations of this updated plan at that time
- In 2016, the airport began an update to their master plan. This included recommendations for airport improvements and off-airport parking, administrative and service facilities that would be linked to the airport by means of a transit system. There are no plans to add a new runway.
- Aerotropolis, surrounding the airport, will be a community of aviation linked businesses. This would be a major hub for economic development in southeast Michigan and Romulus.

## D. Future Land Use Plan

Based on the goals and objectives, a Future Land Use Plan was developed. Below is a description of each land use category

including the general intent of the category, anticipated land uses, and maximum allowable density. The Future Land Use map illustrates where each category is located within the city.

*Rural Residential.* The area devoted to Rural Residential is intended to protect the remaining large lot single family residential areas on the west side of the city. Much of this land use is located west of Huron River Drive and Ozga. To preserve the rural character, density in this area will permit a reasonable use of the properties, but incorporate appropriate provisions that can ensure the protection of the rural character, low residential densities, and allow uses that are compatible with this development. The density planned for this area is 2 units per acre or less. This means lot sizes can be 20,000 square feet or greater.

The emphasis for any development is on preserving the rural character of this area of the city. Details related to the design character and neighborhood improvements planned for this area of Romulus are more clearly outlined in Chapter 3: Neighborhoods. In general, there should be an emphasis on preserving natural features, open space and maintaining the unique rural character that exists in much of this area. Appropriate uses to accompany residential uses include urban farming and other low intensity agricultural uses. Appropriately scaled home-based businesses may also be appropriate

Residential development should use clustering provisions when appropriate, including deep setbacks from the street and permanently preserved open space. In addition, individual lot divisions should be properly regulated to ensure efficient use of land, proper access and adequate street frontage.

*Single-Family Residential.* The Single-Family Residential land use category promotes neighborhood development with homes on individual lots at densities of up to 6 units per acre. Typical minimum lot sizes would start at 9,600 square feet, depending upon the character of the area. Areas of the city characterized by smaller lots at a more urban density in close proximity to mixed-use neighborhood centers may be appropriate for lots as small as 7,200 square feet. With new development, subdivision design should reflect a natural environment and protect open space and natural features. Single-Family Residential development in existing neighborhoods is encouraged and should be done so in accordance with the recommendations of Chapter 3: Neighborhoods.

Single-family detached housing would be the predominant land use in these areas with other ancillary uses typical of residential neighborhoods including family child care homes, schools, churches, parks and public facilities.

*Multiple-Family Residential.* Multiple-Family Residential offers a mixture of housing opportunities ranging from moderate to high density. This designation is provided primarily for attached multiple-family developments and manufactured housing communities. Certain transitional locations adjacent to single-family would be appropriate for infill development of duplexes

or townhouses at densities of up to 12 units per acre. Other areas can support higher density multiple family with typical densities ranging from 15 units per acre for low-rise multiple family to 24 units per acre for mid- to high-rise apartments. Areas planned for future Multiple-Family Residential development are located in strategic areas of the city to provide a transition between residential and non-residential areas.

In addition, these uses are planned near activity centers such as Downtown and Vining Road Development District. Based on the current mix of housing already provided in the city, it is important to focus future housing development to include single-family (attached and detached), condominiums (attached and detached), senior housing, and owner-occupied attached units. This will ensure the proper mixture of housing options for residents and strongly support the City's goal to accommodate housing diversity. Although the housing types may differ, the design and layout of these areas should reflect the urban neighborhood character consistent with the strategies of Chapter 3: Neighborhoods.

*Neighborhood Business.* Neighborhood Business allows for small-scale commercial development serving the needs of nearby neighborhoods. Uses intended within this category include small-scale and pedestrian oriented retail, specialty grocery, personal services, business services, financial institutions, sit-down family restaurants, medical clinics, and offices. Some development of residential uses may be appropriate to improve integration between neighborhoods and commercial areas.

Future development and redevelopment should be designed to promote a more residential-scale character than General or Regional Business. Uses should be limited to those serving nearby residential neighborhoods and not draw from the larger community. Buildings should maintain a small-scale that is more similar to residential construction in accordance with Neighborhood Business design guidelines contained in Chapter 6: Development Design.

*General Business.* General Business includes commercial operations that serve the entire community. Planned uses include shopping centers, larger retail stores, gas stations, car washes, financial institutions, entertainment uses, offices and restaurants. Because these uses tend to have higher intensity uses, site design elements such as landscaping, buffering, access and lighting are critical in ensuring compatibility with the surrounding neighborhoods.

*Regional Business.* Regional Business includes commercial operations that are regional destinations and are often linked with the market created by the airport. Uses in this area include hotels, restaurants, conference centers, entertainment uses, car rental, and long term-parking facilities. The intent for this area is to capitalize on the activity related to the airport and use this as a catalyst to create a critical mass of commercial development with an enhanced synergy that creates a landmark destination district.

*Downtown.* The city's downtown district should continue to contain a mixture of uses situated in a compact, pedestrian-oriented downtown with limited auto-oriented uses. Uses should include retail, restaurants, personal service establishments, live-work, office and residential. A specific subarea plan is provided later in this chapter that divides the central business district into three areas:

- *Downtown Core.* Within the downtown core, retail and restaurants should be encouraged on the first floor. The commercial uses on the first floor should stimulate sidewalk level activity. Buildings with upper story office or apartments are encouraged. Apartments on the upper floors create a 24-hour population within the downtown and office uses create additional daytime activity to help support retail businesses. Small-scale artisanal manufacturing with a retail component and microbreweries or distilleries can help contribute to Downtown Romulus's eclectic vibe.
- *Five-Points.* The Five-Points area will develop primarily as commercial, but be a distinct and separate area from the downtown core.
- *Transition.* The transitional area allows a mixture of uses but has building types and setbacks that are more residential in character. This can include single-family dwellings and residential buildings that have been converted to office or services uses. Infill development with townhouses in this transitional area will also help maintain a strong downtown population.

*Mixed-Use.* Mixed-use is intended to accommodate both commercial and mixed residential uses in a fashion that is mutually complementary. Retail uses could take advantage of exposure to major roadways and upper story residential would help to contribute towards a more compact, pedestrian and transit-oriented land use pattern. These could include buildings that are vertically integrated (residential above retail uses) or horizontally integrated (commercial and office in the same development). Live-work units are another potential for these areas. Mixed-use areas should be comprehensively developed to allow for shared access, parking, stormwater management, and provide for pedestrian plazas.

Traffic impacts to the street system should be considered as areas designated mixed-use are developed or redeveloped. Depending on the location and size of development, a traffic impact study maybe required. One example is around the Pennsylvania and Middlebelt intersection where the existing non-conforming commercial use causes traffic back-ups. Any expansion of commercial use in that vicinity will likely require street improvements such as by-pass lanes, paved shoulders, or other improvements so that traffic can be accommodated. Internal circulation and on-site access should be designed to minimize impacts on public streets.

*Office Research.* Office Research provides an opportunity to diversify the industrial employment base of the city by reserving

For more on the mixed-use development planned in the Vining Road Development District, see Section F.

areas for research, development, technology, and corporate offices or campuses that will not greatly impact surrounding uses. Uses would include research, design, engineering, testing, laboratories, diagnostics, and experimental product development. Types of industries may include automotive, electronics, alternative energy technologies, computers, communications, information technology, chemical or biomedical engineering. Uses should generate little or no truck traffic, outdoor storage, noise, or other impacts.

Use types should be strictly limited to office buildings, that may accommodate multiple tenants, or business headquarters and that are devoted to technology, and research. These businesses should be developed in a campus-style environment with high quality site, open space, landscaping, and building design features (See Chapter 6: Design Guidelines for additional details). The best way to achieve this concept is to encourage large sites to be assembled for business parks. These uses provide an excellent transition and buffer between industrial areas and residential uses.

*Light Industrial.* Light Industrial is a designation that serves as a transition to less intensive uses but likely produces greater impacts than Office Research development. Operations intended for this category should be limited to light manufacturing and assembly from previously prepared material, small warehousing, air freight forwarders, and industrial uses that have no adverse impact upon neighboring land uses. Certain other consumer service uses would be accommodated in this area such as automobile repair, home improvement supplies, self storage, and certain limited commercial uses that provide services to persons working within the area. Offices and research facilities will also be located in the light industrial areas. This area should have limited outdoor storage and limited distribution/trucking. Uses in this district must have less of an impact on surrounding uses and generate less truck traffic than the other industrial developments.

Buildings will typically be smaller-scale, either as small individual businesses, multi-tenant buildings or industrial parks with small industrial establishments. Quality design is important and these areas should also be organized in industrial parks (refer to Chapter 6: Design Guidelines for additional guidelines). Light industrial is generally located at transitional areas from more intense industrial to non-industrial uses.

*General Industrial.* General industrial provides larger contiguous areas that are well suited for larger-scale industrial uses. Operations included in this designation will provide for the full range of manufacturing uses, including research and development, prototype testing, part fabrication, assembly, packaging, warehousing, and administrative offices. Other general industrial uses may include primary metal industries and construction contractors in addition to uses in the light industrial areas.

Uses in this area will generate more truck traffic than light industrial uses and therefore need to be located where

convenient access can be provided without truck traffic passing through residential areas. General industrial uses will often include large manufacturing and warehouse buildings with limited outdoor storage. Additional landscape screening and larger setbacks will be necessary to compensate for the large scale of buildings.

General Industrial involves operations with greater impacts such as noise, odor, truck traffic, and large building massing. Important site design and appearance expectations are also included in Chapter 6. Because of negative impacts, general industrial uses should not be located adjacent to large residential neighborhoods or some form of additional buffering should be provided. This could include additional setbacks, landscape berms, or some form of transitional use.

*Heavy Industrial/Trucking.* This designation expands upon the manufacturing uses allowed in the other industrial areas and provides for some of the higher impact industrial uses in the city. While general industrial uses would be allowed in this area, other high-impact transportation uses are allowed, including distribution centers, truck terminals, truck service, chemical and petroleum production and storage, recycling, waste processing/disposal, and uses that involve large quantities of hazardous materials/wastes. This land use will include larger-scale trucking operations involving interstate and intrastate motor carriers, which often involve delivery of merchandise to a distribution facility for redistribution to other trucks for immediate shipment elsewhere. Buildings dedicated to distribution generate substantially more truck traffic than other manufacturing uses that are dedicated to producing a product on-site.

Uses in this area will generate more truck traffic than light industrial uses and therefore need to be located where convenient access can be provided without truck traffic passing through residential areas. These types of activities are most suitably placed in strategic locations close to complementary uses and other potentially high volume truck traffic areas and in locations which are efficiently coordinated with the planned street system. Heavy industrial uses may include large warehouse buildings, distribution facilities, truck terminals, and storage yards. Long-term parking facilities related to the airport are also suitable in this area. Additional landscape screening and larger setbacks will be necessary to screen sites, particularly where there is outdoor storage or truck parking.

Heavy Industrial involves operations with greater impacts such as truck traffic, noise, odor, outdoor storage, hazardous materials and large building massing. Important site design and appearance expectations are also included in Chapter 6. Because of the impact that these uses have in terms of truck traffic, noise, fumes and potential hazards to nearby uses from fire, explosion or chemical releases, these uses are contained within a highly defined area of the city that is separate from the major population centers.

*South Gateway District.* Development of this area is considered a key to the Aerotropolis concept. The airport provides the opportunity to develop businesses that provide expedited shipping, logistics, supply chain management, distribution, international trade management, customs brokerage services and international trade related to the airport to create a global logistics air hub. Other secondary or tertiary light industrial uses such as manufacturing, office and research and development that rely on close proximity to the airport and air cargo facilities will also be located in this area.

While this area may include warehousing and large-scale distribution centers (without outdoor storage) related to air cargo, it would not include truck terminals or cross-dock truck facilities that are primarily found in the Heavy Industrial area. Sites in this area generally will not have outdoor storage or large areas for long term truck storage. Additional landscape screening and larger setbacks will be necessary to screen sites with larger buildings.

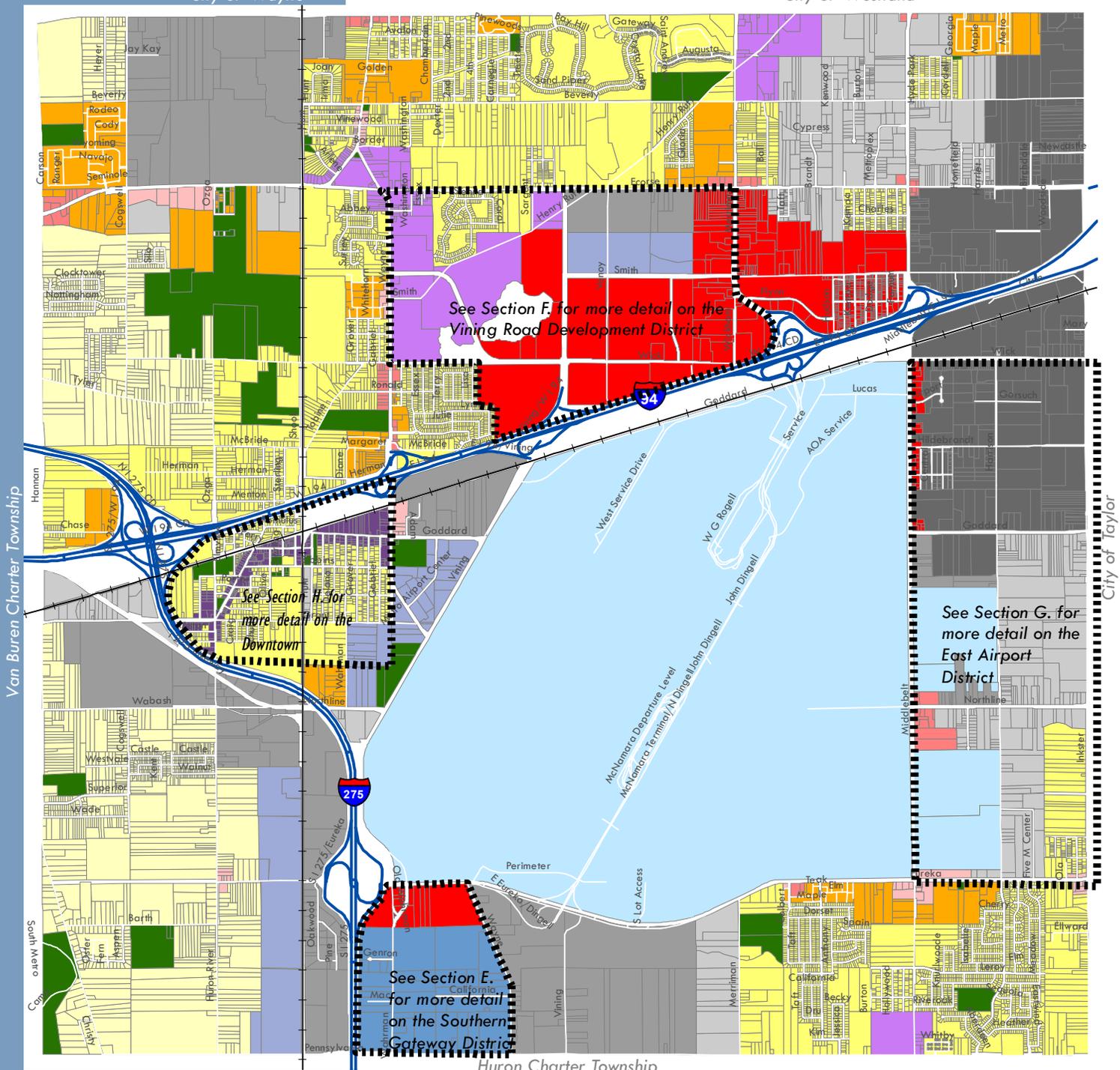
Airport-related general commercial uses are planned as a gateway at the Eureka interchange area.

A specific subarea plan is provided later in this chapter that describes the development of the Southern Gateway.

*Vining Road Development District.* The Vining Road area is planned to be a mixture of shopping, entertainment, mixed residential, hotel, office, and light industrial uses to become a destination for visitors and complement existing airport-related uses. More specifics related to uses in this area are described later in this chapter.

*Airport.* The Airport designation includes all areas in the city devoted to the airport terminals, runways, and on-site airport uses. Uses on this site include airport terminals, runways/taxiways, aircraft hangars, and maintenance facilities, services for passengers such as retail, restaurants, parking, car rental, and hotels and other operations incidental to airports including customs, security, and emergency services. Future development within this area should be compatible with applicable design guidelines outlined in Chapter 6.

*Public.* This designation includes existing land owned by the City and public schools. City-owned facilities could include city hall, parks, maintenance facilities, public safety buildings, fire stations, and police stations. Though the exact uses designated as Public may change in the future, the City should ensure to the extent practical that future use continues to serve residents in some manner. They should also ensure easy access to these facilities, including sidewalks, bike paths, and transit. Further, the City should continue to evaluate facility needs and consider opportunities for expansion and additional land acquisition that may not be indicated on the map. Attempts should be made to locate these facilities in different areas of the city to improve the convenience of access and service to all residents.



- Rural Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Neighborhood Business
- General Business
- Regional Business
- Downtown
- Mixed-Use
- Southern Gateway
- Office Research
- Light Industrial
- General Industrial
- Transportation Industrial
- Airport
- Public

### Future Land Use



Sources: MCGI, City of Romulus, LSL Planning

# Zoning Plan

Future Land Use	Zoning District	Max. DU/ Ac	Notes on specific location criteria
<b>Residential Districts</b>			
Rural Residential	RE, Rural Estates Single-Family Residential District	2.2	
Single-Family Residential	R-1A, Single-Family Residential District	4.5	Applied in areas with a development pattern of larger, more suburban lots
	R1-B, Single-Family Residential District	6.1	Areas characterized by smaller lot single family uses at a more urban density in close proximity to mixed-use areas of the City
Multiple-Family Residential	R2, Townhouse Residential District	12.0	Applied as an infill adjacent to single family residential neighborhoods
	RM, Low-Rise Multiple-Family Residential District	15.0	Applied to transitional locations adjacent to non-residential uses and where compatible with surrounding density
	HRM, High-Rise Multiple-Family Residential District	24.0	Applied along arterial roads, where in-scale with surrounding land uses and will not conflict with FAA airspace requirements
	RMH, Residential Manufactured Home District	8.7	Applied only in transitional locations next to industrial uses where there is a demonstrated need for this type of housing
<b>Downtown Districts</b>			
Downtown	CBD-1, Transition District		See Downtown subarea plan
	CBD-2, Downtown District		
	CBD-3, Five Points District		
<b>Business Districts</b>			
Neighborhood Business	O-1, Office District		When compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods
	C-1, Local Business District		
General Business	C-2, General Business District		Locations not adjacent to residential
	C-3, Highway Service District		
Regional Business	RC, Regional Center District		Larger sites may be developed under the Planned Development Area (PDA)
<b>Industrial Districts</b>			
Office Research	O-R, Office Research District		
Light Industrial	M-1, Light Industrial District		
General Industrial	M-2, General Industrial District		
Heavy Industrial	M-T, Industrial Transportation District		
Southern Gateway	M-2, General Industrial District C-3, Highway Service District		The City may want to consider a comprehensive developed of this area as a PDA or Overlay District
Airport	AP, Airport District		
<b>Other Districts</b>			
Public	All Zoning Districts		Public and institutional uses are permitted in every district as appropriate
Mixed-Use	PDA, Planned Development Area		PDA may also be applied in other classifications to achieve higher quality mixed-use development

- Proximity to airport and expressways
- Concentrated employment center
- Mixture of commercial and industrial

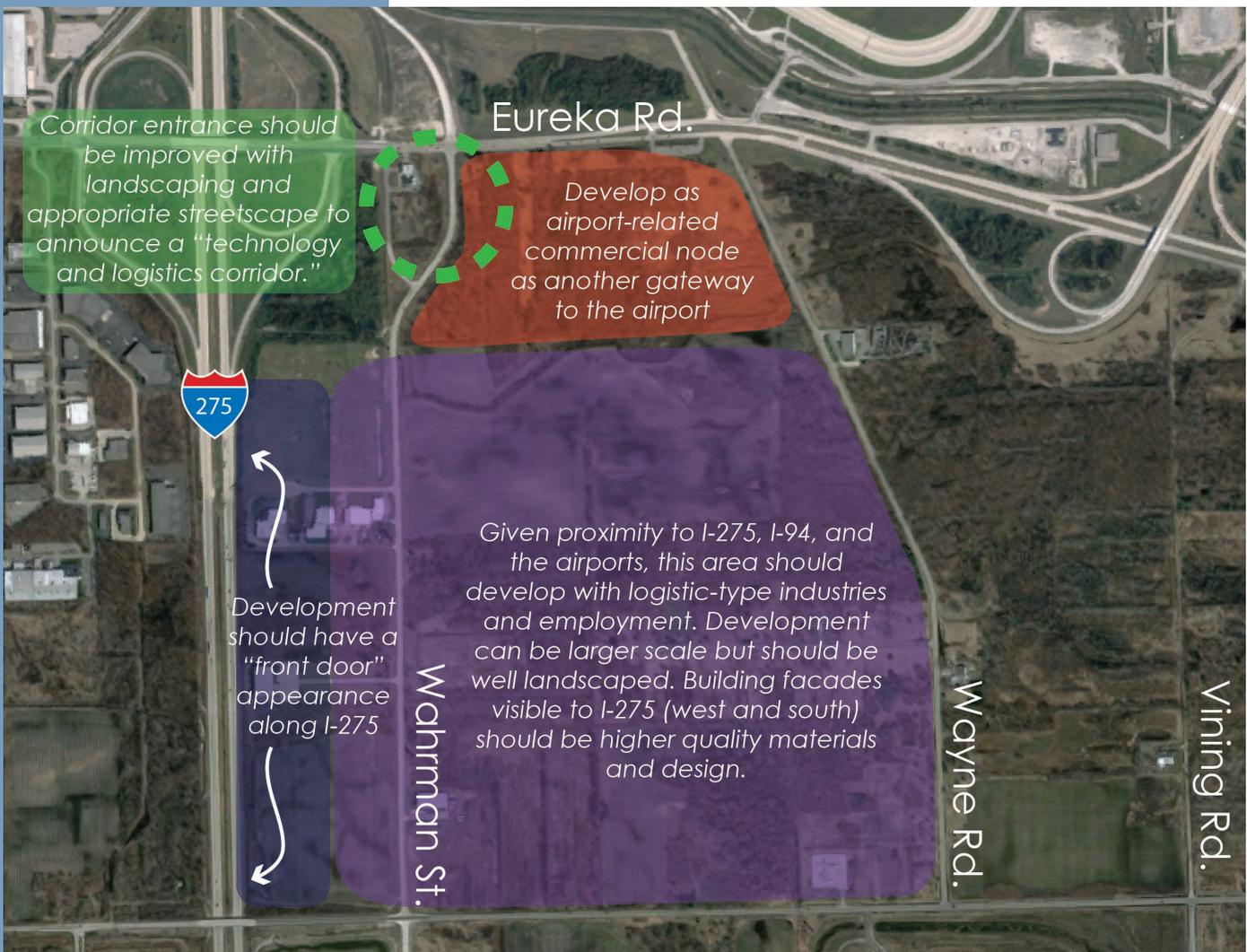
For specific descriptions of land uses, please see Section C: Future Land Use.

## E. Southern Gateway

The Southern Gateway sub-area is located south of the airport, along the east side of I-275 and the south side of Eureka Road. Over time this sub-area has been targeted for different types of airport-related technology, research, and general industrial, with a modest amount of commercial at the interchange. Most of this area is currently vacant.

### Land Use

- Prime opportunity for airport-related businesses and industries.
- The intent is to create a concentrated employment center that will compliment surrounding existing and planned land uses in this area of the city and neighboring Huron Township.
- The planned commercial area along Eureka Road primarily is intended to serve expressway travelers, airport employees, and those using the airport. No airport parking should be allowed. It is not intended to create a new commercial center in this area that would detract from development of the primary airport-related commercial along Vining and Merriman Roads north of the airport.



# Design Concepts

## Transportation

- **Gateway:** In order to enhance the image of the entrance to Romulus from the I-275 intersection directional signage, city welcome signs, public art, and landscaping should be incorporated to the intersection and adjacent open space.



## Landscape

- A buffer should be created between the commercial uses along Eureka and the industrial to the south.
- Additional landscape should be provided along Eureka consisting of a landscaped island with low plantings as median and landscape buffers along both sides of the street.



## Site Design

- **Industrial park:** New industrial uses should be in the style of an industrial park that contains high quality landscaping, adequate lighting, shared access, and any truck parking or outdoor activity screened from views.
- **Outdoor storage:** Sites should not have outdoor storage or large areas for long-term truck storage visible from I-275, Eureka or Warhman Roads.

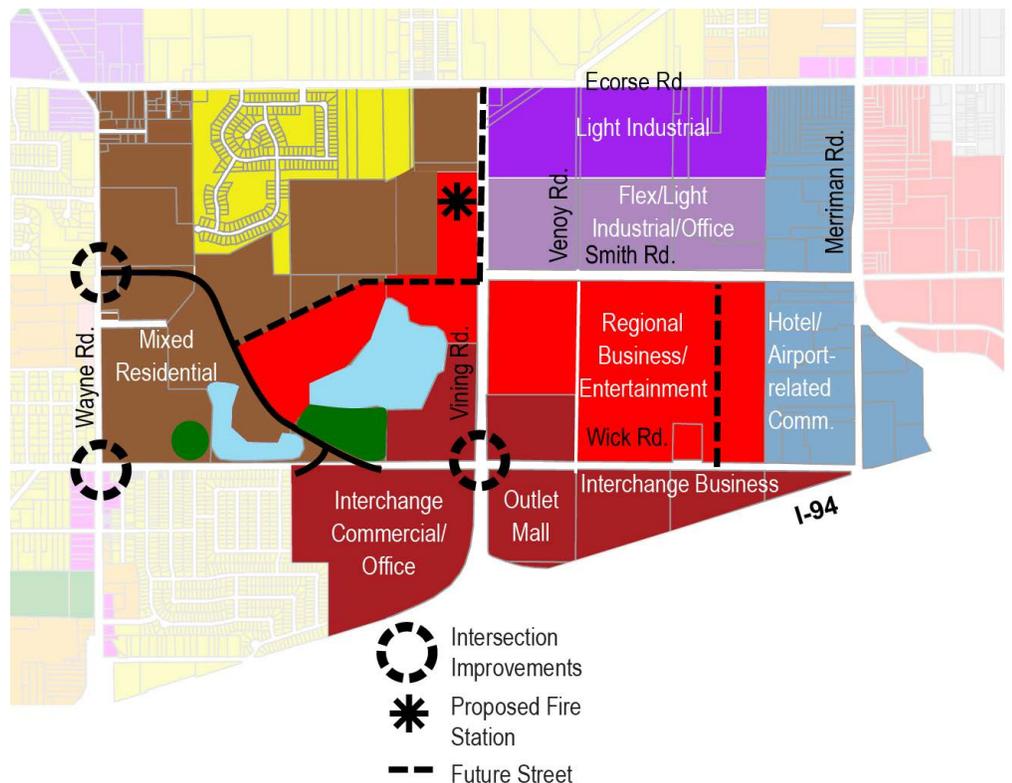


- Largely undeveloped
- Tourism potential
- Housing options to include alternative housing types that cater to seniors and airport employees
- Improve views along I-94
- Quality site design

## F. Vining Road Development

The Vining Road Development District includes the an area north of I-94 extending about a mile east and west of Vining Road defined generally by Ecorse Road to the north, I-94 to the south, Wayne Road to the west and Merriman Road interchange area to the east. This area is one of the few, large, undeveloped areas in the city. Given its prominent location and accessibility, the Vining Road area should be developed as a new focal point in the City with a mixture of regional attractions such as shopping centers, large-scale employment, and entertainment uses that will benefit both residents and visitors to the City. Uses in the Vining Road Development District should take advantage of the synergy created by the adjacent major hub airport but also be considerate of existing neighborhoods.

Coordinated development within the Vining Road area could act as a catalyst for development in the city and serve as a gateway for travelers passing through Romulus. New shopping and entertainment uses will provide desired amenities to existing businesses and residents as well as visitors staying in local hotels or driving I-94. This Vining Road Development District Plan provides a framework the land uses, transportation system and overall design, with flexibility to allow adaptation to market conditions to ensure the desired development occurs.



*During the time of this update, an outlet mall has been approved for development at the northeast corner of I-94 and Vining Road.*

## Land Use

### *Mixed-Residential*

- Single-family residential
- Attached and detached homes
- Moderate to high-density
- Neighborhood scale commercial
- Mixed-use buildings along commercial corridors

### *Hotel/Airport Commercial*

- Hotels
- Restaurants
- Long-term parking

### *Flex Space*

- Office/technology
- Light industrial
- Larger-scale commercial
- Uses that generate high truck volumes are not appropriate
- Uses should complement regional commercial in terms of quality building and site design
- Limited outdoor storage

### *Interchange Business/Regional business/entertainment*

- Restaurants
- Department stores
- Home improvement/hobby stores
- Recreation facilities (i.e. driving range, rock climbing)
- Theaters
- Event facilities

### *Open Space*

- Two key open spaces should be preserved: one a prime woodlot and the other open space along the lakeshore. Additional open space, preferably public, is also expected throughout the area but is not illustrated so it can be defined as part of the development design process.

## Design Concepts

### *Transportation*

The overall concept plan illustrates a number of new streets, street extensions and other improvements that will provide both a “ring road” system and internal connectivity for safe and efficient traffic flow. The overall network and right-of-way should be designed for a level of service D at full build out. Wide, well landscaped arterials, Wick and Vining, are intended to serve as the major circulation routes. Some specific recommendations are listed below:



- Vining Road will be extended as a boulevard (120 to 150 feet right of way) to Ecorse to provide connectivity to the I-94 interchange and I-275 via Ecorse. Venoy should also be extended through the site to provide access and circulation. In addition, a new north-south street should be constructed within the existing unimproved right-of-way.
- **Access:** The number and design of access points should be managed to ensure smooth traffic flow is preserved and accident potential is diminished, especially along Vining Road.
- **Wick Realignment:** As part of any development review

For specific descriptions of land uses, please see Section C.

process, the City will need to evaluate whether Wick Road should be realigned (a concept is shown on the subarea plan) to minimize impacts on the existing neighborhoods.

- *Smith Extension:* Smith Road will likely need to be extended across Vining to connect with the “new” Wick to Wayne Road. Several intersections will likely need to be improved. A conceptual alignment is shown on the subarea plan.
- *Median:* The median along Vining Road should include street trees, decorative lighting, sidewalks and pedestrian amenities.
- *Interchanges:* Streetscape treatments should be made along Vining similar to those made along Merriman Road.
- *Ecorse Industrial:* Access should be well spaced or provided through an internal circulation system so that there are few driveways along Ecorse Road.

### *Landscape*

- Buildings should be oriented in a manner that enhances views of the natural environment such as water bodies and woodlands.
- Residential developments along the waterfront should incorporate setbacks that maximize the views and provide an environmental buffer.
- Development around the lakes should include a unified open space system linking the development areas, providing opportunities for passive and/or active recreation; and preserving sensitive natural features



### *Site Design*

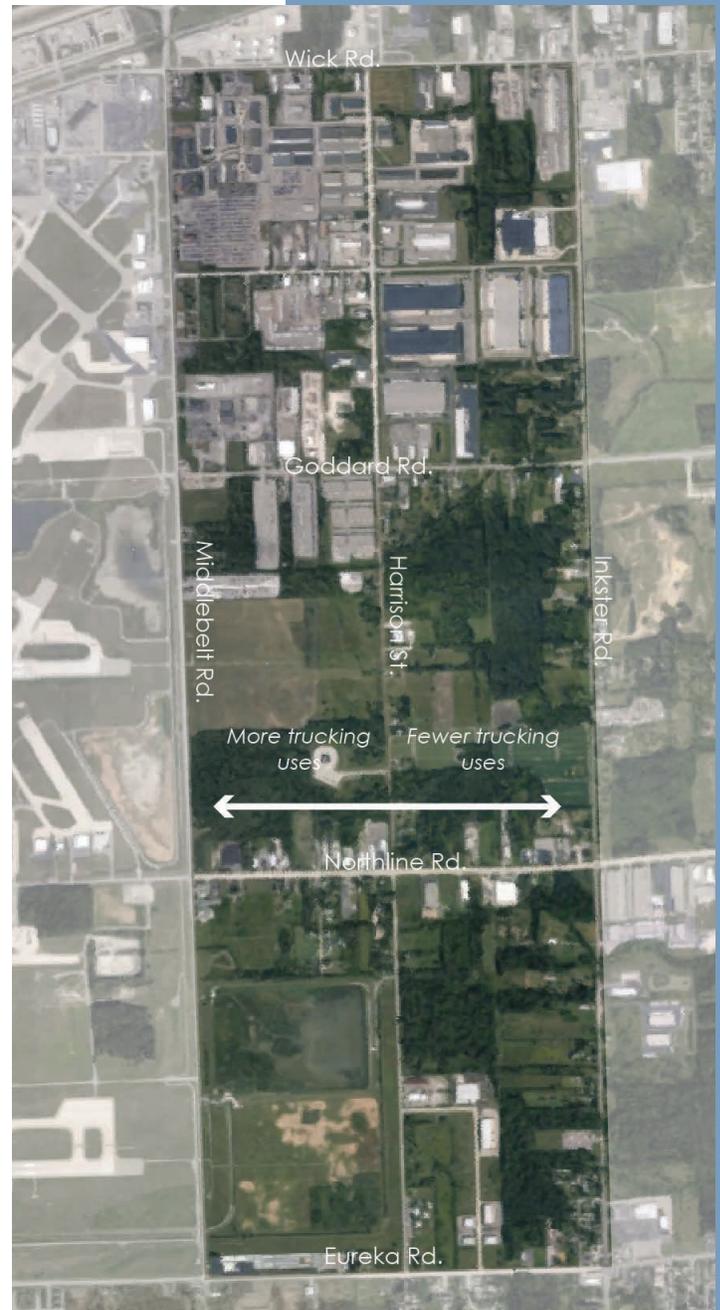
- Decorative and pedestrian lighting
- Signs should promote uniformity through consistent size, scale, shape, height, and materials.
- Low, monument, or ground mounted signs, supplemented by appropriate wall mounted signs integrated with the overall building design.
- Because of the desired image from I-94, additional billboards should be prohibited
- Surface parking should be screened from view along the roadways through the use of trees, shrubs, hedges, or berms.
- Low-impact stormwater design
- Overhead doors or loading areas should not be visible from the street or residential area and should be screened
- Industrial along Ecorse Road should have generous setbacks and landscaping with limited, screened outdoor storage
- Should the RTA plan a rapid transit airport connector route along Merriman, amenities around the stops should be provided such as sidewalks connect the nearby uses with the station



## G. East Airport

The East Airport subarea is located immediately east of the airport, between Middlebelt, Goddard, Harrison, and Northline Roads. With connections to I-94 and I-275 and adjacency to the airport, this area is increasingly of interest to trucking and heavy manufacturing uses. This area may be a prime location to allow a greater diversity of industrial uses targeted at trucking uses related to the airport. However, with allowing these industrial uses, care needs to be taken to ensure the nearby residential uses are appropriately buffered from the negative impacts associated with industry and trucking, especially south of Northline Road.

Therefore uses that involve more trucking activity are directed to the west side of Harrison. East of Harrison has more of a residential character and the roads are less appropriate for heavy truck use. Industrial east of Harrison should be smaller in scale with low volumes of trucks generated. Outdoor storage should be limited and screened.



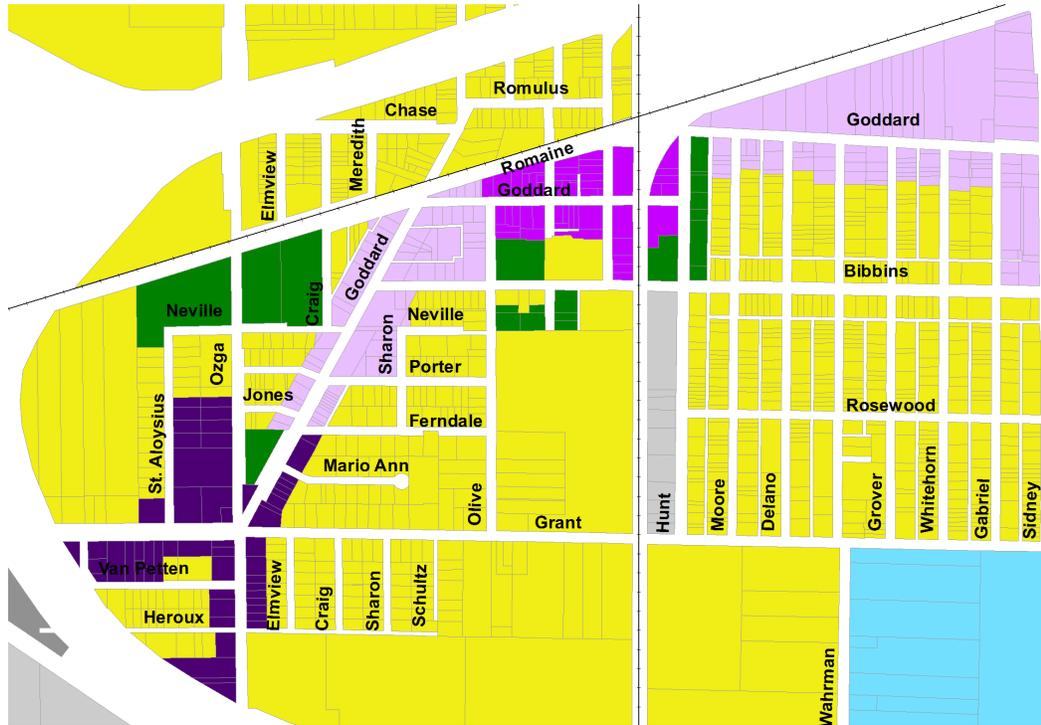
## H. Downtown

Downtown is bounded by I-94 to the north, Grant Road to the south, Wayne Road to the east, and I-275/I-94 interchange to the west.

The purpose of the sub-area plan is to explore in more detail what can be done to promote more desirable land uses, more attractive sites, market Downtown, and how the City can improve accessibility and visibility of the area to ensure future revitalization of the Downtown Core, Five Points, and Transition areas.

**Downtown Land Use Map**

- Single Family Residential
- Multiple Family Residential
- Office Research
- Mixed Use - Transition District
- Mixed Use - Downtown Core District
- Mixed Use - Five Points District
- Light Industrial
- General Industrial
- Public



**get new photos from City**

## Land Use

The specific land use pattern for the downtown is represented in the detailed future land use plan on the following page. The three mixed-use districts that line the major streets are described below.

**Mixed-Use Downtown Core District.** The Downtown Core is the heart of the downtown districts. The density of the proposed uses should be higher in this district than in the Transition District. The intended character should be that of a busy downtown where people work, live, gather for social occasions, and shop. The Downtown Core should be an attractive place to visit, have dinner, attend an event, or to just simply walk through on a Sunday afternoon.

**Mixed-Use Five Points District.** This category provides a secondary downtown destination with more emphasis on services for the neighborhoods. The intended density is less than the Downtown Core District but more than the Transition District. The intended character should be that of the surrounding neighborhood and neighborhood service area where residents can live and find medical offices, beauty salons, and other service uses.

**Mixed-Use Transition District.** This district should serve as a transition area between the Downtown Core and Five Points Development in this district is intended to maintain the current framework and focus on preserving a residential character with appropriate scale infill. The purpose of defining these transition areas is to improve gateways and strengthen connections.

For specific descriptions of single-family, public, and light industrial land uses, please see Section C: Future Land Use.



**Action**  
Update use table in zoning ordinance Article 6: Central Business District

Downtown Mixed Use Districts Uses		
Downtown Core	Five Points	Transition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-density residential</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Entertainment</li> <li>• Services</li> <li>• Offices</li> <li>• Live/work (small-scale fabrication, artisans, office)</li> <li>• Bed and breakfasts</li> <li>• “Crash pads” (flexible short-term housing for airline workers)</li> <li>• Micro-breweries/distilleries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Office</li> <li>• High-density residential</li> <li>• Small-scale fabrication or artisans with a retail component</li> <li>• Live/work (small-scale fabrication, artisans, office)</li> <li>• Bed and breakfasts</li> <li>• “Crash pads” (flexible short-term housing for airline workers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-family residential</li> <li>• Multiple-family residential</li> <li>• Offices</li> <li>• Commercial services</li> <li>• Limited auto-oriented uses</li> <li>• Live/work (small-scale fabrication, artisans, office)</li> <li>• Bed and breakfasts</li> <li>• “Crash pads” (flexible short-term housing for airline workers)</li> </ul>

## Design Concepts

*Residential Areas.* Neighborhoods located in or near the downtown should promote traditional neighborhood design:

- Within the transition area between the Downtown and Five Points, there are several existing single family homes that will either continue to be used for single- or multiple-family residential or will be converted to office or service uses. In either case, the residential character of the structures should be maintained through building and site design techniques such as maintaining a traditional front door and yard, restricting size and type of signs, and requiring parking areas to be discrete and screened.
- New residential construction is encouraged along Goddard between Wayne Road and Downtown. The intent is to promote high-density residential and introduce a new product type to the city's housing stock, such as townhouses. The townhouses should maintain traditional neighborhood design elements such as prominent front porches, street front orientation, curb appeal through landscaping, and limited visibility of parking with garages accessed via an alley.

*Mixed-Use Transition District.* The Mixed-Use Transition District should reflect an office/residential character that is compatible with the established neighborhoods of the Downtown.

As a mixed-use district, residential uses may occur next to or within commercial or office buildings along Goddard Road. When this land use mix occurs along Goddard Road, minimizing potential noise disruptions due to business hours and vehicles accessing the site should be resolved through narrow buffer strips, canopy trees, low walls, and hedgerows. Fences, walls, and evergreen trees should only be used where extensive impacts are anticipated and only behind building lines so that views from the street are not obstructed.

*Mixed-Use Downtown Core District.* Overall, the Downtown Core is a walkable, complex center of activity with a unique sense of place. This character can be reinforced through continued facade and streetscape improvements and compatible infill development.

*Mixed-Use Five Points District.* Five Points is a busy intersection that is comprised of primarily auto-oriented businesses. Five Points parcels are larger than those located in Downtown Core and can accommodate a different mix of land uses. Site and building design in Five Points should complement the Downtown Core and provide appropriate screening for adjacent residential.



Building Design



<p>Building Design and Infill</p>	<p>Infill development includes not only the reuse and conversion of existing structures but also the construction of new buildings. Redevelopment in the downtown is an opportunity to enhance the aesthetics of the area and promote a consistent image.</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality materials and building design that are compatible with the historic character of the Downtown</li> <li>• Maintain historic elements of existing façades and similar historic character to be incorporated into newly developed buildings</li> <li>• For existing buildings, the DDA offers façade enhancement grants to help businesses maintain the traditional design characteristics of Downtown, provided the design guidelines described in this plan are met</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given the larger scale of buildings in this area, the incorporation of design elements such as prominent front entrances and windows, columns and canopies on side and rear elevations will be necessary to help break up the building mass</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While this transitional area includes a mix of residential and commercial buildings of various styles, design should be complementary.</li> <li>• Consistent building design/materials</li> <li>• Siting within the lot (shallow front yard setback to provide green space and landscaping on both sides of the sidewalk with parking on the side and/or in the rear yards</li> <li>• A more consistent image should be maintained for businesses through similar signage, building materials, and other design elements</li> </ul>
<p>Building Height</p>	<p>The height of infill development should complement the existing commercial downtown character (two to three stories).</p>	<p>Developing or redeveloping existing buildings into taller structures (two to three stories) is recommended in the corners of the Five Points intersection.</p>	<p>Buildings in the transition district should complement their surroundings. Two stories are generally appropriate and three may be allowed along Goddard.</p>
<p>Signage</p>	<p>Examples of signage currently used in Downtown Romulus are comprised of painted signs placed in windows, illuminated vinyl awnings, and illuminated wall signs of projected roofs. Painted signs should be removed to alleviate clutter. They could be replaced with professionally designed and installed window signs with the business name and logo. Existing illuminated awnings, box signs, and roof signs should be replaced with canvas awnings, projecting signs or wall mounted signs with exterior illumination such as gooseneck lighting. The relative consistency of building mounted, projected and awning signs should be encouraged throughout the Downtown to provide a sense of location and a more uniform character for the Downtown.</p>		



Site Design



<p>Streetscape</p>	<p>While portions of the Downtown Core and Five Points already have significant streetscape elements in the public right-of-way, this treatment should be continued and strengthened. Ornamental lighting, pole banners, benches, information kiosks, and location maps should be provided where not yet installed to enhance the overall character of the district.</p>	
<p>Street Yard</p>	<p>A smaller scale of landscaping comprised of sidewalk plantings, flower pots, and small shrubs should be located on the frontage of buildings along Goddard Street. Downtown landscape should be compatible with the overall City character and contribute to a well maintained Downtown.</p>	<p>Street trees and landscape should be provided in the right of way between the sidewalk and the street to enhance pedestrian activity and provide a sense of safety for pedestrians from street traffic. The landscape street yard should be provided only on secondary streets such as Olive and Shook and in Mixed-Use Transition districts that connect the Downtown District with the Five Point District. This landscaped street yard should help promote pedestrian activity in mixed-use transition districts and provide a sense of safety for visitors and residents.</p>
<p>Public spaces</p>	<p>Incorporation of usable public spaces throughout Downtown and Five Points Romulus should be encouraged.</p> <p>One potential location for an outdoor gathering space is located at Sterling and Goddard Streets. Public space should have special paving, landscaping and seating. Vehicular traffic should be limited through the placement of removable bollards which could allow for creation of additional parking or used for civic events.</p>	<p>Public gathering spaces and elements such as plazas, gazebos, kiosks, and landscape public art areas should be located in close proximity to the intersections to enhance sense of place and community character.</p>





## Transportation

Streets	Curbs and gutters should be added along secondary streets that connect directly to Goddard such as Olive and Shook Streets to define public space and provide additional parking.		
Paving	Special paving materials that denote patterns and color variations are encouraged for Downtown sidewalks. The variation of colors and materials should create a unique sense of place that will differentiate Downtown Romulus from other areas of the city and other downtowns. Paving patterns should create a unique sense of place for visitors and residents and enhance pedestrian activity.	Key intersections and storefronts in the Five Points and Transition Districts should also incorporate some of these sidewalk patterns.	
Traffic calming	Special materials such as textured pavement to calm traffic should be installed at major intersections to strengthen pedestrian connections and reduce traffic speeds.		
Parking screening	Low knee walls should be provided in existing or proposed parking lots along major streets to provide screening. Proper screening along the rear lot line is necessary to minimize negative impacts. Due to limited space a narrow strip of plantings or obscuring wall/fence may be considered. The extent of the screening should address potential impacts of the use but should not close-off the neighborhood from the commercial area. Parking lots should be connected to the sidewalk through pedestrian pathways.		
Parking location	Rear yard	Rear or side yard	Rear, side, or front yard.

Provision of ample parking is a shared responsibility between the City and businesses. For key locations where demand from multiple businesses exist, the City or DDA could purchase property for municipal parking lots or public spaces for community gathering, special and civic events or location of public art. But businesses should also provide additional parking as demand increases, both through construction of new lots and with shared parking agreements where peak parking demands allows.





**FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS**

- Wood Band
- Wood Foam Crown
- Stucco Over CMU at blue awning building
- Signage on front Edge of Awnings and Door Painting
- New Wood Windows and Doors
- New Storefront Lights New Wood Parapet
- New Canvas Awnings
- New Planters between Tenants
- Brick work Along Buiding facade



**Romulus Hardware Block**

**Improvements:**

- Remove signage & window signage
- Clean limestone
- Clean & tuckpoint brick as req'd
- Restore doors, windows & transoms as req'd

- Remove awning
- Remove window signs
- Remove chain link fence
- Remove false wood pediment

- Remove door, transom & window
- Remove window signage
- Remove curtains

- Remove canopy, signage, exposed conduit
- Clean brick & stone coping
- Patch holes



- Add shed type awnings at openings bet'n piers
- Add banner/projecting signs at corners

- Add pilasters, cornice, awnings
- Add wrought iron fencing/gates

- Add crown at cornice
- Add framed sign
- Add 3-d letter sign w/ subtle uplights from crown above awning
- Add window sign
- Add single awning

- Clean & tuckpoint brick
- Add new door & transom
- New windows with divided Lights
- Add wrought iron grilles & planters
- Add antique barber pole
- New 3-d letter signage w/ optional gooseneck or subtle front lighting (not shown)
- Add metal canopy over windows
- Add banner over door

- Add crowned cornice just below both limestone copings
- Add crowned frieze above display windows
- Add awnings corresponding w/ openings as shown
- Cover vent with decorative vent
- New 3-d letters for signage
- Add gooseneck lights over signage
- New infill panels
- New commercial light fixtures

# 3. NEIGHBORHOODS



## A. Introduction

Romulus is a City with a number of well-established neighborhoods that range from tight-knit urban environments to more rural residential areas. The creation, preservation and enhancement of all types of neighborhoods are essential to the success of the community. Neighborhoods define and characterize the unique cultural, historical, and natural qualities of the City.

The analysis and recommendations of this chapter are organized by a geographic neighborhood. Each area was evaluated based on a listing of goals and objectives included in the following section. The existing conditions, key issues, and recommendation strategies for each neighborhood follow the goals and objectives and are organized by their geographic area. Each list of strategies will ensure the continued success and vitality of Romulus' different neighborhoods.

### *Key Neighborhood Concepts*

- Promote an organized system of City neighborhoods
- Support traditional neighborhood design elements in denser areas
- Protect rural, low density neighborhoods
- Ensure all neighborhoods are properly served by parks, schools, pathways, etc.
- Minimize impacts on neighborhoods caused by incompatible land uses

## B. Neighborhood Goals and Objectives



Based on desires of the community, existing conditions, and major challenges the following goals have been developed that set forth a vision for the future of the City. Following each goal statement are objectives that provide more specific direction to accomplish the City's vision.

### Goal No. 1 Preserve, protect, and enhance the integrity, economic viability and livability of Romulus's neighborhoods.

#### Objectives

- a. Limit or buffer non-residential intrusions into residential neighborhoods through open space, landscape treatments, and site design.
- b. Maintain attractive and safe neighborhoods through homeowner education, policing, and code enforcement.
- c. Develop a comprehensive housing preservation strategy to retain housing stock that reflects the improvement strategies described in this chapter.
- d. Require new residential development to provide parks and recreational areas.
- e. Support development of sidewalks and pathways to link neighborhoods to nearby community facilities and services.
- f. Provide a range of housing choices and increase housing opportunities to accommodate young professionals, young families, seniors, and those with lower- to mid- incomes.
- g. Direct housing development near employment centers, Vining Road Development District, and along transit corridors, providing for higher densities at transit nodes.

### Goal No. 2 Create an identity for all neighborhoods.

#### Objectives

- a. Promote, develop and support block clubs and neighborhood associations.
- b. Encourage cooperation between community groups and the City to implement a neighborhood signage and banner program.
- c. Incorporate streetscape improvements in developing neighborhood identities.
- d. Utilize consistent landscaping at entries, rights-of-way, and park areas.
- e. Maintain the rural identity in some areas through low densities, large open spaces, and accommodating appropriate agricultural operations.
- f. Ensure that all new housing developments are compatible with the desirable characteristics of that particular neighborhood.

## C. Citywide Neighborhood Strategies



In order for any neighborhood to thrive, a comprehensive approach is needed to indicate support and priority for residents. The following are specific Citywide strategies that should be applied.

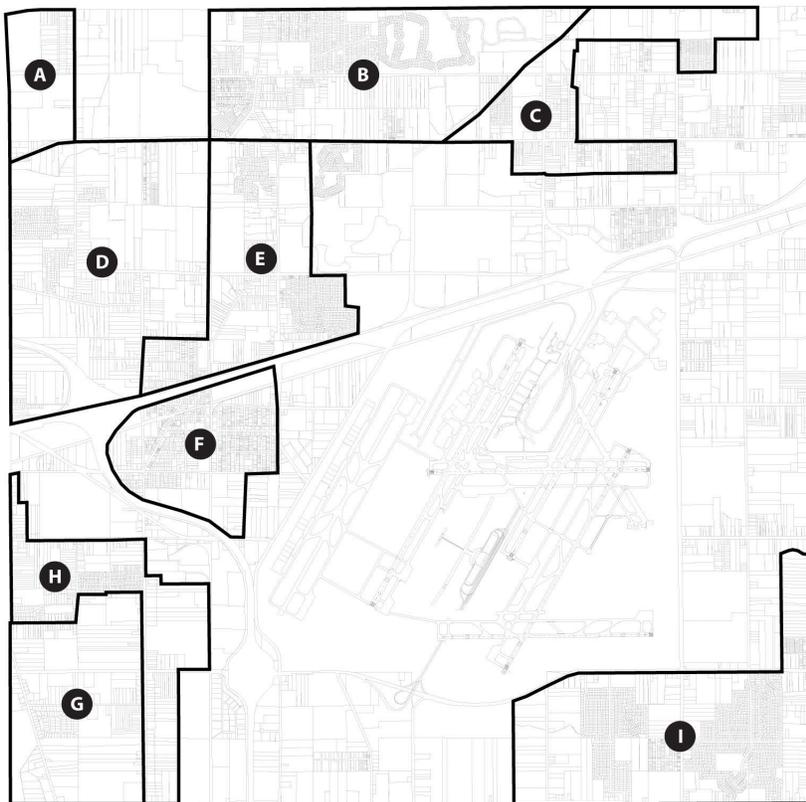
- a. Apply code enforcement uniformly in all areas of the City.
- b. Promote the development of neighborhood associations and programs in all neighborhoods.
- c. Promote the use of public facilities, such as schools and religious institutions, as neighborhood anchors.
- d. Continually upgrade and maintain parks in accordance with the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan to ensure optimal use and benefit of the existing park system, prioritize reopening closed parks before expanding existing parks or creating new ones.
- e. Encourage the development of open space communities, or clustering, for large-scale development or when multiple parcels are assembled to concentrate homes into a traditional neighborhood, conserve natural systems, and promote the efficient division of land.
- f. Regularly inspect and maintain neighborhood infrastructure, such as streets, drains, sidewalks, and storm sewer lines.
- g. Implement programs for housing reinvestment and ownership including low-income and senior populations.
- h. Work with current and prospective homeowners to promote responsible ownership and long term investment in housing.
- i. Promote a mixture of housing types and styles such as attached and detached condominiums, townhouses, upper story apartments, and granny flats, as appropriate to the neighborhood.
- j. Enhance neighborhood entrances to be maintained by residents to reflect a quality image and sense of pride in the neighborhoods.
- k. Provide wayfinding signage to direct residents and visitors to key points of interest within the City and to facilitate easy access between different areas of the City.
- l. Target property maintenance and rehabilitation efforts to areas most in need.
- m. Increase presence of emergency services to increase the level of safety and comfort in neighborhoods.
- n. Promote the installation of lighting through all neighborhoods to facilitate safety.
- o. Encourage the development of Neighborhood Plans for specific areas that involve the residents to help build relationships and support for future improvements in those neighborhoods.

## D. Neighborhood Specific Recommendations

The following sections are a description and summary of the nine neighborhoods addressed in this plan. It is important to emphasize that all neighborhoods in the City should work together to improve the future of the City and protect its residential areas as one comprehensive unit.

*Neighborhood Specific Recommendations are not intended to seclude areas of the City from one another they are only organized as such due to similar needs as an efficient method of relaying plan recommendations.*

Romulus neighborhoods contain a number of existing desirable assets, and the City is fortunate to have vacant lands and redevelopment sites to offer many new residential development opportunities. This plan sets forth a framework to successfully strengthen existing areas and offer guidance to ensure that new residential areas positively influence the character of the community. The strategies provided for each recommendation area are more detailed action statements for the different recommendation areas as delineated on the map. Please also refer to the Future Land Use Map to understand planned densities and land use patterns.



*Romulus Neighborhood Map*

## Neighborhood A

**Key Issues.** The limited vacant land available for residential development is planned for a density of 8 units per acre. The area is situated near a number of uses with potential negative impacts such as a heavily traveled roadway and industrial operations. Existing residential areas are isolated and attempts should be made to connect them with surrounding development and services.

**Strategies.** The challenge of this area is that it is not part of a unified residential area, it is more segmented. The main function this area serves is to offer a transition between the single family development to the south and the industrial development to the north and east. It also serves as a transition along the City boundary shared with Van Buren Township.

- The only area planned for Single Family Residential is at Van Born and Cogswell Road. The character of this neighborhood should be protected as it currently exists, with potential expansion to the west, at which point, a street connection should link to Cogswell Road.
- A sidewalk is needed along Cogswell Road to link these residential areas with uses along Ecorse Road.
- The limited areas where residential uses are adjacent or across the street from industrial uses will warrant wide buffer areas and screening to minimize impacts.
- City-owned land located in this area and future development should be dedicated too much needed access to community services such as parks and recreation.

## Neighborhood B

**Key Issues.** This neighborhood is a representative sampling of a variety of residential development types in Romulus. Most of the residential areas are older neighborhoods that should be enhanced and offer in-fill development opportunities. New development areas should integrate with the existing neighborhood structure and improve connectivity between existing neighborhoods. Links to parks and schools are needed along with connections to the Neighborhood Businesses along Wayne Road. Single Family Residential should seek to preserve natural wooded areas and open space and will need to be buffered from development on the south side of Ecorse Road.

**Strategies.** The area offers a number of amenities and character with a mixture of residential densities. The neighborhood should be developed in a unified manner so that residents living in this neighborhood can benefit from these assets. The character of new residential development or in-fill residential should replicate the existing traditional neighborhood character.

- Sidewalks are needed in the residential areas to link residents to parks and recreation opportunities in the neighborhood and the shopping area at Wayne and Ecorse Roads.
- Wayne Road is a key corridor linking this neighborhood with

### General Location

East side of Hannan Road,  
north of Ecorse Road.

### Existing Uses

- single family homes,
- a manufactured housing community,
- vacant land planned for residential.

other key areas in the City such as the Regional Center, Central City, and Southern Gateway. A variety of methods of transportation (car, bike, walking, bus, etc.) should be accommodated along this roadway to ensure residents can use Wayne Road to connect them to other areas in the City.

- To improve circulation and access throughout the neighborhood, north-south street connections are needed to Ecorse Road and Beverly Road to break up long blocks.
- Conserve open space in Single Family Residential developments.
- Promote the assembly of existing narrow, deep lots into one development to promote more efficient and organized subdivision of land. If this is not possible, strict land division regulations are needed to ensure all lots have proper street frontage, configuration and are consistent with the planned density. Flag lots are discouraged as a way of dividing land because they do not preserve natural features, complicate emergency responses, do not promote efficient use of land and cause traffic conflicts due to excessive driveways.
- The streetscape should manifest a 'close-knit' environment that is comfortable and welcoming with curbing, a grass strip, canopy trees, a sidewalk and lighting.
- This streetscape should be continuous and link adjacent uses through a logical street and sidewalk network. Cul-de-sacs should be avoided.
- Residential uses planned along Ecorse Road should have a strong presence along this corridor to prevent it from becoming a predominant commercial strip. Wide, heavily landscaped greenbelts along the street frontage will be necessary to minimize impacts between residential uses and heavy traffic volumes.
- Areas planned for Multiple Family Residential may be ideal for opportunities to address special population needs such as senior housing due to the convenient location near commercial services and other residential development.
- Residential structures should have curb appeal that creates a friendly environment and promotes interaction between neighbors.
- Front entrances should closely relate to one another, side by side and across the street, through features such as prominent front entrances, shallow front yard setbacks, porches and dramatic front doors.
- Garages should be recessed, side entry, or detached so their presence within the front yard is minimized and the home is the prominent feature.
- Multiple family or attached single family structures should incorporate architectural design elements that emulate single family neighborhoods such as pitched roof lines and prominent entries, and minimize appearance of garage doors in order to properly integrate these uses into the neighborhood.



### **General Location**

South of Van Born, West of Merriman Road, North of Ecorse Road and Henry Ruff, East of the CSX Railroad.

### **Existing Uses**

- neighborhood commercial
- medium and low density single family residential
- high density residential
- schools
- City parks
- private golf course

## Neighborhood C

**Key Issues.** The residential uses in this area are not concentrated into one neighborhood block which creates obstacles for continuity. Much of the area is adjoined by industrial or regional business uses, therefore, screening and minimizing impacts is necessary. This area lacks adequate acreage of park and recreation opportunities. Connections to core activity areas such as Merriman Road and Regional Center are greatly needed. Regulating truck traffic is important in maintaining a proper quality of life for residents in this area. The intersection of Merriman Road and Ecorse Road is an important element in defining the edge of the commercial corridor and establishing the residential character of the northern part of the City. There are a number of driveway cuts and individual lots situated along major routes. New neighborhood development should be consolidated projects that are integrated into the existing street system and limit orientation and driveways along main routes.

**Strategies.** Similar, to Neighborhood A, it is not part of a unified residential area, it is more segmented. The main function this area serves is to offer a transition between the residential area to the west and the industrial development to the east. It also serves to maintain a residential presence along Merriman and Ecorse Roads.

- The area planned for Single Family Residential is along the east side of Merriman Road. There is some existing residential but there are many opportunities for new residential development and redevelopment. These areas should be developed in a manner similar to the grid patterned neighborhoods found in Neighborhood B.
- Multiple Family Residential areas include some existing multiple family complexes but also include vacant lands for new development. New development could include additional multiple family complexes, attached single family condominiums, or townhouses.
- The existing platted subdivision at the corner of Ecorse Road and Middlebelt Road is a potential redevelopment or in-fill development area because there are several vacant lots.
- The corner of Ecorse Road and Merriman Road should serve as the core shopping area for residents and uses should accommodate the daily needs of these residents such as banking, groceries, and pharmacies.
- Convenient access to shopping and nearby recreation to the west need to be accommodated through different forms of travel including, walking, biking, driving, and bus rides.
- Special efforts are needed to link the neighborhood on Middlebelt Road with remaining areas, including a sidewalk along Beverly Road.
- There are a number of areas where industrial and residential uses are adjacent or across the street. These situations will warrant wide buffer areas and screening to minimize

### General Location

South of Van Born Road and Henry Ruff Road, north of Ecorse Road, excluding industrial uses in this area.



### Existing Uses

- medium density single family residential situated in traditional subdivisions,
- a neighborhood park,
- a multiple family complex,
- manufactured housing communities and neighborhood businesses located at main intersections.
- The Salvation Army facility is also included in this neighborhood to maintain a connected area.

impacts.

- Residential located on the south side of Ecorse Road abuts planned and existing Regional Business development. This can result in negative impacts for these residents but can also be a desirable feature if properly planned. Convenient and direct access to these areas should be incorporated into the design plan as an amenity to these residents. Other considerations must include screening and proper placement of loading/unloading, site lighting, and other site features to minimize negative impacts.
- The streetscape along Ecorse, Merriman and Van Born Roads in this area should emphasize the residential character through wide greenbelts, street trees, pathways or sidewalks, and neighborhood street lighting.
- The close proximity to a large industrial area presents particular hazards to which residents should be aware, including awareness of existing operations and chemicals and response procedures depending upon the incident. This may include evacuation or something as simple as storing proper emergency and first aid materials.

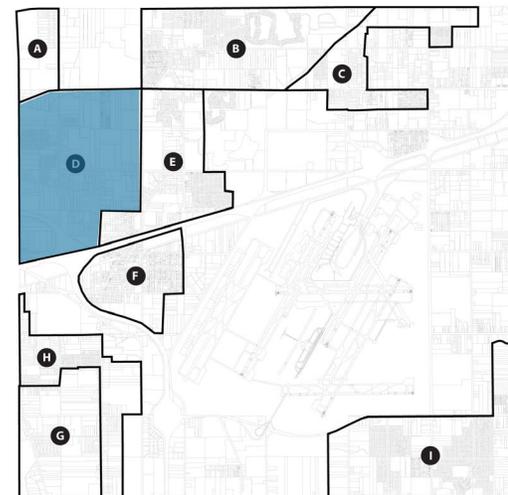
## Neighborhood D

**Key Issues.** This segment of the Ecorse Road corridor is planned to offer a high concentration area of residential and businesses leading east to the Wayne Road/Ecorse Road intersection, which is the focal point of this area.

Neighborhood residents prize the “rural character” of this area since it was for this reason that many people moved to and continue to live here. For this area, rural character is defined by a feeling of openness and tranquility where it is not uncommon to find small scale agricultural uses such as horse stables, pumpkin patches, corn fields and roadside stands. However, as more people are attracted to this area, preserving its unique character will become more of a challenge. Accordingly, the style and method of development of new residential areas will play a pivotal role in preserving rural character. Appropriate regulations may call for homes with larger lots and generous setbacks, and careful placement of homes on the lot to preserve natural features.

Where development of land is requested, the densities and design of proposals should be of a nature that will continue the rural character of the area or permit the preservation of open space or natural features. Careful open space planning will also enhance the ability of the City to limit traffic impacts and environmental problems associated with more intensive development. If development occurs, the City needs to be prepared to ensure they are designed in an organized manner where streets are connected, design styles are consistent, and all continue to reflect the low density character intended in this area.

On a smaller scale, land divisions will become more common. Many of the existing lots are narrow and deep and further division may increase this condition and may involve flag lots,



### General Location

South side of Ecorse Road, north of I-94, west of CSX Railroad, and east of Hannan Road.

### Existing Uses

- low density single family - most home sites are individual parcels situated along main routes. They are generally not located in traditional subdivisions.
- public land
- a school

zero frontage divisions, shared driveways, and private streets. Improperly regulated can result in disconnecting streets, poor access to homes for emergency vehicles, and overtaking the street system.

This area would benefit from improved connections through pathways or sidewalks to parks and neighborhood businesses including along Ecorse Road, in the Regional Center and in the Central City sub-areas.



*Strategies.* This area is a true asset to the City's neighborhood system in that it offers a unique opportunity for low intensity residential development that is unlike most areas in the City. Similar to Neighborhoods G and H, it is an opportunity for residents to have the conveniences of a thriving City with shopping, entertainment, and services nearby with the ability to 'retreat' to a quiet neighborhood. The area east of Ozga Road provides a protective transition between this area and the activity of the railroad track, Wayne Road, and the Regional Center through slightly high density residential development.

- Main collector routes should be improved to emphasize their importance in linking residents with key destinations, but must still achieve a quiet residential character. Trucks should be prohibited from these streets.
- Key routes to emphasize include Cogswell Road which links residents north to Ecorse Road a major regional arterial, Wick Road which provides direct access east to Wayne Road and the Regional Center shopping and employment area, and south via Ozga Road which links residents to the Central City.
- Streetscape treatment should include two-lanes, soft shoulders, open ditches, there should be only a few main pathway links, deep building setbacks and more natural landscaping is appropriate instead of uniform rows.
- Although there are already established collector routes for the neighborhood, new subdivisions must also provide an organized, connected street system to improve circulation and traffic flow in this area.
- Multiple Family Residential is planned along the south side of Ecorse Road. This will provide needed buffering for Rural Residential planned to the south and also have a strong presence along Ecorse Road to protect this corridor from becoming a long commercial strip.
- Homes spaced out along roadways, particularly when near the street, tend to detract from the rural character of the area when the view is more of buildings than of open space. A byproduct of strip residential development, the inefficient use of land, also occurs when homes are placed near the front property line.
- Deeper setbacks from the street and greater spacing between homes allow the characteristics of homes to be flexible with less emphasis on curb appeal and street-front orientation.

- Promote the assembly of the several narrow and deep lots into larger developments to promote more efficient and organized subdivision of land. If this is not possible, strict land division regulations are needed to ensure all lots have proper street frontage, configuration and are consistent with the planned density. Flag lots are discouraged as a way of dividing land because such lots do not preserve natural features, complicate emergency responses, do not promote efficient use of land and cause traffic conflicts due to excessive driveways.
- City owned land within this neighborhood creates a valuable opportunity to accommodate needed parkland and open space for residents and should be considered.
- New residential development along I-94 and I-275 needs substantial buffering from the expressways to minimize noise and visual impacts. This can be accomplished through the clustering of homes and by providing deep setbacks along the MDOT right-of-way. This is also an opportunity to reflect the quality character of the City for travelers along the expressway, so quality landscape treatment and design of visible areas should be a priority.
- Street and sidewalk connections are needed to minimize the need for travel on Ecorse Road. A service drive on the south side of Ecorse Road located in the rear of the commercial and industrial users should be considered.
- The limited areas where residential uses are adjacent or across the street from industrial uses or the CSX Railroad will warrant wide buffer areas and screening to minimize impacts.

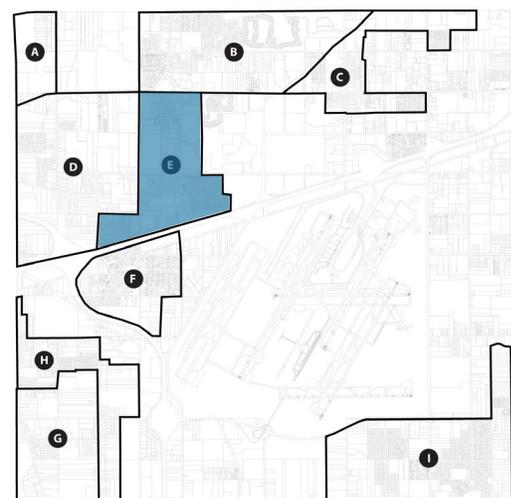
## Neighborhood E

**Key Issues.** This area provides valuable neighborhood development opportunities at a more traditional, urban scale. An existing neighborhood framework is in place with development that should be respected. Improved connection to downtown is needed that is more welcoming and desirable. New opportunities with the Metro Center sub-area will also bring potential development and high quality design will be needed to be compatible with the development. Improved connection to parkland is needed across the railroad track to Ozga Park. The presence of I-94 and the railroad create barriers and negative impacts for the neighborhood.

**Strategies.** As already noted, this area has an established neighborhood framework that includes an existing and planned land use pattern that is appropriate for traditional neighborhood development. New development and in-fill development must follow these guidelines.

- Improvements to street connections are needed to minimize the need for travel on Wayne Road and alleviate congestion. Internal routes should link the area north to south on both sides of Wayne Road.





### General Location

South of Ecorse Road, east of CSX Railroad, north of I-94. The eastern boundary is defined by the boundary of planned non-residential development in the Metro Center sub-area. There is a small segment west of the railroad tracks that is also included that extends to Ozga Road.

### Existing Uses

- medium density single family residential
- a few multiple family complexes
- public park
- school
- neighborhood business

Existing single family development is located in a traditional neighborhood structure. The neighborhood businesses along Wayne Road create a desirable focal point for the neighborhood.

- Wayne and Wick Roads are important corridors to link residents to major transportation routes and key destinations in the City such as the Regional Center, Central City, and even further south to the Southern Gateway. Enhancements are needed along these streets such as greenbelts, streets trees, street lighting, and pathways. Improvements will also be necessary to properly accommodate traffic volumes as more development occurs in this area.
- Although at a smaller scale, internal neighborhood streets should have a similar design concept. A narrower cross section is expected to improve visual connections between the front yards in the neighborhood.
- Connections between the residential areas and nearby Neighborhood Business areas are important along Wayne Road and further north at the Wayne Road and Ecorse Road intersection. These commercial nodes should offer convenient services and retail goods for residents. These nodes should be designed to promote activity and gathering opportunities for residents. Refer to the Design Guidelines Chapter for specific design recommendations.
- Residential structures within the neighborhoods should have curb appeal that creates a friendly environment and promotes interaction between neighbors.
- Front entrances should closely relate to one another, side by side and across the street, through features such as prominent front entrances, shallow front yard setbacks, porches and dramatic front doors.
- Garages should be recessed, side entry, or detached so their presence within the front yard is minimized and the home is the prominent feature.
- Multiple family structures should incorporate architectural design elements that emulate single family neighborhoods such as pitched roof lines and prominent entries, and minimize appearance of garage doors. Screening of parking and waste receptacle areas is needed.
- Future efforts should be made to offer parks and recreation facilities to residents in the area either through City park acquisition or through clustering and open space development.
- New residential development along I-94 and the railroad track needs buffering from noise and visual impacts. This can be accomplished through clustering homes and deep setbacks. This is also an opportunity to reflect the quality character of the City for travelers along the expressway, so quality landscape treatment and design of visible areas should be a priority.
- Efforts to overcome the expressway and railroad barriers must be considered. Tobine Road can offer a desirable route over the railroad leading to Ozga Road, which is an alternative access point into the Central City. Special

treatment is needed at the railroad crossing to ensure safety and to improve the link between neighborhoods.

- Ozga and Wayne Roads should be improved to offer safe crossings over I-94 for pedestrians, drivers, and bikes.

## Neighborhood F

**Key Issues.** Offering fundamental neighborhood elements, the downtown is an important priority for the City to attract residents. Many of the overall strategies for the downtown are highlighted in the Central City Plan in Chapter 2. Overall, the current structure of the neighborhood should remain, with some enhancements including street lighting and street trees to improve definition of the neighborhood streetscape. Focus should be on in-fill development that is consistent with the character and supporting home expansion and home remodeling. The existing sidewalk network must continue to be maintained and expanded. In areas where higher density residential is planned, traditional building design should be implemented such as townhouses.

**Strategies.** This neighborhood is at the heart of the City and should reflect its character to improve the quality of life for existing residents and attract new residents and businesses. There will be several in-fill development opportunities along with redevelopment projects to consider. These guidelines will assist in ensuring new projects will meet the goals of this plan. For more detailed strategies on the Central City, refer to Chapter 2.

- Preserve the interconnected, grid pattern street system and provide additional enhancements to define the street such as curbing, curb lawns, street trees, sidewalks, and tree lighting.
- Main corridors include Goddard, Ozga, Wayne, and Grant Roads. Enhancements are needed to demonstrate their importance and assist with directing traffic to destinations.
- Promote the historic aspects of the downtown and educate property owners about preservation tax credits, rehabilitation grants, and the historic significance of the district.
- Residential structures should have curb appeal that creates a friendly environment and promotes interaction between neighbors.
- Front entrances should closely relate to one another, side by side and across the street, through features such as prominent front entrances, shallow front yard setbacks, porches and dramatic front doors.
- Garages should be recessed, side entry, or detached so their presence within the front yard is minimized and the home is the prominent feature.
- The mixed-use environment of this neighborhood results in the need to screen parking, loading, waste receptacles, lighting, and other site elements from nearby residential.
- The streetscape should manifest a 'close-knit' environment



### General Location

Includes all residential development in the downtown area south of I-94, North and east of I-275 and west of Wayne Road.

### Existing Uses

The downtown area consists of a variety of non-residential uses such as retail, services, and office. The focus of this Chapter is, however, the single family development on the perimeter of the business district. The majority of existing residential development is reflected in traditional neighborhood design with grid pattern streets, tightly spaced homes, and strong connections to the downtown. As the central core of the City, this neighborhood has the advantage of several churches, City parks, and nearby services.



that is comfortable and welcoming with curbing, a grass strip, canopy trees, a sidewalk and lighting. This streetscape should be continuous and link adjacent uses through a logical street and sidewalk network. Cul-de-sacs should be avoided.

- Multiple family structures should incorporate architectural design elements that emulate single family neighborhoods such as pitched roof lines and prominent entries, and minimize appearance of garage doors. Townhouse style development is the most consistent housing style for the Central City.
- Future efforts should be made to offer parks and recreation facilities to residents in the area either through City park acquisition or through clustering and open space development.
- Sidewalks and pathways are needed to connect this neighborhood to other special development areas of the City. The main routes to assist with this effort should be Middlebelt and Eureka Roads.
- When new industrial development is proposed or redevelopment or expansion occurs that adjoins this residential area, screening is needed in the form of deep setbacks and landscaping.



### General Location

Located in the southwest corner of the City generally at Hannan and Pennsylvania Roads, west of Huron River Drive.

### Existing Uses

- Large lot single family homes sites, some offering a more rural flavor with crop farming and horse stables.
- Large open spaces and natural woodlands

## Neighborhood G

**Key Issues.** Similar to Neighborhood D, larger lots exist with the potential for further division or subdivision development. It is more likely that landowners will seek individual land divisions or site condominium development based on the density planned. As noted with Neighborhood D, strategies are needed to avoid inefficient division and development land.

Neighborhood residents prize the “rural character” of this area since it was for this reason that many people moved to and continue to live here. For this area, rural character is defined by the a feeling of openness and tranquility where it is not uncommon to find small scale agricultural uses such as horse stables, pumpkin patches, corn fields and roadside stands.

However, as more people are attracted to this area, preserving its unique character will become more of a challenge.

Accordingly, the style and method of development of new residential areas will play a pivotal role in preserving rural character. Appropriate regulations may call for homes with larger lots and generous setbacks, and careful placement of homes on the lot to preserve natural features.

Where development of land is requested, the densities and design of proposals should be of a nature that will continue the rural character of the area or permit the preservation of open space or natural features. Careful open space planning will also enhance the ability of the City to limit traffic impacts and environmental problems associated with more intensive development.



*Strategies.* This area is a very specialized neighborhood in the City that offers a unique opportunity for low intensity residential development where it is not uncommon to find small scale agricultural uses such as horse stables, pumpkin patches, corn fields and roadside stands. Similar to Neighborhood D, this neighborhood is an opportunity for residents to have the conveniences of a thriving City with shopping, entertainment, and services nearby with the ability to 'retreat' to a quiet neighborhood.

- Main collector routes should be improved then maintained to emphasize their importance in linking residents with development areas, but must still achieve a quiet residential character. Trucks should be prohibited from these streets within this area.
- Key routes to emphasize include Hannan Road which is an important north-south route; Barth and Pennsylvania Roads are important east-west links; and Huron River Drive, which links residents north to the Central City and east via Eureka Road to the Southern Gateway area, should also be enhanced.
- Streetscape treatment should include two-lanes, soft shoulders, open ditches, there should be only a few main pathway links, deep building setbacks, and more natural landscaping is appropriate instead of uniform rows.
- Huron River Drive should be highlighted as an important link to the Central City and an opportunity to overcome the barrier created by I-275. A pathway should be installed to accommodate travelers of all types. Eureka and Pennsylvania Roads should also provide a pathway to overcome the barrier to the east created by the railroad track and I-275.
- Although there are already established collector routes for the neighborhood, new subdivisions must also provide an organized, connected street system to improve circulation and traffic flow in this area. An additional east-west route is needed to unify the neighborhood.
- Homes spaced out along roadways, particularly when near the street, tend to detract from the rural character of the area when the view is more of buildings than of open space. A byproduct of strip residential development, the inefficient use of land, also occurs when homes are placed near the front property line. Deeper setbacks from the street and greater spacing can decrease the emphasis on curb appeal and street-front orientation.
- A deeper setback could require that no building that is part of the development could be nearer to the existing main street than 200-300 feet. Other provisions applying to this setback area would be that no native or natural vegetation be removed from the setback, nor any grading or changes in topography occur, except that necessary for entrance streets.
- Promote the assembly of the several narrow and deep

lots in this area into larger development areas to promote more efficient and organized subdivision of land. If this is not possible, strict land division regulations are needed to ensure all lots have proper street frontage, configuration and are consistent with the planned density. Flag lots are discouraged as a way of dividing land because such lots do not preserve natural features, complicate emergency responses, do not promote efficient use of land and cause traffic conflicts due to excessive driveways.

- This neighborhood, coupled with Neighborhood H, is underserved by parks and recreation. Efforts should be made to accommodate needed parkland and open space for residents either through City acquisition or cluster housing and open space conservation.

## Neighborhood H

**Key Issues.** This neighborhood offers a protective transition between the rural residential area to the south and the uses and operations to the north and east. The area is currently disconnected and needs street extensions and new subdivision in-fill to occur. Buffering from nearby industrial development is a concern along with truck traffic and the railroad to the east. Although a higher density than Neighborhood G, new residential development should maintain a rural character rather than the urban character planned in the downtown. This area also lacks convenient accessibility to community services such as parks and shopping and employment centers such as the Central City, Regional Centers and Southern Gateway.

**Strategies.** Similar, to Neighborhoods A and C, it is not part of a unified residential area, it is more segmented. The main function this area serves is to offer a transition between the residential area to the south and west and the industrial development and interstate to the north and east. It also serves to maintain a residential presence along Merriman and Ecorse Roads.

- Rural Residential areas planned along Wabash Road, Hannan Road and Huron River Drive should continue to maintain a balance between a quiet, rural character and more suburban subdivision development in order to meet the transitional needs of this area of the City.
- Along the east side of Huron River Drive there are a number of deep lots containing a mixture of residential and industrial uses, with a significant amount of industrial land. Currently much of this area has split zoning with residential along the frontage and industrial to the rear. The intent for this area is that the rear portion of the property along the railroad develop as research/office or light industrial, but be limited to uses that do not involve regular truck traffic. The frontage along Huron River Drive should remain residential or make use off existing vegetation to establish an appropriate transition to the rural residential area along Huron River Drive and Neighborhood G to the west.
- The corner of Eureka Road and Huron River Drive is planned

### General Location

Includes the remaining residential area southwest of I-275 and I-94.

### Existing Uses

- Low and medium density single family development
- Though some subdivisions have developed, there remain a number of large lot parcels situated along the roadways.
- A small neighborhood business area is located at the corner of Eureka Road and Huron River Drive.
- The higher density of development compared to Neighborhood G is intended to offer a transition to nearby industrial development and the expressways.
- High density residential along the railroad as a buffer



to offer limited shopping for residents and uses should accommodate the daily needs of these residents such as banking, groceries, and pharmacies. Due to the small area, development potential is limited however the close proximity to the Central City and Southern Gateway will meet larger-scale needs.

- Convenient access to key destinations such as shopping and nearby recreation to the north and east need to be accommodated through different forms of travel including, walking, biking, driving, and bus rides.
- Key routes to emphasize include Hannan Road, Wabash Road, and Huron River Drive, which links residents north to the Central City and east via Eureka Road to the Southern Gateway.
- Streetscape treatment should include two-lanes, soft shoulders, open ditches, there should be only a few main pathway links, deep building setbacks, and more natural landscaping is appropriate instead of uniform rows.
- This neighborhood, coupled with Neighborhood G, is underserved by parks and recreation. Efforts should be made to accommodate needed parkland and open space for residents either through City acquisition or cluster housing and open space conservation.
- There are areas where industrial and residential uses are adjacent or across the street. These situations will warrant wide buffer areas and screening to minimize impacts.
- Huron River Drive should be highlighted as an important link to the Central City and an opportunity to overcome the barrier created by I-275. A pathway should be installed to accommodate travelers of all types. Eureka and Pennsylvania Roads should also provide a pathway to overcome the barrier to the east created by the railroad track and I-275.
- Promote the assembly of the several narrow and deep lots in this area into one development to promote more efficient and organized subdivision of land. If this is not possible, strict land division regulations are needed to ensure all lots have proper street frontage, configuration and are consistent with the planned density. Flag lots are discouraged as a way of dividing land because such lots do not preserve natural features, complicate emergency responses, do not promote efficient use of land and cause traffic conflicts due to excessive driveways.
- Close proximity to a large industrial area presents particular hazards of which residents should be aware, including awareness such as awareness of existing operations and chemicals and response procedures depending upon the incident. This may include evacuation or something as simple as storing proper emergency and first aid materials.

## Neighborhood I

**Key Issues.** This area has a strong, established foundation for traditional neighborhood development that includes interconnected streets, sidewalks, street lighting, and some neighborhood amenities through schools and a local shopping area at Middlebelt and Eureka Roads. The current street system lacks continuity with much improvement needed. Although an internal sidewalk system is in place, there is no connection to outlying areas such as Central City, Regional Centers, or the Southern Gateway. There is a strong need for parks and recreation facilities in this area. Existing residential fronting on Inkster Road north of Eureka Road requires additional protection from adjoining industrial development.

**Strategies.** The area offers a number of great amenities and character. The consistent implementation of Single Family Residential with a small core of Multiple Family Residential will establish a solid foundation for the neighborhood. The character of new residential development or in-fill residential should replicate the existing traditional neighborhood character.

- Streetscape enhancements should be focused along Eureka and Middlebelt Roads as the central intersection of the neighborhood. This must also extend to Inkster Road to assist in defining this main community entrance.
- Eureka Road is a major thoroughfare and is capable of handling high volumes of traffic. Road enhancements should include a more urban cross section, but at a larger scale to better define the streetscape. Curb and gutter are needed at the edge, along with a curb lawn, large street streets, and a pathway.
- Within the neighborhoods, the streetscape should be reduced in scale to reflect the residential character. Front entrances should closely relate to one another, side by side and across the street, through features such as prominent front entrances, shallow front yard setbacks, porches and dramatic front doors.
- Garages should be recessed, side entry, or detached so their presence within the front yard is minimized and the home is the prominent feature.
- The streetscape should manifest a 'close-knit' environment that is comfortable and welcoming with curbing, a grass strip, canopy trees, a sidewalk and lighting.
- This streetscape should be continuous through existing neighborhoods, in-fill development, new subdivisions, and adjacent uses. It should offer a logical and interconnected street and sidewalk network. Additional north-south and east-west connections are needed. Cul-de-sacs should be avoided.
- Multiple Family Residential development should incorporate architectural design elements that emulate single family neighborhoods such as pitched roof lines and prominent

### General Location

Includes the southeast corner of the City defined by Eureka, Merriman, Pennsylvania, and Inkster Roads.



### Existing Uses.

- a charming hamlet in the City somewhat isolated in the southeast corner.
- The focal point is at Middlebelt and Eureka Roads where a neighborhood business node exists.
- Surrounding the businesses is high density residential to offer nearby housing within walking distance.
- Further out is medium density residential planned and existing for traditional subdivision development
- schools
- a fire station

entries, and minimize appearance of garage doors. Screening and enhancement in parking lots and areas with waste receptacles is necessary.

- Townhouse style buildings are most appropriate within Multiple Family Residential areas to reflect the urban environment of the neighborhood core at Middlebelt and Eureka Roads.
- Future efforts should be made to offer parks and recreation facilities to residents in the area either through City park acquisition or through clustering and open space development.
- Sidewalks and pathways are needed to connect this neighborhood to other special development areas of the City. The main routes to assist with this effort should be Middlebelt Road (a regional greenway) and Eureka Road.
- When new industrial development is proposed or redevelopment or expansion occurs that adjoins this residential area, screening is needed in the form of deep setbacks and landscaping.





## A. Introduction

Romulus' transportation system affects the movement of goods and people, land use patterns, and the city's economic health as well as its image. Transportation in Romulus includes not only the street system, but also sidewalks, railroad lines, the airport, and transit.

This chapter includes key issues, goals, and recommendations. Implementation will involve coordination among the various agencies that have jurisdiction for different streets, the City, Wayne County Department of Public Services, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Southeast Michigan Regional Transit Authority and the Wayne County Airport Authority. In addition, collaboration with adjacent communities will be important for improvements along Ecorse, Merriman and other major regional thoroughfares.

### *Key Transportation Concepts*

- Ensure street design reflects the intended character of the area
- Improve visual appearance of major transportation corridors, especially through residential and commercial areas
- Direct trucks and truck-related uses to designated streets
- Control driveway spacing and locations to reduce crash potential and ease traffic flow
- Improve streets and intersections to improve traffic flow
- Create an interconnected non-motorized system throughout the City to give people an alternative to driving
- Use technology and wayfinding to provide drivers information



## B. Transportation Goals and Objectives

Resolution of current and future transportation issues require a clear set of policies upon which to base decisions and determine project priorities. Policies (i.e. goals) to guide those decisions listed below are based on technical evaluations of current and anticipated traffic conditions, input from road agency staff, and community input. Following each goal statement are objectives that provide more specific direction to accomplish the City's vision. Transportation related actions can also be found in the sub-area plans.

**Goal No. 1** Provide a safe and efficient transportation system that provides accessibility to land uses, supports economic development and directs traffic to appropriate routes.

### *Objectives*

- a. Maintain the condition of the streets for safe and efficient travel.
- b. Direct more intense land uses, especially those that generate significant truck traffic, to locations where capacity is available, streets have been built to Class A standards, and negative impacts on residential areas are minimized.
- c. Coordinate transportation issues of regional significance particularly related to Detroit Region Aerotropolis and mass transit with area communities, the Wayne County Department of Public Services, Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Regional Transit Authority (RTA), Wayne County Airport Authority and SEMCOG.
- d. Reduce potential for crashes, improve traffic operations, improve pedestrian environment, and preserve vehicular carrying capacity of streets through regulations and access management standards.
- e. Maximize the capacity of the road network through transportation system management techniques (such as intersection signal optimization, intersection improvements, and access control).
- f. Generally design and maintain the street system for a level of service 'D.'

**Goal No. 2** Improve the visual appearance of the City through street and related improvements.

### *Objectives*

- a. Design streets and the area within the right-of-way as attractive gateways, including medians, street trees, and street lighting.
- b. Provide wayfinding to help guide visitors to key destinations in the city.
- c. Upgrade "airfront" views of the airport which includes quality building and site design that screens airport maintenance activities from view and mitigates noise impacts to a reasonable degree.
- d. Collaborate with the MDOT, SEMCOG, metro Detroit business/tourism organizations, RTA, MEDC, and other communities along the interstates to improve views and add aesthetic design features along I-94 and I-275
- e. Require landscaping and architectural upgrades to sites along interstates to improve the visual appearance of the City for those traveling the roadways.

**Goal No. 3** Provide multi-modal transportation options which connect neighborhoods, schools, the library, businesses and other activity areas.

#### *Objectives*

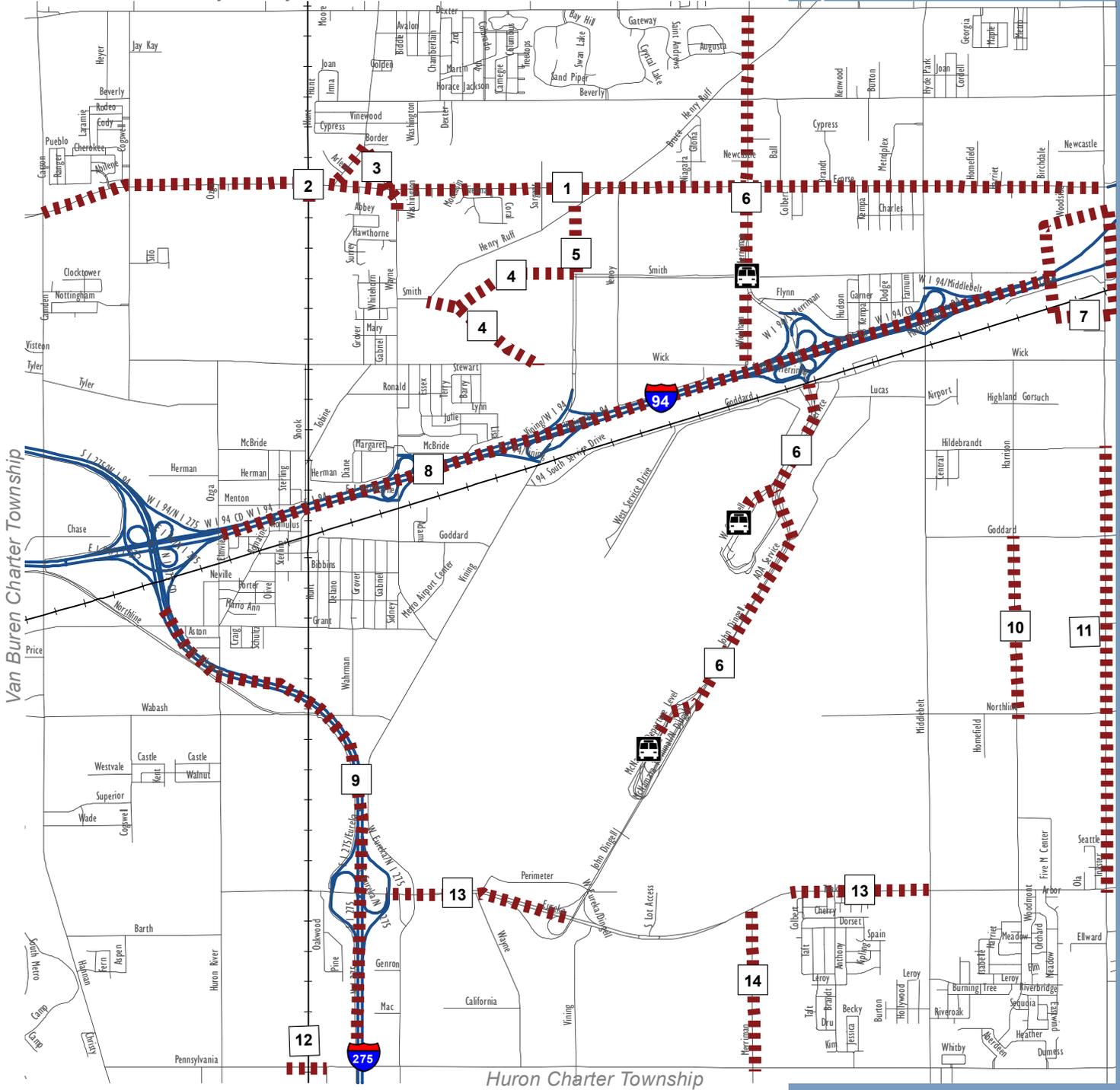
- a. Promote alternative options to automobile travel through a continuous system of sidewalks and bikeways and improved bus rapid transit.
- b. Require pedestrian and transit-oriented site design near future transit stops including links between the public and on-site pedestrian systems.
- c. Work with the RTA and SEMCOG to support efforts to enhance transit along the Ann Arbor to Detroit corridor, and links beyond, particularly to secure attractive connections from any rail or transit system to the airport and other key destinations in Romulus.
- d. Promote recreation, healthy, and commuting benefits of non-motorized transportation to residents and businesses - encouraging employees' ability to walk to restaurants or shops, take a healthy walk during breaks and get from their home or bus stop to work.

## C. Key Transportation Issues and Opportunities

Transportation can be viewed as the most influential factor in shaping the development pattern in the city. Located in the center of the city, the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport has significantly impacted the City, both positively and negatively. Interchanges from the two expressways, I-275 and I-94, have influenced the flow of traffic and the development patterns, especially industrial and trucking uses. Industrial uses, hotels, restaurants and airport parking developed around the airport and the interchanges that serve it. Residential development has also been influenced by the airport and its associated flight patterns and noise zones.

In terms of transportation, the overall goal is to have a convenient, safe and maintained system that balances the needs of residents, businesses and the airport. Key opportunities and challenges to meeting that goal include the following:

- *Enhanced Freight Networks.* Efficient movement of goods from trucking uses to the airports and interstate interchanges is an important factor in location decisions made by industries. To realize the business attraction benefits of its location, the City needs to continue to work with business leaders, transportation agencies and the Detroit Region Aerotropolis group to maintain and improve the airport and the related transportation system as an economic engine for southeast Michigan.
- *Conflicts between trucking and residential areas.* Much of Romulus has single family areas intermingled with industrial trucking uses. Trucking uses can erode the viability of the residential areas. The city can reduce the conflicts though directing trucking uses and trucks roads designed for trucks. The pattern of zoning and design of industrial sites and access can also help reduce the negative impacts of the important industrial uses.



1. Widen Ecorse to median/create 150 foot right-of-way from Hannan to Inkster
  2. Construct grade separation at rail crossing
  3. Ecorse Rd/Wayne Rd intersection realignment
  4. Construct roads for Vining Rd Development
  5. Extend Vining Rd as a boulevard
  6. Rapid Transit route
  7. Explore design options to modify the I-94 interchange at Ecorse Road to improve full movement access to Inkster Road
  8. Improve view along I-94
  9. Improve view along I-275
  10. Upgrade Harrison Rd to Class A standards
  11. Reconstruct Inkster Rd to Class A standards
  12. Construct grade separation for rail crossing
  13. Eureka Rd aesthetic enhancements
  14. Upgrade to Class A standards
- Apply access management to improve safety and preserve capacity during development, redevelopment, and road projects

## Transportation Plan



Sources: MCGI, City of Romulus, LSL Planning

- *Shared jurisdiction over transportation.* The City's control of its road network is limited, as many major routes fall under the jurisdiction of Wayne County, MDOT and the Federal Highway Administration. Thus coordination and collaboration among the various agencies on project priorities, design and funding is critical.
- *Vehicular Focus.* The city's road network is designed for vehicles. But some residents in Romulus need or desire an option to driving a car. The city's sidewalk and bicycling routes have many gaps. Transit options are limited as well. Changes are needed to provide more opportunities to walk, bike or take transit.
- *Disconnected System.* The airport's location at the center of the city interrupts the pattern of the road system.
- *The Detroit Metro Airport* serves as the international gateway to the region and brings thousands to the city. There are opportunities to obtain more economic benefit from this traffic through giving visitors more places to shop, eat and be entertained. There is also potential for the Eureka Road area to become an attractive southern Gateway to the airport that attracts businesses and industrial employers.
- *Regional Transit.* Transit is an important ingredient in "New Economy" initiatives, to retain and attract young professionals and technology industries in the Detroit region. Metro Detroit is behind most metro areas in terms of a regional transit system and funding. The new Regional Transit Authority (RTA) for Southeast Michigan is promoting a commuter rail and/or rapid transit to connect the airport with Ann Arbor, Detroit, and other major destinations in the region.
- *Street Capacity and Safety.* Several routes have traffic volumes that exceed the capacity of roads or intersections during certain hours of the day, such as Van Born, Wayne, Middlebelt, Ecorse, Eureka and Inkster Roads.
- *Rail Crossing Conflicts.* Along the CSX rail line there are seven at-grade crossings that create delays and backups along several major streets, such as Ecorse Road and east-west traffic using , Eureka or Pennsylvania Roads in the city's southwest quadrant. This creates an inconvenience for travelers, impacts efficiency of moving goods, and reduces response time for public safety.
- *Intersection Operations and Safety.* Most intersections in the city operate relatively well in terms of traffic flow and safety (low crash rates). A few intersections need to be upgraded in response to current traffic patterns with changes to the design, or improved and coordinated signal timing.
- *I-94 Interchanges.* An additional, convenient interchange with I-94 is needed east of the airport to alleviate congestion at Middlebelt Road and support economic development initiatives. Modifications to the Ecorse Road/I-94 Interchange to offer more convenient access to Inkster Road be a solution.

- **Interstate views.** Many people's impression of Romulus is formed based on trips to and from the airport. Some of the views along the interstates, particularly segments of I-94, are not attractive. Improved views are needed to provide a more positive image and welcoming gateway. The interchange frontages should be treated as a corporate "front yard" in terms of building and site design, with any truck parking or outdoor storage screened from view. In particular, as the South Gateway area develops, quality building design, site layout and landscaping should provide attractive views from the expressway.

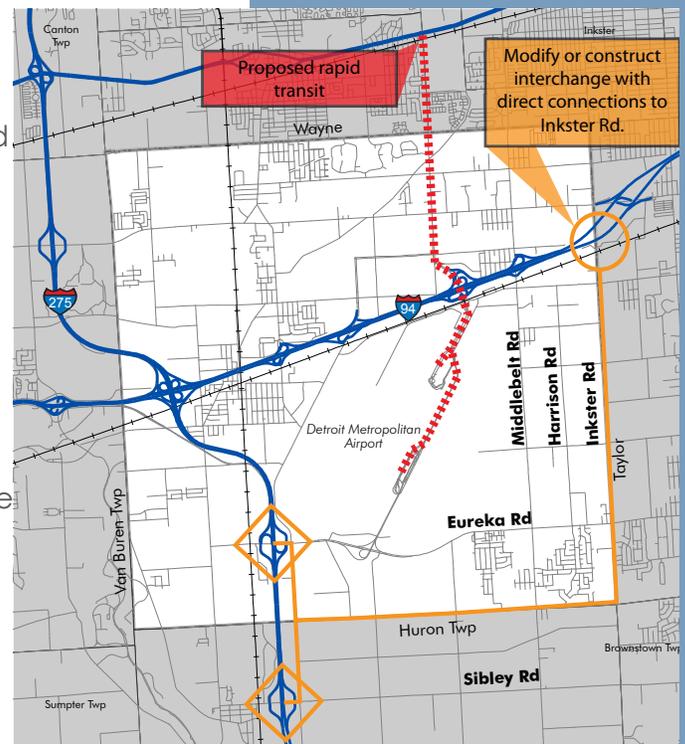


Ecorse Interchange

- **Views along major roadways.** Similar to the interstates, the perception of the city is affected by the views along major roadways. Attractive streetscapes with landscaping, medians, managed signage, lighting and wayfinding to guide visitors can improve the city's image to current and prospective residents and investors.

- **Improved access management.** The number and placement of driveways has a direct relationship on traffic flow and safety. Applying the city's access management standards can help reduce the potential for crashes and preserve the capacity of the road system.

- **Ring Road.** Wayne County and area communities have promoted a "Ring Road" concept in the past to improve circulation around Detroit Metropolitan Airport, to the interstates, and support economic growth. This ring road would run from the I-275 interchanges at Sibley and Eureka to Pennsylvania Road then up to I-94 via Inkster Road. Continuity along the ring road would be provided through intersection improvements, coordinated traffic signals, new streetscape treatments, medians for some segments and promotion as an efficient route.



Ring Road

- **Right-of-way preservation** is important because some roads have limited land area for desired improvements. As a guide the City should work with the County, property owners, and any other applicable stakeholders to provide the right-of-way widths as indicated in the table below, organized by National Functional Classification.

In order to implement improvements to the transportation system, the following recommendations are provided in this Toolkit.



Recommended Right-of-Way Widths		
National Functional Classification*	Recommended Right-of-Way	Other Considerations
Interstate/ Expressway*	300 - 500 feet	
Principal Arterial*	120 to 160 feet	Ecorse Road should be upgraded to a principal arterial
Minor Arterial*	120 feet	Ecorse Road, Wick Road, and Vining Road should be a minimum of 150 foot right-of-way to accommodate planned median
Collector Streets*	86 feet	Harrison and Smith Roads should be upgraded to a collector street
Local Streets*	60 feet	

## D. Transportation Toolkit

### Street and Corridor Character

**Expressway Viewsheds.** Approximately 200,000 vehicles a day pass through Romulus along I-94 and I-275. Motorists' perceptions of the city are largely created from views along the expressways or from their experience at the interchanges. A number of techniques can help promote a quality community image.

**Entryways.** Entryway features can be used to announce key community gateways. Key gateways may include the expressway interchanges or at segments along major roads connecting the interchanges with destinations or near the City corporate limits. Entryway features should also be used in conjunction with major new development projects in the City.

Entryways could include features such as welcome to Romulus signs with landscaping or sculptures or other structural elements. The key is to develop a design and use it consistently, though not every element must be used at every entryway. In some cases, the entryway feature could be at the first major intersection along an entrance route, where the right-of-way at the border only has sufficient room for the standard MDOT green and white sign.

**Wayfinding.** Wayfinding is also referenced in Chapter 2 and in Chapter 3 to improve circulation within the sub-areas and within neighborhoods. The concept of wayfinding is to help travelers find a convenient route to their destination. This is important in Romulus given that many roads are interrupted by the expressways and the airport. Wayfinding is most applicable around the downtown (where it has already been installed), to the airport, recreation center, senior center, city hall/library, or particular districts in the city.

A comprehensive wayfinding system is recommended in order

to improve accessibility for residents, visitors, and workers of Romulus. Typically, wayfinding is provided by a consistent signage system that points travelers in the direction of their destination. It is important that all these signs look the same because the sign becomes a trademark and the user quickly learns what to look for to find the next piece of information.

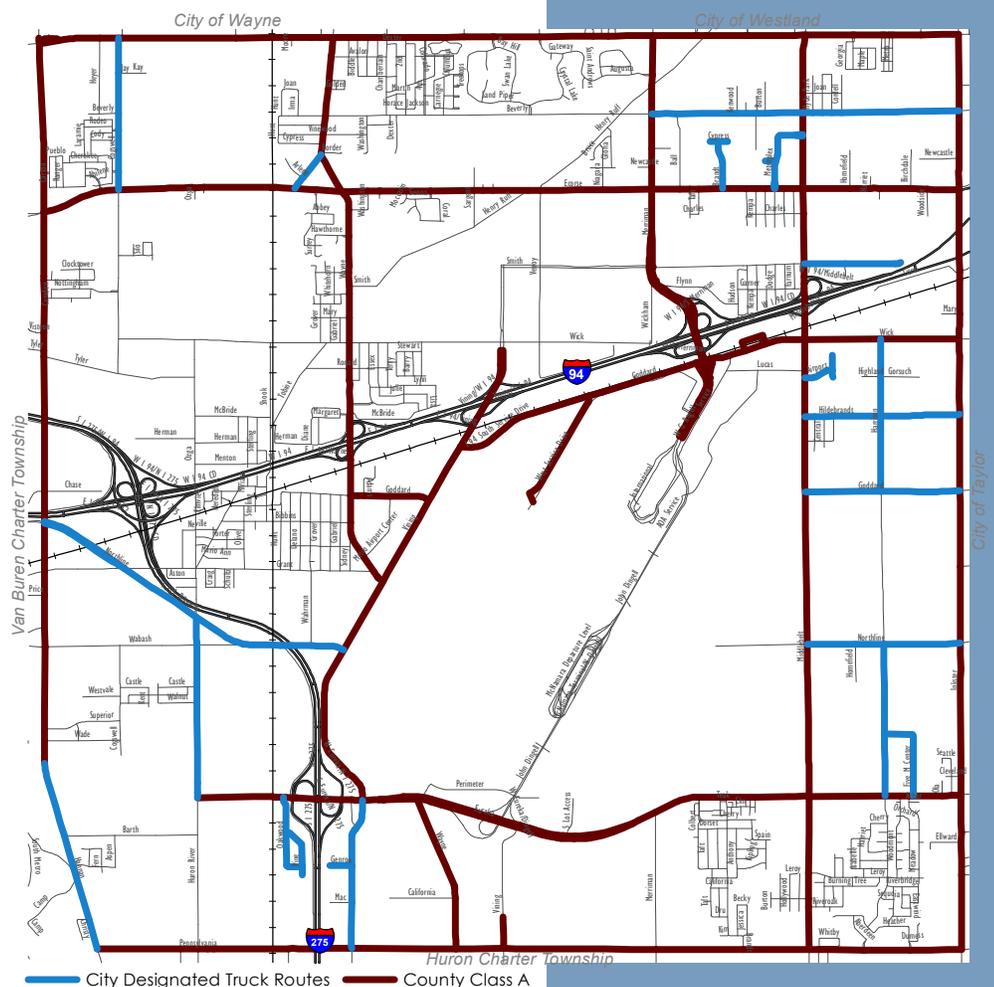
## Truck Routes

Romulus has become a center for industrial, warehousing and trucking uses. Those businesses provide employment and tax base. The city remains dedicated to supporting the transportation needs of those businesses. However, the city also has extensive neighborhoods where the noise, vibration, emissions, congestion, vehicle weight, and other impacts of trucking can degrade the road condition and character of the city's residential uses. A balanced approach is needed. This plan's approach to do that is based on directing trucking related uses and their routing to roads that are designed to best withstand truck traffic.

The land use plan identifies locations for industrial uses, based in part on the capability of the infrastructure including the roads. More intense uses with significant truck activity are generally directed to be located along Class A roads as designated truck routes. The plan is that trucks should use these routes unless they have an origin or destination along a non-truck route.

The truck route map includes two classifications: County All Season or Class A Roads and City Roads designed as Class A roads. Most of these roads are already designed and constructed to accommodate heavy truck traffic volumes. Others, such as segments of Inkster and Harrison Roads, require upgrades to either a Class A road or an all-weather road. These truck routes are intended as a guide for land use and zoning decisions. In addition, the city could adopt an official truck route map and ordinance, to make this routing enforceable on actual truck travel.

## Truck Routes



## Transportation Management

In addition to street improvements noted above, the City can help manage traffic through a variety of tools that reduce vehicle trips or lessen their impact. The concept of transportation management is that some automobile trips can be eliminated by giving people other choices, such as transit or walking, to help relieve the street system. Land use arrangement that shortens the length of vehicle trips can also help. Every driveway that is eliminated or redesigned will help preserve capacity and reduce potential for crashes. Current streets may be able to operate better with new technology, such as signals that respond to actual traffic conditions or informing motorists of alternate routes when there is congestion or a crash. All of those ideas collectively can help address the city's transportation needs in the future. Some specific transportation management tools are discussed below.

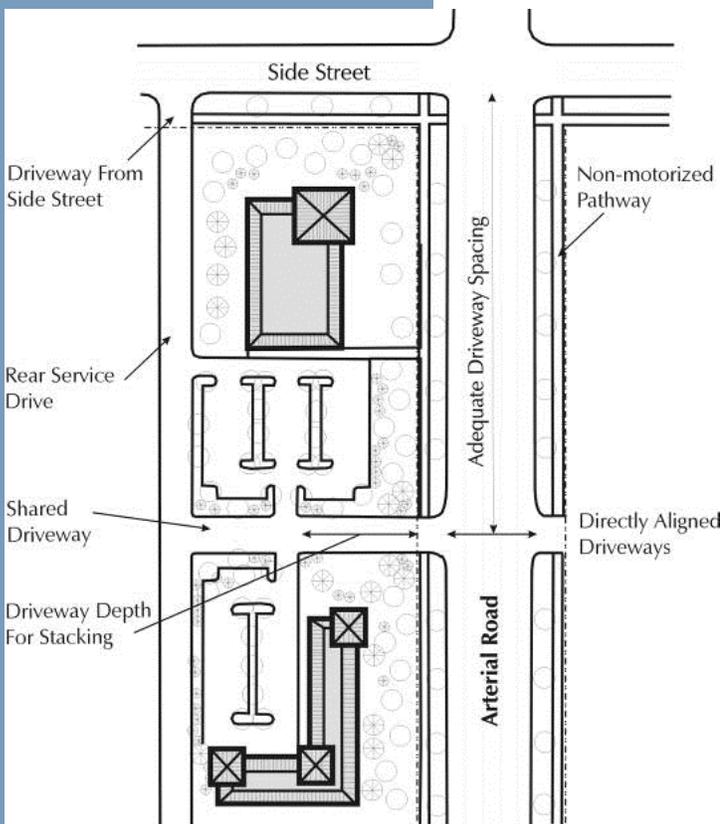
**Traffic Impact Analysis.** Generally, a traffic impact study should be required for a rezoning or project that would generate traffic above a specified threshold. Thresholds are included in the city's zoning ordinance and in established sources such as the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual or the handbook "Evaluating Traffic Impact Studies:

A Recommended Practice for Michigan Communities."

A well prepared traffic impact study will evaluate current traffic operations, improvements needed to support the impacts on a new uses and site access issues, such as the potential to share access or use service drives. Traffic studies should analyze options to mitigate traffic impacts, such as changes to access, improvements to the roadway, or changes to the development intensity, circulation or access. In some cases, the developer can assist in funding improvements to help offset the impacts of the project.

**Driveway/Access Management.** Access management involves comprehensive controls on the number, spacing and placement of driveways. Numerous studies in Michigan and nationally demonstrate access management can reduce the potential for crashes, and help preserve the street's ability to carry traffic. Fewer driveways also create more attractive and pedestrian friendly roadways. The City of Romulus has adopted

a comprehensive set of access management standards in the Zoning Ordinance along key corridors. These are to be applied to new development. But in addition, when the use of a current site changes to one with more traffic or truck activity, the ordinance also includes standards to help bring a site into greater compliance.



Effective access management includes the following:

- **Limit the number of access points.** The number of driveways allowed along major streets affects traffic flow, ease of driving, and crash potential. Every effort should be made to limit the number of driveways; and encourage access off side streets, service drives, frontage roads, and shared driveways. Those developments which generate enough traffic or have sufficient frontage to consider allowing more than one driveway should locate these second access points on a side street or shared with adjacent uses where practical.
- **Consider alternative access.** Frontage drives, rear service drives, shared driveways, and connected parking lots should be used to minimize the number of driveways, while preserving the property owner's right to reasonable access. In areas where frontage roads or service drives are proposed or recommended but adjacent properties have not yet developed, the site should be designed to accommodate a future drive, with access easements provided.
- **Space driveways to minimize conflicts at expressway ramps.** A minimum of 600 feet is recommended between expressway ramps and any driveway.
- **Adequately space driveways from intersections to minimize interference with intersection operations and safety.** The minimum distance, on the same side of the road, between a driveway and an intersecting roadway should be 200 feet along a major arterial and 250 feet from any existing or future signalized intersection. In these cases a right turn in, right turn out driveway could be considered for access, with left turns accommodated through frontage roads or service drives. For non-arterial roads spacing from intersections is recommended to be 75 feet. If the amount of road frontage is not sufficient to meet these criteria the driveway should be constructed along the property line farthest from the intersection to encourage future shared use, and/or a frontage road or rear access service drive should be developed.
- **Adequate spacing from other driveways.** Minimum and desirable driveway spacing requirements should be determined based on posted speed limits along the parcel frontage, traffic conditions, sight distance and in consideration of the amount of traffic a particular use is expected to generate. Guidelines are shown on in the city's code but can be varied upon specific findings and in consideration of published traffic engineering manuals, such as the Transportation Research Board's Access Management Manual.

## Non-Motorized Transportation

Non-motorized transportation includes accommodation for people to safely walk or bicycle through the city along roads and within sites. A non-motorized system is important for a

## Different Levels of Implementing Access Management



### Change of Use

- Require cross access easements



### Building Expansion

- Close problematic driveways



### Full Redevelopment

- Full compliance required

number of reasons:

- To give people who do not have access to an automobile an option to get to work, school, or shopping
- To help meet the needs of an aging population
- To give residents and employees an opportunity for improved health through more physical activity

During recent decades, Romulus has worked to provide a more continuous system of sidewalks. Typically, sidewalks along roads are provided with new development or changes to existing sites. The city has invested in the construction of gaps in the sidewalk system.

The Sidewalk Map illustrates locations where sidewalks are recommended. This plan is based on locations of existing sidewalks, planned land uses, natural systems, and the regional greenway system. Generally, it is safer for pedestrians to have a sidewalk along both sides of a road. However, for some road segments, sidewalks are planned for only one side of a road given the expected use and physical constraints. Sidewalks shall be a minimum of five feet in width and constructed of concrete. The sidewalk system should be continually upgraded, taking into consideration the following factors.

To gradually provide a complete interconnected system of sidewalks, the City should pursue filling in gaps in the systems. While City funds may be used for this purpose, the community in general should also share in this commitment. Options to accomplish this include requiring the installation of sidewalks along major roads and throughout the interior of new development projects or for residential lots that have not maintained or installed their sidewalks, requiring an escrow or performance guarantee when transfer of property ownership occurs. The City should prioritize future sidewalk improvements based on their expected use and location. Gaps that prevent full connection between major destinations should be of the highest concern. Where the City wishes to increase pedestrian activity, it should ensure that continuous sidewalks are provided that offer safe crossings that bring the pedestrian to the forefront of consideration, rather than making the automobile the priority. There may also be cases where a mid-block pedestrian crossing should be considered.

In the last few years there has been more recognition that bicyclists generally should not be on sidewalks where they conflict with pedestrians and motorists may not be as aware of a bicyclist at intersections. The trend has been toward Complete Street systems that have opportunities for safe travel for all types of users. In most cases, bicyclists have a legal right to use the road. But in Romulus, high volumes of trucks and narrow road widths means that many roads are not inviting to all but the most skilled or confident bicyclists.

The objectives of this plan, in terms of bike travel, is to begin to provide a network of bike routes that will:

- Connect major destinations such as the library, elementary

#### Action

Prepare a citywide non-motorized plan that coordinates with Wayne County, MDOT, and adjacent communities' regional pathway plans



and middle schools, parks, senior and recreation centers.

- Provide recreational system connections to the existing pathway along I-275 and regional bike routes in adjacent communities.

Those objectives can be met by provision of wider paths that can be shared by pedestrians and bicyclists. In some cases, bike routes could be designated and promoted with informational materials and signs. In addition to shared paths, some streets could include bike lanes or have special markings (called sharrows) to remind motorists to share the road. The city should consider updating the sidewalk plan used for the last decade so that it adds recommendations for different types of bicycle facilities.

## Transit

As this Master Plan update was being prepared, the Regional Transit Authority for Southeast Michigan was preparing a transit master plan for the region. This master plan includes rapid transit corridors along Woodward, Gratiot and Michigan Avenues plus some type of rapid or express transit to the airport. Representatives of the city were engaged in the evaluation of alternatives. Alternatives being considered included a commuter rail using the existing rail line from Ann Arbor to Detroit or a new type of rapid transit (called Bus Rapid Transit) along Michigan Ave. The City and airport have advocated for a rapid connection from either the Michigan Avenue rapid transit or commuter rail station along Merriman with stops at Smith Road and both airport terminals. If implementation of that alternative is approved, the city may want to revise its zoning to allow more compact, transit oriented development around the Smith Road rapid transit station and more sidewalks to connect to it.



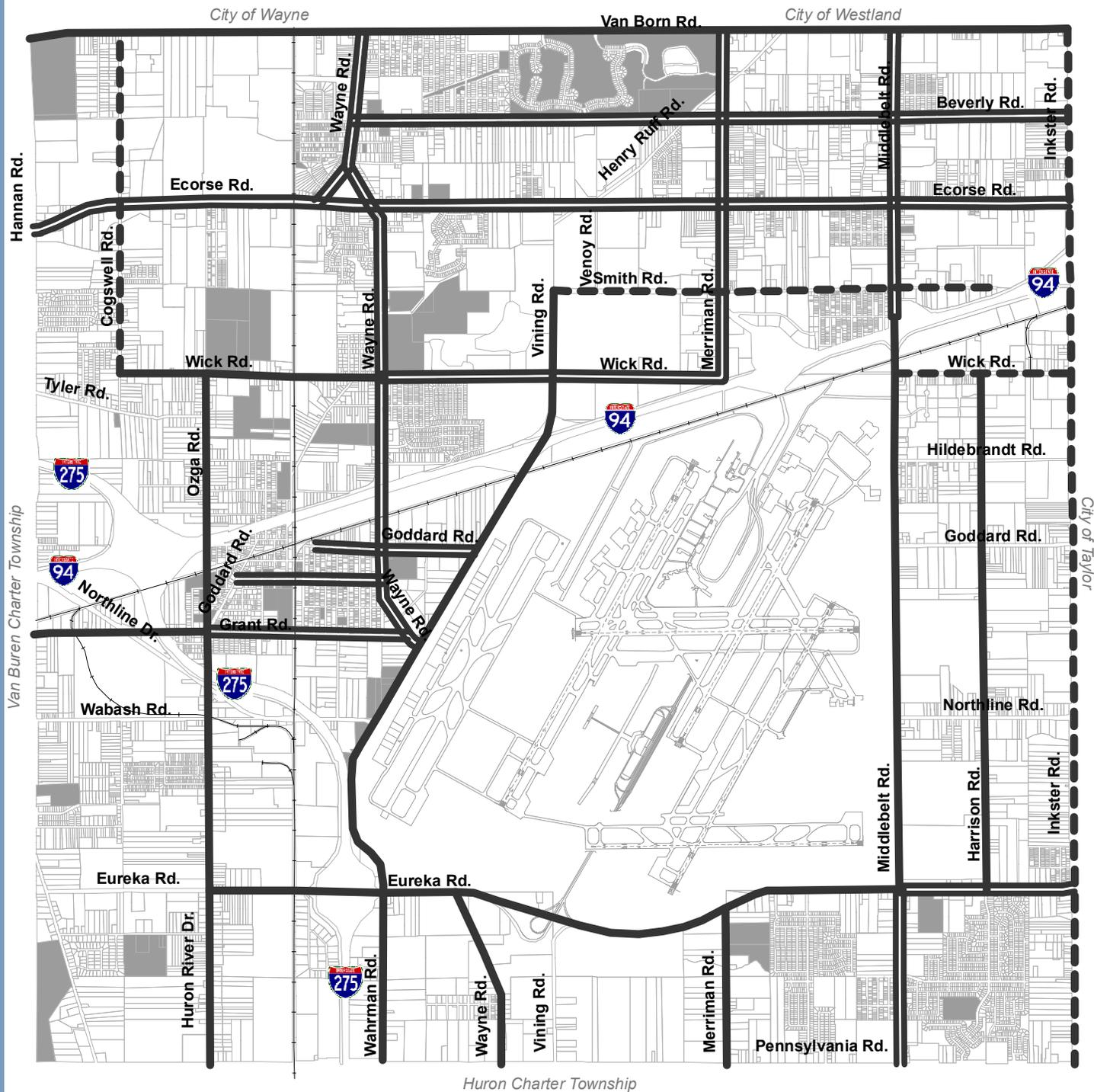
On-street bike lane



On-street bike lane



Sharrows



### Planned Sidewalks

-  Both Sides of the Street
-  East/South Side of the Street
-  West/North Side of the Street

 Community Facilities

Note that sidewalks are required on both sides of the street in new residential subdivisions with the exception of areas in the Rural Character Overlay District (RCOD).

### Sidewalk Plan



Sources: City of Romulus, LSL Planning

# 5. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND NATURAL RESOURCES

need good photos of park facilities or natural features

## A. Introduction

The City's community facilities and resources must be protected as needed, and allowed to evolve and expand in harmony with the development of the City itself. Community facilities and resources include services such as police, fire, City offices, schools, recreation, utilities, and natural features. As new residents, land uses, businesses and neighborhoods become a part of the community, the City's facilities and resources must also integrate into these changes. In addition, improvements to technology must also be a factor in capital spending decisions. The following serves as a guide for the City as long and short term budgeting decisions are made.

### *Key Facilities and Resources Concepts*

- Upgrade aging infrastructure
- Continue to monitor emergency response needs
- Upgrade park and recreation facilities
- Explore opportunities for new parkland
- Protect, where possible, woodlands and wetlands
- Continue to upgrade daily services for residents to improve their quality of life

## B. Facilities/Natural Features Goals and Objectives



Romulus offers a variety of community facilities to serve residents, including a senior center, parks, Civic Center, community gardens, library, city hall and services. Over the years, the challenge has been ensuring facilities are up-to-date and that they are conveniently located for residents all over the City. The future vision for the City is to strive for a high quality of life for current and future residents by maintaining a diverse and unified system of community facilities and services. Included in this vision is to consider preservation and appreciation of natural features within the City. Envision Romulus found that residents felt it was important for the community to be connected by pedestrian and bicycle paths, to be properly maintained and aesthetically pleasing, and for the City to be more sustainable and to promote green practices and policies.

The following goals and objectives established by the City need to be considered during important capital investment decisions, policy decisions, and changes to regulations. These elements must be interwoven into other decisions related to issues such as land use, transportation, neighborhoods, and economic development.

### Goal #1 Continue to offer the highest quality, most efficient services and facilities for residents.

- a. Evolve facilities and services to accommodate all residents such as increased website services and modern application processes.
- b. Monitor the efficiency of the various City departments and offices to prevent duplication of work and miscommunication.
- c. Develop a comprehensive geographic information system (GIS) that links information regarding the City's facilities and public right-of-way and all lots and parcels within the City through mapping and data.
- d. Increase coordination and cooperation between departments to streamline processes and ensure consistent application of policies.
- e. Ensure facilities are conveniently located for residents and easily accessible.
- f. Continue to coordinate services and facilities with surrounding communities and the County.
- g. Continue ongoing planning efforts and studies of infrastructure facilities to ensure it is meeting demands and adequate capacity is provided.
- h. Update facilities to accommodate improvements and changes in technology, including WIFI.
- i. Re-evaluate capacity plans for sewer and water based on new future land use plan.
- j. Plan additional emergency response facilities in underserved areas of the City and as recommended by the needs assessment completed for the Fire Department.
- k. Promote the use of alternative energy sources including wind energy conservation systems (WECS), solar energy, LED lighting, and green infrastructure.

### Goal #2 Promote community services and facilities that integrate and unify the community.

- a. Support timely expansion of community facilities and services to support anticipated growth such as the recreation center, the senior center, and police enforcement.

- b. Promote the historical and cultural resources provided in the community.
- c. Encourage public involvement with community, civic and school activities.
- d. Promote the continued development of public facilities within the neighborhoods, promoting prevalent traditional neighborhood design elements.
- e. Encourage the development of community gardens, especially near schools, neighborhoods, and the senior center.

### Goal #3 Acquire, develop, maintain and preserve sufficient open space and recreation facilities.

- a. Reopen closed parks and maintain existing parks before adding additional parkland to the system.
- b. Maintain and enhance existing recreational resources, ensuring all equipment and facilities meet current ADA standards and National Recreation and Park Association equipment standards.
- c. Update and develop recreational programs that serve the needs of persons of all ages.
- d. Implement the recommendations of the City of Romulus Recreation Plan and update the plan every five years.
- e. Pursue all available funding sources to implement park development recommendations of City of Romulus Recreation Master Plan.
- f. Initiate various efforts to acquire or preserve open space and parkland, concentrating on developing recreation space in underserved and new neighborhoods.
- g. Pursue cooperative arrangements with other public and private groups for the maintenance of facilities.
- h. Have residents assist in planning for and developing additional neighborhood and privately owned open space and in maintaining and reopening existing public parks.

### Goal #4 Maintain an ecologically sound balance between development and the environment.

- a. Promote the clean-up of contaminated sites with innovative incentives through zoning flexibility and with assistance from the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.
- b. Encourage integration of natural features into site development as aesthetic and functional features, while protecting the quality.
- c. Encourage creative design and planning techniques, which produce visual harmony while protecting vital natural resources, including air, water, woodland, and open space.
- d. Promote the development of green buildings and low impact development (LID) on new and redeveloped sites.
- e. Continue existing comprehensive and innovative efforts to promote sensitive and responsible storm water management practices and protection of the five watersheds in the City.
- f. Use site design and zoning practices to protect and promote environmental quality, including limits of development in heavily wooded areas, near lakesides, and encourage developers to integrate existing natural features into new developments.

## C. Summary of Key Community Facility and Natural Resource Issues

Throughout the City's history, staff and officials have striven to offer Romulus residents the most desirable community facilities to maintain their quality of life. Natural resources have also been a valued part of the City's character. As the City plans for the future, the following key issues must be addressed related to community facilities and natural resources.

- The City has an aging infrastructure and is lacking any existing utility master plans for sanitary water and storm sewer line improvements. These should be developed to acknowledge system conditions, needs, and improvements.
- The City is located within five watersheds and requires special focus to ensure all decisions are compatible with the goal of maintaining the quality of these systems.
- Existing barriers such as the airport, rail lines, and expressways can create obstacles for emergency response vehicles.
- The existing park system needs updates, enhancements, and new, more diverse equipment.
- New neighborhoods and isolated existing neighborhoods, such as in the in southeast corner, are not offered convenient access to parks.
- The City needs to remain competitive with surrounding growing communities through updated and diverse community facilities in order to remain attractive to potential residents and businesses.
- Continued coordination and efforts to maintain the quality of schools are important to residents for their quality of life.
- While sensitive natural features are limited, those that exist are an important part of the unique character of the City and need to be conserved.
- The desire for sustainable building practices may impact how sites and buildings are designed, and the City should show its commitment and lead by example for community buildings and policies.

## D. Facilities and Resources Toolkit Renewable Energy

In light of rising energy prices, many communities are looking for ways to reduce their energy consumption and their carbon footprint. As fossil fuel prices rise and climate change looms, interest in alternative energy sources is increasing. Use of alternative energy sources such as waste heat utilization, heat pumps, co-generation of heat and power, wood-waste systems, solar and wind technologies, and alternative fuels should be investigated.

Wind is an abundant resource in many parts of Michigan, including Romulus. It is estimated that wind energy could reliably supply at least 20% of the nation's electricity. As a

result, wind power development is expanding in the U.S., and technologies are being developed and improved, increasing the ability to harness wind in a variety of settings.

A U.S. household with average energy demand that uses the typical mix of U.S. utility energy emits 16,376 pounds of carbon per year. In 2000, the U.S. E.P.A estimated the annual carbon emissions of an average U.S. passenger car at 11,450 pounds per year. Thus, on average, each home that is powered 100% by wind, emits no carbon, and reduces emissions equivalent to taking 1.4 cars off the road. Wind power has other benefits, such as reducing dependence on foreign oil, providing dispersed back-up energy in the event of grid failures, and better air quality.

As citizens' interest in sustainability and energy alternatives increases, Romulus should develop well-written and reasonable standards to encourage installation of Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECs). Standards should protect neighbors from potential nuisance impacts of WECs, create a predictable environment for those that invest in WECs, and should avoid overly restrictive, unnecessary provisions – such as low height limitations – that substantially reduce the effectiveness of WECs, which discourages investment in them. The City should work with the airport and FAA to determine reasonable height restrictions that enable functional WECs without interference with airport operations.

## Green Building

As a prominent and recurring theme throughout the planning process, the incorporation of sustainable design and “green” building practices should be promoted by the City. Standards for sustainable design should strive to:

- Reduce the energy required for lighting, heating and cooling of structures.
- Reduce the energy required for transportation.
- Reduce on-site water usage.
- Reduce the off-site runoff of stormwater.
- Encourage design that promotes walking and biking.
- Protect existing trees and vegetation.
- Promote higher density infill development where the infrastructure capacity exists

The United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) provides benchmarks for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings and site design. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing five key areas of human and environmental health:

- sustainable site development,
- water savings,
- energy efficiency,
- materials selection and

*Please see the 2014-2019 Romulus Parks and Recreation Plan for detailed recommendations*

In order to implement the goals and objectives to address the issues, the following recommendations are provided in this Toolkit.

- indoor environmental quality.

New and infill developments can be LEED-certified based on qualifying guidelines. It has been shown that LEED-certified buildings have lower operating costs, promote healthier neighborhoods and conserve energy and natural resources that lead to development that is sustainable over the long term.

The use of LEED-designed buildings should be encouraged in Romulus and incentives, such as density or height bonuses, could be granted in exchange for buildings that become LEED certified. To achieve the maximum benefits of environmental sustainability, the following should be considered:

- The use of LEED certification programs, including those for new construction, existing buildings (operations and maintenance), commercial interiors, core and shell, schools, retail, healthcare, homes and neighborhoods.
- Placing, orienting and configuring buildings on a site to minimize energy use by means of day light, solar heating, natural ventilation, green roofs, and shading from vegetation or other buildings.
- Using pervious pavers in surface parking lots along with appropriate sustainable design concepts that reflect urban development patterns like rain gardens for open spaces and landscaped areas to improve the quality and reduce the amount of storm water runoff.
- Implementing a streetscape enhancement program with a focus on use of shade trees and native vegetation.
- Working with downtown residents and business owners to implement “green” operating practices such as installing compact fluorescent light bulbs and/or lights with motion sensors, developing restrooms with low flow fixtures, promoting recycling, and adjusting thermostats to reduce usage, etc.
- Promoting the use of Energy Star.

### Low Impact Development

Low Impact Development (LID) is an innovative stormwater management approach with a basic principle that is modeled after nature: manage rainfall at the source rather than distributing it to a larger stormwater system. LID’s goal is to mimic a site’s original runoff patterns through use of design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source. Techniques are based on the premise that stormwater management should not be seen as stormwater disposal. Rather than conveying and managing / treating stormwater in large, costly end-of-pipe facilities located at the bottom of drainage areas, LID addresses stormwater through small, cost-effective landscape features located at the lot level. These landscape features, known as Integrated Management Practices (IMPs), are the building blocks of LID. Almost all components of the urban environment have the potential to serve as an IMP. This includes not only open space, but also rooftops, streetscapes, parking lots, sidewalks, and

medians. LID is a versatile approach that should be promoted by the City as part of new development and redevelopment projects.

## A. Introduction

In the years following adoption of this master plan, the City will continue to experience the pressures of growth and development. Although much of the City has been developed, the purpose of this plan is to set forth a detailed framework for how and where new development will occur and how existing sites should be redeveloped.

This chapter offers sound decision making considerations for development proposals and site development that will ensure compatibility with this plan and the vision of its residents. These guidelines are intended to serve as a basis for zoning requirements that provide more specific and quantifiable requirements for development.

## B. Summary of Existing Conditions/ Key Design and Appearance Issues

A tour of the City's commercial corridors reveals a number of important observations that must be considered in developing design guidelines for Romulus. These conditions and issues are as follows:

- The streetscape along most commercial corridors do not promote a consistent image, and is not inviting because of the cluttered appearance from business signs, outdoor storage and operations, extensive pavement in the front yard, and building setbacks.
- Several existing structures have not used durable, aesthetic building materials.
- Landscape enhancements are lacking in the front yards and parking areas of many business areas.
- Screening of outdoor storage and loading docks is needed in industrial areas.
- Site design in large commercial centers does not consider the circulation needs and safety of the pedestrian.
- Overall site appearances do not reflect a particular character or 'sense of arrival' that distinguish Romulus business areas from others within the County.

### *Key Design Concepts*

- Promote high quality, durable building construction and design
- Use site design features such as landscaping, lighting, and parking to improve circulation and appearance
- Screen undesirable views
- Limit the clutter of business signs
- Promote pedestrian oriented design where appropriate

## B. Design Goals and Objectives



### Goal #1 Improve the appearance and design quality of non-residential development in Romulus.

- a. Promote the use of landscaping and landscape islands to enhance the appearance of sites and more functional purposes like screening, noise mitigation, and guiding circulation.
- b. Eliminate cluttered views along major corridors caused by large business signs.
- c. Improve the longevity and durability of new buildings through the use of high quality building materials.
- d. Balance the circulation and parking needs of the vehicle with pedestrian facilities and accessibility.

### Goal #2 Promote business development that is compatible with the character of Romulus.

- a. Screen and buffer undesirable operations and more intense uses including industrial businesses, loading areas, storage, and parking from surrounding residential uses and public roadways.
- b. Improve views to the City from I-275 and I-94 and the gateways from the freeway, understanding that they are often the first impressions of the City's overall character and quality.
- c. Pursue stronger gateway image development for all corridors to the City.
- d. Prevent spill-over exterior lighting to adjacent site and along roadways.
- e. Manage traffic and driveway placement for each site to ensure new development supports a safe road network.
- f. Promote enhancement of the outer perimeter of the airport.

## D. Residential Development

Romulus has a variety of existing neighborhood types and as indicated in the Future Land Use Map areas for new residential development are planned. Because different areas of the City lend itself to its own design character, it is more effective to address design guidelines for residential development based on their location in the city. Refer to Chapter 3 for specific residential development guidelines organized by neighborhood in the city.

## E. Public Uses

There are a number of public and semi-public uses throughout the city. These include uses such as churches, schools, city buildings, and golf courses. It is important that the design and character of these sites are compatible with the surrounding area in which they are located. This surrounding character should be the guideline in which to follow when reviewing new proposals or redevelopment proposals for these uses. In assessing compatibility, the City should consider building mass, building materials, roof style, traffic, building orientation, screening, and other site elements.

## F. Citywide Business Development Guidelines

For all business development in the City (commercial, office and industrial), a few fundamental elements must be consistently considered, as described below. Site design components specific to the type of use or particular area in the city are described in the section following the general guidelines. There are also supplemental guidelines that apply to the special sub-areas in the city including Downtown, Vining Development District, and Southern Gateway. These additional standards are outlined in Chapter 2.

**Site Lighting.** Adequate site lighting needs to be provided along the roadways, within parking lots, and on buildings to ensure a safe environment. In addition, lighting within commercial and industrial areas needs to be designed to minimize impacts on adjacent residential areas and should promote aesthetically pleasing design.

All sites need to provide adequate lighting to ensure safety.

- Driveways, intersections, parking lots and major traffic routes need to be adequately illuminated to ensure traffic safety.
- Pedestrian pathways and in particular crosswalks need to be adequately illuminated to ensure pedestrian safety.
- Sites need to be adequately illuminated to ensure natural surveillance for crime prevention. Parking areas and building entrances need to be lighted to maximize visibility of people for safety and keeping intruders easily observable.

Poorly designed site lighting is disruptive to nearby residential neighborhoods and can alter the natural evening sky. To prevent these conflicts, the City needs reasonable and effective lighting requirements and approval procedures.

- Limit the intensity and type of bulb to a low wattage, lower foot-candle output and require only metal halide fixtures.
- Limit the height of poles to ensure lighting reflects the scale of the use and adjacent uses.
- All fixtures should be directed downward, away from adjacent sites, with full cut-off shields to reduce glare.
- Ornamental street lighting is recommended along the major business corridors to create a grander entrance and representation of the city. The City should establish a consistent fixture types that reflect the character of that particular area of the city.

**Landscaping.** Sites should consistently be developed to maximize the amount of green space. This may be accomplished by implementing the landscaping regulations in the new Zoning Ordinance. These landscaping standards allow for the design of planting areas that will enhance the site, create a view of the site from the road, and provide ample internal green space. In addition, plantings are provided to screen and buffer incompatible uses and activities.



- Site frontage should be consistently landscaped to create a pleasant appearance along the corridor. Necessary screening along the roadway is discussed later in this chapter. Consistent implementation of these regulations will produce well landscaped, canopy tree-lined business corridors. Shrubs and flowers should be encouraged in natural clusters that accent the entry to sites. The use of berms on large sites may be appropriate to create a 'natural' landscape treatment and/or to mitigate the potential impact of features such as parking, storage, loading and waste receptacle enclosures. In such cases, low-profile and undulating berms are to be used.
- Large canopy trees and planting islands should be required in proportion to the amount of paved surface (including parking, drive aisles, loading areas, etc). Parking lot landscaping should enhance green space within the site, assist with directing on-site circulation, and be coordinated with parking lot lighting.
- Parking areas should be screened when directly visible from a public or private roadway. Acceptable forms of screening may include hedgerows, seat walls, or berms depending on the character and size of the site. Landscape screening should be done in a manner that softens views of the parking lot but still allows for surveillance by law enforcement.
- Businesses should be required to provide landscape screening and buffering when located adjacent to less intense uses such as residential or office. Walls or fences should be used where necessary to prevent trespassing on adjacent residential properties and protect privacy.
- Landscaping and screening should be done in a manner that reinforces territorial control over sites and creates natural access control thereby discouraging unlawful activities.
- Landscaping should also function as interior site enhancement with building foundation plantings in the form of shrubs, ornamental trees, canopy trees and evergreen trees in an amount that is proportionate to the size of the building.
- Landscaping and the amount of open space should be greater for sites within the Office Research areas to create the campus style setting that is desired in the city.
- Detention and retention ponds should include plantings that are natural to its design and can tolerate the amount of water anticipated.

**Signs.** Signs have a major effect on the appearance of the streetscape. While adequate signs to advertise and draw customers is important for the viability of businesses, uncontrolled proliferation of large unattractive signs not only degrades the appearance of business areas, but also distracts motorists.





The City recently updated its sign regulations to accomplish this objective. Limitations have been placed on the area and placement of business signage to minimize the clutter and negative appearance along the street. Low ground mounted signs in the front yard of businesses and at the entrances to business parks with framing materials to match the building and supplemental landscaping are encouraged. Removal and prohibition of taller, larger pole signs is also encouraged.

**Utilities.** Throughout the city, overhead utilities are an ever-present element that must be considered as the city evolves. Old utility poles and multiple wires spanning along the roadway in some areas do not present a desirable impression for community character. In addition, these exposed utilities create limitations on improvements such as pathways and landscape design. The reality, however, is that the business corridors began to develop many years ago, when overhead utilities were the only option. Furthermore, it is very costly to undertake burying the utilities. A realistic alternative for the city is to encourage developers to bury utilities as vacant lots develop or as sites are redeveloped. Where poles cannot be removed, developers should provide a human scale through landscaping to draw attention away from the views of the overhead wires and poles.

**Parking.** The City has updated parking requirements in the Zoning Ordinance to achieve the following goals:

- Parking requirements have been adjusted to reduce minimum parking requirements and set maximum parking limits. Excessively large parking lots impact community aesthetics, reduce the walkability of a community and impact the environment. Excessive areas of parking will impact the natural environment through woodland removal, increased stormwater runoff and microclimate changes that contribute to an “urban heat island” effect.
- Flexibility was added to the parking requirements in order to create and allow opportunities for shared parking, off-site parking, banked parking, and accessibility to public transportation.
- Parking landscaping is required to delineate traffic routes for vehicular circulation, provide refuge or buffers for pedestrian routes. Improve the site aesthetics and minimize the impact to the urban microclimate.
- Parking is encouraged in the side and rear yards, bringing buildings closer to street to reduce the dominance of parking lots along the public street, create a more human-scale environment along the sidewalk and a more walkable community.

**Transit and Pedestrian-Oriented Design.** The land use component of this plan recommends creation of business nodes along key corridors that will provide a concentration of activity, in place of commercial sprawl in some areas of the city. This creates an environment that could be conducive to public transit and increased pedestrian traffic. Additional site specific

elements will facilitate public transportation and should be incorporated into the City's zoning ordinance.

- Develop transit and pedestrian oriented design standards that apply in key development areas, but not necessarily to every business site.
- Provide multi modal accessibility through sidewalks between sites and parking areas to mass transit stops and accommodate bike racks.
- Provide enhancements at mass transit stops to increase comfort and safety such as lighting, seating and shelters.
- Incorporate bus traffic and stops into street design either through a pull-off or pavement markings to alert motorists of mass transit stops.
- Coordinate shopping center development and redevelopment to accommodate on-site mass transit stops.
- Ensure that acceptable turning radii are available for bus maneuvering.
- Provide internal sidewalks between parking areas and building entrances.

**Access Management.** It is important to manage the flow of traffic in a manner that is safe for cars and people. In non-residential development areas, traffic is more intense than in the neighborhoods because of the different access points to the street and the variety of destinations for vehicles. To ensure safe management of traffic, regulation of driveway amounts, design, and location is important. Refer to Chapter 4 for access management recommendations.

## Neighborhood Business Development

In Romulus, there are many nodes planned for Neighborhood Business on the Future Land Use Map including along Van Born, Ecorse, Wayne, Merriman, Middlebelt, and Eureka Roads. Some are located near residential areas and others are situated near business centers. Design standards for businesses in the Central City sub-area are addressed in Chapter 2

Neighborhood Businesses are intended to serve daily commercial and office service needs of residents and workers in the City. These areas are intentionally planned in small nodes in order to limit the development to a local scale with limited types of businesses and limited building massing. These areas should be accessible and comfortable for the pedestrian and should create a sense of place along the roadway.

In most cases, Neighborhood Business areas are located near residential neighborhoods and should be compatible with the residential scale of the surrounding area. In these locations, the nodes can become a focal point, or gathering area for a neighborhood. In other cases, such as along Middlebelt Road, the residential character is less important due to the presence of surrounding industrial and airport uses.

- Building architecture should possess a timeless and traditional character that signifies the presence of the





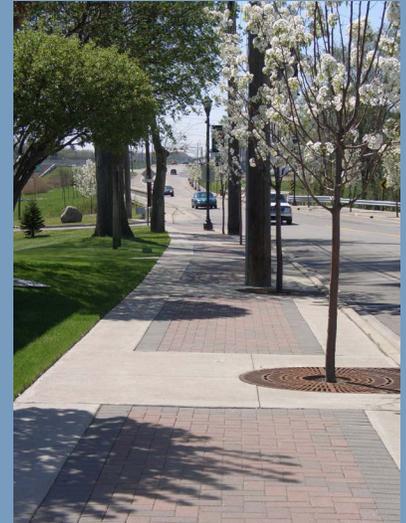
commercial area and reflects pedestrian-oriented design. The use of high quality building materials is strongly recommended to create a memorable character.

- All buildings should have exterior facades made of brick, glass, wood, and cut or simulated stone.
- All front facades should have windows and distinguishing architectural features commonly associated with the front of a building, such as awnings, cornice work, edge detailing, or other decorative finishes. Similar treatment is also needed on the side and rear depending on visibility from the roadway and surrounding property.
- Buildings are encouraged to be built closer to the street with most or all of the parking located to the side or rear. This will not only strengthen the streetscape but will ensure a district character of active and pedestrian-oriented areas that promote walking.
- Along Middlebelt Road, where Neighborhood Businesses are surrounded by industrial and airport uses, it is more important for the site to be designed for vehicular traffic and include visible parking areas, adequate on-site circulation and drive lanes.
- Streetscape treatment should be used to signify an entrance and sense of place. This provides a benefit for motorists and pedestrians to more easily identify these areas, and it is better for business owners because the streetscape can be used as a form of business recognition.
- The streetscape should include wide sidewalks, street trees, and street lighting. For additional enhancement along the streetscape, storefronts should allow for an area of planted flowers, plants, or benches.
- Parking abutting residential should be screened with a mixture of treatment such as landscaping and a wall or fence. Large canopy trees are also needed in parking lots to create shade, to break up the view of the built environment, and to enhance the overall site.
- Parking should be minimized to the greatest extent because pedestrian-orientation is promoted. The City should employ techniques such as shared parking, banked parking, and setting a maximum amount of parking to ensure the number of spaces is not excessive.
- In areas with less neighborhood appeal, at a minimum shared and connected parking is important to improve traffic flow between sites and avoid additional volumes onto the adjoining main road.
- Care should be taken to locate loading and unloading areas so that they are screened from view. Waste receptacle enclosures should also be sited so they are out of view and constructed of quality materials that are found in the building they serve.

## Regional Business Development

Regional Business development includes businesses that serve the entire community and the region such as large scale retail, restaurants, and services. The focus of design guidelines for these areas is to ensure durable, high quality building design, place limitations on potential nuisances such as lighting and offer techniques to minimize the visual impacts of large building massing and parking. Regional Business development is located along Merriman, Smith, Vining, Eureka, and Wick Roads.

- Building materials should be durable and have an appearance of permanence and substance consistent with surrounding buildings. For instance, brick, split-faced block or similar materials are encouraged as the primary building material.
- Roof shape and materials should be architecturally compatible with adjacent buildings and should have a pitched roofline.
- All visible wall elevations from the street must be designed with design details and treatment consistent with the front elevation of the building.
- Building colors should be subtle and consistent with the businesses along the corridor or within the shopping center.
- New building construction and renovations should be consistent in massing with the desired scale and proportion of the business corridor or area.
- Building massing should be reduced by incorporating vertical and horizontal breaks, varied rooflines, archways and other treatments.
- Entrances to commercial buildings should use windows, canopies and awnings; provide unity of scale, texture, and color to adjacent buildings; and provide a sense of place.
- Building entrances should be prominent and accessible from the roadway when located near the front of the site and otherwise oriented towards parking areas with a high quality façade.
- Rooftop equipment should be completely screened to protect views from the roadway and adjacent uses.
- Newly constructed parking lots should provide a setback and landscape greenbelt.
- Parking lot landscaping is especially important in minimizing large parking lots.
- Loading facilities and overhead doors should be prohibited along any building side facing a public street or residential area.
- Rear elevations visible from the roadway and/or residential areas should have a finished quality consistent with the other elevations of the building.





## G. Office Research Development

Areas planned for Office Research will be expected to be developed at a higher standard than typical industrial development. The intent is to encourage these sites to develop as unified office park with a unified road system, limited points of access to main roads, and consistent design theme. Some of the sites designated as Office Research are consistent with this intent and offer a unified design concept. All new development and redevelopment should possess the following development concepts in addition to general standards listed in the beginning of the Chapter.

- Building materials should be durable and have an appearance of permanence and substance consistent with surrounding buildings. For instance, brick, split-faced block or similar materials are encouraged. The roof shape and materials should be architecturally compatible with adjacent buildings with a pitched roofline.
- Building colors should be subtle and consistent with other businesses.
- Building massing should be minimized by incorporating vertical and horizontal breaks, varied rooflines, archways and other treatments.
- Building entrances should be prominent and accessible for employees and visitors, separate from service areas.
- All facades visible from the roadway must be of a finished appearance with similar design features and building materials, regardless of the front entrance location.
- Rooftop equipment should be completely screened to protect views from the roadway and adjacent uses.
- Large lots and deep setbacks should be applied to provide adequate open space and contribute to the campus environment while maintaining a prominent front orientation for the building.
- Newly constructed parking lots should provide a setback, landscape greenbelt, and interior plantings.
- Loading facilities and overhead doors should be prohibited along any building side facing a public street or residential area. Screening is also needed in the form of landscaping, berms, or an integrated screen wall extending from the building.

## H. Industrial Development

This section includes design standards for Industrial Development. Although there is a range of industrial future land use categories and types, architecture and building design should generally follow similar guidelines.

**Building Design.** Buildings should be compatible with others in the area and consistently reflect a quality image that is attractive to employers and employees, by addressing the following design elements:

- The administrative/office segment of the building should utilize quality architecture with variable building lines, rooflines, architectural accents, and brick facades similar to community and regional scale commercial development.
- The administrative/office portion of the building should be located and oriented toward the front of the site and appropriately transitioned into the warehouse and manufacturing areas.
- The portion of industrial buildings devoted to warehousing and manufacturing should be located at the rear of the building.
- Techniques should be utilized to break up building massing such as vertical and horizontal breaks, windows, varying facades, and landscaping.
- The predominant material utilized on facades visible from a public right-of-way or parking lots should be brick, split face block or other high-quality decorative masonry material.
- Building materials should be durable and have an appearance of permanence and substance.
- Loading areas and overhead doors must be located where they are not visible from the roadway and residential areas and proper screening must be provided in the form of landscaping, and a berm where deep setbacks are provided. Screening may also be provided in the form of an integrated screen wall extending from the building. If a deep setback is not possible, a wall with plantings should be provided.

**Outdoor Storage.** Within the City there are a number of industrial uses that rely on outdoor storage for their operations. Because the City wishes to promote the economic viability of a variety of business types outdoor storage should be allowed, but strictly regulated in industrial areas. These standards should be considered in controlling outdoor storage:

- Outdoor storage areas should only be permitted within the rear yard of any site and meet the side and rear setback standards for a principal structure as a special land use.
- The size of the storage area should be limited by setback requirements and a maximum area should be allowed that is relative to the specific lot size.
- Designated outdoor storage areas should provide suitable containment in the form of opaque screening walls or opaque fences. In cases where it is necessary to use a chain link fence, the fencing shall be black vinyl coated and augmented with landscaping.
- To provide further screening and enhancement, plantings should be required along the outer perimeter of a screening wall or fence.
- Regulations should be flexible as to the types of materials stored outdoors, provided they do not cause hazardous contamination of soils and are contained in a manner that



prevents the material from blowing away.

- Materials stored may be stacked or placed at a height that is at or below the level of the screening wall or fence to ensure effective screening and containment.
- Circulation for emergency vehicles must be maintained within the storage area.
- Large outdoor storage operators, such as asphalt/paving companies or compost or recycling businesses, should mitigate views onto the site through increased setbacks and landscaping.

*Screening from Residential.* The future land use plan attempts to create transitions and separation between industrial development and single family residential neighborhoods by planning other land uses in those areas such as Multiple Family Residential, Neighborhood Business, and Office Research. In many cases, however, past development decisions and land use policies have created numerous areas in the City where single family residential abuts industrial operations. Since redevelopment cannot always occur with the desired land use separation, there will be circumstances where industrial development will be adjacent to single family residential.

In these cases it is the priority of the City to ensure as they redevelop, are re-used, or expand that additional screening is provided to minimize impacts. Screening should be provided by the industrial user in the manner described below when residential abuts the site, or when residential is directly across the street. Since sites are different, flexibility is needed to adjust to site conditions while at the same time maintaining the important priority of protecting residential areas.

- Deep setbacks are needed to physically separate industrial buildings from residential areas and to allow adequate space for proper screening.
- Landscaping is needed to provide a natural, aesthetic screen. Plantings should include both evergreen trees and large canopy trees to provide year round screening and screening at varying heights. Planting spacing must be dense enough to prevent 'openings' in the landscape screen.
- Undulating berms should also be incorporated into the landscape screen to obtain a taller, opaque screen. Since plantings take time to grow and fill in, the berm will contribute to an immediate screening of taller structures. The width of the berm must be adequate to allow a natural slope to the berm that can be maintained and allows for plantings to thrive.
- In cases where a deep setback is not possible, an opaque screening wall is needed in addition to plantings.
- Although the entire length of the property line should be screened where it abuts or is across the street from residential, attention should be directed toward loading areas, outdoor storage areas, or other on-site operations

that may be particularly displeasing to residents. Where possible, attempt should be made to orient these activities to the opposite side of the site.

## I. Airport Enhancements

The City and the airport should work together to promote the success of this important transportation facility while at the same time protecting the image of Romulus. When the opportunity presents itself either through development review or a cooperative effort between the City and the airport the following exterior and entrance enhancements should be completed. The most visible elements are along the edge of the airport while traveling along roadways such as Goddard, Eureka, Vining, Wayne, and Middlebelt Roads. To ensure the airport becomes a more positive element to the streetscape, the following should be considered.

- Tall chain link fencing is required for security purposes however plantings should be installed to soften its stark appearance. Security and safety regulations may limit the type and location of landscaping however a feasible compromise can be reached. Ideally, a mixture of large canopy trees and evergreens along the fenceline should be provided however, plantings closer to the road, away from the fence, could also achieve the intent.
- Enhanced corner treatment should be provided in the form of flowering shrubs, planting beds, and other ornamental plantings to introduce color at main intersections. The airport could use planting areas to provide attractive wayfinding or site identification signage.
- Work with the airport to encourage consistent lighting and signage for the facility to reduce clutter and improve wayfinding. This should include all on-site operations such as the terminals, rental car facilities, parking lots, storage and other uses.
- The airport is considering development of air cargo facilities along Vining and Wayne Roads. Any development on the west side of the airport needs to retain the noise berms, which protect the residents in the downtown area. The berms will also serve as screening for the air cargo facilities. While the berms could be shifted further west and retaining walls used on the airport side, the sound attenuating characteristics of the berms must be retained.

## J. I-94 and I-275 Corridors

The I-94 and I-275 Interstate corridors traverse through the city creating a number of valuable opportunities for Romulus. This type of regional accessibility allows for prime development opportunities and is attractive to many businesses. These corridors also allow travelers a glimpse into the image and character of Romulus.

The view of the city from these interstates is for many, a first impression of Romulus whether they are passing by or plan to exit at one of the interchanges. It is extremely important to continue upgrades along these corridors in order to project a higher quality image of the city and to attract positive attention to the community. Generally, frontage along the expressway should be treated as a second front yard in terms of building orientation, building design, and screening of operations and storage. More detailed, design guidelines are offered in Chapter 4 that are important to follow to ensure enhancement of this first impression of Romulus.

## A. Introduction

Each chapter contained in this document provides sufficient background information and analysis on the key issues facing the City of Romulus. Following the analysis of each subject, goals and objectives were established as a foundation to guide the resolution of issues and establish policies for decision-making. An important part in the development of these goals and objectives is that they all support each other, are inter-related and most of all work together to achieve the needs and demands of the City.

### *Key Action Plan Tools*

- Amend the Zoning Ordinance
- Initiate Zoning Map changes
- Create design requirements
- Employ economic development resources
- Coordinate with agencies on transportation improvements
- Explore funding opportunities
- Communicate between City departments and officials

This final plan chapter should be utilized as a resource to the City when they begin the implementation of the goals and objectives of this plan. Over time, the City may discover new approaches and opportunities that may alter this implementation plan. Changes to the specific strategies are to be expected, however, the City must remain committed to upholding the integrity of the goals and objectives of the document.

## B. Prioritized Actions

Based on the various goals and objectives, a set list of prioritized action statements have been developed to assist in plan implementation. For ease of use it is organized in a table format. Each section of the table is divided into three categories: Top Priorities, Ongoing Efforts, and Future Priorities to help focus attention on the most important and most effective strategies. In addition, a Completed Projects table is included to recognize the many efforts that have been completed as recommended in the Master Plan. Although successful implementation will involve effort from the entire community, the second column identifies key responsibility.

Top Priorities and Responsibility	
Adopt a complete set of design guidelines and requirements to apply to each sub-area plan (Southern Gateway, Downtown, Vining Road Development District) to ensure accurate implementation of its vision	Planning Department Planning Commission City Council
Create promotional materials and actively work with the Metro Detroit Chamber of Commerce, Aerotropolis, and Michigan Economic Development Corporation to recruit land use types that are important to each district and implement the land use plan and sub-area plans	Community Development Dept. City Council Tax Increment Financing Authority Downtown Development Authority
Seek opportunities to acquire land for public, recreation, and preservation uses	City Council Park and Recreation Department Park and Recreation Commission
Promote the establishment of neighborhood associations and support the creation of a lead committee that is charged with maintaining communication between associations	Community Services Dept. City Council
Continue to coordinate with Wayne County, SEMCOG, MDOT, adjoining communities, and other jurisdictions for improvements to roads	Community Development Dept. City Council Building Department
Ensure transportation projects, including expressways and city streets, are designed in consideration of the city's character along with traffic flow and safety factors	Community Development Dept. City Council Department of Public Services
Prepare a citywide non-motorized plan that coordinates with Wayne County, MDOT, and adjacent communities' regional pathway plans	Community Development Dept. Department of Public Services
Support infrastructure upgrades and maintenance compatible with the planned land use pattern	Community Development Dept. Planning Department City Council
Update and maintain the citywide GIS system	Community Development Dept. Planning Department City Council Department of Public Works Accessing Department
Update use tables in zoning ordinance to reflect the uses in this plan	Planning Department Planning Commission
Adopt home-based business standards	Planning Department Planning Commission
Conduct training on best practices and new zoning techniques	Planning Commission City Council

## Ongoing Efforts and Responsibility

Reference the land use plan and sub-area plans for rezoning reviews, and other application procedures	Planning Department Planning Commission City Council
Consistently and regularly enforce property maintenance codes	Building Department City Council
Provide information to homeowners related to home improvements and funding sources for home improvements such as tax credits and low-interest financing	Community Development Dept. Building Department City Council
Encourage a variety of flexible housing types to accommodate a wide variety of residents including seniors and airport workers	Community Development Dept. Planning Department Planning Commission
Continue a regular street and sidewalk maintenance program including filling in gaps in the sidewalk system	City Council Department of Public Works
Coordinate emergency management efforts with higher risk neighborhoods as noted in the plan.	Emergency Management City Council Community Development Dept.
Prepare a multi-year Capital Improvement Plan (as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act) and annually update it to reflect the current and future community facility and infrastructure needs of the community	Mayor's Office Community Development Dept. Department of Public Works Planning Department Planning Commission City Council
Annually review applicability of road improvements projects and incorporate, as needed into the City's CIP and seek necessary changes to the County's project list	Planning Department City Council
Explore opportunities for new and diversified community facilities and services as described in Chapter 5 and continue current efforts for improving the City's infrastructure	Community Development Dept. Department of Public Works Planning Department City Council
Capitalize on natural and historic resources in a manner consistent with the objectives of Chapter 5	Planning Department Planning Commission City Council
Pursue local and state funding to complete the planned sidewalk and road improvement projects	Planning Department Community Development Dept. City Council
Continue to work with MDOT to improve interchange design and enhancements at I-94 and I-275	Community Development Dept. Planning Department City Council
Adopt Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards	Community Development Dept. Planning Department Department of Public Works Police and Fire Departments Planning Commission City Council
Encourage redevelopment of former school buildings that are sensitive to their context, exploring possible reuse as housing	Community Development Dept. Planning Department School District

## Future Priorities and Responsibility

Install consistent gateway signage and streetscape treatment within each sub-area to incorporate a sense of place that reflects the character of that area	Community Development Dept. Tax Increment Financing Authority Downtown Development Authority City Council
Implement a citywide way-finding program	Community Development Dept. Tax Increment Financing Authority Downtown Development Authority City Council
Create a neighborhood development committee that will assist in guiding the implementation of the neighborhood improvement strategies set forth in this plan	Community Services Dept. City Council
Improve views to the city from I-275 and I-94 and the gateways from the freeway, understanding that they are often the first impressions of the city's overall character and quality	Community Development Dept. Tax Increment Financing Authority Downtown Development Authority City Council
Promote enhancement of the outer perimeter of the Airport – work with the Airport Authority and the Romulus TIFA	Community Development Dept. Tax Increment Financing Authority Downtown Development Authority City Council
Update the zoning ordinance to more strongly influence the city's land use pattern and development character in accordance with the recommendations of this plan	Planning Department Planning Commission City Council
Complete a comparative analysis of the zoning map and the future land use map and determine which zoning changes should be pursued by the City in order to implement the plan	Planning Department Planning Commission City Council
Update subdivision, condominium, land division regulations and sign, woodland, and rental ordinance to reflect plan recommendations	Planning Commission Planning Department City Council

## C. Implementation Tools

This Master Plan is only valuable if used consistently. This chapter has been prepared to summarize the various recommendations into a checklist to outline actions and responsibilities for implementation. Tools to implement the Master Plan generally fall into these categories:

- Land use regulations derived from police powers
- Capital improvement programs derived from budgetary powers
- Programs or additional studies derived from the city charter and approvals by the city council or administration

Each tool has a different purpose toward Plan implementation. Some suggest specific short term priorities, some are medium term policies and others involve on-going activities. The key tools are described below.

### Land Use Regulations

The purpose of the primary tools for Plan implementation, such as the Zoning Ordinance and other land use regulations, are

summarized below. The City also has a number of other codes and ordinances to ensure that activities remain compatible with the surrounding area, such as noise, blight and nuisance ordinances, and to control impacts on the environment and infrastructure.

*Zoning Map.* The intent is that changes to the zoning map over time will gradually result in better implementation of the objectives encouraged in the Future Land Use Map. In some cases, the City may wish to initiate certain zoning changes as part of an overall zoning map amendment. Other changes to the zoning map will be made in response to requests by landowners or developers. In those cases, City officials will need to determine if the time is proper for a change. A key point to remember is that the future land use plan is a long range blueprint: Implementation is expected, but gradually in response to needs, conditions and availability of infrastructure. Additional guidance on the relationship of the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map are included in Chapter 2.

*Zoning Regulations.* Zoning regulations control the intensity and arrangement of development through standards on lot size or units per acre, setbacks from property lines, building dimensions and similar minimum requirements. Various site design elements discussed in this Plan are also regulated through site plan review, which addresses landscaping, lighting, driveways, parking and circulation, access management, pedestrian systems and signs. The City recently updated its Zoning Ordinance to implement these recommendations. Zoning can also be used to help assure performance in the protection of environmentally sensitive areas such as floodplains, state regulated wetlands and woodlands.

*Subdivision, Land Division and Condominium Regulations.* Subdivision, land division and condominium regulations control the manner in which property is subdivided in the city and the public improvements required to support the development. The distinctions are not always apparent once a project is built, but the approval procedures are different due to separate state statutes that govern the three types of land development/division in Michigan. The City will need to update the Subdivision Ordinance to ensure proper division of land and provision of streets, recreational space and other infrastructure to support new residents.

*Development Review and Approval Process.* Most land development regulations are applied when new construction is proposed. The City of Romulus has a comprehensive development review process from development conceptualization to building occupancy. Once proper zoning is in place, a site plan must be approved followed by approval of building and site engineering construction plans and then permits for construction. Buildings and sites are inspected and then occupancy permits are issued. Regulations are enforced through a combination of monitoring by city staff and in response to complaints.

## Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

A CIP is a multi-year program that lists recommended improvements, timing, estimated costs and funding for infrastructure (streets, bikeways, sidewalks, sanitary sewers, waterlines, storm sewers and drainage) and community facilities (public buildings, fire, police and parks). Capital projects should be identified and constructed in a manner that helps support and promote desired development, and to meet the needs of residents and businesses already in the city. The number of projects and their timing is influenced by several factors, in particular the cost, need for environmental clearance or approval by other agencies, and funds available. For example, the amount of funding available from outside sources varies as new programs become available. Funding is also influenced by the timing of development (i.e. tax revenue), tax abatements, and other changes to the anticipated tax base.

## Additional Studies and Programs

A variety of housing, economic development, informational and other programs are used by the City to assist with implementation of recommendations in this Plan. Programs targeted toward various neighborhoods could also be created to respond to specific situations such as traffic calming where traffic speeds or volumes are a concern.