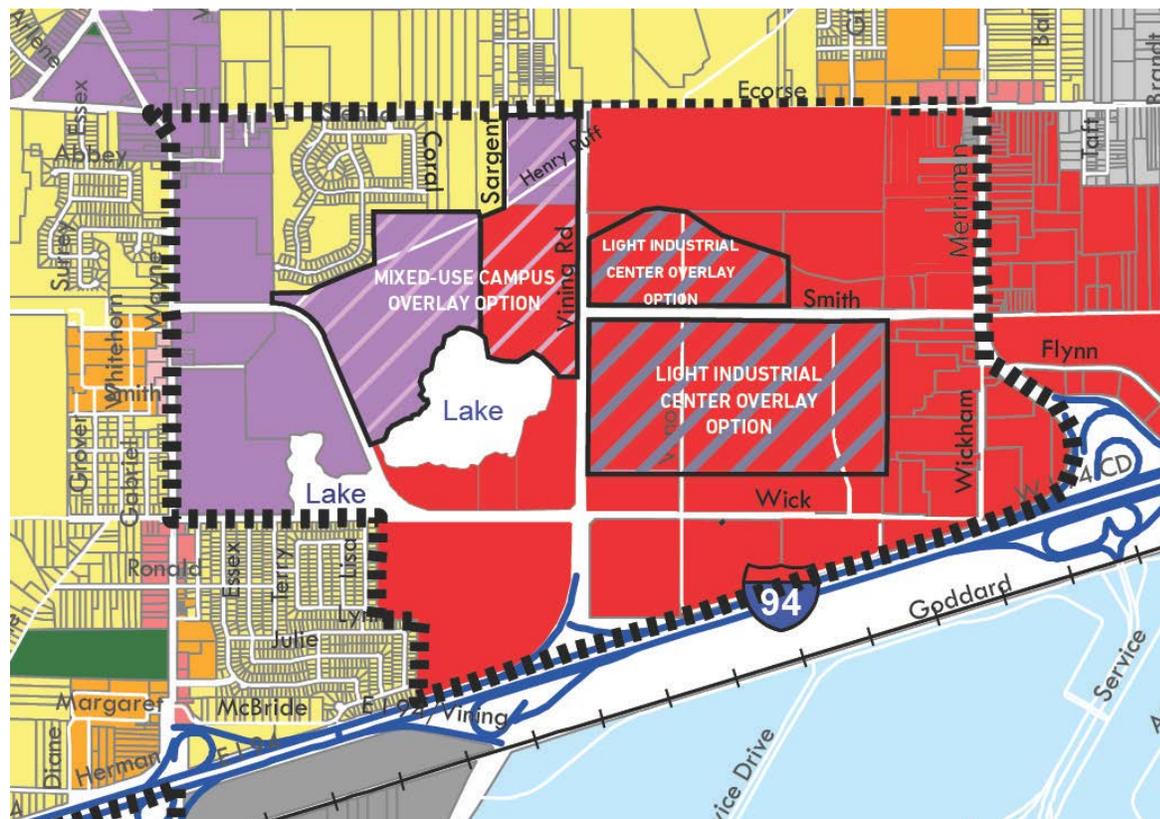


Location and Prior Planning Efforts

The Vining Road Development District includes the area 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 (as outlined within the dashed lines on the Vining Road Development District Land Use Map below). This is one of the few, large undeveloped areas in the City, and given its prominent location and accessibility, the Vining Road area should be developed in a coordinated way with a higher level of design quality than in some other parts of the City. Development should support the goals, provide destination retail and entertainment places, employment for residents, grow the tax base, and provide a unique hub of activity. Development should include mixed-use commercial and office space, but also allow for research and development facilities, and lower intensity light industrial uses which could be catalysts for job creation and economic development in the area. Uses in the Vining Road Development District should take advantage of the synergy created by the nearby Detroit Metro Airport and be considerate of existing and adjacent planned residential neighborhoods in the area. Of particular importance is to restrict uses to those that do not generate significant volumes of traffic that could discourage full development of the most desired commercial users.

Vining Road Development District Land Use Map



History

The area has long been planned for Regional Commercial but has largely remained vacant. Over the years, there have been several major development proposals for commercial uses and entertainment uses in this area, but none have come to fruition due to a variety of factors. The City has recognized that the area intended for commercial uses may now be too large for the demand. There are several reasons for this, including that the number of residents in the vicinity around the Vining Road area is relatively small, and the overall trending growth of e-commerce and subsequent reduction of brick and mortar retail stores.

Therefore, the Master Plan was amended to broaden the list of uses allowed in this district to include some lower intensity industrial uses.

Vining Road Area Goals

This Vining Road Development District Plan provides a framework for land uses and transportation to have the flexibility to adapt to market conditions to the degree that such uses are compatible with the overall vision. The plan emphasizes high quality site and building design to provide compatibility with other planned uses. In summary, the Vining Road Development District Plan is in place to:

- (1) Provide opportunity for Regional Center uses in a more concentrated area north of the I-94 interchange and around the lake.
- (2) Accommodate some of the current market demand for research and development and advanced manufacturing uses in specific parts of the subarea to take advantage of the proximity to the airport and access to markets via the I-94 interchange. Location of such uses and site design standards are designated to help ensure compatibility with existing and planned Regional Center uses in the area.
- (3) Limit truck traffic volumes overall, and direct trucks to the I-94 interchange to avoid traveling through nearby residential and commercial areas.
- (4) Provide new employment opportunities, especially for the residents of Romulus.
- (5) Provide an increased tax base to gain a return on the infrastructure investment made by the state of Michigan, City of Romulus, and the Tax Increment Finance Authority.

Description of the Subarea Plan

If a developer selects a light industrial use option, then building and site design must meet higher standards than other industrial zoning districts in the city.

Land Use

The buildout of the Vining Road Development District should evolve to become an area that supports a range of uses that may vary in type but are compatible with neighboring properties through comprehensive design and site standards. These uses should also be limited to those that generate relatively low truck volumes as high truck traffic can cause vehicle delays, increase crash severity, and cause additional noise pollution that is not compatible with adjacent commercial and residential uses. New standards in the zoning ordinance for this district emphasize useable open space with amenities, greater architectural and building standards, more greenspace, larger landscape materials, wider non-motorized paths, and special lake front requirements. The subarea land use plan supports the following uses in addition to the Regional Center uses that are already permitted (research and development and light industrial uses would require additional standards to limit building sizes, dock or overhead door placement and screening, and enhance the overall appearance of the property with greater landscaping and building design standards):

- **Regional Center:**
 - Multi-family Residential
 - Commercial
 - Office
 - Hotels
 - Restaurants
 - Event Facilities
 - Recreation Facilities

- **Mixed-Use Campus and Light Industrial Center Options (in part of the District):**
 - Regional Center Uses
 - Planned office parks
 - Specialized or customized photographic design services
 - Manufacture, assembling, compounding, fabrication or packaging of products from previously prepared material
 - Research, development, experimental, or testing facilities
 - Publishing and printing establishments

The primary difference between the Mixed-Use Campus and Light Industrial Center Overlay options are the limitations on building sizes. The Mixed-Use Campus Overlay area should allow buildings up to 125,000 square feet in gross floor area for light industrial uses, while the Light Industrial Center area would allow larger buildings up to 350,000 square feet in gross floor area.

The vision for this subarea is a collection of sites that are interconnected (when possible) with ample green space and landscaping. The graphic for potential light industrial development below illustrates the level of landscaping expected.

Example of Site Design Permissible in the Vining Road Sub-Area



The photos provide an example of industrial buildings that display the high quality design that is desired with the use of durable and attractive materials to wrap the building façade to enhance the overall appearance of the structure.

Precedent for Industrial Building Design:

Kentwood, Michigan - Rapid Packaging, Single User



Van Buren Township, Michigan - Grand River Printing & Imaging



Denver, Colorado - Office/Warehouse, Single User



Location Unknown - Advanced Imaging (Healthcare Facility)



Site and Building Design Considerations

The following sections detail the desired accommodations for site and building design that will help protect community identity and enhance the overall quality of life.

Open Space

Preservation of prime woodlots and open space along the lakeshore is a high priority. Additional open space should be required throughout development sites, in particular along public streets. This means that the impervious surface area (buildings and parking lots) should be less than in the City's other industrial districts. Special site design standards should be applied to developments along the lakefront, including deeper setbacks and required pathways.

Transportation

The overall concept plan illustrates several new streets, street extensions and other improvements that will provide internal connectivity for safe and efficient traffic flow. The Romulus Truck Route Map was amended to show the Vining Road Development District designed for a level of service D at full build out. Wide, well-landscaped arterials, such as Wick and Vining Roads, are intended to serve as the major circulation routes. Specific transportation recommendations are listed below:

- **Truck Routes:** Truck traffic should generally be directed to use Vining Road. To ensure future compatibility with surrounding residential and commercial land uses, standards to help control the volume of truck traffic should be used in these overlay subdistricts to restrict building size, the number of dock doors, and limit outdoor truck trailer storage area. A traffic impact study that addresses truck volumes and their impacts, and mitigation to address them specifically should also be required.
- **Access:** In order to protect investment in the roadways already built or underway, future access points should be carefully placed to preserve safe and efficient traffic along Vining and Smith Roads. Uses that generate truck traffic may need greater spacing between driveways to minimize potential traffic conflicts and provide for safer pedestrian conditions.
- **Wick Realignment:** As part of any development review process, the City will need to evaluate whether Wick Road should be realigned (a concept is shown on the subarea plan) to minimize impacts to existing neighborhoods.
- **Smith Extension:** Smith Road will likely need to be extended across Vining Road to connect with the "new" Wick Road to Wayne Road. Several intersections will likely need to be improved. A conceptual alignment is shown on the subarea plan and can be defined as part of the development design process.
- **Median:** The median along Vining Road should include street trees, decorative lighting, sidewalks, and pedestrian amenities.
- **Pedestrian and Bike Transportation:** A system of a minimum of 8-foot wide pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists should be provided along primary roads

and around the lake to ensure a place for employees and residents to walk and bike for recreation and provide access to future commercial and residential uses. Sidewalks should be created to connect parking areas with building entrances and public sidewalks or pathways along the street.

Landscaping and Open Space Considerations

- Buildings should be oriented in a manner that enhances views of the natural environment such as the prime woodlots and the lake.
- Development along the lake waterfront should incorporate setbacks that maximize the views and provide a landscaping and pedestrian pathway buffer.
- Development around the lake should include a unified open space system linking the development areas, providing opportunities for recreation, and the preservation of sensitive natural features.
- Surface parking should be screened from view along the roadways using trees, shrubs, hedges, and berms.
- Open space and pedestrian connectivity should be encouraged within the site.
- Internal streets, primary streets, and adjacent commercial/residential land uses should be buffered appropriately with landscaping greenbelts and berms.
- Preservation of prime woodlots should be prioritized in this area.
- Create notable and visible public spaces that are easily accessible to all types of users.

Site Design

- Decorative and pedestrian lighting should be implemented throughout the subarea.
- Buildings should be neutral in color and use patterns and textures to avoid monotonous facades with horizontal and vertical delineations, as well as corner articulations.
- Overhead doors or loading areas should be limited to the side and rear yards and properly screened to decrease visibility from the street or adjacent commercial and residential areas.
- Should the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) plan a rapid transit airport connector route along Merriman Road, amenities around the future stops should be provided, such as sidewalks, to connect to nearby uses.