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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Citizen Planning Commission
Adoption: December 14, 2002
City Council Adoption: January 6, 2003

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The City of Monroe would also like to acknowledge the years of service and contributions of Mary Kay Kosa,

who played an integral role in the City as well as the formulation of this document.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Monroe is rich in history and embodies the traditional urban center for Monroe County, Michigan. Important events and turning points in the City's history assist in understanding its needs for the future. A glimpse at the past also provides greater insight and appreciation for its assets so they can properly be preserved.

Development of the Comprehensive Plan was pivotal in preserving these qualities while preparing the City for contemporary pressures and issues. Through an interactive planning process, emerged strategies and policies that seek to accomplish the following six primary objectives:

- ***Protect the neighborhoods***
- ***Revitalize the City's downtown***
- ***Capitalize on the City's greatest natural asset, the River Raisin***
- ***Improve traffic operations***
- ***Preserve the historic character and resources of the City***
- ***Strengthen the City economy, tax base and job market***

This summary of the City's Comprehensive Plan captures the essence of the most important issues facing the City of Monroe. Most importantly, it includes a summary of the goals, objectives, and recommended strategies that will be important to follow in years to come. Refer to the complete plan for background data, a complete listing of goals and objectives, and detailed descriptions of these strategies.

The following ten major topic areas from the Comprehensive Plan are discussed in this executive summary:

- ***Land Use***
- ***Transportation***
- ***Neighborhoods & Housing***
- ***Economic Development & Redevelopment***
- ***Historic Resources***
- ***Downtown***
- ***Municipal Facilities***
- ***Natural Features, Parks & Open Space***
- ***Greenways***
- ***Community Character & Design***

The Citizen Planning Commission was the driving force during the entire plan process. A Resource Committee was also assembled and were updated on the status, findings and recommendations of the plan and received personal invitations to all public meetings. The planning team consisted of Langworthy, Strader, LeBlanc and Associates, Incorporated; Hamilton Anderson and Associates; the City of Monroe Department of Community Development and Planning; and Jane C. Busch, PhD, an historic preservation consultant.

The following are the steps in the comprehensive plan process:

Step 1: Issues Gathering
Step 2: Data Collection
Step 3: Develop Goals and Objectives
Step 4: Consensus Building and Plan Review
Step 5: Public Hearing
Step 6: Adoption

Citizen Planning Commission Adoption: December 14, 2002
City Council Adoption: January 6, 2003

LAND USE SUMMARY

Introduction

The City of Monroe's current development pattern has evolved over a period of more than 200 years and is defined by natural features, railways, streets, and lakefront locations selected by early industries and local building regulations. Today, the result of years of development and redevelopment are visible in a diverse existing land use pattern.

The south side of the River Raisin has primarily developed as the central business district, with older, stable neighborhoods and a few small business nodes. Industrial operations, wetlands and large open spaces occupy the east side of the City. The north side of the River Raisin is a mixture of many new residential and commercial areas amongst older, residential areas.

Existing Conditions

In collecting data and preparing analysis for this plan, a number of issues emerged. Those that had the strongest influence on the Future Land Use Plan are described below. Goals and objectives in this plan and the Future Land Use Map seek to address or resolve these concerns.

- Minimize the effects of sprawl
- Address incompatible land use relationships
- Capitalize on new development areas
- Evaluate potential redevelopment areas

Land Use Goals and Objectives

POLICY STATEMENT

Preserve and enhance the traditional, mixed land use character of the City by offering planned integration of land uses that promote positive relationships between businesses and neighborhoods and careful separation of conflicting land uses.

Goal #1 ***Maintain and create stable residential areas that offer a variety of housing options, are conveniently located near activity centers and promote the traditional character of the City.***

a. Maintain established boundaries of thriving residential neighborhoods.
b. Expand residential neighborhoods where land and safe access is available.
c. Protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible land use encroachments.
d. Distinguish between single family and multiple family residential areas.
e. Concentrate multiple family/high density residential along major streets and near more intense non-residential development.
f. Concentrate single family residential away from intense land use activity.
g. Integrate residential with neighborhood commercial to stimulate activity areas.
h. Preserve community services such as parks and schools within residential areas.
i. Encourage reuse of public and institutional sites for similar uses if there are changes to current uses.
j. Delineate boundaries of historic residential areas.
k. Integrate open space and preservation areas throughout the City.
l. Offer more residential opportunities near the River Raisin.

Goal #2 ***Accommodate a diverse, strong commercial and office base that serves the needs of residents and businesses within the community and reduces scattered and sprawling commercial areas throughout the City.***

a. Concentrate businesses into planned nodes and activity centers.
b. Treat the Central Business District as the primary business and activity center for the City and the area.
c. Accommodate areas exclusively for office development.
d. Locate neighborhood scale commercial uses in small areas that will conveniently serve nearby residents and businesses.
e. Locate community scale commercial uses in concentrated areas that are easily accessed by all members of the community.

f. Limit the intensity of commercial development in areas that contain sensitive features such as residential uses, institutional uses and the River Raisin.
g. Integrate commercial and residential into mixed-use arrangements where it will stimulate concentrations of activity.

Goal #3 Promote a strong, unified industrial presence in the community that offers employment and business services opportunities for the region while promoting the high quality image of the City.

a. Establish a hierarchy of industrial development to better locate businesses based on their intensity.
b. Concentrate medium to heavy industrial developments into limited areas.
c. Utilize light industrial development as a buffer between heavy industry and in areas where industrial must be near residential areas.
d. Locate high traffic generators where they can easily access transportation facilities.
e. Gradually reduce or eliminate isolated industrial operations from residential areas.
f. Develop and enforce design guidelines for industrial sites that minimize off-site impacts caused by on-site activity.
g. Develop and enforce performance standards for industrial uses.

Future Land Use Plan

The following land use categories are identified on the Future Land Use Map located at the end of this summary:

Moderate Density Residential. This category includes all planned areas of single family residential development. The term 'moderate density' was utilized to reflect small lot residential development, consistent with the existing zoning and development pattern and to emphasize promoting traditional neighborhood design in new development areas. Typical incidental uses permitted in this area include but are not limited to parks, open space and accessory apartments that promote the traditional neighborhood development of the City.

High Density Residential. High density residential includes greater concentrations of residential than the moderate density residential areas in the form of multiple family dwellings and attached single family dwellings. The designation preserves and expands existing multiple family areas and provides land use transitions between single family residential and more intense uses. In addition, the 'high density' designation presents opportunities to diversify housing options for residents and adaptive reuse of abandoned buildings in the future.

Neighborhood Commercial. The intent of this designation is to create defined pedestrian-oriented commercial nodes that are

compatible with surrounding residential areas. These uses should be limited by type and size and include strict design guidelines in order to preserve the neighborhood scale. For example, permitted uses in this district include neighborhood services such as dry cleaners, convenience stores, day care facilities, beauty salons, and small sit-down restaurants.

Community Commercial. This category represents auto-oriented businesses that meet the daily consumer needs of residents within the City, traveling through the City. Examples include gas stations, drive-through restaurants, offices, and larger scale commercial uses such as full service grocery stores. Businesses are planned generally consistent with current development and expansions are controlled to protect residential areas and traffic operations.

Office. A separate designation for office was included in order to promote economic diversity of businesses within the City and to offer an exclusive area for office development in need of proper transition. The office designation represents areas planned for general and/or professional office use such as real estate offices, financial institutions, travel agencies, medical offices and attorney's offices. The category also includes appropriate types of ancillary activities such as printing, computer and office equipment sales and servicing operations.

Downtown Gateway District. Development areas located on the periphery of the Central Business District are crucial in supporting the downtown and offering careful integration of business and residential uses. These corridors are entrances to the downtown therefore, a high quality appearance is important.

- North Monroe Street: A mixed-use land use pattern is encouraged that will help the residential areas and businesses to co-exist.

- South Monroe Street: This segment should be carefully regulated in order to maintain the convenience of auto-oriented businesses while preserving the character of the City.

- West Front Street: A strong residential character is appropriate at this entrance point to the downtown with an emphasis on the riverfront.

Central Business District. The Central Business District is the focal point of the City. The area includes commercial, office, residential, institutional and public uses. The intent of creating an exclusive district for the downtown is to unify the area. The land use designation and strategies listed in the downtown section will set the stage for revitalization.

Light Industrial. Light industrial is planned within the Ternes/Homrich Industrial area on Detroit Avenue, along Huber Road, and in a small

segment of the southwest corner of the City. Light industrial includes uses that involve research, testing, warehousing and minor assembly. The intent of this designation is to provide an exclusive area for low intensity industrial development. Guidelines to ensure sites are designed in a manner similar to office should be associated with this designation.

Heavy Industrial. Heavy industrial is limited to existing large plants, the Port East Industrial Park and Port West Industrial Park located near the expressway. Operations considered heavy industry are those that involve manufacturing a product, stamping and machine operations. These types of operations are important to the City's economy as well as the region's economy and must be supported to continue.

Industrial – Consumer. This designation includes businesses that are considered industrial but also offer retail sales of their product. Similar types of businesses currently occupy the majority of these areas. These uses may include mini-storage facilities and supply businesses. The intent of this district is to offer a proper location for these businesses, support existing businesses in these areas and to prevent a conversion to higher intensity industrial uses.

Public/Institutional. Public and institutional uses are an important part of the City's framework and its history. They include parks, government facilities, schools and places of worship. These areas must be maintained in order to ensure residents are offered these community facilities and services. Expansion of these facilities must continue to be compatible with the character and scale of the neighborhood. If any of these sites are reused in the future the City should be committed to continuing a public/institutional use.

Parks/Open Space/Nature Preserve. This broad category primarily includes areas that should be preserved in their natural state. The location of many areas was based on the Natural Features Map found in the complete plan. Current ownership of these lands is a mixture of private, public and non-profit organizations. The intent of designating land that is not owned by the City in this manner is to indicate potential areas for land acquisition, conservation easements, or privately controlled open space.

Riverfront Mixed-use. This area serves as the primary gateway into the City and has the potential to create a dramatic entrance to the community. This area should be restored and preserved to promote this strong, historical feature in the City. This area should be redeveloped as a water-focused district that includes a top quality marina and associated business and entertainment uses. There may also be potential for high density residential development to serve a niche market of waterfront housing. Open spaces or a greenway should be incorporated along the River Raisin.

TRANSPORTATION SUMMARY

Introduction

The transportation system has played an important role in Monroe's development pattern. The River Raisin and Lake Erie influenced the early settlement patterns. Later, the street system, particularly construction of I-75, shaped how the City developed.

While the automobile is the prominent way of getting around, over the years Monroe has expanded their multi-modal system through the development of a bus system, pathways system, airport, and waterways.

Existing Conditions

Refer to the Transportation Conditions Map for geographic reference and details. In considering the existing street conditions a number of elements are evaluated. Based on this information, opportunities for improvements can be identified and the most effective methods to accomplish those improvements. These elements include:

- Street Jurisdiction
- Functional Classification
- Annual Daily Traffic Volumes
- High-Crash
- Access Management

The City's multi-modal system includes a variety of transportation methods. The conditions of these components were considered as part of the transportation plan.

- Non-Motorized Pathways/Greenways/Sidewalks
- Truck Routes
- Lake Erie Transportation
- Rail Lines

- Monroe Custer Airport
- Port of Monroe

Transportation Goals and Objectives

POLICY STATEMENT

To create a safe, balanced and coordinated multi-modal transportation system that includes street, transit, water, air, rail and non-motorized components adequate to accommodate the current and future needs of the City of Monroe and promotes the walkable, traditional character of the community.

Goal #1 ***Preserve the capacity, level of service and safety of the street network to support current and future development.***

a. Evaluate the future level of service and capacity of streets based on anticipated future development plans and growth in the City.
b. Coordinate street improvements with City policies on land use, non-motorized circulation, natural features preservation and provision of community facilities.

c. Manage the number, spacing and type of access points along the streets.
d. Consolidate driveways and interconnect parcels on major streets so that automobile and pedestrian movement is possible without going out onto the highway.
e. Monitor traffic speeds along certain streets within neighborhoods, and if posted speed limits are being exceeded, undertake education, enforcement and design programs to reduce speeds to an appropriate level.
f. Explore opportunities for street extensions and connections that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and located in appropriate areas to maintain evenly distributed traffic flow.
g. Coordinate with other jurisdictions and agencies to monitor conditions and pursue improvements on principal routes such as Telegraph, Monroe Street, and Dixie Highway.
h. Limit through truck travel to streets designated for such use.
i. Consider implications of traffic and truck impacts with development proposals.

Goal #2 Ensure the transportation system complements the context of the surroundings and the overall traditional character of the City.

a. Design streets to frame land uses and streetscape to balance the automobile function with the desire for a walkable community at a human scale.
b. Require green space, street trees and sidewalks along all streets
c. Design and manage corridors to limit vehicular and pedestrian conflicts.
d. Recognize the importance of the pedestrian friendly environment and reserve space to assure that pedestrians are accommodated.
e. Eliminate or reduce intrusion of truck traffic into neighborhoods by directing through-trucks to designated by-pass routes and directing truck-generating uses to locations where trucks will only utilize streets designed and designated for such traffic.

Goal #3 Promote use and enhancement of the variety of transportation modes offered in the City.

a. Expand and maintain a comprehensive greenway system to provide choices besides the automobile and offer recreational benefits consistent with the City's Greenways Plan.
b. Continue an active sidewalk replacement program.
c. Continue to expand the service area of the Lake Erie Transit system as new development occurs and as new activity centers are created.
d. Provide enhanced amenities at transportation stops for a more comfortable, welcoming environment such as shelters, benches, planters and signs.
e. Coordinate between the Lake Erie Transit Commission, the City and private developers in order

to offer improved access and design for the bus system.

f. Integrate new and old transportation facilities.
g. Support Custer Airport by expanding its services and offering opportunities for creative land uses.
h. Continue to explore potential development opportunities and expanded services with the Port of Monroe.
i. Create a unified system between the variety of services.

Transportation Plan

State Route Jurisdiction. In the past, M-50 and M-125 routes were extremely valuable in accessing destinations in outlying areas. Now that volumes have lowered and the streets serve more local destinations, the City should continue to coordinate with MDOT on future improvements and jurisdiction issues.

Corridor Enhancements and Improvements. The major corridors in the City must be treated as design elements that represent the quality and character of Monroe. The major corridors include:

- Telegraph Road/ US-24
- Monroe Street /M-125
- Dixie Highway
- Front Street
- Elm Avenue

Enhancement should be consistent and promote a defined streetscape. Recommended improvements include:

- Street Trees
- Greenspace
- Street Lighting
- Pedestrian Orientation
- Landscaped/Enhanced Median
- Access Management
- Technology

Wayfinding and Signage. The City should increase and enhance consistent signage and wayfinding methods in order to direct people to various facilities. Making facilities and key destinations easier to find and easier to use will ultimately increase use.

The new system will achieve the following goals:

- Improve geographic orientation for visitors and residents
- Reduce signage hardware clutter through consolidation
- Enhance the City's image through improved physical identity

Bus. The Lake Erie Transit system is a well-established service provider in the City and surrounding area. As the City grows and changes, the amenities that go along with bus service should evolve to the needs of the riders. To begin with, the Transit Commission should work with the City as new development occurs to ensure that bus routes meet the needs and are accessible to these areas. Working with the City at the beginning stages of developments will also ensure site plans incorporate transit-friendly design. Finally, continuing enhancements are suggested at the most commonly used bus stops including a shelter and benches.

Truck Routes. The current required truck routes in the City are reviewed from time to time when new industrial projects are proposed. At this time, no changes are expected to the route map because it currently serves all business areas. Future routes should not accommodate industrial areas that are to be phased out or those that require connection through historical and residential areas.

Rail Lines. The current rail system causes conflicts with traffic patterns and land use conflicts with neighborhoods. The City should continue to pursue alternatives such as grade separations, re-routing rail lines, and rail consolidation in order to mitigate these affects.

These efforts would greatly enhance the residential character of existing neighborhoods and minimize traffic congestion along major cross streets. With these most recent plans, the City has been, and should continue to be, committed to obtaining any abandoned rail right-of-way to convert to a pathway system.

Monroe Custer Airport. The airport has been serving industrial and business commerce and recreational flights. Consideration should be given to expanding the realm of its economic impact and capitalize on certain niche markets such as tourism, recreation, and residential airparks. At the same time, it must continue to serve its role in transporting materials and goods to support the economic base of the City.

Port of Monroe. The Port Commission has recently prepared a draft master plan for the Port District. This aggressive plan includes infrastructure improvements and expansions that will accommodate new businesses and development sites on the south side of Front Street both east and west of I-75. Plans also include an intermodal transportation warehouse to provide warehouse space for storage of commodities between transportation modes of water, rail and truck. This plan will support effective integration and development of the City's transportation facilities and will strengthen the economic base of the area.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS SUMMARY

Introduction

Monroe is a City with well-established, attractive and historically significant neighborhoods. The creation, preservation and enhancement of neighborhoods are essential to the success of the community. Intrinsic to its success and to a stable and attractive quality of life for all citizens is an emphasis on preservation and rehabilitation of the City's housing stock, the availability of home ownership and housing for all segments of the population and the proximity to community facilities and services.

The City of Monroe provides a variety of housing styles and neighborhoods with their own unique character. Although each should take on its own identity, it is important to bring out the positive elements of that neighborhood and ensure that all possess traditional, or fundamental, characteristics. These items listed below served as a framework for the existing conditions, goals, and objectives of this chapter. A traditional neighborhood characteristics should posses the following elements:

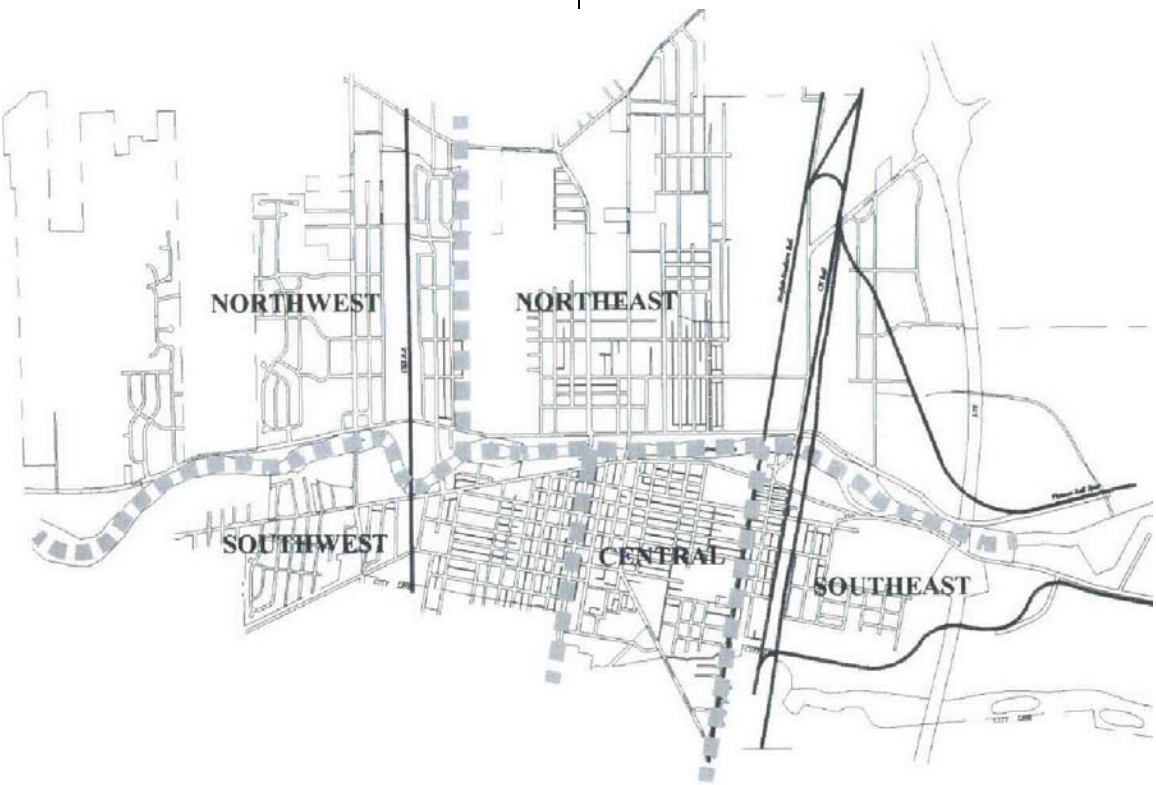
- Center and an edge
- Walkable scale
- Balanced mix of uses
- Interconnected street and pathway system
- Multi-modal accessibility
- Inviting and comfortable street environment
- Prominent living areas and front entries to the homes
- Unifying elements to identify the neighborhood
- Historical, civic, natural or cultural resources
- Formal association

Existing Conditions

Neighborhoods Evaluated. The Neighborhood Map located on this page identifies five major neighborhood areas in the City. These comprise a 'neighborhood' unit of sufficient size to support an elementary school, a neighborhood park, and other residential amenities.

- Northwest Neighborhood
- North East Neighborhood
- Southwest Neighborhood
- Southeast Neighborhood
- Central Neighborhood

Key Findings. An exterior appearance survey of conditions, discussions with Monroe community leaders, and recommendations from community workshop sessions created an understanding of the issues and opportunities in the City's residential areas. A few of the important observations and findings are listed below:



Neighborhood Boundaries
Source: Hamilton Anderson, Dec 2002

- Strong family living and pride
- Solid housing stock and quality living
- Wide range of housing styles and costs.
- Uniform setbacks and tree-lined streets
- Home and property reinvestment
- Pedestrian-friendly
- New home construction
- Some isolated neighborhoods

- Barriers limit access to neighborhoods
- Neighborhood associations needed

Housing and Neighborhoods Goals and Objectives

POLICY STATEMENT

Sustain and enhance Monroe's neighborhoods by providing for the safety and protection of all residents, visitors, and property, and enabling the development of strong, cohesive neighborhoods.

Goal #1 Preserve, protect, and enhance the integrity, economic viability and livability of Monroe's neighborhoods.

a. Plans, programs and investment opportunities should be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and with the strategies described below for each neighborhood area.
b. Limit non-residential intrusions into residential neighborhoods and buffer detrimental effects of commercial and industrial uses through the use of open space and landscape treatments and site design to help reduce the impacts.
c. Promote home ownership in all neighborhoods.
d. Educate residents about tools such as home rehabilitation grants, tax credits and loans that are available.
e. Ensure that all new housing developments are compatible with the desirable characteristics of that particular neighborhood and in accordance with the general neighborhood strategies contained in this Chapter.
f. Gradually convert certain industrial uses adjacent to moderate-density residential uses to multiple family or other adaptive uses more compatible with the area as indicated on the Future Land Use Map and in the Economic Development Chapter.
g. Establish neighborhood associations.
h. Enforce code compliance throughout the City.
i. Develop a comprehensive housing preservation strategy to retain housing stock that reflects the characteristics and improvements strategies described in this chapter and offer a variety of implementation tools for the City.

Goal #2 Protect the character and quality of neighborhoods by maintaining and enhancing their open spaces and parks, as well as public safety facilities and services.

a. Maintain all City parks and recreation facilities and pursue cooperative arrangements with other public and private groups for maintenance of these facilities.
b. Involve residents in planning for and developing additional open space and parks.
c. Encourage residential areas to participate in neighborhood watch and other eyes on the street programs.
d. Work with schools, churches or other institutions to educate

youth about crime prevention and public safety.

e. Require new residential development to provide parks and recreational areas.

Goal #3 Create an identity for all neighborhoods.

a. Promote, develop and support block clubs, neighborhood associations and homeowner 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 landscaping at entries and in the rights-of-way and park areas to improve and promote the image of all residential neighborhoods.

Housing and Neighborhoods Plan

The strategies listed below detail the actions that should be undertaken by the City to implement the above goals and objectives and achieve the traditional neighborhood elements described in the beginning of the chapter. These strategies offer City-wide direction but primarily focus on specific strategies for the different neighborhoods as delineated on the included graphic from the previous page.

City Wide Strategies

a. Apply code enforcement uniformly in all areas of the City.
b. Periodically monitor industrial uses to ensure compliance with all applicable codes and reduce impacts on residential neighborhoods.
c. Promote the development of neighborhood associations and programs for all areas of the City.
d. Promote the use of public and quasi-public facilities, such as schools and religious institutions, as neighborhood anchors.
e. Regularly inspect and maintain all neighborhood infrastructure.
f. Review and revise the City zoning regulations to ensure compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan and the City's evolving residential goals for the future.
g. Implement programs for housing reinvestment and ownership including low-income and senior populations.
h. Continue on-going infrastructure maintenance and improvements such as sidewalk repair and street improvements.
i. Promote a mixture of housing types and styles such as attached and detached condominiums, townhouses, upper story apartments, and granny flats.

Northwest Neighborhood Strategies

a. Coordinate efforts with adjacent townships to connect City and County streets.
b. Enhance neighborhood gateway entries at Cranbrook, Lafayette, Richards and Roessler.
c. Increase and upgrade the multi-family uses along Telegraph Road.

d. Develop and implement streetscape improvements for Telegraph Road and Elm Avenue.
e. Preserve Oak Forest Park as a natural amenity for the neighborhood.
f. Buffer, with deep setbacks and screening, the negative impact of the commercial uses along Telegraph Road and the industrial uses along Huber Drive.
g. Explore opportunities for alternative access points between Telegraph and Elm.

Northeast Neighborhood Strategies

a. Educate homeowners about historic rehabilitation tax credits and grants.
b. Require new infill housing to complement the architectural character of the surrounding neighborhood.
c. Explore opportunities to link existing dead-end streets along the Immaculate Heart of Mary campus property line.
d. Target property maintenance and rehabilitation efforts where needed (ie. east of Riverview, south of Scottwood, west of Michigan and north of Elm)
e. Develop and implement streetscape programs for Monroe, Macomb and Elm.
f. Develop entry and interpretive signage for the East Elm – North Macomb historic district.
g. Require new developments to respect and complement the historic quality of the surrounding neighborhood.
h. Promote mixed-use development along North Monroe Street, provided that it complements and serves the nearby residential neighborhoods without negative impacts.

Southwest Neighborhood Strategies

a. Target code enforcement, property maintenance and rehabilitation efforts where needed.
b. Promote the renovation of single-family homes into businesses and multiple family structures in the Front Street area. Ensure the conversions do not negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood (ie. buildings should have adequate service areas and parking).
c. Develop Mill Race Park as an amenity for the community.
d. Explore opportunities to connect the neighborhood to the River Raisin.
e. Explore the possibility of removal of the abandoned rail corridor that is closest to downtown.

Central Neighborhood Strategies

a. Preserve and protect the historic character of the neighborhood.
b. Develop entry and interpretive signage for the Old Village Historic District.
c. Educate homeowners and business owners in the Old Village Historic District about preservation tax credits, grants for rehabilitation of their properties and the historic significance of the district.
d. Promote the development of alternative housing marketed to seniors and/or professionals in the downtown core (ie. Live-work units, loft conversions, etc.

e. Develop municipal gateway entries at Monroe, Front and Laplaisance.
f. Complete streetscape programs for Monroe and Front Streets.
g. Target code enforcement, property maintenance and rehabilitation efforts where needed (ie. west of Navarre to railroad).
h. Explore opportunities to link Cherry and Walnut Streets with Laplaisance Road.

Southeast Neighborhood Strategies

a. Develop a sub area plan illustrating the optimal development pattern for the area.
b. Phase out industrial uses along the railroad to allow for expansion of the residential neighborhood as indicated on the Future Land Use Map and Economic Development and Redevelopment Chapter.
c. Concentrate businesses along Winchester Street into neighborhood service nodes.
d. Provide adequate buffering and screening between the neighborhood and I-75.
e. Promote infill residential uses throughout the neighborhood.
f. Target code enforcement, property maintenance and rehabilitation efforts throughout the neighborhoods.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Introduction

Revitalizing the urban environment is a complex problem. The process requires solutions designed to attract new businesses, retain jobs, build a stronger tax base and continue to make the City an attractive place to live and work. Initiating change requires cooperation by stakeholders: citizens, government, businesses, institutions and various groups working together to improve the City's economic vitality.

Existing Conditions

Southeast Michigan

- Business centers have shifted from older urban areas to the adjacent suburbs.
- Urban redevelopment sites have recently been streamlined with state, federal and local programs.
- Southeast Michigan's economy produced a strong job market in the '90s with forecasted growth to 2010.
- The prime working age population (ages 18-54) will grow only slightly, to keep jobs stable to 2025.
- The automotive industry and its suppliers will still continue to power the region's economy.

Monroe County

- The County's location between the metropolitan areas of Detroit

and Toledo and accessibility to major transportation routes for highway, water, rail and air travel create economic opportunities.
- This region is ideally located for use of water for transportation, processing, or cooling operations.
- Currently, there are only a few sites that are State certified industrial parks.
- Monroe County has a key role in the services industry such as healthcare and business services.
- Employment in the County is projected to increase 10.6% through 2020.

City of Monroe
- In 2000, SEMCOG estimated 15,092 jobs in the City of Monroe with the leading job class of 'services.'
- Service jobs are forecasted to continue to dominate the market, while manufacturing jobs will decline.
- The City has a healthy balance of both skilled laborers and professionals.

Potential Development Areas. The following are potential development areas and are delineated on the Potential Economic Development and Redevelopment Areas Map located at the end of this summary.

- Ternes/Homrich Industrial Area
- Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Potential Redevelopment Areas. The following are potential redevelopment areas and are delineated on the Potential Economic Development and Redevelopment Areas Map located at the end of this summary.

- Mason Run Neighborhood
- Dixie Highway
- Riverfront Mixed-Use
- South East Neighborhood
- South Consolidated Site
- Port West Industrial Park
- Port East Industrial Park
- Winchester Neighborhood Commercial District
- North Monroe Mixed-Use District
- South Monroe Commercial District
- Downtown Sites

Economic Development and Redevelopment Goals and Objectives

POLICY STATEMENT

Build an awareness of the City of Monroe as an outstanding place to live, work and visit through promoting a positive business environment; encourage new development in industrial parks, support redevelopment of brownfield sites, broaden and strengthen the tourism sector, and facilitate economic diversification and business growth.

Goal #1 Encourage economic diversity and job creation that are compatible with Monroe's physical character.

a. Rezone vacant or underutilized property in and near neighborhoods to encourage redevelopment that is

compatible in use and intensity with the existing neighborhood.

b. Support and encourage efforts to diversify the economic base of Monroe.
c. Facilitate economic development activities that will strengthen neighborhoods, provide educational training and employment opportunities and provide necessary support systems.
d. Diversify the City's transportation network to support multiple methods to transport commerce.
e. Additional policies regarding redevelopment of various downtown sites are included in Chapter 7.

Goal #2 Promote a business-labor-government relationship that addresses the needs of businesses to operate in a positive and mutually beneficial environment.

a. Develop new and enhance existing partnership programs that promote cooperation among public agencies, industry, labor and community to enhance economic growth throughout the City.
b. Facilitate communication between businesses, neighborhoods, development interests, neighborhood associations, community-based groups and other interested parties with respect to economic development and redevelopment.
c. Provide information and briefings on economic development tools, incentives and grants to business groups, community groups, neighborhood groups, and other interested parties.

Goal #3 Provide economic opportunities in certain development and redevelopment areas.

a. Place a priority on infrastructure and transportation improvements and pursue alternative methods of funding.
b. Develop specific policies for certain development and redevelopment areas as part of the City's economic development program.
c. Develop public and private initiatives to support and finance small business and economic growth.

Economic Development and Redevelopment Plan

City Wide Strategies

a. Encourage a diversity of business sizes and types.
b. Identify vacant and underutilized areas and to maximize their development.
c. Cluster similar sizes and types of businesses within smaller districts.
d. Reinforce existing business retention and expansion.
e. Provide for local infrastructure development.
f. Encourage a mix of housing and complementary retail and services.
g. Promote tourism and tourist related facilities and services.
h. Promote expansion of the successful brownfield redevelopment efforts.

i. Encourage innovative approaches to environmental due care.
j. Encourage businesses to reuse infrastructure.
k. Target redevelopment initiatives through funding assistance.

Ternes/Homrich Industrial Area Strategies

a. Encourage development that will not negatively affect the neighborhood.
b. Re-route traffic away from the existing adjacent neighborhoods.
c. Require new development to maintain an attractive façade along the I-75.
d. Promote the site as a gateway to the City at Dixie and the I-75.

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Strategies

a. Link East and West Lorain and extend Hendricks Drive to Monroe Street.
b. Provide sidewalks, street lighting, street trees and recreation opportunities.
c. Encourage development that is compatible with the neighborhood.
d. Integrate the circulation system with the existing adjacent neighborhoods.

Mason Run Neighborhood Strategies

a. Continue development of a moderate density traditional neighborhood.
b. Provide sidewalks, street lighting, street trees, recreation opportunities and infrastructure.
c. Increase access and visibility by extending street and sidewalk system.
d. Encourage development to be compatible with the neighborhood.
e. Incorporate with adjacent residential neighborhood to the west.

Dixie Highway Site Strategies

a. Encourage commercial development that will complement Mason Run and link with the adjacent residential neighborhoods.
b. Maintain infrastructure and improve rights-of-way and streetscape.
c. Promote the site as a gateway to the City at Spaulding, Noble and Elm.
d. Develop a strong connection to the River Raisin Recreation District.
e. Consider support uses to the historic and cultural development opportunities.

Riverfront Mixed-Use Strategies

a. Take advantage of grants and financial incentives.
b. Investigate the former paper industrial plant site for historic and cultural development.
c. Consider adaptive reuse of the former paper mill's administrative building.
d. Develop work/study programs in archeology at the River Raisin Battlefield and Frenchtown Settlement sites.
e. Redevelop the former Jefferson Smurfit Corporation East Mill Landfill.
f. Develop a mixed-use-district that combines waterfront, residential, with specialty retail, and entertainment uses.

g. Promote use of the River Raisin frontage for commercial marinas, marina supply shops and entertainment.
h. Promote a safe and inviting pedestrian and recreation activity area.
i. Increase access and visibility to the site by extending Noble to Mill.
j. Develop a strong connection to the Dixie Highway Area.
k. Expand the existing Waterfront Commercial District zoning designation to include potential uses such as entertainment, residential, and specialty retail and eliminate warehouse and industrial uses.

South East Neighborhood Strategies

a. Revitalize and enhance the existing South East Neighborhood.
b. Provide sidewalks, street lighting, street trees and recreation opportunities.
c. Promote infill residential development throughout the neighborhood.
d. Ensure new residential development maintains consistent density.
e. Increase pedestrian access and visibility to the River Raisin.
f. Develop public recreation uses along the River Raisin 's frontage.
g. Develop a pedestrian bridge to link the with the River Raisin Recreation District and Settlement/Battlefield site.
h. Encourage the development of a neighborhood organization.

South Consolidated Site Strategies

a. Increase access and visibility to the River Raisin.
b. Develop an attractive gateway entry at Front and I-75.
c. Ensure all negative impacts from the I-75 are buffered from any residential development.

Port West Industrial Park Strategies

a. Ensure new development respects the flood plain and wetland areas.
b. Investigate funding and grant opportunities for protection and/or enhancement of sensitive floodplain and wetland area.
c. Seek funds from MDOT and MEDC for infrastructure improvements.
d. Require new development to maintain an attractive façade along the I-75 frontage.

Port East Industrial Park Strategies

a. Ensure new development respects the flood plain and wetland areas.
b. Investigate funding and grant opportunities for protection and/or enhancement of sensitive floodplain and wetland area.
c. Seek funds from MDOT and MEDC for infrastructure improvements.
d. Require new development to maintain an attractive façade along I-75.
e. Promote the site as a gateway to the City at Front Street and I-75.

Winchester Neighborhood Commercial District Strategies

a. Re-orient land uses along Winchester to provide for retail development at the neighborhood level.
b. Limit non-residential impacts on

adjacent neighborhoods.

c. Encourage residential uses above neighborhood retail uses.
d. Enhance Winchester as a neighborhood center.
e. Develop and implement a streetscape program that emphasizes pedestrian activity.

North Monroe Mixed-use District Strategies

a. Encourage mixed-use development (residential, retail and office) on North Monroe Street, that does not compete with downtown.
b. Limit non-residential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.
c. Develop and implement a streetscape program that celebrates the East Elm – North Monroe historic district.
d. Assist property owners in understanding historic rehabilitation tax credits, grants and other similar programs.
e. Create a separate zoning district tailored to the desired uses and responds to the unique site design needs of this area.

South Monroe Commercial District Strategies

a. Adopt the proposed design overlay to preserve the established character.
b. Encourage mixed-use development (retail and office).
c. Limit non-residential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.
d. Assist property owners in understanding historic rehabilitation tax credits, grants and other similar programs.

Downtown Sites Strategies

a. Encourage mixed-use development (parking, residential and retail) to enhance and increase the vitality of the Central Business District.
b. Ensure development does not have a detrimental effect on the River Raisin.
c. Promote development that assists in reestablishing retail and service uses and generates new business in the downtown.
d. Enforce site design guidelines to ensure that the character of the development is complementary to the historic downtown.
e. Ensure public pedestrian access is provided along the River Raisin, along with a pedestrian connection from the riverwalk to Monroe Street.

HISTORIC RESOURCES SUMMARY

Introduction

One of Michigan's oldest communities, Monroe has a long and rich heritage evident on its landscape. The City's abundant historic buildings, structures, and sites are a key element in defining its identity and character. Properly managed, these resources can provide the foundation for community revitalization.

Existing Conditions

Historic Districts, Structures, and Sites. The following are historic resources listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

- Old Village Historic District
- East Elm-North Macomb Street Historic District
- St. Mary's Church Complex Historic District
- River Raisin Battlefield Site
- Governor Robert McClelland House (ca. 1840)
- Sawyer House (1873)
- Rudolph Nims House (1836–1846)
- Weis Manufacturing Company (1905–1912)
- George Armstrong Custer Equestrian Monument (1910)

The following are listed in Michigan's State Register of Historic Sites:

- Johnson-Phinney House (1832 and 1869)
- Woodland Cemetery (1810–)

Potential Historic Areas. The five historic areas listed below have significant concentrations of buildings that retain their historic appearance and appear to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

- St. Mary's Academy Historic Area
- West Elm Avenue Historic Area
- Godfroy/Borgess/St. Mary's Historic Area
- East Elm-North Macomb Street Historic District Additions
- Hollywood Drive Historic Area

Key Issues. The following issues are most critical to the future of Monroe's historic resources.

- There is relatively little protection for Monroe's historic resources.
- Without an accurate, up to date survey of Monroe's historic resources, the City may be losing resources that have not even been identified.
- Financial incentives that are already available for historic preservation are underutilized.
- The people of Monroe take pride in their history but have been reluctant to support the regulations needed to protect the City's historic resources.

Historic Resources Goals and Objectives

POLICY STATEMENT

Protect Monroe's valuable historic resources and promote them as a positive influence on the quality life for residents, on

the economic viability of the City, and as an educational tool.

Goal #1 Enhance Monroe's quality of life by preserving and protecting the City's historic resources.

a. Conduct a City-wide survey of above-ground historic resources to provide an accurate database for future planning and protection activities.
b. Integrate survey data into a City geographic information system.
c. Make survey results available to the public through the Internet.
d. Consider local historic districts that protect entire historic areas.
e. Consider historic overlay districts under Monroe's zoning regulations for each historic district, area, and site.
f. Acquire, preserve, and conduct archaeological investigations of the portion of the River Raisin Battlefield Site that is still privately owned.
g. Involve the Monroe County Historical Society as an active partner in preservation projects.
h. Investigate establishment of a revolving fund for historic buildings.
i. Continue efforts to preserve the former St. Mary's Academy, a unique and prominent historic resource.
j. Pursue National Register listing for those historic areas in Monroe that are not yet listed.
k. Add specific guidelines for signs in historic districts, areas, and sites to Monroe's sign regulations.
l. Review alternatives for truck routes through historic neighborhoods.
m. Encourage the establishment of neighborhood associations to help preserve neighborhood integrity.

Goal #2 Promote Monroe's economic development through historic preservation.

a. Encourage work done under the DDA's Facade Improvement Program meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.
b. Consider appointment of a representative from the historic district commission as a voting member of the DDA board.
c. Adopt the guidelines and recommendations in the 1981 *Downtown Facade Study* as design guidelines for the historic business district.
d. Strengthen Monroe's Main Street Program through more active participation in the National Main Street Center.
e. Develop a better working relationship between preservationists and business owners.
f. Publicize and promote the use of existing federal, state, and local financial incentives for historic preservation.
g. Promote a well-managed heritage tourism program utilizing historic resources such as the French settlement and River Raisin Battlefield Site, and broader assets such as the City's

historic neighborhoods and downtown.

h. Continue to promote Monroe as a vital part of Michigan's heritage tourism economy.
i. Track at a local level the economic benefits of historic preservation.

Goal #3 Foster greater awareness, understanding, and support for preserving Monroe's historic resources.

a. Establish a historic preservation awards program.
b. Present workshops and seminars on preservation topics such as architectural history and practical rehabilitation techniques for historic homes.
c. Offer workshops on preservation benefits and techniques to local bankers, realtors, and contractors.
d. Publish an ongoing series of monthly newspaper articles in local newspapers to disseminate accurate information about preservation practices.
e. Use print, the Internet, and other media to inform people about preservation topics.
f. Commemorate the Native American inhabitants of what is now Monroe.
g. Celebrate National Historic Preservation Week.
h. Include instruction on Monroe's history and historic resources in the school curriculum.
i. Reestablish the 'Day in Historic Monroe' school program.

Historic Preservation Tools

Legislation and Incentives

- Monroe's strongest tool to protect its historic resources is its historic district ordinance.

- Michigan historic preservation tax credits is available to owners or lessees of historic buildings and cover up to 25 percent of rehabilitation costs.

- The expansion of local historic districts allows more sites to become eligible for tax credits and other programs.

- The National Historic Preservation Act provides the framework for preservation activities throughout the United States. Of particular relevance to Monroe are the National Register of Historic Places and the Certified Local Government Program.

- The federal Tax Reform Act of 1986 established a 20 percent federal income tax credit for rehabilitating income-producing historic buildings.

- The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) provides funding for transportation enhancement activities through the Surface Transportation Program.

- Under ISTEA, Michigan established a Heritage Route Program, and in 1996 Monroe Street became the first historic route designated under this program.

- The Monroe Heritage Loan Program offers low interest loans for exterior and interior improvements to commercial buildings located within the DDA district or buildings that have been identified as historic by Monroe's Historic District Commission.

- The Monroe DDA's Facade Improvement Program offers grants of up to $5,000 for facade improvements to commercial buildings within the DDA district.

Agencies, Organizations, and Programs

- The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is the State agency that helps people to identify, interpret, and protect their historic resources, administering a number of Federal and State historic preservation programs.

- Assistance is also available from the Michigan Historic Preservation Network, a Statewide, not-for-profit advocacy organization dedicated to preserving and cultivating awareness of the State's historic resources.

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a nationwide, not-for-profit advocacy organization, offers programs and publications to inform and assist people in their preservation efforts.

- The National Park Service offers additional programs and publications of interest to people in Monroe.

- Monroe has past success in partnering with the Historic Preservation Program at Eastern Michigan University.

DOWNTOWN MONROE SUMMARY

Introduction

Downtown Monroe has many assets that other communities strive to achieve in order to improve the character of their towns. Monroe's downtown has historic buildings; streets with wide sidewalks, on-street parking, and a variety of activities, and most notably, frontage along the River Raisin.

Existing Conditions

General Characteristics

- The boundaries of the downtown area generally consist of Elm Avenue to the north, Fifth Street to the south, Smith Street to the west, and Scott Street to the east.

- The perceived "City center" is located at the intersection of Front Street and Monroe Street.

- The two and three story structures, zero line setbacks and traditional urban grid pattern leading to the River Raisin to create a pedestrian-scaled environment.

- Downtown Monroe has a diversified mixture of uses, consisting of commercial, office,

residential, parks, and places of worship.

- On both sides of the river, development oriented to the street and to parking have resulted in a neglected and underutilized riverfront.

Services and Retail Characteristics

- The majority of downtown buildings have offices and services located on the first floor.

- There are definite niches in the retail shops such as second hand stores, bar-restaurants, and craft and gift shops.

Community/Cultural District

- The community/cultural district is primarily centered from First to Third Street, and from Cass to Washington.

- This district includes places of worship, the River Raisin Center for the Arts, the Monroe County Historical Museum, and other significant buildings.

- Over time, the number of surface parking lots in this area of the downtown has increased.

- This district should be highlighted by a redeveloped 'Loranger Circle' and exhibit the historical importance of Monroe, and its 'Four Elements': floral, paper, military, and railway.

Government District

- The government district can be reestablished as an anchor for the downtown.

- If there is opportunity in the future, unifying elements between the City Hall and County buildings should be provided to strengthen the visibility of the district and improve the pedestrian-orientation of the buildings.

- This district should have a clear identity of its own, while still providing strong linkages to other areas of the downtown with connecting green spaces.

Circulation and Parking

- A prevalent issue in the downtown is improving the relationship between vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

- Monroe Street is perceived as a difficult and threatening street to cross, and this ultimately causes the retail shops to suffer.

- Monroe Street could greatly benefit from traffic calming methods and streetscape elements, such as parking bump-outs, parking on both sides of the street, banners and street lighting.

- Inadequate parking is also a primary concern for many residents and visitors to the downtown.

- Retail shops are affected by one-way traffic loops because one-way streets ultimately cut the traffic from these storefronts in half.

Redevelopment Areas

- The area facing the River Raisin behind W. Front Street presents the greatest amount of space for a redevelopment project involving mixed-uses.

- Larger open areas in the downtown are opportunities for festivals, exhibit space, concerts and City functions to bring events and people to downtown.

- Other redevelopment areas include some of the side streets such as Second Street or Macomb at First Street. These areas are all well suited for urban residential town homes.

- A parking deck could be developed with 'liner shops' at the ground level to handle increases in parking.

Gateways

- The downtown has several opportunities to create 'gateways' to the area, through the use of landscaping, architectural elements, or other features.

- The intersection of Harrison, Front Street and First Street is an important gateway.

- Downtown entry points could also include elements symbolic of the settlement of Monroe.

- Other key intersections include Elm and Monroe, Third and Monroe, and Front and Macomb.

Downtown Goals and Objectives

Provide a vibrant and active downtown that combines opportunities for living, work, recreation, entertainment, family tourism and shopping in an

atmosphere reflecting the unique character of the City.

Goal #1 Promote a high standard of living, and create a 24-hour urban living environment within the downtown area.

a. Encourage building types and land uses that bring people to Monroe to live, work and recreate.

b. Encourage first floor uses to be commercial and retail shops, with the second and third floors of downtown buildings used for residential or office spaces.

c. Provide incentives for renovation of lofts or apartments in the downtown to increase the number of living units in the area.

d. Consider marketing strategies to attract new businesses and venues to the downtown area.

e. Promote downtown events and decorations that are coordinated and executed throughout the City.

f. Examine the need for a downtown coordinator for events to help market empty retail and attract new tenants.

Goal # 2 Create a pedestrian-scaled downtown that is compatible with vehicular traffic

a. Provide adequate parking in the downtown for City and County employees, residents, and visitors through shared parking strategies, a parking structure, or other means to rid the downtown of unwanted perceptions of parking shortages.

b. Slow down traffic on Monroe Street so that traffic speeds match the posted limits.

c. Create entry/gateway image that is appropriate in scale and location for the downtown.

Goal #3 Create a hub of community activity in the downtown.

a. Improve the physical environment by enhancing the pedestrian experience.

b. Encourage activities and events in the downtown all year round.

c. Encourage the renovation of residential units in the downtown area and create residential living spaces along the riverfront.

d. Implement design guidelines for the downtown (Chp. 11) to improve facades and new construction.

Goal #4 Ensure economic viability of downtown through mixed-uses.

a. Provide incentives for upper floor rehabs of residential units.

b. Promote a variety of complimentary land uses, such as small offices and residential units (live/work units) to be located above retail shops.

c. Strengthen connections between Downtown Monroe Business Network (DMBN), merchants, downtown residents, City and the

Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

d. Seek public/private partnerships to create mixed-use developments.
e. Create a tenant mix strategy to focus marketing efforts on downtown niches.

Goal #5 Create efficient movement of people, goods and vehicles.

a. Continue evaluation of parking supply and demand, and examine ways to alleviate areas of concern.
b. Allow for adequate parking for City and County employees that does not detract from visitor or residential parking in the downtown.
c. Develop a coordinated delivery plan for service vehicles.
d. Clean up alleys and service areas.
e. Encourage building owners to provide barrier-free access that conforms to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) but does not aesthetically detract from the traditional architecture and design of the structure.

Downtown Improvement/Enhancement Plan

The following is a list of detailed action strategies for the City to continue the revitalization of the downtown. The Downtown Land Use Map included at the end of this document supports this discussion.

- Increase downtown events.
- Cluster similar stores in proximity to each other.
- Promote 'cross-shopping' with an increased number of retail store adjacencies and reduction in offices.
- Encourage retail development around the new surface parking lot at Washington and East 1st Street.
- Buildings with their "backs" to the River Raisin should be renovated to encourage use along the river.
- Connect the riverwalk to the City's greenway system.
- Reduce the 'barrier' of Monroe Street through streetscape enhancements.
- Provide additional parking spaces between Front Street and First Street.
- Increase the amount of residential development.

The following retail categories represent the greatest potential for success in downtown Monroe, Michigan. A more complete report of these findings is provided in the market study prepared by the Downtown Development Authority's (DDA) market research consultant, The Strategic Edge, Inc.

- Drug/Pharmacy
- Personal Services
- Office Supplies
- Books/News
- Specialty Food
- Restaurants/Sidewalk Cafés.
- Apparel
- Home Furnishings
- Riverside Entertainment Venues

MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES SUMMARY

Introduction

Monroe offers a wide range of municipal services to its residents and businesses and operates a number of public facilities. The quality, availability and cost of these elements are among the factors influencing growth and redevelopment in the Monroe area. Residential, commercial, and especially industrial users make location decisions based in part upon the ability of a municipality to meet their present and future needs cost-effectively. As competition between communities grows and as technology advances, citizens and business owners will expect more from local governments. In order to keep pace with these trends, Monroe must continually upgrade and diversify facilities and services.

Existing Conditions

The City of Monroe is organized as a council-manager form of government. The administrative structure has gradually evolved and advanced with the City.

City Departments. To offer specialized service to residents, the City created different offices and departments such as: Assessing, City Attorney, Department of Public Service and Water, Community Development and Planning, Purchasing and Information Systems. Each department has their own

divisions, support staff and equipment in order to operate efficiently. Many develop their own master plans and goals for the future.

Boards and Commissions. Monroe, like many Michigan communities, gets its strength from the energy and expertise of its residents. Its foundation includes the Mayor, the Clerk, the Treasurer, City Council, and District Courts, which create the executive, legislative and judicial branches of local government. In addition, advisory boards and commissions were created that involve many residents playing an active role in City government. Each body serves as advisors to the City Council, which makes the final executive decisions.

Water Service. The City of Monroe presently owns and operates a Water Treatment Plant, and the associated pumping stations and distribution lines. The entire system is a self-supporting entity financed through water utility operating revenues. The water is pumped from Lake Erie to the treatment facility. The City supplies water to local residents and to residents of surrounding communities.

Sanitary Sewer Service. The City's sanity sewer service district provides service to the City of Monroe and the more intensely developed areas in Frenchtown and Monroe Townships. The sewer service district is managed by the Monroe Metropolitan Water Pollution Control System, which was established in 1976. It has a seven-member board consisting of two representatives each from the City of Monroe and Monroe and Frenchtown Townships, and one representative from the Monroe County Drain Commission.

Storm Sewer. The system has not had a comprehensive evaluation since the 1960's. Many of the recommendations contained in the 1962 report and subsequent subsystem reports have been implemented. The Engineering Department is not aware of a need for any major system expansion.

Solid Waste Collection and Disposal System. The City provides waste collection through a contractual arrangement with a private operator financed through general fund expenditures. Trash is transported to a private landfill. The City also operates a voluntary curbside recycling program collected the same day as the garbage.

Other Utilities. The City of Monroe is served by Aquila for gas service and electric service is provided by DTE Energy. The Monroe Power Plant, owned and operated by DTE Energy is located within the City limits and the Fermi II nuclear plant is located along Lake Erie in neighboring Frenchtown Township.

Government Facilities. The central local government facility is the two-block City-County Complex in the southeastern section of the Central Business District. The complex contains the City Hall, the County Administration Building, the Law Enforcement and Adult Detention Center and the remodeled

Courthouse and Annex. The City is also home to a number of other City, County, State and Federal governmental offices.

Police Protection. The Police Department currently operates out of one station and serves only the City. The surrounding townships are served through contracts with the Monroe County Sheriffs Department, whose headquarters is also located in the City-County Complex.

Fire Protection. The Fire Department has three stations placed within the community. Unlike the Police Department, the Fire Department has a mutual aid agreement to service Frenchtown Township and Monroe Township.

Schools. The Monroe School District has always been a source of pride for residents and a draw for the City. At the time the Comprehensive Plan was prepared, the school district had nine elementary school complexes for kindergarten through 5th grade; two middle schools for grades 6,7, and 8; and one high school for 9th through 12th grade.

A site for a new school is planned within the new Mason Run Neighborhood to assist in accommodating this growth. There are also a number of private and parochial schools that draw students from throughout the City and County.

Monroe County Community College has their main campus about three miles west of the City. The college maintains an 'open-door' admissions policy in most of its programs. The college offers a large variety of course options, degree programs and certification programs.

Municipal Facilities and Services Goals and Objectives

Strive for a high quality of life for current and future residents by maintaining a diverse and unified system of municipal facilities and services.

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

a. Evolve facilities to accommodate all residents such as increased website services and 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 that links information regarding the City's facilities and public rights-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 and facilitate adequate response times.
f. Continue to coordinate services and facilities with surrounding communities and the County.

g. Continue on-going planning efforts and studies of infrastructure facilities to ensure it is meeting demands and that adequate capacity is provided.
h. Update facilities to accommodate improvements and changes in technology.
i. Re-evaluate capacity plans for sewer and water based on future land use.

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

a. Promote the historical and cultural resources provided in the community.
b. Encourage public involvement with community, civic and school activities.
c. Promote the continued development of public facilities within the neighborhoods, such as the Mason Run neighborhood, promoting prevalent traditional neighborhood design elements.
d. Continue providing services and assistance to neighboring communities in a manner that promotes the spirit of a cohesive region without facilitating suburban sprawl.

NATURAL FEATURES, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE SUMMARY

Introduction

The overall focus of the Natural Features, Recreation and Open Space Chapter is on preserving the integrity of Monroe's natural features, providing recreational opportunities and facilities on a regional scale, including trails and waterways; securing adequate funding sources; and increasing tourism and recreation- based businesses.

Existing Natural Features Conditions

Natural features in the Monroe area have influenced its historic growth and development pattern. The Lake Erie Harbor and the River Raisin attracted the initial commercial and industrial development. Many of the other original features such as woodlands and some wetland areas have gradually been altered or removed as a result of development.

Each development decision should carefully consider the benefits natural features provide and irreversible losses that occur when they are destroyed or altered. The key is, when possible, to prevent negative environmental impacts before they occur through proper planning, enforcement or mitigation. Elements considered in the

evaluation of the City's sensitive lands include:

- Floodplain
- Wetlands
- Woodlands
- Contaminated Sites

Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities and Conditions

City-Owned. Monroe has approximately 315 acres of land designated for parks and open space recreational use. One of the City's two major recreational facilities is Munson Park, located north of Custer, in the northwest neighborhood. A second is Monroe Multi-Sports Complex, located on Dixie Highway in the northeast neighborhood. Smaller neighborhood and community parks, as well as school playgrounds are located throughout the City. Residents should refer to the recently adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan for more specific information, analysis and recommendations.

Monroe County Parks. Monroe County has four developed parks, (Nike, Vienna, Waterloo, and Heck) and one undeveloped park site (West County Park). All County parks are equipped with restrooms, parking areas, play equipment, and picnic shelters. In addition, the County also owns the River Raisin Battlefield Visitor's Center that interprets the 1813 Battles of the River Raisin.

Huron-Clinton Metroparks. The Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority is a five-County regional park agency established in 1942. Although Monroe County is not a member of the HCMA, these parks do serve as a recreation resource for City residents as they are within a 25 mile distance.

State-Owned Land. The State of Michigan owns a variety of sites in Monroe County including state parks, state game areas, and public access sites. Sterling State Park (930 acres), provides a campground, beach, trails, and facilities for fishing and boating. Three State Game Areas (Erie, Petersburg, and Pointe Mouillee) offer fishing and hunting, as well as hiking. Three access sites (Bolles Harbor, Otter Creek, Swan Creek) provide boat launch and fishing facilities.

Recreation Deficiencies. As mentioned previously, the City Parks and Recreation Master Plan is an important resource in understanding the need assessment and park and recreation recommendation. In general, the following issues should be the focus for park and recreation development:

- The northeast area is under-served by nearby recreational facilities.
- Many of the transportation routes and natural features that transverse the City act as divisive elements, hindering access to recreation facilities for children and seniors.

- Existing park maintenance and equipment upgrades are needed.
- Recreation programs need to meet the diverse interests and age groups of City residents.

Natural Features, Recreation and Open Space Goals and Objectives

POLICY STATEMENT

Create a healthy, sustainable environment for Monroe citizens to live, work and play in by preserving and enhancing Monroe's natural environment, improving Monroe's abundant park land and planning for the efficient, attractive and environmentally sound use of land.

Goal #1 ***Encourage integration of natural features such as woodlands and wetlands into site development as aesthetic and functional features while protecting the quality of the features.***

a. Promote the clean-up of contaminated sites with innovative incentives through zoning flexibility and with assistance from the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.
b. Promote sensitive and responsible storm water management practices through developing guidelines and policies based on the State's "Best Management Practices".
c. Regulate tree clearing through a tree preservation ordinance by preserving landmark trees and requiring effective tree preservation methods during construction.
d. Institute an urban reforesting program to recreate and enhance wooded areas along streets and in public spaces.
e. Require open space areas in new developments that is proportionate to the scale, character and type of project.
f. Incorporate access to natural features in the community into the City's pathway system.
g. Consider the presence of natural features in street construction and improvements.

Goal #2 ***Protect the quality of the River Raisin and its tributaries from the impacts of development while at the same time promoting it as one of the City's greatest assets.***

a. Promote responsible development along the River Raisin that prevents negative impacts to water quality.
b. Require a reasonable, yet effective setback from natural features such as the River Raisin and wetlands.
c. Encourage land uses and improvements along the River Raisin that maximize visual and physical access.
d. Continue to monitor the water quality of the River Raisin.
e. Explore opportunities for public access along the riverfront either through land acquisition or access easements.

Goal #3 Preserve the rare and significant features in Monroe's environment.

a. Develop new and utilize existing partnership programs between public agencies and private citizens to monitor the City's air and water quality.
b. Work with elected representatives, other governing bodies, and public interest groups to develop a comprehensive management plan for the River Raisin.
c. Encourage developers to integrate existing natural features into new developments.
d. Establish a strong natural resources policy for Monroe.
e. Assist in the development of a comprehensive, regional natural resources plan.
f. Develop ordinances which preserve the integrity of the natural settings of neighborhoods, communities, open spaces and parks, and develop clear procedures for their enforcement.

Goal #4 Acquire, develop, maintain and preserve sufficient open space and recreation facilities.

a. Initiate an open space acquisition program, concentrating on developing recreation space in underserved and new neighborhoods.
b. Maintain and enhance existing recreational resources, ensuring all equipment and facilities meet current ADA standards.
c. Update and develop recreational programs that serve the needs of persons of all ages.
d. Update the Recreation Master Plan every five years to address the changing population and socio-economic demographics in Monroe.
e. Pursue cooperative arrangements with other public and private groups for the maintenance of facilities.
f. Have residents assist in planning for and developing additional open space and parks.
g. Pursue all available funding sources in order to implement park improvements and land acquisition.

GREENWAYS PLAN SUMMARY

Introduction

In an urban environment such as Monroe, greenways can be designed in many forms but all have one common goal – to provide a means for non-motorized transportation throughout the community and to the region.

Where possible, greenways in Monroe will incorporate open space and capitalize on the natural features in the community. Greenways will be in the form of on-street or off-street paths that align with the existing sidewalk system and follow along major streets. Finally, greenways in Monroe will utilize utility corridors such as abandoned railroad rights-of-way.

Existing Conditions

In order to develop an effective greenway plan, there are key elements that must be considered and incorporated. An inventory of existing facilities and planning efforts will assist in identifying gaps in the system and establish priorities for connections. In addition, key local destinations must be identified in order to shape greenway routes. Finally, regional destinations and greenway systems are important to consider in planning for connections to these areas.

Existing Facilities and Planning Efforts

- Existing sidewalks within the older neighborhoods
- An historic downtown walking tour
- Some disconnection with the northwest and southwest areas of the City
- Difficult barriers including the River Raisin, Telegraph Road and Monroe Street
- A walkway along the south side of the River Raisin between Monroe Street and Soldiers and Sailors Park
- The Martin Luther King Pedestrian Bridge, links St. Mary's Park to downtown and the riverwalk
- Annual sidewalk maintenance and installation program
- The Downriver Linked Greenway Initiative plan identifies greenway opportunities through the use of existing major transportation corridors and waterways to which Monroe should connect

Key Local Destinations

- Downtown Monroe
- Neighborhoods
- Schools, parks, places of worship
- Lake Erie
- River Raisin
- Major bus stops
- Government offices
- Cultural institutions

Greenways Goals and Objectives

POLICY STATEMENT

Improve the quality of life for Monroe residents by offering a comprehensive, greenway system that unifies significant elements of the City and the region and offers an effective method for non-motorized vehicle transportation

Goal #1 Develop a greenways system that provides safe and efficient non-motorized transportation routes throughout the City and to the region.

a. Provide greenways along major streets and highways and within abandoned railroad rights-of-way.
b. Complete existing gaps in the City's current greenway system.
c. Offer routes that travel east–west to compensate for the lack of motorized east-west routes.
d. Utilize the greenway system to integrate neighborhoods and eliminate physical barriers.
e. Establish connections consistent with the Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative Plan and other sub-regional planning efforts.
f. Expand the riverwalk to provide access to other areas of the City along the River Raisin.
g. Link routes to the regional bus system.
h. Institute an effective implementation program for the development of a non-motorized transportation system.

Goal #2 Utilize the greenway system to showcase and enhance key features and destinations within the City.

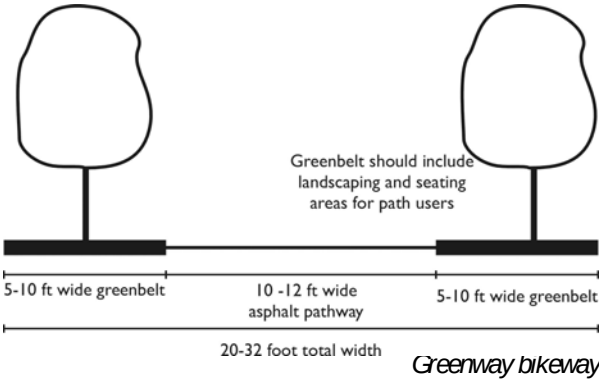
a. Expand non-motorized access to natural features such as Lake Erie and the River Raisin.
b. Promote a successful downtown with greenway links.
c. Offer non-motorized access to schools and places of worship through greenway connections and indoor/outdoor recreation facilities.
d. Provide non-motorized access to community service areas such as the City/County Government Complex.
e. Incorporate enhanced features such as plantings and modest signage at greenway start points and connections.
f. Highlight important historical and cultural resources along the greenway system.

Goal #3 Incorporate different forms of greenways in order to accommodate the diversity of transportation modes.

a. Offer greenway connections that traverse through open space environments for access to preserve natural features within the community.
b. Incorporate greenway connections within available utility corridors such as abandoned railroad right-of-way and electrical and drainage easements.
c. Provide off-street routes along major streets for convenient and efficient non-motorized transportation access.
d. Plan for wide greenways in areas that are intended for multi-modal transportation activity.
e. Ensure barrier free accessibility for all routes.
f. Offer exclusive bike lanes on some major streets to more effectively integrate bike and vehicle transportation modes.
g. Designate special routes designed specifically for walking to interpret historic resources.
h. Where necessary retro-fit existing sidewalk systems while retaining tree-lined street terraces.
i. Modify the City's sidewalk ordinance to accommodate multi-modal use of the pathways with proper yielding hierarchy and enforcement for safety.

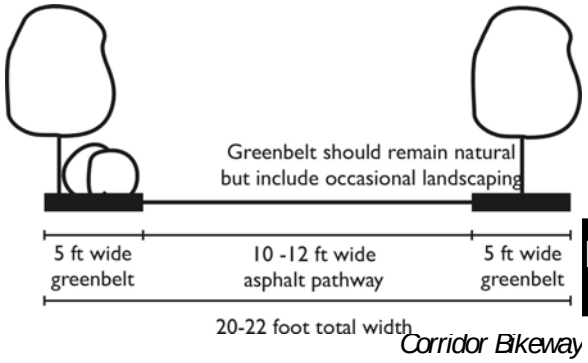
Greenways Plan

Greenway Bikeway. This type of greenway accommodates the greatest variety of users in terms of non-motorized travel and ability including bicyclists, skateboarders, roller bladers and pedestrians. The intent is to offer a greenway route within a park-like setting. Greenway bikeways have 10 to 12-foot wide cross-sections.



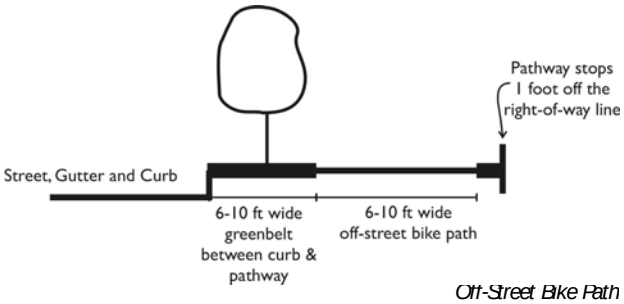
Greenway bikeway

Corridor Bikeway. The corridor bikeway is similar to the greenway bikeway because it is separated from motorized traffic with limited interaction with vehicular travel and accommodates a wide variety of users. These locations differ from the greenway bikeway because it does not offer a park like setting and would most likely be found within former railroad rights-of-way and street utility corridors. Corridor bikeways have a 10 to 12-foot wide cross section in order to accommodate higher volumes and provide for a wide variety of users.



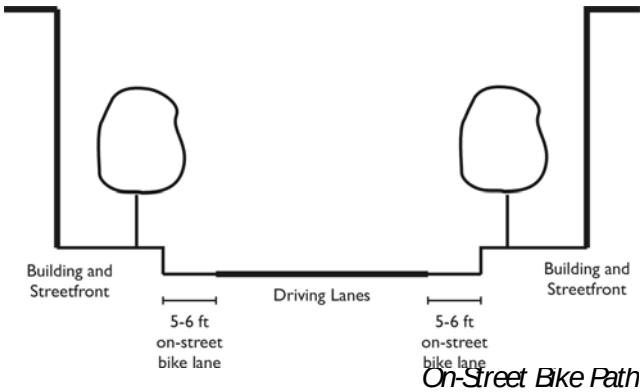
Corridor Bikeway

Off-Street Bike Path. Off-street bike paths present the most widely provided form of greenway throughout the City. This design generally remains separate from direct traffic flow however off-street bike paths involve interaction with vehicles when crossing the street or an entrance driveway. These segments of this system are up to 10 feet wide (as space permits) in order to accommodate a variety of users. Given the urban nature of Monroe, in many situations off-street bike paths will consist of existing or modified sidewalks and will not disturb mature trees within existing street terraces.



Off-Street Bike Path

On-Street Bike Lane. In many areas throughout the City, situations exist where it is not appropriate, due to the potential conflicts between pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles, to provide one multi-use system. Bicycles coexist with vehicles much easier and more safely than pedestrians. Therefore, segments of the overall system may be designed that provide a designated on-street bike lane with a separate pedestrian system similar to traditional sidewalks. On-street bike lanes should be a minimum of 5 feet wide clearly marked and located between the parking areas and the vehicular travel lane.



On-Street Bike Path

COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DESIGN GUIDELINES SUMMARY

Introduction

Land use planning generally makes recommendations on the intensity and arrangement of land uses and public improvements needed to support those uses. Beyond the uses themselves, however, the design of buildings and their sites can influence the public health, safety and welfare. Courts have supported aesthetics as a legitimate public interest, provided the regulations are reasonable.

The guidelines in this chapter are flexible and should be applied on a case by case basis considering the elements such as the context of the site and the scale of the use.

They are intended to provide the City, design professionals, developers and members of the business community with a written and visual perspective to prepare and review development proposals. The guidelines articulate the overall vision for community character and provide some design concepts so each project helps meet the overall objective.

For new development, these guidelines can be applied during site plan review. But the guidelines can also be applied during redevelopment or renovation of

existing buildings and sites to the extent practical. In those cases, the City should work with the developer to include the most important elements or improvements on a site, in proportion to the extent of the change being considered.

Existing Conditions

Key Terms

- 'Suburban' is a term usually applied to growth at the edge of a City yet dependent on the City…."less than urban" or "sub-urban". It is based on the rural ideal and outward migration from America's cities and typically lacks a physical and visual connection to outlying areas and promotes more isolation between land uses and structures.

- 'Traditional design' refers to development from the late nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth century. Spaces between buildings, parks and streets still serve as connectors and help instill a "sense of place" within a neighborhood. The pedestrian is given a high priority, and connectivity and interaction with neighbors is encouraged. Those traditional residential areas usually have higher densities, smaller lots and a greater mixing of land uses than can be found in most suburban subdivisions.

Existing Commercial Character

- Conventional strip malls, service stores and large parking areas are common.
- The lack of architectural diversity and character, excessive setbacks, large parking lots, and numerous signs create visual clutter.
- Monroe Street transforms from a commercial strip at the south end to a traditional downtown environment at the core of the community. North of downtown, it loses part of this traditional character.
- A mix of small stores, offices, and homes with shallow lots fronts North Monroe Street and include many access drives and limited parking.

Existing Industrial Character

- On the west side, unregulated outdoor storage of materials is a concern.
- High truck traffic volumes are impacting surrounding uses and neighborhoods.
- Sites along Cooper Avenue are not well-maintained with outdoor storage.
- Facilities serviced by Huber are set back, which helps mitigate impacts.
- On Dixie Highway, sites are well maintained, but screening and additional streetscape enhancement is needed.
- Ternes Industrial Park generates significant truck traffic, and landscape enhancement could help soften impacts.
- Heavy industry is well secluded, which minimizes character conflicts.

Existing Residential Character

- Residential neighborhoods in Monroe are safe, stable areas

with a wide range of housing types.
- The majority of streets are tree-lined, and pedestrian-friendly.
- Concerns are geared towards compatible renovations and in-fill development
- Property maintenance code enforcement is extremely important to sustain neighborhood qualities.

Existing Downtown Character

The downtown generally has healthy structures that could accommodate a mixture of uses.

- Many people feel downtown Monroe should establish an identity of small, independent businesses.
- Building facades have been lost to surface parking in some areas.
- Street furniture, large canopy trees, streetlights, outdoor cafés and street vendors are needed to give the downtown a 'sense of place.'

Community Character and Design Guidelines Goals and Objectives

POLICY STATEMENT

Promote and preserve the community character in business corridors, industrial districts, neighborhoods, and downtown by providing guidelines for new construction and redevelopment.

Goal #1 Encourage the development of buildings that relate contextually to both downtown Monroe and its well-preserved neighborhoods and transportation corridors.

a. New construction should contribute to the style and integrity of Monroe.
b. Building designs should compliment and enhance past architecture.
c. Reinforce pedestrian qualities of the City and frame public open spaces.
d. Require buildings along the River Raisin to embrace the river as a public corridor.

Goal #2 Protect the character and quality of neighborhoods.

a. Provide a mixture of housing types, opportunities and prices.
b. Utilize the strengths of the City and allow for views to the River Raisin.
c. Require and strictly enforce a sidewalk ordinance for new development.
d. Encourage neighborhood identities through streetscape improvements and landscaping.
e. Strive for residential development standards that respect neighborhoods.
f. Provide the opportunity for people to recreate and interact with their neighbors.
g. Encourage in-fill construction to be consistent with and contribute to the desirable traits of established neighborhoods.

Goal #3 Promote business development that is

compatible with the character of Monroe.

a. Screen and buffer parking areas from surrounding residential uses.
b. Promote high-quality architectural design and building placement.
c. Require landscaping and open space design elements.
d. Improve views to the City from I-75 and the gateways from the expressway.

Community Commercial and Industrial Design Guidelines

The following is a brief summary of the design guide components. Refer to Chapter 11 of the Comprehensive Plan for a complete description of design guidelines.

Community Commercial Building Architecture and Layout

- Durable building materials
- Varying roof shape, quality roof materials, and equipment screening
- Subtle, compatible building colors
- Consistent building massing, scale, and proportion
- Prominent building entrances
- Front lot line build-to
- Parking lot enhancements
- Screening of loading and storage areas
- Finished quality rear elevations

Industrial Building Architecture and Layout

- Quality architecture for administrative/office segments
- Utilize techniques to minimize building mass
- Quality building materials where visible
- Limited metal paneling may be used
- Locate administrative/office at the front of the site
- Locate warehousing/manufacturing areas at the rear
- Located loading areas and overhead doors where they are not visible from the street and residential areas

Outdoor Storage

- Locate only in the rear yard, or out of public view
- Meet the side and rear setback standards
- Limit the size setbacks and a maximum permitted area
- Require suitable containment and opaque screening
- Require plantings along the outer perimeter
- Stacking must not exceed the height of screening

Utilities

- Placement of utility lines underground may be practical for new development, a multiple lot infill or where utility upgrades are already needed
- City staff should work with utility firms to determine where utility burial is most appropriate
- Consider creating new easements for overhead wires in less conspicuous places

Landscaping

- Consistent site frontage plantings and greenbelt

- Accent business entrances and building foundations
- Provide canopy trees and planting areas in parking lots
- Screen parking from the street
- Require landscape screening between uses.

Lighting

- Encourage metal halide lights
- Regulate the intensity of lights
- Regulate the height and type of lighting
- Encourage decorative lighting at gateways

Signage

- Signage should be visible to vehicles and parking areas
- Building signage should be internally lit
- Allow for smaller scaled pedestrian signs at entrances
- Rooftop signs, billboards, and signs attached to rocks, trees, and poles should be discouraged.

Pedestrian System

- Provide access from sidewalks and parking areas to building entrances
- Access should be barrier-free
- Connect building entrances with internal sidewalks

Parking and Circulation

- Provide a more comprehensive list of uses with corresponding parking calculations
- Allow flexibility to require less or more, as needed
- Encourage shared parking, off-site parking, banked parking and accessibility to public transportation
- Reduce dimensional requirements
- Require parking lot islands and sidewalks

Access Management

- Limit the number of driveways
- Regulate driveway spacing
- Encourage shared driveways
- Seek opportunities for service drives and parking lot connections

Downtown and Neighborhood Commercial Design Guidelines

The following is a brief summary of the design guide components. Refer to Chapter 11 of the Comprehensive Plan for a complete description of design guidelines.

Landscape and Urban Design

- Promote retail, restaurants, services on the first floor
- Promote office and residential uses on upper stories
- Accommodate barrier-free accessibility
- Build to the property line
- Locate active uses and entrances at the street
- Acknowledge significant public landmarks
- Encourage outdoor activities and uses
- Require street trees between each storefront
- Allow for planted flowers or plants in the front yard
- Revitalize green spaces

Downtown Building Architecture

- Require a minimum height of two stories
- Require high quality building materials
- Require historic materials and colors, as appropriate
- Architectural features associated with the front of a building should be promoted
- Variety in buildings and design should be encouraged

Parking

- Make on-street spaces available to visitors/ shoppers
- Place time limits on meters
- Locate off-street parking spaces in the rear
- Coordinate lighting, landscaping, paving and signs
- Consider shared parking strategies

Signage

- Signs should be easy to read and enhance the building
- Lighting and signage must reflect the pedestrian scale
- Signs should not be painted onto the building
- Signs should be externally lit with gooseneck lighting or similar techniques
- Murals can be used to accent blank building facades
- Storefront glass may be stenciled
- Internal lighting should be discouraged
- Discourage rooftop signs and billboards
- Projecting signs are encouraged
- Clocks, or special architectural features extending from the building are encouraged

Neighborhood Design Guidelines

The following is a brief summary of the design guide components. Refer to Chapter 11 of the Comprehensive Plan for a complete description of design guidelines

Architecture

- Promote high quality, durable building materials
- Materials must be compatible to adjacent housing
- Establish a minimum height requirement
- Dominant features of the home should be the living areas
- All front entrances should have a porch or stoop
- Views from front entrances to the front walk should be incorporated
- Windows on the front elevation should be encouraged to be vertical in proportion
- Garages should not dominate the front of the home
- Recessed and detached garages are encouraged

Streetscape Design

- Streets need straight-faced concrete curb and gutters
- Streets should be designed for low traffic speeds and volumes
- Maintain narrow pavement and short block faces
- Accommodate on street parking
- Maintain interconnected streets and blocks
- Improve connections between east and west sides of the City
- Encourage short setbacks for homes along the streets

Sidewalks, Pathways and Landscaping

- Utilize design features to alert drivers of residential areas and slow speeds
- Street trees should frame the street
- Landscaping should compliment the building and the entrance
- Pedestrian light fixtures are strongly encouraged
- Require sidewalks on both sides of the street
- Low-rise decorative walls or fences can be used

Lot sizes/width. The Future Land Use Map illustrates densities that are consistent with existing development and characteristics of each particular area. These densities and lot dimensions should be maintained to perpetuate and enhance the existing neighborhood atmosphere. An additional district or special regulatory provisions may be appropriate to reduce minimum requirements to allow for the creation and continuance of narrower lots.

Neighborhood Parks. Neighborhood parks are a key element to any quality neighborhood. Currently Monroe has a well-integrated park system. Additional connections to the system are needed and addressed with the Greenways Plan. With new neighborhood development park and open space areas should be required.

Street Lighting. In order to promote activity in the neighborhoods and to establish a safe environment for residents, street lighting may be provided along collector streets. This lighting should be compatible with downtown lighting. The decorative style enhances the character of the neighborhood and promotes a scale that is more comfortable for pedestrians while providing safe levels of lighting for the motoring public.

Signage/Neighborhood Entrances

- Single family residential developments should not be differentiated from nearby neighborhoods
- Low signs to mark the name of a neighborhood should be subtle and an extension of the landscaping
- Multiple family developments entry signs should be subtle and low to the ground with planting beds
- Illumination of the sign should not be permitted
- Gated entrances should be discouraged
- Neighborhoods should have multiple points of entry

Multiple Family Developments

- Emulate the scale of single family
- Orient building entrances to the street
- Encourage townhouse style buildings
- Encourage a high quality design image
- Maintain structural integrity
- Provide private, outdoor space
- Locate parking and dumpsters away from view
- Locate garages to the rear

IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

Each chapter contained in the Comprehensive Plan provides sufficient background information and analysis on the key issues facing the City of Monroe, and those are summarized in this document.

Following the analysis of each subject, goals and objectives were established as a foundation to guide the resolution of issues, implementation of ideas and establish policies for decision-making. These goals and objectives are summarized in this document and outlined specifically in the Comprehensive Plan. 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.

The Implementation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan provides a detailed list of recommended strategies to implement the goals and objectives of the plan. The chapter takes these strategies a step further by establishing short and long-term priorities and identifying key players responsible for completing the tasks. Prioritizing each of the strategies will assist the City in establishing a reasonable guide for complete implementation of the plan. Priorities will need to be adjusted each year when the plan is reviewed and when the next set of implementation strategies is determined.

Over time, the City may discover new approaches and opportunities that may alter this implementation plan. Changes to the specific strategies, their priority, and responsibility are to be expected, however, the City must remain committed to upholding the integrity of the goals and objectives of the document.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The City of Monroe is rich in history and embodies the traditional urban center for Monroe County, Michigan. The timeline provided below offers a brief look into the City's past. These important events and turning points in the City's history assist in understanding its needs for the future. A glimpse at the past also provides greater insight and appreciation for its assets so that they can properly be preserved.

Development of this comprehensive plan is pivotal in preserving these qualities while preparing the City for contemporary pressures and issues. Through an interactive planning process, emerged strategies and policies that seek to accomplish the following six primary objectives.

- ***Protect the neighborhoods***
- ***Revitalize the City's downtown***
- ***Capitalize on the City's greatest natural asset, the River Raisin***
- ***Improve traffic operations***
- ***Preserve the historic character and resources of the City***
- ***Strengthen the City economy, tax base and job market***

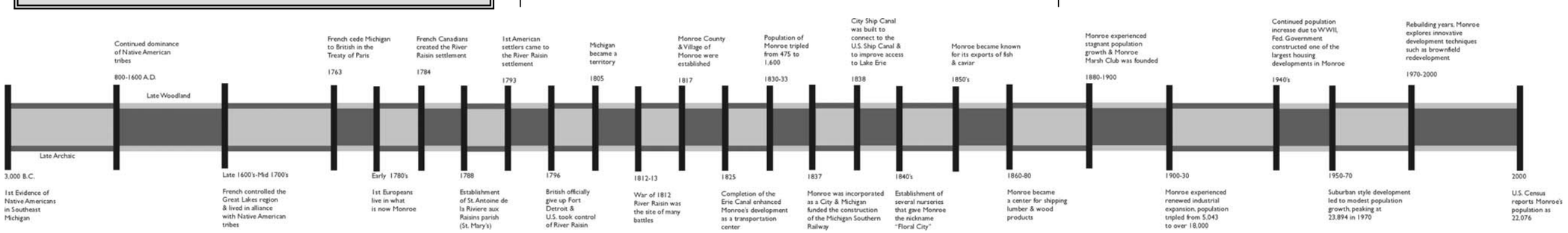
Contents of the Plan

Following this introduction are eleven chapters that capture the essence of the most important issues facing Monroe. Each chapter begins with a description of existing conditions and current issues using text, maps and charts. Based on this discussion, each chapter includes a list of goals and objectives that provide the framework for implementation strategies. Some of the more complex implementation strategies are discussed in each chapter.

The final chapter is the Implementation table, which provides concise and specific strategies that must be accomplished in order to meet the goals and objectives. This component synthesizes all of the plan recommendations into a format that is easily referenced and ensures that all strategies work toward a common vision.

- ***Land Use***
- ***Transportation***
- ***Neighborhoods and Housing***
- ***Economic Development and Redevelopment***
- ***Historic Resources***
- ***Downtown***
- ***Municipal Facilities***
- ***Natural Features, Parks and Open Space***
- ***Greenways***
- ***Community Character and Design***
- ***Implementation***

The following subjects are covered in this plan and are provided their own chapter:



Planning Process

Because of the complexity of issues and strong sense of community pride amongst residents, the focus of the planning process was on public involvement and consensus building. The City felt that although they were not required to follow the planning process of the newly adopted Municipal Planning Act, it was a worthwhile effort. The more extensive public review process and coordination with the City Council allowed ample input on the plan and ensured support by the various departments and governmental bodies. As a comprehensive plan, the goals, objectives and recommendations will be considered during all decision-making processes of the City.

The Citizen Planning Commission was the driving force during the entire process, however, a Resource Committee was assembled and were updated on the status, findings and recommendations of the plan and received personal invitations to all public meetings. The planning team consisted of Langworthy, Strader, LeBlanc and Associates, Incorporated, Hamilton Anderson and Associates, the City of Monroe Department of Community Development and Planning and Jane C. Busch, PhD, an historic preservation consultant.

Step One: Issues Gathering

The process began with a number of orientation meetings and workshops to uncover important issues that should be addressed in the plan. These meetings also allowed an opportunity for the City and the consultant team to educate participants on urban planning topics and update them on projects in the City to reinforce community awareness. The project team met with groups such as all of the City's boards and commissions, representatives from Monroe County and neighboring communities, the Downtown Development Authority, the Downtown Monroe Business Network, local seniors and local civic groups. There was also one evening workshop open to the public.

Step Two: Data Collection

Upon completion of the orientation and issue gathering meetings, the team began to collect background data for the different segments of the plan. It was determined that to achieve these objectives, the plan must comprehensively consider all aspects of community planning and development.

Step Three: Develop Goals, Objectives and Recommendations

Based on an analysis of the data collected and discussion at Citizen Planning Commission work sessions, the project team developed goals, objectives and recommendations for each of the plan components. The focus was to ensure that the recommendations all worked together to create a common vision and promote quality planning principles. It was also important to develop recommendations that were feasible.

Step Four: Consensus Building and Review

The recommendations of the plan were developed early in the process in order to allow ample time to build consensus for the plan. A series of work sessions with the Citizen Planning Commission were conducted with the project team in order to discuss ideas and finalize the recommendations. Once the Citizen Planning Commission was confident in their plan, a public workshop was held to present the recommendations to the public and to respond to their comments. Recommendations of the plan were then refined to reflect public comment and the Citizen Planning Commission conducted a work session with the City Council to address their ideas.

Again, the plan was refined and was ready for public and agency review in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Planning Act, as amended. This period was 60 days long and involved distribution of the plan to key reviewing agencies for their comments. All public comments received, along with the City's response to these comments are available for review at the Department of Community Development.

Step Five: Public Hearing

Once adequate public and agency response was completed, two public hearings were scheduled as a final opportunity to present the recommendations of the plan and to receive public comments. Typically, only one public hearing is required; the City however felt that two hearings would be more consistent with the concept of a community-driven planning process. Public comments received were incorporated into the final draft of the plan. All comments received at the public hearing are available for review at the Department of Community Development.

Step Six: Adoption

In accordance with the Municipal Planning Act, as amended, both the Citizen Planning Commission and City Council adopted the plan at the end of the process.

Citizen Planning Commission Adoption: December 14, 2002
City Council Adoption: January 6, 2003

CHAPTER 10: GREENWAYS PLAN

Introduction

The term 'greenways' can be interpreted different ways, therefore, it is important to define the scope of the City of Monroe's greenways plan. In an urban environment such as Monroe, greenways can be designed in many forms but all have one common goal – to provide a means for non-motorized transportation throughout the community and to the region.

Where possible, greenways in Monroe will incorporate open space and capitalize on the natural features in the community such as the River Raisin and woodlands. In the built environment, greenways will be in the form of on-street or off-street paths that align with the existing sidewalk system and follow along major streets. Finally, greenways in Monroe will utilize utility corridors such as abandoned railroad rights-of-way. These components are more specifically defined within this chapter.

Interconnected biking, hiking and walking trails throughout the City of Monroe have become increasingly important among residents. When preparing the 2000-2004 Recreation Systems Plan, a community-input survey was distributed to a random sampling of City residents. Approximately 70% of the survey respondents agreed that there is a need for more walking trails, fitness/exercise trails and bicycle paths. It is clear that many support expanding the transportation system in the City to include greenways. This plan offers special attention to this issue because the benefits of a greenway system are immeasurable and span social, economic and environmental perspectives. A brief summary of these benefits include the following:

- Improving air quality
- Reducing traffic congestion
- Reducing dependency on motor vehicles
- Providing transportation cost savings for families
- Promoting a healthier lifestyle for residents
- Expand recreation opportunities
- Increasing non-motorized access throughout the City

The format of this chapter begins with an analysis of existing conditions and opportunities for the development of a greenways system in the City. Based on this information, goals and objectives are provided to guide decisions regarding greenway development. Finally, to assist the City in achieving the goals and objectives, a greenways plan map and corresponding text is included in this chapter.

Opportunities and Conditions

In order to develop an effective greenway plan, there are key elements that must be considered and incorporated. An inventory of existing facilities and planning efforts will assist in identifying gaps in the system and establish priorities for connections. In addition, key local destinations must be identified in order to shape greenway routes. Finally, regional destinations and greenway systems are important to consider in planning for connections to these areas.

Existing Facilities and Planning Efforts. The current greenway consists of sidewalks within the older neighborhoods that connect residential areas, the downtown and many institutional uses such as schools and churches. As described in the Historic Resources Chapter (Chapter 6), these areas are rich with heritage and significant structures. In order to emphasize these areas, the City offers a historic walking tour that encompasses an area approximately 12 blocks in size. Key features along the route include: The General Custer Statue, the River Raisin Battlefield Site, the original Anderson Trading Post, Loranger Square and the Historical Museum. Churches, homes, government buildings and cultural facilities are also highlighted on the tour.

In contrast, the northwest and southwest areas of the City do not offer a connected sidewalk system to integrate these nor do they provide pedestrian linkages to the river. This is however being addressed gradually with the City's annual sidewalk improvements program, which completes gaps in the system. Difficult barriers include the River Raisin, Telegraph Road and Monroe Street, which are perceived as dividers within the City. The greenway plan should attempt to improve the physical unification of the City and minimize these barriers.

The Martin Luther King Pedestrian Bridge over the River Raisin creates a crucial link between the north and south sides of the City

A walkway along the river was recently installed along the south side of the River Raisin between Monroe Street and Soldiers and Sailors Park. The Martin Luther King Pedestrian Bridge, at St. Mary's Park, provides a connection across the River Raisin and links to the riverwalk. Currently, the walkway extends along a portion of the river and with limited points of access and visibility. In addition, the walkway is currently restricted to use by only pedestrians. Bicycling, rollerblading, skateboarding, and other similar equipment are prohibited. Despite these challenges, it has become an important asset to the City and a positive step towards capitalizing on its most precious resource. Expansion of this walkway should be a high priority along with improvements to increase use and accessibility for all residents.

Key Local Destinations. The City of Monroe has many different destinations that should be incorporated into the greenway plan however it is difficult to narrow the scope. This plan should therefore focus on identifying primary routes to community landmarks and desired revitalization areas. As the City continues to install greenways along all major roadways and within neighborhoods, the user can create their own "secondary route" in order to access primary routes.

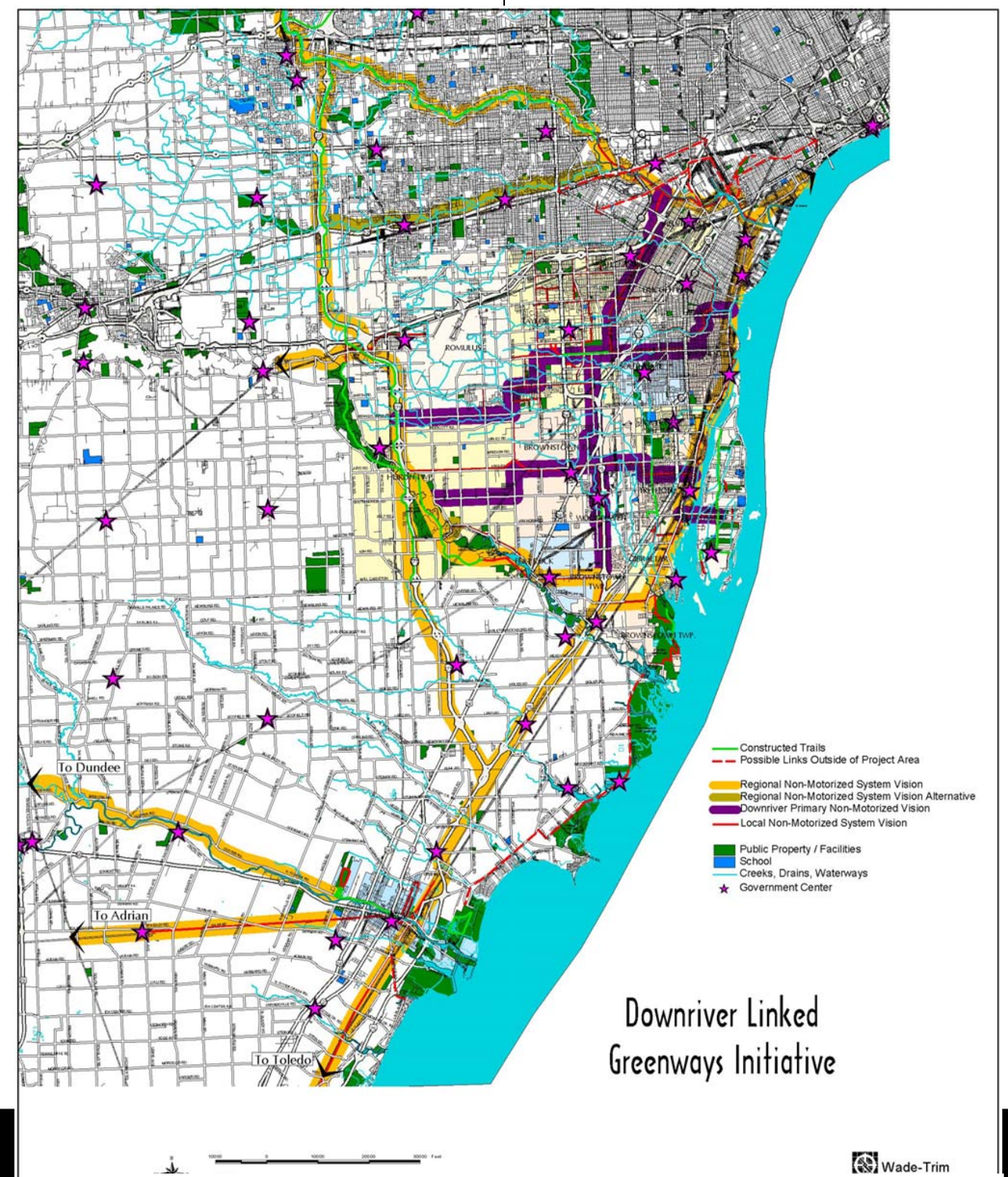
To promote the revitalization of the downtown, the greenway plan focuses on providing links to this area. Connections should also include one or two major routes through residential areas that also tie into schools and parks in those neighborhoods. Also, a greenway connection is needed to Sterling State Park and Lake Erie. Although a large portion of the State Park is located within the City, residents cannot access it directly within the City limits and the park is only accessible by car.

Other important destinations to include in a greenways plan include: neighborhoods, public places, parks and recreation facilities, the River Raisin, major bus stops, the county offices, City offices and the museum. These facilities are not only important for employment generation but also offer key community services to residents.

Regional Greenway System. The Downriver Linked Greenway Initiative (DLGI) is an important collaborative between communities within the downriver area to develop an interconnected, regional greenway system. These communities included, but are not limited to: Lincoln Park, Taylor, Riverview, Grosse Ile, Trenton, Rockwood, Flat Rock, Brownstown and Monroe. A reduce version of the plan is located to the right of this text (to review an enlarged and color version of the map, visit the City's Department of Community Development Planning). The plan identifies greenway opportunities through the use of existing major transportation corridors such as I- 75 and I- 275 and waterways such as the Huron River.

As part of this program, the City of Monroe has the obligation to incorporate this regional greenways system into its local initiatives. Connections identified in the regional plan that relate to the City are listed below:

- Between Munson Park and Sterling State Park via Elm Avenue
- Along the south side of the River Raisin
- Within all available abandoned rail right-of-way (NS line)
- Through the downtown
- Along Custer Road
- Along I-75
- Along LaPlaisance Road



Source: Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative Plan, Wade-Trim, Smith Group/JJR

Greenways Goals and Objectives

In response to the opportunities and conditions discussed in the previous section, goals and corresponding objectives were prepared. These statements establish a framework for the greenway plan and offers specific strategies in order to achieve a safe and efficient greenway network within the City. This section begins with a greenways policy statement and is followed by goal statements. Each goal statement is supported by a list of objectives.

POLICY STATEMENT

Improve the quality of life for Monroe residents by offering a comprehensive, greenway system that unifies significant elements of the City and the region and offers an effective method for non-motorized vehicle transportation

Goal #1 Develop a greenways system that provides safe and efficient non-motorized transportation routes throughout the City and to the region.

a. Provide greenways along major roadways and highways and within abandoned railroad rights-of-way.
b. Complete existing gaps in the City's current greenway system.
c. Offer routes that travel east–west to compensate for the lack of motorized east-west routes.
d. Utilize the greenway system to integrate neighborhoods and eliminate physical barriers.
e. Establish connections consistent with the Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative Plan and other sub-regional planning efforts
f. Expand the riverwalk to provide access to other areas of the City along the River Raisin.
g. Link routes to the regional bus system.
h. Institute an effective implementation program for the development of a non-motorized transportation system.

Goal #2 Utilize the greenway system to showcase and enhance key features and destinations within the City.

a. Expand non-motorized access to natural features such as Lake Erie and the River Raisin.
b. Promote a successful downtown with greenway links.
c. Offer non-motorized access to schools and places of worship through greenway connections and indoor/outdoor recreation facilities.
d. Provide non-motorized access to community service areas such as the City/County Government Complex.
e. Incorporate enhanced features such as plantings and modest signage at greenway start points and connections.
f. Highlight important historical and cultural resources along the greenway system.

Goal #3 Incorporate different forms of greenways in order to accommodate the diversity of transportation modes.

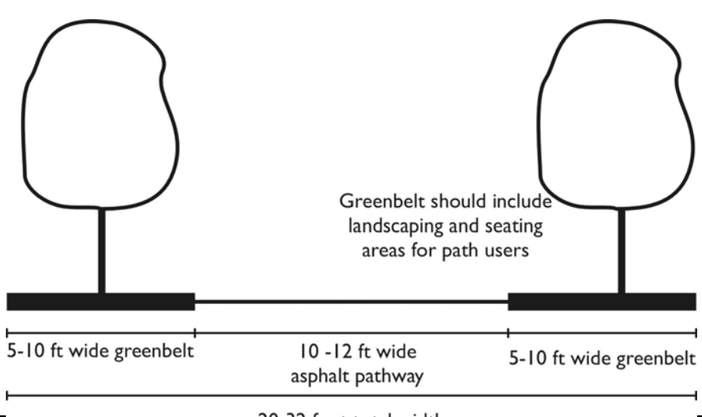
a. Offer greenway connections that traverse through open space environments for access to preserve natural features within the community.
b. Incorporate greenway connections within available utility corridors such as abandoned railroad right-of-way and electrical and drainage easements.
c. Provide off-street routes along major roads for convenient and efficient non-motorized transportation access.
d. Plan for wide greenways in areas that are intended for multi-modal transportation activity.
e. Ensure barrier free accessibility for all routes.
f. Offer exclusive bike lanes on some major roads to more effectively integrate bike and vehicle transportation modes.
g. Designate special routes designed specifically for walking to interpret historic resources.
h. Where necessary retro-fit existing sidewalk systems while retaining tree-lined street terraces.
i. Modify the City's sidewalk ordinance to accommodate multi-modal use of the pathways with proper yielding hierarchy and enforcement for safety.

Greenways Plan Elements

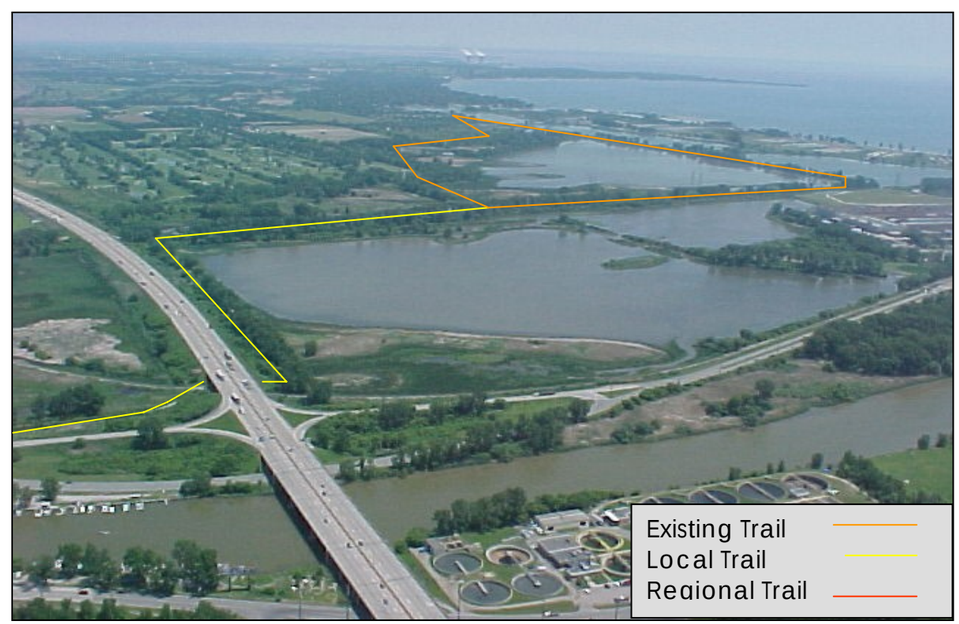
Monroe is committed to achieving the goals and objectives of this chapter. The Greenways Plan (Map 13) illustrates the primary greenway routes recommended for development. These routes have been carefully designed with a comprehensive approach towards achieving the goals and objectives of not only this chapter, but of the entire plan. Although the City of Monroe is an urban community, it is blessed with natural resources and open space areas. This allows the ability to offer a variety of greenway solutions and presents a variety of opportunities for destinations. The following is a description of the five greenway categories delineated on the map. Refer to Map 13 for specific routes.

Greenway Bikeway. This environment is most desirable because it accommodates the greatest variety of users in terms of non-motorized travel and ability including bicyclists, skateboarders, roller bladers and pedestrians. This design also provides for some of the most enjoyable traveling in terms of comfort level, recreation and limited conflicts with vehicles. The intent is to offer a greenway route within a park-like setting.

View of proposed greenway system along the River Raisin looking west of I-75

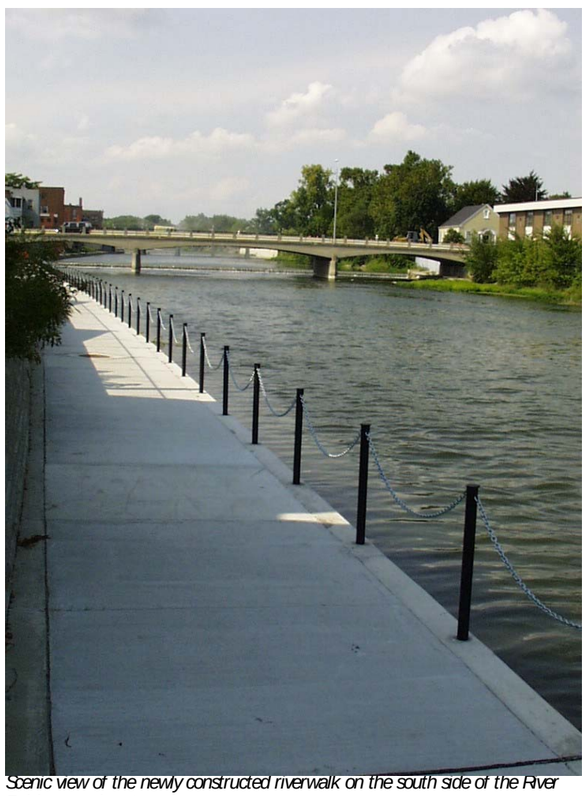


View of proposed greenway system near Sterling State Park and Lake Erie looking northeast of I-75



Greenway bikeways have 10-12 foot wide cross sections. This type of greenway is planned through Munson Park, along the River Raisin, across the north side of the Sacred Sisters Immaculate Heart of Mary (SSIHM) site and through the open space leading to Sterling State Park and Lake Erie. This system includes a proposed crossing over the River Raisin near the SSHIM site and incorporates the existing riverwalk system and crossing at Monroe Street and St. Mary's Park.

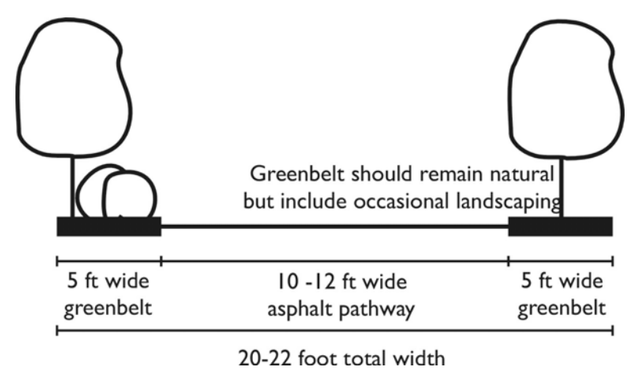
To increase the level of enjoyment along greenway bikeways enhancement features and resting areas should be incorporated to include benches, picnic tables, and trash receptacles. In addition, these greenways should be designed to function with a variety of users. For instance, there should be special striping in order to indicate two-way travel. In addition, there should be an established yielding hierarchy so greenway users understand who has the right-of-way in given circumstances.



Scenic view of the newly constructed riverwalk on the south side of the River Raisin near downtown

Corridor Bikeway. The corridor bikeway is similar to the greenway bikeway because it is separated from motorized traffic with limited interaction with vehicular travel and accommodates a wide variety of users. These locations differ from the greenway bikeway because it does not offer a park like setting and would most likely be found within former railroad rights-of-way and road utility corridors.

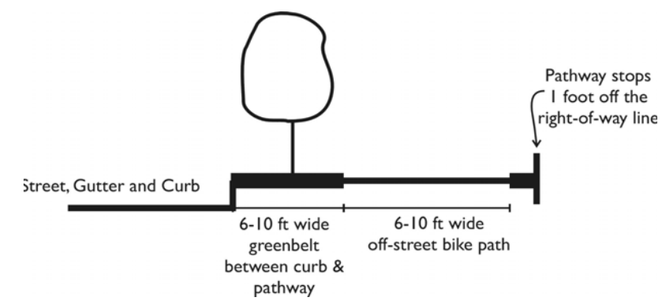
Corridor bikeways have a 10 to 12-foot wide cross section in order to accommodate higher volumes and provide for a wide variety of users. A corridor bikeway route is planned in Monroe along the abandoned right-of-way that runs parallel to Seventh Street and extends in a northeast direction to downtown Monroe. There are also two corridor bikeways planned north of the SSIHM site within the existing drainage easements. When the NS southbound railroad right-of-way is abandoned, installation of a corridor bikeway is planned. Finally, the power easement that runs down the middle of Maple Avenue presents another opportunity for corridor bikeway installation within the median. Similar to the greenway bikeway, enhancements such as benches and seating areas are encouraged and regulations related to two-way travel and yielding are also appropriate.



Typical cross section detail of a corridor bikeway

Off-Street Bike Path. Off-street bike paths present the most widely provided form of greenway throughout the City. This design generally remains separate from direct traffic flow, however, off-street bike paths involve interaction with vehicles when crossing the road or an entrance driveway. These segments of this system are up to 10 feet wide (as space permits) in order to accommodate a variety of users. Given the urban nature of Monroe, in many situations off-street bike paths will consist of existing or modified sidewalks. When modifications are proposed, they will likely be minor widening (from 4 feet to 6 feet) and will not disturb mature trees within existing street terraces. Off-street bike paths function more as connector paths to destinations rather than leisure trails.

Off-street bike paths are planned along Telegraph Road, segments of Elm Avenue and Front Street and Dixie Highway.

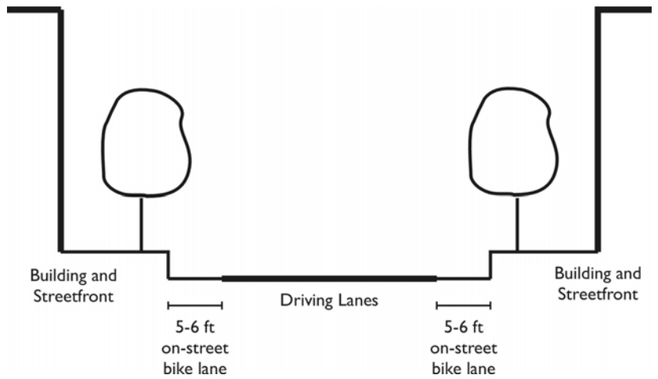


Typical cross section detail for an off-street bikepath

On-Street Bike Lane. In many areas throughout the City, situations exist where it is not appropriate, due to the potential conflicts between pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles, to provide one multi-use system. Bicycles coexist with vehicles much easier and more safely than pedestrians. Therefore, segments of the overall system maybe designed that provide a designated on-street bike lane with a separate pedestrian system similar to traditional sidewalks. The location and design of bike lanes must take into consideration the presence and function of on-street parking.

On-street bike lanes should be a minimum of 5 feet wide, clearly marked and located between the parking areas and the vehicular travel lane. This type of system is most appropriate where vehicular speed does not exceed 45 miles per hour, and where the lane can be achieved by reducing travel lanes and/or on-street parking width.

This type of path is planned for key local streets such as Riverview Avenue, Macomb Street, Huber Drive, Custer, Fredericks and First Street. Many of the routes are intended to guide users through the neighborhoods, and to parks and schools. The routes also contribute to improving access to the downtown and the River Raisin.



Typical cross section detail of on-street bike lanes.

Funding / Implementation Strategies

In order to bring this plan to reality, a few important strategies must be explored and a comprehensive approach must be followed.

Public Investment. The City will need to take the lead in implementing this plan and demonstrating the public commitment to the project. This can be accomplished by incorporating these improvements into the City's 5-year capital improvement budget in order to properly allocate funding for construction.

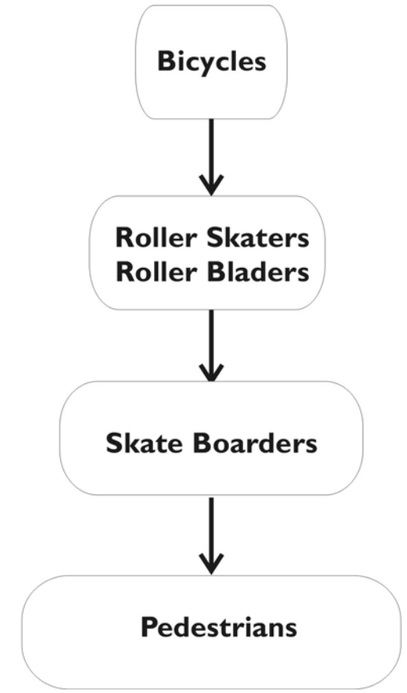
Based on the cost estimate to complete this system, it is not likely that the City has a general fund that can finance the entire project. Therefore, other sources must be considered. As a City they have the authority to levy taxes in order to implement a capital improvement project either in the form of a bond or a special millage.

Grants, Donations and Other Sources. To further support improvements to the Greenways System, grants and donations will also be an important resource. Grant sources will be helpful in financing construction costs, however, since they are extremely competitive, there should not be a heavy reliance. The City could also establish a fund raising program to finance enhancements along system such as benches, way finding signage and landscape treatments. Those who participate could be named on a plaque or have their name(s) engraved in a brick paver or bench.

Private Investment. Based on the Greenway Plan, the City should work with private developers to install sections of the plan as part of new development or redevelopment projects. This will be possible provided it is included in the zoning ordinance as part of the site plan requirements and design standards.

Yielding Hierarchy. The City should develop a yielding hierarchy to facilitate organized use of the greenway system. This can be accomplished with a City Code and signage on the system. As shown in the graphic, bicycles yield to roller bladers and roller skaters. All three yield to skate boarders and everyone yields to pedestrians. The graphic is just an example and utilizes generalized terms. The City should more closely define each category to include all activities that may occur on the greenway system.

City of Monroe Greenways System
Recommended Yielding Hierarchy



CHAPTER 11: COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

Introduction

Monroe is a city with extensive history, well-established residential neighborhoods, a traditional downtown, industrial districts and supporting commercial districts. In planning for the future, the goal is to protect, enhance and reinforce the special traits of each area in the city. Many of the planning principles and development guidelines described in this chapter are embodied in the text and recommendations of previous chapters.

Land use planning generally makes recommendations on the intensity and arrangement of land uses and public improvements needed to support those uses. Beyond the uses themselves, however, the design of buildings and their sites can influence the public health, safety and welfare. Courts have supported aesthetics as a legitimate public interest, provided the regulations are reasonable. This chapter provides guidelines to help ensure that development and redevelopment complements the city's overall character without being too prescriptive. Separate guidelines are provided for (1) General Commercial and Industrial Uses), (2) Downtown and Neighborhood Commercial, and (3) Residential Uses/Neighborhoods). As guidelines, they are flexible and should be applied on a case by case basis considering the elements such as the context of the site and the scale of the use.

The character of Monroe is that of a traditional town with scenic vistas

Applicability

One purpose for the guidelines is to provide the city, design professionals, developers and members of the business community with a comprehensive set of guidelines to prepare and review development proposals. Since the city has a diverse array of design types, developed over many decades, these are guidelines instead of a rigid set of standards or regulations. The intent is to articulate the overall vision for community character and provide some design concepts so each project helps meet the overall objective.

For new development, these guidelines can be applied during site plan review. But the guidelines can also be applied during redevelopment or renovation of existing buildings and sites to the extent practical. In those cases, the city should work with the developer to include the most important elements or improvements on a site, in proportion to the extent of the change being considered. For example, a parking lot expansion may include landscape improvements through the entire lot and new waste receptacle screening. Renovation of a building's exterior could incorporate elements noted in this Chapter.

Prior to making a formal application for site plan review, property owners and their design professionals are highly encouraged to meet with city staff or the Citizen Planning Commission to familiarize themselves with the review process and how the design guidelines may be applied. This helps explain the city's expectations for design before the applicant starts their design process. For redevelopment, a pre-application meeting allows some discussion on which elements of the design guidelines are applicable.

Neighborhood homes reflect the changing seasons and family traditions

One of the challenges is to encourage future development activities that respect the inherent qualities and vernacular characteristics that make Monroe unique but still allow the diversity evident throughout the city's history. The discussion on community character envisions investment that will physically connect and blend into the fabric of the city, establish tree-lined, pedestrian friendly streets, promote mixed-use and economic diversity, and respond to and compliment adjacent neighborhoods. This chapter examines the current character of various parts of the city. It outlines a series of goals, as well as potential design guidelines.

Existing Community Character

Key Terms. Monroe has neighborhoods with traditional urban character, as well as successful subdivisions in the north and northwest parts of the city. It also has one

neo-traditional neighborhood, one of the first to be built in Michigan.

Suburban is a term usually applied to growth at the edge of a city yet dependent on the city....”less than urban” or “sub-urban”. It is based on the rural ideal and outward migration from America’s cities during the mid and late twentieth century. Subdivision developers often argue against sidewalks and multiple street connections because they interfere with the intent to create individual character and privacy. Some subdivisions have gated entrances, highlighting exclusivity and adding a perception of security. Subdivisions are mostly single-family residential and typically do not mix land uses.

“Traditional design” used in this Chapter refers to development with many aspects of projects built in the late nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth century. A narrow range of locally available materials and craftsmen often defined the architecture. Spaces between buildings, parks and streets still serve as connectors and help instill a “sense of place” within a neighborhood. The pedestrian is given a high priority, and connectivity and interaction with neighbors is encouraged. Those traditional residential areas usually have higher densities, smaller lots and a greater mixing of land uses than can be found in most suburban subdivisions. Since these neighborhoods were built prior to 1950, most homes require high levels of maintenance and are not adaptable to modern technology or desirable room sizes and layouts. Mason Run is a neo-traditional neighborhood being built in the city that attempts to take the best of past success and blend it with today’s technology and conveniences.

Key Findings. Monroe is a unique traditional town with a strong urban core and walkable neighborhoods. It has been fortunate to maintain a strong sense of identity throughout the city. This identity and historic flavor are valuable marketing tools for the city in attracting new residents and businesses. Throughout this plan, a number of issues and strategies are discussed to preserve and enhance the quality attributes of Monroe. These issues need to be responsive to market demand and sustainability**.** At the same time, current market forces favor conventional-style prototypes for new development, opening the way to arbitrariness that could threaten the uniqueness of the city. Over time, an influx of “anywhere architecture” could harm the fabric of Monroe. An overview of the various sectors of the city provides insight on the challenges to preserving this identity.

Commercial. Business areas consist primarily of three main corridors, Telegraph Road (US-24), Dixie Highway, and Monroe Street (M-125). Conventional strip malls, service stores and large parking areas characterize Telegraph and Dixie Highway. Generally, sites are well maintained but the architectural character is often mainstream in nature, with limited landscaping and greenspace. Some buildings seem outdated.

Along Telegraph, buildings are set well back from the road to accommodate parking, leaving the streetscape undefined. The lack of architectural diversity and character, excessive setbacks, and large parking lots, and numerous ground-mounted and pole-mounted signs create visual clutter.

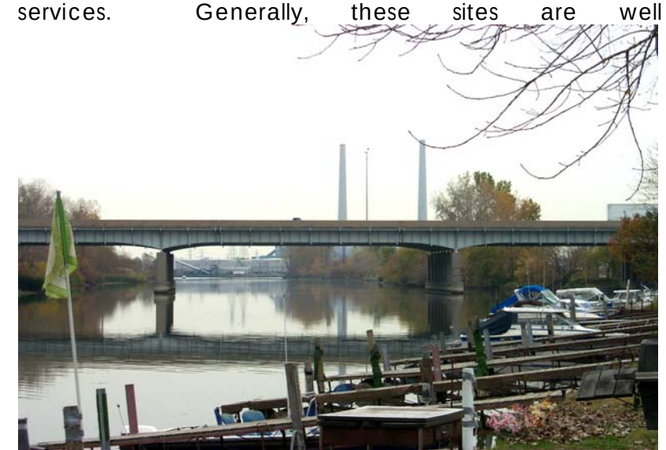
Downtown Monroe banners display community pride and promote an identity for the City

Monroe Street changes in character as it traverses the city from south to north. It gradually transforms from a typical commercial strip at the south end to a traditional downtown environment at the core of the community. North of downtown, it loses part of this traditional character. North Monroe Street is fronted by a mix of small stores, offices and homes. The general character is narrow, shallow lots with many access drives and limited parking.

Industrial. Industrial sectors are scattered throughout the city, reflecting the history and strength of Monroe as an industrial center. Generally, on the west side of the city industrial uses concentrated along Huber Street, north of Elm Avenue with a small pocket located on Cooper Avenue, south of Front Street. These businesses have co-existed with adjacent residential neighborhoods for many years. Unregulated outdoor storage of materials is a concern. Also, distribution and warehousing centers generate truck traffic at volumes impacting surrounding uses and neighborhoods.

Sites along Cooper Avenue are not well-maintained and materials stored outdoors are not properly contained and screened. This condition is magnified because buildings and storage areas are close to the road. Sites along Huber exhibit some improvement over the conditions found along Cooper. Facilities serviced by Huber are set back from the road, which seems to help mitigate the impact.

On the east side of the city, Dixie Highway offers industrial uses that also have commercial showrooms or sales facilities. Many of these businesses sell, store and display goods as well as providing delivery and installation services. Generally, these sites are well


Monroe’s industry is visible from several points along the River Raisin.

maintained with proper containment of outdoor storage. Screening and additional streetscape enhancement could improve the image of this critical entrance corridor to the City.

Ternes Industrial Park, south of Dixie Highway along the west side of I-75, offers a consolidated area for industrial businesses. The majority of these sites are occupied with general industrial, light industrial and warehousing operations. This area generates significant truck traffic, and landscape enhancement could help soften the impact on the surrounding community.

Heavy industry is located in the Port of Monroe Industrial Park. The park is isolated along the River Raisin, east and west of I-75. This includes large complexes for power generating and automotive-related industrial uses.

Residential. Residential neighborhoods in Monroe are stable areas with a wide range of housing types. Many residents feel the prominent historic character of Monroe conveys a small town atmosphere. Neighborhoods are perceived as safe and stable. The great majority of streets are tree-lined, and pedestrian-friendly. Residents think there is a high potential for infill development. They have concerns for the appropriateness in renovation of existing homes and businesses, and the need for code enforcement and design guidelines to sustain desirable qualities of their neighborhoods and the homes.

Downtown. The downtown generally has healthy structures that could accommodate a mixture of uses, but the current market demand is not filling these buildings with a variety of shops. Instead, storefronts in the downtown appear to be converting over to

Building facades along the river should be upgraded, as the view is so prominent from the north and south sides of the riverbank.

professional offices, largely to support the governmental center and courts. Community members recognize that the long-term health of the downtown requires a mixture of retail, office, service and residential uses. People feel the downtown lacks good restaurants, a hardware store, grocery store, more housing, a quality hotel or inn, and boutique shops, to name a few examples.

As automobile-oriented commercial strip corridors continue a trend towards recruiting regional and national retailers, locally-owned businesses are squeezed out. Many people feel downtown Monroe should establish an identity as a place where small, independent businesses can thrive, and where pedestrian traffic is balanced with automobile traffic. Parking is a critical issue and part of the traditional downtown "street wall" of building facades has been lost to surface parking. Residents would like to see more shops, programmed events and activities, street furniture, large trees, streetlights, outdoor cafés and street vendors to give the downtown a "sense of place".

Community Character and Design Guidelines
Goals and Objectives

Clear community values were expressed during various public meetings, focus groups and a downtown visioning session. The following goals and policies are not so concerned about individual elements and parcels as they are with the positive interaction of new and existing investment. They respond to the need to reinforce the architectural totality that defines Monroe as a place. Encouraging developers to carefully consider how their investment can build on the strengths of the city is essential to promoting Monroe's rich heritage and attractive, small town qualities. This heritage is a highly desirable and valuable asset, making it an integral component of future planning decisions.

POLICY STATEMENT

Promote and preserve the community character in business corridors, industrial districts, neighborhoods, and downtown by providing guidelines for new construction and redevelopment.

Goal #1 Encourage the development of buildings that relate contextually to both downtown Monroe and its well-preserved neighborhoods and transportation corridors.

a. The character of new construction should contribute to the style and integrity of Monroe and its neighborhoods.
b. Building designs should not replicate past architecture, but complement the vernacular style and enhance the surrounding area.
c. Reinforce pedestrian qualities of the city by developing buildings that define the street as public space and frame public open spaces.
d. Require buildings along the River Raisin to embrace the river as a public corridor, including the use of elements such as high quality building materials, special outdoor lighting, outdoor uses and seating, landscaping, upper floor decks, and entrances at the riverfront.

Goal #2 Protect the character and quality of neighborhoods.

a. Provide a mixture of housing types, opportunities and prices.
b. Utilize the strengths of the City and allow for views to the River Raisin and other significant natural features.

Input from community leaders and residents helped to clearly define goals and objectives for strengthening the character of Monroe.

c. Require and strictly enforce a sidewalk ordinance for all new residential neighborhoods and infill housing.
d. Encourage neighborhood identities through streetscape improvements and landscaping at entries and in neighborhood parks.
e. Strive for residential development standards that respect the historic characteristics of the neighborhoods, landscaping, setbacks, lot sizes and houses.
f. Provide the opportunity for people to recreate and interact with their neighbors.
g. Encourage in-fill construction to be consistent with the desirable traits of established neighborhoods, and establish renovation and rehabilitation standards that will reinforce neighboring property values by contributing to the quality and character of the neighborhoods.

Goal #3 Promote business development that is compatible with the character of Monroe.

a. Screen and buffer parking areas from surrounding residential uses.
b. Promote high-quality architectural design and building placement.
c. Require landscaping and open space design elements.
d. Improve views to the city from I-75 and the gateways from the freeway, understanding that they are often the first impressions of the City's overall character and quality. Pursue stronger gateway image development for all corridors to the City.

General Business and Industrial Design Guidelines

Community Commercial Architecture and Building Layout. One of the most influential elements of corridor design in community commercial areas is architecture. To achieve continuity in quality development throughout the city, certain basic standards should be adopted. Based on the future land use map, the greatest concentration of community commercial activity is along major transportation routes including Telegraph Road and Dixie Highway.

- Building materials should be durable and have an appearance of permanence and substance while consistent with surrounding buildings. For instance, brick, split-faced block or similar materials could be encouraged as primary building materials with limited use of metal, wood and exterior finishing systems. The roof shape and materials should be architecturally compatible with adjacent buildings.
- Building colors should be subtle and not detract from other businesses along the corridor.
- 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 also incorporate varied rooflines, archways and other treatments for aesthetics while complementing surrounding buildings.
- 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 accessible and oriented towards the roadway with a high quality façade.
- Rooftop equipment should be completely screened to protect views from the roadway and adjacent uses.
- Front lot build-to standards should allow for buildings to be located closer to the road.
- Newly constructed parking lots should provide a setback or landscape greenbelt.
- Loading facilities and overhead doors should be avoided along any building side facing a public street or residential area or where there is no alternative, significantly screened.
- Visible rear elevations should have a finished quality consistent with the other elevations of the building and well screened where appropriate.

This industrial property uses many techniques to create a sense of character such as low signage and landscaping, a variety of massing in the building, and a clear, identifiable front entrance.

Industrial Architecture. Architecture for industrial development should be compatible with other business development in an area. Industrial sites differentiate from commercial sites, because they typically do not require elements of pedestrian scale to accommodate the public realm and are primarily only viewed from the frontage roadway. Industrial architectural design for buildings facing corridors can be improved, however, 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.
- Techniques such as windows, varying facades and landscaping should be utilized to break up building mass.
- The predominant material utilized on facades visible from a public right-of-way or visitor parking lots should be brick, split face block or other high-quality decorative masonry material.
- Metal paneling may be used, however, only if a significant portion of the base is a sturdy block or brick material.
- The administrative/office portion of the building should be located toward the front of the site and appropriately transitioned into the warehouse and manufacturing area.
- The portion of industrial buildings devoted to warehousing and manufacturing should be located at the rear of the building.
- Loading areas and overhead doors should be located where they are not visible from the roadway and residential areas.

Outdoor Storage. Although outdoor storage should be discouraged in neighborhood commercial areas, it is often necessary to accommodate it as a functional part of permitted land uses. Specific standards should be applied to the approval of outdoor storage areas. These standards should address the following elements:

- Outdoor storage areas should only be permitted within the rear yard of any site, or out of public view.
- Storage areas should be required to meet the side and rear setback standards for a principal structure.
- The size of a storage area should be limited by setback requirements and the maximum area allowed is relative to the lot size.
- Designated outdoor storage areas should provide suitable containment in the form of opaque screening walls or fences.
- To provide further screening and enhancement, plantings should be required along the outer perimeter of a screening wall or fence.
- Regulations should be flexible regarding the type of materials stored outdoors, provided they do not cause contamination of soils and are contained in a manner that prevents the material from moving or 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.

Utilities. In this urban and developed community, utilities are an ever-present element that must be considered as the city evolves, such as overhead wires and underground water and sewer lines.

Utility poles and multiple wires spanning along the business corridors do not present a desirable impression for community character. In addition, these exposed utilities create limitations on improvements such as pathways and landscape design. These business corridors however began to develop more than 40 years ago, when overhead utilities were the only option. Furthermore, it is costly and disruptive for the City to undertake burying the utilities in a piecemeal fashion or all at once. Placement underground may be practical for new development, a multiple lot infill or where utility upgrades are already needed and completed by

developers. City staff should work with utility firms to determine where utility burial is most appropriate. One approach may be to create new easements for overhead wires in less conspicuous places so that existing lines could be relocated on new, higher poles away from the sight of pedestrians and motorists. This has proven to be a more cost effective alternative to removal and burial of overhead wires.

Architectural elements give a strong sense of character for business uses that typically use a standard building type in every location.

Landscaping. Sites should be developed to maximize the amount of effective green space. This may be accomplished through landscape regulations that incorporate the following components to site design. Some of these guidelines may be consistent with current city regulations., Those that exceed current standards should be considered with amendments to the Zoning Regulations. It is not uncommon for these types of facilities to have large expanses of hard surface areas. Storm water run-off from these areas is a significant problem, especially for communities like Monroe that have significant water resources that need protection from contaminants. Hard surface areas should be minimized if possible in renovation and new construction of industrial and business parks. Landscape standards should allow for planting areas that enhance the site, filter run-off, create views from the road and provide ample internal green space. In addition, plantings should be incorporated to screen and buffer incompatible uses and activities.

- Site frontage should be consistently landscaped to create a pleasant appearance along the corridor and "soften" the visual impact of intense development. Consistent implementation of these regulations will likely result in well-landscaped, tree-lined business corridors.
- Each site within Community Commercial and Industrial Districts should be required to provide a greenbelt strip along the right-of-way that includes sod and a row of large canopy trees. A 15-foot wide strip is suggested. Shrubs and flowers should be encouraged in natural clusters that accent the entry to sites and building foundations.
- Large canopy trees and planting islands located within parking areas should be in proportion to the number of parking spaces provided. Parking lot landscaping should enhance green space within the site.
- Within required parking lot setbacks, parking areas should be screened when directly visible from a public or private roadway with a hedgerow or low-rise wall.
- All sites should be required to provide greenbelts for landscape screening and buffering between uses.
- Landscaping should also function as an 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.

Lighting. Adequate lighting needs to be provided along roadways and within parking lots to ensure a safe environment. In addition, lighting within commercial and industrial districts should minimize impacts on adjacent residential areas. Reasonable and effective lighting requirements and approval procedures are needed.

- The City's Street Lighting Summary from October 1999 indicates that the lighting levels are adequate overall, but individual lights could be improved by replacing mercury vapor lights with high-pressure sodium. The study identifies two areas of concern: Telegraph Road, and North Macomb Street on the north end near the hospital.
- Metal halide is a preferred light source for the downtown area and pedestrian scale districts because it is the closest to natural light and true rendition of colors, where other sources can appear eerie or unnatural. Where pedestrians and automobiles share the rights-of-way, the height of poles should be no greater than 20 feet measured at grade. In areas encouraging evening use, such as the downtown and the riverfront, lighting levels should exceed minimum acceptable standards. The intent is to provide a consistent and comfortable wash of light. All fixtures should be down directed to reduce glare.
- Decorative street lighting is recommended along the major business corridors to create a stronger entrance image and representation of the city.

The landscaping and sidewalks help to emphasize the front entrance. All of these elements give a strong sense of

Signage. For General Businesses and Industrial Uses, signage must be adequate to draw customers from a large distance and often at higher speeds. As in downtowns and smaller neighborhoods, sign standards are important and should be implemented and enforced consistently. While signs should be easy to read and mark clear entranceways into businesses, they should not be so oversized that they become a distraction to the streetscape or motorists.

- Signage should be visible to vehicular traffic and parking areas.
- Building signage should be internally lit to promote visibility at night, but should also allow for smaller scaled pedestrian signage near the front entrances of buildings.
- Storefront signs can be externally lit with gooseneck lighting or similar techniques to provide the appropriate lighting level and scale for pedestrians.
- Different brick patterns or variations in facades can be helpful tools to accent large surface areas that lack windows or openings on large structures.
- Rooftop signs, billboards, and signs attached to rocks, trees, and poles should be discouraged.

Pedestrian System. In order to successfully create a non-motorized system that will be used by pedestrians, downtown, neighborhood and commercial businesses must link to these pathways. These linkages are further detailed in Chapter Ten Greenways.

- Commercial businesses and retail shops should have direct access from their front entrances along the City's sidewalks to the non-motorized trails along abandoned railway near W. Front Street, and on segments along Elm Avenue, Dixie Highway, Macomb Street, Custer, and Fredericks.
- The pedestrian system throughout the City should accommodate people with disabilities by carefully placing sidewalk ramps within reasonable proximity to handicap parking spaces.
- All parking ramps and entrances should conform to the requirements of the American Disability Act (ADA) to promote a pedestrian friendly environment for all residents.

Parking and Circulation. A common characteristic seen along Telegraph Road, and certain areas along Dixie Highway are large parking areas that dominate the view of the streetscape. Past and current parking requirements assume peak parking demand for any given use. Updated standards should establish a plan for more typical or average year-round parking needs. Generally, the following elements should be considered when updating the parking standards:

- The uses addressed in the parking section of the zoning regulations should be revised to provide a more comprehensive list and should accommodate recent development trends such drive-throughs and gas stations that provide fast food and conveniences stores.
- Calculations should be updated to consider 100% flexibility. Flexible parking regulations allow developers to demonstrate that the amount of parking provided is adequate to meet the needs of the specific uses. This could be done through parking use studies at other similar locations, prepared by qualified professionals. If comparable examples are found to be adequate, the new project can follow those standards.
- Create and encourage opportunities and circumstances for shared parking, off-site parking, banked parking and accessibility to public transportation.
- Revise dimensional and design requirements to be the minimum necessary to provide a safe parking bay.
- Require the installation of more parking lot islands and sidewalks to promote an attractive environment and safe pedestrian circulation.

Access Management. As noted in the Transportation Chapter, access management is an important tool in improving traffic operations along roadways. Access management applies directly to site design because it is implemented at the site plan review stage. These standards should be applied to all major commercial corridors including Telegraph, certain segments of Monroe Street and Dixie Highway.

Number of Driveways: The number of driveways allowed along a street will affect traffic flow, ease of driving and accident potential. This includes both residential and non-residential driveways. Local, residential streets do not present any concerns related to the amount of driveways because the amount of traffic entering and exiting sites is very low and traffic speeds are slow. Arterial and collector streets, however, carry high volumes or traffic at speeds ranging from 35 to 55 miles per hour. Along these routes, every effort should be made to limit the number of driveways; and encourage access off side streets, service drives and shared driveways.

Each commercial site should have a single driveway or share a single driveway with an adjacent lot. Corner lots should have driveway access from the lower volume side street. For larger sites with more than 300 feet of frontage additional drives may be warranted where a well designed access and circulation system can be designed and integrated with service drives to other sites.

Driveway Spacing: To promote safe turning movements regulations should be established for locating driveways. Standards should include spacing from intersections based on the type of side street and spacing between driveways. Along busy streets such as Telegraph Road and Monroe Street, a recommended spacing of at least 230 feet should be provided between two commercial drives or between a commercial drive and a roadway intersection. Driveways on opposite sides of the street need to be directly aligned or offset 230 feet to prevent turning movement conflicts.

Shared Driveways: Sharing or joint use of a driveway by two or more property owners should be encouraged in the form of a recorded easement. These shared driveways, if planned accordingly, should be located on the property line to allow for convenient access to both sites. If an existing driveway is shared, on-site circulation must be designed to offer a clear and safe route between the abutting sites.

Service Drives/Parking Lot Connection: Planned service drives are an asset to businesses and at the same time alleviate traffic volumes on the main road. Service drives

should be located at the rear of sites and should direct traffic to more controlled access points that are better equipped to handle the vehicles such as appropriate side streets and signalized intersections. The west side of Telegraph Road is the only area that could accommodate a service drive. In Monroe, many of the commercial sites have a shallow lot depth with no space for a fully developed service drive. In these cases, connections between parking lots should be accommodated.

Downtown and Neighborhood Commercial Design Guidelines

As stated previously, the mixture of uses, surrounding residential homes and small town character create a sense of place and continue to promote the history of Monroe. The structures, street patterns, lighting, scale, and landscaping all contribute to the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. At the street level, entrances, windows, and glass storefronts help provide an inviting appearance and connect the interior of stores to pedestrians on the sidewalk. These elements are essential to creating safe and active public spaces.

To maintain this character, the downtown and neighborhood commercial buildings need specific guidelines that differ from community commercial and industrial districts. The primary intent of guidelines is to preserve structures and direct the pattern of building rehabilitation as well as new construction to enhance the desirable traits and atmosphere of the downtown.

In 1981, a Downtown Façade Study was conducted, which included urban design issues and architecture façade recommendations. Although the 1981 Façade Study contains several strong and valid design recommendations, many have not been implemented to date. The following recommendations substantiate and uphold the 1981 study.

Landscape and Urban Design. The streetscape design of this area should reflect the traditional precedent of downtown Monroe. This includes setbacks, massing of buildings, the use of flat roofs, and plantings at each storefront.

- Restaurants, retail shops, and general commercial uses should be encouraged to occupy the first floor, while office and residential uses should be directed to the second or third floors. For most of the smaller historic buildings in Monroe, this will require the granting of exceptions by the State barrier-free board in order for reuse of the upper floors to be feasible for offices. All rehabilitation activity should make every effort to accommodate barrier-free access if possible. However, current guidelines in the Michigan Building Code allow for reuse of the upper floors for up to three residential units without providing barrier-free access. Also, accessibility standards of the Fair Housing Act are exempt for buildings occupied before 1991. New buildings and larger buildings housing greater numbers of units will need to meet these barrier-free requirements. Future leases and purchases should encourage first floor uses for business commercial tenants.
-

Buildings, entrances and decorative enhancements should be oriented to the street and the pedestrian system.

- Buildings within the downtown are encouraged to build to the property line, with active uses and entrances oriented to the street. This strengthens the street wall, promoting a district character of active and pedestrian-oriented streets that encourage walking.
- New and renovated structures should frame and acknowledge the importance of significant public landmarks and features, such as Loranger Square and prominent buildings in the downtown.
- Ordinances should encourage summertime outdoor cafes and restaurant seating as part of the downtown environment. All sidewalks in the downtown and in front of businesses with neighborhood commercial should be a minimum of 10' wide to allow for outdoor tables.
- All streets should have street trees in good condition and located between individual storefronts so signs

are not blocked. Trees should be placed no more than 25'-30' apart along the street.

- Storefronts should allow for an area of planted flowers or plants of at least four (4) square feet in size. All flowers and plants should be kept in a healthy and maintained condition. Plantings should be appropriate to the level of pedestrian activity.
- All landscape elements should support the public realm and frame important spaces, such as Loranger Square and the riverwalk.
- The River Raisin, green spaces and surrounding landscape within the downtown should be revitalized and protected for future water habitat and recreation.

Architecture. Architecture in the downtown should be in keeping with the traditional commercial styles from Monroe and southeastern Michigan, including flat roofs, vertically proportioned windows, glass front doors and vibrant, traditional commercial colors.

- Commercial and mixed-use buildings should be a minimum of two stories in height and encouraged as high as six stories. The building massing should reinforce the street hierarchy. For example, a one-story building would appear out of scale between existing two and three-story structures.
- The use of high quality building materials are strongly recommended to create a memorable character for the city. All commercial and mixed-use buildings should have exterior facades made of brick, glass, wood, cut or stone. For historic buildings, historically appropriate colors should be used.
- All facades that front public streets should have windows and interesting architectural features commonly associated with the front of a building, such as awnings, cornice work, edge detailing, or other decorative finishes. The awnings, canopies, or marquees should not cover up the significant architectural features of the building. Likewise, backlit awnings are not appropriate.
- Buildings within the downtown should provide variety.

Parking. Downtown parking is perceived to be in short supply, and over the years, several surface lots have been built to alleviate concerns of office tenants, storeowners, and City and County employees. Strategies can be explored to address some of these concerns:

Green space in the downtown seems to be disregarded as "left over" space, without any real design or clear use of

- On-street and metered spaces in the downtown should be made available to visitors and shoppers rather than employees or storeowners. Time limits can be placed on them. This will help to encourage and increase "impulse" shopping.
- Off-street parking spaces should be located in the rear of the building with access by a rear lane or alley. Standards for coordinated and appropriate levels of lighting, landscaping, paving and signage are desirable.
- The City should consider the benefit of shared parking strategies, particularly with the future possibility that downtown Monroe will have parking structures.

Signage. Adequate signage to advertise and draw customers is important for the viability of businesses. Uncontrolled proliferation of large unattractive signs not only degrades the appearance of a district, but also distracts motorists. Sign standards are important and should be implemented and enforced consistently. Signs should
be easy to read and enhance the image of the building. Both lighting and signage in the downtown need to reflect the pedestrian scale of the environment.

- Signage should be pedestrian in scale, but should be also visible to both the sidewalk and to vehicular traffic.
- Signage in the downtown should be dimensional in nature. Signs should not be painted onto the building except for walls that have been historically used as signs. Signs should be externally lit with gooseneck lighting or similar techniques.
- Murals can sometimes be helpful tools to accent large surface areas that lack windows or openings. Murals provide interest and character to the downtown, and provide opportunities to showcase local artists. Any mural should be respectful of the historic character of the downtown.
- Storefront glass may be stenciled with lettering to describe the business or services of the store. Lettering style should compliment the building's architectural style.
- Storefront signs that have internal lighting should be discouraged. Similarly, rooftop signs, billboards, and signs attached to rocks, trees, poles, benches, and trash bins should be discouraged. They can be detrimental to downtown Monroe's image and character.
- Neon signs should be permitted on the interior of the store to enliven the façade, as long as the display window is open to the public view.
- Stores may have small signs that extend perpendicular from the building façade, called blade signs, to address the pedestrian walking along the sidewalk. Clocks, or special architectural features extending from the building are also encouraged. All such elements should have a minimum height of eight (8) feet from the sidewalk.

- A coordinated standard is encouraged for all building signage and will help to establish a visual unity within the downtown.

Residential/Neighborhood Design Guidelines

A few large parcels remain in the city that have potential for residential development. These sites should be developed in a manner compatible with the neighborhood character of established residential areas in Monroe. The largest redevelopment area is on the south side of Stewart Road, west of Macomb Street. Another large redevelopment site between Michigan Avenue and the N-S Railroad is part of the Mason Run neighborhood. Mason Run is currently under construction with a mixture of densities and future phases in the planning stages. It has been carefully reviewed and designed to integrate with the existing fabric of the residential neighborhood west of the site. Mason Run is an example for future neighborhood development projects.

Many opportunities exist for "infill" residential development. Infill development occurs when a vacant lot, or a few vacant lots in an established neighborhood are redeveloped with new homes. There may also be lots purchased or structures demolished and replaced with newly constructed homes. With infill development, the framework of the neighborhood is already established; therefore, guidelines become important. The impact of a few new homes that do not coincide with the existing fabric is easily identified and can change the character of the entire neighborhood. Both in-fill and new residential development in the community need to follow a consistent list of design standards to unify development throughout the community.

Architecture. New residential structures, whether in a newly developed neighborhood or in-fill housing, should have curb appeal that creates a friendly environment and promote interaction between neighbors. Many existing homes are directly accessible from the sidewalk and the first impression is the porch and front door. These guidelines will assist in continuing this atmosphere:

- Building materials should be high quality such as brick, carved stone and wood or high-quality hardy-panel or vinyl siding.
- For in-fill development and renovations, the use and type of materials must be compatible to adjacent housing.

Appropriate architectural elements include rear-entry garages, front porches and sidewalks.

- New residential buildings are encouraged to be two stories in height and generally no higher than 38' in height as measured from the grade at the front elevation to the underside of the eave or cornice line on the front facade.
- New homes should be designed with the living areas of the home and the front door to be the dominant point of emphasis. The front entrance of all residential units should have a porch or stoop.
- The front entrance door should be encouraged to have a means of viewing out to the front walk, such as a door-window or view panels either side of the front door.
- Windows on the front elevation should be encouraged to be vertical in proportion and should be single-hung, double-hung, casement or fixed.
- Garages and garage doors should not dominate the front facade of the home. Garages should be recessed or setback from the front building lines, or can have side or rear entry doors not directly visible from the street.
- In keeping with the existing character of the neighborhoods, detached garages located to the rear of the lot are also encouraged.

Streetscape Design. Monroe has a traditional street cross-section that is established for most of the city, with exceptions in the north and northwest sectors. New road construction and improvements to existing roads should be consistent with the existing patterns and follow these guidelines:

- All streets should have straight-faced concrete curb and gutters, and mountable curbs should be discouraged.
- Streets should be designed to keep traffic speeds and volumes low. Among the methods to accomplish these goals include maintaining a narrow pavement width and creating short block faces

Although still in the construction stages, Mason Run clearly demonstrates the ability to create a neighborhood that follows the character of Monroe and considers the pedestrian

- Pavement width should be sufficient to accommodate on street parking yet maintain traditional standards. A typical street width should range from 26' to 32' for two lanes of traffic and on street parking on one or two sides.
- Maintain an interconnected series of streets and blocks. Stronger connections between the east and west sides of the city north of the river are needed.

An interconnected grid will promote and enhance the character of the overall community and diffuse traffic.

- Design standards should encourage short setbacks for homes along the streets. They should be consistent with those found in the established neighborhoods, or about 10 to 15 feet back from the right-of-way line. Front porches and stoops should be allowed to encroach up to about one-half of the setback distance.

Sidewalks, Pathways and Landscaping. Cities need integrated pedestrian circulation systems that conveniently and safely link neighborhoods, public gathering places and other destination points. The city must continue to offer sidewalks in existing neighborhoods, complete existing gaps in the system and require new sidewalks in new residential development areas. Additionally, appropriate connections are needed for non-motorized pathway/greenway systems.

- Design features such as street trees can be used to alert drivers of residential areas and slow speeds. Street trees should consist of large canopy trees that frame the street and promote the traditional character of Monroe.
- Street trees should be provided within a 5'-8' curb lawn between the street and the sidewalk. Street trees should generally be spaced 25' to 30' along the road.
- Landscaping should compliment the building and provide an attractive entrance for each residence. Pedestrian light fixtures that complement the character of the architecture are strongly encouraged.
- Every new residential development should be required to have sidewalks on both sides of the street to promote connectivity and to provide alternative modes of transportation.
- Low-rise decorative wall or fence 30'' in height and landscaping sometimes can be effectively used to define public and private properties.

Lot sizes/width. The Future Land Use Map illustrates densities that are consistent with existing development and characteristics of each particular area. Currently, residential zoning includes three single-family districts with minimum lot sizes of 6,000 s.f. (R-1C), 7,200 s.f. (R-1B), and 9,100 s.f. (R-1A). Minimum lot width requirements range between 50 and 70 feet. Lot sizes, widths and required setbacks within single family districts allow for "close-knit", yet comfortable, spacing between homes. These densities and lot dimensions should be maintained to perpetuate and enhance the existing neighborhood atmosphere. An additional district or special regulatory provisions may be appropriate to reduce minimum requirements to allow for the creation and continuance of narrower lots as narrow as 40 feet.

Neighborhood Parks. Neighborhood parks are a key element to any quality neighborhood. These can take the form of a public park, a school playground or a common area held by a subdivision or condominium association. Currently Monroe has a well-integrated park system consists of parks, limited greenways and school playgrounds. Additional connections to these facilities are needed and addressed with the Greenways Plan. With the development of the few remaining larger parcels, neighborhood park and open space areas should be required to accommodate the increased demand created by the new residents.

Street Lighting. In order to promote activity in the neighborhoods and to establish a safe environment for residents, street lighting may be provided along collector streets. This lighting should be compatible with downtown lighting. The decorative style enhances the character of the neighborhood and promotes a scale that is more comfortable for pedestrians while providing safe levels of lighting for the motoring public. In some instances, such as intersections, more powerful light fixtures may be more appropriate. Lighting should be reasonably spaced and should by no means negatively impact nearby sites and homes.

Signage/Neighborhood Entrances. Neighborhoods existing in the city have individual place-names, but are fully integrated into the overall street network. On the contrary, many subdivisions are designed to be separate entities, thereby creating the desire for separate identification. This perpetuates disconnected road systems, and this. is not consistent with neighborhood design in the core of a urban community like Monroe. The following proposed guidelines promote a sense of community throughout the city:

- Single-family residential developments should not be differentiated by large signs and gateway landscaping, but should seamlessly integrated into the fabric of the community. Low signs to mark the name of a neighborhood or district should be an extension of the landscaping, rather than creating a separate entrance. Multiple-family developments entry signage should be subtle and low to the ground with planting beds as an extension of the landscaping.
- Illumination of the sign should not be permitted unless lighting serves to identify the entrance to the development for motorists and emergency vehicles. The sign should be illuminated externally.
- Gated entrances and gatehouses to new developments should be discouraged because they detract from a culture and attitude toward "city" building.
- New neighborhoods and developments should have multiple points of entry from the existing road system to extend the urban fabric and not overload one road with traffic.

Multiple-Family Developments. In general, elements described above apply to both single family and multiple family developments. However, there are additional guidelines for multiple family, or high density housing:

- Multiple family dwellings should emulate the scale of a single-family home through the use of front porches, or stoops, and peaked rooflines.
- Building entrances should orient to the street, providing sidewalk connections to the right-of-way.
- Townhouse style buildings are encouraged. The front façade of each townhome should exhibit a high quality, residential image, typically achieved by the use of a minimum 80% brick, split-face CMU (concrete masonry units) or pre-cast stone with details made of granite, limestone or the similar.
- Brick used on the front elevation should return at least 8"-12" on the side elevation before transitioning to a

lesser cost material such as siding. This helps maintain an appearance of structural integrity.

- Each townhouse unit should provide a small area for private, outdoor space to allow for grilling, gardening, and similar activities. Balconies and terraces may be developed above rear-entry garages for this purpose.
- Parking areas and dumpsters should be located away from view from the street and single-family residential areas to the extent possible. Dumpsters should be screened from view with fencing and/or landscaping.
- As with single-family residential homes, garages and garage doors should not dominate the front facade of structures as viewed from the roadway. Garages should be located to the rear of the unit and have rear access through a shared driveway or alley.

CHAPTER 12: IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

Each chapter contained in this document provides sufficient background information and analysis on the key issues facing the City of Monroe. These areas include land use, transportation, neighborhoods and housing, economic development, historic resources, downtown, municipal facilities and services, natural features/open space/recreation, greenways, community character and design.

Following the analysis of each subject, goals and objectives were established as a foundation to guide the resolution of issues, implementation of ideas 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.

The final chapter of this plan 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, their priority, and responsibility are to be expected, however, the City must remain committed to upholding the integrity of the goals and objectives of the document.

Implementation Table Format

The implementation plan is divided into sections that replicate the previous chapters. The beginning of each section begins with a title and the goal statements provided in the chapters to direct the focus of the user.

Each section includes a list of specific implementation strategies. Since the plan is intended to cover a 10-year time frame, not all of these strategies will be implemented immediately following adoption. The proceeding column breaks down the priority of the implementation strategy into short term and medium term priority.

Prioritizing each of the strategies will assist the City in establishing a reasonable guide and timetable to complete implementation of the plan. These priorities will need to be adjusted every year when the plan is reviewed and the next set of implementation strategies is determined for the year.

- *Short Term Priority:* A short term priority ranking implies that the strategy should be considered and explored in the first 5 years of plan implementation. These tasks include those that are quick and simple issues to resolve and those are important to have in place for future development and redevelopment in the community.

- *Medium Term Priority:* These strategies should be applied after five years of implementing the plan. Many of these tasks require completion of short term tasks and other factors and condition in order to explore. They are important to the longevity and integrity of the plan and are more likely to require modifications after analyzing conditions.

The final columns assign responsibility for implementing the tasks and note other important related issues. These groups will not have sole responsibility. A successful implementation effort will require cooperation and delegation of work. The groups listed in the table are the key players in organizing and overseeing the completion of tasks. Regular meetings and coordination between the groups will be fundamental.

The followings is the key to the implementation table. All groups are related exclusively to the City of Monroe, with the exception of the Lake Erie Transit, which is an independent regional agency.

CDP - Community Development and Planning
ENG - Engineering
CC - City Council
CPC - Citizens Planning Commission
BLD - Building and Zoning
DPS - Department of Public Services
REC - Recreation Department
IS - Information Systems
CM - City Manager's Office
DH - Department Heads
W - Water Department
WW - Wastewater Treatment Plant
DDA - Downtown Development Authority
HDC - Historic District Commission
LETC - Lake Erie Transit Commission

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIORITY		RESPONSIBILITY
	Short Term	Medium Term	
Land Use Plan Goals • *Maintain and create stable residential areas that offer a variety of housing options, are conveniently located near activity centers and promote the city's traditional character* • *Accommodate a diverse, strong commercial and office base that will serve the needs of all residents and businesses within the community that reduces the amount of scattered and sprawling commercial areas throughout the City* • *Promote a strong, unified industrial presence in the community that offers employment and business services opportunities for the region while promoting the high quality image of the city*			
Gradually update the City's zoning map and zoning districts to more accurately reflect the future land use plan	τ		CPC/ CDP/ CC CPC/CDP
Conduct a detailed single family residential lot size study in order to better assess the densities of the different neighborhoods and to establish the most appropriate single family zoning districts, eliminate unnecessary non-conforming situations and to accommodate traditional neighborhood development and redevelopment	τ		CPC/CDP
Evaluate the location of two-family dwelling units and create a separate zoning district where they are permitted upon meeting certain standards for site elements such as parking, screening, lot size and lot width. Limit these areas to a smaller district than currently allowed		τ	CPC/CDP
Develop residential design standards that reflect traditional neighborhood design characteristics to apply to new residential development and redevelopment	τ		CPC/CDP
Update the Waterfront Commercial District to accommodate high density residential development, recreation and other active uses along the river and to allow more flexibility for mixed-use development projects in accordance with the Riverfront Mixed Use land use designation		τ	CPC/CDP
Create three new zones (either overlay or traditional) with associated design standards to create the high quality, integrated land use character of the Downtown Gateway District to include: North Monroe Street, South Monroe Street and West Front Street	τ		CPC/CDP/CC
Create the Industrial –Consumer Zoning District to accommodate higher intensity commercial businesses in appropriate areas of the City	τ		CPC/CDP/CC
Develop strict non-conforming standards and enforcement regulations that will effectively promote conversion of non-conforming uses and sites and limit use and expansion of existing non-conforming structures	τ		CPC/CDP/CC
Monitor areas where residential neighborhoods abut industrial to ensure a compatible land use relationship is maintained		τ	CPC/CDP/CC

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIORITY		RESPONSIBILITY
	Short Term	Medium Term	
Develop and enforce strict performance standards for industrial uses		τ	CDP
Revise rezoning review criteria to more accurately reflect the goals of this plan		τ	CDP/BLD CDP
Monitor rezoning applications, changes in uses and business expansions to ensure requests are consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan	τ		CDP
Review and update the City's Comprehensive Plan		τ	CDP
Transportation Plan Goals • *Preserve the capacity, level of service and safety of the road network to support current and future development* • *Ensure the transportation system complements the context of the surroundings and the overall traditional character of the City* • *Promote use and enhancement of the variety of transportation modes offered in the City*			
Prepare a transportation plan for the entire city that evaluates the future level of service and capacity of roads and conditions of roads based on anticipated future development plans and growth in the City	τ		ENG/CDP
Coordinate road improvements with city policies on land use, non-motorized circulation, natural features preservation and provision of community facilities	τ		ENG/CDP
Plan for road improvements on all major east-west collector routes in order to minimize traffic congestion on Elm Avenue and Front	τ		ENG/CDP
Update the City's access management standards to more strictly manage the number, spacing and type of access points along the roadways and to require street extensions and connections in appropriate locations		τ	ENG
Evaluate and modify streetscape design standards for green space, street trees and sidewalks along all streets		τ	ENG/CDP/CC
Evaluate and modify street design standards that establish a defined street hierarchy consistent with its intended function		τ	ENG

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIORITY		RESPONSIBILITY
	Short Term	Medium Term	
Adopt the Port of Monroe Master Plan and incorporate appropriate improvements as part of the City's capital improvement program	τ		ENG/CDP/CC
Continue to expand the service area of the Lake Erie Transportation system as new development occurs and as new activity centers are created		τ	ENG
Establish joint venture between businesses, the City and LET to provide enhanced amenities at transit stops for a more comfortable, welcoming environment such as shelters, benches, planters and signs and to offer improved access and design for the bus system on-site and along the street		τ	CPC/CC
Develop a transportation commission or a similar 'adhoc' committee that will create a forum for representatives of the various transportation agencies to cooperate and communicate on projects and issues		τ	LETC/CC
Coordinate with MDOT on M-50 and M-125 jurisdiction issues	τ		ENG/CDP
Coordinate with MDOT on the status of I-75 interchange improvements		τ	CC
Continue to implement and expand the City's wayfinding system		τ	ENG
Review the local truck route map to reduce or eliminate routes through residential and historical areas in a manner that is consistent with the intent of accommodating local truck traffic	τ		CDP/CC
Work with MDOT to improve signage and mapping to clearly direct through trucks around the City on designated routes		τ	ENG/CDP/CC
Acquire abandoned rail lines and obtain easements for conversion to greenways	τ		ENG/CDP/CC
Housing and Neighborhood Plan Goals • *Preserve, protect and enhance the integrity, economic viability and livability of Monroe's neighborhoods* • *Protect the character and quality of neighborhoods by maintaining and enhancing their open spaces and parks, as well as public safety facilities and services* • *Create neighborhood identifiers for all neighborhoods*			

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIORITY		RESPONSIBILITY
	Short Term	Medium Term	
Establish neighborhood associations as defined in this plan that is charged with the responsibility of organizing the neighborhoods, serving as a clearinghouse for home rehabilitation grants, tax credits and loans for neighborhood improvement projects, to serve as liaisons to the City Council and to establish neighborhood identities		τ	CDP/CC
Develop a comprehensive neighborhood plan for each of the five neighborhoods that achieve the improvement and redevelopment strategies set forth in this plan		τ	CPC/CDP
Develop neighborhood design standards and residential in-fill design standards that will ensure all new housing construction and neighborhood development is consistent with desirable characteristics of established neighborhoods	τ		CDP/CPC/CC/BLD
Rezone select isolated industrial sites or modify standards to establish use or reuse that is compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods	τ		CPC/CDP/CC
Enforce property maintenance code compliance throughout the City	τ		BLD/CC
Work with adjacent townships to connect streets and increase access to neighborhoods		τ	ENG/CC
Require parkland in all new residential developments	τ		CPC/CDP/ENG
Economic Development and Redevelopment Plan Goals • *Encourage economic diversity and job creation which are compatible with Monroe's physical character* • *Promote a business-government relationship that addresses the needs of businesses to operate in a positive and mutually beneficial environment* • *Provide economic opportunities in target areas*			
Place as a high priority zoning changes, infrastructure improvements and transportation improvements that will stimulate economic redevelopment, diversify the economic base of the City and implement the improvement and development strategies set forth in this plan	τ		ENG/CDP/CC/CPC
Strengthen the Planned Unit Development District and other zoning districts in order to be more applicable to targeted redevelopment sites		τ	CDP/CPC

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIORITY		RESPONSIBILITY
	Short Term	Medium Term	
Create a committee that will focus on developing relationships between business owners, facilitate communication between different stakeholders, provide a clearinghouse of information on business development, implementing recommended programs and serve as a liaison to the City Council		τ	CC/CDP
Promote tourism through the development of tourist related facilities and services focused in the Waterfront Commercial District such as hotels, restaurants, historical tours and fishing charters		τ	CC/CDP
Develop new and expand existing partnership programs between public agencies, industry and community to enhance economic growth	τ		CC/CDP
Offer business retention incentives to existing businesses to utilize and improve existing city infrastructure and services	τ		CC/CDP
Continue to expand and increase the benefits of the city's brownfield redevelopment program	τ		CDP/CC/ENG/BRA
Historic Resources Plan Goals • *Enhance Monroe's quality of life by preserving and protecting the City's historic resources* • *Promote Monroe's economic development through historic preservation* • *Foster greater awareness, understanding, and support for preserving Monroe's historic resources*			
Review the City's Historic District Ordinance and consider expansion of district boundaries in accordance with the Historic Areas Map		τ	CDP/HDC
Continue to offer the low interest loan program within the DDA district in accordance with the DDA Façade Program	τ		CDP/CC/DDA
Apply the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* to building rehabilitation and façade improvement projects in the Central Business District	τ		CDP/HDC/CC
Utilize the resources of outside agencies to protect and create awareness of historic resources including the State Historic Preservation Office, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and educational institutions such as Eastern Michigan University	τ		CDP
Utilize federal funding and grant programs such as TEA-21 and through the National Historic Preservation Act to the extent possible to assist in financing historic rehabilitation projects	τ		CDP
Downtown Plan Goals • *Create a hub of community activity in the downtown* • *Ensure economic viability of the downtown through creating mixed-uses* • *Create efficient movement of people, goods and services*			

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIORITY		RESPONSIBILITY
	Short Term	Medium Term	
Promote retail space in existing vacancies	τ		CDP/DDA
Program events and sales in the downtown along the river	τ		CDP/DDA
Develop infill sites in existing parking lots		τ	CDP/ENG
Develop program to improve the rear façade and entrances of downtown structures	τ		CDP/DDA/BLD/CC
Update facilities to improve barrier-free accessibility		τ	BLD/ENG
Increase downtown residential development through renovation of upper-story units	τ		BLD/CDP/DDA
Promote locating similar stores in proximity to each other and other techniques that encourage "cross-shopping"	τ		CDP/DDA
Minimize perceive barrier of Monroe Street through improved pedestrian crossing opportunities and streetscape enhancements that define the street edge	τ		ENG/CDP/CPC/CC
Develop a comprehensive parking study and parking plan for the downtown	τ		ENG/CDP/CPC
Municipal Facilities and Services Plan Goals • *Continue to offer the highest quality, most efficient services and facilities for residents* • *Promote community services and facilities that integrate and unify the community*			
Increase the amount of information offered on the city's website including planning documents, zoning regulations, building regulations, subdivision control ordinance, other City codes and permit applications	τ		IS/ENG/CDP/CPC/CC
Monitor the efficiency of the various city departments and offices to prevent duplication of work and miscommunication	τ		CM/DH/CC
Develop a comprehensive geographic information system 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		τ	CDP/ENG/IS

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIORITY		RESPONSIBILITY
	Short Term	Medium Term	
Increase coordination and cooperation between departments to streamline processes and ensure consistent application of policies	τ		CC/CM
Complete and update planning efforts and studies of infrastructure facilities to ensure it is meeting demands and that adequate capacity is provided		τ	W/WW/ENG
Update facilities to accommodate improvements and changes in technology		τ	IS/CC
Promote the continued development of public facilities within the neighborhoods, such as the Mason Run neighborhood, promoting prevalent traditional neighborhood design elements		τ	CDP/CC/ENG
Provide services and assistance to neighboring communities in a manner that promotes the spirit of a cohesive region without facilitating suburban sprawl		τ	ALL DEPTS.
Natural Features, Recreation and Open Space Plan Goals • *Encourage an integration of natural features such as woodlands and wetlands into site development as aesthetic and functional features while protecting the quality of the features* • *Protect the quality of the River Raisin and its tributaries from the impacts of development while at the same time promoting it as one of the City's greatest assets* • *Preserve the rare and significant features on Monroe's environment* • *Acquire, develop, maintain and preserve sufficient open space and recreation facilities*			
Develop district regulations for the Special Environmental Overlay and rezone sensitive sites consistent with the future land use plan and zoning plan		τ	CDP/CPC
Explore opportunities for public access along the riverfront through land acquisition or access easements		τ	CDP
Develop a regional, comprehensive natural resource plan that includes a management plan for the River Raisin incorporating an update to both the Coastal Zone Management Plan and the River Raisin Corridor Plan		τ	CDP/CPC
Develop natural features protection standards that include limitations of development along waterways, wetlands, and woodlands	τ		CDP/CPC

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIORITY		RESPONSIBILITY
	Short Term	Medium Term	
Require permits for grading and tree clearing that are associated with stricter regulations for new construction projects		τ	BLD
Coordinate with the City Forester to continue implementation a reforesting program for the City's open spaces and parks	τ		DPS
Work with the Army Corps of Engineers, Monroe County, surrounding townships, and the MDNR to encourage regional waterfront recreation		τ	EMG/DPS/REC
Update and implement the City's 5-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan	τ		CDP/CPC/CC/REC
Seek partnerships and volunteer programs to assist with funding park improvements		τ	CDP/CC/REC
Apply for grant funding for park land acquisition and improvement projects offered by MDNR	τ		CDP/CC/REC
Apply Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design techniques when improving and planning parks and recreation facilities	τ		REC/CDP/POLICE/REC
Improve the barrier free accessibility to parks and open spaces in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and guidelines		τ	ENG/REC
Cooperate with other recreation providers to avoid duplication of services and assure efficient use of funds		τ	REC/CC
Greenways Plan Goals • *Develop a greenways system that provides safe and efficient non-motorized transportation routes throughout the city and to the region* • *Utilize the greenway system to showcase and enhance key features and destinations within the city* • *Incorporate different forms of greenways in order to accommodate the diversity of transportation modes*			
Continue evaluation of the greenway plan recommendations through cost estimates, construction details and land ownership	τ		ENG/CDP

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIORITY		RESPONSIBILITY
	Short Term	Medium Term	
Prioritize pathway improvements into the capital improvement program that includes annual investment from the City	τ		ENG/REC/CDP
Assign the responsibility of implementation to a City department and an advisory commission such as the Planning Commission or a sub-committee	τ		CC
Acquire land or access easements needed to install greenways as it arises in the implementation program		τ	REC/CDP
Explore funding options beyond the City's current general fund such as TEA-21, Southeast Michigan Greenways Initiative, Special Millage and donations	τ		REC/CDP
Evaluate opportunities for regional collaboration with the County, Downriver Linked Greenway Initiative participants, MDOT, MDNR, the rail road companies and others		τ	CDP/CC/ENG
Community Character and Design Plan Goals • *Encourage the development of buildings that relate contextually to both the downtown Monroe and its well-preserved neighborhoods and corridors* • *Protect the character and quality of neighborhoods* • *Promote a high standard of living, and create a 24-hour urban living environment within the downtown area* • *Create a pedestrian scaled downtown that is compatible with vehicular traffic* • *Promote business development that is compatible with the character of the City*			
Develop and adopt as part of the zoning regulations specific design standards that apply to all new development projects as set forth in this plan and coincide with the new zoning plan	τ		CDP/CPC/BLD/CC
Develop criteria and incentives for upgrades to existing non-conforming sites	τ		CDP/CC/BLD/CPC
Assemble sample graphics and photographs that best represent regulatory standards that can be distributed to applicants	τ		CDP
Require pre-application conferences for larger projects to discuss design standards and expectations that is specific to their application	τ		CC/CDP/CPC

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIORITY		RESPONSIBILITY
	Short Term	Medium Term	
Initiate public investment and improvements that are compatible with design standards	τ		CC/CDP/CPC

Appendix A:
List of Resources

The following resources were reviewed and considered during this planning process

City of Monroe Plans

- City of Monroe Master Plan (1990 and 1976)
- Brownfield Redevelopment Plans for all eight (8) sites
- Downtown Façade Study (1981)
- Downtown Development Authority Strategic Plan (2000)
- Tax Increment Financing and Development Plan for Downtown Development Authority
- City of Monroe Recreation Systems Plan (2000)
- City of Monroe Bike Trail Plan (late 1970's)
- Airport Master Plan
- Port of Monroe Master Plan
- Department of Public Services Facilities Plan

City of Monroe Regulations and Documents

- 2002 Aerials of the City
- Traffic volumes, accident data over the last three years
- City of Monroe CIP Budget 2001-2007
- City of Monroe Subdivision Regulations
- City Zoning Regulations
- City Zoning Map
- Recent Text and Map Amendments

Other Related Documents

- Coastal Zone Management Plan (1989)
- Countywide Economic Plan (1997)
- Frenchtown Township Master Plan (1995)
- SEMCOG Greenways Initiative Plan
- Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative Plan
- Draft of County Housing Study
- Feasibility Study/Rail Consolidation Plan
- Industrial Development Plan

Appendix B:
Adoption Records

The following adoption records have been inserted for review on the following pages.

- *Citizen Planning Commission Adoption Resolution*
- *City Council Adoption Resolution*
- *Monroe County Planning Commission Endorsement*

City of Monroe
Citizens Planning Commission
Resolution #02-001

WHEREAS, in January of 2001 the Monroe Citizens Planning Commission initiated a project to revise the City of Monroe Master Plan, which was adopted in 1991 and updated in 1999; and

WHEREAS, the Monroe Citizens Planning Commission developed a Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the requirements of 1931 PA 285 as amended, more commonly known as the City, Village and Municipal Planning Act; and

WHEREAS, the Monroe Citizens Planning Commission conducted four public visioning sessions and several work sessions to gain citizen input into the Plan; and

WHEREAS, the goals and objectives, maps and recommendations for the future use of land within the City of Monroe corporate boundary found within the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan were developed from review of past, current and future trends, review of past and current planning documents, as well as citizen input; and

WHEREAS, the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan presents goals and objectives, maps and recommendations on the following issues:

- Land Use (Maps 1 and 2);
- Transportation (Maps 3 and 4);
- Housing and Neighborhoods (Maps 5 and 6);
- Economic Development and Redevelopment (Map 7);
- Historic Resources (Map 8);
- Downtown (Maps 9 and 10);
- Municipal Facilities and Services;
- Natural Features, Recreation and Open Space (Maps 11 and 12);
- Greenways (Map 13); and
- Community Character and Design Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the Monroe Citizens Planning Commission reviewed additional public input received during a sixty-five (65) day review and comment period as well as three (3) Public Hearings conducted on September 25, November 6 and December 4, 2002; and

WHEREAS, the Monroe County Planning Commission took action on November 13, 2002 to endorse the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Monroe Citizens Planning Commission finds that the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan was prepared in accordance with statutory authority.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Monroe Citizens Planning Commission hereby approves this resolution adopting the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan, which is attached hereto and made a part thereof, on Wednesday, December 4, 2002.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Monroe Citizens Planning Commission is hereby authorized to submit a copy of the proposed plan to the Monroe City Council for their approval in accordance with the Resolution adopted by City Council on September 16, 2002.

John VanSlambrouck, Chairman
December 4, 2002

Sharon Cawood, Secretary
December 4, 2002

CITY OF MONROE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2003

Regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Monroe, Michigan held on Monday, January 6, 2003, at 7:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Present: Council Members Burkett, Conner, Edwards, Guyor, Sabo, Worrell and Mayor Cappuccilli.
Charles Evans, City Clerk-Treasurer gave the invocation.
Mayor Cappuccilli led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Communications. (Communications are referred to city administration for action and report back, unless otherwise noted.)

1. Communication from the Ida Township Supervisor requesting an amendment to the water contract with the City of Monroe regarding the establishment of a water district in the Village of Ida and the surrounding area.

Public Hearings.

1. This being the date set to hear comments on Proposed Ordinance No. 02-011, an ordinance to amend Part Two, Administration Code, Chapter 296, Sections 296.06 (b) and 296.46 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Monroe, there being no persons present objecting and no comments on file in writing in the Clerk-Treasurer's Office, the Mayor declared the hearing closed.

2. This being the date set to hear comments on Proposed Ordinance No. 02-012, an ordinance to amend the Downtown Development Authority Ordinance No. 91-004, pursuant to Act 197, Chapter 268, of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Monroe, there being no persons present objecting and no comments on file in writing in the Clerk-Treasurer's Office, the Mayor declared the hearing closed.

Council Action.

1. It was moved by Councilman Worrell and seconded by Councilman Conner that Proposed Ordinance No. 02-011, an ordinance to amend Part Two, Administration Code, Chapter 296, Sections 296.06 (b) and 296.46 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Monroe, be placed on its final reading.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0
Motion carried.

Note: This Ordinance would make amendments to certain sections of the retirement ordinance as part of the favorable determination by the IRS.

Proposed Ordinance No. 02-011, was then presented for the second time, after which the Mayor asked, "Shall this Ordinance pass?"
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0
Ordinance passed.

2. It was moved by Councilman Sabo and seconded by Councilman Worrell that Proposed Ordinance No. 02-012, an ordinance to amend the Downtown Development Authority Ordinance No. 91-004, pursuant to Act 197, Chapter 268, of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Monroe, be placed on its final reading.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0
Motion carried.

Note: This Ordinance would expand the DDA district boundaries to include adjacent properties of commercial character.

Proposed Ordinance No. 02-012, was then presented for the second time, after which the Mayor asked, "Shall this Ordinance pass?"
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0
Ordinance passed.

3. It was moved by Councilman Worrell and seconded by Councilwoman Edwards that the communication from Jean Guyor, Councilwoman, requesting that Council consider in favor of her continuing to serve both on Council and the Historic District Commission be placed on the floor for discussion.
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 (Councilwoman Guyor abstained)
Motion carried.

Charles Evans, City Clerk-Treasurer read a letter into the record from John Iacoangeli in favor of Councilwoman Guyor continuing to serve both on Council and the Historic District Commission.

After discussion, it was moved by Councilman Worrell and seconded by Councilman Sabo that Councilwoman Guyor be appointed as Council Liaison to the Historic District Commission.
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 (Councilwoman Guyor abstained)
Motion carried.

Consent Agenda. (All items listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by Mayor and Council and may be approved by one motion. Any item may be removed for separate discussion by a Councilperson or citizen.)

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on Monday, December 16, 2002.

2. Approval of payments to vendors in the amount of $512,574.51.
Action: Bills be allowed and warrants drawn on the various accounts for their payment.

3. Cathodic Protection for Elevated Water Tank.

- Communication from the Purchasing Agent, reporting back on bids received on Monday, December 16, 2002, for the Cathodic Protection of the elevated water storage tank in Maybee, Michigan, and recommending that the bid be awarded to Corrpo Companies, Inc. at a total of $7,100.00.
- Supporting documents.
- Action: Accept, place on file and the recommendation be carried out.

4. Modernization of the Traffic Signal at Telegraph Road and Lorain Street.

- Communication from the Director of Engineering and Utilities, submitting a proposed resolution approving the cost sharing agreement for modernization and maintenance of the traffic signal at Telegraph Road and Lorain Street, and recommending that the

resolution be adopted and that the City Manager be authorized to sign the agreement on behalf of the City of Monroe.
- Supporting documents.
- Action: Accept, place on file and the resolution be adopted.

5. E2 Replacement Pumper.

- Communication from the Fire Chief, submitting a request to purchase a demo pumper as a replacement of Engine 2 currently stationed at the East Side, and recommending that the purchase be made from E-One for a cost of $135,000.00.
- Supporting documents.
- Action: Accept, place on file and the recommendation be carried out.

6. City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan.

- Communication from the Community Development and Planning Department, submitting a proposed resolution adopting the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan, and recommending that the resolution be adopted.
- Supporting documents.
- Action: Accept, place on file and the resolution be adopted.

7. Frenchtown Charter Township Request.

- Communication from the Director of Engineering and Utilities, submitting a request from Frenchtown Charter Township to allow a home to be built at 8802 Exeter Road to connect to the City of Monroe Water System, and recommending that the residence at 8802 Exeter Road be allowed to connect to the City of Monroe water system under the terms of the existing Frenchtown-City of Monroe Water Agreement with the concurrence of Exeter Township.
- Supporting documents.
- Action: Accept, place on file and the recommendation be carried out.

8. Exhaust Removal System Bid.

- Communication from the Purchasing Assistant, reporting back on bids received on Monday, December 9, 2002 for an Exhaust Removal System for Monroe City Fire Station #2 and #3, and recommending that the award be made to Hastings Air Energy Control at a total price of $20,810.00.
- Supporting documents.
- Action: Accept, place on file and the recommendation be carried out.

9. Monroe Traffic Committee Meeting of December 18, 2002.

- Communication from the City Traffic Engineer, submitting the minutes of the Traffic Committee meeting of December 18, 2002, and recommending that the minutes be accepted and placed on file and that Traffic Control Orders 055-002, 066-003, 096-002, 127-003, and 176-001 be adopted.
- Supporting documents.
- Action: Accept, place on file and the recommendation be carried out.

It was moved by Councilman Worrell and seconded by Councilwoman Guyor that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9 be approved as indicated and that items 5 and 6 be removed and considered separately.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0
Motion carried.

5. The communication from the Fire Chief was presented, submitting a request to purchase a demo pumper as a replacement of Engine 2 currently stationed at the East Side, and recommending that the purchase be made from E-One for a cost of $135,000.00.

Bill Bert, Fire Chief, explained that they currently have a pumper due for replacement that has some problems, and by purchasing the demo pumper it would save the cost of having to make repairs over the next four years to E2.

After discussion, it was moved by Councilman Burkett and seconded by Councilman Conner that item 5 be accepted, placed on file, and the recommendation be carried out.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0
Motion carried.

6. The communication from the Community Development and Planning Department was presented, submitting a proposed resolution adopting the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan, and recommending that the resolution be adopted.

Brad Strader, LSL Planning, responded to questions stating that there was consideration at the Planning Commission level regarding potential residential uses for the former IKO property at Elm and Huber and considered this not to be an extreme land use incompatibility like some other areas that exist in the city.

Brian Borden, Land Use Planner, responded to Council concerns with respect to the property at Huber and Elm, stating that the Planning Commission does have a pending rezoning petition before them, which has been deferred until the Comprehensive Plan is adopted.

Richard Micka, 47 East Elm Avenue, read a letter requesting that Elm Avenue, Front Street and Macomb Street remain local streets.

Don Link, City Engineer explained that Elm Avenue is not available for through trucks under current ordinances, it is a local truck route, meaning that only trucks that have business to pick up or deliver within the City of Monroe can legally be on that street.

Brad Strader, LSL Planning, stated that the functional classification map (map 3), is sort of a planning map established by the federal highway administration and is used by MDOT, but has no direct relationship to truck routing. The truck route map and how truck routing is handled is outside the Comprehensive Plan; the Planning Commission is not involved in that, they just look at the road's function in terms of comprehensive planning. He explained that there are three different places in the plan where it is listed specifically that the functional classification designation of a minor arterial doesn't mean that this is intended for through trucks or local trucks, it is a separate item.

Linda Compora, 411 Bentley Drive, questioned what the light industrial designation would mean to the IKO property.

Brian Borden, Land Use Planner explained that in this case the subject property is currently zoned I-2, which is in general for a heavier industrial zoning designation, whereas the I-1 designation, which is light industrial, would allow for uses that are far less intense than the uses permitted in the I-2 district.

Jeanne Micka, 47 East Elm, read a letter requesting that Elm remain a local street, not an arterial.

Charles Beall, 857 West Elm, expressed concern for the heavy traffic on Elm and stated that people are turning when the light is red.

Nancy Barron, 516 East Elm, stated that she has no objection to local truck drivers, it is those that cut through that she objects to.

John Michrina, Police Chief, responded to Council concerns stating that through trucks on Elm Street can be ticketed.

After discussion, it was moved by Councilman Sabo and seconded by Councilman Worrell that item 6 be accepted, placed on file, and the resolution be adopted.

Brad Strader, LSL Planning, responded to Council concerns stating that the Comprehensive Plan is a guide for the Planning Commission and Council on rezonings and capital investments, etc. He stated that you can vary from the plan or you can amend the plan at any time going through the same public process.

After further discussion, a vote was taken on the motion.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0
Motion carried.

Mayor's Comments.

Mayor Cappuccilli announced that a work session will be set up regarding parliamentary procedure.

Council Comments.

Councilman Burkett stated that the snow never gets cleaned off of the east side of the Telegraph Road Bridge over the River Raisin. He also asked that the City Manager check into some kind of remuneration for the citizens in regard to all of the cable outages.

Citizen Comments.

Jerry Soncrant, Winston Drive, thanked Councilman Burkett for his comments regarding the Comcast Cable outages and thinks the citizens deserve some type of reimbursement.

Frank Zarron, 309 East Fifth Street, President, Old Village Plat Neighborhood Association, expressed concern that the plan not be overlooked and that it be used as a guideline. He suggested that the plan evolve and that any changes that go against what is in the plan be incorporated into the plan at that time so that the city master plan continues to be current rather than wait every 5 or 10 years and have to do it all over again.

Charles Beall, 857 West Elm, stated that the sidewalks were not cleaned of snow and ice along St. Mary's Park.

Adjournment.

It was moved by Councilman Conner and seconded by Councilwoman Edwards that the meeting adjourn at 8:57 p.m., until the Regular Meeting on Tuesday, January 21, 2003 at 7:30 p.m.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0
Motion carried.

Charles D. Evans	C.D. Cappuccilli
City Clerk-Treasurer	Mayor

Monroe County
Planning Department & Commission
125 East Second Street • Monroe, Michigan 48161-2197
Telephone: 734.240.7375 • Fax: 734.240.7385 • Toll Free: 1.888.354.5500 ext. 7375
Visit the Monroe County Website: www.co.monroe.mi.us

Mary K. Webb
Commission Chairperson
Royce R. Maniko, AICP
Director

November 19, 2002

James Tischler, Director
City of Monroe Community Development
120 E. First Street
Monroe, MI 48161

Re: Case #200.3-11-02-6 – City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan – Final Draft – August 2002

Dear Mr. Tischler:

At its meeting of November 13, 2002, the Monroe County Planning Commission **approved** the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan – Final Draft, August 2002, in compliance with Act 285, P.A. 1931. The County Planning Commission believes the proposed revision **would be consistent** with sound planning and land use principles and our staff report and commission recommendation should be of assistance in determining the consideration which went into this review.

Sincerely,

Royce R. Maniko

Royce R. Maniko, AICP
Planning Director

RRM/pjl

cc: John VanSlambrouck, Chairman, City of Monroe Planning Commission

APPENDIX

CHAPTER 2: LAND USE

Introduction and History

The City of Monroe's current development pattern has evolved over a period of more than 200 years and is defined by natural features, railways, roadways, and lakefront locations selected by early industries and local building regulations. This section seeks to briefly describe such history.

Early French explorers found a river with banks of grapes, which inspired the name 'Riviere aux Raisins,' or River Raisin. The river and nearby wildlife attracted fur traders. In an effort to create a trading post for the area, Francis Navarre signed a land agreement with the Pottawatamie Native American Tribe in 1785. The settlement grew into a trading and market outpost named 'Frenchtown' along the River Raisin. Gradually as a result of trading activity, the initial Native American trails evolved into highly traveled roads.

French families moving into the area adopted the traditional French system of splitting land into 'private claims,' which are long strips of land connecting narrow frontage along the River Raisin with frontage along existing roads or trails. The Lake Erie shoreline was generally avoided due to the presence of unbuildable marshland. The area grew and the community's name was changed from Frenchtown to Monroe in honor of President James Monroe in 1817.

In the early 19th century the industrial and railway age transformed Monroe from a trading center to an industrial center. Later construction of state highways and the expressway solidified Monroe's role as the center of commerce in Monroe County.

Auto-related industries, the power plant and other high intensity industries followed, with most locating along the Lake Erie shoreline to take advantage of shipping and the water supply. Employee housing was built near the factories and east of the downtown while managers built larger homes further from the lakefront in exclusive subdivisions and around the downtown.

Commercial uses were concentrated in downtown Monroe, but small neighborhood retail uses were also common. Generally the City grew with an integrated land use pattern of predominantly residential uses interspersed with commercial and industrial uses.

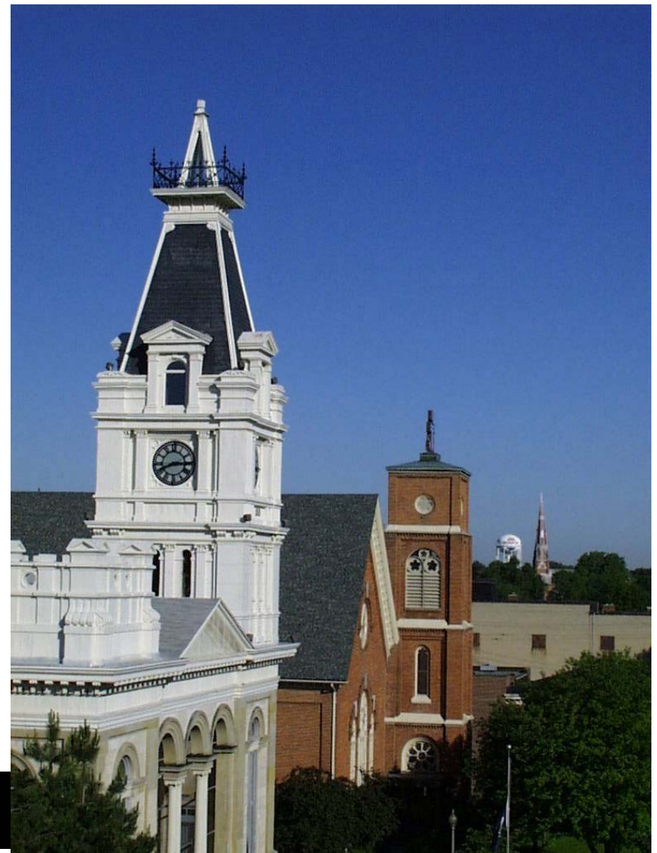
Monroe's first zoning ordinance and map was adopted in 1929, just a few years after Michigan adopted a form of the federal government's Standard Zoning Enabling Act. The first zoning ordinance was established to protect the "health, safety and welfare" of residents by segregating uses into districts. The zoning ordinance and its subsequent amendments, began to segregate low intensity uses from higher intensity uses and helped ensure greater compatibility between uses.

The opening of the Interstate 75 expressway, adoption of the city's first Comprehensive Plan in 1964, new zoning regulations and changes in industrial practice refined the land use pattern. Increased mobility provided by automobiles led to suburbanization, as residential development expanded countywide. Gradually, the downtown's role as the only commercial center in the area was diminished by the emergence of competing commercial strips sprawling along the high traffic arterial roads in the three communities.

Large-scale development in the City of Monroe peaked in the 1970's. Although, most of the City's development since that time has involved in-fill of vacant lots and redevelopment of obsolete structures and 'brownfields,' it has contributed to some dramatic changes and new opportunities for land use. For instance, several obsolete factories have been demolished, contamination on the sites cleaned-up and new residential neighborhoods has occurred in its place. In addition, new commercial uses continue to develop along the arterials and several large vacant parcels are being promoted as industrial sites.

Today, the result of years of development and redevelopment are visible in a diverse existing land use pattern that resembles a traditional developed mid-sized city offering a centralized core that has long served as a foundation for the growth of the community.

The south side of the River Raisin has primarily developed as the central business district, with older, stable neighborhoods and a few small business nodes. Industrial operations, wetlands and large open spaces occupy the east side of the City. The north side of the River Raisin is a mixture of many new residential and commercial areas amongst older, very dignified residential areas. Three main business corridors traverse this side of the City including Telegraph Road, Monroe Street and Dixie Highway.



Skyscape view of City landmarks

Existing Land Use Categories

A major component of the Comprehensive Plan is the future land use plan. Many decisions and recommendations in other chapters are based upon its framework. The type, location and densities in the plan are derived from the City's existing land use patterns and densities.

A land use inventory within the City was conducted by staff and the consultant team with current aerial photographs and verified field observation in the Spring of 2001. This survey is represented in the Existing Land Use Map and described below. This section explains how existing land uses were classified and defined.

Single and Two-Family Residential. Single and two family residential uses are the most predominant land use type in the City with two-family residences scattered throughout the older neighborhoods. Three eras of residential construction are discernable extending outward from both sides of the River Raisin.

The oldest neighborhoods were generally built in the late 1800's with relatively small lots and shallow setbacks placed on a grid street pattern set at French Claim lines, perpendicular to both sides of the River Raisin and immediately adjacent to the Central Business District. Some of these neighborhoods are established, or eligible, historic districts.

Unique single family home in one of the City's established neighborhoods

The second phase of development occurred in the 1940's, also set on a grid street pattern and is primarily on the north side of the River Raisin. These older areas embody the traditional design elements that are continually emphasized throughout this plan.

The most recent development took place during the 1970's on the western edge of the City on land that was once farmland. These newer subdivisions possess a different character than previous development that include attached garages, larger lots without alleys, curvilinear and cul-de-sac streets rather than a grid system. These characteristics make newer neighborhoods in the City quite distinguishable from older neighborhoods. In addition, due to the configuration of the City boundary in the northwest corner, they are physically divided from other City neighborhoods. The street network is also disconnected and links to only one collector route for the City, N. Custer Road.

The City's newest neighborhood on the north side of Elm Avenue, west of Dixie Highway represents a return to traditional neighborhood elements. While the homes include the latest amenities, the neighborhood features grid streets, shallow setbacks, alleys and parkland. Homebuyers can now find a new home with the desired amenities of the older neighborhoods. This has been a positive step forward for the City in maintaining the integrity of its traditional character and image.

Multiple-Family Residential. This category includes buildings that contain more than two dwelling units including the adaptive reuse of single family homes and businesses, apartment buildings, townhouses and senior housing facilities. The largest multiple family complexes are situated immediately west of Telegraph Road, north of W. Noble Street and W. Lorain Street. Smaller buildings are located in scattered areas throughout the City, mostly older single family structures that have been converted to multiple family. Many of these structures continue to reflect the historical and residential character of the surrounding area. Most of the newer apartment complexes lack the integrated character of the surrounding single-family neighborhoods because they are disconnected, from a design standpoint, and possess modern building characteristics.

Commercial and Office. Commercial development occurs in four main areas of concentration; Telegraph Road, Monroe Street, Dixie Highway and a small node along Winchester Street in the southeast neighborhood of the City. These uses include large scale shopping areas, various retail and service uses and auto-oriented facilities such as gas stations and drive-through restaurants. The primary office areas are located along Macomb Street and Telegraph Road.

These uses include banks, financial institutions, professional offices and medical clinics. The Central Business District contains is a large concentration of both office and commercial uses in the City and as such it has been included in a separate category to acknowledge its mixture of uses such as residential, commercial, office, and public.

Telegraph Road and Monroe Street are the center point of more recent commercial and office development and function as the 'front door' to the community when entering from the north or south. Dixie Highway contains a center of commercial businesses that cater to freeway travelers and is also considered one of the gateways to the community. In contrast to the more compact downtown environment, these commercial areas contain a wide variety of automobile related uses characterized by larger lots with front yard parking lots. These corridors provide many businesses for residents and those traveling through the area, but lack much in the way of distinguishing characteristics or unifying elements. The City has been working toward more consistent landscaping, a reduction in the excessive number of driveways and more attractive signage to make the area less confusing and more attractive.

Industrial. Industrial uses provide employment opportunities and tax base to support improvements to capital facilities and municipal services. Most of the industrial sites in the City have existed for years. Industrial concentrations are located on the east side of the City along both sides of Interstate 75. A strip of industrial uses exists north of the River Raisin east of Telegraph Road and a few small pockets are still scattered throughout the City on the south side of the River Raisin. The largest and most intense operations are the DTE Energy-Monroe Power and the Visteon plants located on the far, eastern edge of the City. The current pattern of industrial along the expressway and extending east has created a land use barrier between the City and Lake Erie.

Institutional. This category includes institutional uses such as schools and places of worship. In keeping with the traditional development pattern of the City, these uses have become integrated into the neighborhoods. This has contributed to a comfortable, walkable environment for residents, which should be protected as the City grows and changes. If re-use of these sites and buildings are proposed, they should continue to offer services for residents including recreation, open space, educational facilities or additional City offices and facilities.

Example of quality industrial businesses in City's business park

Public. This category includes all publicly owned sites including City, county and state buildings and parks. Similar to Institutional uses, it is important to maintain the presence of public lands and facilities in order to meet the service and social needs of residents. As development competition increases with nearby townships, the ability to offer extensive, convenient public services and areas will reinforce the City as a desirable place to live or have a business.

With the exception of parks, most public uses are concentrated in the downtown. Parks have been well integrated throughout the City and within neighborhoods. Along with Institutional uses, these fulfill an important recreational and social need because they provide an opportunity for residents to meet and gather in a comfortable environment. The extent of these facilities is discussed in greater detail in the Community Facilities chapter.

Prominent entrance to the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Monroe Custer Airport is included in this category because it is owned by the City of Monroe. This general aviation airport is located in the northwest area of the City. Despite a spatial disconnection from the rest of the City, it is an important facility in the City because it expands the diversity of services offered and contributes to the economic growth of the community.

Parks should continue to be integrated into neighborhoods and public facilities should maintain their current use or be re-used for other needed public facilities as the City evolves.

Vacant. Vacant sites within the City are primarily small lots integrated within the neighborhoods. There are, however, remaining vacant sites larger in size. These sites are primarily located at the extreme south and extreme north sides of the City. This planning process is a prime opportunity for the City to visualize the development of these vacant sites and offer the foundation to ensure they will be developed in a manner consistent with the goals of this plan.

Veteran's Park located on the River Raisin

Key Land Use Issues

In collecting data and preparing analysis for this plan, a number of issues emerged that were raised that directly relate to land use. General elements such as natural features, transportation, historic resources and community facilities are discussed in greater detail in separate chapters and were considered in the development of the Future Land Use Plan.

Key issues that had the strongest influence on the Future Land Use Plan are described below. Goals and objectives in this plan as well as the Future Land Use Map seek to address or resolve these concerns.

Minimize the effects of sprawl. The City of Monroe is an urban core city that was traditionally developed on the River Raisin with a main downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. A study of the history of community development in every part of the country reveals that increased use of the automobile has allowed people to live farther from work, from family and from the daily necessities such as shopping. As a result, the land use pattern of communities like Monroe began to change from a compact environment with one major business center to a quickly expanding community with several options for housing and for business areas. This has resulted in the depletion of the heart of the community and a lack of concentrated activity for residents.

One challenge of this plan is to work with the existing land use pattern and recommend modifications that will respect the business corridors and new housing areas while at the same time re-establishing the fundamental community development elements that began with the founding of the City.

Addressing incompatible land use relationships. There are a number of incompatible land use relationships noted throughout the existing land use map. Primarily these are areas where industrial and residential, or heavy commercial and residential co-exist. There are potential incompatibilities because industrial and heavy commercial uses generate noise, odors, encompass later hours of operation, and are not elements most homeowners want in their neighborhoods. Noise, odors, glare, and other effects are a result of high volumes of car and truck traffic, outdoor storage, evening site lighting, operating machinery and moving materials.

Historically, industrial uses have developed along major transportation routes. In Monroe, industrial development has occurred along the River Raisin, Lake Erie, rail lines and Interstate-75. As a result, there are a number of industrial nodes throughout the City, in some situations within and adjacent to residential neighborhoods. In most cases, location decisions were made when adjacent homeowners worked at the manufacturing

Residential abutting industrial in the northeast side of the City

businesses, so it was advantageous to be in close proximity. Unfortunately, nuisance in some cases has replaced the convenience. There are also residential neighborhoods that suffer from impacts of rail lines in front of or next to homes and from the encroachment of commercial areas.

Consistent with the previous section regarding sprawl, public tendency is to completely separate residential land uses from incompatible environments. To some extent this theory is reasonable in order to protect property values and the quality of life for residents. It is however, contrary to the historical and traditional development pattern of the city which is intended to be preserved. Thus, a balance should be established between eliminating extreme land use conflicts and developing strategies to allow the remaining land use mixture to co-exist in a more compatible way.

Capitalizing on new development areas. There remain a few areas that present potential for new development and new opportunities in the City.

a. Mason Run: The large vacant area immediately west of the Norfolk Southern rail line at Dixie Highway and Elm Avenue is a prime area for the expansion of the neighborhoods. Although shown as vacant, the site is part of a large Planned Unit Development project that includes mostly residential with a school and possibly nodes of neighborhood commercial uses. The details of the entire site have not been finalized, so there is potential for the City to plan the land use pattern of this site.

b. Dixie Highway: Between Dixie Highway and Interstate 75 are a few large sites that are either vacant or are occupied by abandoned industrial buildings that present redevelopment opportunities. The surrounding land use pattern is primarily industrial and is divided by both the north and south Norfolk Southern and Canadian National rail lines. The rail lines present constraints for an interconnected road network in this area, however, they are currently completing a grade separation project that will improve this condition.

c. Southeast Neighborhood: This segment of the City is primarily a developed single family residential neighborhood that is separated from nearby neighborhoods because of the presence of industrial operations that have proliferated along the railroads. The industrial operations have gradually expanded, influencing the residential character of this neighborhood. The intended residential character of this area should be protected with proper buffering and screening and industrial expansion should be controlled.

d. Port of Monroe Industrial Park: Located on the south side of the River Raisin near Interstate 75, the Port of Monroe has vacant land set aside for development of an industrial park. Important issues considered

when planning for the land use pattern in this area was impact to surrounding land uses and on the environment, and consideration of the types of industrial uses that should be accommodated.

Evaluate potential redevelopment areas. There are some sections in developed areas of the City characterized by a land use mixture that impacts existing neighborhoods, traffic patterns and the aesthetics of the community. Through the action strategies of this plan, many of these issues can be systematically addressed.

a. Telegraph/Seventh/Cooper/Front: The periphery of this block includes a mixture of commercial and industrial uses that generate high volumes of car and truck traffic. In addition, the CSX rail line defines the eastern edge of this area. Finally, in the center of this activity is a small residential area. Although these uses seem to have co-existed for some time, it is important to set forth a desired vision for this area to capitalize on redevelopment opportunities.

b. Front Street/CSX railroad to Smith Street: The north side of Front Street at the CSX railroad crossing is a transitional area between the businesses at Telegraph Road, the Central Business District and the nearby residential neighborhoods. The high volumes of traffic traveling Front Street between these major business centers and neighborhoods have resulted in a conversion of the existing single family to businesses and multiple family structures. The south side of the street is mostly single family with some multiple family therefore this residential character should be protected.

c. Winchester Street: Winchester Street is a major corridor for the southeast neighborhood. This street provides a direct connection to Front Street, Elm Street and Dixie Highway. A small business node has developed over the years, but disinvestment in this area has resulted in blighted and vacant buildings that are in need of revitalization. In addition, the small business district has sporadically spread along the corridor. This business district is a necessary element for the southeast neighborhoods, however it should be preserved and strengthened in a manner that respects the residential character of the area.

d. Downtown Monroe: The city's downtown has been the focal point for the community socially and economically. In recent years, many influences have negatively affected its vitality. A driving element in this plan is developing strategies that will invigorate new businesses and increased activities. The majority of specific issues and conditions related to the downtown are described in Chapter Seven. This chapter also provides specific strategies for the City to follow. The Future Land Use Plan can be utilized to define the downtown, categorized as Central Business District and set forth the types of uses that are compatible with the downtown plan goals.

Land Use Goals and Objectives

In response to the key issues discussed in the previous sections and the other general elements that are discussed in the following chapters, a set of goals and corresponding objectives were prepared by the Citizen Planning Commission. These statements establish a framework for the future land use plan and offer specific strategies to accomplish desirable land use relationships within the City. This section begins with a land use policy statement, followed by goal statements (in bold lettering). Each goal statement is then supported by a list of objectives. Collectively, these strategies should be used to ensure the effectiveness of the land use plan.

POLICY STATEMENT

Preserve and enhance the traditional, mixed land use character of the City by offering planned integration of land uses that promote positive relationships between businesses and neighborhoods and careful separation of conflicting land uses

Goal #1 Maintain and create stable residential areas that offer a variety of housing options, are conveniently located near activity centers and promote the traditional character of the City.

a. Maintain established boundaries of thriving residential neighborhoods.
b. Expand residential neighborhoods where land and safe access is available.
c. Protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible land use encroachments.
d. Distinguish between single family and multiple family residential areas.
e. Concentrate multiple family/high density residential along major streets and near more intense non-residential development.
f. Concentrate single family residential away from intense land use activity.
g. Integrate residential with neighborhood commercial to stimulate activity areas.
h. Preserve community services such as parks and schools within residential areas.

i. Encourage reuse of public and institutional sites for similar uses if there are changes to current uses.
j. Delineate boundaries of historic residential areas.
k. Integrate open space and preservation areas throughout the City.
l. Offer more residential opportunities near the River Raisin.

Goal #2 Accommodate a diverse, strong commercial and office base that serves the needs of residents and businesses within the community and reduces scattered and sprawling commercial areas throughout the City.

a. Concentrate businesses into planned nodes and activity centers
b. Treat the Central Business District as the primary business and activity center for the City and the area.
c. Accommodate areas exclusively for office development.
d. Locate neighborhood scale commercial uses in small areas that will conveniently serve nearby residents and businesses.
e. Locate community scale commercial uses in concentrated areas that are easily accessed by all members of the community.
f. Limit the intensity of commercial development in areas that contain sensitive features such as residential uses, institutional uses and the River Raisin.
g. Integrate commercial and residential into mixed-use arrangements where it will stimulate concentrations of activity.

Goal #3 Promote a strong, unified industrial presence in the community that offers employment and business services opportunities for the region while promoting the high quality image of the City.

a. Establish a hierarchy of industrial development to better locate businesses based on their intensity.
b. Concentrate medium to heavy industrial developments into limited areas.
c. Utilize light industrial development as a buffer between heavy industry and in areas where industrial must be near residential areas.
d. Locate high traffic generators where they can easily access transportation facilities.
e. Gradually reduce or eliminate isolated industrial operations from residential areas.
f. Develop and enforce design guidelines for industrial sites that minimize off-site impacts caused by on-site activity.
g. Develop and enforce performance standards for industrial uses.

Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Map and land use categories provide a guide for the city to accomplish the policy statement, goals and objectives included in the above section. Following sound planning principles, the Future Land Use Plan must also reflect and complement the strategies of other elements of the planning process. As a result, the City of Monroe's Future Land Use Plan also coincides with the recommendations of other chapters in many ways. A summary of these methods are listed below:

- Transportation: The land use plan reflects recommendations in the Transportation Chapter by ensuring future land uses are provided proper access to all modes of transportation in the city.
- Historic Resources: The residential and business areas designated coincide with historical areas described in the Historic Resources Chapter in order to prevent undesirable land use conversions in those areas.
- Neighborhoods and Housing: In order to support neighborhood and housing development, residential areas are specifically located to prevent encroachment and promote expansion in a manner that protects its character.
- Economic Development and Redevelopment: Proper land use designations were applied to support targeted development and redevelopment areas.
- Municipal Facilities, Parks and Natural Features: Municipal facilities, parks, open space and natural features are accommodated in a separate land use designation for these areas to ensure they are an ever-present element in land use planning
- Downtown: The Downtown is protected and delineated by a separate land use designation that will directly relate to the strategies of this chapter.

The following land use categories are identified on the Future Land Use Map following this page. Each category includes a more detailed discussion of the types of uses intended in these areas, brief concepts of the intended character of development and a general description of their location.

Moderate Density Residential. This category includes all planned areas of single family residential development. The intent of this designation is to properly maintain and expand residential neighborhoods in the city. Development within this area shall be consistent with the established traditional design pattern of adjacent residential neighborhoods. The term 'moderate density' was utilized to reflect small lot residential development, consistent with the existing zoning and development pattern and to emphasize promoting traditional neighborhood design.

Traditional single family residential home in downtown neighborhood

As distinguishable by the map, this is the most dominant land use category throughout the City. Planned land uses within these areas include single family residential homes with lot sizes generally between 6,000 square feet and 9,100 square feet. Typical incidental uses that may be permitted in this area include but are not limited to; parks, open space and accessory apartments which promote the traditional neighborhood development of the city.

The City currently has three single-family residential zoning districts that are applied. In addition, large portions of the neighborhoods surrounding the downtown on both sides of the river are zoned for two-family development, which allows single family homes or duplexes. As a result, there is a mix of single family and two-family dwellings in these areas that need to be more strictly regulated.

A more unified application of single family residential zoning districts is needed in order to control the type and density of residential development in a manner that is compatible with the plan. Incidental uses in residential areas should include strict regulations that ensure compatibility. For example, accessory apartments are appropriate in some areas provided standards are applied through special land use approval that address lot size, lot width, parking, design, location and visible neighborhood impacts. In areas they are not appropriate, land should be zoned accordingly to prohibit duplexes and accessory apartments and conversion back to single family encouraged.

High Density Residential. High density residential includes greater concentrations of residential than the traditional single family areas in the form of multiple family dwellings and attached single family dwellings. These areas are situated in small pockets on the east side of the city and in larger areas in the west side of the city near Telegraph Road. This designation does not include the high-density residential uses permitted in the Monroe Street Mixed Use District and the Central Business District.

The designation serves a number of purposes as the city develops and redevelops. To begin, the designation preserves and expands existing multiple family areas to increase the residential presence within the community. It also provides land use transitions between single family residential and more intense uses. In addition, the 'high density residential' designation presents more opportunities to diversify housing options for residents and may offer a more appropriate and adaptive reuse of abandoned buildings or existing industrial development.

Permitted uses in these areas include various types of high density residential development including but not limited to; attached single family, townhouses, condominiums and apartments. Incidental uses are also permitted as referenced in the "Moderate Density Residential" category.

Neighborhood Commercial. The intent of this designation is to create defined pedestrian-oriented commercial nodes that are compatible with surrounding residential areas. These uses should be limited by type and size and include strict design guidelines in order to preserve the neighborhood scale. This includes the application of guidelines for the location and design of the site, parking and buildings.

This designation is located along Winchester Street where commercial businesses have haphazardly developed at Second Street. This existing neighborhood service node should be preserved to serve the large residential area on the east side of the City. However, this area must be limited at this main intersection.

Uses in this district should be limited to neighborhood services such as dry cleaners, convenience stores, day care facilities, beauty salons and small sit-down restaurants.

Community Commercial. This category represents auto-oriented businesses such as gas stations, drive-through restaurants and larger scale commercial uses such as full service grocery stores and multi-purpose stores and some office uses. These businesses require relatively large parking areas, generate high volumes of traffic and rely to some extent on pass-by traffic. The intent of this designation is to offer necessary commercial businesses that meet the daily consumer needs of residents within the city, travelling through the city and those that live in abutting townships. It is also important through corresponding design guidelines that a balance is created between the needs of the businesses and maintaining the unique character and image of the city.

These areas are designated along Telegraph Road and Dixie Highway with a small pocket at Front Street and Telegraph Road. Businesses are planned generally consistent with current development. Future expansions of these areas, however, are controlled in order to protect residential areas and traffic operations. Along Dixie Highway between Spaulding Road and Noble, the intent is to focus on smaller scale commercial businesses that will serve the City but have a heavy reliance on the regional market. This area is a main entrance to the community and it is important to preserve its historic, residential character. Special design standards are recommended for this area in order to accomplish a successful business corridor while promoting a positive impression of the City.

Office. A separate designation for office was included in order to promote economic diversity of businesses within the city and to offer an exclusive area for office development in need of proper transition. The office designation represents areas planned for general and/or professional office use such as real estate offices, financial institutions, travel agencies, medical offices and attorneys offices. The category also includes appropriate types of ancillary activities such as printing, computer and office equipment sales and servicing operations.

Macomb Street is primarily residential, however there are some businesses including funeral homes, doctors offices and the hospital complex. Business development along Macomb Street should be limited to two small pockets of office development that coincides with this existing land use pattern.

Downtown Gateway District. Development areas located on the periphery of the Central Business District are crucial in supporting the downtown and offering careful integration of business and residential uses. An entrance, or gateway, to the downtown is also created along these corridors, therefore, their high quality appearance is important.
These areas have been identified along Monroe Street, north and south of the downtown, and along Front Street on the west side of the downtown. Although each play the same role, they each have their own unique character. Separate standards are needed for each area in order to capture their particular image and also to preserve the boundary of the downtown business district.

- North Monroe Street: North Monroe Street is currently occupied by a number of existing homes along the corridor. Businesses, however, have developed either in place of or in addition to residential uses. Although it is feasible for business development along this busy arterial, allowing the entire corridor to convert would conflict with the objective to control commercial development. A mixed-use designation will help the residential areas and businesses to co-exist. Specific regulations, however, must be established to prevent negative influences. For instance, parking, screening and building design should be regulated. The types of uses permitted should be limited to neighborhood services, offices and residential to ensure they are limited to low-intensity.

- South Monroe Street: The southern segment of Monroe Street in the City of Monroe is characterized by drive-through and sit down restaurants and business services. These uses are more auto-oriented and rely on pass-by traffic. This segment should be carefully regulated in order to maintain the convenience of these businesses while preserving the character of the City. Businesses should be oriented to the street and preserve a pedestrian environment. Parking should be in the side and rear yards, but screened from abutting residential areas. Access should be controlled through shared driveways and linked parking lots. Allowable building heights and massing should promote a more dominant building presence at the street front and encourage mixed-use buildings such as apartments or condominiums above office and retail uses.

- West Front Street: The west side of downtown along Front Street includes a mixture of industrial, single family and multiple family development. This transitional area is limited to Front Street, First Street, Second Street and Third Street between Adams and Harrison Street. A strong residential character is appropriate at this entrance point to the downtown with an emphasis on the riverfront. Standards should ensure structures reflect the historic character of the neighborhoods and the downtown. Buildings should be oriented at the street to create an impression of entering the core of the community.

Central Business District. This area is the focal point of the City and includes a mixture of uses. The Central Business District includes commercial, office, residential, institutional and public uses. The intent of creating an exclusive district for the downtown is to delineate and unify the area. Specific strategies for future development opportunities of the downtown are included in a separate chapter and are based on this geographical area. The Land Use designation and these strategies will set the stage for revitalization of the downtown and to stimulate new ideas and activities in this area.

Traditional downtown Monroe streetscape

Light Industrial. Light Industrial is planned within the Ternes/Homrich Industrial area on Detroit Avenue, along Huber Street and in a small segment of the southwest corner of the City. Light industrial includes uses that involve research, testing, warehousing and minor assembly. The intent of this designation is to provide an exclusive area for low intensity industrial development. Guidelines to ensure sites are designed in a manner similar to office should be associated with this designation. These guidelines should relate to proper screening, deep setbacks, open space, landscaping and quality architectural design and building materials. Outdoor storage should be heavily restricted, if not prohibited.

Heavy Industrial. Heavy Industrial is limited to existing large plants, the Port East Industrial Park and Port West Industrial Park located near the expressway. Operations considered heavy industry are those that involve manufacturing a product, stamping and machine operations. These types of operations are important to the city's economy as well as the region's economy and must be supported to continue. In order to promote the city's balanced land use approach, performance standards should be applied and outdoor storage, loading and truck traffic must be carefully designed and buffered to minimize impacts to abutting properties.

Industrial – Consumer. This designation includes businesses that, because of outdoor storage and noise, are considered industrial but also offer retail sales of their product. Similar types of businesses currently occupy the majority of these areas. These uses may include, mini-storage facilities and building and landscape supply businesses. The intent of this district is to offer a proper location for these businesses, support existing businesses in these areas and to prevent a conversion to higher intensity industrial uses.

Landmark church near City's downtown

Industrial-consumer uses are planned along Dixie Highway and along Cooper Street. Important considerations for these businesses are ensuring a quality appearance, well-maintained sites and screening of outdoor storage and service areas.

Public/Institutional. Public and institutional uses are an important part of the City's framework and its history. They include parks, government facilities, schools and places of worship. These areas must be maintained in order to ensure residents are offered these community facilities and services. Expansion of these facilities must continue to be compatible with the character and scale of the neighborhood. If any of these sites are reused in the future the City should be committed to continuing a public/institutional use in order to maintain a high visibility of these types of facilities.

Parks/Open Space/Nature Preserve. This broad category primarily includes areas that, due to the presence of sensitive natural features on some sites and the historical significance of others, should be preserved in their natural state. The location of many areas was based on the Natural Features Map provided in the Parks, Open Space and Natural Features Chapter. Current ownership of these lands is a mixture of private, public and non-profit organizations. Potential open space and nature preserve areas are located along Plum Creek, Lake Erie and the River Raisin.

The intent of designating land that is not owned by the City in this manner is to indicate potential areas for land acquisition. Also, if these properties remain under the control of other entities, there is potential to coordinate with the City upon development to preserve portions of these areas.

The entire edge of the River Raisin within the City limits is included in this category. Although this edge may not be completely preserved in a natural state, it should be preserved as a public area, accessible to everyone. Finally, all of the city parks are included in this category as they offer open space opportunities and connections to other public spaces that are important to preserve.

Riverfront Mixed Use. This site serves as the primary gateway into the City and has the potential to create a dramatic entrance to the community. To begin, the majority of the land at Dixie Highway and Elm Avenue is part of the Frenchtown Settlement and River Raisin Battlefield. This area should be restored and preserved to promote this strong, historical feature in the City. The remainder of the area is situated along Elm Avenue running parallel to the River Raisin Raisin and currently is occupied by scattered development of single family, commercial and marinas. Aesthetically, the structures, landscaping and overall appearance needs enhancement. For example, the marina area was originally intended to serve as not only a business opportunity but also a source of passive recreation for residents to visit and enjoy.

Existing marina along the River Raisin

This area may be redeveloped as a water-focused district that includes a top quality marina and associated business and entertainment uses. There may also be potential for high density residential development to serve a niche market of waterfront housing. Open spaces or a greenway should be incorporated along the River Raisin to provide better contact with this natural asset. The site does abut an industrial area to the north and east, therefore, screening and land use transitions will be needed to prevent land use conflicts.

CHAPTER 3: TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

The transportation system has played an important role in Monroe's development pattern. The River Raisin and Lake Erie influenced the early settlement patterns. Later, the road system, particularly construction of I-75, shaped how the City developed. While the automobile is the prominent way of getting around, Monroe is truly a "multi-modal" City. The City offers an extensive street network, sidewalks and other non-motorized pathways, the Port, rail lines, airport and a transit system. The transportation system continues to affect the business climate and day-to-day lives of the City's residents. Since Monroe is the hub of the area, its transportation system also impacts the surrounding communities.

This Chapter describes the various transportation modes in the City including their condition, issues to address and policy goals upon which the recommendations are based. In some cases, the City has primary authority to initiate changes, such as most of the streets and the non-motorized system. In some situations, authority to make decisions or advise the City on improvements is provided by the Lake Erie Transit Authority, Airport Advisory Commission, Port Commission, and the State for its trunkline routes. Still, the City recognizes its role to provide input on all the transportation-related decisions so improvements can be coordinated.

Since most of the issues in the City are related to increasing traffic volumes and congestion, the emphasis of this chapter is on changes to improve the street system. But this does not mean a series of widenings. Widenings are expensive, may cause relocation of homes or businesses and may conflict with other goals for a livable community. So the City must be more imaginative in how improvements to the transportation system are made.

Comprehensive improvements to all the modes of travel can help improve operations of the street system. Every automobile trip that can be eliminated by giving people other choices, such as transit or walking, will help relieve the street system. Every potential automobile trip that can be eliminated by having uses in close proximity to one another, such as homes near neighborhood stores, can help. Every driveway that is eliminated or redesigned will help preserve capacity and reduce potential for crashes.

This chapter also recognizes the importance the transportation system has on the character of the community. Different streets have different functions. Some streets, like Telegraph Road, need to be able to move high volumes without many delays. But streets in the downtown and neighborhoods should balance the goal of convenient automobile travel with other goals.

Street width and scale, presence of on-street parking and sidewalks, block length, street linkages, design speed, street trees and even pavement markings and signs all contribute to how the street functions, and how it makes one feel. Streets in the downtown need to feel comfortable for people, not just for autos. Streets in residential areas should make one intuitively drive at a low speed. In some cases, improvements to existing streets need to be considered. Standards for new streets can help ensure the desirable characteristics of established neighborhoods are copied. This Plan relies on a wide range of concepts to help ensure the future transportation system operates safely and efficiently, but also in context with the character of the City.

Existing Street Conditions

Street Network. Monroe's street network can be characterized into three basic patterns. Most streets south of the River Raisin consist of a rectangular grid pattern with alleys and short blocks. The grid pattern continues north of the River Raisin, but the blocks are longer and some streets are wider. Newer streets, most located in the western areas of the City, use a curvilinear, or modified grid (curved that still connect) system with wider pavements and right-of-way widths. These differences are largely a result of changes to the City's design standards over the years, generally consistent with national changes. The older streets were designed before autos were the dominant mode of travel, so while some work well, others may be more difficult to negotiate. Newer streets were designed to emphasize easier and safer travel for automobiles, trucks and emergency vehicles. Current thinking is to accomplish the benefits of both street types through design that provides safe travel, but at speeds consistent with the surroundings.

Since the City has an established street network few major changes are likely to occur. Therefore, the focus for future improvement and planning is to make the current streets work better and contribute to the livable character sought throughout the City. The following information assists in this evaluation.

Jurisdiction: Coordination between applicable roadway jurisdictions is extremely important in ensuring future planning and goals are compatible. Most streets are under the jurisdiction of the City and are maintained by the City's Department of Public Services and Engineering. Monroe Street (also a National Heritage Route), Dixie Highway, Telegraph, a portion of Front Street and I-75 are under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

Improvements to the state and federal roads require coordination between the City, other communities and the road agency with jurisdiction. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) is responsible for such coordination in the Monroe area.

National Functional Classification: As noted earlier in this chapter, the function of a street, road, and highway should be considered during decisions on improvements, design standards, speed limits and land use proposals. All Michigan streets, roads and highways have a National Functional Classification designation based on the purpose it serves in moving traffic, people and goods, its physical characteristics such as width, length, allowable speeds, and connectivity to other routes.

The National Functional Classification (NFC) is a planning tool which federal, state and local transportation agencies have used since the late 1960s to help organize roadway hierarchy. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed this system of classifying all streets, roads and highways according to their function. Periodically, MDOT engages is a statewide functional reclassification or the City may request a change. In either case, MDOT must review and approve any requested changes. This plan does not recommend any changes to the NFC designations at this time, but the City should always consider this option in the future.

Planning and design improvements should relate to the purposes of the streets within each category. For example, Telegraph Road (U.S. 24) is classified as an arterial with the primary purpose to provide long distance travel though several communities. Arterials are intended to carry relatively high volumes of traffic in a quick and efficient manner. As a result, strategies such as limiting access points and providing an adequate number of traffic lanes are reasonable to consider. Based on the National Functional Classification System, the City has a hierarchy of four elements that is illustrated on the Transportation Map.

- Interstate/Principal Arterials: Interstates and principal arterials serve a similar purpose, to carry long distance, through-travel movements. These routes can accommodate high volumes with all types of vehicular traffic, particularly truck traffic due to their width, length, and durable construction. They also provide access to important traffic generators, such as airports and regional shopping. Interstate 75 connects Michigan with Florida and serves as the principal route connecting Monroe with the metropolitan Toledo and Detroit. There are three interchanges with this interstate that directly serve the City. The northern interchange is at Dixie Highway (exit 15) and the southern interchanges are at Front Street (exist 13) and Elm Avenue (exit 14). Other interchanges outside the City limits, notably at LaPlaisance Road, also provide access to the community. Telegraph Road (U.S.-24) is considered a principal arterial because it serves a region of travelers and provides access to interstates and lower level roadways.

Monroe Street bridge crossing

- Minor Arterials: Minor arterials are intended to primarily serve traffic with an origin and/or destination within the City, and to provide a connection between principal arterials and more local routes. Dixie Highway, Monroe Street (M-125), Elm Avenue, Front Street (M-50 west of Monroe Street), Front Street and others are among the minor arterial roads in the City. In Monroe, certain minor arterials are not appropriate for truck traffic due to street design and the character of adjoining land uses (refer to discussion on truck routes on the next page).

X Collectors: Collector streets serve to assemble traffic from local streets and subdivisions of residential areas and deliver it to the arterial streets. There are many streets that serve as collector routes within the City such as Winchester/Kentucky, Roessler, East Noble, Seventh, Third, Detroit and Riverview streets.

X Local Streets: The primary purpose of streets classified as "local streets" are to provide access to the adjacent land uses and route travel onto the collector roads and arterials. These roadways generally have many access points, short block lengths and are usually more narrow and posted with lower speeds than other types of streets.

Michigan P.A. 51 Major Streets: The State of Michigan also has a method of determining functional classification in order to determine eligibility for state funding. Most streets classified as Major Streets qualify for state funding. These include only segments of streets such as Second Street, Front Street, Fifth Street, and Washington Street.

Annual Daily Traffic Volumes. Annual daily traffic counts have been recorded for the majority of Monroe's streets between the years of 1998 and 1999. These counts are identified on the Transportation Map. This information helps to understand the flow of traffic through the City and determines whether each street is operating at capacity.

Crash Data. Crash data has been collected over the past three years and analyzed. This information helps to identify problem intersections and general traffic safety

issues along the roadways. Data collected includes citywide crash severity and characteristics and a closer look at intersections with an annual average of five crashes or greater:

Crash Severity: Crash data was collected for a three-year period as part of the Comprehensive Plan evaluation (refer to Table 1). Over that period, 719 to 830 crashes were reported annually (note: these figures include crashes reported to the police department or State police). Of those crashes 75%-80% involved just property (automobile) damage. The remainder involved some sort of personal injury. Three crashes had fatalities. Based on Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) findings throughout southeast Michigan, the typical crash in Monroe is less severe than most other places. But the average of approximately 60 crashes a month reveals a need to continue to improve road design to decrease the number of collisions and reduce the extent of property damage and injuries.

Table 1:
Crash Severity Statistics

	1999	1998	1997
Fatal	0.3%	0%	0.1%
Personal Injury	24.5%	18.2%	22.8%
Property Damage Only	75.30%	81.8%	77.1%
Total Crashes	749	716	830

Source: SEMCOG (figures rounded)

Crash Type: When a crash occurs, the officer records the type. Consistently, 35% of the crashes have been characterized as "Angle". In other words, vehicles have been hit from an angle either while they were turning a corner or pulling out of a driveway. This percentage is relatively common to similar communities and is often associated with inattentive drivers, poor sight distances, one auto pulling out in front of another or one or more vehicles operating at too high a speed for the conditions present. The second most common accident type has been "rear-end" at about 30% of the crashes. This type is again common specifically when vehicles are travelling along the roadway, not stopping to make a turn. This type of crash typically occurs when vehicles are stopping at an intersection and is a symptom of traffic congestion or motorists following too closely or not paying attention to the vehicle in front of them.

The remaining types of crashes are classified as head on (1%), sideswipe (10-13%) and other. In all cases, motorists driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs may be a contributing factor.

High-Crash Intersections: According to data collected from 1997 to 1999, the intersection that experiences the most accidents is Telegraph Road (U.S. 24) at Front Street (M-50) with an average of 30 crashes a year, with about 8 annually involving injuries. Refer to Table 2 on the following page for a ranking of high-crash intersections. The intersection of Monroe Street (M-125) at Elm Avenue experienced the second most incidents, with an average of 26 crashes a year, with 7 reporting injuries. Again, the high averages can be attributed to the high volumes of traffic at this intersection.

A more revealing statistic is the Crash Rate per intersection. Establishing a crash rate allows a statistical comparison of crashes to the volume of vehicles entering an intersection. The intersection of East Front Street and Washington Street only has an average of 5.7 accidents a year, however based on the amount of vehicles entering the intersection, its accident rate is 2.9 crashes per million vehicles entering the intersection. This is the highest rate in the City. The second highest rate is at East Third Street and Winchester Street with 2.2 crashes per million vehicles entering the intersection. Telegraph Road/US-24 and Front Street/M-50 ranks third in crash rate.

Table 2:
Top 5 High–Crash Intersections by Category

	Number of Crashes	Rate of Crashes	Injury Rate
No. 1	Telegraph Rd/ Front St	Front St/ Washington St	Telegraph Rd/ Front St
No. 2	Monroe St/ Elm Ave	Third St/ Winchester St	Monroe St/ Elm Ave
No. 3	Telegraph Rd/ Lorain St	Telegraph Rd/ Front St	Elm Ave/ Roessler St.
No. 4	Monroe St/ Third St	Elm Ave/ Macomb St	Monroe St/ Third St
No. 5	Elm Ave/ Macomb St	Monroe St/ Elm Ave	Elm Ave/ Macomb St

Source: City of Monroe Engineering Department

Access Management. Access management involves comprehensive controls over all aspects of roadway access for the purposes of minimizing conflict points and preserving the roadway's ability to carry traffic. The lack of these types of regulations and standards increases the potential for traffic congestion and crashes. Poor, but heavily used, access systems conflict with the traffic movement function of the City's arterials such as Monroe Street and Telegraph Road. Access management involves a series of tools to reduce traffic conflict points including limiting the number of driveways, regulating the spacing of driveways, establishing design standards for access points and promoting shared access systems. These tools should be used in a manner that is directly related to the functional classification of the road.

Many arterials in the City are under state jurisdiction. On those trunklines, access approval is shared jointly between the City and MDOT for new development and major changes in use. MDOT has published access guidelines that should be applied to the extent practical. The remaining sites are regulated under the City's current access management standards contained in their zoning ordinance. The City's standards should be updated to reflect the most recent findings of MDOT and incorporate their recommended standards. Flexible application will be needed since many sites were developed prior to current standards and are considered non-conforming.

As a result of these factors, many of the major roads have a number of access points which conflict with traffic operations because they slow traffic for multiple turning movements when the function of the road is to move traffic quickly through the area. In addition, the majority of sites do not have internal connections that offer access between individual businesses.

Interstate 75 Interchanges. Five exits provide access to the City of Monroe from Interstate-75 (I-75); one from I-275 at Telegraph Road and the remainder are on I-75. There are three interchanges within the City limits at I-75 that provide the most direct access to the City of Monroe. Exit 15 is at Dixie Highway and is the northern most interchange and entrance/exit for the City. This is the most commonly used interchange by residents and visitors because it is well-designed and offers services such as restaurants, gas stations and hotels. Trucks, because of direct access to the Detroit Avenue and the Homrich/Ternes Industrial Park, also commonly use this interchange. Exit 14 and Exit 13 provide access to Elm Avenue and Front Street. These interchanges provide a more direct connection to the core of the City on both sides of the river and convenient access to major businesses in the City, such as Visteon, DTE-Monroe, and North Star Steel. Although they are convenient, they are not as commonly used. One reason cited by residents at the public meetings was the design, which does not meet current standards, with a tight turning radius at the ramps and limited sight distance. As an alternative, many use Exit 11, south of the City and enter and exit from La Plaisance Road.

Traffic Flow. The gird pattern street system described previously in this Chapter has facilitated a somewhat balanced flow of traffic throughout the City. Major traffic routes, however, are limited to mostly north-south routes (e.g. Telegraph Road, Monroe Street, and Dixie Highway) with very few major east-west routes (e.g. Front Street and Elm Avenue). This has created undue congestion on east-west corridors that should be mitigated. The City should consider alternative east-west routes to improve the balance of traffic but at the same time protect the character of the community and meet the goals of this plan.

Additional Transportation Facilities and Conditions

Non-Motorized Pathways/Greenways/Sidewalks. Promoting non-motorized transportation and access through the City and to the region will yield benefits and add value to the area in many ways. This Comprehensive Plan devotes an entire Chapter to establishing and maintaining a greenway system for the City and the region. Refer to Chapter 10: Greenways for an evaluation of existing conditions and opportunities; establishment of goals and objectives; and a detailed implementation plan.

Truck Routes. Because of its prime access to state roadways and waterways, Monroe has a very active industrial economic base. As a result, a strong presence of commercial truck traffic prevails in the City. In order to control trucking activity and to protect the neighborhoods and street conditions, the City has an ordinance that establishes routes where through-trucks and local trucks are permitted. These limitations do not apply to commercial trucks that require use of local streets to access intended destinations such as delivery vehicles, garbage trucks, and movers.

Through truck routes are I-75, Monroe Street (M-125), Telegraph Road (US-24) and Front Street/M-50 (west of Monroe Street) and Jones Avenue to connect with LaPlaisance Road. Local truck routes (for trucks with an origin and/or destination within the City) include Elm Avenue, First Street, Third Street, Dixie Highway, Detroit Avenue, Front Street (east of Monroe Street), Kentucky and a few others.

In comparing the truck routes to the street functional classifications, it is evident they do not necessarily correspond. As noted previously, some minor arterials are not appropriate for high volumes of truck traffic and have not be approved for through-truck traffic or even as local truck routes. Designated truck routes are based on conditions such as pavement limitations, connectivity, road design, and compatibility with adjoining residential neighborhoods. These routes are evaluated on a regular basis, as new development occurs and other factors.

Lake Erie Transportation. Lake Erie Transportation Commission is a regional bus system that serves the City of Monroe, Frenchtown Township and parts of Monroe Township. The Commission is an affiliation of metro Detroit's bus system, Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART). The system runs Monday through Saturday and offers seven different routes. Major destinations include civic uses, apartment complexes, education and medical facilities. This includes Downtown Monroe, Monroe County Community College, Monroe Mall, Frenchtown Square Mall, Mercy Memorial Hospital, County Courthouse and City Hall. The major streets that carry bus traffic include, Telegraph Road, Monroe Street, Macomb Street, Front Street and First Street.

The Lake Erie Transportation system is an asset to the Monroe area since it provides a safe method of transportation for those that do not drive and do not own vehicles. It also assists in relieving traffic congestion on the roadways. The City should continue to work in collaboration with the transit authority so the system can respond to changing needs, such as changes in the age of residents and needs of employers. Site plan design for major projects should incorporate transit friendly elements so that they can be more easily served now or in the future.

Rail Lines. Rail lines are a prevalent transportation element in the City. Three different rail systems traverse the City. CSX Railroad has a line through the west side of the City generally parallel to Telegraph Road. Two tracks operate at this location. The line is flanked by industrial businesses fronting on Huber Street and Cooper Street. There are rail crossings at West Seventh, Elm Avenue and Front Street that cause occasional traffic delays. This situation is most critical at Elm Avenue due to high traffic volumes. A grade separation (overpass) has been considered to eliminate the crossing.

The majority of rail activity is on the east side of the City via lines operated by Canadian National (CN) and Norfolk Southern (NS). These lines have crossovers and spurs that service industrial areas east of I-75. The most severe impact of these rail lines occurs along the line that runs parallel to Kentucky Avenue and is bordered to the east by a residential neighborhood within 30 feet of the line.

The major impacts of these two alignments occur at grade crossings. Considerable delays from switching and from slowly moving trains are incurred at Dixie Highway, Elm Avenue, First Street and Third Street. To address those problems, a rail consolidation project has been approved following several years of study, to eliminate tracks and crossings and abandon rail right-of-way. Construction of a grade separation along Dixie Highway is underway as this Plan was being prepared. The recommendation to eliminate a segment of the NS southbound line beginning north of the City, that runs along Kentucky Avenue and ends south of the City is also anticipated in the Rail Consolidation Plan.

Monroe Custer Airport. The City of Monroe offers an airport at its western edge that is almost 190 acres. Its main purpose is to serve local businesses and residents but it also is a "reliever airport" for Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport. The Airport is owned by the City and has a contractual fixed base operator. The Airport Advisory Board provides goals and recommendations to the City Council, on planning, operating and budget matters.

The airport has one runway and one taxiway under construction. Buildings located on the site include an administration office, a maintenance hangar, storage hangars and an equipment building. Based on the size of the runway, the types of aircraft that can be served by the airport are limited to small single-engine and multi-engines planes and small jets. According to the Airport Layout Plan Update Report prepared in June, 2000, a busy month currently services 3,030 airplanes (an arrival is one service and a departure is one service). Planned airport improvements are limited to safety improvements, but there is interest in providing a greater variety of services and coordinating with other transportation agencies.

Custer Municipal Airport serves a vital role in Monroe economic development

Port of Monroe. The Port of Monroe is a non-profit public authority created by public vote in 1932 under the Michigan Port Districts Public Act 234 of 1925, as amended. It is Michigan's only port on Lake Erie. The port has a 15,800 foot long entrance channel in Lake Erie that is open and straight with an 8,200 foot long inner channel on the River Raisin. Existing mooring facilities include a 1,043 foot long dock and 460 foot long dock. The Port District is comprised of 561 acres that includes existing businesses, vacant developable land and a number of acres of wetlands, lagoons, drainage ditches and the Plum Creek. The existing businesses serve as a strong economic base for the City and Monroe County.

The Port of Monroe is administered by the Monroe Port Commission and consists of five appointed commissioners with one full-time employee. They are obligated to plan and develop the port district, and within this framework, the commission is authorized to construct, purchase acquire, improve, enlarge, maintain and operate a wide variety of works, including terminals, warehouses, seawalls, jetties, piers, docks and other port related improvements.

Access to the port can be provided by multiple transportation modes. By vehicle, major highways include I-75, I-275, US-24 (Telegraph Road) and M-50 with direct access via Front Street. Users of the port are also offered air transportation from Monroe Custer Airport, Detroit Metropolitan Airport and Toledo Express Airport. Nearby rail service includes CN and NS lines that lead into the port.

Transportation Goals and Objectives

The various elements of the City's transportation system have been brought together in this chapter in order to assess how future planning and decision-making can collectively improve access, circulation, safety and convenience for residents, workers and visitors. Map 4 also provides a visual representation of key issues considered. The following policy statement, goals and objectives set the framework toward accomplishing this important civic responsibility.

POLICY STATEMENT

To create a safe, balanced and coordinated multi-modal transportation system that includes street, transit, water, air, rail and non-motorized components adequate to accommodate the current and future needs of the City of Monroe and promotes the walkable, traditional character of the community.

Goal #1 Preserve the capacity, level of service and safety of the road network to support current and future development.

a. Evaluate the future level of service and capacity of roads based on anticipated future development plans and growth in the City.
b. Coordinate road improvements with City policies on land use, non-motorized circulation, natural features preservation and provision of community facilities.
c. Manage the number, spacing and type of access points along the roadways.
d. Consolidate driveways and interconnect parcels on major streets so that automobile and pedestrian movement is possible without going out onto the highway.
e. Monitor traffic speeds along certain roads within neighborhoods, and if posted speed limits are being exceeded, undertake education, enforcement and design programs to reduce speeds to an appropriate level.
f. Explore opportunities for street extensions and connections that are compatible with the surrounding

neighborhood and located in appropriate areas to maintain evenly distributed traffic flow.

g. Coordinate with other jurisdictions and agencies to monitor conditions and pursue improvements on principal routes such as Telegraph, Monroe Street, and Dixie Highway.
h. Limit through truck travel to roads designated for such use.
i. Consider implications of traffic and truck impacts with development proposals

Goal #2 Ensure the transportation system complements the context of the surroundings and the overall traditional character of the City.

a. Design roads to frame land uses and streetscape to balance the automobile function with the desire for a walkable community at a human scale.
b. Require green space, street trees and sidewalks along all streets
c. Design and manage corridors to limit vehicular and pedestrian conflicts.
d. Recognize the importance of the pedestrian friendly environment and reserve space to assure that pedestrians are accommodated.
e. Eliminate or reduce intrusion of truck traffic into neighborhoods by directing through-trucks to designated by-pass routes and directing truck-generating uses to locations where trucks will only utilize streets designed and designated for such traffic.

Goal #3 Promote use and enhancement of the variety of transportation modes offered in the City.

a. Expand and maintain a comprehensive greenway system to provide choices besides the automobile and offer recreational benefits consistent with the City's Greenways Plan.
b. Continue an active sidewalk replacement program.
c. Continue to expand the service area of the Lake Erie Transit system as new development occurs and as new activity centers are created.
d. Provide enhanced amenities at transportation stops for a more comfortable, welcoming environment such as shelters, benches, planters and signs.
e. Coordinate between the Lake Erie Transit Commission, the City and private developers in order to offer improved access and design for the bus system.
f. Integrate new and old transportation facilities.
g. Support Custer Airport by expanding its services and offering opportunities for creative land uses.
h. Continue to explore potential development opportunities and expanded services with the Port of Monroe.
i. Create a unified system between the variety of services.

Transportation Recommendations

The following are effective strategies to improve transportation conditions within the City.

State Trunkline Designation. Both M-50 and M-125 traverse through the City of Monroe and serve as principal state trunkline routes. In the past, these routes were extremely valuable in accessing destinations in outlying areas. Today, with a more developed road system and nearby interstates, these routes are not as significant at a State level. The City should continue to coordinate with MDOT in considering jurisdiction of these routes.

It is the policy of the City to retain a trunkline designation for Monroe Street as either M-125 and/or business loop I-75 to help direct motorists to the downtown and retain the National Heritage Route designation. However, the City also desires to implement design improvements to Monroe Street to reduce lane widths and add some type of on-street parking, where feasible. The City will need to continue to work with MDOT to achieve a design acceptable to both parties. If an agreement cannot be reached, the City may consider a request to "turnback" authority of Monroe Street from the State to the City.

Corridor Enhancements. The major road corridors in the City must be treated and supported as important transportation routes and design elements that represent the quality and character of Monroe. This will distinguish the City from other communities located along the route. These major corridors include:

- Telegraph Road/ US-24
- Monroe Street /M-125
- Dixie Highway
- Front Street
- Elm Avenue

Enhancement should be consistent, promote a defined streetscape, and ensure maximum efficiency of the road system. The extent of these enhancements should be variable to help ensure improvements reflect the character of the surrounding area. Recommended improvements are described below.

Street Trees: A consistent row of large canopy street trees should be provided along major corridors. The trees should be located between the sidewalk and the street curb and planted at a rate of one every 30-40 feet (this standard should be modified to tighter spacing in the downtown and neighborhood area in accordance with the design guidelines in Chapter 11). Street trees help to frame the roadway and provide a comfortable environment by minimizing the impression of a multiple lane thoroughfare. In addition, the presence of a defined roadway assists in slowing traffic.

Greenspace: All road cross-sections should accommodate greenspace between the sidewalk and the curb where trees and lawn areas can be installed. This space should be a minimum of 8 feet wide to allow ample foundation of tree planting and for easier maintenance. Exceptions to this guideline would include those roads within the Central Business District or other areas where lots are built-out to the right-of-way line. Street trees planted along the sidewalk are sufficient greenscape enhancement in these areas.

Street Lighting: Consistent street lighting is important for safety and as a decorative element to unify the corridor. Currently decorative lights are only offered in the downtown, however, the City's business corridors are also important activity centers for the community that warrant enhancements. Street lighting also enhances the pedestrian scale by creating a safer walking environment.

Pedestrian Orientation: Although more heavily traveled by vehicle, major road corridors in the City should be designed to accommodate pedestrians, due to close proximity to neighborhoods. Safe and accessible pedestrian crossings, pathways, and links to these pathways are needed along these routes to meet this goal. Further information related to pathways is discussed in Chapter 10.

Median: To minimize the expanse of pavement for major routes, particularly Telegraph, the City should support the installation of landscaped medians along certain segments. These require some modification in design and some limitations on accessibility, however the result is a more aesthetically pleasing transportation route. In addition, if designed at the City limits, these medians can be utilized as a dramatic entry feature into the City.

Access Management: To ensure safe traffic operations along the City's major road corridors while maintaining reasonable access to sites, access management standards are necessary. These provide a guide for development and involve coordination between the community, property owners and the agency that has jurisdiction over the particular road. Managing access has a number of components and is described in more detail in Chapter 11.

Enhanced East-West Connection: To improve traffic flow along the major transportation corridors, Map 4 illustrates the concept of enhanced east-west circulation north of the river, within the City limits. This concept does not necessarily imply an entirely new road or comprehensive upgrade to one road is the best alternative. It may be a series of road improvements to existing east-west routes that will assist in accommodating additional traffic and alleviate congestion on existing, overtaxed east-west routes. Additional traffic studies will need to be completed before alternatives can be considered. Also, while no specific alignment is proposed, the goal is to ensure any development on the Immaculate Heart of Mary side is linked to the existing street system. Similar to such connections with the new Mason Run project, a connection will help manage traffic flow and improve access for emergency and maintenance vehicles. Any street connection should be designed to minimize through traffic and ensure vehicle speeds are compatible with the existing neighborhoods.

Monroe Street bridge offers a grand entrance leading into the downtown

Technology. Currently, traffic management hardware maintained and operated by the City consists of traffic signals and pedestrian crossing lights. The majority of these signals are pre-timed, meaning the timing of the lights are already programmed based on the time and day and continue to follow that pre-set cycle. A few of the signals are pedestrian and traffic actuated, meaning the timing of the cycles are based upon the traffic activity at that time. The presence of vehicles and pedestrians will trigger the necessary change in the signal timing. The City reviews signal timings every year to make sure they are meeting demands based on their function, traffic counts and turning movement activity.

The City has recently been approved for two new signals at the intersections of N. Dixie Highway and E. Noble and W. Elm Avenue and Custer Drive. In addition, they have recently upgraded all hardware including traffic signals and pedestrian lights to keep pace with the latest technology and design requirements. These projects are funded partly through the general operating budget, but many projects have been funded through federal grants.

The City should continue this systematic policy of maintaining their traffic management systems in order to accommodate the evolution of development within the City. The City and the prospective developer must closely analyze new development areas in order to evaluate the future impacts that will result from the development. Based on this analysis, improvements can be accommodated before there becomes a traffic management problem.

Wayfinding and Signage. The City of Monroe is currently developing a new signage system through design management principles to assist with community wayfinding. The new system will achieve the following goals:

- Improve the geographic orientation and navigation for visitors and residents. The way-finding system will provide an organized, complete system that provides appropriate information and direction to key destinations in the City such as downtown, City Hall, and historic resources. A spin-off benefit of this goal is the increase in business activity by making it easier for motorists to find locations in the City.

- Attract additional tourism dollars to Monroe through improved signs along I-75, the way-finding system, and information provided to visitors by tourism associations and destination businesses. In particular, capture additional tourism dollars from motorists visiting the Dundee area by directing traffic through the business district via signs and improved intersections.

- Reduce signage hardware clutter through consolidation. By providing a uniform system design and placement mechanism to post appropriate and necessary information, it is indeed possible to significantly reduce the quantity of signage hardware, and save both time and maintenance costs.

- Enhance the City's image through improved physical identity. Offering a municipal graphic signage system that is carefully researched, designed and constructed will convey more than just information to the public. In fact, such a system may be a valuable tool in marketing the community through influencing residents' and visitors' view of Monroe, and hence, their image of the community.

Beyond the new system, the City should increase and enhance consistent signage and way finding methods in order to direct people to various facilities. Many people do not consider other modes of transportation because they are unsure of routes, times and where they can connect to the system. Making facilities and key destinations easier to find and easier to use will alleviate these concerns and ultimately increase use.

Bus. The Lake Erie Transit system is a well-established service provider in the City and surrounding area. They continue to seek improvements to their facility as funding becomes available. As the City grows and changes, the amenities that go along with bus service should evolve to the needs of the riders. To begin with, the Transit Commission should work with the City as new development occurs to ensure that bus routes meet the needs and are accessible to these areas. For instance, as the Mason Run neighborhood becomes more populated, a bus route should run through the area for these residents. Working with the City at the beginning stages of developments will also ensure site plans incorporate transit-friendly design. Finally, continuing enhancements are suggested at the most commonly used bus stops including a shelter and benches. Currently there is no signage at stops or simply a post sign for identification. There are plans for two new shelters and larger facilities such as the hospital and Wal-Mart offer some shelter and seating. Provision of these amenities makes it more comfortable for users and allows for more convenient year-round use of the system. Working with developers at the beginning stages of a project may present the opportunity for public/private partnerships in funding, installation and maintenance of these enhanced facilities.

Truck Routes. Through trucks should be directed only to designated by-pass routes such as LaPlaisance Road, Dunbar Road or I-275 and Telegraph Road. The City should work with MDOT to erect signs that clearly inform truck drivers of the designated routes. Trucks with an origin or destination in the City should be directed to local truck routes regulated by the City.

The current required truck routes in the City are reviewed from time to time when new industrial projects are proposed. Future routes should not accommodate industrial areas that are to be phased out or those that require connection through historical and residential areas. The truck route map should be reviewed from time to time to adjust to changing conditions.

Rail Lines. The current rail system causes conflicts with traffic patterns and land use conflicts with neighborhoods. The City should continue to pursue alternatives such as grade separations, re-routing rail lines and rail consolidation in order to mitigate these affects. A study was completed to install a grade separation for the CSX rail line at Elm Avenue. This road is a major arterial for the City and a grade separation would do a lot to alleviate congestion.

A higher priority for the City is rail consolidation. As discussed earlier, this involves the NS north and southbound tracks and the CN Main track. Eliminating the Southbound track would greatly enhance the residential character of the existing neighborhood along Kentucky Street. It would also minimize, to a slight extent, traffic congestion along the major cross streets such as Elm Avenue, Front Street and First Street.

With these most recent plans, the City has been, and should continue to be, committed to obtaining any abandoned rail right-of-way to convert to a pathway system. If the southbound line is abandoned, this would accommodate a non-motorized route between Dixie Highway and the southern edge of the City. This route would traverse through the neighborhoods, near a few commercial nodes, across the river and connect to the riverfront park system.

Monroe Custer Airport. The airport has been successful serving industrial and business commerce and recreational flights. Consideration should be given to expanding the realm of its economic impact and capitalize on certain niche markets such as tourism, recreation and residential airparks. At the same time, it must continue to serve its role in transporting materials and goods to support the economic base of the City.

Airparks are an increasingly popular land use that began during the 1980's. The design and concept of the parks vary, but they generally integrate access between residential neighborhoods and the airport. The intent is to offer pilots and owners convenient access to the runway for their plane that is stored either at their home or at the airport. These facilities attract recreational pilots as well as business owners that require a private plane for business travel.

Port of Monroe. The Port Commission has recently prepared a draft master plan for the Port District. This aggressive plan includes infrastructure improvements and expansions that will accommodate new businesses and development sites on the south side of Front Street both east and west of I-75. Expansion of the dock facilities and railroad facilities are also planned in order to accommodate the planned increase in use and access for the port. Finally, an intermodal transportation warehouse is planned that will provide warehouse space for storage of commodities between transportation modes of water, rail and truck. The warehouse facilities are planned in two different areas and would be available for any port tenant/customer moving commodities across the port docks. This plan will support the integration and development of the City's transportation facilities in a manner that strengthens the economic base of the area.

View of Monroe Harbor and nearby land uses looking east into Lake Erie

CHAPTER 4: HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Introduction

Monroe is a city with well-established, attractive and historically significant neighborhoods. The creation, preservation and enhancement of neighborhoods are essential to the success of the community. Neighborhoods define and characterize the unique cultural and historical qualities of the city. Intrinsic to the success of Monroe's neighborhoods and to a stable and attractive quality of life for all citizens is an emphasis on preservation and rehabilitation of the city's housing stock, the availability of home ownership and housing for all segments of the population and the proximity to community facilities and services.

The first section of this chapter illustrates current population and housing characteristics and existing conditions in Monroe neighborhoods. Understanding what is on hand is essential when planning for the future. The second section of the chapter includes goals and objectives, as well as improvement and redevelopment strategies for the various neighborhoods that make up the city.

Population Trends and Projections. The City's population peaked at 23,894 in 1970 and has been slowly declining over the past 30 years. Between 1990 and 2000, the City's population declined by 4.2%. This trend is typical for many city centers in Michigan due to the popularity of out-migration to abutting townships for larger lot sizes, the reduction in household size and the lack of available land. This trend is confirmed by the steady increase in population of surrounding townships. The County overall has benefited from this growth trend, showing an overall increase in population by 9.2%.

Recent trends show however that living in a downtown, city center environment is increasingly gaining popularity. This movement is a result of a re-established desire to be part of a traditional, unified community where residents are offered the convenience of services in walking distance or within a short drive. More importantly, there is a strong desire to be part of a neighborhood where families know each other and life long roots can be established.

At present, Monroe is beginning to experience the benefits of this trend and is seeing in-fill housing development, redevelopment for housing and the development of large neighborhoods such as Mason Run. In late 2001, SEMCOG prepared population projections for its seven county jurisdiction in the *2030 Regional Development Forecast Report (RDF).* The population projections for the City of Monroe are included in the chart below.

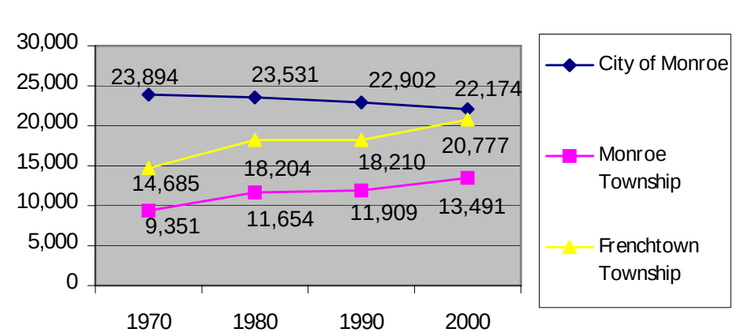
Table 3:
Population Comparison, 2000

	Population	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
Battle Creek	53,364	65.8%	34.2%
Bay City	36,817	69.5%	30.5%
Flint	124,943	58.8%	41.2%
Jackson	36,316	57.6%	42.4%
Kalamazoo	77,145	47.7%	52.3%
Lansing	119,128	57.5%	42.5%
Monroe	**22,076**	**61.9%**	**38.1%**
Muskegon	40,105	56.9%	43.1%
Pontiac	66,337	52.8%	47.2%
Saginaw	61,799	63.6%	36.4%
Average	--	59.2%	40.8%

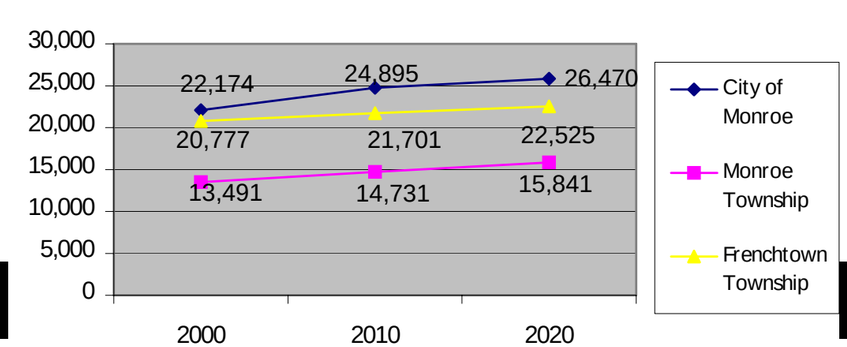
Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Based on this report, a 19.3% increase in the City's population is expected over the next 20 years. This estimate places Monroe in the top tier for future population and household growth rates in Monroe County. Population figures for surrounding townships indicate there is still a demand for suburban living and as land continues to be available for residential development, the population in these areas will continue to grow.

Population History in the Monroe Area



Population Projections in the Monroe Area



Household Trends and Projections. With the anticipated increase in the population comes an increase in the number of households in the City. However, due to the projected decrease in household size, the population will increase at a slower rate than the number of households.

Table 4:
City of Monroe Household Trends (1980-2000)

	1980	1990	2000	90-00 % Change
Number of Households	8,057	8,430	8,634	2.4%
Average HH Size	2.9	2.7	2.47	-8.5%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table 5:
City of Monroe Household Projections (2000-2020)

	2010 SEMCOG	00-10 % Change	2020 SEMCOG	10-20 % Change
Number of Households	10,315	-19.5%	11,430	10.8%
Average HH Size	2.33	-6.0%	2.23	-4.3%

Source: US Census, 2000; SEMCOG 2030 Regional Development Forecast

Household Type and Size. When compared to Monroe County and the state, Monroe has a smaller percentage of family households and a larger percentage of non-family households. Monroe also has a slightly higher senior population and "households with children" population than those percentages for the county and state. Conversely, Monroe has less or fewer than the county and state overall.

Table 6:
Household Comparison

	Family Households	Non-Family Households	Average Household Size	Average Family Size
City of Monroe	65.0%	35.0%	2.47	3.10
Monroe County	74.3%	25.7%	2.69	3.14
Michigan	68.0%	32.0%	2.56	3.10

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 7:
Household Comparison

	Total HH's	HH's w/individuals under 18 years	HH's w/ individuals 65 years and over
City of Monroe	8,594	36.5%	25.2%
Monroe County	53,772	39.1%	21.3%
Michigan	3,785,661	35.6%	22.8%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

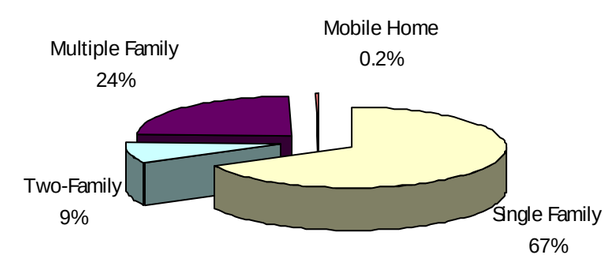
Housing Units. Between 1990 and 2000, the City experienced an overall increase of 267 housing units. During the same period, the City saw an increase in owner-occupied units (1.02%) and an increase in single family housing units (14%). This steady increase in housing can be attributed to new apartment complexes, new subdivisions on the west side of the City, housing in-fill within existing neighborhoods and the new Mason Run neighborhood. There have also been conversions from single family to multiple family and a few adaptive re-use projects that have increased the amount of housing options in the City.

Table 8:
Housing Units

	Total Housing Units	Total Occupied Housing Units	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
2000	9,107	8,594	61.9%	38.1%
1990	8,840	8,430	60.4%	39.6%
% Change	1.0%	1.9%	1.02%	-1.04%

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000

City of Monroe Housing Unit Type 2000



Housing Tenure. The 2000 U.S. Census reported a total of 9,107 housing units within the City of Monroe. Of these, 8,594 (94.4%) were occupied, while 513 (5.6%) were classified as vacant. Of the occupied housing units, 5,323 (61.9%) were owner-occupied and 3,271 (38.1%) were renter-occupied. The following table compares the housing tenure of the city against similar information for Monroe County and the state as a whole. As Table 9 demonstrates, the city has a higher percentage of rental units than that of the state. These units include a variety of housing types including mobile homes, apartment complexes, rental homes and accessory apartments. In comparison with other mature cities, Monroe's tenure character falls within the range of a typical urban center.

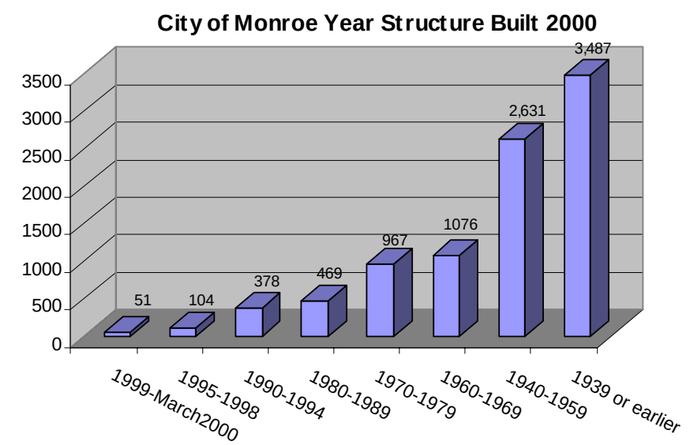
Table 9:
Housing Tenure Comparison

	Total Occupied Housing Units	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
City of Monroe	8,594	61.9%	38.1%
Monroe County	53,772	81.0%	19.0%
Michigan	3,785,661	73.8%	26.2%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Consistent with Monroe County overall, the majority of housing units in the City in 1990 was single-family homes. The City has a much higher percentage of two family and multiple family units compared to the County. This is to be expected because the City serves as the urban core of the County that lends itself to higher density development. The remainder of Monroe County communities is primarily rural townships or small villages.

Age of Housing. The City of Monroe has a diverse housing mixture including housing styles that have evolved over time. These phases are visually evident touring the community and are also seen evaluating the year structures were built. The adjacent chart indicating year structure built information for the City is a testament to the historical importance of the City's neighborhoods. Of the 9,163 homes reported in 2000, 38.1% were built in or before 1939. Similar to many Midwest cities, Monroe saw growth in the 1950's and again in the 1970's. The past 10 years has been the slowest growth period for the City. This is largely due to the decline in available land and the out-migration to the townships.



Characteristics of a Great Neighborhood

The City of Monroe provides a variety of housing styles and neighborhoods with their own unique character. Although each should take on its own identity, it is important to bring out the positive elements of that neighborhood and ensure that all possess traditional, or fundamental, characteristics. This will ensure its long term strength and viability. Before each neighborhood could be evaluated and improvement strategies developed, it was important to understand the elements of a great neighborhood. These items are listed below and served as a framework for the existing conditions, goals, and objectives of this chapter. These are considered traditional neighborhood characteristics.

- A neighborhood should have a center and an edge. The center should incorporate a public space and does not necessarily have to be in the exact center, but should serve as a focal point.
- The neighborhood should be of a walkable scale around a quarter mile from center to edge.
- The neighborhood should have a balanced mix of activities, living, shopping, working, schooling, worshipping, and recreating where residents can gather and integrate.
- The neighborhood should have an interconnected street and pathway system that allows multi-modal accessibility.
- The street system should create a comfortable, safe environment through narrow pavement widths, street lighting, street trees and sidewalks that is inviting for visitors and residents to socialize and bring them out of their homes and back yards.
- The living areas and the front entry of the homes should be the prominent feature viewed from the street.
- Unifying elements should be utilized as a 'neighborhood identifier,' whether it is signage, similar architecture, street lighting or consistent streetscape landscaping.
- The neighborhood should embrace its resources whether they are historical, civic, natural or cultural. These elements should be promoted as a focal point for the neighborhood.
- The neighborhood should have a formal association that is prepared to address issues effectively and efficiently as they arise.

Existing Conditions

Housing Conditions Exterior Appearance Survey (Block Average). A residential appearance survey of Monroe's neighborhoods was conducted in June 2001 by Hamilton-Anderson, a member of the consultant team that assisted the City in preparation of this plan. (see Map 5). Blocks were graded good, fair or poor based on the *overall* condition of the entire block. A rating, therefore, does not necessarily imply that all the homes on that block meet that standard. Some homes may be in better or worse condition than the block rating.

Residential areas characterized as good condition reflect conditions where regular property and home maintenance is evident. Blocks characterized in fair condition tend to show a mix of stable housing, vacant lots and housing requiring minor repairs. Blocks graded poor include areas where some existing homes that are unable to be rehabilitated or in some cases abandoned. Based on this survey, the housing quality ranges from excellent to fair condition with a wide range of housing styles and costs available. A few blocks have small pockets of blighted conditions. These areas should be targeted for improvement programs and code enforcement. For specific strategies on improvement needs for different areas of the City, refer to the goals and objectives and improvement and redevelopment strategies at the end of this chapter.

Mature neighborhoods reflect the solid housing within the City

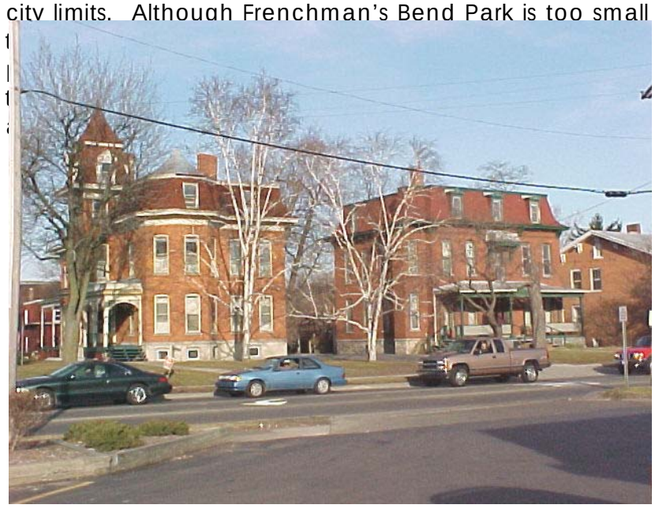
Key Findings. Monroe is a residential community that places great importance in family living and community pride. Neighborhoods have solid housing stock and quality living environments, with minor blight evident only in small pockets. Pressure to develop new homes and neighborhoods within the city has both positive and negative aspects, as investment and expansion of the tax base is desired but not at the expense of the disruption of neighborhood character. Specific findings include the following:

- A wide range of housing styles, types and costs can be found throughout the city.
- Uniform setbacks and tree-lined streets create continuity within the residential blocks.
- Home and property reinvestment is evident.
- Pedestrian-friendly elements such as sidewalks, parks and schools are found in all areas of the city.
- New home construction is occurring in several areas throughout the city.
- Short, dead end streets and cul-de-sacs tend to isolate homes within and from neighborhoods.
- Elements such as railroad lines, city boundaries, public properties, and commercial/ industrial corridors inhibit access to small pockets of homes.
- Neighborhood associations need to be supported throughout the city.

The Neighborhood Map (Map 6) identifies five major neighborhood areas located in the northeast, northwest, southeast, central and southwest sections of the city. They border the River Raisin, the CSX Railroad, St. Mary's Academy and Monroe Street (see Map 6). While these neighborhoods have smaller sub-districts, they comprise a "neighborhood" unit of sufficient size to support an elementary school, a neighborhood park, and other residential amenities. The exterior appearance survey of conditions, discussions with Monroe community leaders, and recommendations from community workshop sessions created an understanding of the issues and opportunities in the city's residential areas.

Northwest Neighborhood. The Northwest Neighborhood is bound by the River Raisin to the south, Lavender Street to the east and the city limits to the north and west. Elements such as the city limits, Telegraph Road and the CSX Railroad help to define five sub-districts within the neighborhood. The exterior appearance survey of the city indicates that residential homes in the Northwest neighborhood are in excellent condition.

The Frenchman's Bend neighborhood offers some of the most recently developed moderate-density housing in Monroe. The area consists of suburban design, high-end homes built on large lots and is being expanded to the city limits. Although Frenchman's Bend Park is too small

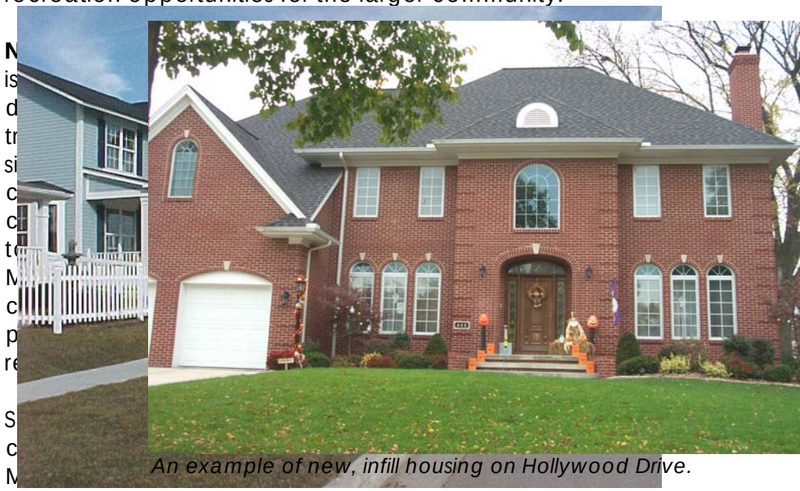


Historic homes on Elm Avenue.

The Manor Park area is comprised of moderate-density single-family homes located between the city limits and the multiple family townhomes adjacent to the Telegraph Road commercial frontage (west side). Moderate-density single-family homes are also located between Telegraph and the CSX Railroad. Housing in these areas are in good condition. Housing west of Telegraph is suburban in character, relatively new and is served by Oak Forest and Manor parks. Mature housing east of Telegraph occurs on two streets and is isolated due to the Telegraph commercial uses and the industrial uses on the east side of Huber Drive.

The final identified residential area in the Northwest neighborhood is located between the CSX railroad and the Immaculate Heart of Mary campus. This area comprised of primarily moderate-density single-family housing. Older housing with occasional infill is located between Elm Avenue and Hendricks Drive on a traditional urban street grid. Most of these homes have been renovated and expanded over time. Newer homes are located north of Hendricks Drive. Low-rise apartments are located south of Elm Avenue. Three small neighborhood parks, Calgary, Lavender and James-Hendricks serve this area.

The Telegraph commercial corridor serves both the community and the region with local shopping opportunities. The Northwest neighborhood houses two elementary schools, Manor and Riverside. Although many small pocket parks serve the needs of the neighborhood, Munson Park, Roessler Field and Cranbrook/Veterans Park (River Raisin trail) provide recreation opportunities for the larger community.



An example of new, infill housing on Hollywood Drive.

New Homes in the Mason Run Neighborhood.

typically bungalow style, and in good condition. The National Register East Elm – North Macomb Street Historic District is bounded by Monroe, Lorain, Macomb and the River Raisin. The historic buildings in this district range from estates to working class dwelling units representing all periods from 1820 to 1930 in many architectural styles.

East of Macomb Street, the predominantly single-family neighborhood is laid out on a traditional street grid. Both mature and new, infill homes on larger lots are located on Hollywood Drive. Significantly larger lots are also located on Hollywood Drive, north of Oakwood Street. The rest of the neighborhood is comprised of homes on

smaller lots. A power line easement runs adjacent to Maple Avenue, acting as a divisive element within the neighborhood. The new Mason Run neighborhood is between Michigan Avenue and the NS Railroad. Mason Run will replicate the existing traditional character and layout of the Macomb Street neighborhoods and blends with the multiple family development bordering the north of the project site.

A very small, yet strong quality residential neighborhood is located off Dixie Highway near the I-75 interchange. Adjacent to the NS Railroad and numerous industrial uses, this area is isolated from the rest of the city neighborhood and over time has experienced pressure from non-residential uses.

Local shopping needs are met by the North Monroe commercial uses, Downtown which is located south of the River Raisin on South Monroe Street and big box commercial uses located just outside city limits on North Monroe and Telegraph. The North East neighborhood houses three public schools, Christiancy Elementary, Hollywood Elementary and Cantrack Middle School. Parochial schools in the neighborhood include Zion Lutheran and the St. Mary's Elementary School. In addition to the school playfields, a small tot lot at Arbor and Lorain and the undeveloped Marquette Park at Orchard and Maple provide recreation opportunities for the neighborhood. The Monroe Multi-Sports Complex on North Dixie Highway and St. Mary's Park at Monroe and Elm are amenities for the entire city.

Southwest Neighborhood. The Southwest neighborhood is bounded by the River Raisin to the north, Monroe Street to the east and the city limits to the south and west. Telegraph Road and the CSX Railroad divide the southwest neighborhood into three smaller areas. Housing to the west of the railroad is in good condition with regular maintenance. To the east of the railroad, housing is in fair condition needing minor repairs.

Small lots, mature homes and tree-lined streets characterize most of the residential area west of Telegraph, all of which are in good condition. Palmwood Avenue, adjacent to the commercial uses on Telegraph is isolated and in fair condition, requiring minor repair. Residential housing between Telegraph and the CSX Railroad is also isolated, as it abuts industrial uses to the east and commercial to the west. Most homes in this small pocket are older although there are several new homes built on larger lots on Toledo Avenue. The residential area west of the CSX Railroad is comprised of predominantly older homes on smaller lots. Most of these homes are in fair condition requiring minor repairs.

The Telegraph Road commercial corridor to the north and Downtown to the east serve the Southwest Neighborhood. Waterloo Elementary and the Monroe High School are adjacent to this neighborhood but both are situated outside the city limits. St. Michael's parochial school is within the neighborhood. Hoffman Park and Father Cairns Field are larger, community parks which, in addition to Winston Park and Boyd Park, support the neighborhood. Mill Race Park, adjacent to the River Raisin is an open space inaccessible but could be developed as an amenity for the community.

Central Neighborhood. The Central Neighborhood is bound by Monroe Street to the west, the River Raisin to the north, the NS Railroad to the east and the city limits to the south. The predominant feature of this neighborhood is the Downtown and civic center district, located along the River Raisin. Most of the Central Neighborhood falls within the Old Village Plat Historic District and is in good condition. Many of the homes in the historic district date back to the early nineteenth century have been preserved and rehabilitated, reflecting its original character. The Old Village Plat neighborhood has a neighborhood association.

Homes outside of the historic district boundaries move from good to fair condition toward the eastern edge of the neighborhood. On average, these homes have not been as well preserved as those within the historic district. Two cemeteries and the NS Railroad cause the southern residential area to be isolated, making them only accessible by Kentucky Avenue.

Local shopping needs are met by the Downtown and the South Monroe commercial uses. The Central Neighborhood is served by two public schools, Lincoln Elementary and Monroe Middle School. There are two parochial schools in the neighborhood, Trinity Lutheran Elementary and St. John's School, and is also home to Navarre Field, Soldiers and Sailors Park and Plum Creek Park.

Southeast Neighborhood. The Southeast neighborhood is bound by the NS Railroad to the west, River Raisin to the north and the city limits to the south and east. The two railroad lines, CN and NS, which run through the neighborhood, isolate the homes and commercial uses off of Winchester. In addition, industrial uses limit access to the neighborhood east of Almyra. Most of the homes in the southeast neighborhood are in fair condition with small pockets in poor condition. Vacant lots exist throughout the neighborhood that can accommodate small-scale residential infill development. This neighborhood also has the opportunity for expansion.

Home improvements are prevalent throughout the City.

Commercial uses along Winchester are spread over five blocks. These should be maintained and concentrated into neighborhood service nodes. The Arthur Lesow Community Center is also located in the neighborhood, serving the larger community. The Orchard Alternative High School and the adjacent Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park are the primary education and outdoor recreation sources for the neighborhood.

Housing and Neighborhoods Goals and Objectives

During the planning process, an overall vision emerged for Monroe reflecting the values of the community. The following goals and objectives set the framework on which future development decisions should be made.

POLICY STATEMENT

Sustain and enhance Monroe's neighborhoods by providing for the safety and protection of all residents, visitors, and property, and enabling the development of strong, cohesive neighborhoods

Goal #1 Preserve, protect, and enhance the integrity, economic viability and livability of Monroe's neighborhoods.

a. Plans, programs and investment opportunities should be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and with the strategies described below for each neighborhood area.
b. Limit non-residential intrusions into residential neighborhoods and buffer detrimental effects of commercial and industrial uses through the use of open space and landscape treatments and site design to help reduce the impacts.
c. Promote home ownership in all neighborhoods.
d. Educate residents about tools such as home rehabilitation grants, tax credits and loans that are available.
e. Ensure that all new housing developments are compatible with the desirable characteristics of that particular neighborhood and in accordance with the general neighborhood strategies contained in this Chapter.
f. Gradually convert certain industrial uses adjacent to moderate-density residential uses to multiple-family or other adaptive uses more compatible with the area as indicated on the Future Land Use Map and in the Economic Development Chapter.
g. Establish neighborhood associations.
h. Enforce code compliance throughout the City.
i. Develop a comprehensive housing preservation strategy to retain housing stock that reflects the characteristics and improvements strategies described in this chapter and offer a variety of implementation tools for the City.

Goal #2 Protect the character and quality of neighborhoods by maintaining and enhancing their open spaces and parks, as well as public safety facilities and services.

a. Maintain all City parks and recreation facilities and pursue cooperative arrangements with other public and private groups for maintenance of these facilities.
b. Involve residents in planning for and developing additional open space and parks.
c. Encourage residential areas to participate in neighborhood watch and other eyes on the street programs.
d. Work with schools, churches or other institutions to educate youth about crime prevention and public safety.
e. Require new residential development to provide parks and recreational areas.

Goal #3 Create an identity for all neighborhoods.

a. Promote, develop and support block clubs, neighborhood associations and homeowner 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 landscaping at entries and in the rights-of-way and park areas to improve and promote the image of all residential neighborhoods.

Improvement and Redevelopment Strategies

Monroe's neighborhoods contain a number of desirable assets. Additionally, current vacant lands and redevelopment sites offer many new opportunities for additional residential development. This chapter 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 listed below detail the actions that should be undertaken by the City to implement the above goals and objectives and achieve the traditional neighborhood elements described in the beginning of the chapter. These strategies offer city-wide direction but primarily focus on specific strategies for the different neighborhoods as delineated on Map 6. Also refer to Chapter 11 where general residential neighborhood design guidelines are provided for new development and in-fill projects.

City Wide Strategies

a. Apply code enforcement uniformly in all areas of the City.
b. Periodically monitor industrial uses to ensure compliance with all applicable codes and reduce impacts on residential neighborhoods.
c. Promote the development of neighborhood associations and programs for all areas of the city.
d. Promote the use of public and quasi-public facilities, such as schools and religious institutions, as neighborhood anchors.
e. Regularly inspect and maintain all neighborhood infrastructure.
f. Review and revise the city Zoning Regulations to ensure compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan and the City's evolving residential goals for the future.
g. Implement programs for housing reinvestment and ownership including low-income and senior populations.
h. Continue on-going infrastructure maintenance and improvements such as sidewalk repair and road improvements.
i. Promote a mixture of housing types and styles such as attached and detached condominiums, townhouses, upper story apartments, and granny flats.

Northwest Neighborhood Strategies

a. Coordinate efforts with adjacent townships to connect city and county streets.
b. Enhance neighborhood gateway entries at Cranbrook, Lafayette, Richards and Roessler.
c. Increase and upgrade the multi-family uses along Telegraph Road.
d. Develop and implement streetscape improvements for Telegraph Road and Elm Avenue.
e. Preserve Oak Forest Park as a natural amenity for the neighborhood.
f. Buffer, with deep setbacks and screening, the negative impact of the commercial uses along Telegraph Road and the industrial uses along Huber Drive.
g. Explore opportunities for alternative access points between Telegraph and Elm.

Northeast Neighborhood Strategies

a. Educate homeowners about historic rehabilitation tax credits and grants.
b. Require new infill housing to complement the architectural character of the surrounding neighborhood.
c. Explore opportunities to link existing dead end streets along the Immaculate Heart of Mary campus property line.
d. Target property maintenance and rehabilitation efforts where needed (ie. east of Riverview, south of Scottwood, west of Michigan and north of Elm)
e. Develop and implement streetscape programs for Monroe, Macomb and Elm Streets.
f. Develop entry and interpretive signage for the East Elm – North Macomb historic district.
g. Require new developments to respect and complement the historic quality of the surrounding neighborhood.
h. Promote mixed-use development along North Monroe Street, provided that it complements and serves the nearby residential neighborhoods without negative impacts.

Southwest Neighborhood Strategies

a. Target code enforcement, property maintenance and rehabilitation efforts where needed.
b. Promote the renovation of single-family homes into businesses and multiple family structures in the Front Street area. Ensure the conversions do not negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood (ie. buildings should have adequate service areas and parking).
c. Develop Mill Race Park as an amenity for the community.
d. Explore opportunities to connect the neighborhood to the River Raisin.
e. Explore the possibility of removal of the abandoned rail corridor that is closest to downtown.

Central Neighborhood Strategies

a. Preserve and protect the historic character of the neighborhood.
b. Develop entry and interpretive signage for the Old Village historic district.
c. Educate homeowners and business owners in the Old Village Historic District about preservation tax credits, grants for rehabilitation of their properties and the historic significance of the district.
d. Promote the development of alternative housing marketed to seniors and/or professionals in the downtown core (ie. Live-work units, loft conversions, etc.
e. Develop municipal gateway entries at Monroe, Front and Laplaisance.
f. Complete streetscape programs for Monroe and Front Streets.
g. Target code enforcement, property maintenance and rehabilitation efforts where needed (ie. west of Navarre to railroad).
h. Explore opportunities to link Cherry and Walnut Streets with Laplaisance Road.

Southeast Neighborhood Strategies

a. Develop a sub area plan illustrating the optimal development pattern for the area.
b. Phase out industrial uses along the railroad to allow for expansion of the residential neighborhood as indicated on the Future Land Use Map and Economic Development Chapter.
c. Concentrate businesses along Winchester Street into neighborhood service nodes.
d. Provide adequate buffering and screening between the neighborhood and I-75.
e. Promote infill residential uses throughout the neighborhood.
f. Target code enforcement, property maintenance and rehabilitation efforts throughout the neighborhoods

Effective Housing Programs

The following is a description of successful housing programs that are currently being applied in Monroe that should continue.

Monroe Housing Commission. The mandate of the Monroe Housing Commission (MHC) is to provide housing for senior citizens, persons with lower incomes and other disadvantaged persons. The MHC currently manages and rents units at the Greenwood Park Town Homes, River Park Plaza as well as thirty single-family homes located throughout the City.

The "Home Builder" Program. The purpose of the "Home Builder" program is to make new housing available to qualified applicants within the target area; to divest the City of Monroe of publicly-owned, residential parcels; to increase the tax base through new home construction; and, to create a positive impact in the neighborhood through new development.

Under this program, the City of Monroe offers city-owned, residential properties located within the targeted area to qualified applicants. The perspective applicant or applicants will submit an application to the "HOME-BUILDER" Program. The review committee will prioritize applicants according to the criteria established in the "HOME-BUILDER" Program Outline.

Habitat for Humanity home recently built in Monroe neighborhood.

Approved applicants would then engage in plan selection and construction preparations with a program-approved builder/developer. Upon all requirements and qualifications being met, the City of Monroe shall

donate a buildable lot to the approved applicant at the time of loan closing.

Habitat for Humanity. Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry that seeks to eliminate substandard housing and to provide decent shelter for low-income families. This organization began in 1976, in Georgia and has grown into a worldwide operation with over 1500 affiliates in the United States and is present in 49 countries. Monroe County has a Habitat for Humanity affiliate in the City of Monroe.

Habitat for Humanity operates through volunteer labor, efficient management and tax-deductible donations of money, materials and labor. Habitat builds and rehabilitates simple decent houses for sale to partner (homeowner) families.

A Family Selection committee chooses the partner families based on their level of need, their willingness to become partners with Habitat, and their ability to repay the loan. The Monroe County affiliate requires that a partner family is a resident in Monroe County for at least one year. Each adult member of the chosen partner family is required to invest 'sweat equity', or a minimum number of hours, into construction of the home in order to qualify for the sale.

Habitat houses are sold to partner families at no profit, and finances with affordable, no interest loans. The partner family's monthly mortgage payments go into a revolving fund, which is used to build more houses. The City of Monroe can work with the Monroe County affiliate Board of Directors to assist this program through donations, waiving permit and application fees, and fund infrastructure or utility improvements.

CHAPTER 5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Revitalizing the urban environment is a complex problem. The process requires solutions designed to attract new businesses, retain jobs, build a stronger tax base and continue to make the City an attractive place to live and work. Initiating change requires cooperation by stakeholders: citizens, government, businesses, institutions and various groups working together to improve the City's economic vitality.

Southeast Michigan Trends

Development trends throughout Southeast Michigan have seen a shift of business centers from older urban areas to adjacent suburban and rural areas often called "greenfields". Outlying greenfields have gradually increased in attractiveness because of the availability of large, relatively inexpensive tracts of vacant land and subsidization of infrastructure. This land typically has lower taxes, access to growing residential populations is easier to assemble and may have better access to expressways. Development of urban parcels, in contrast, can be complicated with demolition, smaller lots, aging infrastructure and in some cases, contaminated soils. Urban redevelopment sites have recently been streamlined with several state, federal and local programs to make such sites more competitive.

Southeast Michigan's economy produced moderate growth in jobs from the late '60s to the early '80s. A strong job market characterized growth in the '90s. Forecasts indicate that this growth will continue to 2010, but then level off. Older workers will stay in the labor force as a result of their improved health as well as economic demand. The prime working age population (ages 18-54) will grow only slightly, before beginning to shrink in size from 2010 through 2025. This should help keep the numbers of jobs stable from 2010 to 2025.

The mixture of jobs in Southeast Michigan's economy has changed dramatically over the past 30 years. In 1965 the three largest groups of jobs included manufacturing, services and retail, with manufacturing accounting for 35% of all jobs. Forecasters predict that this mix of jobs will shift by 2025, and manufacturing jobs will decrease to 13% and service sector jobs will continue to grow. The automotive industry and its suppliers will still continue to power the region's economy, although older factories may be upgraded or replaced.

Economists believe the region will remain economically strong, though periodic recessions may occur. Manufacturing industries must continue to improve efficiency to remain globally competitive. The service sector is expected to grow substantially larger. As a result of aging population, it will be difficult for the labor force to grow after 2010. There will, however, be opportunities that will spur labor force participation of workers over age 55.

Monroe County Trends

Demographics and statistics depicted for Southeastern Michigan generally reflect the current and anticipated conditions for Monroe County. Many of the economic opportunities in Southeastern Michigan are located within Monroe County. For example, the County had an unemployment rate in 2000 of 3.2%, which was lower than Michigan's 3.6% rate and the nation's rate of 4.0%. With the natural rate of unemployment at approximately 5.5%, Monroe County is characterized as having a 'tight' labor market. As such, Michigan rate has been lower for the past several years. Also similar to the overall region, the County has had a recent increase in the number of residential units and building permits.

Advantages. Monroe County's strategic location and physical characteristics are advantageous for its economy. Location between the metropolitan areas of Detroit and Toledo and accessibility to major transportation routes for highway, water, rail and air travel create economic opportunities. Both Detroit Metropolitan Airport and Toledo Express Airport are located within an hour of the County. With Interstates 75 and 275, Monroe County is easily accessible by most major cities in the Midwest. The County also has an abundance of rail lines, and freight traffic, providing further economic advantages.

Industry. Both Table 10 and Table 11 provide a breakdown of the industry in Monroe County. This region has been ideally located for industries that use water for transportation, processing, or cooling operations due to adjoining Lake Erie and its connections to the St. Lawrence River, Detroit River, and Lake Huron. At present, improvements are needed to the Port of Monroe to adequately support increased economic development. Despite current trends of downsizing in a tighter economy, one of the larger automotive industries in the County, Visteon, announced in 2000 plans for a $100 million investment to its Monroe Plant.

Table 10:
Service Industry Employment March 1997 (Monroe County)

Industry	Total Number Establishments	Number of Employees
Hotels	18	177
Personal Services	69	342
Business Services	82	1454
Auto Repair, Services and Parking	74	348
Misc. Repair Services	25	302
Motion Pictures	12	96
Amusement and Recreation	47	520
Health Services	165	2899
Legal Services	37	128
Education Services	7	154
Social Services	58	751

From Milan to Bedford to Frenchtown, industrial uses have been and continue to be a large part of the County's economy. In the early part of 2001, the Monroe County Industrial Development Corporation indicated that its efforts would be focused on ensuring that existing businesses can remain competitive and can grow in the years ahead. But in order for new businesses to be attracted to the area, more industrial parks will need to have state certification. Currently, there are only a few sites that are State certified industrial parks, and many other sites ideal in many respects for industrial development are lacking in sufficient infrastructure.

Along with industrial uses, Monroe County has a key role in the services industry. Table 10 provides a more detailed breakdown of the types of service jobs offered in the county. Some of the top ranking services includes healthcare, business services and membership organizations.

Finally, Monroe County's 1985 Comprehensive Plan stressed the significance of the County's agricultural lands. The 1997 Census of Agriculture stated that 57% of the total land in Monroe County was agricultural land. This land is used for production of corn, soybeans, alfalfa, and tomatoes. Thus, Monroe County is an ideal location for food processing industries. This also means as a general policy, that industrial uses should be directed to locations with infrastructure and expressway access rather than to more important farmland.

Future Trends. The County's labor force is a strong indication of the strength of its economy. SEMCOG projects employment to increase 10.6% through 2020, with most increases occurring in the service category, which will increase 21% by 2020. Manufacturing, Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate are anticipated to lose jobs over this period as the Service industry grows to account for 50% of all jobs in the County.

Table 11:
City of Monroe Employment by Industrial Class

Industrial Class	1990	2000	90-00 % Change	2010	00-10 % Change	2020	10-20 % Change	2030	20-30 % Change
Agriculture/Natural Resources	40 (0.2%)	75 (0.5%)	87.5%	98 (0.6%)	30.7%	133 (0.7%)	35.7%	184 (0.9%)	38.3%
Manufacturing	4,412 (26.1%)	3,913 (25.9%)	-11.3%	3,472 (21.0%)	-11.3%	3,647 (20.0%)	5.0%	4,473 (22.2%)	22.6%
Telecommunication, Utilities	1,741 (10.3%)	757 (5.0%)	-56.5%	610 (3.7%)	-19.4%	328 (1.8%)	-46.2%	35 (0.2%)	-89.3%
Wholesale Trade	528 (3.1%)	499 (3.3%)	-5.5%	622 (3.8%)	24.6%	743 (4.1%)	19.5%	842 (4.2%)	13.3%
Retail Trade	3,513 (20.8%)	3,092 (20.5%)	-12.0%	3,347 (20.2%)	8.2%	3,684 (20.2%)	10.1%	3,833 (19.0%)	4.0%
Financial, Real Estate	626 (3.7%)	610 (4.0%)	-2.6%	747 (4.5%)	22.5%	887 (4.9%)	18.7%	1,034 (5.1%)	16.6%
Services	5,324 (31.5%)	5,266 (34.9%)	-1.1%	6,683 (40.3%)	26.9%	7,744 (42.4%)	15.9%	8,553 (42.5%)	10.4%
Public Administration	710 (4.3%)	880 (5.8)	23.9%	985 (5.9%)	11.9%	1,096 (6.0%)	11.3%	1,181 (5.9%)	7.8%
Total Jobs	16,894	15,092	-10.7%	16,564	9.8%	18262	10.3%	20,133	10.2%

Source: SEMCOG, 2030 Regional Development Forecast, U.S. Census 1990:2000

City of Monroe Trends

The City's economy is closely related to the characteristics of its population, household, and more directly, by its employment characteristics, job forecasts and decisions by developers and lending institutions. These factors provide valuable insight to future economic development.

Employment Characteristics. Two important factors to consider when evaluating the employment characteristics of the City are characteristics of jobs available compared with the labor force. To begin, it is important to review the employment by industry that identifies the types of jobs available in the City. Second, it is important to know the occupation breakdown of the population in order to establish the experience and employment specialization of City residents.

Table 11 provides information relative to the types of employment available in the City. In 2000, SEMCOG estimated a total of 15,092 jobs in the City of Monroe. While manufacturing jobs have historically been the employment base in Monroe, recent estimates indicate the leading job class is 'services.' This typifies the nationwide trend over the last 20 years as the US evolved into a service-oriented economy. Service jobs are forecasted to continue to dominate the market, while manufacturing jobs are on the decline. This is primarily attributed to the downsizing of companies that are more reliant upon technology than manpower. This is also due to the trend that companies are trying to be more cost effective with fewer employees. SEMCOG estimates that the job market peaked in 2000 and the number of jobs in the City will decrease by 2020.

Table 12:
Occupation of City Residents by Sector, 2000

Occupation	Percent
Managerial & Professional	26.4%
Sales Workers	23.6%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	22.5%
Service Workers	18.3%
Construction, Extraction and Maintenance	9.0%
Farming, Forestry & Fishing	0.3%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

The occupational breakdown for the City provides insight into the skills, expertise and training of its residents. This can be useful in developing economic development programs because these strategies can draw upon the training of citizens. The highest-ranking categories are Managerial & Professional, Sales Workers and Production, Transportation and Material Moving. This is an important indicator the City has a healthy balance of both skilled laborers and professionals.

Job Forecasts. The job market forecasts for the City follow that of Monroe County, with the City able to attract a significant percentage of the growth in the Service Industry. The industrial economy has been strong in the City, but Monroe has recently been experiencing an increase in employment in the downtown area and along other major corridors. While at the current time, commercial development is growing; its largest sectors for employment include services, transportation, communication, and utility.

Brownfield Redevelopment

Monroe's Brownfield History. Brownfield sites have figured prominently in both historical and present development of the City. Those most prominent are located in the eastern portion of the City near the River Raisin and Lake Erie.

Once the primary manufacturing and income generating sites in the City, they now fall under the definition of "brownfield" – abandoned, underutilized, and potentially contaminated lands. While classified as 'prime' in infrastructure amenities and market access, they have a severe economic effect upon the community and continue to affect development in Monroe because of liability and due care issues.

Successful marketing of these sites for new construction is more difficult because investors often avoid brownfield locations because of liability and due care requirements for unknown contamination. Although community institutions have pioneered techniques for protection of investment in developing these sites, their marketability requires a sophisticated approach.

In recent years, the State of Michigan adopted two laws that provide a significant incentive for brownfield projects. Public Act 381 provides for establishment of brownfield tax increment finance authorities, which may fund assessment and remediation activities via the value of the redevelopment project. In addition, Public Act 382 provides for a 10% Michigan Single Business Tax credit for those parties who invest in a brownfield site designated by a Brownfield TIF Authority.

Monroe Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Because of geographic and economic considerations, the City of Monroe has targeted brownfield redevelopment as the primary component of its development policy. Only through redevelopment of brownfields can the City and other taxing jurisdictions maintain the ability to provide effective services to its residents.

Monroe City Council created a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) authorized by P.A. 381 of 1996 in January 1997. Since then, the City has engaged in a number of brownfield projects using all elements of the Michigan Brownfield Program – MDEQ liability protection via baseline environmental assessments, grant and loan programs, and BRA tax increment financing coupled with the State Single Business Tax Credit for private investment. Most of these projects are financed through Act 381 BRA work/brownfield plans, approved by MDEQ for school tax capture.

Many individuals and agencies have recognized the City of Monroe as one of Michigan's municipal leaders in the development of brownfield sites. The site-based reimbursement brownfield plan model currently used by most local units and recommended by MDEQ was developed by the Monroe BRA. Based upon its substantial experience, the City was actively involved and referenced in the drafting, review, and recommendation on provisions of the 2000 and 2002 State Brownfield Program amendments.

Other Public Agency Support

The Port of Monroe and its draft master plan discussed in Chapter Two is also an important economic development opportunity for which the City should focus. Future plans for infrastructure improvements will accommodate 240 or more acres of new development sites for industrial businesses. Additional railroad, dock and warehousing improvements are also important implementation plans that will support multiple transportation modes for moving commerce into and out of the City. Diversifying the City's transportation system will be key to offering a solid foundation for its future economic growth.

Much of the Port's acreage is classified as brownfield. Since 1975, the Port has committed more than $10,000,000 to conduct remedial investigation on its property, and has developed valued expertise in the arena of brownfield redevelopment. The Port Commission has set a precedent by marketing and preparing its brownfield sites for development - examples include remedial measures such as construction of a containment dike on the southern edge of its property adjacent to Plum Creek, and innovations such as securing one of the first non-bankruptcy covenants-not-to-sue (CNTS) for a prospective firm to build a facility without fear of liability for previous contamination.

The Monroe County Industrial Development Corporation (MCIDC) has also become involved in marketing the City's brownfields. Their assistance, along with help from local utility companies, has resulted in inquiries from industrial firms interested in a possible site location on Port property. The MCIDC also supports the inclusion of Monroe brownfield site redevelopment in the Monroe County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a planning document which lends credibility for public financing through both federal and state sources.

Potential Development Areas

Ternes/Homrich Industrial Area

- **Location.** The site is bound by the I-75 to the east, Noble to the south, the Conrail RR to the west and Dixie Highway to the north.

- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** The site is primarily industrial with several commercial uses along Dixie Highway. Additional industrial uses occur to the east and south. Two streets with residential are surrounded by the development area.

- **Zoning.** The area is zoned I-1 Light Industrial, I-2 General Industrial, and C-2 General Commercial.

- **Ownership.** Private.

- **Site Factors.** Non-residential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, such as service and delivery areas, parking, glare and noise need to be controlled.

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (SSIHM)

- **Location.** The site is the northerly portion of the SSIHM

campus located on Elm Avenue.

- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** The site is primarily an agricultural area with open space. The Immaculate Heart of Mary campus is located to the south and moderate-density residential homes lie to the east and west of the development site. The existing campus has been declared eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (see Chapter 6 – Historic Resources).

- **Zoning.** The site is currently zoned as R-1B, Single Family Residential.

- **Ownership.** Private.

- **Site Factors.** Natural features should be preserved. Development should not impact adjacent residential neighborhoods. The SSIHM are currently evaluating future development options.

Potential Redevelopment Areas

Mason Run Neighborhood

- **Location.** The Mason Run site is bound by Michigan Avenue to the west, the NS Railroad to the east, city limits to the north and Elm Street to the south.

- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** The site is being developed as a traditional neighborhood. Expansion of this neighborhood will continue to the north city limits. The south edge of the site abuts Elm Avenue and the River Raisin. An existing residential neighborhood is located to the west, vacant land to the north and the Monroe Multi-sports Complex and vacant lands to the east.

- **Zoning.** The site is currently zoned as PUD, Planned Unit Development.

- **Ownership.** Private/Public.

- **Site Factors.** The site is designated as a brownfield redevelopment site. Environmental remediation is ongoing and development activity continues. There is limited access to Dixie Highway, noise and odor from railroads and nearby intensive commercial uses.

Dixie Highway

- **Location.** The Dixie Highway site is bound by the NS Railroad to the west, Noble Avenue to the south, CN Railroad to the east and Dixie Highway to the north.

- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** The Mason Run PUD site is located west of the site, industrial/commercial uses are located to the north, a former paper plant to the east and the Monroe Multi-Sports Complex and several commercial businesses to the south.

- **Zoning.** The area is zoned I-1 Light Industrial District.

- **Ownership.** Private.

- **Site Factors.** Site access may be limited due to the intersection of Elm and Dixie and the N&S railroad.

Riverfront Mixed-Use

- **Location.** This site is located along the River Raisin, east of Dixie Highway, south of Mill Street and on both sides of I-75.

- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** Much of the site is parks and open space, small marina and commercial uses along the River Raisin and the former landfill.

- **Zoning.** The site is currently zoned PUD, Planned Unit Development and I-2. General Industrial District.

- **Ownership.** Private/Public.

- **Site Factors.** Noise and odor from railroad lines and the River Raisin water quality also pose constraints.

South East Neighborhood

- **Location.** This neighborhood is bound by the N&S Railroad to the west, the River Raisin to the north, Norwood to the east and the Port West Industrial Park.

- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** The neighborhood consists of primarily residential uses. Light industrial uses exist along the railroad. The South East neighborhood is surrounded by open space areas, former industrial sites and residential neighborhoods.

- **Zoning.** The site is zoned R-1C, Single Family Residential, I-1 Light Industrial District and I-2, General Industrial District.

- **Ownership.** Private/Public.

- **Site Factors.** Noise and odor from the railroad lines and associated rail yards pose constraints and will need to be mitigated for the neighborhood to regain its strength and reach its potential.

South Consolidated Site

- **Location.** The South Consolidated Site is located north of the South East Neighborhood, south of the River Raisin and west of I-75.

- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** Currently, an industrial warehouse is located on the site. It is surrounded by residential uses to the south and the River Raisin and other industrial uses to the north.

- **Zoning.** The site is zoned I-2, General Industrial District.

- **Ownership.** Public.

- **Site Factors.** The site is a designated brownfield redevelopment site. Environmental due care is necessary because of the former use as a paper manufacturing plant and related activities.

Port West Industrial Park

- **Location.** This site is located south of the South East neighborhood, bounded by Wood Street to the north, the City limits to the south and I-75 to the east.

- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** This 153-acre vacant parcel is surrounded by moderate-density residential to the north, Port East Industrial Park to the east, environmentally sensitive lands to the south, and industrial uses to the west.

- **Zoning.** This site is currently zoned I-2, General Industrial District.

- **Ownership.** Public.

- **Site Factors.** Environmental due care is necessary because the past use as a landfill. The site has limited access except through the local residential streets of the South East Neighborhood. A connection is proposed from Borchert Park Drive that will improve this condition. Environmentally sensitive areas south of the site need to be protected.

Port East Industrial Park

- **Location.** This site is located south of the South East neighborhood. It is bounded by Plum Creek Bay on the south, Front Street on the north, I-75 to the west and North Star to the east.

- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** This 80-acre vacant parcel is bounded Plum Creek Bay to the south and I-75 to the west.

- **Zoning.** This site is currently zoned I-2, General Industrial District.

- **Ownership.** Public.

- **Site Factors.** Environmental due care is necessary because the past use as a landfill.

Winchester Neighborhood Commercial District

- **Location.** Winchester Street frontage from Third to First.

- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** Residential and commercial uses exist along the length of Winchester. Moderate density residential uses occur to the east, south and west. Light industrial uses occur to the north.

- **Zoning.** The district is zoned C-2, General Commercial District.
- **Ownership.** Private.
- **Site Factors.** Non-residential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, such as service and delivery areas, parking, glare and noise need to be limited.

North Monroe Mixed Use District

- **Location.** North Monroe Street frontage from the River Raisin to Lorain Street.
- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** Residential and commercial uses are located within the district. Moderate density residential uses are located to the east and west. The Central Business District is located to the south.
- **Zoning.** The District is partially zoned C-1, Local Commercial District, C-2, General Commercial District and RM, Multiple Family Residential.
- **Ownership.** Private.
- **Site Factors.** Non-residential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, such as service and delivery areas, parking, glare and noise need to be controlled.

South Monroe Commercial District

- **Location.** South Monroe Street frontage from Third Street south to City Limits
- **Existing and Surrounding Land Uses.** Commercial uses are located within the district. Moderate and low density residential uses are located to the east and west. The Central Business District is located to the north.
- **Zoning.** The District is primarily zoned C-2, General Commercial District. One block in the district is zoned RM, Multiple Family Residential.
- **Ownership.** Private.
- **Site Factors.** Non-residential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, such as service and delivery areas, parking, glare and noise need to be controlled.

Guidelines for building and site design should be developed that promote the desired character.

Downtown Sites

- **Location.** Several redevelopment sites have been identified within the Central Business District. The CBD is bound by the River Raisin to the north, Macomb Street to the east and Third Street to the south and Smith Street to the west.
- **Zoning.** The area is zoned CBD, Central Business District.
- **Ownership.** Private/Public.
- **Site Factors.** More detail is provided in Chapter 7: Downtown Monroe.

Economic Development and Redevelopment Goals and Objectives

In work sessions with business leaders, property owners, and community representatives, goals for the future economic development of the city were discussed. These economic development goals form the basis for the Comprehensive Plan land use policies related to economic development.

POLICY STATEMENT

Build an awareness of the City of Monroe as an outstanding place to live, work and visit through promoting a positive business environment; encourage new development in industrial parks, support redevelopment of brownfield sites, broaden and strengthen the tourism sector, and facilitate economic diversification and business growth.

Goal #1 Encourage economic diversity and job creation that are compatible with Monroe's physical character.

a. Rezone vacant or underutilized property in and near neighborhoods to encourage redevelopment that is compatible in use and intensity with the existing neighborhood.
b. Support and encourage efforts to diversify the economic base of Monroe.
c. Facilitate economic development activities that will strengthen neighborhoods, provide educational training and employment opportunities and provide necessary support systems.
d. Diversify the City's transportation network to support multiple methods to transport commerce.
e. Additional policies regarding redevelopment of various downtown sites are included in Chapter 7.

Goal #2 Promote a business-labor-government relationship that addresses the needs of businesses to operate in a positive and mutually beneficial environment.

a. Develop new and enhance existing partnership programs that promote cooperation among public agencies, industry, labor and community to enhance economic growth throughout the city.
b. Facilitate communication between businesses, neighborhoods, development interests, neighborhood associations, community-based groups and other interested parties with respect to economic development and redevelopment.
c. Provide information and briefings on economic development tools, incentives and grants to business groups, community groups, neighborhood groups, and other interested parties.

Goal #3 Provide economic opportunities in certain development and redevelopment areas.

a. Place a priority on infrastructure and transportation improvements and pursue alternative methods of funding.
b. Develop specific policies for certain development and redevelopment areas as part of the City's economic development program.
c. Develop public and private initiatives to support and finance small business and economic growth.

Improvement and Redevelopment Strategies

City Wide Strategies

a. Encourage a diversity of business sizes and types, including retention of existing businesses and attracting new businesses.
b. Identify vacant and underutilized areas and plan to maximize their development.
c. Cluster similar sizes and types of businesses within smaller districts where appropriate, so synergistic effects may result.
d. Reinforce existing business investment and provide for retention and expansion.
e. Provide for local infrastructure development, where needed, to support economic development efforts.
f. Continue downtown revitalization efforts by encouraging a mix of housing and complementary retail and services.
g. Promote tourism through the development of tourist related facilities and services.
h. Promote expansion of the successful brownfield redevelopment efforts.
i. Encourage public-private partnerships to demonstrate innovative approaches to environmental due care leading to economic development.
j. Encourage businesses to reuse infrastructure rather than relocating out of the city or state and thereby increase future public capital and operating costs.
k. Target redevelopment initiatives by providing funding assistance for environmental assessment to investigate properties with redevelopment potential.

Ternes/Homrich Industrial Area Strategies

a. Encourage development that will not negatively affect the adjacent residential neighborhood.
b. Develop an alternate circulation system that will avoid routing traffic through the existing adjacent neighborhoods.
c. Require new development to maintain an attractive façade along the I-75 frontage.
d. Promote the site as a gateway to the city at Dixie and the I-75.

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Strategies

a. Link East and West Lorain and extend Hendricks Drive to Monroe Street to make the interior portions of the parcel accessible.
b. Ensure sidewalks, street lighting, street trees and recreation opportunities are provided.
c. Encourage development that is compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood and is complementary to the Immaculate Heart of Mary campus.
d. Integrate the circulation system with the existing adjacent neighborhoods.

Mason Run Neighborhood Strategies

a. Promote continued development of a moderate density traditional residential neighborhood into northern areas.
b. Ensure sidewalks, street lighting, street trees, recreation opportunities and infrastructure such as water, sewer and electricity are provided.
c. Increase access and visibility to the site by extending Greenwood and Maywood to Dixie Highway/Spaulding Road.
d. Encourage development to be compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood.
e. Incorporate with adjacent residential neighborhood and multiple family uses to the west.

Dixie Highway Site Strategies

a. Encourage the traditional design of new commercial development that will complement the Mason Run Neighborhood and link with the adjacent residential neighborhoods.
b. Maintain infrastructure and improve rights-of-way and streetscape to encourage connections to northern and eastern neighborhoods.
c. Promote the site as a gateway to the City along Dixie Highway at Spaulding, Noble and Elm Avenue.
d. Develop a strong connection to the River Raisin Recreation District.
e. Consider support uses to the historic and cultural development opportunities on the east side of Dixie Highway at the War of 1812 Settlement and Battlefield site.

Riverfront Mixed-Use Strategies

a. Take advantage of grants and financial incentives to enhance the interpretive potential of the Frenchtown Settlement and River Raisin Battlefield (listed on the National Register).
b. Investigate the former paper industrial plant site for redevelopment into a historical and cultural display of the War of 1812 and the Frenchtown Settlement.
c. Consider adaptive reuse of the former paper mill's administrative building as an interpretive center or complementary land use.
d. Develop work/study programs in archeology at the River Raisin Battlefield and Frenchtown Settlement sites.
e. Redevelop the former Jefferson Smurfit Corporation East Mill Landfill.
f. Develop a branded mixed use-district that combines waterfront residential, with specialty retail, entertainment uses and marina uses.
g. Promote the use of the River Raisin frontage for waterfront commercial marinas, marina supply shops and entertainment uses.
h. Promote a safe and inviting pedestrian activity area with wide sidewalks, river overlooks, pedestrian plazas, landscaped medians and recreation opportunities.

i. Increase access and visibility to the site by extending Noble to Mill.
j. Develop a strong connection to the Dixie Highway Area.
k. Expand the existing Waterfront Commercial District zoning designation to include potential uses such as entertainment, residential, and specialty retail and eliminate warehouse and industrial uses.

South East Neighborhood Strategies

a. Revitalize and enhance the existing South East Neighborhood.
b. Ensure sidewalks, street lighting, street trees and recreation opportunities are provided.
c. Promote infill residential development throughout the neighborhood.
d. Ensure new residential development maintains a consistent density as existing residential uses.
e. Increase pedestrian access and visibility to the River Raisin.
f. Develop public recreation uses along the river's frontage within the neighborhood in accordance with the Greenway Plan.
g. Develop a pedestrian bridge to link the South East Neighborhood with the River Raisin Recreation District and Settlement/Battlefield site.
h. Encourage the development of a neighborhood organization that will promote the redevelopment and revitalization efforts for the neighborhood.

South Consolidated Site Strategies

a. Increase access and visibility to the River Raisin.
b. Develop an attractive gateway entry at Front and I-75.
c. Ensure all negative impacts from the I-75 are buffered from any residential development.

Port West Industrial Park Strategies

a. Ensure new development respects the existing sensitive flood plain and wetland areas that are located in the southern portion of the site.
b. Investigate funding and grant opportunities offered by the MDNR and the EPA for protection and/or enhancement of sensitive floodplain and wetland area.
c. Seek funds from MDOT and MEDC for infrastructure improvements.
d. Require new development to maintain an attractive façade along the I-75 frontage.

Port East Industrial Park Strategies

a. Ensure new development respects the existing sensitive flood plain and wetland areas that are located in the southern portion of the site.
b. Investigate funding and grant opportunities offered by the MDNR and the EPA for protection and/or enhancement of sensitive floodplain and wetland area.
c. Seek funds from MDOT and MEDC for infrastructure improvements.
d. Require new development to maintain an attractive façade along the I-75 frontage.
e. Promote the site as a gateway to the city at Front Street and the I-75.

Winchester Neighborhood Commercial District Strategies

a. Re-orient land uses along Winchester to provide for retail development at the neighborhood level. Neighborhood retail is recommended as a node development between First and Third.
b. Limit non-residential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, such as service and delivery areas, parking, glare and noise.
c. Encourage residential uses above neighborhood retail uses.
d. Enhance Winchester as a neighborhood center through linkages to Arthur Lesow Community Center and improvements at Labor Park.
e. Develop and implement a streetscape program that emphasizes pedestrian activity such as buildings lining the street front, street trees, wide sidewalks, lighting, and parking in the rear.

North Monroe Mixed Use District Strategies

a. Encourage mixed-use development (residential, retail and office) on North Monroe Street, where density and mix of uses can establish a strong district that does not necessarily compete with the Central Business District.
b. Limit non-residential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, such as service and delivery areas, parking, glare and noise.
c. Develop and implement a streetscape program that celebrates the East Elm – North Monroe historic district.
d. Assist property owners in understanding historic rehabilitation tax credits, grants and other similar programs.
e. Create a separate zoning district tailored to the desired uses and responds to the unique site design needs of this area.

South Monroe Commercial District Strategies

a. Adopt the proposed design overlay for the South Monroe Street Corridor to preserve the established character of the district and ensure that future development activities are compatible with this character.
b. Encourage mixed-use development (retail and office) on South Monroe Street, where density and mix of uses can establish a strong district that does not necessarily compete with the Central Business District.
c. Limit non-residential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, such as service and delivery areas, parking, glare and noise.
d. Assist property owners in understanding historic rehabilitation tax credits, grants and other similar programs.

Downtown Sites Strategies

a. Encourage mixed-use development (parking,

residential and retail) to enhance and increase the vitality of the Central Business District.

b. Ensure development does not have a detrimental effect on the River Raisin.
c. Promote development that assists in reestablishing retail and service uses and generates new business in the Downtown.
d. Enforce site design guidelines to ensure that the character of the development is complementary to the historic Downtown.
e. Ensure public pedestrian access is provided along the River Raisin, along with a pedestrian connection from the riverwalk to Monroe Street.

CHAPTER 6: HISTORIC RESOURCES

Introduction

One of Michigan's oldest communities, Monroe has a long and rich heritage evident on its landscape. The city's abundant historic buildings, structures, and sites are a key element in defining its identity and character. Properly managed, these resources can provide the foundation for community revitalization.

Profile of Historic Resources

Monroe has three historic districts, one historic site, and five individual resources listed in the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, historians have identified five undesignated historic areas as having historic value.

Old Village Historic District. Platted in 1817, Old Village is the largest of the three historic districts and includes the city's business district, courthouse square, and oldest neighborhoods. Old Village is historically significant for the exceptional breadth and diversity of its residential architecture, containing nearly every style and type of house that was built in the nation between 1820 and 1950. However the historic character of the Old Village Historic District has diminished since 1982 when it was listed in the National Register. In the neighborhoods this has occurred through the removal of such historic features as windows and porches and the application of artificial siding. In the business district historic facades have been replaced by unsympathetic modern designs. In addition, some historic buildings have been demolished, leaving gaps in the streetscape. While Old Village is still of National Register quality it would be desirable to stop the erosion of the district's historic character.

East Elm-North Macomb Street Historic District. For much of Monroe's history Elm Avenue has been the most prestigious address in the city, reflected in the array of impressive upper class dwellings dating from the 1820s to the 1920s. In the mid-nineteenth century suburban villas were built in the rural area north of Elm Avenue. The rest of the district gradually filled in with more modest houses representing the range of popular architectural styles. The district has experienced some of the same unsympathetic alterations found in Old Village neighborhoods but overall retains its historic character to a high degree.

St. Mary's Church Complex Historic District. Located at the corner of Monroe Street and Elm Avenue, St. Mary's Church was built between 1835 and 1839. The district also contains the Brothers of Holy Cross Hall, a school, and the church rectory. St. Mary's parish is the second oldest Catholic parish still in existence in the Old Northwest Territory, and the church was previously one of the oldest Gothic Revival style churches in Michigan. In 1988 the exterior of St. Mary's Church was encased in a new brick facade, resulting in a loss of its historic appearance.

River Raisin Battlefield Site. Located north of the River Raisin on Monroe's east side, the River Raisin Battlefield Site has the potential to reveal important information about early French settlement in Michigan and to add to our understanding of the River Raisin battles and War of 1812. Archaeological and other excavations at the site have demonstrated the presence of extensive resources from the French settlement and the first and second battles of the River Raisin. These deposits survive beneath the industrial complex built in the early twentieth century by the River Raisin Paper Company. The city of Monroe recently received a $1,400,000 Clean Michigan Initiative Grant for the Paper Mill Row brownfield redevelopment project, which will include preservation of the River Raisin Battlefield Site.

Monroe has four buildings and one monument individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

The corner of Harrison and Front Street in 1895

- **Governor Robert McClelland House** (ca. 1840), within the East Elm-North Macomb Street Historic District;
- **Sawyer House** (1873), in the Old Village Historic District;
- **Rudolph Nims House** (1836–1846) on West Noble Avenue;
- **Weis Manufacturing Company** (1905–1912) at Union and Seventh Streets;
- **George Armstrong Custer Equestrian Monument** (1910) at the corner of Elm Avenue and North Monroe Street.

One additional building and one site are listed in Michigan's State Register of Historic Sites:

- **Johnson-Phinney House** (1832 and 1869);
- **Woodland Cemetery** (1810–).

In 2001 a group of historians met in Monroe to take a fresh look at its historic resources. Because so much of Monroe is more than fifty years old it is a challenge to pick out specific areas that are the most "historic." However the five historic areas discussed below have significant concentrations of buildings that retain their historic appearance and appear to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

St. Mary's Academy Historic Area. In 1982 St. Mary's Academy Historic District was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places and determined eligible for listing by the Keeper of the National Register. The proposed district included the Hall of the Divine Child, the Motherhouse, Immaculate Heart Chapel, St. Mary's Academy, the infirmary, and the power plant. The St. Mary's Academy Complex is significant as the home of the Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (SSIHM) and also as one of the most important groupings of Art Deco style buildings in Michigan. The closing of the boys and girls schools combined with a decrease in the population of their order have led the SSIHM to reevaluate the use of the former academy.

West Elm Avenue Historic Area. Adjoining St. Mary's Academy at its southeast corner, the West Elm Avenue Historic Area extends along both sides of West Elm Avenue to St. Mary's Park and northward for one block along the west side of Borgess Avenue. Platted in 1836, West Elm is similar in character to the East Elm-North Macomb Street Historic District. Most of this area was in a local historic district designated in 1991 but subsequently repealed.

Godfroy/Borgess/St. Mary's Historic Area. North of West Noble Avenue, extending along Godfroy, Borgess, and St. Mary's Avenues, this area contains Monroe's largest and most intact concentration of the small house styles such as "Cotswold" cottages and Bungalows popular in the 1920s. After World War I residential development in Monroe shifted to vacant lands north of the River Raisin. Godfroy, Borgess, and St. Mary's Avenues have become a preferred address for Monroe's middle class.

East Elm-North Macomb Street Historic District Additions. Two areas adjoining the East Elm-North Macomb Street Historic District that match the district in character and retain their historic appearance appear to be potential additions to the historic district. Homes on Lincoln Avenue south of East Noble Avenue relate closely to the homes on Macomb and Tremont to the west. East Elm Avenue, extending eastward from the current district boundary at Riverview Avenue to Michigan Avenue, was part of a local historic district established in 1991 but subsequently repealed.

Hollywood Drive Historic Area. Extending northward along Hollywood Drive from the East Elm-North Macomb Street Historic District boundary to Maywood Avenue, this historic area was platted in 1920. Developed as a boulevard with large lots, Hollywood Drive replaced Elm Avenue as the street for Monroe's most affluent citizens through World War II. The large homes in a variety of historical revival styles popular from the 1920s through the 1940s are unmatched elsewhere in Monroe.

Past Preservation Efforts

The activities of the Monroe County Historical Society, founded 1938, and the Monroe County Historical Commission, established 1966, laid the groundwork for appreciation of Monroe's historic resources. Active historic preservation efforts began with surveys to identify Monroe's historic buildings, structures, and archaeological sites. The first comprehensive study to document Monroe's historic buildings was the Monroe County Historical Commission's 1973 survey of more than six thousand buildings in Monroe County built before 1901. In 1976 the commission sponsored the first archaeological investigations of the River Raisin Battlefield Site. Continued in subsequent years, these investigations led to the listing of the River Raisin Battlefield Site in the National Register of Historic Places and to the opening of the River Raisin Battlefield Visitors Center.

In 1978 the city of Monroe conducted a comprehensive survey of properties within the city's boundaries, identifying 3,352 buildings and structures and nearly 100 sites pre-dating 1930. This survey provided Monroe with its first comprehensive database of historic resources and created a basis for preservation planning. It also proved a catalyst for preservation activities. In 1979 Monroe City Council approved the creation of a historic district study committee, which prepared the nomination that led to the 1982 listing of three historic districts in the National Register of Historic Places. The committee also worked on a local historic preservation ordinance. In 1989 City Council approved Monroe's Heritage Resource Historic Preservation Ordinance. In August 1991 City Council established three local historic districts under this ordinance: the East Elm/North Macomb/East Noble Street Historic District, the St. Mary's Church and Elementary School Historic District, and the West Elm Street Historic District. In November City Council repealed the districts in response to a petition by property owners. In 1995 Monroe's historic district ordinance, which follows the requirements of Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act, replaced the 1989 ordinance.

Historic photograph of Monroe Police Officers

Historic photograph of Monroe firemen

Public Policy

Public buildings play an important role in forming a city's image. Local governments set an example by how they care for their own historic buildings. The Monroe County Courthouse has been a landmark from the time it was built in 1880. The Monroe County Historical Museum, built in 1911 as the U.S. Post Office, is another historic public building that lends a strong presence to downtown Monroe. Two nineteenth century Italianate style houses have been converted to public uses. The Dorsch House became the city library in 1914. The Sawyer family gave their ornate home to the city in 1938 and it has housed a variety of community organizations and events. Well-maintained historic schools are key resources for attractive and livable historic neighborhoods. Monroe Middle School, Christiancy Elementary School, and Lincoln Elementary School offer an imposing presence and a stabilizing influence in their neighborhoods.

Monroe's Central Business District is one of the city's most visible historic resources. The appearance and vitality of the Central Business District are strongly influenced by the policies of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). In December 2000 the DDA adopted a strategic plan based on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Program. In 2002 the DDA implemented design guidelines that follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, the nationally accepted standards for preserving a building's historic character while adapting it for contemporary use. Monroe's roads, sidewalks, streetlights, and parking may either enhance or detract from the city's historic character. The representations of historic street lamps in downtown Monroe are similar to early twentieth century street lamps. However the surface parking lots, many of them publicly owned, that pepper Monroe's streets are unattractive, leave "holes" in the rhythm of the historic streetscape, and in some cases historic buildings were demolished to create them.

Codes and Ordinances

Monroe's historic district ordinance is the central element of the city's historic preservation program and its strongest tool for protecting historic resources. The ordinance establishes a historic district commission that reviews all work affecting the exterior appearance of resources within designated historic districts. Monroe City Council may designate historic districts consisting of one resource or a group of resources. In 2002 Monroe had thirty-six historic districts almost all consisting of one historic building. Monroe would benefit by a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to local historic district designation. The great advantage of local historic districts is the ability to protect the historic character of whole neighborhoods and business districts. They protect a property owner's investment in his or her property by preventing insensitive alterations and development on neighboring properties.

Zoning should help to maintain Monroe's historic character but this is not always the case. For example, much of the East Elm-North Macomb Street Historic District and the Old Village Historic District is currently zoned two family or multiple family residential, allowing increases in density that are not in keeping with the historic character of these neighborhoods. Another example is the architectural design standards for the Central Business District (CBD), which state that exterior design shall be consistent with the U.S. Department of the Interior's architectural guidelines for historic buildings. Yet buildings in the CBD have been renovated in a manner that is not consistent with these architectural guidelines. One way for zoning to support Monroe's historic character is to establish historic overlay districts in which density, setback, use, height, and bulk must be compatible with the historic architecture and landscape. Zoning regulations could also provide for the historic district commission to be heard on land use applications that might impact historic character in an overlay district.

Monroe's sign regulations contain provisions to protect historic signs and to help ensure that new signs do not detract from the city's historic character. For example, the regulations exempt certain historic signs from permitting and licensing requirements. The sign regulations could be strengthened by providing more specific guidelines to ensure that signs in historic districts

Front Street and Washington

and areas are consistent with that place's historic character.

Monroe uses the State Construction Code (SCC) to ensure that buildings meet minimum standards for health, safety, and welfare. Like most building codes, the SCC is written for new construction, making it difficult for historic buildings to meet code requirements. Chapter 34 of the SCC exempts historic buildings from meeting all of the code requirements when authorized by the building official, provided that the building has been designated historic and that unsafe conditions are corrected.

Influences

Monroe's population peaked at 23,894 in 1970 and since then has gradually declined, to 22,076 in 2000. This trend has somewhat protected Monroe's historic neighborhoods from the pressures of a growing population. However Monroe's aging housing may need significant repairs now or in the near future. The historic character of Monroe's historic districts and areas has already been diminished by unsympathetic alterations, and this is likely to continue without the protection offered by local historic districts. Monroe's percentage of rental housing falls within the range for a typical city. Rental housing is often associated with poor maintenance, but there is opportunity for rental housing in buildings that contribute to National Register historic districts to qualify for the federal historic rehabilitation tax credit.

On Telegraph Road, Monroe Street, and Dixie Highway, Monroe has developed commercial corridors typical of

post-World War II development throughout the nation. To some extent this has protected downtown Monroe by channeling new development to these areas instead of to downtown. Nevertheless, competition from these commercial corridors has diminished the vitality of Monroe's historic business district. Efforts by downtown Monroe to compete with these corridors have included modernizing building facades and creating surface parking lots, both of which erode downtown's historic character.

Although Monroe has railroad lines and an airport, the system of roads and streets for automobiles is primary. A number of Monroe's high volume arterial roads are within or border historic areas and districts. These designated truck routes, while necessary for transportation access, have a negative effect on quality of life in the affected areas, especially the neighborhoods. The comprehensive sidewalk system in downtown Monroe and older neighborhoods relieves traffic congestion and maintains Monroe's historic character as a walking city. With the planned consolidation of rail lines in Monroe the city is investigating converting abandoned rail lines to pathways for pedestrian and bike traffic. As these plans proceed the city should preserve historic railroad structures.

Economic Benefits

Historic preservation has always been believed to offer significant economic benefits. The Michigan Historic Preservation Network published a report called *Investing Michigan's Future: The Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation* that provides important insight into this issue. This report revealed that:

> *"Historic preservation activities are cost-effective tools that may be used to leverage private capital, create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods and businesses districts, and stimulate a wide range of other economic activities."*

Examples and findings cited in the report include:

- Since its conception in 1971, the federal rehabilitation tax credit has been utilized by 611 Michigan projects showing a sizeable investment of $819.9 million in qualified rehabilitation costs towards neighborhood and business district rehabilitation projects. Associated economic impacts to those tax credit projects add another $933..2 million, for a total of $1.7 billion attributable to rehabilitation activities throughout the state.

- Since 1971 rehabilitation activities in Michigan have created 20,252 jobs.

- Historic district designation programs have enhanced local property values throughout the state when compared to non-designated areas.

- Historic preservation will assist in supporting the growing heritage tourism industry in Michigan.

The programs discussed in the report represent only the beginning of historic preservation's economic benefits. Historic preservation is an investment that continues to generate benefits for many years and should not be neglected by the City of Monroe.

Education and Advocacy

The Monroe County Historical Society has been an active preservation advocate. The society moved and restored the Navarre-Anderson Trading Post and the Johnson-Phinney House. The society was also instrumental in acquiring part of the River Raisin Battlefield Site and establishing a visitor center on the site. Neighborhood organizations are often effective advocates for historic preservation. At present, the Old Village Plat Neighborhood Association (OVPNA) is the only active formal neighborhood organization in Monroe. The OVPNA aims to maintain and preserve the integrity of its neighborhood, which is contained within the Old Village Historic District. From time to time the city of Monroe has sponsored programs to teach people about local historic resources and how to preserve them. These programs have ranged from downtown preservation conferences to historic Monroe walking tours. There is opportunity to do more to educate Monroe's citizens about their historic resources.

Public Perception

The citizens of Monroe seem interested yet ambivalent about preserving their historic resources. Clearly there is pride in the city's history, evident in signs for historic Monroe, numerous historical markers, an active county historical society and county museum, and large districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Yet after more than twenty years of effort by preservation advocates, Monroe is still striving to establish a preservation program that is truly effective.

Key Issues

The following issues seem to be most critical to the future of Monroe's historic resources.

There is relatively little protection for Monroe's historic resources. Monroe's historic district ordinance protects only a handful of the city's hundreds of historic resources. Historic buildings have been demolished and many more have had historic features removed.

Without an accurate, up to date survey of Monroe's historic resources, the city may be losing resources that have not even been identified. Monroe's last comprehensive survey of historic resources took place more than twenty years ago. Since then demolitions, new construction, and renovations have made it necessary to reevaluate what is historic. Buildings constructed in the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s need to be evaluated.

Financial incentives that are already available for historic preservation are underutilized. Despite a large number of commercial and rental residential buildings in Monroe's National Register historic districts, there have been no applications from Monroe for the federal historic rehabilitation tax credit since the mid-1980s. Moreover, there are relatively few applications for Monroe's Heritage Loan Program.

The people of Monroe take pride in their history but have been reluctant to support the regulations needed to protect the City's historic resources. Evidence abounds of Monroe's pride in its history, yet even with ongoing efforts by preservation advocates, Monroe needs to establish an effective program for protecting its historic resources.

Historic photograph of downtown Monroe

Historic Resources Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives that follow describe a desirable future for Monroe's historic resources and how this can be achieved.

POLICY STATEMENT

Protect Monroe's valuable historic resources and promote them as a positive influence on the quality life for residents, on the economic viability of the City, and as an educational tool.

Goal #1 ***Enhance Monroe's quality of life by preserving and protecting the City's historic resources.***

a. Conduct a city-wide survey of above-ground historic resources to provide an accurate database for future planning and protection activities.
b. Integrate survey data into a city geographic information system.
c. Make survey results available to the public through the Internet.
d. Consider local historic districts that protect entire historic areas.
e. Consider historic overlay districts under Monroe's zoning regulations for each historic district, area, and site.
f. Acquire, preserve, and conduct archaeological investigations of the portion of the River Raisin Battlefield Site that is still privately owned.
g. Involve the Monroe County Historical Society as an active partner in preservation projects.
h. Investigate establishment of a revolving fund for historic buildings.
i. Continue efforts to preserve the former St. Mary's Academy, a unique and prominent historic resource.
j. Pursue National Register listing for those historic areas in Monroe that are not yet listed.
k. Add specific guidelines for signs in historic districts, areas, and sites to Monroe's sign regulations.
l. Review alternatives for truck routes through historic neighborhoods.
m. Encourage the establishment of neighborhood associations to help preserve neighborhood integrity.

Goal #2 ***Promote Monroe's economic development through historic preservation.***

a. Encourage work done under the DDA's Facade Improvement Program meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.
b. Consider appointment of a representative from the historic district commission as a voting member of the DDA board.
c. Adopt the guidelines and recommendations in the 1981 *Downtown Facade Study* as design guidelines for the historic business district.
d. Strengthen Monroe's Main Street Program through more active participation in the National Main Street Center.
e. Develop a better working relationship between preservationists and business owners.
f. Publicize and promote the use of existing federal, state, and local financial incentives for historic preservation.
g. Promote a well-managed heritage tourism program utilizing historic resources such as the French settlement and River Raisin Battlefield Site, and broader assets such as the city's historic neighborhoods and downtown.
h. Continue to promote Monroe as a vital part of Michigan's heritage tourism economy.
i. Track at a local level economic benefits such as amount of investment, business stimulation, and job creation in order assess and articulate Monroe's economic development as a result of historic preservation.

Goal #3 ***Foster greater awareness, understanding, and support for preserving Monroe's historic resources.***

a. Establish a historic preservation awards program.
b. Present workshops and seminars on preservation topics such as architectural history and practical rehabilitation techniques for historic homes.
c. Offer workshops on preservation benefits and techniques to local bankers, realtors, and contractors.

d. Publish an ongoing series of monthly newspaper articles in local newspapers to disseminate accurate information about preservation practices.
e. Use print, the Internet, and other media to inform people about preservation topics.
f. Commemorate the Native American inhabitants of what is now Monroe.
g. Celebrate National Historic Preservation Week.
h. Include instruction on Monroe's history and historic resources in the school curriculum.
i. Reestablish the "Day in Historic Monroe" school program.
j. Develop signage for the city's National Register listed historic districts and the River Raisin Battlefield Site.

Historic Preservation Tools

Local Tools. Monroe's strongest tool to protect its historic resources is its historic district ordinance. Monroe's ordinance was adopted under the authority of Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act, which enables—but does not require—local units of government to adopt such ordinances. Expansion of the local historic district as recommended in Map 8 will encourage a higher level of preservation and allow those people to become eligible for tax incentives described in this chapter.

Incentives. Some of the most valuable incentives for historic preservation are the TEA-21 grants and historic rehabilitation tax credits described below. Monroe is also eligible to apply for CLG grants for preservation activities. Monroe has taken advantage of CLG funds available for training members of the historic district commission and in 2002 received its first CLG grant.

State Incentives: The Michigan historic preservation tax credits, authorized in 1999, are available to owners or lessees of historic buildings and cover up to 25 percent of rehabilitation costs. Three Monroe projects totaling nearly $60,000 in rehabilitation costs have been certified for the tax credit, and as of July 2001 an additional two projects with nearly $24,000 in rehabilitation costs were pending. The property tax benefit available to all homeowners under Michigan's Mathieu-Gast Act can be used to offset the costs of maintaining historic and other houses. This act provides that the added cash value of a property resulting from home improvements will not be considered as part of the tax assessment until the property is sold.

Federal Incentives: At the federal level the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) provides the framework for preservation activities throughout the United States. Of particular relevance to Monroe are the National Register of Historic Places, Section 106 review, and the Certified Local Government Program. Monroe has numerous properties listed in the National Register. Under Section 106 of the NHPA, activities that are funded or licensed by federal agencies are reviewed for their effects on resources that are listed in or eligible for the National Register, providing some protection from any adverse effects that these activities might cause. Monroe is one of fifteen local governments in Michigan that have been awarded Certified Local Government (CLG) certification for meeting high standards in its historic preservation programs.

The federal Tax Reform Act of 1986 established a 20 percent federal income tax credit for rehabilitating income-producing historic buildings. In the mid-1980s, eight projects in Monroe representing a total investment of nearly ten million dollars were certified for the federal rehabilitation tax credit. There have been no applications from Monroe for this tax credit since that time.

In 1991 Congress passed the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), with funding for transportation enhancement activities through the Surface Transportation Program. Under ISTEA, Michigan established a Heritage Route Program, and in 1996 Monroe Street became the first historic route designated under this program. In 1998 Congress reauthorized the Surface Transportation Program and its transportation enhancement funding under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Monroe was awarded a TEA-21 enhancement grant to conduct archaeological survey of the River Raisin Battlefield Site in Riviere aux Raisins Park.

Local Incentives: On the local level, the Monroe Heritage Loan Program offers low interest loans for exterior and interior improvements to commercial buildings located within the DDA district or buildings that have been identified as historic by Monroe's historic district commission. Since the program started in November 1995 loans have been approved for projects totaling more than $1.1 million. The Monroe DDA's Facade Improvement Program offers grants of up to $5,000 for facade improvements to commercial buildings within the DDA district. Beginning in 2002, projects are required to apply the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

Agencies, Organizations, and Programs. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is the state agency that helps people to identify, interpret, and protect their historic resources, administering a number of federal and state historic preservation programs. Assistance is also available from the Michigan Historic Preservation Network, a statewide, not-for-profit advocacy organization dedicated to preserving and cultivating awareness of the state's historic resources. The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a nationwide, not-for-profit advocacy organization, offers programs and publications to inform and assist people in their preservation efforts. The National Trust has assisted Monroe in establishing and promoting its local historic districts. Although a number of National Park Service (NPS) programs are administered in Michigan by the SHPO, the NPS offers additional programs and publications of interest to people in Monroe.

Monroe is fortunate in its proximity to Eastern Michigan University and in the good working relationship the city has developed with the Historic Preservation Program at the university. Students in the Historic Preservation Program have completed valuable projects for the city, including a comprehensive history of the River Raisin Paper Company site and a profile of Monroe's historic business district.

CHAPTER 7: DOWNTOWN MONROE

Introduction

Downtown Monroe has many assets that other communities strive to achieve in order to improve the character of their towns. Monroe's downtown has historic buildings of two and three stories; streets with wide sidewalks, on-street parking, and a variety of activities, and most notably, direct access to and frontage along the River Raisin. There are civic buildings with commercial and office space, and residential units are being renovated in increasing numbers above the existing storefronts. The riverwalk, pedestrian bridge, and nearby parks and open space bring people even closer to the natural amenities that the river has to offer.

Yet the downtown suffers, as many other downtowns throughout the country, from development pressures along major road corridors and sprawling developments that carry residents away from the city center. The market demands have changed such that the downtown storefronts are now being occupied by office uses and some buildings are being used as storage spaces. Where business and service stores once drew people into the downtown, new development entices businesses away to the main corridors, such as Telegraph Road and Dixie Highway.

Monroe has already started to examine its strengths and opportunities for revitalizing its downtown to become a unique and thriving place for the entire region. Through development of goals and objectives and strategies for economic development, Downtown Monroe can build upon its assets and initial steps to prepare for its future as a successful district.

The traditional grid pattern of the downtown allows for narrow streets and interconnected neighborhoods.

The downtown has several buildings sited on the river and pedestrian riverwalk.

The National Main Street Program is one approach that Monroe can take toward revitalization. The Main Street Program focuses on a Four Point Approach: Design, Organization, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring. All four categories deal with essential components to downtown revitalization. The program also has eight principles that are key steps, some of which include the need for public/private partnerships, the identification of existing assets, and having an action-oriented plan. Several of the recommendations listed below build upon strategies developed by the National Main Street Program. Refer to www.mainstreet.org for more information.

Boundaries. The boundaries of the downtown area consist of Elm Street to the north, Fifth Street to the south, Smith Street to the west, and Scott Street to the east. While this does not correspond directly with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) district, most of the downtown's "character" is concentrated within this boundary, and so it is presented as the area for discussion in this chapter.

Land Use. The downtown has several assets that have allowed Monroe to maintain its small town character and charm over time. The two and three story structures, zero line setbacks and traditional urban grid pattern leading

to the river create a pedestrian scaled environment. Downtown Monroe has a diversified mixture of complimentary uses, consisting of commercial, office, financial institutions, residential, and civic uses. There are parks and churches within walking distance and healthy neighborhoods nearby. While the scale of the city blocks and downtown buildings enhance

the pedestrian experience, there are several areas of opportunity that exist for rehabilitation and redevelopment. The following areas present a variety of options to enhance the downtown:

Along the River Raisin. Along the south side of the river, buildings are sited such that they face the street front and turn their backs to the river. As a result, the space along the river now consists of asphalt parking lots and/or underutilized space. This missed opportunity of such sweeping views should become a primary focus for downtown revitalization. In order to make the newly constructed riverwalk an active and lively space, there is a need to improve connections to the river, and potential to create mixed-use structures that face both the river and the street.

At the 2001 Mayor's Conference, an idea came about to develop the W. Front Street area along the river into a park to provide an aesthetically pleasing view of the river from the north side, and to strengthen the connection between the river's two sides. The pedestrian bridge also provides great linkages from St. Mary's Park.

On the north side of the river, two parking lots flank either side of Monroe Street. These parking lots could be better landscaped. With infill development in these key parcels, and redevelopment of the riverside of the buildings along East and West Front Street, the downtown can present a grand entrance for the entire city to view.

Front and Monroe Streets serve as the "main-main" of the

Retail/Office District. The perceived "city center" is located at the intersection of Front Street and Monroe Street. This is where traffic, pedestrians, shopping, and mixed-uses all come together. Although retail shops are thriving along Front Street and Monroe Street, the majority of the downtown area buildings have offices and services located on the first floor. While market demands have shifted, and retail stores are locating along the major business corridors outside of the downtown, the result is that the downtown streets do not attract as many people as they once did, and the individual business owners that remain are at a disadvantage.

There are some definite niches in the retail shops that do exist, however, as identified through stakeholder meetings, such as second hand stores, bar-restaurants, and craft and gift shops. These niches are the result of merchants trying to be flexible to the trends in sales; camera shops may also sell gifts or artwork, or a country store may also sell office supplies. A successful tenant mix strategy and marketing program can begin to attract appropriate uses to the downtown, and can better define the key niches for the downtown.

Community/Cultural District. The Community/Cultural District is primarily centered from First to Third Street, and from Cass to Washington. In this district, church steeples are defining vertical elements, and the River Raisin Center for the Arts, the Monroe County Historical Museum, and other significant buildings are located. While there are several historic structures in this section of the downtown, there are also several vacant sites and parking lots.

The Lotus Fountain in the Community/Cultural District at First and Washington depicts one of the four elements for Monroe

Over time, the number of surface parking lots has increased in the
area. Some of these lots are private lots for specific uses. One way to preserve the original character of this area and prevent future deterioration is to consolidate such parking and develop parking strategies to meet demands, such as shared and long-term parking.

This district could also be highlighted by a redeveloped "Loranger Square". Loranger Square, surrounded by Dorsch Memorial Library, First Presbyterian Church, the County Courthouse, City Hall, and the Historic Edison Building, will serve as a city center for the community/cultural district, the retail/office district, and the government district. Loranger Square should also exhibit the historical importance of Monroe, and could contain the key "Four Elements" of Monroe: Floral, Paper, Military, and Railway.

Government District. Adjacent to the Community/Cultural District and Office/Retail District, the Government District can be reestablished as an anchor for the downtown. Currently, the County Building and City Hall are located next to each other, but the site design of each building is quite independent. Architecturally, City Hall is a modern building in a traditional downtown. Currently, it is angled away from the street and does not engage the pedestrian. The main entrance to City Hall should be oriented to both the sidewalk and the street while also providing a grand entry. If there is opportunity in the future, an arcade between these buildings or other unifying design element combined with improved and adequate parking for employees could help to strengthen and improve the visibility of City Hall and the entire the district. This district should have a clear identity of its own, while still providing strong linkages to the retail and cultural districts of the downtown with connecting green spaces and linear lawns.

Circulation and Parking. One of the more prevalent issues in the downtown is the mixture of vehicular traffic with pedestrians. Monroe Street is perceived as a difficult and threatening road to cross, and this ultimately causes the retail shops to suffer. While evaluation is now underway for streetscape and roadway redesign along Monroe Street in the downtown, today Monroe Street is a five-lane road that is primarily designed for automobiles rather than pedestrians.

Angled parking in the downtown allows for extra spaces and narrows the street width.

There is a proposed overlay design for S. Monroe Street that has the potential to alleviate several of these concerns. The intention of the overlay district is to preserve the established character of the street and coordinate future development and design in the area. The main components of the overlay district deal with front façade orientation and setback, building height, and the enhancement of the street presence. Monroe Street could greatly benefit from this overlay design and other traffic calming and streetscape elements, such as parking bump-outs, parking on both sides of the street, banners and street lighting. All of these strategies can create an atmosphere that is pedestrian-oriented.

The issue of inadequate parking is also a primary concern for many residents and visitors to the downtown. The downtown must provide enough parking for visitors, residents, City and County employees. In the focus group session, it was stated that residents in the City would most likely choose creating a new parking lot over the construction of new park or green space in the downtown area. Although, other residents saw this parking issue as more of a perception than an actual problem, the DDA should develop a parking plan and examine shared uses of parking lots for both long term and short term strategies.

Another major circulation issue in the downtown is one-way traffic patterns. The retail shops are seriously affected from the one-way traffic loops in the city along First and Front Streets. As retail in downtowns thrive on vehicular traffic and pedestrian access, one-way streets ultimately cut the traffic from these storefronts in half.

The parking lot that fronts the river and is behind West Front Street is a prime location for redevelopment.

Redevelopment Areas. There are several areas throughout the downtown that can be redeveloped with mixed-used buildings to enhance the area. The area facing the river behind W. Front Street presents the greatest amount of space for a redevelopment project. Until this space is redeveloped with structures, it has the potential to be used for festivals, exhibit space, concerts, city functions, or even as a secondary space for the farmer's market, to bring these events closer to the downtown.

Other redevelopment areas include some of the side streets such as Second Street or Macomb at First Street. These areas are all well suited for urban residential town homes. Bringing long term residents back into the downtown is a key step in revitalization. Where parking becomes in demand as a result of new construction along Macomb Street, a parking deck could be developed with "liner shops" at the ground level. Liner shops are typically 25'-35' deep storefronts that have service for urban living, such as a small bakery, dry cleaners, coffee shop, or newsstand.

Gateways. The downtown has several opportunities to create "gateways" to the area, including the use of landscaping, architectural elements, or other features. One such location is at the intersection of Harrison, Front Street and First Street. To symbolize the industrial heritage of the City, this may be a location where a sculptural element of the railroad could serve as an entry point to the downtown. Downtown entry points could also include elements symbolic of the settlement of Monroe. Other key intersections include Elm and Monroe, Third and Monroe, and Front and Macomb.

The downtown walking tour in June 2001 allowed residents to view the downtown from a design perspective and to gather

Public Comments. Public input has been a key component to the creation of this comprehensive plan. Early on in the process, focus group sessions were conducted in January and again in April to gain input from community leaders, residents, and business owners about the downtown and important issues for the City.

The public participation culminated in a downtown workshop session held on June 20, 2001. This session further explored the public comments generated during the January and April sessions. This session also included a city walking tour to gather perspective and a design workshop where participants separated into groups to share design ideas for the downtown.

The results of the focus sessions indicated several strong themes for the downtown, including the need to establish a strong identity, and the issue of adequate parking spaces in the city. More detailed comments and suggestions are listed to the right.

Goals and Objectives

Public Comments from Visioning Sessions:

- Positive images and assets for the downtown: New residential development, quaint and intimate streets, close proximity to river, flags flying in the downtown, "mom and pop" shops, the Coney Island restaurant, the Knights of Columbus three-day festival, St. Mary's park and its festivals and events, and Christmas trees and streetlights during the holiday season.
- Need for good quality restaurants, a hardware store, a grocery store, more housing in the downtown, a quality hotel, and a women's clothing store. Need restaurants, a bakery, boutique shops, a five and dime shop or general store, an ice cream shop, a bakery.
- There is an over abundance of office space, and not enough retail stores.
- Need an entry image/gateway to the downtown.
- Building design should take advantage of proximity and view of the river.
- Monroe Street could be narrowed with a widened pedestrian area instead of the current five lanes of traffic. Need to increase pedestrian traffic in the area.
- Need to improve the streetscape in the downtown: street furniture, places to sit, large trees, streetlights, and street vendors are all missing elements.
- Need a downtown coordinator for events with City employee participation to market the downtown and attract new tenants. Increase volunteerism; the same group of people plan and volunteer for most of the events and activities. As merchants plan the events themselves, it takes time away from their own businesses.
- Need street furnishings – lights, trees, and furniture to enhance the character.
- The City should do historic lighting in downtown and along the riverwalk.
- Need shelters for downtown events. Need on-street parking in the neighborhoods near downtown.
- A very serious problem exists in the downtown area: several historic buildings are being torn down to create surface parking lots.
- The downtown has several non-resident operators

Downtown Goals and Objectives

The following policy statement, goals and objectives also strive to improve the character of the downtown, but are more focused on the perspectives of city initiatives, economic development and marketing strategies.

POLICY STATEMENT:
Provide a vibrant and active downtown that combines opportunities for living, work, recreation, entertainment, family tourism and shopping in an atmosphere reflecting the unique character of the City.

The downtown is rich with character that includes historic buildings, tree-lined streets, and a pedestrian scale.

Goal #1: Promote a high standard of living, and create a 24-hour urban living environment within the downtown area.

a. Encourage building types and land uses that bring people to Monroe to live, work and recreate
b. Encourage first floor uses to be commercial and retail shops, with the second and third floors of downtown buildings used for residential or office spaces
c. Provide incentives for renovation of lofts or apartments in the downtown to increase the number of living units in the area
d. Consider marketing strategies to attract new businesses and venues to the downtown area
e. Promote downtown events and decorations that are coordinated and executed throughout the city
f. Examine the need for a downtown coordinator for events to help market empty retail and attract new tenants

Goal # 2: Create a pedestrian scaled downtown that is compatible with vehicular traffic.

a. Provide adequate parking in the downtown for City and County employees, residents, and visitors through shared parking strategies, a parking structure, or other means to rid the downtown of unwanted perceptions of parking shortages
b. Slow down traffic on Monroe Street so that traffic speeds match the posted limits
c. Create entry/gateway image that is appropriate in scale and location for the downtown

Goal #3: Create a hub of community activity in the downtown.

a. Improve the physical environment by enhancing the pedestrian experience
b. Encourage activities and events in the downtown all year round
c. Encourage the renovation of residential units in the downtown area and create residential living spaces along the riverfront
d. Implement design guidelines for the downtown (Chp. 11) to improve facades and new construction

Goal #4: Ensure economic viability of downtown through mixed-uses.

a. Provide incentives for upper floor rehabs of residential units
b. Promote a variety of complimentary land uses, such as small offices and residential units (live/work units) to be located above retail shops
c. Strengthen connections between Downtown Monroe Business Network (DMBN), merchants, downtown residents, City and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
d. Seek public/private partnerships to create mixed-use developments
e. Create a tenant mix strategy to focus marketing efforts on downtown niches

Goal #5: Create efficient movement of people, goods and vehicles.

a. Continue evaluation of parking supply and demand, and examine ways to alleviate areas of concern
b. Allow for adequate parking for City and County employees that does not detract from visitor or residential parking in the downtown
c. Develop a coordinated delivery plan for service vehicles
d. Clean up alleys and service areas
e. Encourage building owners to provide barrier-free access that conforms to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) but does not aesthetically detract from the traditional architecture and design of the structure.

The downtown has several opportunities to enhance the individual storefronts and increase pedestrian traffic, both of which are successful elements needed for revitalization.

Improvement/Enhancement Strategies

The following is a list of detailed action strategies for the City to continue the revitalization of the downtown. The Downtown Site Analysis Map (Map 10) supports this discussion.

- Increase retail space in existing vacancies or when office leases turn over.
- Festivals/Downtown Events: In an effort to bring patrons to downtown Monroe on a somewhat regular basis, downtown events should be increased. Events bring people to the downtown throughout the year and are an excellent means of advertising for the downtown district. Festival patrons have a chance to see improvements and new businesses opening in the downtown.
- Concentrate downtown events specifically within the downtown area. Festivals, exhibit space, concerts, city functions, or secondary space for the farmer's market could be relocated to a more central location, such as in the large parking lots on West Front Street facing the River Raisin. There may be other vacant lots that can be used for other types of markets and sales.
- Cluster similar stores in proximity to each other.
- Promote "Cross-Shopping". Downtown Monroe is often used as a single-destination stop for patrons. Cross shopping can be promoted with an increased number of retail store adjacencies. Another way to increase cross shopping is to reduce the number of offices in prime street-level spaces in the core of the downtown. The reduction in non-retail use will make the downtown feel less divided and more cohesive to the retail patron.
- Encourage retail development around the new surface parking lot at Washington and East 1st Street. The combination of demolishing a large building and converting the land to parking will shift the focus of the downtown district away from Monroe Street and toward Front and Washington Streets. An increase in retail development in this area would be beneficial.

- Rear Façade/Entrance Revitalization: Buildings along Front Street with their "backs" to the river should be renovated to encourage use along the river. Again, the river is an ideal location for restaurant, entertainment, and retail use.
- Connect the riverwalk to the City's greenway system. The goal of a trail system converging on the downtown is to connect the downtown to the nearby neighborhoods and encourage pedestrian/bicycle traffic in the downtown area. In an effort to make this form of transportation more convenient and to channel people from the path into downtown, the City should consider installing bicycle racks at appropriate locations and removing the existing "No Biking" signs. More detail regarding greenways in Monroe is located in Chapter 10 – Greenways.
- Reduce the "barrier" of Monroe Street. Businesses located west of Monroe Street would benefit from an effort to reduce the barrier effect of Monroe Street. City Council endorsed several alternatives that would accomplish this ranging from increased time for pedestrian crossing, streetscape "softening", reconfiguring on-street parking and the construction of a median.
- Parking – west side of Monroe Street. Businesses located immediately west of Monroe Street would benefit from the addition of parking spaces between Front Street and First Street.
- Increase Downtown High-Density Residential Development. The downtown business environment would benefit from an increased number of upper-story residential units in or close to downtown Monroe.

Outdoor events like the concert shown in this picture could be located in the downtown to encourage people to linger before and after events.

Planned Businesses and Land Uses

The following retail categories represent the greatest potential for success in downtown Monroe, Michigan. The recommendations are derived from analysis of the U.S. Census of Retail Trade, existing downtown business mix, competitive framework, retail sales transfer analysis, demographics, and our expertise. A more complete report of these findings is provided in the market study prepared by the Downtown Development Authority's (DDA) market research consultant, The Strategic Edge, Inc. Along with the downtown market study, the City and DDA continue to develop studies that are all available at City Hall and will be made available in the future on a website.

The following retail categories appeal to a range of customer types. In general, the following categories range from convenience oriented to destination oriented customer appeal. Convenience-oriented stores appeal to customers who may work or live in the downtown area or those who make a quick stop on their way home from work. Destination-oriented stores appeal to patrons who come to downtown to visit multiple establishments and are not as concerned with time.

Drug/Pharmacy. An essential convenience oriented business opportunity for downtown Monroe is a drug store/pharmacy. The strong employment base and adjacent neighborhoods would support such an establishment.

Personal Services. Hair care, shoe repair, and dry-cleaning establishments could locate in smaller spaces throughout the downtown. Again, the employment base of the downtown is a major reason why this business type could locate in the downtown area.

Office Supplies. With the recent closure of the Office Max (24,927 square feet) at Frenchtown Square Mall, the downtown Monroe trade area could support additional office supply retail space. The downtown area is an ideal location because of the City/County government employment base and associated professions located there. The upscale potential is, however, limited by internal governmental purchasing programs.

Books/News. Because downtown Monroe is an employment destination, additional stores specializing in news publications, periodicals, and books would be appropriate close to major employers.

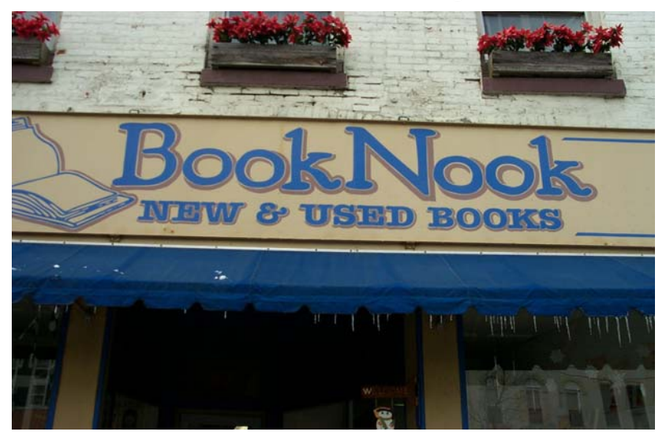
Specialty Food. Downtown Monroe has only one single specialty foods retailer representing approximately 1% of its overall mix (on a count basis). Southeast Michigan downtowns typically have about 3% of their mix in specialty foods.

Restaurants/Sidewalk Cafés. In an effort to liven the streetscape of the downtown, sidewalk cafés and restaurants with outdoor seating availability are recommended.

Apparel. The apparel category consists of approximately 3% of existing businesses on a square footage basis and about 2% on a count basis. Average downtowns in southeast Michigan consist of about 4% apparel.

Home Furnishings. Downtown Monroe is lacking any pure home furnishings retailers. However, there are gift stores that carry some home furnishings merchandise. The downtown trade area could support additional home furnishings retailers.

Riverside Entertainment Venues. Perhaps Monroe's most underutilized asset is its location along the River Raisin. The riverwalk is an excellent start to the proper utilization of this natural feature. The riverfront area is perfect for restaurants and cafés. Entertainment destinations would create cross-shopping alternatives and be a natural compliment.



The Book Nook is a specialty type of retail niche store in the downtown

CHAPTER 8: MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Introduction

Monroe offers a wide range of municipal services to its residents and businesses and operates a number of public facilities. The quality, availability and cost of these elements are among the factors influencing growth and redevelopment in the Monroe area. Residential, commercial, and especially industrial users make location decisions based in part upon the ability of a municipality to meet their present and future needs cost-effectively. As competition between communities grows and as technology advances, citizens and business owners will expect more from local governments. In order to keep pace with these trends, Monroe must continually upgrade and diversify facilities and services.

Municipal facilities include transportation centers, government buildings and agencies, parks, schools, cultural opportunities, and health care facilities. Facilities and services contribute to a community's unique identity and help make it a desirable place to live. They contribute to the intangible, but very important, quality of life. The quality of facilities and services can be pivotal in retaining and attracting residents, businesses and industry.

Administrative Structure

The City of Monroe is organized as a Council-Manager form of government. The administrative structure has gradually evolved and advanced with the City. This section includes a brief overview of the organizational structure of the City including departments and advisory bodies at the time the plan was adopted.

City Departments. To offer specialized service to residents, the City created different offices and departments such as: Assessing, City Attorney, Department of Public Service and Water, Community Development and Planning, Purchasing and Information Systems. Each department has their own divisions, support staff and equipment in order to operate efficiently. Many develop their own master plans and goals for the future. For instance, the Department of Public Services and Water have their own facilities plan to assist in planning for new equipment, staff, maintenance and additional land if needed. Issues related to the City's Comprehensive Plan must coincide with these types of department plans.

Boards and Commissions. Monroe, like many Michigan communities, gets its strength from the energy and expertise of its residents. Its foundation includes the Mayor, the Clerk, the Treasurer, City Council, and District Courts, which create the executive, legislative and judicial branches of local government. In addition, advisory boards and commissions were created that involve many residents an active role in City government. Each body serves as advisors to the City Council, which makes final executive decisions.

- Airport Advisory Board
- Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
- Citizen Planning Commission
- Downtown Development Authority
- Historic District Commission
- Local Development Financing Authority
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Port Commission
- Zoning Board of Appeals

Existing Facilities and Services

The following is an overview of the existing facilities and services offered to Monroe residents.

Water Service. The City of Monroe presently owns and operates a Water Treatment Plant, and the associated pumping stations and distribution lines. The entire system is a self-supporting entity financed through water utility operating revenues. The City supplies water to local residents at a metered rate, and also supplies water to residents of surrounding communities. The Engineering and Utility Department oversees this operation.

Monroe's water is pumped from Lake Erie and prechlorinated at a pump station. The system has a capacity of at least 14 million gallons per day (MGD). The treatment process followed at this facility consists of a series of steps beginning with special treatment for Zebra Mussels and ending with the final addition of flouride and a corrosion inhibitor before it is pumped to the underground reservoirs, water towers and to houses and businesses. The 2000 water quality report has been released and based on the findings of this report, the City's water exceeds the state and federal drinking water requirements.

The Water Treatment Plant was constructed in 1923 and has been upgraded and expanded in 1949, 1974 and 1985. The plant employs ozonation, clarification, granular filteration and chlorination to treat the Lake Erie water. The plant can handle the current demand.

A Water Systems Facility Plan was prepared in 1996 to assess current conditions and expected increases in demand. The report revealed that future growth to the system would all be in the townships, not within the City.

Current projects underway include increasing the stand-by-power generating capacity at the Raw Water Pumping Station to allow greater pumping volumes during power outages. Several distribution lines will receive upgrades and other related equipment replacements and upgrades are planned. The department has begun working on increasing the pumping capacity of the South Custer Booster Station which will serve Raisinville Township, the Village of Maybee and the Village of Dundee.

Sanitary Sewer Service. The City's sanity sewer service district provides service to the City of Monroe and the

more intensely developed areas in Frenchtown and Monroe Townships. The sewer service district is managed by the Monroe Metropolitan Water Pollution Control System, which was established in 1976. It has a seven-member board consisting of two representatives each from the City of Monroe and Monroe and Frenchtown Townships, and one representative from the Monroe County Drain Commission.
The capacity of the plant is 25 MGD, which is ample for current constructed needs. The City of Monroe retains 39.7% of the reserve capacity, Frenchtown Township has 36.5% and Monroe Township has 23.8%. Extension of the sewer system beyond the service district would only be possible if one of the three jurisdictions being serviced were to give up some of their reserve capacity. There is currently a study underway that is evaluating current and expected capacity of the system in order to plan for future improvements within the City and the townships.

Storm Sewer. The system has not had a comprehensive evaluation since the 1960's. Many of the recommendations contained in the 1962 report and subsequent subsystem reports have been implemented. For instance, in response to the reports the City has built the Mason Run cut-off, Monroe Street cut-off, Eastchester Relief Sewer, Ives and Bates Drain cut-off, and the Eaton Drain cut-off. The Engineering Department is not aware of a need for any major system expansion.

Individual footing drains from homes built prior to the 1970's are connected to the sanitary sewer system. During large rain events, storm water enters the sanitary sewer system through these footing ties and, in conjunction with other sources of inflow and infiltration, cause the sanitary sewer system to overload. The city should consider options to correct this situation. One option is the expansion of the storm sewer system to connect with footing drains from all individual homes. A second alternative is the construction of a large detention basin on the sanitary sewer system to detain the wet weather flows until they can be treated.

Solid Waste Collection and Disposal System. The City provides waste collection through a contractual arrangement with a private operator financed through general fund expenditures. Trash is transported to a private landfill. The City also operates a voluntary curbside recycling program collected the same day as the garbage. Monroe and area agencies need to do more to reduce the amount of waste and promote recycling. Area industries should conduct studies to determine where waste can be reduced. These programs not only reduce the amount of waste that must be disposed of, but also can save companies thousands of dollars annually.

Other Utilities. The City of Monroe is served by Aquila for gas service and electric service is provided by DTE Energy. The Monroe Power Plant, owned and operated by DTE Energy is located within the City limits and the Fermi II nuclear plant is located along Lake Erie in neighboring Frenchtown Township.

Government Facilities. The central local government facility is the two-block City-County Complex in the southeastern section of the Central Business District. The complex contains the City Hall, the County Administration Building, the Law Enforcement and Adult Detention Center and the remodeled Courthouse and Annex. The City is also home to a number of other City, county, state and federal governmental offices.

City of Monroe Water Tower

Public Safety. The perception of security and the quality of public safety affect the attraction that a City has to its residents, visitors and potential newcomers. The City operates both a fire department and police department.

The Police Department currently operates out of one station and serves only the City. The surrounding townships are served through contracts with the Monroe County Sheriffs Department, whose headquarters is also located in the City-County Complex. There are no plans for future expansions to the City Police Department with the exception of periodic upgrades to equipment. The current equipment and staffing is adequate to service response times.

The Fire Department has three stations placed within the community. Unlike the Police Department, the Fire Department has a mutual aid agreement to service Frenchtown Township and Monroe Township. Planned investments include annual fire apparatus replacements and building maintenance, but no new facilities. The Fire Department also operates the Emergency/Medical Response/Ambulance Service.

The typical challenge with response times to emergencies in the City is conflicts with trains blocking railroad crossings, The Monroe Fire Department has mitigated this issue by strategically locating three fire stations where they would be the least hindered by this situation.

Schools. The Monroe School District has always been a source of pride for residents and a draw for the City. The decrease in population in the City over the past ten years is evident in the enrollment trends. According to the 1990 Master Plan, Monroe Public Schools had a total enrollment of 7,500. An estimate for the 2001 school enrollment shows a 9% drop to approximately 7,000 students. In the next ten years, however, an increase in population is expected which will likely increase enrollment. A site for a new school is planned within the new Mason Run Neighborhood to assist in accommodating this growth.

At the time the Comprehensive Plan was prepared, the school district had nine elementary school complexes for

kindergarten through 5th grade; two middle schools for grades 6,7, and 8; and one high school for 9th through 12th grade. There are also a number of private and parochial schools that draw students from throughout the City and county.

Monroe County Community College, with its main campus about three miles west of the City, has an enrollment each semester of at least 3000 students. The college maintains an 'open-door' admissions policy in most of its programs. The college offers a large variety of course options, degree programs and certification programs.

Municipal Facilities and Services Goals and Objectives

The City's community facilities and services must evolve and expand in harmony with the development of the City itself. As new residents, new land uses, new businesses and new neighborhoods become a part of the community, the City's services must also integrate into this dynamic. In addition, changes and improvements to technology must also be a factor in capital spending decisions. The following must serve as a guide for City as long and short term budgeting decisions are made.

POLICY STATEMENT

Strive for a high quality of life for current and future residents by maintaining a diverse and unified system of municipal facilities and services.

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

a. Evolve facilities to accommodate all residents such as increased website services and 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 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 and facilitate adequate response times.
f. Continue to coordinate services and facilities with surrounding communities and the County.
g. Continue on-going planning efforts and studies of infrastructure facilities to ensure it is meeting demands and that adequate capacity is provided.
h. Update facilities to accommodate improvements and changes in technology.
i. Re-evaluate capacity plans for sewer and water based on new future land use plan.

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

a. Promote the historical and cultural resources provided in the community.
b. Encourage public involvement with community, civic and school activities.
c. Promote the continued development of public facilities within the neighborhoods, such as the Mason Run neighborhood, promoting prevalent traditional neighborhood design elements.
d. Continue providing services and assistance to neighboring communities in a manner that promotes the spirit of a cohesive region without facilitating suburban sprawl.

CHAPTER 9: NATURAL FEATURES, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Introduction

This Chapter establishes goals and policies that address the preservation and protection of natural features and the long-range provision and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities needed to improve the quality of life of existing and future Monroe residents. The abundance of parkland in Monroe requires concentration on maintenance and accessibility of existing recreational lands and facilities. The goals and policies included in this element are responsive to this demand. The overall focus of the Natural Features, Recreation and Open Space Chapter is on preserving the integrity of Monroe's natural features, providing recreational opportunities and facilities on a regional scale, including trails and waterways; securing adequate funding sources; and increasing tourism and recreation- based businesses.

Existing Natural Features Conditions

During the preparation of the 1991 Master Plan and now, the City's natural features have been identified as some of the community's greatest assets. These community elements offer extraordinary opportunities for a range of activities and uses.

Natural features in the Monroe area have influenced its historic growth and development pattern. The Lake Erie Harbor and the River Raisin attracted the initial commercial and industrial development that grew into a larger community. Today, these significant features remain a visible element in the city's landscape. Many of the other original features such as woodlands, hills and some wetland areas have gradually been altered or removed as a result of development.

Much of the alteration to natural features occurred when there was little appreciation of the functional value of wetlands and high demand for industrial property on the waterfront. Changes in philosophy toward the environment, however, have given Monroe an opportunity to explore the potential to reestablish some of the lost features and to better preserve those that still remain, particularly along the river and lakefront.

Each development decision should carefully consider the benefits natural features provide and irreversible losses that occur when they are destroyed or altered. The key is, when possible, to prevent negative environmental impacts before they occur through proper planning and enforcement of regulations that wisely manage natural features. In some cases some type of mitigation can be used to help replace the features lost through development.

Despite the developed, urban character of the City, there are notable natural resources that should be considered in land use planning. These features offer a multitude of benefits and functions:

- The variety of habitats increase wildlife diversity and amount
- Groundwater purification, flood control, pollution reduction, unique plant and animal habitat (wetlands)
- Active and passive recreation opportunities such as boating, fishing, skating, biking, swimming, sledding, walking, cross country skiing and water skiing
- Views of the natural features that contribute to or create a more appealing community image, especially along the river
- Woodlots and landscaping that help reduce pollution (carbon dioxide emissions, noise, water, waste) and improve aesthetics
- Educational opportunities for citizens and visitors (natural history, biology, geology and ecology)

Floodplain. Because of its geographic and waterfront location and low-grade elevation, portions of many properties in Monroe are within 100-year floodplains as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). A 100- year floodplain is an area where a one percent chance exists for a flood to occur within any year. FEMA identifies floodplains to determine eligibility for the National Flood Insurance Program.

Development within FEMA identified floodplains is regulated because they serve as water recharge areas and natural storage basins during high water events such as heavy rains or snow thaws, and therefore the likelihood of water damage to homes and businesses is increased. FEMA has identified floodplains primarily along the River Raisin, the Norfolk Southern southbound rail line and the east side of the city.

The River Raisin is an important natural feature and recreational amenity for Monroe residents.

Wetlands. Wetlands are an important natural resource, which provide both aesthetic and functional benefits. Among the important natural functions are:

- Control floods and storm water runoff
- Improve water quality by filtering contaminants
- Help control erosion
- Provide a water recharge or discharge area

- Act as a natural pollution treatment system
- Provide wildlife/wildfowl habitat
- Provide natural open space and aesthetic areas

Typically the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) only regulates wetlands that are five acres or larger. Smaller wetlands may be regulated if the wetland is contiguous to a lake, pond, river or stream, or is considered to be "essential to the preservation of natural resources of the state". The determination that a site contains a regulated wetland mandates that MDEQ be informed before any development can occur. MDEQ may permit filling of a wetland, but this often requires mitigation, such as replacing the wetlands, sometimes at a higher volume.

The general wetlands locations shown on the Environmental Conditions Map were provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and a limited field inspection. Actual determination requires a detailed analysis by a specialist when a development is proposed in the vicinity. These wetlands generally fall within low-lying areas, along the east and southeast boundaries of the city. The map on the next page delineates significant wetlands but not necessarily all wetlands regulated under the state wetland act.

Wetlands in the eastend of the city serve as wildlife habitat to important species such as white cranes and blue heron. The Nature Conservancy notes that 50-60 species of migratory birds use the Lake Erie shoreline as a major staging area.

The wetlands also provide habitat to relatively rare plant species such as the American Lotus. The American Lotus is a type of lily, which was established in the marsh areas during the 19th Century. It is the city flower and can be seen in the city's logo and flag.

Woodlands. Being an urban area, there are very few concentrated woodland areas in Monroe. Small groves and stands of trees are more common and are dispersed throughout the city. These stands are most present in the residential neighborhoods. Remaining large woodland areas are located within Munson Park and on property owned by the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The Sisters are preparing a natural area plan in order to properly manage the abundant natural resources on their site. Others are located within undisturbed wetlands areas along the southern edge of the City and on the east side of I-75. Because of these characteristics, the City should focus on the re-creation of woodlands and maintenance of existing trees.

Wetland area in Sterling State Park.

Table 13:
City of Monroe MLL 324 Part 201 Contaminated Sites, Fall 2001

Site name and Location	Source of Contamination	Pollutant	Affected Resources
River Raisin	Unknown	PCB, Heavy Metals	Sediment Surface water Study Fauna
Port of Monroe	Landfill	PCB, BTEX, Chromium	Groundwater Soil Wetland
Consolidated Packaging Corp	Paper Products	PCB, Chromium Lead, Zinc	Sediment Surface water Wetlands
Visteon	Plant polishing	Copper, Zinc, Lead, Chromium	Groundwater Soil
Port of Monroe	Landfill	Domestic waste Heavy metals	Soil
Clark Station	Gas tanks	Ethylebenzene, Xylene	Soil
Monroe Post Office	Unknown	Cresote	Unknown

Source: Part 201 Environmental Remediation Site List-MDEQ Environmental Response Division.

Contaminated Sites. As noted in the Land Use and Economic Development and Redevelopment Chapters, Monroe has a long history of industrial development. As a result, a number of sites have become contaminated from operations occurring years ago when environmental protection was not regulated as strictly, or at all. As described in the Economic Development and Redevelopment Chapter, the city has actively encouraged and assisted developers in the clean-up and redevelopment of contaminated sites through their Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. Chapter 5 provides more details about this program, the sites that are currently enrolled and the status of their redevelopment.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality maintains a listing of contaminated sites through their Environmental Response Division. Michigan's Public Act 451of 1994 (the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act) provides for the identification, risk assessment, funding, remediation and priority evaluation of environmental contamination sites in the state. Part 201 of this act discusses the details of remediation for contaminated sites. As part of this legislation, the Environmental Response Division maintains a listing of contaminated sites, also referred as "Part 201 Sites". Table 13 is the list of Part 201 sites in the City of Monroe. This data was last updated Fall 2001. Remediation of many of these sites is actively being pursued.

The Monroe Multi-Sports Complex

City Parks and Recreational Facilities

Monroe has approximately 315 acres of land designated for parks and open space recreational use. One of the city's two major recreational facilities is Munson Park, located north of Custer, in the northwest neighborhood. A second is Monroe Multi-Sports Complex, located on Dixie Highway in the northeast neighborhood. Smaller neighborhood and community parks, as well as school playgrounds are located throughout the City. Residents should refer to the recently adopted Parks and Recreation Master Plan for more specific information, analysis and recommendations. The information included in this plan serves as a summary to that document.

Table 14:
City of Monroe Park and Recreation Inventory

Park	Acres	Facilities
Mini and Neighborhood Parks		
Altrusa Park	0.1	Park benches
Arbor – Lorain	0.12	Playground equipment, bench
Boyd Park	0.544	Playground equipment, 1 basketball half-court
Calgary Park	1.9	Playground equipment, picnic shelter, backstop
Frenchman's Bend Park	0.4	Playground equipment, open space
Hoffman Property	1.8	Playground equipment
James and Hendricks Park	3.3	Playground equipment, play field
Lavender Park	1.2	Tennis court, picnic shelter, basketball half-court, park benches
Manor Park	5.5	Roller sport court, parking lot, picnic shelter, playground equipment, ball diamond, open play field
Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park	3.4	Playground equipment, picnic shelter, cooking grills, 2 basketball half-courts
Mason Run Riverfront Area	1.9	Currently undeveloped
Plum Creek Park	2.4	Playground equipment, 1 basketball half-court, picnic shelter, historic marker
Winston Park	0.4	Playground equipment, picnic shelter, benches
Community Parks		
Cantrick School	9.5 *	3 ball diamonds, 2 tennis courts, 2 basketball half-courts, paved school parking lot, 1 soccer/football field, outdoor swimming pool
Elm Avenue Bike Path	2 mi long	Benches in several locations
Father Cairns Field	1.8	1 ball diamond, 1 roller sport court, picnic pavilion
Hellenberg Field	9.2	River access with fishing and boat launch, 1 ball field, picnic shelter, restrooms, paved parking lot
Navarre Field	10.7	1 football/soccer stadium, 1 baseball diamond, 2 roller sport courts, playground equipment
Riviere Aux Raisins Park	1.9	Flagpole, historic marker
Roessler Field	20.1	Playground equipment, 4 ball diamonds, shore fishing, football/soccer field, gravel parking lot, limited paved parking
Sawyer Homestead	1.1	Historic site, 3-story home converted to a catering facility, cultural center and historic reenactment site
Soldier/Sailor's Park	1.2	Shore fishing, picnic shelter, 4 tennis courts, playground equipment, 1 basketball half-court, 2 horseshoe pits, 2 shuffleboard courts, historic markers, benches
St. Mary's Park	3.0	Custer Monument, picnic shelter, band shell, paved parking lot, 2 tennis courts, 2 basketball half-courts, playground equipment, bocce courts
Veteran's Park		Monuments, 3 picnic shelters, playground equipment, paved parking lots, bicycle/pedestrian paths, fishing restrooms, cooking grills
Regional Parks		
Munson Park	178.9	Restrooms, 4 softball/baseball diamonds, 2 sand volleyball courts, 16 soccer fields, natural ice rink, 2 picnic pavilions, jogging/exercise trail, 4 tennis courts, open play area, community gardens
River Raisin Battlefield Visitor's Center	3.75	Historic interpretive center
Green/Open Space		
Cranbrook Park	1.3	Bicycle/pedestrian path
Gateway Park	0.4	Bench, floral display
Labor Park	0.12	Bench, picnic table
Loranger Square	0.92	Benches, picnic table, fountain
Marquette Property	2.37	Undeveloped
Memorial Park	0.66	Benches
Mill Race Park	14.2	Fishing access
Oak Forest Park	7.0	Natural area
Rauch Park	2.1	Open space
Facilities		
Arthur Lesow Community Center		Gymnasium, multi-purpose rooms
Dick Waters Pool		Pool

Monroe Multi-Sports Complex		2 Ice rinks, conference rooms, dry floor activities

Source: City of Monroe Recreation System Plan (2000-2004)

Sterling State Park

Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities

Monroe County Parks. Monroe County has four developed parks, (Nike, Vienna, Waterloo, Heck) and one undeveloped park site (West County Park). All County Parks are equipped with restrooms, parking areas, play equipment, and picnic shelters. In addition, the County also owns the River Raisin Battlefield Visitor's Center which interprets the 1813 Battles of the River Raisin

Huron-Clinton Metroparks. The Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority is a five-county regional park agency established in 1942. Although Monroe County is not a member of the HCMA, the parks specified below do serve as a recreation resource for city residents as they are within a 25 mile distance.

- Oakwoods Metropark is approximately 12 miles northwest of the city and offers picnicking, canoeing, fishing, hiking, cycling, cross-country skiing, and a nature center
- Lake Erie Metropark is approximately 12 miles northeast of the city. Amenities include a wave pool, court games, boat dockage and storage, ice skating, cross country skiing and ski rental, fishing, canoeing and cycling.

River Raisin Battlefield Visitor Center

- Willow Metropark is 20 miles northwest of the city and contains a swimming pool, golf course, cycling, trails, water sport facilities, and an outdoor dance program.
- Lower Huron Metropark is 25 miles northwest of the city and offers facilities for swimming, canoeing, fishing, golfing, cycling, hiking, cross-country skiing, and ice skating.

State-Owned Land. The State of Michigan owns a variety of sites in Monroe County including state parks, state game areas, and public access sites. Sterling State Park (930 acres), one of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' (MDNR) most patronized State Parks, provides a campground, beach, trails, and facilities for fishing and boating. Three State Game Areas (Erie, Petersburg, and Pointe Mouillee) offer fishing and hunting, as well as hiking. Three access sites (Bolles Harbor, Otter Creek, Swan Creek) provide boat launch and fishing facilities.

Recreation Services Areas

The MDNR has adopted a set of standards based on those developed by the National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA). The NPRA classifies parks as mini parks, neighborhood parks and community parks. Each park type is intended to serve a specific population group that varies depending on the type of activities

Playscape at Munson Park.

offered and distance from the park. Criteria for each classification are useful in estimating the amount and locations of parkland needed, however the guidelines need to be applied in consideration of the population and physical characteristics of the community. These "recreation service areas" are determined based on the following criteria.

MINI PARKS

Size: Approximately one acre
Facilities: Specialized facilities to serve a target area such as toddlers or senior citizens
Service area: Less than ¼ mile radius
Standard: .25 to .50 acres per 1,000 population

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Size: Up to 15 acres
Facilities: More intensive recreational activities such as court games, play equipment, picnic areas and other similar activities. Accessible for pedestrians, with vehicular access provided from higher volume roads. School facilities often function as neighborhood parks
Service area: ¼ to ½ mile radius; targeting up to 5,000 people
Standard: 1 to 2 acres per 1,000 population

COMMUNITY PARK

Size: Typically greater than 22 acres
Facilities: Highest intensity uses and/or areas with diverse environmental quality
Service Area: 1 to 2 mile radius
Standard: 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 population

Regional Park

Size: Typically greater than 200 acres
Facilities: Area of natural or ornamental quality for outdoor recreation, that may be contiguous to or encompassing natural resources.
Service Area: Several communities, 1 hour driving time
Standard: 5 to 10 acres per 1,000 population

Recreation needs were assessed based on the NPRA guidelines, city demographic characteristics, public comments/survey results and evaluation. The included map identifies the neighborhoods served by the existing recreation facilities in Monroe. Although the map indicates the majority of the city is serviced and has convenient and safe access to neighborhood parks, the northeast area requires additional recreational facilities. Many of the transportation routes and natural features that transverse the city act as divisive elements, hindering access to recreation facilities for children and seniors.

Based on the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) Regional Development Forecast population projection of 23,100 residents for the year 2020. Considering each park classification, the NPRA recommends at least 8.375 acres of parks per 1,000 residents or 192.625 acres in Monroe. With over 360 acres of parkland, the city falls well above the NPRA standard for recreation opportunities.

Natural Features, Recreation and Open Space Goals and Objectives

Although the City is a developed, urban community a number of sensitive elements to its character must be considered as the City grows and changes over the years. These features have always been evident, however, it was not until in recent years that preservation and appreciation of these features has been publicly expressed. Residents are only beginning to consider these elements a part of the community's character and image.

The following is an outline of goals and objectives established by the City that will need to be considered at the beginning stages of implementing of this plan. These elements must be interwoven into other decisions related to issues such as land use, transportation and even downtown development.

POLICY STATEMENT

Create a healthy, sustainable environment for Monroe citizens to live, work and play in by preserving and enhancing Monroe's natural environment, improving Monroe's abundant park land and planning for the efficient, attractive and environmentally sound use of land.

Goal #1 ***Encourage integration of natural features such as woodlands and wetlands into site development as aesthetic and functional features while protecting the quality of the features.***

a. Promote the clean-up of contaminated sites with innovative incentives through zoning flexibility and with assistance from the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.
b. Promote sensitive and responsible storm water management practices through developing guidelines and policies based on the State's "Best Management Practices".
c. Regulate tree clearing through a tree preservation ordinance by preserving landmark trees and requiring effective tree preservation methods during construction.
d. Institute an urban reforesting program to recreate and enhance wooded areas along streets and in public spaces.
e. Require open space areas in new developments that is proportionate to the scale, character and type of project.
f. Incorporate access to natural features in the community into the city's pathway system.
g. Consider the presence of natural features in road construction and improvements.

Goal #2 ***Protect the quality of the River Raisin and its tributaries from the impacts of development while at the same time promoting it as one of the City's greatest assets.***

a. Promote responsible development along the river that prevents negative impacts to water quality.
b. Require a reasonable, yet effective setback from natural features such as the River Raisin and wetlands.
c. Encourage land uses and improvements along the river that maximize visual and physical access.
d. Continue to monitor the water quality of the River Raisin.
e. Explore opportunities for public access along the riverfront either through land acquisition or access easements.

Goal #3 Preserve the rare and significant features on Monroe's environment.

a. Develop new and utilize existing partnership programs between public agencies and private citizens to monitor the City's air and water quality.
b. Work with elected representative, other governing bodies, and public interest groups to develop a comprehensive management plan for the River Raisin.
c. Encourage developers to integrate existing natural features into new developments.
d. Establish a strong natural resources policy for Monroe.
e. Assist in the development of a comprehensive, regional natural resources plan.
f. Develop ordinances which preserve the integrity of the natural settings of neighborhoods, communities, open spaces and parks, and develop clear procedures for their enforcement.

Goal #4 Acquire, develop, maintain and preserve sufficient open space and recreation facilities.

a. Initiate an open space acquisition program, concentrating on developing recreation space in underserved and new neighborhoods.
b. Maintain and enhance existing recreational resources, ensuring all equipment and facilities meet current ADA standards.
c. Update and develop recreational programs that serve the needs of persons of all ages.
d. Update the Recreation Master Plan every five years to address the changing population and socio-economic demographics in Monroe.
e. Pursue cooperative arrangements with other public and private groups for the maintenance of facilities.
f. Have residents assist in planning for and developing additional open space and parks.
g. Pursue all available funding sources in order to implement park improvements and land acquisition.