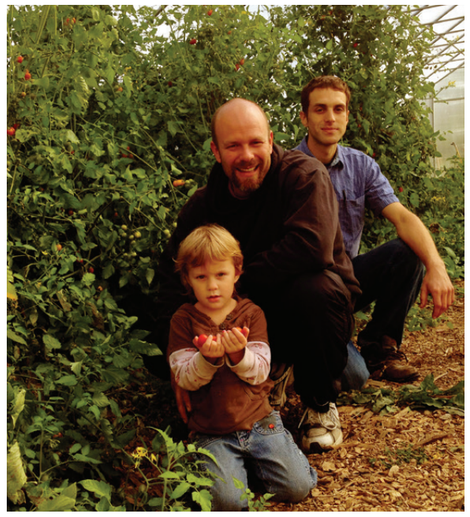
IMAGINE FLINT

MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT

ADOPTED OCTOBER 28, 2013 • HOUSEAL LAVIGNE ASSOCIATES



FOREWORD

Flint is a city poised and ready for transformation. A city committed to reinventing itself by building upon its rich history, strong character, and enduring work ethic. A city eager to once again stand as a symbol to the nation as to what hard work, ingenuity, and commitment can achieve. Flint is a city dedicated to forging innovation and creativity into a city of new opportunity, vitality, and livability.

The last half century has been hard on Flint. A fifty percent population decrease, thousands of vacant structures, a decimated local economy, and a fragmented development pattern have left the City a bruised and battered version of its former self. But, while disconnected neighborhoods, contaminated industrial sites, and neglected facilities are now too common, the seeds for reinvention have already begun to emerge – community groups and residents eliminating blight lot by lot; churches leading community gardening initiatives; local organizations promoting change through community activities; world class cultural and education facilities; and the development of the City's first Master Plan in more than 50 years – Imagine Flint.

Imagine Flint as a flourishing city that is walkable and well served with transit providing easy, convenient, and equitable access to a diverse mix of uses. Imagine Flint with strong neighborhoods offering housing options that meet the needs of all residents at all stages of life and socio-economic status. Neighborhoods are well served with appropriately maintained open space and plentiful recreational opportunities to foster a healthy and active community. Imagine Flint thriving economically, with an abundance of diverse employment opportunities and a local workforce of educated residents trained for jobs of today and the jobs of the future. "Green", "Sustainable", and "Healthy" are synonymous with Flint, as the City has fully embraced the notion of pioneering best practices in "green" industry and infrastructure, becoming a 21st Century Sustainable Community.

Imagine Flint values its educational and cultural richness, building upon its history and establishing a new legacy for an engaged and aware constituency of artists, entrepreneurs, and visionaries. New innovative and diverse neighborhood hubs and community gathering places thrive throughout the city, offering a wide range amenities, activities, and interests, each offering a unique and desirable sense of place. The best and brightest young minds from across the City are trained and educated to compete with students from across the globe. Recognized as one of the City's most valuable resources, the youth of Flint are succeeding, being prepared to be the leaders, innovators, and doers of tomorrow.

Imagine Flint represents the community's shared values. It is a "roadmap", a "foundation for future decision-making", a "true community vision" that is framed around six core themes that have been identified and embraced by the entire community – Social Equity and Sustainability; Reshaping the Economy; Quality of Life; Adapting to Change; Youth; and Civic Life. With the mission of guiding the actions that will transform the City, Imagine Flint will be used by the people of Flint to make a strong city stronger. Its recommendations and strategies will work to collectively improve the overall quality of life and enrich the human experience. Flint's potential is limitless and its people tireless, as they work to improve the city they so love and are resoundingly proud of.

Imagine Flint, at its heart, is a chance for the people of Flint to imagine what their future might be. It is the result of thousands of people who dared to imagine a better Flint; who love their city so much, they took the time to come together to discuss their ideas, voice their fears and concerns, and share their dreams and aspirations. With the knowledge that there is much more work to be done and the willingness to do it, the people of Flint have imagined a better life that they themselves can help create.

*– **Imagine Flint**.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all those who participated in the development of Flint's first Master Plan in over 50 years. The content in this Plan reflects the ongoing collaboration between the nearly 130 residents and stakeholders who served on the Planning Commission, Steering Committee, and Advisory Groups. The Plan was furthered shaped by over 5,000 people that provided input either online or at one of the 300 events, meetings, or workshops. We recognize that the level of participation is extraordinary for a city of Flint's size.

Project Funders

Office of Sustainable Communities, Department of Housing and Urban Development

C.S. Mott Foundation

Ruth Mott Foundation

Community Foundation of Greater Flint

In-kind Contributors

Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

Genesee County Land Bank Authority

Center for Community Progress

Flint Housing Commission

Flint Community Schools

Mass Transit Authority

LISC

ABC 12

Governor's Office of Urban Initiatives

FARO

GFAC

U of M – Flint

County Health Department

Project Consultant

Houseal Lavigne Associates

Houseal Lavigne Associates is the lead consultant for the Imagine Flint Master Plan. Houseal Lavigne Associates is a professional consulting firm specializing in all areas of Community Planning, Urban Design, and Economic Development. Houseal Lavigne Associates focuses on strengthening communities through creative, dynamic, and viable approaches to planning, design, and development. From revitalizing downtowns and neighborhoods, to creating context sensitive zoning regulations and economic development strategies, Houseal Lavigne Associates provides the expertise necessary to improve the relationship between people and their environment. With community outreach and citizen engagement serving as a foundation, Houseal Lavigne Associates partners with communities to strengthen their sense of place, enhance their livability, and improve their overall quality of life.

Additional assistance provided by a5, AmericaSpeaks, DLZ, and inFORM Studio.

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Ward 3 – Councilman Bryant W. Nolden

Ward 4 – Councilman Joshua M. Freeman

Ward 5 – Councilman Bernard Lawler

Ward 6 – Councilman Sheldon Neely

Ward 7 – Councilman Dale K. Weighill

Ward 8 – Councilman Michael J. Sarginson*

Ward 9 – Councilman Scott Kincaid

Former Ward 1 Councilman Delrico Lloyd

Genesee County Commissioners

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District 2 – Commissioner Brenda Clack

District 3 – Commissioner Jamie Curtis

District 4 – Commissioner John Northrup

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Ward 2 – Commissioner Patrick Ryals

Ward 3 – Commissioner Leora Campbell

Ward 4 – Commissioner Carol – Anne Blower

Ward 5 – Commissioner Robert Wesley, Chair

Ward 6 – Commissioner Robert Jewell

Ward 7 – Commissioner Denise Smith Allen

Ward 8 – Commissioner Phyllis McCree

Ward 9 – Commissioner Elizabeth Jordan, Vice Chair

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Charles Tutt, Retired Educator

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Parks and Recreation

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Richard Sadler
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Victoria Morckel

As part of the National Endoment for the Arts (NEA) grant, the City and Greater Flint Arts Council utilized various artists across the city to engage people within their wards to feed back into the planning process.

Artist in Residency
Kenyetta Dotson – Ward 1
Melton Harvey – Ward 2
Gary Jones – Ward 3
Nic Custer – Ward 4
Andrew Morton – Ward 5
Eric Hinds – Ward 6
Connor Coyne – Ward 7
Todd Nickola – Ward 8
Debra McGee – Ward 9
Artina Sadler – Coordinator
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Morrie Warshawski - Consultant

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University of Michigan – Flint

Neighborhood Small Grants Program / Data Collection
3 R's: Refine, Reform, Rebuild
A Word in Season
Ballenger Highway Neighborhood Association
Ballenger Square Community Association
Buick Street Block Club
Building Strong Woman Inc.
Court Street Village Non-Profit
East Bishop/ E. Flint Park Block Club
Evergreen Neighborhood Association
Fairfield Village Neighborhood Council
Family Housing CDC
Flint Park CDC/Warrington Block Club
Flint Park Lake CDC
Forrest Hill Neighborhood Association
Freedom Center North
Friends of Max Brandon Park
Friends of Max Brandon Park
Goodwill Industries of Mid-Michigan
Grand Traverse District Neighborhood Association
Greater Flint Respite House Inc.
Greater Home Avenue Block Club
Help Center for Youth
Hispanic Technology and Community Center
International Academy of Flint
Kingdom CDC Inc.
Men of Tomorrow
My Brother's Keeper of Genesee County
Neighborhood Hands-On Group
Neighbors United
New Paths Inc.
North East Village CDC
North Flint Reinvestment Corporation
Odettte, Witherbee, Iroquois, Restoration
Salem Housing CDC
Second Chance Community Gardens
Southside Business and Resident Association
Spencer Street Block Club
The CHANGE Foundation
Unite Flint Campaign
University Park Association
Urban Transformation Development
Urban Youth Community Outreach
West Baker Block Club
West Baker Street Block Club
West Pulaski Street Block Club
WOW Community Outreach
WOW Outreach

Neighborhood Groups and Organizations
Adams Avenue Neighborhood Association
Bel-Aire Woods Neighborhood Association
Bonbright and E. Genesee Block Club
Burr Blvd. Block Club
Carriage Town Historic Neighborhood Association
Central Park Neighborhood Association
Circle Drive Neighborhood Association
College Cultural Neighborhood Association
Daily-Dolan East Neighborhood Association
Eastside Business Association
Evergreen Neighborhood Association
Flint Neighborhoods United
Flint Park Lake CDC
Forrest Hill Neighborhood Association
Glendale Hills Neighborhood Association
Greater Home Avenue Block Club
Metawanee Hills Neighborhood Association
Milbourne Ave. Block Club
Mott Park Neighborhood Association
Neighborhood Restoration Coalition
Neighborhood Roundtable
Pierson Place Block Club
Potter Longway Neighborhood Association
Proctor Street Block Club
South Parks Neighborhood Association
Sterling & Myrtle St. Neighborhood Association
Warrington Street Block Club
Washington School Neighborhood Association
West Baker Block Club
West Dewey St. Block Club
West Flint Crime Watch
Whittlesey St. Block Club
Woodcroft Block Club

Community Organizations
Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint
Building Neighborhood Capacity Program
Building Neighborhood Power
Capitol Theater
Crim Fitness Foundation
Edible flint
Goodbeans Café
Greater Flint Health Coalition
Hamilton Community Health Network
Haskell Youth Center

We would like to thank all those who provided space to hold our various meetings, events and workshops at.

Ashbury United Methodist Church
Bethlehem Temple Church
Brennan Community Center
Community Action Resource Department (GCARD Building)
Doyle Ryder Elementary Schools
Eastwood United Methodist Church
Flint Institute of Arts
Flint Public Library
Flint Water Department
Foss Avenue Baptist Church
Freeman Elementary School
Greater Galilee Baptist Church
Habitat for Humanity
Hamilton Health Center
Hasselbring Senior Community Center
International Academy of Flint
Kettering University Campus Center
Mass Transportation Authority
Mott Community College – Ballenger Field House
Mount Carmel Baptist Church
Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church
Neithercut Elementary School
New Community Baptist Church
Northend Flint Police Mini Station
Salem Housing Community Development Corporation
Salem Luther Church

MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT

1 INTRODUCTION & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

PURPOSE AND USE OF THE MASTER PLAN

Imagine Flint is the Comprehensive Master Plan for the City of Flint. It will serve as the City's official policy guide and strategy for community improvement and development over the next two decades and beyond. At the most basic level, the Master Plan is intended to stabilize the City while directing orderly redevelopment and change within Flint, enhancing the livability of the City and neighborhoods, and transforming it into a more sustainable, innovative, accessible, and economically vibrant community. The Master Plan provides a vision for the future, based on community input and consensus, to ensure that quality of life is maintained and improved for all residents, workers, students, and visitors.

The Plan is a comprehensive set of land use designations, policies, goals, and objectives that direct future growth and development and lay the groundwork for future zoning, development regulations, and capital improvement investments. The Plan outlines strategies that will help effectively guide City leaders and community stakeholders in making substantive and thoughtful decisions for the community regarding land use and development; housing and neighborhoods; transportation and mobility; environmental features, open space, and parks; infrastructure and community facilities; economic development and education; public safety, health, and welfare; and arts and culture.

The Master Plan has a long-range perspective and is the one official policy document that provides a coordinated approach to community-wide decision making. As such, the Master Plan is one of the primary tools used by City Council, the Flint Planning Commission, the Mayor, and City staff in making decisions that affect the future of the community.

While the Master Plan is a policy guide for the City of Flint, it also defines a vision for the future that will require active participation from a broad and diverse group of stakeholders. The Master Plan is intended to serve as a guide for community stakeholder groups, non-profit organizations, neighborhood organizations, and county and regional entities that serve as essential partners in the betterment of the Flint community.

Finally, the Plan will serve as an important tool in promoting the City's unique assets and advantages. Imagine Flint showcases to the region and the nation the future direction of the community. It underscores the community's commitment to the City and serves as a calling card to others who may be interested in investing in Flint's future. As a marketing tool, the Master Plan establishes a viable and exciting vision for the future…a future that holds the promise of a better tomorrow.

The City of Flint is a community with a rich history, with roots as a fur-trading outpost before rising to become one of the premier automobile manufacturing centers in the world. Now dealing with the realities of a post-industrial American economy, the Flint of today is struggling to manage the artifacts of its past while setting the stage for a bright and prosperous future.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires local governments to develop a Master Plan that is regularly updated. The last official City of Flint Master Plan, adopted in 1960, was created relying on an assumption of continued population growth and a robust economy, neither of which materialized. The overall lack of planning, the realities of a declining population, and the struggling local economy all resulted in a city that was ill prepared to face the challenges of the next generation.

With the help of a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), matching funds from various community organizations, and the commitment and resolve of residents eager to make Flint a better place, the City undertook the development of a new Master Plan. This new Master Plan – Imagine Flint - articulates a vision for the Flint community along with goals, objectives, and strategies that will guide change and improvement over the next 20 years and beyond.

Historically, industry and manufacturing has been a significant sector of Flint's economy. The City recognizes that this type of activity at its former scale is not a realistic expectation, and that a very different economic makeup is required to be competitive in the 21st century. At its peak in 1960, the population of Flint was nearly 200,000 people. According to the 2010 Census, the City of Flint's population is just over 100,000.

What will the population of Flint be in another twenty years? Fifty years? How will this strong and historic City reinvent itself for the next century?

A population decrease of the magnitude experienced by Flint, places challenging stresses on every system, from infrastructure and government services, to education and economic development. The Master Plan provides guidance on the issues facing Flint and will serve as the foundation for decision-making for the next twenty years, ensuring that Flint can continue to build upon its legacy with an eye toward the future.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose and Use of the Master Plan 3
Structure of the Master Plan 4
Past Master Planning Efforts 4
1920 Master Plan 4
1960 Comprehensive Master Plan 4
1977 Comprehensive Master Plan (never adopted) 4
The Imagine Flint Planning Process 5
Phase I: Plan Making 5
Phase II: Implementation 5
Importance of Community Outreach 6
Overview of Outreach and Engagement 6
Tiers of Community Input 7
Planning Commission 7
Master Plan Steering Committee 7
Master Plan Timeline 8

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE FLINT MASTER PLAN

Imagine Flint was developed through an extensive community engagement process that involved more than 5,000 residents and community stakeholders. Through this process, a core set of Guiding Principles was established to serve as the structure upon which the Master Plan would be created. The Guiding Principles for the Flint Master Plan are organized into six main themes:

- Social Equity & Sustainability
- Reshaping the Economy
- Quality of Life
- Adapting to Change
- Youth
- Civic Life

STRUCTURE OF THE MASTER PLAN

Imagine Flint is the City's Master Plan that articulates a vision for the Flint community along with goals, objectives, and strategies to assist in guiding change and improvement over the next 20 years and beyond. The Master Plan is organized into the following elements:

1. Introduction
2. Community Profile
3. Vision & Guiding Principles
4. Land Use Plan
5. Housing & Neighborhoods Plan
6. Transportation & Mobility Plan
7. Environmental Features, Open Space & Parks Plan
8. Infrastructure & Community Facilities Plan
9. Economic Development & Education Plan
10. Public Safety, Health & Welfare
11. Arts & Culture Plan
12. Moving Forward

PAST MASTER PLANNING EFFORTS – 1920, 1960, 1977

Although the Flint Master Plan has not been updated for more than fifty years, it is important to understand the history of master planning in Flint. This examination of past planning provides some insight into the development of Flint as it has become the City we now know.

1920 Master Plan

In 1917, an amendment to the City of Flint's charter established a City Planning Board. One of the Board's first acts was to commission a master plan and a transportation plan for the City. The main recommendations of the MasterP-plan, completed three years later, were to create business, civic, and industrial districts; build a Union Station; acquire parkland; provide resources for schools; and improve roads. The Plan describes the current conditions in detail and makes recommendations concerning downtown, public facilities, the road network, the park system, schools, zoning, housing, utilities, industrial properties, flood zones, population growth, and more.

The Transportation Plan outlines thorough, technical recommendations for railroad, street, and bridge construction and changes. Many of the subjects covered in the Plan, shaped the fabric of Flint for years to come, and remain important planning issues today.

1960 Comprehensive Master Plan

Undertaken in 1958, this plan was completed during the peak of Flint's population and economy. At the time, General Motors employed two-thirds of all workers, and the median household income was one of the highest in the nation. Many of the Plan's recommendations were made under the assumption of continued growth; while Flint's current population is approximately half of what it was in 1958. The Plan focused on widening transportation thoroughfares for more efficient traffic circulation; planning downtown as a central business district; cooperation between various levels of government; and developing a community renewal program for blighted parts of the City, both residential and non-residential. The 1960 Plan also included the goal of coordinating recreation planning with school planning for maximum utility of grounds and buildings.

1977 Comprehensive Master Plan - (Never Adopted)

Though it was never adopted, the City's draft 1977 Comprehensive Master Plan reflects a general shift in City policy away from growth and expansion. Due to the loss of industry in the five to ten years prior, recommendations and considerations of the 1977 Comprehensive Master Plan contrast many of the characteristics of the 1960 Master Plan. Housing rehabilitation was a major goal in the 1977 Plan. During the time of the Plan's creation, 50% of the housing mix was constructed prior to WWII and thus much of the housing was structurally deficient. Major recommendations of the Plan included support of neighborhood preservation plans, developing vacant land, especially recently vacant industrial land, increasing vocational schools, and supporting the already strong and popular cultural facilities. The Plan was not formally adopted due to the lack of a public process, lacking significant public input and comment.

THE *IMAGINE FLINT* PLANNING PROCESS

The ***Imagine Flint*** Master Plan is a product of a seven-step, multi-phased, community driven process consisting of assessing existing conditions and influences, establishing a vision, and developing policies and recommendations to serve as a guide for community decision making. The 18-month process, which the Planning Team began in June 2012, builds on a foundation of community engagement, with the Plan's content continuously refined based on feedback from the Master Plan Steering Committee, Planning Commission, seven Advisory Groups including nine Artist-in-Residence participants, the Mayor, City officials and staff, and the community-at-large.

The planning process for ***Imagine Flint*** consisted of two phases – ***Phase 1: Plan Making***, and ***Phase 2: Implementation***. Phase 1 (Plan Making) were the steps essential to developing a new Master Plan for Flint – acquiring data, conducting individual parcel assessments, assessing existing conditions, conducting extensive community outreach and engagement, developing a community vision, setting goals, and creating city-wide plans and recommendations. Phase 2 (Plan Implementation) will include the companion documents most crucial to the successful implementation of key elements of the Master Plan, including eight sub-area plans, an organizational re-alignment plan, a review of fiscal planning, a capital improvements plan, and revision to the City's zoning code.

The common thread throughout the entire process is community outreach and engagement. Throughout the entire planning process, efforts were taken to inform, engage, and listen to the City's residents. Above all, the process was designed and executed to ensure transparency and to build upon the thoughts, ideas, concerns, and aspirations of the people of Flint. ***Imagine Flint*** is the community's plan and the process has ensured a sense of community involvement and authorship, and perhaps most importantly, a stewardship for the new Master Plan.

Phase I: Plan Making

- ***Project Initiation***
  The project began in 2011 and the planning consultant team began its work in June 2012 with a project kick-off where the Project Team met with City Staff, the Planning Commission, the Master Plan Steering Committee, and community members.
- ***Branding, Marketing & Multi-media Outreach***
  To establish interest and excitement in the project, the ***Imagine Flint*** brand, a project website, marketing materials, and channels for outreach were established.
- ***Engagement/Community Outreach***
  Over the course of the planning process more than 5,000 participants, both on-line and face-to-face, provided input to the Master Plan.
- ***Data Analysis & Framing***
  An Existing Conditions Interim Report was completed including community data and input helping identify the City's challenges and assets. This understanding of existing conditions informed the development of Master Plan goals, objectives, and strategies and other Master Plan recommendations.
- ***Community Vision, Goals & Objectives***
  Three separate community input sessions with over 170 individuals were held to document the major concerns and issues of residents. This information framed the discussion of a Vision & Goals Workshop that was held on March 9, 2013, where more than 500 people gathered to provide feedback. The results of the workshop were used to establish the Master Plan's Vision and Guiding Principles which are embedded in every chapter of the Plan.
- ***Flint Master Plan Development***
  City-wide plans were prepared for: land use and development; transportation and mobility; housing and neighborhoods; environmental features, open space, and parks; infrastructure and community facilities; economic development and education; public safety, health, and welfare; and arts and culture.

Phase II: Implementation

- ***Detailed Sub-area Plans***
  Eight sub-area plans will be developed following adoption of the Master Plan. Each sub-area will center on a theme or common issue that exists in other areas of the City and are to serve as prototypes within a "tool-box" for areas experiencing similar issues elsewhere in the City. Individual workshops were held as part of the Master Plan process for all eight sub-areas.
- ***Organizational Re-Alignment***
  An organizational report will be developed with recommendations on how to improve the City's organizational structure, communication, and processes, to implement the Master Plan.
- ***Fiscal Planning***
  Specific actions required to carry out the Master Plan, including potential funding sources and strategies, will be developed.
- ***Capital Improvement Strategy***
  A Capital Improvement Strategy will be developed to focus infrastructure improvements on supporting the existing population, while ensuring new development can be supported.
- ***Zoning Code Revisions***
  A new Zoning Code will be drafted to implement the Master Plan.

More than 12,000 posters and postcards were distributed throughout the City to popularlize the planning process and advertise various outreeach events.

Select marketing materials shown here include (from left to right): a Community text-messaging flyer, a Vision Workshop postcard, Sub-Area Plan Workshop postcards, and a Community Open House flyer.

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

As the blueprint for the City, it was critical that all of Flint's residents and community stakeholders were involved in the development of the Master Plan. The extensive, multi-phased outreach efforts obtained input from Flint residents, business owners, property owners, institutions, religious communities, and students, providing important local insight about Flint. The input received, ultimately crafted a community vision along with specific objectives and strategies to guide Flint's future.

Community engagement and outreach served as the foundation for the *Imagine Flint* Master Plan. The multiple methods of community engagement deployed by planning staff, during the process, led to levels of participatory planning that exceeded expectations at every turn and surprised everyone involved. Over 5,000 individuals participated in nearly 300 events throughout the master planning process. The first phase of the outreach process focused on listening to the community and gathering input on the issues, opportunities, and strengths of the City of Flint.

Next, outreach activities focused on generating a vision for the Flint community and the establishing the community's Guiding Principles. Engagement was then used to generate potential solutions and strategies, explore best practices to improve all areas of the City, and develop a land use plan built on "placemaking". Finally, extensive outreach was conducted during the 63-day public comment period to strengthen the draft plan, while incorporating as much feedback and comment into a final document as possible. From the very beginning to the very end, community outreach and engagement was critical at every step, and was valued by staff as the top priority of the planning process.

OVERVIEW OF OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Outreach and engagement for the Master Plan was multi-faceted to help build awareness and promote the City's planning effort, and to assist in including the entire community. The approach included 1) multi-media marketing and branding; 2) traditional "face-to-face" outreach and engagement; and 3) on-line/web-based participation.

Multi-Media Marketing & Branding

To promote the Master Plan and the planning process, the Project Team worked with the Steering Committee to develop a name and a brand for the Master Plan. A marketing campaign was developed to maximize community awareness and participation. The following components have been undertaken as part of the branding and marketing efforts:

- Brand/logo/tag-line
- Project website
- Postcards
- Posters
- Video clips
- TV spots
- Radio spots
- E-mail blasts
- Twitter feed
- Facebook page
- Facebook advertisements
- News articles
- Community newsletters
- Text-message based surveys
- Live TV Q&A

Traditional Outreach & Engagement Activities

Traditional outreach and engagement involved the following:

- *Meetings with community groups* – Over 200 meetings conducted/attended to date with over 2,500 in attendance
- *A series of public community workshops* – 3 workshops conducted with 170 participants
- *Business workshop* – 1 business workshop conducted with 10 participants
- *Key person and group interviews* – 21 individuals interviewed representing 14 different organizations
- *Do-it-yourself meeting kits* – 494 participants in 29 DIY workshops conducted by various community groups and individuals
- *Project Studio* – located at the Capitol Theatre where open houses and public outreach events were held including planning staff office hours
- *Hosting a Vision Workshop* – Over 500 participants, 40 volunteer facilitators, 2,076 lines of input
- *Land Use Workshops* – 2 workshops, 42 tables, 350+ participants
- *Sub-Area Workshops* – 8 workshops, 210 participants
- *Community Open Houses* – 7 open houses
- *Steering Committee Meetings* – 20 meetings, over 1,000 individuals in attendance
- *Advisory Group Meetings* – 7 advisory groups, and the technical planning team, 120 members
- *Individual Ward Input Sessions* – 9 input sessions held, approximately 300 participants

On-line Outreach & Participation

On-line outreach involved the following:

- *Project website* – Monthly average of 1,000 hits with 6,000 unique visitors over the life of the project
- *Online planning mapper* – 28 maps, 405 points of interest identified
- *Online resident, student, business, and community facility provider surveys* – 149
  - Resident Questionnaire – 108 participants
  - Business Questionnaire – 16 participants
  - Student Questionnaire – 15 participants
- *Social networking tools: Facebook and Twitter* – 724 Facebook "likes" reaching over 1,200 individuals weekly and 68 followers on Twitter
- *Textizen Text-Messaging Surveys* – 50 responses

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT NEIGHBORHOOD REACH

Project staff was committed to providing each and every resident of Flint an opportunity to engage with the Imagine Flint process. Staff realized the best way to achieve comprehensive representation, city-wide, was to physically visit residents, instead of expecting residents to visit staff. In all, project staff connected with over 70 Neighborhood groups and grass-root community based organizations, while visiting over 110 sites throughout the City for master plan engagement. Community engagement sessions occurred within 1/2 mile of 88% of Flint homes, while 75% of Flint homes lie within 1/2 mile of any neighborhood group that worked with the Imagine Flint team.

The Capitol Theatre was home to the Project Studio, which held open house events and planning staff office hours

Tiers of Community Input

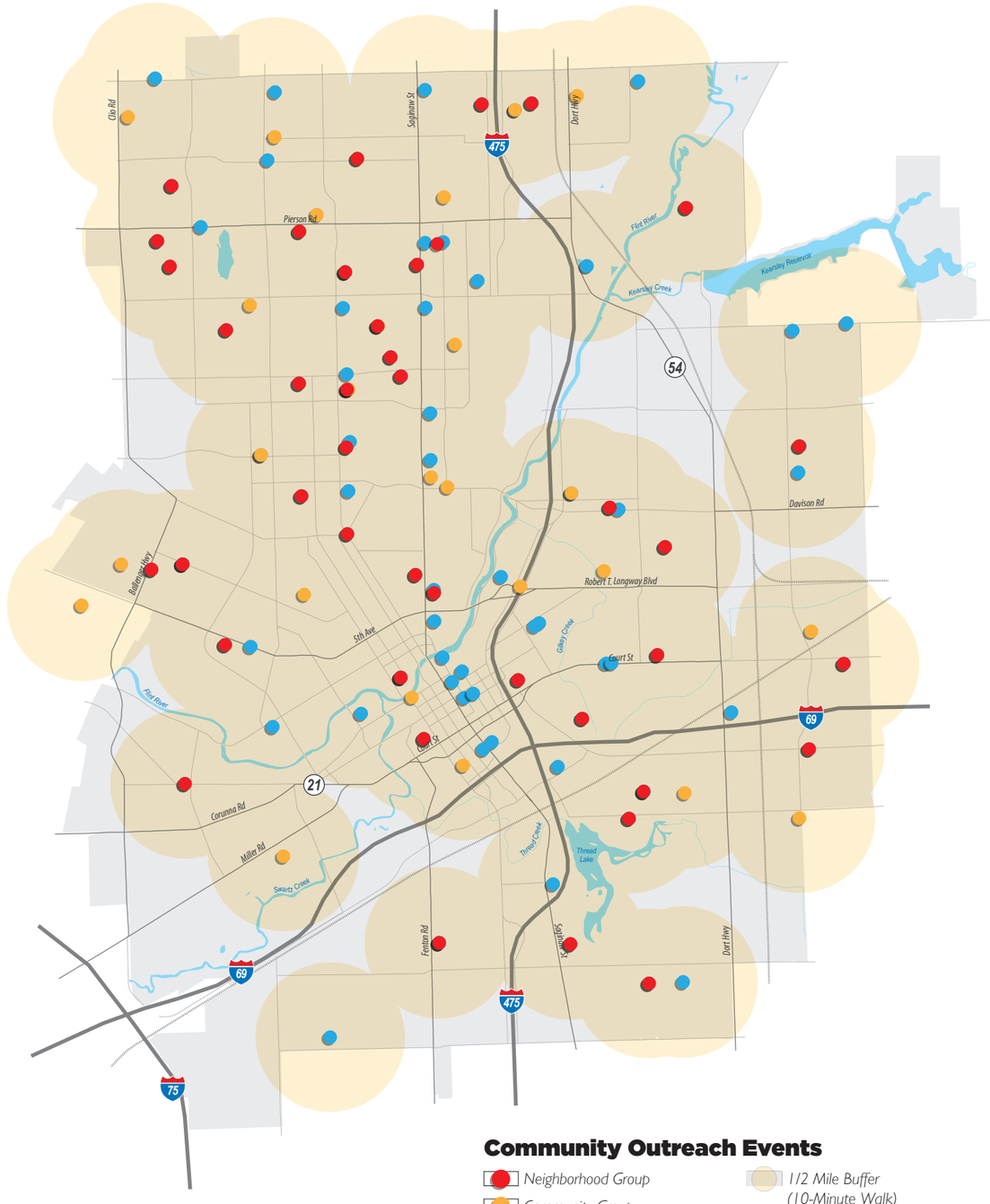
In addition to the 300 community outreach events in which more than 5,000 residents and stakeholders participated, the Imagine Flint Master Plan process incorporated a tiered community input structure led by the City of Flint Planning Commission. The Planning Commission, alongside a 21-member Steering Committee, and seven Advisory Groups with a Technical Planning Team comprising 120 members, gave focus to the Master Plan efforts. Together they provided a broad sounding board for plan recommendations and related reports, and helped oversee the process. These groups, along with City staff and a consultant team, worked cooperatively to develop and review materials, present ideas to the community for consideration and discussion, and helped shape Master Plan recommendations.

Planning Commission

Under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, or P.A. 33 of 2008, the Flint Planning Commission was charged with the creation of the Master Plan and recommendation of the plan for adoption by Flint City Council. The Planning Commission encouraged the development of a Master Plan process that is founded on broad public participation and legitimately reflects the priorities of the community based on meaningful engagement. Heeding the need for a truly public process, the Planning Commission initiated the formation of the Master Plan Steering Committee, a 21-member group that includes two representatives from the Planning Commission as well as two from the City Council. The inclusion of official City representation on the Steering Committee helped in creating a Master Plan that reflects the goals and aspirations of the larger Flint community as well as City officials, ensuring a smooth transition through the public hearing and adoption process.

Master Plan Steering Committee

The role of the Master Plan Steering Committee in the planning process was to channel community resources towards the Imagine Flint process, to ensure the broadest community ownership of the Master Plan. The Master Plan Steering Committee was composed of 21- members that included representatives of community residents, the business community, neighborhood and faith-based organizations, Master Plan partners and stakeholders, two members of the City Council, and two members of the Planning Commission. Each member was selected by a four person panel consisting of two co-chairs, a member of City Council, and the Mayor. All nine City of Flint wards were represented and the members reflect the social makeup of the City of Flint.



CITY OF FLINT

Master Plan Timeline

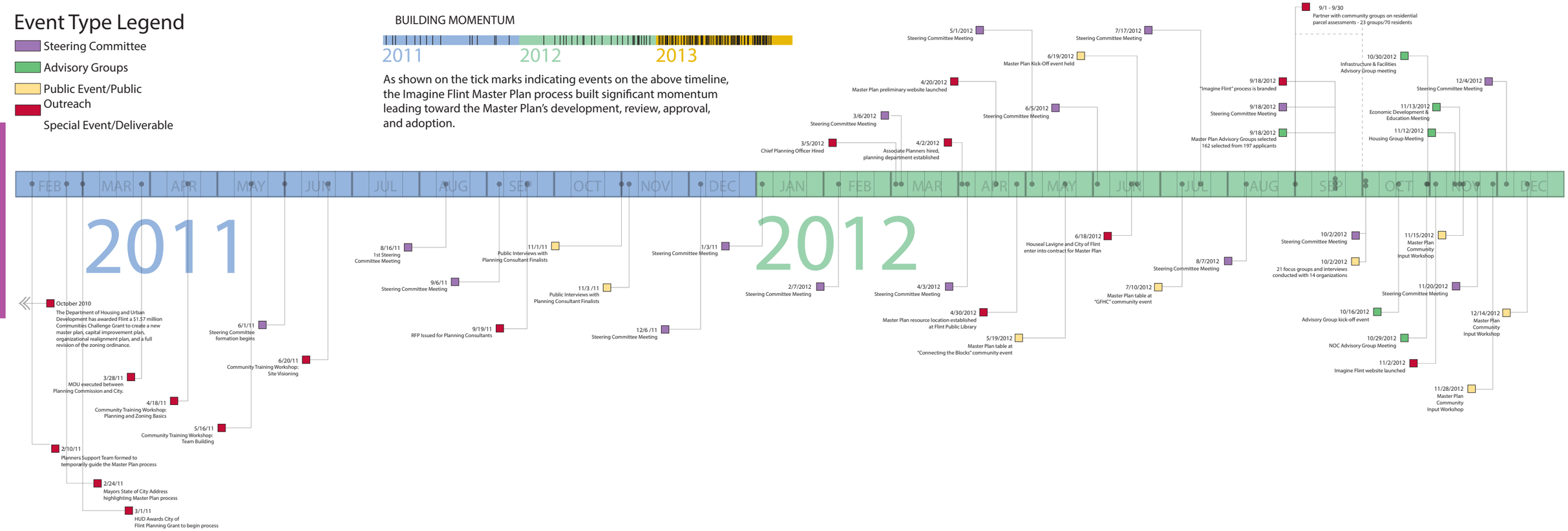
Event Type Legend

- Steering Committee
- Advisory Groups
- Public Event/Public Outreach
- Special Event/Deliverable

BUILDING MOMENTUM

2011 2012 2013

As shown on the tick marks indicating events on the above timeline, the Imagine Flint Master Plan process built significant momentum leading toward the Master Plan's development, review, approval, and adoption.

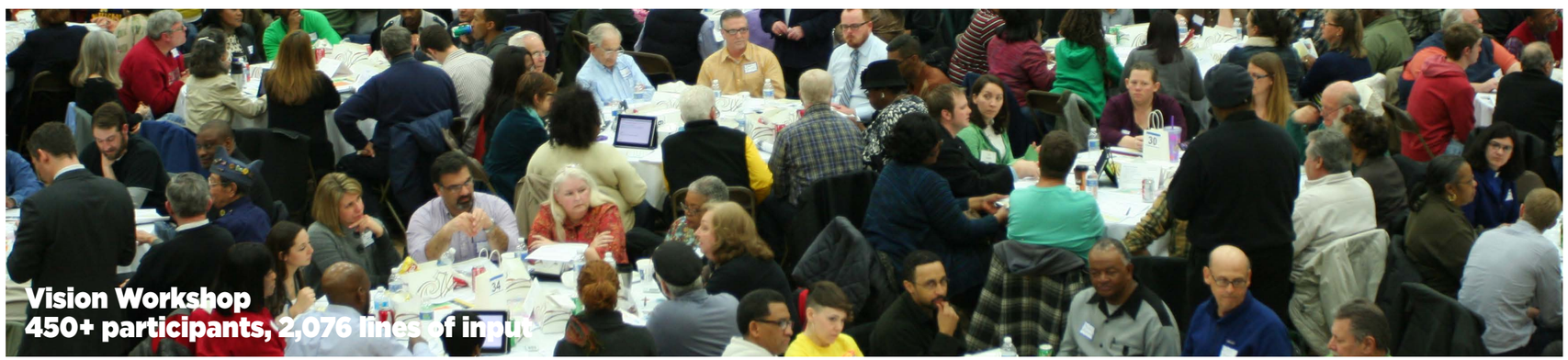


Community engagement and outreach served as the foundation for the Imagine Flint Master Plan, over 5,000 people participated in almost 300 events as outreach was conducted at several junctions throughout the master planning process.

2013

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT

1/26/2013 Safety, Health & Welfare meeting
1/26/2013 DIY Workshop at Food Summit
1/23/2013 DIY Student Workshop at IAF
1/15/2013 Steering Committee Meeting
1/15/2013 Existing Conditions Report Presented and Published
1/9/2013 Economic Development & Education Meeting
1/7/2013 NOC Advisory Group meeting
1/7/2013 Infrastructure and Facilities Meeting
2/19/2013 NOC Meeting
2/13/2013 Economic Development & Education Meeting
3/9/2013 Community Vision and Goals Workshop
3/5/2013 Steering Committee Meeting
4/2/2013 Steering Committee meeting
4/1/2013 Transportation & Mobility meeting
3/26/2013 Designated master plan sub-areas approved at Planning Commission
3/23/2013 Basic needs community fair
4/15/2013 Safety, Health & Welfare meeting
4/10/2013 Economic Development & Education Meeting
4/25/2013 Youth input session held at Imagine Flint project studio
5/10/2013 Imagine Flint project studio Art Walk event
5/23/2013 Detroit Works site visit with Master Plan residents and stakeholders
5/13/2013 Safety, Health & Welfare meeting
5/8/2013 Economic Development & Education meeting
5/6/2013 NOC meeting
6/1/2013 Master Plan table at connecting the blocks community event
6/14/2013 Imagine Flint project studio Art Walk event
6/12/2013 Economic Development & Education meeting
6/4/2013 Steering Committee meeting
7/23/2013 Neighborhood group trainings for Master Plan commercial property inventory
7/10/2013 Economic Development and Education meeting
7/10/2013 South Saginaw Sub-Area workshop
7/10/2013 Central Saginaw Sub-Area workshop
7/27 - 7/28 Master Plan Land Use open-house at Flint Gospel Fest
7/29/2013 Master Plan land use open-house at Imagine Flint project studio
7/12/2013 Imagine Flint project studio Art Walk event
7/9/2013 University Corridor Sub-Area workshop
7/2/2013 Community Land Use workshop
8/1/2013 Land Use open-house at Brennan Community Center
7/29/2013 Housing meeting
8/13/2013 63-day Public Comment Period begins for draft master plan
8/6/2013 Steering Committee meeting recommending preferred land use plan and draft master plan for circulation
8/12/2013 Flint City Council votes to approve draft Master Plan for public circulation
9/5/2013 9th Ward Public Input Session
9/9/2013 Safety, Health, & Welfare meeting
9/12/2013 Ward 2 Public Input Session
9/13/2013 Art Walk event at Imagine Flint Project Studio
8/21/2013 Economic Development and Education meeting
8/20/2013 Transportation and Mobility meeting
10/2/2013 Ward 1 Input session
10/3/2013 Ward 8 Input session
10/5/2013 Ward 6 Input Session
10/19/2013 Planning Commission special meeting, discussing public hearing comment
10/10/2013 Ward 6 Town Hall Meeting
10/1/2013 Steering Committee meeting
1/14/2013 Housing meeting
1/14/2013 Transportation & Mobility meeting
1/22/2013 Master Plan public forum Q&A
1/31/2013 DIY Workshop with community groups
2/5/2013 Steering Committee meeting
2/8/2013 Imagine Flint project studio opened
2/8/2013 Infrastructure and facilities meeting
2/20/2013 Safety, Health & Welfare meeting
2/25/2013 Housing meeting
2/25/2013 Transportation & Mobility meeting
3/11/2013 Safety, Health & Welfare meeting
3/18/2013 Infrastructure & Facilities meeting
3/20/2013 Economic Development & Education meeting
3/25/2013 NOC meeting
4/12/2013 Imagine Flint project studio Art Walk event
4/23/2013 Safety, Health & Welfare meeting
4/29/2013 Infrastructure & Facilities meeting
4/30/2013 Master Plan artist in residency community event held at Imagine Flint studio
4/8/2013 Housing meeting
4/9/2013 Draft version of Vision and Guiding Principles presented at Planning Commission
5/7/2013 Steering Committee meeting
5/13/2013 Master Plan neighborhood walk
5/20/2013 Housing meeting
6/17/2013 NOC meeting
6/22/2013 Community Land Use workshop
6/24/2013 Transportation & Mobility meeting
6/3/2013 Safety, Health & Welfare meeting
6/10/2013 Infrastructure & Facilities meeting
6/11/2013 Planning Commission approves Land Use Placemaking Toolkit
7/25/2013 Imagine Flint city-wide bus tour
7/27/2013 Neighborhood group trainings for Master Plan commercial property inventory
7/27/2013 Draft preferred land use plan unveiled
7/1/2013 Housing meeting
7/15/2013 Safety, Health & Welfare meeting
7/17/2013 Welch and Dupont Sub-Area workshop
7/17/2013 Dort Highway and Delphi East Sub-Area workshop
7/18/2013 East-Side Sub-Area workshop
7/22/2013 NOC meeting
7/22/2013 Infrastructure & Facilities meeting
7/22/2013 Youth land use workshop at Imagine Flint project studio
8/19/2013 Infrastructure & Facilities meeting
7/30/2013 Pierson Road Sub-Area workshop
7/30/2013 Pierson Road Land Use open-house
7/30/2013 North Saginaw Corridor Sub-Area workshop
7/30/2013 Land use open-house at Flint Job Corps
7/30/2013 Land use open-house at Edible Flint garden tour
9/16/2013 NOC meeting
9/17/2013 Steering Committee meeting
9/18/2013 Ward 4 Input Session
9/20/2013 Ward 5 Input Session
9/10/2013 Housing meeting
9/23/2013 Ward 3 Input Session
9/24/2013 Planning Commission meeting, approved submitted revisions to draft plan
9/25/2013 Flint Public Affairs Forum – Master Plan discussion
9/26/2013 Neighborhood Small Grants follow up meeting, Master Plan Q&A
9/30/2013 Community Open House at Project Studio
10/8/2013 Planning Commission meeting, approved submitted revisions for draft plan
10/11/2013 Master Plan Live Q&A call-in on ABC 12
10/15/2013 Planning Commission Public Hearing
10/22/2013 Master Plan Approved by Planning Commission
10/28/2013 Master Plan Adopted by City Council



Master Plan Advisory Groups

Seven Advisory Groups and a Technical Planning Team, totaling 120 participating members, were formed to enable additional residents and community stakeholders to provide more focused recommendations around specific core components of the Master Plan including:

- Housing
- Economic Development and Education
- Transportation and Mobility
- Natural Resources, Open Space, and Conservation
- Public Infrastructure and Community Facilities
- Public Safety, Health, and Welfare
- Arts and Culture (Led by the Greater Flint Arts Council)

Advisory groups helped gather community feedback, review Master Plan documents, and report back to their designated Steering Committee liaison with their recommendations. The Steering Committee, in turn, considered the recommendations of the Advisory Groups and reviewed all of the Master Plan documents holistically in crafting their own recommendations.

Summary of Community Issues and Opportunities

By engaging more than 5,000 people over the course of the planning process, and synthesizing the feedback from all participants, several common concerns and themes emerged as consistent priorities and considerations for the Flint community and the Master Plan. These concerns reflect opinions expressed by residents, business owners, City officials, and other stakeholders involved in the Master Planning Process. A complete record of all outreach feedback is on file with the City of Flint Planning Department.

It is important to note that the issues and opportunities summarized in the following, represent input from Flint residents and stakeholders. The brief summaries reflect a general consensus around key topics, as identified during several community outreach events.

Economic Development & Job Growth

The creation of new jobs will ultimately drive the physical and economic revitalization of the City. There is a need to create a business-friendly environment that encourages existing businesses to stay and expand within Flint and the need to attract new, high-quality employers to the City. Flint has a poor reputation within the region, state, and nation, which further confounds its ability to attract outside employers and investment in the community. In addition to improving this outward image, the City needs to create change from within by empowering local residents and providing education and training opportunities.

Education Quality

Education was identified as a key tool in improving the community. A lack of value in the public education system in Flint threatens quality of life and hinders growth. School closings, declining property taxes, a lack of quality facilities, and short school days were cited as reasons for a poorly performing system.

Public Safety and Crime

Public safety and crime are city-wide challenges. Crime is an issue that goes beyond personal safety. It affects residents' positive sense of community as well as Flint's image and identity, portrayed to and perceived by outsiders.

Housing and Blight

Poorly maintained housing, vacant and abandoned homes and commercial areas, and vacant lots are significant issues facing the Flint community. The abundance of vacant or abandoned homes is having a negative impact on the sense of community as well as City resources and infrastructure.

City Governance

Numerous comments dealt with the current state of City governance within Flint. Related issues include community distrust of the City, varied opinions on the need or benefit of having a State-appointed Emergency Manager, and the need for improved communication and coordination between the City, local residents and Genesee County. Also cited is a need to update City policies that reflect current economic conditions and best practices.

City Finances

City finances are an issue that needs to be addressed. Population loss within Flint has eroded the tax base and the City faces current and projected budget deficits.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Several transportation and City infrastructure issues were identified. Many roadways are in poor condition and need to be improved to accommodate transit as well as pedestrians and bicyclists. Recent increases in City water rates are an on-going issue and source of mistrust among local residents.

Recreation Opportunities for Youth

Providing facilities and new programs to support the City's youth is a concern, as many youth do not have access to afterschool programs or constructive educational, recreational, and social activities. A top priority of citizens is to keep at-risk youth away from gangs, and engaged in productive activities.

Public Services

City services are being cut as a result of budget constraints. Little code enforcement, a lack of parks and open space maintenance, and a growing litter/refuse problem are of great concern. Residents expressed displeasure at the rate and efficiency by which public services get accomplished. They noted there is no system in place for complaints and reaction from the City is based upon "who yells the loudest."

2 MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT
COMMUNITY PROFILE

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Incorporated in 1836, the City of Flint, as of the 2010 census, is the seventh largest City in Michigan, with a population of 102,434 and an estimated population of 100,515 in 2012. As the seat of Genesee County in mid-Michigan, Flint is located roughly 50 miles from Lansing and 70 miles from downtown Detroit. Three interstates, I-69, I-75, and I-475, intersect in Flint, placing Flint at a major crossroads in the State of Michigan and directly linking the City to an international border with America's largest trading partner, Canada. These important roadways combine with two major rail corridors and the Bishop International Airport to make Flint an important regional transportation hub.

The City is also bisected by the Flint River, a tributary of the Saginaw River, which eventually flows into the Saginaw Bay of Lake Huron. Despite a significant downturn in auto-industry employment, Flint remains an established manufacturing center in Michigan alongside the "Tri-Cities" of Saginaw, Bay City, and Midland. Today, Flint is the largest employment hub in the Genesee County region and is home to four colleges and universities including Kettering University, the University of Michigan-Flint, Mott Community College, and Baker College. Flint is also at the center of a growing health sector anchored by Hurley Medical Center, McLaren Regional Medical Center, Genesys Regional Medical Center and Diplomat Pharmacy.

COMMUNITY HISTORY

The Canadian fur trader Jacob Smith founded Flint in 1819. Attracted to the shallowest crossing point in the Flint River, Smith built a trading post at this "grand traverse," which is now present-day Water Street. Smith's trading post capitalized on a key passageway between Detroit and other parts of the state.

Native American Heritage

Smith was not Flint's first resident, however. For generations, Native Americans such as the Sauks, Ottawas, and Chippewas occupied areas in and around present-day Flint. At the time of Smith's arrival, there was a Chippewa village northwest of Flint near Montrose. There was also a gathering place in Flint called "Muscatawingh," meaning "open plain burnt over."

A great council in Saginaw, between the Chippewa and the territorial governor, General Lewis Cass, led to the sale of six million acres, including present-day Flint, to the U.S. government and settlers in 1819. Over the next few decades, pioneers from the east, aided by the completion of the Erie Canal and the promise of ample land, moved to the "Flint River Settlement" to farm, hunt, and trade.

The area continued to experience growth, and by 1855 was home to around 2,000 residents. That same year, the settlement was formally incorporated by the State of Michigan and officially named Flint, likely after the Native American name for the Flint River which translated into "river of flints." Shortly after its incorporation, residents elected the City's first mayor and council, and established a fire and police department.

Lumbering

In addition to its strategic position in the fur-trade, Flint's expansive and dense forests made it an attractive location for lumbering. Sawmills quickly sprouted up as Flint became a lumbering boom town. Henry Crapo's sawmill, for example, employed sixty people and cut twelve million feet of lumber, annually. By 1870, Flint was home to more than 5,000 residents, 100 stores, 18 lumber dealers, and 11 sawmills. Lumbering created a cadre of expert carpenters in home construction, cabinet making, and other key wood industries which stimulated economic growth for the City.

Since Flint's lumbering was a local enterprise, profits for the most part remained in the community and were available for reinvestment and development in other technologies, including carriage making.

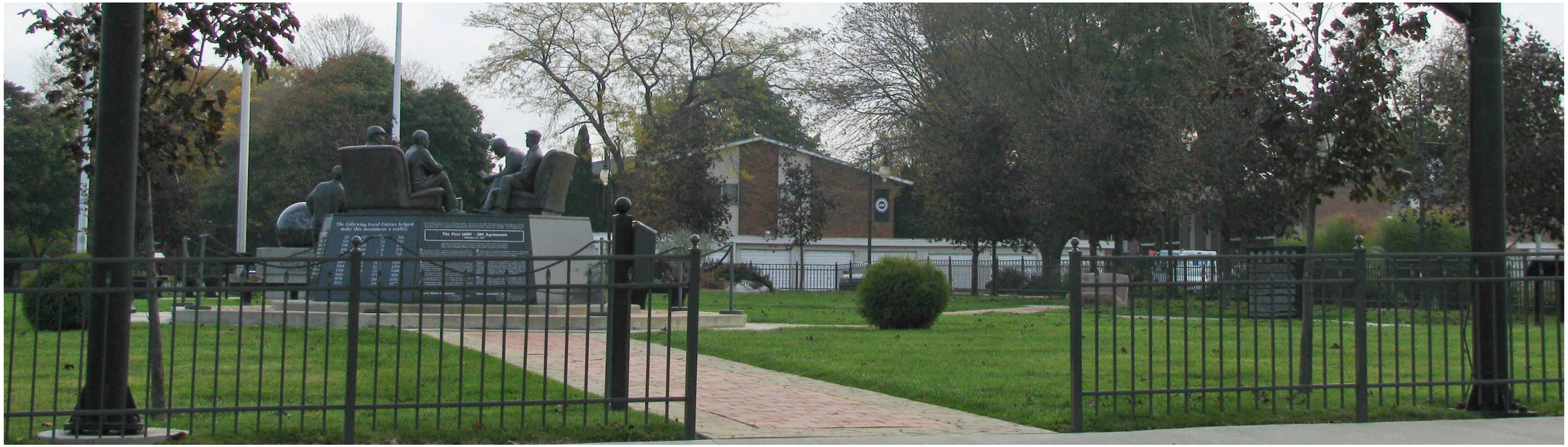
Flint's entrepreneurs recognized a pent-up nationwide consumer demand for a new mode of transportation – farmers required wagons to move and sell their crops, businesses needed vehicles to transport wares, and families sought travel into and around town. With the availability of lumber dwindling, the local economy reinvented itself through carriage manufacturing.

Carriage Manufacturing

In 1869, the first of Flint's "Big Three" carriage companies was founded by the Patterson brothers, William and A.B. By 1901, the Pattersons employed 350 people and built 23,000 vehicles annually. The second, Flint Wagon Works, transitioned directly from lumbering operations to large scale carriage construction. Most famously, William Crapo Durant ("Billy") and J. Dallas Dort founded the third in 1886 in what would become the Durant-Dort Carriage Company, a global leader in carriage production and the foundation for General Motors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Community History **13**
Demographic and Market Overview **15**
Data Sources *15*
Summary *15*
Demographic Overview *16*
Master Plan Topics **22**
Existing Land Use *22*
Housing & Neighborhoods *22*
Transportation & Mobility *23*
Parks, Open Space & Environmental Features *23*
Infrastructure & Community Facilities *24*
Public Safety, Health & Welfare *24*
Economic Development & Education *24*



At the dawn of the twentieth century, 13,103 residents called Flint home, and its companies manufactured more than 150,000 wagons annually.

Rise of the Auto Industry

The carriage business created an entrepreneurial scene in Flint akin to Silicon Valley and planted the seeds for Flint's transition to the "horseless carriage," or automobile industry. In 1900, the first automobile built in Flint, Charles Wisner's "buzz wagon," debuted before 10,000 spectators at the Flint Labor Day parade. Just two years later, A.B.C. Hardy manufactured the City's first fleet of autos, producing the $750 to $850 Flint Roadster. However, it was not until 1903, when the Flint Wagon Works bought the Buick Motor Company, that the Flint Journal declared that "a splendid new manufacturing industry is now assured for Flint." Billy Durant was brought onboard at Buick in 1904 and quickly persuaded Charles Stewart Mott's axle company to relocate from New York to Flint. In 1908, Durant founded General Motors (GM) and purchased Buick and Oldsmobile. Within the next several years, Durant purchased dozens more companies such as Chevrolet, Cadillac, Oakland (precursor to Pontiac), and AC Spark Plug and reorganized them under the GM umbrella. Flint made its last carriage in 1917 and by 1927 Buick was producing 240,000 cars annually.

Population Boom

Flint's population, wealth, and diversity rose steadily with the burgeoning automobile industry. In 1900, Flint's population was only 13,000, but by 1910, it skyrocketed to 38,500; 91,600 in 1920; and a remarkable 156,500 in 1930. Immigrants and southern blacks were larger drivers of these numbers, flocking to Flint to work in its factories. The list of Flint congregations from the time period illustrates the City's diversity.

The City also saw a building boom in the 1920s, with rapid construction of some of Flint's most famous structures: Central High School, Durant Hotel, Capitol Theatre, the Civic Park neighborhood, and the Mott Foundation Building.

Labor Rights

The course of American history was forever changed when striking auto workers in Flint redefined the relationship between workers and management. Starting in December 1936, thousands of General Motors factory employees enacted a "sit-down strike," refusing to work until employee demands were met by management. In February 1937, the strike ended when GM recognized the United Auto Workers (UAW) and gave workers a raise. This "strike heard around the world" gave birth to America's middle class by ensuring living wages and a safe working environment for factory workers around the country.

WWII & The Golden Era

When World War II broke out a few years later, Flint was uniquely situated to aid the war effort given its extensive manufacturing infrastructure. All of GM's factories converted to producing war machinery, making airplane parts, tanks, machine guns, and the Hellcat (a 19-ton tank destroyer). The City's involvement in the war effort extended beyond manufacturing. Nearly 28,000 men and women from Genesee County served in the war, of which nearly three thousand were killed or wounded.

Following the war, the 1950s marked the "golden era" for Flint. The City's civic leaders constructed the University of Michigan-Flint, new libraries, a planetarium, and the College Cultural Center. General Motors produced its 50 millionth car in 1954 and employed more than 80,000 while Buick recorded record sales.

The City added more than 33,000 new residents in this decade and its per-capita income rose to one of the highest in the nation.

Segregation & Race Relations

As the City's population grew, Flint also faced complicated race relations. Between 1940 and 1955, Flint's African American population tripled, due to southern migration to the City's factories. However, restrictive covenants, mortgage redlining, and social norms limited where African Americans could live and work. Flint may not have had the violent racial animosity of the Deep South, but a survey published in 1951 ranked Flint the third most segregated city in the country and the Ku Klux Klan paraded through the downtown.

While Flint residents mostly maintained economic security in the 1960s, the decade brought shifts in the City's politics, population, and economic base. In 1966, Floyd McCree became the first black mayor and one year later, progressive Flint voters passed the nation's first open housing ordinance. However, it did not lead to integrated neighborhoods, as intended. Instead, whites with new economic mobility began moving in droves out to suburbs such as Davison, Flushing, and Grand Blanc.

This flight was compounded by ongoing structural changes at GM that hurt the local workforce. New technology allowed GM to automate many jobs previously held by residents, while profit motives relocated many northern factories to lower-wage, non-union, southern states. By the 1980 census, the City had lost more than 35,000 residents from its peak of 196,940 in 1960.

Flint's urban renewal plans also complicated race relations. The City's 1960 Master Plan called for the demolition of the St. John's neighborhood, a predominantly poor and blighted African American neighborhood, to make way for I-475 and industrial expansion of Buick City. In 1972, demolition began with the promise of relocating residents to better, safer, and integrated housing. Unfortunately, that did not materialize. The neighborhood was razed, and black residents were relocated along racial lines.

Economic Decline

Factory closures, suburbanization, and sprawl combined with federal disinvestment created a perfect storm of blight, poverty, and high crime in Flint, during the final decades of the twentieth century. Historically a "one company town" with little economic diversity, Flint's challenges were significantly greater than most other post-industrial cities. Efforts to stem the tide with capital projects such as Auto World, Buick City, the I-475 highway expansion, a new down-town hotel, and a riverfront shopping mall, failed to materialize into any meaningful economic gain for the City. While area non-profit organizations, foundations, and everyday citizens came together at unprecedented levels, the economic storm was difficult for many to weather.

Flint in the 21st Century

The early twenty-first century has also not been easy. Two recessions, lower property tax revenues, and a decline in State revenue sharing, translated into an unprecedented shrinkage of City services. To help the City through this tough period, the State appointed an Emergency Manager in 2011 with special powers that supersede those of the City Council and Mayor. At the same time, Flint is seeing revitalization in the downtown, pockets of neighborhood investment, and expansion of its institutional corridors, including economic growth in the education and medical sectors.

DEMOGRAPHIC & MARKET OVERVIEW

An analysis of the City's demographic and market trends provides a firm understanding of existing conditions within the Flint community and informs land use and development decision-making. The analysis begins with a demographic overview of recent trends in population, households, income, age, racial and ethnic composition, and labor force and employment. This is followed by an assessment of Flint's position within the residential and commercial markets.

Data Sources

Numerous demographic and economic studies have been conducted within Flint and Genesee County in recent years. Where appropriate, data and observations provided by those various reports, has been incorporated into this market analysis. Some of the data referenced in those reports, has also been updated to provide the most accurate representation of Flint's position when the Existing Conditions Report was drafted in Fall 2012.

At the time of analysis, data from the 2010 US Census as well as the 2011 American Community Survey represented the most accurate snapshot of Flint's population. These data sources were contrasted with data from the 2000 Census to document demographic shifts and market trends within the community. Additional market data regarding housing, income and retail demand were also obtained from other U.S. Census Bureau sources and ESRI Business Analyst, a nationally recognized provider of market and demographic data.

Summary

Key points of the demographic and market analysis are listed below, including an examination of the City of Flint independently as well as in comparison to the larger Genesee County area:

- The Average household income in Flint is two-thirds lower than that of the County
- At $33,029, average household incomes in Flint are $20,000 lower than that of the County ($53,415), and more than $35,000 lower than the national average of $69,821
- The Flint African American population represents one quarter of the County population, but two-thirds of the County's total black population. African Americans make up 56% of Flint's population
- Nearly half of Flint residents are renters
- The City's population rapidly declined from 193,317 in 1970 to 102,434 in 2010, while the County's total population stayed relatively stable
- The City is continuing to lose population, albeit at a slower rate than in the past
- The population is getting older, with an increase of 35% in the 55 to 64 year old age cohort
- Economic development opportunities are enhanced by a growing student population and business activities
- The City lost nearly 23,000 jobs between 2002 and 2010; however, the City is still responsible for one-third of total employment within the County
- The City is projected to experience modest job growth through 2018
- At 25.6%, the 2011 Flint unemployment rate is 56% higher than that of the County (16.4%)
- There are some data indicating potential for additional retail development in multiple locations
- Some neighborhoods are under served by grocery stores

Demographic Overview

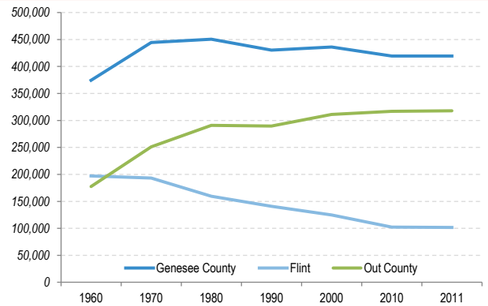
Since Flint's previous master plan in 1960, the City's population declined by 48%. This significant decrease in population translates into a loss of $1,777 in City revenue per resident and a total loss of $9.4 million between 2006 and 2011. Additionally, the City still maintains the same amount of infrastructure that previously served a population double the size. It has struggled with preserving population density and a high-quality of life. With future projections showing a continued decline of 20,000 people over the next decade, the Master Plan outlines innovative methods to retain population and work towards stabilizing the residential population, strengthening vital City services, and promoting more sustainable, safer neighborhoods.

Demographic Summary
CITY OF FLINT - 2000 & 2010

			Total Change
	2000	2010	2000 to 2010
Population	124,943	102,434	-22,509 (-18.0%)
Households	48,744	40,472	-8,272 (-17.0%)
Median Age	30.9	33.7	2.8 (9.1%)
Average Household Size	2.51	2.45	-0.1 (-2.4%)
Median Household Income	$28,121	$22,672	-$5,449 (-19.4%)
Average Household Income	$39,621	$30,826	-$8,795 (-22.2%)

Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Population Change
CITY OF FLINT AND GENESEE COUNTY (1960-2011)



Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Population Change

The Population Change graph compares changes in population and number of households within the City of Flint between 2000, 2010, and 2011. Population is defined as the overall number of people within a specified geography. A household is defined as the group of individuals who live in the same dwelling unit. Household by age is based on the age of the individual considered head of household. Overall, the number of households and total population have decreased within Flint, while the typical household has grown older and decreased in size.

Flint continues to get smaller. The City of Flint experienced a decline of 22,509 individuals (-18%) between 2000 and 2010. The trend of decline continued between 2010 and 2011, with a decrease of 866 individuals (-0.8%).

Flint is growing older, but remains younger than average. The City's median age surpassed 34 years in 2011, representing an increase of more than 3 years (10%) since 2000. This means that half of the people living in Flint are over the age of 34. This is still younger than the median age of Michigan and the Nation, which are 39.2 and 37.3 respectively.

Flint households are earning more. After declining by 19% between 2000 and 2010, it is estimated that median household incomes rose by $1,158 (5.1%) in 2011, indicating that Flint may be rebounding from the recession. While this may be a positive sign, Flint families are still earning significantly less than they were in the past.

Population Projections

While Flint's population has declined by half since 1960, the population of Genesee County has remained relatively stable, suggesting a population transfer to the suburbs. Between 2000 and 2011, the City lost more than 23,000 people, but the total County population declined by only 14,000. As such, population loss within the City of Flint accounted for approximately 166% of total population loss within the County and the proportion of Flint residents within Genesee County decreased by 16% over the same time period.

Population loss will continue into the near future. Genesee County is projected to lose population through the year 2020, decreasing by more than 12,000 between 2010 and 2020. Assuming a similar ratio of population loss within the City and population gain within other areas of the county, it is projected that the City will lose approximately 20,000 individuals between 2010 and 2020. Conversely, those areas of Genesee County outside of Flint, will grow by a projected 8,000 over the same period.

Population Change
CITY OF FLINT & GENESEE COUNTY - 2000-2010

	Population		Change	
	2000	2010	Number	Percent
City of Flint	124,943	102,434	-22,509	-18.0%
Genesee County	436,141	425,790	-10,351	-2.4%
Flint % of County Population	28.6%	24.1%	-16.0%	

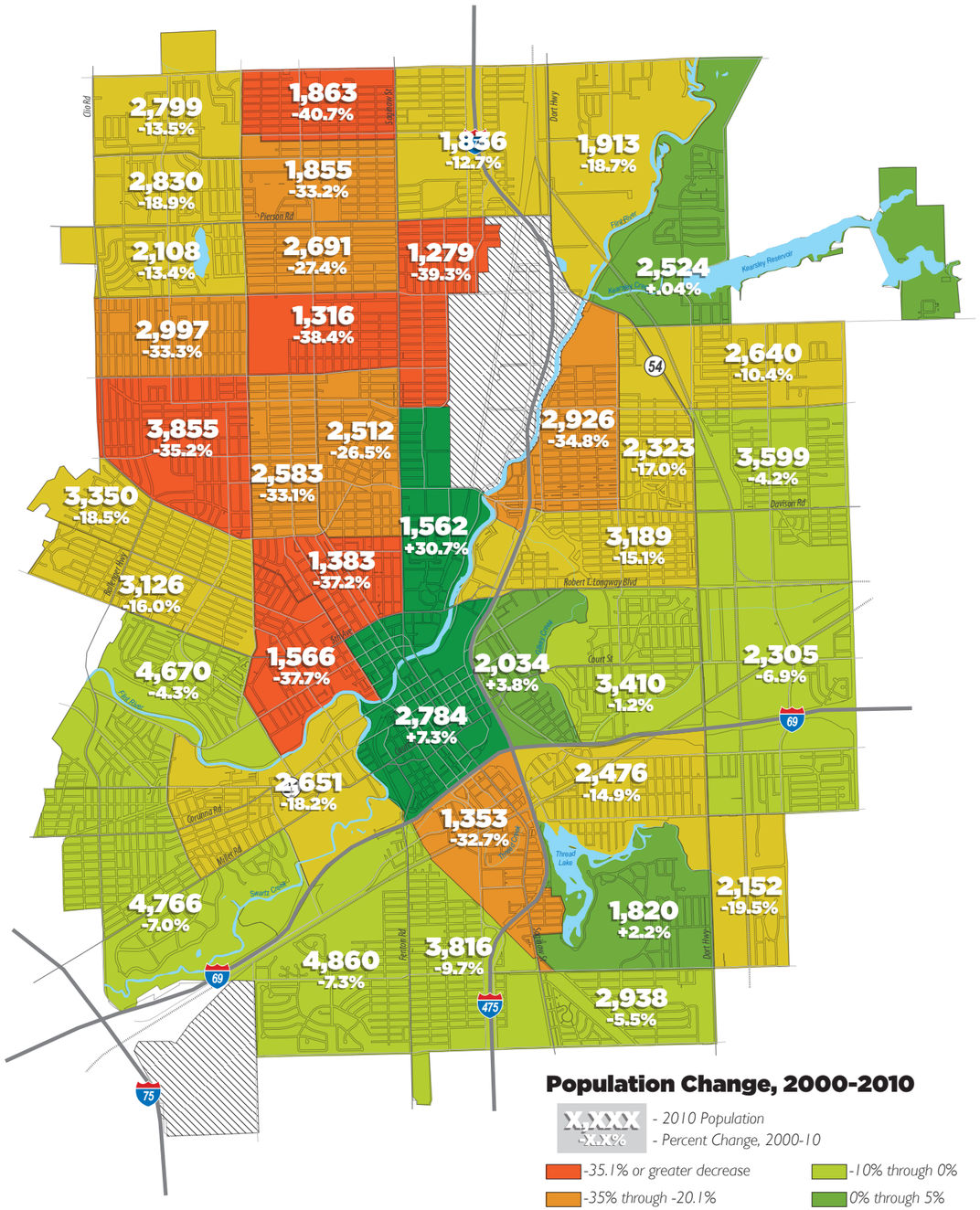
Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Population Projections
GENESEE COUNTY (2010 - 2020)

		2010*	2015	2020
Population		431,100	425,300	419,000
Change From 2010	Number		-5,800	-12,100
	Percent		-1.3%	-2.8%

** 2010 Census total population was 425,790*

Source: *Michigan State Budget Office*



Population Change, 2000-2010

XX,XXX - *2010 Population*
-XX.X% - *Percent Change, 2000-10*

- *-35.1% or greater decrease*
- *-35% through -20.1%*
- *-20% through -10.1%*
- *-10% through 0%*
- *0% through 5%*
- *5% or greater*

Population Change within the City

Population Density

Flint's population is not as dense as other communities. As shown in the following table, Flint's population density is lower than that of other peer-cities in Michigan, and significantly lower than its peak density in 1960 (5782 people per square mile). Flint, Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids and Lansing are the largest cities outside of the Detroit Metro area, each with a 2010 population of 100,000 or more. Flint is the least dense of these four cities. Between 2000 and 2010, population density of Flint dropped from more than 3,700 people per square mile to less than 3,100 people per square mile, representing a decrease of 17.5%. This is slightly less than the total loss in population of 18% that the City experienced over the same period.

Population Distribution

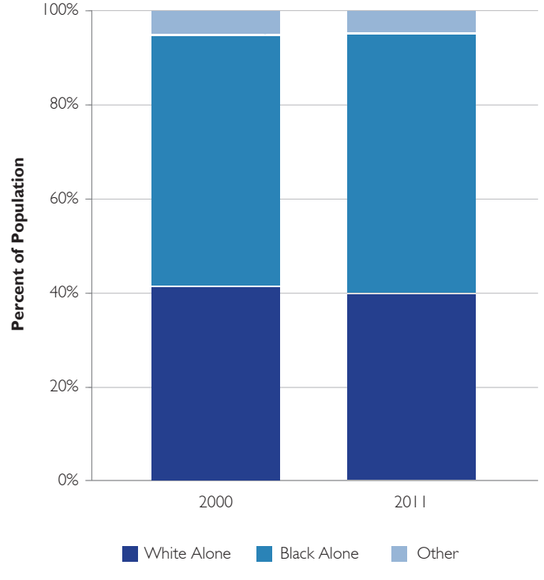
Population change varies by neighborhood. As highlighted by Census tracts shown in shades of orange, between 2000 and 2010, population loss within Flint was concentrated within areas north of the Flint River. These areas primarily consist of single family residential neighborhoods with limited commercial or employment-related uses.

Population Density
FLINT AND PEER COMMUNITIES (2000 & 2010)

			Total Change	
Population	2000	2010	Number	Percent
City of Flint	124,943	102,434	22,509	-18.0%
City of Ann Arbor	114,024	113,934	90	-0.1%
City of Grand Rapids	197,800	188,040	9,760	-4.9%
City of Lansing	114,321	109,563	4,758	-4.2%
Population Density (per sq. mi.)	2000	2010	Number	Percent
City of Flint	3,714.9	3,065.4	649.5	-17.5%
City of Ann Arbor	4,221.1	4,094.0	127.1	-3.0%
City of Grand Rapids	4,431.2	4,235.6	195.6	-4.4%
City of Lansing	3,366.7	3,303.2	63.5	-1.9%
Land Area (sq. mi.)	2000	2010	Number	Percent
City of Flint	33.6	33.4	0.2	-0.6%
City of Ann Arbor	27.0	27.8	-0.8	3.0%
City of Grand Rapids	44.6	44.4	0.2	-0.5%
City of Lansing	34.0	33.2	0.8	-2.3%

Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Racial Composition
CITY OF FLINT (2000, 2011)



Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Daytime Population

Flint is a regional emploment hub, not a bedroom community. Unlike many communities in the region, Flint's daytime population is larger than its resident population. While there is no doubt that the City of Flint has lost numerous businesses over the last several decades, Flint remains a large employer within mid-Michigan and serves as a regional hub for employment and education. The number of people commuting to Flint for work is nearly double the number of Flint residents leaving the community for work on a daily basis. Nearly 30,000 students are also enrolled at Flint's four major college and universities (Baker College, Mott Community College, Kettering University, and University of Michigan-Flint).

Flint's retail demand goes beyond demand from residents. When non-resident employees and students are combined with residents living and working in Flint, the City's daytime population is conservatively estimated at nearly 134,000. This population has a significant influence on demand for retail goods and services throughout the community. More in-depth discussion of the impact of the daytime population can be found in ***Chapter 9: Economic Development and Education***.

Flint's institutions generate significant demand. Mott Community College, University of Michigan-Flint, Hurley Medical Center, McLaren Regional Medical Center and Genesys employ a combined 8,500 people. These institutions contribute significantly to the City's daytime population and may represent an underutilized source of potential demand for goods and services.

Daytime Population
CITY OF FLINT (2010)

Worker In Flow	+ 30,874
Residents	+ 102,434
Students	+ 28,456
Worker Out Flow	- 17,966
Residents who are Students	- 9,916
Total Daytime Population	***133,882***

Source: *US Census (2010), OnTheMap Application, Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce*

Race & Ethnicity

The following charts illustrate the estimated 2000 and 2011 racial and ethnic composition of the City of Flint (as defined by the US Census).

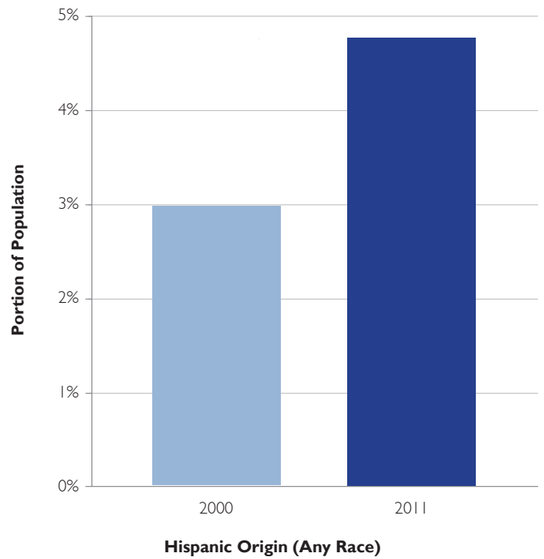
Flint remains a predominantly Black community. In 2011, it is estimated that 55.2% of the City's population is considered Black. While the Black population of Flint decreased by 10,542 between 2000 and 2011, this group has maintained a steady proportion of Flint's total population.

Flint's White Alone population has maintained a steady portion of the community. Between 2000 and 2011, Flint's White population decreased by 21.8%, making up 39.8% of the City's 2011 population. As with the Black population, despite decreases in population, Flint's White population has maintained a steady proportion of the City's total population.

Flint's non-Black and non-White racial groups are small, according to the US Census. There were an estimated 1,071 American Indian and Alaska Native individuals in Flint in 2011, making up 1.1% of the population. No other racial group made up more than 1% of Flint's 2011 population.

Flint's Hispanic population is growing. The most significant increase among any racial or ethnic group is projected to occur in the Hispanic population, which had an estimated 4,034 individuals in 2011. Flint's Hispanic and Latino population grew by 29.1% over 11 years to make up 4.8% of the City's 2011 population.

Hispanic Population
CITY OF FLINT (2000, 2011)



Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Age Profile

The following chart compares 2011 population estimates by age group for the City of Flint, State of Michigan, and the United States. The City of Flint has a proportionately smaller number of youth and young adults, while its middle-aged and senior populations are proportionately larger.

Flint has a smaller youth population than the national average. Residents under the age of 20 made up 27% of Flint's 2011 population. This is on par with the State of Michigan (26%), but lower than the national rate of 30%.

Flint has a typically-sized young adult population. In 2011, the proportion of Flint residents aged 20 to 34 was 20.4%, compared to 18.9% in the State of Michigan and 21.2% in the United States.

Flint has a larger middle-aged population than the national average. Residents aged 35 to 54 made up 27.4% of Flint's 2011 population. This is on par with the State of Michigan (27.6%) as a whole, but 2% larger than that of the United States (25.2%)

Flint has a larger senior population than the national average. In 2011, 25.4% of Flint residents were aged 55 or over. By comparison, this age group made up 27.3% of the Michigan population and 23.8% of the nation.

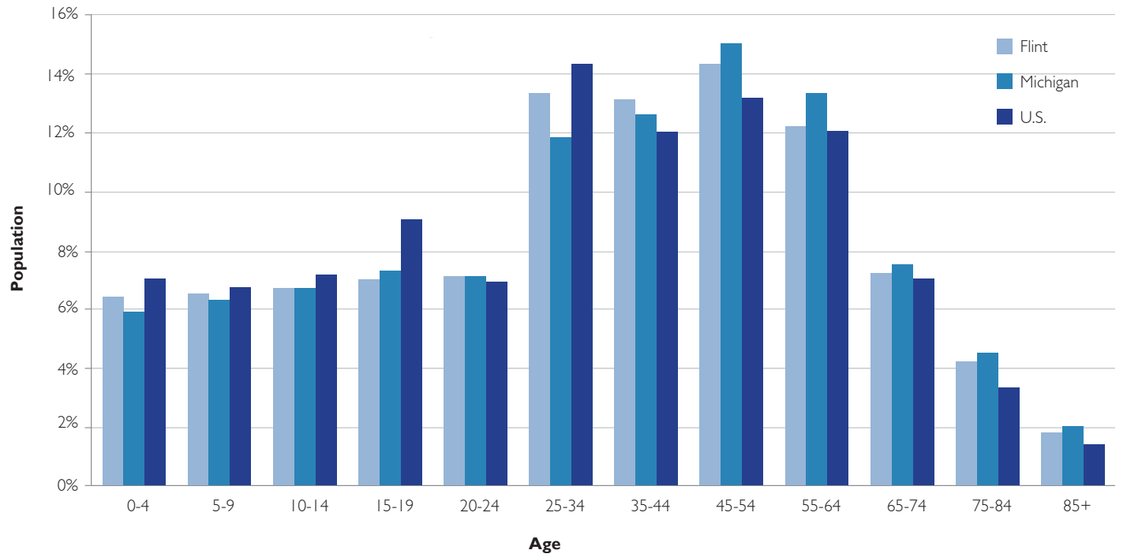
Population Change by Age

Flint is growing older, faster. The following chart shows population change by age cohort between 2000 and 2011. Between 2000 and 2011, the median age of a resident of the City of Flint increased by three years, from 30.9 to 34.2. By comparison, the national median age increased by two years, increasing from 35.3 in 2000 to 37.3 in 2011. The median age in Flint is increasing at a faster pace than that of the nation due to a combination of factors.

The number of residents aged 55 and over grew by nearly 2,000 individuals, an increase of 8.9%, between 2000 and 2011. Over this period, the only age group to experience significant growth were those aged 55 to 64, which increased by 3,164 individuals (+34.9%).

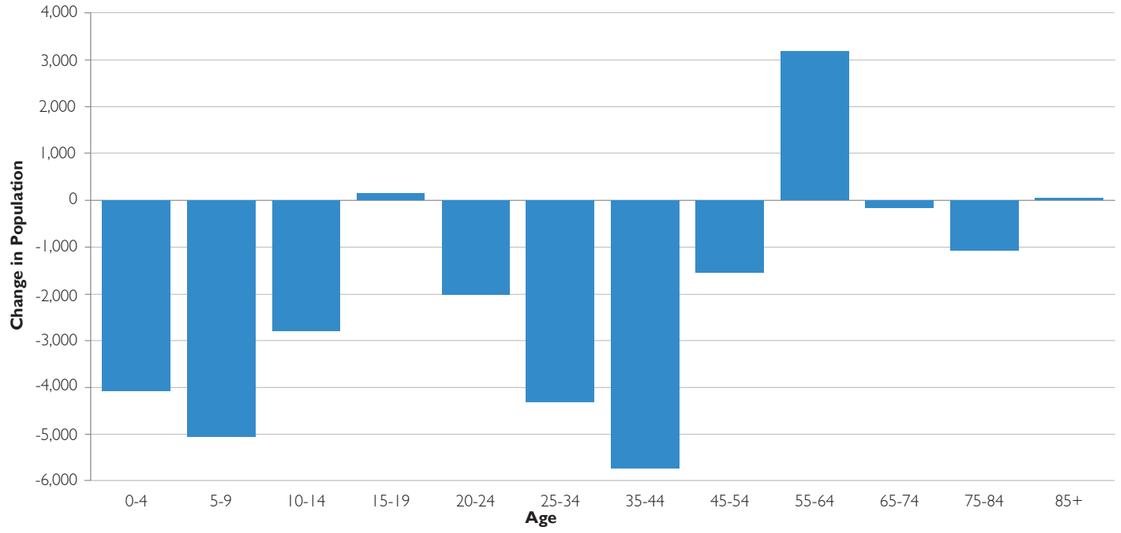
Flint's younger and middle-aged populations are getting smaller. Flint's population under the age of 25 decreased by 13,776 between 2000 and 2011, a drop of 27%. Over the same period, the number of Flint residents aged 25 to 54 decreased by 11,576 individuals (-22.4%).

Population by Age
CITY OF FLINT, MICHIGAN & U.S. (2011)



Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Change in Population by Age
CITY OF FLINT (2000-2011)



Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Household Structure

Household makeup is changing. The following table highlights the link between a shifting age profile and household structure. As noted in the Flint & Genesee County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), Flint and Genesee County are experiencing the impacts of changes to household structure caused by an aging Baby Boom population. The proportion of two-parent households with children decreased between 1990 and 2010, while the proportion of non-married couples without children and persons living alone, increased. Persons living alone made up nearly one-third of all households in Genesee County in 2010.

Household Income

The following charts present change in household income between 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2011. Between 2000 and 2010 the median household income in Flint decreased by 19% while the average household income decreased by 22%. Although it was only one year, an increase in median income among Flint households between 2010 and 2011 is encouraging. This shift in median household income is largely the result of recent increases among middle income households.

Flint incomes may be growing. Between 2010 and 2011, the average income among Flint households increased by 7.1% to $33,029 in 2011. By comparison, the median household income for the State of Michigan increased by just 3.6% over the same period.

Flint is gaining more middle income households. After decreasing by 47% between 2000 and 2010, the number of households earning between $50,000 and $100,000, within Flint, grew by 1,563 (28%) between 2010 and 2011.

Flint household income lags behind Genesee County. The average income for a Flint household was $33,029 in 2011, while the average household income in Genesee County was $53,415. Moreover, while Genesee County household income is estimated to be slightly higher than in 2000, the average household income in Flint is still approximately 16% lower than in 2000.

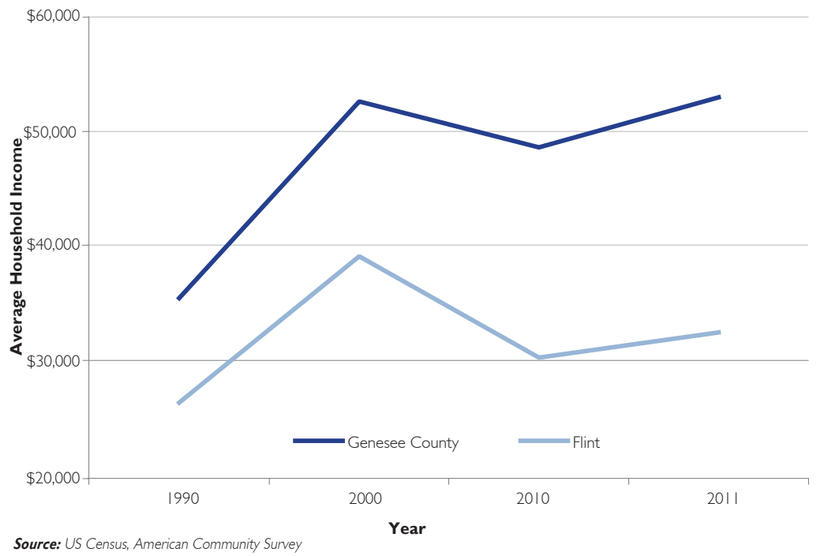
Changes in Household Structure
GENESEE COUNTY & U.S. (1990 & 2010*)

	Genesee County		United States	
Familes w/ Children	**1990**	**2010**	**1990**	**2010**
Male Householder	1.9%	3.3%	1.7%	1.6%
Female Householder	12.5%	8.8%	7.6%	6.3%
Married Couple	25.0%	17.2%	26.7%	20.1%
Families w/o Children	**1990**	**2010**	**1990**	**2010**
Other	5.8%	10.5%	5.7%	8.3%
Married Couple	26.5%	26.9%	28.4%	31.5%
Nonfamily	**1990**	**2010**	**1990**	**2010**
Other	4.3%	6.2%	5.3%	5.4%
Persons Living Alone	23.9%	29.5%	24.6%	26.8%

** Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding error.*

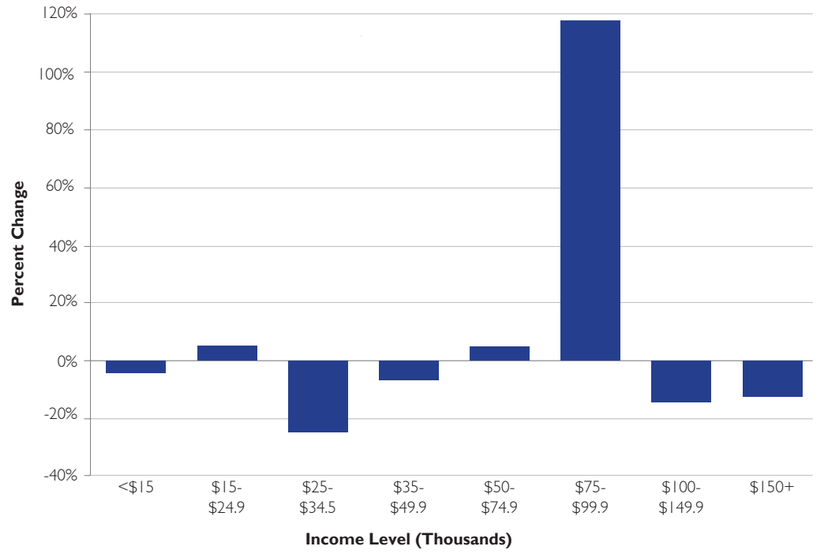
Source: *Flint and Genesee County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*

Change in Average Household Income
CITY OF FLINT AND GENESEE COUNTY (1990-2011)



Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Change in Household Income
CITY OF FLINT (2010-2011)



Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

People Below Poverty Level
CITY OF FLINT (2000, 2010, & 2011)

				2000-2010		2010-2011	
Poverty Rate	2000	2010	2011	Change	Percent Change	Change	Percent Change
All People	26.4%	41.2%	40.6%	14.8%	56.1%	-0.6%	-1.5%
Under 18 Years	37.7%	63.1%	59.7%	25.4%	67.4%	-3.4%	-5.4%
18 Years and Over	27.3%	33.1%	33.9%	5.8%	21.2%	0.8%	2.4%

Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Local Employment

Genesee County job growth is positive, but modest. In 2008, Genesee County accounted for approximately 89.1% of jobs within the Flint region (defined by the Michigan Department of Technology as Genesee and Shiawassee Counties). Genesee County could stand to gain an additional 4,375 jobs between 2008 and 2018.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate among Flint individuals aged 16 and older was 27% in 2011. This is 56% higher than that of Genessee County, which is 16.4%. Unemployment in Flint is concentrated among males and young adults. In 2011, more than 46% of Flint's population aged 20 to 24 was employed and nearly one in three Flint men were unemployed.

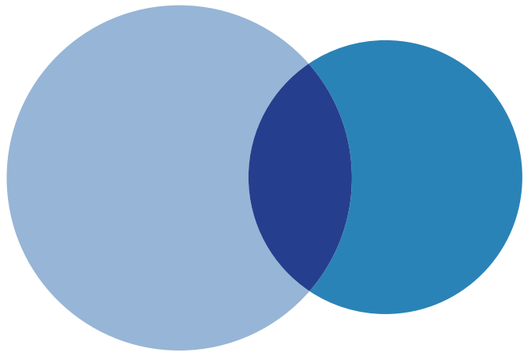
Poverty Rate

The total poverty rate among Flint residents increased by 15% between 2000 and 2010, growing to 41.2% in 2010. As with household income, data from 2011 indicate that the long-term trend of increasing poverty may be reversing.

More of Flint's youth are living in poverty. The proportion of children under 18 years old living below the poverty level grew from nearly 38% in 2000 to more than 63% in 2010. By comparison, the poverty rate among adults increased by just 6% to 33% in 2010.

Flint's high poverty rate may be trending downward. Data for 2010 and 2011 indicate that the overall poverty rate within Flint decreased by 1.5% to 40.6%. This overall decrease is the result of a 3% drop in the youth poverty rate.

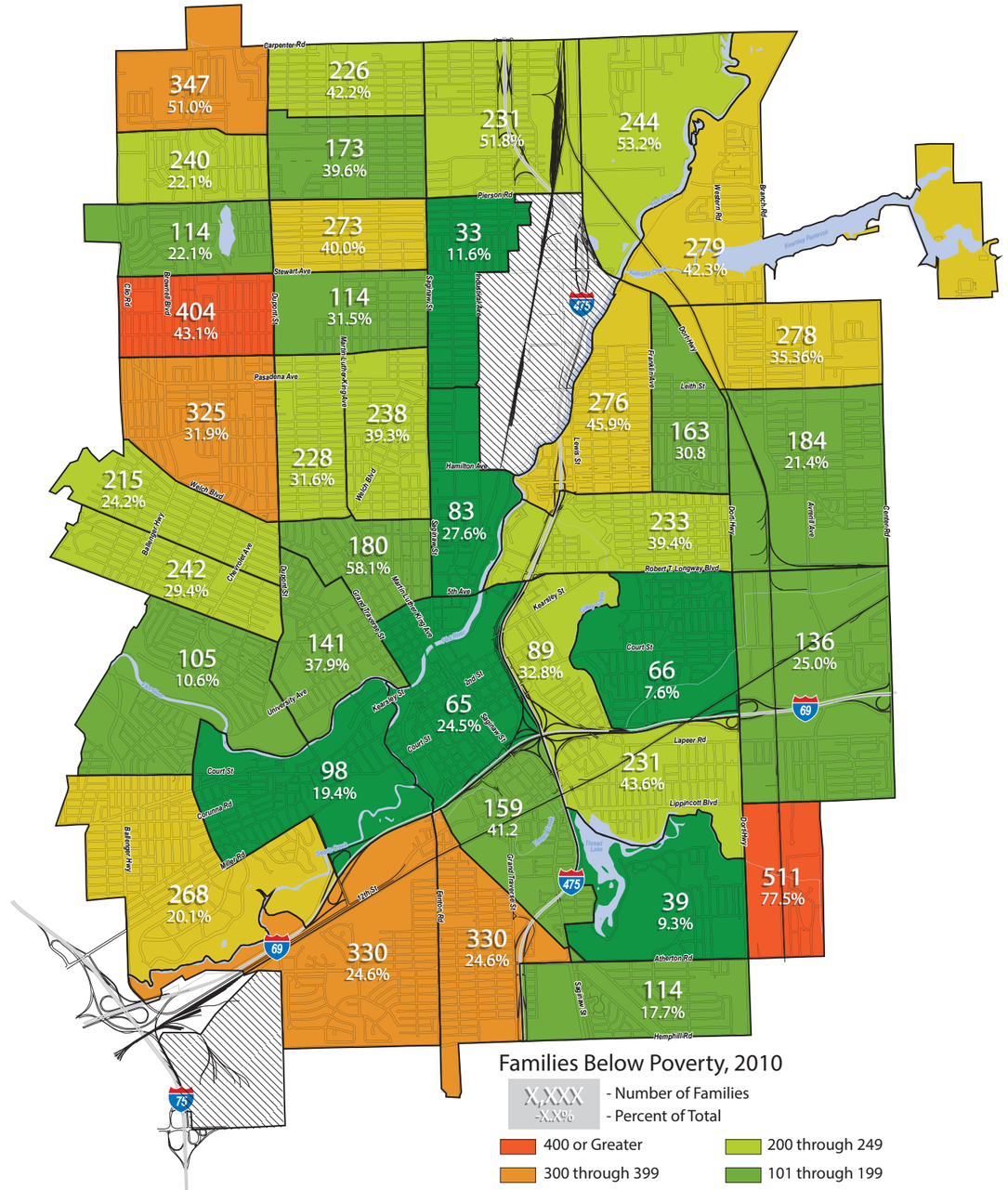
Employment Inflow & Outflow



30,874 people - Work in Flint, but live elsewhere

17,966 people - Live in Flint, but work elsewhere

Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*



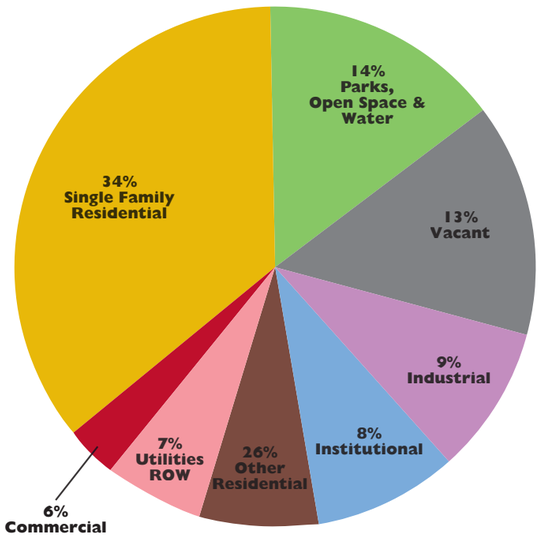
Families Below Poverty, 2010

X,XXX - Number of Families
-X.X% - Percent of Total

- 400 or Greater
- 300 through 399
- 250 through 299
- 200 through 249
- 101 through 199
- 100 or below

Source: 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Existing Land Use



MASTER PLAN TOPICS

A detailed existing conditions analysis combined with extensive community outreach, provided an assessment of the challenges facing the Flint community and identified assets the City has upon which to build. This chapter provides an overview of the City's major assets and challenges addressed in other chapters of the Master Plan including: Land Use; Housing and Neighborhoods; Transportation and Mobility; Environmental Features, Open Space, and Parks; Infrastructure and Community Facilities; Economic Development and Education; Public Safety, Health, and Welfare; and Arts and Culture.

Existing Land Use

The Land Use Plan builds upon a firm understanding of Flint's existing land use patterns which will have a significant influence on the City's future growth and development. As illustrated, Flint is made up of a diverse range of land uses that have developed over the City's history. Large areas of the City are single family residential neighborhoods with commercial uses located primarily along the City's arterial corridors and in the Downtown area.

Flint's industrial and employment sector uses continue to concentrate along the City's two primary railroad corridors and along the Flint River. Flint also features a high amount of public and community facilities such as schools, churches, cultural amenities, and also includes a vast network of parks and open space. A primary distinguishing land use characteristic is the high number of vacant parcels that exist throughout the City's residential, industrial, and commercial areas.

Vacant Land

The Master Plan provides the City with a tremendous opportunity to capitalize on the abundance of vacant land to reinvent itself and correct previous planning mistakes. Vacant parcels include a wide array of formerly occupied sites including residential parcels, commercial and industrial sites, and public/semi-public uses currently without structures. Vacant parcels occur in almost all parts of the City, with high-concentration of vacancy in distressed residential neighborhoods and within the larger industrial areas. The abundance of vacant homes is having a negative impact on the sense of community as well as on City resources and infrastructure.

Genesee County Land Bank

In 1999, the Michigan State Legislature created a new, streamlined system for returning tax-reverted properties to productive use. This changed the way foreclosed properties were administered, by giving outright ownership of these properties to the local county treasurer after two and a half years, instead of speculators or slumlords at auction. With this process, Michigan opened the door for Flint to reclaim, reinvest in, and rebuild their neighborhoods through the creation of the Genesee County Land Reutilization Council (LRC). In 2004, after the State of Michigan passed the land bank legislation, the LRC became the Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA). Today, state governments across the country are approving land bank legislation based on the success of the Genesee County model.

Land Bank Properties

The Genesee County Land Bank uses the new tax law as a constructive community development tool. By avoiding the potential neglect or misuse that comes from selling land at auction to speculators, the County is able to acquire abandoned land through the foreclosure process, and determine the best use of that land in conjunction with the community's long-term vision. The Genesee County Land Bank transfers land to adjacent homeowners, develops long and short-term green spaces, and assembles land for responsible new housing and commercial development. The objective is to restore the integrity of the community by removing dilapidated structures and redeveloping abandoned properties.

As of June 2013, the Genesee County Land Bank owned 8,335 properties within the City of Flint. This represents an estimated 18% of the parcels within the City. The Genesee County Land Banks holdings have increased dramatically since 2003, with most properties concentrated in the north central portion of the community, along the M.L.K. and Saginaw Street corridors. Further discussion of the Land Bank and its programs can be found in ***Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods Plan***.

Housing & Neighborhoods

Flint has roughly 12,000 vacant homes and 6,000 houses in poor/substandard condition. The City must find ways to improve the quality of local neighborhoods; however, it is unlikely that the City can demolish all substandard homes given the cost of more than $10,000 a piece.

Therefore, the City must partner with local neighborhood groups and block clubs to address neighborhood blight and implement beautification programs. The City must also continue to work hand-in-hand with the Land Bank, which owns an estimated 18% of the parcels within Flint. Only by doing so, can the City identify ways to address the housing needs of a diverse population of home owners and renters, while also actively targeting blight and strategic demolition.

Housing Overview
CITY OF FLINT AND GENESEE COUNTY (2010)

	City of Flint		*Genesee County*	
Total Units	52,615	100.0%	192,097	100.0%
Occupied	40,827	78.0%	166,539	87.0%
Vacant	11,788	22.0%	25,558	13.0%
Single Family	40,270	77.0%	137,793	72.0%
Multi-Family (more than one unit)*	12,345	23.0%	13,404	28.0%

* Including mobile home units.

Source: *American Community Survey; Houseal Lavigne Associates*

Challenges

Housing Diversity
- 43% renters, but only 23% multi-family housing

Housing Stock
- 82% of Flint's housing stock was built before 1970
- 14.1% of Flint's parcels contain houses in poor or substandard condition

Vacancy
- 22% of Flint's residential parcels are vacant lots
- There are 5,774 blighted parcels in Flint, and it costs an average of $10,000 to demolish one house structure

Assets

Strong Neighborhoods
- Flint contains many strong and active neighborhoods, with as many as 65 neighborhood organizations identified by the City and 14 having developed neighborhood plans
- A variety of housing styles exist, with 24% of homes dating prior to 1940
- As of June 2013, the Genesee County Land Bank owns over 8,335 properties within Flint, positioning a large number of problamatic lots together for system wide solutions
- More than $35 million has been invested in Flint neighborhoods through the Neighborhood Stabalization Program since 2009

Transportation & Mobility

To effectively influence how development will change and locate in the future, the Master Plan establishes a framework for investing in critical transportation infrastructure. The ultimate goal of the transportation and mobility plan is to support multiple types of motorized and non-motorized modes of travel, expand bike lanes, minimize congestion, develop complete streets, increase walkability, and reduce existing hazards. Flint is positioned to be a major asset throughout the region. Located centrally within the I-69 International Trade Corridor, Flint is connected with over 750,000 residents by means of air, water, rail, and roadways encompassing over 2,500 sq. miles of linkage. In addition, with the majority of Flint residents (59%) owning one car or less, accessibility and mobility are also an essential component of the City's transportation network.

Challenges

Poor Connectivity
- Some neighborhoods are isolated and not connected to larger grid system

Equal Access
- MTA provides 500,000 trips per year for people with disabilities
- Flint has 28,000 people with disabilities, of which 15% have mobility issues

Funding & Maintenance
- 26% of Flint's roads received the lowest condition rating requiring structural upgrades

Assets

Bishop International Airport & Freight Access
- Bishop International Airport serves 1 million passengers per year and growing

Mass Transit
- MTA serves approximately 6 million passengers per year
- MTA provides 14 service routes within Flint

I-69 Trade Corridor
- The corridor provides 2,500 miles of linkage connecting over 750,000 individuals

Non-Motorized Transport
- Flint is recognized for its trail system, including the 12+ mile Flint River Trail linking downtown to multiple neighborhoods and environmental assets
- In a 2007 non-motorized County trail plan, 3 of the top 10 priorities throughout the County recognized were in Flint

Transportation Coordination
- Coordination with the County is practiced, including long range planning

Environmental Features, Open Space & Parks

The Flint parks and recreation system, comprising 67 parks and play-lots spanning over 1,800 acres, was developed to place every neighborhood within a ¼ mile of an area of open space. While Flint's large and diverse inventory of parks and recreation facilities has the potential to serve as an important community amenity for residents, a drop in revenues and declining tax base have put the system in distress.

Between 2008 and 2012, the City lost nearly $315,000 in park millage revenue support. Since 2002, the Parks and Recreation Department has eliminated 89 staff positions. Fortunately, multiple non-profit, philanthropic, and neighborhood organizations are rising to the challenge to help maintain, update, and provide programming throughout Flint.

Given the severe cuts, the City is pursuing alternative funding strategies and contracting with third parties, to operate recreational facilities and assist neighborhood organization in their efforts to revitalize its parks.

Challenges

Parks Funding & Maintenance
- In 2012, the Parks and Recreation Department had a $2.1 million deficit
- Staffing was reduced to five people in FY2014 as a result of park revenue dropping by $315,000 between 2008 and 2013

Park Safety & Remediation
- During youth-focused Master Plan workshops, children overwhelmingly cited park safety as the reason for not using park assets
- The City possesses nearly 1,000 acres of brownfields in need of remediation/redevelopment

Assets

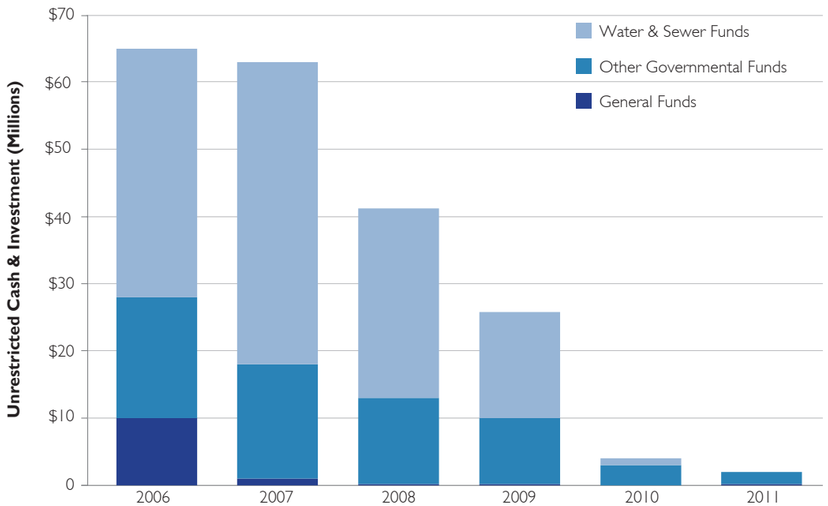
Flint River & Lakes
- Flint is located on part of a watershed that drains 1,360 square miles across 7 counties
- Flint contains 3 lakes, totaling roughly 300 acres of fresh water access
- The Flint River spans the entire City and is prime for recreational activity

Park Partnerships
- Dozens of partnerships have been formed to maintain parks and keep community centers
- Within the Clean & Green Program, there are 46 groups currently maintaining more than 1,360 lots within the City

Urban Agriculture & Gardening
- There are over 200 active farms and gardens in Flint

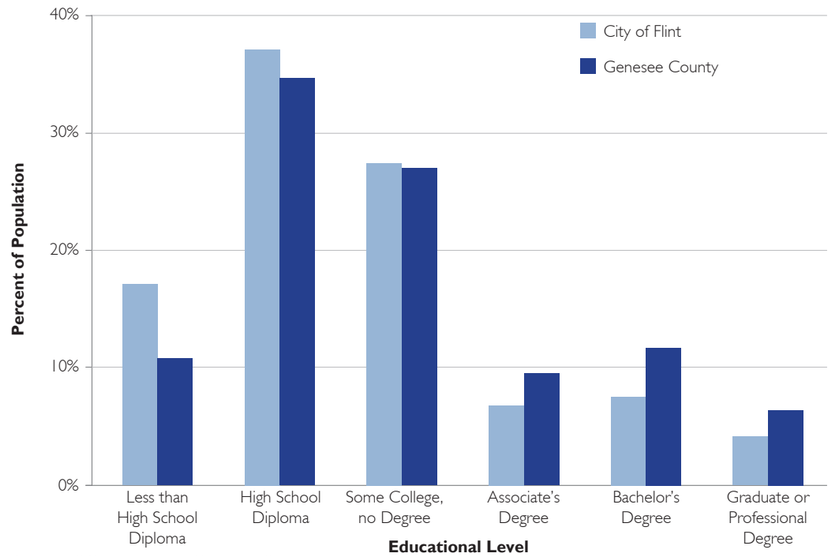
Accessibility
- There are over 1,800 acres of park land in Flint
- 80% of neighborhoods in Flint are within ¼ mile of a City park

Primary Operating Funds



Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Educational Attainment



Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

Infrastructure & Community Facilities

Budgetary constraints, partly due to a major deficit in 2012, have forced the City of Flint to downsize, close community facilities, and delay critical infrastructure upgrades. Water infrastructure has become an especially critical issue, due to a 20% decline in water customers between 1999 and 2011, leading to a major loss in the City's ability to adequately maintain its aging water infrastructure. The City recognizes that these services are essential to creating a thriving and vibrant community for all residents and help to define local quality of life. The goals outlined in the Master Plan address these issues head on.

Challenges

City Budget

- There was a $18 million general fund deficit in 2012

Infrastructure with High Fixed Costs

- In 1999, the City provided water to 45,000 customers, but by 2011 the number dropped to 36,000
- The City has 1,500 miles of water/sewer lines built to accommodate a population of more than 200,000
- Flint's water and sewer rates have increased 110% since 2011, equating to an average monthly bill of $139 for Flint residents

Outdated Infrastructure

- The City has six failing or obsolete dams
- The City's street lighting system uses over 11,600 antiquated steet lights

Assets

Cultural Center

- Culture in Flint creates a regional draw, for example, the Flint Institute of Music attracts 300,000 visitors for instruction, programming, and concerts

Potential to Repurpose Schools

- Some schools are well located and could be repurposed (e.g. Oak School) with uses that suit the community's needs

Economic Development & Education

Poor education and a lack of workforce development opportunities is stifling Flint's ability to both attract high-skilled jobs and fill available positions in the City. While Flint has a large trained workforce in manufacturing and skilled trades, the fast growing industries of healthcare, education, and professional services require a new set of skills.

The City is well positioned to take advantage of this with nearly 30,000 students attending Flint's colleges and universities, however, City residents are often left behind. High illiteracy and high school dropout rates have contributed to a 25% unemployment rate of for Flint residents over 16.

If Flint is to take advantage of future job growth in Genesee County, the workforce must be considerably more educated and tailored to the needs of a changing job market. The Plan outlines strategies for education, including the creation of greater links between Flint's primary education system and higher education opportunities. The Master Plan lays a framework for helping prepare Flint's future workforce for success.

Challenges

K-12 Education

- Only 54.4% of the school aged population attend a Flint Community School
- 17% of adults aged 25 and older did not graduate high school

Workforce Development & Literacy

- 36% of adults aged 25 and older are considered functionally illiterate

Youth Poverty

- In 2010, 63% of Flint youth aged 18 and under were living in poverty, which is an increase of 25.4% from 2000

Unemployment

- 27.5% of Flint's population over 16 was unemployed in 2011

Higher Education Attainment

- Only 11.6% of Flint's population has a bachelor's degree or higher

Assets

Higher Education

- Flint has 4 major higher education facilities with nearly 30,000 enrolled students

Regional Hub

- Flint businesses provide 33% of all jobs in Genesee County
- Flint has an estimated daytime population of 133,882
- Employment in Genesee and Shiawassee Counties is expected to grow by over 4,900 jobs (3%) by 2018

Public Safety, Health, & Welfare

Flint is struggling with unacceptably high crime and poverty rates. In 2010, an estimated 41% of overall residents live below the poverty line, with youth poverty rates near 63%. While these statistics are troubling, the City and County are fortunate to have hundreds of organizations committed to solving the challenges Flint faces.

The Master Plan identifies the improvement of public safety, health and welfare within Flint's neighborhoods as vital to the City's long-term economic health and quality of life. The Plan envisions a place where youth can mature around strong, stable neighborhoods, seniors can live peacefully while having access to high performing health care facilities, and businesses can ensure a high standard of quality of life for their employees.

Challenges

Crime

- 2,337 violent crimes were reported per 100,000 Flint residents in 2012

Poverty

- In 2010, 41.2% of Flint residents were living below the poverty level

Youth in Distress

- In 2010, 63% of Flint residents under the age of 18 lived below the poverty level

Police Staffing Levels

- Drops in City revenue between 2008 and 2013 have led to a loss of nearly 136 police officers since 2008

Arson

- Since 2008, over 1,600 structures within the City have been burned

Assets

Non-Profit Organizations

- Approximately 300-400 non-profit organizations are located in Genesee County

Healthcare Institutions

- Hurley Medical Center is the largest hospital in the County with 443 beds; In 2006, 472,208 outpatients were served

Genesee County Health Plan

- The Genesee Health Plan (GHP)affords area residents the opportunity to obtain quality health care services, serving over 25,000 area people annually

3 MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT
VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The City of Flint Master Plan is a blueprint for the future, guiding development and investment in the City for the next 20 years. The Master Plan also articulates a vision of what the community desires to become in the future. This chapter presents the Master Plan's Vision and Guiding Principles and establishes a framework for planning recommendations, policies, future projects, and actions.

Evolving Discussion

The Vision and Guiding Principles incorporate the main ideas and recurring themes discussed throughout the planning process and are primarily based on the Community Vision and Goals Workshop conducted on March 9, 2013. Framed through the results of prior public outreach and engagement efforts, the Community Vision and Goals Workshop event, brought over 500 individuals together in one room, 77% of which were City of Flint residents. Participants engaged with fellow residents and community stakeholders in discussing Flint's challenges and assets, while also becoming a part of an evolving discussion where they were asked to help provide potential solutions to these issues. Real-time polling allowed for instant results and areas of consensus, both leading to informed dialogue among participants.

At the duration of the 4-hour workshop, all those involved left with a preliminary report, detailing what transpired and outlining the next steps in the planning process. With over 80% of attendees feeling the workshop was valuable and 85% feeling satisfied, this community-wide workshop set the framework for developing the Vision Statement and identifying the key guiding principles moving forward.

The ***Vision and Guiding Principles*** are the main themes that came out of the Vision and Goals Workshop. These include:

- Social Equity & Sustainability
- Reshaping the Economy
- Quality of Life
- Adapting to Change
- Youth
- Civic Life

A VISION FOR FLINT

The City of Flint has transformed from a lumber center, to a carriage town, to an auto City. The Master Plan provides the community with a single, united vision, and the guidance needed to continue Flint's transformation into a vibrant, sustainable community for residents, workers, students, and visitors.

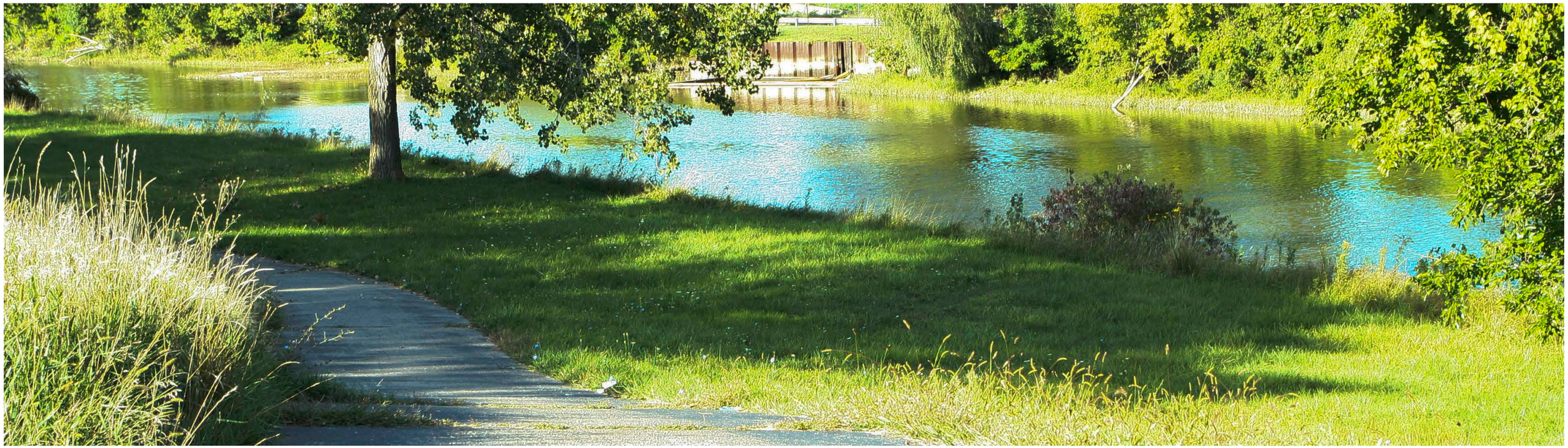
City government alone is not capable of implementing the Master Plan. This is a community vision which relies upon Flint's greatest asset, its people, to help implement desired aspirations. Collectively, the community is working together to make real progress on the City's toughest challenges. Our actions are not bound by today's limitations, but by tomorrow's potential and by ***what we Imagine Flint can be***.

We *Imagine Flint* as a City that...

- *provides for the fundamental needs of all people and responsibly uses and protects our land, water, air, and energy resources.*
- *has a growing and diverse economy that spurs innovation and small business development and prepares our workforce for jobs that offer a livable wage.*
- *is made up of desirable and safe neighborhoods that are near quality schools, attractive open spaces, and have access to fresh food.*
- *has neighborhoods that are connected to arts and culture, recreation, and community services by a convenient transportation system.*
- *adapts to change by reshaping our physical environment to be greener and more efficient for a smaller population.*
- *nurtures youth and creates a safe, healthy place for them to learn and thrive.*
- *combines the energy of residents, organizations, and government to proactively address our challenges and share in open and accountable decision-making.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Vision for Flint 27
Social Equity & Sustainability 28
Reshaping the Economy 28
Quality of Life 28
Adapting to Change 29
Youth 29
Civic Life 29



Social Equity & Sustainability

Past planning efforts failed to deliver equal access and opportunity for all of Flint's residents. The entire Master Plan is rooted in the principles of social equity and sustainability to address clear inequalities between different races and income groups, and to care for our most vulnerable people and natural assets.

Guiding Principles

- ***Weave social equity and sustainability into all we do.*** Pay attention to the actual experiences and outcomes of various social groups based on race, ethnicity, income, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability. Shift policies and practices, where needed, to close gaps in access to education, jobs, health, safety, housing, transportation and involvement in civic and cultural life.
- ***Balance and blend social, environmental, and economic needs.*** Pursue priorities that reinvigorate the economy, our human connections, and our relationship to the natural environment.

Reshaping the Economy

Flint is industrious and tenacious. We will build upon these virtues to cultivate opportunities from within and ensure that as we attract new employers, we position Flint residents to prosper as well. The City will embrace a creative and entrepreneurial spirit to invest in the skills of our people and remove barriers that unfairly limit potential.

Guiding Principles

- ***Human development is economic development.*** Improve education (early childhood through 12th grade), adult literacy, and workforce training. Coordinate resources and initiatives to better prepare Flint residents for locally available jobs.
- ***Flint residents can be the drivers of the Flint Economy.*** Focus on local small business development by providing access to capital and supportive services and creating incentives to help businesses start and grow.
- ***Take advantage of infrastructure, transportation, and vacant industrial brownfields.*** Capitalize on our infrastructure and well-connected transportation network to redevelop our brownfield sites and strengthen our position as an employment center.
- ***Strengthen existing businesses, attract new industries.*** Attract emerging and diverse industries while continuing to support existing businesses.
- ***Leverage Flint's education and health institutions.*** Foster partnerships between institutions to advance research and create new business opportunities. Increase the economic impact of the growing daytime population by encouraging workers and students to live, shop, and play in Flint.
- ***Transform Flint's internal and external image.*** Recreate Flint's identity by building upon existing cultural and natural assets and an innovative spirit that embraces the arts, technology, and urban agriculture.

Quality of Life

Flint will measure success, not by the number of residents who call Flint home, but by the quality of life that its residents enjoy. The City will have a thriving downtown, safe and walkable neighborhoods, with convenient access to services, arts and culture, recreation, fresh food, jobs, and transit. Achieving these goals will require community stakeholders – residents, businesses, institutions and non-profit organizations – to work together, fostering a sense of shared ownership for neighborhood projects.

Guiding Principles

- ***Everybody must feel safe everywhere.*** Emphasize both enforcement and crime prevention. Offer supportive programming for youth. Promote re-entry programs for ex-offenders. Empower local groups to play a meaningful role in public safety and crime prevention and improve transparency and communication between citizens and the police department.
- ***Flint will prosper when neighborhoods succeed.*** Invest in stabilizing neighborhoods. Commit to partnering with neighborhood organizations to create neighborhood-specific plans to coordinate resources more effectively.
- ***Every person deserves a safe and healthy home and a choice of housing.*** Create pathways for home ownership and promote quality rental housing. Provide for a mix of incomes and racially and ethnically diverse neighborhoods. Partner with organizations and programs to combat homelessness, promote home maintenance, and streamline the purchase of vacant lots and homes.
- ***Blight elimination is critical to changing Flint's image.*** Remove blight in conjunction with targeted investment and crime prevention to improve the City while helping change our image.
- ***Flint's neighborhoods need community anchors.*** Re-purpose vacant buildings, like closed schools, to create community centers with multiple services under one roof, to revitalize neighborhoods.
- ***Quality of life is key to keeping our youth here.*** Concentrate improvements on quality of life to create an environment where students want to stay and invest in the community.

Adapting to Change

Declines in Flint's population and economic base present real challenges to City finances, and have resulted in uneven patterns of development. These challenges also present an opportunity to reshape our neighborhoods by providing a mix of uses and variety of housing options, while rethinking the community's relationship with the natural environment. The Master Plan is a valuable tool in allowing the City to take advantage of these and other opportunities.

Guiding Principles

- ***Flint residents deserve to live in an attractive community.*** Work cooperatively with residents, organizations, and government to maintain properties, ensure adequate code enforcement, preserve natural and architectural assets, and promote greening/beautification, repurposing, and demolition.
- ***Flint's neighborhoods need to be accessible.*** Connect services and community assets such as schools, parks, and employment centers to neighborhoods by pedestrian and bike linkages and public transit.
- ***Flint's infrastructure needs to be efficient.*** Retool Flint's infrastructure to cut costs and promote long-term sustainability.
- ***Achieve cost savings through partnership and alternative funding sources.*** Collaborate with organizations to leverage resources and combine services to reduce costs. Actively pursue long-term funding alternatives to create financial stability.
- ***Encourage mixed use development.*** Promote higher density around key community assets, public transportation, and along major corridors. Focus on walkability, cycling, and transit when considering new development.
- ***Repurpose and reinvent under-populated areas.*** Encourage homeowners to assemble property for larger lots in high-vacancy areas. Activate vacant property for productive and innovative uses such as urban agriculture and green infrastructure.

Youth

Through partnership and coordinated effort and resources, Flint youth will thrive and have the values and guidance to become productive, engaged adults. To support their healthy development, Flint's youth need safe communities, access to healthcare and fresh foods, well-maintained parks and recreation facilities, quality schools, and ample after-school programming.

Guiding Principles

- ***Youth are our priority.*** Commit to eliminating youth poverty. Provide equitable access to quality education and enrichment programs and jobs. Instill a sense of neighborhood pride among youth through recreation and community service programs.
- ***Strengthen intergenerational relationships.*** Expand efforts to build trust and communication between youth, adults, and elders through mentorship, sustained participation in youth programs, and closer neighborhood ties.
- ***Healthy families raise healthy youth.*** Provide family support services, such as daycare and adult education to help parents and caregivers fulfill their roles.
- ***Engage youth in civic life.*** Listen to youth perspectives and welcome their contributions to the community. Involve youth in decisions that impact them.

Civic Life

There are hundreds of public, private, non-profit, and community groups engaged in efforts to improve the Flint community. The Master Plan can play a key role in coordinating these efforts and encouraging collaboration among all who are interested in enhancing Flint. Implementation of the Master Plan will depend upon open community engagement, efficient use of resources, and accountability. The City's leaders must be held accountable to its people for upholding the Master Plan's values and priorities.

Guiding Principles

- ***Base decisions on active public participation.*** Maintain open communication and engage citizens throughout the decision making process. Reach out to people and communities likely to be impacted by a decision, or whose voices are underrepresented.
- ***Empower residents to improve their neighborhoods.*** Encourage and invest in community problem solving and neighborhood improvement efforts. Build the capacity of community groups to create neighborhood change.
- ***Coordination is needed to make good use of resources.*** Maximize the impact of limited resources through organized action among public, private, non-profit, and community groups.
- ***Hold government accountable to the Master Plan.*** Make sure City department programs and policies align with the Master Plan and that decisions are based upon the Plan's guidance.

4 MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT
LAND USE PLAN

VISION P. 33

GOAL & OBJECTIVES P. 33

RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES P. 37

IMPLEMENTATION P. 79

4 LAND USE PLAN
VISION, GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Imagine a
Flint with a creative, responsive, and flexible land use pattern that accommodates a decreasing city population while ensuring community sustainability for generations to come.

Imagine a Flint where blighted, abandoned, and vacant areas are transformed into opportunities to enhance economic vitality and the natural environment.

Imagine a Flint comprised of a network of unique and desirable places that prioritizes neighborhoods and provides a range of land uses to create a healthy and walkable community.

Imagine a Flint that concentrates land use intensities around transit, neighborhoods, and commerce, rather than diluting investments across too large an area.

Over the next twenty years, Flint can achieve this vision. However, we must first face existing realities: Flint's is a smaller City with fewer resources, some traditional neighborhoods are now mostly vacant, quality commercial development is dispersed and spread too thin to serve the needs of residents, and the reliable delivery of daily services is faltering under the weight of outmoded infrastructure.

The "Land Use Plan" is a roadmap to overcoming these obstacles and to realizing a new community vision. By following the recommendations outlined in this chapter, Flint can reposition its neighborhoods, leverage underutilized properties, and repurpose blighted areas into productive uses.

SOCIAL EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY

By balancing the distribution of land use throughout all areas of the City, the Land Use Plan ensures that future investments will be made equitably and that no areas of the City are neglected. The Land Use Plan provides the City with a healthier, more "walkable" and transit-friendly community, allowing all residents, including youth, the elderly, and those without a car, better access to all areas of the City, including housing, shopping, recreation, education, cultural amenities, and more.

QUALITY OF LIFE

The Land Use Plan promotes compact development that encourages physical activity while enhancing delivery of City services. It also ensures that key community facilities, including parks and schools, continue to serve as anchors to the surrounding neighborhoods, fostering a sense of community, encouraging reinvestment, and improving overall quality of life.

YOUTH

Parks and recreation facilities, schools, and community facilities play a key role within the Land Use Plan. These community assets have repeatedly been identified by the community as crucial core components to the overall function of Flint's neighborhoods, commercial districts, green areas, and employment centers. By entrenching these uses within the City, the Land Use Plan provides youth with necessary educational resources, employment opportunities, and outlets for recreation and physical activity. The Land Use Plan presents a framework for creating places that support healthy youth development.

RESHAPING THE ECONOMY

The Land Use Plan provides opportunities for the City to adapt to the changing global and regional economy by designating areas dedicated to employment and the production of goods, as well as ideas and innovation. The Land Use Plan also identifies neighborhood and regional commercial areas to provide needed goods and services to Flint's residents, and attract visitors and shoppers from the surrounding region to help bolster the local tax base. The Land Use Plan reinforces the central role of the Downtown as a regional destination, and promotes coordination among key institutions, encouraging development of complementary scale and intensity in their surrounding areas.

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

The repurposing of vacant or underutilized properties is a central component of the Land Use Plan. Recognizing that some areas of Flint cannot continue to exist as they do today, Flint residents have chosen to adapt and transform their neighborhoods and commercial corridors into areas where innovative practices, including green neighborhoods and the green economy, can flourish. Throughout other areas of the City, the community has staked a claim to protect and preserve existing neighborhoods and districts. The Land Use Plan reinforces the function and sense of places in these areas while encouraging further investment.

CIVIC LIFE

The Land Use Plan advances the principle of civic life through the promotion of high-quality and diverse places. Implementation of the desired places identified in the Land Use Plan will require significant input, action, and support by local members of the community, while fostering a greater sense of community and involvement. The Land Use Plan also provides a unified framework upon which Flint's numerous foundations, non-profit organizations, and other service providers can collectively coordinate their efforts. By implementing the Land Use Plan and abiding by the framework, the City can subsequently begin to rebuild and strengthen its relationship with Flint residents.

GOAL:

The City of Flint will be a community made up of distinct and desirable "places" by integrating a wide range of land uses into a city pattern that is vibrant, sustainable, livable, and healthy.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The ways in which the Goal & Objectives of the Land Use Plan have been influenced by the guiding principles are indicated using the following symbols.

- ***Social Equity & Sustainability***
- ***Reshaping the Economy***
- ***Quality of Life***
- ***Adapting to Change***
- ***Youth***
- ***Civic Life***

Objective #1

Create unique and desirable places throughout all areas of the community by combining different land uses of varying types and intensity.

Flint is made up of a complex arrangement of varying uses that collectively comprise neighborhoods, districts, and corridors. As the fundamental approach to land use planning in Flint, placemaking emphasizes the importance of planning for this scale, placing its focus on vibrant places instead of individual parcels.

Objective #2

Establish a more sustainable land use pattern by clustering development and land use intensity near key intersections, key corridors, and central areas of the City.

Flint's population decline presents an opportunity to reorganize the community, transforming the City from an outward sprawling community to a compact, mixed use city situated along dense, urban corridors with a vibrant city core. The Plan also provides strategies to transition high-vacancy areas to sustainable, green neighborhoods.

Objective #3

Strive for land use compatibility in all areas by locating similar and supportive uses by "place type" and minimizing the potential negative impact of any incompatible adjacent uses.

Incompatible land uses can be detrimental to a healthy community by undermining quality of life and discouraging investment in homes. By striving for land use compatibility Flint can stabilize its neighborhoods and create concentrated nodes of like activities.

Objective #4

Provide a mix of uses that supports a sustainable and healthy community for all areas of the City.

Promoting a mix of uses can reduce reliance on the automobile, support local businesses, and improve resident health by fostering walkability. Mixing uses will also provide a more sustainable land use pattern for Flint and help ensure that no area of the City becomes disenfranchised or devoid of necessary investment.

Objective #5

Support land use arrangements that provide a more walkable community and improve access to necessary and desirable goods, services, and amenities for all residents.

Much of Flint's existing development pattern separates homes, employment, and shopping, requiring residents to travel by car to get to work and access necessary goods and services. By reorganizing the City's land uses, Flint can improve access and mobility for all individuals.

Objective #6

Transform vacant land into opportunities for economic development and enhanced open space by encouraging green innovation and sustainable best practices.

The deindustrialization of the City has resulted in a significant population decline and large vacant areas. This provides the City with an opportunity create case studies of tomorrow's best practices, as it reinvents itself and forges a new sustainable economy.

4 LAND USE PLAN
RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES

MOVING PAST 50 YEARS OF DECLINE

In 1960, Flint's population reached nearly 200,000 people. At that time, the City had developed far beyond the footprint of the original 1920s Comprehensive Plan, due to its bustling economy. Shortly thereafter Flint experienced deindustrialization. The population declined steadily. Many once vibrant areas of Flint were abandoned and slowly began to deteriorate, ultimately resulting in widespread blight.

Over the last several years, the City and its partners have secured funding for wide-scale demolition of vacant or derelict properties. Thousands of empty lots have been left behind. Today, these vacancies present the City with an opportunity not typically afforded to mature cities – an opportunity to re-invent its land use pattern and prepare the City for new investment.

The Context for Developing the Place-Based Land Use Plan

The Place-Based Land Use Plan reflects a fundamental shift in how the Flint community envisions its future. While responsive to community desires, the Place-Based Land Use Plan is grounded in the reality that Flint's population is approximately half of what it once was. Although now a smaller city with fewer resources, Flint is still the regional center of Genesee County, accounting for 33% of all jobs in the county and receiving an additional 30,000 workers and students each day. Building upon these dynamics, and recognizing that the economy of the 21st Century is fundamentally different than in the past, the Place-Based Land Use Plan helps position Flint to be the economic and cultural anchor of the region.

> *"The Plan seizes the opportunity to leverage blighted and underutilized properties and recognizes them for what they are – a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reinvent the land use pattern of the City, and to take forgotten and burdensome areas and use them as the catalyst to trigger City-wide transformation. Few cities have such an opportunity."*

The Place-Based Land Use Plan informs all other chapters of the Master Plan and plays a key role in guiding public investment, resulting in stronger and more stable neighborhoods, livelier commercial districts, and more efficient services and infrastructure that have been reoriented to serve a smaller, more vibrant city.

The Place-Based Land Use Plan promotes a more sustainable and livable land use pattern, taking into consideration compatibility, access, market viability, sense of place, and the daily delivery of essential and desirable goods and services. The Place-Based Land Use Plan identifies the type, character, and intensity of desired future land use and development for all areas of Flint. The Place-Based Land Use Plan is intended to provide an appropriate balance and distribution of uses with green neighborhoods and green innovation areas, clustered development at key intersections and corridors, and easy access via walking and transit.

The "Placemaking" Approach & Community Input

The Place-Based Land Use Plan utilizes an approach called "placemaking," which defines desired "places" within the City. While traditional approaches to city planning are often concerned with specific "uses," the Flint Place-Based Land Use Plan builds on the idea of establishing unique and desirable places.

Together, 12 different "places" within the City of Flint comprise the different land uses and types of places essential for creating a harmonious and inviting community in which to live, work, and play. These are places such as healthy and walkable neighborhoods, accessible open spaces, areas for green innovation and sustainable best practices, and centers for commerce and civic activity.

Developed within the context of the City's existing development pattern, the Place-Based Land Use Plan was built upon a foundation of community input. By giving residents and other stakeholders a voice and the ability to articulate their vision and aspirations for the City and their neighborhoods, the Place-Based Land Use Plan has been developed as a viable and responsive plan that reflects the values of Flint residents and creates attractive, livable places for residents, workers, students, and visitors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Moving Past 50 Years of Decline 37
The Context for Developing the Land Use Plan 37
The "Placemaking" Approach & Community Input 37
Development of the Flint "Place" Typology 38
Place Typology v. Traditional Land Use Planning 38
Engaging the Public 38
Refining Community Input – Saginaw Corridor Example 39
Flint's Planning Context 41
Excessive Residential & Industrial Vacancies 41
Regional Competition & Positioning 41
Decreasing Population & Flint's 1920 Footprint 41
Land Use Plan & Place Types 42
Land Use Guide 68
Primary & Complementary Land Uses 68
Land Use Categories 68
Future Planning Initiatives 74
Innovation District 74
Brownfields 75
Neighborhood Plans 75
School Sites 76
Sub-area Plans 77

DEVELOPMENT OF THE FLINT "PLACE" TYPOLOGY

The Place-Based Land Use Plan consists of 12 "places" or "place types." Each place type consists of a combination of primary and complementary land uses, development scales, and character. Together, the place types provide a land use and development palette that defines all areas of the City.

Place Typology v. Traditional Land Use Planning

Traditional land use planning is typically done on a parcel-by-parcel basis with desired land uses defined for each parcel and vacant or undeveloped areas often taking on the characteristics of adjacent development. This approach can work for a stable community, with limited opportunities for change or reinvestment. However, for a changing community like Flint, this approach falls short.

The revitalization of Flint requires a more innovative approach to land use planning that identifies the potential of vacant lots beyond simply reverting back to what has failed, or perpetuating what will never be. By thinking of Flint as a collection of unique areas, the Place-Based Land Use Plan promotes development of "places" at a neighborhood or district scale, creating multiple possibilities for Flint's vacant properties.

Engaging the Public

The preliminary list of place types was developed using a combination of community input and an understanding of the existing development pattern of the City. Input from thousands of concerned residents, businesses, and stakeholders, was evaluated to help identify the existing assets and places that should be preserved within Flint. Desirable neighborhoods, commercial districts, and special areas were identified within the City and helped establish the foundation and framework for future planning.

Place types were created to present these places in their ideal form, showing how they can be improved to allow the City to function better as a whole. Responding to the community's input and aspirations also made it necessary to provide for new places, where new types of development can occur. These places are needed to allow the City to adapt, to reinvigorate the local economy, and to carry Flint into the future.

Land Use Workshops

After developing a list of place types, two separate community land use workshops were held to seek input on future desired land uses and development in Flint. Participants were provided with descriptions of different place types representing a range of development types with differing character and intensity.

Working in groups of 7 to 10, more than 350 participants were given a collection of stickers and markers, and asked to create maps, highlighting where they believe each place type should occur as Flint evolves over the next 20 years.

Summarizing Community Input

All workshop comments were recorded, and every sticker, point, or line drawn on a workshop map was digitized and entered into a geographic information system (GIS) map. Inputs from each map were then overlaid on top of one another, allowing for the identification of areas where there was community consensus or where workshop input was similar.

Composite Map

Areas of consensus and similar input were used to identify focal points for larger place types. Maps for each place type were overlaid and used to form a Composite Map showing locations of community-desired place types, for nearly every area of the City. These areas of general consensus were then evaluated and refined based on an understanding of existing conditions, market and demographic trends, and input from the Imagine Flint Steering Committee.

Preferred Land Use Plan

The Composite Map was applied on a block-by-block basis resulting in a draft Land Use Plan. Each block was evaluated using data on existing land use and character, housing conditions, and vacancies. In many cases, traditional neighborhoods and commercial areas identified by the community, overlapped with existing development that was similar to that described in the desired place type.

Additional analysis was required with regard to areas where community input was either absent or in stark contrast to current conditions. Feedback received at six open house events held throughout Flint, as well as comments from the Steering Committee and Planning Commission, were then used to further refine the Place-Based Land Use Plan.

Refining Community Input – Saginaw Corridor Example

The Saginaw Street corridor is an example of an area of the City that required additional analysis in applying and identifying place types. Workshop participants identified nearly every segment of the Saginaw Street corridor as a Neighborhood Center or City Corridor, both of which are primarily commercial place types.

While Saginaw Street has historically functioned as a commercial corridor, an analysis of existing conditions revealed that long segments of the corridor are now largely vacant.

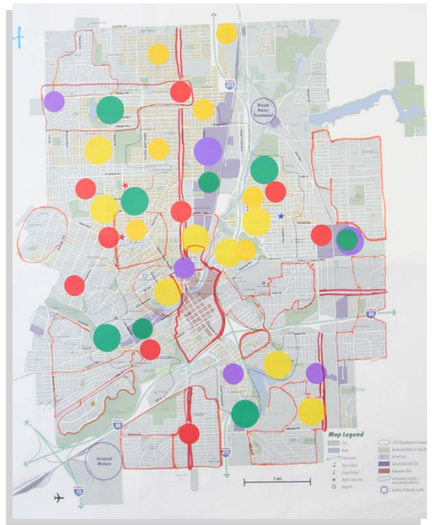
Moreover, many of the residential areas surrounding the corridor were identified by the community as Green Neighborhoods, a lower-density residential neighborhood that may not be capable of supporting large areas of commercial development. Many of the commercial corridor segments identified by the Land Use Workshop participants overlapped at key intersections along Saginaw Street.

In responding to community input, while recognizing realistic potentials, the Place-Based Land Use Plan identifies some of the intersections as "Neighborhood Centers" and shorter segments as "City Corridors." In some areas, the "Mixed Residential" place type was applied to offset lower population densities in nearby Green Neighborhoods.

Community Input as a Foundation for Plan Making

Step 1: Land Use Workshop

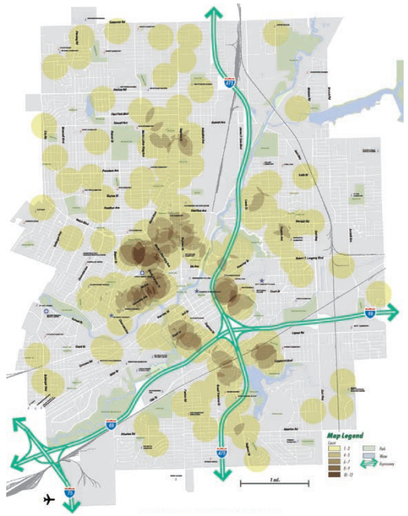
Over 350 engaged residents and stakeholders attended the Imagine Flint land use workshop series. Participants were given a collection of stickers and markers and asked to create maps highlighting where each type of place should occur as Flint evolves over the next 20 years.



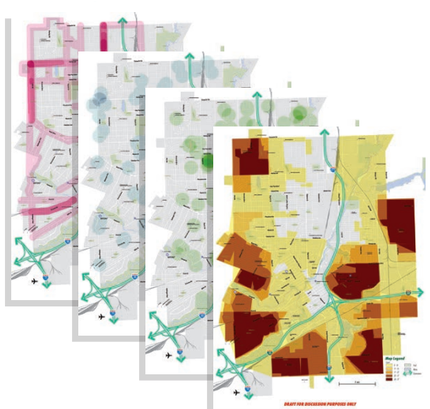
Workshop Maps from 42 Groups

Step 2: Summarize Community Input

Every point or line drawn on a workshop map by one of the 350 participants was digitized, and all comments were recorded. Areas where workshop input was concentrated or overlapped, were used to identify focal points for larger place types.

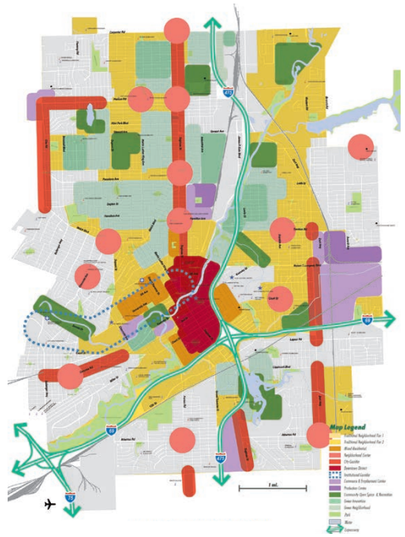


Analysis of Consensus

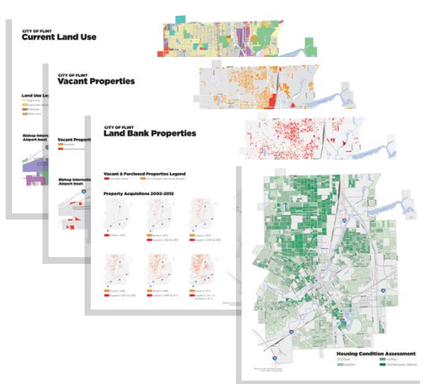


Step 3: Composite Map

A Composite Map was created showing areas of community consensus and desired place types, for nearly every part of the City. The areas of general consensus were then evaluated and refined based on an understanding of existing conditions, market and demographic trends, and input from the Imagine Flint Steering Committee.

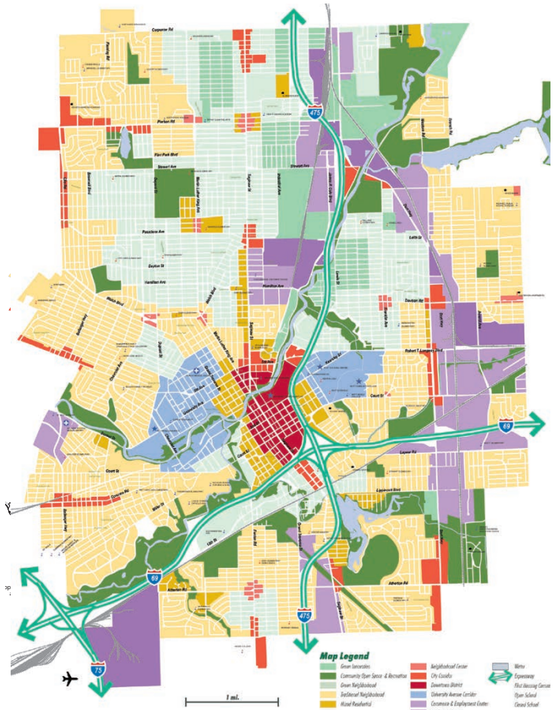


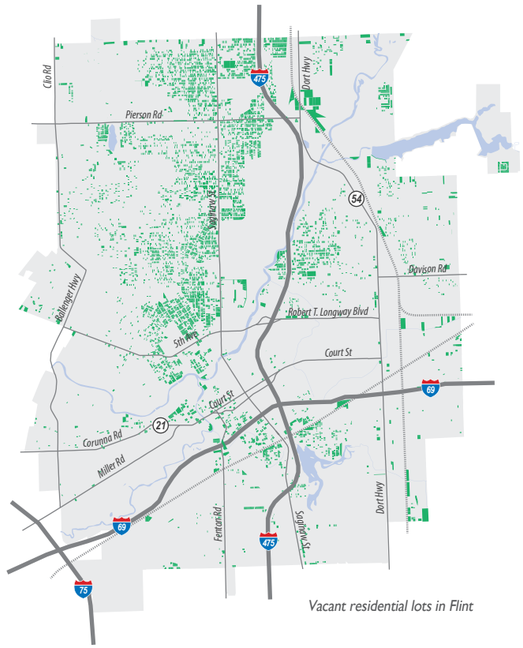
Analysis of Existing Physical & Market Conditions



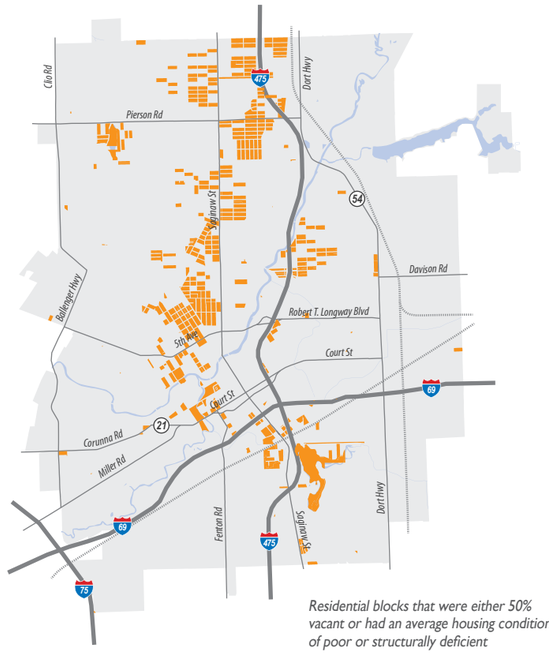
Step 4: Preferred Place-Based Land Use Plan

The Composite Map was overlaid on a City base map and applied on a block-by-block basis resulting in a draft City-wide Land Use Plan. Feedback received at six open house events held throughout Flint, as well as comments from the Steering Committee, Planning Commission, and on-line, were then used to further refine the Land Use Plan.

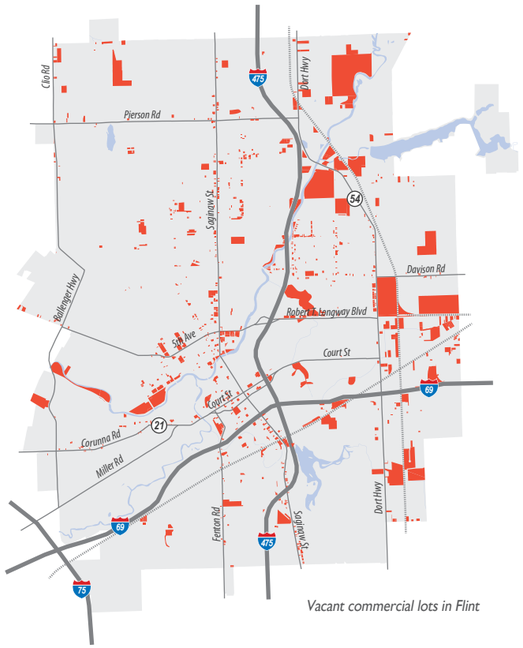




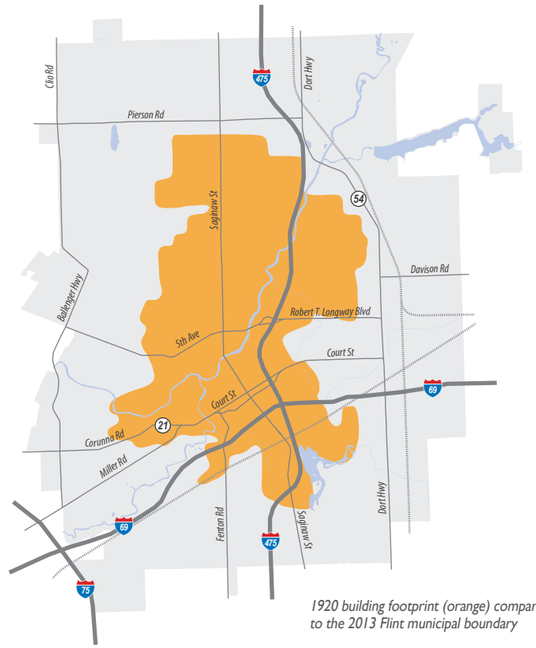
Vacant residential lots in Flint



Residential blocks that were either 50% vacant or had an average housing condition of poor or structurally deficient



Vacant commercial lots in Flint



1920 building footprint (orange) compared to the 2013 Flint municipal boundary

FLINT'S PLANNING CONTEXT

To help ensure that land use and placemaking input was provided within the realities that are confronting the Flint community, land use workshop participants were given a series of parameters intended to provide context and guide group discussion. Several of these context parameters were illustrated on the workshop base map onto which participants provided input. Other context parameters were used by facilitators to better frame the limitations and capacity issues pertaining to certain community issues.

Excessive Residential & Industrial Vacancies

Using the results of a city-wide housing conditions assessment conducted in the fall of 2012, every vacant residential lot in the City was identified on the workshop map. Blocks that were either 50% vacant or had an average housing condition of poor or structurally deficient were also identified. These two data sources were used to highlight areas on the map where workshop participants should consider alternatives to areas historically identified for traditional single family neighborhood development.

Regional Competition & Positioning

Throughout the outreach process, residents repeatedly expressed a desire for additional and higher quality retail and dining options within the City of Flint. Significant retail development in adjacent communities, like that along Center Road and Miller Road, present considerable competition to shops and restaurants looking to locate or expand in Flint.

Given this neighboring retail competition, the market capacity to absorb new commercial uses, and the need to ensure that commercial uses were concentrated into viable areas rather than dispersed indiscriminately throughout the community, participants were asked to identify no more than 10 neighborhood centers and 4-6 linear miles of commercial corridor frontage. The number of commercial centers was predicated on the assumption that approximately 10,000 people were needed to support a neighborhood center, which could accommodate a grocery store and other uses geared toward the neighborhood scale.

Decreasing Population & Flint's 1920 Footprint

The City's first Master Plan was adopted in 1920. This is also the last decade during which the City of Flint had a population comparable to that of today-- 102,000 according to the 2010 Census. Presumably, the City's 'footprint' in 1920 was large enough to provide sufficient infrastructure, services, employment, commercial areas, and other amenities to Flint's 100,000 residents and its businesses.

Maps from the 1920 plan were used to identify residential blocks from that era, and then an approximate 1920 Flint footprint was created and superimposed on a current map of Flint. The much smaller, 1920 City footprint, was a stark contrast to the City footprint of today, although both accommodated the same size population. As a means of better concentrating development near the City center as well as existing services and infrastructure, workshop participants were asked to locate half of any desired multi-family areas within the identified 1920 footprint.

A view of South Saginaw street in the early 1920s.
Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Detroit Publishing Company Collection.

CITY OF FLINT

Place-Based Land Use Map

The Land Use Plan provides a guide for future land use decisions. Its application is flexible and allows the City to consider individual proposals for innovative approaches to development, that are in line with overarching policies included in the Master Plan.

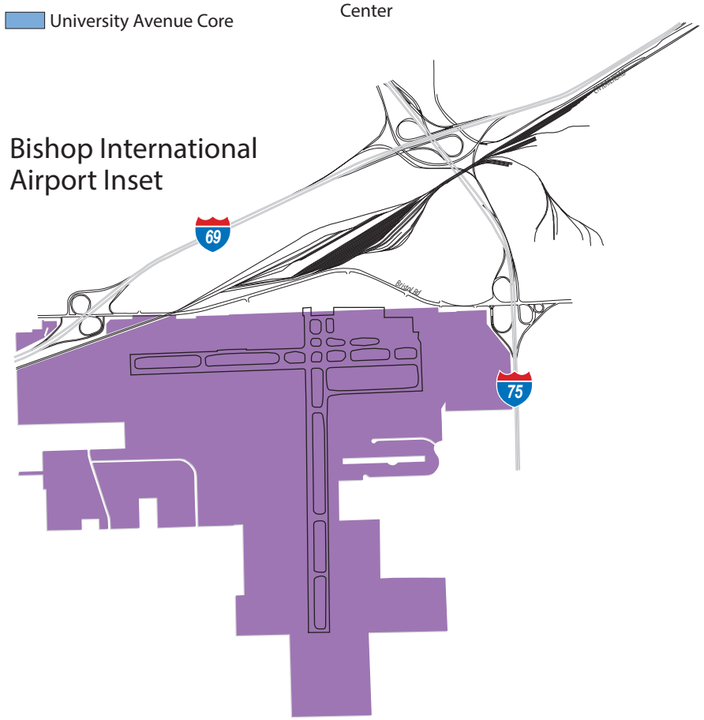
It is important to note that the Place-Based Land Use Plan is not necessarily concerned with the specific use of each parcel, but rather is concerned with the collective uses for each area that establish a "place" within Flint. All places are important to the collective functioning and livelihood of the City.

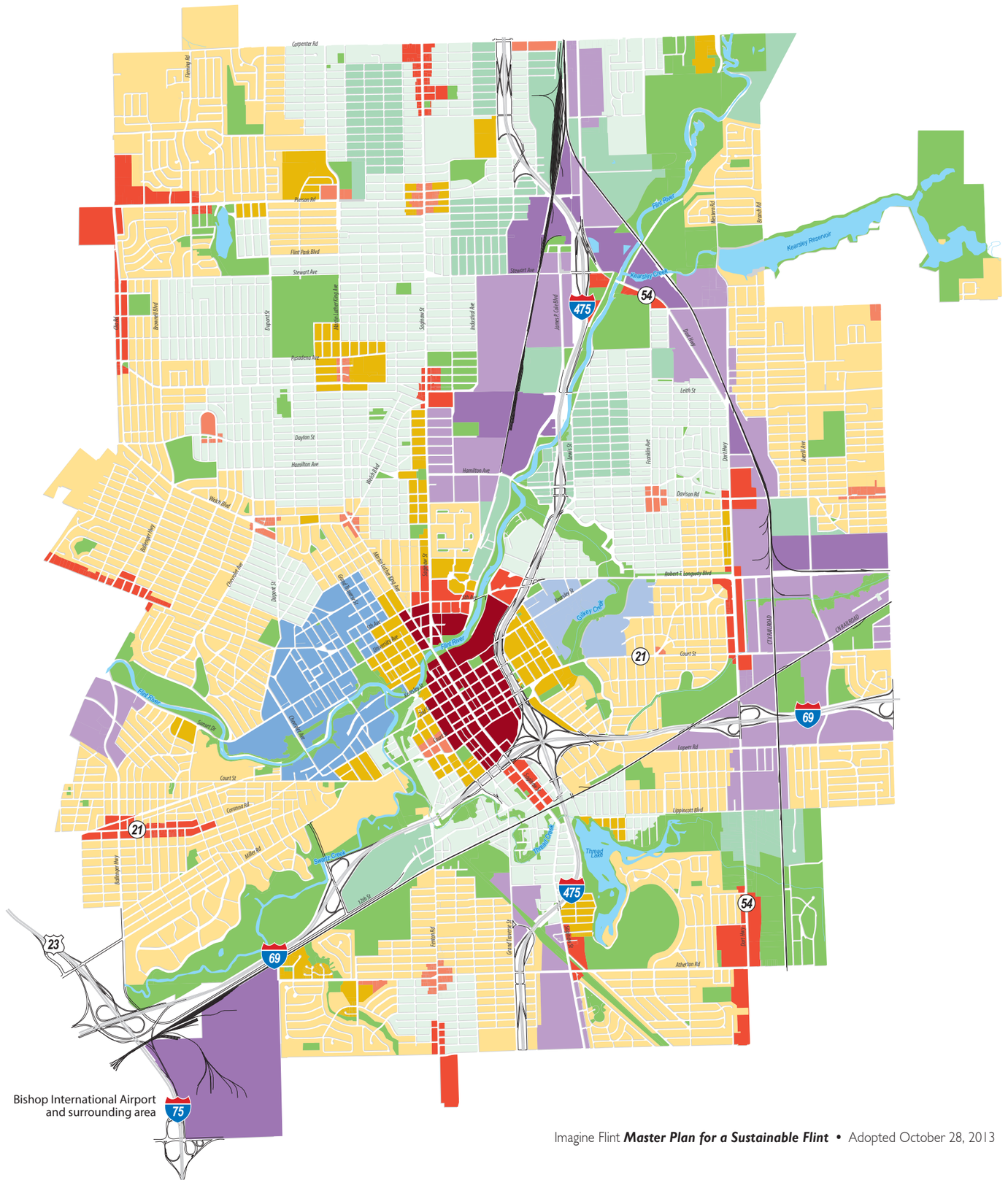
The Land Use Plan identifies and describes 12 different "places" within the City that together accommodate a full range of land use types, including residential neighborhoods, commercial and employment areas, open space and natural areas, and public facilities and institutions.

The Flint Land Use Plan builds on the idea of establishing unique and desirable places that are essential for creating a harmonious and inviting community in which to live, work, and visit.

Place Type Legend

- Green Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Mixed Residential
- Civic/Cultural Campus
- University Avenue Core
- Neighborhood Center
- City Corridor
- Downtown District
- Commerce & Employment Center
- Production Center
- Green Innovation
- Community Open Space & Recreation





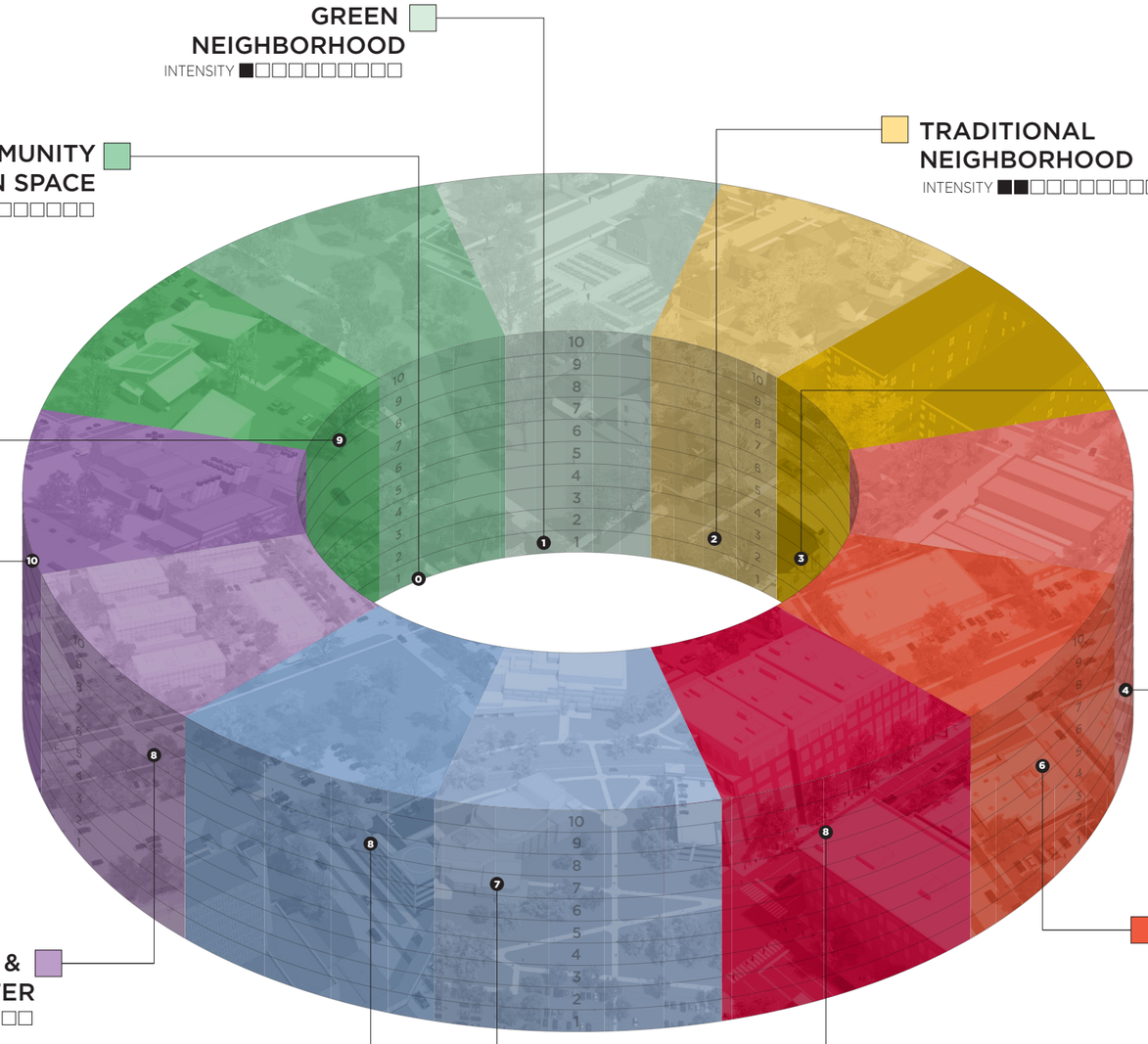
Bishop International Airport and surrounding area

CITY OF FLINT
Intensity Wheel

Through a series of placemaking exercises, the residents of the City have helped define and redefine their neighborhoods and the City of Flint, identifying the locations for 12 different place types in the City. The Land Use Focus & Intensity Wheel indicates the place type's relationship to other place types with regard to intensity of development and the predominant land use category within the place type.

Other place types of similar intensity are shown to the left or right on the wheel. This means that while the characteristics of a given neighborhood or district within Flint may best reflect one place type currently, it is reasonable to believe that developments may occur to transition that area to a neighboring place type.

Intensity on the wheel is indicated for each place type with a ranking from 0 to 10, with 10 being most intense. Intensity is based on a number of factors, including activity, building height, noise, residential density, and traffic.



GREEN NEIGHBORHOOD
INTENSITY ■□□□□□□□□□

COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE
INTENSITY □□□□□□□□□□

GREEN INNOVATION
INTENSITY ■■■■■■■■■□

PRODUCTION CENTER
INTENSITY ■■■■■■■■■■

COMMERCE & EMPLOYMENT CENTER
INTENSITY ■■■■■■■■□□

UNIVERSITY AVENUE CORE
INTENSITY ■■■■■■■■□□

CIVIC/CULTURAL CAMPUS
INTENSITY ■■■■■■■□□□

DOWNTOWN
INTENSITY ■■■■■■■■□□

CITY CORRIDOR
INTENSITY ■■■■■■□□□□

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER
INTENSITY ■■■■□□□□□□

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD
INTENSITY ■■□□□□□□□□

MIXED RESIDENTIAL
INTENSITY ■■■□□□□□□□

Intensity on the wheel is indicated for each place type with a ranking from 0 to 10, with 10 being most intense. Intensity is based on a number of factors, including activity, building height, noise, residential density, and traffic.

INTENSITY ■■■■■■■■■■
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

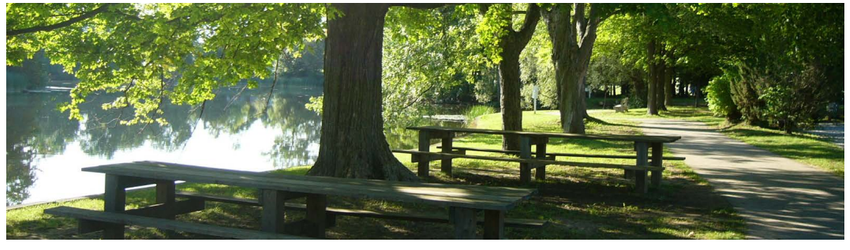
Community Open Space

Community Open Space areas are designated where parks, open spaces and environmental features predominate. These areas are defined by: large natural features, such as large greenways along the Flint River, Swartz Creek, Gilkey Creek, and Kearsley Creek; areas around Thread Lake, Kearsley Reservoir, and Flint Park Lake; large wooded areas and urban forests; and, other City parks and open spaces.

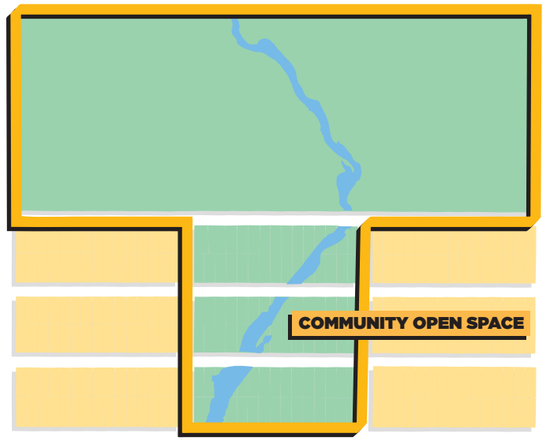
CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Community Open Space varies from large areas of natural environment to developed park sites in established neighborhoods. Unimproved areas are defined by Flint's natural landscape and provide unique opportunities for the community to enjoy the natural environment. While these areas generally lack improvements, they still provide passive recreation opportunities, including walking and biking along both formal and informal trails, and boating and fishing on the open water.

Developed park sites are also contained within the Community Open Space designation. High-quality parks bustling with activity and enlivened by people at play are critical to a high-quality of life and are a stabilizing influence in the City's neighborhoods. Playground structures provide recreation for Flint's youth, fields and courts accommodate programmed athletics and drop-in play, and field houses and other recreation amenities provide a balanced open space and recreation system for the City.



Character Images



Parks and Open Space. natural areas, greenways, community and regional parks

LAND USES

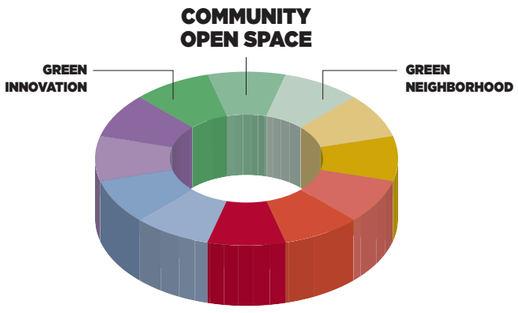
The ***Community Open Space*** place type consists of one land use, open space. However, different types of open space have different land use considerations. A small neighborhood park for example, serves a local population and should ideally be centrally located within the neighborhood it serves. A larger community park provides residents with park opportunities within a short driving distance. These types of parks can generate traffic and activity and may have areas within them that are not residentially compatible. A more detailed classification of the City's parks and open space is contained in ***Chapter 7 – Environmental Features, Open Space and Parks Plan***.

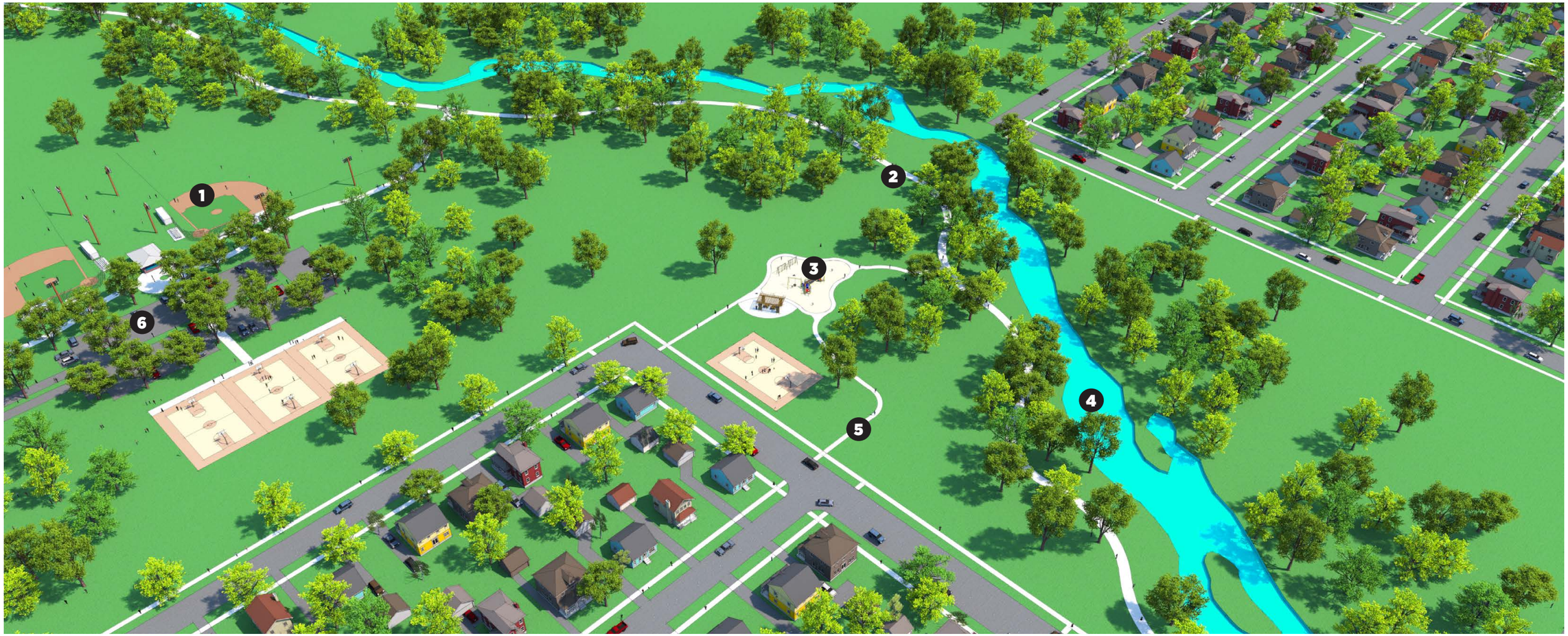
ADJACENT AREAS

Generally, Community Open Space areas are compatible with other land uses, however, other land uses may not be compatible with Flint's open spaces. For example, an open space area may not impact an adjacent industrial land use, however noise, pollution, and site activity from an industrial operation may compromise the enjoyment of Flint's open spaces. Also, intensely-programmed athletic complexes that can generate traffic from the entire City and beyond and contain lighted fields, large crowds, and public address systems may adversely affect a quiet neighborhood.

LAND USE WHEEL

In Flint's *Land Use & Intensity Wheel* the Community Open Space place type sits between Green Innovation and Green Neighborhood. Community Open Space areas consisting of large active and passive parkland are not likely to change. The Flint community is well served by an open space network that provides opportunities for recreation, protection for its environmental assets, and an escape from the urban environment. These open spaces are among the community's most cherished assets and changes in use would likely not be supported by the community. However, vacant areas that have become Community Open Space and are not considered park sites have the potential to shift in both directions along the wheel depending on future development.





IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE PLACE TYPE

Almost all areas designated as ***Community Open Space*** consist of existing parkland and natural areas within the City. However, that is not to say implementation is complete. The vision for Flint's Community Open Space in many ways is different from what exists today. A number of improvements are required to provide the character and vision desired for these areas. The implementation matrix presented at the end of this chapter provides specific strategies and the detail necessary to implement the recommendations of the Place-Based Land Use Plan, some of which are highlighted on the right. Additional analysis and recommendations for Flint's parks and open spaces is provided in ***Chapter 7 – Environmental Features, Open Space and Parks Plan***.

- Provide recreational amenities, facilities, and uses necessary to accommodate a healthy lifestyle for residents at all stages of life.
- Discuss possible partnerships to convert some community open space to state or county parks.
- Work with the Land Bank to acquire properties around parks for limited park expansion, particularly around waterways.
- Work with community stakeholders to create organizations such as a land conservancy, land trust, and/or Friends of Flint Parks to help manage Flint's Community Open Spaces.
- Develop a plan to gradually reduce public utilities and roads in passive recreation areas in the Community Open Space place type.
- Transition green neighborhoods that experience steep population decline to Community Open Space.
- Work with community stakeholders to educate the residents about naturalization of the Community Open Space place type and to develop individualized naturalization plans for passive areas.

1. Intensely programmed athletic complexes are not residentially compatible uses. They can generate traffic and contain lighted fields, large crowds, and public address systems.
2. A multi-use trail provides for circulation within the park, and with connections to the City and larger regional trail network, providing opportunities for recreation and transportation.
3. Playground can provide Flint's youngest residents with recreation opportunities in the City's parks.
4. Rivers provide opportunities to establish blue/green corridors, where waterways are linked with green infrastructure to provide recreation, reduce the risk of flooding, and help restore urban rivers.
5. A comprehensive network of trails and sidewalks should connect Flint's residents with its parks and open spaces.
6. Community parks have a service area that is larger than smaller neighborhood parks, and as a result attract visitors that often arrive by automobile. Parking lots and access points for community parks should consider impact of non-local traffic in adjacent neighborhoods.

Green Neighborhood

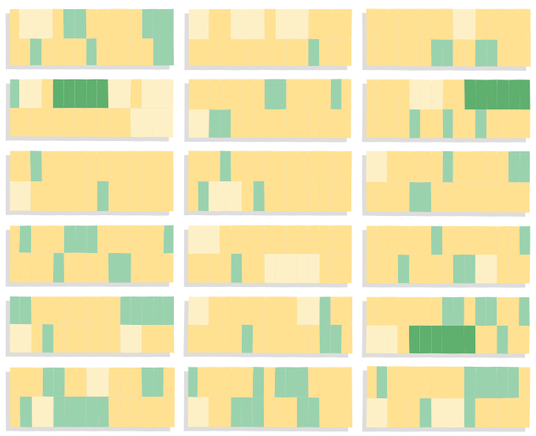
Green Neighborhoods are designated in residential areas that have experienced some disinvestment and abandonment, but the remaining housing stock is sound. The deindustrialization of the City has resulted in a significant population decline, and some of Flint's neighborhoods are no longer fully occupied. The Place-Based Land Use Plan designates theses areas as Green Neighborhoods, recognizing their potential to function as healthy places to live where residential uses and urban gardens thrive.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Flint's Green Neighborhoods are areas where previously vacant or under-utilized properties have been repurposed. They have become low-density, residential neighborhoods with a significant amount of land dedicated to green uses, community gardens, small-scale urban agriculture, and small open space areas. Pockets of traditional single family housing exist throughout the Green Neighborhoods, including a number of single family homes and estates that have assembled adjacent lots to expand their yard and homes.

Despite population loss, Flint's Green Neighborhoods are stable, safe and healthy. They are complemented by parks and natural open space areas that are maintained by local residents, community groups, and invested stakeholders, and have maintained their access and connections to schools, shopping, and other vital services.

Character Images



- ***Single Family.*** single family detached homes
- ***Large Lot Single Family.*** multiple, smaller lots, consolidated into larger residential properties
- ***Open Space.*** community gardens, vacant residential lots used for passive open space
- ***Small-Scale Urban Agriculture.*** consolidated vacant lots used for neighborhood agriculture

LAND USES

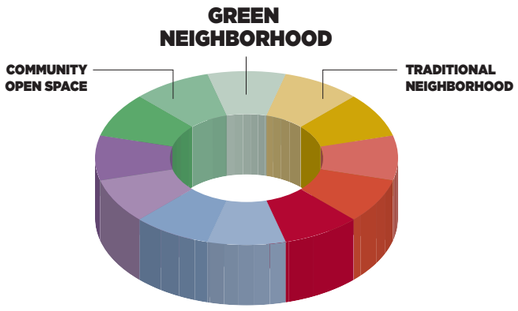
The ***Green Neighborhood*** place type consists of single family residential uses with community gardens, small-scale urban agriculture, and small amounts of open space intermixed. Residential uses primarily consist of detached single family homes, situated on a traditional City lot; however, through programs encouraging residents to acquire adjacent parcels, some homeowners occupy larger land areas with expanded yards and private gardens.

Adjacent Areas

Consideration should be given to use compatibility with adjacent areas. Although Green Neighborhoods contain small amounts of urban agriculture uses, they remain predominantly residential and should be considered as such when evaluating appropriateness for adjacent land uses. When Green Neighborhoods abut other place types that allow commercial and industrial activity, including Green Innovation areas, increased setbacks and buffering should be used to protect them.

LAND USE WHEEL

In Flint's ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel*** the Green Neighborhood place type sits between Community Open Space and Traditional Neighborhood. If future investment and development should occur within a Green Neighborhood, it is possible for these areas to transition to a Traditional Neighborhood, with new homes on vacated lots repairing the neighborhood fabric. However, if a Green Neighborhood cannot be stabilized, and decline and abandonment continues, these areas will transition in the other direction and become Community Open Space or Green Innovation.



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GREEN NEIGHBORHOOD PLACE TYPE

Implementation of the ***Green Neighborhood*** place type requires the stabilization of the homes that remain within the designated neighborhoods, along with the introduction of green uses. There are a significant number of vacant lots and abandoned homes within the Green Neighborhoods. Abandoned homes will need to be demolished, and vacant land will need to be prepared for green space. In addition, the City's zoning code must be revised to adequately accommodate the desired vision. The implementation matrix presented at the end of this chapter provides specific strategies and the detail necessary to implement the recommendations of the Place-Based Land Use Plan, some of which are highlighted on the right.

- Revise the City's Zoning Code to ensure the uses necessary to support the Master Plan's place typology are permissible and that desired character for these places can be fostered.
- Prioritize neighborhood planning and community organizing in Green Neighborhoods to rebuild neighborhood cohesiveness damaged by abandonment and vacancy.
- Promote and incentivize parcel assembly, land acquisition, and lot clearing, prioritizing low-vacancy blocks to facilitate the land use transitions from existing conditions to recommended place types.
- Create a housing rehabilitation program to reduce the number of people walking away from their homes.
- Continue demolition of vacant and abandoned buildings in poor condition and work with community partners to devise and implement a long-term maintenance plan for vacant lots after demolition.
- Establish small scale urban agriculture as a permitted use in the Green Neighborhood place type.
- Work with the Land Bank to accelerate side lot transfer in the Green Neighborhood place type.
- Invest necessary resources and promote partnerships with community groups and institutions to maintain community open space and enhance sense of community in low-density neighborhoods.

1. Home owners should be encouraged to acquire vacant lots adjacent to their property, assuming maintenance responsibilities and expanding their yards.
2. The residential uses comprising the Green Neighborhoods should consist of primarily detached single family homes.
3. Community gardens provide opportunities to strengthen the sense of "community," instill neighborhood pride, and provide access to healthy food.
4. Private gardens on expanded lots should be promoted throughout Green Neighborhoods.
5. Green Neighborhoods should maintain their pedestrian infrastructure which provides necessary connections to schools, parks and other destinations.

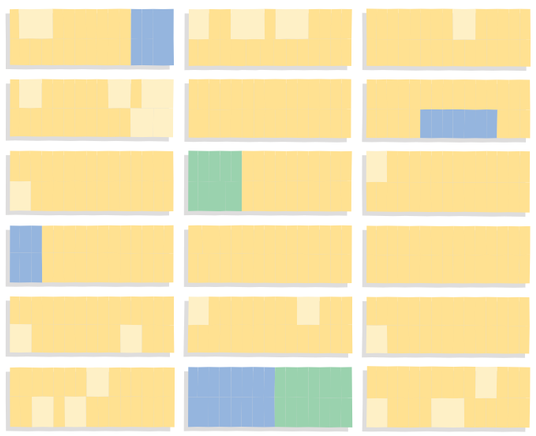
Traditional Neighborhood

Since 1960, the City of Flint has lost almost half of its population. As a result of this population loss, some of Flint's neighborhoods have experienced decline and abandonment. More of them, however, have been resilient and stable. These areas are Flint's ***Traditional Neighborhoods*** and they are found throughout the City.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

The Traditional Neighborhood is the building block of the Flint community. It is where most people live and families are raised, in primarily detached single family homes. Other dwelling unit types do exist, including the occasional townhomes, duplexes, and small multi-family buildings, but these are usually located along busier corridors and areas of special interest. Traditional neighborhoods also include more contemporary housing developments where larger lot single family homes and curvilinear streets are more common.

Flint's Traditional Neighborhoods are supported by various other uses including schools, community centers, religious institutions and parks. Trees and sidewalks line every street, providing a safe and comfortable environment to walk to local bus stops, ride a bike, or simply take a stroll. Traditional neighborhoods are stable with minimal vacancies, allowing for the efficient provision of services.



- ***Single Family.*** single-family detached homes
- ***Large Lot Single Family.*** multiple, smaller lots, consolidated into larger residential properties
- ***Institutional.*** schools, churches, and neighborhood/community facilities
- ***Park/Open Space.*** neighborhood parks for active and passive recreation

Character Images

LAND USES

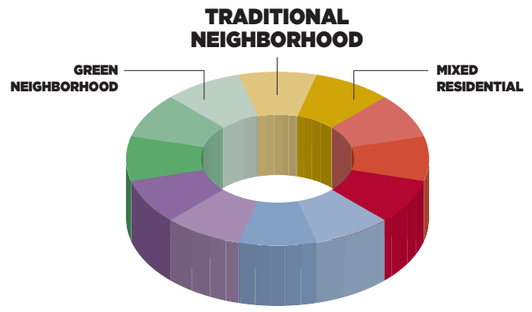
Detached single family homes predominate the ***Traditional Neighborhood*** place type. Most of the homes exist on a "typical" City lot, however, some larger lots do exist as a result of acquiring and consolidating adjacent parcels when lots were vacated. Public uses, such as schools and parks, can also be located within the Traditional Neighborhood, however, they may be better suited for the Neighborhood Center place type.

Adjacent Areas

Land use compatibility of adjacent areas is important consideration for the Traditional Neighborhood. Property values, safety, and overall quality-of-life can be impacted by the adverse impacts of adjacent nonresidential activities, and encroachment by incompatible land uses. Place types accommodating high intensity uses, such as Production Centers, Commerce & Employment Centers, and Green Innovation Areas, should be separated from Traditional Neighborhoods. Where land use incompatibilities exist, or cannot be avoided, buffering should be used to help protect them.

LAND USE WHEEL

In Flint's *Land Use & Intensity Wheel* the Traditional Neighborhood place type sits between Green Neighborhood and Mixed Residential. Traditional Neighborhoods have the potential to shift in both directions along the wheel. If a traditional neighborhood experiences disinvestment and abandonment, it can transition to a Green Neighborhood. If redevelopment occurs, and dwelling types are diversified and density is permitted to increase it could transition to a Mixed Residential area.



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD PLACE TYPE

Most of the areas designated as ***Traditional Neighborhoods*** are already residential areas. Implementation of this place type aims to stabilize and improve these areas, to help ensure their long-term success and resiliency, and protect homeowner investment and property values. Several objectives of the Place-Based Land Use Plan are concerned with providing direction to support the implementation of Traditional Neighborhoods. The specific strategies, along with their timing and cost implications, are detailed in the implementation matrix at the end of this chapter and some are highlighted on the right. Additional recommendations for Flint's residential areas are located in ***Chapter 5 – Housing & Neighborhoods Plan***.

- Engage in strategic and targeted code enforcement to proactively identify violations, reverse decline in housing conditions, and improve neighborhood quality of life.
- Create a housing rehabilitation program to reduce the number of people walking away from their homes.
- Limit demolitions to only substandard structures and clear, vacant sites of debris and building remnants, in order to prepare sites for reinvestment and prevent poor conditions of a few existing properties from impacting neighborhood property values.
- Encourage single family infill development.
- Ensure bus stop locations are appropriately located, well designed, and adequately lit so as to provide safe and convenient access to transit.
- Work with existing owners to improve their properties.

1. Parks are key components of Traditional Neighborhoods and provide essential open space and recreational amenities for neighborhood residents.
2. Schools can serve as a building block around which Traditional Neighborhoods can flourish, providing a central gathering place, a sense of identity, and community-based educational opportunities.
3. Traditional Neighborhoods are comprised primarily of single family detached homes developed in a manner that maintains a "rhythm" of open space and structures, with relatively uniform setbacks and building heights.
4. Traditional Neighborhoods should maintain a fully connected pedestrian network of sidewalks that provide safe and efficient walking access to nearby schools, parks, and amenities.
5. Tree lined streets should be a hallmark of traditional neighborhoods, helping to improve the appearance, health, and quality of life in an area.

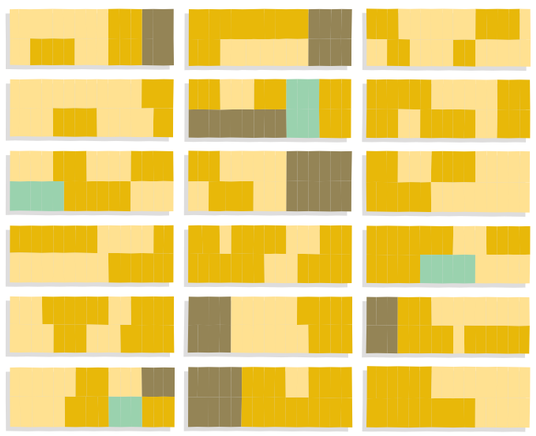
Mixed Residential

Mixed Residential areas are generally concentrated around Downtown, providing a local population to help patronize Downtown businesses. Mixed Residential areas are also situated along busy corridors, providing an opportunity for transit-oriented development and more robust commercial services.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Flint's Mixed Residential areas consist of a mix of single family detached, single family-attached residences (townhomes, rowhomes, etc.), and multi-family buildings. With multi-family structures typically three to four stories in height, these are the most intense residential areas within the City, typically abutting busy commercial districts and employment hubs and providing a buffer to lower density traditional neighborhoods.

Mixed Residential areas are a popular choice among university and college students, young professionals looking for housing close to work, and seniors looking to locate near daily goods and services. These neighborhoods are served by nearby commercial districts as well as smaller retailers and service providers that may be clustered at key intersections or located on the ground floor within more prominent multi-family buildings. New development within Mixed Residential areas should reflect the density, scale, and character of surrounding neighborhoods.



- ***Single Family.*** single family detached homes
- ***Single Family Attached.*** rowhouses, townhomes
- ***Multi-Family.*** duplexes, apartments, condominiums
- ***Park/Open Space.*** neighborhood parks for active and passive recreation

Character Images

LAND USE

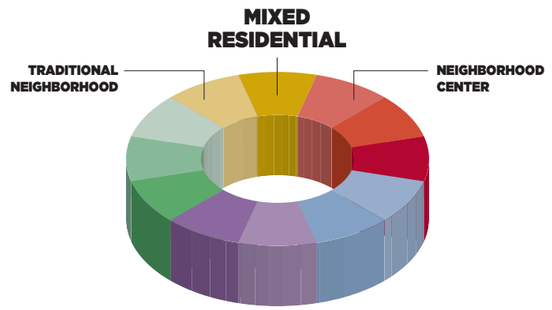
Mixed Residential areas consist of all types of housing, providing a range of housing options for the City's residents. Attached-single family units, in the form of townhomes, rowhouses and duplexes are accommodated in this place type, along with multi-family units, in the form of apartments and condominiums. Single family homes are also found within the Mixed Residential place type, intermixed among other types of residential units.

Adjacent Areas

Land use compatibility of adjacent areas, is an important consideration for the Mixed Residential Areas. While they may be more resilient than a Traditional Neighborhood, their property values, safety, and overall quality of life can also be impacted by the adverse impacts of adjacent non-residential activities and encroachment by incompatible land uses. Locating place types that accommodate high intensity uses, such as Production Centers, Commerce & Employment Centers, and Green Innovation Areas adjacent to Mixed Residential should be avoided. Where land use incompatibilities exist, or cannot be prevented, buffering should be used to help protect them.

LAND USE WHEEL

In Flint's ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel*** the Mixed Residential place type sits between Traditional Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center. If multi-family and attached single family units are redeveloped in favor of single family detached residential, this place type could become a Traditional Neighborhood. If commercial or institutional uses are introduced within a Mixed Residential area, such as a community center or mixed use building, areas of a Mixed Residential place type could transition to a Neighborhood Center.



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MIXED RESIDENTIAL PLACE TYPE

Some of the ***Mixed Residential*** areas are already dense residential districts, but other areas will need to be transformed. Implementation for some areas aims to stabilize and improve existing buildings and neighborhoods to help ensure their long-term success and resiliency, while implementation of other areas seeks to transform existing uses to the Mixed Residential place type. The density and scale of new development should be limited to respect the surrounding character of existing, well-established residential neighborhoods. The implementation matrix, presented at the end of this chapter, provides specific strategies and the detail necessary to implement the recommendations of the Place-Based Land Use Plan, some of which are highlighted on the right. Additional recommendations for Flint's residential areas are located in ***Chapter 5 – Housing and Neighborhoods Plan***.

- Engage in proactive code enforcement to ensure rental registration and identify maintenance violations.
- Demolish substandard structures and clear vacant sites of debris and building remnants in order to prepare sites for reinvestment and to prevent the condition of existing properties from deterring reinvestment within this place type.
- Provide rehabilitation assistance for prominent multi-family structures in need of repair and facade improvements.
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of valued structures (buildings with historic, architectural, or civic significance) to support the accommodation of appropriate and desirable land uses.
- Discourage the over concentration of transitional housing and ensure availability of appropriately located supportive services for this population.
- Develop more specific form-based regulations for multi-family, mixed use, and commercial development to improve overall appearance and compatibility with surrounding areas and uses.
- Focus residential densities in areas of the City that provide convenient access and walkability to needed goods and services.

1. Single family detached residential homes can be a supporting dwelling unit type in Mixed Residential, but is not considered a primary development type.
2. Duplexes provide two units in a single structure, typically having adjacent units sharing a common wall, with each unit having its own direct access to outside.
3. Rowhouses typically include several units in a single building that provide a "streetwall" effect, with building located near the sidewalk and units having a strong orientation toward the street.
4. Senior housing can be well suited in Mixed Residential areas, providing housing that is geared toward residents in the later stages of life.
5. Apartments and condominiums provide the greatest residential density and are often developed on larger lots located along minor and major collector streets, rather than smaller local roads.

Neighborhood Center

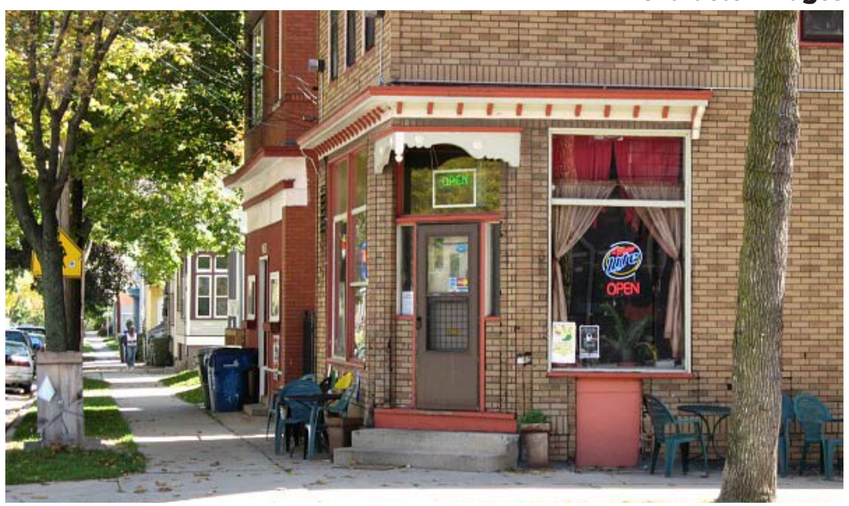
Neighborhood Centers are a focal point of Flint's neighborhoods and are distributed throughout the City. Neighborhood Centers are primarily located at the intersection of busy streets that provide ease of access for nearby residents and contribute to the overall activity of the area.

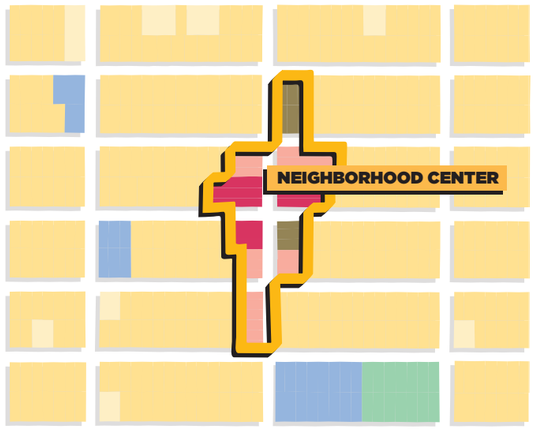
CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Neighborhood Centers serve as anchors of commercial and social activity for the neighborhoods that surround them. Typically found at intersections of two or more major roadways, neighborhood centers can have several local retailers at their center, providing daily goods and services to surrounding neighborhoods. Neighborhood centers may also contain prominent community institutions such as larger schools, community centers, and civic and cultural facilities. Neighborhood centers provide opportunities for smaller, mixed use buildings that include retail and service uses on the ground floor with residential or office uses on the upper floors.

Stand-alone retailers and small mixed use buildings are the predominant commercial use within a neighborhood center, while retail centers are limited. In addition, unique non-profit uses providing services that benefit the community, such as job training, should also be encouraged under development agreements. Although accommodating a variety of commercial and other uses, all neighborhood center uses must be compatible with the adjacent and surrounding residential areas and contribute to neighborhood character, viability, and attractiveness.

Character Images





Commercial. local retail and services

Mixed Use. apartments/condominiums above retail/office

Multi-Family. apartments, condominiums

LAND USES

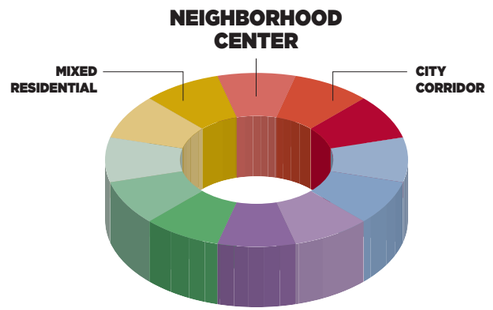
Neighborhood Centers should include all land uses capable of fostering a node of commercial and social activity. Commercial businesses should be of an appropriate scale, catering to the needs of nearby residents, providing access to daily goods and services. Businesses capable of attracting visitors from a larger region can generate undesired traffic, and are better suited in other place types, such as the City Corridor. Public uses, including schools, churches, and community centers can also be located within a Neighborhood Center, along with multi-family residential mixed use buildings. More intense uses such as limited-scale manufacturing can be permitted under special agreement with non-profit service providers provided that such uses provide a needed community benefit.

Adjacent Uses

Consideration should be given to the land use compatibility with adjacent areas. As a focal point for nearby neighborhoods, Neighborhood Centers are often nestled into residential uses. However given the mix of uses within the Neighborhood Center, they are not always compatible with residential uses. Property values, safety, and overall quality of life can be impacted by the adverse impacts of adjacent nonresidential activities, and encroachment by incompatible land uses. Where land use incompatibilities exist between Neighborhood Centers and their adjacent neighborhoods, buffering and screening should be considered to mitigate impacts.

LAND USE WHEEL

Neighborhood Centers sit between Mixed Residential areas and City Corridors within Flint's ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel***. Neighborhood Centers have the potential to change in either direction of the wheel, however a transition to a City Corridor is less likely given that they exist only along Flint's busy streets. A transition from a Neighborhood Center to a Mixed Residential area could occur if a neighborhood center loses its ability to function as a focal point for a neighborhood, but maintains a diverse mix of dwelling types and a dense population.



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER PLACE TYPE

All of the areas designated as ***Neighborhood Centers*** exist today as nodes of activities for their surrounding neighborhoods. Within each Neighborhood Center, however, there are opportunities for their improvement and intensification. The implementation matrix presented at the end of this chapter provides specific strategies, and the detail necessary to implement the recommendations of the Place-Based Land Use Plan, some of which are highlighted on the right.

- Identify neighborhood centers that require additional development standards and enact these regulations and design guidelines through a district plan.
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of valued structures (buildings with historic, architectural, or civic significance) to support the accommodation of appropriate and desirable land uses within this place type.
- Support local economic development efforts to retain, expand, and attract appropriately scaled businesses in this place type.
- Revise the zoning ordinance to allow increased residential densities in the Neighborhood Centers place type.
- Encourage the location of cluster uses geared to meet the daily needs of residents near neighborhoods in order to improve accessibility and encourage walking and biking.
- Develop a commercial matching fund program for rehabilitation and demolition of adjacent vacant, substandard structures.
- Require connections between the public sidewalk system and the entrance to all commercial and residential buildings, including designated pedestrian routes through on-site parking areas.

1. Neighborhood Centers are typically located along major or minor collector streets, rather than local streets or arterials.
2. Neighborhood Centers can provide a wide range of neighborhood scaled and compatible commercial uses, such as a pharmacy, grocery store, neighborhood coffee shop, and more.
3. Neighborhood Centers can be a contributing factor to the quality of life for the surrounding residential areas, but consideration must be given to ensuring compatibility to surrounding homes.
4. A wide range of residential and mixed use building types should be located within and near Neighborhood Centers.
5. Landscaping and screening of non-residential uses is essential to provide the necessary buffering from adjacent properties.

City Corridor

City Corridors are situated along Flint's busiest roads, providing areas for a range of activities on parcels easily accessible by automobiles and serviced by transit. City Corridors leverage the economic potential of traffic and help minimize land use incompatibilities by containing a variety of uses in manageable areas throughout the City.

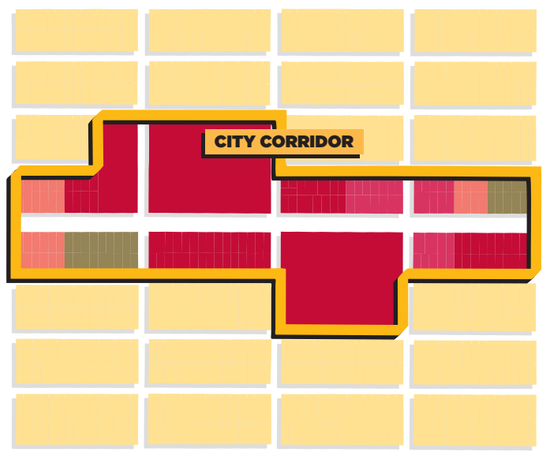
CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

A City Corridor is an area of the City that accommodates a wide range of commercial and institutional uses strung along Flint's major roadways. Retail, service, and employment related uses typically predominate along City Corridors, with structures oriented toward the roadway. City Corridors are auto-oriented in nature, but with amenities such as sidewalks, benches, pedestrian-scale lighting, and landscaping that make it easy for residents and visitors to walk along the corridor. Over time, the development pattern along City Corridors may evolve to include a more intense mix of uses, including multi-story mixed use buildings, and development that abuts the street.

Curb cut reduction, cross access easements, and shared parking make it easy to travel from business to business along the corridor without using local roads. Green space is limited within a City Corridor and is often associated with an institutional use or residential use.

Development within a City Corridor is often hampered by shallow lot depths, close proximity to stable residential neighborhoods, or other factors that limit physical capacity for expansion or intensification. While the scale of development varies along a City Corridor, community shopping centers and mid-sized retailers represent the most intense commercial development.

Character Images



- ***Heavy Commercial.*** community shopping center, mid-box retail
- ***Mixed Use.*** apartments/condominiums above retail/office
- ***Corridor Commercial.*** shallow lot depth suitable for local retail/services
- ***Multi-Family.*** apartments, condominiums

LAND USE

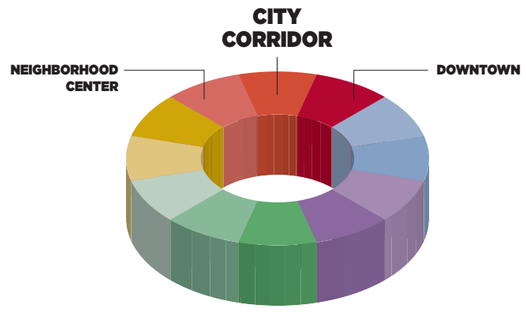
City Corridors can host a range of commercial uses of varying types and intensities, including commercial uses that serve and draw customers from a larger region, including grocery stores and large format retailers. Smaller commercial can also be located along the City Corridor, as standalone uses, in mixed retail centers, or as outlots of larger centers. Mixed use development, consisting of multi-family uses above ground floor commercial uses, can be suitable for the City Corridors. While better suited for other place types, institutional uses may also be appropriate.

Adjacent Areas

City Corridors can be busy and intense corridors and they are often adjacent to residential areas. Uses within the City Corridors are capable of generating noise, light, and traffic. Consideration should be given to the compatibility of City Corridors, particularly where they are adjacent to Green Neighborhoods, Traditional Neighborhoods, and Mixed Residential areas. Where land use incompatibilities cannot be avoided, buffering and screening should be used to mitigate any impacts.

LAND USE WHEEL

City Corridors sit between Neighborhood Centers and Downtown within Flint's ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel***. Although some City Corridors are adjacent to Downtown, their auto-orientation would preclude them from becoming Downtown. A shift to a Neighborhood Center is equally unlikely as it would require a dramatic transformation of a busy City street, into a quieter node of uses that could function as a neighborhood anchor.



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CITY CORRIDOR PLACE TYPE

As it relates to land uses, most of the areas designated as ***City Corridors*** today are consistent with the uses described for the City Corridor place type. However, along each corridor there are significant opportunities to improve their form, function, and appearance to better align with the vision for these areas. The implementation matrix presented at the end of this chapter provides specific strategies and the detail necessary to implement the recommendations of the Place-Based Land Use Plan, some of which are highlighted on the right.

- Ensure new development is attractively designed and constructed and existing development is appropriately maintained.
- Utilize the subarea plans to develop district plans for City Corridors that require additional development standards and design guidelines.
- Revise the zoning ordinance to allow increased residential densities at key locations along the City Corridor place type, and develop appropriate development standards to ensure compatibility with more auto-oriented existing uses at busy streets.
- Amend the City's sign regulations to include an amortization schedule for the elimination of non-conforming signs to eliminate visual clutter and remove undesirable signage.
- Work with adjacent property owners to develop a streetscape plan for each City Corridor.
- Support local economic development efforts to retain, expand, and attract businesses within the City Corridor place type.
- Proactively enforce codes and utilize demolition of substandard, vacant buildings to eliminate blight.

1. Commercial buildings should be located to the front of the properties along the corridor whenever possible to present an urban edge that showcases architecture and business vitality, instead of parking lots.
2. Commercial uses can be appropriately designed to extend more than one block deep from the corridor frontage, but careful steps should be taken to ensure compatibility as commercial uses "push" into the residential areas.
3. Landscaping is essential at the rear of commercial properties where a double frontage is created and the commercial use fronts two streets – the primary commercial corridor and the parallel residential street.
4. Drive-thru facilities (i.e. fast food, banks, etc.) can be accommodated, but special attention must be given to design that mitigates nuisances to surrounding property owners, including vehicle stacking/idling, speakers/noise, headlights, on-site circulation, and ingress and egress.
5. Whenever possible, within the City Corridor place type, commercial buildings should hold a strong corner at the intersection of the primary corridor and intersecting streets, to further establish the identity and character of the area.

Downtown

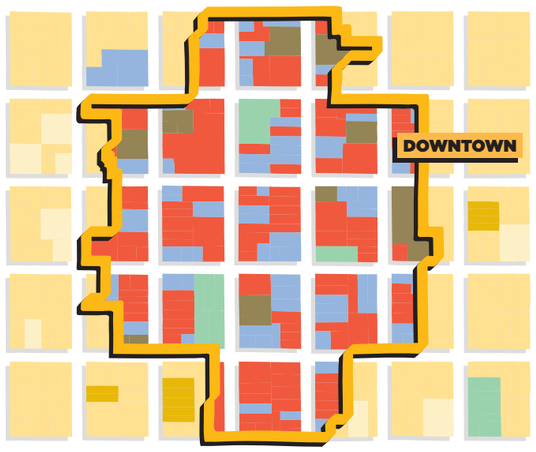
Downtown is a dense and vibrant mixed use area near the geographic center of the City along Saginaw Street, between the Flint River and Interstate 69. Downtown is, and should continue to be, a compact area consisting of a variety of uses that together provide and foster an active pedestrian-oriented area.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

There is only one Downtown. It is a unique place representing the most densely developed area within Flint. The downtown's foundation is a core of mixed use buildings, some exceeding 15 stories in height, with multi-family residential, institutional, and office uses located above ground floor retail and commercial uses. The presence of a large residential population in conjunction with significant employers and institutions creates an around-the-clock sense of activity, helping support a variety of retail, service providers, and restaurants.

Large civic and institutional uses are integrated within the same built environment as retailers, corporate offices, and residences, providing the same sense of place and pedestrian experience regardless of land use. The development pattern establishes connections and promotes synergies between the Saginaw Street corridor and surrounding anchor institutions such as U of M-Flint. The Downtown also features prominent public spaces, and is a frequent destination for community events and gatherings. The built environment is pedestrian-oriented with buildings located at or near the sidewalk's edge.

Character Images



- ***Mixed Use.*** apartments/condominiums/retail/office/institutional
- ***Institutional.*** government, universities, transit, community organizations
- ***Multi-Family.*** apartments, condominiums
- ***Parks and Open Space.*** plazas, squares

LAND USE

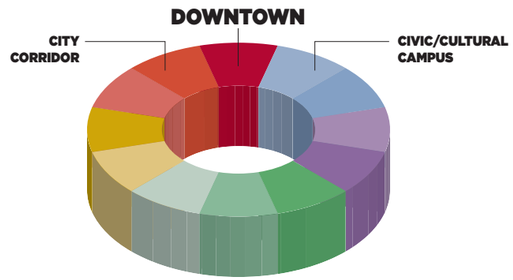
Downtown should continue to consist of a dynamic mix of uses that together foster an active pedestrian-oriented area. Downtown uses should be mixed, including commercial, office, residential and public uses. While there may be single-purpose buildings in Downtown, the ideal built form would consist of mixed use buildings, with dining and retail uses on the ground floor, and office or multi-family residential uses above.

Adjacent Areas

The neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown contribute to its vibrancy but should be protected and insulated from any spillover impacts of Downtown activity.

LAND USE WHEEL

In Flint's ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel*** the Downtown sits between City Corridor and Civic/Cultural Campus. Downtown is a unique place within the City and given this special nature, shifts along the ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel*** in either direction are unlikely.



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DOWNTOWN PLACE TYPE

Most of the areas designated as ***Downtown*** are a part of what is already known as Downtown Flint. There are, however, opportunities to intensify and improve some of the areas and desired characteristics of Downtown. Several objectives of the Place-Based Land Use Plan and their associated implementation strategies support the implementation of the Downtown place type. The strategies, along with their timing and cost implications, are detailed in the implementation matrix at the end of this chapter, some of which are highlighted on the right. Additional analysis and recommendations for Downtown Flint is presented in ***Chapter 9 – Economic Development and Education Plan***.

- Support and encourage a mix of commercial, retail, dining, entertainment, and office uses within the Downtown area and work to maintain Downtown as a destination and the symbolic heart of the community.
- Establish design guidelines for the Downtown to ensure that new development is attractively designed and constructed.
- Revise the zoning ordinance to allow increased residential densities in in the Downtown.
- Limit surface parking, which can interrupt the traditional streetwall, and explore ways to located public parking behind or within buildings to minimize its visual impact.
- Promote the use of public art to create a sense of activity in vacant storefronts, vacant lots, and public rights of way.
- Allow for limited street vending related to special events and construction of temporary art installations.
- Actively market commercial and mixed use development opportunities within the Downtown place type.
- To further establish a sense of place, "brand" or "name" each district and use the name to reinforce its unique identity within Downtown Flint, such as the Buckham Alley area or proposed Health and Wellness Campus.

1. Locate buildings in the Downtown, at or near the sidewalk, in order to maintain a traditional streetwall effect that is so important in pedestrian-oriented environments.
2. Mixed use multi-story buildings should be the predominant land use type in the Downtown, providing a mix of uses in a compact urban form.
3. Civic plazas, courtyards, and public open space can be an important component of a successful and engaging Downtown, providing gathering places for Downtown residents, employees, and visitors.
4. Alleys and service drives located behind buildings provide necessary pedestrian access, loading and service areas for Downtown businesses, and also represent opportunities for vibrant public space and community gathering such as the Buckham Alley area.
5. Key intersections within the Downtown should be developed on all four corners with structures that create a strong architectural and visual presence.
6. Public uses in the Downtown, such as churches, City Hall, and the Post Office can add to the desirable mix of uses that make Downtown the "symbolic heart" of the community.

Civic/Cultural Campus

The ***Civic/Cultural Campus*** is a unique area of the City, home to Mott Community College and the Flint Cultural Center, which includes the Sloan Museum, Buick Automotive Gallery, Flint Public Library, Applewood, Longway Planetarium, The Whiting, Flint Youth Theatre, Flint Institute of Arts, and Flint Institute of Music. The Civic/Cultural Campus is located east of Downtown and I-475, between Court Street and Robert T. Longway Boulevard. The Civic/Cultural Campus is also the location of the Flint Central High School campus highlighted in ***Chapter 9: Infrastructure and Community Facilities***.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

The Civic/Cultural Campus is an area dedicated solely to the function of major community institutions, such as Mott Community College and its campus, and a collection of other community institutions that comprise the Flint Cultural Center.

The Civic/Cultural Campus consists of a cluster of related buildings arranged in a campus setting that is largely separated from the surrounding areas. Landscaping, signs, consistent architectural styles, and other elements create a unified sense of place within the campus. Daily activities within the Civic/Cultural Campus attract visitors from throughout the region. In areas where a Civic/Cultural Campus abuts other portions of the community, land use, roadway, and streetscape configurations are designed to manage the flow of visitors and encourage those visitors to interact with other nearby areas of the City.

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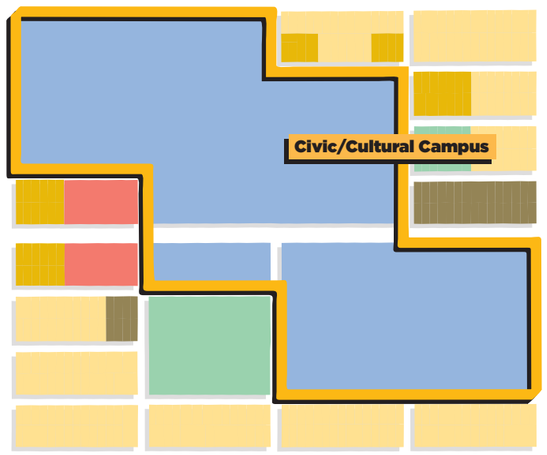


- ***Institutional.*** museums, library, concert hall, college, high school
- ***Multi-Family.*** apartments, condominiums
- ***Single Family.*** single-family detached homes
- ***Single Family Attached.*** rowhomes, townhomes
- ***Parks and Open Space.*** neighborhood recreation
- ***Commercial.*** neighborhood retail

LAND USE

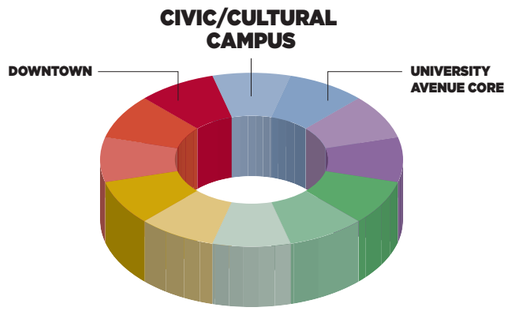
The ***Civic/Cultural Campus*** is a special purpose place type consisting of entirely institutional and public uses. The place is designated around several existing and cherished uses in the City, including the many institutions that make up the Flint Cultural Center. Any redevelopment within this place type should consist of uses that complement or strengthen the existing campus.

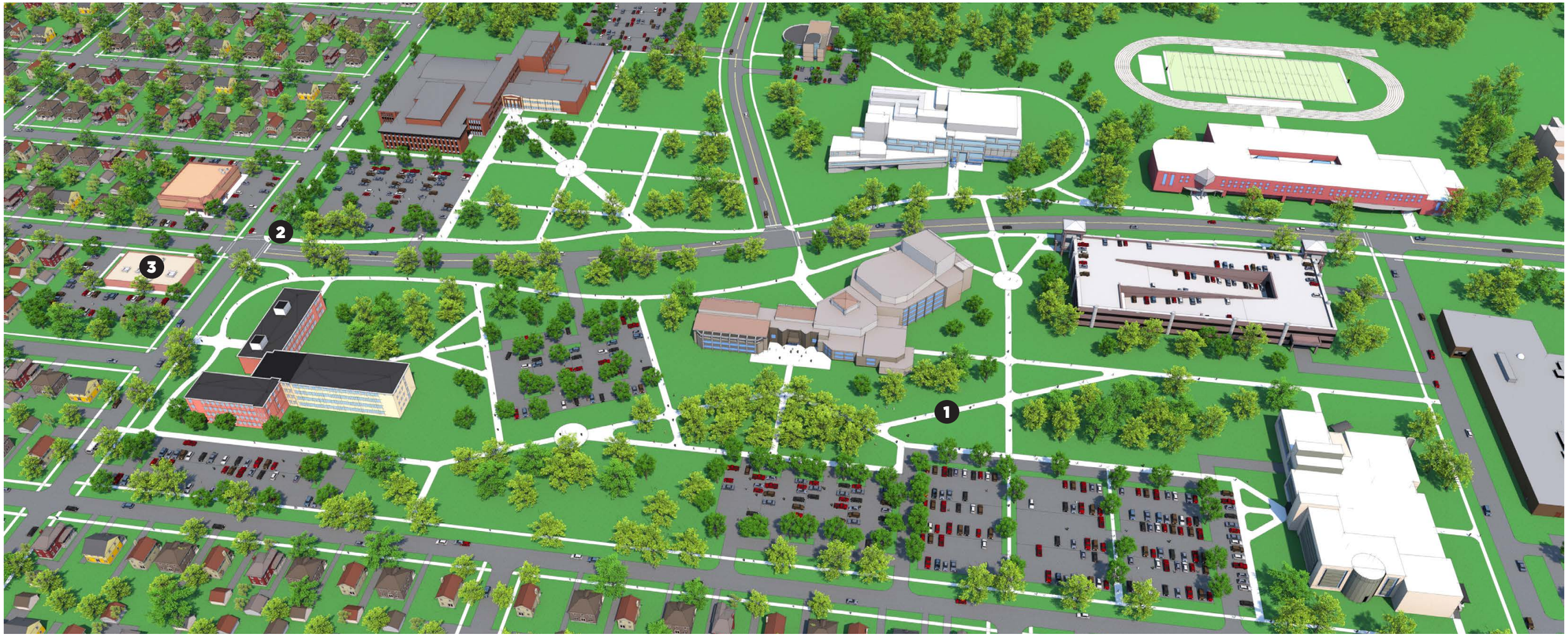
Adjacent Areas

At times, Flint's Civic/Cultural Campus can be a busy district, attracting visitors and traffic from throughout the City. It is primarily surrounded by residential areas that should be protected from spillover effects of campus activity. Neighborhood-scale retail and dining should be encouraged in select areas to capitalize on the large number of visitors to the area. Consideration should be given to access and egress to the campus to limit non-local traffic through residential areas. In addition, buffering and screening should be used to mitigate any other impacts of campus activity, including areas dedicated to its operation and maintenance.

LAND USE WHEEL

The Civic/Cultural Campus sits between Downtown and University Avenue Core on Flint's ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel.*** The Civic/Cultural Campus is a unique place in the City, centered around the Flint Cultural Center and Mott Community College. Given the unique nature of this place type, shifts along the ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel*** in either direction are unlikely.





IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CIVIC/ CULTURAL CAMPUS PLACE TYPE

The ***Civic/Cultural Campus*** place type represents an established area of the City, home to several community institutions. Implementation of this place type involves only strategies that can improve some of the areas, desired characteristics, and help ensure its compatibility with adjacent areas. The implementation matrix, presented at the end of this chapter, provides specific strategies and the detail necessary to implement the recommendations of the Place-Based Land Use Plan, including the Civic/ Cultural Campus, some of which are highlighted on the right. Additional analysis and recommendations for the Civic/Cultural Campus is presented in ***Chapter 11 – Arts and Culture Plan***.

- Ensure that the Civic/Cultural Campus is easily accessible to surrounding neighborhoods by foot and bike to minimize the necessity of using an automobile, thereby reducing parking demand and minimizing traffic congestion.
- Design and implement an effective and attractive wayfinding system to provide identification of, and direction to area facilities and public parking areas.
- Flint Community Schools should be encouraged to implement its Central High School Campus concept, providing a centralized school location for all Flint high school students.
- Encourage compatible and high-quality design and construction for all development/redevelopment with an emphasis on site design, building orientation, architecture, building materials and site improvements.
- Enhance pedestrian connections and wayfinding within the Civic/Cultural Campus to promote walking between area institutions and destinations.
- Establish programs that link and promote synergies between Civic/Cultural Campus institutions such as a Mott Community College-Flint Community Schools dual enrollment program or Flint Institute of Arts College Town discount program.

1. A fully connected network of sidewalks and bike paths should provide safe and efficient walking access from nearby neighborhoods as well as connections to nearby assets such as the Downtown and Kearsley Park.
2. Improved gateway treatments and wayfinding are needed at key entrances, to better direct residents and visitors to the numerous cultural and educational facilities located within the Civic/Cultural Campus area.
3. To better leverage the hundreds of thousands of annual visitors to the Civic/Cultural Campus, commercial development should be encouraged that is sensitive to the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

University Avenue Core

Flint's ***University Avenue Core*** is a unique area of the City, home to Hurley Medical Center, Kettering University, Atwood Stadium, and General Motors Tool and Die. The University Avenue Core is located northwest of Downtown, divided by University Avenue, which runs through it.

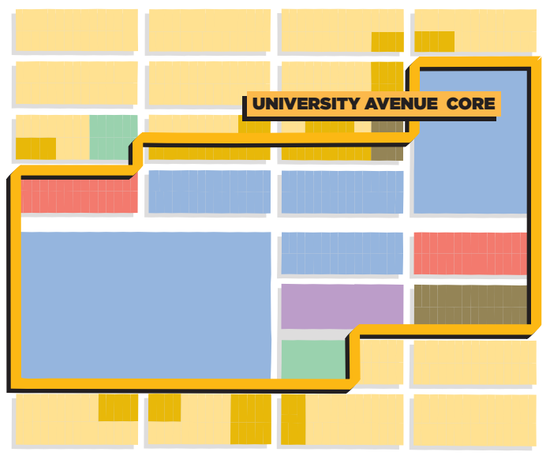
CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

The University Avenue Core is an area where the Hurley Hospital and Kettering University form the central component of a high-intensity district outside of Downtown Flint. The development pattern establishes connections and promotes synergies along corridors, such as University Avenue, that physically link multiple institutions. Strategic landscaping, wayfinding, consistent architectural styles, and other elements create a unified and unique sense of place.

The development of business incubators, research and development centers, and specialized manufacturing, builds on the strengths of established institutions, fostering an environment of innovation and entrepreneurship. Larger multi-family buildings of four- to five-stories or higher exist to support larger institutions as a means of providing local housing for area employees such as medical staff, university instructors, and students.

Daily activities within the University Avenue Core attract visitors from throughout the region. In areas where University Avenue Core abuts other portions of the community, land use, roadway, and streetscape configurations are designed to manage the flow of visitors and encourage those visitors to interact with other nearby areas of the City.

Character Images



- ***Institutional.*** hospitals and universities
- ***Commercial.*** local retail and services
- ***Light Industrial.*** research & development, limited manufacturing
- ***Multi-Family.*** apartments, condominiums
- ***Single Family Attached.*** rowhomes, townhomes
- ***Parks and Open Space.*** neighborhood recreation

LAND USE

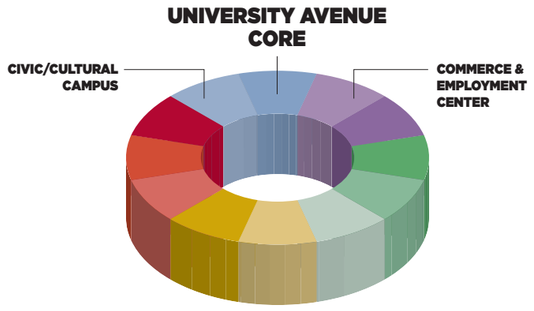
The ***University Avenue Core*** is an area anchored around institutions with the potential to connect with one another, blossoming into a more intense area of the City. Future uses envisioned within the place type include public institutions, professional offices, residential buildings, open space and greenways, research and development, and light manufacturing.

Adjacent Areas

Anchored by two major institutions, the University Avenue Core can be a busy district, attracting visitors and traffic from throughout the City of Flint and beyond. Surrounded almost entirely by residential areas, land use compatibility and transitioning to adjacent land uses are important considerations. Adjacent residential areas should be protected from spillover effects of campus activity. Where land use incompatibilities exist between the University Avenue Core and adjacent areas, buffering and screening, and other measures should be used to mitigate impacts. Some higher-intensity green uses may be permitted in this place type, but will require a development agreement to protect adjacent uses from potential nuisances.

LAND USE WHEEL

In Flint's ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel*** the University Avenue Core sits between the Civic/Cultural Campus and the Commerce & Employment Center place type. The University Avenue Core is a unique place type in the City, centered around Hurley Hospital and the campus of Kettering University. While the institutions themselves will not change, their surrounding areas could transform into neighboring place types on the map, not the ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel.***



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE CORE PLACE TYPE

The ***University Avenue Core*** place type is anchored by two established institutional uses. However, the Master Plan envisions their surrounding areas undergoing a transformation that includes intensification of the area with new supporting uses and campus expansion. The implementation matrix presented at the end of this chapter provides specific strategies and the detail necessary to implement the recommendations of the Place-Based Land Use Plan, including the University Avenue Core, some of which are highlighted on the right.

- Create a "district plan" that dovetails with the zoning ordinance and provides additional guidance to ensure high-quality design, market viability, and compatible uses and development.
- Design and construct improvements to the streetscape and public spaces to intentionally create a more unified appearance and function across institutional campuses.
- To the extent possible, locate workforce and multi-family housing in the University Avenue Core to provide densities that can support local businesses and which promote walkability.
- Work with Kettering University, community stakeholders, and surrounding neighborhoods to improve access to the Flint River and activity program spaces around the river including Chevy in the Hole and Atwood Stadium.
- Actively market commercial and mixed use development opportunities within designated areas in the University Avenue Core place type.
- To further establish a sense of place, "brand" the district and use the name to reinforce its unique identity within Flint.
- Ensure that areas of increased development intensity are easily accessible on foot and bike to minimize the necessity of using an automobile, thereby reducing parking demand and minimizing traffic congestion.
- Allow complementary agricultural uses and other more intensive green economy uses within the Chevy in the Hole area through the use of development agreements.

1. As key economic drivers, Kettering University and Hurley Medical Center should be maintained as focal points within any future redevelopment of this area.
2. A new transit route, possibly Bus or Area Rapid Transit, is needed to properly serve the significant number of employers and residents currently located within the University Avenue Core, Downtown, and commerce and employment centers to the east and west.
3. Employment-related uses such as research and development and office uses should be encouraged to complement the functions of Kettering University and Flint Tool and Die.
4. Multi-family and single family attached residential is an important component of the University Avenue Core, providing much needed local student housing and workforce options.
5. A range of commercial uses should be encouraged to provide goods and services to the residents, students, and workers of the University Avenue Core.

Commerce & Employment Center

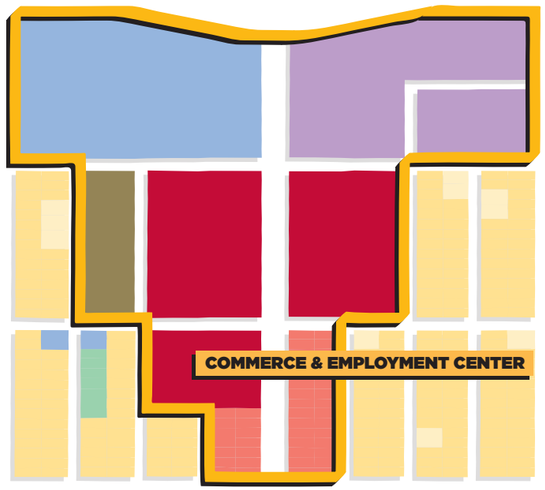
Commerce and Employment Centers are designated along key road and rail corridors seeking to leverage transportation infrastructure for economic development.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Commerce and Employment Centers are areas where the development pattern is focused around a community anchor such as a large employer and/or regional commercial center, or a cluster of smaller employment-related uses, including light industrial, research, and office. It is a diverse district where a high-intensity mix of uses serves to complement the employment users that anchor them. Housing may be located within Commerce and Employment, but as a complementary use such as workforce housing to support the area employers, allowing the area to function, at its full capacity, as a hub of employment and commerce within the community and larger region.

Commerce and Employment Centers can attract a significant number of workers and visitors from outside of the community and surface lots and parking decks may be common. While access to main roadways are needed by large employers and retail centers alike, portions of the frontage along these areas may be utilized by smaller retailers or service providers. Roadways and parking areas are well-landscaped and areas dedicated to outdoor storage are screened from view. Green space may be limited within a Commerce and Employment Center, but should be incorporated where possible to enhance the overall attractiveness and pedestrian environment.

Character Images



- ***Business.*** large employers, light industrial/office park
- ***Institutional.*** hospitals, universities
- ***Regional Commercial.*** large commercial centers
- ***Local Commercial.*** local retail and services
- ***Multi-Family.*** senior, workforce, and veteran's housing

LAND USE

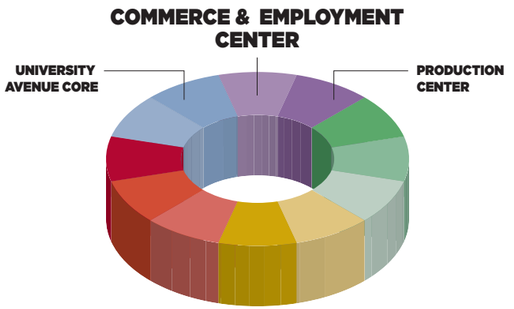
Land uses within the ***Commerce and Employment*** place type consist of a mix of uses capable of accommodate larger employers, including light industry and office uses. Regional shopping centers and other intense commercial uses are also appropriate for this place type. Satellite campuses of colleges, universities, outpatient facilities, and physician offices of hospitals are also well suited for Flint's Commerce and Employment Centers. Complementary multi-family development is also encouraged within these areas. Commerce and Employment areas can take on a range of forms from more suburban regional retail destinations to more urban corridors located near the Downtown.

Adjacent Areas

Commerce and Employment Centers are busy areas, hosting an intense mix of land uses. Planning for adjacent areas is vitally important. Property values, safety, and overall quality of life can be impacted by the adverse impacts of adjacent nonresidential activities, and encroachment by incompatible uses and activities. Where Commerce and Employment Centers abut residential areas, buffering should be used to help protect the City's neighborhoods.

LAND USE WHEEL

In Flint's ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel*** the Commerce & Employment Center sits between the University Avenue Core and Production Centers. Commerce & Employment Centers have the potential to shift in only one direction along the wheel. If heavy industries are permitted to proliferate within Commerce and Employment Centers, areas of this place type could transform into a Production Center. A shift in the other direction is not possible given the unique nature of the University Avenue Core place type.



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMERCE & EMPLOYMENT CENTER PLACE TYPE

Some of the areas designated as ***Commerce & Employment Centers*** exist today, while other areas will have to undergo transformation and repositioning to achieve the desired vision for the area. The implementation matrix, presented at the end of this chapter, provides specific strategies and the detail necessary to implement the recommendations of the Place-Based Land Use Plan, some of which are highlighted on the right. Additional analysis and recommendations for Flint's industrial and business areas are presented in ***Chapter 9 – Economic Development and Education Plan***.

- Potentially create future "district plans" which dovetail with the zoning ordinance to provide additional guidance to ensure high-quality design, market viability, and compatible uses and development.
- Prioritize redevelopment efforts that are aimed at the block scale or larger, often involving several properties, rather than efforts geared more toward an individual parcel.
- Support and encourage all retail, office, and service commercial activities to be organized by use and concentrated within or near areas of complementary uses.
- Facilitate collaboration between businesses and surrounding property owners on shared security and parking, maintenance of vacant lots and public rights of way, code enforcement, and blight elimination.
- Identify and remediate any environmental contamination and site issues that would otherwise prevent the desirable development of properties within the designated places types.
- Protect residential areas from the adverse impacts of adjacent incompatible land uses by establishing appropriate setback, landscaping, screening and buffering requirements.

1. Regional Shopping Centers are a prime use in the Commerce and Employment Center place type, typically including regional/large/big box retail uses, with large parking areas and outlots developed for restaurant and retail uses.
2. Parking lot screening and on-site landscaping is very important as it helps to establish the high-quality and attractive character of the area.
3. Office park uses are well suited for the Commerce and Employment Center, often employing a significant number of people that contribute to an increased daytime population that supports local retail, restaurant, and service uses.
4. Corridor commercial uses, including drive-thru restaurants and smaller and mid-sized commercial uses typical of the City Corridor place type, can be highly desirable supporting uses.
5. Commerce and Employment Centers are typically located along major arterials, often with direct connections to the region's highway system, making it easier to draw employees, shoppers, and visitors from throughout the greater region.

Production Center

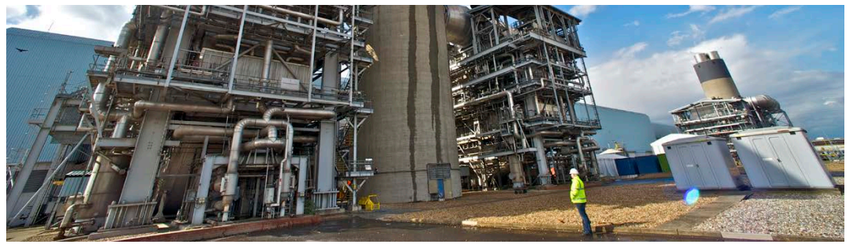
Production Centers are designated where the City's major industrial centers and economic generators exist. These areas include GM's Flint Truck Assembly, Bishop International Airport, portions of the Buick City site, portions of the Delphi East site, and the CSX railroad corridor.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Production Centers represent some of the community's largest employers and consist primarily of intense industrial uses capable of generating considerable noise, traffic, and other nuisances. With the potential to create negative externalities, there is a need to separate Production Centers from residential and commercial areas.

Production Center uses primarily consist of larger factories, with furnaces, chimneys, cooling towers, and storage tanks. These areas also include industrial users requiring significant areas dedicated to the storage of materials or whose operation is typically performed in the open-air, such as salvage yards. Institutional uses such as public utilities or waste management facilities are located within Production Centers. Landscaped or naturalized areas along the perimeter of Flint's Production Centers help provide a buffer to commercial areas and residential neighborhoods, limiting impacts on property values and quality of life.

Production Centers can generate high volumes of traffic from both its employees and truck traffic associated within their operation. Adjoining roadways should accommodate traffic without negatively impacting local flow or routing through other, quieter, place types.



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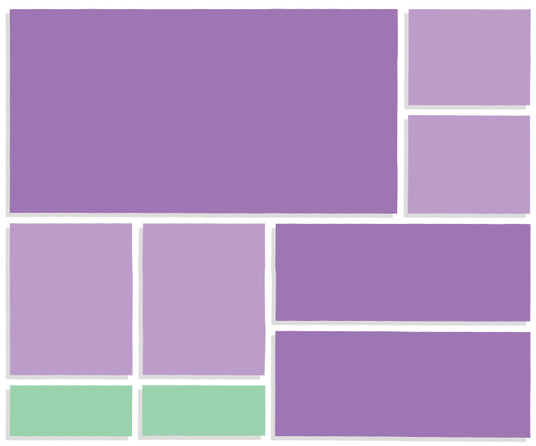


- ***Heavy Industrial.*** heavy industry, utilities, outdoor operation/storage
- ***Light Industrial.*** light industry, business parks, logistics
- ***Open Space.*** open space buffer for adjacent residential properties

LAND USES

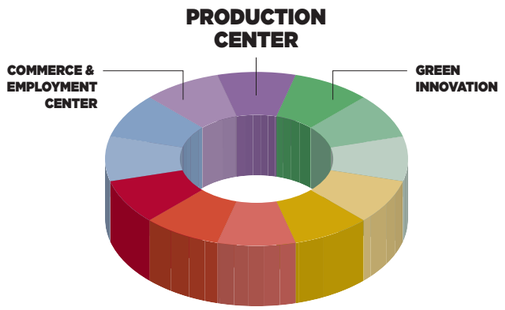
The most intensive land uses in the City are permitted within the ***Production Center*** place type, including industrial uses of all types and intensities. Heavy industrial uses, including manufacturing plants and factories, light industrial uses with large open-air operations, are all land uses accommodated in the Production Center.

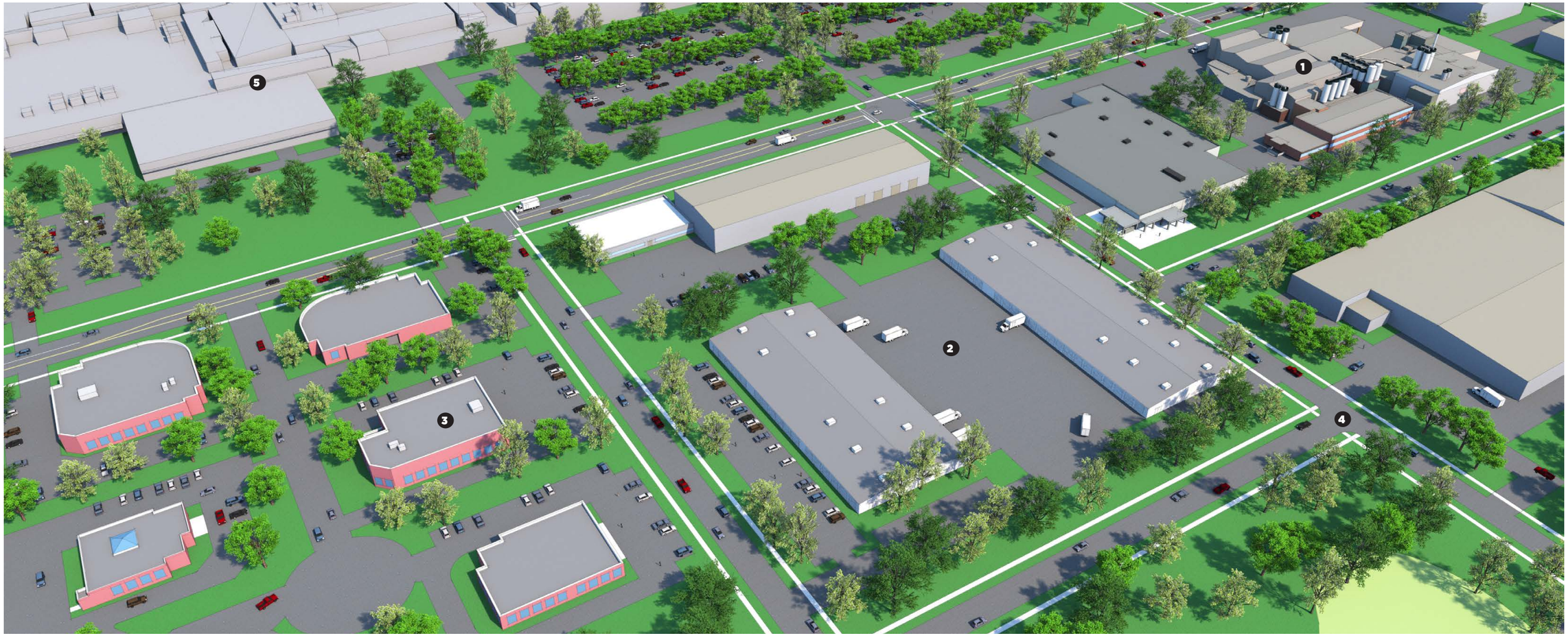
Adjacent Areas

As a place type hosting the most intense land uses in the City, planning for adjacent areas is vitally important. Left unregulated, Production Centers can negatively impact nearby residential property values or the health and vibrancy of a commercial district. Ideally, Production Center uses would be adjacent to Green Innovation Areas or the Commerce & Employment Center place type, where similar uses can exist, helping to transition to a less intense area. If locating a Production Center adjacent to residential areas cannot be avoided, buffering should be used to help protect the City's neighborhoods.

LAND USE WHEEL

In Flint's ***Land Use & Intensity Wheel*** the Production Centers sit between Commerce & Employment Centers and Green Innovation areas. Production Centers have the potential to shift in both directions along the wheel. By abandoning traditional industries in favor of green and innovative industries a Production Center could shift to a Green Innovation place type. If, over time, heavy industrial become less intense, these areas could transition to a Commerce & Employment Center; however, this would likely also entail the decommissioning of some industrial infrastructure and remediation of the site.





IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRODUCTION CENTER PLACE TYPE

All of the areas designated as ***Production Centers*** exist today, however, there are opportunities to intensify some of these areas in addition to actions that could be undertaken to improve existing areas. Several objectives of the Place-Based Land Use Plan are concerned with providing direction to support the implementation of the Production Center place type. The specific strategies, along with their timing and cost implications, are detailed in the implementation matrix at the end of this chapter, and some are highlighted on the right. Additional analysis and recommendations for Flint's industrial areas are presented in ***Chapter 9 – Economic Development and Education Plan***.

- Identify and remediate any environmental contamination and site issues, that would otherwise prevent the desirable development of properties within the designated places types.
- Protect residential areas from the adverse impacts of adjacent incompatible land uses by establishing appropriate setback, landscaping, screening, and buffering requirements.
- Require all industrial development to meet specific applicable performance standards for noise, air, odor, and any other forms of environmental pollution.
- Ensure that new or expanded industrial uses are concentrated in areas of similar or compatible use in general compliance with the Land Use Plan.
- Encourage the rehabilitation and reuse of functionally obsolete industrial buildings to accommodate more appropriate and market-viable uses.
- Support local economic development efforts to retain, expand, and attract businesses in the Production Center place type.
- Work with residents in the surrounding neighborhoods to determine and enact additional zoning regulations to buffer from potential nuisances and limit their expansion.
- Proactively enforce codes and work with police to prevent scrapping and illegal dumping.

1. As traditional employment sector uses, light manufacturing and assembly uses are perfectly suited for the Production Center typology and can range from intense traditional industrial activity to newer more high-tech, clean industry.
2. Logistics/freight operations can require very large sites to accommodate huge storage buildings and large paved areas required to facilitate the on-site maneuvering and loading of tractor trailers.
3. Office/research parks should include a cluster of buildings to accommodate a variety of office, research, and business uses in a campus-like setting.
4. The street grid and roadway design in a Production Center should be of sufficient width and layout, as to accommodate the safe and efficient circulation and access of a high volume of semi-trick/tractor trailer traffic.
5. Production Centers are the only typology appropriate for the location of large-scaled heavy manufacturing, the use that can typically generate a large number of employees, but a use that is also incompatible with most of the uses found in other areas of the community.

Green Innovation

Green Innovation is designated in areas where significant redevelopment opportunities exist in large vacant areas of the City. The deindustrialization of the City has resulted in a significant population decline, and areas of Flint that once consisted of fully built out neighborhoods are now vacant. The Place-Based Land Use Plan designates many of the theses areas for Green Innovation, recognizing their potential for a variety of solutions to repurpose large vacant areas and help reinvent the City.

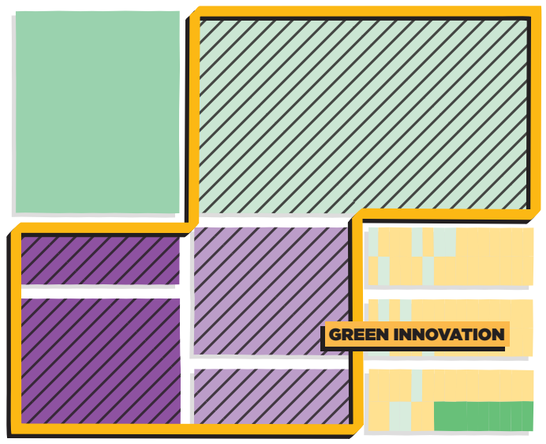
CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

The City's Green Innovation areas consist of a wide array of activities capable of capitalizing on unique infill opportunities. As it relates to land uses, the City's intent is to remain flexible, determining what is appropriate on a case-by-case basis, considering context and other City objectives.

Ideally, Green Innovation accommodates uses related to local food production, environmental sustainability, alternative energy, and other locally based "green" initiatives. Areas designated for Green Innovation also provide opportunities for agricultural research, organic food processing, and other uses with a reliance on natural resources such as aquaculture or renewable energy. These areas may provide fertile testing grounds for green research and technologies such as water technology, clean energy research and green packaging or provide an opportunity to accommodate the City's creative industries. More intense and extensive urban agriculture may also be desired for these areas, provided land use incompatibilities can be mitigated.

Development intensity within areas of Green Innovation should be context sensitive, and consider impacts on surrounding land uses, including isolated single family homes that remain in this place type. Industrial users may require a large footprint, or one- to two-structures for housing agricultural research operations, while other uses may require none at all.

Character Images



Agriculture. large-scale urban agriculture, vertical agriculture

Light Industrial. food processing, agriculture research

Heavy Industrial. aquaculture, green energy

Innovative Practices. a unifying characteristic of this place type.

LAND USES

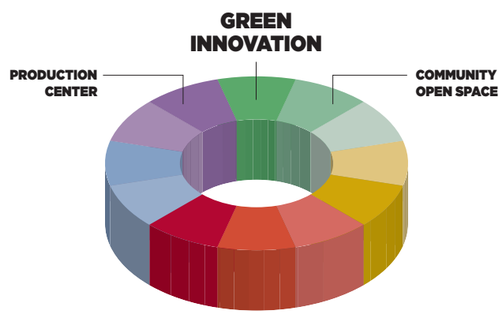
The land uses within the ***Green Innovation*** place type will vary and the City will remain flexible, determining what is appropriate on a case-by-case basis. Heavy industry, light industry, research and development, and agriculture are all land uses that can be accommodated within Green Innovation areas, however, businesses located within this place type should demonstrate innovative practices that justify their appropriateness for Green Innovation instead of other areas of the City.

Adjacent Areas

Consideration should be given to the land use compatibility with adjacent areas. The types of uses envisioned for areas of Green Innovation may be considered industrial in nature, and may not be compatible with residential uses. Areas of Green Innovation abutting residential areas should maintain appropriate setbacks and buffering where adjacency cannot be avoided. In addition, unsightly uses should be screened from residential areas, and consideration should be given to hours of operation, non-local traffic in residential neighborhoods, and other impacts that could affect quality of life.

LAND USE WHEEL

In Flint's *Land Use & Intensity Wheel* the Green Innovation place type sits between Production Center and Community Open Space. Green Innovation areas have the potential to shift in both directions along the wheel. By abandoning innovative industries in favor of more traditional ones, the Green Innovation place type would shift to a Production Center. If however, large areas of land are assembled and investment and development fails to materialize, these areas would transition to Community Open Space where they could either remain until development occurs or become permanent open space.



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GREEN INNOVATION PLACE TYPE

Much of the area designated as ***Green Innovation*** will require repositioning and transition from existing uses. Although there are a significant number of vacant lots and homes in these areas, environmental remediation, site and soil preparation, regulatory modifications, and plans to accommodate and protect remaining homes are all important considerations. The implementation matrix, presented at the end of this chapter, provides specific strategies and the detail necessary to implement the recommendations of the Place-Based Land Use Plan, including Green Innovation areas, some of which are highlighted on the right.

- Revise the City's Zoning Code to ensure the uses necessary to support the Master Plan's place typology are permissible, and that desired character for these places can be fostered.
- Include regulations in the zoning code to protect adjacent incompatible land uses, including residential areas remaining within the City's Green Innovation areas.
- Promote and incentivize parcel assembly, land acquisition, and lot clearing to facilitate the land use transitions from existing conditions to recommended place type.
- Work cooperatively with the Genesee County Land Bank to help implement the Place-Based Land Use Plan, including limiting further residential development in areas designated for land use transitions such as Green Innovation areas.
- Prioritize redevelopment efforts that are aimed at the block scale or larger, often involving several properties, rather than efforts geared more toward an individual parcel.
- Identify and remediate any environmental contamination and site issues that would prevent the desirable development of properties.
- Establish urban agriculture as a permitted use in the Green Innovation place type.
- Market the Green Innovation areas to potential green innovation businesses.

1. Community open space could represent a potential holding classification until areas are redeveloped as Green Innovation.
2. While not ideal, it is possible that home owners will choose to remain in a Green Innovation area. When this occurs, buffering and setbacks should be used to protect residential uses from impacts of neighboring uses.
3. Aquaculture is the raising of aquatic organisms, including fish and aquatic plants, and represents one of many innovative uses for Flint's Green Innovation areas.
4. Companies conducting research and development within the Green Innovation areas could utilize existing buildings, including closed schools, to house their operations.
5. Renewable energy uses, such as solar, are encouraged within Green Innovation areas.
6. The City's zoning code must be amended to accommodate the types of uses desired within the Green Innovation place type and include provisions for green houses and other aspects critical to implementation.

INTEGRATING LAND USE, PLACEMAKING, & ZONING

It is important to have a firm understanding of the different land uses that are provided throughout the City and how these land uses fit into the "placemaking" approach of the Flint Master Plan. Then, with land use and placemaking aligned, zoning amendments can be put into place to ensure that the City's regulatory approach, supports and helps realize the placemaking aspirations of the community.

Each of the 12 place types are made up of a collection of different, but related land uses that collectively create a "place." For instance, in the "Traditional Neighborhood" place type, single family homes, schools, and parks are all permitted uses that combine to create a neighborhood "place." This chapter describes in more detail how each land use category is distributed among the different place types and then outlines the strategy for revising the City's zoning ordinance and map, based on the placemaking approach.

Primary & Complementary Land Uses

Each place type is comprised of multiple land uses – primary and complimentary. The table at the right identifies different land uses and how each fits into the 12 different place types. A solid dot (●) indicates a primary land use within a given place type, while a hollow dot (○) indicates a land use that is complementary to the overall function of the place type.

Grandfathering Existing Uses

In instances where an existing use is not permitted within a place type, and therefore not recommended in the Place-Based Land Use Plan, that use should be grandfathered in. This means that properties of use not defined in the place type should be allowed provided that it is properly maintained and continues to be a positive contribution to the surrounding neighborhood or district.

When an owner wishes to repurpose their property from a use not desired within the place type, staff from the City of Flint Planning Department should assist the property owner in evaluating alternative uses of the property, that could better complement the surrounding place type and further the goals and objectives of the Place-Based Land Use Plan.

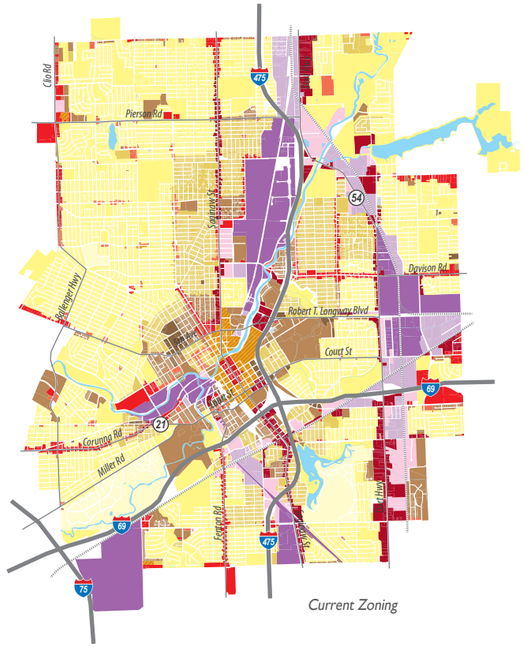
Land Use Categories

Provided on the following pages, are brief descriptions for some of the traditional and often sought after land use categories, along with a table that identifies where each of these land uses would be permitted as either a primary or complementary use throughout the City.

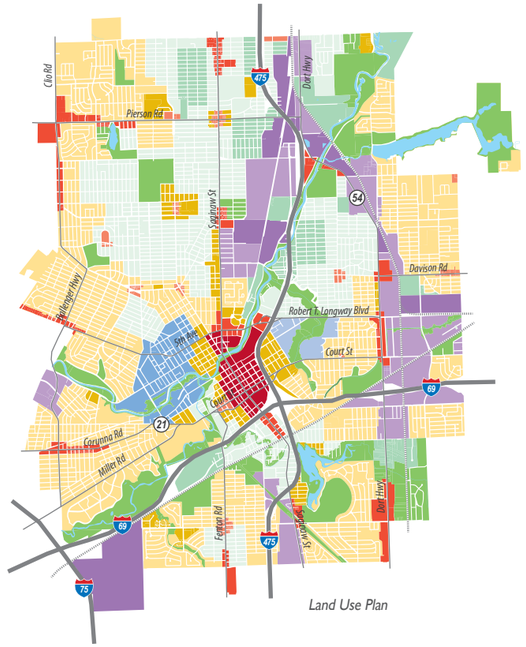
This chapter of the plan is intended to provide a better understanding of the relationship between land uses and place types, and how both work together to create the Place-Based Land Use Plan for Flint.

	GREEN INNOVATION	COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE	GREEN NEIGHBORHOOD	TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD	MIXED RESIDENTIAL	CIVIC/CULTURAL CAMPUS	UNIVERSITY AVENUE CORE	NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER	CORRIDOR	DOWNTOWN	COMMERCE & EMPLOYMENT CENTER	PRODUCTION CENTER
AGRICULTURAL USES												
Neighborhood/Community Gardens			●	○	○		○					
Urban Agriculture	●		○				○					
Renewable Energy	●						○					
Vertical Agriculture/Greenhouse	●		○				○					
Aquaculture	●											
OPEN SPACE USES												
Neighborhood Park/Play Lot			○	○	○					○		
Community Park/Sports Complex		●				○	○					
Civic Plaza						○	○	○		○		
Golf Course		●										
Urban Forest/Natural Area	○	●	●			○	○					
RESIDENTIAL USES												
Detached Single Family Home			●	●	○							
Attached Single Family				○	●		○	○	○	○		
Multi-Family Building					●	○	●	●	○	●	○	
Mixed Use					○	○	●	●	○	●	○	
INSTITUTIONAL USES												
Elementary/Middle School			○	●	●	○	○	○				
High School				●	●	○	○	○				
Church			●	●	●		○	●	○	○		
Government/Administrative Offices						●	●		○	●	●	
Community/Recreation Center				○	○	●	●	●	○	●		
Hospital/Medical Center						●	●				●	
College - Primary Campus						●	●			●	●	
College - Extension							●	○	○	●	●	
COMMERCIAL USES												
Restaurant							○	●	●	●	●	
Retail							○	●	●	●	●	
Office						●	●	○	●	●	●	
Personal Service							○	●	●	●	●	
Professional Service							○	●	●	●	●	
Grocery/Food Store							○	●	●	●	●	
Hotel/Lodging							●		●	●	●	
Mixed Use						○	●	●		●		
INDUSTRIAL USES												
Creative Industries	○		○				○	○	○	○	○	
Warehouse	○										○	●
Office Park											●	
Light Industrial Park	○						○				●	●
Salvage Yard												●
Manufacturing Plant												●
Food Processing	○											●

● *indicates a primary land use within a given place type* ○ *indicates a land use that is complementary to the overall function of the place type*



Current Zoning



Land Use Plan

Implementing the Place-Based Land Use Plan through Zoning

The Place-Based Land Use Plan and zoning regulations must work in concert to create the type of development a community envisions. The Place-Based Land Use Plan serves as the formal policy statement for development and is an expression of desired development types, though it is not a regulatory document or a legally binding obligation of what must be done. The zoning ordinance, on the other hand, includes the legally binding regulations that dictate how properties can be used and establishes the permitted character of development in an effort to implement the land use policy of the Master Plan.

The adoption of this Master Plan, and the Place-Based Land Use Plan contained herein, establishes the land use and development policy for the City of Flint.

The Master Plan should serve as a guide for updating of the City's zoning regulations, as well as other decisions related to capital programming, community services, district and neighborhood planning, and more. This page describes how the land use typologies and their location as identified in this chapter correlate to existing zoning and potential future amendments.

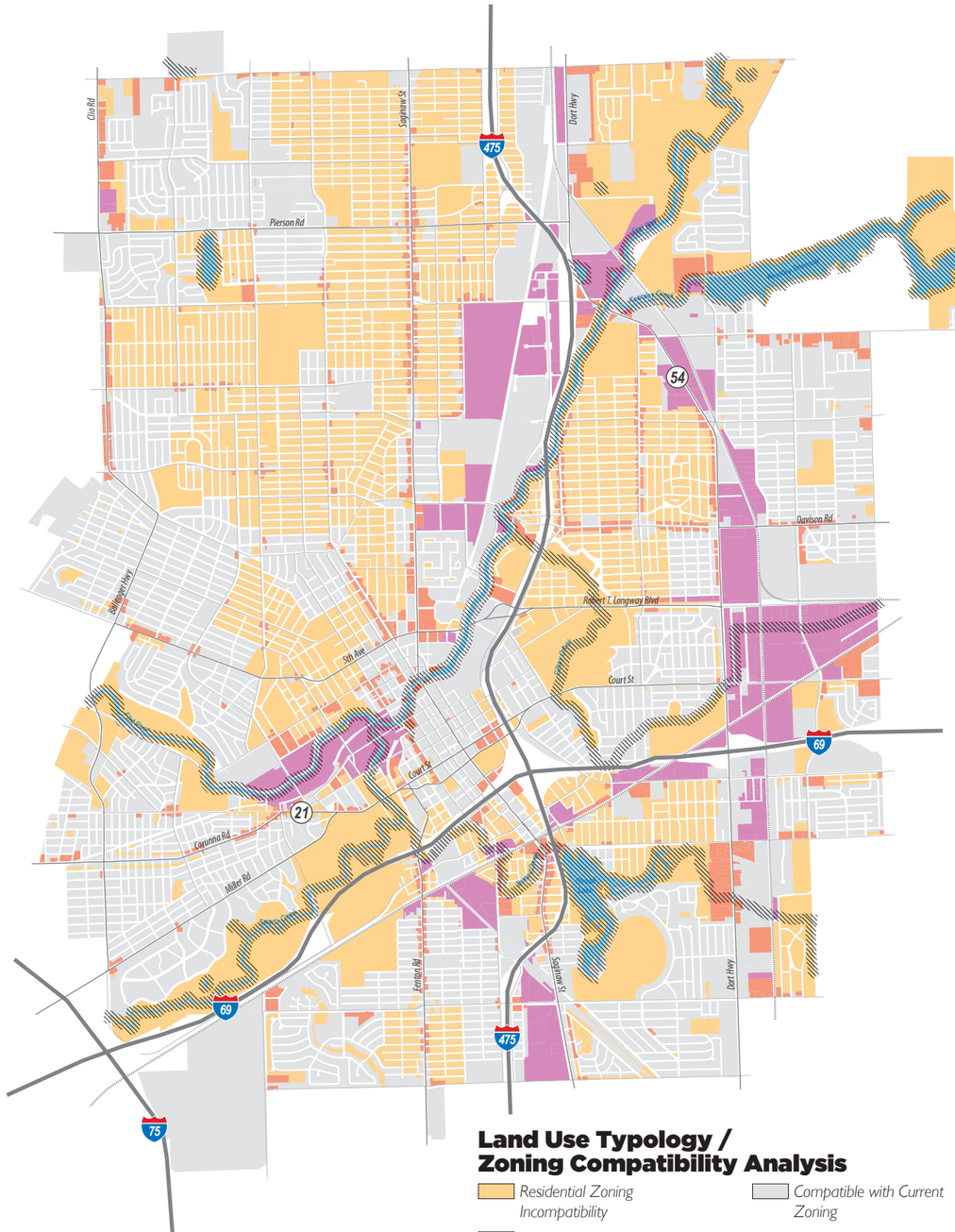
Zoning Ordinance Update

Adoption of the Master Plan should be followed by an immediate review and update of the City's various development controls, including the zoning ordinance. The desired character of the 12 unique place typologies within the City, as expressed in both text and imagery, should inform regulations regarding appropriate uses, as well as height, bulk, and intensity standards. Accordingly, as the vision for the community evolves and the Master Plan is amended to address changing dynamics, priorities, or issues, the zoning ordinance should be revisited to ensure it assists in implementing that vision over time.

Land Use and Zoning Alignment

As a way of understanding the anticipated steps necessary in amending the City's zoning regulations, and in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act; Act 33 of 2008, 125.3833 (2) (d), this page includes an analysis of how closely the proposed place types and their application throughout the City, align with existing zoning regulations. It should be noted that this represents only a preliminary analysis of general uses permitted within each zoning district. Prior to amending zoning regulations and district boundaries, a comprehensive analysis should be undertaken that considers alignment of the proposed land use typologies and zoning requirements related to more specific permitted uses, bulk requirements, scale, buffering, design, and other elements.

The maps above illustrate the existing zoning district boundaries (left) and proposed land use typologies (right) described in this chapter. The map to the right illustrates locations where these two elements do not align, implying that zoning amendments will be required to foster the kind of residential, commercial, or industrial development described in the Master Plan. Much of the misalignment is due to the proposed transition of existing deteriorating neighborhoods to green neighborhoods or green innovation centers. This analysis also identifies buffers along lakes and rivers, as an important consideration in potential zoning amendments.



Land Use Typology / Zoning Compatibility Analysis

- *Residential Zoning Incompatibility*
- *Commercial Zoning Incompatibility*
- *Industrial Zoning Incompatibility*
- *Compatible with Current Zoning*
- *Water Protection Buffer*

Repurposing Flint's vacant or underutilized public facilities, including vacant schools, will provide opportunities for creative reuse. As illustrated to the right, a potential recommendation is the adaptive reuse of the former Cook Elementary School featuring senior housing and a community center.

SUSTAINING FUTURE POPULATIONS

The placemaking approach provides the City of Flint with a flexible planning framework that will accommodate a wide population range within a sustainable, market-viable, livable, and healthy community. The land use and placemaking framework establishes the land use pattern and development intensity capable of accommodating today's population, while also being able to adjust to the City's current declining population trajectory or accommodate growth when Flint has stabilized its decline and successfully reinvented its economy and grown as a result.

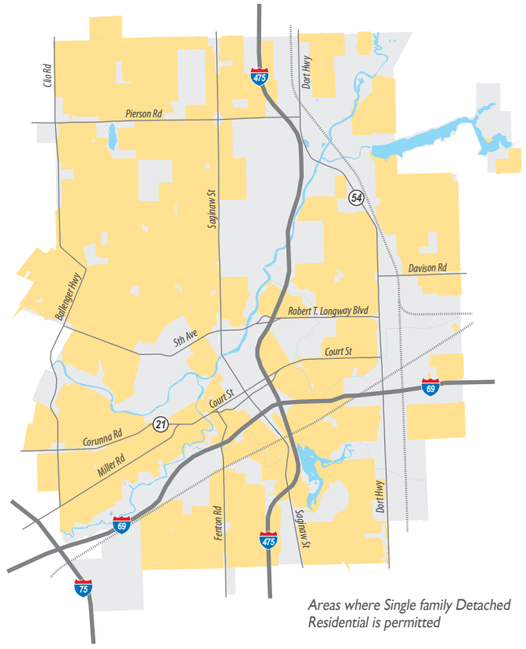
By assigning a residential density range (number of units per acre) for each of the twelve place types, and determining the total acreage of each place type, the Master Plan is able to reasonably predict the carrying capacity of the City of Flint in the future, whatever that may be. Although not an exact science, the assigned residential densities reflect the place type descriptions and characteristics, as well as an understanding of market capacity and regional projections. Based on this approach, the population range than can be accommodated within the Place Based Land Use Plan in a reinvented Flint is between 75,000-150,000 people.

The table on the right breaks down the upper and lower density range for each of the twelve place types. The table reflects the anticipated upper range goal of 5,000 new dwelling units in the Downtown and 10,000 new dwelling units in the University Avenue Core. These new units are anticipated to be one- and two-bedroom, with smaller household sizes. As a result of the anticipated increase in multi-family units in these areas, the full build out prediction lowers the average household size to reflect these types of units coming on-line.

In the future, if the population of Flint becomes smaller than the lower end of the range (76,242), the City may have to transition some developed areas into more natural areas with less development. If the opposite happens, and a reinvented Flint grows and exceeds the upper range (150,016), then the City will likely need to increase the residential density of some areas, while also transitioning some Green Neighborhoods back into Traditional Neighborhoods and Mixed Residential areas.

Population Estimates
CITY OF FLINT

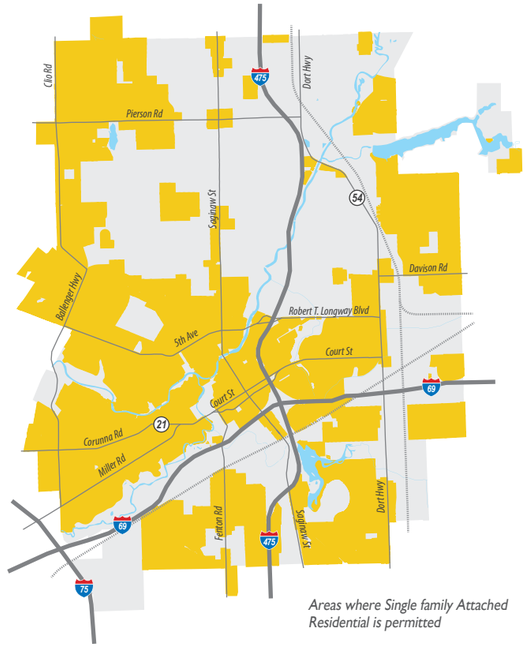
			Density Range		*Population Range*	
Land Use Typology	*# of Parcels*	*Total Acres*	*Lower*	*Upper*	*Lower*	*Upper*
Community Open Space and Recreation	1199	3076.8	0	0	0	0
Green Innovation	3652	889.6	0	2	0	1,779
Green Neighborhood	18891	2653.1	2	4	5,306	10,612
Traditional Neighborhood	26360	4693.7	4	6	18,775	28,162
City Corridor	987	573.1	0	4	0	2,292
Mixed Residential	2295	546.4	8	16	4,371	8,743
Downtown District	332	221.1	2	25	442	5,529
Civic/Cultural Campus	48	126.6	0	0	0	0
University Avenue Core	1047	400.6	4	25	1,602	10,014
Neighborhood Center	447	105.8	0	10	0	1,058
Production Center	117	2438.2	0	0	0	0
Commerce & Employment Center	489	1551.2	0	0	0	0
				Households	30,497	68,189
				Household size	2.5	2.2
				Population	76,242	150,016



Areas where Single family Detached Residential is permitted

Single Family Detached Residential

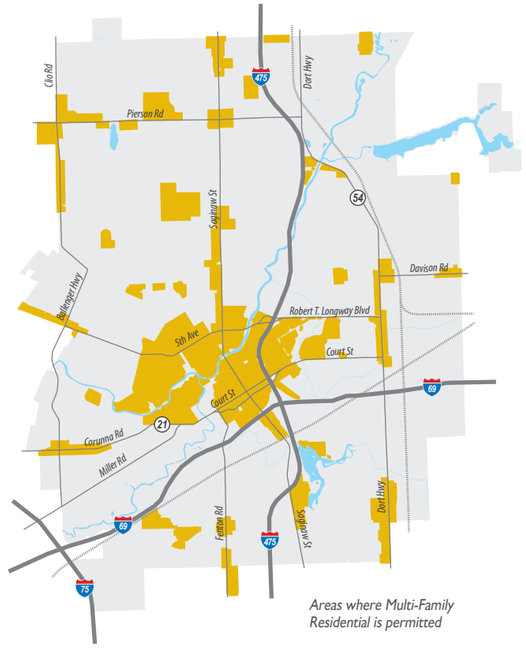
Single family detached residential areas consist primarily of single family detached homes on lots subdivided in an organized and planned manner. Single family detached homes are the most prevalent residential building type in the City. Single family detached homes are a primary use in Traditional Neighborhood and Green Neighborhood, and a complementary use in Mixed Residential.



Areas where Single family Attached Residential is permitted

Single Family Attached Residential

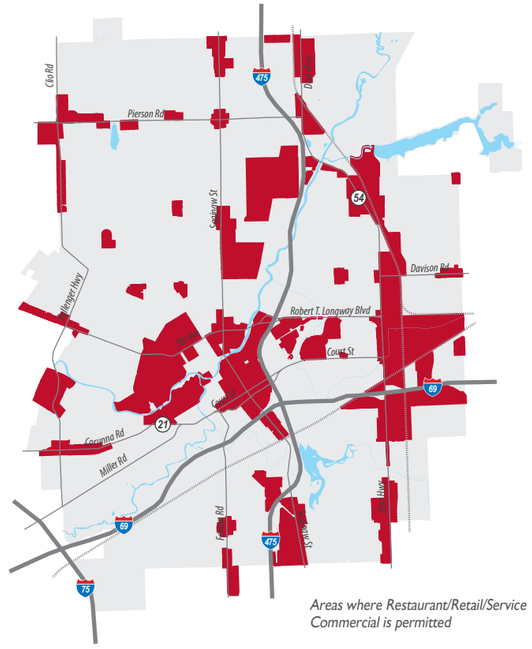
Single family attached structures include townhomes and row-houses. Single family attached structures contain multiple units divided by vertical common/shared walls, with each unit having their own direct entrance from outside. Single family attached uses are a primary use in Mixed Residential, and should be considered a complementary use in Traditional Neighborhood, Neighborhood Center, City Corridor, Downtown, and University Avenue Core.



Areas where Multi-Family Residential is permitted

Multi-Family Residential

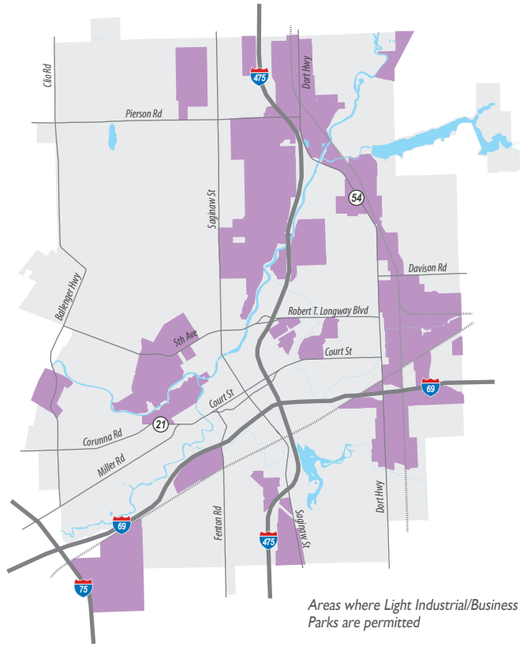
Multi-family residential structures contain multiple housing units, are usually stacked vertically and attached horizontally, with each unit having its entrance on a common hallway or lobby. Examples of multi-family residential developments include apartments, condominiums, student housing, and senior housing. Multi-Family residential is a primary use in Mixed Residential, Neighborhood Center, Downtown, and University Avenue Core, with a complementary use in City Corridor.



Areas where Restaurant/Retail/Service Commercial is permitted

Restaurant/Retail/Service Commercial

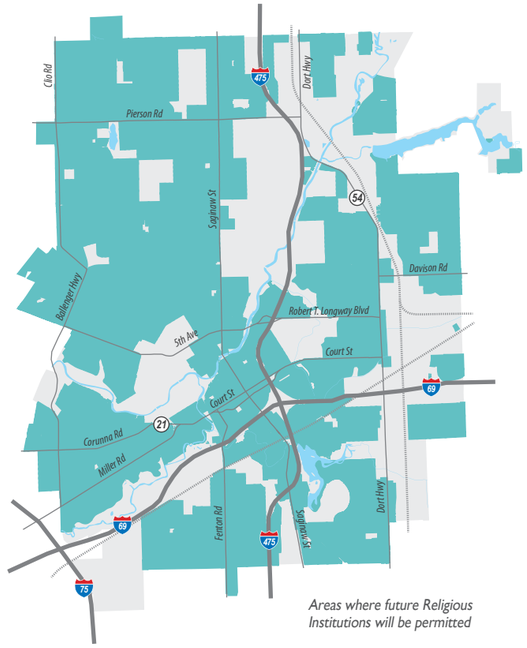
All of these areas permit "commercial" uses and include places where people shop, eat, work, and receive professional and personal services. The uses can be low-intensity and small scale, such as those found within a neighborhood, they can be large and very intense like those found in regional shopping areas, or part of mixed use environments such as Downtown. Restaurant/Retail/Service are primary uses in Neighborhood Center, City Corridor, Downtown, and Commerce/Employment Center, and complementary uses in University Avenue Core.



Areas where Light Industrial/Business Parks are permitted

Light Industrial/ Business Parks

Light Industrial, Business Parks, and office space uses cover a wide range of uses that include storage, warehouse, research, food processing, office parks, and more. Warehouse, light industrial, and food processing can all be complementary uses in Green Innovation. Light industrial uses can also be complementary in University Avenue Core and Green Innovation. Light industrial uses are also primary uses Commerce & Employment Center and Production Center.



Areas where future Religious Institutions will be permitted

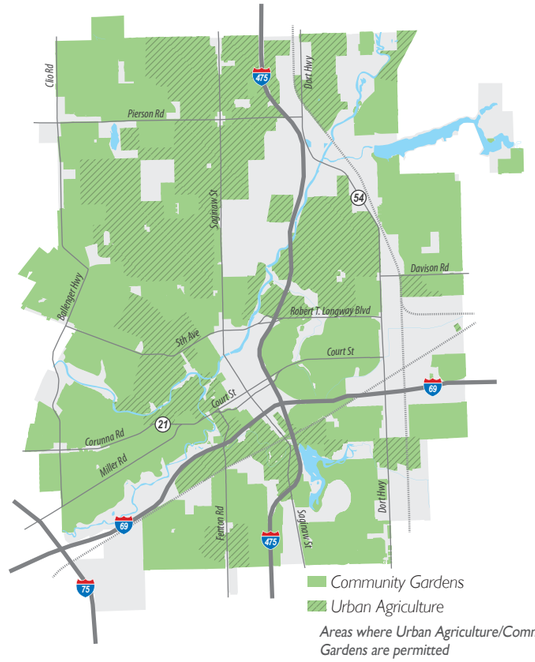
Religious Institutions

Religious Institutions include churches, synagogues, mosques, other houses of workshop, and related facilities. These institutions can be a key component of quality of life and tend to stabilize, and help define individual neighborhoods. While religious institutions exist in many areas throughout Flint, and can remain, going forward, City policy should be to discourage religious institutions from locating in commercial and employment areas. Religious Institutions can be a primary use in Green Neighborhood, Traditional Neighborhood, Mixed Residential, Neighborhood Center, and a complementary use in City Corridor, Downtown, and University Avenue Core.

Areas where Parks and Schools are permitted

Parks and Schools

Parks and Schools are located throughout the City and both contribute significantly to the community's overall quality of life. Parks can include small neighborhood parks with playgrounds, as well as larger community-wide parks with ball fields and recreation programs. Neighborhood parks can be a complementary uses in Green Neighborhood, Traditional Neighborhood, Mixed Residential, Downtown, and University Avenue Core; and community-wide parks and sports complexes are a primary use in Community Open Space and a complementary use in University Avenue Core. Elementary, middle, and high schools can be primary uses in Traditional Neighborhood and Mixed Residential, and can also be a complementary use in Green Neighborhood, Neighborhood Center, Civic/Cultural Campus, and University Avenue Core.



Areas where Urban Agriculture/Community Gardens are permitted

Urban Agriculture/ Community Gardens

These two land uses are related, but represent varying levels of intensity and compatibility. Urban agriculture is more intense and can include agricultural activities intended for the commercial level production of crops and produce. Urban agriculture is a primary use in Green Innovation and can be a complementary use in Green Neighborhood and University Avenue Core. Community gardens are much smaller in scale and less intense, intended for neighborhoods whose residents desire to provide local produce and gardening activities to the neighborhood and Flint community. Community gardens can be a primary use in Green Neighborhood and a complementary use in Traditional Neighborhood and Mixed Residential.

FUTURE PLANNING INITIATIVES

In addition to the place type designations identified in the Land Use Plan, there are several areas of the City that require more detailed planning, including special districts that comprise several related place types. The following discussion offers context for Land Use Plan recommendations and provides a foundation for future planning initiatives.

Sub-Area Plans

A series of sub-area plans are to be developed as a complement to the Master Plan. The sub-area plans will be used to inform Master Plan implementation and revise zoning regulations for key areas of the City.

Each sub-area will center on a theme or common issue that exists in other areas of the City. The sub-area plans that will be developed for these areas will serve as a prototype for other areas experiencing similar issues. Taken collectively, the sub-area plans will represent a planning "toolbox" that can be used to help address a range of issues in areas throughout Flint, where similar conditions exist.

The areas shown in the map on the right represent the eight sub-areas where plans are to be developed. The content in the sub-area plans may be used in the development of future district or neighborhood plans.

1. ***Traditional Commercial Corridor Development - Pierson Road Corridor***
   Larger scale commercial parcels; Flint Park Lake

2. ***Community Services Cluster - North Saginaw***
   Berston Field House; Broome Center; Job Corps; Oak Business Center; Hamilton Community Health Network

3. ***Small Scale Commercial/ Mixed Use Node - Welch & Dupont***
   Retail area at Chevrolet Avenue; Closed Cook Elementary School; Historic housing

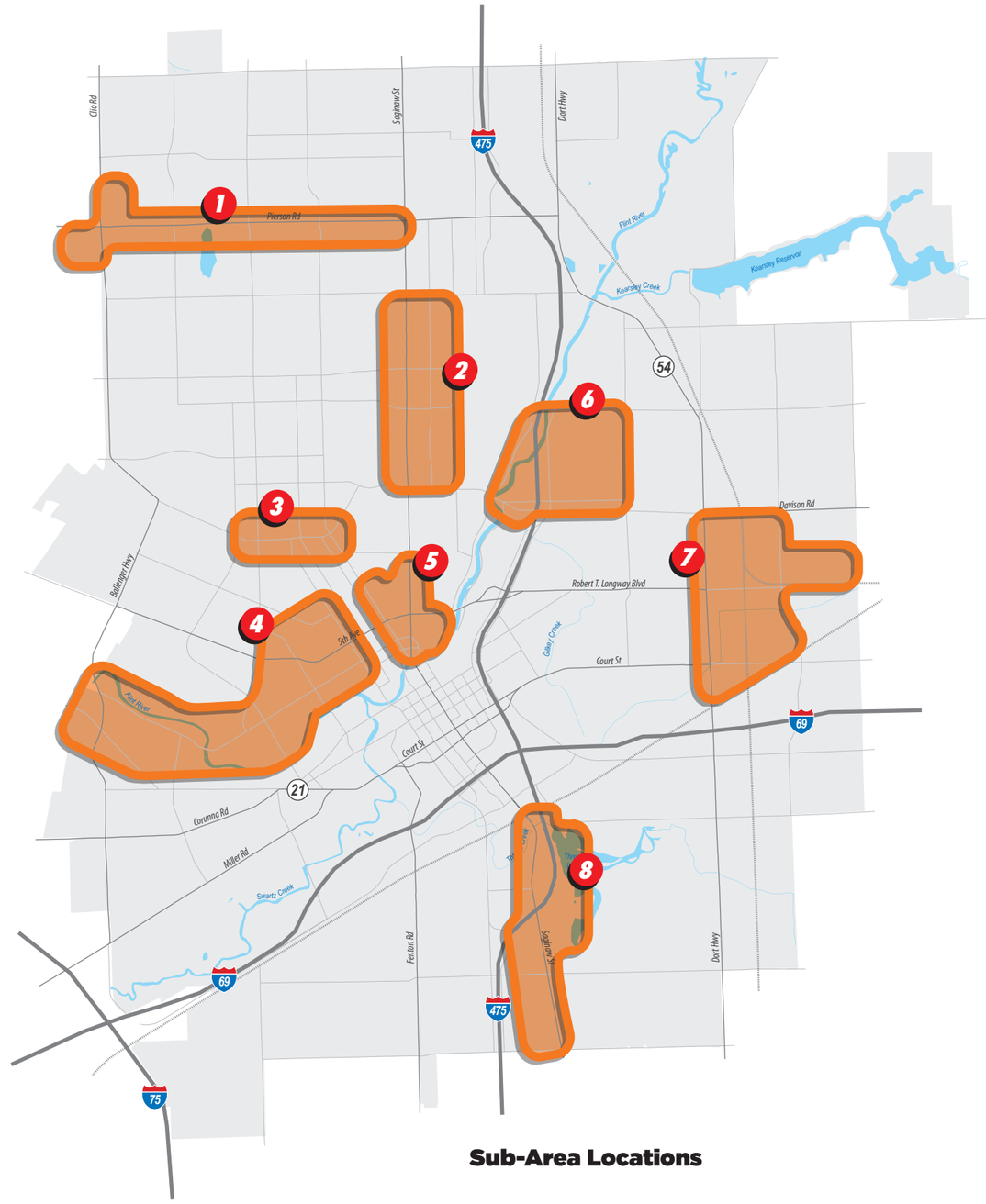
4. ***University Avenue Core - University Avenue***
   Hurley Medical Center; Kettering University; McLaren Regional Medical Center; Atwood Stadium

5. ***Downtown Linkages for Walkable Neighborhoods - Central Saginaw Corridor***
   Varied housing densities; Smith Village & University Park Estates; Gateway to downtown & U of M-Flint

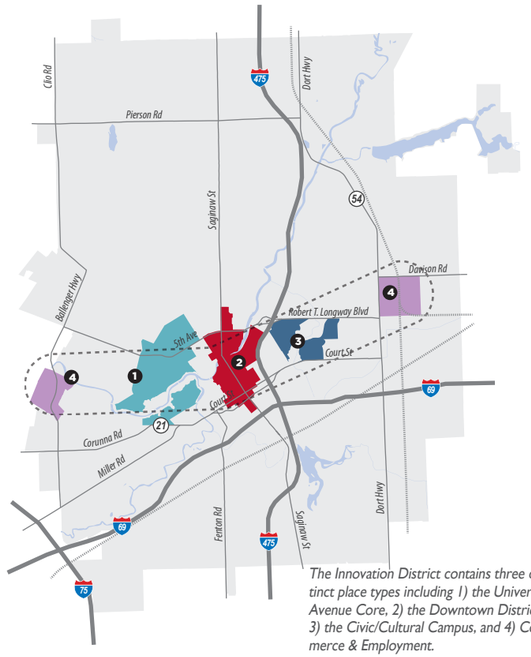
6. ***Green Innovation (Reuse of Vacant Land) - Eastside adjacent to River***
   Flint River; Large tracts of vacant land for productive uses such as urban agriculture & green infrastructure

7. ***Employment Node - Dort Highway & industrial areas to the east***
   Delphi East/AC Delco site; CTX Railroad; Easy access to I-69

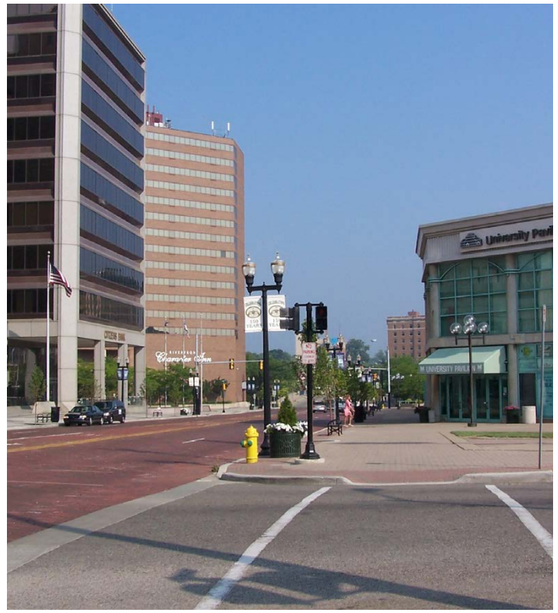
8. ***Reconnecting an Interrupted Corridor - South Saginaw Corridor***
   Focus on how to address physical barriers created by freeway and former railroad site; Thread Lake; Employment Center; International Academy; Grand Traverse Trail

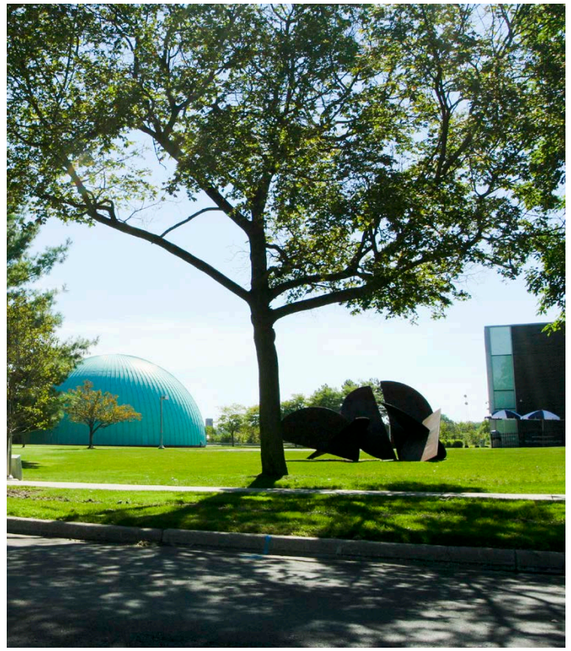


Sub-Area Locations



The Innovation District contains three distinct place types including 1) the University Avenue Core, 2) the Downtown District, 3) the Civic/Cultural Campus, and 4) Commerce & Employment.





District Plans

Following adoption of the Master Plan, the City should develop detailed District Plans for important predominantly commercial and employment districts, whose redevelopment and repurposing will be crucial to the future health and prosperity of the City.

Innovation District

The Innovation District is a designated area within a city that encompasses higher-education institutions and public and private sector industries, such as science and technology, to attract entrepreneurs. In a knowledge-based economy, the goal is to encourage cross-disciplinary partnerships. The thought is that bringing people and ideas together, to spur entrepreneurial creativity, will result in job growth and strengthen the economy. The concept of an Innovation District has been applied both nationally and internationally, including the North American cities of Pittsburgh, Boston, Toronto, and Portland.

The Michigan Municipal League has identified the following core components of an Innovation District: a focus on entrepreneurship; presence of at least one university; philanthropy; infrastructure investment; quality affordable housing and live-work space; and green space.

The central area of the City, surrounding the University Avenue and 5th Avenue corridors between Ballenger Road and Center Road, is an Innovation District representing the core of Flint's future, as well as the anchor of a productive economic region that stretches along I-69 through mid-Michigan. This Innovation District represents a concentration of institutions that is unique in the state and includes the metropolitan area's largest employers, research institutions, and cultural assets. These include McLaren Regional Medical Center, Kettering University, Hurley Medical Center, University of Michigan-Flint, Flint Cultural Center, and Mott Community College, the Delphi East Facility.

The District contains four distinct place types that have been created to foster the development of high-quality places with growth potential. The Downtown District is the heart of the City with a fast growing population of students, entrepreneurs, and new residents that complements the long-standing strengths of the University of Michigan-Flint, the C.S. Mott Foundation headquarters, and the Saginaw Street Corridor. The University Avenue Core stretches west from Downtown to Kettering University. The Civic/Cultural Campus stretches east from Downtown to Mott Community College.

The eastern and western gateways to the Innovation District consist of two Commerce and Employment place type areas: McLaren Regional Medical Center and the Delphi East brownfield site. These four place types, connected by dense Mixed Residential neighborhoods, form the Innovation District which currently employs an estimated 13,000 and has a population of approximately 6,300 people.

Enhanced coordination is needed amongst all of these key institutions, as well as the City, to better leverage resources and address corridor-wide issues. Examples of joint initiatives to be evaluated should include coordination on public safety, street and signage enhancements, inter-college course enrollment, and formation of a joint-college incubator. If they can work together, these key institutional partners are capable of effecting significant and widespread change throughout the core of the City and enhancing the corridor into an even stronger economic engine for the City of Flint.

A sub-area plan will expand on the Innovation District concept and provide greater detail regarding strategies to be implemented within the University Avenue Corridor and University Avenue Core place type. In conjunction with the anchor partners and the Chamber of Commerce, the Planning Department should undertake an Innovation District Plan to effectuate the recommendations of the sub-area plan aimed to develop more specific design guidelines addressing streetscape and open space improvements to create a more unified district. Additional discussion regarding the economic importance of the Innovation District is also contained within ***Chapter 9: Economic Development and Education Plan***.

Partner Organizations: University Avenue Corridor Coalition & Anchor Institutions

The University Avenue Corridor Coalition (UACC) has emerged as an active group within the University Avenue Core. Started in the fall of 2012, the UACC has spearheaded neighborhood clean-ups and monthly meetings among key stakeholders, and is in the process of evaluating several initiatives, such as:

- Using the private security forces of partner institutions to patrol surrounding neighborhoods;
- Coordinating area-wide blight elimination efforts such as demolition and clean-up;
- Installing on- and off-campus security cameras and lighting; and
- Improving pedestrian areas to make the corridor safe and walkable.

Involvement of the Innovation District's key anchor institutions will be key to implementation. These institutions include:

- McLaren Regional Medical Center;
- Kettering University;
- Hurley Medical Center;
- University of Michigan - Flint;
- Flint Cultural Center institutions;
- Flint Community Schools; and,
- Mott Community College.

South Saginaw Corridor

In 2012, several community stakeholders rallied together to form a partnership with the South Saginaw Corridor to eliminate blight and bring redevelopment in an area with tremendous amounts of community and business assets including Thread Lake, International Academy of Flint, Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy, the Flint Golf Course, Applegate Chevrolet, and Word of Life Church. Together, they have undertaken a number of initiatives including applying for a Michigan State Department of Natural Resources Grant to improve nearby McKinley Park. Based on the work of these stakeholders and a corridor study conducted by Michigan State University's Urban Collaborators practicum students, the City applied for a grant to potentially implement a road diet and install key gateway improvements along the South Saginaw Corridor.

This work laid the foundation for the selection of this area as one of eight sub-area plans to be developed alongside the Master Plan.

The South Saginaw Corridor's importance to the revitalization of the City, development of an active group of committed stakeholders, and connection to a variety of neighborhoods, both stable and in transition, make it a desirable candidate for the development of an official district plan. The Planning Department should coordinate with the South Saginaw Corridor to develop a district plan to be adopted by the City.

Sub-Area Plans

As a complement to the Master Plan, the City will develop eight sub-area plans. The City should use these sub-area plans as a guide to identify future district plans. Successful redevelopment efforts will depend on well-conceived plans. Priority should be placed on creating district plans for areas in need of new vision and investment.

Neighborhood Plans

A key component of the implementation of the Land Use Plan is the development of officially adopted neighborhood plans, which align with the newly developed place types. Neighborhood plans are to provide detailed strategies for Flint's residential areas, which are needed to fulfill the vision of the Master Plan.

The City has only officially adopted three neighborhood plans: Northeast Village, Flint Park Lake, and Smith Village. However, many neighborhoods have developed their own plans that were used to inform the Place-Based Land Use Plan and recommendations of the Master Plan. Additional discussion of neighborhood planning is also located in ***Chapter 4: Housing and Neighborhoods Plan***.

Over the next five years, the Planning Department will review all 14 existing neighborhood plans, including those not formally adopted, to revise as necessary, and officially adopt them. In addition, the City will adopt a new neighborhood plan for the Building Neighborhood Capacity Program by 2015. The Planning Department will work on two new neighborhood plans beginning in 2015 based on the recommendations of the Planning Commission.

Building Neighborhood Capacity Program

Flint is only one of four communities in the nation to participate in the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI) launched by the Obama Administration in 2010. Through a highly competitive grant process, Metro Community Development was awarded a Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BNCP) Grant for the area generally bounded by Carpenter Road to the north, the Flint River to the east, Pierson Road to the south, and Dupont Street to the west.

With funding from the Departments of Education, Housing and Urban Development, and Justice, BNCP was launched in 2012.

BNCP is designed to help low-income neighborhoods build the infrastructure and resources needed to ensure families experience better results around housing, safety, education, employment, and other key areas. The program is intended to catalyze community-driven change in neighborhoods that have historically faced barriers to revitalization.

BNCP will work with community groups and stakeholders to create and implement comprehensive revitalization plans and make effective use of and attract a range of federal, state, and local resources.

Once the revitalization plans are developed, the Planning Department has committed to working with residents and stakeholders to translate their vision into an officially-adopted neighborhood plan. Work on the BNCP Neighborhood Revitalization Plan began in 2013 and will be completed in 2015.

City-wide Coverage of Neighborhood Plans

The Planning Department should utilize the BNCP as a model for establishing future planning areas and neighborhood plans. Utilizing the Place-Based Land Use Plan as a foundation, the Planning Department is committed to the development of 10 to 15 neighborhood plans. Every residential area of the City is to be included within a neighborhood plan by 2020.

Brownfields Planning

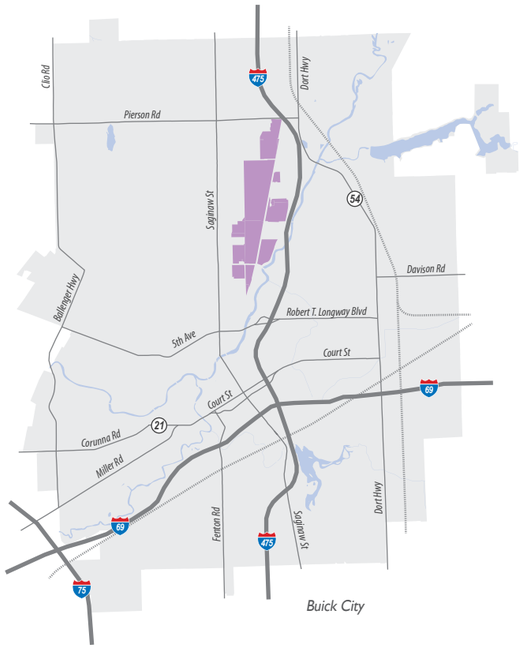
The result of deindustrialization in Flint left the community with some of the nation's largest brownfield sites. The Place-Based Land Use Plan advances the concept of "recycling" these large brownfield sites, recognizing the intrinsic value they hold as large areas of vacant land within close proximity to Flint neighborhoods, colleges and universities, Downtown, and valued natural areas.

Given the importance and prominence of these areas, it is critical that the City work toward establishing redevelopment plans for all of the City's brownfields by actively seeking partnerships with State and Federal agencies such as the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, and Environmental Protection Agency. By prioritizing planning efforts for these sites, redevelopment efforts can begin sooner rather than later.

The following discussion conveys a preliminary vision for the reuse, repurposing, and redevelopment of some of these important assets. Additional planning and community input is needed to properly identify long-term strategies for the repurposing and recycling of each of these important sites.

Source: Flint Riverfront Restoration Plan (2010)

Chevy in the Hole



Buick City

Delphi East

Chevy in the Hole

Chevy in the Hole (CITH), the 130 acre site, formerly home to a General Motors manufacturing facility, is a large brownfield located along the Flint River west of Downtown. The once thriving factory site is a reminder of the dramatic loss of auto-manufacturing jobs in Flint and subsequent decline of the City.

Today, CITH has been a drain on many of the adjacent neighborhoods and threatens the potential redevelopment efforts occurring near the site. However, given its large size, proximity to several neighborhoods, location to Downtown, adjacency to important institutions including Kettering University and Atwood Stadium, and position at the confluence of the Flint River and Swartz Creek, CITH is a truly unique and potentially valuable amenity and must be creatively addressed to help transform Flint.

CITH is included within the University Ave Core area of the Place-Based Land Use Plan and has been identified as an asset for economic development as well as a mix of both active and passive community open space.

In an effort to leverage the existing institutional investment taking place along the Flint River and in Downtown, the Flint River Corridor Alliance was formed to bring together residents from the surrounding neighborhoods, community stakeholders, and institutional leaders to advance redevelopment along the Flint River Corridor. The concepts developed from this group through the Flint Riverfront Restoration Plan have been publicly vetted and discussed throughout a series of community events. Input from the community indicates strong support for this plan which focuses on establishing large park space along the banks of a rehabilitated Flint River and supports a naturally flowing, native riparian vegetation waterway.

Areas near Kettering University and the existing GM Flint Tool and Die facility, would be reserved for more intense development such as research and development, workforce or student housing, or retail and services. Redevelopment of the site may also contribute to mixed use development in areas to the south, adjacent to the Michigan School for the Deaf and Powers Catholic High School.

The City of Flint, through a partnership with the GCLBA, is currently implementing a $1.6 million EPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund sub-grant to design a green cap to convert the site into a sustainable green space. The funding will also be used to develop the first phase of the green cap. The partners are in the process of securing additional resources to develop future phases of the green cap.

The City will apply for funding through an EPA Brownfields Area Wide Planning Grant to incorporate additional green infrastructure to create strong linkages to the neighborhoods, and promote redevelopment within the surrounding neighborhoods.

Further discussion of remediation efforts and the desired redevelopment of CITH site is located in ***Chapter 8: Environmental Features, Open Space, & Parks*** and ***Chapter 9: Economic Development and Education Plan***.

Buick City

The large brownfield site known as "Buick City" consists of 258 acres located to the south of Leith Street. Another brownfield site, referred to as Flint North, comprises 194 acres to the north of Leith Street. Though they are being marketed by the Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce and the owner, RACER Trust, as two sites, they are often collectively referred to in the community as Buick City.

The Buick City and corridor sites offer the most significant opportunity for economic redevelopment within the region and could accommodate a wide array of uses beyond the heavy industrial automotive complex that was once located there. The Chamber and RACER Trust have marketed the site for smaller users with the potential for intermodal facilities, leveraging the site's access to rail, interstate, and Bishop International Airport. It was also reported that the concentration of telecommunication infrastructure could also be attractive to information technology firms. The site's proximity to the Flint River also provides a potential source of raw water.

Comments received throughout the community outreach process indicate a broad community desire to maintain the majority of the Buick City area as productive space. In recognition of this desire, the Place-Based Land Use Plan divides the Buick City area into three employment-related place types: Commerce & Employment Center, Production Center, and Green Innovation.

Additional discussion of the economic importance of the Buick City site and on-going marketing and development efforts is located in ***Chapter 9: Economic Development and Education Plan***.

Delphi East

The Delphi East site consists of a square half-mile area brownfield and a partially occupied industrial complex. It is the site of the former AC Spark Plug Plant, which closed in 1976 and was demolished in 2008. A portion of the complex located between Averill Ave. and Center Rd. is still partially in use by Delphi, but this facility will soon be closed in late 2013. The site's access to the CN and CSX Railroads, as well as Dort Highway and I-69, are economic assets unique to the Delphi East site.

As with the Buick City area, the community desires to see the majority of the Delphi East area retained as productive space. As such, the Land Use Plan divides the area into a mix of place types: Commerce & Employment Center, Production Center, and City Corridor.

Similar to the Reimagining Chevy in the Hole planning process undertaken in 2007, the City should consider working with the Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce, who is marketing a portion of the site, and other partners to undertake a Reimagining Delphi East study that outlines a more detailed vision for this important site. A subarea plan is being developed for the Delphi East area that will establish a preliminary vision for the area. However, additional outreach and research is needed to sufficiently highlight the potential this area possesses. Additional discussion of the economic importance of the Delphi East site and on-going marketing and development efforts is located in ***Chapter 9: Economic Development and Education Plan***.

Closed Flint Community Schools Facilities

Master Plan Vision and Goals Workshop, March 9, 2013

Joint Planning Efforts

Flint Community Schools

Flint Community Schools and the City of Flint have signed a Memorandum of Understanding recognizing the need to work together to address common issues such as population decline and loss of revenue. Flint Community Schools has expressed a desire to partner with the City in facility planning for both its open and closed facilities.

Adaptive Reuse of Closed Schools

It is vital that the City and other partners work with the school district to determine how to best use these vacant facilities while strengthening open schools. The placemaking approach to the Land Use Plan affords the flexibility needed to tailor the adaptive reuse of school sites to meet the local needs of the community, while being responsive to market conditions.

While priority should be given to uses that complement the surrounding place type identified in the Land Use Plan, the City should also remain flexible in considering innovative approaches to the reuse of these valued community assets. First and foremost, it is important that school facility reuse does not negatively impact quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods. Unconventional reuse proposals may be appropriate if externalities are minimal. A more detailed discussion regarding the challenges and best practices in the adaptive reuse of schools is located in ***Chapter 8: Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan.***

Flint Housing Commission

The Flint Housing Commission (FHC) desires to work together with the City in pursuing HUD grant opportunities and constructing public housing units in areas that are well connected and integrated within the community. As discussed in ***Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods Plan***, the City's long-term goal is to work with FAC to relocate both the Atherton East and River Park public housing developments to an area better connected to transit, services, employment, and schools. The City of Flint has also committed to working collaboratively on issues such as demolition (including FHC properties), blight elimination, public safety, and sale of rehabbed homes to FHC in better connected neighborhoods.

Mass Transit Authority

The Mass Transit Authority has agreed to align its Service Plan with the recommendations contained in ***Chapter 6: Transportation and Mobility Plan*** and other Master Plan recommendations. Key recommendations for which the MTA explicitly has expressed support include:

- Implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies;
- Reevaluation of transit route locations based on the Land Use Plan;
- Use of Bus Rapid Transit or Arterial Rapid Transit (BRT/ART) routes; and
- Local coordination regarding land use planning and design surrounding transit facilities.

Plan Follow-up & Implementation

There a variety of initiatives the City must undertake to implement the recommendations of the Master Plan including development of a Capital Improvements Plan, updates to the zoning code, and routine progress reporting.

Expanded discussion of plan implementation and next steps is located in ***Chapter 12: Moving Forward***.

Capital Improvement Plan

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will be developed in 2014 to focus infrastructure improvements on supporting the existing population and non-residential users, while ensuring new development and redevelopment can be supported. It will also identify potential funding sources available to meet the City's capital needs. The CIP should be regularly updated in conjunction with updates to the Master Plan.

Zoning Plan

As noted previously in this chapter, following completion of the new Master Plan, the City will engage in the process of rewriting and updating its zoning ordinance by 2014. This will include a more detailed assessment of the current zoning ordinance with a focus on how existing regulations promote or hinder the advancement of the recommendations of the Master Plan, including the Land Use Plan and corresponding place types.

This task will have a focus on the principles of sustainability identified in the Master Plan and will respond to existing conditions and new opportunities, while creating balanced transitions where needed and avoiding widespread nonconformities.

Master Plan Update Event

It is important that the City keep track of, and make public, its progress with regard to implementing the Master Plan. The Planning Department should collect data annually to measure progress using the metrics provided in the implementation section of each Master Plan chapter. A report summarizing implementation progress should be created every year.

The City should also work with partner organizations to host an annual Master Plan Update Event, to communicate progress to the broader community and get feedback on priorities for the coming years and strategies for improving plan implementation.

Ideally, this event would be similar in format to the 500-attendee Master Plan Vision and Goals Workshop held on March 9, 2013, which featured interactive key pad polling and engaged participants in a conversation about Flint.

4 LAND USE IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents the strategies needed to implement the goals and objectives of the Land Use Plan. Taken together, the objectives and strategies included in this section, provide specific direction and serve as a guide for the evaluation of development proposals and land use alternatives.

To provide the City with a reliable policy guide for decision-making, the objectives and strategies are based significantly on community input received through the master planning process. In addition to broad community input, these objectives and strategies are based on input from the Advisory Groups, Steering Committee, City officials, City staff, and observations and assessment from the Imagine Flint Project Team.

Implementation Matrix

The following Implementation Matrix groups strategies by topic within each objective and identifies anticipated time frame, relative cost, and the entities, including City of Flint departments and partner organizations, potentially responsible for the implementation. The matrix also identifies key metrics needed to track implementation progress.

Time Frame

A general time frame is assigned to each strategy, considering the cost of various types of improvements and their ability to set other actions in motion. Generally, low-cost strategies with easy implementation are given the short-term time frame, though some other actions are given this designation based on their high-level of priority in meeting community objectives or ensuring the safety of residents.

Each strategy in the Implementation Matrix is indicated with one of the following:

- ***Short:*** low-cost, ease of implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years
- ***Medium:*** important actions that have some level of significant cost, and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years
- ***Long:*** actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time, or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation

Public Cost Estimate

Public cost estimate is represented by a scale ranging from $ to $$$. The costs in this column refer only to public costs. Below is a description of the cost scale:

- **$**: Actions that require primarily internal staff time requiring mostly regulatory changes, policy updates, or strategic partnerships with limited outside funding required
- **$$**: Actions that require outside consulting services assistance or relatively minor investment in infrastructure or project development
- **$$$**: Actions that require intensive planning, engineering, or design, and significant investment in infrastructure or project development

Responsible Entities & Partner Organizations

City government alone is not capable of implementing the Master Plan. This is a community vision which relies upon Flint's greatest assets, its people and community stakeholders to help implement desired aspirations.

With regard to citing those entities responsible for implementation, it should be noted that it is anticipated that, from a policy standpoint, the Mayor and City Council will be involved in the majority of these actions.

Where a City Department should be involved, that department has been listed. Where general administrative leadership is needed, the City of Flint has been listed. Strategies, such as recommended technical studies and analyses that would likely benefit from outside expertise, have also been highlighted.

Unforeseen Partnership Opportunities

Every effort was made to identify a comprehensive list of potential partner organizations for inclusion in the implementation matrix. As a community of over 100,000 with a rich history of volunteerism and over 100 foundations active in Genesee County, there may be instances where a deserving organization that is well-matched to one of the plan objectives or strategies has been excluded from a list of potential partners for a given topic.

Similarly, there may come a time when a partner organization identified in the implementation table merged with another organization or otherwise ceases to exist. As with the rest of the Master Plan, the implementation table is a flexible document that should be regularly updated and revised to reflect the evolving needs and assets of the Flint community.

Progress Indicator

Key progress indicators have been provided for each strategy grouping. Progress indicators identify quantifiable metrics for which data should be available on a regular basis and indicate desired trends for each metric. These indicators represent measurable achievements that move the City toward realization of Master Plan objectives. These progress indicators will enable the City to monitor its effectiveness at implementing plan recommendations.

PLACE-BASED LAND USE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 1	Create unique and desirable places throughout all areas of the community by combining different land uses with varying types and intensity.				
Planning	Revise the City's Zoning Code to ensure the uses necessary to support the Master Plan's place typology are permissible, and that desired character for these places can be fostered.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Neighborhood Groups • City Infrastructure	• Adoption of a new zoning ordinance • Completion of two tailored Neighborhood Plans every year • Completion of Infrastructure Plan
	Enact the corresponding zoning changes that could also include additional regulations meant to protect surrounding areas and remaining residents.	Short	$		
	Develop a Capital Improvement Plan that prioritizes projects over the next six years.	Short	$		
	Create "neighborhood plans" and "district plans" which dovetail with the zoning ordinance and provide additional guidance to ensure high-quality design, market viability, and compatible uses and development in all of the different place types.	Long	$		
	Create individual infrastructure plans for the district and neighborhood plans to ensure that infrastructure necessary for future development is available, and redundant infrastructure is removed.	Short	$		
	Review Master Plan as part of the five-year update to determine whether to modify the Land Use Map based on changing conditions.	Short	$		
Marketing	Make market-based development decisions to ensure that proposed and approved development is viable and sustainable over the long term, including residential densities and unit types, commercial activities and intensities, and employment uses and emerging industries.	Medium	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce • Neighborhood groups • Key businesses • Area Colleges & Universities • Realtors	• Increase in number of new developments in specific place types • Completion of "branding strategy"
	Actively market development opportunities and focus on business recruitment within all areas of the City to support and encourage private sector reinvestment consistent with the placemaking typology identified in the Master Plan.	Short	$$		
Redevelopment	Use existing conditions inventory to determine the feasibility of re-purposing structures in good or fair condition.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Genesee County Land Bank • Housing Development Authorities • Flint Historical Commission • MDEQ • EPA • RACER Trust • Key Stakeholders	• Increase in number of structures demolished • Increase in number of reinvested vacant sites • Increase in number of valued structures reused • Increase in number of acres remediated
	Encourage the adaptive reuse of valued structures (buildings with historic, architectural, or civic significance) to support the accommodation of appropriate and desirable land uses within the designated place types.	Short	$$		
	Create a housing rehabilitation program to reduce the number of people walking away from their homes.	Short	$$		
Objective 2	Establish a more sustainable land use pattern by clustering development and land use intensity near to key intersections, key corridors, and central areas of the City.				
Development Patterns	Demolish substandard structures and clear vacant sites of debris and building remnants, in order to prepare sites for reinvestment and to prevent the condition of existing properties from deterring reinvestment within a place type.	Medium-Long	$$$	• Planning & Development Department • Downtown Development Authority • Transportation Department • Area Colleges & Universities • Genesee County Land Bank • Housing Development Authorities • Neighborhood Groups • Business Leaders • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce • Flint Economic Development Corporation • Downtown Development Authority • Foundations	• Adoption of a new zoning ordinance • Adoption of new sign regulations • Completion of new parking policy • Increase in number of houses demolished • Development of new plan • Increase in number of businesses downtown • Increase in number of annual visitors downtown • Decrease in residential vacancy rate • Decrease in enforced building code and blight violations
	Focus on demolition efforts in populated Green Neighborhoods to facilitate the new residential density pattern.	Medium-Long	$$$		
	Work with the Land Bank to accelerate side lot transfer in the Green Neighborhood place type.	Short-Medium	$$		
	Promote and incentivize parcel assembly, land acquisition, and lot clearing, prioritizing low-vacancy blocks to facilitate the land use transitions from existing conditions to recommended place types.	Short	$		
	Prioritize redevelopment efforts that are aimed at the block scale or larger, often involving several properties, rather than efforts geared more toward an individual parcel.	Medium-Long	$$		
	Follow the Land Use Plan's place typology by primarily clustering development intensity in areas designated for Neighborhood Center, City Corridor, Employment and Commerce Center, University Avenue Core, Downtown, and Production Center.	Medium-Long	$$		
	Support and encourage all retail, office, and service commercial activities to be organized by use and concentrated within or near areas of complementary uses to create districts and clusters of complimentary uses.	Short	$		
	Revise the zoning ordinance to allow increased residential densities in appropriate places throughout the City, including Downtown, the University Avenue Core, Neighborhood Centers, and at key locations along the City Corridor place type.	Short	$		
	Establish a relocation assistance program for homeowners and businesses that wish to relocate within, or out of designated areas in order to support the transformation of an area into the appropriately designated place type.	Short-Medium	$$		
	Allow existing residents in non-conforming place types, some flexibility in the zoning to expand houses and build additional accessory structures.	Short	$		
	Ensure that areas of increased development intensity are easily accessible on foot and bike to minimize the necessity of using an automobile, thereby reducing parking demand and minimizing traffic congestion.	Short	$		
	Revise parking standards to reflect increased development intensity at key locations.	Short	$		

PLACE-BASED LAND USE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 3	Strive for land use compatibility in all areas by locating similar and supportive uses by "place type" and minimizing the potential negative impact of any incompatible adjacent uses for all residents.				
Aesthetics	Develop more specific formed-based regulations for residential, multi-family, mixed use, and commercial development to improve overall appearance and compatibility with surrounding areas and uses.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce • MEDC • Genesee County Land Bank • Local funders • Local businesses • Neighborhood organizations	• Adoption of form-based code by Fall 2014 • Adoption of form-based code by Fall 2014 with new site planning regulations • Adoption of form-based code by Fall 2014 with screening regulations • Completion of two tailored Neighborhood Plans every year • Increase in number of businesses being improved each year • Increase in number of lots participating in clean and greening programs • Increase in number of demolished and cleared sites • Increase in number of code enforcement actions succsessfully resolved • Increase in number of obsolete buildings rehabilitated and put into active use
	Encourage compatible and high-quality design and construction for all development/redevelopment with an emphasis on site design, building orientation, architecture, building materials and site improvements.	Short	$		
	Ensure new infill development is complementary to the scale and character of surrounding residential neighborhoods.	Medium	$		
	Institute new signage regulations to allow appropriate and attractive business identification, while enhancing the overall appearance of an area and eliminating visual clutter.				
	Improve the appearance of the existing business and industrial areas including buildings, parking areas, and screening/buffering through façade loan and grant programs.	Medium	$$		
Place Appropriateness	Protect residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses and the adverse impacts of adjacent nonresidential activities.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce • MEDC • Local funders • Local businesses • Genesee County Land Bank • Center for Community Progress • Planning & Development Department	• Adoption of form-based code by Fall 2014 with signage regulations • Adoption of form-based code by Fall 2014 with lighting regulations • Adoption of form-based code by Fall 2014 with regulations on buffering from nuisances. • Adoption of form-based code by Fall 2014 with regulations on incompatible uses • Development of site planning regulations related to truck/freight circulation. • Increase in number of code enforcement actions successfully resolved • Increase in number of businesses successfully relocated • Increase in number of residential expansions "by right" • Development of clear policies related to Master Plan and lot sales • Increase in number of lots developed with more sustainable landscaping • Increase in number of businesses successfully retained or recruited in a cluster area
	Work with impacted residents and neighborhoods to determine and enact additional zoning regulations to buffer from potential nuisances and establish appropriate setbacks, landscaping, screening and buffering requirements.				
	Promote the relocation of incompatible land uses from residential areas to more appropriately designated areas.	Short	$$$		
	Review development controls to ensure that they require appropriate screening of public utilities, dumpsters, rooftop equipment, etc.				
	Ensure that new or expanded industrial uses are concentrated in areas of similar or compatible use in general compliance with the Land Use Plan.	Medium-Long	SSS		
	Require all industrial development to meet specific applicable performance standards for noise, air, odor and any other forms of environmental pollution.	Short	S		
	Adopt site lighting criteria to maintain safe light levels while avoiding off-site light spillage and night sky pollution.	Short	$		
	Work with the Land Bank to limit new residential development in areas designated as Green Innovation.				
	Designate truck routes to serve all Production Centers, Green Innovation areas, and other place types, and require utilization of these routes to prevent industrial traffic from using residential streets.	Short	$		

PLACE-BASED LAND USE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 4	Provide a mix of uses that supports a sustainable and healthy community for all areas of the City.				
Neighborhood Services	Support local economic development efforts to retain, expand, and attract businesses in appropriately designated "places" throughout the City.	Long	$$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Downtown Development Authority • Business Leaders • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce • Flint Economic Development Corporation • Downtown Development Authority • Foundations	• Development of new plan • Number of businesses downtown • Number of annual visitors downtown • Vacancy rate
	Maintain a range of retail and service commercial activities throughout the City, primarily within commercial centers and along the major corridors.	Medium-Long	$$		
Environment	Clear vacant, blighted, and debris-filled sites in an effort to eliminate properties that pose a potential safety hazards, including sites that may provide increased opportunities for crime, arson, trespassing, garbage dumping, vandalism, and the proliferation of rodents and other pests.	Short-Medium	$$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce • Genesee County Land Bank • EPA • MDEQ • Local funders • Local businesses	• Adoption of Place-Based Land Use Plan • Adoption of Form-Based Code by Fall 2014 • Completion of two tailored Neighborhood Plans every year • Number of sites identified for remediation • Number of sites undergoing remediation • Amount of funding secured for remediation per year
	Identify and remediate any environmental contamination and site issues that would otherwise prevent the desirable development of properties within the designated places types.	Short-Medium	$$$		
	Work with community partners to devise and implement a long-term maintenance plan for vacant lots after demolition.	Short	$$		
Health and Safety	Implement needed infrastructure improvements and remove unnecessary infrastructure related to a formerly residential development pattern (i.e. driveway aprons and sidewalks adjacent to a green innovation business).	Medium-Long	$$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Parks & Recreation Department • Genesee County Parks • Water Service Center • MDNR • MEDC • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce • Health & Fitness advocacy programs and organizations • Genesee County Land Bank • Consumer's Energy • State of Michigan • Neighborhood organizations • Local businesses • Local funders	• Adoption of Place-Based Land Use Plan • Adoption of form-based code by Fall 2014 • Adoption of form-based code by Fall 2014 with provisions on pedestrian and bicycle amenities • Number of recreational improvements • Number of Flint residents engaged in regular physical activity • Number of demolished and clear sites • Number of code enforcement actions successfully resolved • Number of green infrastructure projects constructed per year • Amount of funding dedicated to infrastructure removal per year
	Provide recreational amenities, facilities, and uses necessary to accommodate a healthy lifestyle for residents at all stages of life.	Short-Medium	$$$		
	Establish urban agriculture as a permitted use in designated areas of the City, including Green Neighborhood and Green Innovation.	Short	$		
	Provide access to health care related land uses for all residents of Flint.	Short	$		

PLACE-BASED LAND USE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 5	**Support land use arrangements that provide a more walkable community and improves access for all, to necessary and desirable goods, services, and amenities.**				
Accessibility	Focus residential densities in areas of the City that provide convenient access and walkability to needed goods and services.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Transportation Department • MTA • Genesee County MPO • Genesee County Land Bank • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce • MEDC • MSHDA • Neighborhoods organizations • Local funders	• Adoption of Place-Based Land Use Plan • Adoption of form-based code by Fall 2014 • Completion of two tailored Neighborhood Plans every year • Development of Public Right of Way Policy by Fall 2014 • Development and distribution of marketing materials focused on walk-ability and transit access • Increase in number of lit bus stops aligned with Place-Based Land Use Plan
	Use walking distance and transit access as a means of evaluating the potential location of new commercial retail and service uses.	Short	$		
	Ensure bus stop locations are appropriately located, well designed, and adequately lit so as to provide safe and convenient access to transit.	Short	$		
	Establish and implement design guidelines and development standards that require connections between the public sidewalk system and the entrance to all commercial and residential buildings, including designated pedestrian routes through on-site parking areas.	Short	$		
	Require new development to provide pedestrian amenities and incorporate pedestrian and bicycle friendly design into all developments.	Short	$		
	Design and implement an effective and attractive wayfinding system in commercial and mixed use areas to provide identification of, and direction to, area businesses, community facilities, and public parking areas.	Short	$-$$		
Objective 6	**Transform vacant land into opportunities for economic development and enhanced open space by encouraging green innovation and sustainable best practices.**				
Economic Development	Prioritize demolition and lot clearance with larger blocks in the Green Innovation place type for possible redevelopment.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Transportation Department • Water Service Center • Flint Planning Commission • Genesee County Land Bank • MSHDA • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce • MEDC • Michigan Works! • Workforce Development Agencies • Local funders • Local businesses	• Initiation of five year update in 2018 • Decrease in number of poor and substandard homes • Increase in annual demolition funding • Increase in number of parcel joining agreements • Increase in number of side-lot transfer agreements • Increase in number of "green" businesses operating in Flint • Increase in number of property owners successfully relocated • Increase in of Flint residents placed in green jobs • Development of mini-infrastructure plans
	Market the Green Innovation areas to potential green innovation businesses.	Medium	$		
	Work with workforce development, training, and placement for emerging green industries.	Medium	$$		
	Develop and implement infrastructure plans for the Community Open Space, Green Innovation, and Green Neighborhood place types to ensure that infrastructure necessary for future development is maintained, and unnecessary and redundant infrastructure is removed.	Medium	$$		
	Review the viability of the Green Innovation place type when the Master Plan is updated.	Short	$		
Open Space	Transition Green Neighborhoods that experience steep population decline to Community Open Space.	Long	$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Water Services Center • Transportation Department • Consumer's Energy • Genesee County Land Bank Authority • Parks and Recreation Department • Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission • MDNR • EPA • Flint River Watershed Coalition • Environmental Advocacy Organizations • Community stakeholders	• Decrease in number the amount of roads and utilities in place type public utilities • Amount of acreage successfully transitioned to Community Open Space without displacement • Increase in number of parks acreage designated as state or county parks • Increase in number of individualized plans created • Increase in number of naturalization pilot projects • Increase in number of sites identified for remediation • Increase in number of sites undergoing remediation • Increase in amount of funding secured for remediation per year • Increase in number of lots integrated into the parks • Reduction in mowing expenses • Reduction in park maintenance costs
	Develop a plan to gradually reduce public utilities and roads in passive recreation areas in the Community Open Space place type.	Medium	$$		
	Discuss possible partnerships to convert some community open space to state or county parks.	Short	$		
	Work with community stakeholders to develop and implement individualized naturalization plans for passive areas.	Short	$		
	Work with the Land Bank to acquire properties around parks for limited park expansion, particularly around waterways.	Short	$		
	Work with community stakeholders on the establishment of an entity such as a land conservancy, land trust, and/or Friends of Flint Parks that could help support the maintenance and programming of Flint's Community Open Spaces.	Short	$		

MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT

5 HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN

VISION P. 87

GOAL & OBJECTIVES P. 89

RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES P. 91

IMPLEMENTATION P. 109

5 HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN
VISION, GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Imagine

thriving and unique neighborhoods free of blight, where longstanding Flint residents partner with their new neighbors -- immigrants, students, former commuters, returning veterans, and young professionals -- to keep the community safe and welcoming to all.

Imagine inclusive neighborhoods teeming with economic, racial, and social diversity, with mixed-income and mixed use developments integrated into the fabric of the community and connected to transit and walkable retail options.

Imagine a new national model for post-industrial land use, where a targeted demolition campaign transforms high-vacancy neighborhoods into stable "Green Neighborhoods" with large lots, community gardens, and well-maintained open space.

Over the next twenty years, Flint can achieve this vision. However, we must first face existing realities: too many neighborhoods face disinvestment and blight, our housing stock is dominated by single family homes and does not match market demand, and Flint and the broader region are severely segregated by race and class.

The "Housing & Neighborhoods Plan" is a roadmap to overcoming those obstacles and to actualizing a new community vision. By following the recommendations outlined in this chapter, Flint will have desirable, stable, and inclusive neighborhoods, with a range of affordable and attractive housing options available to a diverse population.

SOCIAL EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY

Quality housing should be accessible to all Flint residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, income, age, religion, gender, gender identity, ability, or sexual orientation. Additionally, as the majority of the City's land is utilized for neighborhoods, housing policies and practices have an extremely large impact on the environment and the City's long-term sustainability.

QUALITY OF LIFE

As the basic building block of the City, neighborhoods are significant contributors to local quality of life. Diversifying the housing stock, eliminating blight, and increasing walkability, will lead to happier residents and positive health outcomes.

YOUTH

The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow. Recognizing that youth are an asset to be leveraged in transforming Flint, they should help drive neighborhood change by participating in litter cleanups, park maintenance, community gardening, and the development of neighborhood plans.

RESHAPING THE ECONOMY

The availability of desirable neighborhoods and quality housing options are important factors in a business's ability to attract and retain quality employees. Similarly, residential growth stimulated by safe, clean, and thriving neighborhoods will spark demand for neighborhood shops and businesses.

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Population loss, increasing vacancies, and worsening housing conditions point to a need to reinvent some of Flint's traditional single family neighborhoods and change how the land is used by local residents. Similarly, Flint must develop more multi-family and rental opportunities to meet demand among students, the elderly, and young professionals.

CIVIC LIFE

Healthy and safe neighborhoods create environments for increased civic participation and engagement. The City must maintain positive lines of communication and empower residents to affect change in the neighborhoods that they call home.

GOAL:

Flint will have desirable, stable, and inclusive neighborhoods, with a range of affordable and attractive housing options available to a diverse population.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The ways in which the Goal & Objectives of the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan have been influenced by the guiding principles are indicated using the following symbols.

- ***Social Equity & Sustainability***
- ***Reshaping the Economy***
- ***Quality of Life***
- ***Adapting to Change***
- ***Youth***
- ***Civic Life***

Objective #1

Establish individual neighborhood planning and investment frameworks to assist in neighborhood stabilization or transition.

Creating individualized neighborhood planning areas and investment frameworks facilitates planning that is tailored to the unique needs of each neighborhood. A key component of such efforts will be data collection and resident engagement, allowing for informed decision making and sound investment.

Objective #2

Eliminate blight and urban decay.

The first step in stabilizing Flint's neighborhoods is to enact an aggressive city-wide anti-blight campaign consisting of code enforcement, demolition, and beautification. Attractive, well-kept neighborhoods increase resident well-being and civic pride, encourage growth and investment, and help keep children safe from harm.

Objective #3

Support and improve partnerships and programs that reduce housing vacancies and strengthen neighborhoods.

Attracting new residents such as immigrants, veterans, and young professionals will inject new civic energy into Flint's neighborhoods and assist in stabilization. Other initiatives, such as the marketing of infill sites for redevelopment or the reorienting of neighborhoods around community facilities and parks, create new avenues for investment and engagement.

Objective #4

Promote equity and social justice in housing.

Flint has historically been a national leader in social justice, passing the country's first open housing ordinance in 1968, and extending such protections to gays, lesbians, and other minority groups in 2012. The City and its partners must proactively build upon this legacy by ending discrimination in renting and mortgage financing, ensuring accessibility for the disabled, and developing public and affordable housing that is integrated into the fabric of the community.

Objective #5

Diversify the City's housing stock to allow anyone to make Flint their home.

Flint's current housing stock is overwhelmingly composed of single family homes. In order to be competitive with other markets and to meet the needs of existing residents such as students, the elderly, and young professionals, Flint must expand quality rental and multi-family housing opportunities at a variety of price points.

Objective #6

Ensure responsible and sustainable housing development.

Moving forward, new housing developments must be strategic, responsible, and prudent. Key historic structures from Flint's past should be protected and receive investment, while new construction should embrace the highest standards of green practices and sustainability. Most importantly, all development must be consistent with the Land Use Plan.

5 HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN

RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES

The City of Flint has approximately half the population it had at the adoption of the last Master Plan in 1960. This population loss has had varied impacts across Flint's neighborhoods, with some areas experiencing significant vacancies and degrading housing conditions, while other neighborhoods remain relatively stable.

The Housing and Neighborhoods Plan outlines a wide variety of strategies needed to address the drastic changes that have occurred in Flint's neighborhood structure. Building on the Land Use Plan, the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan provides housing policies and recommendations needed to address the issues facing Flint's neighborhoods.

Moving forward, as indicated in the Land Use Plan, several of Flint's traditional single family neighborhoods must change in character and evolve into well-maintained, less dense, green neighborhoods. Other neighborhoods must be repurposed to make way for non-residential development that can make productive use of largely vacant areas. These changes are needed to provide a higher quality of life for residents and to create opportunities or future investment.

Throughout the extensive community outreach process undertaken as part of the Master Plan, residents expressed their concerns and aspirations for Flint's neighborhoods. The Housing and Neighborhoods Plan reflects this engagement and provides Flint residents with a diverse and balanced range of housing options to accommodate people of all ages, incomes, and lifestyles. The plan stresses the need to involve residents and community organizations in the implementation of City housing policies and tailor city-wide strategies to local needs. The Housing and Neighborhoods Plan ensures that future reinvestment is leveraged to provide maximum benefit to current residents.

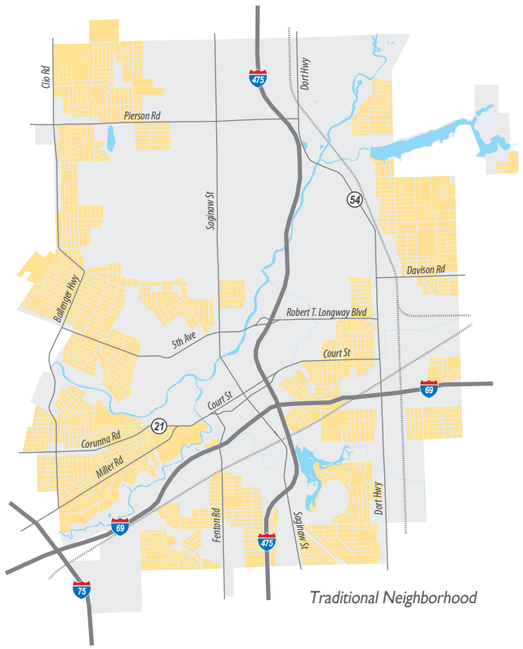
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Placemaking 92
Housing Growth 92
Residential Place Types 92
Diversifying Housing Options 93
Growing Demand for Multi-Family Housing 94
Key Growth Opportunity: Workforce & Student Housing 94
Aging Population 95
Prioritizing Social Equity 96
Integrated Housing 96
Affordable Housing 96
Public Housing - Flint Housing Commission 96
Developing an Investment Framework 97
Community & Neighborhood Involvement 97
Land Use Plan Implications 97
Neighborhood Assessment 98
Neighborhood Revitalization Priorities 101
Neighborhood Stabilization 101
Greening & Repurposing 102
Neighborhood Reinvestment Strategies 104
Veterans Housing 105
Historic Districts 105
Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA) 106
Coordinating Efforts 106

FOSS AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD

Located in Northeast Flint, the Foss Avenue Neighborhood is a local example of what a Green Neighborhood should be. The Foss Avenue Neighborhood is anchored by Foss Avenue Baptist Church, which is not only the spiritual heart of the community, but has provided an array of services helping to stabilize the neighborhood despite significant abandonment and blight. By partnering with the Genesee County Land Bank, the neighborhood has seen additional side-lot sales, cleaning and greening programs, and residential demolitions that have noticeably transformed the environment.

These efforts have enabled another successful partnership with the Genesee County Habitat for Humanity to construct several new homes for low-income families, but at a lower density than before. Future plans include a neighborhood center that would provide local, small-scale, walkable services for neighborhood residents. Not only have the actions of the church, local organizations, and neighborhood residents restored the neighborhood, but offer other neighborhoods a model of how to successfully transition to the Green Neighborhood place type.



Traditional Neighborhood

Green Neighborhood

PLACEMAKING

Over the last several years the City and community partners have secured millions of dollars in funding for the demolition of vacant or substandard properties resulting in thousands of empty lots. Today these vacancies present the City with an opportunity not typically afforded to mature cities – an opportunity to re-invent its land use pattern and prepare the City for the future. To guide the City in this effort, the Land Use Plan utilizes a 'placemaking' approach, which defines unique and desired places within the City.

In keeping with the placemaking approach, the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan provides strategies to stabilize and strengthen Flint's traditional neighborhoods while further diversifying Flint's housing stock to attract a broad range of new residents. The Plan also fosters the development of dense residential development and complementary services and amenities that combine in select areas of the City.

Housing Growth

If trends in population loss continue, it is estimated that the City of Flint will lose an additional 20,000 residents between 2010 and 2020. This represents a decrease of approximately 8,000 households. The City must take action using the strategies identified in the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan, and elsewhere in the Master Plan, to reverse current trends, and stabilize and grow Flint's population.

As detailed in ***Chapter 4: Land Use Plan***, the placemaking approach to land use planning provides a flexible framework that will enable Flint to function as a healthy, vibrant city with a population of anywhere between 75,000 and 150,000. Given that Flint has experienced several decades of population loss, it is not realistic to think that the City of Flint could nearly double its current population through the year 2040. However, the Master Plan must establish goals towards which to strive.

1. First and foremost, the City should seek to reverse current trends of population loss and stabilize at its current level of 40,000 households by 2020.
2. Once the City's population has been stabilized, the City should turn its sights on growth. The City should seek to add a combined 15,000 housing units to the Downtown and Innovation District areas, and provide additional new housing in Flint's Traditional Neighborhood and Mixed Residential areas.

While these goals are lofty, they may be achievable. If the City of Flint were to grow at an annual rate of 1.5% between the years 2020 and 2040, it would result in the addition of approximately 13,900 housing units. This is equal to just under 700 housing units per year.

Residential Place Types

The Land Use Plan includes three residential place types: Traditional Neighborhood, Green Neighborhood, and Mixed Residential. In addition, mixed use housing will be developed in place types such as City Corridor, Downtown, University Avenue Core, and Neighborhood Center.

Traditional Neighborhood

Traditional Neighborhoods represent areas where the form and character of Flint's established single family neighborhoods should be maintained and enhanced. The Land Use Plan identifies several areas as Traditional Neighborhoods, including central areas of the City near the Downtown, University Avenue Core, and Civic/Cultural Campus place types, as well as neighborhoods east of Dort Highway and generally west of Dupont.

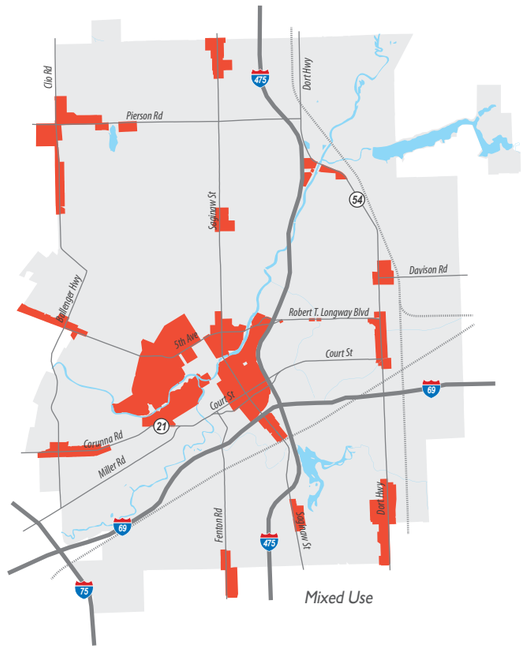
Maintaining a solid core of traditional residential neighborhoods is crucial to ensuring the health of the City, spurring future economic development, and providing high-quality services, including those provided by community partners such as the Flint Community Schools. Priorities within Traditional Neighborhoods should be the stabilization and improvement of housing conditions, encouraging infill development, and mitigating other blighting factors such as crime and poor property maintenance.

Green Neighborhood

Green Neighborhoods are low-density residential areas consisting of a mix of large lot residences, neighborhood open space, community gardens, and limited scale urban agriculture. The Green Neighborhood is intended for residential areas of Flint where targeted demolitions have created a large amount of vacant properties on residential blocks. The Land Use Plan locates Green Neighborhoods south of Flint's Downtown and in areas north of Davison Road and Hamilton Avenue, and west of Interstate 475 where vacancies are especially prevalent.

The Green Neighborhood place type represents a new approach to repurposing vacant or underutilized areas to create a healthy and sustainable low-density residential neighborhood. The City and its partners will empower residents to adopt and care for properties in their neighborhood through changes to development regulations, neighborhood capacity building, and lot improvement programs.

Mixed Residential



Mixed Use

Neighborhood Center

Housing Overview
CITY OF FLINT & PEER COMMUNITIES (2010)

	Total Units	% Occupied	% Vacant	% Single Family	% Multi-Family
City of Flint	51,321	79%	21%	77%	23%
Genesee County (Including Flint)	192,180	88%	12%	72%	28%
Ann Arbor	49,789	95%	5%	42%	58%
Grand Rapids	80,619	89%	11%	58%	42%
Lansing	54,181	89%	11%	67%	33%

Multi-family units needed to match:*

Ann Arbor	55,000
Grand Rapids	29,000
Lansing	19,500

** Assumes 2010 number of Single Family units in Flint remains constant.*

Source: *American Community Survey 2010*

Mixed Residential
Mixed Residential areas are made up of detached single family, attached single family residences (townhomes, rowhomes, etc.) and multi-family buildings. The Land Use Plan identifies areas where Mixed Residential areas can be served by nearby commercial districts as well as smaller retailers and service providers that are clustered at key intersections. In some cases, Mixed Residential areas are located adjacent to important natural features such as Thread Lake or Flint Park Lake.

Mixed Residential areas provide a range of housing options for first time home buyers, young families and facilitate "aging in place." Mixed Residential areas also provide workforce housing options – housing that is affordable to "critical service" employees that contribute to the quality of life in the City.

Mixed Use
Though not a place type in and of itself, mixed use developments will play in an increasingly important role in providing housing for Flint residents. Several Land Use Plan place types accommodate mixed use development with a residential component including Downtown, City Corridor, and University Avenue Core.

With a 0% residential vacancy rate, the success of apartment projects within the Downtown speak to the demand for mixed use development. Mixed use areas possess huge potential for growth and will play an integral role in attracting a diverse range of new residents including students, young professionals, seniors, and workers currently commuting to Flint from other communities. The Land Use Plan seeks to establish vibrant, walkable corridors near restaurants, bars, entertainment, and the Downtown and with access to key transportation routes.

Neighborhood Center Housing
A Neighborhood Center is a small commercial district primarily consisting of a mix of local retailers, neighborhood institutions, and mixed use development. However, multi-family buildings should also be encouraged within such areas. The Land Use Plan identifies several Neighborhood Center locations that are scattered throughout the community, serving Flint's residential areas.

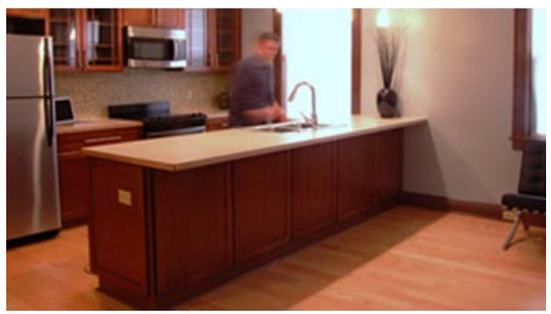
As a hub of social and commercial activity for local neighborhoods, the Neighborhood Center place type will play a key role providing daily goods and services to Flint residents and enhancing quality of life. Priorities within a Neighborhood Center should be the installation and proper maintenance of streetscape and pedestrian infrastructure, improvement of commercial property conditions, and small business assistance.

DIVERSIFYING HOUSING OPTIONS
A shift is needed within available housing types to better reflect Flint's diverse population and market demand. Compared to its peer communities, Flint is severely lacking with regard to the range of housing options offered within the local housing stock.

In 2010, only 23% of Flint residential units were not single family detached homes. By contrast, within the cities of Ann Arbor and Grand Rapids multi-family dwellings made up 58% and 42% of the housing stock respectively. Lansing was the closest in comparison to Flint with 1 in 3 housing units being a multi-family dwelling.

The presence of a 20% vacancy rate within Flint's traditional neighborhoods and a 0% vacancy rate in the Downtown provides further indication of increased demand for multi-family housing.

If the City of Flint were to strive to achieve a similar ratio to that of Lansing with two single family homes for every multi-family dwelling, an additional 19,500 multi-family housing units would need to be constructed. This assumes that the number of single family homes would remain constant.



Renovated Berridge Place and Tinlinn Building (Source: inForm Design Studio)

Growing Demand for Multi-Family Housing

As outlined in the following section, the lack of quality multi-family housing choices within Flint limit the community's ability to attract young families, provide quality housing for Flint's lower income households, and allow Flint's seniors to remain in the community as their housing needs change.

Flint residents are becoming older, on average, and demographic projections indicate that seniors are one of the few groups growing in population within the City. Additionally, the lack of multi-family housing choices also means a missed opportunity for Flint to provide housing for a growing student population, and the highly educated workforce that currently commutes to the City from outlying communities.

Key Growth Opportunity: Workforce & Student Housing

Currently, more than 30,000 people commute daily from the suburbs into Flint for work. Additionally, more than 28,000 students attend college at one of the area's higher education institutions, rivaling most Big Ten college towns. When non-resident employees and students are combined with residents living and working in Flint, the City's daytime population is conservatively estimated at nearly 134,000. Flint is in a unique position to capture this educated and skilled population by tailoring new development to fit their needs.

The City of Flint should encourage the development of higher density, multi-family and mixed use projects to attract and retain residents, especially seniors, students, and the Flint workforce. The Land Use Plan accommodates a significant number of multi-family housing units in the Mixed Residential place type. Areas located in-and-around the Downtown, University Avenue Core, and Cultural Campus should be prioritized for the development of workforce housing and student housing.

To effectively provide quality, multi-family housing, the City should revise and update the zoning ordinance and other regulatory tools to appropriately reflect the new range of housing designations outlined in the Land Use Plan.

Success Stories: Berridge Place & The Durant

Successful projects geared toward Flint's student population, like Berridge Place, have already been implemented. Berridge Place is a recently renovated 24,000 square foot historic building with 17 residential units, located in Carriage Town, next to Downtown Flint. The project also included converting the historic Tinlinn Building, a 4,800 square foot four-unit rental, into a four-unit residential project. Berridge Place is now a popular housing option for students at the University of Michigan-Flint.

Additionally, the Durant, located just two blocks from Berridge Place, has been a successful multi-family addition to Downtown Flint. The project included an extensive historic rehabilitation resulting in 93 residential units and approximately 20,000 square feet of commercial space. As of October 2013, both had residential vacancy rates at or near 0%.

The $25 million project was completed in the spring of 2010 and is now being used as housing for a mix of young professionals, families, and University of Michigan-Flint students.

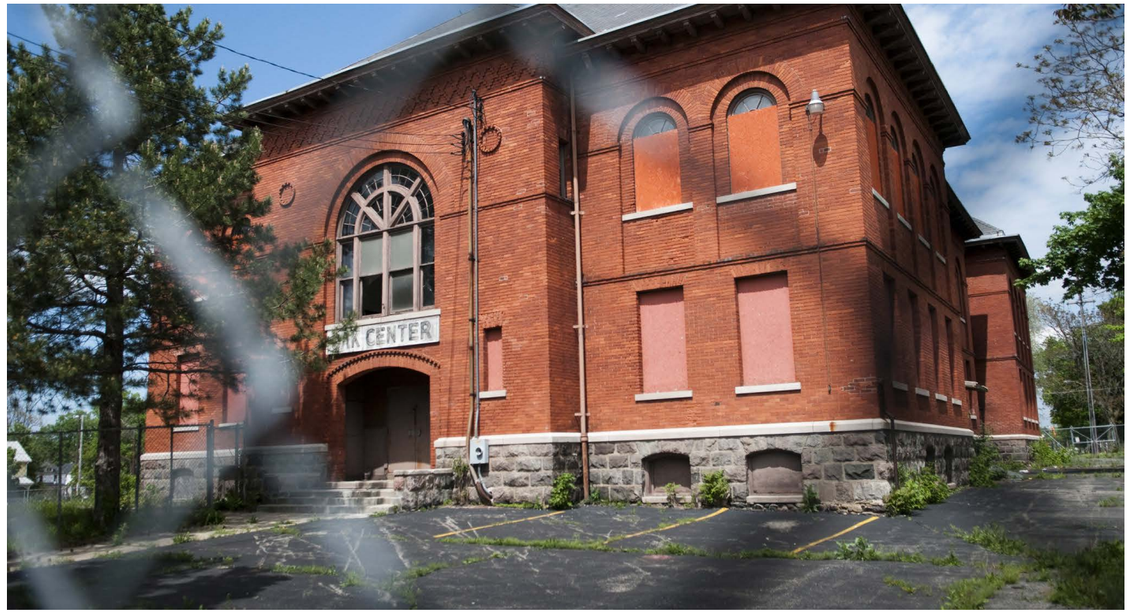
Live Flint

Private groups in the Midtown and Downtown areas of Detroit have created LiveDowntown and LiveMidtown initiatives that provide an array of incentives to entice the employees of partner companies and institutions to live where they work. Incentives range from forgivable home loans, rental assistance for up to two years, and rebates for exterior improvements to homes. Top employers and key stakeholders should evaluate the use of similar 'Live Flint' incentives to attract local employees to targeted areas of the City.

Many key employers and institutions are located within the central area of the City referred to as the Innovation District. The Innovation District, which includes the Downtown, University Avenue Core, Civic/Cultural Campus, and Commerce and Employment place types, is the target of numerous other economic development incentives, and should be considered for Live Flint strategies as well. The City desires to locate 5,000 new housing units within the Downtown and another 10,000 housing units within other areas of the Innovation District through the year 2040.

The Durant

Court Street Commons Senior Living Facility



Oak School building to be converted to Oak Street Senior Apartments (Source: Ryan Garza, The Flint Journal)

Aging Population

The median age in Flint is increasing at a faster pace than that of the nation. The number of Flint residents aged 55 and over grew by nearly 2,000 individuals, an increase of 8.9% between 2000 and 2011. With an aging population, the availability of affordable multi-family housing becomes an even more significant issue for the City. For many older homeowners, multi-family dwellings such as apartments and condominiums, are an attractive housing option due to the lower costs and lower effort required to maintain the home.

Aging in Place

Senior living centers are a viable option for aging persons, but seniors should have a choice to live independently as well. Known as aging in place, the Federal Government defines this concept as, "the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level."

Cities that cater to the concept of aging in place, promote integrated land uses which link housing with public transportation and services amenable to seniors. Giving seniors the choice to stay in their communities rather than move to an assisted living center is achieved through ADA compliant affordable housing developments, transit-oriented developments, and complete streets initiatives. These policies lead to communities that accommodate the elderly population by being more compact and walkable.

Multi-family Housing

The Land Use Plan responds to the growing senior population by locating multi-family uses all throughout the City of Flint through the Mixed Residential place type. Mixed Residential is served by nearby commercial districts, as well as smaller retailers and service providers that may be clustered at key intersections, or located on the ground floor within more prominent multi-family buildings. These locations make Mixed Residential a popular choice for seniors looking to locate near daily goods and services.

Universal Design

In addition, the City should promote "universal design" in multi-family buildings of a certain size to ensure accessibility for seniors and the disabled. This will include ADA accessible ramps to main entrance ways, elevators, power-assisted doors, and assistive railings in major hallways.

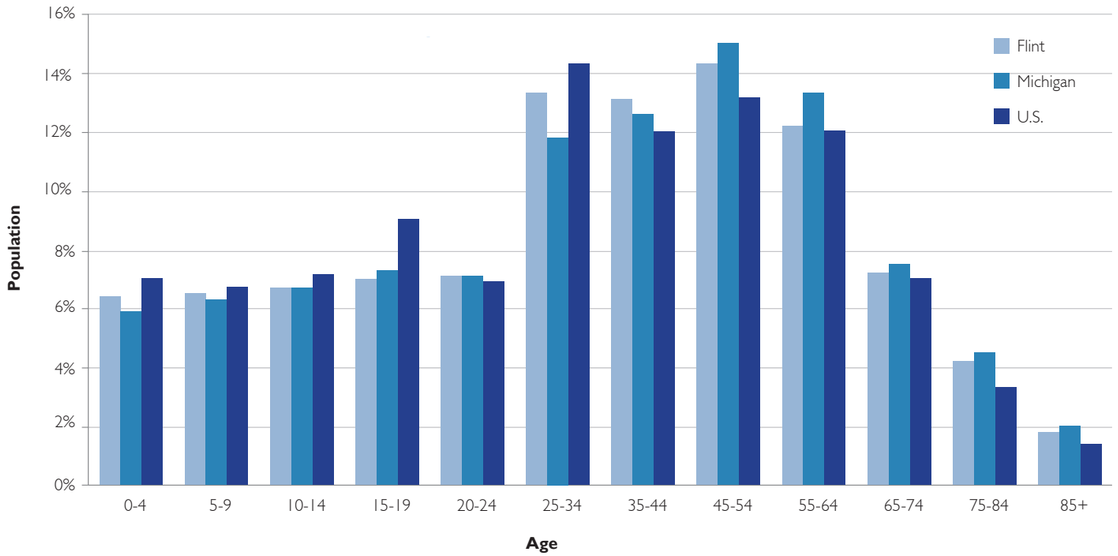
As a result, universal design improvements will create more options for senior living arrangements. At a minimum, the City should strive to increase the proportion of homes that are "visitable" by people with disabilities, meaning wheelchair users can enter the home and get to a bathroom.

Success Stories: Oak Street Senior Apartments

Construction is underway in Flint's Grand Traverse District neighborhood to build an affordable senior housing development. The Oak Street Senior Apartments are being built at the historic site of the old Oak School, closed since 1998. In early 2012, a local non-profit organization, Communities First Inc., was awarded $5.1 million in federal, state, and local funds to renovate the building and create 24 energy efficient units.

This adaptive reuse project proposes a variety of amenities to serve future residents including a library, computer room, community room, laundry facilities, and new elevators. This project will benefit elderly, low-income residents by its close proximity toDdowntown and access to public transit. Reusing the Oak School building for senior apartments is an excellent example of the reuse of an existing community asset, while addressing the need for senior housing in Flint.

Population by Age
CITY OF FLINT, MICHIGAN & U.S. (2011)



Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

PRIORITIZING SOCIAL EQUITY

Social equity is an important guiding principle of the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan and it is important that housing policies, both within the City of Flint and the larger Genesee County, function to reduce economic segregation and housing discrimination.

Integrated Housing

Rather than isolating lower income households, the City should promote the integration of public and affordable housing within new and existing market-rate housing developments. The City should also revise its zoning ordinance to ensure that development regulations, such as minimum unit size, do not deter low-income residents from living in the community.

The City can also play a role in working to end housing discrimination on the basis of disability, family status, sexual orientation, race, and other statuses protected under local law. The City should partner with organizations such as the Genesee County Fair Housing Center, to monitor and ensure that local lenders are adhering to Fair Housing laws and regulations.

Equal Housing Rights Ordinance

The City of Flint's Equal Housing Rights Ordinance, passed in March 2012, protects residents renting or buying a home from discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, condition of pregnancy, marital status, physical or mental limitation, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or actual or perceived HIV status.

This ordinance is more inclusive than any State or Federal regulations related to fair housing, and highlights the City's commitment to equal access to quality housing for residents.

Affordable Housing

A priority of the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan is to provide housing options for all income levels. While the Smith Village project and Section 8 Housing Vouchers already provide affordable housing financing for Flint residents, the City should advocate for an expanded Federal and State role in financing all types of affordable housing, including mixed use and mixed-income.

On a local level, the City should partner with local banks, non-profit organizations, and financial institutions to guarantee funding mechanisms for all types of affordable housing. Policies and procedures that facilitate reinvestment in the housing market including zero or no interest loans, tax breaks, permit fee waivers, infrastructure improvements, and other mechanisms that could steer developers into providing more affordable housing options.

To be truly affordable, multi-family units should connect to Flint's transit options. Automobile ownership may not be an option for many low-income families.

The City should work with public transit providers, like the MTA, to ensure routes connect multi-family housing developments to employment centers, schools, commercial nodes, and other important locations within Flint. The City should also work closely with the Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA) to facilitate revitalization efforts. In addition to controlling a significant percentage of the City's land, the Genesee County Land Bank has been responsible for successful multi-family developments already, including the Durant and Berridge Place. Continued partnership with this organization will facilitate additional future multi-family developments.

Public Housing - Flint Housing Commission

The Flint Housing Commission (FHC) is a medium-sized Public Housing Agency (PHA) that owns 1,248 units of scattered site and multi-family low-income public housing in Flint. The programs of the FHC are funded through the rental income of residents, as well as an operating subsidy from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). While the agency has been labeled as "troubled" by the federal government, it has made tremendous progress in working to improve housing conditions.

Atherton East & River Park

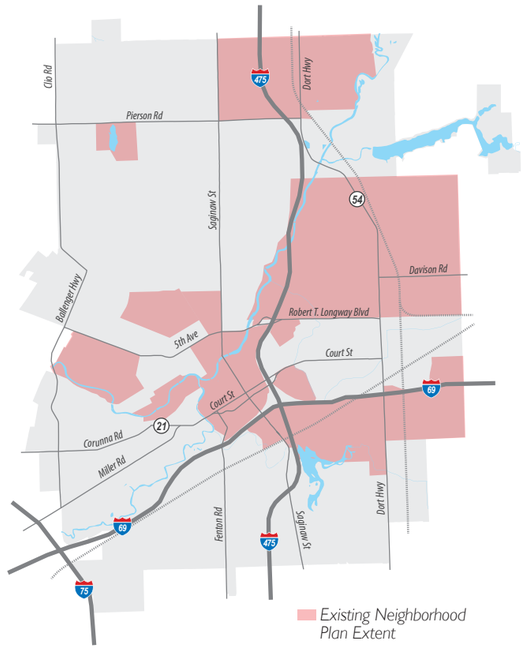
One long-term goal desired by the community, is to have both the Atherton East and River Park public housing developments relocated to an area that is better connected to transit, services, employment, and schools. Currently, these developments are located in areas that are isolated from schools, shopping, and other critical services. This has led to a degree of disinvestment, poor maintenance, high rates of crime, and blight. Housing authorities in other cities have successfully demonstrated that public housing that is physically integrated into traditional neighborhoods results in higher levels of maintenance without compromising neighborhood character or housing values.

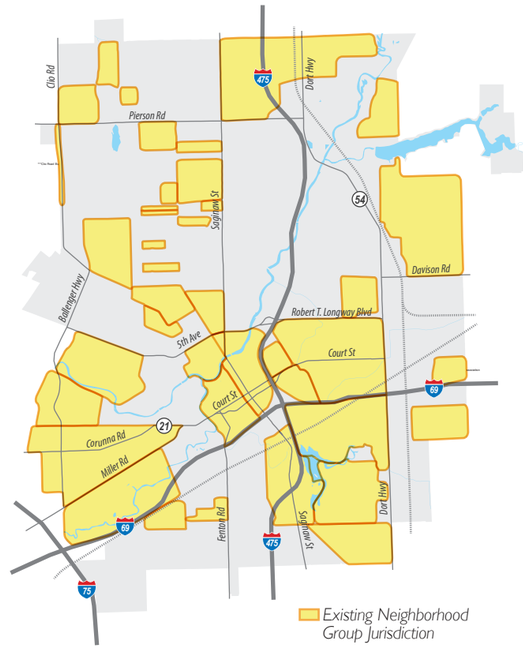
The City of Flint and FHC are working together to accomplish this vision of mixed-income housing integrated into the community, while returning the former areas to open space.

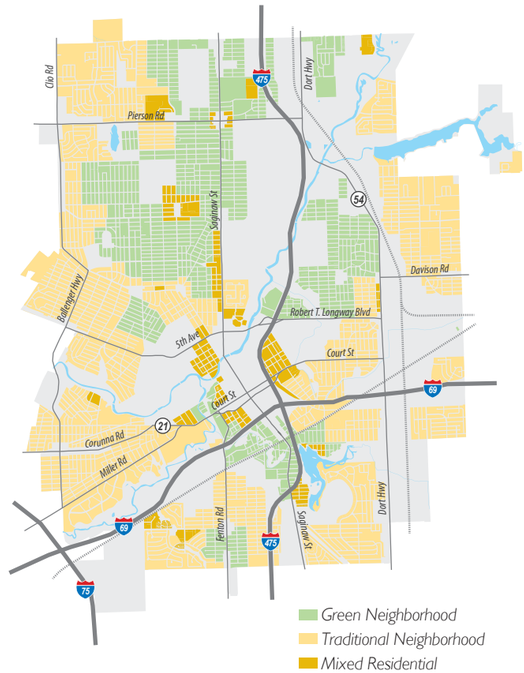
Additionally, the City of Flint has committed to working collaboratively on issues such as demolition (including FHC properties), blight elimination, public safety, and sale of rehabilitated homes to FHC in better connected neighborhoods. Relocated housing could be in the form of multi-family housing, a shared market/subsidized structure, or scattered infill units.

Section 3

Through HUD's Section 3 program, the City of Flint and the FHC can also facilitate local economic development in concert with implementation of various public and affordable housing initiatives. Under Section 3, recipients of certain HUD financial assistance must provide job training, employment, and contract opportunities for low- or very low-income residents to the greatest extent possible, in connection with projects and activities in their neighborhoods.







DEVELOPING AN INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

Flint is a diverse community with numerous neighborhoods, commercial districts, and distinct areas. As such, it is important that the Master Plan strategies, services, and funding are applied in a manner that tailors to the unique needs of each unique place. An investment framework is needed to assist in the stabilization, or transition, of Flint's distinct districts and neighborhoods.

As discussed in the following section, the primary components needed to establish and update the City Investment Framework include:

- Localized community input;
- An understanding of Land Use Plan policies within each area; and,
- Detailed market and demographic data.

Community & Neighborhood Involvement

An understanding of local issues and community participation are crucial to the implementation of the Master Plan, and the Housing and Neighborhood Plan should be used as a tool for organizing and engaging residents. The desired location of residential areas as identified in the Land Use Plan should serve as the focus of neighborhood planning areas. Significant city initiatives can then be organized around planning area geographies. City officials should also be involved in establishing formal neighborhood planning areas; however it is likely that planning areas will cross ward boundaries, and representation from multiple wards will be needed.

Once planning areas are established, community liaisons, such as block group leaders, should also be appointed as neighborhood points of contact for City staff.

Building Neighborhood Capacity Program

The City was recently awarded a Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BNCP) grant for the area generally bounded by Carpenter Road on the north, the Flint River to the east, Pierson Road to the south, and Dupont Street on the west. The Planning Department will begin working with community groups and stakeholders in 2014 to create and implement a comprehensive revitalization plan and make effective use of, and attract a range of federal, state and local resources. Once the revitalization plan is developed, the Planning Department has committed to working with residents and stakeholders to translate their vision into an officially adopted neighborhood plan.

The Planning Department should utilize the BNCP as a model for establishing future planning areas and neighborhood plans. Utilizing the Land Use Plan as a foundation, the Planning Department should identify between 10 and 15 areas, similar in size to the BNCP neighborhood area, and complete neighborhood plans for these areas by 2020.

Leveraging Local Groups

Many of the areas in Flint have some form of active block club or neighborhood association. These groups should serve a central role in establishing effective neighborhood planning areas, and can be leveraged to help carry out neighborhood-based initiatives. Where possible, existing neighborhood groups can also help disseminate information and gather feedback in City initiatives.

Community Resource: Flint Neighborhoods United

Flint Neighborhoods United is a coalition of block club, neighborhood association, and crime watch captains and presidents who come together on the first Saturday of each month to share information and leverage their resources to create positive change throughout the Flint community. Groups like Flint Neighborhoods United should continue to be leveraged by City staff and officials as valuable resources in identifying issues and vetting potential projects taking place within Flint's neighborhoods.

Land Use Plan Implications

Building from community input regarding desired land use and development, the Land Use Plan was further refined utilizing the data discussed in the forthcoming Neighborhood Assessment section. As such, the residential areas identified in the Land Use Plan represent a preliminary framework around which City policies should be built. This framework should be used to focus City initiatives and prioritize investment of resources such as funding for demolitions and target areas for incentives funded through HUD's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

Neighborhood Assessment

Maintaining an updated inventory of Flint's neighborhoods and local knowledge of existing conditions will be essential to the effective implementation of blight elimination strategies and the investment of the City's resources.

Housing Conditions

As part of the Master Plan process, City staff conducted a housing conditions assessment. This ground-level assessment provides an analysis of the general condition of housing throughout the City and within individual neighborhoods. The conditions assessment was a foundational step for data gathering related to the Master Plan and should be updated every two years to help guide decision-making processes regarding long-term housing projects such as demolition, new builds, and rehabilitation. The inventory will also allow the City and its partners to track stabilization progress within each neighborhood planning area.

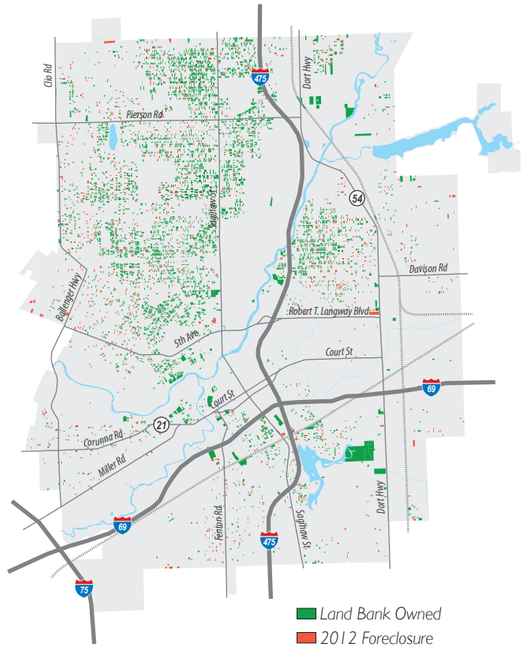
Assessment Procedure

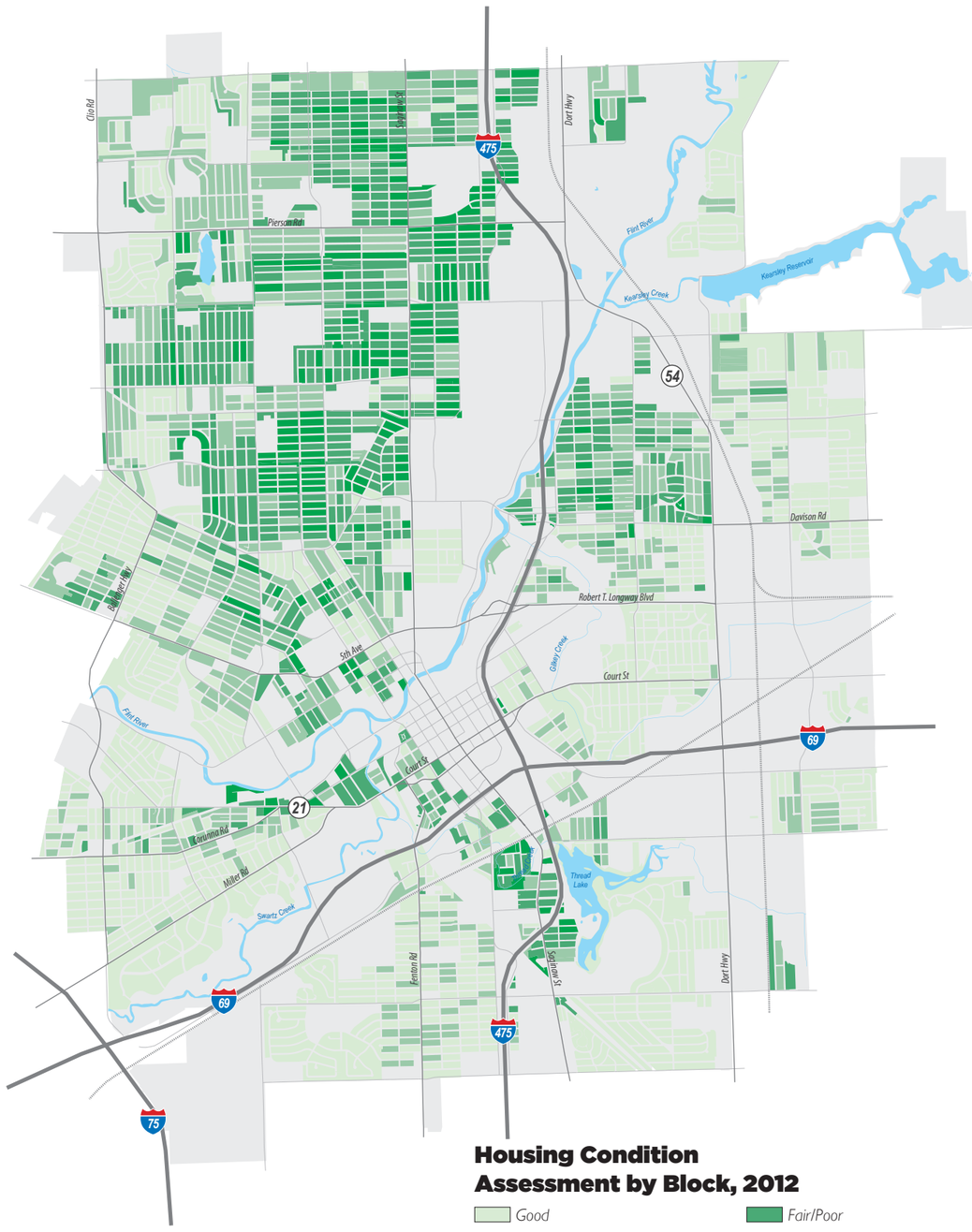
City staff partnered with the Community Foundation of Greater Flint and twenty-seven community groups to work together on this project. City staff held three trainings with the groups using a modified ranking system (1-5 scale) derived from Data Driven Detroit and the Genesee County Land Bank. Participants were required to rank every residential parcel within their boundaries either good (1), fair (2), poor (3), or sub-standard (4), including all vacant lots (VL) as well.

City-wide Statistics

In all, 52,095 residential parcels were assessed. Of those, 11,333 (22%) were vacant lots, and 40,762 (78%) contained a residential structure. Residential structures were rated as follows:

- "Good" - 25,957 (50%)
- "Fair" - 9,192 (18%)
- "Poor" - 2,840 (6%)
- "Substandard" - 2,774 (5%)



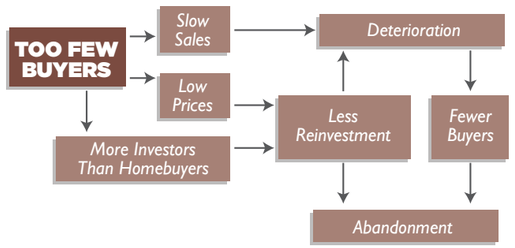


Market & Demographic Conditions

When combined with an understanding of housing conditions and vacancy, housing value, and other market and demographic data, an accurate picture of neighborhood quality is provided. This data also provides a means of quantitative benchmarking and assessing progress in areas targeted for investment and stabilization.

As noted in the Housing Market Conditions Assessment (August 2013), authored by the Center for Community Progress, a firm understanding of market dynamics at the neighborhood level is essential to developing an investment framework that addresses blight and stabilizes neighborhoods.

Vicious Cycle of Low Demand
HOUSING MARKET CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT
FLINT, MICHIGAN



Source: *Center for Community Progress, Alan Mallach with the assistance of Peyton Heins*

Example: Housing Values

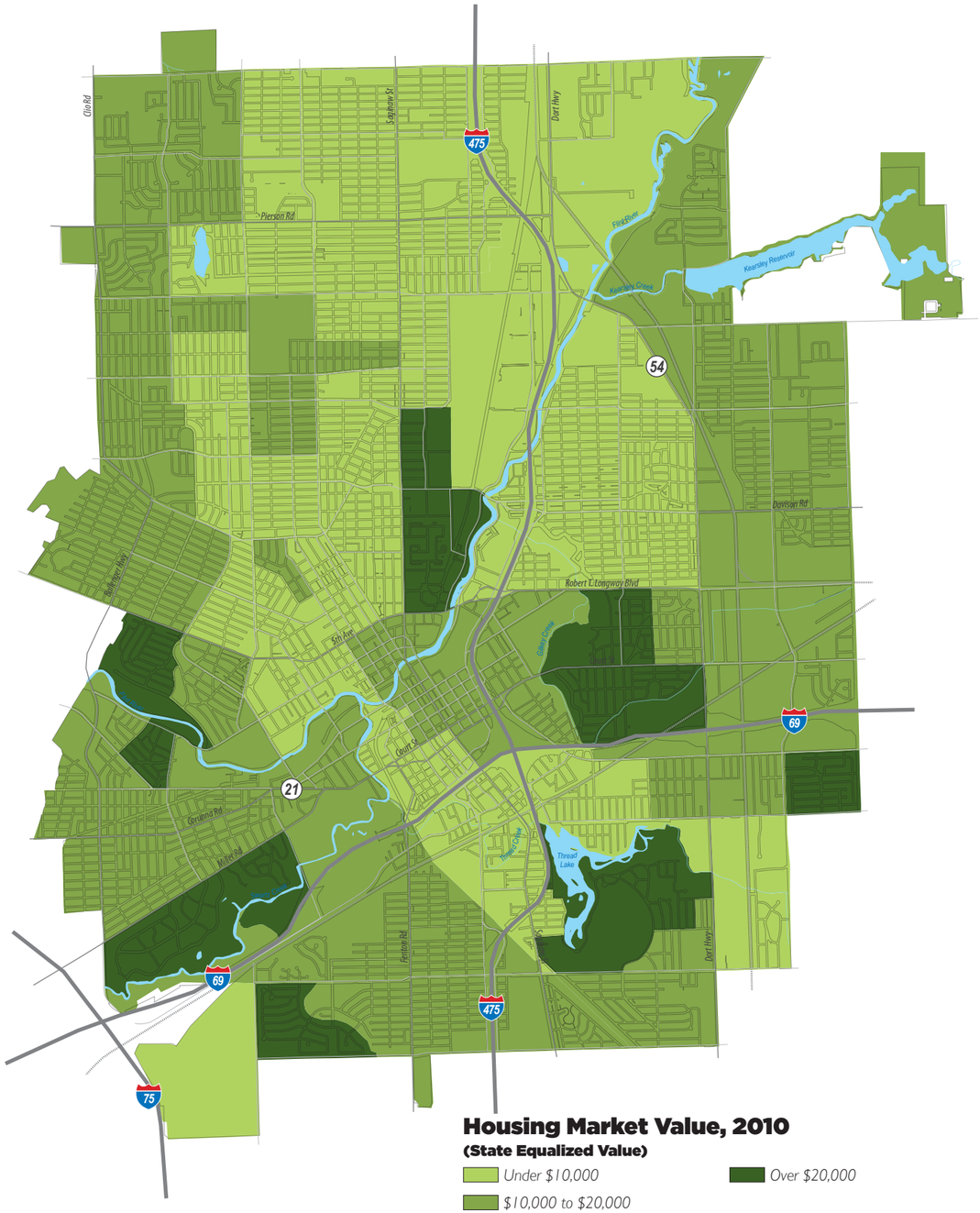
The figure on the following page, indicates housing values based on average State Equalized Value (SEV) for single family residential housing units. SEV is generally the equivalent of about half of market value. Areas with an average SEV below $10,000 are generally below the average for the City of Flint as a whole, while areas with an average SEV greater than $10,000 are greater than average for the City of Flint as a whole. State Equalized Value, and other similar market-driven data, should be inventoried and assessed on a biennial basis in conjunction with a city-wide housing conditions assessment.

Example: Youth Population

From a demographic perspective, the City should also regularly review trends in regard to the distribution of various groups. As an example, knowledge of how Flint's youth population is distributed throughout the community can be used to help inform strategies related to such topics as community services, education, and parks. As shown in the following figure, Flint's east side area (bound by Dort Hwy., the Flint River, and Longway Blvd.) is home to more than 2,600 youth.

While the majority of this area is designated as a Green Neighborhood place type, the east side is home to a significant youth population in need of targeted services. Local elementary and middle school facilities have recently been closed in this area, which means that youth programming must come from other resources.

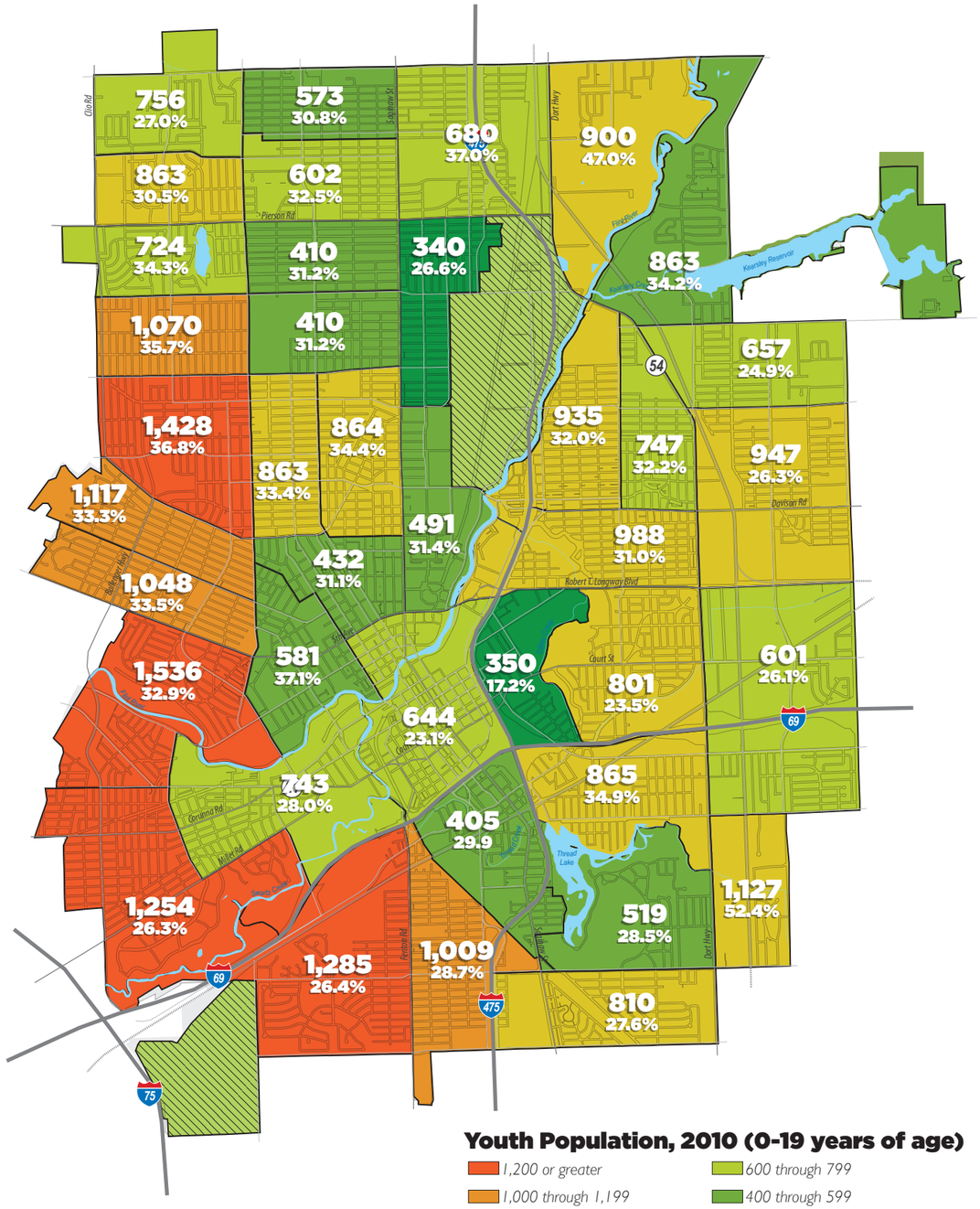
> *"Where some demand exists, it may be possible to design strategies that can build on that demand, and stabilize a neighborhood that might otherwise risk future decay and abandonment. Where little or no demand exists, other strategies, which may involve land banking and future green reuses, may be more appropriate. Similarly, code enforcement can be an effective strategy where owners still see value in their properties and will bring them up to code rather than lose them. In an area where few owners consider their properties to have any value, aggressive code enforcement may simply hasten the day when they walk away."*
>
> - Alan Mallach, Center for Community Progress



Housing Market Value, 2010
(State Equalized Value)

- *Under $10,000*
- *$10,000 to $20,000*
- *Over $20,000*

Analysis performed in conjunction with Genesee County Land Bank



Youth Population, 2010 (0-19 years of age)

- *1,200 or greater*
- *1,000 through 1,199*
- *800 through 999*
- *600 through 799*
- *400 through 599*
- *399 or below*

Source: 2010 US Census

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PRIORITIES

The following sections of the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan outline a three-tiered approach to revitalizing Flint's neighborhoods: 1) Neighborhood Stabilization, 2) Greening and Repurposing, and 3) Neighborhood Reinvestment. Strategies related to each tier are discussed with respect to the Land Use Plan.

Neighborhood Stabilization

The City of Flint is the beneficiary of approximately $23 million in state and federal funds to demolish more than 2,000 poor and substandard residential properties through the year 2015. Although this flurry of demolition will help transform the landscape of the City, it is estimated that the City still will have between 3,000 and 4,000 additional residential structures that need to be demolished. Once these structures are gone, the remaining lots will also require ongoing maintenance.

In addition to the residential areas, the surrounding commercial centers need desperate attention because very little funding has been available for commercial demolition or blight elimination. Neighborhood decline has further been exacerbated by the closure of stabilizing anchors, like schools, that have left a hole in the neighborhood fabric. While most neighborhoods throughout the City have been victims of economic decline and destabilization, "Green Neighborhoods" have experienced these forces most acutely. It is important to note that many of these neighborhoods were promised re-investment dollars that never came to be.

Because of the challenges that lie ahead, it is critical that the City and its partners make a real commitment to investing in neighborhood stabilization and redevelopment. This involves not just coordinating existing dollars, but securing new private and public sources of funding. If commercial structures are included in the City's total demolition need, it is estimated that a total of between $40M to $70M is required, in addition to $2M to $3M annually for maintenance.

Annual Commitment

An annual commitment of $10 million for neighborhood stabilization and redevelopment, over the next 20 years, will have a huge impact on residential areas beyond blight elimination. This will allow needed investment in home rehabilitation, limited housing infill, redevelopment of neighborhood anchors, and assistance for struggling commercial businesses. By establishing a challenging goal, the City hopes to inspire partners who are willing to invest in Flint and help transform its neighborhoods, the foundation of the City's future.

Demolition

Flint has roughly 12,000 vacant homes and 6,000 houses in poor/substandard condition. The demolition of these properties should be pursued to improve local quality of life and establish a clean, green slate for future investment and the repurposing of properties. In this short term, it is unlikely the City can demolish all substandard homes given the cost is more than $10,000 per house.

The City must continue to closely partner with the Genesee County Land Bank, which owns an estimated 15% of the residential parcels within Flint, and other key stakeholders to clean and green Flint's neighborhoods. Thorough code enforcement, input from empowered residents, proactive and data driven approaches, and strategic partnerships with community stakeholders should also be used to improve local neighborhoods.

Michigan Blight Elimination Grant

The Land Use Plan should also be used to coordinate the efforts of partner organizations such as the Genesee County Land Bank. For example, following completion of the housing conditions assessment the Genesee County Land Bank and City partnered to receive a $3.7 million grant to demolish 325 poor or substandard properties.

Troubled Asset Relief Program – Hardest Hit Funding

In June 2013, MSHDA officials were granted permission to create a blight elimination program using federal money originally set aside for mortgage relief to target demolition in 5 Michigan communities, one of them being Flint. Again, utilizing data collected through the housing assessment inventory, the City partnered with the Land Bank to submit a grant proposal of $25 million for residential demolition.

Formally awarded $20.1 million, 1,800 "poor" or "substandard" single family residential dwellings have been identified and scheduled for demolition to occur over an 18-month period beginning in late 2013 concluding in 2015.

In many cases, the areas targeted by the MBEG and Hardest Hit grants represent Traditional Neighborhood areas located adjacent to large Green Neighborhood areas, and City Corridors.

Property Maintenance

Maintaining residential properties is important to protect property values and preserve the character and desirability of residential neighborhoods. Deferred property maintenance is a significant issue in Flint. In many cases, properties have been abandoned, and maintenance responsibilities must be taken on by the City, the Genesee County Land Bank, or local community members. It is also recognized that in some instances, owners know there is a need to replace a roof or fix a structural issue with a home, but they are unable to afford the repairs.

The City should explore the creation of a property maintenance program to assist residents, particularly seniors, with affordable lawn cutting, snow removal, and other appropriate services. Given the City's limited resources, such a program could center on leveraging local community groups and other neighborhood organizations to provide equipment, or direct assistance to residents within their service area.

Code Enforcement

Effective code enforcement is vital to maintaining neighborhood character and limiting the impacts of disinvestment. The City has minimal resources dedicated to code enforcement and there is currently no program in place for Flint residents to report code violations. A strategic, targeted code enforcement program should be implemented to proactively identify violations, reverse decline in housing conditions, and improve quality of life in Flint's neighborhoods.

Blight Court

Developing a mechanism for residents to report violations, such as a 'Blight Court', will be a key component of this code enforcement program. Blight court is a legally authorized forum for residents to penalize landlords that do not maintain their property. Residents can take their claim to an administrative court which has the power to fine, garnish wages, place liens, and other penalties on negligent property owners. By giving residents the tools to enforce code violations, they have greater control over contributing to the revitalization of their neighborhoods.

Scrapping

Scrapping has become an epidemic in Flint. The destruction of property caused by the illegal scrapping of homes is creating a heightened perception of crime and abandonment, providing a breeding environments for illegal activity, and causing both direct and indirect economic losses to local businesses, homeowners, landlords, and community organizations.

Under the threat of scrapping, it is harder for the City of Flint to recruit new businesses and encourage new investment by existing businesses. The City of Flint has attempted to put in place new ordinances, a special investigative police unit, City Attorney office resources, and a network of volunteers that are working to protect their communities and properties. In addition to these local initiatives, the City should continue to advocate for the adoption of new State-wide laws that eliminate the ability of illegal scrappers to travel outside City limits to sell illegal haul.

Example of a large lot residence in Flint's East Side neighborhood

Flint community garden in action

Greening & Repurposing

It is estimated that there are more than 11,000 vacant residential lots within the City with an average vacancy rate near 20% in residential areas. The high amount of vacant land is a significant challenge for several reasons: it lowers property values, increases blight, and threatens public safety. Yet vacant land also represents a tremendous opportunity and potential.

As residents noted throughout the community outreach process, vacant land can be re-used for a wide variety of beneficial purposes, and there are many organizations and programs in place that dedicate resources to up-keeping and reusing vacant land. Where possible, the strategies outlined in this section should be implemented on a block-by-block basis, rather than sporadic infill sites, to have the greatest impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

Large Lot Residence

Large lot residences are those where responsible homeowners gain ownership and maintain additional lots adjacent to their principal residence. Large lot residences reduce residential density within a neighborhood while enhancing sense of ownership and local investment. By encouraging and facilitating the creation of large lot residences, the City can place vacant or derelict properties under the care of responsible homeowners while bringing properties back onto the tax roll and reducing the public costs associated with property maintenance.

Owners of large lot residences can take advantage of their more expansive properties through the addition of amenities that would otherwise not fit on a typical residential lot such as a larger garage, pool, large gardens, and play areas.

Large lot residences should be widely encouraged within Green Neighborhoods, but are also appropriate on a limited scale (1 to 2 side lot parcel maximum) within Traditional Neighborhoods.

Lot Consolidation

The Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA) implements this re-purposing method through its Side Lot Transfer Program. The program is currently restricted to the sale of a single side lot immediately adjacent to the applicant's home. As discussed within the GCLBA section of the Housing & Neighborhoods Plan, the City should work with the Land Bank to broaden the side lot transfer program to facilitate the assembly of multiple adjacent lots, including properties located to the rear of an applicant's property.

Zoning Regulations

In addition to facilitating lot consolidation through initiatives such as the side lot transfer program, the City should evaluate and revise zoning regulations to ensure that residents can make full use of the large lots they are maintaining. For example, limited lot widths of close to 40 feet, along with accessory structure and accessory use standards limiting the ability of many residential properties to lawfully erect a two-car garage. Zoning regulations should be revised to permit complementary accessory structures and uses on large-lot residential properties.

Neighborhood Open Space

Within Green Neighborhoods, community organizations such as block groups, should be encouraged to either purchase properties or engage in a long-term lease to establish contiguous areas of neighborhood open space. While these areas may be improved with limited recreation amenities such as a playlot, they typically function as well-cared-for areas of passive open space that enhance the natural beauty of a neighborhood.

Clean & Green

The Clean and Green Program, orchestrated by the Genesee County Land Bank, is an example of an existing program that can assist neighborhood organizations in maintaining vacant properties they have adopted. While the Clean and Green Program is largely a lawn and yard maintenance program, groups should be encouraged to maintain areas of neighborhood open space with low maintenance ground cover and native plantings. The effective use of native plantings would reduce water and fertilizer use, minimize fuel spent on mowing, and provide for year-round color and appeal.

The City should consider partnering with organizations like the Genesee County Land Bank to establish a Native Plantings Initiative that provides resources to community groups seeking to establish and maintain areas of neighborhood open space.

Low Maintenance Greening Demonstration Project

In the spring of 2013 the Genesee County Land Bank received a grant to fund a pilot program, known as the Low Maintenance Greening Demonstration Project, to plant clover as a low-growth ground cover on tax foreclosed lots owned by the Land Bank in neighborhoods throughout Flint. They will use a native white clover that grows 10-12 inches tall and only requires mowing twice per year. In addition to lowering maintenance costs, the clover is drought tolerant, provides nitrogen for the soil, and could provide forage for wildlife.

Pending success of the pilot project, the City should assist the Genesee County Land Bank and other partner organizations in pursuing additional funding to plant native, low-maintenance ground cover on other vacant properties throughout Flint.

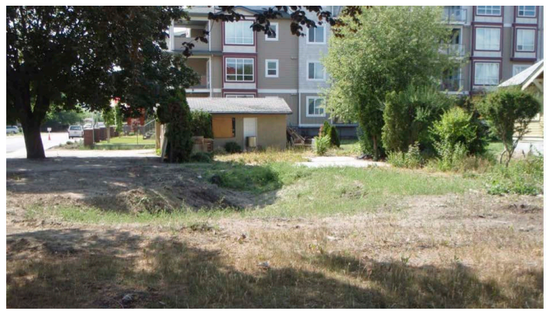
Community Gardens

Community gardens provide fresh food while enhancing a sense of community and providing a connection to the environment. Community gardens are maintained by local groups and neighborhood organizations, and are intended to provide a food source for local consumption. They should be encouraged within Traditional Neighborhoods, and permitted at a larger scale within Green Neighborhoods.

GREEN CITY ACRES

Green City Acres is a sustainable urban agriculture initiative in central Kelowna, British Columbia. The enterprise consists of 6 urban farm plots (totaling 4 acres) and is operated on front and backyards rented from landowners. This arrangement is mutually beneficial, as landowners receive produce and are saved the cost of lawn maintenance, in exchange for growing space. Produce grown by Green City Acres is sold at a farmer's market, to local restaurants, or distributed through their own CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program. The operation is focused on its mission of environmental change – all produce is grown with natural methods and the majority of transportation is "peddle powered," with bicycles being the principle transportation method. Green City Acres is sponsored by a local bicycle shop, Kelowna Cycle, who also maintains and repairs all of the operation's bicycles.

These images show the before and after result of the Green City Acres urban agriculture facility.



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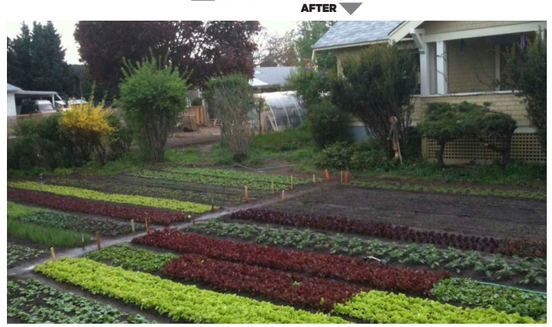

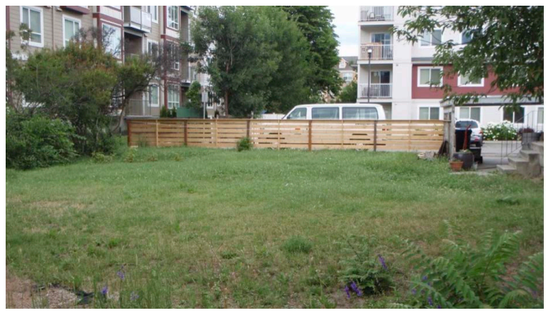

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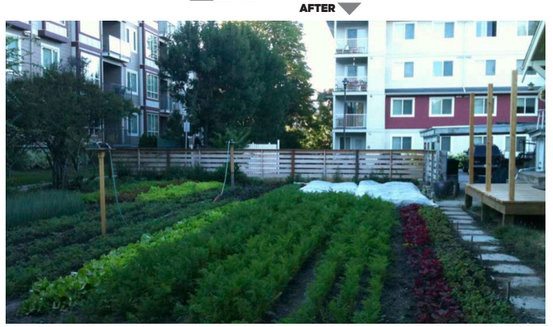


Self-Sufficient Living

Within Green Neighborhoods, large lot residences could also provide potential for self-sufficient households. A self-sufficient household is a household that strives to subsist on food grown from household gardens and agriculture. The City should evaluate the community desire for relaxed zoning regulations, that would allow for self-sufficient living to be permitted and feasible within Green Neighborhoods.

Limited Scale Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture is the practice of cultivating, processing, and distributing food. Unlike a community garden, urban agriculture is generally a commercial enterprise meant for income-earning purposes. Urban agriculture provides greater access to food, increases food security, and creates a local source for fresh vegetables, fruits, and generally healthy foods. Additional discussion regarding access to healthy food can be found in ***Chapter 10: Public Safety, Health, and Welfare Plan.***

Urban agriculture is appropriate within Flint's Green Neighborhoods and Green Innovation areas, but should not occur within Traditional Neighborhoods. Within a Green Neighborhood, urban agriculture in is intended to be of a limited scale, not exceeding more than 1-2 acres in size within a contiguous area.

The two-acre Flint River Farm near 12th and Saginaw represents the largest-scale urban agriculture appropriate for a Green Neighborhood. Urban agriculture activities within Green Innovation is intended to function at a larger commercial scale, serving the regional community.

Access to Water

A key hurdle to gardening within Flint, is access to water. High maintenance costs related to aging infrastructure, decreasing revenue base related to population loss, and increasing fees charged for water purchased from the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department have required the City to raise water rates.

The high cost of water is a frequent concern among Flint residents and businesses. If gardening and other greening initiatives are to be encouraged, the City must identify strategies to help groups offset the high costs of City water used in irrigation. For example, the City could partner with local universities and colleges to evaluate the use of a solar-powered pumping systems that could pull water from the Flint River, providing a non-potable water source for irrigation in select areas.

School Reuse

In many of Flint's neighborhoods, schools historically served as anchors for civic and social life. However, as demographics change and schools close, many areas of the City have lost their social bond. It is critical that the City consider ways of re-using these facilities in order to capitalize on an existing resource, and strengthen local identity and character.

As individual sites are considered for reuse, priority should be given to uses that fit within the proposed typology of the context as identified in the Land Use chapter.

For instance, in traditional or green neighborhoods, a more conventional reuse of a school can be a community center or small retail center to function as a social hub. In green innovation areas, a former school could serve as a space for research and offices.

In addition, reusing school property with apartments or senior housing could further diversify the local housing stock. A larger discussion of the adaptive reuse of schools, including successful examples, is located in ***Chapter 8: Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan.***

HASSELBRING PARK

One such example is a church that now occupies the former Gundry Elementary School facility at Austin and Dupont, adjacent to Hasselbring Park. This serves as a positive model of the adaptive re-use of a school facility that could be echoed in other parts of the community. The church maintains the facility and grounds, mitigating the negative impact that a large derelict property could have on the surrounding residential properties.

METAWANENEE HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD

The Metawanenee Hills Neighborhood is a successful example of integrating an affordable rental housing project into an established, predominantly single family community. The 24-unit project was developed by the Salem Housing Community Development Corporation and funded by Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). The project was designed to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and managed by community members, as desired by stakeholders in the Kings/Wood/Metawanenee Hills Neighborhoods. Partners during the first phase of development included the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Genesee County Land Bank Authority. Rental housing options include high-quality, single family homes and duplexes which match the character of the neighborhood with units to accommodate homeowners at varying stages of life. As a priority redevelopment area, the neighborhood will experience additional infrastructure improvements and home ownership opportunities through the 2010-2016 funding cycles.

Neighborhood Reinvestment Strategies

Housing Programs – Closing the Gap

Achieving equitable housing relies heavily on the City's ability to ensure quality, affordable rental and homeownership opportunities that are accessible to all. It is imperative that the City partner with groups that help low-income and minority home buyers obtain fair financing options, as well as provide incentives to non-profit and private developers to build and maintain affordable housing developments. Providing well-maintained rental and owner occupied units, should be another high-priority for the City so that all citizens have access to safe and sanitary housing conditions.

City Role in Providing Funding Mechanisms

To help expand homeownership opportunities, the City should take an active role in supporting home financing assistance programs and affordable housing development. These programs promote equitable neighborhood developments by making homeownership more accessible to people of all income levels. To help streamline the process, it is recommended that the City establish a single point-of-contact for inquiries regarding tools available to potential developers and investors. Furthermore, the City can help implement affordable housing developments by collaborating with non-profit agencies on state and federal grant proposals.

Housing Revolving Loan

Partnerships with local non-profit affordable housing agencies should be pursued by the City to establish an affordable housing revolving loan fund. This type of fund helps finance land acquisition, predevelopment costs, and construction of affordable rental or homeownership housing communities by offering below-market interest rate loans for qualified borrowers. Potential borrowers could include private and non-profit developers, faith-based groups, public agencies ,and non-profit agencies that are interested in developing affordable housing properties.

The source of revenue for this fund can derive from dedicated revenue sources such as a local real estate transfer tax to penalties on late payments of real estate taxes. In most cases, housing trust funds are targeted for individuals and families earning no more than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

The City should also continue to encourage developers and community development organizations to apply for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) to increase the supply of housing for low-income families in Flint. This federal program awards tax credits to state housing finance agencies that pass these credits on to developers of qualifying projects.

First Time Home Buyers

To help serve first time home buyers, the Flint Housing Commission (FHC) provides homeownership assistance through its Housing Choice Voucher Program. Families must meet minimum income requirements, possess income from sources other than public assistance, complete a housing counseling program, and fulfill any other requirements as determined by the public housing commission. Forty-three housing choice vouchers are to be utilized for home ownership opportunities for low-income families.

In addition to Housing Choice Vouchers, the City should promote the establishment of a Home Purchase Assistance Program that helps bridge the gap for low- to moderate-income home buyers that cannot afford down payments or closing costs. In many instances, these low-interest or interest-free loans are forgivable if the homeowner is a primary resident for a certain number of years.

Sweat Equity Programs

Sweat equity programs offer a "self help" approach to affordable housing by giving low-income families and individuals the opportunity to reduce the cost of a home, in return for their labor to construct it. Salem Housing Community Development Corporation and Habitat for Humanity are two examples of non-profit organizations with excellent long-term success rates, and owners that are truly invested in their properties.

State and federal entities no longer offer this program. However, Habitat for Humanity is still receiving federal funding for their sweat equity model.

There are some examples of cities establishing sweat equity programs, such as Washington D.C.'s experiment in 2012 to reduce homelessness and provide job training skills. The City should consider potential partners for initiating its own sweat equity program to increase homeownership opportunities and job skills among welfare recipients.

Affordable Housing Development Incentives

There are a number of incentives that promote the development of affordable housing. Density bonuses are a popular incentive for enticing developers to designate a percentage of affordable units in exchange for allowing the developers to build more units than a current zoning ordinance allows. Expedited permitting for affordable housing projects is another incentive commonly used by cities to make affordable housing more attractive to developers. The development review process is often cumbersome which adds to costs. Therefore, fast-tracking the review process is an effective way to reduce developer costs without adding any financial burden to the local jurisdiction.

The City of Flint should consider implementing Inclusionary Zoning, a regulatory tool that requires a certain percentage of total units to be affordable in all new developments. This tool is often paired with density bonuses to reduce developer's costs.

Neighborhood Improvement Funding

The City of Flint has utilized two primary sources of funding for neighborhood improvement projects in the past: Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP). CDBG funds are utilized for a wide range of programs with the overall goal of providing quality housing, increasing economic opportunities, and improving the overall quality of life for vulnerable communities.

The Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) was funded by the CDBG program, but has been discontinued, as it was part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The City of Flint has received more than $35 million in NSP funding since 2009. If NSP, or a similar program, is reinstated, the City should seek funds and use them on areas identified on the Land Use Plan as Traditional Neighborhoods, Green Neighborhoods, or Mixed Residential.

MSHDA Landlord Rental Rehabilitation (LRR)

The LRR program offers assistance to landlords for rental facility improvements with HOME funds provided by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). In the 2011-12 program year, LRR was awarded $300,000 and targeted two Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) areas. The program

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE: CARRIAGE TOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Carriage Town Historic District's boundaries are the Flint River on the south, Fifth Avenue on the north, Begole Street and Atwood Stadium on the west, and North Saginaw Street on the east. As the historic site of the Durant-Dort Carriage Company, Carriage Town has been part of the Motor Cities-Automobile National Heritage Area under the National Park Service since 1998.

In addition to its link to the auto industry, the Carriage Town area is also the location of a Native American burial site. This burial site is from the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe and was discovered near Stone Street and Third Avenue. An archaeological excavation was undertaken to recover ancestral human remains from a site. In recognition of this discovery, this site should be protected as a green space and any future construction activity in the area should be sensitive to its cultural significance.

Source: Ziibiwing Center, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan

Flint's Historic Districts and Sites

intended to assist 20 landlords in 2011-12. However, only three participants were enrolled when the 2011-2016 Consolidation Plan was completed. The City should work with affordable housing groups to promote this program to support the Consolidated Plan's goal of providing more decent, affordable housing, and better living conditions for Flint residents.

Smith Village Homeownership Zone

The Renaissance of Smith Village is a mixed-income development centrally located in downtown Flint. The project was funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in addition to a combination of other federal, City, and private development funding sources. The funds assisted in the acquisition of vacant land and deteriorated dwellings, demolition, the rehabilitation of structures, and public infrastructure improvements.

The City of Flint partnered with Genesee County Land Bank, Metro Community Development, and Flint Housing Commission to develop Smith Village. It consists of 83 energy efficient, single family homes that are designed to provide homeowners with a variety of amenities at a discounted value.

The mix of income limits include 43 homes available to homebuyers earning less than 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI) and 40 homes open to moderate income homebuyers earning up to 120% of AMI.

The Smith Village project provides needed high-quality infill housing in an area of the community where scattered vacant lots and dwellings previously existed. Ultimately, this significant project has created a broad range of new, affordable, safe, and sanitary housing opportunities, as well as community services for all ages within close access to transportation and centers of employment.

Owner Occupied Rehab & Emergency Programs

Maintaining safe and attractive homes are an important aspect to neighborhood stabilization efforts in Flint. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program offers funding for the repair, rehabilitation, or reconstruction of owner-occupied units. HOME block grants are another source of federal funding that can be used for rehabilitation financing assistance to eligible homeowners and new home buyers. These programs are essential for low-income homeowners that are underwater and unable to secure a home equity loan for repairs.

In addition to promoting the use of federal funds, the City should also support a local Housing Rehabilitation Program that caters to low- to moderate-income homeowners by offering low-interest loans for home rehabilitation and maintenance.

Homelessness

As evidenced by the 3,943 homeless individuals that were serviced by support agencies in 2012, homelessness is a significant issue in Flint and Genesee County. The City should continue to support initiatives to end homelessness taken by partner organizations, such as Flint/Genesee County Continuum of Care, and work with these partners to develop a formal three-phased approach to battling homelessness that provides: 1) emergency shelter; 2) transitional housing; and 3) permanent housing solutions.

As a part of this strategy, the City should also promote Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program (formerly Emergency Shelter Grants) to reduce homelessness and provide immediate assistance to families in need of transition housing. This program funds street outreach, emergency shelters, homeless prevention and rapid re-housing components, and data collection through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Veteran's Housing

A new Phoenix Apartments development, recently approved by the Flint Planning Commission, could soon bring 78 units for homeless or at-risk to be homeless veterans. The $15 million development is awaiting tax credits to fund the construction of these one-bedroom apartments. It is anticipated that this project will receive 80% of its funding from the federal government, and will provide housing for 150 to 200 veterans each year.

Historic Districts

There are many advantages to establishing historic districts in cities. Not only do these districts preserve the unique character of a neighborhood, they can promote a sense of place, encourage community cohesiveness, protect property values, and enhance business recruitment potential. However, houses in such districts are often costly to maintain. Currently the Flint Historic District Commission (FHDC) oversees 6 historic districts, 13 historic sites, and more than 50 historic properties.

Balancing Preservation with Private Property Interests

Some property owners have criticized the FHDC and some local organizations such as the Carriage Town Historic Neighborhood Association for being too restrictive in its application of design guidelines for the rehabilitation of homes.

The FHDC should work closely with residents and neighborhood associations to address concerns related to the interpretation of preservation guidelines and requirements. District designations and related regulations should aim to preserve vital community character and historic significance, without placing undue burden on property owners seeking to reinvest in the community.

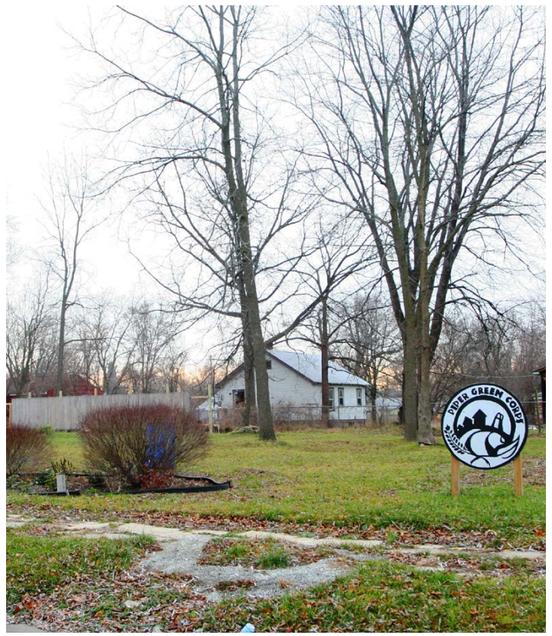
The City should reevaluate regulations being applied within Flint's historic districts and assist homeowners in procuring financing or grants to reinvest in or maintain on their homes (e.g. tuckpointing, roof replacement, etc.). Forging relationships with institutional partners, in and around historic districts, could play a significant role in securing funding for such grants.

Demolition by Neglect

Property owners within some of Flint's historic districts have ceased to maintain or invest in their historic properties, allowing them to deteriorate to the point that demolition is the only solution to making use of the property. Moving forward, the City should be more proactive in halting this practice, commonly known as demolition by neglect.

Efforts to protect the integrity of the City's historic districts and properties should be tied to the strengthened code enforcement and blight elimination strategies discussed earlier in the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan.

The City of Flint remains dedicated to investment in historic areas and is committed to adhering to the principles of historic preservation. However, there are currently many structures in Flint's historic districts, that have already lost their historical significance through decades of disinvestment and neglect, in addition to arson and scrapping.



Genesee County Land Bank Authority

The Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA) is a non-profit government organization that annually receives tax-foreclosed properties in Genesee County, most of which are located in Flint. The Land Bank was created so that local government could gain control over tax-foreclosed properties, manage the challenges associated with them, and begin to put them back into productive use. As shown in the accompanying figure, the Genesee County Land Bank owned 8,335 properties within the City of Flint, as of June 2013. This represents an estimated 18% of the parcels within the City.

Within Genesee County, the Genesee County Land Bank has returned thousands of properties to some form of productive reuse. In doing so, it has helped transform neglected tax-delinquent properties into productive, tax revenue-generating properties, while achieving the long-term community goals of affordable housing and neighborhood stabilization.

As discussed previously, the Genesee County Land Bank is a key figure in repurposing vacant residential properties to more efficient uses. Each of the Genesee County Land Bank's programs are described here.

Clean & Green Program

Since 2003, the Clean & Green Program gives community organizations the opportunity to control land available in their area through seasonal cleaning, maintenance, and greening. It has adapted to community changes and grown in numbers at the same time. In 2012, the Clean and Green Program had 43 participating groups including more than 180 youth participants. The Program maintained more than 1,300 lots every three weeks and completed more than 7,200 "mowings."

The use of the Clean & Green Program should be focused in Traditional Neighborhoods and blocks within Green Neighborhoods and City Corridors that have numerous existing structures and residents.

Demolition

The Genesee County Land Bank demolishes vacant and blighted housing units. Typically, the Genesee County Land Bank demolishes structures that it owns. In some cases, the Genesee County Land Bank demolishes privately owned structures through partnerships with the City. This increases public safety, appearance, and property values. Since the Genesee County Land Bank formed, it has environmentally cleaned and demolished more than 2,300 structures.

Recently, through the award of two separate grant opportunities, 2,000 additional residential structures are slated for removal. Approximately 256 structures are planned for demolition through the state funded Michigan Blight Elimination Grant, while roughly 1,800 are slated for demolition by virtue of the federally administered Hardest Hit Funding.

The outcome of these subsequent grant opportunities will result in roughly 40% of the necessary demolitions occurring over an 18-month span, creating an immediate impact within Flint's neighborhoods.

Adopt-A-Lot & Lease-A-Lot

Adopt-A-Lot provides residents and organizations the opportunity to green and garden on a year-to-year basis. The program is most often used for short-term greening and gardening. Lease-A-Lot is a way for residents and organizations to green and garden on a 2-5 year basis. Lease-A-Lot is most often used for longer term greening and gardening projects.

Housing Sales

The Genesee County Land Bank supports homeownership and investment in tax-foreclosed properties through housing sales. In addition to accepting cash, the Genesee County Land Bank sells most of its housing units under land contract, often with credit for renovations going towards the purchase price. This ensures that the purchaser will help stabilize the neighborhood by improving their property. The Genesee County Land Bank offers housing units for sale that are in good or fair condition.

Side Lot Sales

Homeowners with vacant Genesee County Land Bank property adjacent to their home have the opportunity to purchase that property as a Side Lot for $25 plus administration and filing fees totaling $39. Residents can purchase one adjacent parcel at this price. Residents are able to purchase additional adjacent vacant parcels at an average of $150 in the City.

Side Lot sales should be promoted and employed throughout Green Neighborhoods. To offset the potential for land speculation, the City should consider revising its zoning regulations to limit residential or commercial development within properties assembled through the Side Lot program. This joint approach will enable responsible property owners to expand the amount of land under their care, while bringing more properties back onto the tax roll.

Housing Renovation

As of 2013 the Genesee County Land Bank had renovated 107 homes with funding from the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program. The program is designed to simultaneously remove blight and create quality affordable housing in strategic areas. The Genesee County Land Bank renovates tax-foreclosed houses, as funding is available to do so.

Blight Management

The Genesee County Land Bank works to diminish and eliminate blight in Flint through weed and trash abatement, and boarding of vacant properties. The Genesee County Land Bank's Blight Management Team secures vacant properties by boarding windows and doors year-round. The Land Bank also supplies boards to neighborhood groups that want to secure vacant properties in their neighborhoods. Seasonal crews are hired to remove trash and mow overgrown grass. The crews sweep the City of Flint, mowing all blighted properties, regardless of ownership. Since 2009 the crews have removed more than 2,500 tons (5 million pounds) of garbage from blighted properties.

Planning & Neighborhood Revitalization

The Land Bank's Planning & Neighborhood Revitalization Team works to revitalize neighborhoods affected by tax-foreclosure. Through planning, development, and community engagement, the team responds to the challenges posed by vacant properties with coordinated strategies. The Community Outreach Coordinator participates in roughly 400 community meetings annually in order to ensure connection to the community. Planning & Neighborhood Revitalization efforts include demolition, Clean & Green, Adopt- and Lease-A-Lot, the Citizens Advisory Council.

Coordinating Efforts

As the owner of approximately 18% of all residential parcels in Flint, the Land Bank must continue to be partner with the City in repositioning, repurposing, and revitalizing Flint's neighborhoods. Building off the neighborhood assessment provided in the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan, the City and Land Bank should continue to share data and work toward the common goals of neighborhood stabilization, greening and repurposing, and reinvestment. Strategies designed to achieve these goals should be directly tied to the Traditional Neighborhood, Green Neighborhood, and Mixed Residential areas identified in the Land Use Plan.

Citizens' Advisory Council

The Land Bank's Citizens' Advisory Council is an 18-member body, consisting of representatives from each of the City of Flint's nine wards, and each of Genesee County's nine Districts. The council is a sounding board for the community that communicates local concerns regarding Land Bank policies and programs and helps disseminate information about Land Bank initiatives. The Land Bank should continue to strengthen its citizen advisory council as a mechanism to improve its outreach and community engagement efforts, and gauge the effectiveness and public perception of its policies.

CITY OF FLINT
Land Bank Properties

The Genesee County Land Bank Authority (GCLBA) owns more than 8,000 properties in the City. These properties, which are tax-foreclosed, are transferred to the GCLBA with the goal of preparing and positioning them for productive use. In almost all cases, the acquired properties are vacant, abandoned, and even blighted.

As tax foreclosures have increased dramatically over the past 10 years, the GCLBA now receives thousands of properties every year. The GCLBA employs Planning & Neighborhood Revitalization, Blight Management, and property Sales in order to respond to tax-foreclosure and strengthen neighborhoods.

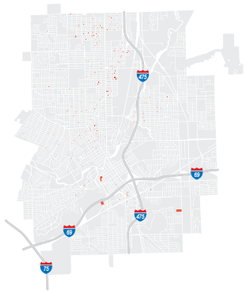
The Master Plan should draw upon the benefits of the Land Bank, develop a comprehensive city-wide approach to addressing the prevalence of vacant properties, and coordinate with entities such as the GCLBA to effectively utilize resources to revitalize neighborhoods and leverage properties in a way that maximizes benefits to the City and the neighborhoods.

Vacant & Foreclosed Properties Legend

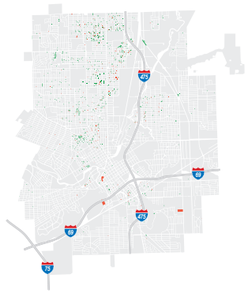
Land Bank Owned

2012 Foreclosure (may not be acquired)

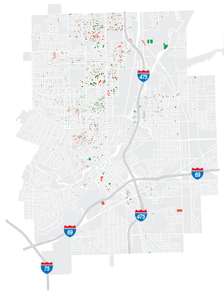
Property Acquisitions 2002-2012



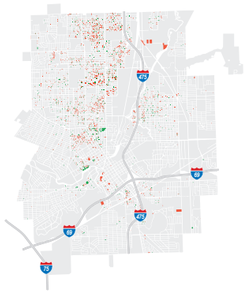
Owned in 2002



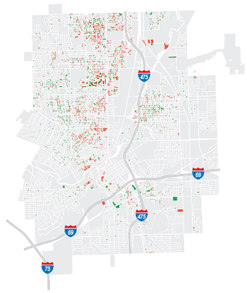
Owned in 2002
Acquired in 2003 & 2004



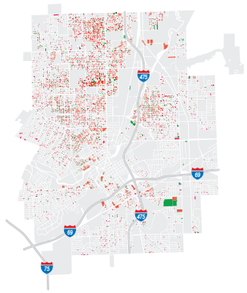
Owned in 2004
Acquired in 2005 & 2006



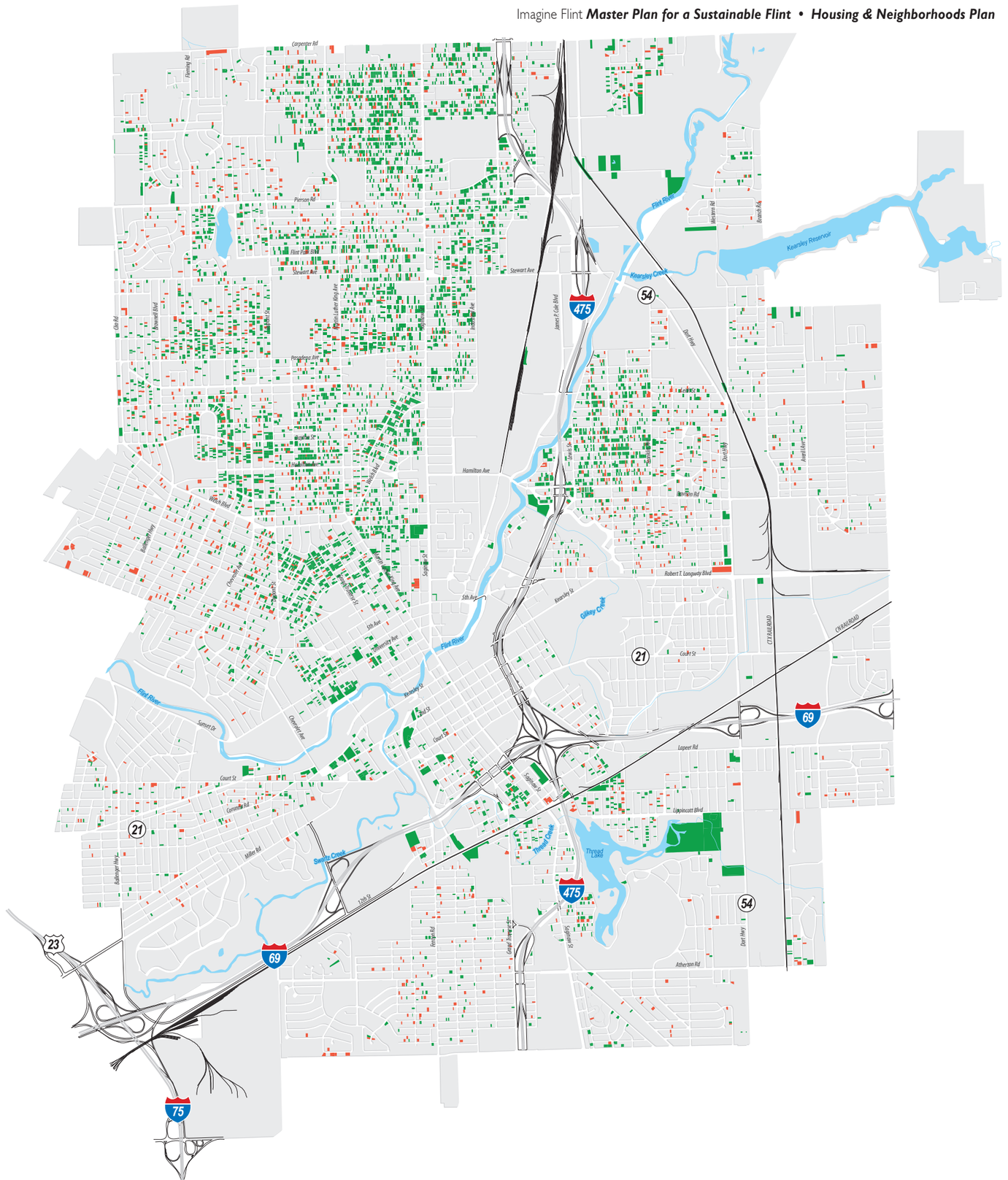
Owned in 2006
Acquired in 2007 & 2008



Owned in 2008
Acquired in 2009 & 2010



Owned in 2010
Acquired in 2011 or Forclosed in 2012



5 HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents the strategies needed to implement the goals and objectives of the Housing and Neighborhoods Plan. Taken together, the objectives and strategies included in this section provide specific direction, and serve as a guide for the evaluation of development proposals and land use alternatives.

To provide the City with a reliable policy guide for decision-making, the objectives and strategies are based significantly on community input received through the master planning process. In addition to broad community input, these objectives and strategies are based on input from the 20-member Housing Advisory Group, Steering Committee, City officials, City staff, and observations and assessment from the Imagine Flint Project Team.

Implementation Matrix

The following Implementation Matrix groups strategies by topic within each objective and identifies anticipated time frame, relative cost, and the entities including City of Flint departments and partner organizations, potentially responsible for the implementation. The matrix also identifies key metrics needed to track implementation progress.

Time Frame

A general time frame is assigned to each strategy, considering the cost of various types of improvements and their ability to set other actions in motion. Generally, low-cost strategies with easy implementation are given the short-term time frame, though some other actions are given this designation based on their high level of priority in meeting community objectives or ensuring the safety of residents.

Each strategy in the Implementation Matrix is indicated with one of the following:

- ***Short:*** low-cost, ease of implementation, directly addressing top priorities or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years
- ***Medium:*** important actions that have some level of significant cost, and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years
- ***Long:*** actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time, or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation

Public Cost Estimate

Public cost estimate is represented by a scale ranging from $ to $$$. The costs in this column refers only to public costs. Below is a description of the cost scale:

- **$**: Actions that require primarily internal staff time requiring mostly regulatory changes, policy updates, or strategic partnerships with limited outside funding required
- **$$**: Actions that require outside consulting services assistance or relatively minor investment in infrastructure or project development
- **$$$**: Actions that require intensive planning, engineering, or design, and significant investment in infrastructure or project development

Responsible Entities & Partner Organizations

City government alone, is not capable of implementing the Master Plan. This is a community vision which relies upon Flint's greatest assets, its people and community stakeholders to help implement desired aspirations.

With regard to citing those entities responsible for implementation, it should be noted that it is anticipated that, from a policy standpoint, the Mayor and City Council will be involved in the majority of these actions.

Where a City Department should be involved, that department has been listed. Where general administrative leadership is needed, the City of Flint has been listed. Strategies such as recommended technical studies and analyses that would likely benefit from outside expertise, have also been highlighted.

Unforeseen Partnership Opportunities

Every effort was made to identify a comprehensive list of potential partner organizations for inclusion in the implementation matrix. As a community of over 100,000 with a rich history of volunteerism and over 100 foundations active in Genesee County, there may be instances where a deserving organization that is well-matched to one of the plan objectives or strategies has been excluded from a list of potential partners for a given topic.

Similarly, there may come a time when a partner organization identified in the implementation table merges with another organization or otherwise ceases to exist. As with the rest of the Master Plan, the implementation table is a flexible document that should be regularly updated and revised to reflect the evolving needs and assets of the Flint community.

Progress Indicator

Key progress indicators have been provided for each strategy grouping. Progress indicators identify quantifiable metrics for which data should be available on a regular basis, and indicate desired trends for each metric. These indicators represent measurable achievements that move the City toward realization of Master Plan objectives. These progress indicators will enable the City to monitor its effectiveness at implementing plan recommendations.

HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 1	**Establish individual neighborhood planning and investment frameworks to assist in neighborhood stabilization or transition.**				
Planning & Investment Framework	Building on the City's Land Use Plan, establish formal neighborhood planning areas to help direct services, funding, and implementation to uniquely defined areas of the City.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Genesee County Land Bank • Community Foundation of Greater Flint • Block Clubs/Neighborhood Associations	• Develop/update of at least two (2) Neighborhood Plans per year • Increase in proportion of housing units identified as in 'Good' condition • Decrease in vacant housing units • Increase in average State Equalized Value • Decrease in tax foreclosures • Increase in median sales price • Increase in proportion of home purchase mortgages relative to total home sales • Increase in owner-occupancy • Decrease in percent of homeowners with householder aged 55 or over
	Partner with neighborhood organizations and community groups to establish a biennial city-wide inventory program assessing vacancies and housing conditions.	Short	$		
	Evaluate biennially neighborhood-specific market and demographic data, along with appropriate metrics and indicators established in the Master Plan, to identify neighborhoods and neighborhood planning areas with changing market conditions.	Long	$		
	Distribute the allocation of City resources and use of stabilization and enhancement strategies within each neighborhood planning area, based on the interaction of future land use designation and local housing, market, and demographic characteristics.	Long	$		
Objective 2	**Eliminate blight and urban decay.**				
Comprehensive Strategy & Partnerships	Invest $10 million per year in neighborhood stabilization and redevelopment, with atleast 50% allocated to Green Neighborhoods and their associated Neighborhood Centers.	Long	$$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Genesee County Land Bank • Michigan State Housing Development Authority • HUD • Block Clubs/Neighborhood Associations	• Decrease in unoccupied, blighted housing units through demolition • Decrease in number of vacant school facilities • Decrease in property damage and scrapping reports • Increase in outside funding secured for demolition and blight elimination
	Working with community partners and stakeholders, design and implement a comprehensive strategy to eliminate blight throughout the City within five years, and then on an ongoing basis.	Long	$		
	Utilize the neighborhood planning and investment framework as a guide for the demolition of vacant or substandard structures.	Long	$		
	Closely coordinate demolitions with the Genesee County Land Bank in order to maximize impact and efficiency in removing blight.	Long	$		
	Bolster partnerships with state and federal agencies.	Long	$		
	Develop a plan in partnership with the Flint Community School District to market and repurpose vacant school sites for uses consistent with the Land Use Plan.	Short	$		
	Aggressively pursue funding opportunities from a range of sources, including local, state, and federal grants, to support various demolitions and blight elimination initiatives.	Long	$		
Codes & Enforcement	Update City ordinances, including the schedule of fines and fees, to deter property neglect.	Short	$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Block Clubs/Neighborhood Associations	• Increase in percent of cases resulting in compliance by voluntary action • Increase in percent of cases resulting in compliance through administrative/judicial action
	Deter irresponsible property ownership by enforcing rental registration and licensing programs, conducting rental inspections, and requiring compliance with housing maintenance standards.	Short	$		
	Develop a streamlined, proactive, and consistent code enforcement strategy.	Short	$		
	Establish a "Blight Court" to prosecute code violations.	Short	$$		
	Host formal code training workshops with neighborhood associations and community stakeholders, and enlist their support in identifying distressed properties (residential and non-residential) in need of security boarding, utility disconnections, and trash removal.	Medium	$		
Improve Neighborhoods	Develop a loan fund and tool bank to assist with the rehabilitation of homes and residential structures in good condition.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Genesee County Land Bank	• Increase in home improvement permits • Increase in grants/loan funds issued to home owners • Decrease in noise/air quality complaints
	Protect residential areas from the adverse impacts of adjacent incompatible land uses through techniques such as buffering or screening.	Long	$		
	Promote the repositioning of incompatible land uses in predominantly residential areas to reduce negative impacts of more intense uses such as heavy commercial or industrial.	Long	$		
Objective 3	**Support and improve partnerships and programs that reduce housing vacancies and strengthen neighborhoods.**				
Housing Vacancies	Partner with the Genesee County Land Bank and neighborhood associations to market infill sites in traditional neighborhoods for redevelopment.	Long	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Genesee County Land Bank • HUD • Community Development Organizations	• Decrease in vacant housing units • Increase in number of lots sold/leased through Land Bank programs • Decrease in tax foreclosures • Increase in average parcel size in Green Neighborhoods
	Work with the Land Bank to increase lot sales, lot adoptions, and leases of vacant land to responsible neighbors in Green Neighborhoods.	Long	$		
	Working with partner organizations, including HUD-approved housing counseling agencies, educate residents about the resources available on important home-owner issues such as mortgages, mortgage defaults, foreclosure, down payment financing, and credit issues.	Long	$		

HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 3	**Support and improve partnerships and programs that reduce housing vacancies and strengthen neighborhoods.**				
Attracting Residents	Make Flint a top choice for immigrants by engaging with immigration organizations, resettlement groups, local businesses, and area colleges and universities.	Long	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • DDA • Anchor institutiosn within the Innovation District • Area Colleges & Universities • Major Employers • Genesee County Land Bank	• Increase in percent immigrant population • Increase in proportion of Flint workers who live in Flint • Increase in student housing units
	Support existing housing programs targeting veterans, public safety and health personnel, and other key fields to ensure maximum participation in all of Flint's neighborhoods.	Long	$		
	Work with key employers and stakeholders to create a "Live Flint" program which would provide initial rent or down payment assistance in the Innovation District area, to young professionals.	Short	$$		
Sense of Community	Position the City's school and park facilities as neighborhood focal points through adaptive reuse of vacant facilities and programming.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Flint Community Schools • Block Clubs/Neighborhood Associations • Neighborhood groups within Historic Districts	• Decrease in number of vacant school facilities • Increase in number of special event permits and estimated special event attendance • Increase in community attendance and participation at public meetings • Increase in historic district property value
	Encourage neighborhood and community events, such as picnics, meet-ups, block parties, book clubs, and coffee meetings to strengthen the sense of community within the City and its neighborhoods.	Long	$		
	Host biennial meetings with the City's neighborhood organizations and community groups to celebrate successes, report on progress and exchange ideas.	Long	$		
	Develop and maintain a civic engagement strategy that helps increase the capacity of the public to participate in the decision making process.	Short	$		
	"Brand" neighborhoods like Carriage Town and S. Grand Traverse District using historic designations and unique attributes to increase community cohesiveness and property values.	Medium	$		
Objective 4	**Promote equity and social justice in housing.**				
Housing Discrimination	End housing discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.	Long	$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission • Other Genesee County Municipalities • Community Development Corporations • Genesee County Habitat for Humanity • Flint Housing Commission • Community Development Financial Institutions • HUD	• Increase in degree of economic integration as measured by the Gini Index per Census Tract • Decrease in racial segregation as measured by the Index of Dissimilarity per Census Tract • Increase in percent of 'visitable' homes
	Work with other jurisdictions in Genesee County to change local ordinances or zoning codes, such as minimum square footage requirements, that in effect deter low-income residents from residency.	Medium	$		
	Increase the percent of homes that are "visitable" by people with disabilities by aligning standards for new home construction and requiring new multi-family units of a certain size to have features such as power-assisted doors.	Long	$		
	Invest in the cultural competence of real estate agents, lenders, landlords, and decision-makers to improve their ability to serve diverse populations and raise awareness of the effects of implicit bias in housing.	Long	$		
	Create multi-income housing by integrating public and affordable housing into new developments.	Long	$$		
	Transition away from models of public housing that isolate low-income people and move towards mixed-income housing developments with access to transit and services.	Short	$$		
	Carry out inspections related to affordable housing to ensure green and healthy homes for all.	Short	$		
Home Finance	Partner with local banks and financial institutions to guarantee funding mechanisms for all types of affordable housing, including lending to non-profit organizations and community development corporations.	Medium	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Michigan State Housing Development Authority • HUD • Fair Housing Center of Eastern Michigan • Community Development Financial Institutions	• Decrease the difference in mortgage origination rates by race • Decrease differences in rental housing (based on results of "testers" on basis of disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, family status, etc.) • Increase in home ownership among low to moderate income households • Increase in number of land contract sales of Land Bank homes
	Advocate for an expanded federal and state role in financing affordable housing and developing mixed-income initiatives.	Short	$		
	Engage non-profit organizations and financial institutions to improve and expand programs that assist first-time homebuyers.	Short	$		
	Work with housing advocates to maintain an interface with financial institutions to address local lending risk, and the extension of credit to minority homebuyers.	Short	$		
	Explore ownership opportunities other than single family for low/moderate income individuals and families that may be challenged by the maintenance of a single family home.	Short	$		
	Improve opportunities for home ownership and home rehabilitation through a variety of programs and sources such as loans, tax abatements, down payment assistance and design assistance.	Short	$		

HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 5	**Diversify the City's housing stock to allow anyone to make Flint their home.**				
Housing Diversity	Revise the City's zoning ordinances to align with the Place Types established in the Land Use Plan.	Short	$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Genesee County Land Bank • DDA • University Avenue Corridor Coalition • Area Colleges & Universities • Genesee County Habitat for Humanity • Metro Community Development • Affordable Housing Developers	• Increase in single family home permits • Increase in multi-family dwelling permits • Increase in proportion of multi-family dwellings compared to single family homes • Increase in local (non-commuting) student population • Decrease in apartment vacancy rate
	Support the development of quality housing to balance out demolition; specifically, the creation of 5,000 units in Downtown Flint and more than 10,000 units in the Innovation District over the next 20 years.	Long	$$$		
	Promote residential development and redevelopment of a variety of housing and dwelling unit types and densities consistent with the Land Use Plan's place types to accommodate Flint's diverse population.	Long	$		
	Preserve and enhance "Traditional Neighborhoods," expand and improve "Green Neighborhoods," increase density in "Mixed Residential" areas, and promote mixed use developments in "Downtown" and key corridors and neighborhood centers.	Long	$		
	Continue to partner with housing organizations and promote the coordination of housing development initiatives to maximize the positive impacts on local housing conditions.	Short	$		
	Improve rental opportunities by mitigating landlord-tenant disputes and working collectively with landlords, tenants, and the community to develop and enforce property maintenance standards and practices.	Short	$		
	Support the retention and expansion of the City's colleges' and universities' enrollments to create an increased demand for student rental housing in the Downtown, Mixed Residential, and University Avenue Core place types.	Long	$		
Objective 6	**Ensure responsible and sustainable housing development.**				
Historic Preservation	Partner with the Flint Historic District Commission (FHDC) to maintain an inventory of historically and locally significant buildings, to support grant proposals for renovation, and raise awareness about Flint's historic significance.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • University Avenue Corridor Coalition • Flint Historic District Commission • Affordable Housing Developers • Neighborhood groups within Historic Districts	• Increase in property values within historic districts • Stabilization in number of historic properties remaining in tact • Increase in grant/loan money and tax credits awarded to historic property owners • Decrease in code violations by historic property owners
	Enforce existing regulations regarding Flint's historic homes and districts to ensure appropriate preservation.	Short	$		
	Incentivize maintenance, upkeep, and upgrades to keep homes within Historical Districts up to code, through mini-grants, tax abatements, education, and partnerships with local community groups and the FHDC.	Medium	$$		
	Promote the availability and use of Rehabilitation Tax Credits to historic sites and districts to fund renovation, rehabilitation, modernization and expansion.	Medium	$		
Sustainable Practices	Partner with energy companies to develop incentive programs to retrofit homes for increased energy efficiency.	Medium	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Consumers Energy • Amerigas • Flint Housing Commission • MTA • Affordable Housing Developers	• Per-dwelling increase in energy savings per public housing community • Increase in number of LEED-rated buildings • Increase in renewable energy accessory use permits • Increase in MTA boardings • Decrease in water consumption per residential and commercial user
	Coordinate with stakeholders to increase awareness of energy saving and water conservation practices in the home.	Long	$		
	Work with Flint Housing Commission to increase the sustainability of City-owned and managed housing units.	Long	$$$		
	Encourage the usage of best practices in green technology and sustainability in all new construction.	Long	$		
	Promote transit-oriented development to ensure lower carbon emissions and travel convenience.	Long	$		
Land Use Planning	Use green space to insulate neighborhoods susceptible to traffic pollution and noise.	Long	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Genesee County Land Bank	• Decrease in flood insurance claims • Decrease in number of noise/air pollution complaints
	Restrict construction on identified flood plains and other environmentally harmful locations.	Short	$		
	Protect residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses.	Long	$		
	Concentrate new housing starts and encourage reinvestment in neighborhood areas as recommended in the Land Use Plan.	Long	$		

MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT

6 TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY PLAN

VISION P. 115

GOAL & OBJECTIVES P. 117

RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES P. 119

IMPLEMENTATION P. 139

6 TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY PLAN
VISION, GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Imagine
an efficient, coordinated, and reliable transportation system for Flint, where an interactive network of trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, buses, and roads affords all citizens multiple modes of safe transit.

Imagine a Flint that is one of the most walkable and bikeable communities in all of Michigan.

Imagine a Flint that capitalizes on its strategic regional location, access to the interstate highway system, existing railroad infrastructure, and connection to Bishop International Airport to spark new industries and grow companies.

Over the next twenty years, Flint can achieve this vision. However, we must first face existing realities: Flint is overly reliant on the automobile, the City's infrastructure is far too large for the existing population, and the roadways and sidewalks are not friendly to bikers, pedestrians, and those with disabilities.

The Transportation and Mobility Plan is a roadmap to overcoming those obstacles and to actualizing a new community vision. By following the recommendations outlined in this chapter, Flint can build a sustainable, modern, and safe multi-modal transportation network, that efficiently provides for the needs of all people and businesses.

SOCIAL EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY

An equitable and sustainable transportation network efficiently provides a variety of mobility choices to residents of all ages, incomes, and abilities. Transportation and mobility refer not only to modes of movement, but also to their relationship with land use, public services, and the natural environment.

QUALITY OF LIFE

More and more, walking, biking, and easy access to goods and services are helping to define local quality of life. Transportation and mobility are important factors in providing citizens with healthy, affordable, and enjoyable lifestyle choices.

YOUTH

Engaging Flint's young residents in helping to shape the transportation system has immediate and long-term benefits. Safe bicycling and walking, which includes both infrastructure and education, fosters independence and provides recreation and exercise, while early involvement in the community inspires future investment as adults.

RESHAPING THE ECONOMY

Despite telecommuting and the expansion of data technologies, commerce will continue to require the movement of people and raw, unfinished goods. Similarly, safe access to education will remove barriers to developing a strong local workforce. Economic growth requires a modern transportation network that provides multiple transit options.

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

As Flint stabilizes and sees new investment, demands on the transportation network will change. The transportation system must adapt to emerging development patterns, land uses, industries, and lifestyle choices.

CIVIC LIFE

Transportation and mobility supports civic life in many ways. By providing access to services, organizations, and places that foster involvement – or by acting as public spaces themselves – streets, trails, sidewalks, and transit vehicles serve as a critical link between the people of Flint.

GOAL:

The City of Flint will have a sustainable, modern, and safe multi-modal transportation network that efficiently provides for the needs of all people and businesses.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The ways in which the Goal & Objectives of the Transportation & Mobility Plan have been influenced by the guiding principles are indicated using the following symbols.

- ***Social Equity & Sustainability***
- ***Reshaping the Economy***
- ***Quality of Life***
- ***Adapting to Change***
- ***Youth***
- ***Civic Life***

Objective #1

The City should establish biking as a form of recreation and transportation by expanding the City's network of trails, bike lanes, and other connections.

Biking is an affordable transportation option and healthy recreational activity that increases mobility for all residents, including youth. It also reduces pollution and infrastructure costs.

Objective #2

The City should implement a safe pedestrian network that is well-connected and well-maintained to support active living and walking as a viable transportation option.

A well-connected and safe network of sidewalks and trails is central to transforming Flint into a walkable city. Ease of mobility stimulates economic growth in neighborhoods and increases accessibility for residents of all abilities.

Objective #3

The City should support the Mass Transportation Authority (MTA) as a leader in the provision of high-quality public transit.

The MTA transports Flint residents to places of employment, education, recreation, and beyond. Coordination between MTA and the Land Use Plan increases the efficient movement of people and raises quality of life in all neighborhoods.

Objective #4

The City should continue to provide a world-class multi-modal transportation network to retain and attract business, industry, and employment.

Flint's unique location and multi-modal infrastructure will grow new industries and provide easy movement of goods by land, rail, and air. Increasing linkages between Flint and other cities such as Chicago, Grand Rapids, Ann Arbor, Indianapolis, and Detroit also stimulates new educational, research, and tourism opportunities.

Objective #5

The City should develop a well-maintained and efficient network of roads and streets to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of vehicles.

Flint's road network must be modernized to meet new population demands. Efficient travel increases quality of life among residents and reduces infrastructure costs. New traffic safety precautions safeguard our youth from harm.

Objective #6

The City should involve the public in all key transportation decisions.

Moving forward, the City must continue the outreach initiated during the master plan process. Involving citizens in key policy and planning decisions, strengthens community buy-in and ensures transparency.

6 TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY PLAN
RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES

The City is primed to leverage its strategic regional location, access to the interstate highway system, and connection to Bishop International Airport for new economic development efforts. By partnering with Flint Mass Transportation Authority (MTA) and working to improve walkability and bikeability, the City must undertake and support initiatives that reduce dependence on the automobile.

The Transportation & Mobility Plan also stresses the need to work with agencies, such as Genesee County Road Commission and Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), to better coordinate efforts, manage and maintain their roadways, and improve the transportation system in Flint.

This section of the Transportation & Mobility Plan provides background information, discussion of best practices, and other supporting information that describe approaches to future improvements.

Transportation & Land Use

Land use and transportation are inherently linked. Together, they create the places people go and the ways they get there. Land use and transportation must be closely coordinated to ensure that Flint grows in a sustainable and efficient way. All policies and projects should consider the impacts on both the City's land use pattern and transportation network, based on the following questions:

Does the existing transportation system support anticipated development? Different types and intensities of land use, impose varying impacts on the transportation network. Highly active commercial areas with frequent trips require high-levels of capacity and access, while low-density residential areas require less capacity. The transportation system should be assessed to ensure that it provides adequate multi-modal access depending on local land use.

How can future development complement the transportation network? Developing an efficient transportation system requires close coordination with development. The City should continue to monitor the impacts of local development and utilize zoning, incentives, and other municipal tools to shape local land use in order to maximize its relationship with transportation. For example, transit-oriented development – higher-density, mixed use development that is pedestrian-oriented and accessible by all modes of transportation – should be encouraged along existing bus lines and potential long-term Bus Rapid Transit corridors.

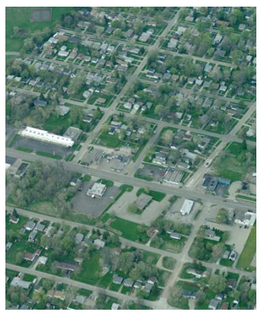
What modes of transportation are most appropriate for a given area? The City should continue to work with MDOT, MTA, and other transportation entities to assess what modes of transportation can best serve various portions of the City. Depending on the location and specific set of local land uses, an area may benefit from increased motorized access, transit services, bike trails, or pedestrian systems. Best practices in development and transportation, such as Complete Streets and Bus Rapid Transit, should be considered as ways to accommodate multi-modal access in a center, corridor, or neighborhood.

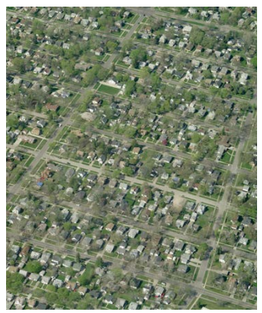
How can investment in transportation accomplish other community goals? The transportation system should be considered an investment in other aspects of the community. People and goods are transported throughout the City in order to support commerce, industry, health, education, activity, and other important functions. As transportation improvements are considered, the City should assess the potential benefits to other local goals and objectives. These may include emergency responsiveness, sustainability, economic development, and others.

How does the local context influence transportation improvements? This chapter identifies a number of concepts and techniques that should be considered in various portions of the City. However, Flint is a complex community with neighborhoods, commercial areas, industrial districts, and other types of development that vary greatly. Specific improvements, such as roundabouts, Complete Streets, bike trails, and others, will be influenced by local transportation patterns, available rights-of-way, development intensities, natural elements, and other factors. Implementation of these improvements will require detailed site assessment and engineering to ensure they are designed to best meet the broader goals of that area and the City as a whole.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Street Network **120**
Functional Classification *120*
Roadway Jurisdiction *120*
Mobility & Access *120*
Infrastructure Design *123*
Technologies & Wayfinding *127*
Parking *127*
Bicycle & Pedestrian Mobility **128**
Trail Improvements *128*
Bike Storage & Facilities *129*
Bike Sharing *129*
Information & Outreach *129*
Signage & Safety *130*
Pedestrian Network *131*
Transit **133**
Mass Transportation Authority *133*
Infrastructure & Facilities *136*
BRT/ART *136*
Outreach & Awareness *136*
Regional Mobility **137**
Access to Interstates *137*
Rail *137*
Regional/Interstate Transit *137*
Bishop International Airport *138*





STREET NETWORK

Functional Classification

The Transportation and Mobility Plan identifies the future classification of all roads in Flint according to a hierarchical system that is based on current and anticipated roadway operations throughout the network. Developed by the federal government, the functional classifications used for the City's streets are as follows:

Interstates

Interstates accommodate large volumes of traffic at high speeds with access points limited to interchanges at major intersecting roadways. The Flint area has access to I-69, I-75, and I-475 with major interchanges near Downtown and Bishop International Airport. The City should continue to capitalize on its high-level of interstate access, though there are no major improvements planned to this portion of the system.

Arterials

Arterials are higher capacity roadways that move traffic from collector roads to interstates. Access along arterials are usually limited in order to increase traffic flow and level of service. Arterial roadways have been broken into two subcategories, principal arterials and minor arterials. Subsequent sections of this chapter describe how the safety and performance of arterials can be enhanced through reductions in conflict points, and enhancements to the traffic signal network.

Principal Arterials typically carry higher traffic volumes and are spaced further apart than minor arterials within the City.

Minor Arterials should provide more access points along a given route than primary arterials, and will generally accommodate lower traffic volumes.

Collectors

Collector roads are typically 2-lane roadways that provide access to adjacent arterials while linking land uses such as residential neighborhoods, parks, and schools to one another. Speed limits on collector roads are lower, usually between 25 and 35 mph. Collectors should continue to provide access to neighborhoods and help establish local character.

Local Roads

Local roads provide direct access to adjacent land uses and are mostly located in residential areas. Local roads often allow on-street parking and permit relatively unrestricted access. The posted speed limit on local roads is typically 25 mph.

Roadway Jurisdiction

The City owns and maintains most of the surface roads within the municipal boundaries. Three of the major edge roads – Carpenter, Clio, and Center – are a shared responsibility between Flint and Genesee County. Hemphill Road is shared with the City of Burton. MDOT operates the three interstates and also provides the City with funding for the two state highways in Flint – Dort Highway and Corunna Road.

Coordination & Outreach

Because the boundary roadways are under the jurisdiction of several government bodies, coordination between departments is necessary in order to enhance roadways within and outside of the City's jurisdiction. The City should partner with other local agencies to establish an Adopt-a-Road program, enlisting the help of outside organizations to help collect litter along the City's streets.

Public Input

As with land use planning, it is vital to involve residents and other stakeholders in the transportation planning and decision-making process. As recommended in ***Chapter 5: Housing & Neighborhoods Plan***, the City should establish neighborhood planning areas with designated community liaisons to serve as points-of-contact for City staff. Within the neighborhood planning framework, local neighborhood groups should assist in the identification and prioritization of needed transportation improvements. Adhering to the neighborhood planning model will foster stewardship in the local application of city-wide transportation policies and create transparency. The City should budget for on-going maintenance and repairs of city-owned streets as part of the Capital Improvement Plan, but also consider implementing participatory budget workshops.

Mobility & Access

Historically, Flint's transportation system hosted much greater traffic volumes than are expected in the future. Many improvements made several years ago do not reflect the current nature of transportation operations. The City should consider reconnecting culs-de-sacs where mobility would be enhanced without creating negative impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. Also, left hand turn signal phasing should be removed or reduced where they are not warranted by current or expected traffic counts.

2010 conversions restored two-way traffic flow on some Downtown streets (orange). Remaining one-way streets (blue) should be considered for two-way traffic restoration.

One-way to Two-way Restoration

Several streets in Downtown Flint are one-way. This is generally unwarranted due to low traffic volumes. The City should consider the conversion of one-way streets to two-way, similar to improvements completed in 2010. The conversion of remaining streets to two-way traffic could have significant benefits for Downtown, including greater access to local destinations, slower travel speeds that support pedestrian safety, and increased use of on-street parking. Each instance should be analyzed based on the following considerations:

- Impact on the overall circulation pattern of traffic
- Relationship to one-way pairs that may need to be converted
- Access to local businesses, destinations, or activity centers
- Transit access and circulation for routes in and around the Downtown, including access to the MTA Transit Center

Curb Cut Consolidation

Curb cuts are designed to provide access from the public street network to local land uses. However, excessive curb cuts can have negative impacts on pedestrian mobility, safety, and on-site circulation. In many cases, curb cuts can be removed or consolidated without compromising access to a site. This may improve the continuity of the sidewalk network, create fewer conflict points along busy streets, and enhance on-site parking capacity and circulation. Along the City's arterials and collectors, the City should work with property owners to identify opportunities to implement curb cut consolidations.

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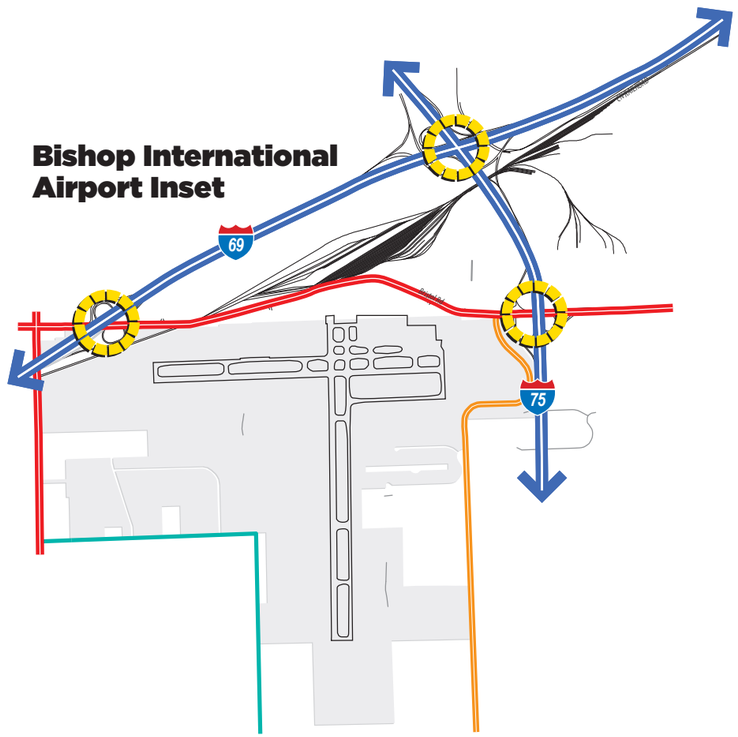
Future Functional Classification

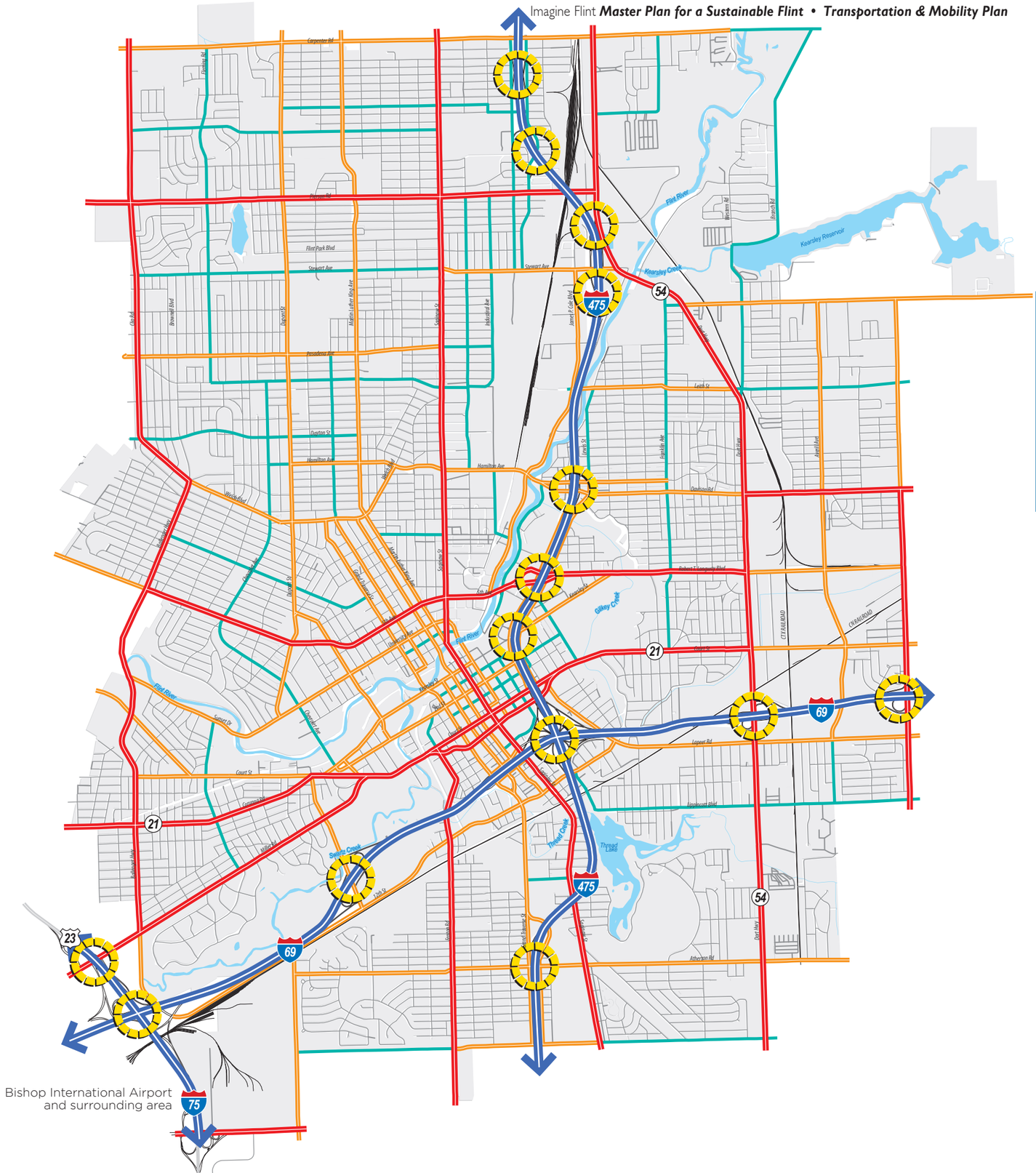
The Transportation and Mobility Plan identifies the future classification of all roads in Flint according to a hierarchical system that is based on current and anticipated roadway operations throughout the network.

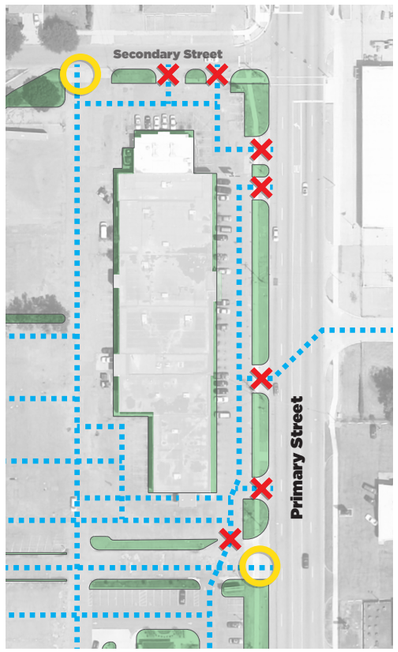
The City owns and maintains most of the surface roads within the municipal boundaries. Three of the major edge roads – Carpenter, Clio, and Center – are a shared responsibility between Flint and Genesee County. Hemphill Road is shared with the City of Burton. MDOT operates the three interstates and also provides the City with funding for the two state highways in Flint – Dort Highway and Corunna Road.

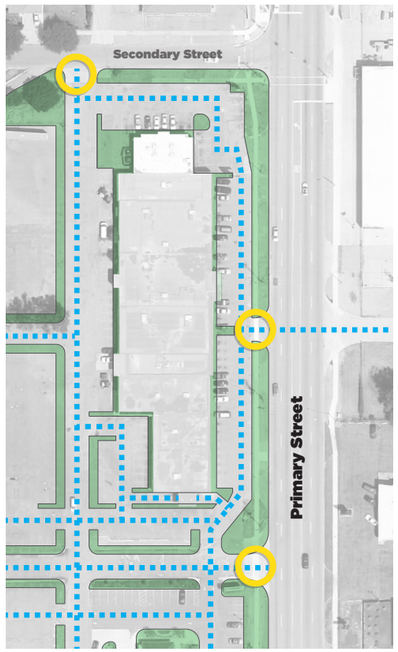
Functional Classification Legend

- *Interstate/Expressway*
- *Principal Arterial*
- *Minor Arterial*
- *Collector*
- *Highway Interchange*









Existing site access and on-site circulation (left) can be improved by curb cut consolidation and cross-access easements (right).

✖ *Curb cut to be removed*
○ *Curb cut to be enhanced*

Cross-access Easements

Developments are often separated from one another by fencing or landscaping, requiring each development to have its own curb cut. Providing cross-access between adjacent parking areas allows motorists to avoid entering street traffic in order to access nearby destinations. This results in safer roadway operations and enhanced access to local uses. It is also an important strategy in implementing curb cut consolidations. The City should work with property owners to facilitate cross-access agreements, and consider requiring or incentivizing them for new development.

New Network Connections

Flint's roadway network is generally built out, and the City is primarily concerned with maintaining the existing system over building new roads. However, there are two key improvements that would enhance mobility for current residents, and set the stage for future investment.

I-475 Corridor

The installation of I-475 resulted in the isolation of several neighborhoods, especially on the south side of Flint. The City should explore opportunities to reconnect these neighborhoods through pedestrian linkages or roadway underpasses.

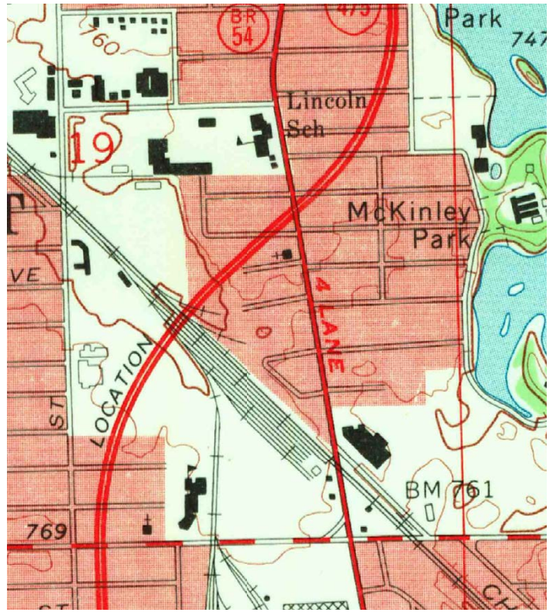
Leith Street Connection

Leith Street used to serve Buick City and the north side of Flint as a primary east-west roadway. However, since its closure, access across the City is difficult, relying on Davison Road and Stewart Avenue which are 1.3 miles apart. Reopening Leith Street would restore access across I-475 and Buick City, and reflect the grid of arterials spaced at approximately ½-mile intervals throughout the north and east sides of the City. The alignment is already served by a grade-separated underpass at the CSX rail corridor, and would benefit future investment on this site as envisioned by the Future Land Use Plan.

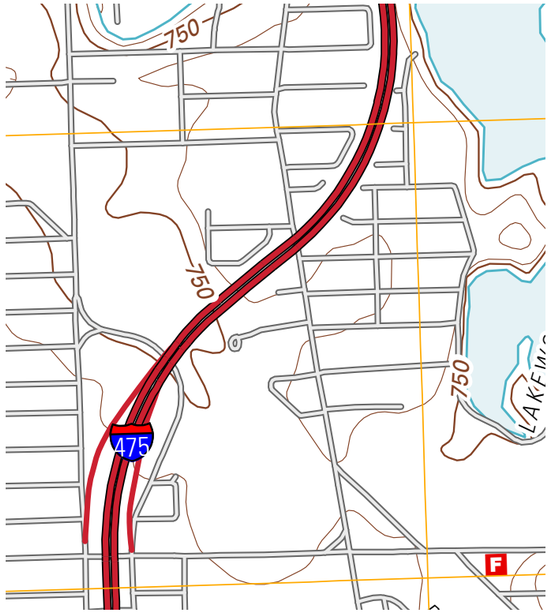
Block Consolidation

The City of Flint includes more than 550 miles of roadway. The FY 2012-2013 maintenance program accounted for 4.5 miles of resurfacing. At that pace, roadway resurfacing would occur on a 122-year cycle, while the anticipated lifespan of asphalt roadways is approximately 20 years. At the same time, there are instances of streets that provide little or no benefit to a neighborhood, based on the way the neighborhood was originally platted.

Leith Street is closed as it passes through the former Buick City site and should be reopeneed to local traffic.



1969 - Neighborhood street grid is intact



2011 - I-475 isolates residential blocks from the surrounding services

Atypically small residential blocks (left) provide an opportunity for street removal with out impacting neighborhood function or character (right).

This Plan recognizes that the large-scale removal of streets would jeopardize the long-term viability of neighborhoods, commerce, and industry. However, there are specific instances where small street segments could be removed without compromising local mobility or neighborhood character. This would alleviate a small amount of the roadway to be maintained by the City and has the potential to provide additional local benefits to residents.

Opportunities to do this should be identified based on the following criteria:

- The proposed improvement would not eliminate access to adjacent sites, understanding that minor reconfigurations to driveways or off-street parking areas may be required.
- The proposed removal would not significantly impact the ability of local residents to access schools, open spaces, shopping, and other critical uses.
- The proposed removal would not significantly impact the level of connectivity of the neighborhood to the overall transportation network.
- The resulting block sizes would be consistent with the character of Flint, and not result in superblocks that limit connectivity to other parts of the City.
- The land created by the removal can be feasibly adapted into local open space or pedestrian trails that offer benefit to the neighborhood and preserve access to remaining underground utilities.

Reconnecting Cul-de-Sac Streets

There are some areas where the local street grid has been cut off from arterials through the use of culs-de-sac. An example of this exists along Hammerberg Road north of Atherton Road. While this is seen as a benefit in some neighborhoods in terms of cut-through traffic, it may hinder overall mobility and emergency responsiveness. The City should examine the use of culs-de-sac and remove them where it is determined that connecting the grid provides significant overall benefit without compromising the character of adjacent neighborhoods.

Problematic Intersections

MDOT maintains a detailed database of crash statistics for the entire state, which is made readily available as a searchable on-line database and interactive mapping feature on the Michigan Traffic Crash Facts website. Crash statistics should be assessed on an annual or bi-annual basis, to identify problematic intersections and prioritize and guide the implementation of traffic management and strategies and technologies identified throughout the Transportation & Mobility Plan. Similar to efforts for map crime data, the City should partner with local colleges and universities to map and analyze crash data for identification of crash hotspots.

Infrastructure Design

Complete Streets

As described in the Genesee County 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, Complete Streets are designed and operated to be safe for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street. Complete Streets often ease congestion while supporting economic growth, improving safety, encouraging walking and biking, improving air quality, and enhancing mobility for children.

Most of Flint's roadways are specifically designed to move motor vehicles, but do not provide adequate bicycle, pedestrian, or transit infrastructure. By supporting a Complete Streets approach to roadway infrastructure, the Transportation & Mobility Plan promotes the development of a truly multi-modal transportation network where residents have the choice of safely walking or biking to local destinations, taking transit, or traveling in a car.

The City recently adopted a non-binding Complete Streets ordinance stating its support for the development of multi-modal corridors. As a next step in implementing Complete Streets, the City should adopt a binding Complete Streets policy that outlines how the following components can be integrated into future public and private development projects:

- Infrastructure design, including cross-sections, standards, and best practices
- Technology and signage, including wayfinding, Intelligent Transportation Systems, signal phasing, pedestrian warning systems, etc.
- Outreach and awareness, including bicycle safety education, trail maps and signage, Share the Road signage, youth programs and awareness, etc.
- Technical references and specifications, including the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials' (AASHTO's) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, MDOT's Michigan Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD), and the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)

Subsequent recommendations in this chapter describe some of the specific components of Complete Streets and how they may be implemented throughout the City of Flint.

Harrison Street: A Complete Streets Transformation

Harrison Street is a one-way street, Downtown, that runs parallel to Saginaw Street and bisects the UM-Flint campus and the new Health & Wellness District. In its current form, it expands from three lanes to four at 2nd Street, facilitating reckless driving and creating a dangerous environment for pedestrians. The wide width of the road also destroys the visual and geographic fabric of the Downtown and divides the UM-Flint campus.

A Complete Streets approach should be applied to Harrison. It should be converted into a two-way street with fewer lanes, pedestrian friendly crossings, streetscaping, and bike lanes. Such a project would not only increase safety and visual appeal, but more closely knit UM-Flint and the Health & Wellness District into the broader Downtown.

Road Diets

Many of Flint's arterials and collectors are designed to accommodate vehicular traffic flow far in excess of what the City can reasonably generate. Frequently, four travel lanes are provided, resulting in minimal or no accommodations for bicyclists or pedestrians. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) states that four-lane roadways with Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 20,000 or less should be considered candidates for road diets, and that roadways with ADT of 15,000 or less have shown high levels of success related to safety, operations, and livability.

Throughout Flint, four-lane roadways with ADT under 20,000 should be analyzed for the feasibility of road diets, taking into consideration driveway density, transit routes, the number and design of intersections along the corridor, and other operational characteristics. The Genesee County Long Range Transportation Plan conducted an initial assessment of road diet viability for four-lane roads. This effort should serve as a basis for future analysis. Road diets can be tailored to specific areas of the City based upon localized goals and the role of a given street within the broader transportation network. However, there are three general approaches for road diets as described below.

The implementation of these alternatives will depend on local operational characteristics, the desire to accommodate other modes of transportation, the desired character of individual neighborhoods, and the available right-of-way.

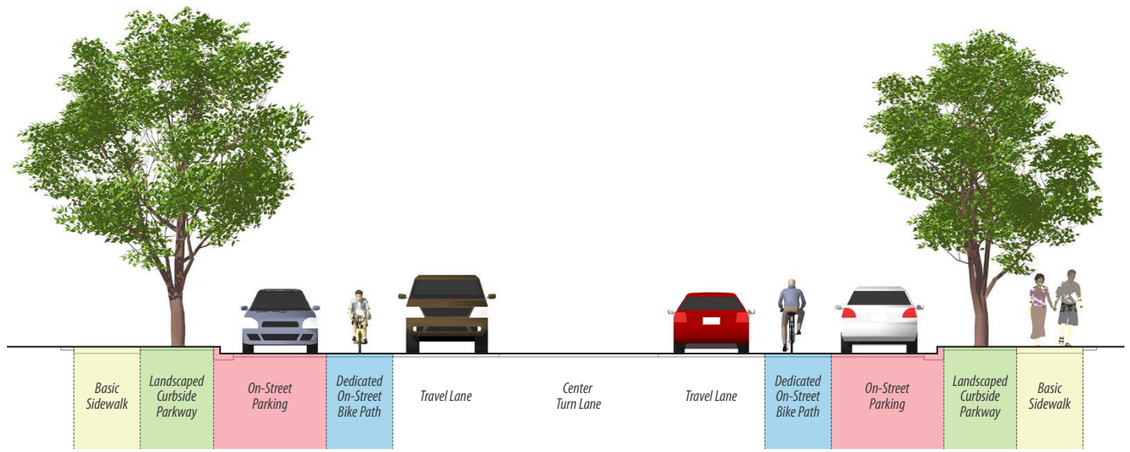
- ***Bicycle and Pedestrian Road Diet.*** In this alternative, space created through the reduction of travel lanes is used for dedicated bike lanes and expanded sidewalks. This is effective in areas where non-motorized mobility is a priority.
- ***Transit Road Diet.*** In this alternative, transit vehicles are accommodated through shared lanes or dedicated turnouts that enhance safety and provide additional space for shelters and waiting areas. This alternative is best suited for corridors served by bus transit.
- ***Boulevard Road Diet.*** In this alternative, reduced travel lanes provide the space for landscaping and greenery. Medians, parkways, and other urban design elements can enhance neighborhood character on prominent streets. This alternative is effective on streets where access to individual uses is not a priority. If implemented, the City should work with neighborhoods and local stakeholders to maintain planting areas.

Right-of-way width varies throughout the City. Principal arterial rights-of-way range from 65' to 90', minor arterials from 65'-80', and collector streets from 60'-90' (many of the wider collectors, such as Chevrolet Avenue, are already configured as boulevards).

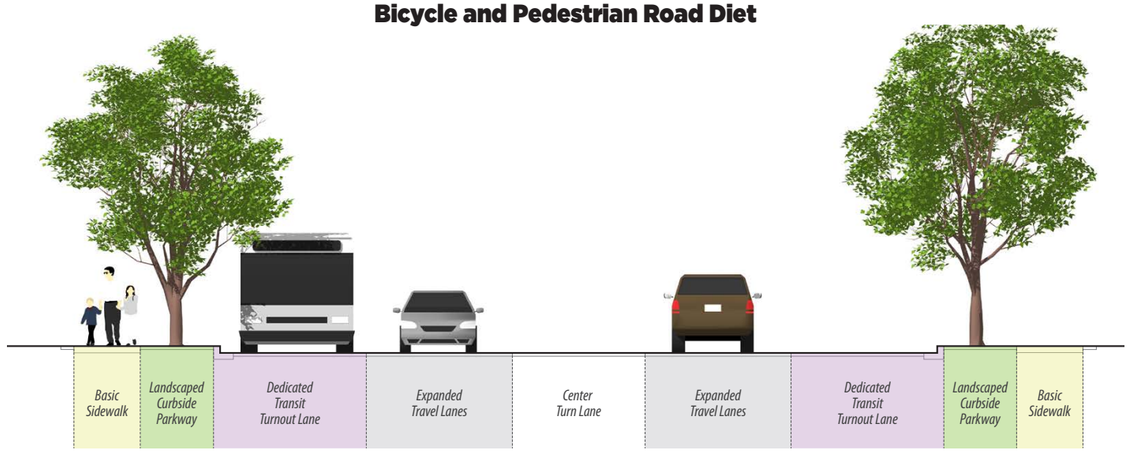
Depending on the preferred function of the roadway and the available space in the right-of-way, elements should be prioritized based on the above table. High-priority elements should be provided in all cross-sections. Medium-priority elements can be incorporated as space allows depending on right-of-way width. Low-priority elements can be integrated only when high- and medium-priority elements are accommodated.

Road Diet Matrix
IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY LEVEL BY TYPE OF ROAD DIET

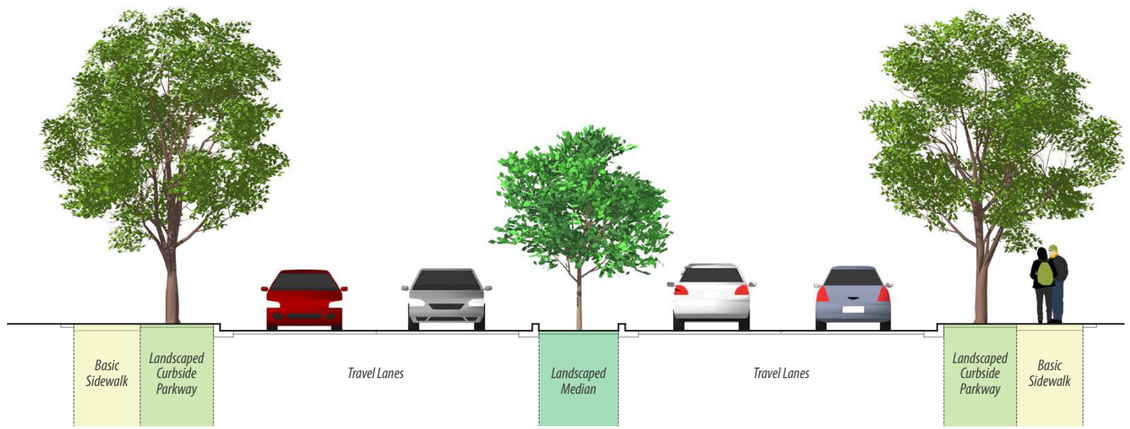
	Basic Sidewalk	Landscaped Curbside Parkway	On-Street Parking	Expanded Travel Lanes	Dedicated Transit Turnout Lane	Dedicated On-street Bike Path	Landscaped Median
Minimum Space	5'	6'	8' for parallel, 19' for diagonal	10', 11' preferred	10'	5'	6'
Bicycle/Pedestrian	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	High	Low
Transit	High	Low	Low	Medium	High	Low	Low
Boulevard	High	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	High



Bicycle and Pedestrian Road Diet



Transit Road Diet



Boulevard Road Diet

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Road Diets

Throughout Flint, four-lane roadways with ADT under 20,000 should be analyzed for the feasibility of road diets, taking into consideration driveway density, transit routes, the number and design of intersections along the corridor, and other operational characteristics.

The Genesee County Long Range Transportation Plan conducted an initial assessment of road diet viability for four-lane roads. This effort should serve as a basis for future analysis. Road diets can be tailored to specific areas of the City based upon localized goals and the role of a given street within the broader transportation network.

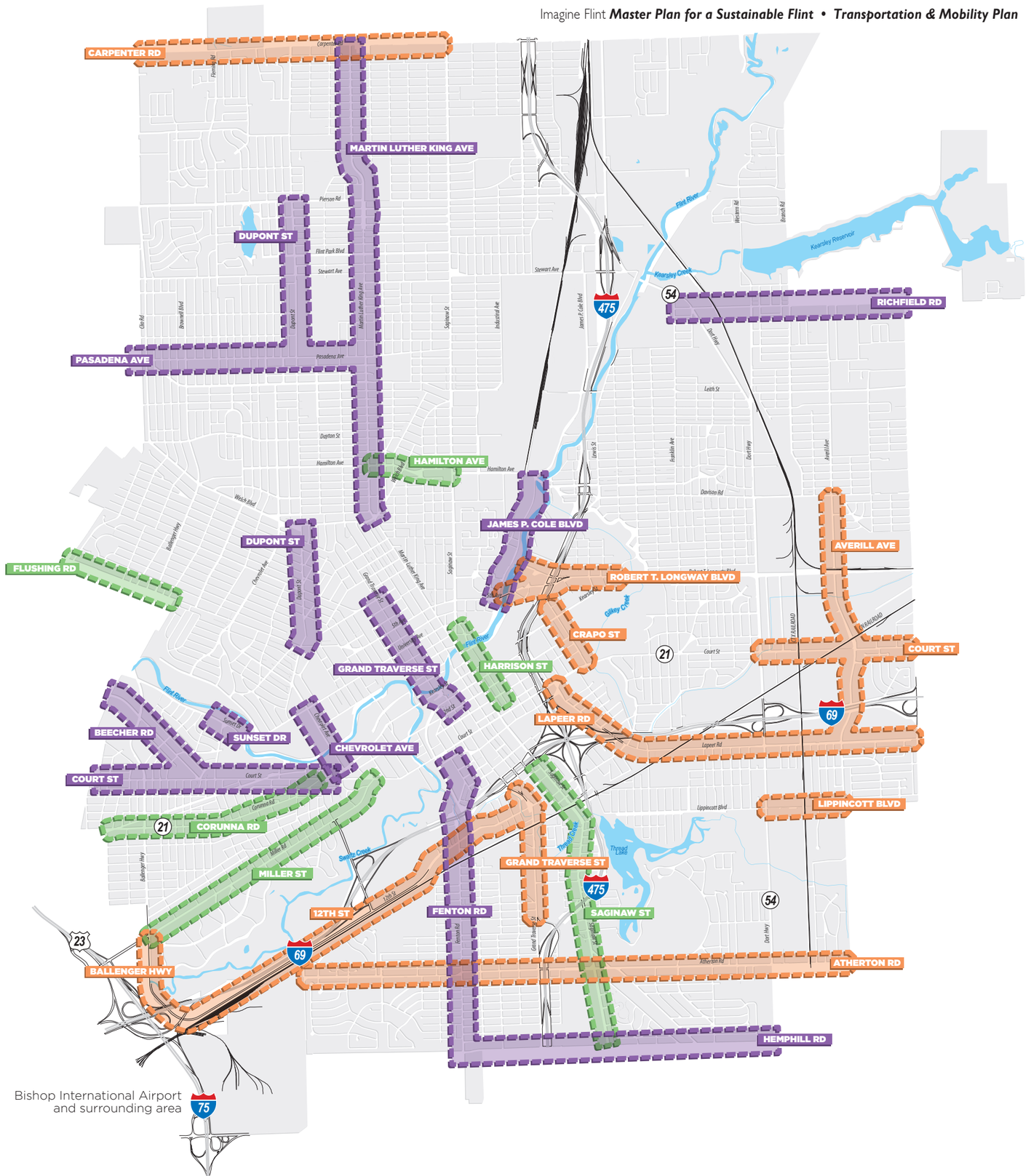
Road Diet Legend

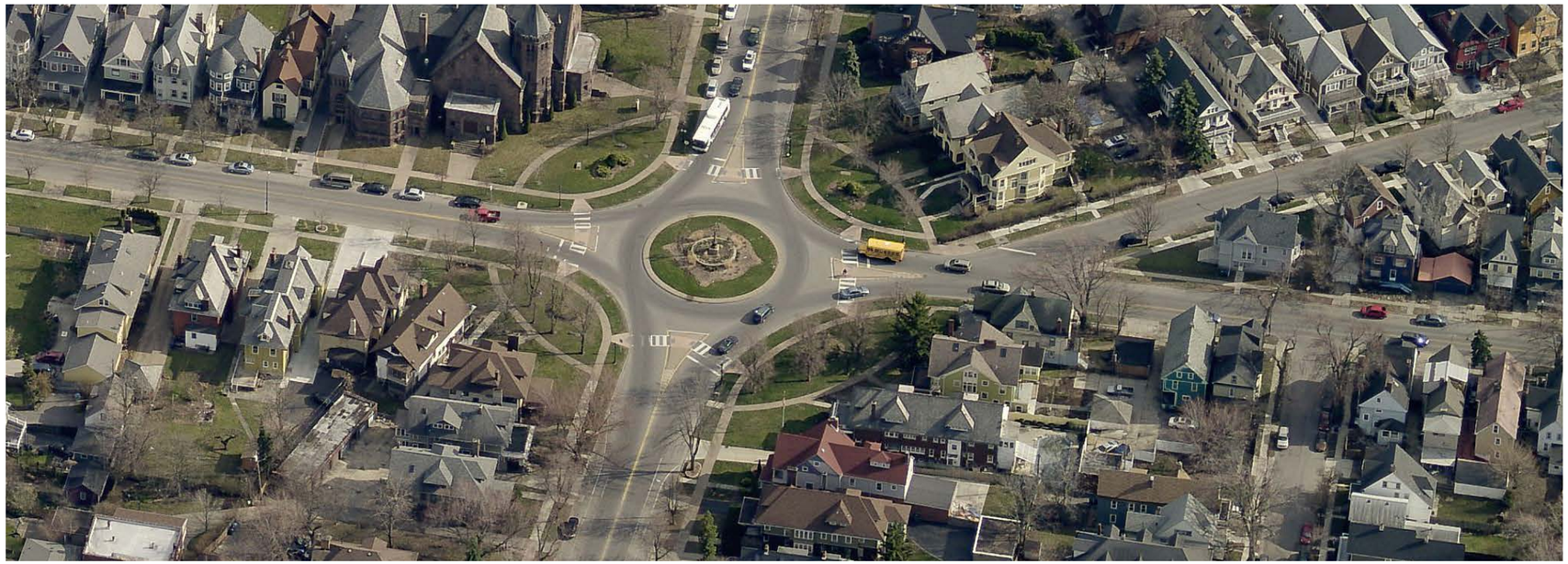
*Very Good Candidate**

*Good Candidate**

Requires Additional Study

**As identified in the Genesee County LRTP*





This traffic circle in Buffalo, NY demonstrates how complex intersections can manage traffic flow and community character.

Right-of-Way Preservation

Generally, roads in Flint are capable of carrying existing and anticipated traffic volumes. The proposed city-wide approach is to focus on the maintenance of the existing network and reduce the number of lanes on streets that operate under capacity and can accommodate other modes of transportation. However, there are specific portions of the City that the Land Use Plan identifies as economic or employment centers. The existing roadway capacity in these areas should be preserved to accommodate new investment and resulting traffic. Dort Highway is one example of this. Due to its interstate access and nearby rail infrastructure, Dort Highway will be the focus of economic development efforts to attract businesses reliant on multi-modal distribution. Dort Highway will be an important link for employees and freight traffic, and the current five-lane cross-section should be preserved.

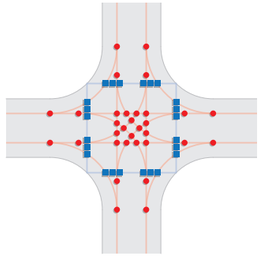
Traffic Circles

Traffic circles are an effective way of managing traffic flow and improving safety at street intersections. Traffic circles can improve intersection traffic capacity by up to 30 percent and reduce injuries and crashes by up to 90 percent. They also reduce noise, emissions, and maintenance, and allow for the removal of signals and related technologies.

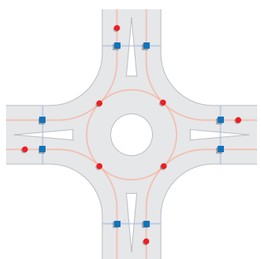
Traffic circles reduce the number of vehicle-to-vehicle conflict points by 75 percent and the number of vehicle-to-pedestrian conflict points by 66 percent. Traffic circles should be considered at major intersections throughout the City, though detailed analysis is needed to determine the viability at each location.

Important considerations regarding the installation of traffic circles include:

- Traffic volumes of intersecting streets and the number of lanes necessary to accommodate that flow
- Availability of land to accommodate the traffic circle
- Education as traffic circles are introduced to a region for the first time
- Adjacent land uses and the types of traffic they generate (i.e. large trucks serving an industrial area)
- Coordination of signals in other areas of the network to manage flow into the traffic circle
- Bike lane access through use of ramps on to the sidewalk or use of shared driving lanes



Traditional intersection conflict points: 32 vehicle-to-vehicle, 24 vehicle-to-pedestrian



Traffic circle conflict points: 8 vehicle-to-vehicle, 8 vehicle-to-pedestrian

Vehicle-vehicle conflict point
Vehicle-pedestrian conflict point

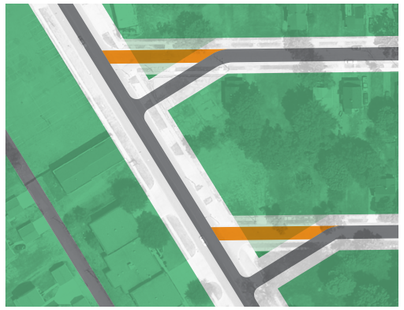
Intersection Alignment/ Reconfiguration

Due to Flint's varying grid pattern and diagonal streets, there are several intersection where streets do not directly align. This results in potentially hazardous movements for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

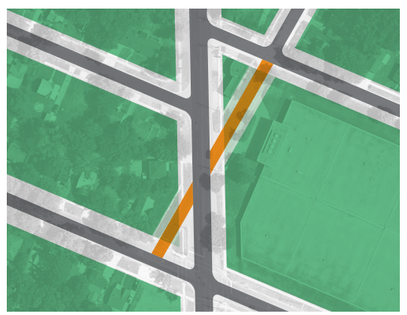
Opportunities for alignment or reconfiguration should be identified in order to accomplish one, or more of the following goals:

- Directly align side streets that intersect a collector or arterial
- Create perpendicular intersections that enhance visibility and safety
- Consolidate the number of roadway segments intersecting at or near one location
- Increase the spacing between intersections that cannot be consolidated

1) Directly aligning side streets



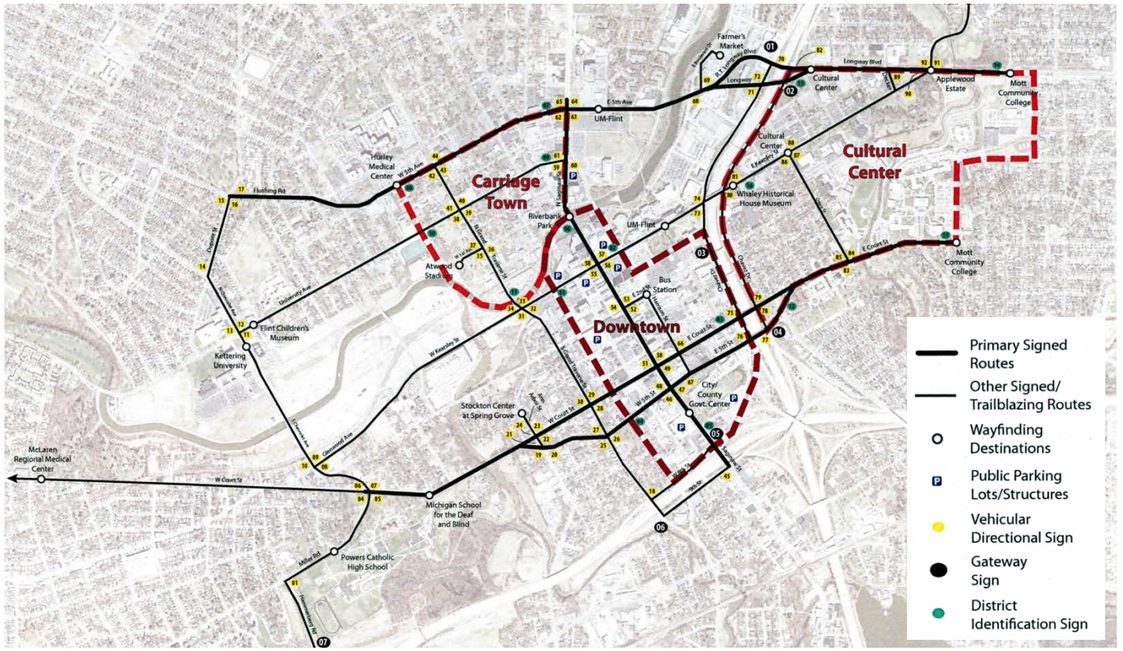
2) Creating perpendicular intersections

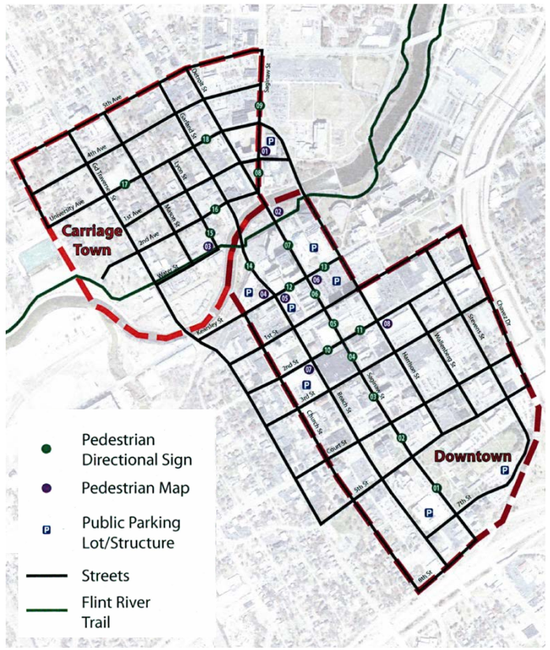


3) Consolidating excess roadway segments

4) Increasing the spacing between intersections

Segment to be realigned or removed
Aligned roadway network





The Downtown Wayfinding Plan contains detailed Sign Placement Plans for Vehicular Signs (left) and Pedestrian Signs (right)

Technologies and Wayfinding

Traffic Signal Removal

Flint's transportation network includes 288 signalized intersections. A study by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) showed that municipalities typically average about one signalized intersection for every 1,000 people. Based on that average, it could be expected that Flint would have approximately 102 signalized intersections. The City should work with MDOT to determine where signalized intersections can be downgraded to two-way or four-way stops. This would save between $2,000-$8,000 per year, per signal. Signal removal should be based on the following factors:

- Vehicular volumes measured in eight-hour, four-hour, and peak hour intervals
- Pedestrian volume
- School crossings
- Coordination with other signals

ITS Applications

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) are used to improve the efficiency of a transportation network through investments in technology rather than or in conjunction with roadway infrastructure improvements. There are several forms of ITS than could be implemented in Flint in order to provide benefits to residents, businesses, and public service providers.

Synchronization

Synchronization involves the coordination of signal phasing at multiple locations throughout a network. The intent is to allow for the platooning of vehicles, or the efficient movement of groups of vehicles along a corridor. Synchronization can be modified to provide priority to major arterials with higher traffic volumes, and can vary throughout the day or week to respond to peak volumes.

Emergency Signal Preemption

Signal preemption allows emergency vehicles to trip a signal for a green light. This allows the vehicle to safely and quickly, pass through the intersection while other traffic waits. Following the preemption, the signal reverts to its programmed phasing.

Transit Signal Priority

Transit Signal Priority (TSP) provides an extended green or shortened red as a transit vehicle approaches an intersection. It does not entirely preempt the signal phasing, but modifies to enable more efficient movement for buses. TSP improvements would require both signal upgrades and vehicle technology upgrades, and may only be applicable on primary regional routes.

Vehicle Detection Systems

Vehicle detection systems modify signal phasing based on the current traffic. At intersections with low traffic counts, this would minimize wait time for vehicles standing when there is no cross traffic.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding is an effective tool for guiding residents and visitors to important destinations. In 2012, a collection of downtown stakeholders and the Uptown Reinvestment Corporation prepared the Downtown Flint Wayfinding Plan. The plan presents a unified wayfinding system to efficiently direct visitors to destination throughout the Downtown. It provides detailed recommendations for the location and composition of a variety of sign types including gateway signs, vehicular and pedestrian directional signs, district identification signs, parking identification signs, and pedestrian maps.

Within a little over a year of completion of the study, several directional signs were installed along major routes surrounding Kettering University. The placement plans indicating the location of vehicular and pedestrian signs are shown in the above figure.

City-wide Wayfinding Program

Recommendations from the Downtown Flint Wayfinding Plan should be expanded upon to create a city-wide wayfinding program that that provides information along area expressways and arterials. As detailed in the Downtown Flint Wayfinding Plan, signage should be of distinctive, uniform, and attractive design, highlighting Downtown Flint, Bishop Airport, hospitals, educational and cultural institutions, and other important destinations. As priority corridors are identified, the City can also focus streetscaping and beautification efforts in those areas in order to enhance the image and character for visitors.

Parking

Access to parking is an important issue in many areas of Flint. However, the specific way in which parking is best managed varies greatly. A one-size-fits-all approach will not address specific local issues related to capacity, access, character, or function. The City should develop a comprehensive parking management plan that does the following:

- ***Improves the image of the City and its neighborhoods.*** While many neighborhoods rely on parking to support commercial uses and other activities, lots can often have a detrimental impact on the aesthetic character of an area. The City should adopt and enforce design regulations that ensure that parking lots are screened and landscaped from public areas.
- ***Engages local stakeholders to identify issues at the neighborhood level.*** The process of developing a city-wide parking strategy should respond to specific local needs. Engaging stakeholders will ensure that different approaches are used that most appropriately address challenges related to access, capacity, and character.
- ***Assesses the viability of various types of parking.*** The viability of different types of parking is dependent on a number of local factors, including the cost of land, parcel and block size, land use, and street design, among others. The City should assess the viability of structured parking, on-street parking, shared parking, and required on-site capacity based on local conditions and characteristics.
- ***Makes Flint a more sustainable community.*** Parking policies and infrastructure present an opportunity to enhance the long-term sustainability of Flint. Requiring landscaping and permeability can reduce stormwater runoff and urban heat island effect. Pricing can return resources to an area that can be used for aesthetic improvements, redevelopment, infrastructure enhancements, etc. Reducing parking requirements, permitting shared parking lots, and requiring bicycle parking can encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation.
- ***Enhances the function of the surrounding area.*** Parking should be considered a support system for the activities it serves. It should be sited and designed in order to provide easy and direct access to employment, commercial, recreation, and residential areas. Where necessary, wayfinding signage and intelligent parking systems should be used to direct users to available parking, and revenue from paid parking should be reinvested in areas for various types of improvements.

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY

Trail Improvements

New Trail Installations

Flint benefits from the existing Flint River Trail and Genesee Valley Trail. Bicycle and multi-use trails provide both recreational and transportation benefits. The following improvements will enhance bicycle mobility within and around the City:

Regional Trails

The 2007 Genesee County Regional Trail Plan identifies a series of new regional trail segments, in and around Flint, that would fill in gaps and expand the network. These include:

- Trail infill at Stewart Avenue near the water treatment plant
- Trail infill on abandoned industrial properties near James P. Cole Boulevard and Hamilton Avenue
- Development of the Grand Traverse Greenway on the abandoned CSX rail corridor between the City of Burton and Downtown Flint
- New trail along the abandoned CN rail corridor between the City of Swartz Creek and Corunna Road (already implemented)

Local Trails

The Regional Trail Plan also identifies a series of local path improvements designed to improve neighborhood mobility and access to amenities throughout the City of Flint. They include the following:

- Kearsley Park to For-Mar Nature Preserve connector:
  - Missouri eastbound to Meade
  - Meade northbound to Davison
  - Davison eastbound to Curry
  - Curry northbound to Risedorph
  - Risedorph eastbound to Blackthorn
  - Blackthorn northbound to Thorntree
  - Thorntree eastbound to Genesee at the For-Mar entrance
- Max Brandon Park connector (identified by Friends of the Flint River Trail):
  - Along Dupont northbound to Thackery
  - Along Thackery & Wager eastbound to Selby
  - Bike Lane southbound on Selby, northbound on Andrew
  - Bike Lane from Stewart to James P. Cole
  - Bike Lane from James P. Cole to Massachusetts (already implemented)
  - Massachusetts through industrial park to Pasadena
- Flint River Trail to the western City Limit connector, consisting of trails along the river or bicycle/pedestrian multi-use trails (implemented to Ballenger Highway)
- McLaren Hospital connector that could tie into the larger regional trail system
- Downtown Bike Lanes:
  - University Avenue/Sunset Drive from Saginaw Street to Ballenger Highway (already implemented)
  - Second Street from Chevrolet through U of M campus, Flint Cultural Center, and Mott Community College
  - Beach/Garland Street from 5th Avenue to I-69
  - Harrison Street from Court Street to Saginaw Street

Bike Path Planning

In its committment to implementing Complete Streets policies and encouraging non-motorized transportaion, the Genesee County MPO is a valued partner in planning for bike paths and other bike infrastructure throughout Flint. The City should work with the Genesee County MPO as it begins the process of updating its Long Range Transportation Plan to ensure that planned bike routes are added/modified as appropriate ,and programed for within the City.

New Trail Opportunities

In addition to the planned trail segments shown on the map to the right, the City should continue to identify new opportunities for the creation of new trails. As areas of green innovation are established and green neighborhoods take shape, potential trail alignments that connect these areas to the Flint River, other local waterways, and the regional trail system should be identified. For example, as described in the Pedestrian Network section of this Plan, vacant lots within a green neighborhood could be used to host segments of a trail. The City should also identify streets that are suitable for bicycle facilities to provide a fully connected trail and bike network.

Safety and Signage

As existing trail segments are improved and new ones are installed, consideration should be given to safety and visibility at intersections with other modes of transportation. Road crossings, multi-use trails, and on-street bike lanes (dedicated or shared) should be designed in accordance with MDOT's Michigan Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD), and include appropriate bicycle and vehicular warning systems.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding is an important component of a successful trail network. Both regional and local segments should incorporate signage that identifies the alignment of the route and highlights local destinations. As recommended in the 2007 Genesee County Regional Trail Plan, each sign should include the 3 D's: distance, direction, and destination. Signs can be customized to distinguish individual trails, but should convey a consistent theme that is clear and easily understood.

Bike Storage & Facilities

In addition to trails, there are several elements of the network that can reduce barriers to cycling. Bike storage should be provided in both public areas and private development. The following techniques should be used to provide adequate bike storage throughout Flint:

- Install bike racks in the public parkway of Downtown, neighborhood centers, and other areas of high bike usage. Where room is not available in the parkway, consider removing an on-street parking space. One on-street parking space can accommodate approximately 10-12 bikes.
- Integrate on-site parking into the site design for all government and civic buildings. Schools, libraries, government offices, and other public development should serve as a model for bicycle and pedestrian mobility. Bicycle storage should be provided in areas in close proximity to the primary entrance and with adequate lighting. A direct pedestrian path should also be provided between the bike storage area and main entrance.
- Require private commercial and office development to provide on-site bicycle storage. Many communities are using zoning ordinances to require on-site bike storage. These regulations typically dictate bike storage capacity as a percentage of the number of vehicular parking spaces, bike storage locations, and storage signage and lighting. Others incentivize on-site bike storage through reductions in vehicular parking requirements, allowing the project to be developed more intensively.

Bike Sharing

Bike sharing programs are being implemented in cities throughout the United States, including Detroit, Chicago, and New York. They provide inexpensive mobility for short trips within a community and convenient access to jobs, education, and critical goods and services. The City and local partners should assess the viability of a bike sharing program, taking into consideration key destinations and amenities, neighborhood-based service areas, anticipated costs to the service provider and rider, and infrastructure and marketing needed to support the service.

Information & Outreach

Maps

There are several existing resources that illustrate the location of trails in and around Flint. Local entities, such as Safe and Active Genesee for Everyone (SAGE) at the Crim Fitness Foundation, Friends of the Flint River Trail, and geneseevalleytrail.com provide information about the local and regional trail networks. Private websites, including mapmyride.com and traillink.com, host user-based information about local trails and trail-related amenities.

The City should work with the Crim Fitness Foundation, Friends of the Flint River Trail, Safe & Active Genesee for Everyone (SAGE), and other local advocates and organizations to promote active transportation as a healthy mode of travel, ensure that information is easily available for users, and that user-based sites remain up-to-date and accurate as new trail improvements are made.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF ACTIVE COMMUTING

Active commuting involves biking and walking to get to work and/or other daily destinations. The combination of active commuting and public transit significantly promotes a healthy lifestyle through increased physical activity. The following statistics highlight the public health benefits of active commuting:

- Increasing biking and walking from 10 to 30 minutes a day, on average, would reduce cardiovascular disease and diabetes by 19%.
- Active commuting that incorporates cycling and walking is associated with an overall 11% reduction in cardiovascular risk.
- Active transportation can reduce the risk of heart disease, lower blood pressure, and reduce risk of overweight and obesity through its contributions to increased physical activity.

HAWK signal

Pedestrian flashing lights

ADA-compliant curb cut and crosswalk

REDUCING FLINT'S CARBON FOOTPRINT THROUGH TRANSPORTATION CHOICE

- If the number of kids who walk and bike to school returned to 1969 levels, it would eliminate 1.5 million tons of CO2 annually.
- If 20% of children living within two miles of school were to bike or walk, it would eliminate an annual total of 356,000 tons of CO2 and 21,500 tons of other pollutants.
- Increasing the mode share of trips made by bicycling and walking from 12% to 15% could save 3.8 billion gallons of fuel per year and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33 million tons per year.
- A solo commuter switching his/her commute from a private vehicle to transit can reduce CO2 emissions by more than 4,800 pounds per year.
- Public transit saves the U.S. the equivalent of more than 11 million gallons of gasoline per day.
- Investment in public transit reduces the nation's carbon emissions by 37 million metric tons annually, equivalent to the savings if New York City, Washington, DC, Atlanta, Denver, and Los Angeles stopped using electricity.
- A commuter switching to public transportation can reduce a household's carbon emissions by 10%.
- If one driver per household switches to taking public transit for a daily commute of 10 miles each way, this would save 4,627 pounds of CO2 household per year.

Signage & Safety

Managing pedestrian/vehicle conflicts should be a priority along Flint's arterial streets. These streets typically experience the highest traffic volumes and speeds, making it difficult for pedestrians to cross safely. The City should consider the following solutions to ensure that pedestrians and motorists can safely share the roadway:

- ***Lighting and Call Boxes.*** Dark trails and pathways can deter bicyclists and pedestrians. The City should install lighting and emergency call boxes along trails to increase safety for all users.
- ***Traffic Signal Phasing.*** Typically, traffic signals prioritize the movement of vehicles over pedestrians. However, small adjustments to traffic signal phasing can enhance pedestrian safety without compromising traffic flow. The City should adjust all traffic signals to ensure that adequate time is provided to cross. The rate of walking speed is prescribed in the MMUTCD.

The City should also consider implementing Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) signal phasing. This provides an advanced walk signal for pedestrians prior to a vehicular green light. The phasing is timed based on the speed of approaching traffic and the distance the pedestrian needs to cross. The City should explore these and other possible treatments for Flint.

- ***Pedestrian Activated Signals.*** Throughout much of Flint's transportation network, traffic volumes do not warrant signalized intersections. However, this results in unimpeded traffic flow that can inhibit crossing when pedestrians are present. Pedestrian activated signals are an effective way to provide crossing opportunities for crossing while maintaining traffic flow when pedestrians are not present. Many communities have implemented pedestrian flashing lights. These include crosswalk signage and markings with imbedded lights that flash when activated by a pedestrian. Some cities are using High-intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) signals along arterial streets. These signals are a pedestrian-activated red light for motorists.

Safety Awareness

Safety awareness is critical to ensuring that motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians understand the rules of the road and trail. There are several resources available to residents that should be integrated into regular educational programs and bicycle advocacy:

- The League of Michigan Bicyclists produces a series of bicycle safety publications, including What Every Michigan Bicyclist Must Know, What Every Michigan Driver Should Know, and What Every Young Michigan Bicyclist Must Know. These resources are designed to enhance bicycle safety and focus on proper equipment, behavior, and knowledge.
- Berston Bicycle Club conducts youth bike safety classes. The City should work with this and other clubs in encouraging enrollment in safety classes and integrating lessons into school curriculum.
- In 2012, UM-Flint opened its Bicycle Road Skills Course. The course is designed to educate users about basic bicycling skills and safety techniques. The course is currently funded by the Crim Fitness Foundation and used by university faculty and staff, as well as the general public through skills training classes. The City should work with UM-Flint to establish regular sessions with local school children.

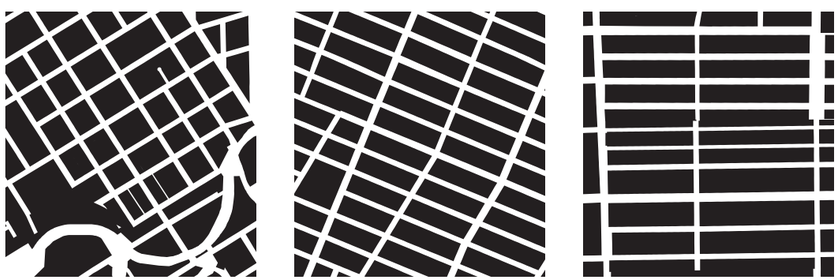
ADA Accessibility

The goal of Flint's pedestrian network should be to allow mobility to residents of all abilities throughout all portions of the City. Regular maintenance or the new construction of sidewalks, crosswalks, curb cuts, signals, and technology should be implemented in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).

Pedestrian Network

Block Sizes

Block sizes vary greatly in Flint, and significantly impact the walkability of a community. In Downtown and in surrounding neighborhoods, blocks are as small as 325' to 400' in length. Most neighborhoods have blocks that average between 800' and 900' in length. However, there are some neighborhoods with blocks up to 1500' in length. Blocks of this length can inhibit access to local destinations, such as schools, shopping, or employment areas, for pedestrians. The City should explore opportunities to use vacant lots to install mid-block sidewalks that mimic the pattern and spacing of sidewalks in other parts of the City.



Downtown blocks *Typical blocks* *Oversized blocks*

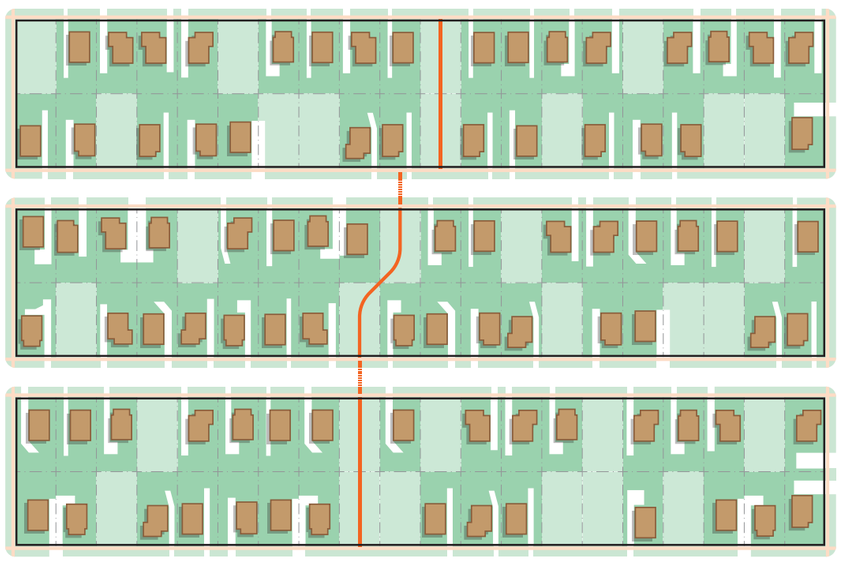
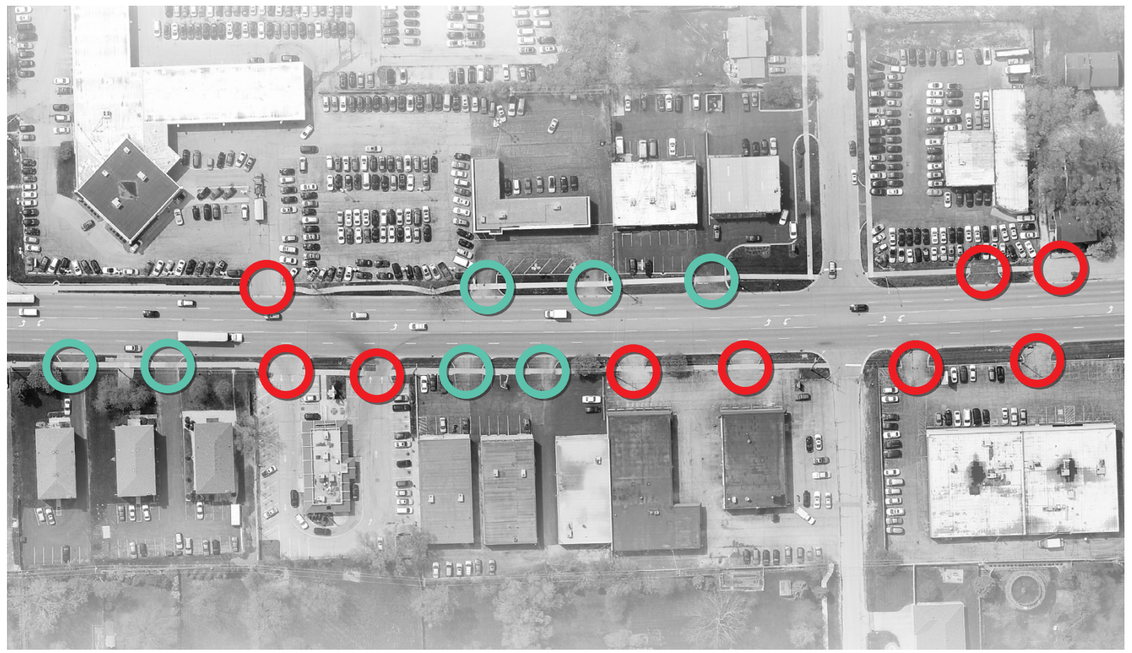


Illustration of how oversized blocks can accommodate mid-block sidewalk connections

Missing sidewalk segment
Sidewalk ribbon is provided



Sidewalk Network

The City of Flint has a comprehensive sidewalk network that serves its neighborhoods, commercial areas, and recreational areas. However, the conditions of many sidewalks are deteriorating, and areas exist where gaps limit pedestrian safety and mobility. The City should conduct a walkability audit that identifies pedestrian paths and physical barriers to walking, accessibility to transit, and American with Disabilities (ADA) infrastructure, and consider the following:

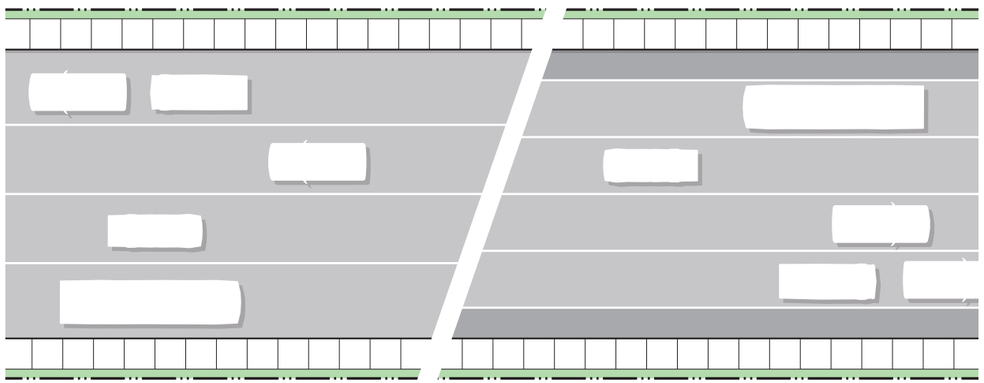
- Sidewalk maintenance will be an on-going challenge as Flint has limited resources to repair damaged segments. The City currently uses CDBG funds for projects identified it the Capital Improvement Program, and has recently completed improvements in the University Park neighborhood through other grants. According to local ordinances, however, the private property owner is responsible for the maintenance of the adjacent public sidewalk. The City should partner with property owners to share the cost of sidewalk improvements and continue to prioritize sidewalk repair based on safety concerns, near destinations like schools and parks, and in neighborhoods that are highly dependent on walking as a primary mode of transportation. The City should also continue to explore federal, state, and grant funding, for the repair or installation of sidewalks.
- Crosswalks and curb cuts are critical components of the pedestrian network. Many of Flint's neighborhoods lack accessible curb cuts or marked crosswalks. The intersections of commercial streets tend to include them, though the condition of the infrastructure varies. The City should identify priority locations for crosswalk improvements, taking into consideration local land uses and destinations, traffic counts on intersecting roadways, and potential hazards or conflicts that would result in injury.
- Private development plays an important role in providing a comprehensive sidewalk network. The City should review and amend zoning regulations to enhance on-site pedestrian mobility. This could include regulations related to:
  - Curb cut consolidation, as described earlier in this chapter, which restores continuity in the pedestrian network
  - Sidewalk ribbons that cross over curb cuts and clearly articulate the pedestrian realm
  - On-site sidewalks that provide safe and direct links between the public sidewalk and building entry
  - Parking lot screening that delineates the public sidewalk from vehicular areas and creates a more comfortable pedestrian environment

Safe Routes to School

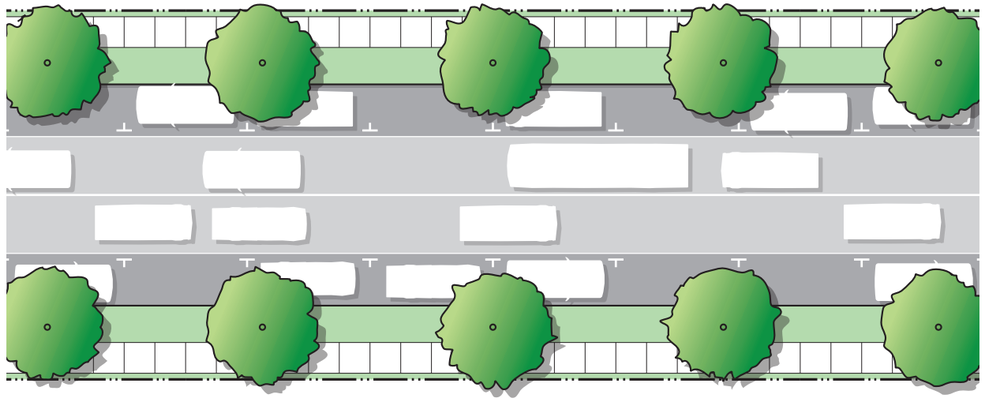
Walking to and from school provides children with the health benefits of daily physical activity. The City should work with the community's schools to create safe pedestrian routes, serviced by a complete sidewalk network and well-defined pedestrian crossings.

Traffic Calming

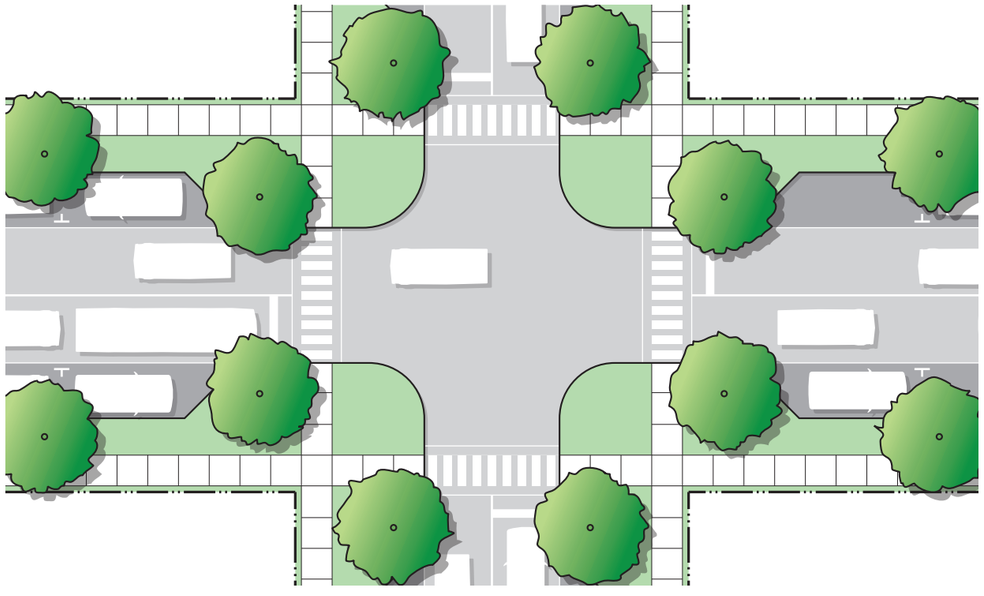
Flint's roadways provide a high level of service in terms of traffic flow. This results in efficient movement at relatively high speeds. While this is conducive to motorists, it can create an uncomfortable environment for pedestrians. The City should explore opportunities to implement traffic calming techniques in areas of high pedestrian activity. Some traffic calming techniques include the narrowing of travel lanes (which may also help accommodate bike or transit lanes), on-street parking, bumpouts, and roundabouts. These techniques should be assessed on a case-by-case basis considering surrounding land uses, the intensity of pedestrian activity, designated bike or transit routes, and other factors.



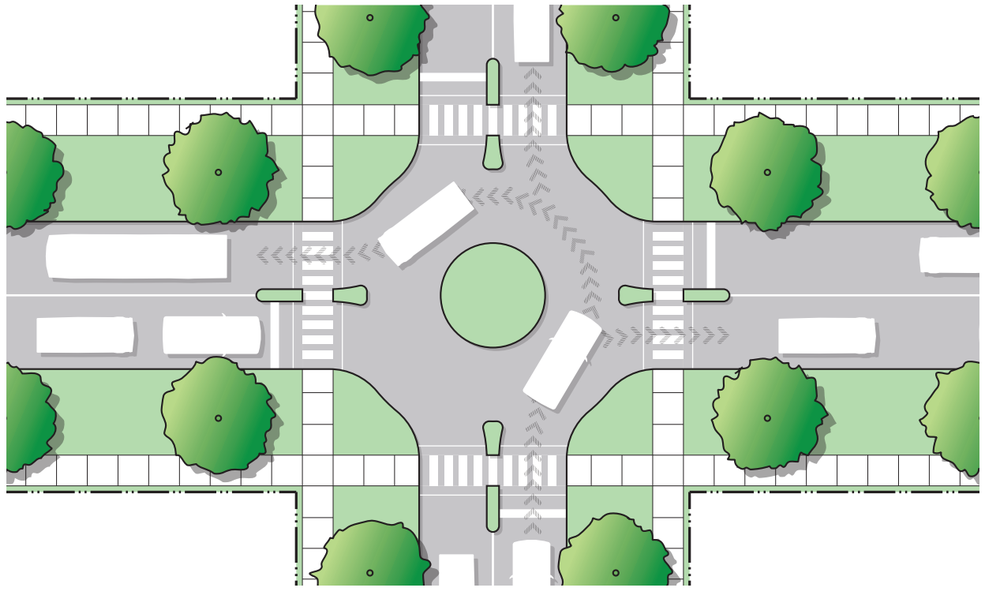
Lane size reduction calms traffic and provides the opportunity for additional amenities.



On-street parking provides a buffer between vehicular traffic and the sidewalk.



Bumpouts shorten the crosswalk distance and provide protected pedestrian areas.



Roundabouts result in slower intersection approach speeds and turning maneuvers.

TRANSIT

Local public transit service is managed and operated by the Flint Mass Transportation Authority (MTA). The MTA operates a multi-faceted service model that, in 2011, provided over 6.2 million rides. MTA services consist of:

- Fourteen fixed routes that operate throughout Flint
- Regional bus services to Livingston, Saginaw, and Oakland Counties
- Your Ride demand-response van service for riders with disabilities
- A series of peak-hour routes connecting various commercial and employment centers in Flint
- Senior Shopper routes between senior housing centers and shopping destinations
- Support for agencies or organizations who wish to provide specialized services throughout Genesee County

This Transportation and Mobility Plan chapter recognizes that the MTA is primarily responsible for the provision of transit services. In that regard, the City's role is to serve as a partner in supporting the MTA's mission of creating a comprehensive transit plan, providing Flint residents with safe and efficient transit.

Mass Transportation Authority

The MTA is constantly monitoring the performance of its routes to ensure that they balance efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and responsiveness to Flint citizens. As the MTA monitors ridership and assesses opportunities for new or modified services, the City of Flint can support the MTA in this mission:

- ***Encourage Transit-oriented Development (TOD).*** TOD aims to concentrate a mix of uses around areas served by transit. One goal is to maximize access to transit services through close proximity, comprehensive pedestrian mobility, and strategic links to the bicycle network. The City can foster TOD through zoning regulations and incentives. Moving forward, the City should work with the MTA to coordinate routing and service enhancements with changes in land use and development. For example, new neighborhood centers and mixed use developments should be served by bus stops.
- ***Coordinate redevelopment, trails, and transit services.*** As redevelopment projects come to light, the City should inform the MTA of anticipated changes in land use and intensity. Senior housing, commercial centers, public uses, and other activities may cause the MTA to adjust routes, schedules, or service types as local demographics or commuting patterns evolve. Also, trail locations, and access points should be coordinated with transit stop locations as well as the installation of bike racks on MTA buses to foster multi-modal commuting and recreation.
- ***Support data gathering through resident surveys.*** Periodically, the City may find it useful to sponsor surveys to capture residents' attitudes about public services or facilities. When this occurs, the surveys should contain a section on public transit services and facilities. This will provide an opportunity for citizens to provide their perspective on transit services, and allow the City and MTA to address multiple goals.
- ***Coordinate with public events.*** Flint hosts several events or festivals that draw local and regional residents. The City should coordinate with the MTA to ensure that transit is a viable option for traveling to these events. The City and MTA should also work with event coordinators and promoters to include a "Take the MTA to the Festival!" icon on websites and printed materials.
- ***Collaborate on grant applications.*** Grant funding is becoming increasingly competitive as municipal budgets are squeezed and federal programs are running short on financing. The City and MTA may be more competitive for grants through a joint application for funding that can address several goals and objectives. The City and MTA should explore opportunities to apply for grants that address transit improvements in conjunction with housing, bike and pedestrian infrastructure, economic development, parks and open space, and sustainability.
- ***Recruit regional transit providers.*** Megabus, Bolt Bus, or other regional bus service providers can provide mobility throughout Michigan and the Midwest. The City should market itself to these services, highlighting its student population and complementary local services.
- ***Monitor the use of various activity centers or destinations.*** Major activity centers are often points of origin or destination for transit trips. The City should work with various entities and service providers, such as McLaren Regional Medical Center, Hurley Medical Center, UM-Flint, the Downtown Development Authority, Bishop International Airport, Mott Community College, key institutions, and others.
- ***Local shuttle services.*** The City should work with local institutions and community service providers to implement shuttle services that fill in gaps that the MTA cannot feasibly serve. These may include campus circulators, localized flex-routes, or demand-response transit services.
- ***Encourage participation in employer-sponsored transit incentive programs.*** The US Internal Revenue Code allows employers to provide tax exempt transit and van pooling expenses to employees up to $245 per month.

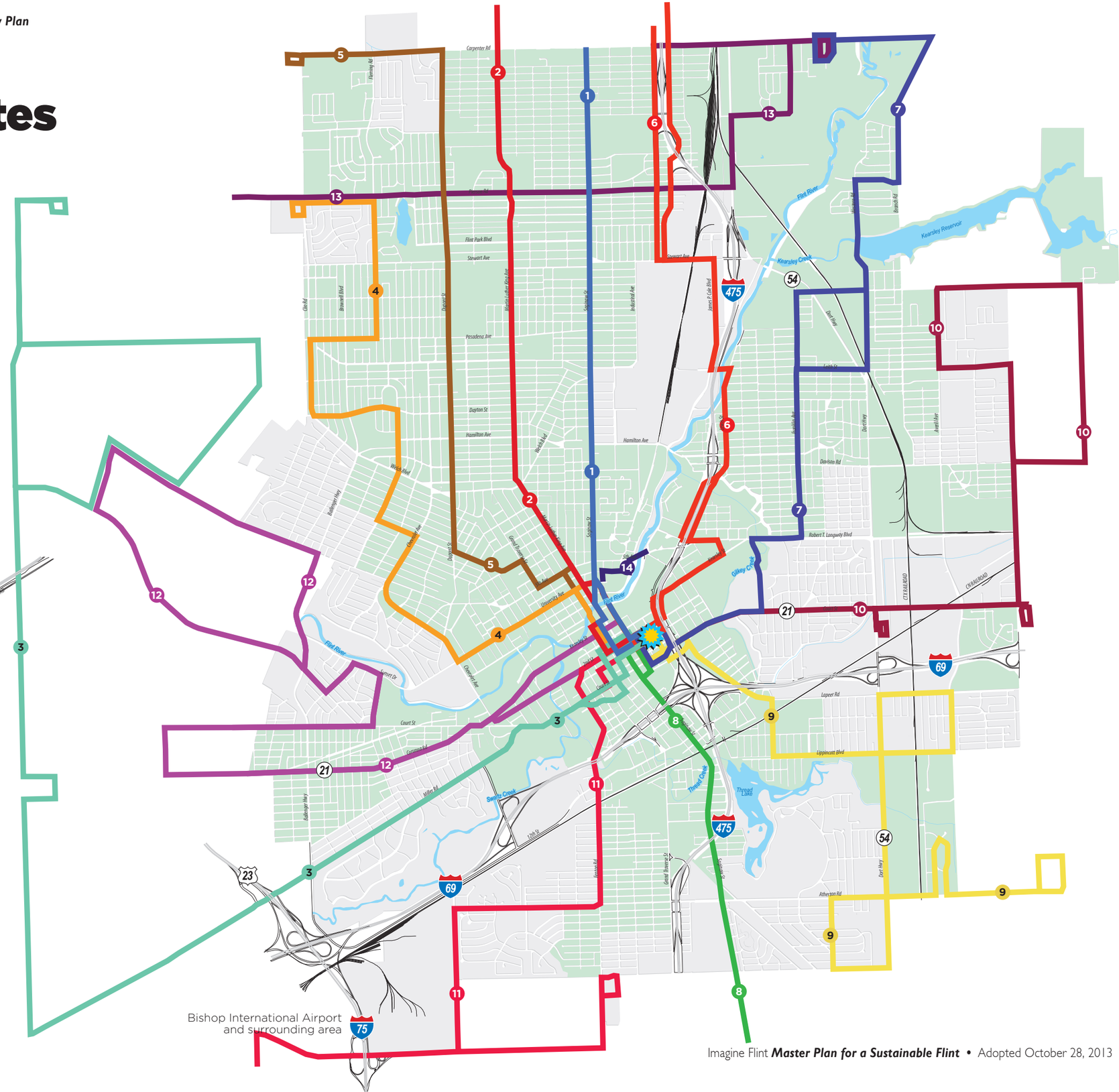
BENEFITS OF TRANSIT

- Every dollar communities invest in public transportation generates approximately $4 in economic returns.
- Every $1 billion invested in public transportation supports and creates 36,000 jobs.
- Every $10 million in capital investment in public transportation yields $30 million in increased business sales.
- Every $10 million in operating investment in public transportation yields $32 million in increased business sales.
- Americans living in areas served by public transit save 865 million hours in travel time and 450 million gallons of fuel annually.
- Without public transportation, congestion costs would have been an additional $21 billion.
- The average household spends 16 cents of every dollar on transportation, and 94% of this goes to buying, maintaining, and operating cars, the largest expenditure after housing.
- Households that are likely to use public transportation on a given day save more than $9,700 every year.
- Public transit saves the United States 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline annually.
- Households near public transit drive an average of 4,400 fewer miles and use 223 gallons of gasoline less per year than households with no access to public transit.

CITY OF FLINT
Existing MTA Routes

Transit Legend

- CDBG Funding Zone
- 1 Route 1- North Saginaw
- 2 Route 2- ML King
- 3 Route 3- Miller/Linden
- 4 Route 4- Civic Park
- 5 Route 5- Dupont
- 6 Route 6- Lewis/Selby
- 7 Route 7- Franklin
- MTA Downtown Station
- 8 Route 8- South Saginaw
- 9 Route 9- Lapeer Road
- 10 Route 10- Richfield Road
- 11 Route 11- Fenton Road
- 12 Route 12- Beecher/Corunna
- 13 Route 13- Crosstown North
- 14 Route 14- Downtown Campus



Bishop International Airport Inset

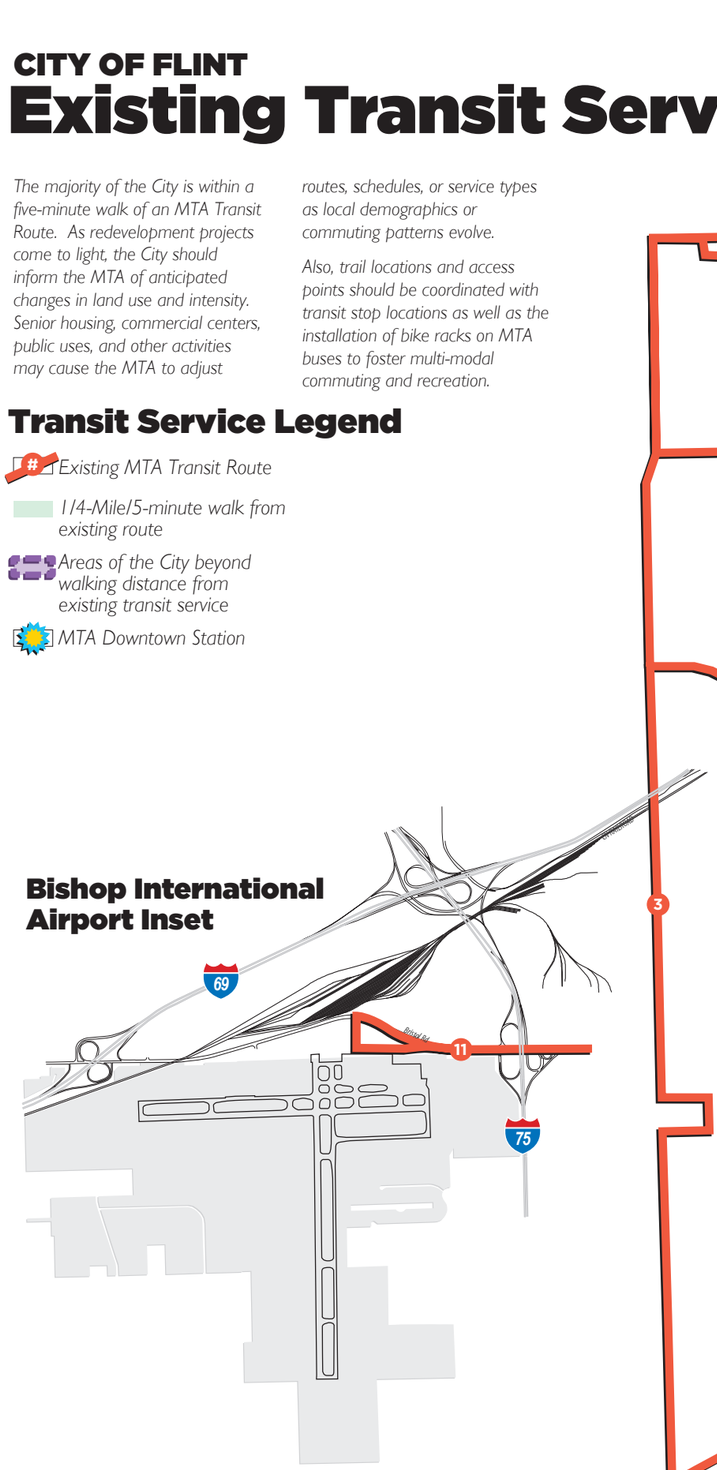
CITY OF FLINT
Existing Transit Service

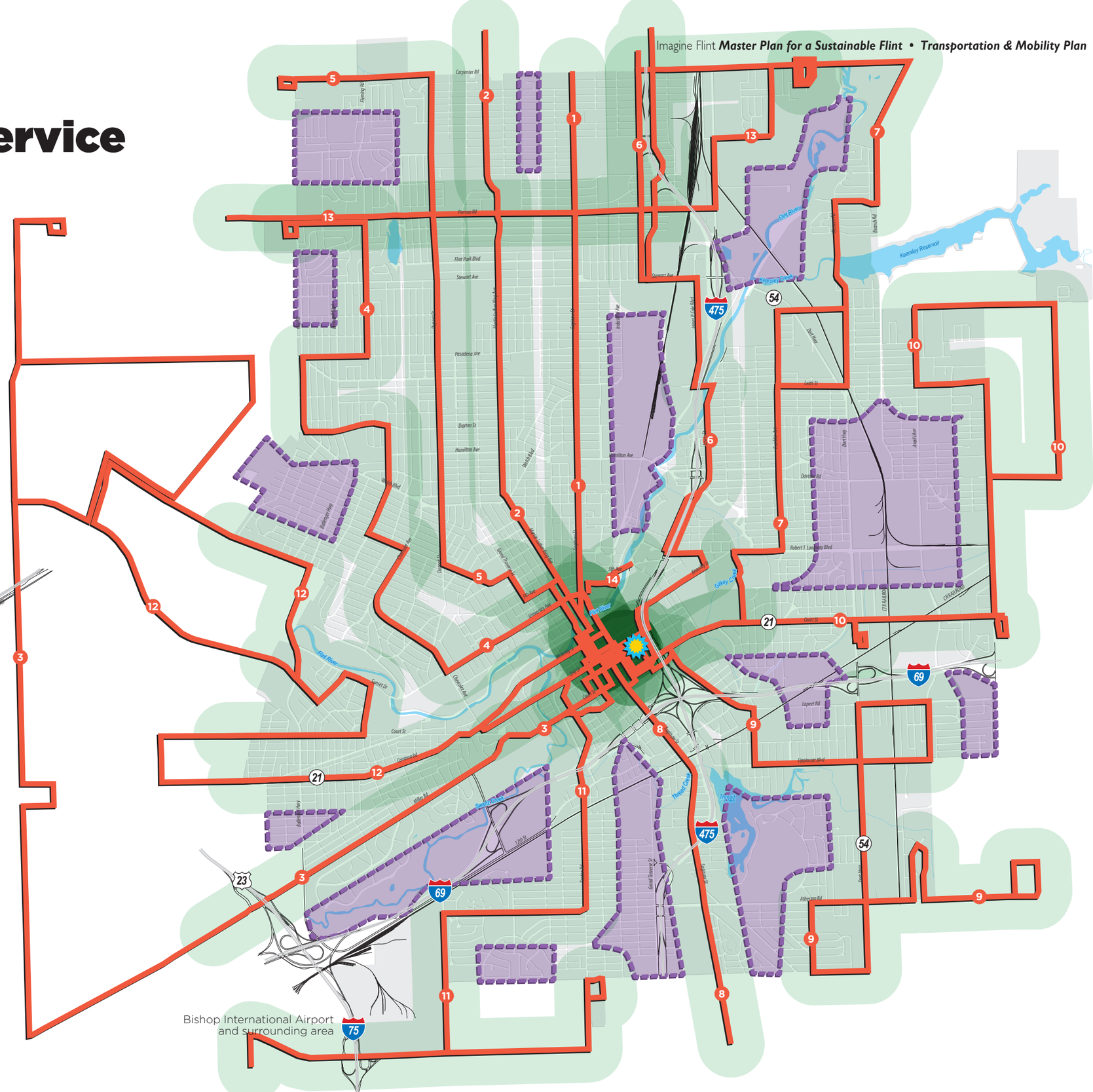
The majority of the City is within a five-minute walk of an MTA Transit Route. As redevelopment projects come to light, the City should inform the MTA of anticipated changes in land use and intensity. Senior housing, commercial centers, public uses, and other activities may cause the MTA to adjust routes, schedules, or service types as local demographics or commuting patterns evolve.

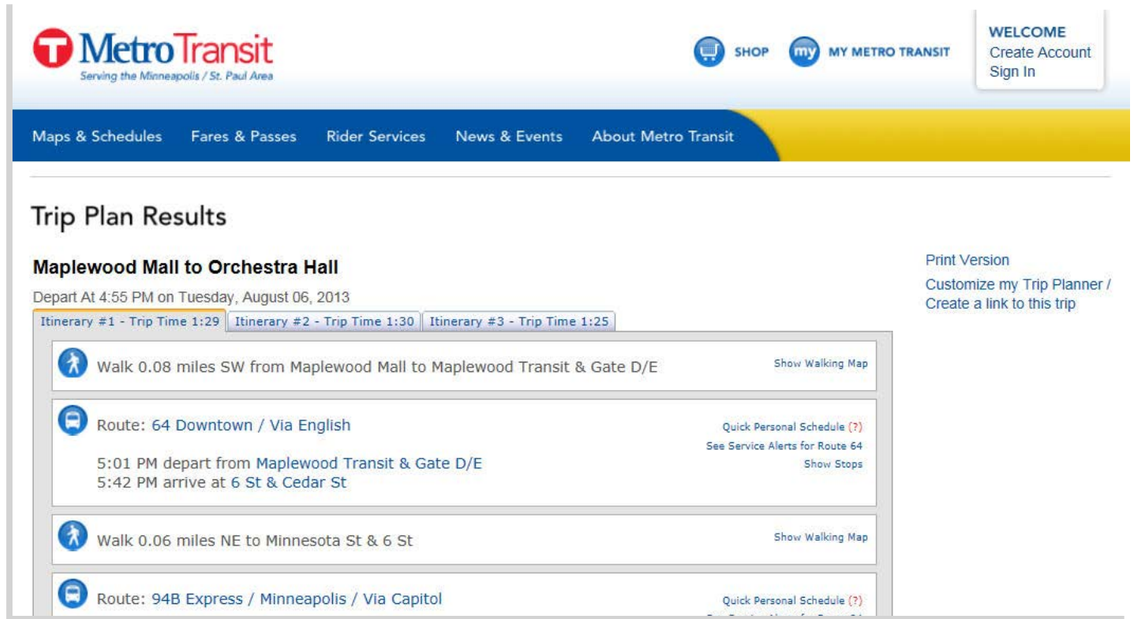
Also, trail locations and access points should be coordinated with transit stop locations as well as the installation of bike racks on MTA buses to foster multi-modal commuting and recreation.

Transit Service Legend

- *Existing MTA Transit Route*
- *1/4-Mile/5-minute walk from existing route*
- *Areas of the City beyond walking distance from existing transit service*
- *MTA Downtown Station*







Source: Screen shot of Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro Transit homepage with the trip planner

Source: Screenshot of City-Go-Round's transit app homepage

Infrastructure & Facilities

The MTA operates its vehicles on roads that are under the jurisdiction of MDOT, Genesee County, and the City of Flint. Close coordination is required to ensure that roadways foster efficient and safe transit service. The City should do the following to support this effort:

- ***Coordinate with MTA, Genesee County, and MDOT.*** As these entities implement the regular maintenance, reconstruction, or reconfiguration of roads, the MTA should be consulted to determine needs related to bus turnouts, stop locations, intersection phasing, ITS applications, and other tools. This may be especially relevant as the City determines the viability of road diets, Complete Streets implementation, and other techniques discussed in this chapter.
- ***Support the MTA's Adopt-a-Shelter Program.*** The Adopt a Shelter program allows individuals or organizations to partner with the MTA in maintaining safe and clean transit facilities. The City should support this effort by encouraging participation in this program and distributing information about how to enroll.
- ***Provide multi-modal links to all bus stops.*** Stations without pedestrian and bicycle links are a significant barrier to safe transit use. The City should assist in providing these links by making sidewalk repair and installation at bus stops a high-priority in the Capital Improvement Program, ensuring that Public Works standards require pedestrian linkages, installing bike racks adjacent to bus stops, and modifying zoning regulations to ensure that private development provide on-site paths between building entrances and the public sidewalk.

BRT/ART

As shifts in population, employment, and commercial activities occur, the City should work with the MTA to assess the viability of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). BRT is a highly efficient form of transit that provides many of the service characteristics of rail transit, but with much less cost and greater flexibility. BRT includes a multi-faceted approach to service, infrastructure, and technologies. Some key aspects of BRT include:

- Stations spaced approximately every 0.5 miles or more
- Dedicated bus lanes
- Transit stations with raised platforms and distinctive shelters
- Technologies that support high-speed transit services (i.e. transit signal priority, queue jumping, etc.)
- Advanced real-time rider information and fare collection

Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) is a version of BRT that incorporates infrastructure and technology improvements where possible, recognizing that a fully implemented BRT concept may not be practical due to right-of-way constraints, existing traffic patterns, or other factors.

BRT and ART are effective service models on corridors that connect several destinations in a community and foster regional or cross-town trips. They are most effective when paired with traditional bus transit or local circulator services that maintain access to neighborhoods, shopping districts, schools, and other destinations. As BRT or ART are considered in Flint, the following should be kept in mind:

- BRT or ART service should be considered for highly used transit routes that link destinations of city-wide or regional importance.
- Infrastructure improvements should be implemented in conjunction with other capital projects, such as road diets, utility upgrades, traffic signal upgrades, etc.
- Land uses around BRT/ART stations should include higher density mixed use development that benefits from greater transit access and supports transit ridership.
- Local bus routes or circulator services should be preserved, modified, or implemented in order to provide the local link between land uses and BRT/ART service.
- BRT/ART alignments should be considered where abandoned rail corridors offer the opportunity for dedicated rights-of-way that intersect multiple key corridors.

Outreach & Awareness

Even with effective transit service in place, users must be able to understand where routes will take them, how frequently they run, and how much time to allow for their trip. The following recommendations identify ways that the City can support the MTA in providing information to riders and conducting outreach to make residents aware of the benefits of transit.

User Information

Transit riders depend on reliable information to plan their trip. Often, this information is needed on the move. The following are ways that the City can support the MTA in providing riders with accurate and useful information:

- ***Coordinate web-based information.*** The City should include a link to the MTA website on its homepage. This will assist riders who turn to the City for information, not knowing that the MTA is a separate service provider. The City should also assist the MTA with the development of a user-based MTA website. Other cities highlight trip planners, quick links to schedules and maps, and other rider information on their homepages. As a result, the rider avoids secondary information. not related to their trip. The homepage can also feature quick links for special services provided for festivals and events in Flint and other parts of Genesee County.
- ***Assist in developing a mobile application.*** Transit riders often require route and schedule information on the go. Initial implementation of a mobile application could provide fixed information on routing, schedules, fares, and transfers. Long-term implementation could integrate ITS technologies and real-time updates, Next bus in X minutes countdowns, and other information.
- ***Assist in distributing paper information.*** The City should distribute MTA schedule, fare, and special service information through displays at City Hall, schools, libraries, and other public facilities. City staff should also provide transit information to residents seeking other services from local government.

REGIONAL MOBILITY

The City of Flint is located at the confluence of three major interstates, several rail lines, and an international airport. This infrastructure provides the foundation for Flint to serve as a hub for regional mobility and goods movement. This section describes key actions the City can take to complement the local transportation network and support residents and businesses dependent upon multimodal mobility to other parts of the region, state, and country.

Access to Interstates

Flint sits at the crossroad of I-69, I-75, and I-475. Collectively, these highways carry over 220,000 vehicles through the Flint community each day. I-69 connects Flint to Ontario, Canada and Indianapolis. I-75 provides access to Detroit, Cincinnati, and southern states. The City should work with MDOT on the following actions to ensure Flint enjoys access to these critical regional and interstate conduits:

- Coordinate land use and economic development policies to ensure that uses that are reliant on interstate commerce and shipping are in close proximity to expressways.
- Identify potential interstate access points that would catalyze development on vacant properties.
- Manage the local transportation network to ensure that it provides adequate access to and from the interstate system.
- Install wayfinding that highlights local destinations for those traveling on interstates through the region.

Rail

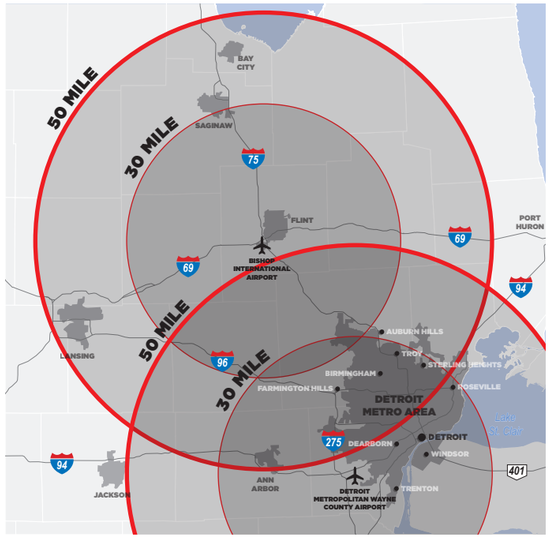
Much of the City's early success was due to the presence of rail lines that moved raw materials and finished goods between Flint and other cities in the Midwest. However, as industry evolved to take advantage of highway freight, rails were relied upon less than they had been. Currently, the Canadian National Railway and CXS Transportation have active rail lines through the City, and there are several inactive or abandoned rail corridors that provide opportunities for improvements that meet local goals and objectives. The City should consider the following actions in order to maximize the benefit of rail corridors in Flint:

- Support the development of new industry in areas already served by active rail lines.
- Work with rail companies and MDOT to install full safety and traffic management systems on at-grade crossings that will enhance the efficiency of rail traffic and vehicular safety and mobility.
- Explore opportunities for grade-separated crossings in areas of significant rail congestion.
- Work with Canadian National and CSX to develop a long-term rail consolidation plan that maximizes the efficiency of the rail network and identifies obsolete corridors that can be used for trails, open spaces, and other activities that would benefit residents.

Regional/ Interstate Transit

Flint benefits from a multi-layered regional transit network that provides mobility to the immediate surrounding area as well as destinations across the United States. However, the City should consider the following actions in order to enhance coordination among existing services and attract new alternatives to Flint:

- ***Market the MTA's regional transit services.*** The MTA provides regional bus and shuttle service to Troy, Hidden Hills, Livingston, and Oakland Counties. The City should work with the MTA to market these services and create clear fare and transfer policies, especially for special events happening in, or near, Downtown Flint.
- ***Link Greyhound service to the Downtown Transit Center.*** The Greyhound Station is currently located on Dort Road near the Amtrak Station. The City should work with Greyhound to utilize the MTA Transit Center as a quick-stop boarding and alighting station. Depending on Greyhound scheduling issues and ticketing capabilities, this could include ticketing services that, in addition to the existing station, offer full-service regional bus transit with easy connections to local transit options.
- ***Attract other regional transit providers.*** Regional bus transit providers, such as Megabus, offer low-cost alternatives for travel within the Midwest. The City should proactively recruit services from these providers and coordinate runs with local transit connections.



Vehicular Travel Time
SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES TO BISHOP INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

	Bishop Intl. Airport	Detroit Metro Airport	Population
Auburn Hills	43 minutes	62 minutes	21,412
Clarkston	33 minutes	76 minutes	882
Highland Twp.	40 minutes	72 minutes	19,202
Holly	28 minutes	90 minutes	6,086
Lake Angelus	38 minutes	67 minutes	290
Lake Orion	46 minutes	70 minutes	2,973
Milford	43 minutes	60 minutes	6,175
Oakland Twp.	60 minutes	67 minutes	16,779
Orion Twp.	43 minutes	67 minutes	35,394
Oxford	50 minutes	81 minutes	3,436
Pontiac	45 minutes	62 minutes	59,515
Rochester Hills	51 minutes	57 minutes	70,995
Rose Twp.	31 minutes	90 minutes	6,250
Troy	53 minutes	53 minutes	80,980
Waterford Twp.	43 minutes	63 minutes	71,707

Bishop International Airport

The Bishop International Airport was dedicated in 1934. Under the management of the Bishop International Airport Authority, the facility has benefited from recent expansion and renovation over the past two decades, including 1993 construction of the current passenger terminal, a major five-year $33.7 million intermodal hub project begun in 2007, a $17 million terminal renovation and runway replacement, and the most recent $1.4 million project in 2012 to repair the airport's tarmac apron. In 2011, the airport served almost 1 million passengers, though its current capacity is approximately 2 million passengers annually.

The airport hosts passenger service for five major airlines – Southwest/AirTran, Delta, American Eagle, Frontier, and United – as well as private charters. Freight activity at the airport has increased by almost 60 times between 1987 and 2012. Through June 2013, freight activity has increased by 12% over the same period in 2012.

This chapter recognizes that the Bishop International Airport Authority is responsible for the management of the airport facility. However, the following recommendations describe actions the City can take to support the Authority, and enhance the role of the airport for the region.

Services & Facilities

The Airport Authority has invested significantly in the improvement of runways, terminals, and supporting facilities. The City should consider the following recommendations in support of these efforts:

- ***Implement complementary infrastructure.*** Bishop International Airport represents an opportunity to expand commercial and industrial development. The City should consider investing in infrastructure that would support such development near the airport, building on the confluence of air, rail, and highway mobility.
- ***Align land use and development policies.*** The City should review and amend the zoning ordinance as necessary to remove barriers to desired investment in the area surrounding the airport. This should be done in accordance with the Land Use Plan and economic development strategies.

Connections

The airport is the port of entry to the Flint area for 1 million passengers per year. The City should consider the following actions as ways of providing connections to important local destinations.

- ***Coordinate with MDOT and Genesee County.*** The existing interstates and regional highways are the primary link between the airport and local destinations. The City should encourage coordination among the Airport Authority, MDOT, and Genesee County to ensure that future improvements enhance access to the local transportation network through I-75, I-69, Bristol Road, and other key connections.
- ***Coordinate with the MTA.*** Transit should be a viable and competitive option for air passengers arriving in Flint. The #5 Fenton Road route currently connects the airport to Downtown. The City should encourage future coordination between the Airport Authority and MTA to ensure that transit services and facilities are sustained and improved over time.
- ***Coordinate with the Canadian National rail company.*** CN owns and operates a rail corridor and yard adjacent to the airport. The City should coordinate with CN to determine opportunities for spurs or secondary lines, that could serve nearby industry according to a broader economic vision.
- ***Maximize connections to regional population centers.*** The airport offers competitive services from a number of airlines, and is surrounded by many communities with significant populations. The airport's website highlights a list of communities that are closer to Bishop International Airport than the Detroit Metro Airport. These communities represent a total population of over 400,000 people. The City should work with Genesee County and surrounding counties to ensure that these communities have direct connections to the airport.

Marketing

Advancing the image of the airport is an important piece of its success. The City should undertake the following actions to ensure the long-term success of the facility.

- ***Coordinate with the Airport Authority on a comprehensive marketing campaign.*** The airport has several distinct advantages for passenger and freight services, including its proximity to the northwest portion of the Detroit region, population centers in and around Genesee County, convenient access, and several major service providers. The City should help implement a marketing campaign through local advertising, incorporating airport facts into business recruitment materials, and branding that stresses connections between the airport and Flint destinations. The campaign should also highlight the airport's location and accessibility to households living in the Detroit area, as a convenient alternative to the Detroit Metro Airport.
- ***Implement a comprehensive wayfinding program.*** Working off of the image and identity established through the coordinated marketing campaign, the City should implement a wayfinding program that guides visitors to local destinations and attractions. The wayfinding program could be part of a larger streetscaping effort that would enhance the image of the community on key gateways.

6 TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents the strategies needed to implement the goals and objectives of the Transportation & Mobility Plan. Taken together, the objectives and strategies included in this section provide specific direction, and serve as a guide for the evaluation of development proposals and land use alternatives.

To provide the City with a reliable policy guide for decision-making, the objectives and strategies are based significantly on community input received through the master planning process. In addition to broad community input, these objectives and strategies are based on input from the seven-member Transportation Advisory Group, Steering Committee, City officials, City staff, and observations and assessment from the Imagine Flint Project Team.

Implementation Matrix

The following Implementation Matrix groups strategies by topic within each objective, and identifies anticipated time frame, relative cost, and the entities, including City of Flint departments and partner organizations, potentially responsible for the implementation. The matrix also identifies key metrics needed to track implementation progress.

Time Frame

A general timeframe is assigned to each strategy, considering the cost of various types of improvements and their ability to set other actions in motion. Generally, low-cost strategies with easy implementation are given the short-term time frame, though some other actions are given this designation based on their high level of priority in meeting community objectives or ensuring the safety of residents.

Each strategy in the Implementation Matrix is indicated with one of the following:

- ***Short:*** low-cost, ease of implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years
- ***Medium:*** important actions that have some level of significant cost, and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years
- ***Long:*** actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time, or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation

Public Cost Estimate

Public cost estimate is represented by a scale ranging from $ to $$$. The costs in this column refer only to public costs. Below is a description of the cost scale:

- **$**: Actions that require primarily internal staff time requiring mostly regulatory changes, policy updates, or strategic partnerships with limited outside funding required
- **$$**: Actions that require outside consulting services assistance, or relatively minor investment in infrastructure or project development
- **$$$**: Actions that require intensive planning, engineering, or design, and significant investment in infrastructure or project development

Responsible Entities & Partner Organizations

City government alone is not capable of implementing the Master Plan. This is a community vision which relies upon Flint's greatest assets, its people and community stakeholders to help implement desired aspirations.

With regard to citing those entities responsible for implementation, it should be noted that it is anticipated that from a policy standpoint, the Mayor and City Council will be involved in the majority of these actions.

Where a City Department should be involved, that department has been listed. Where general administrative leadership is needed, the City of Flint has been listed. Strategies, such as recommended technical studies and analyses that would likely benefit from outside expertise, have also been highlighted.

Unforeseen Partnership Opportunities

Every effort was made to identify a comprehensive list of potential partner organizations for inclusion in the implementation matrix. As a community of over 100,000 with a rich history of volunteerism and over 100 foundations active in Genesee County, there may be instances where a deserving organization that is well-matched to one of the plan objectives or strategies has been excluded from a list of potential partners for a given topic.

Similarly, there may come a time when a partner organization identified in the implementation table merges with another organization, or otherwise ceases to exist. As with the rest of the Master Plan, the implementation table is a flexible document that should be regularly updated and revised to reflect the evolving needs and assets of the Flint community.

Progress Indicator

Key progress indicators have been provided for each strategy grouping. Progress indicators identify quantifiable metrics for which data should be available on a regular basis, and indicate desired trends for each metric. These indicators represent measurable achievements that move the City toward realization of Master Plan objectives. These progress indicators will enable the City to monitor its effectiveness at implementing plan recommendations.

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 1	Establish bicycling as a form of recreation and transportation by expanding the City's network of trails, bike lanes, and other connections.				
Bicycle Trails & Infrastructure	Continue to support implementation of projects identified within the Genesee Regional Trail Plan and advocate for inclusion of local trails in all updates to the Genesee Regional Trail Plan.	Short	$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT • Genesee County Road Commission • Genesee County Trail Commission • Flint Community Schools • Environmental Advocacy Organizations • Genesee County MPO • City of Flint Planning and Development Department • Health and Fitness Advocacy programs and organizations	• Increase in the number of parks, schools, and key destinations accessible by designated bike trails • Increase in the number of lane miles of dedicated bike trails or striped on-street paths • Increase in the number of bike racks in the public right-of-way, on public properties, and in private development • Increase in the amount of contiguous bike trail mileage • Increase in the number of miles of abandoned rail right-of-way converted to bike trails • Increase in number of miles of bike trails funded through outside funding sources
	Establish local trail connections to the City's parks and the larger regional trail network, including the Flint River Trail and the Genesee Valley Trail.	Short	$$		
	Identify streets suitable for on-street bike lanes or designated bike routes, to provide a fully connected trail and bicycle network where off-street trails cannot be implemented.	Medium	$$		
	Provide bicycle parking at all public facilities within the City including City Hall, community centers, the Flint Public Library, and schools.	Medium	$		
	Require bicycle and pedestrian amenities to be incorporated into all new development.	Short	$		
	Aggressively pursue funding opportunities from a range of sources including Federal, State, and local grants to assist with land acquisition, easements, and trail construction.	Short	$		
	Continue to develop and expand the Flint River Trail including fixing existing gaps and disconnects, and extending it west of Downtown.	Medium	$$		
	Complete the Grand Traverse Greenway along the abandoned CSX Railroad Line from Downtown Flint to Hemphill Road.	Medium	$$		
	Evaluate the feasibility and benefit of a City-wide bike sharing program.	Medium	$		
	Coordinate with the Genesee County MPO as the Long Range Transportation Plan is being updated to add/modify the City's bike routes.	Medium	$		
Education, Awareness, & Safety	Promote the utilization of multi-use trails as a means of both recreation and transportation.	Short	$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • Environmental Advocacy Organizations • Health and Fitness Advocacy programs and organizations	• Increase in the number of people subscribing to or joining local bicycle groups and students that visit UM-Flint's Bicycle Road Skills Course • Decrease number of accidents or crime along trails and bike lanes • Increase in residents bike safety programs
	Improve the safety of the City's trail network by installing lighting and emergency call boxes where necessary.	Short	$$		
	Continue to work with, and support the efforts of bicycle advocacy groups and organizations dedicated to improving bicycling within the City and surrounding area, including the Safe & Active Genesee for Everyone (SAGE), the League of Michigan Bicyclists, Friends of the Flint River Trail, and Crim Fitness Foundation.	Short	$		
	Develop a pedestrian and bicycle plan to complement the Genesee County Regional Trail Plan by improving pedestrian and bicycle circulation and safety throughout the City of Flint.	Medium	$$		
	Partner with the University of Michigan-Flint Walk/Bike Work Group, and promote their Bicycle Road Skills Course as an opportunity to establish a comprehensive bike safety educational program for the community.	Short	$		
Signage, Information, & Wayfinding	Expand the existing pedestrian/cyclist scaled wayfinding signage throughout the entire trail system, including directing trail users to key community facilities, retail and office destinations, employment centers, and other trail connections.	Medium	$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • Environmental Advocacy Organizations • Health and Fitness Advocacy programs and organizations	• Increase number of new trail wayfinding signs posted • Increase in the number of hits for websites or maps that provide information regarding Flint trails
	Consider posting trail signage in other locations within the City, such as Downtown, directing people to trail entrances and promoting the trail networks' availability and connectedness.	Medium	$		
	Promote the use and availability of the City's trail and bike route system by publishing and distributing trail maps at public venues, the City's website, bicycle shops, and other visible locations.	Short	$		
Objective 2	Provide a safe pedestrian network that is well connected and well maintained to support active living and walking as a viable transportation option in the City of Flint.				
Pedestrian Infrastructure & Accessibility	Work with the community's schools to create safe walk to school routes, and ensure they are serviced by a complete sidewalk network and defined pedestrian crossings.	Short	$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT • Genesee County Roads Commission • Flint Community Schools	• Decrease in pedestrian gaps in designated priority zones • Decrease in the percentage of non-ADA accessible sidewalks and intersections • Decrease in the ratio of commercial square footage to curb cuts within a given geographic area • Increase in amount of outside funding secured for improvements to the pedestrian network
	Implement ADA compliant infrastructure at all intersections whenever a pre-ADA street or sidewalk is altered, consistent with the requirements of the ADA.	Short	$$		
	Preemptively implement ADA compliant infrastructure at all busy pedestrian intersections, including curb ramps and detectable warnings.	Medium	$$		
	Consolidate access points and curb cuts along the City's commercial corridors to improve walkability and pedestrian safety.	Medium	$$		
	Ensure that all new development provides sidewalks and sufficient street lighting to promote pedestrian circulation and enhance pedestrian safety.	Short	$		
	Budget for on-going maintenance and repairs of the City's sidewalks as part of the Capital Improvement Plan.	Short	$$		
	Aggressively pursue funding opportunities from a range of sources including Federal, State, and local grants to assist with improvements to the sidewalk network.	Short	$		
	Maintain City sidewalks in good condition, and ensure they are level and clear of debris and overgrown vegetation.	Medium	$		
	Conduct a walkability audit of the City and identify primary pedestrian paths, physical barriers to walking and accessing transit, and locations of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant infrastructure.	Short	$		
	Based on the results of the walkability audit, develop a sidewalk gap and improvement program to systematically upgrade sidewalk infrastructure, eliminate physical barriers, and prioritize sidewalk projects.	Medium	$$		
	Where appropriate, modify or retrofit existing blocks with mid-block sidewalks, to provide pedestrian links at reasonalbe dimensions.	Medium	$$		

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Health, Safety, & Traffic Calming	Increase public awareness of the health benefits of walking.	Short	$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT • Genesee County Roads Commission • Health and Fitness Advocacy programs and organizations	• Decrease in the number of accidents involving pedestrians • Increase in the number of locations using pedestrian-oriented signalization and technology • Increase in the number of miles walked annually by Flint residents for recreation, fitness, or as a means of transportation
	Promote walking as a pro-active way to reduce vehicle emissions.	Short	$		
	Consider the use of HAWK (High-Intensity Activated crossWALK) beacons to provide safe crossings along busy/high speed roads, such as South Saginaw Street or Dort Highway.	Medium	$$		
	Implement passive and active traffic calming measures to slow traffic along primary pedestrian routes and busy pedestrian crossings.	Medium	$$$		
	Provide for pedestrian crossings with pedestrian activated signal buttons at all signalized intersections within the City.	Medium	$$		
	Based on the results of the walkability audit, develop a streetscape improvement plan along primary pedestrian routes to provide additional pedestrian scaled lighting, signalizations, and enhanced crosswalks.	Long	$$$		
Objective 3	**Support the Mass Transportation Authority (MTA) as a leader in the provision of high-quality public transit.**				
Transit Service, Infrastructure, & Facilities	Encourage the MTA to consider altering existing routes or adding additional routes and multi-modal links, to provide service to areas of the City currently beyond walking distance to transit.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT • MTA	• Increase in the number of jobs and residents within 1/4-mile of transit services • Increase in the amount of bus shelters and signage • Increase in transit ridership • Increase in amount of outside funding secured for transit service, facility, or infrastructure improvements
	As the City undertakes road diets and the implementation of Complete Streets, work with the MTA and appropriate jurisdictions to consider infrastructure, such as bus bays, to improve transit operations as part of the roadway improvements.	Long	$$$		
	Encourage the MTA to inventory and regularly assess the condition and location of all transit shelters in the City through technical standards and user surveys, assessing the structural integrity, signage and scheduling provisions, and connections to the sidewalk network.	Medium	$$		
	Work with MTA to aggressively pursue funding opportunities from a range of sources including Federal, State, and local grants to assist with transit operations, including an expansion of the Your Ride service.	Short	$		
	Work with local employers, hotels, and businesses to identify locally-sponsored services that could fill gaps in MTA service, including carpools, employer sponsored vanpools, and local shuttles.	Medium	$$		
	Work cooperatively with the MTA to develop a Comprehensive Transit Plan, identifying priority destinations and traffic generators within the City, and ensure they are adequately served by MTA routes.	Short	$$		
Transit Marketing & Promotion	Increase public awareness of the environmental benefits of public transportation and promote transit use as a pro-active way to reduce vehicle emissions.	Short	$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • Health and Fitness Advocacy programs and organizations • Major employers	• Increase in participation in employee-sponsored transit incentive programs • Increase in hits to the MTA website, paper maps, or other tools made available in the future
	Encourage employers to offer incentives for transit use by employees under the US Internal Revenue Code section 132(a), which allows transit passes and van pooling expenses (up to $245/mo) to be exempted from taxable income.	Short	$		
	Promote the MTA's comprehensive array of services and programs throughout the City by making route maps and schedules available at City facilities and events, maintaining a link to the MTA's website on the City's website, and other reasonable methods.	Short	$		
	Assist with the development of a mobile app that includes schedules, route, and fare information.	Medium	$$		
Transit-Supportive Development & Intermodal Coordination	Promote compact land use patterns such as transit-oriented development that foster residential densities capable of supporting transit operations.	Long	$$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MTA • Genesee Region Trail Commission	• Increase in the amount of commercial square footage or residential units located within 1/4-mile of transit stops • Increase in the number of multi-modal non-motorized trips
	Work cooperatively with the MTA to coordinate bus stops with trail entrances and promote the availability of bike racks on MTA busses.	Short	$$		
Objective 4	**Continue to provide a world-class multi-modal transportation network to retain and attract business, industry, and employment.**				
Rail Infrastructure	Support the provision of adequate and necessary railroads and railroad infrastructure to support and attract industrial businesses to the City.	Long	$$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • Major rail companies	• Decrease in the amount of accidents involving trains and motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists
	Continue to work with railroad companies to ensure rail crossings are safe, properly maintained, or improved whenever necessary.	Short	$$		
Bishop International Airport	Support the continued expansion of Bishop International Airport operations.	Long	$$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • Bishop International Airport Authority • MTA	• Increase in the number of commercial trips or freight tonage served through Bishop International Airport • Increase in the number of outbound and inbount airport passengers
	Promote commercial flights from Bishop Airport throughout the State of Michigan as an alternative to the Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW).	Long	$		
	Support the implementation of Bishop Airport's Capital Improvement Plan.	Long	$$$		
	Strengthen connections between Bishop Airport and other areas of the City through public transit and wayfinding signage.	Short	$$		

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Regional Mobility	Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to ensure the City of Flint maintains necessary and appropriate access to the interstate system.	Long	$$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT • MTA • Regional and national transit providers	• Increase in ridership for MTA's regional transit services • Increase in the number or frequency of regional or national transit runs serving Flint
	Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to provide wayfinding signage along I-69, I-75, and I-475, promoting key destinations and businesses within the City of Flint.	Long	$$		
	Identify and continue to support roadway improvement projects that enhance Flint's regional connections to Genesee County, the Detroit Metro area, and beyond.	Long	$$$		
	Work with appropriate agencies to determine the feasibility of establishing train service to Detroit and other major locations in the State of Michigan not currently accessible by existing Amtrak service.	Long	$$$		
	Promote the availability of Amtrak train service and Greyhound bus service in the City of Flint and support their continued operation as a benefit to City residents and businesses.	Short	$$		
	Promote the availability of the MTA's Regional Service to Livingston, Saginaw, and Oakland Counties.	Short	$		
	Identify regional transit options between Flint and surrounding cities, including Detroit, Toledo, Grand Rapids, Chicago, Indianapolis, etc.	Short	$$		
Objective 5	Develop a well-maintained and efficient network of roads and streets to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of vehicles.				
Roadway Infrastructure	Reinforce the existing hierarchy of the City's street network of interstates, arterials, collectors, and local roads through roadway design, land use planning, and access management.	Medium	$$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT • Genesee County Road Commission	• Increased percentage of roadways designated as fair or good condition according to the PASER rating system • Increase in the number of commercial square footage linked by vehicular cross-access • Increase in number of miles of roadway reconstructed through road diets • Increase in the miles of roadway maintained through the Adopt-a-Road program
	Implement access management strategies along arterial streets, and to a lesser extent collector streets, including eliminating excessive or redundant curb cuts and providing for cross access between adjacent commercial properties.	Medium	$$		
	Budget for on-going maintenance and repairs of City-owned streets as part of the Capital Improvement Plan.	Short	$$$		
	Coordinate with Genesee County and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) as they work to enhance their roadways within and outside of the City's jurisdiction.	Short	$		
	Consider a road diet on every four-lane street within the City that has an average daily traffic volume (ADT) of less than 20,000.	Long	$$$		
	Develop and adopt a binding Complete Streets policy for the City's streets in an effort to safely accommodate all motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.	Short	$		
	Ensure adequate right-of-way is preserved or dedicated to the City as new development occurs.	Lon	$$		
	Continue to identify and eliminate problematic intersections throughout the City through roadway realignments and optimized intersection configurations.	Medium	$$$		
	Consider the use of a modern traffic circle as an alternative to traffic signals.	Long	$$$		
	Establish an Adopt-a-Road program and partner with local agencies, organizations, and groups, enlisting their help in collecting litter along the City's streets.	Short	$		
	Consider block consolidation to alleviate roadway maintenance by the City.	Long	$$		
Traffic, Connectivity, & Safety	Consider reconnecting cul-de-sac streets to the street grid.	Long	$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT • Genesee County Road Commission	• Increase in the number of lane miles with sustained or increased traffic counts, and improved levels of service through signalization and traffic management techniques
	Enhance mobility by reconnecting neighborhoods isolated by I-475 and reopening Leith Street.	Medium	$$		
	Convert one-way streets to two-way wherever feasible.	Short	$$		
	Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to improve traffic flow and circulation along routes under its jurisdiction.	Short	$		
	Continue to implement the City's Wayfinding Plan to ensure motorists are directed to Downtown Flint, Bishop Airport, educational and cultural institutions, and other key destinations within the City.	Medium	$$		
	Maintain current traffic counts along the City's arterial and collector streets.	Medium	$$		
	Develop a comprehensive parking management plan.	Short	$		
Signalization & Technology	Install and maintain intelligent traffic signals and systems along key corridors and routes to facilitate the efficient movement of vehicles throughout the City.	Long	$$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT • Genesee County Road Commission	• Decrease in the ratio of traffic signals per capita to reflect national standards • Decrease in response times based on signal technology upgrades
	Audit each of the City's 288 signalized intersections and remove unwarranted traffic signals.	Medium	$$		
	Install and maintain emergency signal preemption devices along key corridors and routes to assist emergency vehicles.	Medium	$$		
	Install and maintain vehicle detection systems along the City's arterial streets to optimize traffic flow throughout the City.	Medium	$$		
Objective 6	Involve the public in all key transportation decisions.				
Public Input	Ensure an open line of communication between transportation policy/planning officials and the general public.	Medium	$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT • Genesee County Road Commission	• Increased community attendance and participation in public meetings • Increased hits in web-based outreach, including the downloading of agendas and minutes, social network followers and friends, etc.
	Hold hearings with opportunities for public comment before all key transportation policy decisions.	Short	$		
	Utilize neighborhood partnerships to solicit feedback regarding major transportation projects.	Short	$		

MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT

7 ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES, OPEN SPACE & PARKS PLAN

VISION P. 145

GOAL & OBJECTIVES P. 147

RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES P. 149

IMPLEMENTATION P. 163

7 ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES, OPEN SPACE & PARKS
VISION, GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Imagine

a new national reputation for Flint, with the City positioned as a post-industrial leader in protecting the environment, cleaning polluted air, land, and water, and confronting climate change.

Imagine an extensive network of well-kept parks, safe and accessible to all and beautifully maintained by an alliance of City, non-profit, volunteer, and resident partners.

Imagine the Flint River revitalized for economic growth and recreation, brimming with kayakers and canoers, and home to a vibrant "green waterfront" of parks and trails spanning the entire length of the river.

Over the next twenty years, Flint can achieve this vision. However, we must first face existing realities: our parks system is too costly for the City to properly maintain, the Flint River is underutilized, and our industrial past polluted our air, water, and soil.

The Environmental Features, Open Space, and Parks Plan is a road map to overcoming those obstacles and to actualizing a new community vision. By following the recommendations outlined in this chapter, we can become a proactive environmental leader with a clean, healthy, and equitable system of parks, waterways, and open spaces.

SOCIAL EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY

A safe and clean environment for all residents helps to rectify past environmental injustices and promotes equity across neighborhoods. Parks should be accessible to all and our natural systems managed in a responsible, forward-thinking manner.

QUALITY OF LIFE

The ability to interact with nature and safely access recreational opportunities elevates quality of life. Ample green space for walking, playing, and relaxation, increase happiness, reduce stress, and assist in leading a healthy, enjoyable lifestyle.

YOUTH

27.3% of Flint's population is below the age of 18, and 8% are age 5 or below. Providing safe, quality, and fun places to play early in life, is valuable for childhood development and can lead young adults remaining invested in their community. We must also be responsible stewards of the environment to ensure our parks remain safe and clean for future generations.

RESHAPING THE ECONOMY

A City's open space influences far more than the traditional realm of plants and playgrounds. Parks attract and retain families and stimulate "recreational economy" growth such as new bike repair shops, canoe renters, and outdoors outfitters. Parks programming can also provide job training skills in horticulture, landscaping, and gardening.

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Reshaping open space can be a powerful tool for bringing about positive change. The City's natural systems must be protected; however, their form and function should be flexible and evolve to match existing realities and projected future needs. Strategies such as naturalization, riverfront parkland acquisition, or blue/green infrastructure development can beautify the outdoors while also reducing long-term costs.

CIVIC LIFE

As anchors for both small neighborhoods and the City at-large, parks and open spaces are natural stimulants to civic life. They serve as active gathering places for community engagement and interaction, and are often fundamental pieces of character and identity. Reinstituting a resident parks advisory council and establishing regular town hall meetings will promote civic involvement in decisions about Flint's parks and open spaces.

GOAL:

The City of Flint will be a proactive environmental leader with a clean, healthy, and equitable system of parks, waterways, and open spaces.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The ways in which the Goal & Objectives of the Environmental Features, Open Space & Parks Plan have been influenced by the guiding principles are indicated using the following symbols.

- ***Social Equity & Sustainability***
- ***Reshaping the Economy***
- ***Quality of Life***
- ***Adapting to Change***
- ***Youth***
- ***Civic Life***

Objective #1

Improve the ecological health of Flint's natural systems through responsible planning and development.

Sustainable planning promotes a healthy ecosystem, protects natural resources by reducing sprawl, and increases water and air quality. Such efforts are particularly important in disadvantaged neighborhoods where Flint's industrial past most negatively affected the environment.

Objective #2

Protect, enhance, and promote the Flint River and its watershed, along with other tributary lakes and streams, as valuable community assets.

Transforming the Flint River and its lakes and streams into clean, appealing, and recreational destinations facilitates exercise and healthier lifestyles, stimulates appreciation for the natural environment, and drives new economic investment. Revitalized outdoor spaces also create new venues for civic engagement, while providing youth with safe spaces for recreation.

Objective #3

Create, integrate, and maintain blue/green infrastructure centered around the Flint River system.

Acquiring and preserving a "greenbleIt" of land around the Flint River protects the river from development and pollution and promotes recreation. It also absorbs rainwater, reduces flooding, and lessens the burden on the City's sewer infrastructure.

Objective #4

Provide parks, open space, and recreation infrastructure that both meets the needs of the community and is maintainable by the City and its community partners.

A healthy, safe, and equitable system of parks provides unmatched quality of life benefits to residents and youth. The City must identify and rectify service gaps, maintenance needs, and accessibility issues.

Objective #5

Reduce the City's overall carbon footprint.

Decreasing reliance on fossil fuels will clean our air, encourage walking and bicycling, and address climate change. Renewable energy and green technologies necessary to achieve this also represent new avenues for economic growth.

Objective #6

Establish a new park management framework and secure resources necessary to maintain the City's parks and open spaces.

A new innovative and sustainable parks framework is needed to reduce City costs while increasing park access and appearance. This will include close civic partnerships with community groups, volunteers, the county and state governments, and non-profit organizations.

Objective #7

Engage the Flint community to support the programming and use of park and recreation facilities.

Residents must drive the implementation of the Environmental Features, Open Space & Parks Plan and be continuously engaged. A new citizen's park advisory council will advocate on behalf of the community, and youth will be provided with new forums for civic and recreational engagement.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES, OPEN SPACE & PARKS
RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES

Open space and parks are critical components of urban life. They provide opportunities for passive and active recreation, access to nature, enhanced air and water quality, and help define the character of each neighborhood and community as a whole.

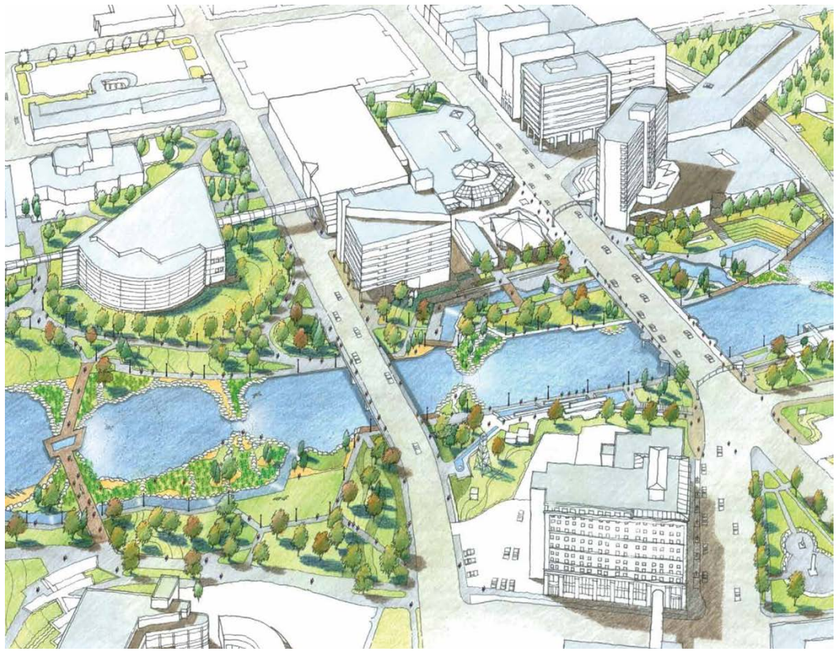
The Environmental Features, Open Space & Parks Plan aims to balance some of Flint's most significant challenges with unique opportunities to enhance the quality of life for its residents, and create a natural framework around which to build a new, prosperous Flint. It also identifies ways that water bodies, green open spaces, and parks can dovetail into other planning efforts, including land use, transportation, community facilities, public safety, and more.

Built around the Flint River, the City has always had a direct relationship with the natural environment. Over time, the system of natural and recreational spaces has given rise to many organizations which have worked to preserve the integrity of Flint's natural environment. The Master Plan presents an opportunity for the Flint River and its tributaries and lakes to establish the framework for more extensive blue/green corridors throughout the City, that are complemented by linked trails, paths, parks, and other open space amenities.

As the community undertakes efforts to revitalize many of its residential, commercial, and industrial areas, opportunities for parks, open spaces, and a restored environment are at the forefront of the conversation. The Environmental Features, Open Space & Parks Plan has the potential to be a prototype for modern, innovative environmental planning for other post-industrial cities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Flint River 150
Flint River Lakes 150
Water Quality 150
Revitalizing the Flint River 151
Urban River Case Studies 152
Parks & Recreation 154
History of Flint Park Systems 154
Classifying Parks & Recreation Facilities 154
Park Standards 156
Park Accessibility 156
Park Safety, Health & Welfare 156
Park Maintenance 158
Programming & Partnerships 159
Sharing Responsibility 160
Brownfields 160
Flint's Brownfields 160
Naturalization 161
Benefits 161
Approach 161
Case Studies 161
Reducing Carbon Emissions 162
Renewable Energy 162
Genesee County Initiatives 162
Potential Strategies for Flint 162
Urban Agriculture 162



This graphic is an excerpt from the Flint Riverfront Restoration Plan (2010) illustrating the green connections that can be made along the Flint River

THE FLINT RIVER

The Flint River is the most prominent natural feature in the City, forming a historic and industrial artery through the community. The river flows from the northeast to the southwest corner of the City, and is the central geographic feature that unites Downtown with several neighborhoods, parks, and former industrial areas.

The Flint River, at 142 miles in length, forms a draining network that spans approximately 1,332 sq. miles. The river is linked to several tributary waterways: Brent Run, Carman Creek, Gilkey Creek, Kearsley Creek, Robinson Drain, Swartz Creek, and Thread Creek. The creeks expand the river's broad floodplain, creating a series of greenbelt fingers that have recreational and ecological purposes.

Moving forward, the City and its partners must transform the Flint River system into a clean and appealing recreational destination for residents and visitors alike. By doing so, the City can restore appreciation for the natural environment, facilitate exercise and active lifestyles, and drive new economic investment in the City. This should be one of the defining projects in the revitalization of Flint.

Flint River Lakes

There are three lakes in the Flint River watershed:

Flint Park Lake

Spring fed, Flint Park Lake is a small neighborhood lake near Max Brandon Park on the northwest side of the City. It has a fishing pier and picnic pavilion along its shore. A significant wetland occupies the southern end of the lake. Once home to a 40-acre amusement park, the lake is currently surrounded by large tracts of vacant land.

Thread Lake

Similar to Kearsley Reservoir, Thread Lake is a dammed portion of a creek. Located in the southeast corner of the City, the lake is closed to motorized boats, and is generally less-developed along its shoreline compared to Kearsley Reservoir. Thread Lake is about 90 acres in size and is heavily wooded to the east.

Kearsley Reservoir

Located in the northeast corner of the City, Kearsley Reservoir is a dammed portion of Kearsley Creek, constructed in 1929, that provides recreational opportunities for citizens. There are two boat launches, one beach, and a municipal golf course alongside the reservoir. At 250 acres, the finger-like shape of the reservoir, creates numerous small bays and scenic bends. Most of the shoreline is developed with single family detached homes.

Potential Improvements

In general, these lakes have untapped potential for recreational activities including fishing, boating, kayaking, and more. The Flint River Watershed Coalition and the Michigan State University Planning & Zoning Center are engaged in efforts to help residents envision a new future for these three lakes. Ideas generated by this process may eventually be adopted as official City recommendations.

FLINT RIVERFRONT RESTORATION PLAN

The goal of this plan is to restore the Flint River by offering more recreational activities, improving park conditions, redeveloping nearby underutilized properties, implementing flood management techniques, and protecting the ecosystem. The plan proposes several short and long-term design recommendations that will enhance water recreational activities, create opportunities for pedestrian/bike connections, and establish "green" developments for greater economic opportunity.

Spring Grove restoration
Source: Joel Rash

Water Quality

According to a river assessment report by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), the water quality of the Flint River is ecologically degraded by a number of factors, including channelization, non-point and point source water pollution, built development within the floodplain, and increased impervious surfaces.

The Water Pollution Control (WPC) section of the Utility Division is responsible for enhancing and maintaining Flint River water quality. The WPC operates a water pollution control facility that treats an estimated 15 million gallons per day, on average.

The WPC implements this role through three primary services. The WPC:

- Cleans and discharges wastewater through a 50 million gallon per day treatment plant and nine pumping stations, resulting in treated water that exceeds standards set by the MDEQ and EPA.
- Administers an Industrial Pretreatment Program (IPP) that tests and regulates wastewater from industries flowing into the sanitary sewers, and prevents overloading the treatment plant and damage to sewers.
- Administers the Illicit Discharge Elimination Program designed to prevent water pollution in local waterways caused by illegal disposal into street drains.

The City should maintain these programs and consider the following policies that would further enhance water quality:

- Require the on-site detention of stormwater and utilization of native landscaping and other natural filtration techniques to clean it before it re-enters the ground.
- Minimize the use of pesticides and other chemicals in the treatment of public parks and open spaces.
- Closely monitor the impacts of brownfield sites on water quality, especially where stormwater can easily penetrate the surface and become contaminated prior to reentry into the river system.

There are also several community non-profit groups that are working to improve water quality and recreational opportunities along the river, including the Flint River Corridor Alliance and the Flint River Watershed Coalition, which conduct a volunteer water sampling program. The City should support these efforts and others in conjunction with its own programs to ensure the best possible water quality in the Flint River system.

Source: Barcelona, Spain – Burt Kaufmann

Source: Edmonton, Alberta – Pembina Institute

Revitalizing the Flint River

The Flint River is a blue corridor and regional watershed that extends beyond Genesee County into Lapeer and Saginaw Counties, where it connects to the Saginaw River and drains into Saginaw Bay. As a prime natural resource, the Flint River served as the basis for the founding of the City of Flint. Historically, the Flint River was used for drinking water, power, and transportation. Currently, the river is utilized much less, in part due to water quality and infrastructure concerns. In order for the City to successfully achieve its goal related to environmental features and open space, revitalization and enhancement of the Flint River must be a major focal point.

Recreation

The Flint River already offers several key recreational opportunities that can be built upon. There are locations along the river where residents fish, including where Swartz Creek and the Flint River converge, and fishing piers located off of Boulevard Drive near Dort Highway. Additionally, the Flint River Trail is a key exercise and transportation corridor for bicyclists, runners, and walkers. Strengthening this trail and its linkages to other trail systems is a key component of ***Chapter 6: Transportation and Mobility Plan.***

The number of public access points along the river should be increased, including kayaking and canoe launches, fishing piers, and related trailheads and park amenities. These improvements are already happening, but further efforts are needed. For example, the Parks and Recreation Department recently applied for a grant through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, to fund a canoe/kayak launch at Riverbank Park in Downtown.

The Flint River Restoration Plan includes several strategies for increasing recreational opportunities on the river such as a new pedestrian bridge and new paths, regarding areas to make them more usable, and adding amenities like kayak launches or an amphitheater. The Plan's concept links the study area through adjacent public and private open spaces that can be threaded together to form the new river corridor.

Beautification

In Downtown Flint, the river is a backdrop for the residents, workers, students, and visitors that utilize plazas and businesses. Recurring flooding problems in the early 20th century, combined with historically intense industrial land use along the Flint River, led to the 1963 concrete channelization of the portion of the river alongside the Chevy-in-the-Hole site. Removal of concrete along the river should be examined to make the river more attractive and welcoming.

In order to return the Flint River to something closer to its natural state, the Flint River Restoration Plan puts forward a number of potential improvements. The plan advocates removing dam infrastructure above the waterline, creating passages for fish, stabilizing the banks with native riparian habitat, and restoring the river channel through floodplain wetland.

Greenbelt (Blue/Green Infrastructure)

A blue/green corridor is a linear waterway that is linked with green infrastructure development such as parks, nature preserves, woods, and wetlands. The purpose of creating these corridors is to restore urban rivers, provide recreational space, and reduce the risk of flooding.

To restore the Flint River, the City should help implement a new regional blue/green infrastructure system that creates open space, parks, and trails that follow the river, tributaries, and lakes connected to it, as well as link to other trails and on-street pedestrian/bicycle connections. Such a system could accommodate natural floodplains, wetlands, native plants, wildlife pathways, and active and passive recreation opportunities.

The form of blue/green infrastructure would depend on the intent of the nearby place types described in ***Chapter 4: Land Use Plan.*** For example, when the river is adjacent to the least intensive uses like Community Open Space and Recreation, or Green Neighborhood areas, the riverbanks would be in their most natural state, with few improvements or interventions. In the primary residential and commercial areas such as Traditional Neighborhoods, Mixed Residential, and Downtown, access would be more structured at designated parks, piers, and launches. Near the most intensive uses in Commerce and Employment Centers, Green Innovation, and Production Centers, blue/green infrastructure would focus on buffering the river from potential harm. Specific recommendations for dams and other river infrastructure can be found in ***Chapter 8: Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan.***

One barrier to fully implementing blue/green infrastructure along the Flint River, is the dams and channelization that impede natural processes and restrict wildlife habitats. The City should assist the MDNR, MDEQ, and other organizations to restore the Flint River and other waterways to less constrained courses, while naturalizing the riverbanks to provide a corridor for wildlife, minimize erosion, and increase access along the channel for both wildlife and people.

The following text highlights examples of cities that have used blue/green infrastructure to reduce flooding, restore ecological features, and beautify their rivers.

Barcelona's Green Urban Corridor

The aim of this project is to link secluded natural spaces around the City of Barcelona, with a network of vegetation along ecological corridors which include existing parks, gardens, and street trees. In addition, wide streets along the corridor will be narrowed and enhanced with more trees.

Edmonton's Ecological Network

The City of Edmonton, Alberta has an impressive system of natural areas along the North Saskatchewan River Valley that runs through the City. With a growing metropolitan population, many of these natural areas are threatened by rapid development. To protect the river's biodiversity, Edmonton has implemented an "Ecological Network" approach which consists of connecting core natural areas, to natural and semi-natural sections through vegetation, or "habitat patches," and compatible land uses.

Source: Providence River – Liz West

Source: Don River – Waterfront Toronto

Urban River Case Studies

Urban rivers that flow through downtowns are common around the world. The following are examples of North American cities that have reclaimed their rivers from being a liability and turned them into major assets.

Providence River – Providence, Rhode Island

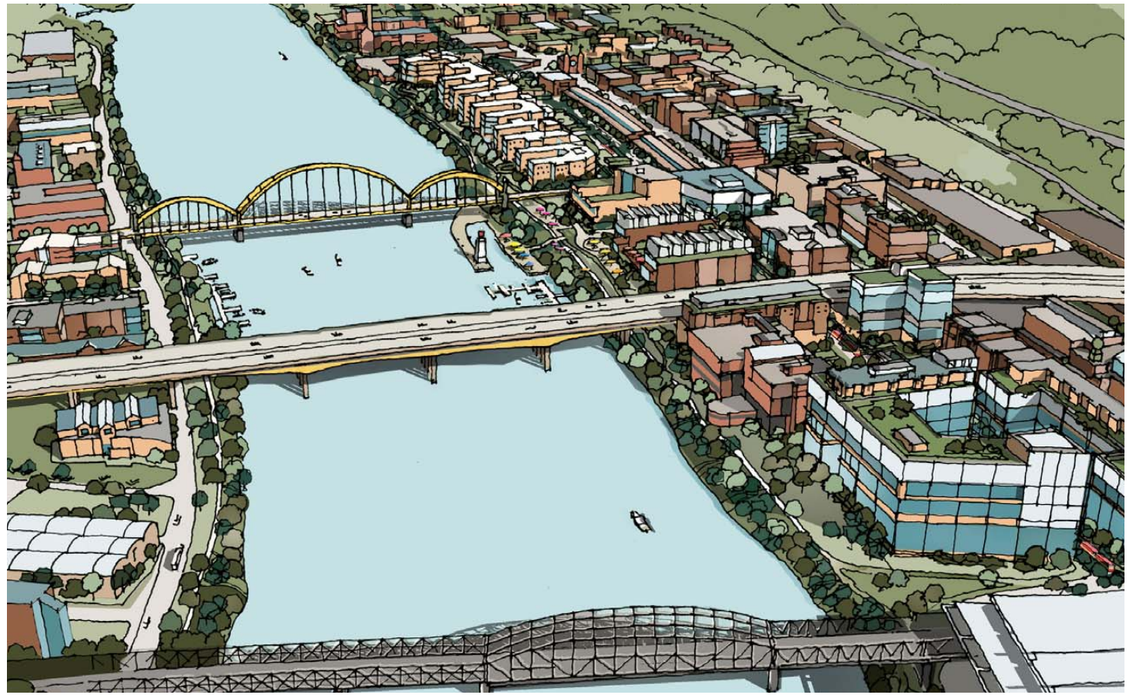
The Providence River in Rhode Island winds through the heart of Downtown Providence, but was once concealed by concrete and the "world's widest bridge." The City took the initiative to reimagine the riverfront and revitalize the downtown area with a new focal point. The Riverwalk and Waterplace Park were constructed and now hosts a wealth of activities annually, with public art, concerts, festivals, and the famous WaterFire installation along the river.

Don River – Toronto, Ontario

The Don River in Toronto, Ontario meanders through long tracts of open space and vegetation until it approaches the heart of the City and Lake Ontario, where it was bounded in the past by train yards and industrial territory. In the last decade, the river has been the subject of much rehabilitation and redevelopment attention. A massive flood protection landform was constructed, followed by Corktown Common, an innovative, wetland-inspired park. Plans are underway to further transform the riverfront with mixed use developments.

Allegheny & Ohio Rivers – Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh recognizes its miles of riverfront as one of its most valuable assets. A vibrant variety of parks and attractive open spaces outline the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers. These greenways allow residents and visitors to access the rivers by way of open space, trails, and boating opportunities. Much of the success can be accredited to Riverlife, an organization created in 2001 by the City of Pittsburgh to take charge of transforming the City's riverfronts.



Source: Allegheny River – Allegheny Riverfront Vision Plan

CITY OF FLINT
Blue/Green Infrastructure

A blue/green corridor links water with green infrastructure such as parks, nature preserves, woods, and wetlands. The purpose of creating these corridors is to restore urban rivers, provide recreational space, and reduce the risk of flooding.

To restore the Flint River, the City should implement a new regional blue/green infrastructure system that creates open space, parks, and trails that follow the river, tributaries, and lakes connected to it, as well as link to other trails and on-street pedestrian/bicycle connections.

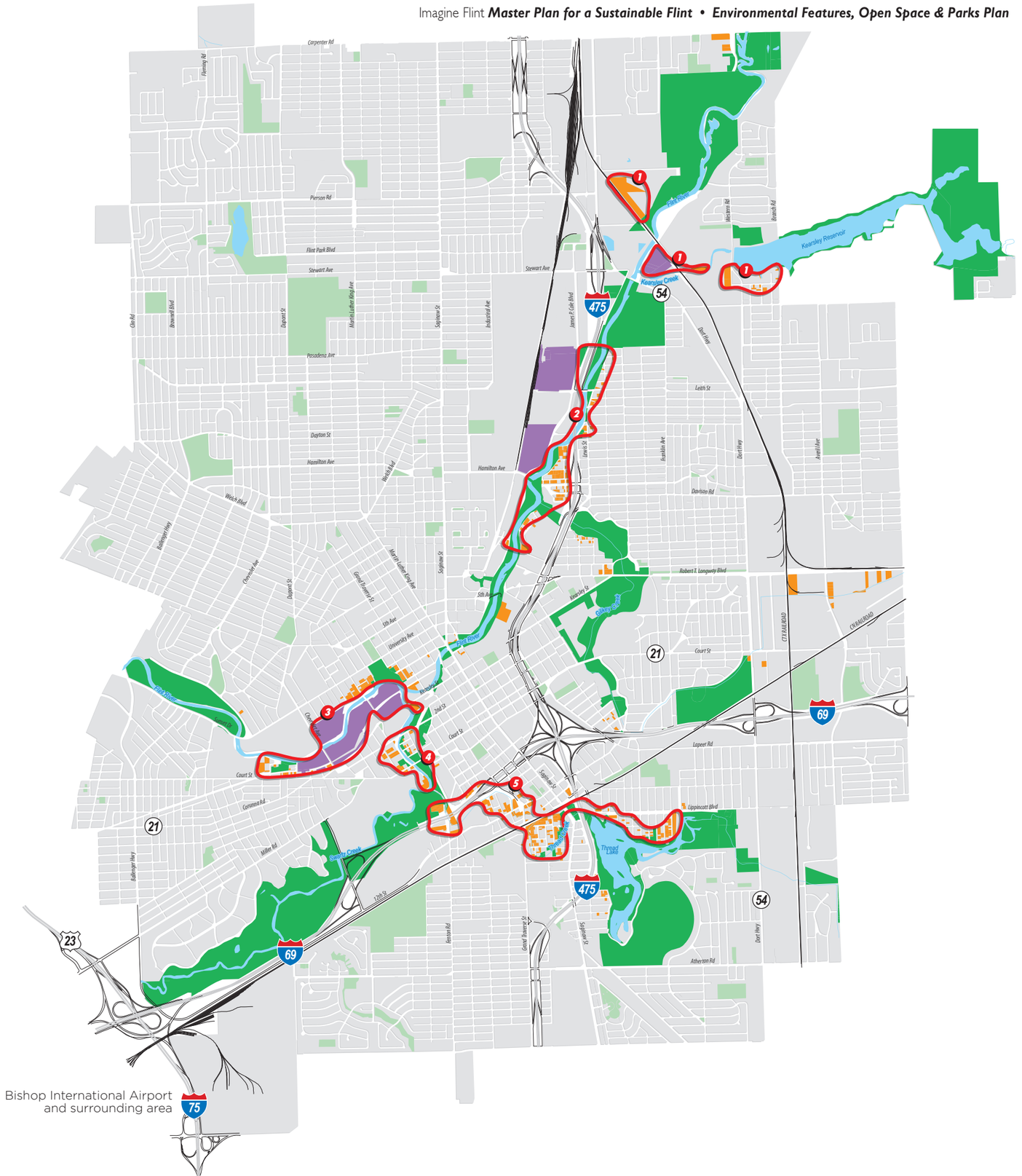
Utilizing vacant land near the Flint River for blue/green infrastructure presents an opportunity for long-term conservation. The City should partner with private and non-profit agencies about strategies for assembling and managing these vacant parcels.

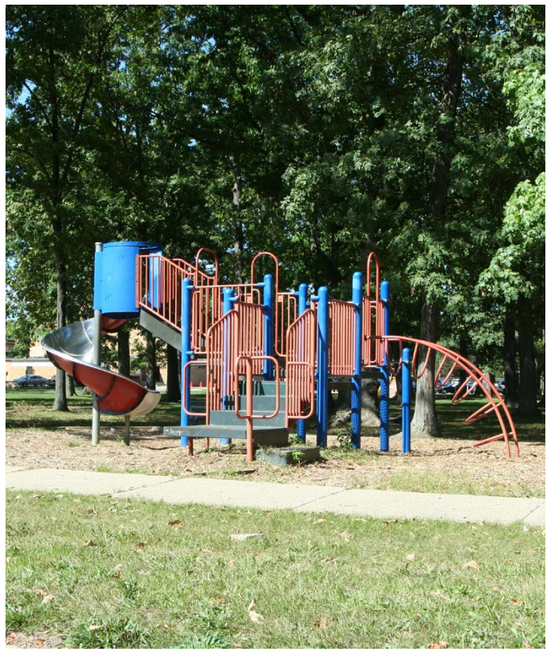
Blue/Green Infrastructure Legend

- *Parks Adjacent to the Flint River System*
- *Vacant Industrial Lots Adjacent to the Flint River System*
- *Vacant Residential Lots Adjacent to the Flint River System*
- *Other Parks in the City*
- *Water Features (Lakes, Rivers, Streams, and Creeks)*
- *Potential Opportunity Areas to Connect a Blue/Green Corridor*

Potential Opportunity Areas

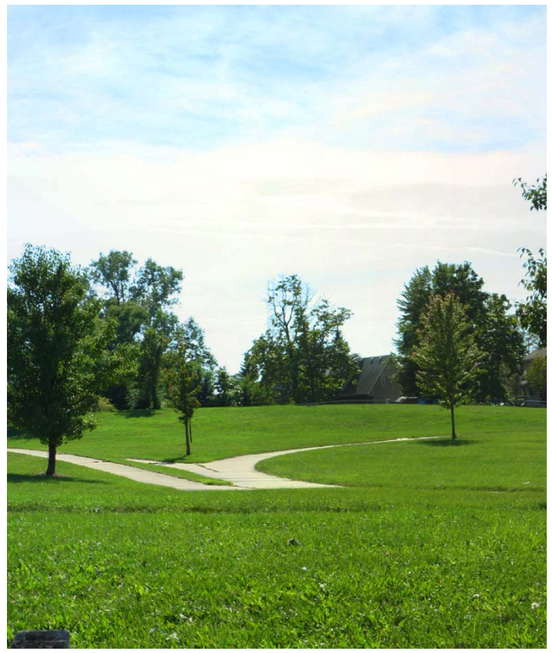
1. *Kearsley Reservoir is a prime opportunity for increasing water-related recreational activities available in the City. Increasing the amount of green infrastructure around the reservoir would enhance this resource.*
2. *Incorporating the vacant properties in this neighborhood into the Flint River Parkway would add to the City's primary blue/green corridor.*
3. *The current vision for the Chevy-in-the-Hole site is as a large park space that supports native riparian vegetation, with the opportunity for potential mixed-use development overlooking the green space.*
4. *Green infrastructure between 2nd Street and Court Street would increase the amount of open space in Downtown.*
5. *Improving green infrastructure along Thread Creek would connect Thread Lake and the future Grand Traverse Trail to other blue/green corridors.*





Mini-parks/Playlot

Neighborhood Park



Community Park

Large Urban Park

PARKS AND RECREATION

Parks and recreation are an important part of community life. Parks provide opportunities for social interaction, physical activities, and engaging with nature. Recreational programs provide opportunities for activities that strengthen character, reduce the likelihood of childhood obesity, and provide adults with opportunities to practice healthy lifestyles. They also strengthen city-wide and community character, while providing a sense of local pride and stewardship in an area.

Moving forward, the City should seek to improve the condition of all of its open spaces by making sure all residents have reasonable access to safe and attractive parks and natural areas. Given the current state of Flint's park system, this is a substantial effort and will take the City, local neighborhood groups and non-profit organizations, regional and state agencies, residents and business owners, and other partners all working together. Achieving this goal will also require innovative strategies and techniques that will change how the City has traditionally approached the management and operation of park facilities.

History of Flint Parks System

The City of Flint parks system is blessed with more than 1,800 acres of public land, including parks associated with all major bodies of water within the City. The more than 60 City parks offer a vast array of recreational opportunities and character through their unique design and carefully planned layouts. Detailed in the 1920's City Plan, the system was designed to incorporate a series of small neighborhood parks and playlots within ¼ mile of all residential areas in Flint. These community space nodes were additionally connected to many larger City parks through a series of circuit drives creating a sense of continuous pleasant boulevards and ample greenways throughout the City.

The creation of a parks board providing and managing financial support for the system was implemented by local carriage maker and auto pioneer, J. Dallas Dort. Through parks board leadership, the Flint Park's system was recognized as a national model for implementing smart, efficient, and equitable recreational resources ripe with programming and opportunities for residents of all ages. Acknowledged as the J. Dallas Dort Memorial Park Systems, it's this rich history and existing resources that make the future of the Flint parks and recreation system one full of opportunity and potential.

Classifying Parks & Facilities

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) uses a hierarchy of park classifications to create a structure for assessing facilities and services. The classification system includes:

- Mini-parks/Playlots (serves limited population)
- Neighborhood Parks (5 to 10 acres)
- Community Parks (10 to 50 acres)
- Large Urban Parks (more than 50 acres)
- Special Use Parks (single interest activities)

Previous parks and recreation plans for the City of Flint have used a similar system, but it is recommended that the City classify its facilities according to the MDNR model. This will allow for "apples-to-apples" comparisons for the MDNR, National Recreation and Park Association, and other organizations who use this system to recommend based on their classifications.

Once classified, the program for individual parks should be tailored to its surrounding land uses and place typologies as identified in ***Chapter 4: Land Use Plan***. For example, neighborhood parks integrated into a "Traditional Neighborhood" context can host more active uses since they are surrounded by intact residential areas. However, neighborhood parks in "Green Innovation" contexts may include fewer active amenities, but rather have native planting areas, solar energy areas, or other installations that reflect nearby activities.

Special Use Parks

CITY OF FLINT
Park Classification

Flint maintains a wide variety of parks and recreation facilities. They vary in terms of size, services, facilities provided, and relationship to surrounding land uses. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) uses a hierarchy of park classifications to create a structure for assessing facilities and services.

It is recommended that the City classify its facilities according to the MDNR model. This will allow for an "apples-to-apples" comparison for the MDNR, National Recreation and Park Association, and other organizations who use this system, to recommend based on their classifications.

Once classified, the program for individual parks should be tailored to its surrounding land uses and place typologies as identified in the Land Use Plan.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Legend

- *Neighborhood Parks*
- *Community Parks*
- *Major City Parks*
- *Playlots*
- *Special Use Parks*
- *Golf Courses*
- *Open Space (Unidentified)*
- *Wooded Area*
- *Water Feature*

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

Playlot (acres)

1. *Amos Park (0.25)*
2. *Delaware Park (0.25)*
3. *Dort Park (2.41)*
4. *Dougherty Park (1)*
5. *Mann Hall Park (1)*
6. *McCallum Park (1)*
7. *McClennan Park (0.25)*
8. *Polk Park (0.25)*
9. *Stockton Park (1.4)*
10. *Wilkins Park (1.7)*

Neighborhood Park (acres)

11. *Aldrich Park (9.2)*
12. *Atherton Park (10)*
13. *Berston Park (6)*
14. *Brennan Park (14.4)*
15. *Clara Hilborn Park (8)*
16. *Cook Park (18)*
17. *Dayton Park (7.8)*
18. *Dewey Park (4.5)*
19. *Durant Park (2.9)*
20. *Eldorado Vista Park (6.75)*
21. *Farnumwood Park (11.45)*
22. *Fleming Park (2.5)*
23. *Gerholz Park (5)*
24. *Hardenbrook Park (3.6)*
25. *Iroquois Park (8.5)*
26. *Kennedy Park (4)*
27. *Martin Park (3.6)*
28. *Mott Park (7.5)*
29. *Oak Park (8)*
30. *Riverside Park East (5.5)*
31. *Rollingwood Park (18.8)*
32. *Sarginson Park (4)*
33. *Sarvis Park (11.5)*
34. *Windiate Park (5)*
35. *Woodlawn Park (2)*

Community Park (acres)

36. *Bassett Park (35)*
37. *Bonner Park (21)*
38. *Broome Park (79)*
39. *Flint Park Lake (20)*
40. *Max Brandon Park (102.5)*
41. *Hasselbring Park (30.5)*
42. *Longway Park (33)*
43. *McKinley Park (36)*
44. *Pierce Park (8)*
45. *Riverside Park West (259)*
46. *Whaley Park (72)*

Special Use Park (acres)

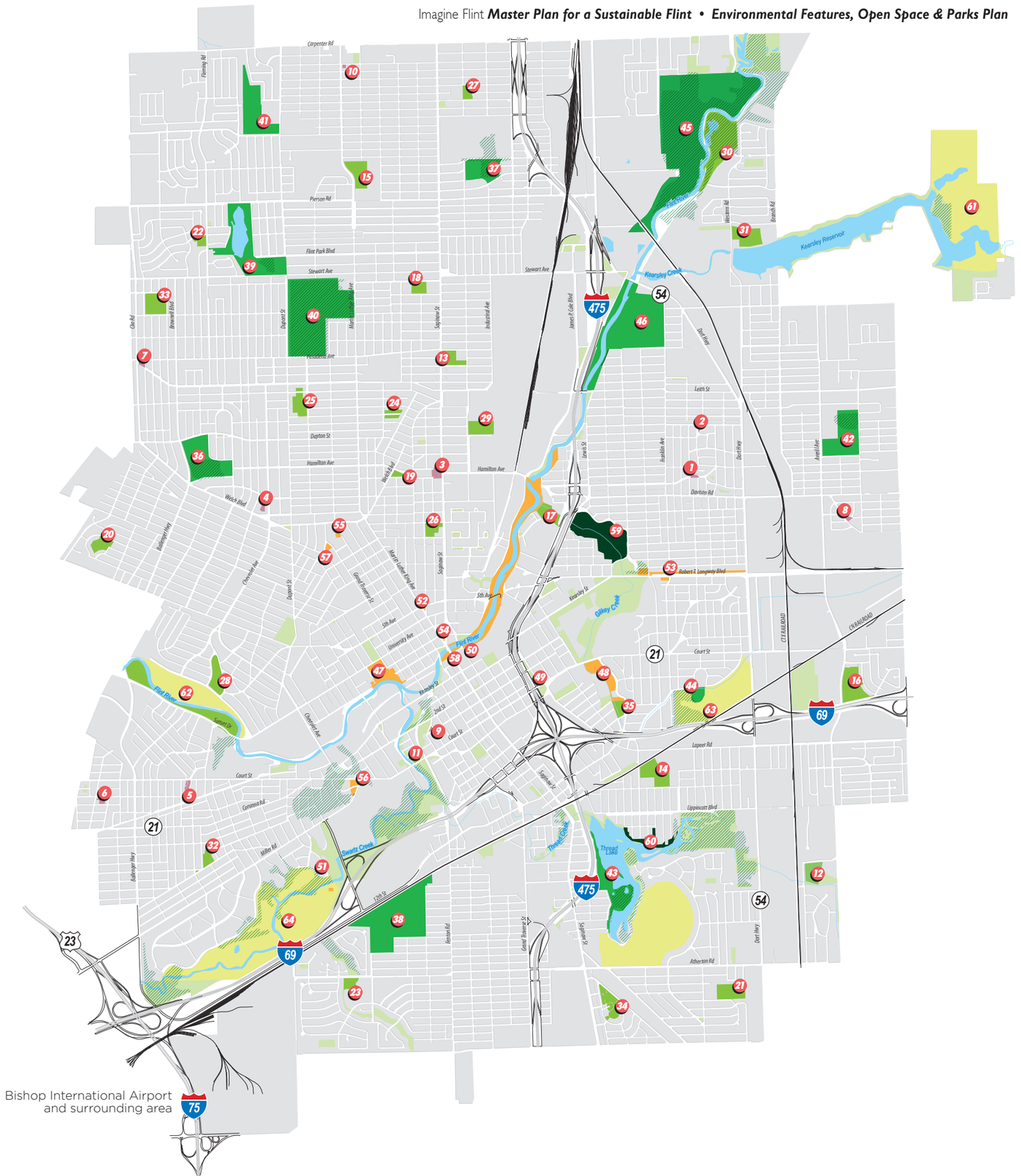
47. *Atwood Stadium (NA)*
48. *Burroughs Park (11.75)*
49. *East St. Park (1.4)*
50. *Flint River Parkway (60.2)*
51. *Flint Skatepark (NA)*
52. *Hamilton Park (0.15)*
53. *Longway Greenbelt (33)*
54. *McFarlan Park (0.4)*
55. *Metawaneenee Park (1)*
56. *Mobley Park (1)*
57. *Ramona Park (1)*
58. *Riverbank Park (9.8)*

Major City Park (acres)

59. *Kearsley Park (35)*
60. *Thread Lake Park (13)*

Golf Course

61. *Kearsley Lake*
62. *Mott*
63. *Pierce*
64. *Swartz Creek*



Source: Flint River Watershed Coalition

Park Standards

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is a recognized authority for parks and recreational planning in the United States. The NRPA provides an extensive list of standards for local parks and recreation planning. These standards serve as a "baseline," recognizing that individual communities must respond to demographic changes, land use context, funding for maintenance and installation, and other factors. The NRPA recommends that individual communities establish their own standards for local application.

Within the NRPA standards, there are two major categories – population-based standards, and service area (or geography)-based standards.

Population Based Standards

The NRPA recommends a standard of 10 acres of open space for every 1,000 residents. According to their literature, this standard does not include parks of regional or state significance, nor does it include public school properties or golf courses. Based on this standard, the City of Flint exceeds the minimum recommended amount of parkland by approximately 20%. This is primarily the result of the historic land holdings for parks remaining stable as the population declined.

In the short-term, excess parkland may be repositioned as passive open space. However, if the population stabilizes and rebounds over time, these areas could be reactivated. As this occurs, the overall ratio of population to parkland ratio should be monitored, and additional parkland provided as needed in accordance with other standards.

Service Area Standards

Park and recreation master plans typically utilize service area standards to analyze the location of parks and recreation facilities. The NRPA provides suggested service area standards for neighborhood parks and community-wide facilities.

These standards should be used to assess the effectiveness of Flint's existing parks, and identify areas currently underserved. The standards are summarized in the following text.

Neighborhood Service Area Standard

The NRPA recommends that each resident have access to a neighborhood park with ½ mile of their home. This reflects an average walk time of 10 minutes. Within this area, uninterrupted and fully accessible pedestrian infrastructure should be provided, in that the walking route is not impeded by barriers such as arterial streets, railroad tracks, rivers, and other natural areas.

Community Service Area Standard

With larger service areas, community parks are considered "drive-to" parks, serving a larger geographic area, and containing structured activities which draw visitors from throughout the community. Community parks typically provide facilities for recreational programming beyond what is desired in neighborhood parks. The NRPA recommends a range of service area standards for different community parks and facilities, typically varying between 1 and 2 miles. Some of the more unique "community" facilities, such as hockey arenas and swimming pools, are recommended as having a 30-minute driving radius.

Park Accessibility

Parks should be located and designed to be accessible to all residents of Flint. All on-site improvements should comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), and surrounding transportation systems should support access by all modes. Bike paths and trails should be aligned to provide access to parks, surrounding areas should include comprehensive sidewalk and crosswalk infrastructure, and transit services and facilities should provide direct links to parks.

Wayfinding should be provided from arterials to maximize the visibility and use of neighborhood and community parks. All these improvements should be considered according to the recommendations in ***Chapter 6: Transportation and Mobility Plan***.

Public Safety, Health & Welfare

As described in ***Chapter 10: Public Safety, Health & Welfare Plan***, park safety is a concern throughout the City. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary crime prevention approach rooted in the belief that a well-designed public realm can lead to a reduction in both the perception and occurrence of crime. Instead of installing security cameras, fences, or other traditional policing methods, components of CPTED aim to preemptively deter criminal activity, increase safety, and reduce fear in potential crime hot spots.

Where appropriate, concepts of CPTED should be applied to the City's parks and open spaces as an initial effort to improve safety and security. City staff should be trained in the appropriate application of CPTED techniques, and local residents should be educated about the benefits of neighborhood maintenance for park safety.

CITY OF FLINT
Park Service Areas

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is a recognized authority for parks and recreational planning in the United States. NRPA standards serve as a "baseline," recognizing that individual communities must respond to demographic changes, land use context, funding for maintenance and installation, and other factors. The NRPA recommends that individual communities establish their own standards for local application.

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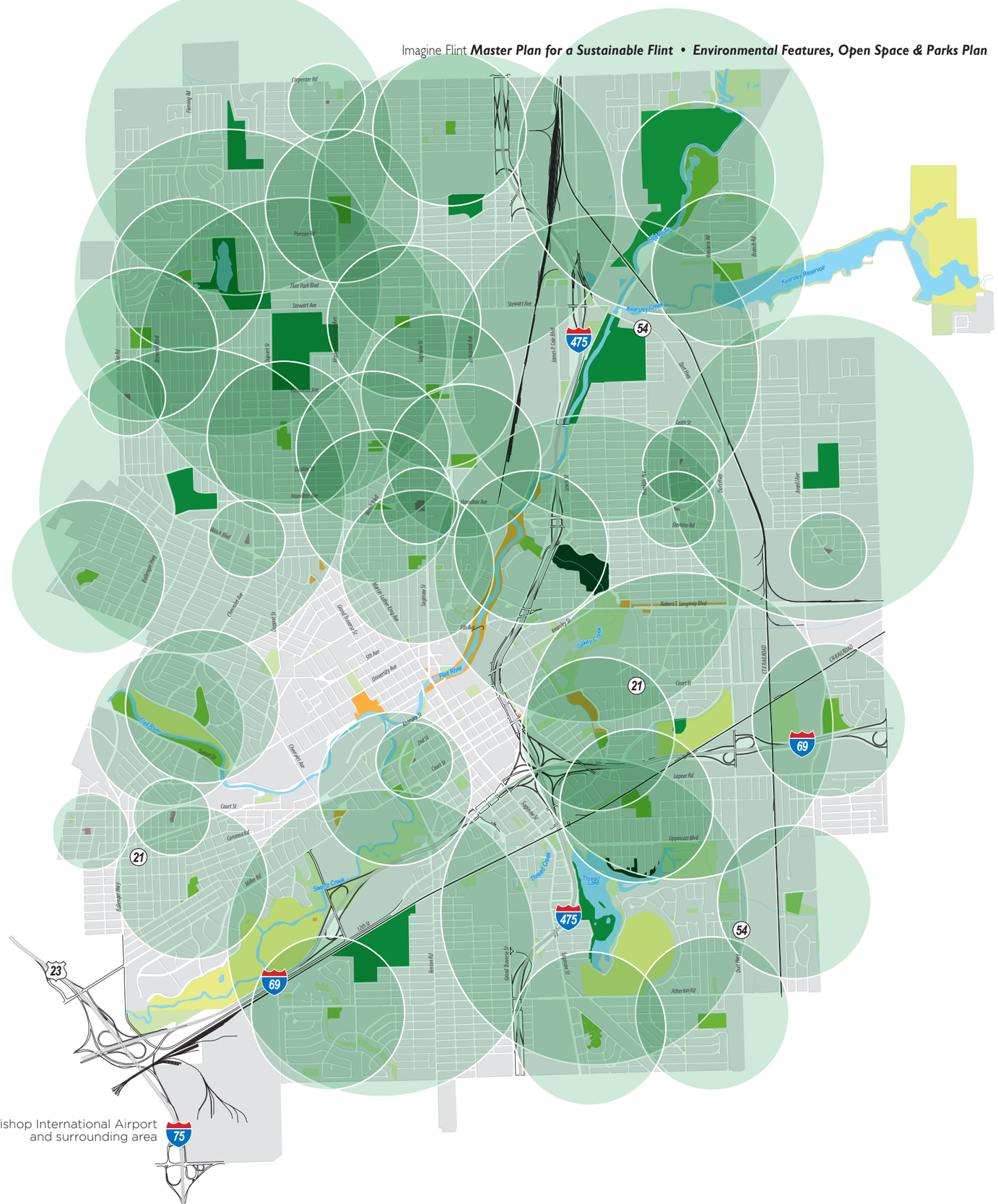
Park Service Areas Legend

- *Neighborhood Parks*
- *Community Parks*
- *Major City Parks*
- *Playlots*
- *Special Use Parks*
- *Golf Courses*
- *Open Space (Unidentified)*
- *Water Feature*
- *Park Service Area*



Park Maintenance

A small staff and constrained funding are hampering the Parks and Recreation Department's ability to adequately operate and maintain parkland and facilities. In fiscal year 2012, the department had $635,000 in revenue and $2.7 million in expenditures—a $2.1 million deficit. For fiscal year 2013, the department will have to limit expenditures to $942,984 to maintain a balanced budget. Staffing at the department has been severely cut. For the upcoming 2013 fiscal year, the department will have six employees, which is 50% lower than the previous year, and significantly lower than the 95 full-time employees in 2002. In order to rebuild an effective department, funding sources will have to be diversified beyond property taxes.

Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update

The City of Flint developed a 2013-2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan update, which includes a 2010 detailed assessment of each of the parks and facilities, their equipment, and various amenities. Most of the smaller parks received a "Fair" or "Poor" rating, while the special use parks were more likely to receive a "Good" rating.

Park mowing plans were developed for 59 City parks that detail frequency of mowing that is planned to take place. These mowing plans represent a starting point as the City moves forward developing a much more comprehensive maintenance strategy, and should be followed by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Although the maintenance of all parks should meet acceptable standards, the first priority of the Parks and Recreation Department should be to eliminate all potential hazards and liabilities, followed by improving aesthetics and making parks attractive.

Strategic Investment

The investment of the Parks and Recreation Department's limited resources should be made strategically based on detailed needs assessments, the intended purpose of each of its facilities, and the future plans of the department and the City. Investments should be made in conjunction with the Land Use Plan, Transportation and Mobility Plan, other services provided by various partners, and public input to determine residents' desired programs and amenities. A strategic maintenance plan for prioritizing investment should be created and scaled to a reasonable expectation of available funding and resources.

Future Investment Guided by Population Needs

Although funds from the Parks Millage are severely limited and continue to decline, it is essential that investment decisions are based upon what is most beneficial for our vulnerable populations, especially youth. Future investment should not solely be guided by population numbers or place types, but also by the unique needs of the populations served by our parks and community centers. It is important to understand that parks can function as a vital anchor in neighborhoods if properly maintained and fully utilized.

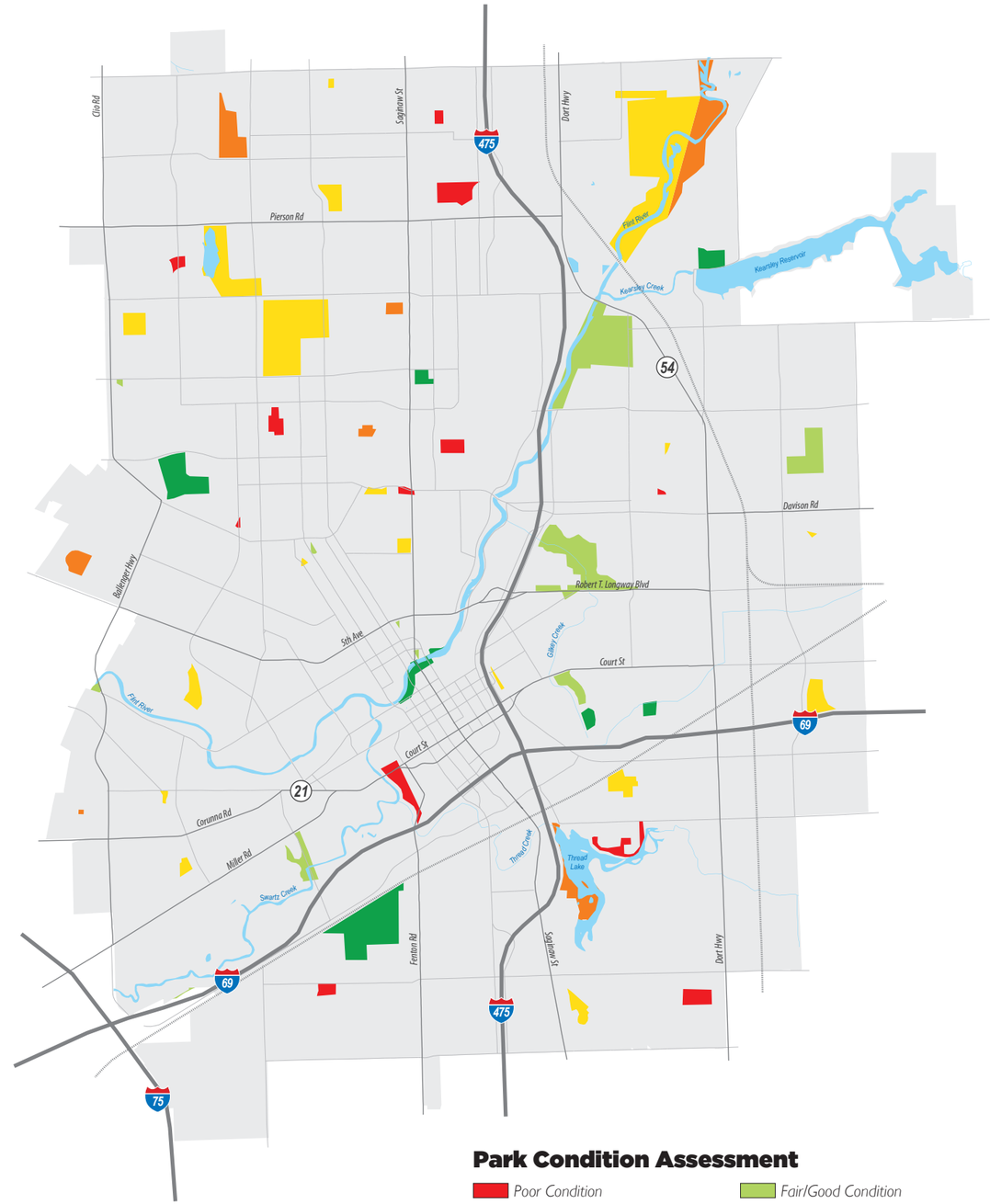
Factoring in other data such as youth population, poverty rates, and crime statistics, will allow for more equitable distribution of funding for park maintenance and investment. In neighborhoods that have been particularly impacted by blight and abandonment, investing in parks and community centers is a crucial strategy in stabilizing these neighborhoods and studies have shown are also effective in reducing crime.

Maintenance and improvement plans should explore opportunities to reuse vacant sites and facilities when considering new parks. For example, schools, community centers, or large areas of contiguous vacant lots provide the opportunity to build off of previous investment, rather than purchasing new land.

Oak Park Decommission

In general, the City should strive to protect all parks from being decommissioned. However, one park, Oak Park, is located in an inaccessible area and should be decommissioned. Oak Park should be redeveloped in concert with improvements and reinvestment occurring in adjacent areas including the Buick City site.

The City's 2013-2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, supplemented by reconnaissance done by the project team, catalogs the condition of all of Flint's parks.



Programming & Partnerships

The Parks and Recreation Department partners with several non-profit organizations to provide programming in City parks. Organizations ranging from large philanthropic centers, to small grassroots neighborhood groups, dedicate financial and volunteer resources to support the diverse range of parks and recreation facilities in the City. The City should continue to foster relationships with current partners, and explore new opportunities to expand the collective offerings. The City's current partnerships include:

- *Friends of Atwood*, formerly known as the Atwood Stadium Authority before the transfer to Kettering University, will continue to operate, supporting Kettering by raising funds to support improvements to Atwood Stadium. The stadium was built in 1929 and is an architecturally significant structure. The stadium hosts football games, live music, and other athletic and cultural events. Kettering now owns and maintains all costs associated with Atwood Statium, looking to improve the quality of the stadium and continue to host and promote community events through the use of the stadium.
- *The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation* is a national philanthropic organization with a Flint Area Program that provides grant funding in subject areas including arts, culture, education, and strengthening community.
- *The Crim Fitness Foundation* began in 1977 as an annual running race that now attracts over 15,000 participants from around the world. As the race grew the Crim Fitness Foundation became a non-profit organization that cultivates accessible, vibrant communities in Flint and Genesee County and encourages people to lead healthy lifestyles by integrating physical activity, healthy eating, and mindfulness into their daily lives, and mentors other communities to do the same. Through grant funding, the Crim supports park work by assisting with planning, community organizing, facility improvements, and policy review and development
- *Flint City Golf* entered into multi-year maintenance agreement with the City in 2012 to manage the Kearsley Lake and Swartz Creek courses.
- *Keep Genesee County Beautiful (KGCB)* conducts programs to help beautify parks and open space. Through their Parks Tender program, KGCB and community partners help maintain five City parks by organizing routine clean-ups, upkeep, and tree tending. KGCB has also developed individual parks master plans for Woodlawn, Rollingwood, Mann Hall, Durant, Basset, Max Brandon and Kearsley Parks.
- *The Mott Park Public Golf Course Association*, a local non-profit community group, entered into a ten-year agreement with the City to manage and maintain Mott Park Golf Course. The course was planned to reopen in the spring of 2013, but remains closed.
- *Police Activities League of Flint (PAL)* is a charter member of the Boys & Girls Club of America. PAL conducts recreation programs, an after school program, and a summer school program for Flint students. PAL operates the Haskell Youth Center.
- *The Ruth Mott Foundation (RMF)* is a non-profit philanthropic organization that awards grants for community improvement in three main areas: arts/culture, beautification, health promotion, as well as other special initiatives.

Other partnership organizations assisting with parks and recreation programming and maintenance include, but are not limited to:

- Automobile National Heritage Area
- Carriage Town Historic Neighborhood Association
- Downtown Development Authority
- Flint Cultural Center Corporation
- Flint River Watershed Coalition
- Friends of the Flint River Trail
- Friends of Max Brandon Park
- Genesee County Land Bank
- Grand Traverse District Neighborhood Association
- Greater Flint Area Baseball/Softball Association
- Greater Flint Health Coalition
- Hurley Hospital
- Kettering University
- McLaren Regional Medical Center
- Mott Community College
- Mott Park Neighborhood Association
- Salem Housing Community Development Corporation
- University of Michigan – Flint
- Uptown Reinvestment Corp.
- Urban Transformation Development

Park Advocacy/ Conservancy Group

Many cities across the country have "Friends of the Parks" non-profit advocacy and conservancy groups, which work with their Citys' parks departments to maintain, beautify, and enhance City parks. Similar to how Friends of MacFarlan Park organize programming and beautification efforts of MacFarlan Park and its Genesee County War Memorial, a "Friends of Flint Parks" organization could take leadership of the City's remaining parks. Working in partnership, the City would be responsible for more intensive maintenance, while the parks organization would handle programming, clean-up days, beautification efforts, and special programs.

The role of a Park Advocacy/Conservancy Group should be private fund raising, volunteer coordination, and advocacy, not necessarily management of community open space. Examples of special programs that could be managed by a Friends of the Parks group are:

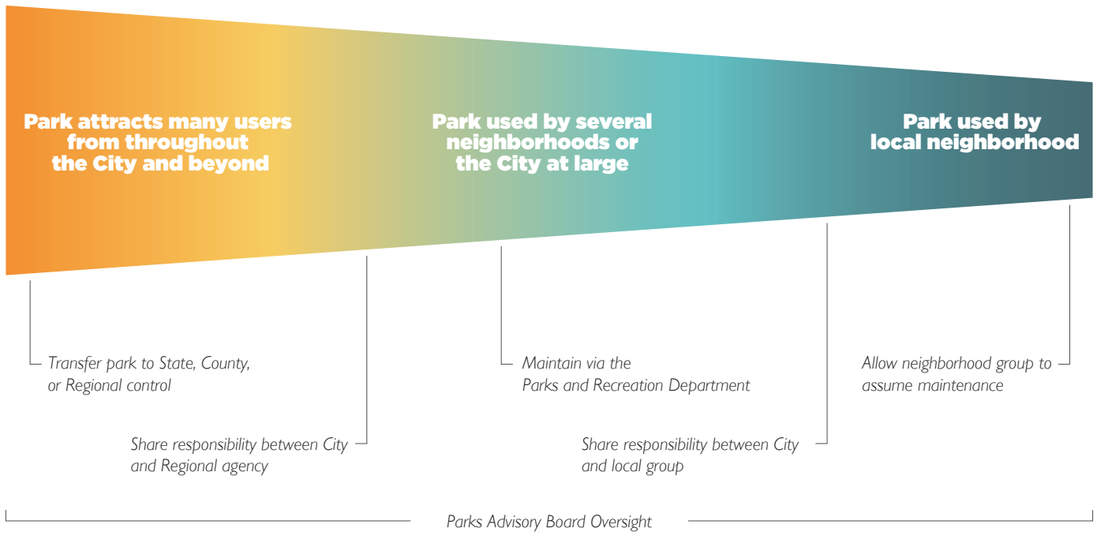
Adopt-a-Park Program

The Adopt-a-Highway program, originated in Texas in 1985 to help ease the cost of litter cleanup for the Department of Transportation, is now operating in 49 states. In some states, interested businesses and organizations rent advertising on designated signs, the revenue paying for cleanup crews for that stretch of roadways. In Michigan, volunteers are responsible for cleaning both sides of at least two miles of roadway for two years. Since 1990, Adopt-A-Highway groups have collected over a million bags of trash.

The City or park organization should implement an Adopt-a-Park program similar to the highway program. Businesses, neighborhood groups, religious groups, and other organizations would assume responsibility for the general cleanliness and condition of their adopted park. The City would provide safety training and safety equipment, and groups would be identified on Adopt-a-Park signs in the park.

Park Volunteer Corps

Many cities, states, counties, and park districts establish Parks Volunteer Corps programs for youth to get involved in taking care of their local parks. Working directly with Parks and Recreation Department staff, young people are provided with after school activities, taught real world job skills, and often receive their first wages if the program is not run on a strictly volunteer basis. Students are also exposed to environmental concepts with hands-on examples and experiences. The City should identify schools, churches, or other organizations who want to invest in their local parks through this program, and the parks organization would be responsible for organizing and implementing the program.



Park Responsibility by Service

A section of Buick City

Flint City Golf Courses

The City of Flint boasts four municipally owned golf courses throughout the City. The formal City Golf Division was eliminated in 2012 due to budget constraints, with operations being transferred over to a private entity. Flint City Golf LLC maintains and operates the 27-hole Swartz Creek, and the 18-hole Kearsley Lake courses. The par-3 Pierce Park course sits shuttered, while the 9-hole Mott Park course is currently under a 10-year lease agreement with the Mott Park Public Golf Course Association. All four courses are publicly owned by the City of Flint. The City should continue to preserve ownership of the courses and actively work with community and neighborhood organizations to reactivate the courses and seek necessary improvements.

The First Tee

The Pierce Park course could benefit from a partnership with The First Tee program. A youth development non-profit organization, The First Tee focuses on impacting the lives of young people by providing educational programs that build character, instill values, and promote future potential through the game of golf. Through support from the City and local organizations, this type of youth programming would not only provide youth an opportunity for leadership development, but also could revive public space back into a productive use.

Sharing Responsibility

Partnering with other organizations as a way to operate and maintain the City's parks and recreation facilities, should continue in the future. To keep existing partnerships with community organizations alive and to help seek additional partnerships, the City should adopt a formal approach for sharing park responsibilities.

One of the ways roadways are classified, is by the amount of traffic they handle on an average day. This measure is often used to determine a road's jurisdiction, or which organization or organizations are responsible for its upkeep. Local roads with fewer cars are typically maintained directly by a municipality. Roads in the mid-range of traffic counts might be shared between a municipality and a county, or controlled entirely by the county. Interstates and other key high traffic roads are often controlled by a state Department of Transportation.

Flint should adopt a similar approach for assigning responsibility for park maintenance and operation. Parks with relatively few daily users who live close by, such as mini parks or certain neighborhood parks, could be efficiently managed by local neighborhood groups or non-profit organizations. Large, community parks and major City parks that draw visitors from the greater region, especially ones with significant or sensitive natural assets, could be turned over to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission, or other regional agencies. Medium sized parks that require more resources than a neighborhood group can provide, but do not warrant transition to a regional agency, would remain in the City of Flint's jurisdiction.

Seeking opportunities to share or transfer a park's jurisdiction would ensure that all community open spaces receive adequate investment. It would also put parks under the control of those with the expertise to maintain them effectively. For a local park, a neighborhood group knows how it is used the most, what needs to be done to keep it in working order, and can galvanize the support to care for it properly. For a major park, a regional organization can pool collective resources, has the expertise to manage more complex facilities, and represents a larger portion of the user base.

Citizen Parks Advisory Board

Major changes to how the Parks and Recreation Department operates should be subject to a citizen's Parks Advisory Board. This board would function like any other appointed board, and would be responsible for advising City Council about open space, parks, and recreation issues. Members of the board would be made up of residents from throughout the City and representatives from established non-profit partners. A new City Parks Liaison should provide staff services to the Advisory Board and coordinate with the Mayor's Office, City Council, Parks and Recreation Department, and other community organizations with environmental or parks and recreation missions.

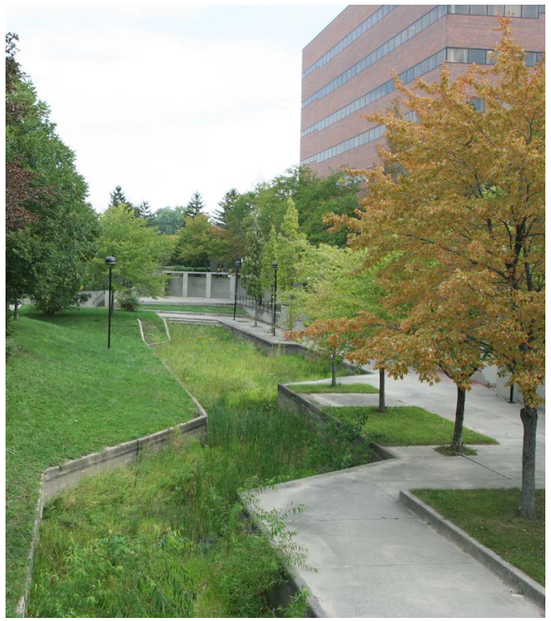
BROWNFIELDS

Brownfields are parcels of land where the presence of environmental contamination complicates redevelopment. These sites were formerly used for industrial or commercial purposes but are now abandoned, leaving concentrations of hazardous waste or pollutants in the soil, groundwater, or surface water. Depending on the type and severity of the contamination, many brownfields have the potential to be reused once contamination is remediated.

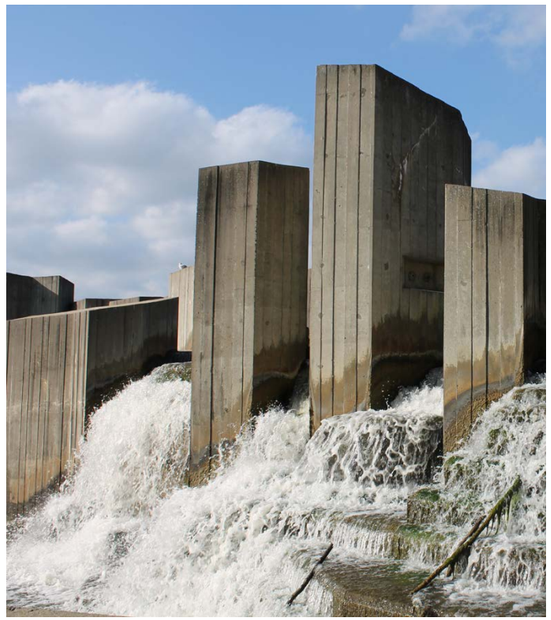
The level of required environmental remediation of brownfield sites can vary based on the contaminant, the severity of the contamination, the medium, and the intended future use of the site. Remediation methods can be broadly categorized into ***ex-situ*** and ***in-situ*** techniques. Ex-situ methods involve a complete removal of the affected soils or water from the site. The process can be as simple as transporting the polluted soil to a landfill or removing contaminated groundwater with a pump or vacuum. In-situ methods treat the contamination without removing soil. These methods can involve immobilizing the pollutant, containing the pollutant, degrading the pollutant, and bioremediation.

Flint's Brownfields

Flint's historic industrial manufacturing economy of the late 19th and entire 20th century produced many brownfields that range in size and character. From the large auto manufacturing sites such as Buick City and Chevy-in-the-Hole, to small dry-cleaning or gas station operations, the City has a large amount of contaminated sites that pose a hurdle to redevelopment. In addition to redeveloping brownfields for economic development and community revitalization purposes, there is a rising interest among communities to redevelop brownfields as environmental assets for active and passive recreation. The City's most prominent brownfield sites and their future development potential is discussed in ***Chapter 9: Economic Development and Education Plan***.



Flint Riverbank Park



Source: Carolanne Blower

Source: Meadowbrook Park – Stephen Butler

NATURALIZATION

Naturalization is the transition of parkland from manicured turf or fields to native vegetation. Naturalizing a park does not mean it is removed as open space available to the community, only that its form and function changes. For instance, a City park that is overgrown and unmaintained today, could be partially or completely turned into a low-maintenance prairie or savanna. This naturalized park could include traditional park elements such as picnic areas, play-grounds, and public art, but would also include elements that take advantage of the natural environment such as trails, water features, and scenic overlooks.

Benefits

There are many benefits to naturalizing part of Flint's park inventory. The most tangible benefit to the Parks and Recreation Department is a reduction in operating expenses. According to a 1995 EPA study, prairie grasses save almost $3,000 in installation costs and $3,800 in annual maintenance costs over turf grass. For a 25 acre park, converting to native vegetation results in over $1 million in maintenance savings over ten years. These savings would allow the department to increase maintenance to traditional City parks, improving the quality of the overall park system.

In addition to reduced maintenance, native landscaping creates a healthier, more resilient environment by increasing local biodiversity, and combating weeds and other destructive invasive species. It also improves permeability and helps to manage stormwater runoff. Besides reduced mowing, native landscaping requires fewer herbicides, fertilizer, and irrigation to upkeep. A naturalization approach would be especially appropriate along segments of the Flint Riverbank where the effects align with other goals of the City.

Naturalized parks can change the way in which residents engage with the environment. Native landscapes provide unique opportunities to learn about the region's environmental heritage through informational signage, outdoor classrooms, and interactive gardens. Wildflowers and ornamental shrubs and trees can improve the appearance and visual diversity of the City's landscapes, creating more fulfilling experiences. In Flint, where park safety can be an issue, making open spaces less conducive for illegal activity will make the entire City more secure.

Approach

The concept of placemaking has driven the approach to land use throughout the Master Plan. This includes the way parks and open spaces are managed across the City. Three of the place types have agriculture or open space as primary uses.

- Green Innovation: large-scale urban agriculture, indoor vertical agriculture, aquaculture, green energy
- Community Open Space: natural areas, greenways, community and regional parks
- Green Neighborhood: community gardens, vacant residential lots used for passive open space or neighborhood agriculture

However, place types other than these three have complimentary park or open space uses included in their character.

- Traditional Neighborhood: neighborhood parks for active and passive recreation
- Mixed Residential: neighborhood parks for active and passive recreation
- Downtown: plazas and squares
- Civic/Cultural Campus & University Avenue Core: neighborhood recreation
- Production Center: open space buffer for adjacent residential properties

A detailed description and land use guide for all of the place types can be found in ***Chapter 4: Land Use Plan.***

An analysis of what place types each of the City's parks serves is crucial to determine where and how the Parks and Recreation Department should direct its resources.

One outcome of a Parks and Recreation Department strategic maintenance plan, should be the identification of portions of park spaces that are unused, and the transition of these spaces to native landscaping through naturalization. However, this strategy must take into account factors related to equity, neighborhood character, and overall quality of life. Parks, or portions of parks, should only be naturalized when doing so does not further compromise the ability of a neighborhood to see reinvestment in housing, transportation, and other critical services.

A community engagement process involving park users and neighbors will help guide decisions about what parts of a park are good candidates for naturalization. Naturalizing parkland requires an up-front investment and a plan for maintaining native plantings as they become established. The help of nearby residents and park stakeholders should be sought in the planning and maintenance of naturalized park areas.

Case Studies

Calgary, Alberta

The City of Calgary in Alberta, Canada has designated portions of its parks and green spaces for naturalization. The initiative will increase plant and animal diversity and reduce maintenance activities. The City chose to naturalize some of its parks "to create new landscapes and designs within our open spaces; to help control weeds, pests, and diseases; and to create sustainable landscapes that help support plant, animal, and insect life (biodiversity) well suited to Calgary's climate." Sites are carefully selected based on use, location, and aesthetics, and not all parks are naturalized in the same amount or in the same way.

Urbana, IL

Meadowbrook Park is a 130 acre park in Urbana, Illinois. The park includes a farmstead, an herb garden, an ornamental tree grove, organic garden plots, a sensory garden, a shade garden, hard and soft walking trails, a playground, and a sculpture garden. A partnership between the Urbana Parks District, the Champaign County Audubon Society, and other volunteers, the park's 80 acres of Illinois tallgrass prairie are home to numerous native plant and animal species. An overlook structure accessible from a path that circles the prairie has informational signage about the park's birds, flowers, and grasses.

REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS

Cities and nations around the globe are prioritizing the reduction of their carbon footprint, and consequently their negative impact on the environment. Modern human activity heavily relies on the combustion of fossil fuels like oil, coal, and natural gas. When fossil fuels burn they emit greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, a major contributor to climate change. The effect of any given population is measured by its carbon footprint, which is described as the total amount of greenhouse gas created by that population.

Carbon footprints were brought into prominence by the Kyoto Protocol, an international treaty adopted in 1997, which set binding obligations on industrialized countries to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases. The aim of the treaty was to mitigate harmful, human-induced interference with the global climate system. While not ratified by the United States, the Kyoto Protocol has helped to incentivize emissions reductions through the creation of an emissions trading system, which placed an economic value on greenhouse gas emissions.

City greenhouse gas emissions come from a few primary sources: buildings, transportation, and waste. Sources can be direct (i.e. burning fuel in a car or a stove) or indirect (i.e. burning fuel to produce a good that is later purchased by consumers). Emitted greenhouse gases are mitigated by trees and vegetation, which break down carbon dioxide during photosynthesis. In fact, some areas with vast tree canopies are known as ***net carbon sinks*** because they absorb more carbon emissions than they create.

Many cities have successfully lowered their carbon footprint on the consumption end, through the adoption of policies and programs that reduce net energy use at household and city-wide levels. The companion approach focuses on the production end by investing in sources of energy that create fewer greenhouse gasses.

Renewable Energy

Unlike fossil fuel-based energy production, renewable energy production methods use resources which are continually replenished, such as sunlight, wind, and geothermal heat. The absence of directly burning fossil fuels makes the net output of greenhouse gas from these methods much lower than traditional techniques. The viability of renewable energy projects is highly dependent on local weather, geography, and other conditions. To determine Flint's suitability for wind, solar, geothermal, or other renewable energy technology, the City should conduct a detailed feasibility study to establish the City's baseline energy consumption and determine the area's energy potential, and to determine if alternative energy production is economically feasible, and if there are prohibitive restrictions in local ordinances and regulations.

Genesee County Initiatives

According to the 2010 Annual Report by the Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission (GCMPC), Genesee County has entered into a performance contract with Johnson Controls to reduce the government's carbon footprint, taking advantage of funding provided by the Federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program and by Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds from the State. It is designed to decrease the County's energy costs and usage by more than 20% by retrofitting the County's largest facilities (Administration Building, County Jail, County Courthouse, etc.).

Potential Strategies for Flint

Many of the recommendations presented throughout the Master Plan will help to reduce the City of Flint's overall carbon footprint. To achieve all of its sustainability goals, however, the City should create a detailed Greenhouse Gas and Carbon Footprint Reduction Strategy. Some approaches that might be appropriate in Flint include:

- Establish native growth protection areas and preserve and enhance the City's tree canopy
- Convert the City's vehicle fleet to hybrids
- Replace all street lights and light bulbs in City buildings with LEDs, and all appliances with ENERGY STAR approval
- Increase the weatherization of government, commercial, and residential buildings in the City to reduce the use of air conditioning and heating.
- Construct all future buildings to higher energy-efficient standards
- Outfit City buildings with green roofs
- Educate the City's development services staff on energy-efficient and environmentally friendly building practices
- Purchase higher percentages of electricity from renewable sources, possibly facilitated through a municipal electricity aggregation program
- Partner with the Genesee County Conservation District on uniform, city-wide street tree planting operations, including the replacement of street trees that are hazardous or affected by disease to increase the tree canopy

Other detailed recommendations directly related to City-owned assets can be found in ***Chapter 8: Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan.***

URBAN AGRICULTURE

Urban agriculture and community gardening, both of which involve growing food in the City, are becoming popular ways to reuse urban land to provide fresh, locally-grown produce. They present a distinct opportunity for cities to rethink the role of food production in urban areas, while also repurposing vacant land into productive uses. Providing access to produce is especially important in Flint, where residents currently lack access to healthy food. Additional detail regarding urban agriculture and community gardening is included in ***Chapter 10: Public Safety, Health, and Welfare Plan.***

7 ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES, OPEN SPACE & PARKS IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents the strategies needed to implement the goals and objectives of the Environmental Features, Open Space & Parks Plan. Taken together, the objectives and strategies included in this section provide specific direction and serve as a guide for the evaluation of development proposals and land use alternatives.

To provide the City with a reliable policy guide for decision making, the objectives and strategies are based significantly on community input received through the master planning process. In addition to broad community input, these objectives and strategies are based on input from the 15-member Natural Resources, Open Space & Conservation Advisory Group, Steering Committee, City officials, City staff, and observations and assessment from the Imagine Flint Project Team.

Implementation Matrix

The following Implementation Matrix groups strategies by topic within each objective and identifies anticipated time frame, relative cost, and the entities, including City of Flint departments and partner organizations, potentially responsible for the implementation. The matrix also identifies key metrics needed to track implementation progress.

Time Frame

A general time frame is assigned to each strategy, considering the cost of various types of improvements and their ability to set other actions in motion. Generally, low-cost strategies with easy implementation are given the short-term time frame, though some other actions are given this designation based on their high-level of priority in meeting community objectives or ensuring the safety of residents.

Each strategy in the Implementation Matrix is indicated with one of the following:

- ***Short:*** low-cost, ease of implementation, directly addressing top priorities or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years
- ***Medium:*** important actions that have some level of significant cost, and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years
- ***Long:*** actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time, or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation

Public Cost Estimate

Public cost estimate is represented by a scale ranging from $ to $$$. The costs in this column refer only to public costs. Below is a description of the cost scale:

- **$**: Actions that require primarily internal staff time requiring mostly regulatory changes, policy updates, or strategic partnerships with limited outside funding required
- **$$**: Actions that require outside consulting services assistance or relatively minor investment in infrastructure or project development
- **$$$**: Actions that require intensive planning, engineering, or design, and significant investment in infrastructure or project development

Responsible Entities & Partner Organizations

City government alone is not capable of implementing the Master Plan. This is a community vision which relies upon Flint's greatest assets, its people and community stakeholders to help implement desired aspirations.

With regard to citing those entities responsible for implementation, it should be noted that it is anticipated that, from a policy standpoint, the Mayor and City Council will be involved in the majority of these actions.

Where a City Department should be involved, that department has been listed. Where general administrative leadership is needed, the City of Flint has been listed. Strategies, such as recommended technical studies and analyses that would likely benefit from outside expertise, have also been highlighted.

Unforeseen Partnership Opportunities

Every effort was made to identify a comprehensive list of potential partner organizations for inclusion in the implementation matrix. As a community of over 100,000 with a rich history of volunteerism and over 100 foundations active in Genesee County, there may be instances where a deserving organization that is well-matched to one of the plan objectives or strategies, has been excluded from a list of potential partners for a given topic.

Similarly, there may come a time when a partner organization identified in the implementation table merged with another organization or otherwise ceases to exist. As with the rest of the Master Plan, the implementation table is a flexible document that should be regularly updated and revised to reflect the evolving needs and assets of the Flint community.

Progress Indicator

Key progress indicators have been provided for each strategy grouping. Progress indicators identify quantifiable metrics for which data should be available on a regular basis and indicate desired trends for each metric. These indicators represent measurable achievements that move the City toward realization of Master Plan objectives. These progress indicators will enable the City to monitor its effectiveness at implementing plan recommendations.

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES, OPEN SPACE & PARKS IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 1	Improve the ecological health of Flint's natural systems through responsible planning and development.				
Preservation & Restoration	Monitor local water quality of the Flint River, related tributaries, and lakes through regular water testing.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks & Recreation • City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Environmental Advocacy Organizations • Genesee County Parks Commission • MDNR • MDEQ	• Increase in Flint River water quality measurements • Increase in square feet of native vegetation on City property • Increased amount of grant funding received for preservation projects
	Require appropriate setbacks and buffering from creeks and floodways to minimize flooding issues and surface runoff contamination.	Short	$		
	Establish local ordinances, regulations, and development standards to preserve and protect Flint's high-quality vegetation and wooded areas from new development.	Short	$		
	Aggressively pursue funding opportunities from a range of sources including Federal, State, and local grants, to assist with preservation and restoration of natural areas to improve the health of the City's ecosystems.	Short	$		
	Replace city-owned turf areas where appropriate with native grasses, trees, and shrubs to reduce long-term maintenance costs while promoting environmental sustainability.	Medium	$$		
	Create a city-wide guide book on appropriate street tree maintenance and native vegetation planting.	Medium	$		
Green Development	Develop a green construction incentive program to encourage green development and retrofits to existing buildings.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Planning and Development Department • Genesee County Land Bank • MDEQ	• Increase in percentage of developments using BMPs • Increase in number of permits issued for green retrofits • Increase in Flint air quality measurements • Increase in acreage of brownfields remediated or redeveloped
	Revise zoning and applicable development regulations to support and permit best management practices (BMPs) consistent with Low Impact Design technologies to reduce runoff, including innovation in water catchment, swales, and groundwater retention.	Short	$		
	Promote the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for new development and redevelopment sites.	Short	$		
	Establish city-wide air quality policies and implement clean air standards for new development.	Short	$		
	Support the development of brownfield sites for uses that protect and promote the environmental health of the community, including minimizing environmental impacts of new uses to local air, water, and soil quality.	Long	$		
Education & Outreach	Actively promote the Green Innovation Place Type to prospective companies focused on "green" jobs, businesses, and technologies.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning and Development Department • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce	• Increased number of CBAs signed • Increase in number of public and private events that promote Flint's environmental leadership
	In partnership with resident stakeholders, develop and ensure implementation of Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) for any new developments that are likely to result in adverse environmental impacts (e.g. manufacturing, transportation-heavy industries, etc.).	Short	$		
	Cultivate awareness among City officials, community leaders, residents, and potential investors about the benefits and opportunities of green urban planning, low-impact development, renewable energy, and climate adaptation.	Short	$		
	Optimize opportunities to showcase Flint's environmental leadership by hosting conferences, workshops, and events through local and national partnerships.	Long	$		
Objective 2	Protect, enhance, and promote the Flint River and its watershed, along with other tributary lakes and streams, as valuable community assets.				
Quality & Condition	Take reasonable actions to protect the Flint River and its tributary lakes and streams from pollution, impairment, and destruction.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • City of Flint Utility Division • Environmental Advocacy Organizations • MDEQ	• Increased number of miles of the Flint River improved or naturalized • Increase improvement in Flint River water quality measurements
	Restore water quality, natural flows, eroding stream-banks, and other improvements to water bodies for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and present and future generations.	Medium	$$		
	Where appropriate, naturalize the banks of the Flint River and other streams and creeks to provide a continuous riparian corridor, minimize erosion, and increase access for both wildlife and people.	Medium	$$		
	Restore existing streams and waterways through daylighting methods to create naturalized open channels.	Long	$$$		
Access	Replace existing Flint River dam structures in the Downtown area with a series of rock cascades and fish passage features as detailed in the Flint River Riverfront Restoration Plan.	Long	$$$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • City of Flint Utility Division • MDEQ	• Increase in number of recreational water access points • Increase in number of designated Flint River vista points • Increase in number of dams replaced or removed
	Provide recreation access to all water bodies through the strategic installation of kayaking/canoe launches, fishing piers, and related trail heads and park amenities.	Medium	$$		
	Improve visual and physical access along the Flint River and provide opportunities for public gatherings and outdoor entertainment.	Medium	$$		

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES, OPEN SPACE & PARKS IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Stewardship	Market the Flint River and other water bodies as city-wide and regional recreational amenities.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • Environmental Advocacy Organizations • Genesee County Parks Commission • Genesee County Trail Council • MDNR	• Increase in acreage of preserved riverbank land • Increase in number of wayfinding signs to Flint River recreational areas • Increase in amount of promotional material distributed throughout the County
	Establish a singularly-focused organization, such as a conservancy, to acquire and maintain the land along the Flint River.	Medium	$		
	Explore with Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) the development of a state park along the Flint River.	Long	$		
Objective 3	Create, integrate, and maintain blue/green infrastructure centered around the Flint River system.				
Acquisition, Construction & Management	Preserve and acquire adequate land around the Flint River, its streams, and lakes to allow for the future construction of bicycle and pedestrian trails and paths.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • City of Flint Planning and Development Department • Environmental Advocacy Organizations • Genesee County Land Bank • MDNR	• Increase in acreage of land available for blue/green infrastructure • Increase in miles of planned and completed bicycle and pedestrian trails • Increase in number of planned and completed trailheads
	Work with the Land Bank to create a new category of land banked properties for future blue/green infrastructure and remove it from lands available for redevelopment and public auction.	Short	$		
	Encourage temporary uses of land in this category such as community gardens, ballfields, non-structural seasonal uses, and related temporary uses.	Short	$		
	Create a system for offers of first refusal and incentives for voluntary sale of lands within blue/green infrastructure areas to the Land Bank.	Short	$		
	Connect existing trails and paths to new blue/green infrastructure as it is created.	Medium	$$		
	Examine the costs and benefits of alternative methods for the maintenance and operation of the waterfront, open spaces, and parks along blue/green infrastructure, such as designating a City agency, a County agency, a new metropolitan parks authority, or a combination of public and non-profit entities as manager.	Medium	$		
Objective 4	Provide parks, open space, and recreation infrastructure that both meets the needs of the community and is maintainable by the City and its non-profit community partners.				
Service Standards	Refine the City's existing parks and open space classification system to better align with the classification system supported by MDNR.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • City of Flint Planning and Development Department	• Decrease in the number of households outside park service areas • Decrease in parkland and recreation facility shortage based on NRPA standards
	Further define park types within the City based on their location within the established "Place Types" specified in the Land Use Plan.	Short	$		
	Endorse and utilize the widely accepted "10-acre" standard (10 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people) as a means of determining appropriate amounts of active and passive parkland throughout the City.	Short	$		
	Endorse and utilize the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) 2-mile service area for the City's Community Parks.	Short	$		
	Endorse and utilize the NRPA's 1/4 -mile service area, uninterrupted from pedestrian barriers, for the City's Neighborhood Parks, Mini-parks, and other neighborhood-based open space.	Short	$		
	Establish population-ratio standards for the City's recreation facilities (i.e. 1 softball field per 10,000 residents).	Short	$		
	Calibrate established National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards to better fit the recreation habits and desires of the Flint community.	Short	$		
Accessibility	Identify physical barriers in the community that impact safe pedestrian access to parks, including railroads, inadequate sidewalks, the Flint River, arterial streets, and Interstates 69, 75, and 475.	Medium	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • City of Flint Planning and Development Department • City of Flint Facilities Maintenance • Disability Network	• Increase in number of parks that have direct access by bike trails, transit, and sidewalks • Increase in number of parks that are ADA compliant
	Using the endorsed NRPA standards, conduct a detailed analysis of the park service levels within the City to identify service gaps and surpluses to help ensure equitable access to parks within the City of Flint.	Medium	$		
	Develop an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plan, identifying physical barriers limiting access to recreation programs and facilities and an action program to address them.	Medium	$		
	Maintain safe lighting in parks.	Short	$$		

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES, OPEN SPACE & PARKS IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Critical Partnerships	Establish and maintain partnerships with other community, corporate, and other organizations, including schools and churches, to help supplement identified shortages of parks and open space.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • City of Flint Planning and Development Department • City of Flint Police Department • Area foundations and institutions • Community groups/organizations • Active living organizations	• Increase in the amount of outside funding secured for park maintenance and improvements • Decrease in emergency response times to parks • Increase number of programming options within Flint parks
	Establish funding partnerships with local institutions, organizations, and businesses to update and enhance park signage throughout the community.	Medium	$		
	Establish funding partnerships with local institutions, organizations, and businesses to implement public art throughout the City's parks.	Medium	$		
	Forge a partnership between parks and recreation staff, planning staff, and the City's police force to create a strategic plan for public safety and emergency response within the City's parks, blue/green infrastructure corridors, and bicycle trails and pedestrian pathways.	Short	$		
	Work with community to establish a "Friends of Flint Parks" advocacy and conservancy group to help fund, maintain, and program parks.	Medium	$S		
Park Management	Implement and update (every 5 years) the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Mini-Parks Plans.	Medium	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • City of Flint Facilities Maintenance • City of Flint Utility Division	• Increase in parks maintenance funding • Regular review of 5-year Parks and Recreation Plan
	Budget for on-going maintenance and repairs of recreation amenities as part of the Capital Improvement Plan.	Short	$$		
	Guided by a needs assessment and adopted standards, create a parks and recreation capital improvement plan to install new recreation facilities.	Short	$		
	Develop, implement, and periodically review a comprehensive plan for the maintenance of community centers ensuring the use of best practices and cost effective strategies.	Medium	$		
Objective 5	**Reduce the City's overall carbon footprint.**				
Neighborhood Initiatives	Work towards reducing Flint's carbon footprint by promoting transit use, bicycling, clean energy, and cleaner industry.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • City of Flint Planning and Development Department • City of Flint Utilities Division • City of Flint Transportation Division • Genesee County Conservation District	• Increase in percentage of energy used that is generated by renewable sources • Increase number of households participating in neighborhood recycling programs • Increased number of trees planted
	Encourage neighborhood recycling through tax credits, grants, and other incentives.	Medium	$$		
	Work with businesses, institutions, and other partners to build neighborhood-scale renewable energy systems.	Long	$$$		
	Encourage the construction of regional renewable energy sources through tax credits, grants, and other incentives.	Long	$$		
	Implement current urban forestry plans and develop new ones to manage and maintain the City's tree canopy and coordinate planting new trees.	Medium	$		
	Review and implement current street tree ordinances to encourage planting along commercial corridors.	Short	$		
Government Initiatives	Strive to be a carbon-neutral City government and commit to leading by example to foster behavioral change throughout Flint.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning and Development Department • City of Flint Facilities Maintenance	• Decrease in the overall carbon footprint of City • Increase in number of LEED-rated buildings in Flint
	Conduct studies to determine a 2015 baseline calculation for the carbon footprint of City operations, as well as for Flint as a whole.	Short	$		
	Develop a greenhouse gas and carbon footprint reduction strategy to establish benchmarks for reducing the carbon footprint of the City of Flint, and report annual progress to the community.	Medium	$		
	Incentivize construction of energy efficient buildings using the LEED tax abatement and reduce building permit fees for LEED-rated buildings.	Medium	$$		
	Work with community partners to develop a carbon footprint rating system for residential dwellings.	Medium	$		
Education & Outreach	Work with the Flint Community Schools to promote innovative programs to educate the public about climate change.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • City of Flint Planning and Development Department • Flint Community Schools	• Increase in number of public and private events related to climate change awareness • Increase in public participation levels in City climate change programs and meetings • Increase in number of green jobs
	Develop a Green Award program highlighting "green achievements" that include residents, businesses, commercial, and non-profit organizations.	Medium	$		
	Develop a climate change adaptation plan, particularly considering the needs of vulnerable populations such as the elderly, youth, and low-income community members.	Medium	$		
	Through public and private partnerships, develop green jobs training and hiring programs to attract businesses that hire underserved or formerly-incarcerated Flint residents.	Medium	$$		
Objective 6	**Establish a new park management framework and secure resources necessary to maintain the City's parks and open spaces.**				
Park Management	Develop and implement an equitable naturalization plan for converting under-utilized park areas to naturalized open space to reduce maintenance costs and attract a variety of birds, butterflies, and other animals.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • City of Flint Transportation Division • Genesee County Parks Commission • MDNR	• Increase in variety and number of native plant species in parks and open spaces • Increase in savings in park maintenance budget
	Develop, implement, and periodically review a comprehensive maintenance plan for the City's parks, open space, and rights-of-way, ensuring the use of best practices and cost effective strategies and addressing effective trash removal and park cleanup.	Short	$$		
	Establish a joint maintenance plan between the Parks and Recreation Department and Transportation Department for the City of Flint's trails and bike routes.	Short	$		
	Explore the transfer of large City parks that draw users from the larger region to Flint, allowing them to become State, County, or Regional parks and remain as perpetual open space.	Medium	$		

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES, OPEN SPACE & PARKS IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Citizen Engagement	Create and fund a City Parks Liaison position to actively seek potential grant opportunities, oversee a parks advisory council, and coordinate with community parks and recreation organizations.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation Department • City of Flint Planning and Development Department	• Increase in number of businesses and organizations participating in the Adopt-a-Park program • Increase in number of participants in the Parks Volunteer Corps
	Strengthen the "Adopt-a-Park" program, encouraging stronger City support while enlisting additional help from the community in maintaining City parks.	Short	$		
	Establish a Parks Volunteer Corps to create opportunities for youth volunteers to engage in maintaining City parks and operate parks programs.	Medium	$$		
Critical Partnerships	Establish and maintain a list of parks and facilities where formal agreements with State and County partner organizations are needed to properly maintain and secure assets.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation Department • City of Flint Community and Economic Development • Flint Community Schools	• Increase in public and private organizations assuming park maintenance responsibilities • Increase in number of joint-use agreements
	Maintain communication with Flint Community Schools and other institutions and organizations regarding the shared use of facilities and maintenance of parks and recreational amenities bordering school properties.	Short	$		
	Remove restrictions currently preventing other agencies from assisting in the maintenance and improvement of existing parks and recreation facilities.	Short	$		
Funding Sources	Aggressively pursue funding opportunities from a range of sources including Federal, State, and local grants, to assist with parkland acquisition and maintenance.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation Department	• Increase in funding from Federal, State, and local sources • Increase in financial or staff commitment of local non-for-profits or community partners
	Jointly pursue grants and other alternative funding sources with other local institutions or organizations to assist the City in meeting local-match requirements, or identify in-kind services the City can provide in lieu of a local match when permitted.	Medium	$		
	Continue to develop joint funding strategies with other community stakeholders, including athletic leagues and recreational affiliates, leveraging private and non-government investment when essential to maintain or develop existing park spaces.	Medium	$		
Objective 7	Engage the Flint community to support the programming and use of the park and recreation facilities.				
Citizen Engagement	Re-establish a citizen's park advisory council responsible for advocating and addressing parks and recreation issues, using an equitable process to determine representation from throughout the City.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation Department • City of Flint Planning and Development Department • Local neighborhood organizations	• Increased public participation levels in City parks programs and meetings • Increase in number of community partners
	Conduct biannual town hall style meetings to celebrate achievements, identify opportunities, and gather feedback from the community on issues and challenges related to the City's parks and recreation.	Short	$		
	Continue to work closely with local community groups and other voluntary organizations in the provision of recreational services.	Short	$		
Departmental Responsiveness	Annually conduct a needs assessment survey of residents to identify the community's satisfaction with existing parks and recreation and the types of facilities and improvements that they desire.	Short	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation Department • City of Flint Planning and Development Department	• Increased number of residents participating in needs assessment surveys • Increase in the number of youth participating in recreation programming
	Develop and implement a programming strategy for community centers that includes youth programming sponsored through partnerships with local institutions, community organizations, and businesses.	Medium	$		
	Partner with community organizations, recreation affiliates, and youth and adult recreation leagues to expand recreation programs and activate the City's open spaces and connect residents with the City's natural resources.	Medium	$		• Increase in number of community partners
Departmental Innovation	Identify and promote educational seminars and other opportunities for parks and recreation staff and advisory council members to generate new ideas for improvements or maintenance of the community's facilities.	Medium	$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation Department • City of Flint Public Safety Department	• Increased number of City officials participating in Parks and Recreation education programming • Increased participation in CPTED training courses
	Train staff in Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) and incorporate CPTED concepts in the design and management of City parks.	Medium	$		

MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT

8 INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

VISION P. 171

GOAL & OBJECTIVES P. 173

RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES P. 175

IMPLEMENTATION P. 189

8 INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN
VISION, GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Imagine

an efficient and reliable system of infrastructure and community services that ensures the safety of the Flint community, meets the needs of residents, and supports investment in businesses, innovation, and the local economy.

Imagine a Flint that serves its residents through an effective local government and quality facilities.

Imagine a Flint that invests in infrastructure in order to spark new development, restore the environmental integrity of the area, meet the needs of various activities throughout the City, and is not only capable, but is also dependable.

Over the next twenty years, Flint can achieve this vision. However, we must first face existing realities: Flint's population and revenue stream cannot support infrastructure for a population twice its size, much of the City's infrastructure has outlived its expected lifespan, and many public facilities need to be upgraded, repurposed, or redeveloped.

The Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan recognizes these challenges and charts a course that will help realize a new vision for the community. The recommendations included in this chapter will help Flint develop a modern and comprehensive system of infrastructure and facilities that will ensure the quality of life of its residents, the fiscal stability of the City, and the success of its changing economy.

SOCIAL EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY

Community facilities and infrastructure play a critical role in ensuring that all residents and families have an opportunity for social and economic success. They also represent some of the greatest fiscal investments made by the City, and should aim to maximize efficiency and effectiveness in how they deliver benefits and enhance the environment.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Safety, reliability, a comprehensive set of services, and a responsive government will allow Flint residents to enjoy all that the City has to offer. Quality infrastructure will complement their investment in the community, while local services will provide the support for education, recreation, and other activities.

YOUTH

Local community services and infrastructure are critical in making sure Flint has strong youth and families. Community services provide the activities and programs that put young people's positive energy to use. Infrastructure provides a living laboratory for young residents to see, on a regular basis, the City's commitment to sustainability, making them the torch bearers for the next generation.

RESHAPING THE ECONOMY

Investment in infrastructure and community services will ensure that Flint is poised to build a strong economy, fueled by local professionals. Local services will help grow a strong local employment base. This, in conjunction with modern and reliable infrastructure, will make Flint an attractive place for investment in commerce and industry.

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Infrastructure and community facilities must remain flexible in order to meet the needs of Flint's evolving population, development patterns, natural environment, and economy. The locations and design of public buildings, stormwater management strategies, blue/green infrastructure, and other factors must be considered within the context of the long-term vision for the community.

CIVIC LIFE

Infrastructure and community facilities relate to both the physical and social building blocks of community. Infrastructure provides the critical resources that allow a household, neighborhood, and City to operate, while community facilities provide the physical spaces and programs for neighbors to come together to accomplish the goals for Flint.

GOAL:

Flint will enjoy a system of reliable and efficient infrastructure tailored to meet local needs, and have a network of comprehensive community facilities and services provided by the City, non-profit organizations, and other local partners in a coordinated and collaborative manner.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The ways in which the Goal & Objectives of the Infrastructure and Community Facilites Plan have been influenced by the guiding principles are indicated using the following symbols.

- ***Social Equity & Sustainability***
- ***Reshaping the Economy***
- ***Quality of Life***
- ***Adapting to Change***
- ***Youth***
- ***Civic Life***

Objective #1

Repair and right-size key neighborhood infrastructure to increase resident safety, quality of life, and efficiency.

Responding to Flint's future population, rather than its population from fifty years ago, will be an effective way to ensure investment reflects the vision of the community. This includes the location, capacity, and type of infrastructure provided in various parts of the City.

Objective #2

Ensure longevity, reliability, and efficiency of City utilities.

Improvements should be weighed based on their potential to not only maintain existing infrastructure, but also to collectively implement the installation of a long-term coordinated system.

Objective #3

Modernize City and community facilities.

Flint must not only overcome its own past, but also the communities it competes with for development. Providing modern community facilities is one way to provide the best services to residents, and make Flint an attractive choice.

Objective #4

Leverage green technology to reduce energy costs, improve air quality, and increase long-term sustainability.

Needed infrastructure upgrades provide the opportunity to invest in innovative systems that accomplish multiple community goals. Strategic investment in infrastructure and facilities will have long-term benefits to the City and natural environment.

Objective #5

Expand opportunities for blue infrastructure development.

Flint's approach to infrastructure should recognize the value of water as both a usable resource and a tool for managing flooding, restoring ecosystems, and improving access to recreation and open space.

Objective #6

Develop and execute a coordinated City network of street trees.

Trees offer several benefits to the Flint community. Aside from their aesthetic value, they also enhance stormwater management, minimize erosion, and create buffers between incompatible uses.

Objective #7

Provide municipal services consistent with the Master Plan.

Infrastructure and services should be tailored to specifically respond to different neighborhood types, transportation systems, natural areas, and other site-specific influences.

Objective #8

Work with residents, businesses and other stakeholders to foster development of the City and its infrastructure in a manner consistent with the Master Plan.

Full implementation of the community's vision will require collaboration and shared accountability. The greatest level of positive impact will occur when the City's investment in infrastructure is in line with and complemented by service provided by local stakeholders.

Objective #9

Operate in an open and financially stable manner, including improving citizen access, focusing on measurable results, improving the City's financial position, and eliminating accumulated deficits.

It is clear that attaining the vision for Flint will require new investment. However, such investment must be justified by its ability to achieve the goals and objectives in this Plan, or set the stage for other improvements that do so.

8 INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES
RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES

In 1960, 197,000 people lived in Flint, and the community was bracing for rapid growth around its core industries. Infrastructure was in place to support over 200,000 people. However, the next 50 years brought a reduction in population of 95,000 people. This reduction resulted in a large percentage of vacant buildings and sites. Flint has more than 10,000 vacant homes, including a total of 5,000 blighted structures. In the past 50 years, Flint's population has dropped by 48%, yet the City continues to maintain infrastructure systems capable of servicing its peak population. The Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan considers ways to tailor infrastructure and services to suit local population centers and anticipated long-term development patterns.

The Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan establishes a coordinated vision for Flint's government facilities, infrastructure, and utilities. It also considers the relationship between the City and other agencies, non-profit organizations, or organizations that provide important social and cultural services.

It also explores vacant properties to make Flint more sustainable by minimizing the stress on infrastructure systems and creatively reusing vacant structures. The Plan envisions a City where infrastructure and services are closely coordinated with housing, economic development, the environment, parks and open space, and transportation, as well as a community that is fiscally responsible and able to support these systems in a fair and equitable way.

Becoming a more sustainable community implies a balanced approach to preserving the environment, enhancing the quality and distribution of services to all citizens, and ensuring the long-term financial viability of all infrastructure.

In addition to recommendations throughout this Plan, there are additional actions the City can take to achieve this important goal:

- Adopt an energy efficiency and conservation policy for government facilities, employees, and contractors that includes turning lights, computers and copiers off, appropriate thermostat use, and reduced "plug load" (i.e. desk lamps, radios, etc.)
- Adopt Energy Star purchasing requirements for new equipment and appliances.
- Implement blue/green infrastructure improvements described in ***Chapter 7: Environmental Features, Open Space, and Parks***.

INFRASTRUCTURE & FUTURE LAND USE

Chapter 4 presents the Place Based Land Use Plan, a flexible framework that establishes the desired character for the areas of Flint. The place types outline potential uses, intensities, and development patterns that can serve as a planning guide for supporting systems and services, enabling local land uses to thrive, and costs of delivery managed. The following paragraphs describe how the provision of infrastructure and services should reflect local land use typologies.

Residential Place Types

The Traditional Neighborhoods and Mixed-Residential areas are striving for improvement. They are existing and stable residential areas that require complete infrastructure, including multi-modal transportation systems consisting of transit, sidewalks, and bike paths; water and electricity with appropriate redundancy; and, community services that focus on supporting youth, families, and local schools.

Successful implementation of Green Neighborhoods will introduce green uses into the remaining, less-dense residential areas. Complete infrastructure, is critical in helping stabilize Green Neighborhoods, demonstrates a City commitment to these areas, and provides an opportunity for a potential long-term transition back into a Traditional Neighborhood. Green Neighborhoods also provide an opportunity to implement blue/green infrastructure, as a way to make use of vacant land and maximize the performance of the City's stormwater infrastructure.

Commercial Place Types

Downtown, City Corridors, and Neighborhood Centers are all critical to a healthy community and local economy. Infrastructure in these areas must ensure the continued delivery of critical services and customers, necessary to keep businesses in operation. Infrastructure can enhance the viability of businesses in the community, ensuring adequate connections are in place between business and all parts of the City, and that pedestrian infrastructure connects shopping and employment areas with nearby neighborhoods.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Infrastructure & Future Land Use..... 175
Long-Term Planning..... 176
Sustainable & Renewable Infrastructure..... 177
Government Facilities..... 178
Infrastructure & Utilities..... 183
Efficient City Governance..... 188

Source: Connor Coyne

BENEFITS OF INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS

Several cities are demonstrating the benefits of investment in sustainable infrastructure systems:

- Philadelphia, PA has implemented restoration and demonstration efforts, regulations and incentives for private development to minimize the amount of demand on sewers, and a revised billing system that considers both the gross area of the lot and the amount of pervious surface.
- Stafford County, VA adopted development regulations that permit the use of low-impact development on private lots as a means of meeting on-site detention requirements.
- Portland, OR invested $9 million to address its sewer overflow issue, saving ratepayers approximately $224 million in infrastructure and maintenance costs associated with overflow events.

Institutional Place Types

The University Avenue Core and Civic/Cultural Campus areas have unique infrastructure needs. Activities in these areas include a combination of education, housing, research, and professional offices. These place types, and the institutions within them, may warrant dedicated infrastructure systems that offer improved stability, greater capacity, ease of adaptability as technologies emerge, and redundancy to overcome instances when the larger municipal network is compromised.

Implementation of the University Avenue Core place type will entail significant intensification of existing uses, and has a goal of adding 10,000 dwelling units to support full build-out. This repositioning and new development provides a good opportunity to replace traditional services with innovative green infrastructure, advanced telecommunications and data systems, gray water reuse, and on-site water storage and distribution.

Employment Place Types

Green Innovation areas, Production Centers, Commerce and Employment Centers, and Downtown, will power the local economy, hosting the most intensive activities within the City.

When implemented, Green Innovation areas will present the City with opportunities to take infrastructure "offline," removing unnecessary utilities and systems once the place type and uses are established.

Other place types must maintain access to a complete infrastructure system to ensure their continued operation. This will require flexible infrastructure that can easily and quickly be retrofitted to meet new demands, and be tailored to each specific place type. Commerce and Employment areas for example, will host intensive office and research activities requiring advanced telecommunications and energy systems. The City should consider flexible infrastructure systems that allow for local upgrades, without disruption or added cost to the broader city-wide systems.

LONG-TERM PLANNING

This Master Plan is intended to provide context for a number of other decisions to be made regarding specific actions, priorities, and capital investments. The City should use the Master Plan as a foundation for further analysis and design, that will answer important questions regarding long-term implementation. The Master Plan should directly correlate to two important municipal documents: the Capital Improvement Plan and the Strategic Plan.

Capital Improvement Program

The City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) includes a series of projects or improvements related to facilities and infrastructure. It identifies specific actions to be completed, and considers anticipated costs, phasing, and funding sources. The Master Plan should be referenced as a guide that provides context for specific decisions and priorities identified in the CIP, specifically considering:

- The potential future benefit of certain actions. These may include long-term cost savings, environmental benefits, increased mobility to important services, and social equity, among others.
- The relative need for specific investments. Some projects may be critical to the health, safety, and welfare of the Flint community, despite also being expensive. These should be considered for more immediate action as they may protect other investments in public systems or private development.
- The anticipated impact in achieving other community goals. Investment in infrastructure or municipal services is often critical to successful economic development, the advancement of arts and culture, or healthy transportation options. These are all goals that provide positive returns back to the Flint community.
- Complementary non-municipal resources. While the CIP reflects the City's intended investment in certain projects, the City should consider funding partners who may make specific actions more attainable on the short-term. This may influence the phasing or priority of some projects and allow the City to attain its vision more quickly.

Flint Strategic Plan

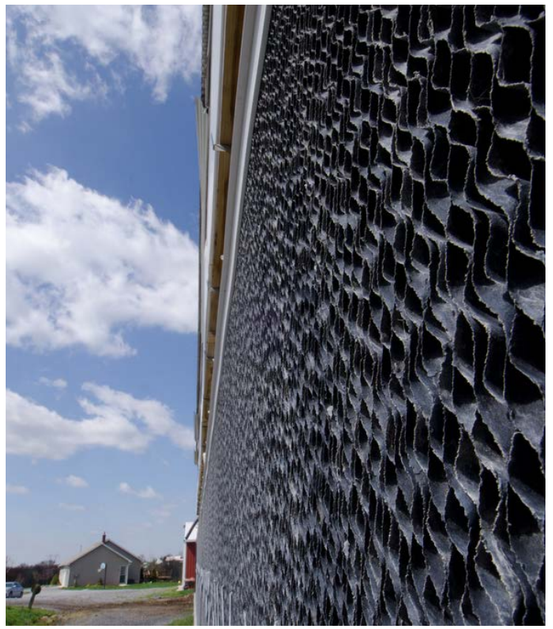
In addition to this Master Plan, the City of Flint is putting in place a Five-Year Strategic Plan to set a sustainable course for local government based on the recognition that the instability and lack of accountability within City government has been a major strain on the community. The Strategic Plan will address the key goals and functions necessary to make the City of Flint a robust partner in planning and maintaining community infrastructure, utilities, and facilities. The Strategic Plan is based on a responsible five-year financial projection and a transparent and accountable revenue estimating process. The Strategic Plan recognizes the importance of creating and maintaining a vibrant and growing community which will attract and retain residents, businesses, students, and visitors by providing municipal services in a customer friendly and financially responsible manner.

BENEFITS OF ENERGY EFFICIENT PUBLIC BUILDINGS

The City of St. Paul, MN is investing in the energy efficiency of public buildings. The $2.7 million program has improved the performance of nearly 30 buildings, with most improvements providing a positive financial return within five years. Improvements include the installation of new energy management systems, new high-efficiency HVAC systems, and new energy-efficient lighting fixtures.

Roof-mounted solar panels (source: Black Rock Solar)

Sustainable building materials and small wind production (source: Terry Wha)



Passive heating fexterior surface (source: USDA)

SUSTAINABLE & RENEWABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Regional and global climate change will impact water availability, infrastructure needs, flora and fauna, and other aspects of the environment. However, sustainable infrastructure has the potential to provide significant benefits to the Flint community. First, it can improve its own performance and efficiency. Secondly, it can minimize negative impacts on private development.

While environmental factors present significant challenges to the community, Flint and Genesee County are home to several hundred non-profit and community organizations. These social resources reflect the local commitment to improving Flint and making it a sustainable and successful community. This Master Plan is an important document for providing context for the coordination of City efforts and the social support provided by non-profit, and community organizations. However, the specific relationship between infrastructure, neighborhood development, character, sustainability, and global climate change, warrant the creation of a local Climate Action Plan. The following paragraphs describe overarching concepts that can be applied to infrastructure throughout the City.

A Climate Action Plan for Flint

In 2009, the State of Michigan adopted a Climate Action Plan that identifies 54 policy recommendations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The recommendations include actions that would reduce harmful impacts on the environment while providing an estimated $10 billion of benefits between 2009 and 2025 through the reduced use of water and energy, new job creation, and diversification of the economy.

The City of Flint should build on the state's efforts and create a local Climate Action Plan. This Plan would provide a unique opportunity to address, within the context of one another, anticipated climate change, future population trends, available open space, environmental resources, resident involvement, and the support provided by non-profit and community organizations. The Climate Action Plan would serve as a supporting document to this Master Plan, providing additional insights that would shape future land use policies, multi-modal transportation enhancements, capital improvements, economic development efforts, and collaboration with other departments, agencies and authorities.

Recommendations for the plan include, but are not limited to the following:

- Require City-funded projects to incorporate energy efficient features.
- Promote the benefits of energy efficiency to the business community, and demonstrate techniques applicable in Flint.
- Provide a "how to" guide for residents who wish to increase energy efficiency in their homes through equipment upgrades, weatherizing, and modifications in behavior.
- Package information for businesses and residents regarding potential rebates or cost savings associated with energy efficiency.
- Work with local schools to integrate sustainability related discussions, demonstration, and field trips into curricula.
- Integrate sustainable alternatives and regulations into the City's zoning code related to green building design, stormwater management, and alternative energy production.
- Encourage or require landscaping materials that reduce water consumption and reflect anticipated climate change for the Flint region.
- Work with UM-Flint, Mott Community College, and other local partners to offer technical expertise to developers and designers who wish to implement sustainable development techniques.
- Utilize LED solar-powered technology for pedestrian crossing signals and street lights.
- Utilize water conservation practices for the maintenance of parks and municipal properties.
- Replace unused turf areas with native landscaping in open spaces and on municipal properties, in order to increase permeability and groundwater recharge.

Benefits of a Climate Action Plan

Four neighborhoods in Chicago, IL are using climate action plans to improve local quality of life. Working with anthropologists and ecologists from the Field Museum, residents are developing and implementing local climate action plans. The goal of this effort is to apply Chicago's city-wide Climate Action Plan to individual neighborhoods based on:

- Community strengths;
- Community concerns;
- Neighborhood's core organizational work;
- Strategies from the region's climate action plans; and,
- Existing and potential new local and technical partners.

Neighborhoods are exploring actions related to a broad range of concepts, including community gardening, green infrastructure, homeowner water conservation, youth leadership, and more.

Blue/Green Infrastructure

Blue/green infrastructure is an approach to infrastructure and site design that mimics natural systems using low-cost, simple techniques to contain and use stormwater close to where it falls and allow the ground to absorb water and filter pollution as it would before development occurred.

Rather than disposing of stormwater by funneling it off site, blue/green infrastructure advances the principle that stormwater is a natural resource that should be used to recharge natural systems at the site level. Allowing the natural processes of infiltration, filtering, storage and evaporation to occur on-site can reduce or eliminate the need for stormwater detention areas and drainage piping while improving overall water quality.

For example, rather than collecting rainwater in pipes and delivering it to the Flint River, a bioswale would allow for the percolation of rainwater into the soil, where it would be cleaned by native plant life and returned to the ground. This approach would provide the foundation for healthy natural ecosystems and help sustain groundwater supply. The City should explore opportunities to implement blue and green infrastructure techniques, as upgrades or new installation occurs. A more detailed discussion of these techniques exists in ***Chapter 7: Environmental Features, Open Space, and Parks***.

Green Technologies

The City should consider ways to implement green technologies into development of its facilities and infrastructure. These include alternative energy sources (i.e. solar, wind and geothermal), energy efficient systems, passive heating and cooling, etc. These techniques can reduce both operational costs to the City, and environmental impacts on the community.

GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

The City of Flint operates a series of facilities that provide services to residents and sustain necessary operations related to government administration, infrastructure, and public safety. Parks and open space facilities are addressed in ***Chapter 7: Environmental Features, Open Space, and Parks Plan***. This section describes those facilities and identifies recommendations related to their long-term maintenance.

Routine Maintenance

The City of Flint operates approximately 22 facilities throughout the community. Many of these facilities are approaching 100 years of age, with the majority of structures being built prior to 1960. The City should do the following measures to ensure their long-term viability:

- ***On-going maintenance.*** All structures should be monitored for regular maintenance needs, including façade rehabilitation, roof repair, water and electrical upgrades and code compliance, sidewalk improvements, ADA accessibility, and parking lot improvements.
- ***Data technologies.*** Where appropriate, data technologies should be upgraded to enhance the operations within a facility, and improve coordination between departments or buildings.
- ***Energy efficiency.*** All facilities should be made more energy efficient through improvements to heating and cooling systems, windows and doors, weather stripping, potential alternative energy sources (i.e. solar, wind or geothermal), upgrades to light fixtures, and the installation of more efficient appliances, infrastructure systems. This effort can be facilitated by the installation of energy management software to identify usage patterns and abnormalities, and the adoption of benchmarks for individual facilities.
- ***Consolidation.*** The City should consider opportunities to consolidate departments or services into fewer facilities, considering the impacts of vacating buildings on nearby land uses and opportunities to repurpose structures for lease or sale.

City Hall

Flint's administrative center consists of six structures: City Hall, City Hall-South Building, City Hall-North Building, the City Hall Dome, Police Headquarters, and Fire Headquarters. These structures total more than 187,000 square feet, and according to the Facilities, Grounds, and Maintenance Division, range from fair to poor/fair condition. In addition to the item listed above, the City should plan for the following improvements to the City Hall facilities:

- ***City Hall.*** Façade renovation and repair and replace the air conditioning unit.
- ***City Hall-North.*** Replace the roof and repair the sidewalk between the Police Station and City Hall.
- ***City Hall Dome.*** Repair or replace lighting in the adjacent parking lot.

Public Works

Public Works includes buildings and facilities operated by the Water Department, Water Pollution Control Department, Water Distribution Division, Sewer Maintenance Division, Street Maintenance Division, and Sanitation Division. The following actions are recommended to ensure that Public Works facilities provide efficient and reliable services to Flint:

- ***Water Treatment Plant.*** The Water Treatment Plant (WTP) is in need of maintenance or replacement of mechanical and electrical equipment, security improvements, concrete and asphalt, and roofs. These improvements, considered as general maintenance programs, are planned and funded.
- ***Cedar Street Pumping Facility.*** The Cedar Street Pumping Facility is used as an emergency or peak supply provider. However, the station has no standby power, its electrical controls date back to 1948, and significant upgrades are required to bring the station up to current automatic operation standards. These improvements should be considered in addition to regular maintenance.
- ***Pump Station No. 4 and West Side Pump Station.*** Pump Station No. 4 was rehabilitated in 1994 and is in adequate condition. The West Side Pump Station was built in 1970. Though its condition is adequate, there is no standby power provided to the station. Installation of standby power should be considered in addition to regular maintenance.
- ***Torrey Road Booster Station.*** The Torrey Road Booster Station has been scheduled for rehabilitation. The existing pumps have exceeded their lifespan and there is no standby power to the station. Rehabilitation should address these issues, while the station should be monitored for long-term maintenance needs.
- ***Water Pollution Control.*** The Water Pollution Control Department maintains the Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF), 11 pumping stations, and 29 additional structures throughout the City. Several of the Department's facilities are in need of routine maintenance improvements. These should be considered as part of an overall maintenance strategy for all public facilities.
- ***Water Service Center.*** The Water Service Center houses the Water Distribution and Sewer Maintenance Divisions, including staff, vehicles and equipment. The facility is in need of routine maintenance improvements. This should be considered as part of an overall maintenance strategy for all public facilities.
- ***Street Maintenance and Sanitation Facility.*** The Street Maintenance and Sanitation facility hosts the Street Maintenance, Sanitation, Traffic Engineering, and Fleet Maintenance Divisions. The facility includes office spaces, equipment storage, and fleet storage and maintenance. The facility is in need of routine maintenance improvements. This should be considered as part of an overall maintenance strategy for all public facilities.

CITY OF FLINT
Governmental Facilities

Governmental Facilities Legend

- *Open Schools*
- *Closed Schools*

Governmental Facilities Inventory

1. City Hall Complex
- *-Flint Police Department*
- *-Flint Fire Department*
- *-Flint City Safety office*

Public Safety Facilities

2. Northside Service Center
3. Ballenger Highway Service Center
4. Southside Service Center
5. Huley Service Center
6. Kettering Service Center
7. Kearsley Park/MCC Service Center
8. Fire Station #3
9. Fire Station #5
10. Fire Station #6
11. Fire Station #8

Dams

12. Hamilton Dam
13. Fabri Dam
14. Utah Dam
15. Holloway Dam
16. Kearsley Dam
17. Thread Dam

Courts

18. 68th District Court

Other City Goverment Facilities

19. City of Flint- Street Maintenance/Sanitation Department
20. City of Flint-Building Maintenance
21. Flint Community Schools - Headquarters
22. Flint Housing Commission
23. Flint Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
24. Flint City Market
25. Oak Business Center

Water Network

26. Water Treatment Plant
27. Water Pollution Control
28. Water Service Center
29. Pumping Station #1
30. Pumping Station #2
31. Pumping Station #5
32. Pumping Station #6
33. Pumping Station #9
34. Pumping Station #12
35. Avon Pumping Station
36. Third Avenue Pumping Station
37. Pumping Station #3 (not in service)
38. Pumping Station #4 (not in service)
39. Pumping Station #7 (not in service)
40. Pumping Station #8 (not in service)
41. Pumping Station #11 (not in service)
42. Cedar Street Pumping Station
43. Torrey Road Booster Station
44. West Side Reservoir/Pumping Station

Community Centers

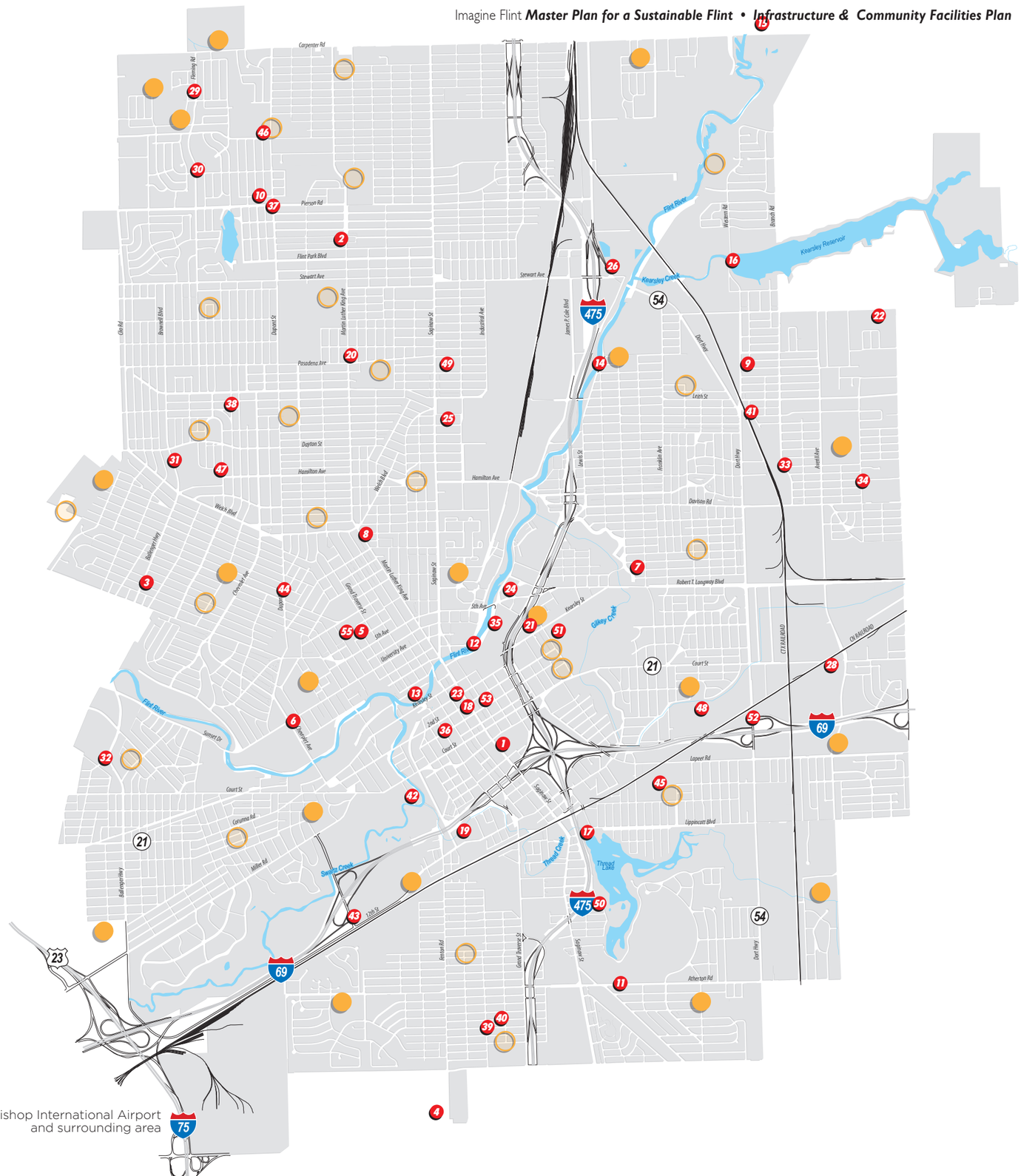
45. Brennan Community Center
46. Hasselbring Senior Center
47. Haskell Community Center
48. Pierce Community Center
49. Berston Field House
50. McKinley/VISTA Center

Library

51. Flint Public Library

Quasi City Goverment

52. MTA Headquarters
53. MTA Downtown Terminal
54. Bishop International Airport
55. Hurley Hospital



Flint City Market. Source: Joel Rash

Public Safety Facilities

This section discusses the facilities related to public safety, while ***Chapter 10: Public Safety, Health, and Welfare Plan*** summarizes services, staffing, fleets, and related outreach and programs.

The Police Department operates out of several facilities, including one main station, one firing range, one storage facility, and six service centers that are staffed by part-time volunteers. There is also a vacant Police Academy facility for which the department has no long-term need.

The Police Department should implement the following actions:

- Conduct a detailed assessment and inventory of routine maintenance needs.
- Assess the feasibility and appropriateness of various technology upgrades in order to enhance communication among facilities and with other City departments.
- Consider the need for consolidated, vacated, or new facilities in conjunction with anticipated development in different areas of the community, considering localized population centers, surrounding land uses, and connectivity and responsiveness.

Public Safety Service Centers

The City of Flint currently operates six neighborhood service centers. These centers offer a visible presence while providing limited services and operate to serve as an interface between residents and police. In order for the City to achieve a "true" community policing model, the Flint Police Department must ensure these service stations are located and staffed across all areas of the City. Future locations, operations, and staffing of these centers are discussed in the Public Safety, Health and Welfare chapter.

The Fire Department maintains seven stations, four of which are operational, and one training center in Flint. In addition to on-going maintenance needs, the City should partner with the Fire Department in implementing the following actions:

- Assess the feasibility and appropriateness of various technology upgrades in order to enhance communication among facilities and with other City departments.
- Consider the need for consolidated, vacated, or new facilities in conjunction with anticipated development in different areas of the community, considering localized population centers, surrounding land uses, and connectivity and responsiveness.
- Make regular station upgrades and repairs related to diesel exhaust systems, bay doors, and other similar items.

Key Community Facilities

Flint Public Library

The Flint Public Library is a full-service library providing an extensive reference department, research collections, and Children's Library. The Library serves over 280,000 visitors annually, while offering over 800 programs servicing nearly 60,000 individuals. The City and the community must recognize the public library as a key community asset and work with a wide range of partners to ensure its long-term sustainability, including assisting in supporting efforts to implement minor capital investments in the short-term.

Flint City Market Site

While the closing of the Flint City Market presents a strong sense of loss for some, it also provides a great opportunity to repurpose the site with new partners in a truly unique fashion. However, its appealing aesthetics and character must be preserved through a thoughtful process that protects its status as a historical asset and strong community anchor.

Building on its proximity to the Flint River and ample parking nearby, the City-owned site could become a great complement to surrounding land uses. The City should encourage the repurposing of the building for either creative uses (i.e. artists' galleries) or Flint River related recreation. For example, the site's location along the river and the Flint River Trail, makes it ideal for a boat and bike rental facility, repair shop, concessions, and river-related recreation programming.

Community Centers

As of 2013, the City had five community centers: Berston, Brennan, Hasselbring, Haskell, and McKinley. All of the programming at these facilities is provided by various non-profit partners.

- ***Senior Centers:*** Two centers - Brennan and Hasselbring - function as Senior Centers with occasional programming offered to the larger community.
- ***Youth Centers:*** Berston and Haskell Centers provide services geared toward youth. Both these facilities are well utilized and have reached the point where they cannot physically accommodate more users without significant capital investment.
- ***Special Services:*** The McKinley Center is run by the VISTA Drop-In Center, an organization that was established in 1985 to serve the mentally ill, developmentally disabled, and/or homeless populations.

Funding

Genesee County passed a senior millage that formally helped fund senior services at Brennan, Hasselbring, and Pierce.

The Pierce Senior Center was closed in 2012 and unfortunately, the City was unable to find a partner to provide senior services at this location. There is no comparable funding source for youth programming.

Wrap-around Neighborhood Centers

The community has expressed strong support for creating new community centers that offer wrap-around services for youth and their families throughout the City. In many cases, there are closed facilities, such as schools, that could be re-purposed for this use. In the short-term, the City must continue to work with its partners at these five centers to ensure that the facilities remain in operation and continue to provide much-needed programming for residents.

Priority should be given to necessary capital improvements, which will allow these facilities to remain open. However, recognizing that these facilities are inadequate to address the needs of our residents, the City should engage with residents, stakeholders, community-based organizations, and funders, to identify and establish new sites for community centers, particularly in underserved areas. The City should also continue to engage potential partners in re-opening the Pierce Senior Center, which when open, was fully utilized.

BERSTON FIELD HOUSE

Located on Flint's north side, the Berston Field House is home to many Flint legends, past and present. Opened in 1923 and designated as a State Historic Site in 1994, the field house was the first in Flint to allow African-Americans entry and access to programming. Ran and operated by volunteers, the center is a prime example of the demand for youth programming within Flint's neighborhoods.

With limited City finances available for needed for capital improvements, the formation of a Berston Authority is underway. This type of public partnership could be a great model for future community centers across the city to ensure the youth of Flint have access and availability to necessary programming and activities.

Flint Community Schools - Adaptive Reuse

Declining enrollment and budget constraints have forced the Flint Community Schools District to close several of its facilities in recent years. Starting in the 2013-2014 school year, the district's two high schools will host students in grades 7 through 12, while 14 elementary schools will host students in kindergarten through grade 6. A new alternative program for 7th through 9th grade students, will also be opening at the former Flint Northern High School. FCS has not built a new school since 1972.

In total, the school district currently owns more than 20 closed school properties, some of which have had their structures demolished. The school district recently signed a six-month contract with a commercial real estate broker to market several district properties.

Adhering to the Land Use Plan

As important community anchors within Flint's neighborhoods, the City should advocate for the adaptive reuse of school facilities. Priority should be given to uses that complement the surrounding place identified in the Land Use Plan. For example, within a traditional or green neighborhood, an appropriate reuse of a school might include senior housing, a community center, or small retail center. Within a green innovation area, a former school could appropriately serve as a space for research, or a business incubator.

While the Land Use Plan should serve as a guide to the type of reuse desired by the community, the City should also be flexible in considering innovative approaches to the reuse of the valued community assets. First and foremost, it is important that school facility reuse does not negatively impact quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods. Unconventional reuse proposals may be appropriate if externalities are minimal. The following discussion includes a brief summary of challenges and best practices in the adaptive reuse of schools.

Historic School Buildings

Flint Community Schools owns several 1920s era buildings of potential historic significance. Schools such as Civic Park Elementary, are also located within designated historic districts. When properly maintained, these structures contribute to a positive neighborhood image and identity. Where possible, the City should work with the school district to preserve historic school buildings.

Challenges of Closed School Buildings

School buildings are neighborhood anchors that attract activity and act as a focal point, but when left vacant they can become a liability to school districts, and a potential burden on the surrounding community. A review of existing adaptive school reuse projects indicates that there is not a strong correlation between structural characteristics and certain types of reuse. The needs of the surrounding community, market demand, and developer willingness have more to do with how the building is adapted.

Competing Sellers with Less Red Tape

Public school closures are a growing phenomenon in the nation, but marketing the school sites to buyers for repurposing proves difficult. To begin with, school districts are typically not set up to handle the challenges of property sales – their business is in education administration and not in real estate or economic development. Additionally, other entities compete with school districts to sell vacant facilities, such as private schools, which can make transactions more nimble and often have facilities in better shape than public schools.

School Location

Location changes the selling game as well – adaptation of a property on a busy corridor, is significantly more feasible than a property that is tucked away into the heart of a residential neighborhood, as many school buildings are. A building in substandard condition that is on an active corridor, will likely have a higher asking price than a less accessible building in great condition.

Best Practices

Physical Assessment & Marketing

Structural factors play a major part in the trouble of repurposing vacant school buildings. Typically, the larger the building, the more difficult it is to find a suitable use– smaller buildings are compatible with a wider range of uses and are easier to locate buyers for. Moreover, aged buildings may require serious renovations by the buyer, the need to be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), or might have insufficient parking. Excessive associated costs will drive away potential buyers.

Given the varied age, size, and condition of the large inventory of closed school facilities owned by the FCS, the school district should consider performing an assessment of its properties to inventory condition, floor layout, site access, and other attributes of potential use to interested buyers. Once complete, the assessment should be made readily available to interested parties. Easy access to property information is essential in the effective marketing properties for sale or lease.

Repurposing Committee

Marketing a school property is a critical component of bringing in a new occupant. In addition to the commercial broker contracted by the school district, the City should work with the school district to establish a "repurposing committee" to guide the school sales/lease process. The committee should consist of school and City officials, as well as community stakeholders, and would be responsible for reaching out to potential developers and occupants, seeking input from residents and stakeholders, and determining whether any environmental or market studies are needed prior to redevelopment.

Choosing an Qualified Buyer

When successful, efforts to repurpose closed school property can be a valuable opportunity to rally interest in the area from both community residents and potential buyers. The school district should consider using a design competition to solicit creative and effective solutions for select properties. A "contest" approach may be more likely to attract developers because of the public attention, it could also generate increased interest among local residents and stakeholders. Use of a design competition may also make certain that the buyer follows through on announced plans by requiring construction milestones, adding clauses to the deed that prohibit flipping to other uses, and requiring a proof of funding for the project.

Central High School redevelopment concept (Source: Flint Community Schools)

Sell or Lease?

School districts have two different options of managing the financial transaction of a property: selling or leasing. Selling can be preferable because most school districts are not set up to be landlords. It produces cash and there is a reduction of the district's liability. On the other hand, leasing offers more control over future use, keeps buildings in public ownership, and can often reduce the turnaround time in occupancy.

Leasing works better for buildings in good condition because lessees may not have the capital or time for renovations. For example, the school district currently leases the former Stewart Elementary School building to a church.

Types of Reuse

School buildings are creatively reutilized in a wide variety of methods. The most common occupants that take up home in closed schools are charter schools – 42% of large city school closures are reused by charters. Other institutional uses frequently establish themselves in school buildings as well, such as private schools, college and university buildings, health clinics, community or cultural centers, police stations, homeless shelters, and churches. If appropriate, the property is sometimes even bought up by the municipality, and transformed into a green park or other public space.

Commercial, residential, or office space is also sometimes compatible with the property's structure and location. Commercial and office applications have included neighborhood markets, recording studios, daycare facilities, technology centers, shopping centers, medical offices, school administration offices, movie theaters, and hotels. Residential properties, especially mixed-income apartments or mixed use developments, are also typical adaptations.

- ***Educational***
  Holmes Street School in Lansing is experiencing a $2.5 million renovation into a technology and educational hub. The building will house Spartan Internet Consulting, a software security technology company, and the ***Information Technology Empowerment Center (ITEC)***, which is a non-profit organization that engages kids in math and science through technology courses and homework help.
- ***Institutional***
  Graceland School in Kansas City, MO will be renovated as the ***Brandmeyer Community Center*** by Swope Corridor Renaissance/Upper Room, Inc. (SCUR), an organization that provides educational opportunities to low-income families. The building will host programs for seniors, a neighborhood meeting space, a coffee shop, a fitness center, and a computer room. It will also provide a home for neighborhood organizations and non-profit organization programs. SCUR received a $1.5 million private donation that will go towards the acquisition and renovation of the site.
- ***Residential***
  The former Ypsilanti High, located in Ypsilanti, was built in 1915 and closed in 1995. In 1997, the school district chose a developer to purchase the 160,000 square foot building and renovate it into a 104 unit apartment complex for senior citizens, known as ***Cross Street Village***. The rehabilitation cost more than $10 million and was finished in 2000. Seniors, some of whom attended the high school, live in renovated classrooms, laboratories, and offices. Lockers are used as storage and a small movie theater and laundry room had been added.
- ***Commercial & Office***
  Swinney Elementary School in Kansas, MO is being purchased by the ***Kansas City Sustainable Development Partners, LLC (KCSDP)*** to restore the building into medical office suites that cater to small practices and doctor's groups. The historic interior and exterior will be preserved. The total projected cost is $9.3 million and are expected to be financed by historic tax credits, short-term and long-term debt, and developer equity.
- ***Arts and Culture***
  Burton International School in Detroit converted to ***Burton Theatre***, a facility with a movie theater and art studios. The school already had seats and a projection booth that was built in 1924, and was purchased by an individual for $400,000. It shows movies on weekends and is also home to a Montessori school.

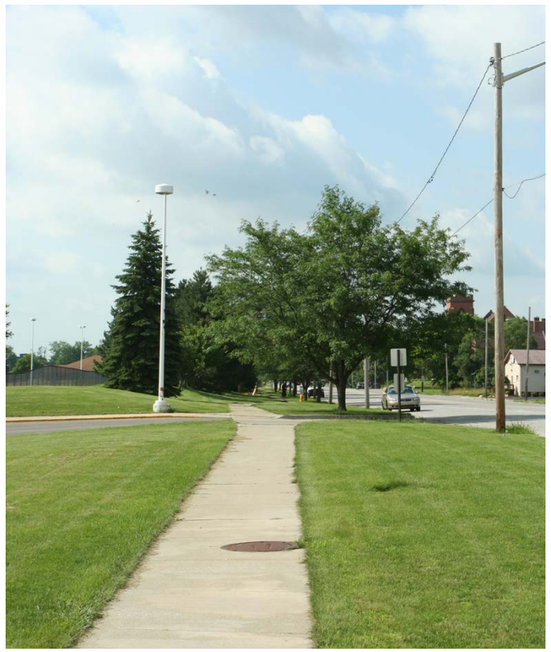
High School Locations

The Flint school district's two open high school facilities are located on the outer edges of the community. While this may be necessary due to current facility conditions and capacity, it also increases the need for busing to schools. A larger issue with the current high school configuration is a concern echoed through numerous community outreach efforts: lack of a central high school facility diminishes the local sense of community. Flint residents have repeatedly expressed a desire for a centrally located high school that helps create a shared sense of community identity across all neighborhoods of Flint, regardless of geography.

Central High School Redevelopment Concept

Central High School (built in 1922) and adjacent Whittier Middle School (built in 1925) were both closed following the 2008-2009 school year due to a combination of declining student enrollment, budget deficits, and increasing maintenance costs at the two facilities. Given its central location and large size, the Central-Whittier campus remains a highly desirable site for school facilities, and residents have expressed a strong desire to see the two schools renovated.

A potential renovation would also allow youth to capitalize on walkability to the Flint Institute of Arts, Flint Public Library, Longway Planetarium, and other key cultural and academic institutions. However, while school officials express a desire to renovate and reoccupy Central High School and Whittier Middle School, budget constraints have limited any action.



INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES

The recommendations of this section address the maintenance and improvement of the City's infrastructure, and should be implemented in conjunction with new development, transportation systems, parks and open spaces, natural areas, and other investment.

Modularization & Decentralization

Modularization and decentralization should be considered for all infrastructure systems.

- Modularization entails the creation of several micro-systems within one larger system. This allows portions of the larger system to be taken off-line for maintenance or repairs without having to shut down a larger portion of the system.
- Decentralization entails the decreased reliance of a system on one resource. For example, multiple energy or water sources provide back-up and redundancy in the event that one source is compromised.

Transportation

Chapter 6: Transportation and Mobility Plan identifies more specific recommendations related to the operational characteristics and capacity of the City's multi-modal transportation network. This section focuses on the maintenance of that system and its relationship to other infrastructure.

Roadway Conditions

In 2012, the conditions of all federal aid eligible roadways in Genesee County were assessed based on the Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) system. According to this assessment of 422 lane miles:

- 35 lane miles of roadway are in "good" condition, requiring routine maintenance.
- 309 lane miles of roadway are in "fair" condition, requiring capital preventative maintenance.
- 78 lane miles of roadway are in "poor" condition, requiring structural improvements.

In order to sustain a high-quality system of roadways, the City should:

- Work closely with MDOT and Genesee County to implement the recommendations in the Transportation and Mobility Plan, Genesee County Regional Trail Plan, Genesee County Long Range Transportation Plan, and other adopted policies
- Continue to explore opportunities for grants to fund roadway improvement projects
- Coordinate roadway improvement projects with other efforts, including utility upgrades, redevelopment, and streetscaping
- Prioritize the improvement of roadways throughout the City based on factors impacts to traffic flow, mobility, safety, and access to surrounding land uses
- Seek opportunities to implement other improvements (i.e. road diets) on roadway segments most in need of repair

Bridges

Many of Flint's bridges were constructed in the 1960's and 1970's. According to a 2013 MDOT report utilizing the FHWA National Bridge Inventory rating system, nine bridges in Flint are structurally deficient, and 44 are functionally obsolete. (The report includes assessments of all bridges with a span of 20' or more.)

MDOT has included several bridge improvement projects in Flint in its 2013-2017 Capital Improvement Program. The City should continue to work with MDOT and Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission to implement these improvements, and monitor the condition of all bridges throughout the community on an on-going basis.

Sidewalks

There are approximately 1,300 miles of public sidewalk in Flint. The FY2014 Capital Improvement Program identifies a shortfall of $35-45 million needed to repair or replace 950 miles of sidewalk. In the past, the City has typically relied on CDBG funding to repair sidewalks, but such funding is increasingly limited and does not address the magnitude of the challenge in Flint. The following are actions that the City should take to improve the sidewalk network, and are consistent with the recommendations contained in ***Chapter 6: Transportation and Mobility Plan:***

- Work with MDOT to implement the recommendations in the Transportation and Mobility Plan related to the maintenance of a comprehensive pedestrian network.
- Conduct a detailed inventory of the pedestrian network, including the location and condition of sidewalks, crosswalks, and curb cuts.
- Establish a sidewalk improvement program that identifies priority improvement areas and funding sources, and considers other improvements related to land use, streets, bike paths, parks and recreation, education, and other services and amenities.
- Assess the need for upgrades to signage and technologies to assist pedestrians in crossing public streets.
- Continue to explore funding sources for the improvement and expansion of the sidewalk network.
- Work closely with residents, neighborhood organizations, and businesses to improve sidewalks in localized areas.

CITY OF FLINT
2012 PASER Ratings

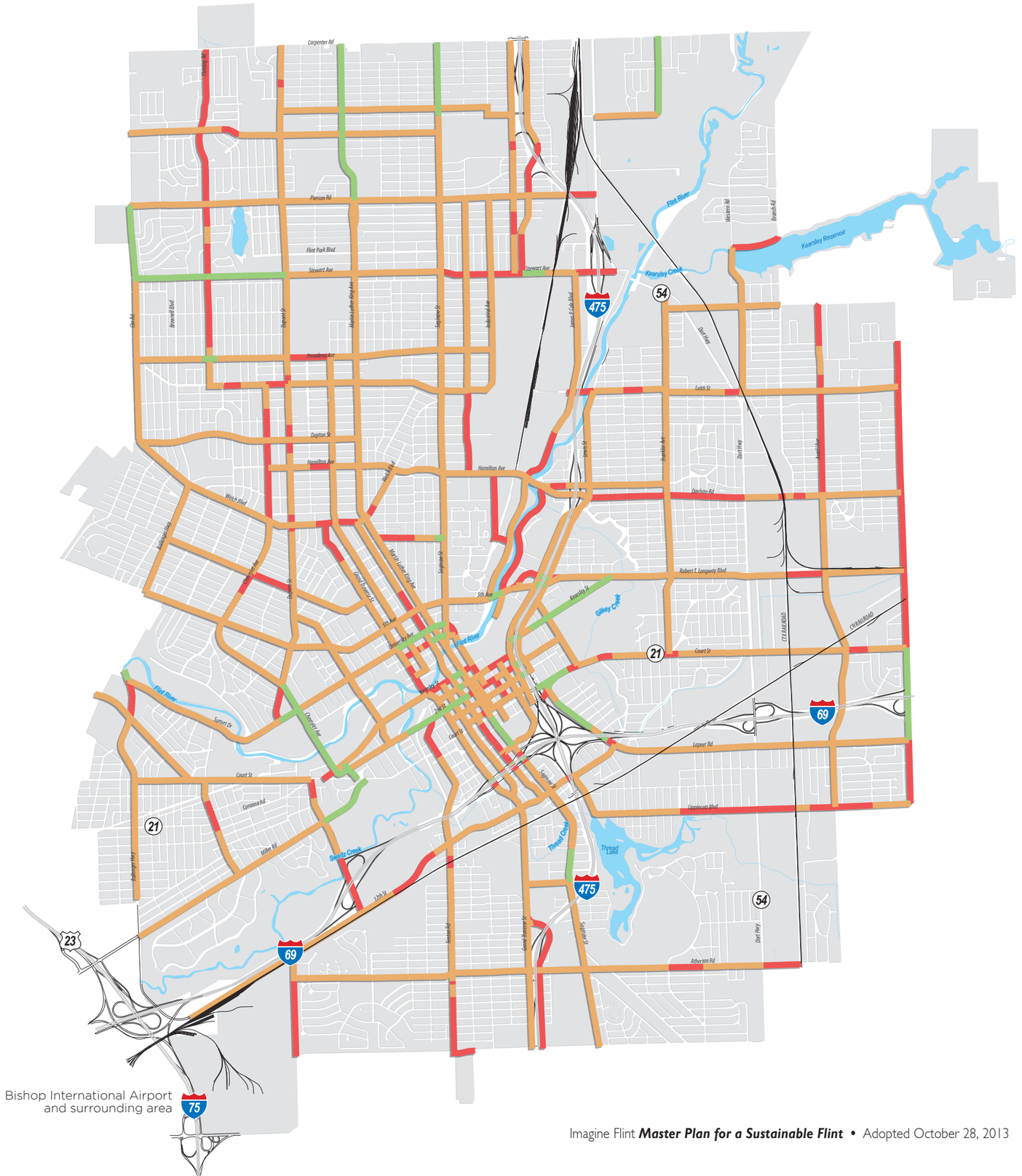
Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) is a rating system designed to assess the quality of roadway segments. Developed by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Transportation Information Center, the rating system evaluates roadway conditions on a scale of 1-10. The system is useful for setting priorities for infrastructure maintenance projects, and selecting alternative roadway treatments.

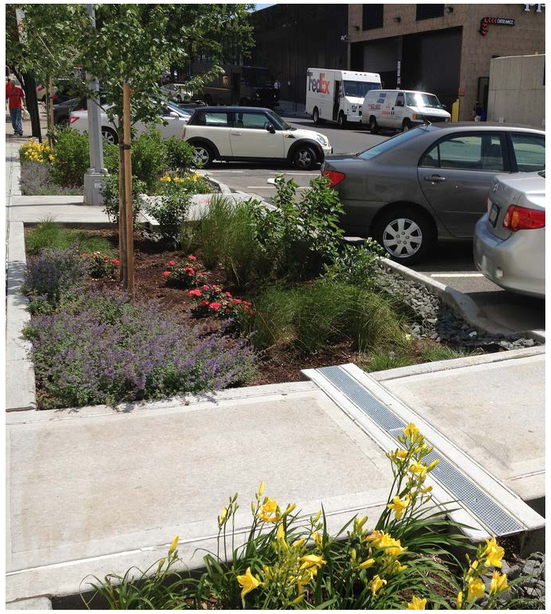
PASER Ratings Legend

Rating 8-10: *35 lane miles of roadway are in "good" condition, requiring routine maintenance.*

Rating 4-7: *309 lane miles of roadway are in "fair" condition, requiring capital preventative maintenance.*

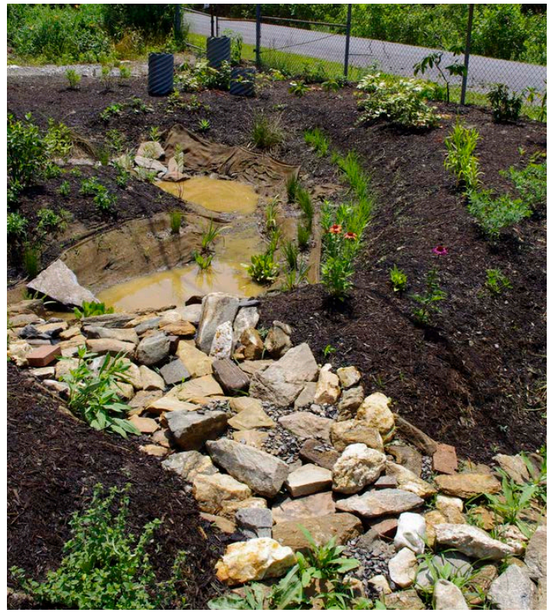
Rating 1-4: *78 lane miles of roadway are in "poor" condition, requiring structural improvements.*





Bioswales as stormwater management in parking areas and curbside landscaping (source: Chris Hamby)

Permeable pavers to minimize stromwater runoff in parking areas, plazas, and streets (source: Gulf Coast Pavers, Inc.)



Raingardens to retain and filter water on-site and recharge groundwater reserves (source: Nine Pennies)

STORMWATER UTILITY

The City faces several financial and engineering challenges related to the maintenance of infrastructure that serves a decreased population from when it was built. The City seeing stormwater infrastructure improvements and maintenance. Several other Michigan communities, including Ann Arbor, Adrian, and New Baltimore. This would allow the City to allocate resources to other systems, while working closely with the Utility to ensure that stormwater infrastructure improvements are made in accordance with land use and development policies.

Bike Trails

The City currently has a layered system of regional and local bike trails. (***Chapter 6: Transportation and Mobility*** offers a more thorough inventory of Flint's trail network and proposed recommendations.) The Flint River Trail is the backbone of the system, extending 12.4 miles through the heart of the community, and providing access to the City's most important natural element. The 2007 Genesee County Regional Trail Plan highlights proposed improvements to the trail system. These recommendations should serve as the vision for future investment in trail maintenance and expansion.

The City should implement the following actions in order to create a more comprehensive system of bike trails in Flint:

- Work closely with Genesee County to implement the recommendations in the Transportation and Mobility Plan and Genesee County Regional Trail Plan.
- Ensure that the locations of, and connections to bike trails enhance access to open spaces, natural areas, and important destinations throughout the City.
- Prioritize bike path improvements based on their ability to reduce automobile use, provide active recreation, and enhance access to jobs, education, and other quality of life factors.
- Improve the mobility of Flint's youth.

Street Lighting

Street lights are currently owned and maintained by Consumer's Energy. The City is assessing the viability and cost savings of converting the system to energy-efficient LED fixtures. It is anticipated that this would result in an annual energy savings of approximately $1.5 million, and would offset installation costs in just over three years. The City should continue to assess the viability of this approach, and work closely with Consumer's Energy to procure funding for installation and long-term maintenance of the system.

Green Transportation Infrastructure

In addition to the maintenance of traditional transportation infrastructure, the City should support the use of alternative transportation through investment in green transportation infrastructure. Some components of a green transportation infrastructure network include:

- Electric car charging stations
- Green Highways that use permeable surfaces, recycled construction materials, and native plant species to retain pollutants from seeping into watersheds
- Pedestrian bridges that enhance connectivity and remove barriers to walking and biking
- Transportation projects that use recycled building materials
- Greenways that offer multi-modal connections between different parts of the City and foster wildlife migration

Sanitary Sewer System

The Utility Division manages 569 miles of sanitary sewers throughout the City. The system includes gravity sewers and force mains ranging from 8" to 72" in diameter, 11 pump stations, a 10 million gallon (MG) storage tunnel, a 10 MG Retention Treatment Basin (RTB), and a 50 million gallon per day (MGD) wastewater treatment plant known as the Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF). The WPCF has a peak facility of 80 MGD and uses chlorination and dechlorination to disinfect sewage and discharge it into the Flint River.

A 2011 Sewer System Evaluation Study (SSES) concluded that 93 manholes would be submerged during significant rain events, and that sewage flow was disrupted by 80-90% in some areas by compromised joint integrity or root intrusion. The City should implement the following actions to improve the sanitary sewer system in response to the SSES findings and recommendations:

- Continue the on-going monitoring of the condition of all components of the sanitary sewer system.
- Establish a regular annual maintenance program that keeps pace with the anticipated lifespan of sanitary sewer components.
- Establish a short-term capital program to implement the recommendations of the SSES, including the replacement of manhole lids and lining of manholes at 93 locations, or the construction of a 2 MG retention treatment basin at the Chevy in the Hole site.
- Identify regular capital improvement funding and other funding sources to assist with scheduled or emerging issues.
- Coordinate sanitary sewer upgrades with other infrastructure improvement projects.

Additionally, the City should encourage the on-site separation of reusable gray water from sewage water that requires treatment. This would reduce the total amount of demand on the sewer system and provide opportunities for gray water reuse.

Storm Sewer System

The Utility Division operates and maintains 350 miles of storm sewers. The storm sewer is separate from the sanitary sewer, though heavy rain events can create overflow into the City's sanitary sewer system. There is little information regarding the age or condition of the storm sewer system, though it can be assumed it was installed at a time similar to the sanitary sewer system. The City should implement the following actions to improve the storm sewer system:

- Conduct a thorough and comprehensive survey of the age, condition, and performance of the storm sewer system that identifies shortcomings in capacity, danger points related to deteriorated infrastructure, or impediments to efficient performance such as root balls, blockages, or other factors. Establish a long-term maintenance and improvement program that addresses the needs identified in the comprehensive survey.
- Minimize the amount of storm water entering the system, especially during significant rain events, through on-site detention and filtration techniques, including detention and retention basins, rain gardens, residential rain barrels, permeable pavers, green roofs, and green infrastructure.
- Utilize vacant land in neighborhoods, commercial districts, and industrial areas for the creation of shared detention facilities that divert water away from the storm sewer system.

Source: Flint River Watershed Coalition

Water

This section includes recommendations related to the treatment and distribution of water, collection and discharge of stormwater and sewer water, and management of the Flint River. (A more detailed approach to the preservation of the Flint River as an environmental asset is discussed in ***Chapter 7: Environmental Features, Open Space, and Parks Plan.***

Flint River Dams

The City of Flint owns and operates six dams along the Flint River and its tributaries. Changes and improvements to the dam network should consider a number of factors, including the condition, functionality, intended benefits, recreational opportunities, and environmental impacts. Recommendations include:

- ***Hamilton Dam Removal.*** The Hamilton Dam is in severe need of repair with several areas of missing concrete and exposed inner rebar, and three of the six floodgates have been decommissioned. Due to its condition, the Hamilton Dam is classified as a High Hazard Critical Dam by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, meaning if dam failure were to occur, a potentially dangerous situation could ensue for those within the immediate area. The Hamilton Dam has also been classified by the Department of Environmental Quality as "unsatisfactory" and needing immediate emergency remedial action. As such, the Hamilton Dam is currently unsafe for use by pedestrians as a river crossing. The City should take steps to implement the recommendations of the Flint Riverfront Restoration Plan which call for the removal of the dam and installation of a series of cascading rock formations. This would enhance fish passage along the river and eliminate the burden of dam maintenance.
- ***Fabri Dam Reconstruction.*** The Fabri Dam was built in 1979, and is located downstream from the Hamilton Dam. Removal of the dam would enhance fish passage and river navigability. The City should take steps to implement the recommendations of the 2008 Fabri Dam Conceptual Design Report, and transform the dam into a whitewater run that would enhance the aesthetics of the Flint River and provide a unique recreational amenity in the City.
- ***Utah Dam Removal.*** The Utah Dam sits north of Downtown between Leith Street and North Dort Highway. The dam was built in 1928 and was installed to prevent industrial oil discharges from entering drinking water intakes. The gates are permanently open, and the dam no longer serves a functional purpose. The City should implement the recommendations of a Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) assessment to remove the dam.
- ***Holloway Dam Assessment.*** Holloway Dam is located approximately 12 miles northeast of Downtown Flint on the Upper Flint River. It was built in 1953 and currently serves as an emergency back-up water supply. As the City transitions to water supplied by the Karegnondi Water Authority, the City should assess the need for emergency back-up water from Holloway Reservoir, and minimize the use of the dam in order to reduce the burden of maintenance.
- ***Kearsley Dam Maintenance.*** The Kearsley Dam is located at the mouth of the Kearsley Reservoir east of Flint. The dam is used for recreation and occasional flow augmentation. The City should continue regular maintenance of the dam.
- ***Thread Dam Fish Passage.*** Thread Dam is currently used for recreation at Thread Lake. The City maintains and operates the dam, and should consider installing a fish passage to enhance its environmental benefits.

Dam Locations

1. Hamilton Dam Removal
2. Fabri Dam Reconstruction
3. Utah Dam Removal
4. Holloway Dam Assessment
5. Kearsley Dam Maintenance
6. Thread Dam Fish Passage

Potable Water

The Utility Division currently manages the maintenance of the water distribution and collection systems, including approximately 600 miles of water main, through the Water Service Center. The City of Flint currently purchases water from the City of Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD). Flint's waterworks system has a design capacity of 36 million gallons per day (MGD). As a back-up, the City of Flint maintains a water treatment plant that draws water from the Flint River, and has a capacity of 36 MGD. In 2006, improvements were made that were mandated by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). However, additional upgrades will be required as part of a new agreement to receive water from the Karegnondi Water Authority.

As part of its mission to reduce the cost of water and efficiency of the distribution system, the City should explore opportunities to provide raw water to industrial uses that do not require fully treated water. This will reduce the cost of water to these users, and therefore operating expenses, as well as the demand on local water treatment facilities.

Water Storage

An assessment conducted by the MDEQ found that Flint's water storage system is adequate in terms of storage, but many aspects of the system are at the end of their useful life, and will require repair or replacement. Components of the water storage system include:

- Dort Reservoir, a 20 million gallon (MG) ground storage facility built in 1966 and is used primarily for emergency water storage and drinking water during peak periods.
- Water Treatment Plant (WTP) elevated tank, with a 2 MG capacity for emergency water capacity and pressure buffering.
- WTP ground storage facility with a capacity of 3 MG used for emergency and peak demand.
- Cedar Street Reservoir, a 20 MG ground storage facility used for emergency and peak demand.
- West Side Reservoir, a 12 MG ground storage facility used for emergency and peak demand.

The City should establish a long-term capital improvement plan for the water storage system, highlighting priority improvements, potential funding sources, and long-term budgeting of maintenance and expansion.

Karegnondi Water Authority

The Karegnondi Water Authority (KWA) was incorporated in 2012 to provide water to the region of the state commonly known as the I-69 Corridor. In order to implement service from the KWA, the Authority is preparing to build a pipeline to Flint. Flint's contribution to the pipeline construction is anticipated to be approximately $81 million, but the cost savings of discontinuing service from the City of Detroit should net benefits in the long-term. In preparation for the construction of the pipeline, the City should assess the capacity requirements of back-up supplies and tailor facilities and infrastructure as needed in order to maximize the efficiency of the storage and distribution system and relieve maintenance costs to the greatest extent possible.

Water Distribution

Flint's conveyance system includes water mains that range from 4" to 72" in diameter. Much of the piping in the system is over 70 years old, and a significant amount of the 48" mains are prone to breaks and unable to provide modern pressures and fire flows. According to a 2011 Water Reliability Study, the distribution and transmission system is "old and in serious need of replacement."

The City has since commissioned a six-year Capital Improvement Program that addresses below-ground infrastructure issues and establishes a 20-year improvement strategy. It is recommended that the City prioritize the implementation of the Capital Improvement Program and continue to closely monitor the condition of the water distribution system.

The distribution system includes over 7,200 valves. The City currently maintains valves as needed, but is transitioning to a preventative maintenance and replacement program that would require $500,000 annually according to the Water Reliability Study.

Also, there are currently 3905 hydrants in the water distribution system, many of which are more than 50 years old. In 2012, the City purchased 80 new hydrants and began a replacement program. Over the next 20 years, the City plans to assess, and regularly replace hydrants that are 25 years of age or older. The Water Reliability Study recommended that $500,000 be set aside annually for valve replacement and maintenance, and $250,000 be set aside annually for hydrant replacement and maintenance. The City should prioritize this funding in its Capital Improvement Program, and continue to explore outside funding sources to assist with the cost of maintenance and replacement.

Water System Efficiency

According to the Water Reliability Study, the City's water system is operating at approximately 68% efficiency, far below the typical 85-90% efficiency for other utilities. Reasons for the high-level of inefficiency include water withdrawn from fire hydrants, leaks and water main breaks, faulty or inaccurate meters, unauthorized connections, and unmetered municipal water use. Increasing the efficiency rate to 85% could result in savings up to $2 million annually.

The City should implement the following actions in order to create a more efficient water system:

- Complete a detailed "leak audit" of the City's water distribution system to determine where leaks are occurring, potential measures to mitigate the leaks, and costs associated with those measures.
- Prioritize the recommendations of the leak audit in the City's Capital Improvement Program.
- Implement an education and outreach campaign demonstrating to businesses and residents the need to reduce water usage and ways to do so through low-cost or no-cost changes in behavior and demand.
- Identify opportunities to incrementally discontinue water services in specific areas as they transition to less intense development or green space in accordance with the Land Use Plan.

Long-term Maintenance

The Water Reliability Study calls for the replacement of over 11 miles of major transmission water main, over one mile of minor transmission water main, and the replacement of 3,000 meters each year. This is in addition to the investment recommended for valve and hydrant replacement or maintenance described previously. The City should prioritize these improvements in its Capital Improvement Program, and consider their impacts on economic development, blight removal, reliability, coordinated infrastructure upgrades, and other broader goals when establishing the phasing of water system improvements.

Private Utilities

While the City of Flint is responsible for many public utilities and services, private utility companies play an important role in providing power and data technology infrastructure. The City does not specifically regulate or control these utility services. However, it should consider Consumers Energy, Exelon, Comcast, AT&T, Exede, and other power and telecommunications providers partners in providing Flint residents and businesses with high-quality services, including emerging services and technologies that will make Flint more competitive for economic and industrial development. The following are actions the City should implement in order to support the services of private utility companies:

- Enter into Municipal Franchise Agreements with private utility providers in order to ensure long-term use of the City's rights-of-way and comprehensive service provisions to all Flint residents.
- Consider ways to efficiently utilize City infrastructure to accommodate private systems (i.e. fiber optic data lines running through sewer mains).
- Coordinate infrastructure improvements to reduce the installation costs of utility upgrades.
- Advocate for quality services to all areas of Flint regardless of localized socioeconomic characteristics.
- Maintain a clearinghouse of private utility providers for residents to understand options related to desired services and costs.
- Assess the feasibility of free public Wi-Fi in Downtown Flint and other active commercial or residential areas.
- Advocate for infrastructure upgrades in priority economic development areas as a way of attracting business investment.
- Maintain publicly available information comparing local utility providers to peers in other communities in order to demonstrate their relative performance in terms of quality and cost.

WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

In March 2013, the City of Flint outsourced municipal trash collection by entering into a multi-year contract with Republic Services, Inc. The City also sold its fleet of 20 garbage trucks to Republic for $1.5 million. This agreement will save an estimated $1 million annually.

Currently, Genesee County's municipalities and townships use a variety of public and private waste management providers (including Republic), creating inefficiencies and redundancy. To generate cost savings, the City should work with the County to explore the potential development of a unified Waste Management Authority. Such an authority would be a regional partnership that collectively develops or bids for one garbage provider. An authority's centralization of services and increased service volume can lead to lower costs, better recycling options, and more effective waste management for Flint.

Other regions across the nation have successfully executed similar models, including those of Saginaw, MI, Sacramento, CA, and Portland, OR.

In the past, the City has not been an active partner in the development and implementation of the state required County Solid Waste Management Plan, which regulates the collection, transportation, delivery, and disposal of solid waste in Genesee County. To lay the foundation for the creation of a potential Waste Management Authority, the City must become more involved in the development and implementation of the Solid Waste Management Plan and demonstrate a more collaborative spirit with the County.

Recycling Services

In April 2013, as a result of a new contract with Republic Services, Inc., Flint residents were once again provided curbside recycling. A similar City managed recycling program was terminated in 2001 due to budget cuts. While this new service is showing promise, participation rates remain low, leading to high-fixed costs.

The City and key environmental partners should work with Republic to increase resident buy-in and awareness of recycling opportunities. The City should also work to expand recycling to include all multi-family housing. By increasing the number of tons recycled annually, the City can be a responsible steward of the environment and reduce costs.

EFFICIENT CITY GOVERNANCE

The Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan identifies a wide range of infrastructure and capital improvement projects. Successful implementation of these projects will require a fiscally sound and strategic approach to city governance. The Master Plan is the first step in this direction. It is a model of transparency, the foundation for future community engagement, and the beginning of long-term strategy and planning in City Hall.

Multi-Year Budgeting

Under emergency management, the City has begun to practice multi-year budgeting and forecasting. This approach to budgeting should continue as it will enable the City to properly plan for large projects that can take more than a single fiscal term to complete and will provide a blueprint beyond immediate needs. In planning for the long-term health of the City's infrastructure, it will be important to have a firm understanding of anticipated revenues and what funds will be required to close the gap between need and financial capacity.

The City should implement a two-year budgeting process based on five-year financial projections and a five-year strategic plan. This strategic plan should be based on Master Plan recommendations, and should be made readily available to the public for review along with all financial information, to ensure the transparent use of funds.

Additional discussion regarding the use of the Master Plan to inform budgeting and other aspects of City governance is located in the concluding chapter, ***Chapter 12: Moving Forward.***

8 INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY FACILITIES IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents the strategies needed to implement the goals and objectives of the Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan. Taken together, the objectives and strategies included in this section provide specific direction and serve as a guide for the evaluation of development proposals and land use alternatives.

To provide the City with a reliable policy guide for decision-making, the objectives and strategies are based significantly on community input received through the master planning process. In addition to broad community input, these objectives and strategies are based on input from the 10-member Infrastructure and Community Facilities Advisory Group, Steering Committee, City officials, City staff, and observations and assessment from the Imagine Flint Project Team.

Implementation Matrix

The following Implementation Matrix groups strategies by topic within each objective and identifies anticipated time frame, relative cost, and the entities, including City of Flint departments and partner organizations, potentially responsible for the implementation. The matrix also identifies key metrics needed to track implementation progress.

Time Frame

A general timeframe is assigned to each strategy, considering the cost of various types of improvements and their ability to set other actions in motion. Generally, low-cost strategies with easy implementation are given the short-term time frame, though some other actions are given this designation based on their high-level of priority in meeting community objectives or ensuring the safety of residents.

Each strategy in the Implementation Matrix is indicated with one of the following:

- ***Short:*** low-cost, ease of implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years
- ***Medium:*** important actions that have some level of significant cost, and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years
- ***Long:*** actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time, or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation

Public Cost Estimate

Public cost estimate is represented by a scale ranging from $ to $$$. The costs in this column refer only to public costs. Below is a description of the cost scale:

- **$**: Actions that require primarily internal staff time requiring mostly regulatory changes, policy updates, or strategic partnerships with limited outside funding required
- **$$**: Actions that require outside consulting services assistance or relatively minor investment in infrastructure or project development
- **$$$**: Actions that require intensive planning, engineering, or design, and significant investment in infrastructure or project development

Responsible Entities & Partner Organizations

City government alone is not capable of implementing the Master Plan. This is a community vision which relies upon Flint's greatest assets, its people and community stakeholders to help implement desired aspirations.

With regard to citing those entities responsible for implementation, it should be noted that it is anticipated, from a policy standpoint, that the Mayor and City Council will be involved in the majority of these actions.

Where a City Department should be involved, that department has been listed. Where general administrative leadership is needed, the City of Flint has been listed. Strategies, such as recommended technical studies and analyses that would likely benefit from outside expertise, have also been highlighted.

Unforeseen Partnership Opportunities

Every effort was made to identify a comprehensive list of potential partner organizations for inclusion in the implementation matrix. As a community of over 100,000 with a rich history of volunteerism and over 100 foundations active in Genesee County, there may be instances where a deserving organization that is well-matched to one of the plan objectives or strategies, has been excluded from a list of potential partners for a given topic.

Similarly, there may come a time when a partner organization identified in the implementation table merges with another organization or otherwise ceases to exist. As with the rest of the Master Plan, the implementation table is a flexible document that should be regularly updated and revised to reflect the evolving needs and assets of the Flint community.

Progress Indicator

Key progress indicators have been provided for each strategy grouping. Progress indicators identify quantifiable metrics for which data should be available on a regular basis, and indicate desired trends for each metric. These indicators represent measurable achievements that move the City toward realization of Master Plan objectives. These progress indicators will enable the City to monitor its effectiveness at implementing plan recommendations.

INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY FACILITIES IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 1	**Repair and right-size key neighborhood infrastructure to increase resident safety, quality of life, and efficiency.**				
Access & Infrastructure	Evaluate existing traffic patterns and densities on City streets to implement "road diets," or the narrowing of less traveled streets to reduce maintenance costs, increase visual appeal, and promote walkability.	Long	$$$	• City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT	• Decrease in the number of lane miles of roadway • Increase in number of miles of sidewalks improved or installed • Increase in number of ADA-compliant crosswalks
	Partner with neighborhood groups to identify sidewalks in need of repair or replacement and develop a streamlined system of prioritization and implementation.	Medium	$$		
	Construct new and repair existing crosswalks in key areas to promote walkability and safe passage.	Medium	$$		
Neighborhood Facilities	Re-evaluate existing community centers and City park structures to ensure prioritization based on proximity to residents, overall demand, and location relative to other parks.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Parks and Recreation • Flint Community Schools	• Increase in investment per capita in community centers and park structures relative to the population within a given service area • Increase in square footage of former school structures re-purposed for active uses
	Increase structural quality of neighborhood service centers (formerly police mini-stations).	Medium	$$		
	Partner with the Flint Community School District to market and repurpose vacant school sites for uses consistent with the Land Use Plan.	Medium	$$		
Objective 2	**Ensure longevity, reliability, and efficiency of City utilities.**				
Long-term Planning	Modify infrastructure, design standards and landscaping palettes to reflect anticipated changes in climate.	Short	$	• City of Flint Utility Division • City of Flint Parks and Recreation	• Decrease in the ratio of linear feet of active infrastructure to the population of Flint • Linear feet of utility lines or facilities analyzed, inspected, and recorded within the past 12 months
	Continue proactive development and execution of long-term infrastructure goals, capital improvement plans, and budgeting strategies.	Short	$		
	Coordinate gradual implementation of green spaces and lower density neighborhoods with the City utilities department in order to reduce fixed infrastructure costs and "right size" water and sewage piping.	Medium	$$		
	Leverage latest computer technologies to map all utilities and public services and make information readily accessible in a central database to City departments and key stakeholders for informed decision-making.	Short	$$		
Service Coordination & Infrastructure Planning	Work with Consumers Energy to assess existing lighting footprint and reorient light placement to meet current and expected future needs.	Medium	$	• City of Flint Utility Division • Private Utility Companies • Karagnondi Water Authority (KWA)	• Decrease in the cost per unit for the delivery of energy, water, and other utilities • Increase in the amount of permeable surface throughout the City • Decrease in the number of reported incidents of utility breaches caused by demolition or excavation
	Explore the viability of local energy or hot water districts that provide efficiencies to users and integrate green technologies for the creation and distribution of resources and services.	Medium	$		
	Implement new policies, in concert with the state, to diversify opportunities for managing rainwater.	Short	$		
	Continue development of the KWA pipeline and make necessary upgrades in water infrastructure -- such as water treatment, pumping, and transmission piping -- to maximize benefits of the new partnership and ensure adequate water access for residents.	Medium	$$$		
	Evaluate options from KWA development for moving towards a coordinated regional water distribution network.	Long	$$$		
	Strengthen coordination between demolition entities and City utilities, gas, and power companies.	Short	$		
	Establish a Solid Waste Authority with Genesee County as a way to reduce garbage costs.	Long	$$		
	Coordinate with neighboring communities, Genesee County, and service providers to explore new infrastructure opportunities.	Short	$		
Preventative Maintenance	Develop a comprehensive plan to address the City's six failing and/or obsolete dams along the Flint River.	Short	$$$	• City of Flint Utility Division	• Decrease on the linear footage of dams designated as hazardous • Decrease in the percentage of manholes impacted by inflow and infiltration • Increase in the total acreage of private properties that utilize innovative stormwater management techniques
	Implement corrective actions for the City's sewer system -- as prescribed in the December 2011 Sewer System Evaluation Study, funded by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality – and continue planned repairs and upgrades over time.	Medium	$$$		
	Identify and implement techniques to divert some portion of rainwater from City infrastructure, such as rain barrels, on-site detention, permeable surfaces, etc.	Medium	$$		
Objective 3	**Modernize City and community facilities.**				
Maintenance & Reuse	Coordinate all upgrades and repairs of City facilities such as City Hall, the Police Department, and the Fire Department with detailed priorities outlined in the Capital Improvement Plan.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Utility Division • Police Department • Fire Department	• Decrease in energy and water usage for publically-owned facilities and properties • Decrease in the total number of days public facilities remain vacant or inactive
	Develop a City property disposition procedure to ensure the sale of unused City properties to responsible partners with a priority given to buyers and projects with a demonstrated public benefit.	Short	$		
	Recognize the public library as a key community asset and work with a wide range of partners to ensure its long-range sustainability.	Medium	$$		
Modernization & Performance	Embrace best practices in school design and the learning environment shown to increase academic capabilities of students.	Medium	$$$	• City of Flint Utility Division • Flint Community Schools • Local Non-profit organizations	• Increased investment in improved or expanded public facilities • Increase in the number of households or square feet of businesses with access to free wi-fi • Increased square feet of public buildings and properties that attain LEED Silver certification or better • Increase in ADA-compliant community facilities
	Partner with the county and key local stakeholders to fund the re-opening, repair, or expansion of select community centers, City pools, and recreational facilities, as necessary.	Medium	$$$		
	Work to develop free wireless internet accessibility in key community areas.	Medium	$$		
	Implement green building techniques in public facilities in order to minimize reliance on infrastructure and respond to long-term climate change.	Medium	$$$		
	Development and implement an ADA Transition Plan for community facilities and infrastructure.	Medium	$$$		

INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY FACILITIES IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 4	**Leverage green technology to reduce energy costs, improve air quality, and increase long-term sustainability.**				
Supporting Systems & Programs	Transition street lights from high-pressure sodium or mercury vapor bulbs to LEDs and utilize off-grid, solar power for generation in extremely low-density/high-vacancy areas.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Utility Department • City of Flint Transportation Division • MTA • Private Utility Companies	• Decrease in the percentage of purchased power used to service municipal facilities and infrastructure • Increase in the percentage of households and businesses that have access to curbside recycling programs • Increased percentage of MTA and City vehicles that use clean burning fuels or electric power • Increased energy and water savings of improvements made to public facilities
	Expand participation in recycling and composting programs to reduce waste and strain on City garbage services.	Medium	$$		
	Increase awareness of water-conservation options in both City facilities and in the home.	Short	$		
	Work with MTA to expand their bus fleet using alternative energies.	Medium	$$		
	Partner with energy companies and local stakeholders to develop new creative financing opportunities for implementing green technologies that have high up-front costs but pay back savings over time.	Short	$		
Development Practices	Retrofit City and institutional properties, and use the latest in on-site energy generation such as geothermal, solar, and/or wind to reduce City energy costs.	Long	$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Local Colleges & Non-profit Organizations • City of Flint Utility Department	• Decrease in the percentage of purchased power used to service municipal and institutional facilities and infrastructure • Increase in the total square footage of white or green roofs
	Provide a toolbox for residents and business owners highlighting techniques for on-site stormwater management, energy reduction, reduced water usage, green building techniques, etc.	Short	$		
	Promote white topping of roofs & development of rooftop gardens.	Medium	$$		
	Encourage green site selection, site development, and building practices, as defined in the Land Use Plan.	Short	$$		
Objective 5	**Expand opportunities for blue infrastructure development.**				
Water Management	Utilize open spaces and surplus land, as defined in the Land Use Plan, for targeted absorption of rainwater to lessen stress on City sewers.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Utility Department • Karagnondi Water Authority (KWA)	• Per capita increase in the amount of stormwater collected and managed on-site
	Capture and clean stormwater.	Medium	$$		
	Leverage creation of KWA pipeline to develop innovative blue infrastructure spin-offs and economic development opportunities.	Medium	$$$		
Objective 6	**Develop and execute a coordinated City network of street trees.**				
Urban Tree Canopy	Establish a list of appropriate plant materials that are resilient to anticipated climate change, and reference the plant list in public works standards and zoning regulations.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • City of Flint Transportation Division • MDOT	• Increased number of climate-adaptive trees and landscape installations planted annually • Increased number of trees planted annually within 100' of highways and railroads • Increase in the number of trees and amount of landscape area in the public realm along arterials and collectors
	Implement carbon forest infrastructure around highways and railroads to minimize neighborhood air pollution and noise.	Medium	$$		
	Plant trees along main corridors to increase visual appeal, reduce pollution, mitigate storm water runoff, and counter blight.	Long	$$		
Objective 7	**Provide municipal services consistent with the Master Plan.**				
Coordination & Collaboration	Respond to place-specific needs based on the Future Land Use Plan.	Medium	$$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • City of Flint Utility Department • Local Non-profit organizations	• Increase in the number of "hits" for on-line or printed information regarding the performance of City services • Decrease in the total cost of providing a continued level of services through consolidation or cooperation
	Improve citizen access to performance information and complaint resolution related to City services.	Medium	$		
	Simplify the City's departmental structure around Finances, Infrastructure, Planning and Development, and Public Safety.	Short	$$		
	Identify and examine opportunities for shared services.	Medium	$$		

INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY FACILITIES IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 8	Work with residents, businesses and other stakeholders to foster development of the City and its infrastructure in a manner consistent with the Master Plan.				
Organization & Information	Provide Flint residents and community volunteers with information and training that enables the capacity to create change in neighborhoods.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Local Non-profit organizations	• Increase in the number of trained neighborhood liaisons
	Establish a City of Flint Planning and Development Department responsible for leading and sustaining long-term planning, blight elimination, building safety, permitting/licensing and community/economic development.	Medium	$$		
Objective 9	Operate in an open and financially stable manner, including improving citizen access, focusing on measurable results, improving the City's financial position, and eliminating accumulated deficits.				
Responsibilities & Accountability	Establish a revenue estimating process that assures integrity in the budgeting process.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • City of Flint Utility Division	• Decrease in annual discrepancy between budgeted and actual costs for various services or projects • Increase in the City's municipal bond rating
	Update and expand the City's financial information available online for public review.	Short	$		
	Establish a 2-Year Budget along with a 5-Year Financial projection and a 5-Year Strategic Plan.	Short	$		
	Review the City's Public Improvement Fund capacity for general infrastructure improvements, deficit elimination and bond financing.	Short	$		
	Support State Law changes to municipal financing in order to close the gap in the trajectories of future State revenue and local government revenue projections, including the option for an increase in the local income tax.	Short	$		

MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT

9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION PLAN

VISION P. 195

GOAL & OBJECTIVES P. 197

RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES P. 199

IMPLEMENTATION P. 227

9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION PLAN
VISION, GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Imagine

Flint as a dynamic college town, a center of innovation and entrepreneurship, a top destination for medical sector companies, an international hub for trade and transportation, and a community where residents of all backgrounds share equally in Flint's economic rebirth.

Imagine an entrepreneurial youth population, equipped for success through a robust education system and an extensive network of local businesses and institutions providing summer internships, mentorships, and apprenticeships.

Imagine a thriving small business scene, where aspiring business owners are empowered to open shops in neighborhoods across the City.

Imagine transforming our current liability of vacant land into new green spaces for economic growth, creating jobs for residents in alternative energy, local food production, or "green initiatives" fields.

Over the next twenty years, Flint can achieve this vision. However, we must first face existing realities: Flint has been overly reliant on manufacturing, youth are not adequately prepared for college and the workforce, new business ventures encounter unnecessary hurdles, and certain neighborhoods face severe disinvestment.

The "Economic Development & Education Plan" is a road map to overcoming those obstacles and to actualizing a new community vision. By following the recommendations outlined in this chapter, we can build a diverse economy that spurs innovation and small business development along with an education system that prepares our workforce for jobs paying a livable wage.

SOCIAL EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY

Moving forward, Flint's economic growth must be equitable to ensure that all residents have access to good jobs and quality public schools. Diversifying the economy and promoting the creation of green jobs will also strengthen Flint's long-term sustainability.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Economic vitality and a quality education system enhance the quality of life for all residents. These two significant aspects of a community help limit unemployment, increase tax revenues, strengthen core services, enhance citizen engagement, and facilitate further investment.

YOUTH

Youth are Flint's future. Having a population that remains in the community after graduation or returns to raise their families is an important barometer of a Flint's success. Therefore, it is extremely important that childhood poverty is reduced and our youth receive quality education. They must also be presented with opportunities to participate in skill-building programs and activities, obtain internships, and secure employment that offers upward mobility.

RESHAPING THE ECONOMY

Economic development initiatives and education are at the center of reshaping the City's economy. The Flint economy is evolving from being auto-centric to one that is multifaceted and includes education, healthcare, manufacturing, intermodal transportation and distribution, and other evolving industries.

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Flint recognizes that it cannot rely on one industry alone. More than just adapting to change, however, we must drive change by constantly re-inventing ourselves and staying on the cutting edge of new technologies and industries in ways that benefit current and future residents.

CIVIC LIFE

Robust economic growth and a better education system create a more engaged, informed populace. Higher wages translate into increased tax revenues for city services while a quality school system helps mold young community leaders and volunteers. Citizen engagement promotes transparency and communication, creating a robust economic development process.

GOAL:

The City of Flint will have a growing and diverse economy that spurs innovation and small business development along with an education system that prepares our workforce for jobs paying a livable wage.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The ways in which the Goal & Objectives of the Economic Development & Education Plan have been influenced by the guiding principles are indicated using the following symbols.

- ***Social Equity & Sustainability***
- ***Reshaping the Economy***
- ***Quality of Life***
- ***Adapting to Change***
- ***Youth***
- ***Civic Life***

Objective #1

Strengthen educational attainment of youth.

Human development is economic development. By reducing youth poverty, providing robust educational offerings, and empowering all youth to achieve professional success, Flint can realize immense social, civic, and economic benefits.

Objective #2

By 2020, reduce the number of Flint residents with low, basic skills to 25%, the nationwide average.

In the City of Flint, 51% of individuals aged 18-64 need improved basic skills. Increasing the credentials and skills of Flint's adult workforce is central to reshaping the economy and reducing economic disparities. A more educated adult populace translates into higher wages, increased tax revenues, and a more dynamic civic life.

Objective #3

Increase access to employment opportunities.

Flint must reduce barriers preventing low-income individuals and marginalized groups from entering the workforce. By increasing access to jobs through affordable childcare and better public transportation, and limiting the effects of implicit bias, we can ensure economic growth is equitable and that quality of life is improved for all.

Objective #4

Ensure viable business ventures have access to capital and coaching, especially historically underrepresented groups.

Cultivating entrepreneurship among residents and matching capital to innovative new ideas will stimulate small business growth and ensure that Flint residents are the drivers of the Flint economy.

Objective #5

Reverse leakage in underserved neighborhoods.

Leakage occurs when consumers are forced to buy goods outside of their neighborhood due to the lack of retail options. The development of new retail in underserved neighborhoods keeps dollars local, reduces transportation and health costs by promoting walking and biking, and improves access to fresh foods.

Objective #6

Utilize business clusters to develop opportunities for small business ventures.

By leveraging the resources of and promoting cooperation between Flint's anchor institutions, we can develop new engines for local economic growth.

Objective #7
Reposition Flint's land, natural resources, and infrastructure for sustainable economic growth.

Flint's unique location, water pipeline, and multi-modal infrastructure will spark new industries and provide easy transportation of goods by land, rail, and air. New land use designations such as "Green Innovation" also provide a unique opportunity to create sustainable and renewable jobs for residents.

Objective #8
Diversify Flint's economic base.

Flint has relied on manufacturing alone for too long. To ensure consistent and sustainable growth, Flint must continue to diversify its economy to include a variety of industries that can employ a multitude of skillsets.

Objective #9
Highlight positive assets to change existing perceptions.

By proactivey showcasing our regional assets, low cost of living, and upward economic trajectory, Flint can capture new investment.

Objective #10
Foster reinvestment by strengthening the visual appeal of targeted areas.

Targeted investments in "placemaking" and improving the visual and physical character of neighborhoods will increase quality of life and catalyze further investment.

Objective #11
Encourage and incentivize residential growth within the City.

New residents—particularly young professionals, students, current commuters, and immigrants—will invigorate Flint's Downtown and neighborhoods and increase the tax base for city services.

Objective #12
Increase efficiency of City of Flint's business-related services.

The City of Flint must be an active partner with the business community in stimulating economic growth. Slow response times, red tape, and unclear procedures and protocol must be eliminated.

Objective #13
Utilize public programs and tools to assist Flint's businesses.

Locating, coordinating, and leveraging external financial resources such as grants, low-interest loans, and tax incentives will be key to creating new developments and businesses. These tools should be utilized to expand opportunities for under-repesented groups and under-served areas while further diversifying Flint's economy and keep it on the cutting edge.

9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION PLAN
RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES

After decades of decline and the difficulties of the recessions in the first decade of the 21st century, Flint's economy is showing signs of growth and change.

While known as a manufacturing center, Flint is establishing itself as a college town, a destination for medical sector companies, an intermodal and international hub for trade and transportation, and a center of innovation and entrepreneurship that echoes the early automotive years.

At the same time, Flint's current and future workforce is facing significant challenges with underachievement, illiteracy, and unemployment. Economic development and education will form the foundation of the future of Flint and there will need to be multi-sector alignment and substantial investments in people, places, and planning to achieve the City's economic development vision.

NEW & CHANGING ECONOMY

The City of Flint was built on the automotive industry. While the auto industry continues to play an important role in the economy, other sectors are evolving including life sciences, transportation, distribution/logistics, advanced manufacturing, and information technology. The emergence of these and other industries is needed to diversify the City's economy and create new opportunities for growth and employment.

In addition, the City must also recognize that the 21st century economy is unpredictable and in constant flux. To stay competitive moving forward, the City must continually and proactively reassess its economic development strategies and targeted sectors of investment to meet changing market needs.

Labor & Employment

Over the past 9 years, Flint lost 22,412 jobs (-37%). This translates into one-third of all primary employment. Flint still, however, employs one-third of all Genesee County workers. Employment loss within the City of Flint accounted for approximately 66% of total employment loss within Genesee County between 2002 and 2010. The proportion of jobs within Genesee County provided by employers in the City of Flint decreased by 19% over the same time period, but remains near 33%.

Employment by Industry

Genesee County has a service-based economy. While the Flint area has been synonymous with manufacturing since the 1950s, recent employment estimates underscore the fact that Genesee County's jobs are predominantly service-sector based. In 2012, the public and private sector businesses in Genesee County employed an estimated 136,000 people. Nearly three-quarters of those Genesee County jobs were in private service-providing industries. The County's 10,800 manufacturing jobs made up approximately 8% of 2012 employment.

Private service-providing jobs within Genesee County are concentrated in four industries:

- Trade, Transportation and Utilities (22%), including 20,500 Retail Trade jobs;
- Educational and Health Services (19%);
- Professional and Business Services (12%); and,
- Leisure and Hospitality (10%).

Genesee County's economy grew in 2012. Despite several consecutive years of employment loss, data for Genesee County indicates that the Flint area economy may be on an upswing. In 2012, average annual employment estimates increased by approximately 1,800 jobs from 2011. This represents a 1.3% increase in year-over-year employment among Genesee County employers.

Increases in employment have been concentrated in three sectors:

- Professional and Business Services (+1,200 jobs);
- Retail Trade (+800 jobs); and,
- Manufacturing – Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (+400 jobs).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

New & Changing Economy 199
Economic Development & Place Types 201
Building Off Success 203
Preparing the Workforce 205
Supporting Small Business 210
Reorienting Assets 214
Higher Education 222
Attracting New Residents 224

Employment Projections by Industry
GENESEE COUNTY (2012-2040)

			Change: 2012-2040	
Employment by Industry	***2012***	***2040***	***Number***	***Percent***
Total Private	165,975	214,543	48,568	29.3%
Total Government	23,461	25,931	2,470	10.5%
Total Employment	**189,436**	**240,474**	**51,038**	**26.9%**
Total Private	***165,975***	***214,543***	***48,568***	***29.3%***
Farm	1,041	718	-323	-31.0%
Forestry, Fishing, and Related Activities	293	380	87	29.7%
Mining	238	295	57	23.9%
Utilities	849	755	-94	-11.1%
Construction	8,374	10,231	1,857	22.2%
Manufacturing	12,265	4,949	-7,316	-59.6%
Wholesale Trade	6,409	5,949	-460	-7.2%
Retail Trade	24,433	32,335	7,902	32.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	3,861	4,683	822	21.3%
Information	4,216	5,547	1,331	31.6%
Finance and Insurance	9,043	10,006	963	10.6%
Real Estate, Rental, and Lease	7,391	9,741	2,350	31.8%
Professional and Technical Services	8,750	10,137	1,387	15.9%
Management and Enterprises	589	653	64	10.9%
Administrative and Waste Services	13,701	20,397	6,696	48.9%
Educational Services	5,181	7,737	2,556	49.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	28,741	48,147	19,406	67.5%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	4,237	5,267	1,030	24.3%
Food and Hospitality	13,349	20,278	6,929	51.9%
Other Services	13,014	16,338	3,324	25.5%
Government	***23,461***	***25,931***	***2,470***	***10.5%***
Federal Government, Civilian	1,491	1,384	-107	-7.2%
Federal Government, Military	774	793	19	2.5%
State and Local Government	21,196	23,754	2,558	12.1%

Source: *Source: 2013 Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.*

Employment Projections

Looking ahead thirty years, Genesee County job growth is positive. It can be estimated that Genesee County could stand to gain an additional 48,568 private sector jobs between 2012 and 2040.

Education and Health Services continue to grow in the region. Industries that are projected to be the largest contributors to job growth in Genesee County between 2012 and 2040 include Health Care and Social Assistance (+19,406 jobs, +68%), Food and Hospitality (+6,929 jobs, +52%) and Administrative and Waste Services (+6,696 new jobs, +49%). Conversely, manufacturing industries are projected to experience the largest decline within the region, decreasing by 7,316 jobs between 2012 and 2040 (-60%).

Major employers are concentrated in medicine and higher education. While General Motors remains the largest employer in the county with 7,000 jobs, employment data highlights the collective importance of the City of Flint's medical and research institutions. For example, estimates indicate that Genesys Health System, Hurley Medical Center, McLaren Regional Medical Center, Mott Community College, and the University of Michigan-Flint employed a combined 8,500 people in November 2012.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate among Flint individuals aged 16 and older was 25.7% in 2011. This is 56% higher than that of Genesee County, which was 16.4%.

Solving the unemployment epidemic will translate into more than just jobs for residents. It will decrease criminal activity, increase the quality of public schools, and strengthen annual tax collections through new revenue.

Unemployment is concentrated among Flint's young adults and males. More than 46% of Flint's population aged 20 to 24 was unemployed in 2011. Nearly one in three Flint men were unemployed in 2011. By comparison, less than one in five Genesee County men were unemployed.

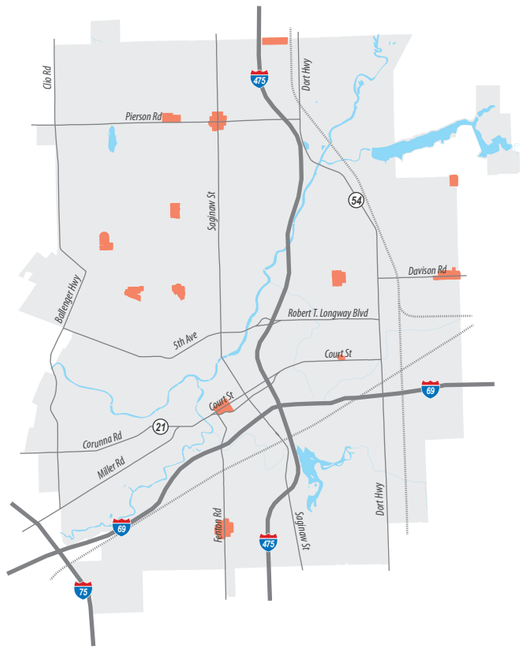
Unemployment is higher than might be expected among those with some college education. Using the overall unemployment rates of Flint and Genesee County as benchmarks, a disproportionate number of Flint residents with some college education are unemployed. In Flint, the 2011 unemployment rate for this group (24.3%) was only slightly lower than that of individuals possessing only a high school diploma (24.7%).

These data indicate that there are external factors beyond educational attainment that are affecting Flint residents' chances of being employed. To begin to address disparities in employment and mitigate unconscious discrimination, the City should work with partner organizations to promote the posting, and wide distribution, of job announcements and provide human resources trainings related to implicit hiring bias.

Unemployment Characteristics
CITY OF FLINT AND GENESEE COUNTY (2011)

Total Unemployment Rate	***Flint***	***Genesee County***
Total Population 16+ years	25.7%	16.4%
Unemployment by Age	***Flint***	***Genesee County***
16-19	37.9%	36.5%
20-24	46.3%	27.1%
25-44	22.0%	15.8%
45-54	28.3%	13.3%
55-64	16.1%	10.2%
65-74	13.9%	13.9%
75+	0.0%	6.0%
Unemployment by Race	***Flint***	***Genesee County***
African American	33.3%	28.0%
White	19.5%	13.7%
Unemployment by Sex	***Flint***	***Genesee County***
Female	19.4%	13.2%
Male	32.5%	18.1%
Unemployment by Education Status	***Flint***	***Genesee County***
Less than H.S. Diploma	32.2%	28.8%
H.S. Diploma	24.7%	17.7%
Some College	24.3%	13.0%
Bachelor's Degree+	9.3%	8.0%

Source: *2011 American Community Survey*



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLACE TYPES

The Land Use Plan includes several place types that will provide a home for Flint businesses, retailers, and service providers. While economic development and employment-related uses should be encouraged in all place types, the following place types should represent the focus of future economic development initiatives.

Neighborhood Center

The Land Use Plan identifies several Neighborhood Center locations that are scattered throughout the community, serving Flint's Green Neighborhoods and Traditional Neighborhoods. As a hub of social and commercial activity for local neighborhoods, the Neighborhood Center place type will play a key role, providing daily goods and services to Flint residents.

Every year, Flint residents spend millions of dollars outside of the community that could be used to support local businesses and jobs. By concentrating businesses at major intersections and adjacent to prominent community institutions, the Neighborhood Center place type encourages high-quality development that can recapture retail dollars leaking out of the community.

As the location of creative industries, limited-scale manufacturing, and office space, the Neighborhood Center place type can also function as an small employment center. These more intense uses are to reflect the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhoods, and are to be designed to mitigate negative outputs such as excessive noise, pollution, or truck traffic.

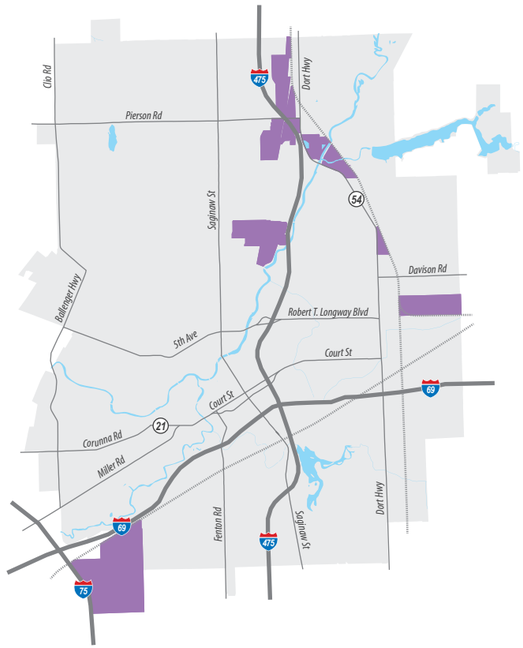
City Corridor

The City Corridor place type is concentrated along Flint's major arterials including Dort Highway, Corunna Road, Flushing Road, Clio Road, Pierson Road, Fenton Road, and Saginaw Avenue. These areas represent the most significant concentrations of retailers, service providers, office users, and government services outside of the downtown. These areas provide goods and services to local residents as well as employees of local business parks and institutions, and visitors traveling along the major arterials that pass through Flint.

While Flint's arterial roadways have historically served as commercial corridors, there are several areas where commercial development is no longer appropriate or desired. Quality commercial uses should be encouraged to relocate to designated City Corridor areas. The identity of each targeted area will be strengthened through strategic streetscape and infrastructure enhancements, branding initiatives, and transit and wayfinding improvements. The pedestrian environment within City Corridor areas, including access management, will also be improved and long-term redevelopment into mixed use districts will be encouraged. Outside of City Corridors, the City should pursue funding for the demolition of poor or substandard commercial properties.

Commerce & Employment Center

The Land Use Plan identifies several areas for the Commerce and Employment Center place type. These areas are concentrated along Flint's two freight rail corridors (CN and CSX), but also include the South Saginaw corridor and the Ballenger Road area anchored by McLaren Regional Medical Center. Commerce and Employment Centers represent a mix of large employers such as Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy, and commercial destinations such as Perani Arena & Event Center, that attract workers and patrons from well beyond Flint's borders. These areas are also home to hundreds of mid-sized employers, and include both office and light industrial users.



Production Center

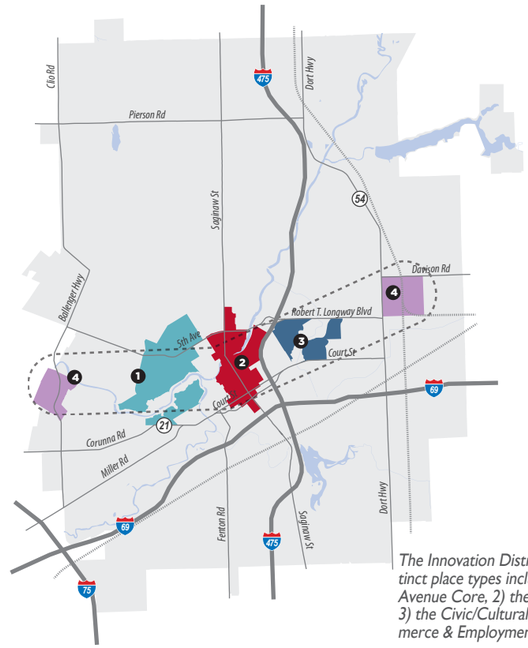
Flint remains home to thousands of automotive industry jobs, many of which are located within the General Motors complex on the City's southwest side. Flint's roots in the automotive industry also created numerous brownfield sites that must be prepared for a new generation of employers.

These sites and others along the CN and CSX railroad corridors, are identified as Production Centers within the Land Use Plan. While not every brownfield should be retained for industrial development, significant portions of the Buick City and AC/Delco sites should be targeted for redevelopment.

Green Innovation

The Land Use Plan applies the Green Innovation designation to several areas along the Flint River corridor, Flint's railroad corridors, and in predominantly vacant residential areas. While urban agriculture and renewable energy are potential uses within these areas, the Green Innovation place type will provide fertile testing grounds for the development and practice of green technologies and room for creative industries. Areas of green innovation should be viewed as a new urban form geared toward sustainable economic development.

Heavy industry, light industry, research and development, and agriculture are all land uses that can be accommodated within Green Innovation areas, however, businesses located within this place type should demonstrate innovative practices that justify their appropriateness for Green Innovation instead of other areas of the City. Examples of new industries that should be encouraged to take hold within these areas include agricultural research, organic food processing, aquaculture, renewable energy, water technology, clean energy research, and green packaging.



The Innovation District contains four distinct place types including 1) the University Avenue Core, 2) the Downtown District, 3) the Civic/Cultural Campus, and 4) Commerce & Employment.

Innovation District

The District contains four distinct place types that have been created to foster the development of high-quality places with growth potential. These four place types, connected by dense Mixed Residential neighborhoods, form the Innovation District, which currently employs an estimated 13,000 people, and has a residential population of approximately 6,300.

Additional discussion of the Innovation District is located in the ***Reorienting Assets*** section of the Economic Development and Education Plan.

Downtown

The Downtown District is the heart of the City with a fast growing population of students, entrepreneurs, and new residents that complements the long-standing strengths of the University of Michigan-Flint, the C.S. Mott Foundation headquarters, and the Saginaw Street Corridor.

University Avenue Core

The University Avenue Core which is home to Kettering University, Hurley Medical Center, and the Chevy in the Hole brownfield site.

Civic/Cultural Campus

The Civic/Cultural Campus stretches east from Downtown to Mott Community College.

Commerce & Employment Center

This place type includes McLaren Regional Medical Center and surrounding commercial areas, as well as the Delphi East brownfield site.

Source: Joel Rash

BUILDING OFF SUCCESS

Despite significant job losses over the last several decades, there are signs of positive growth within the Flint economy. Flint is home to several successful companies, both big and small. that are collectively pushing the Flint economy in the right direction. The City should continue to strengthen ties with the area's largest employers and emerging sectors as well as engage businesses and employers that offer jobs with a range of skill sets and wages. The Economic Development and Education Plan identifies the strategies the City of Flint should employ to build upon current success, and position Flint to embrace a more diverse economy.

Flint Regional Cluster Project

Community partners are currently conducting a study, known as the Flint Regional Cluster Project, to identify industry clusters in the Flint region that may represent potential targets for economic workforce development strategies. According to the Brookings Institution, "an industry cluster is a group of firms and related economic actors and institutions, that are located near one another and that draw productive advantage from their mutual proximity and connections." Clusters accelerate economic growth by allowing for labor market pooling, supplier specialization, and knowledge spillovers.

The study is designed to better understand how Flint's current economic resources align with existing and emerging industry clusters within the region and has three main objectives:

1. Identify areas within the greater economic region that offer the greatest opportunity for economic development.
2. Identify an initial set of industry clusters to target.
3. Identify resources necessary to support the targeted clusters.

Flint has strong economic ties to Southeast Michigan and the I-69 Corridor. The study situates Flint within a 7-county functional economic area (FEA), including the City of Detroit as the economic area within which Flint is fully embedded. This FEA serves as the primary geography with which Flint businesses draw trade links and pulls resources such as labor, raw materials, and goods and services.

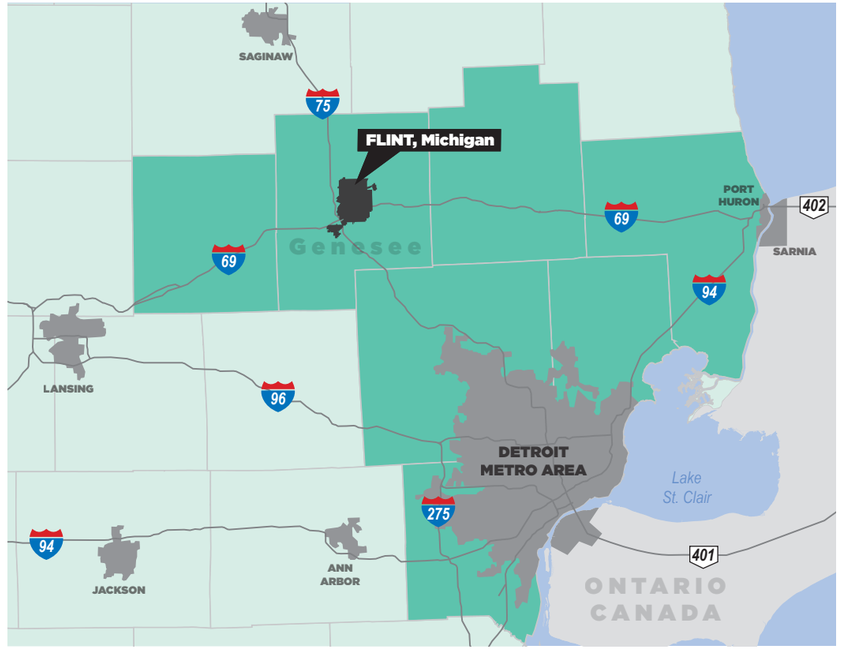
The large seven-county geographical area was identified largely because of the connections between Flint's manufacturing base and the manufacturing resources of Southeast Michigan.

There are several industrial sectors with potential for growth in Flint. A group of economic and workforce experts from the region was convened to select industries within the FEA that could be targets for concentrated development in the Flint region. Key criteria guiding the industry selection process included historical growth rates; competitive advantages within the region; talent production and workforce preparation; existing workforce, economic, and infrastructure connections; and nationwide emerging sector opportunities such as healthcare.

Six sectors were identified as having the highest potential for growth in the Flint region. The selected target industries include:

- Life Sciences;
- Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics;
- Automotive and Transportation Equipment Manufacturing;
- Machinery Manufacturing;
- Information Technology; and
- Food Manufacturing.

The City and its economic development partners should continue to pursue opportunities to foster development of targeted growth industries, and link these assets to the larger regional economy.



Flint Functional Economic Area (Source: Flint Regional Cluster Project)

GM Flint Assembly Plant

McLaren Medical Center

Flint Crepe Company

Major Employer Profiles

Hurley Medical Center

The Hurley Medical Center, located atop a hill at 5th Avenue and Grand Traverse Street, employs approximately 2,500 people, and is the region's only level-one trauma center. The campus recently completed renovations and includes the Hurley Children's Hospital, a regional leader in neonatal intensive care, pediatric intensive care, and maternal fetal medicine. The medical center is actively involved in enhancing their campus by purchasing residential properties surrounding the hospital with the goal of creating a green buffer. The real estate acquisition included the creation of a grand lawn feature on the axis between Hurley Medical Center and Atwood Stadium to the south.

McLaren Regional Medical Center

As one of the largest hospital networks in Michigan, McLaren Regional Medical Center is a strong employment and health care node, located at the intersection of Ballenger Highway and Beecher Road on Flint's west side. Vacant or underutilized parcels surrounding the hospital and its facilities represent opportunities for future expansion and a potential catalyst for revitalization along Ballenger and Flushing Roads. McLaren Flint has expanded its footprint in recent years. Completion of the new 52,000 square foot, $70 million Proton Therapy Center, is expected in the Winter of 2014. McLaren Flint also recently broke ground on the Hospitality House, an $8 million project that will provide extended stay accommodations for up to 100 patients undergoing therapy at the McLaren Cancer Institute and Proton Therapy Center.

General Motors

General Motors currently operates three plants in the City: Flint Assembly, Metal Center, and Engine Operations. In total, GM employs an estimated 7,000 people in Genesee County. GM has invested nearly $475 million in their complex in the last four years, and recently broke ground on a $7.5 million office addition to the Flint Engine Operations facility. After years of declining employment, GM added a third shift to the Flint Assembly plant in 2011, creating 750 new jobs in Flint. While macroeconomic factors play a large role in GM's production and employment, recent trends are encouraging, and may indicate that the auto industry will maintain a significant presence in the local economy.

Great Lakes Medical Technology Center

The Great Lakes Medical Technology Center (GLMTC) is a hub for pharmaceuticals and medical research and is located in a special Renaissance Zone that eliminates property tax and state education taxes. The center's primary tenants include Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy and the Insight Institute of Neurosurgery and Neuroscience (IINN), an incubator for medical research and pharmaceuticals. Approximately 300,000 additional square feet of the GLMTC are currently available for lease, suggesting that the GLMTC could eventually employ thousands. In addition to bolstering the city-wide economy, the success of the technology center could lead to an increased local demand for restaurants, retailers, and service providers which, in turn, could facilitate redevelopment and enhancement of commercial properties along the Saginaw Street corridor.

Diplomat Pharmacy

Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy relocated its headquarters to Flint in late 2010, investing more than $12 million in their 340,000 square foot facility in the Great Lakes Medical Technology Center. Currently employing 680 people in Flint, Diplomat continues to grow. From 2008 to 2011, Diplomat hired for 233 new positions, and they plan on adding another 1,000 jobs over the next five years.

Small Business Profiles

Flint Crepe Company

The Flint Crepe Company began as a mobile food cart in 2008 visiting the Flint Farmer's Market and touring downtown serving homemade crepes with creative flavors. Their crêpes were an immediate success and by 2011, Flint Crepe Company opened a store on Saginaw Street in Downtown Flint. The majority of products offered by Flint Crepe Company come from local growers and producers.

Genesee Packaging

Flint-based Genesee Packaging has manufactured corrugated cardboard packaging for the automotive industry since its establishment in 1979. Genesee Packaging, which employs 115 people, remains a strong foundation for the manufacturing industry in Flint, demonstrating that small, local businesses can experience enduring success. In February 2013, the company was awarded the Exporter of the Year Award by the I-69 International Trade Corridor.

Rogers Foam

This Massachusetts-based company provides manufacturing services for medical, automotive, and consumer goods industries. In 2008, Rogers Foam opened a plant in the former Allen Storage and Moving Co. building on West Kearsley Street, creating much-needed job opportunities for Flint residents. One of 11 locations worldwide, the Flint facility employs 50 in providing foam components used in GM vehicles, including the Chevy Volt.

Michigan School for the Deaf

The 130-acre campus of the Michigan School for the Deaf (MSD), located at Court Street and Miller Road, recently underwent a $36 million redevelopment that included construction of a new, 80,000 square foot state-of-the-art building to house MSD. In addition, the 100-year-old Fay Hall, a partially abandoned dormitory, underwent renovation to become the new home of Flint Powers Catholic High School, which relocated from nearby Mt. Morris Township. Flint Powers owns the 150,000 square foot building. The MSD/Flint Powers Catholic project represents the largest development in the City of Flint since Mott Community College opened the Regional Technology Center in 2002.

PREPARING THE WORKFORCE

A combination of quality, public and private K-12 education offerings and after school programming are needed to best prepare Flint's future workforce for the new economy. In addition, adult workforce development programs are needed to complement youth education efforts, and raise the skill and education levels of the current workforce.

Community Education

For nearly 80 years, Community Education programs have been operating in Flint. Its origin stems back to 1935 when Frank Manley, a Flint physical education teacher saw an opportunity to capitalize on underutilized school resources for after-school activities. With support from the C.S. Mott Foundation, the school board approved after-school activities for children and adults, keeping school doors open after school hours and on Saturdays.

The programs were so successful that the Mott Foundation opened the National Center for Community Education (NCCE) to train educators and community leaders on how to run similar after-school programs. The popularity of the programs received national recognition and President Gerald Ford signed the School and Comprehensive Community Education Act in 1974, which provided federal funding for after-school programs. NCCE programs were instituted nationwide, but the center had to close its doors in 2006 due to budget constraints.

Legacy of Community Education

The Community Education movement established the notion that schools should function as social and civic anchors of the neighborhoods they serve. Though Flint Community Schools continues to offer after-school programs for Pre-K through high school students, budget constraints have limited the ability to provide a wider range of community services and educational opportunities to Flint residents.

Renewed Community Education

The City should work with Flint Community Schools and area foundations to renew commitments to community education. School facilities should serve as a "homebase" within different neighborhood areas to provide community education programming, as well as serve as community meeting and public information centers.

Community Resource Teams

Community resource teams should also be formed including a community education director, police liaison officer, school social worker, City blight inspector, teacher, mental health specialist, and nurse. These teams would then be charged with traveling throughout the neighborhood and connecting with students who are not getting to school. In addition, the Community Resource Team could assist and provide counseling and services to enrolled students. Existing personnel may be used in this effort, but must be assigned to designated school facilities and neighborhood planning areas.

K-12 Education

Kindergarten through 12th grade education offerings for Flint residents include public schools, charter schools, and private schools that range widely with regard to academic performance, facility quality, and fiscal stability.

Flint Community Schools

Flint Community Schools district (FCS) provides public primary and secondary education in Flint. The 2013 enrollment at Flint Community Schools was 7,280 students, a loss of 1,144 students from 2012. At its peak in 1968, when General Motors employment reached 80,000 workers, student enrollment in FCS was 46,557.

Enrollment for the 2013-2014 school year represents an 84% drop in attendance over a 42-year period. The district faces numerous funding, staffing, and facility challenges that hinder its ability to meet the educational needs of Flint's school children. Despite enrollment and budgetary constraints, FCS provides a variety of after-school educational and extracurricular activities to its students and the community. From academic and vocational education, to interscholastic athletics, to GED and ESL programs, the district is continuing the Community Education legacy started decades before. In recent years, however, the district has felt the pressure of annual budget shortfalls and declining enrollment, which has affected its ability to provide additional services to its students and has led to the closing of several facilities and consolidation of grades elsewhere to reduce operational and maintenance costs.

Partnership

The problems faced by Flint Community Schools are system-wide and reflect the major issues of population decline and loss of revenue, with which the City is also coping. As such, FCS has expressed a desire to partner with other organizations to deal with common issues. Additional partnerships include expanding mentorship programs for at-risk youth through local non-profit organizations such as the Big Brothers Big Sisters and local churches.

Curriculum Partnership

International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme is an academically challenging and balanced program of education with final examinations that prepares students, grades 7-12, for success at university and life beyond. Currently, Southwestern Classical Academy is the only school in Flint participating, with 25 students enrolled in the in the school's 2013 IB Diploma examination. The City should work with FCS and the International Baccalaureate Schools of Michigan to introduce the program to elementary schools. The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme not only addresses students' academic, social, and emotional well-being, but also aims to create a learning environment for children aged 3-12 that is rigorous and engaging.

CITY OF FLINT
Existing Schools

Schools Legend

- *Public School (FCS)*
- *Closed Public School (FCS)*
- *Public School Academy*
- *Private School*
- *Closed Private School*
- *College/University*
- *Other Educational Facility*

Schools Inventory

Public Schools (Flint Community Schools)

1. *Northwestern High School*
2. *Brownell Elementary School*
3. *Carpenter Road Elementary School*
4. *Williams Elementary School*
5. *Northern Alternative Education Center*
6. *Potter Elementary School*
7. *Summerfield Early Childhood Education Center*
8. *Doyle/Ryder Elementary School*
9. *Flint Community Schools Administration Building*
10. *Durant-Tuuri-Mott Elementary School*
11. *Pierce Elementary School*
12. *Scott Elementary School*
13. *Eisenhower Elementary School*
14. *Southwestern High School*
15. *Manley Early Childhood Education Center*
16. *Cummings Elementary School*
17. *Neithercut Elementary School*
18. *Freeman Elementary School*
19. *Holmes Middle School*
20. *Brownell K-2 STEM Academy*
21. *Holmes 3-6 STEM Academy*
22. *Southwestern Classical Academy*
23. *Mott Adult High School*

Closed Public Schools (Flint Community Schools)

24. *Gundry Elementary School*
25. *Wilkins Elementary School*
26. *Bryant Elementary School of Fine Arts*
27. *Johnson Accelerated Academics Academy*
28. *Merrill Elementary School*
29. *Bunche Elementary School*
30. *Lowell Middle School*
31. *Garfield Elementary School*
32. *Civic Park Elementary School*
33. *King Elementary School*
34. *Anderson Middle School*
35. *Longfellow Middle School*
36. *Cook Elementary School*
37. *Dort Elementary School*
38. *Washington Elementary School*
39. *Central High School*
40. *Whittier Middle School*
41. *Coolidge Elementary School*
42. *Zimmerman Elementary School*
43. *Stewart Elementary School*
44 *Cody Elementary School (demolished)*
45. *McKinley Middle School*
46. *Clark Elementary School*

Other Public Schools (Genesee Intermediate School District)

47. *Genesee Early College*
48. *Mott Middle College*
49. *Health, Safety, and Nutrition Services*

Public School Academies (charter schools)

50. *New Standard Academy*
51. *Northridge Academy*
52. *Richfield Public School Academy*
53. *International Academy of Flint*
54. *WAY Academy of Flint*

Private Schools

55. *St. John Vianney Catholic School*
56. *St. Paul Luthern School*
57. *St. Pius X School*
58. *Alpha Montessori*
59. *Flint Powers Catholic High School*

Closed Public School Academy

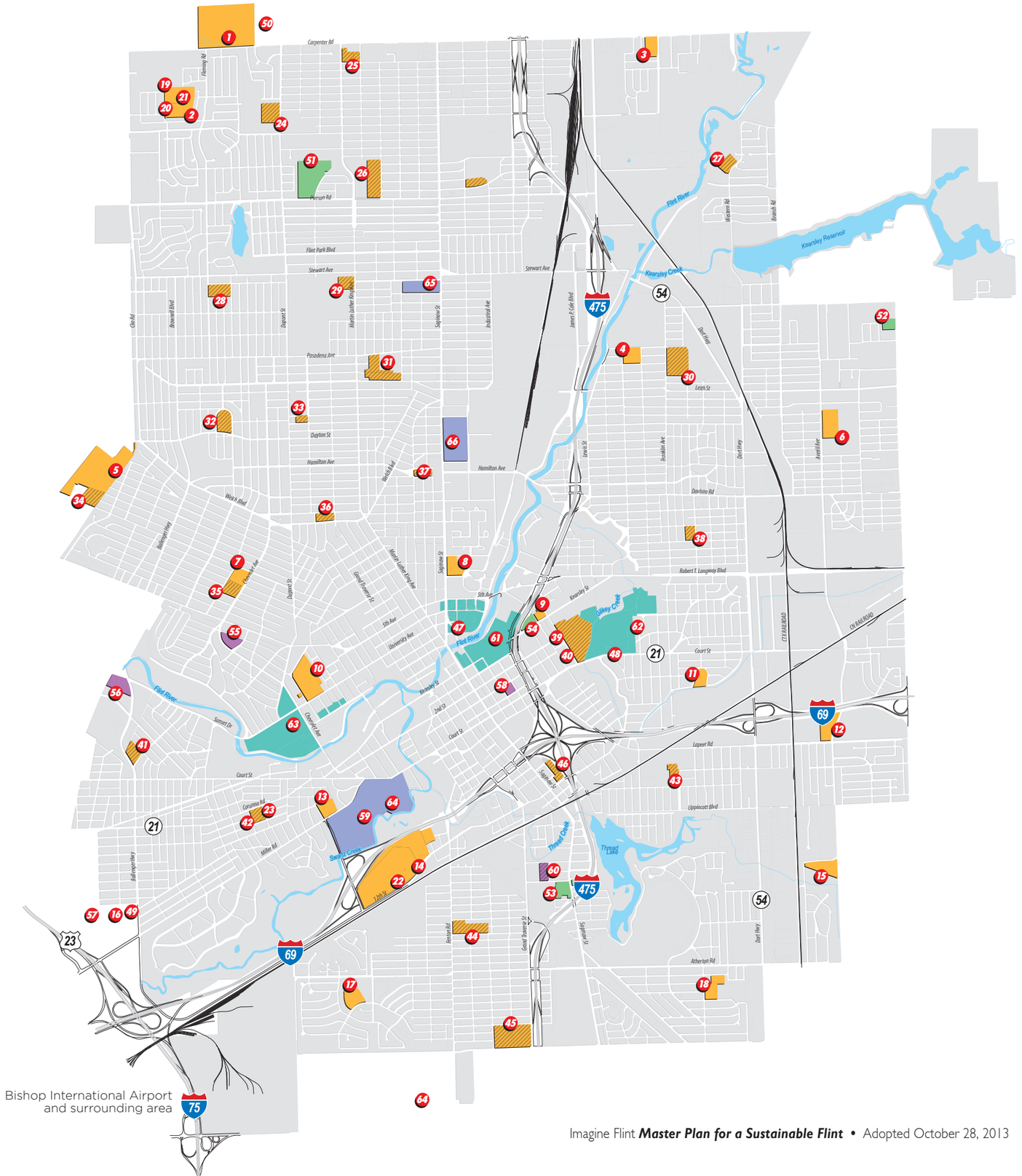
60. *Center Academy*

Colleges/Universities

61. *University of Michigan-Flint*
62. *Mott Community College*
63. *Kettering University*
64. *Baker College*

Other Education Facilities

65. *Sylvester Broome Jr. Training Technology Center*
66. *Flint/Genesee Job Corps Center*
67. *Michigan School for the Deaf & Blind*



Source: Joel Rash

Success Story: YouthQuest

With support from a $3.1 million grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, FCS was able to continue its YouthQuest program for the 2013-2014 academic year. YouthQuest is an after-school program that promotes academic achievement, physical fitness, youth leadership, and volunteerism. The program, a partnership between the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce and Genesee Area Focus Fund, provides a positive after-school environment for nearly 2,000 children, which is especially important for working families.

The program is a win-win arrangement for Flint Community Schools as it can continue to provide community education while helping prepare students for the future through positive enrichment activities. However, the City needs to find a sustainable form of community education and continue to encourage youth participation.

Other Schooling Options

In addition to Flint Community Schools, there are four public charter schools and five private schools in Flint. These schools provide a valuable alternative to the public school district, and have emerged as strong partners in improving education in Flint.

Private Schools

Private schools range in grades served, but in general, elementary schools offer kindergarten through eighth grade and high schools offer ninth through twelfth grades. The Lion of Judah Temple School offers instruction at all grade levels. There is only one private high school, Flint Powers Catholic, which enrolls approximately 680 students.

Public School Academies

As of the 2013-2014 school year, Flint residents are served by five public charter schools (also referred to as public school academies). Charter schools in Flint had a 2011-2012 enrollment of more than 2,100 students, more than 88% of whom qualified for free or reduced lunch. With the exception of the International Academy of Flint (IAF), Flint's charter schools only serve primary and middle school grades. Another charter school, The New Standard (grades K- 5), opened for the 2013-2014 school year at the former site of the Flint Powers Catholic in neighboring Mt. Morris.

Success Story: International Academy of Flint (IAF)

Located along South Saginaw near I-475, the International Academy of Flint is the top performing public high school within Flint. Based on the Mackinac Center for Public Policy CAP score, IAF is also the eighth best high school in the State of Michigan. In addition to leading the way in education in Flint, enhancements to properties and rights-of-way surrounding the school have led local residents to identify IAF as a key contributor to the health and image of the neighborhood.

The school is doing well and is undergoing renovations and expansion. The IAF worked with the adjacent Genesee County Road Commission facility, to purchase property to accommodate a bus lane on the rear side of the building. A recent addition to the school was also built to allow for a second floor in the future. IAF continues to look for opportunities to expand.

City as Partner

The City of Flint does not have direct control over many important community facilities, including those in the education system. Communication and cooperation between Flint Community Schools and the City, are key components in ensuring that the highest quality of education is delivered to Flint's youth. The City should also serve as a resource to public charter schools and private schools.

Providing a Positive Environment

While the City has limited control of decisions regarding the delivery of education services, it plays a vital role in creating a positive physical environment in which students live, play, and learn. Throughout the community outreach process, students in Flint repeatedly identified blight and violence as the top issues facing the community. These issues are at the heart of the Master Plan, and should continue to be a focus of City policy and initiatives.

Neighborhood stabilization and blight elimination initiatives identified in the Master Plan will serve to create a warmer, safer environment for Flint students. By providing quality neighborhoods, the City can encourage families to stay in Flint, minimize student mobility, and improve the education experience.

Facilitating Expansion

Working in partnership with local schools, the City can pursue strategic growth and development. IAF has a clear need for additional parking, and the school is actively pursuing the purchase of nearby residential and commercial lots for eventual expansion. In its recent application for blight elimination grant funding, the Genesee County Land Bank, in partnership with the City of Flint, identified several residential parcels surrounding for potential demolition.

Just as the IAF was intimately involved in outreach related to subarea planning efforts, so too should other school entities be involved in planning efforts for the neighborhoods they serve. Fostering a positive, working relationship between the City and education providers, will ensure that Flint residents can take full advantage of local education options.

Sharing Resources

As public schools that are dependent per pupil funding allocation, charter schools may lack the resources to purchase land and facilities related to recreation or entertainment. Some charter school representatives have indicated a desire to establish a partnership with the City to facilitate use of local parkland, recreation facilities, and even auditorium space. While a school would not likely be able to purchase any such assets outright, it may be able to cover a portion of the maintenance costs currently incurred by the City of Flint. The City should evaluate the potential for the shared use of facilities to reduce costs.

YouthQuest Participants. Source: Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

TeenQuest Participants. Source: Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

Integrating K-12 with Higher Education

FCS high schools face the challenge of adequately preparing their students for higher education. Unfortunately, 2009-2010 ACT scores for all subjects indicate that students graduating from FCS high schools are underprepared for post-secondary education.

Nevertheless, the number of graduates (73%) that go on to pursue some type of post-secondary education, is in line with the statewide average (74%) according to the Michigan State School Data portal. As a result, fewer Flint students are actually able to obtain a degree after high school.

Educational Attainment

Despite comparable levels of educational attainment at the secondary level, a smaller proportion of Flint's population has received a bachelor's degree or higher compared to the state.

As of 2010, state attainment levels for a bachelor's degree (16%) and for a graduate or professional degree (10%) were more than double that of the City of Flint (8% and 4% respectively).

Within Genesee County there is also evidence of a significant education gap between Flint and non-Flint residents. In 2010, the proportion of Flint residents (17%) with less than a high school diploma or equivalent is nearly double that of the population in out-county areas (9%). The proportion of Flint residents with at least a bachelor's degree (12%) is also markedly different than that of out-county area residents (20%).

Other data indicates that the disparity in educational attainment between Flint and non-Flint residents of Genesee County is even more significant for those aged 25 to 34.

Success Story: STEM Public Schools

In an effort to reposition their schools to better prepare students for the requirements of the modern workforce, FCS began offering a STEM-based curriculum at a newly renovated Brownell-Holmes campus in the fall of 2013. STEM, which stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, provides students with critical knowledge that allows them to be competitive in the growing technology industry.

Early STEM education prepares students for the rigors of college and professional careers in the STEM industry, which shows steady job growth compared to non-STEM jobs and commands earnings 26% higher than non-STEM counterparts. The City should support the continued evolution of curricula and use of technology in FCS schools as well as encourage area STEM employers to offer summer jobs and internship opportunities.

Success Story: Kettering University Dual Enrollment Program

A new program offered at Flint Powers School Catholic may also serve as a model for how FCS can work with nearby higher education institutions to increase academic offering and expose FCS students to college-level coursework. Flint Powers Catholic, which is located near Kettering University, now offers students a dual enrollment program allowing high schoolers to take college courses at reduced tuition costs.

The program is also unique in that Kettering University professors teach the courses at Powers, suited to the schedule of the high school students. The relationship benefits students by exposing them to college curricula and benefits Kettering by bringing students to the University.

Flint Community Schools has a unique an opportunity to form a similar relationship with UM-Flint and Mott Community College with the potential location of "Flint Central High" in the Cultural Center. Flint Central High School would be a centrally-located consolidation of existing Flint high schools. Partnering with UM-Flint and MCC would provide educational advantages for students by increasing academic offerings, getting low-income students a foothold into school, ensuring college preparedness and increasing awareness of higher education options.

Adult Workforce Development

The education dilemma facing the Flint community is further compounded by the fact that an estimated 35% of adults read at or below a first grade level. This means that despite job growth in some industries, many residents are unable to take advantage of job openings. Flint is in need of workforce development that trains people to meet the demands of available jobs. The Flint region has a large workforce trained in the manufacturing and skilled trades, but the growing health, education, and professional services require a different skill set.

Existing Opportunity: Diplomat Pharmacy

Diplomat Pharmacy plans to add 1,000 jobs through the year 2015, and recently filled 100 new job openings. Diplomat has reported difficulty filling open positions due to a lack of trained and qualified professionals within the local workforce and several positions have been filled by individuals from outside of the region. By current estimates, 25% of Diplomat's employees live in Flint while another 55% live in other areas of Genesee County.

The City should work closely with Diplomat Pharmacy and other area employers to identify gaps in education and skill sets. This will allow schools and workforce development programs to ensure under- and unemployed residents and recent graduates, receive the proper training to take advantage of local job opportunities.

Adult Illiteracy

Improving the adult literacy rate will provide increased opportunities for Flint residents by helping to close the job-skills gap. Currently providers in the Flint area include:

- Baker Pathways Adult Education
- Bendle/Carman-Ainsworth Adult Education
- Center for Higher Education Achievement
- Christ Enrichment Center
- Flint Genesee Job Corps Center
- Flint Odyssey House
- Flint Public Library
- Genesee County Literacy Coalition
- Mt. Morris Consolidated Schools
- Mott Adult High School
- MCC Workforce Education Center
- New Paths
- St. Luke N.E.W. Life Center

Genesee/Flint Job Corps

Genesee/Flint Jobs Corps offers free education and career training programs for low-income students ages 16-24. Through this program, young people obtain skills to thrive in a new career or pursue higher education opportunities. Career training offers skills in vocational trades ranging from computer technician to dental assistant. Job Corps also offers a college level program called Advanced Career Training (ACT) through partnerships with Mott Community College, Baker College, and Davenport University.

Christ Enrichment Center offers a free tutoring program in addition to Adult Basic Education opportunities. The Mott Community College (MCC) Workforce Education Center also supports low-literacy and low-income adults using best practice techniques as common practices.

Breaking Through is a national initiative that helps prepare adults for occupational and technical degree programs and a performance-based, open-entry/open-exit, Pre-GED and GED program. These programs help students reach their workforce and educational goals. The City should continue to support existing literacy programs and encourage the development of additional resources and initiatives for children and adults.

Prisoner Re-entry Office

Providing former prisoners with employment opportunities is critical to re-building the lives of parolees, and helping reduce the cycle of crime. New Paths, Inc. is operating the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative (MPRI) in Genesee County, which offers parolees assistance in locating job training, housing, and counseling services in their community. As recommended in ***Chapter 10: Public Health, Safety and Welfare Plan***, the City should explore successful examples of local prisoner re-entry programs to help improve public safety and reduce recidivism rates.

Mott Community College Workforce Education Center

The Mott Community College (MCC) Workforce Education Center (WEC) is one place for Flint residents to begin their search for job training and/or employment assistance. The facility is equipped with computer labs and smart classrooms, as well as space to provide building and construction training. MCC Career training programs include manufacturing, healthcare, and computer technology, and are delivered in a career pathway format.

MCC WEC also offers youth programs for In-School and Out-of-School Youth. MCC's WEC partners with Genesee/Shiawassee Michigan Works! and other agencies to offer demand driven programs while providing a variety of services to area employers.

MCC Workforce Education Center Strategies

The development of a city-wide workforce development strategy will be an important step towards creating a strong economic and workforce development foundation. Successfully implementing this plan will not only support the City's economic success, and help to maintain the existing employer base, but will also attract new emerging and growing industries into the greater Flint area.

- Identify existing workforce programs and gaps
- Coordinate local workforce training programs
- Expand awareness of and information on training opportunities
- Organize industry-wide training initiatives
- Broaden the career pathway training system
- Secure immediate and long-term sources of flexible funding

MCC Best Practice/Capacity

MCC Workforce and Career Development Division has built the capacity to align priorities, strategies, and resources with those of regional labor market needs. MCC maintains a leadership role in building and sustaining high-quality programs and services supportive of regional economic growth strategies.

These efforts move MCC toward more effective and sustained responses to changing workforce needs.

Employers are a valuable partner for community colleges in developing career pathways. In addition to offering job and internship placements, local businesses can define worker skills and competencies that are in demand, as well as help pathway partners discern labor market demand. Employer work sites also offer an additional venue for colleges to deliver incumbent workers training at all skill levels.

The development of effective career pathways programs requires resources that allow for multiple strategies and supports. A report by The Aspen Institute in February of 2011 titled "The Price of Persistence: How Non-profit and Community College Partnerships Manage and Blend Diverse Funding Streams" profiles the resources dedicated to support students in three of six demonstration project sites participating in a three-year study. A Mott Community College student was one of the featured profiles. The Aspen Institute highlights in their Lessons Learned section, the importance of developing the capacity and infrastructure to secure and manage resources from multiple sources to help students persist.

Financial Opportunity Center (FOC)

Workforce interventions alone are frequently not enough to support low-income, low-skilled workers as they enter the labor force or attempt to upgrade their skills. Other economic and social supports are needed. This year, MCC, Metro Community Development, and Genesee Shiawassee Michigan Works! partnered to establish a new Financial Opportunity Center (FOC) to provide families with services in a bundled fashion including employment placement and career improvement, financial education and coaching, and public benefits access. Increased capacity of the FOC will boost the economic well-being of Flint residents and strengthen workforce interventions city-wide.

Sylvester Broome Jr. Training Technical Center

The Broome Center is a hub for workforce development job training services and activities. The Broome Center was once Dewey Elementary School, and is another positive example of adaptive reuse in Flint. The Center is owned by Genesee Shiawassee Michigan Works!

Oak Business Center

Oak Business Center is the location of the Metro Flint YouthBuild program. YouthBuild, a partnership between Mott Community College and Metro Community Partnership, is designed to serve youth who are unemployed and have a desire to work towards their GED, while learning construction and life skills as well as leadership.

Genesee/Shiawassee Michigan Works! Career Alliance, Inc. (GSMW/CAI)

Genesee/Shiawassee Michigan Works! assists job-seekers and employers looking for skilled workers by partnering with workforce development service providers that use federal and foundation funds to offer programs for adults and youth. The City should work closely with this agency to help provide up-to date information on the needs of the Flint community. In addition, the City should explore ideas to increase networking opportunities for Flint residents and employers (such as city-wide career fairs or information session on upcoming employment opportunities) in partnership with local workforce development agencies and programs.

Buckham Alley. Source: Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS

Neighborhood Business Incentives

The City should establish incentives to encourage new commercial development in the City Corridor and Neighborhood Center place types, particularly in the underserved areas of Flint. While a range of potential incentives should be evaluated, a Business Improvement District (BID) or Business Improvement Zone (BIZ) may provide the tools and funding sources needed to encourage desired reinvestment.

When a BID or BIZ is established, it uses special assessments paid by property owners within the district or zone to fund projects aimed at improving the business climate and local quality of life. A BID is created by a City Council resolution while a BIZ is initiated by a grassroots petition to the City Clerk from business owners.

Through a BID/BIZ, a community can undertake a variety of projects within the targeted area, such as:

- Maintain and modify roads and pedestrian walkways;
- Prohibit or regulate vehicular traffic or parking;
- Own, operate, or contract for off-street parking lots or structures;
- Conduct market research;
- Conduct marketing and promotional campaigns for the district;
- Sponsor special events; or,
- Maintenance and security of the district.

Retail Market

Retail potential has been assessed at the neighborhood scale to more accurately reflect the shopping patterns of local residents. Market areas are defined as the areas within a five minute drive of the following intersections: Corunna and Ballenger; Dort and Davison; Pierson and Martin Luther King; and Saginaw and Atherton.

These intersections were selected based on the location of existing retail areas within Flint, as well as proximity to nearby market areas. The intersections are geographically dispersed such that when overlaid on the same map (see adjacent figure), the market areas encompass the majority of the City as well as portions of neighboring communities and townships. The assessment findings are as follows:

- The majority of the City's retail properties are located along linear commercial corridors and few concentrated nodes of commercial development exist outside of the downtown area.
- Many of the retail properties in Flint have limited lot depth due to their adjacency to residential properties. These and related physical limitations have resulted in a large number of small-scale commercial properties with a limited number of mid- to large-sized retailers and retail centers.
- With the exception of the Clio Road corridor, the majority of Flint's large retailers are located on the far eastern and far southern edges of the community.
- As of 2013, the most significant concentrations of retail within Flint included:
  - The ***Center Road Corridor***, including the Eastridge Commons Shopping Center, a 287,453 square foot retail center with tenants such as Target and TJ Maxx.
  - The north ***Clio Road Corridor,*** including the 433,000 square foot Northwest Shopping Center, where tenants include Family Dollar and Kroger.
  - The south ***Fenton Road Corridor*** is the location of a small node of commercial at Hemphill Road. This intersection features a Landmark grocery store as well as the South Flint Plaza, a 316,805 square foot shopping center anchored by Value City Furniture and Dollar Tree.
  - The ***Dort Highway Corridor*** is an auto-oriented corridor with several small- to mid-size retail strip centers including the Dort Mall Shopping Center. The Dort Mall is strip center, anchored by Perani's Hockey World, and Bargain Hunterz, that also features an enclosed mall area. It was built in 1963.

Retail Market Area & Gap Analysis

To assess the potential for retail development in the City, this analysis compares household spending (demand) to the amount of sales (supply). This provides an indication of "surplus" or "leakage" for each retail category. Simply put, a surplus indicates that there is at least enough space to accommodate demand, and leakage indicates that consumers are spending dollars outside of the market area. Given this baseline, the City should perform annual market analyses to gauge market potential and identify opportunities.

City-wide Supply & Demand

The location of retail uses in the City of Flint and the greater market area influences shopping habits and expenditures. For example, if looking only at the City of Flint, the City is undersupplied in terms of the amount of expenditures by residents (i.e. existing demand) relative to market sales volume (i.e. available supply) within the City's defined boundaries. However, given that market areas do not follow City limits, retail options available outside of the City must be factored in as well.

Market Area Supply & Demand

For purposes of analysis, the aforementioned four distinct market areas were defined using five-minute drive times from defined intersections. While the market area for some retail categories extends beyond five minutes, others such as grocery stores are fairly consistent with this measurement.

Within the table, positive (+) numbers represent leakage, while negative (-) numbers represent a surplus.

Corunna & Ballenger

While the overall market and most retail categories are saturated there are indications of support for grocery stores in the immediate market area.

Dort & Davison

Market is fairly saturated in all retail categories. The categories that indicate potential generally cater to a larger or more regional market area.

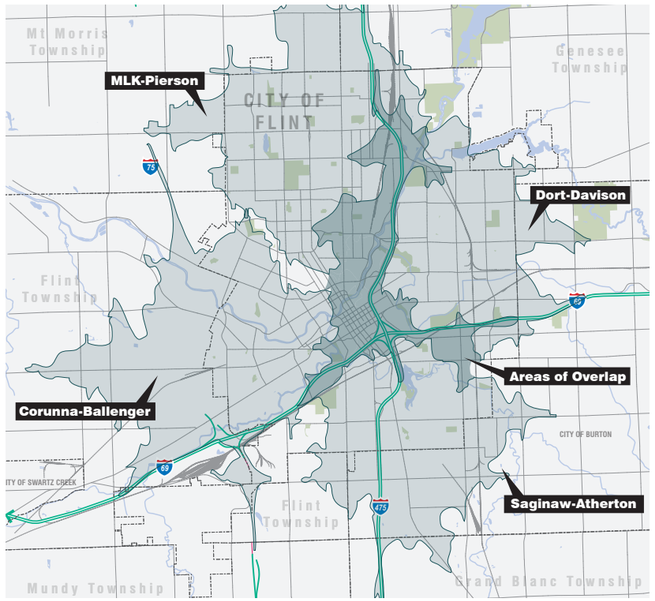
Pierson & MLK

This market area is one of the most undersupplied in the City. It is also the most heavily populated, with the lowest per capita income in comparison to other areas.

Saginaw & Atherton

The overall market area is fairly saturated in all retail categories. There are indications of support for grocery stores in the immediate market.

Retail Market Areas



Source: Houseal Lavigne Associates

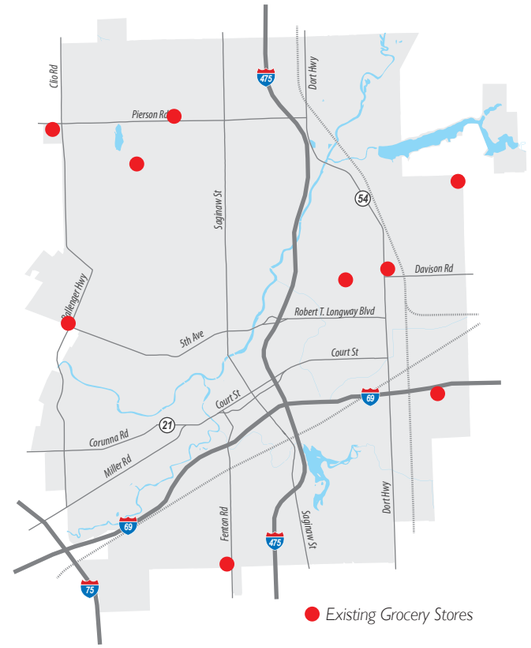
Retail Market Analysis
CITY OF FLINT AND 5-MINUTE DRIVE TIMES, 2012

	City of Flint	Corunna-Ballenger	Dort-Davison	Pierson-MLK	Saginaw-Atherton
Summary Demographics					
2010 Population	111,879	32,777	30,615	45,691	31,913
2010 Households	44,123	13,500	12,925	16,154	13,251
2010 Median Disposable Income	$28,598	$33,154	$29,111	$23,850	$30,309
2010 Per Capita Income	$18,088	$21,066	$19,745	$14,453	$19,612

Industry Summary	***City of Flint***	***Corunna-Ballenger***	***Dort-Davison***	***Pierson-MLK***	***Saginaw-Atherton***
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	$154,337,327	-$325,931,316	-$51,169,367	$84,858,004	$92,095

Industry Group	***City of Flint***	***Corunna-Ballenger***	***Dort-Davison***	***Pierson-MLK***	***Saginaw-Atherton***
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	$4,995,274	-$11,020,795	-$1,670,307	$4,515,980	-$3,148,271
Electronics & Appliance Stores	$14,222,861	-$4,457,452	$2,710,913	$5,175,035	$3,726,687
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	$17,083,963	-$30,157,696	-$21,319,807	$5,960,217	$2,010,515
Food & Beverage Stores	$26,430,389	$9,611,299	-$5,123,994	-$8,700,778	$12,990,566
Health & Personal Care Stores	$8,148,143	-$10,557,354	-$1,936,255	$4,380,501	-$9,107,882
Gasoline Stations	$29,255,623	-$3,411,360	-$2,269,759	$15,297,343	$3,971,094
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	$186,201	-$17,249,383	-$6,903,401	$1,557,849	$3,048,673
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores	$5,288,067	-$8,860,841	$1,142,676	$2,398,955	-$47,713
General Merchandise Stores	$34,018,479	-$93,611,384	$1,068,394	$34,815,760	-$8,111,897
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	-$8,313,191	-$5,736,342	-$1,778,594	$2,369,972	-$32,090
Food Services & Drinking Places	$23,021,518	-$46,132,507	-$15,089,233	$17,087,170	-$8,030,694

Source: *ESRI Business Analyst, Houseal Lavigne Associates, Data based on early 2010 data prior to US Census update.*



Quality of Existing Development

Another consideration of retail analysis is the quality of existing supply. While this is not intended to cast judgment on any particular business, the fact that a particular neighborhood may be served by stores that sell grocery-related items, does not necessarily mean that the area is well served. Additional analysis of the quality of stores including accessibility, safety, variety and other issues must be considered as well.

NOTES:
1. Within the table, positive (+) numbers represent leakage, while negative (-) numbers represent a suprlus.

2. All data is as of October 2012 and does not reflect changes in local retail inventory since that time.

Grocery Stores

Due to the diverse nature of store types and sizes, the supply of grocery stores in a market area is often the most overstated retail category. This is because gas stations, convenience stores, and pharmacies that sell food are considered part of the market supply. The reality is that while these small infill grocers provide convenience, they do not necessarily provide quality food options to neighborhood residents.

The issue is compounded by the fact that potential businesses do not consider these areas for new stores. This is due to an assessment of relatively low area income levels in contrast with existing overstated supply. The City needs to continue to work with investors, developers, and major grocery stores to educate them on this dynamic and facilitate the siting of new stores in impacted neighborhoods.

Market and Development Potentials

While overall market potential is primarily based on resident population, the active daytime and student population represents additional opportunity. Employees and visitors to an area do not typically travel far from their destination for retail and dining. As a result, the City should seek to ensure that commercial development opportunities are maximized proximate to daytime activity. When promoting opportunities to prospective businesses, retailers, and developers, the City must promote its daytime demographic in order to maximize potential.

The types of uses discussed would apply to Neighborhood Center, City Corridor, and Downtown place types. University Avenue Core and Commerce and Employment Center place types would also apply to some of this development, depending on the site and its context.

Flint Economic Development Organizations & Assistance Programs

There are numerous programs offered by the City of Flint and its partners to support small businesses throughout Flint. The City should play a central role in minimizing barriers to entrepreneurship and providing access to the resources needed to launch start-up companies and expand existing businesses. The programs outlined here provide a range of services including, but not limited to, technical assistance and education, access to financing and credit, and facilitating business-to-business interaction.

City of Flint Economic Development Corporation

The EDC provides small business loans, tax abatements, and location selection services. Small- to medium-sized businesses located in the City of Flint are eligible for the EDC small business financing program, which provides gap funding for start-up and growing businesses. The EDC provides industrial businesses tax abatement options and revenue bonds based on investments in property or land. The City should assist with outreach to small businesses to grow awareness of the EDC's financial assistance programs.

Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

As one of the ten largest chambers in the State of Michigan, the Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce collaborates and partners with business, government, education, and non-profit organizations to support the local economy. The Chamber supports local businesses through marketing efforts and a strategic partnership with the Flint and Genesee Convention and Visitors Bureau. Technical assistance and education programs regarding site selection, procuring government contracts, and start-up businesses are offered through the Chamber. Finally, the Chamber works with the community, securing grants and funding for after-school youth programs.

eTEAM

The eTEAM is an entrepreneurial assistance team organized by the Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce. A regional collaboration that includes local universities and business assistance providers, such as Kettering University, the Michigan Small Business Technology and Development Center (MI-SBTDC), Mott Community College-Regional Technology Center, Commerce Connect, Automation Alley, Baker College of Flint Small Business Center, SCORE, Inventors Council of Mid-Michigan, VetBizCentral, Metro Community Development, and others.

The eTEAM helps entrepreneurs launch their businesses by providing technical assistance for financing options and writing business plans. The group also hosts an annual Jumpstart Entrepreneur Conference, serving as a one-stop shop for businesses looking to grow or get off the ground. The City should partner with the eTEAM to provide guidance on business operations within the City as well as assist in co-locating similar businesses to encourage collaboration and share resources.

Community Development Financial Institutions

A Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) is an institution that offers financial products and services specifically tailored for low-income borrowers in economically distressed communities. These financial products typically include mortgage financing for low-income and first-time homebuyers and non-profit developers, flexible underwriting and risk capital for needed community facilities, and commercial loans and investments for small start-ups or business expansion.

In Flint, Metro Community Development is a certified Community Development Financial Institution. Because these services are critical to the economic stability of Flint's residents, it is important to support the services Metro provides, and if possible expand the number of CDFI providers in the community.

Metro Business Loan Program

Metro receives grants for neighborhood improvement programs in Flint, conducts a homebuyer program, and provides KIVA loans to local start-ups and small businesses.

In 2010, Metro announced the introduction of its Business Micro-Loan Program, a $125,000 seed program from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation meant primarily to jump-start already existing small businesses in Downtown Flint. Projects can include renovations, improvements, and repairs; money that is often difficult to secure from traditional banks. The typical loan is for $15,000 with interest rates between 4 and 8 percent. Metro also offers enterprise loans to growing businesses. These loans range from $50,000 to $200,000 and carry interest rates between five and seven percent.

Community Development Corporations (CDCs)

CDCs, such as Salem Housing, Court Street Village, Flint NIPP and Metro among others, provide a multitude of housing-related services including foreclosure prevention, rental assistance and property improvement. Unlike many CDCs throughout the country, Flint's CDCs have experienced greater economic hardship due to steep and rapid declines in property values, which have outpaced the nation. As a result, Flint's CDCs are significantly weakened and lack the capacity to actively acquire, rehabilitate, develop, and manage properties. Because the CDCs can play an important role in neighborhood stabilization and economic development, the City should identify ways to strengthen their capacity.

The City can also assist other local, nontraditional lenders in marketing their loan programs and making information about credit options easier to access.

The New Economy Initiative

The New Economy Initiative is a Detroit-based program that focuses on entrepreneurship and workforce development. The program is funded by foundation grants totaling $100M, of which the C.S. Mott Foundation is a key contributor. Workforce development is a key factor of the model. The initiative funds training and education for entrepreneurs and manufacturers to transition from the automobile industry to a new client base.

The program capitalizes on existing industries within areas prime for growth (defense, border protection, transportation) and uses a "clustering" model, co-locating entrepreneurs of similar industries to allow them to collaborate and interact. The program also partners with and gives grants to educational institutions for research, information sharing, and workforce development programs.

The City of Flint should use the New Economy Initiative as a model for workforce development and entrepreneurial growth of local businesses and hold regular meetings of cluster representatives to respond to retention issues and expansion opportunities.

Michigan Credit Union Small Business Financing Alliance

As a joint program across the state, nearly 35 credit unions in Michigan have joined together to start a $43 million loan program to in-state small businesses, including some in Genesee County. The program, launched in 2010, is expected to benefit 2000+ new businesses and collaborate with other statewide facilities such as Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Centers.

Business Accelerator Fund

The Business Accelerator Fund is a 2-year, $3 million fund that may be accessed by participating business accelerators state-wide to provide specialized business acceleration services to companies that are commercializing advanced technology. The program was developed with input from 13 Michigan business accelerators and will leverage that network to spread best practices state-wide and in tandem with the Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center's (MI-SBTDC) business consulting, entrepreneurial education, and information based planning services.

The Business Accelerator Fund is a 21st Century Jobs Fund Program, managed by the MI-SBTDC in partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and Michigan's network of business accelerators.

Business Accelerators will select companies with a high potential for success and an ability to create a positive economic impact in the region. Accelerator Engagements will be awarded through a competitive review process. No company may receive more than $50,000 in accelerator services. Companies receiving more than $15,000 in accelerator services will pay a 10% fee to the business accelerator. Business Accelerators may not use BAF funds to assist companies that have raised more than $1 million in private sector capital or have more than $2.5 million in 12-month trailing revenue. Business Accelerators may each have their own eligibility requirements and selection criteria.

The Michigan Emerging Technologies Fund (ETF)

ETF is designed to expand funding opportunities for Michigan technology companies in the federal innovation research and development arena. To that end, the Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC), through the Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF), is dedicating up to $1.4 million to match federal funding opportunities for new or expanded opportunities in Michigan.

Oak Business Center

Located in north-central Flint, the Oak Business Center is a City-funded incubator initiative to assist and encourage residents to implement their business plans. The Center provides office space and access to equipment, as well as consulting services and financial aid. Though it does sometimes cater to high-tech start-ups, the Center's main target is to promote the growth of locally owned, small commercial trades or service industries. In order to qualify, the client must submit a complete application and business plan for review, as well as give an interview to see whether the business idea will match the goals of the Incubator. Although it is a City-owned project, the incubator relies on support from its community partnerships, such as area foundations, universities, and chambers of commerce.

The Michigan Community Revitalization Program (MCRP)

MCRP is an incentive program available from the Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF), in cooperation with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). It is designed to promote community revitalization that will accelerate private investment in areas of historically declining values, contribute to Michigan's reinvention as a vital, job generating state, foster redevelopment of functionally obsolete or historic properties, reduce blight, and protect the state's natural resources. The program is designed to provide grants, loans, or other economic assistance for eligible investment projects in Michigan. Generally, no funds will be disbursed until the project is verified as complete.

Business Incubators

Business incubators afford new startups and growing firms a way to build their businesses with minimal cost, support services, and infrastructure. Business incubation programs are often sponsored by private companies or municipal entities and public institutions, such as colleges and universities. Their goal is to help create and grow young businesses by providing them with necessary best practices support and financial and technical services.

Best Practice: Ann Arbor SPARK Incubator

SPARK is an organization that promotes economic development for high-tech and innovation-based companies in Ann Arbor. This non-profit group provides programs, resources, and support for business investment and expansion through collaborating with government, university, entrepreneurial, and community leaders.

One major program within SPARK is the Shifting Gears Program which assists skilled professionals obtain opportunities with entrepreneurial and emerging businesses. By attracting and strengthening industries in Ann Arbor, SPARK is contributing to the region's economic prosperity.

SPARK also offers a compelling framework for creating a business incubator in Flint that links cutting edge university research to small business start-ups. This strategy requires local universities and investors to establish a capital fund for student and faculty research that would help commercialize innovations into marketable technologies.

Microloan/Seed Grant Programs

A variety of programs exist at the state level to encourage investment and job growth in technology via the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's seed, angel, and venture capital funding. At the state level, technology is loosely defined to incorporate innovation in advanced automotives, security, alternative energy, manufacturing, and life sciences. Many of these funding sources draw from the already established entrepreneurship micro hubs located in the Michigan SmartZone network, which consists of 15 established incubators and small business innovation centers scattered throughout the state.

Larger funding opportunities include:

- The Michigan Pre-Seed fund, which provides secondary-stage capital to support high-technology startups in the advanced stage of their development;
- The Venture Michigan Fund for outside venture capitalists looking to invest in Michigan;
- The 21st Century Investment Fund, a grant to research and fund cutting edge investments in defense, life science, alternative energy, and advanced manufacturing; and
- The InvestMichigan! fund that aims to leverage public-private partnerships for opportunities in small-scale corporate buyouts.

Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC)

The RRC is new certification program of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation that assesses, certifies, and rewards communities that it sees as fit for attracting potential development.

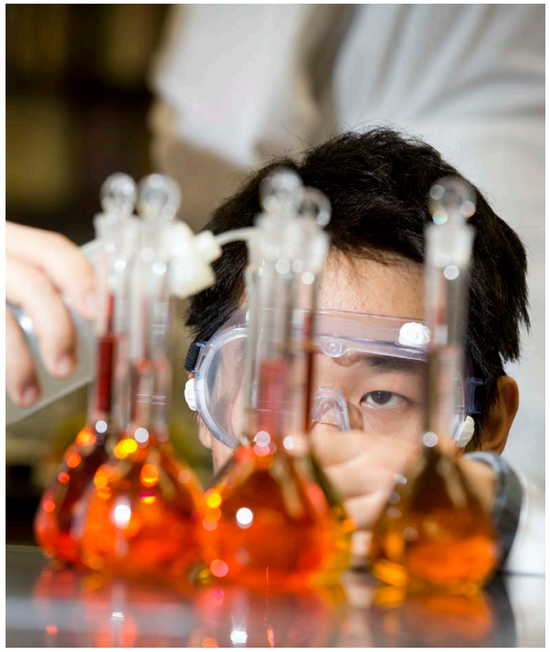
The overall aim of the initiative is to streamline a community's development process, making it more business friendly in hopes that it will more readily attract economic investment and growth.

To qualify for certification, applicants must submit an application and necessary pre-evaluation documents. From there, a panel of technical experts from around the state, serve as consultants and advisory committee to the community in order to implement best practices in areas of land use, education, economic development, zoning, and development processes.

Once the community approves and adopts the improvements, the municipality will be ready for certification, as well as additional funding and technical expertise.

The only applicant City in Genesee County out of the 36 that applied to the program in 2013 was the City of Burton. Most communities that have implemented the program since its inception are in the southeastern portion of the state, concentrated in the Detroit metro region. Flint should target areas for development and work to adapt existing regulations to reflect best practices of the RRC—understandable development procedures, a community-supported redevelopment vision, an open and predictable review process, and attractive sites for developers to locate their latest projects.

Although achieving RRC certification will assist Flint in crafting sensible regulations and a streamlined permitting process, it is also important to explore best practices in other parts of the country and where practical incorporate these practices into our regulatory framework too.



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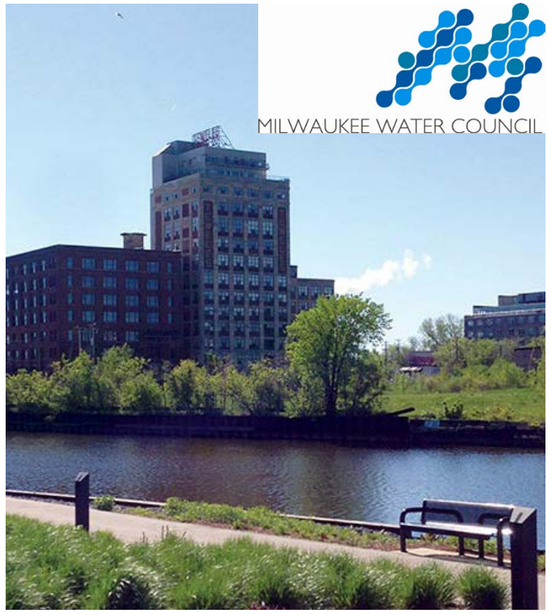


Reed Street Yards Global Water Technology Park and Global Water Center (Source: The Water Council)

REORIENTING ASSETS

Green Initiatives

There are many different definitions and categories of green initiatives. According to a report commissioned by the Flint Clean Economy project, this generally refers to businesses that result in one or more of the following benefits—greater use of clean energy; energy savings; greater resource efficiency; less pollution; and/or the restoration of natural systems that support life. These benefits may directly result from a new green product or service, or from improvements in the production process for existing "conventional" goods and services.

For example, jobs in the recycling industry such as collection, processing, remanufacturing, and deconstruction are considered green jobs. There are significant environmental benefits that derive from recycling jobs because recycling results in fewer waste and greenhouse gases produced by landfills, mining, and processing of raw materials.

The report highlights important academic studies on green initiatives.

1. The Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, found that green jobs have grown much faster in inner City areas than other types of jobs. Preliminary findings suggest that green jobs in the inner City experienced growth in the range of 6% to 12% from 1997 to 2008. In contrast, overall inner City jobs grew by only 1.3% over the same time period.
2. The Brookings Institution study showed that green jobs offer diverse opportunities, better pay, and are generally more accessible to lower-skilled workers.

Green initiatives are appropriate uses within several Land Use place types including Green Innovation, University Avenue Core, Commerce and Employment Center, and Production Center.

Flint Clean Economy Project

The Flint Clean Economy Project's purpose is to actively communicate the potential for clean economic development to create good jobs, fight poverty, and revitalize manufacturing in Flint. The project is working to develop and implement a clean technology economic development strategy that builds on the City's strengths: skilled labor, strong educational institutions, land availability, existing knowledge and manufacturing activity, and a history as a global technology leader. Central to the project's success is the Flint Clean Economy Project Taskforce, an official City advisory body comprised of a diverse array of stakeholders including representatives from the labor, business, educational, nonprofit, and public sectors.

Blue Economy

Similar to green initiatives, the blue economy is focused on jobs that benefit the environment. Michigan's superior access to water resources, available land, and existing transportation infrastructure has made it a viable place for promoting blue economy development, particularly for water companies including semiconductors, alternative energy, biotech, and battery functioning. Environmental consulting also has the potential to expand if more corporations begin incorporating water stewardship into their business practices.

Statewide opportunities for encouraging blue economy development are currently underway ranging from wastewater treatment to hydroelectricity. Considering approximately 20% of the earth's surface fresh water supply is contained in the Great Lakes, there is a strong potential for the state of Michigan to achieve economic recovery while protecting its water quality.

The Karegnondi Water Pipeline

The Karegnondi Water Pipeline represents a new economic development opportunity for the City. In April 2013, Flint ended its longstanding contract with the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department. The City of Flint then entered into a new relationship with Karegnondi Water Authority (KWA) and is investing $274 million to build 64 miles of KWA pipeline, pumping stations, a county water treatment plant, and an intake pipe into Lake Huron over the next two to three years.

After the pipeline is constructed, Flint will have the capacity to provide water to more than 2,400 square miles in the I-69 corridor. Extending Flint's water supply will strengthen agricultural industries, stimulate job growth, and spark spin-off parts manufacturing opportunities.

Local economic developers have already begun to investigate opportunities that will be created by the water pipeline and the City should vigorously pursue strategies that capitalize on this major asset.

Best Practice: City of Milwaukee Water Council

The City of Milwaukee's Water Council brings together representatives from the area's 130+ water technology companies, research institutes, university scientists, stormwater experts, and nonprofit organizations, to establish a unique and innovative water research community in the Greater Milwaukee area of the Great Lakes region. Partnerships exist with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, home to the nation's first Freshwater Sciences program, the Great Lakes WATER Institute, as well as other area universities, businesses, and organizations devoted to water research, water law, water technology, and/or climate change.

The Water Council promotes the region as an economic development center and water innovation hub. In 2011, the Obama Administration's Regional Innovation Cluster Initiative announced the recipients of its $37 million interagency "Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge" to revitalize communities and prepare high-growth clusters for a future in science and the green economy. Awarded $1.65 million of this federal funding, the Milwaukee Regional Water Accelerator Project is a business incubator program for the advancement of water technology-related companies and research.

The Project is located in the Global Water Center, which will accommodate water-related research facilities for universities and companies, including accelerator space for new, emerging water technology-related startups. The work of the Water Accelerator Project, The Water Council and other affiliate organizations provide an example of how rust-belt cities can transform themselves to be on the forefront of the eco-industrial movement.

Redeveloping & Repurposing Properties

Vacant commercial land and industrial sites are central features of Flint's current landscape. With proper remediation, site preparation, and infrastructure improvements, many of these sites can be leveraged to attract new development and investment. In addition, site attributes such as rail spurs can be enhanced as a means of generating development potential for a range of uses including logistics, distribution, manufacturing, and technology. The City can strengthen the visual appeal of targeted areas, which will be more attractive to developers. They should also work with the development community to provide local financial incentives and identify funding gaps.

Commercial Property Demolitions

The City has an extensive inventory of vacant or substandard commercial properties that are having a blighting effect on Flint's commercial corridors and districts. While thousands of residential properties have been demolished and greened, currently many of the funds made available through the State and Federal governments, limit the ability of municipalities and other entities such as land banks, to demolish commercial properties. The City should work with the Land Bank and other organizations to identify creative strategies for the removal of commercial blight.

Commercial Property Assessment

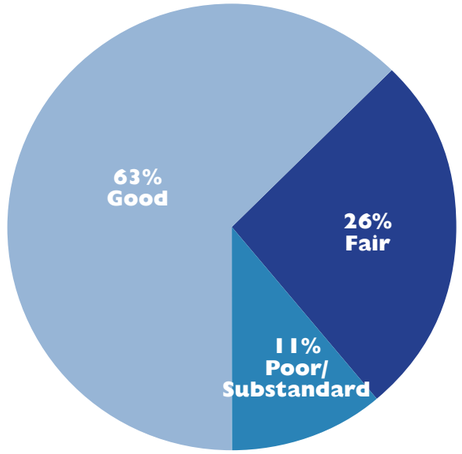
Building off the success from the residential properties inventory, planning staff again partnered with the Community Foundation of Greater Flint Neighborhood Small Grants program to perform a commercial property assessment. City staff partnered with 38 community groups to perform a commercial property assessment on 1,760 parcels, or roughly 48% of the total amount of commercial parcels.

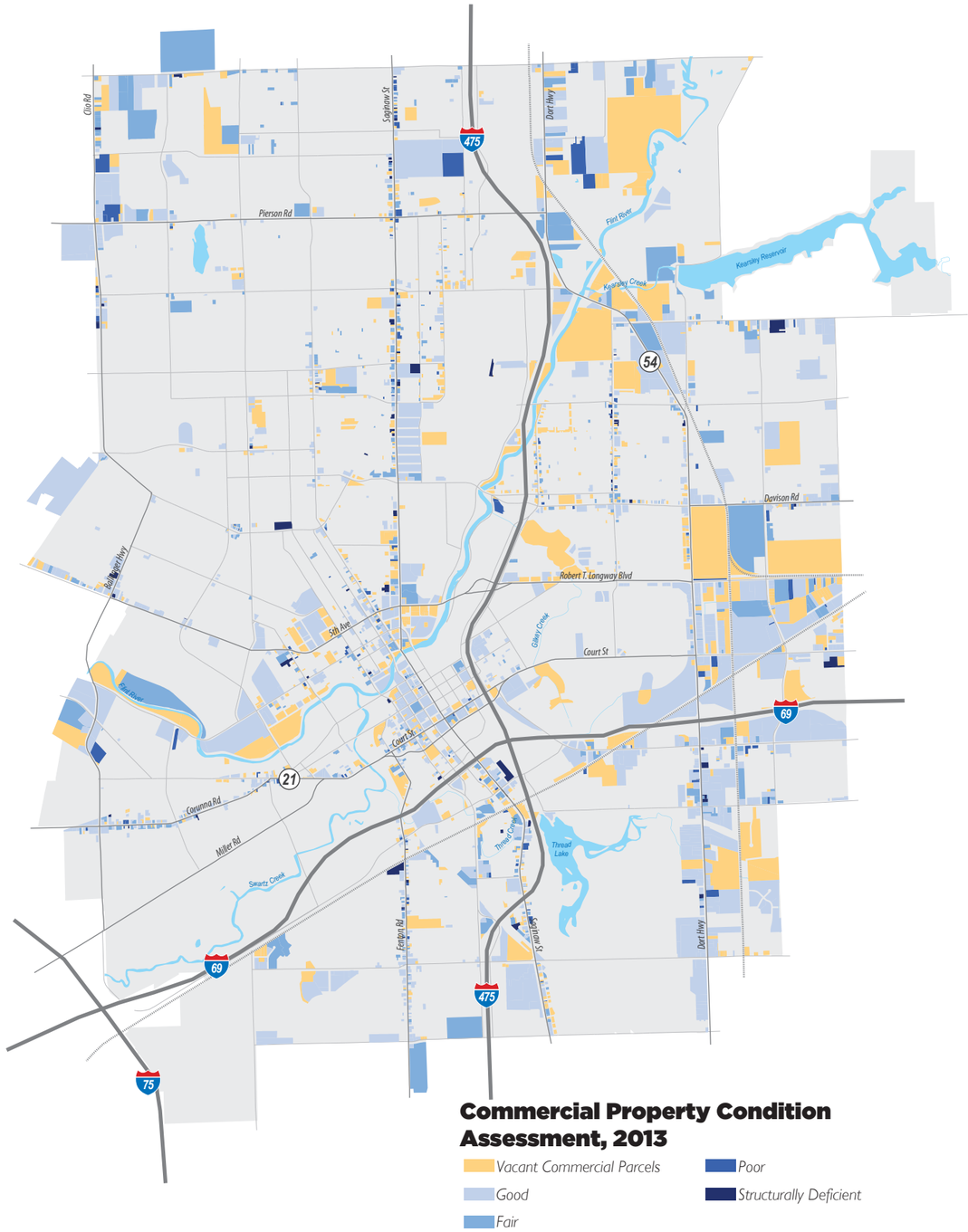
The groups were asked to gather 23 unique attributes for each specific commercial parcel such as signage, access to public transit, environmental concerns, and overall condition. The data collected from this inventory will play a vital role for the City in truly understanding the current challenges and opportunities within its commercial corridors and districts. Additionally, this information will benefit the Land Bank as a potential revenue generator by assisting in marketing purposes for the potential sale of its holdings.

City-wide Statistics

As of the fall of 2013, 3,211 commercial parcels had been assessed encompassing 87% of the entire City. Of those, 1,101 (34%) are commercial vacant lots while 2,110 (66%) contained a structure. Of the parcels containing a structure, 1,452 (69%) are currently "In Use" while 584 (28%) are unoccupied or "vacant." Of the 2,110 parcels containing a structure, 1,329 (63%) are rated "good", 553 (26%) are rated fair, and 150 (7%) are rated in "poor" condition. 78 (3.7%) are rated as "structurally deficient." Overall, out of 3,211 total commercial parcels assessed within Flint, there are 1,452 (45%) that contain a structure and are fully operational.

Commercial Property Condition





Brownfield redevelopment concepts: (left) Good Bean Cage, Flint Riverfront Restoration Plan (2010) (right) Buick City, Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce (2012)

Commercial Areas Investment Framework

Similar to the Neighborhood Investment Framework discussed in ***Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods Plan***, a Commercial Areas Investment Framework should be developed that builds on the Commercial Property Assessment, and the market data provided in the Master Plan. While the Commercial Property Assessment provides a starting point for policy discussion, further analysis is needed to intersect the results of the property assessment with the Land Use Plan.

Such an analysis is needed to identify the status of buildings that fall within the Land Use Plan's commercial districts (e.g. Neighborhood Center, City Corridor, Commerce and Employment, etc.).

These areas should be the focus of programs and strategies identified in the Supporting Small Business section of the Economic Development and Education Plan. Conversely, to encourage investment in commercial areas supported by the Land Use Plan, the City should consider limiting the use of such programs at properties and businesses located in non-commercial areas of the Land Use Plan.

The City should also evaluate the use of various incentives such as tax abatements and low- or no-interest business improvement loans to encourage businesses in non-commercial place types to relocate to the commercial areas identified in the Land Use Plan.

Repurposing Publicly Owned Properties

Obsolete, surplus, and/or vacant public facilities can be repurposed and used to facilitate development opportunities. The advantage of using these properties, is that they are already under public control and can be more easily leveraged in attracting developers. While demolition and redevelopment may be more appropriate than re-use in many instances, the community could benefit from the maintenance of well-located, vacant structures, that are capable of meeting the needs of modern commercial and institutional users.

Flint Community Schools

The Flint Community Schools have closed more than twenty facilities including elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. Schools play an important social role within the community and the adaptive reuse of closed school facilities should be pursued to ensure the long-term economic health of Flint's neighborhoods.

It is vital that the City and other partners work with the school district to determine how to best use these vacant facilities.

Flint City Market Site

Relocation of farmers market operations from the Flint City Market site will create a significant opportunitity to redevelop or reposition the City-owned site. The City should encourage the repurposing of the building for either creative uses (i.e. artists' galleries) or Flint River related recreation.

Additional discussion of repurposing properties, including school facilities and the Flint City Market site, is located in the Education portion of this section, as well as ***Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods Plan*** and ***Chapter 8: Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan***.

Flint's Brownfields

Flint's historic industrial manufacturing economy of the late 19th and entire 20th century, produced many brownfields that range in size and character. From large auto manufacturing sites, such as Buick City and Chevy in the Hole, to small dry-cleaning or gas station operations, the City has a large amount of contaminated sites that pose a hurdle to redevelopment. Flint's numerous brownfields possess significant potential to host a wide variety of uses aimed at expanding the local job base. Additional discussion of these important assets in contained in ***Chapter 4: Land Use Plan***.

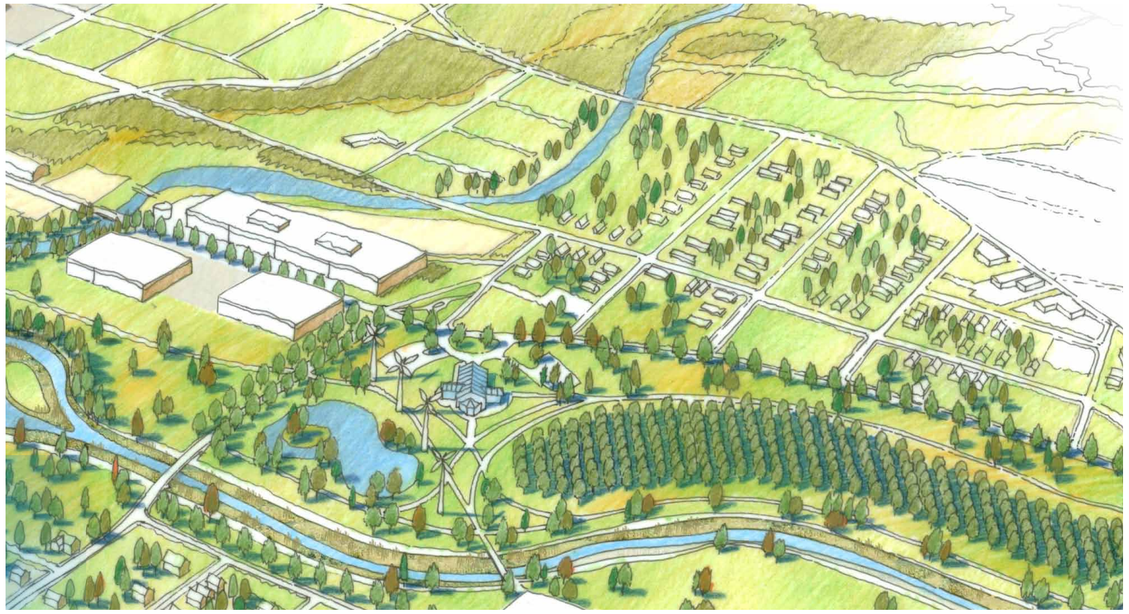
Buick City

Buick City is a large brownfield site previously owned by General Motors that housed a massive automobile manufacturing complex. It consists of two areas: 258 acres located to the south of Leith Street and 194 acres to the north of Leith Street. Though they are being marketed by RACER Trust and the Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce separately, they are often collectively referred to as Buick City.

The Buick City site offers the most significant opportunity for economic redevelopment within the region, and could accommodate a wide array of uses beyond the heavy industrial automotive complex that was once located there.

The Chamber and RACER Trust have marketed the site for smaller users with the potential for intermodal facilities, leveraging the site's access to rail, interstate, and Bishop International Airport. It was also reported that the site's concentration of telecommunication infrastructure could also be attractive to information technology firms. The Buick City area's proximity to the Flint River also provides a potential source of raw water.

In recognition of a community desire to maintain the majority of the Buick City area as productive space, the Land Use Plan divides the Buick City area into three employment-related place types: Commerce and Employment Center, Production Center, and Green Innovation.



Chevy in the Hole Aerial Sketch. Flint Riverfront Restoration Plan (2010).

Chevy in the Hole

This 130-acre site of a former General Motors manufacturing facility held 17 buildings, including an engine assembly plant, an engine parts plant, an auto parts plant, a body production plant, an office building, and a hospital. The site is an important potential asset to the City given its large size, proximity to several neighborhoods, location near Downtown, and adjacency to important institutions including Kettering University and Atwood Stadium. Chevy in the Hole is also located at the confluence of Swartz Creek and Flint River with a long stretch of river frontage.

Flint Riverfront Restoration Plan

Chevy in the Hole is included within the University Avenue Core area of the Land Use Plan, and has been identified as an asset for economic development as well as a mix of both active and passive community open space. As specified in the Flint Riverfront Restoration Plan, there is community support for the establishment of a large park space along the banks of a rehabilitated Flint River and supports a naturally flowing, native riparian vegetation waterway.

Green Infrastructure

The City of Flint, through a partnership with the GCLBA, is currently implementing a $1.6 million EPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund sub-grant, to design a green cap to convert the site into a sustainable green space. The funding will also be used to develop the first phase of the green cap. The partners are in the process of securing additional resources to develop future phases of the green cap. The City will apply for funding through an EPA Brownfields Area Wide Planning Grant to incorporate additional green infrastructure into the site, create strong linkages to the site, and promote redevelopment within the surrounding neighborhoods.

The resulting Chevy Area and River Corridor Plan (CARCP) would also celebrate the site's historical significance as the location of the famous 1936-37 sit down strike that marked the first major collective bargaining agreement, won by the United Auto Workers (UAW).

Potential Reuses

In addition to naturalized open space and recreation facilities, the site's location in the University Avenue Core place type, indicates potential for a wide range of development that could be accommodated at the site. Potential reuses that should be considered at Chevy in the Hole include, but are not limited to, a field course and job training site related to activities at Kettering, an environmental education and training center, additional incubator facilities for green technology, similar to the Kettering Innovation Center, a biosolids plant, student and workforce housing, or research and development. The City should continue to lead the charge in facilitating remediation of Chevy in the Hole and work with partner organizations such as Kettering University and Hurley Medical Center to promote beneficial redevelopment.

Delphi East

The Delphi East site consists of a brownfield and partially occupied industrial complex. The Delphi East brownfield is the site of the former AC Spark Plug Plant, which closed in 1976, and was demolished in 2008. The Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce is currently marketing the 59-acre eastern portion of the site for sale.

The site has access to an inactive railroad spur, and could be combined for the adjacent 69 acres to the west. A portion of the complex located between Averill Avenue and Center Road, where Delphi is currently utilizing approximately 1 million square feet of the 1.5 million-square-foot plant, will remain partially in operation until the entire site is closed in November of 2013.

A sub-area plan is being developed for the Delphi East area that will establish a preliminary vision for the Delphi East area. While additional outreach and research is needed to sufficiently highlight the potential this area possesses, recommendations for the site include:

- Reuse of the remaining manufacturing facility;
- Extension of Commerce Street north to Davison Road;
- Commercial development at Davison Road and Dort Highway; and,
- Cluster development of smaller research and development and light industry uses.

Success Story: Great Lakes Technology Center

A notable brownfield redevelopment success within Flint was the repurposing of the former General Motors Fisher Body complex. Acquired by the Genesee County Land Bank in 2006, the site was then transferred into a tax-free Renaissance Zone. In 2010, two major occupants moved in to the vacant properties on the site and repurposed it as a medical technology center. Rebranded as the Great Lakes Medical Technology Center, it continues to provide a growing number of jobs to Flint and Genesee County. Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy owns 600,000 square feet of the site, which houses their pharmaceutical distribution facility, currently employing 680 with plans to add 1,000 jobs over the next five years. The other half is now occupied by the Insight Institute of Neurosurgery and Neuroscience (IINN) as well as an incubator that is used for medical research and pharmaceuticals.

Downtown Flint

As a regional hub for office employment, education, government, and community services, Downtown is one of Flint's most significant assets and its health as a central business district is critical to the long-term sustainability of the Flint economy. In order for Downtown to thrive, it must redefine itself not just as an area of business, but a dynamic destination in and of itself, where people live, work, and play.

Moving forward, Downtown Flint must look beyond a legacy of surface parking lots and parking garages, and increase residential and commercial density through innovative planning and development. The focus must be shifted from solely economic development, but to its interrelationship with placemaking. Several key redevelopment opportunities and underutilized community assets located in the Downtown district will collectively define Downtown's future and sense of place.

Downtown Strategic Plan

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) developed a 3- to 5-year action-oriented Strategic Plan for the revitalization and economic redevelopment of Downtown Flint. The project area for the Downtown Strategic Plan is located within the boundaries of the Flint DDA district.

Many of the goals and initiatives from this plan have been completed, and the Downtown Strategic Plan builds off of previous planning efforts such as the ***Initiatives for Uptown Plan*** (2003), ***Flint River District Strategy*** (2004), and ***UM-Flint Campus Master Plan*** (2003), but with more up to date and more specific objectives.

As identified in the Land Use Plan, Flint should continue to support the guiding principles of the Downtown Strategic Plan, which focused around creating a downtown that is pedestrian friendly, mixed use, densely populated, safe, diverse, and inviting so that it is a more attractive place to live and work.

Downtown Development Authority

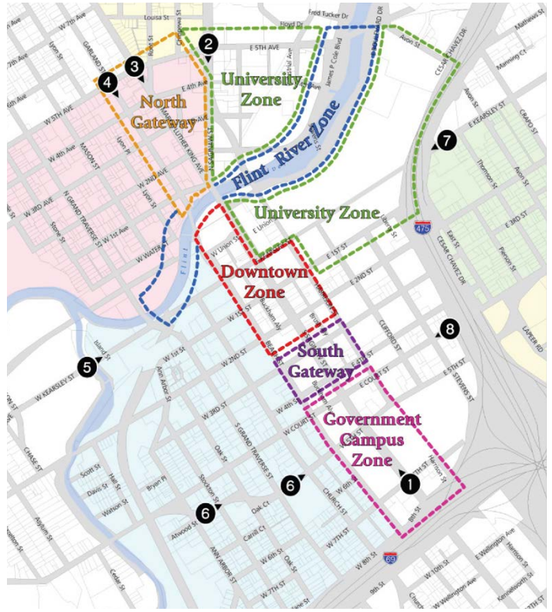
The focus of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), which is funded through tax increment finance and parking revenues, is redevelopment within Downtown Flint. Its core duties include marketing the Downtown, managing parking facilities, and hosting several annual events. The Riverbank Park is also maintained and operated by the DDA.

The DDA is an independent organization, although it acts on behalf of the City of Flint in matters of redevelopment. The DDA is an essential partner in the revitalization of Downtown Flint.

Important Places

While the City, the DDA, and other partners have worked to implement much of the strategic plan, there are several key areas that will require additional attention as Flint seeks to revitalize the downtown. These include:

- Capitol Theatre redevelopment;
- Redevelopment of Riverbank Park and other open space along the Flint River;
- Genesee Towers & "Health and Wellness" District; and,
- Determination of the best use for the Flat Lot.



Downtown Strategic Plan

Flint Health and Wellness District

The Flint Health and Wellness District, an emerging area of Downtown that will highlight Flint's health, education, and wellness assets, will extend from Brush Alley to Chavez Drive, and First Street to Court Street. The District will be anchored by a major new reinvestment project that capitalizes on the momentum generated by the revitalization of Saginaw Street to extend redevelopment into the greater Downtown area. The $32 million project will redevelop the four City blocks on the south end of the district. The project includes three key elements that reuse vacant buildings and sites and knit together the fabric of existing amenities along First and Second Streets. These elements include the renovation of the former Flint Journal headquarters to house Michigan State University's (MSU) Flint Public Health and Medical Campus; creation of the Flint Farmers' Market at the Flint Journal printing press facility; and demolition of the Genesee Towers building, which will be replaced by an urban plaza.

MSU Campus

Building on Flint's "eds and meds" redevelopment strategy, the project has attracted Michigan State University as an anchor tenant. MSU will move its entire School of Public Health to Flint, and will expand its medical program to include a total of 100 medical students in Flint. The Public Health program will emphasize applied research on major public health problems found in Flint and comparable urban areas. The Flint Journal headquarters building will be renovated to offer over 100,000 square feet of office and commercial space, as well as 16 loft-style residential apartments. This project will create approximately 100 jobs, 60 of which will be well-paying positions related to health research.

"Mark's House" Flat Lot Competition Winner. Source: Flint Public Arts Project

Capitol Theatre. Source: Joel Rash

Downtown Plaza

The Health and Wellness District will incorporate a new urban plaza on the former site of the Genesee Towers building. The new plaza will be themed around exploration and discovery, providing an open space amenity that is readily accessible to the new MSU campus, the historic Capitol Theater, which is currently under renovation, and patrons of the commercial businesses along Second Street.

Flint Farmers' Market

In spring 2014, operations at the current Flint City Market will relocate to a new market, the Flint Farmers' Market, in the Downtown. This new venue in the old Flint Journal printing facility offers room for all of the market's current amenities—33 inside vendors, a restaurant, an art gallery, and 40 outside vendor spaces—as well as space for 25 additional inside vendors, a commercial kitchen that will support entrepreneurs in bringing new food products to market, commercial office space, and a community room with seating for up to 300. The new facility is also located next to the MTA Transit Center, and will be ADA accessible, providing more convenient access to the disabled and underserved.

Flat Lot Redevelopment

The DDA-owned parking lot that fronts Saginaw Street, between Kearsley and First Street, is commonly known as the Flat Lot. While the Flat Lot is host to many events throughout the year, and serves as a central parking lot for the Downtown, it is also visually unappealing and destroys the density and urban fabric of the Downtown. With such a central location and extensive frontage along Saginaw Street, the Flat Lot represents a significant redevelopment opportunity for the community.

Design Competition

In a joint effort between the Flint Public Art Project, the Flint Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Uptown Reinvestment Corporation, and Michigan Architectural Foundation, a Flat Lot Competition recently solicited ideas for the development of a temporary structure that would occupy eight parking spaces on the lot. This competition began a much-needed dialogue on alternative uses for the Flat Lot.

While the winning temporary public art project was an attraction within the Downtown, a long-term vision is needed for the Flat Lot site. The University of Michigan-Flint Campus Master Plan identifies the Flat Lot as the location for a park and plaza featuring an amphitheatre. The City should work with the DDA, U of M-Flint, and other partner organizations to create a long-term vision and strategic redevelopment plan for the Flat Lot.

Redevelopment Parameters

When considering a development proposal for the Flat Lot, the City and DDA should consider the following guidelines, based on parameters and best practices established by the Downtown place type:

- The Flat Lot's extensive frontage along Saginaw Street should serve as an asset to new development.
- Development should be constructed along the front lot line and oriented toward the street to extend the streetwall established by the buildings to the south and west of the site.
- Development should establish clear pedestrian connections to surrounding blocks and assets such as the UM-Flint campus.
- If a garage is placed on site, it should not be visible from the street.
- The site has functioned historically as a community gathering space. Public open space such as a small park or plaza should be encouraged, but should not be a primary component of the site.
- Development does not adversely affect ability to repay bonds associated with the Flat Lot parking revenues.

As identified in the Downtown place type, there are a wide range of potentially appropriate uses for the Flat Lot, but all should function well within and contribute to a dense, mixed use, and pedestrian friendly environment.

Capitol Theatre

First opened in 1928, the historic Capitol Theatre is well poised to once again become a regional destination for arts and entertainment. In addition to the 2,000 seat theatre, redevelopment plans also include 25,000 square feet of retail and office space. At completion, the 15th-century Hispano-Italian style theater will have a direct and induced economic impact, not just on the Downtown, but the City as a whole. In addition to jobs created during construction, this includes an estimated fifty permanent theatre positions, and additional employment related to complementary nearby businesses such as restaurants.

The theatre is one of Downtown Flint's key assets, and has been noted by City leaders as a missing link in completing the revitalization of Downtown. Theatre owners have, and continue to proactively pursue federal and state assistance and resources to further improve the property, including receiving a Community Development Grant from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority and seeking New Markets Tax Credits and other programs and funding sources.

The City should continue to work with the DDA, Capitol Theatre representatives, and other property owners to pursue state and federal funding for the properties' rehabilitation, as well as secure additional interim uses for retail and office space and special events.

University of Michigan-Flint

As a significant property owner, large employer, and regional destination, the University of Michigan-Flint is an essential partner in the revitalization of Downtown Flint, as well as the larger community. For example, Uptown Reinvestment Corp. converted the former Hyatt Regency within the downtown into new student housing used by many UM-Flint students, transforming the vacant structure from a liability to an anchor on the north end of the Downtown Saginaw Corridor.

The University of Michigan-Flint completed its Campus Master Plan in 2011. Many of the Plan recommendations deal with improvements within the existing campus, and will have minimal influence on adjacent areas. However, there are several recommendations that center on the 'town-gown' relationship between the University and City of Flint. Such recommendations include the reuse of existing downtown buildings for university purposes, integration of established pedestrian networks with campus walkways, and potential improvements to areas outside of the campus that could benefit U of M-Flint students as well the greater Downtown Flint area.

Flint River & Waterfront

Redesign of Riverbank Park

Riverbank Park follows the banks of the Flint River as it passes through Downtown Flint, and is maintained by the DDA. In addition to the park's green spaces, the park's amphitheatre is a valuable public space along the river that the community desires to see revitalized and properly leveraged as an asset to the Downtown. There is a strong desire to establish a closer connection between Downtown Flint, and the river. To that end, the City and its partners should pursue implementation of the community supported Riverfront Restoration Plan.

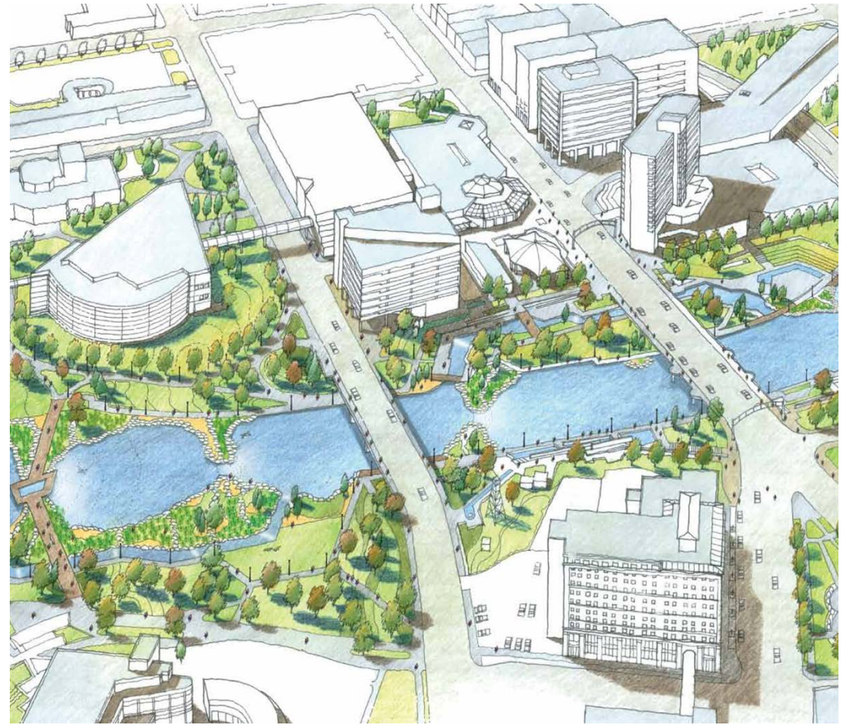
Important recommendations within the Plan for Riverbank Park include enhancing physical and visual access to the river, pedestrian underpasses at bridges, development of a new and improved network of pedestrian-only paths along the river's edge that provide barrier-free access across the length of the park, a central amphitheatre with a terraced open space to accommodate sitting and viewing areas, and connectivity to adjacent streets. The Plan also recommends removal of concrete walls along the Saginaw Street bridge to open up the street-level viewshed and establish a clear and visible connection to the downtown.

The City of Flint received a MDNR Trust fund grant to implement a first phase of physical changes to Riverbank Park in accordance with the plan and should continue to pursue funding to move forward with additional phases of the plan.

University Pavilion

In 2007, the Project for Public Spaces prepared a report for the DDA and Uptown Reinvestment Corporation that identified placemaking strategies for unique places within Downtown. The University Pavilion was originally built as a festival marketplace, but has been reborn as a student union and university offices. The building is well-used by U of M-Flint students, staff, and visitors, but is not frequented by downtown visitors and workers.

The Project for Public Spaces report proposes that University Pavilion be redesigned to connect with Downtown through year-round programming of the amphitheater space including use as an ice rink in the winter. Improvements to the skating rink should also be coupled with improvements to Riverbank Park. Just as with the Flat Lot, the City should work with U of M-Flint, the DDA, and other stakeholders to develop a detailed plan for the University Pavilion site that facilitates year-round use by the University and larger Downtown community.



Riverbank Park Aerial Sketch, Flint Riverfront Restoration Plan (2010)

Innovation District

Flint is transitioning from a solely manufacturing economy to a diverse range of new technologies and industries. Moving forward, Flint must capitalize on its unique institutional assets to create networked hubs of innovation and vitality that attract and retain top talent. This "anchor development" strategy is a central component to stimulating economic growth in Flint.

A 2013 study by U3 Ventures, in partnership with the State of Michigan, identified Flint as one of only four Michigan cities possessing the assets, anchor support, and market conditions necessary for immediate and effective anchor development. Successful anchor development, or maximizing cooperation between key institutions on strategies designed to compound economic gains, will increase residential density in the urban core, shift institutional procurement and employee spending to local businesses, and increase urban vitality.

The central corridor of Flint, encompassing University Avenue, Court Street, the Flint River, and Delphi East, represents the innovation core of Flint's future, as well as the anchor of a productive economic region that stretches along I-69 through mid-Michigan and into Canada.

The "innovation district" includes the area's largest employers, research institutions, and cultural assets such as: Kettering University, Mott Community College, University of Michigan-Flint, Genesys Downtown Flint Health Center, Hurley Medical Center, McLaren Regional Medical Center, Delphi East, and the Flint Cultural Center.

The Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce has recently hired staff to develop a plan for this Innovation District, focusing on the anchor driven, place-based economic growth strategies recommended by U3 Ventures. These include:

1. Stabilizing Residential Neighborhoods: Incentivize anchor employees to support anchor neighborhoods that have strong housing stock but that exhibit decline;
2. Strengthening Downtown Flint: Develop new and young professional housing in Downtown Flint that would serve the anchor market;
3. Linking Innovation: Develop an innovation center that connects university students and researchers with the major healthcare institutions interested in commercialization; and,
4. Promoting Safety and Security: Implement a safety strategy along the University Avenue Corridor between the University.

More detailed discussion regarding the application of Innovation District strategies will be included in a sub-area plan for the University Avenue corridor.

I-69 International Trade Corridor

The I-69 International Trade Corridor, or Michigan's Blue Water Gateway, is a commercial transportation route between the Midwest and Ontario, Canada. Genesee County is a participating region, looking to capitalize on the corridor's multi-modal transportation infrastructure through the warehousing, distribution, and manufacture of trade goods.

The I-69 International Trade Corridor Next Michigan Development Corporation (NMDC) provides incentives for businesses located along the corridor that move their products utilizing two or more forms of transportation. Incentives include tax abatement and even approval for Renaissance Zones, which are project and parcel-specific tax-free designations for qualifying businesses.

The Flint region serves as a strategic commercial gateway between the Midwestern United States and Ontario, Canada, with multi-modal transportation infrastructure that offers a wide range of distribution options. I-69 International Trade Corridor advantages include:

- Industry Clusters in Automotive, Defense, Aerospace, Medical Device and Green Technology;
- A trained and highly skilled workforce;
- A supportive and engaged educational system;
- Access to critical markets in Canada and Midwestern United States;
- Two Foreign Trade Zones available;
- HUBZone available; and
- Low-cost, incentivized locations.

Multi-Modal Opportunities

The corridor is home to major multi-modal sites, brownfield redevelopment opportunities, and industrial parks offering high-quality/high-value industrial buildings and acreage. There are nearly 750,000 residents in the Corridor, which covers more than 2,500 square miles. As a "high-traffic, low congestion" thoroughfare, the Corridor provides a multitude of transportation advantages.

The Corridor has the advantage of access to the Halifax Deep Water Port, as well as three deep water ports located along the St. Clair River at the Canadian border crossing. In addition, the Blue Water Bridge and Rail Tunnel to Canada are the third most active crossings between Canada and the United States. The City should continue to vigorously promote and support businesses along its multimodal corridors.

Highways

I-69 is one of Michigan's "Corridors of Highest International Significance," according to the Michigan Department of Transportation. The Corridor also intersects with Interstates 75 and 94, as well as US-23 and a host of state highways. The connectivity provided by these thoroughfares coupled with low traffic congestion make the Corridor the most effective way to traverse the state.

Rail

The Corridor is home to CSX and Canadian National railroads, which provide access to destinations throughout the continent. Connectivity to points east, west, north, and south is available from the heart of the Corridor.

Air

The western end of the I-69 International Trade Corridor is anchored by Bishop International Airport. Bishop serves approximately one million passengers annually, and is an intermodal freight hub that accommodates cargo plane, truck, and train traffic.

Local Food Economy

The urban agriculture, community gardening, and local food movement has grown rapidly in Flint. While a more detailed discussion of this topic as it relates to community well-being is located in ***Chapter 10: Public Safety, Health & Welfare Plan***, local food also represents an underutilized asset within the local and regional economies. Food that flows through the local food system creates an economic multiplier as profits stay within Genesee County and consumers gain access to healthier food. Locally sourced food also provide the added environmental benefit of having travelled less distance and undergone minimal processing.

Local Food as Economic Asset

It is estimated that in 2013, Genesee County consumers spend $1.1 billion buying food, including $645 million for home use and $220 million in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamp) expenditures. Only $1.5 million of food products are sold by farmers directly to consumers, within the county. These figures highlight significant growth potential for the sale of local food within Genesee County.

Tapping into this potential will require new policies on behalf of the City, support from local partner organizations, and innovative business solutions. Priorities should include:

- Revising the City's zoning ordinance to support urban agriculture;
- Providing start-up business support, such as business planning, shared resources, and cooperative models;
- Researching supply and demand for various local food products;
- Facilitating institutional purchasing to provide increased, stable demand for local foods; and,
- Establishing a regional food hub to actively manage the aggregation, distribution, and marketing of local food products.

Food Policy Council

City of Flint has no official food policy council, but existing entities like 'edible flint' and Food for Change represent broad community efforts to develop and implement community based food strategies. City of Flint participation in these activities can lend authority to these efforts and increase chances of government and private funding. Several Michigan cities have food policy councils including Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Grand Rapids and there is also a statewide Michigan Food Policy Council.

Like these peer cities, Flint should establish a City Food Policy Council to identify direct roles the City can play in developing and implementing community-based food strategies.

A more detailed discussion regarding the local food systems strategies is included in the report Integrating Food Systems into City of Flint's Master Plan (2013).

HIGHER EDUCATION

One of Flint's strengths is its higher education offerings—four colleges/universities offering a wide range of academic programs. Post-secondary educational opportunities are important to the health of a local economy as they act as regional anchors, employ residents, and educate the Flint's future workforce.

The City must continue to embrace the role that higher education institutions play in providing academic, as well as cultural programs for students and the general public. The Plan's future recommendations pertaining to economic development, public safety, and land use will also impact the future of higher education in Flint, as well as maximize the presence of higher education institutes, generating housing demand in and around their campuses.

Kettering University

Kettering University is a private institution providing both undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the fields of engineering, science, mathematics, and business. More than 2,000 students attended the university in the Fall of 2011. Originally founded as an automobile engineering school in 1919, the university operated as the General Motors Institute from 1926 through 1982. Today, the University still focuses on engineering and applied technology and it operates a co-op employment program that has over 100 participating employer partners.

The University consists of a six-building, 90-acre campus southwest of Downtown, adjacent to the Flint River. Currently, the University is under capacity with its facilities. Approximately half of the student body (900 students) lives on campus. The newest building, the 9,000 square foot Innovation Center, opened in 2010 is an incubator for entrepreneurial technology start-ups. The University has also recently completed upgrades to several science labs and developed a commercial building featuring a student eatery and police service center at the corner Chevrolet and University Avenue.

The University is proceeding with a Campus Master Plan that may identify needs for new facilities as enrollment increases, and new programs are created in the future. In preparation for expansion and reinvestment, Kettering University has purchased more than 100 foreclosed properties in the area.

Exerpt from the UM Campus Master Plan

Mott Community College

Mott Community College (MCC) is a regional two-year institution with an enrollment of 10,300 students. The college offers over 100 associate degree and certificate programs in a wide range of subjects such as health sciences, criminal justice, culinary arts, and technology. About 63% of the student body attends on a part time basis. 82% of students that attend the school come from within the county. The college, formerly known as Genesee Community College, was renamed in honor of Charles Stewart Mott in 1973.

The 13-building, 32-acre main campus is located at the southern end of Kearsley Park on land donated by C.S. Mott's Applewood Estate. Several campus buildings are organized around a series of open spaces. The facilities are operating at full capacity and are in need of some improvement. Parking lots and ramps are on the perimeter of the campus. MCC also hosts FABLAB, which is a digital fabrication laboratory designed to move innovative ideas into marketable products. The main campus is complimented by several regional facilities including the Regional Technology Center, three community technology centers, and a workforce education center. The College has branches in Clio, Fenton, Lapeer, and Howell.

The College is funded through state taxes, local property taxes, and tuition and fees. Due to declining local property tax revenue, an increased reliance on tuition and fees is needed in order to maintain the current quality of education and community service.

University of Michigan-Flint

The University of Michigan-Flint (UM-Flint) is a four-year, public University that is part of the University of Michigan System. Founded in 1956, UM-Flint has grown from a small, undergraduate liberal arts college to a university offering over 100 degree programs for undergraduates and 26 degree programs for graduate study. Total enrollment for the Fall 2013 semester was a reported 8,555 students, a 3.2% increase over the previous year. Since 2005, enrollment has grown 33%.

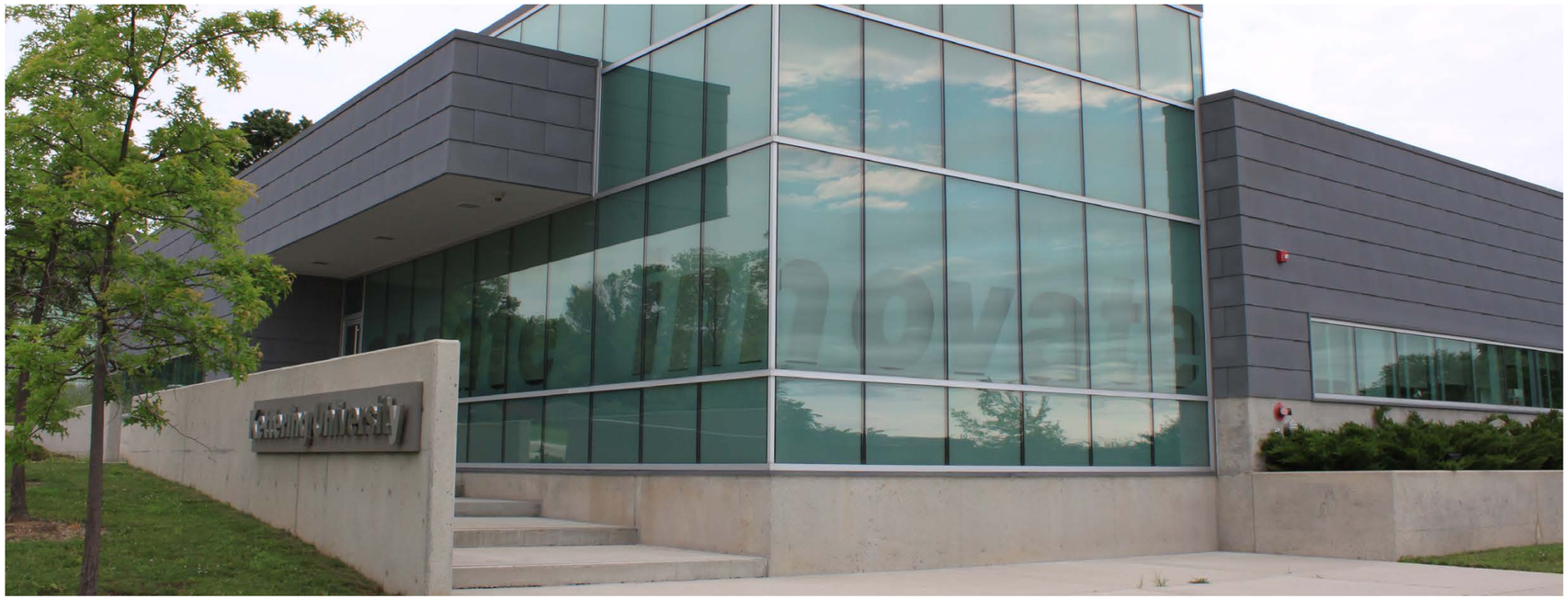
UM-Flint is situated on a 76-acre campus along the north and south banks of the Flint River in Downtown Flint. The University built its first residence hall in 2008, which has helped enliven downtown. Known for its dedication to community engagement, the university has a strong service-learning program that emphasizes taking action.

In 2011, the University updated its Campus Master Plan. The 10-year plan identifies new facilities including a recreation center expansion, recreation fields, a residence hall, and additional academic space. Plans also include the reuse of existing Downtown buildings for university purposes, integration of established pedestrian networks with campus walkways, and potential improvements to areas outside of the campus that could benefit UM-Flint students as well the greater Downtown Flint area. Several recommendations have already been implemented, such as the creation of new student housing in the former Hyatt Regency. With other community partners, the University is also actively investigating options for market rate housing in the area around its campus to accommodate its growing student population.

Baker College

Baker College is a private College founded in the Flint area in 1911 that now has 17 locations and 34,000 students across the state of Michigan. Baker's Flint area campus, which is located on Bristol Road just south of the Flint City limits, had over 6,300 students in the Fall of 2011 and offers over 100 degree programs in business, computer information systems, education, engineering and technology, and health sciences.

While the primary campus is not located within the Flint City limits, the College has increased its physical presence within Flint over the last several years. For example, in 2009, Baker College renovated and transformed a closed auto dealership at Dort Highway and Lapeer Road into the Baker College Center for Transportation Technology. The $3.8 million renovation allows Baker College to expand its automotive technician enrollment, accommodate the increased demand in the trucking and transportation arena, proactively implement emerging programs, and respond to the marketplace need for highly trained transportation individuals.



Success Story: Prismitech & Kettering Innovation Center

Prismitech is the first tenant in Kettering University's Innovation Center and the CEO is a Kettering University graduate. The research and development company sells systems to grocery stores and other retailers to improve efficiency of commercial refrigerators. The Innovation Center, located on the north edge of the Chevy in the Hole brownfield, provides laboratory space to startup companies. The company is using the Innovation Center to grow its operations and is committed to keeping future expansions within Flint.

University Partnerships

With a growing health and educational services sector and strong educational institutions, the City of Flint is in an ideal position to encourage partnerships between universities and startups to develop innovative projects and spur job growth. These collaborations provide invaluable research experience for students and help leverage economic development opportunities in Flint by monetizing home grown ideas. Below are two examples of viable programs that the City of Flint could implement to encourage university and business collaboration.

Michigan Translational Research Acceleration and Commercialization Fund (M-TRAC)

The M-TRAC program is funded by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's (MEDC) 21st Century Jobs Fund. This program uses the nationally recognized Coulter model to transform university research into products through start-ups and licenses, with the goal of creating high-tech companies and jobs in Michigan. Instead of a general approach, M-TRAC creates focused commercialization programs in Michigan's universities with in-depth field expertise in specific areas of research.

For example, recently the University of Michigan Medical School was awarded a grant from the MEDC to fund the University of Michigan Translational Research and Commercialization for Life Sciences Program to identify and support projects with high-market potential.

Each M-TRAC program has:

- a full-time industry-experienced Project Director;
- an external Oversight Committee consisting of business and technical experts with domain-knowledge, which selects funded projects and monitors program performance;
- a project fund for reducing technical risk in the lab as well as market risk; and
- a laser-focus on obtaining follow-on funding.

Existing M-TRAC programs are focused in the following areas:

- University of Michigan Life Sciences
- University of Michigan Advanced Transportation
- Michigan State University Agro-biotech
- Michigan Technological University Advanced Applied Materials

Michigan Initiative for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (MIIE)

(MIIE) is a collaboration of all 15 Michigan public universities with representatives from angel/venture capital, industry, and economic development communities. This program is designed to build on Michigan's universities as economic assets by funding joint projects, entrepreneurship education, and technology commercialization. MIIE Goals include:

- Provide gap funding to speed commercialization of research;
- Help universities launch start-up companies;
- Promote an entrepreneurial risk-taking culture; and
- Strengthen ties between small business, industry, and academia.

ATTRACTING NEW RESIDENTS

Business Attraction & Retention

The notion of business retention and attraction can essentially be divided into (1) those businesses that provide goods and services to the local and daytime population (retail, restaurants, pharmacies, banks etc.) and (2) businesses related to a specific employment sector, such as manufacturing, and generally are larger employment generators.

While many initiatives can be applied city-wide, others are more applicable to specific neighborhoods and/or areas. The City should follow the Master Plan's Land Use Plan as it relates to place types and the appropriateness of certain uses and development.

Daytime Population

Unlike many communities in the region, Flint's daytime population is greater than its resident population. While the City of Flint lost numerous businesses and large employers over the last several decades, Flint remains a large center of employment within mid-Michigan and serves as a regional hub for jobs and education.

The number of people commuting to Flint for work is nearly double the number of Flint residents leaving the community for work on a daily basis. In addition, nearly 30,000 students are enrolled at Flint's four major colleges and universities.

When non-resident employees and students are combined with residents living and working in Flint, the City's daytime population is conservatively estimated at nearly 134,000. This population has a significant influence on demand for retail goods and services throughout the community.

Daytime Population
CITY OF FLINT (2010)

Worker In Flow	+ 30,874
Residents	+ 102,434
Students	+ 28,456
Worker Out Flow	- 17,966
Residents who are Students	- 9,916
Total Daytime Population	***133,882***

Source: *US Census (2010), OnTheMap Application, Gensee Regional Chamber of Commerce*

Attracting New Residents

In order to attract new businesses and sustain existing uses, the City will need to reverse population decline and attract new residents. As more people locate to a particular area, it creates a critical mass that instills confidence in the market. In response, businesses and retailers seek to meet the needs and expenditures of the growing resident population by opening new shops and offices. The attraction of new residents serves to stabilize neighborhoods and stimulate both residential and commercial reinvestment.

The biggest challenge lies in attracting those initial residents. Like many new initiatives or developments, the first participants may require private sector economic incentives or assistance. Policies and procedures that facilitate reinvestment including low- or no-interest loans, tax breaks, permit fee waivers, infrastructure improvements, and other mechanisms can be used to stimulate and assist the housing market. However, if properly instituted, subsequent investment will be market driven.

Ideally, blocks should be targeted for reinvestment rather than isolated infill properties. Doing so allows for the stabilization of an entire area, and also increases the likelihood of attracting buyers from outside the City. This is due to the fact that, while infill development has a positive influence, it does not always result in additional development or stabilization of a block.

While block-by-block reinvestment is still speculative from a financial perspective, the comfort level of buyers and investors lies in the fact that there are others sharing in the risk and potential benefit. Nevertheless, the City must work, with the development community to ensure that the regulations and processes produce quality residential development.

Recruit Young Households

Another important note and influence is that the Flint market area is growing older; a trend which is projected to continue into the foreseeable future. The interesting dynamic of older age cohorts is that they tend to cover the entire housing spectrum. In some cases older individuals continue to occupy single family homes in part because of the decrease in the available younger buyers with families.

If the City can begin to successfully recruit younger households, this can potentially create new opportunities and demand for quality senior housing.

Live Flint

Other cities, such as Detroit, have programs in place geared toward recruiting and incentivizing people (mostly young professionals) to move to the City. Given that 82% of Flint's 37,810 primary jobs are currently filled by commuters, Flint has an enormous opportunity to capture new residents by incentivizing the relocation of those who already work here. The City of Flint should work with larger employers to determine if a program could be developed to help attract young professionals while simultaneously reinvesting in the housing stock.

Incentivizing New Residents in Detroit

In hopes of attracting the "best and brightest" workers and stabilizing key neighborhoods, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Compuware, DTE Energy, Marketing Associates, Quicken Loans, and Strategic Staffing Solutions created the "Live Downtown" initiative for their employees. It incentivizes employees to live where they work and provides participants with financial assistance to purchase or rent a home in neighborhoods in and around Downtown Detroit.

A similar initiative developed by Wayne State University, Detroit Medical Center, and the Henry Ford Medical Center entitled "Live Midtown" has also been extremely successful. As of September 2012, the program had received nearly 700 applicants.

Immigration

Immigrant populations have the potential to create jobs in Flint and stabilize neighborhoods with new residents. Within Michigan, although only 6% of the state's population is foreign born, immigrants have launched nearly one-third of the high-tech firms created in Michigan in the past decade. It is also estimated that Michigan's immigrants start high-tech firms at six times the rate of the state's native-born population. By making the City easier to navigate for immigrant populations and others with English as a second language, Flint can encourage new groups to move to the community. In addition to working with immigrant organizations and local businesses, the City should initiate programs and alter policies to make Flint more attractive to foreign-born groups and support non-natives already living in Flint.

Success Story: Welcome Dayton

In just two years, a "Welcome Dayton" initiative has led 400+ Turkish families to move to Dayton, Ohio and settle in some of the City's most blighted areas. Working with local organizations, the City found interpreters for public offices, added foreign-language books in libraries and arranged for English classes. Teachers have returned to school to learn other languages, and the police have changed policies to limit the use of immigration checks and build trust.

Turning Commuters into Residents

Nearly twice as many workers are entering Flint to work than workers commuting outside of the City. In 2010, approximately 81.7% of the City's estimated 37,810 primary jobs were performed by workers who lived outside of the City of Flint. Approximately 6,936 individuals (18.3%) both lived and worked within the City of Flint in 2010. An estimated 17,966 Flint residents, which was 72.1% of all employed residents, were employed by businesses outside of the City.

The more than 30,000 workers that commute into the City on a daily basis represent an enormous opportunity for Flint. Convincing just 10% of those who already work and invest in Flint to live in the City would have a significant impact.

The City can play a key role in attracting these potential residents such as encouraging the development of quality housing near major employment centers, improving the quality of services provided to all residents, and working with area employers to create 'Live Flint' incentives. Additional discussion of potential 'Live Flint' strategies and incentives is located in ***Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods Plan***.

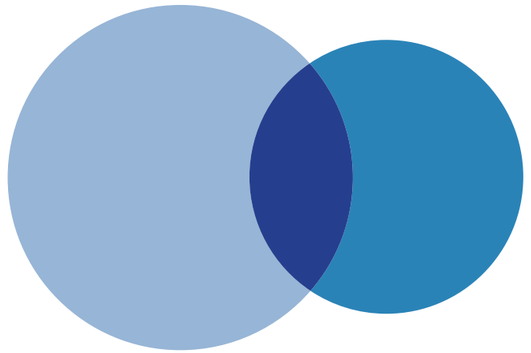
Where Flint Workers Live

Flint is an employment hub for Genesee County and beyond. Flint's "labor shed," or where its workers live, is predominantly concentrated in Genesee County.

Approximately 54% of Flint's labor force of 37,810 commutes less than 10 miles to their jobs in the City. This includes 18% of the labor force that both lives and works in Flint.

Approximately one in eight workers are traveling more than 50 miles in their commute to Flint. Given their long distance commute, these workers represent a high-priority target for potential resident incentives that underscore the benefits of low cost, minimal time committments of working locally.

Workers from Outside of Flint



30,874 people - Work in Flint, but live elsewhere

17,966 people - Live in Flint, but work elsewhere

6,936 people - Work and live in Flint

Source: *US Census, American Community Survey*

9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents the strategies needed to implement the goals and objectives of the Economic Development and Education Plan. Taken together, the objectives and strategies included in this section provide specific direction and serve as a guide for the evaluation of development proposals and land use alternatives.

To provide the City with a reliable policy guide for decision-making, the objectives and strategies are based significantly on community input received through the master planning process. In addition to broad community input, these objectives and strategies are based on input from the 20-member Economic Development Advisory Group, Steering Committee, City officials, City staff, and observations and assessment from the Imagine Flint Project Team.

Implementation Matrix

The following Implementation Matrix groups strategies by topic within each objective and identifies anticipated time frame, relative cost, and the entities, including City of Flint departments and partner organizations, potentially responsible for the implementation. The matrix also identifies key metrics needed to track implementation progress.

Time Frame

A general time frame is assigned to each strategy, considering the cost of various types of improvements and their ability to set other actions in motion. Generally, low-cost strategies with easy implementation are given the short-term time frame, though some other actions are given this designation based on their high level of priority in meeting community objectives or ensuring the safety of residents.

Each strategy in the Implementation Matrix is indicated with one of the following:

- ***Short:*** low-cost, ease of implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years
- ***Medium:*** important actions that have some level of significant cost, and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years
- ***Long:*** actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time, or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation

Public Cost Estimate

Public cost estimate is represented by a scale ranging from $ to $$$. The costs in this column refer only to public costs. Below is a description of the cost scale:

- **$**: Actions that require primarily internal staff time requiring mostly regulatory changes, policy updates, or strategic partnerships with limited outside funding required
- **$$**: Actions that require outside consulting services assistance or relatively minor investment in infrastructure or project development
- **$$$**: Actions that require intensive planning, engineering, or design, and significant investment in infrastructure or project development

Responsible Entities & Partner Organizations

City government alone is not capable of implementing the Master Plan. This is a community vision which relies upon Flint's greatest assets, its people and community stakeholders to help implement desired aspirations."

With regard to citing those entities responsible for implementation, it should be noted that it is anticipated that, from a policy standpoint, the Mayor and City Council will be involved in the majority of these actions.

Where a City Department should be involved, that department has been listed. Where general administrative leadership is needed, the City of Flint has been listed. Strategies, such as recommended technical studies and analyses that would likely benefit from outside expertise, have also been highlighted.

Unforeseen Partnership Opportunities

Every effort was made to identify a comprehensive list of potential partner organizations for inclusion in the implementation matrix. As a community of over 100,000 with a rich history of volunteerism and over 100 foundations active in Genesee County, there may be instances where a deserving organization that is well-matched to one of the Plan objectives or strategies has been excluded from a list of potential partners for a given topic.

Similarly, there may come a time when a partner organization identified in the implementation table merged with another organization or otherwise ceases to exist. As with the rest of the Master Plan, the implementation table is a flexible document that should be regularly updated and revised to reflect the evolving needs and assets of the Flint community.

Progress Indicator

Key progress indicators have been provided for each strategy grouping. Progress indicators identify quantifiable metrics for which data should be available on a regular basis and indicate desired trends for each metric. These indicators represent measurable achievements that move the City toward realization of Master Plan objectives. These progress indicators will enable the City to monitor its effectiveness at implementing Plan recommendations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 1	Strengthen educational attainment of youth.				
Education & Youth Development	Re-institute a sustainable form of community education through K-12 schools, community centers, and early learning sites.	Short	$$$	• Flint Community Schools • Youth employment service providers • Summer youth program service providers • Area colleges & universities	• Increase in percent of pre-school aged children in pre-school • Increase in percent of Flint youth who graduate from high school • Increase in percent of Flint youth graduating from college • Increase in number of college/grade-school partnership programs • Increase in number of job opportunities and/or training positions available to students • Decrease in unemployment rates for youth, people with disabilities, African Americans, men, and others with disproportionately high rates • Increase in participation in WIC, Medicaid, Head Start, SNAP, & other programs serving low-income children/families
	Bolster both academic and social linkages between City's high schools and the four area colleges to better prepare students for higher education.	Short-Medium	$-$$$		
	Encourage youth participation in skill-building opportunities and vocational education.	Short-Medium	$$		
	Encourage area employers to offer summer employment opportunities, internships, and apprentice-ships to students—particularly in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.	Short-Medium	$		
	Promote the expansion of existing mentoring programs of at-risk children in coordination with local non-profit organizations, such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and churches.	Short	$-$$		
	Find ways to expand and maximize impact of successful young adult development and family outreach programs that prepare disconnected youth and their parents for societal re-engagement.	Short-Medium	$		
	Create a Mayor's office liaison for education policy who will be responsible for interfacing between the general public, the school board, and the State and Federal governments.	Short	$$		
	Promote policies that address childhood poverty and ensure children and families benefit from all programs for which they qualify.	Short	$		
	Develop a program and funding mechanism that allows all of Flint's children to attend a public college or university for free, similar to the Kalamazoo Promise or a Promise Zone.	Medium	$$$		
	Create a formal partnership of stakeholders committed to increasing college readiness, participation, and completion, especially among low-income students.	Short	$		
	Develop "two-generation" strategies by working to ensure at-risk young people are able to participate in early childhood education while simultaneously working to improve the skills of their parents.	Short	$		
Objective 2	Provide adults with opportunities to gain additional education, skills, and training.				
Adult Education	As part of a new community education initiative, include adult learning programming with workforce development, General Educational Development (GED) courses, English as a Second Language (ESL), apprenticeships, and vocational training.	Short	$-$$	• Genesee County Literacy Coalition • Adult literacy service providers • Genesee and Shiawassee County office of the 2005 Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (MPRI) • Key non-profit organizations & foundations • Area colleges & universities	• Decrease in Adult illiteracy rate • Increase in number of GED certificates obtained • Increase in percent of residents with a 4-year degree • Increase in enrollment in adult education programs
	Build strong educational and career pathways with clear, achievable milestones that articulate from adult education to GED to a postsecondary credential.	Short	$-$$		
	Reduce the illiteracy rate by increasing access to literacy programs.	Short	$-$$		
	Strengthen and raise the profile of existing "prisoner re-entry" programs that connect ex-offenders with resources, employment opportunities, and mentoring services.	Short	$-$$		
	Advocate for greater investment and expansion of key workforce development programs—especially those for veterans—to federal representatives and state officials.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Open basic skills learning labs that are neighborhood based and offer online learning that can be tailored to the needs of each learner, supported by skilled instructors/tutors.	Medium	$-$$		
	Expand "bridge" programs that ease the path to post-secondary education by integrating basic skills instruction with occupational training.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Teach basic skills in the context of careers, providing both clear application for skills being mastered and clearer "line of sight" to the end goal of good jobs.	Short	$-$$		
	Accelerate the pace of delivery so that learners can advance into career path post-secondary courses faster.	Short	$-$$		
	Create a common assessment and advising capacity so that low-skill learners can obtain an accurate picture of their needs and help in building a learning plan - with a quality that is consistent across all Network partners.	Short	$-$$		
	Build a network of support so that learners can obtain the backing and help needed from their families, social networks, and agencies in overcoming barriers that inhibit successful learning.	Short	$-$$		
	Measure and publicize results so that the community can see the progress being made and that we build community-wide accountability for making large-scale improvements in basic skills.	Short	$-$$		
	Make strong basic skills a community imperative that diverse stakeholders commit to collaboratively solving across the next several years.	Short	$-$$		
Objective 3	Increase access to employment opportunities.				
Workforce Development	Leverage relationships with all community organizations to improve access to reliable and affordable childcare services.	Short-Medium	$	• Michigan Economic Development Corporation • Key non-profit organizations & foundations • Mott Community College Adult Worker Program and Dislocated Worker Program • Sylvester Broome Jr. Training Technical Center • Michigan Works! and employment agencies	• Increased number of local hire jobs • Increased number of workforce development/training program participants
	Re-evaluate and adapt public transit schedules to maximize efficiency and reliability to central places of employment.	Short-Medium	$$		
	Enhance access to and participation in local job training programs.	Short-Long	$-$$		
	Work with employers to identify gaps in skill sets so schools and work programs can help students, recent graduates and unemployed or underemployed residents receive the proper training.	Short-Long	$		
	Ensure that workforce development services and programs meet the needs of the market.	Short-Long	$		
	Designate a liaison to work with local businesses to promote available programs to match individuals with job opportunities.	Short	$-$$		
	Work with universities and local employers to facilitate internships and cooperative education opportunities.	Short-Long	$		
Hiring Practices	Secure commitments from and provide incentives for Flint businesses to hire local.	Short-Long	$-$$	• City of Flint Economic Development Corporation • MEDC Community Ventures • Universities & colleges with human resource curriculum specializations	• Increased number of job postings at diverse locations and through diverse organizations
	Invest in the cultural competence of economic development and employment organizations, employers, schools and decision-makers to improve their ability to serve culturally diverse populations and raise awareness/limit the effects of implicit bias in education and economic development.	Medium	$		
	Improve the use of inclusive employment practices such as posting openings in diverse publications and limiting reliance on personal networks to advertise jobs.	Short	$		
	Add sexual orientation & gender identity to protected classes with respect to employment.	Medium	$		

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 4	Ensure viable business ventures have access to capital and coaching, especially historically underrepresented groups.				
Business Development	Encourage private investors and financial institutions to provide venture or "angel capital" for startup businesses.	Short-Long	$	• Small Business and Technology Development Center • Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce • City of Flint Economic Development Corporation • Michigan Credit Union Small Business Financing Alliance • Michigan SmartZone Network • Business development service providers • Faith-based organizations • Financing service providers	• Increase in number of new businesses in Flint • Increase in percent of women and minority-owned businesses
	Encourage local universities and investors to create a joint venture capital fund and incubator for faculty and students to grow new tech companies.	Short-Long	$		
	Capitalize on Flint's new "innovation district" by facilitating research and development partnerships between area colleges.	Short-Long	$		
	Work with faith based organizations and non-profit organizations to strengthen microloan or seed grant programs for neighborhood-based entrepreneurs.	Short-Long	$		
	Provide a centralized source and database of resources and locations where entrepreneurs and startup businesses can receive assistance.	Short-Medium	$-$$$		
	Connect local entrepreneurs to resources, technical assistance, and toolkits at business incubators.	Short-Long	$		
	Facilitate networking and mentoring relationships between established and prospective business owners.	Short-Long	$		
	Work to expand business incentives to local neighborhood entrepreneurs and monitor participation in incentive programs to ensure women and people of color are being served.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Leverage opportunities with local events to assist entrepreneurs in showcasing their goods or services.	Short-Long	$-$$		
	Conduct regular and ongoing reviews of programs and services to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the community.	Short-Long	$-$$		
Objective 5	Reverse leakage in underserved neighborhoods.				
Retail	Promote development and incentivize creation of neighborhood business centers to house small businesses and ensure consumer dollars stay local.	Short-Medium	$-$$$	• City of Flint Economic Development Corporation • Metro Community Development	• Decrease in amount of retail leakage • Increase in percent of residents who live within a certain radius of important amenities like banks, grocery stores, pharmacies, etc. • Increase in number of new retailers in underserviced areas
	Conduct annual market analyses to gauge market potential and identify opportunities.	Short-Long	$-$$		
	Encourage Flint employers to provide relocation incentives (rental or down-payment assistance) to their commuting employees, thus increasing population in key neighborhoods and making them more attractive to retailers.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Meet with retailers that have sites elsewhere in the region to encourage them to open a Flint location.	Short-Long	$		
	Work to ensure that all neighborhoods are served by quality retailers, particularly as it relates to grocery stores.	Short-Long	$		
	Ensure that residential areas have safe and efficient connections to local retail options.	Short-Medium	$-$$$		
	Target underperforming retail nodes and commercial corridors for reinvestment or potential repositioning if necessary.	Short-Long	$-$$$		
	Encourage foreign born immigrants to relocate to Flint and open small businesses in underserved areas.	Short-Long	$		
Objective 6	Utilize business clusters to develop opportunities for small business ventures.				
Small Business Entrepreneurs	Encourage growth and local placement of spin-off companies resulting from university research and development.	Short-Medium	$-$$	• Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce • Business Incubators • Business development service providers	• Increase in number of new small businesses • Increase in number of identified and organized clusters
	Leverage buying power of large City institutions (government, universities, hospitals etc.) to promote local business purchasing arrangements with local small businesses.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Increase the economic impact of the growing daytime population by encouraging workers and students to eat, play, and shop at Flint's small businesses.	Short-Long	$		
	Identify the businesses and organizations related and important to each defined cluster.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Regularly meet with representatives of each cluster to readily respond to retention issues and expansion opportunities.	Short-Long	$-$$		
	Facilitate regular meetings and create the structure for representative businesses to meet, share ideas and strengthen relationships.	Short-Long	$		
	Develop a program for existing clusters to work with and mentor representatives of emerging clusters.	Short-Medium	$-$		
Objective 7	Reposition Flint's land, natural resources, and infrastructure for sustainable economic growth.				
Reposition Assets	Capitalize on Flint's existing infrastructure and well-connected transportation network, including rail spurs to facilitate redevelopment of brownfield sites in alignment with the land use plan.	Short-Medium	$-$$$	• Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce • Bishop International Airport • I-69 International Trade Corridor Next Michigan Development Corporation	• Increase in number of new businesses along I-69 • Increase in amount of freight moved through Bishop International Airport
	Support the long-term vision for Bishop International Airport with the goal of increasing both freight and passengers to/from the region.	Short-Long	$-$$$		
	Leverage cross-jurisdictional I-69 Trade Corridor "Next Michigan Development Corporation" to ensure maximum eligibility for economic incentives and redevelopment opportunities.	Medium-Long	$-$$$		
	Identify "blue economy" opportunities arising from construction of the Karegnondi Water pipeline, especially water intensive opportunities or those requiring raw water.	Medium-Long	$-$$$		
	Promote Flint's location including close proximity to interstates and access to air and rail for distribution and logistics.	Short-Long	$-$$		
	Establish Green Innovation areas and offer incentives to businesses specializing in renewable and sustainable technologies.	Short-Long	$-$$$$		
	Leverage the Flint River, parks, and City open spaces to create a recreational economy including hiking, biking, running, canoeing, and kayaking.	Short-Long	$-$$		
Objective 8	Diversify Flint's economic base.				
Diverse Economy	Focus energies on supporting and attracting industries in seven central growth sectors: (a) life sciences, (b) transportation, distribution, and logistics, (c) automotive and transportation equipment manufacturing, (d) machinery manufacturing, (e) information technology, (f) food manufacturing and (g) blue or green industries.	Short-Long	$-$$$	• Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce • Michigan Emerging Technologies Fund through the Michigan Strategic Fund • Major employers • Area colleges & universities	• Increase in distribution of redevelopment incentives across the City and among businesses/ property owners, including the % that go to women and minority-owned businesses
	Strengthen ties between Flint's colleges/universities and those in East Lansing, Ann Arbor, and Detroit to further catalyze technology development.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Continue economic partnerships with and support the growth of the area's largest employers and emerging sectors.	Short-Long	$-$$		
	Seek businesses/employers that offer a diverse range of wage levels and skill set requirements.	Short-Long	$-$$		
	Continuously evaluate the health and sustainability of business clusters to ensure that they are responding to evolving needs of the economy.	Short-Long	$-$$		
	Regularly evaluate missing and/or underrepresented businesses within targeted sectors and implement programs and initiatives for attraction and recruitment.	Short-Long	$-$$		

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 9	**Highlight positive assets to change existing perceptions.**				
Marketing & Outreach	Promote Flint's College Cultural district as a top regional entertainment destination.	Short-Medium	$-$$	• Local, state, and national media • Area colleges & universities • Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce - Convention and Visitors Bureau • Downtown Development Authority	• Increase in number of annual visitors • Increase in positive regional and national stories about Flint
	Increase recognition of Flint's burgeoning grassroots art community in addition to its long-standing cultural institutions.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Brand Flint as a regional knowledge hub, building upon assets and attributes of local colleges and universities, key businesses, and cultural institutions.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Promote the affordability of doing business and living in Flint.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Champion Flint's unique geographic position for the intermodal transportation industry.	Short-Long	$		
	Continually reassess national and regional marketing efforts to maximize effectiveness.	Short-Long	$		
	Reduce negative perceptions by working with the local and national media to promote the positive aspects and changes taking place in Flint.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Working with business leaders, prepare a coordinated marketing strategy/campaign promoting the City of Flint.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Market Flint's trails, parks, lakes, and river for recreational opportunities.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
Objective 10	**Foster reinvestment by strengthening the visual appeal of targeted areas.**				
Visual Appeal	Embrace and execute targeted "placemaking" strategies such as high-density growth, mixed use development, parking lot beautification, bike lanes, and pedestrian friendly streets.	Short-Medium	$-$$	• Michigan Community Revitalization Program • Downtown Development Authority • City of Flint Department of Planning and Development	• Increase in number of adaptive reuse projects • Increase in number of demolished and greened vacant properties • Increase in commercial property values • Decrease in commercial vacancy rates (comparison between commercial areas across the City)
	Continue to advocate for federal and state demolition funding for blighted properties where appropriate.	Short-Medium	$		
	Ensure that walkability and safety is facilitated in all targeted areas.	Short-Medium	$-$$$		
	Protect historic and architecturally significant buildings that provide character to neighborhoods and commercial areas.	Short-Long	$-$$$		
	Provide façade and/or site improvement assistance to business and property owners.	Short-Long	$-$$$		
	Facilitate public/private partnerships for maintaining neighborhood appearance.	Short-Long	$-$$$		
	Work to reduce the negative impact of large surface parking areas, such as the Flat Lot.	Short-Medium	$-$$$		
	Adapt existing City zoning, permitting, ordinances, site plan review, and redevelopment site capacity to reflect best practices in other cities as well as those highlighted in the MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Communities Plan.	Short-Medium	$-$$$		
Objective 11	**Encourage and incentivize residential growth into the City.**				
Attracting Residents	Make Flint a top destination for foreign born immigrants by working with immigration organizations and resettlement groups along with local businesses and higher education stakeholders.	Short-Medium	$	• Major Employers • City of Flint Economic Development Corporation • Down payment assistance program service providers • Immigrant service providers	• Increase in growth of City population • Increase in percent of local graduates who remain in Flint • Increase in participation numbers in LiveFlint
	Support existing housing programs targeting veterans, public safety and health personnel, and other key fields to ensure maximum participation in all of Flint's neighborhoods.	Short-Medium	$-$$$		
	Maximize higher education's presence to generate increased demand for student rental housing around campuses.	Short-Medium	$-$$$		
	Work with key employers and stakeholders to create a "Live Flint" program, which would provide initial rent or down payment assistance as incentives for residential growth.	Short-Medium	$-$$		
	Work with development community to ensure that processes and regulations are conducive to providing quality residential development.	Short-Medium	$		
Objective 12	**Increase efficiency of City of Flint's business-related services.**				
Business-Friendly Climate	Provide training for elected and appointed officials, multi member bodies, and City staff to enhance sound economic development decision-making and City policies.	Short-Long	$	• City Hall • Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce Retention and Expansion Program • Michigan Economic Development Corporation • City of Flint Economic Development Corporation • Business service providers	• Increase in number of regulations streamlined • Decrease in wait time for permits • Increase in number of business permits issued • Increase in monthly number of website "hits" • MEDC Redevelopment Ready
	Adapt existing City zoning, permitting, ordinances, site plan review, and redevelopment site capacity to reflect the best practices highlighted in Michigan Economic Development Corporation's (MEDC) "Redevelopment Ready Communities" Plan.	Short	$		
	Apply for evaluation and certification under MEDC's "Redevelopment Ready Communities" program.	Short	$		
	Work with business leaders to identify and eliminate unnecessary impediments or delays in permitting and business related processes.	Short	$		
	Institute a coordinated program for communication with existing and prospective businesses.	Short	$		
	Enhance the City's economic development web presence and use of social media.	Short	$-$$		
	Create a primarily web based permit process to expedite review time.	Short	$-$$		
	Promote equitable investment in commercial nodes throughout the City and assist diverse local businesspeople in accessing capital	Short	$		
Objective 13	**Utilize public programs and tools to assist Flint's businesses.**				
Development Incentives	Advocate for tax incentives for historic buildings and under-utilized properties including areas outside of the Downtown.	Short-Medium	$-$$	• Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce • City of Flint Economic Development Corporation • Business service providers • Financial Institutions • Major employers (Hurley Medical Center, McLaren Regional Medical Center, General Motors, Great Lakes Medical Technology Center, Diplomat Pharmacy)	• Increase in amount of business funding from public sources • Increase in number of businesses participating in Neighbiorhood Center and City Corridor incentive programs
	Support developers in utilization of multiple funding streams.	Short-Medium	$-$$$		
	Where applicable and feasible, provide local financial incentives to facilitate desired development.	Short-Long	$-$$$		
	Coordinate infrastructure improvements with redevelopment of targeted sites.	Short-Long	$-$$$		
	Work closely with developers and prospective businesses to identifying funding gaps for desired and/or potential development.	Short-Long	$-$$$		
	Continually monitor state and federal grant and loan programs that may benefit Flint businesses and development.	Short-Long	$		
	Identify and implement the appropriate economic development incentive, such as a Business Improvement Zone, to encourage the redevelopment of Neighborhood Centers and City Corridor in under-served areas of the City.	Short-Long	$		
	Base redevelopment incentives on local benefit agreements to provide construction jobs and other opportunities to local people.	Short-Long	$-$$$		

MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT

10 PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE PLAN

VISION P. 233

GOAL & OBJECTIVES P. 235

RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES P. 237

IMPLEMENTATION P. 255

10 PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE PLAN
VISION, GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Imagine Flint as one of the safest cities in the country, with a proactive and technologically-savvy police force trusted by residents, and a coordinated partnership between law enforcement, residents, educators, social service providers, and public health officials to drive down crime.

Imagine Flint as a regional hub for fresh and locally grown produce, where a thriving movement of entrepreneurial growers transform vacant lots into gardens and provide healthy foods to schools, farmers markets, restaurants, and stores across the City.

Imagine all of Flint's youth growing up in stable neighborhoods that are clean, safe, and welcoming, patrolled by police officers known to residents and home to community centers providing around-the-clock activities and services for youth.

Over the next twenty years, Flint can achieve this vision. However, we must first face existing realities: Flint leads the nation in violent crime, relations between the police and the public are strained, many neighborhoods are saturated with liquor stores and blight, and too many residents lack a healthy diet of fresh foods and exercise.

The Public Safety, Health, and Welfare Plan is a road map to overcoming those obstacles and to actualizing a new community vision. By following the recommendations outlined in this chapter, Flint can become a safe and healthy place for all residents to live and thrive.

SOCIAL EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY

Gun violence, mass incarceration, and negative health outcomes disproportionately affect low-income communities of color. By building trust between the police and residents, investing in our at-risk youth, and providing the tools necessary for living a healthy life, Flint can reduce inequities and become one of the healthiest and safest communities in Michigan.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Public safety and health are fundamental pieces of overall quality of life. Neighborhoods should be safe, secure environments that lead to prosperous individuals, positive social interactions, and lifelong healthy behaviors.

YOUTH

Children and young adults are disproportionately affected by unsafe and unhealthy environments. Actively engaging the City's youth has significant effects on reducing crime, decreasing unhealthy behaviors, and promoting positive choices during adulthood. We must provide our youth with safe environments in which to live, learn, and play.

RESHAPING THE ECONOMY

The welfare of a community has dramatic effects on economic growth. Crime and the perception of crime stifle investment, while employers seek healthy, reliable workers. In Flint, the healthcare and medical industries are also major drivers of the economy, and the development of a robust local food system will lead to job growth.

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Negative trends in health and crime statistics are symptoms of the changes that have occurred over the past few decades. Moving forward, Flint must develop new approaches to solve persistent, longstanding problems. This includes treating crime as a public health epidemic and recognizing that key investments must be made in not just law enforcement, but also education, healthcare, and social services.

CIVIC LIFE

Community health and safety are intertwined with a thriving and dynamic civic life. Safe and active public places allow opportunities for interaction and discussion among neighbors that would not happen otherwise. Similarly, healthy outdoor activities such as running or hiking, as well as team sports such as football or baseball, bring people of different backgrounds together and increase civic camaraderie.

GOAL:

Flint will be a safe and healthy place for all residents to live and thrive.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The ways in which the Goal & Objectives of the Public Safety, Health & Welfare Plan have been influenced by the guiding principles are indicated using the following symbols.

- ***Social Equity & Sustainability***
- ***Reshaping the Economy***
- ***Quality of Life***
- ***Adapting to Change***
- ***Youth***
- ***Civic Life***

Objective #1

Eliminate environmental contributions to crime.

Demolishing abandoned homes, fixing broken street lights, and shuttering liquor stores out of compliance with the law, shields our youth from harm and increases overall quality of life. Smart urban design, community partnerships, and city planning can also facilitate more "eyes on the street," thus reducing the likelihood of criminal activity.

Objective #2

Build trusting relationships between police and residents, empowering citizens to contribute to the safety of their neighborhoods.

A trusting partnership between police, residents, and local stakeholders is critical in preventing and solving crimes. Expanded community policing activities, consistent two-way communication, and strategically located neighborhood service centers will empower residents to actively work with the police in their neighborhood to ensure safe streets.

Objective #3

Develop a state-of-the-art, efficient, and proactive public safety departments.

Flint's police and fire departments must be fully staffed and modernized with high-tech equipment to become efficient, well organized, data driven, and proactive. By developing close partnerships with other public safety bodies and arming officers with state-of-the-art tools, our police can aggressively deter criminal activity and quickly solve crimes.

Objective #4

Reduce gun violence, violent crime, and arson.

Flint must overcome its reputation as one of the nation's most violent cities. While remaining tough on violent crime, we must also recognize that Flint cannot "arrest its way out of the problem." As such, the City and local law enforcement should take a holistic approach through partnerships with community organizations and social services, health providers, and educators to offer alternative paths to at-risk youth and ex-offenders.

Ridding the streets of illegal guns and violent criminal activity will not only save lives, but stabilize families, stimulate economic investment, increase physical and mental health outcomes, and reduce social inequities.

Objective #5

Ensure universal access to quality healthcare services and facilities.

All citizens deserve quality, accessible, and affordable health services. Residents must be made aware of the extensive network of existing health programs, insurance enrollment opportunities, and preventative care services available to them. While the City's role in healthcare is very limited, it should actively support policies, practices, and funding opportunities that expand services and the accessibility of facilities as well as positive health outcomes.

Objective #6

Develop a local food system.

Transforming vacant lots into gardens or urban agriculture plots is a creative re-use of land that produces affordable fresh foods for residents. A new network of local and sustainable growers also reduces "food deserts," creates jobs, and provides valuable health and civic benefits to the community.

Objective #7

Promote exercise and active lifestyles.

Improvements in the City's built environment – such as increased walkability, more miles of bike lanes, and enhanced Flint River recreation – facilitate exercise and healthy behaviors. Active lifestyles increase health and happiness, and provide our youth with numerous extracurricular and recreational activities.

Objective #8

Provide youth with a safe and healthy upbringing.

Flint must protect its youth from harm and align resources to invest in their future. By reducing child poverty, educating students about healthy lifestyle choices, and preventing at-risk youth from criminal activity, we can ensure that our next generation of leaders are healthy, properly educated, and fully prepared for adulthood.

10 PUBLIC SAFETY,HEALTH WELFARE PLAN
RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES

The Public Safety, Health, and Welfare Plan addresses Flint's most critical social issues.

Crime affects not only the everyday quality of life for Flint's residents, but also the City's regional and national perception. Moving forward, increasing the safety of residents will be dependent upon providing adequate resources to our at-risk youth; finding innovative new strategies, technologies, and partnerships to prevent crime; and sustaining effective, proactive, and responsive police and fire departments. Success can only be achieved by strengthening collaboration between City staff, State and County officials, community organizations, social service providers, and concerned residents.

Health and welfare are closely linked to other important chapters of this Master Plan. Access to local healthy foods will be fostered by strategic long-term land use policies and equitable economic development strategies. Active recreation and access to the environment will be dependent upon the availability of quality open spaces, and the preservation of the Flint River and other ecosystems.

Healthy transportation choices will rely on investment in sidewalks, bike paths, and supporting systems that provide full accessibility to all residents, regardless of age or level of mobility. Social service providers and community organizations must reinforce agencies and institutions that provide health care and education. Through this holistic and collaborative approach, the Flint community will be empowered to instill positive change that leads to a healthier population and a higher quality of life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

State-of-the-Art Police & Fire Departments 238
CPTED 242
Community Partnerships 242
Community Health 245
Creating Healthy Environments 247
Emergency Preparedness 247
Healthcare Access 248
Nutrition & Access to Produce 250
Physical Activity & Exercise 252
Community Organizations & Foundations .. 254

STATE-OF-THE-ART POLICE & FIRE DEPARTMENTS

The Flint Police Department (FPD) and Fire Department (FFD) make the best use of limited funding, but face staffing and equipment shortages that hinder their ability to adequately protect and serve the public. A top priority of the City should be to identify new revenue streams that can help sustain adequate personnel levels.

That said, given the uncertainty of funding in the future, it is more important than ever to find innovative new methods of reducing crime and arson with limited resources. This may include deepening patrol and investigative partnerships with other law enforcement agencies, developing strategic relationships with community groups, engaging youth, and embracing new technologies that can more efficiently deploy resources and stop criminal and arson activities before they happen.

Public Safety Budget

The revenue for the Flint Police and Fire Departments is primarily drawn from the City's General Fund. Overall, 80% of the General Fund is allocated to public safety, which includes funding for 9-1-1 operations and the District Court. Although the City maintained a balanced budget during the 2013 fiscal year, long-term public safety funding is not stable. Deficits are projected in the future and significant parts of police and fire operations are funded through grants that will eventually expire.

In November 2012, Flint voters authorized a property tax increase that is projected to raise $5 million annually, for public safety. The increased tax levy will help mitigate staff losses and bring more stability to personnel levels that currently are dependent on short-term grant funding. With property values in the City continuing to decline, the identification of new sources of funding, including increased property taxes, increased income taxes, state revenue sharing, and grant funding is crucial for providing basic public safety services.

Staffing & Collaboration

According to a year-long study conducted by Michigan State University, both the Police and Fire Departments are understaffed, causing inefficiencies in delivering effective service. Budget cuts have forced the City to layoff police officers and firefighters over the past five years. In 2013, the City employed 129 police officers, compared to 265 officers in the 2008 fiscal year. Currently, the City has just 1.2 officers per 1,000 residents, which is lower than Detroit (4 officers per 1,000 residents), Grand Rapids (1.6), and Lansing (1.9). According to the report, the ratio of violent crimes to detectives is 118:1, twice as high as any comparable city.

Insufficient staffing levels make it difficult for the FPD to implement proven crime-fighting strategies, including a community policing strategy. Furthermore, the inadequate staffing levels are causing police response times to rise. The number of detectives on staff is also very low at just 15, especially when compared to the high amount of violent crime investigations.

Collaboration amongst law enforcement agencies increases the efficiency and availability of officers to spend time in Flint's neighborhoods. Security personnel for some institutions and agencies already extend their patrols into surrounding neighborhoods. The FPD should collaborate with institutions throughout the City to promote the cooperation of security teams in their patrol areas. Potential institutions to develop partnerships with include University of Michigan – Flint, Kettering University, Mott Community College, and Hurley Medical Center.

Secure Cities

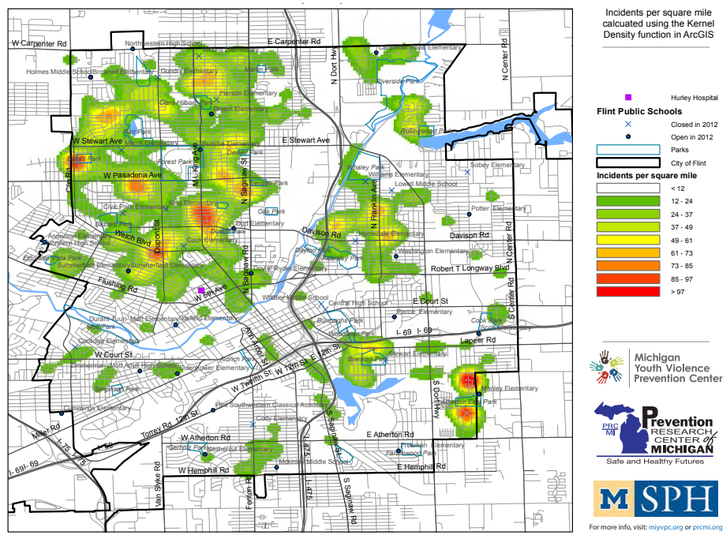
In early 2012 Governor Rick Snyder proposed his Secure Cities Partnership Plan. Under the Plan, Michigan State Police officers have been assigned to assist local law enforcement in four Michigan cities – Flint, Detroit, Pontiac, and Saginaw. More than 30 troopers and detectives in Flint are helping to coordinate teams of local, state, and federal law enforcement officers conducting directed patrols and providing investigative resources. Secure Cities has been a successful example of how the Flint Police Department can work with other agencies to supplement local efforts, and the City should explore similar opportunities with other agencies in the future.

Auxiliary/Reserve Force

Auxiliary police, sometimes called special police, are part-time reserves for a regular police force. The structure and composition of auxiliary forces can vary, with officers being armed or unarmed, paid or volunteer. They usually have the power to make arrests, but may be limited in other regular police capacities. Auxiliary forces are often called upon to assist Police Department officers during weekend shifts, summer months, or special events. There are currently four Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) programs operating in Genesee County.

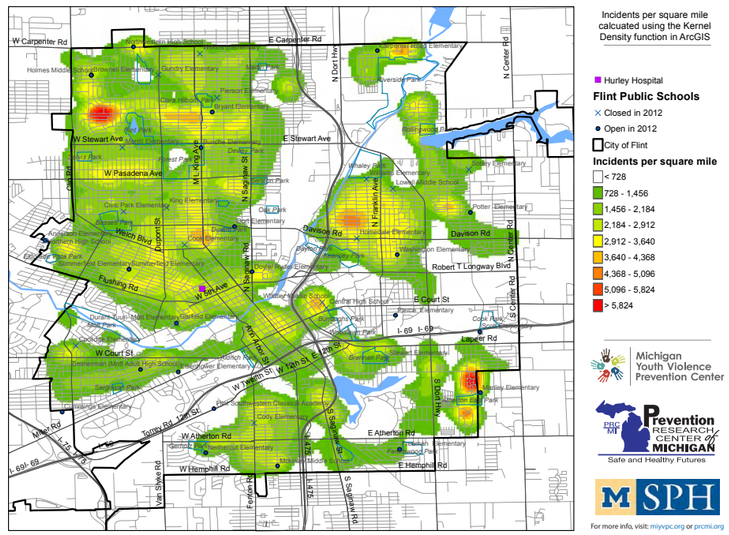
The City should explore the creation of an auxiliary police force to help alleviate the FPD's staffing shortages. This force would be a third option to accompany expanding the FPD and implementing more informal community policing programs discussed later in this chapter.

Homicide Offenses, 2005-2011

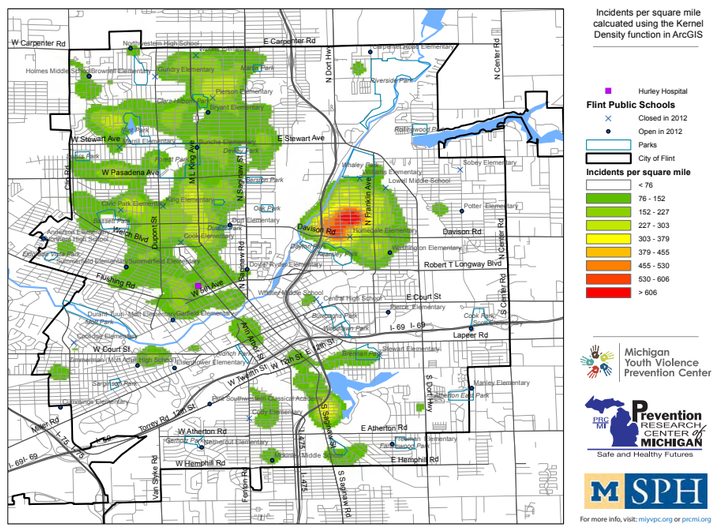


An example of collaboration and data-sharing, the University of Michigan's Prevention Research Center in the School of Public Health produced a report that analyzed crime in the City.

Assault Offenses, 2005-2011



Arson, 2005-2011



Embracing Data & Technology

With access to complete, up-to-date data sources, the City, the FPD, and community members have more resources to develop the best possible solutions and alternatives to address Flint's crime problems. Crime statistics are occasionally reported in Flint, but not routinely. The FPD and FFD, should collect and manage comprehensive crime and fire statistics for the entire City. Data should be routinely tracked, some made publicly available, and used to inform decisions and provide benchmarks for progress. The Police and Fire Departments should develop a comprehensive data and information strategy that uses crime and staffing statistics to assess department needs and determine the spatial deployment of officers and firefighters.

A number of versatile technologies are available to the Police and Fire Departments to assist them in fulfilling their primary missions. Since new technology is constantly being developed, the following examples do not represent a comprehensive list of systems that Flint agencies should adopt, but merely illustrate the types of technology that have been successful elsewhere.

DDACTS

Data-Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS) are the basis for most of the new technology approaches to increase the efficiency of public safety. DDACTS is a general term for any approach to crime prevention technique which uses data linked to a geographical location to understand where crimes typically occur and predict where they will happen in the future.

Some examples of technology available for municipal law enforcement are:

CompStat

A DDACTS called Comparative Statistics (CompStat) has been implemented in major U.S. cities like New York, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Baltimore, and others. The effectiveness of this approach depends on many different factors, but as an example, the preliminary results of the implementation of CompStat within the Baltimore County Police Department show that over the first three months, thefts declined by an average of 27%, crashes declined by 25%, and 49% more vehicles were stopped. If implemented correctly, this kind of data usage can prevent and reduce crimes more efficiently and proactively.

FARS

Fatal Analysis Reporting Systems (FARS) is an online data system run by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. It utilizes a concept similar to CompStat to link all fatal car crashes to a geographical location in hopes of future prevention. FARS attaches supporting information to these events, such as victim ages, time of incident, and the cause of the incident (driving under the influence, speed, etc.), to better identify unsafe road conditions and make better predictions about the likelihood of future incidents.

CAD

Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) consists of a central computer linked to smaller portable computers used in the field. These systems can include features such as incident information, location verification, time-stamping, and incident dispatch linked to the location of an officer for efficient dispatch and shorter response times. New patrol cars are being equipped with features that have this technology for more hands-free capability. These vehicles are already being used in Flint. The benefit of this kind of technology is that it can be implemented in phases in order to reduce the initial costs.

ShotSpotter

ShotSpotter is a system used as a direct defense against gun violence. The system requires the installation of acoustic surveillance equipment throughout an area, to pinpoint the precise location of a gunshot in real time. This system provides immediate alerts without anyone needing to call 9-1-1. It can report the exact time and number of rounds fired, as well as the shooter's position, speed, and direction of travel. This system can be a huge benefit to any community looking to reduce and prevent gun violence and has already helped communities such as Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Omaha, Nebraska; and South Bend, Indiana.

Citizen Communication

9-1-1 Consolidation

Another prospective opportunity for collaboration and technological upgrade is the consolidation of emergency dispatch services. Currently, Flint and Genesee County are served by three separate 9-1-1 call centers. Collapsing centers into one regional call center can reduce redundancies.

Citizen Reporting

When used in tandem with non-9-1-1 call centers, citizen reporting systems can also help streamline incident reporting and eliminate wasted resources. The Desk Officer Online Reporting System (DORS), a popular case management software from a company called Coplogic, is one such system that enables agencies to collect reports from citizens online. DORS reduces the need for personnel to handle every incident report and gives citizens a convenient way to report minor incidents, crime tips, and submit forms through an online service available 24 hours a day. The FPD already utilizes DORS, but many residents do not know about the system. The City should build community awareness of the citezen reporting system in conjunction with other public safety outreach measures.

Institutional Partnerships

Since systemized information reporting requires staff and budgeting, the FPD should consider leveraging institutions like University of Michigan-Flint and Kettering University, as potential resources for collecting and synthesizing data. This would provide students with material for crime education as well as create a partnership between the FPD and local universities.

Such partnerships are already proving useful. For example, the University of Michigan's Prevention Research Center published a data report for crime in Flint in 2011. According to that report, there was a total of 17,312 criminal, incidences between January 1st and December 31st, 2011. Assault was the most frequent offense, with one occurrence per 21 residents in Flint. The study utilized incident reports to map the general locations of crimes and identify potential "hotspots" of criminal activity throughout the City. Density maps were created for several types of crime reported between 2005 and 2011. This analysis can be used directly by the FPD to help managed its resources effectively.

Training & Culture

The most advanced crime prevention technology is meaningless if its operators cannot use it properly. Flint's police officers, firefighters, and support staff need continual training to appropriately use and maximize the benefit of any new data analysis techniques and technology that the City's agencies adopt. Beyond simply purchasing new gadgets, the FPD, FFD, and other agencies must also make a cultural shift to embrace this new style of operation.

Arson Prevention

The Flint Fire Department (FFD) has inadequate resources to promptly respond to all calls for service. Annual budget shortfalls have led to the closure of several stations, and a decrease in the number of firefighters on staff. The number of arsons began to increase in 2010 after budget cuts resulted in the layoffs of firefighters. As a result of these shortfalls, the FFD has a fire insurance rating of 5 out of 10, which is worse than surrounding communities.

The City should take a three-pronged approach in working with the Fire Department to decrease arson in Flint. First, the City should assist in the prevention of arson. This may include the continued demolition of dilapidated or condemned housing that may be a target for arson, neighborhood watch programs, outreach and awareness, and special events. Second, hire additional staff to better meet Flint's public safety needs. Third, the City should assist the Fire Department in extinguishing fires by ensuring roadway connectivity to all portions of the City, and maintaining water service with reliable infrastructure, hydrants, and water pressure.

The majority of arsons in Flint occur in dilapidated or abandoned homes. Prioritizing the demolition of these structures should be the City's primary strategy to reduce arson. More information about blight elimination can be found in ***Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods Plan.***

Utilizing the United States Fire Administration (USFA)

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) is a strong resource for reducing arson rates. Established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 1984, the USFA's mission is to reduce deaths, injuries, and property losses due to arson. The strategies outlined below utilize USFA information and resources regarding arson prevention, Fire Department funding, and firefighter training.

Awareness Programming

The City should provide citizens with tools to reduce the incidence of arson. The following strategies outline ways of combating arson:

- The City should participate in the USFA Arson Awareness Week (AAW) in early May. The program promotes awareness of arson issues and provides citizens with measures to safeguard their home from arson. Each year, the AWW has a specific theme. The theme for 2013 was "Reducing Residential Arsons."
- The FFD should work with Flint Community Schools to implement fire prevention programs that educate school children about the danger of fires. According to the USFA, some of the main motivations for arsons are curiosity, vandalism, or simple excitement. Educating children on the dangers of fires and their harmful results will help reduce arson driven by these motivations.
- The FFD should develop a community Arson Watch Program. Like the existing successful community policing programs, this program would educate members on how to recognize and report suspicious activities.

Fire Department Programming and Training

The FFD should utilize USFA programs and other techniques for arson prevention. USFA programming provided for local fire departments can include:

- ***Fire/Arson and Explosion Investigation Curriculum*** The USFA provides numerous courses for local fire departments that are designed to provide critical knowledge and skills to investigate fires, identify potential arson-related crimes, and prepare cases for successful prosecution in court.
- ***Arson Module*** Fire service and law enforcement agencies can develop and implement arson prevention initiatives, allowing them to use their resources in the most efficient and effective manner. The module can assist the FFD in the assessment of arson cases and create a comprehensive database to record potential arson trends. Identifying trends will allow the Fire Department and Police Department to develop a needs assessment for neighborhoods that need to be patrolled more frequently.

Funding Opportunities

In May 2012, the City received a $6.9 million Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); a grant which aids fire departments that struggle to meet standards for staffing, response times, and other operations. The grant money saved 32 firefighter positions in Flint and required the hire of seven new recruits.

The USFA offers additional grants for fire department activities that the City could pursue to pay for equipment, staffing, and fire prevention measures. The other core grant programs of the USFA are:

- ***Assistance to Firefighters Grant*** Funding from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) can be utilized to purchase vital equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training, and other important resources needed to protect the community from fire hazards. The grant is made available to fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations.
- ***Fire Prevention & Safety Grants*** The Fire Prevention & Safety Grants (FP&S) assist with funding for projects that take preventative measures against fire and related hazards. Populations with a high-risk of injury or death by fire-related hazards are the primary target of the program.
- ***Other Funding*** There are many other funding alternatives and grant programs available through the USFA. Additionally, USFA provides thorough informational resources and guidelines about alternative funding mechanisms, including local revenue, State and Federal funding programs, and private-sector sources, as well as how to access those financial resources.

CITY OF FLINT
Public Safety Facilities

The foundation of the City of Flint's community policing policy is the idea that "public safety is everyone's responsibility." The community policing policy encourages the Police Department to establish relationships with the neighborhoods they serve, partner with residents to identify potential issues, leverage community organizations and volunteers, and take preemptive action to prevent crime.

Abundant interaction points between the police department and the community are a key element of community policing. For the model to work correctly there should be physical points of contact in every neighborhood. Flint employs the use of neighborhood service centers (formerly police mini-stations) to maintain a visible presence, provide limited services to their surrounding areas, and serve as an interface between residents and police.

The City should ensure that public safety facilites, including police stations, fire stations, and neighborhood service centers, are located and staffed to minimize emergency response times to all areas of the City. Areas designated as residential place types in the Land Use and Development section of this Master Plan should be given priority when services and facilities are planned.

Place Types with a Residential Component

- *Green Neighborhood*
- *Traditional Neighborhood*
- *Mixed Residential*
- *University Avenue Core*
- *Downtown District*
- *Neighborhood Group Jurisdiction*

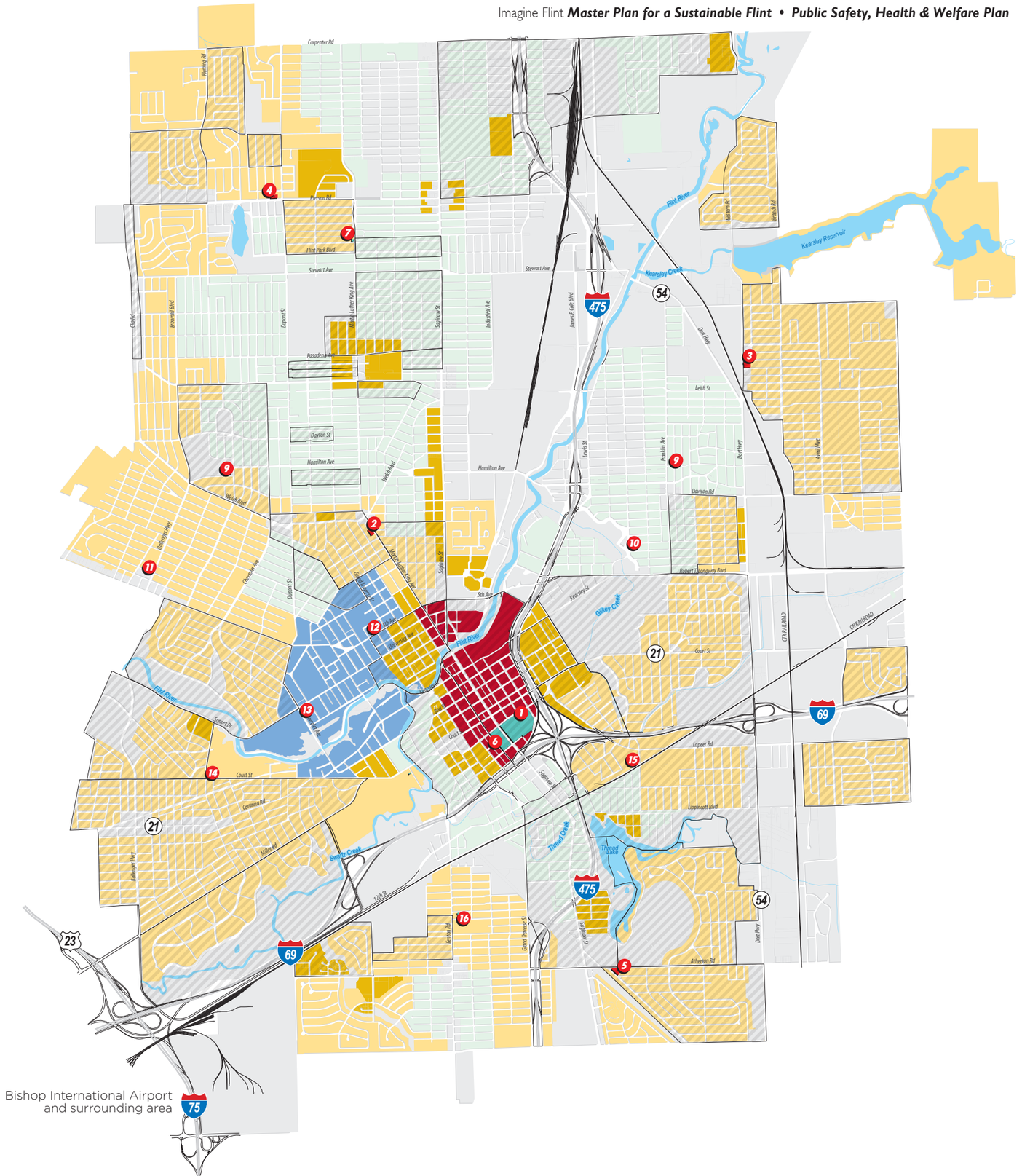
Public Safety Facilities Inventory

Public Safety Facilities

1. *Flint Police and Fire Department (Station #1)*
2. *Fire Station #3*
3. *Fire Station #5*
4. *Fire Station #6*
5. *Fire Station #8*
6. *Genesee County Jail*

Service Stations

7. *Northend*
8. *Haskell (closed)*
9. *Eastside (closed)*
10. *Kearsley Park/Mott Community College*
11. *Ballenger Highway*
12. *Hurley*
13. *Kettering*
14. *Westside (closed)*
15. *Howard Estates (closed)*
16. *Southside*



CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

A 2011 study of Flint residents revealed that 77% of respondents were either "somewhat fearful" or "very fearful" of crime in their neighborhood. A well-designed, clean, and activated public realm can lead to a reduction in both the perception and occurrence of crime. Instead of installing security cameras, speed radar, or other traditional and costly policing methods, several key components of "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design" (CPTED) aim to preemptively deter criminal activity, increase safety, and reduce fear in a potential crime hotspot. The City should develop CPTED strategies through zoning changes, City ordinances and policies, public awareness campaigns, and financial incentives.

Key CPTED concepts include:

- ***Territoriality*** Signs, fences, or artwork should be used to promote a sense of ownership of a given space.
- ***Natural access control*** Geographic barriers, landscaping, and gateways that delineate transitional, public, private, and semi-public areas can restrict access to crime-prone areas.
- ***Informal surveillance*** The strategic placement of buildings, windows, roads, and walkways, as well as activating public spaces through regular use, maximize the visibility of people, parking lots, vehicles, and the overall site. More bystanders with "eyes on the street" create a space that is unsuitable for criminal activity.
- ***Regular maintenance*** Proper upkeep (mowing the lawn, trimming landscaping, regular and thorough trash pick-up, road maintenance, fixing broken fixtures) instills pride in a space and indicates that criminal activity is unwelcome.

BENEFITS OF CPTED

In a Philadelphia precinct, burglaries and thefts dropped by 90% after police helped neighborhood volunteers clean up vacant lots and plant gardens. Crimes in the neighborhood averaged at only four per month compared to the previous 40 crimes per month.

Demolition, Code Enforcement & Blight Court

As a corollary to the principles of CPTED, areas plagued by poor property maintenance and vacancies can foster criminal activity and create a perception of crime. Such blight sends a clear signal to criminals that laws will not be enforced, while also making residents feel endangered and uncomfortable. Strategic demolition of blighted properties and strict code enforcement should be integral parts of Flint's crime reduction strategy.

Blight reduction strategies including demolition, code enforcement, and blight courts are described in detail in ***Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods Plan.***

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Flint's public safety problems can't be solved by reactive law enforcement alone. Instead, the City and its public health and safety partners must work together on an approach that involves preventive programs alongside traditional ones. A new proactive, data-driven law enforcement apparatus must include community organizations including neighborhood groups and faith-based organizations, social service, health, education, and workforce development stakeholders in every step of the process.

Public agencies cannot achieve Flint's public health and safety goals alone. Residents and businesses must also be willing to invest in their neighborhoods to make Flint safe, healthy, and livable. Community involvement in law enforcement has a long history in Flint, and should have a prominent place in its future.

Community Policing

The foundation of Flint's community policing policy is the idea that "public safety is everyone's responsibility." This policy encourages the Police Department to establish relationships with the neighborhoods they serve, partner with residents to identify potential issues, leverage community organizations and volunteers, and take preemptive action to prevent crime. This approach is aimed at producing a cooperative, proactive policing strategy that is tailored to meet the unique needs of each neighborhood.

The City of Flint was a community policing pioneer in the 1970s, with a network of organizations and crime watches effectively protecting the City. However, this approach was put aside in the 1980s when foot patrols were replaced by vehicular patrolling.

Today, both residents and Police Department representatives have expressed a strong desire for a return to community policing, but staff and financial shortfalls at the FPD have slowed down implementation.

A community policing approach should be re-implemented in Flint, but the FPD's resources cannot currently provide the staff, time, and budget required. There are a high number of community organizations and programs dedicated to addressing crime in Flint like Flint Lifeline and the Police Athletic League (PAL). These organizations could be key players in a community policing strategy, but are not fully leveraged. The following approaches can be taken toward implementing community policing within the limitations of City resources.

Municipal & Departmental Buy-in

Community policing must be fully supported and continually sustained by the City to be effective. Beyond funding challenges that must be addressed over time, the ideals of community policing must become a core element of the way the City and its departments function and interact with the public. Within the FPD, community policing should be embraced at all levels, from the Chief of Police to officers, detectives, administrative staff, and others. All other agencies and departments within the City should support the concept and collaborate with each other on its implementation.

Source: Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

Leveraging Community Volunteers

The City of Flint benefits from an extremely engaged community. Volunteers and neighborhood organizations are a valuable asset, and should be utilized as a way to involve citizens in law enforcement and complement FPD efforts. An umbrella program called the Blue Badge Volunteer Corps was established by the FPD in 2009 to recruit and engage citizen volunteers in public safety. The program includes more than 40 community-based organizations and over 150 trained volunteers. However, the Blue Badge program experiences difficulties in recruitment and the effective use of resources.

The City should explore strategies to recruit, connect, retain, and utilize volunteers effectively and efficiently, such as a year-round recognition program for volunteer efforts, expanded use of social media, or a campaign to promote community service as a core part of what it means to be a citizen in Flint. In addition to individual citizen involvement, many community organizations provide crime prevention support.

In order to better serve the populations they are intended to serve, the City should take an active role in coordinating the region's non-profit organizations and foundations resources to improve communication between these organizations and their target populations. This notion is discussed in more detail at the end of this chapter.

Opportunities for Neighborhood Interaction

Abundant interaction points between the Police Department and the community, are a key element of community policing. For the model to work correctly, there should be physical points of contact in every neighborhood. Traditionally, this has been accomplished through the utilization of foot patrols in assigned areas. However, there are other methods of creating these points of connection.

Flint employs the use of neighborhood service centers (formerly police mini-stations) to maintain a visible presence, provide limited services to their surrounding areas, and serve as an interface between residents and police. These centers are used for community activities and training programs, and also serve as accessible locations for citizens looking to report criminal activity or seek information. Currently these centers are staffed by volunteers.

This model should be maintained since, unless additional funding is identified, it is impractical for the City to provide full-time staff at all centers.

Blue Badge volunteers should be utilized to staff the neighborhood service centers. To further enhance citizen-police communications, police officers should be encouraged to regularly attend meetings hosted by neighborhood associations or community organizations. Ideally, the same officer would attend all meetings in a general geography so that meaningful relationships can be forged with that particular neighborhood. In order to avoid extended shifts and over-time pay, "flextime" could be utilized to offset when officers go to meetings, shortening other shifts in exchange.

Holistic Partnerships

An active and engaged non-profit and philanthropic community are important assets in achieving the desired public safety and health objectives and strategies.

The City should seek creative ways to make use of the great resources available to address Flint's crime issues. Law enforcement must work with social services, education, workforce development providers, as well as businesses to develop true community partnerships to prevent crime and reduce repeat offenses.

Wrap-around Neighborhood Centers

To provide needed community services and enhance sense of community, the City should promote the development of "Wrap-around Neighborhood Centers" throughout the community.

Located primarily within the Neighborhood Center and City Corridor place types that provide for the day-to-day retail and service needs of local residents, wrap-around centers should provide a variety of different services to the community from one central location.

Such a facility could be used as a health facility, an entertainment venue, a place of learning, social services office, or a recreation center. Wrap-around centers are an effective way of tackling crime prevention efforts at all levels, but also in coordinating and leveraging resources and filling gaps in neighborhood services.

Neighborhood Services

Wrap-around Neighborhoods Centers could serve as an anchor of well-being, filling gaps in services and ensuring that every neighborhood is equipped with tools to create a supportive environment. They can provide safe, supervised places for youth during after school and evening hours, a place for neighbors to meet and socialize, a place for senior adult programs, a place of accessible health and mental services, a safety facility, a much needed space for neighborhood and other group meetings, and space for various programs such as art, fitness, yoga, and after school programs.

Community Engagement

Additionally, Wrap-around Centers could serve as anchors for outreach and engagement. Moving forward, as the City evaluates the implementation of Master Plan recommendations at the neighborhood scale, wrap-around centers could provide the venue and physical anchor for ongoing outreach efforts to ensure that community concerns are properly heard and addressed.

Locating Wrap-Around Centers

The City should work with its partners to explore potential locations for Wrap-around Neighborhood Centers. Several of Flint's neighborhoods have experienced school closures which have strained local sense of community. The City should partner with the Flint Community Schools to evaluate the potential for the adaptive reuse of vacant school buildings as Wrap-around Neighborhood Centers. Already centrally located and community based, the school buildings could provide a low-cost option for future centers as well as transform underutilized spaces into valued community assets. For more on the adaptive school reuse, see ***Chapter 8: Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan.***

JOY TABERNACLE CHURCH

Located within Flint's Civic Park Neighborhood, Joy Tabernacle Church is a stabilizing community anchor that combats blight, promotes youth development, and collaborates on job training programs. Led by Pastor Robert McCathern, their efforts to "re-vision abandonment" through blight elimination techniques have begun to transform one of Flint's most blighted neighborhoods into one of stability and visual appeal.

A member of the Genesee County Land Bank's Clean and Green program, Joy Tabernacle maintains over 80 properties annually while employing neighborhood youth between the ages of 16 and 24. In collaboration with the Land Bank, they have also launched a pilot program that covers the windows of abandoned houses with vinyl images, giving the appearance of occupancy and attention. Their leadership and commitment to the safety and appearance of the Civic Park neighborhood serves as a great example of grassroots community activism.

Integrating Ex-Offenders

Repeat offense trends have increased in Flint, demonstrating the need for more effective re-entry methods for ex-offenders. Overall, 2,075 Flint residents are known "recent offenders," or have both a state felony conviction and are currently on parole or probation. This does not include federal felonies or individuals with felonies who are out of the criminal justice system.

Residents have voiced a need to focus on the challenges of prisoner re-entry in a thorough and comprehensive manner. In conjunction with current State prisoner re-entry efforts, the City should invest in programming and resources targeted at providing services to individuals with a criminal background who have completed their sentence, and are looking for a second chance. Flint's various re-entry partners, such as the State of Michigan Genesee/Shiawasee County Prisoner Re-entry office, Career Alliance, Michigan Works, Mott Workforce Development, New Paths, Catholic Charities, and others should collaborate to better serve ex-offenders attempting to integrate back into the community.

The City can work to raise awareness and encourage the expansion of prisoner re-entry programs that connect ex-offenders with a variety of employment opportunities, mentoring services, housing options, and other resources.

Flint Lifeline

Flint Lifeline Intervention Networking Together (formerly CeaseFire FLINT) is a program of "focused deterrence" developed in partnership with the City, the Flint Police Department, and Flint Area Congregations Together (FACT). Flint Lifeline also involves Michigan State Police, Michigan Department of Corrections, US Department of Justice, and local social service and workforce development providers. Participants in the program are criminal suspects with enough evidence compiled against them to justify an arrest warrant. If the suspect meets certain criteria, prosecutors and the police can decide to admit the suspect into Flint Lifeline, instead of moving forward with court proceedings. Once in Flint Lifeline, participants receive aid to help them change their lives, including opportunities for housing, employment, and job training.

Flint Lifeline represents a community strategy to addressing crime through positive intervention. It depends upon strong cooperation between law enforcement agencies, social service providers, government, faith leaders, and the community at large. The City should continue to monitor the outcomes of the program and expand it if it proves successful. The City should also explore similar programs and partnerships that can replace incarceration with intervention.

Youth Safety & At-Risk Youth

Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federal program signed into law in 2005 that is aimed at improving the health and safety of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bike to school. Formerly a component of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), in 2012, the SRTS program was rolled into the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) under Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). This consolidation is occurring over a multi-year process, so the City should verify the status of current programs and the TAP program to ensure that all potential funding sources are explored.

Each year, states receive federal funds that can be distributed to local SRTS programs. The local programs can use this funding for infrastructure or non-infrastructure improvements that enhance the safety of pedestrian and bicycle safety for children traveling to and from school. The City should seek SRTS funding to implement recommendations detailed in ***Chapter 6: Transportation and Mobility Plan.***

BENEFITS OF YOUTH PROGRAMS

A Bakersfield, CA school district began an after-school program for more than 1,300 students. Within the district boundaries, crimes against children dropped by 46% compared to only 8% in the rest of the city.

Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Center

The Flint community has tremendous concern for the City's youth, especially those at-risk of criminal and gang activity. Seeking to reduce violence and create a supportive environment for young citizens, the Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Center (MI-YVPC) in Flint, helps to implement youth violence prevention strategies by researching different approaches and creating relationships with community partners. Funded by the CDC, MI-YVPC's six programs address youth violence in several areas. The programs are designed to address either low- or high-risk youth, and are focused on either the individual, relationships, or the community. The information below summarizes their spectrum of approaches.

- ***Individual*** Youth Empowerment Solutions (YES) provides youth an outlet to make a difference through community improvement projects and Project Sync provides counseling to youth treated at the Hurley emergency department.
- ***Relationship*** Fathers & Sons strengthens the relationship between young boys and fathers to improve connectedness and reduce negative behaviors. The mentoring component of the program provides a mentor to at-risk youth at the Boys and Girls Club.
- ***Community*** In collaboration with the Genesee County Land Bank, Clean & Green helps to improve properties in the Flint area to create a better environment for youth. Community Mobilization works with local community organizations and residents to reduce violence.

Boys and Girls Club

The Boys and Girls Club is a place for kids ages 7-17 to be after school and throughout the summer. The idea behind the Boys and Girls Club is to create positive and proactive environments for school-aged kids and young adults to spend time constructively, when parents are not normally available to them due to work schedules. With two locations in the Greater Flint Area, and programs that focus on education, leadership, life skills, art, and fitness, the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Flint currently serves 80-120 individuals per day after school, and an average of 480-500 kids per day in the summer. The Club has a low-cost to its users and is a great asset to the City of Flint.

Source: Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Big Brothers Big Sisters partners with many government and community entities, individual sponsors, and volunteers to bring positive relationships to children and young adults ages 6-18. Programs involve spending time with each other, meeting either at school or out in the community, and supporting the friendship with activities together or in groups that keep kids away from violence and trouble. Big Brothers Big Sisters has helped both "Littles" and "Bigs" in Flint stay connected through positive relationship building.

Gun Violence

With the US having the highest number of gun-related injuries among developed countries, gun violence is a relevant and difficult issue to deal with throughout the nation. There are many ways to begin preventing gun violence for the community as a whole, and for youth in particular.

These strategies will involve extensive cooperation with educational institutions throughout the City, as well as community groups, religious organizations, and other partners.

COST OF GUN VIOLENCE

In 2010 there were 105,177 injuries involving guns in the US.

Flint was fifth, in Michigan, for the number of recovered firearms in 2010 at 182, increasing from 89 in 2007.

In their book "Gun Violence: The Real Costs," Jens Ludwig and Philip Cook argue that gun violence costs roughly $100 billion annually in social costs.

Ludwig and Cook also claim that every crime-related gunshot wound imposes costs on society on the order of $1 million.

Steven Levitt's analysis of data on a national sample of urban areas suggests that, on average, every homicide reduces a city's population by 70 people.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

The health of residents is a critical issue in Flint. Genesee County ranked 78th out of 82 Michigan counties for overall health in a recent Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings report, including 77th in health behaviors, 67th in physical environment, and 75th in social/economic factors. CDC data identifies the County as being 4th in the state for physical inactivity, 6th for obesity, and 3rd for adult diagnosed diabetes. Genesee County mortality rates for eight of the ten leading causes of death in 2007 exceeded those of both the Michigan and US.

Community health is an integral element in providing the overall quality of life for Flint residents. Addressing community health cannot be done by the City alone, but must be achieved by working closely with the region's health care providers, public health organizations, and local non-profit organizations. This section of the plan presents recommendations to improve current health conditions to help ensure that all residents are provided with resources that enhance their quality of their life and their health.

Community Health Stakeholders

Much of the health data and policies for Flint residents are generated by four major institutions: the Genesee Health System, the Genesee County Health Department, the Greater Flint Health Coalition, and the Prevention Research Center of Michigan. These four institutions provide updated community health statistics as well as programs for residents to improve upon reported health standards. These institutions are essential to maintaining the community's public facilities, services, and organizations that make a community function, and are key contributors to the quality of life enjoyed by residents.

Genesee County Health Department

The Genesee County Health Department has the statutory responsibility for County residents, businesses, and schools. The Health Department aims to prevent disease, promote health, and protect the public from environmental hazards to health. The Department pays particular attention to eliminating racial, social, and economic inequalities and uses prevention and intervention strategies that target underlying causes.

Genesee Health Systems

Renamed under a new authority in 2012, GHS supports recovery, prevention, health, and wellness of the body, the mind, and the community by providing services and support to Genesee County residents who suffer from developmental disabilities, serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbances, and adults and children with substance use disorders. GHS is accredited nationally by CARF, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.

Communities Against Diabetes

Funded through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with local support provided by the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan, a coalition made up of organizational partners and community members has formed "The Flint: Better Health Together" (FBHT). This alliance promotes healthy living and positive choices to decrease the unequal impact of diabetes in the community, and their mission is reflected ensuring that, "Flint is a socially responsible community where the root causes of health inequity are addressed."

Prevention Research Center of Michigan (PRC/MI)

The Prevention Research Center of Michigan is one of 37 Prevention Research Centers funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Established in 1998, the Prevention Research Center of Michigan (PRC/MI) is based at the University of Michigan School of Public Health in Ann Arbor. The Center conducts community-based prevention research to improve health and prevent disease especially focused on populations with a disproportionate share of poor health outcomes.

Speak to Your Health! 2011 Community Survey

The PRC/MI conducts a biennial survey, The Speak to Your Health! Community Survey, examines a wide range of issues related to individual and community health in Genesee County. The survey conducts a needs assessment, planning and program evaluation, health data analysis in the County, and geographic mapping of information that enables identification of asset and needs areas.

Greater Flint Health Systems

- ***Hurley Medical Center,*** which includes the Hurley Children's Hospital and Mott's Children's Health Center, is a level 1 trauma center bringing innovative, leading-edge technology and medical services to Flint and Genesee County. Hurley Medical Center has specialties in neonatal, diabetes, kidney transplantation, trauma, and bariatric care.
- ***McLaren Regional Medical Center*** is recognized as one of the top integrated health networks in the nation. McLaren Flint is a tertiary teaching facility with 416 beds located in Flint. They are affiliated with the MSU College of Human Medicine for its medical residency programs.
- ***Genesys Regional Medical Center*** is a regionally integrated health care delivery system with a complete continuum of care. Over 140 family physicians in the Genesys network act as health advocates, offering resources to outpatient ambulatory care, physical medicine treatment, and mental health services.
- ***Flint Public Health & Wellness Campus,*** run by Michigan State University, will be part of a $5.65 million project that involves demolishing Genesee Towers, renovating the former Flint Journal printing facility, and starting a new Flint Farmers' Market in Downtown. The new medical center will integrate medical training and public health to create a healthier Flint community.

CHILD POVERTY

According to the US Census Bureau, 58% of Flint children were living in poverty in 2012. While this number is decreasing, it is still the second highest in Michigan following Detroit, and more than double the state average of 25%. This Plan contains strategies to fight child poverty and other youth issues, but community dedication over the long-term is needed to truly make a difference.

Greater Flint Health Coalition

Most of the available health data specific to Genesee County is generated by The Greater Flint Health Coalition (GFHC), a non-profit healthcare coalition whose mission is to improve the health status of Genesee County residents and the quality and cost effectiveness of the local health care system. The Greater Flint Health Coalition consists of 26 partner organizations.

GFHC Health Impact Study

In 2012 the GFHC release their Healthy Impact Study. The Study outlines data such as unemployment, poverty, Medicaid, and other assistance program enrollment, and also identifies trends and future implications for the health of Genesee County residents.

Conclusions of Studies

Key health impacts and assessment priorities identified by the Genesee County REACH program and the Speak to Your Health! 2011 Community Survey GFHC Health Impact Study determined that many of the community's health related issues are due to demographic, social, and economic factors as well as the physical environment.

Mental Health

Flint must foster a positive and safe school climate by enhancing access for youth to mental health services and strengthening partnerships among schools, law enforcement, and public health organizations. The City should improve coordination efforts with Flint Community Schools to create a system of trust throughout the community as a whole. If this is achieved, other strategies and suggestions will have a better chance of being effective.

Another way to enable a safer community is to institute a public health campaign that encourages people in distress to seek help. Family members and friends need to know how to seek mental health assistance for others or for themselves. This process can aid in shifting the societal views toward helping the community become safer and healthier.

Source: Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

REACH 2010

The REACH program was one of the first initiatives in the County, which focused on fostering mobilization, improving health care, and reducing racism for mothers. The program puts an emphasis on where racism may play a role in disparities in the community, since typically the infant death rate for African Americans is much higher than for white infants.

Part of the program's success was due in large part to the partnership between the Genesee County Health Department and local community-based non-profit organizations. The partnership fostered a deep understanding of racial dynamics and enabled the Department to tailor projects to fit the needs of the people they were intended to assist.

During the period of the REACH 2010 initiative, the African American infant mortality rate in Genesee County dropped from a high of 23.5 deaths per 1,000 live births to an all time low of 15.2. The rate for white infants dropped from a high of 13.1 to 8.9. The ratio of disparity decreased from a high of 3.6 African American infant deaths for every white infant death to 2.4.

CREATING HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

Environmental issues such as pollution, crime, property abandonment, lack of areas to exercise outdoors, and poor access to healthy foods disproportionately impact residents who are low-income, minority, or uninsured. The recommendations outlined in the other chapters of this Plan effectively promote a physical environment that fosters healthy living for Flint residents.

In addition, the City can promote overall health by focusing on other things that have more subtle influences on the physical environment.

Reducing Health Disparities

All demographic, social, and economic risk factors are higher among Flint residents compared to the national average, where higher rates of poverty and lack of health insurance are associated with poorer educational outcomes, income and employment levels, and crime and incarceration rates.

Data for minority, low-income, and uninsured populations indicate that these populations are experiencing even worse health outcomes when compared to the population as a whole. For example, the rate for chronic diseases such as cancer and diabetes, sexually transmitted infections, and hypertension are higher among African American populations in Michigan and Genesee County than other groups.

The REACH program is a model of one successful approach that the City should seek to replicate for other health issues in minority communities. Health officials should also consider impacts on communities of color and low-income communities, when making decisions about where to locate health resources. Investing in the cultural competence of social service organizations, public safety departments, health providers, and decision makers would improve their ability to serve culturally diverse populations.

Drugs & Alcohol

Per capita liquor store density in Genesee County is higher than 90% of other Michigan counties. While City of Flint residents have access to only nine grocery stores, there are 54 liquor stores within City limits. This is a significant problem for the City of Flint, both in reality and in image. Alcohol outlets can be directly and indirectly related to crime. Many cities across the country, including Baltimore, Chicago, and Los Angeles, are revoking liquor licenses in high-crime neighborhoods as part of their overall crime prevention strategy. The City should reduce the number of liquor licenses to be more appropriate for Flint's population, prioritizing the elimination of problem establishments in high crime areas.

The City should also promote healthy habits among its citizens by adopting policies to reduce the excessive use of drugs and alcohol. This can be done by:

- Banning smoking in City-owned buildings, parks, and other properties
- Utilizing the Global Smoke Free Partnership strategies to design a 100% smoke free workplace with voluntary participations by institutions and major employers
- Working with healthcare providers to expand treatment options for those suffering from smoking, other substance dependence, and mental illness
- Enacting City ordinances restricting signage for alcohol and cigarettes

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Emergency preparedness, disaster planning, and hazard mitigation is crucial for a community to be secure and resilient. Adequate planning before a disaster occurs means that a city has the operational capabilities to mount an effective response in the event of emergencies, including natural disasters, man-made hazards, and terrorism. Emergency preparedness planning for the City of Flint is overlapped by a number of organizations, including the local chapter of the Red Cross, the City, Genesee County, and the State of Michigan.

To improve Flint's emergency preparedness, the City should:

- Coordinate the City's emergency planning efforts with the County;
- Ensure the City's emergency plan is up to date and that it addresses continuity of operations; and,
- Encourage citizens to understand .and prepare for emergency situations

HEALTHCARE ACCESS

The value of uncompensated care provided by the Genesys Health System and McLaren Regional Medical Center effectively doubled between 2006 and 2009. Over the same period, the community's primary safety-net provider, Hurley Medical Center, which has consistently reported the City's highest level of uncompensated care, experienced a 25% increase.

These trends pose a number of future implications for healthcare and resident health in Genesee County. Growing numbers of medically uninsured residents affects the long-term financial stability of hospitals and physicians, strains the capacity of community-based safety-net providers, spurs physician out-migration, and hinders future recruitment efforts.

The first step to improving the healthcare system in Flint is increasing collaboration between the City's hospitals, the Michigan Department of Corrections, mental health organizations, and housing services. The City should partner with the Greater Flint Health Coalition to stabilize the health care system and facilitate greater access to health care resources. The cooperative effort will bring together expertise and resources to ensure a continuum of care.

Accessible Medical Facilities

Locating pharmacies, treatment facilities, and clinics in high-poverty neighborhoods is important to providing healthcare to persons with limited access to transportation or limited mobility. The City and its partners should establish strategically located community centers to provide entry points for health and human services. Locating pharmacies and clinics in the Land Use Plan's Neighborhood Center place type, which is intended to provide daily goods and services to surrounding neighborhoods, will help give residents in high-risk communities quick and easy access to healthcare. The City should also encourage pharmacies, treatment facilities, and urgent care clinics to locate in high-risk neighborhoods.

Residents that are not within walking distance of medical facilities and do not have access to personal vehicles have to rely on public transit to access healthcare. The City should collaborate with the Mass Transportation Authority to ensure public transit routes reliably and conveniently connect these neighborhoods to major health care centers.

Preventative Health Care

Health issues such as nutrition, physical activity, sexually transmitted infections (STI), and pregnancy can be tackled with a more preventative approach through awareness campaigns and public education. Many resources exist for these health issues, but can go widely unknown by the populations they are designed to serve. The City should work with health organizations like the Genesee County Health Department and the Greater Flint Health Coalition to expand or create collaborative partnerships with institutions throughout Flint, such as schools, faith-based organizations, and community groups, to promote awareness of both health risk factors and resources available to the public.

Outreach to the public can be as minor as educational talks to youth groups or as extensive as broad marketing campaigns, but all levels of health outreach have the potential to positively impact the citizens of Flint. The City should collaborate with existing community-based health improvement campaigns to maximize exposure to healthy lifestyles. This could include working with Resource Genesee, the University of Michigan and the Prevention Research Center of Michigan's HOPE project, and other health partners to expand the existing clearing house for all public health information.

Awareness & Enrollment in Health Care Services

Health issues in Flint are compounded by the fact that many residents who are eligible for lower cost, or subsidized health care programs like Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Exchange, and the Genesee Health Plan are not signing up for these services. For instance, in Genesee County, participation rate among those eligible in WIC is only 60%. The problem is that many residents do not sign up because they do not understand how, or they do not know they are eligible.

The City should collaborate with existing community-based health improvement campaigns to maximize exposure of health care and insurance options available to Flint residents.

All levels of health outreach have the potential to increase enrollment rates and increase health care coverage city-wide.

To promote the Affordable Care Act Exchange for example, state health agencies are opening brick-and-mortar stores in malls and urban areas to target those most in need of health insurance, showing informational videos during professional sporting events, printing ads on prescription drug bags, and many other techniques unique to their region. On a more local level, health organizations like the Genesee County Health Department and the Greater Flint Health Coalition, could partner with Flint's religious institutions and community based groups to host enrollment fairs to assist residents in signing up for health programs.

CITY OF FLINT
Access to Healthcare

Locating pharmacies, treatment facilities, and clinics in high-poverty neighborhoods is important to providing healthcare to persons with limited access to transportation or limited mobility. The City should establish strategically located community centers to provide entry points for health and human services. The City should also encourage pharmacies, treatment facilities, and urgent care clinics to locate in high-risk neighborhoods.

Residents that are not within walking distance of medical facilities and do not have access to personal vehicles have to rely on public transit to access healthcare. The City should collaborate with the Mass Transportation Authority to ensure public transit route reliably and conveniently connect these neighborhoods to major health care centers.

Areas designated as residential place types in the Land Use and Development section of this Master Plan should be given priority when services and facilities are planned.

Access to Healthcare Legend

- *Place Types with a Residential Component:*
  - *Green Neighborhood*
  - *Traditional Neighborhood*
  - *Mixed Residential*
  - *Civic/Cultural Campus*
  - *University Avenue Corridor*
  - *Downtown*
- *Residential Place Types with Poor Transit Access*
- *MTA Bus Routes*
- *Pharmacy*

Healthcare Facilities Inventory

Clinics

1. *Genesee County Free Medical Clinic*
2. *Genesee County Health Department*
3. *Genesys West Flint Health Center*
4. *Hamilton Community Health Network - North Pointe Clinic*
5. *UM-Flint Urban Health and Welness*
6. *Hamilton Communtiy Health Netowrk - Main Clinic*
7. *Genesee Community Health Center*

Hospitals

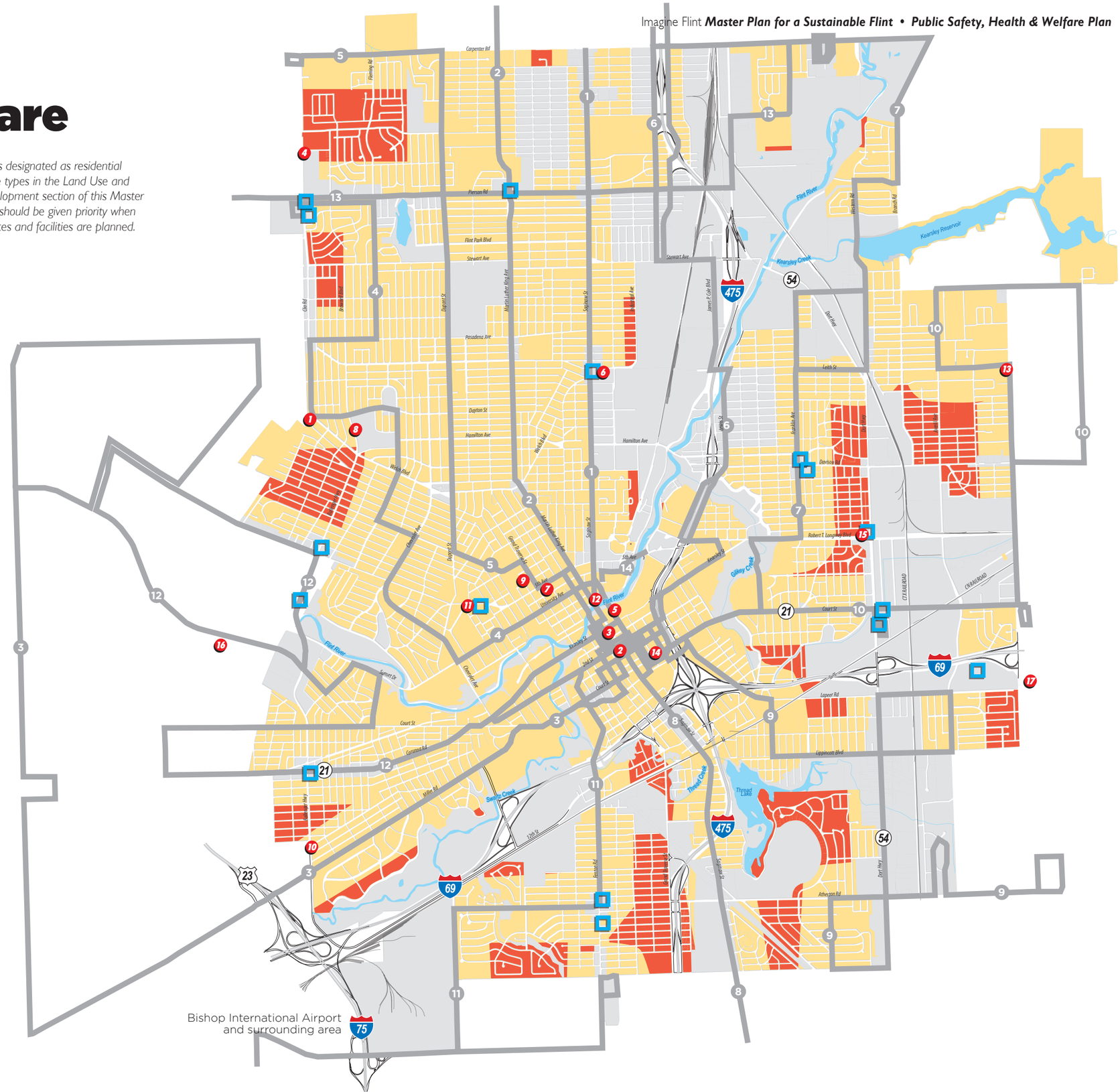
8. *McClaren Regional Medical Center*
9. *Hurley Medical Center and Hurley Children's Hospital*

Urgent Care Facilities

10. *Emergency Medical Center*
11. *Flushing Road Urgent Care*
12. *Genesys Downtown Fllint Health Center*

Miscellaneous Facilities

13. *Heartland Health Care Center-Briarwood*
14. *Wellness AIDS Service*
15. *Michigan Health Specialists*
16. *Planned Parenthood - Flint Township*
17. *Planned Parenthood - Burton*



NUTRITION & ACCESS TO PRODUCE

A lack of access to fresh, nutritious food is a barrier to healthy lifestyle choices and contributes to Genesee County's 36% obesity rate. Urban agriculture and community gardening are immediate ways to introduce fresh produce to the community, while also bringing vacant land back into active use. New food retailing outlets can help revitalize these communities, contribute to economic development, and improve access to healthy foods. Additionally, providing a more well-rounded diet in the City's schools will promote healthier eating habits and lifestyles for Flint's youth that lead to many benefits later in life.

Right to Farm Act

The 1981 Right to Farm Act is administered by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to protect farmers who conform to the Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMPs), or who were established before the surrounding land use changed to incompatible uses. The GAAMPs have been revised a number of times throughout the years. They apply to practices ranging from management and utilization to wastewater management and odor management. Issues with the Act came to light in the last few years due to the increasing popularity of urban agriculture and similar practices.

A revision to the Right to Farm Act's regulations allows cities with more than 100,000 people to develop their own ordinances for agriculture, so long as those cities exempt any farms that have started operating prior to new city rules. This revision made in 2011 allows the City of Flint to exempt themselves from the GAAMPs, and hold their own agriculture ordinances.

Urban Food Production

Urban agriculture and urban gardening are becoming popular ways to reuse urban land, provide fresh, locally-grown produce, educate youth about health and food production, and employ local residents. The distinction between urban agriculture and urban gardening, although not black and white, is based on the scale and intensity of the operation. Either category may choose to market and sell their products.

Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture, the larger-scale practice of urban food production, involves cultivating, processing, and distributing food, and is generally practiced for an income, although not always. Overall yields are smaller, but yields per unit area are often higher than traditional rural agriculture, as urban agriculture requires space-saving measures and concentrated plots. They focus on higher value crops and low-impact growing techniques, avoiding some of the historical problems of integrating agriculture and urban life. Most forms of urban agriculture use organic methods of production, so they typically rely on some amount of imported soil.

Urban agricultural land ranges in size from a few contiguous residential yards to larger-scale operations. One of the largest documented urban agricultural operations in the United States is six acres. Facilities sometimes integrated into urban agricultural land operations include storage structures, potting sheds, greenhouses, and kitchens. Heavy equipment is not used due to the nature of the location, so equipment tends to be limited to hand tools. Typically, urban agriculture requires amendments to traditional zoning in order to accommodate its operations and manage its impacts. Urban agriculture can be implemented in many ways, including:

- One or more contiguous residential lots owned by a homeowner or leasing agent, where the space is often leased in exchange for produce or a percent of the food sales.
- Urban spaces, such as parking lots and rooftops, that are owned by a private land owner or business and often require raised beds due to lack of soil.
- Parks and public green spaces, or portions thereof, owned by local government and run by a local organization and utilized for gardening.
- Institutional land, including hospitals or universities, where an under-utilized portion of the site is used for gardening and/or research.
- Vacant lots or under-utilized sites that are often temporary and require raised beds due to a lack of soil quality.
- Agriculturally zoned land within the City limits.

In keeping with the goals of the Land Use Plan, intensive, large-scale urban agriculture would be allowed only in the Green Innovation place type. Less intensive, small-scale urban agriculture would be allowed under Green Innovation, but also the more residential Green Neighborhood place type. On-site sales would require commercial zoning for any operation.

Urban Gardening

Urban gardening is a smaller-scale operation on a single parcel of land that is maintained by an individual or a group. Urban gardens are aimed at providing fresh produce and social benefits to a neighborhood, such as increased activity, a sense of community, and a connection to the environment. They are not typically focused on generating income, but some urban gardens may involve the sale or distribution of produce. Under the new Land Use Plan, urban gardens will be allowed in any residential place type.

On-Site Sales

Currently, the sale of food products on-site is not allowed in residential areas. However, a Flint resident may obtain a permit to conduct a yard sale. Minnesota allows the sale of urban agricultural products on-site as a special event. The City should allow for the sale of agricultural products on-site via a similar process as permitting yard sales.

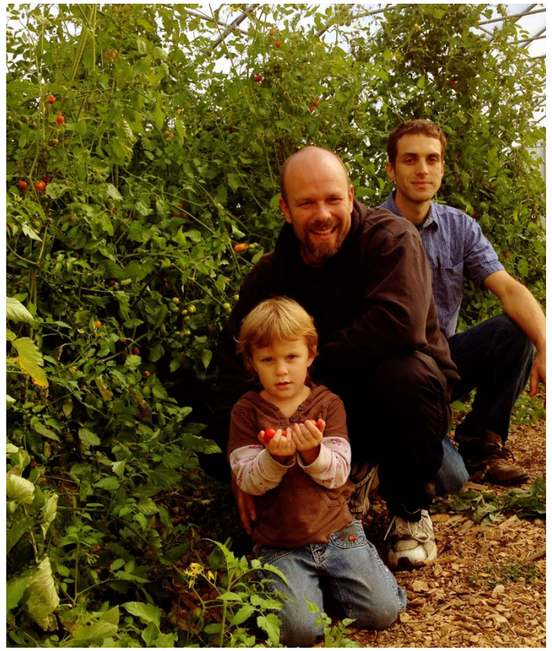
BENEFITS OF PROVIDING ACCESS TO LOCAL PRODUCE

New York City: Green Carts, Healthy Bodegas, Health Bucks, and FRESH

In New York City, the Departments of Health, Planning, Housing, Economic Development, and the Mayor's Office all played a role in developing and implementing several innovative programs including: Green Carts, to help produce vendors locate in underserved neighborhoods with high rates of obesity and diabetes; Healthy Bodegas, to improve healthy offerings in corner stores; Health Bucks, to promote produce purchasing at farmers' markets; and FRESH, to provide zoning and financial incentives to promote grocery store development, upgrading, and expansion in underserved areas.

Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative

The Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative has helped develop supermarkets and other fresh food outlets in 78 underserved urban and rural areas, increasing access to healthy food for nearly 500,000 residents and creating or retaining 4,860 jobs.



Ongoing Support for Fresh & Healthy Foods

The popularity of urban agriculture and urban gardening is clearly evident in Flint, which has over 200 active agriculture operations or community gardens. In many cases, vacant and unused lots are converted into active gardens. While there are many groups working in Flint to ensure local access to fresh and healthy food, there are a few that are more prominent:

Flint Farmers' Market

The Flint Farmers' Market provides an exchange for local produce in Flint. The market currently has 30 vendors in one building and 50 more vendors outside. The indoor market operates on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays year round, while the outdoor market operates from May through October. The market provides educational programs throughout the year, and it partners with other community organizations to provide food to low-income families through the Double Up Food Bucks program. In addition to produce, the Farmers' Market hosts live, local music on most market days as well as several events throughout the summer.

The market's manager, Uptown Reinvestment Corporation (URC), has announced plans to expand their market at a new location in the former Flint Journal printing facility in Downtown Flint in 2014. This facility is directly across the street from the central MTA terminal, making it easily accessible by transit for low-income individuals. In the past several years, Downtown Flint has experienced a revitalization with many renovated buildings, new businesses, and increased housing choices. The new facility will be double the building footprint of the current market, providing a 200-person meeting room and a commercial kitchen that will become an incubator and test kitchen for entrepreneurs and vendors.

'edible flint'

The mission of 'edible flint' is to support Flint residents in growing and accessing healthy food in order to re-connect with the land and each other. While 'edible flint' supports food gardening and healthy food access through training, education, networking, and providing garden services, it does not manage any gardens directly. Key activities include operating a co-operative to sell food, organizing an annual garden tour, leading a training course for new growers, and providing tilling, soil testing, and compost delivery for new gardeners (as funds are available).

Flint River Farm

Flint River Farm is one of the largest urban farms in the City of Flint and sits on nearly two acres of land across 16 lots near Downtown. While this farm is large for urban standards, it is a small, organic operation by industrial agriculture standards. The farm is run by two local farmers and is largely funded through a $90,000 one-year Ruth Mott Foundation grant but is also community-supported. This operation allows local community members to subscribe to a once a week box of produce for a 16-week season for a flat, pre-established and contracted rate. The River Farm also has volunteer days, and educational classes and workshops for community members to attend.

Hurley Community Garden

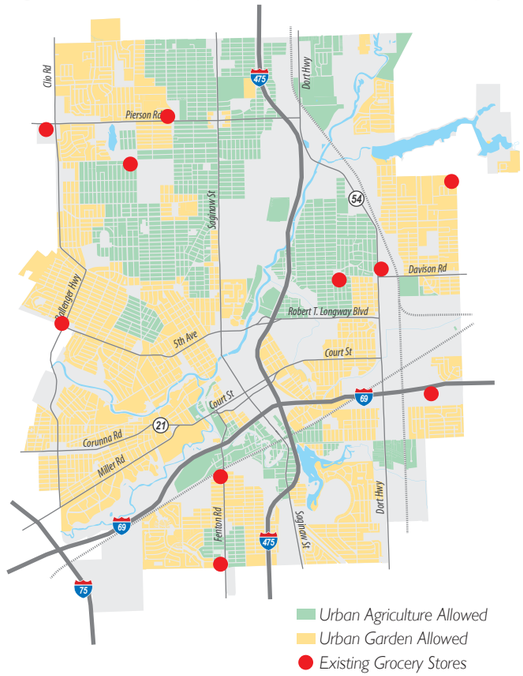
The Hurley Community Garden is located just near the Hurley Medical Center and provides beautiful landscape for the patients, visitors, and workers at Hurley Medical Center as well as the surrounding neighborhood. Additionally, the Community Garden aims to bring the community together to maintain the area, while fighting local hunger through donations to the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and to the needy people within the immediate community. With rows of beautiful flowers, plants, and nearly 50 different vegetables and ample sidewalks between plots, anyone of its visitors can enjoy the produce and calming space that it creates.

Implementing Urban Food Production

There are challenges in determining where urban food production should be, how large it can be, who can participate, and how it should function. Providing a legal framework is challenging, given a lack of clarity about urban agriculture activities in the City's existing Code of Ordinances.

The City, in partnership with the Ruth Mott Foundation, Genesee County Land Bank, and Michigan State University Extension, reviewed existing legal barriers to urban agriculture and explored strategies for fostering it going forward.

A recent article in the ***Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*** titled "Creating a legal framework for urban agriculture: Lessons from Flint, Michigan" provided information on this issue. Promoting urban agriculture within Flint will require amending existing policies and must be addressed when the City rewrites the zoning code.



Source: Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

Grocery Stores in Flint

Flint residents spend more than $32 million on food and beverages outside the community, as the City's nine grocery stores meet only some of their needs. Additionally, a large portion of grocery sales within Flint are made at other businesses such as small independent shops, convenience stores, and gas stations. As a recent study found that only 21% of convenience stores sampled in the City offer fresh produce. As such, these uses often do not represent a reasonable quality option for fresh, healthy food.

The City should:

- Work with community groups, residents, and other government agencies to identify areas that lack access to healthy food and to understand local economic conditions and regional food systems.
- Work with investors, developers, and major grocery stores to facilitate the siting of new stores in affected neighborhoods.
- Identify, market, and assemble parcels that are appropriate for grocery store development.
- Compile a strong, succinct marketing package to developers that includes relevant market data, site information, and available incentives.

Once a grocery store is established in a community, additional food access actions must be undertaken to maximize market reach.

- Longer term transportation and land use planning should promote the co-location of food retail, transit access, and affordable housing.
- The City should evaluate existing transportation routes and improve the coordination of bus routes, bus stops, and schedules or add van pools or shuttles to maximize transit access to grocery stores and farmers' markets.
- The City should partner with retailers to launch programs such as mobile markets, grocery shuttles, and grocery van delivery to improve access to healthy food.

School Programming

The school environment is a major influence on children's food choices and eating habits. Schools can ensure that available food and beverage options are healthy to help young people eat food that meets the dietary recommendations outlined by the Surgeon General. The City should work with Flint Community Schools to educate children, parents, and educators about the value of nourishing food and its positive effects on overall health and development.

The City should also work with the School District to find practical solutions for enhancing current lunch programs. This includes reviewing existing beverage/snack vending machine contracts in the City's schools.

The expanding urban agriculture movement presents a good opportunity for Flint's schools to utilize the resources on hand. Schools should partner with community garden and urban agriculture groups to integrate food education into their curriculum.

HEALTHIERUS SCHOOL CHALLENGE

The HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC) establishes rigorous standards for schools' food quality, participation in meal programs, physical activity opportunities, and nutrition education, and is a good resource for seeking information related to healthy food implementation in schools. Participation in this and similar programs by Flint Community Schools is a good way to promote nutrition and celebrate significant milestones and achievements.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & EXERCISE

According to a 2012 Greater Flint Health Coalition report, approximately 31% of Flint residents get physical activity less than once per week. Regular physical activity like walking, biking, and other active recreation has immense benefits for health. The City can play a proactive role in reversing poor health trends by encouraging physical activity through changes in policies, programs, and the built environment.

Walkability & Bikeability

When combined in the right urban form, components of the built environment can contribute directly to physical health. The physical layout and design of buildings, streets, and sidewalks and the siting of open space, public facilities, and other uses directly determine the walkability and bikeability of a community. The Surgeon General advises that 30 minutes of walking five days a week, which will significantly reduce the risks to adults for health condition like obesity, respiratory problems, heart disease, and other chronic diseases, while also contributing to healthy bones, muscles, and joints. In addition to their physical health and safety benefits, walkable communities generally enhance residents' overall quality of life and contribute to their neighborhood's unique identity.

HEALTH & WALKABILITY

- On a daily basis, each additional hour spent driving is associated with a 6% increase in the likelihood of obesity, while each additional kilometer walked is associated with a 5% reduction in this likelihood.
- Forty-three percent of people with safe places to walk within 10 minutes of home met recommended activity levels; just 27% of those without them met the recommendation.
- Residents are 65% more likely to walk in a neighborhood with sidewalks.
- People in walkable neighborhoods do about 35-45 more minutes of moderate physical activity per week, and are substantially less likely to be overweight or obese than similar people living in low-walkable neighborhoods.
- Easy access to transit can also contribute to healthy physical activity. Nearly one third of transit users meet the Surgeon General's recommendations for minimum daily exercise through their daily travels.

In a walkable and bikeable community, it is easier to accumulate the recommended 30 minutes of activity since daily tasks, such as commuting to school or work and running errands, can be performed by walking and biking rather than driving. Individuals have to make these personal choices about active modes of transportation, but the infrastructure investments from local government can influence those choices. In many cases, people who may want to walk or bike may not be able to due to inadequate pedestrian infrastructure, land use and zoning patterns, traffic conditions, or road designs.

Specific recommendations to improve walkability and bikeability throughout the City including ones related to sidewalks, trails and paths, complete streets, ADA compliance, and more, are provided in ***Chapter 6: Transportation and Mobility Plan.*** Pursuing responsible land use and zoning patterns and encouraging new types of development are also effective tools to create walkable environments. ***Chapter 4: Land Use Plan*** describes places in Flint where compact, walkable neighborhoods could flourish.

Recreational Programming

Varied recreational opportunities make physical activity interesting, enjoyable, and encourage life-long fitness habits. Just 30-60 minutes of regular physical activity can result in significant mental and physical health benefits. The benefits of staying active include reduced obesity, a diminished risk of disease, an enhanced immune system, strong bones, and increased life expectancy. Regular physical activity can also reduce the risk of depression, increase self-esteem, reduce mental impairment, and improve sleep.

The City should make physical activity fun, safe, and accessible by making opportunities more readily available and actively promoting the link between parks and recreation resources and improved mental, physical, and societal health. Detailed recommendations for recreational programming can be found in ***Chapter 7: Environmental Features, Open Space, and Parks Plan.***

THE BENEFITS OF A HEALTHY WORKPLACE

A workout program initiated by the multinational company Johnson & Johnson, improves health in its employees by incentivizing healthy living. Their process begins with an annual, online health-risk assessment, where employees self-report everything from diet and exercise habits to cholesterol levels. Compliance in the program is near-universal because if employees don't participate they pay a penalty of $500 more toward their health insurance premium.

Based on the assessment, employees work with health care professionals to make lifestyle changes. J & J assist their employees in making better choices by offering healthy options in their cafeterias and vending machines, Wii Fit stations and gym in their facilities, and an energy performance training program.

Studies of the outcomes have shown that the program achieved $565 in annual health care savings per US-based employee from 2002 to 2009. More importantly, J & J employees were less likely to be at high-risk for high blood pressure, obesity, and tobacco use.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS & FOUNDATIONS

Community organizations and foundations play a significant role in providing services in Flint. Serving missions as wide-ranging as healthcare and maintaining vacant lots, community organizations and foundations provide services that often times are not provided by the private, for-profit or government sectors. In 2010, there were an estimated 119 active foundations in the City of Flint and Genesee County with total revenue of $122.5 million. Collectively, they provided an estimated $112.0 million in charitable contributions to the Genesee County community in 2010.

In addition to non-profit community organizations and foundations, in 2012 Genesee County had a total of 236 social organizations and 311 religious organizations. While the total net impact of these organizations is hard to quantify financially, they are undoubtedly responsible for valued social, health, and general welfare services.

All of these groups are important to the long-term success of Flint residents and the larger community, and the City should proactively seek opportunities to partner with them. Within this broad set of service providers, there are some organizations that manage large-scale social services:

- ***Charles Stewart Mott Foundation:*** The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation is a private foundation that is focused both locally and internationally and provide grant funding through four program areas: Civil Society, Environment, Flint Area, and Pathways Out of Poverty.
- ***Ruth Mott Foundation:*** The Ruth Mott Foundation strives to "advocate, stimulate, and support community vitality." The foundation is providing funding for arts and culture, beautification, and health promotion.
- ***Metro Community Development:*** With a mission to expand and enhance quality housing and community development initiatives in Flint and Genesee County, Metro Community Development (MCD) organization provides programs, housing development, and lending services for individuals, families, and businesses.
- ***Community Foundation of Greater Flint:*** The Community Foundation of Greater Flint (CFGF) is a non-profit organization that provides tools and resources to help individual, families, businesses, and other non-profit organizations achieve their charitable and financial goals. The CFGF spends $4 million annually on grants and program sponsorship in Flint.
- ***Other Local Service Providers:*** The City should work to coordinate services provided by a number of local organizations, including the Boys and Girls Club, YWCA, YMCA, Big Brothers, Salem Housing, Flint NIP, Court Street Village Housing, United Way, and others. These organizations, in conjunction with those previously described, represent a broad spectrum of potential social services.

Coordinated Community Services

Flint is blessed with an active population made up of individuals who are invested in the betterment of the community. The City should continue to support the efforts of all who wish to volunteer in a constructive and collaborative way. However, with so many organizations providing a vast array of services, it is likely that there is overlap, redundancy, and inefficiency when looked at holistically.

The City should advocate for the coordination of community services from the consumer's perspective. The City should work with community services partners to determine the most equitable and efficient way to implement this, whether it is the formation of a City staff position, a non-affiliated non-profit umbrella organization, or an informal consortium of representatives from recognized community service providers. Regardless, the outcomes of this effort should be:

- Service provisions that are more closely coordinated among partners to ensure that resources are maximized and services are of the highest possible quality.
- Central clearinghouse of information that allows the consumer to easily query available services based on the type of service, area of the City, preferred affiliations, or other factors.
- Coordinated fund raising and networking that maximize the exposure of all service providers.
- Forum for service providers to share lessons learned regarding financing, regulations, outreach, marketing, and other aspects of operations and management.

Comprehensive Marketing & Outreach

With so many community groups offering so many different services, communicating the services provided to the people that need them can be challenging. Creating a network will significantly help market services to the Flint and Genesee County population. The network would facilitate a regional multi-media marketing campaign to draw people from outside Flint. A campaign should especially market programming to Flint's youth, a population that Flint residents see as underserviced. Additionally, local staff or a volunteer located at City Hall, could act as a "one-stop shop" concierge for what programs are available.

A website combining the various organizations services and programming could describe all of the cultural offerings in Flint as well. It could also host an online questionnaire, gathering information about local interests, demographics, and marketing and outreach approaches. This information could be used to tailor outreach techniques to best inform citizens of cultural opportunities in Flint.

The City and its community organizations should partner with the Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce, which already markets many of the region's main attractions. Joint initiatives could include:

- Development of a coordinated website describing all cultural offerings;
- A regional multi-media marketing campaign to draw people from outside Flint;
- Use of local staff or volunteer as a "one-stop shop" concierge for what programs are available;
- Implement a consolidated survey; or,
- A joint marketing campaign to youth.

Expanded Funding Options

Funding is a significant challenge confronting Flint's community service providers. The City should partner with Genesee County and local organizations to procure financing for on-going and desired programming. Some of these sources include:

- Grants through the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to fund artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation in the Flint community.
- Three programs administered by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) for community facilities improvements.
- Explore new donor programs, like Power2Give.org to expand financial support.

10 PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents the strategies needed to implement the goals and objectives of the Public Safety, Health and Welfare Plan. Taken together, the objectives and strategies included in this section provide specific direction and serve as a guide for the evaluation of development proposals and land use alternatives.

To provide the City with a reliable policy guide for decision-making, the objectives and strategies are based significantly on community input received through the master planning process. In addition to broad community input, these objectives and strategies are based on input from the 15 member Public Safety, Health and Welfare Advisory Group, Steering Committee, City officials, City staff, and observations and assessment from the Imagine Flint Project Team.

Implementation Matrix

The following Implementation Matrix groups strategies by topic within each objective and identifies anticipated time frame, relative cost, and the entities, including City of Flint departments and partner organizations, potentially responsible for the implementation. The matrix also identifies key metrics needed to track implementation progress.

Time Frame

A general time frame is assigned to each strategy, considering the cost of various types of improvements and their ability to set other actions in motion. Generally, low-cost strategies with easy implementation are given the short-term time frame, though some other actions are given this designation based on their high level of priority in meeting community objectives or ensuring the safety of residents.

Each strategy in the Implementation Matrix is indicated with one of the following:

- ***Short:*** low-cost, ease of implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years
- ***Medium:*** important actions that have some level of significant cost, and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years
- ***Long:*** actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time, or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation

Public Cost Estimate

Public cost estimate is represented by a scale ranging from $ to $$$. The costs in this column refer only to public costs. Below is a description of the cost scale:

- **$**: Actions that require primarily internal staff time requiring mostly regulatory changes, policy updates, or strategic partnerships with limited outside funding required
- **$$**: Actions that require outside consulting services assistance or relatively minor investment in infrastructure or project development
- **$$$**: Actions that require intensive planning, engineering, or design, and significant investment in infrastructure or project development

Responsible Entities & Partner Organizations

City government alone is not capable of implementing the Master Plan. This is a community vision which relies upon Flint's greatest assets, its people and community stakeholders to help implement desired aspirations.

With regard to citing those entities responsible for implementation, it should be noted that it is anticipated, from a policy standpoint, that the Mayor and City Council will be involved in the majority of these actions.

Where a City Department should be involved, that department has been listed. Where general administrative leadership is needed, the City of Flint has been listed. Strategies, such as recommended technical studies and analyses that would likely benefit from outside expertise, have also been highlighted.

Unforeseen Partnership Opportunities

Every effort was made to identify a comprehensive list of potential partner organizations for inclusion in the implementation matrix. As a community of over 100,000 with a rich history of volunteerism and over 100 foundations active in Genesee County, there may be instances where a deserving organization that is well-matched to one of the Plan objectives or strategies has been excluded from a list of potential partners for a given topic.

Similarly, there may come a time when a partner organization identified in the implementation table merged with another organization or otherwise ceases to exist. As with the rest of the Master Plan, the implementation table is a flexible document that should be regularly updated and revised to reflect the evolving needs and assets of the Flint community.

Progress Indicator

Key progress indicators have been provided for each strategy grouping. Progress indicators identify quantifiable metrics for which data should be available on a regular basis and indicate desired trends for each metric. These indicators represent measurable achievements that move the City toward realization of Master Plan objectives. These progress indicators will enable the City to monitor its effectiveness at implementing Plan recommendations.

PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 1	Eliminate environmental contributions to crime.				
Codes, Ordinances & Policies	Implement a streamlined, proactive code enforcement strategy in partnership with the Flint Police Department.	Medium	$	• Neighborhood Organizations • Neighborhood Safety Officers • Flint Police Department • City of Flint Planning Development Department • City of Flint Law Department • Michigan State Police • US Department of Justice	• Decrease in code violations • Decrease in blighted properties city-wide • Decrease in number of non-compliant businesses • Decreased number of liquor stores per capita
	Develop a "Blight Court" to prosecute blight and code enforcement violations.	Medium	$$		
	Strengthen existing City ordinances and advocate strengthening State laws regarding salvaging scrap material from homes.	Short	$		
	Amend the zoning code to reflect the best practices in Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).	Short	$		
	Work with the State to revoke the business and/or liquor licenses of establishments not complying with the law.	Medium	$		
Safety & Infrastructure	Continue to evaluate the existing street lighting system to ensure it meets current needs and that all lights are fully functioning.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • City of Flint Facilities Maintenance • City of Flint Transportation Division • Flint Community Schools	• Decreased number of structures that represent arson and crime hot-spots • Decrease in malfunctioning lights city-wide
	Develop "safe routes" to schools by implementing the recommendations of the Transportation and Mobility Plan.	Long	$$		
	Take spatial analysis of violent criminal activity and arson into account when prioritizing demolitions.	Short	$		
Objective 2	Build trusting relationships between police and residents that empower citizens to contribute to the safety of their own neighborhoods.				
Neighborhood Initiatives	Strengthen neighborhood watch capabilities with accepted protocols, standards of performance, and incorporation of youth into watch activities.	Short	$	• Community and faith-based groups • Flint Police Department • Flint Fire Department • City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Michigan State Police • Flint Community Schools • Volunteers • Neighborhood Groups • Block Clubs	• Increased number of active neighborhood watch and block club groups • Increased number of Blue Badge volunteers • Increased number of fire education events • Decrease in neighborhood arsons
	Promote the cooperation and technological integration of watch groups.	Short	$		
	Expand opportunities for community fire prevention and safety training.	Short	$		
	Embrace best practices in community policing.	Short	$		
	Expand the Police Department's "Blue Badge" volunteer program.	Medium	$		
	Increase the number of block clubs by offering training toolkits and mini-grants.	Medium	$$		
Police/ Community Collaboration	Increase law enforcement presence at school, after-school, and community organization activities.	Medium	$$	• Flint Police Department • Flint Fire Department • Genesee County Sheriff • Michigan State Police • US Department of Justice • Flint Community Schools • After school programs • Resource Genesee	• Increase in number of staffed service stations • Increase staff levels at special events • Increase in neighborhoods with public safety action plans • Decrease in neighborhood based crime
	Hold community conversations between police officials and residents regularly throughout the year.	Short	$		
	Develop neighborhood public safety action plans in partnership with law enforcement, community groups, faith-based organizations, and local businesses.	Medium	$		
	Expand the role of neighborhood service centers (formerly police mini-stations), including the staffing of assigned community policing personnel to each location and the incorporation of service centers into other programs.	Long	$$		
	Establish a joint Citizen and Police Committee to instill citizen confidence in local law enforcement.	Short	$		
Objective 3	Develop a state-of-the-art, efficient, and proactive public safety departments..				
Efficiency & Capacity Building	Increase Flint Police and Fire Departments staffing levels.	Long	$$	• Flint Police Department • Genesee County Park Rangers • Area Colleges & Universities	• Increase level of Police Department Staffing • Decrease is Police response times
	Explore creation of an auxiliary or reserve force to assist full-time officers.	Short	$$		

PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Innovation & Technology	Participate in regionalization and shared services, such as 9-1-1 consolidation and unification of the Flint area's two district courts.	Medium	$$	• Flint Police Department • Flint Fire Department • Genesee County Sheriff • Michigan State Police • Michigan Department of Corrections • US Department of Justice • 9-1-1 • Area Colleges & Universities • Genesee County Park Rangers	• Increased participation in IT training sessions for law enforcement • Increase amount of law enforcement data collected
	Implement a modern computerized crime statistics system to drive strategy, adapt staffing levels, and promote officer accountability.	Medium	$$		
	Increase opportunities for officer training in information technology.	Short	$		
	Centralize data and reporting in a user-friendly website where residents can obtain up-to-date crime statistics, crime maps, and communications from the Flint Police Department.	Medium	$		
	Work with the Flint Police Department, Michigan State Police, Genesee County Sheriff's Office, and other law enforcement partners to develop uniform, shared data protocols.	Short	$		
	Build upon efforts of the Criminal Justice System Advisory Council to provide continuous assistance to the Police Department on state-of-the-art operations and technology.	Short	$		
Building & Establishing Partnerships	Encourage residents to report low-priority crimes either online or at neighborhood service centers in order to keep more officers on the street.	Short	$	• Flint Police Department • Flint Fire Department • 9-1-1 • Area Colleges and Universities	• Decrease in improper 9-1-1 calls • Increase in the percentage of low-priority incident reports filed on-line or at service stations
	Increase coordination and communication between EMTs and law enforcement when responding to 9-1-1 calls.	Short	$		
	Reduce 9-1-1 misuse by educating the public about proper emergency protocols.	Short	$		
Objective 4	Reduce gun violence, violent crime, and arson.				
Police Presence & Effectiveness	Strengthen participation in and resources for multi-jurisdictional task forces.	Medium	$	• Flint Police Department • City of Flint Planning Development Department • Genesee County Sheriff • Genesee County Land Bank • Michigan State Police • US Department of Justice	• Increased number of beat patrols • Increased frequency of parole and probation violator sweeps • Decrease in number of violent crimes • Decrease in outstanding warrants
	Expand the street presence of federal law enforcement agencies.	Medium	$$		
	Deepen patrol partnerships with the Michigan State Police and the Genesee County Sheriffs to more effectively prevent crime.	Short	$		
	Develop a regional investigative bureau to utilize best practices in case preparation and court participation.	Long	$$		
	Increase the frequency of parole and probation violator sweeps.	Medium	$		
	Develop tough, equitable, data-driven, and consistent gun crime prosecution policies with the United States Attorney General, the Michigan Attorney General, and the County Prosecutor.	Short	$		
	Ensure City lockup remains open.	Short	$$		
Program Integration & Strengthening	Re-establish pre-trial and probation services in the District Court serving Flint.	Medium	$	• Genesee County Courts • Flint Housing Commission • Flint Police Department • US Department of Justice • Resource Genesee • Flint Lifeline (CeaseFire FLINT)	• Decrease in public housing agencies without public safety plans • Increase in number of guns taken off the streets • Increase in percentage of participants in ex-offender programs • Decrease in gang-related crime • Decrease in the annual number of violent crimes
	Create comprehensive public safety plans for public housing agencies.	Short	$		
	Implement an ongoing gun buyback program to reduce the number of illegal guns.	Medium	$$		
	Raise the awareness and capacity of prisoner re-entry programs, which would connect ex-offenders with a variety of employment opportunities, mentoring services, housing options, and other resources.	Short	$		
	Develop a gang violence prevention strategy that aims to educate youth about the risks of gang participation.	Short	$		
	Support existing and develop new research-driven programs of "focused deterrence," such as the Flint Lifelines program.	Medium	$		
Arson Awareness & Prevention	Create and maintain a comprehensive data base to record potential arson trends around the City.	Short	$	• Flint Area Reinvestment Office • Flint Fire Department • Flint Community Schools • Community Centers	• Increased participation in parson awareness and prevention programs • Decrease arsons
	Pursue grant funding from the United States Fire Administration (USFA) to fund Fire Department activities.	Short	$		
	Participate in Arson Awareness Week to provide all residents with strategies to combat arson in their neighborhoods.	Short	$		
	Encourage the Fire Department to participate in USFA arson prevention programs to decrease the number of annual arsons.	Short	$		
	Work with the Fire Department to implement in-school fire prevention programs to educate children about the danger of fires.	Short	$		

PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 5	Ensure universal access to quality healthcare services and facilities.				
Outreach & Awareness	Work with Resource Genesee and other health partners to expand the existing clearing house for all public health information, with special emphasis on reaching homeless populations.	Short	$	• Health & Fitness advocacy programs and organizations • Flint Area Congregations Together • Hospitals and Providers	• Increase in "hits' on health related websites • Increase in the number of eligible Flint residents enrolled in Medicaid and WIC • Increase in the percentage of residents with health insurance
	Participate in collaborative partnerships with faith based institutions and community groups to promote awareness of or provide key health services such as Medicaid enrollment or immunization.	Short	$		
	Develop a broad marketing and outreach campaign to ensure all community members see and hear about all available healthcare resources.	Medium	$$		
Access & Availability	Establish strategically located community centers to provide entry points for health and human services.	Medium	$$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Healthcare providers • Greater Flint Health Coalition • MTA • Community-based organizations • Flint Community Schools	• Increase number and frequency of bus routes that provide access to healthcare facilities • Increased number of people using Flint health care facilities for preventative services
	Encourage pharmacies, treatment facilities, and urgent care clinics to locate in underserved neighborhoods.	Short	$		
	Support policies, practices, and funding opportunities that expand healthcare services and increase accessibility of facilities to residents.	Short	$		
	Work with the MTA to evaluate and modify public transit schedules for convenience and reliability in traveling to healthcare locations.	Short	$		
Quality & Care	Work with relevant stakeholders to enact structural changes in healthcare delivery reimbursement models.	Medium	$	• Flint Community Schools • Michigan Department of Corrections • Healthcare providers • Social service providers • Health & Fitness advocacy programs and organizations	• Decrease of child poverty rate • Increase in number of schools offering healthy food options • Decrease in the amount of known buildings or sites containing lead
	Increase collaboration between hospitals, Michigan Department of Corrections, mental health organizations, and housing services to ensure a continuum of care.	Short	$		
	Ensure that reduction of child poverty remains a key metric and central consideration for all new and existing social services.	Short	$		
	Reduce the amount of lead in buildings and soil by education, remediation, and/or mitigation.	Long	$$		
	Work with schools and community centers to promote healthy food offerings.	Medium	$		
Objective 6	Develop and local food system.				
Food Production	Revise the City's zoning ordinance to align with the Land Use Plan, facilitating local food production, distribution, and retail sales in appropriate areas.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • City of Flint Utility Division • Genesee County Land Bank • Flint Community Schools • Urban agriculture organizations	• Increased acreage of land dedicated to food production • Increased number of school garden programs • Increase in the percentage of produce in grocery store provided by local growers • Increased number of municipal composting sites throughout the City
	Streamline and/or ease the acquisition process for parcels intended for urban agriculture, community gardens, food production, distribution, and local food businesses.	Short	$		
	Adopt an urban agriculture policy that supports local growing, provides recommendations to improve access to local food, and ensures compatibility with adjoining uses.	Short	$		
	Promote the development of community gardens and other agricultural uses consistent with the Land Use Plan's place types, based on the availability of land banked parcels in these areas.	Short	$		
	Evaluate opportunities for municipal composting.	Medium	$		
	Support local food planning efforts by linking local growers with merchants, markets, convenience stores, restaurants, and grocery stores.	Short	$		
	Encourage the establishment of school gardens.	Medium	$		
Access to Food	Support efforts of the State, County, and non-profit organizations to encourage fresh food retailers to accept public food assistance programs.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Social service providers • Area Farmers Markets • Local businesses • Urban agriculture organizations	• Increased number of fresh food retailers accepting public food assistance programs • Increase in the percentage of produce in restaurants from local growers
	Promote neighborhood composting and post-demolition clean-fill enforcement within appropriate place types consistent with the Land Use Plan.	Short	$		
	Create strategies and provide incentives for restaurants and stores throughout the City to utilize locally grown and harvested produce.	Short	$		
	Create strategies and provide incentives to foster healthy convenience stores in neighborhood centers throughout the City.	Short	$		
	Strengthen satellites of the Flint Farmers Market in underserved neighborhoods.	Medium	$		
Community Engagement	Maintain an inventory of local food production sources, including community gardens, urban agriculture, and other activities.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Flint Community Schools • Health & Fitness advocacy programs and organizations • Urban agriculture organizations	• Increased number of food production sites in the City • Increased number of schools participating in the Farm-to-School Program
	Increase public awareness of the individual benefits of fresh, healthy, and local food.	Short	$		
	Facilitate a community engagement process to create a Food System Plan for the City of Flint.	Medium	$		
	Partner with schools to establish a Farm to School program to connect the City's schools and local growers to serve healthy meals in school cafeterias.	Medium	$		
	Establish a Food Policy Council	Short	$		

PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH & WELFARE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 7	**Promote exercise and active lifestyles.**				
Personal Mobility	Revise the City's zoning ordinance to incentivize the development of walkable mixed use neighborhoods.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Flint Transportation Division • Health & Fitness advocacy programs and organizations	• Increased amount of new bicycle infrastructure and facilities • Increase in ADA-compliant intersections • Decrease in the percentage of Flint's population considered at risk of obesity, hypertension, etc. • Increase of Genesee County health rankings as compared to other Michigan counties
	Support bicycling through bike lanes, trails, storage, signage, active transportation campaigns, and other recommendations from the Transportation and Mobility Plan.	Medium	$$		
	Enhance walkability by ensuring Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance for all sidewalks and crosswalks, repairing and maintaining sidewalks, instituting clear street signage, increasing crosswalks in priority and high-traffic corridors, and other recommendations from the Transportation and Mobility Plan.	Medium	$$		
Active Health & Welfare	Leverage unique natural assets such as the Flint River and associated trails to increase biking, jogging, walking, kayaking, and other healthy activities.	Short	$	• Flint River Watershed Coalition/Corridor Alliance • City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Healthcare providers • Flint Parks and Recreation Department • Genesee County Parks • Business Community • Greater Flint Health Coalition	• Increased percent of residents who participate in active exercise programs • Increased number of employers sponsoring wellness programs and strategies
	Maximize recreational opportunities for citizens through public pools, parks, and gymnasiums.	Medium	$$		
	Collaborate with existing community-based health improvement campaign to maximize exposure to exercise and healthy lifestyles.	Short	$		
	Implement comprehensive workplace wellness strategies, starting with major employers.	Short	$		
	Ban smoking in City-owned buildings, parks, and other properties, and encourage voluntary participation from other institutions and major employers.	Short	$		
Objective 8	**Provide youth with a safe and healthy upbringing.**				
Early Intervention	Increase capacity for mentoring services for at-risk children in coordination with local non-profit organizations and churches.	Medium	$$	• Flint Police Department • City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Flint Community Schools • Flint Area Congregations Together • Urban agriculture organizations • Priority Children • Conflict Resolution Center • Community-based and faith-based organizations	• Decrease in child poverty rate • Increased number of business "safe havens" • Increased participation in youth mentoring and conflict resolution programs • Decrease in the number of violent crimes
	Expand mediation and conflict resolution services to ensure disputes end non-violently.	Short	$$		
	Ensure that reduction of child poverty remains a key metric and central consideration for all new and existing social services.	Short	$		
	Develop, in partnership with law enforcement, health, education, and social service stakeholders, a comprehensive strategy to prevent at-risk youth from criminal activity.	Short	$		
	Work with the business community to identify and market businesses that are safe places to go in a crisis or get access to help.	Short	$		
Education & Employment	Encourage area employers to offer summer employment opportunities, internships, and apprenticeships to students.	Short	$	• Universities & colleges • Healthcare providers • Social service providers • Greater Flint Health Coalition • Business community • Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce and TeenQuest • Genesee Intermediate School District	• Increase in youth summer employment • Increased participation in youth development programs • Increase in grant funding for early childhood programs
	Bolster linkages between City youth and the area's four colleges to promote aspirations for higher education.	Short	$		
	Expand successful youth development programs which prepare disconnected youth for societal re-engagement.	Medium	$$		
	Pursue funding opportunities from a range of sources, including Federal, State, and local grants, for expanded prenatal services and early childhood education.	Short	$		
Health & Wellness	Work with schools and community centers to promote healthy food offerings.	Short	$	• City of Flint Planning & Development Department • City of Flint Facilities Maintenance • Flint Community Schools • Health & Fitness advocacy programs and organizations • Flint Parks and Recreation Department • Urban agriculture organizations • Green and Healthy Homes Initiative	• Increased funding for lead remediation • Increased number of schools with healthy food options • Decrease in the number of liquor stores per capita
	Work with coordinated school health teams, school districts, parent-teacher organizations, student groups, and community partners to expand opportunities for youth physical activity both during and outside of school hours.	Short	$		
	Promote awareness of the risk factors for sexually transmitted infections (STI) and teen pregnancy through increased partnerships with schools, churches, and other community organizations.	Short	$		
	Reduce the amount of lead in buildings and soil by education, remediation, and/or mitigation.	Long	$$$		
	Bring the number of liquor licenses into line with the City's population, as defined by State law.	Short	$$		
	Enact City ordinances restricting signage for adult uses, alcohol, and cigarettes.	Short	$		

11 MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT
ARTS & CULTURE PLAN

VISION P. 263

GOAL & OBJECTIVES P. 265

RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES P. 267

IMPLEMENTATION P. 275

Source: Joel Rash

11 ARTS & CULTURE PLAN
VISION, GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Imagine

public spaces and vacant lots that are activated and energized by murals, sculptures, paintings, and performance art pieces developed by local artists.

Imagine a Flint where arts and culture are sewn into the fabric of every neighborhood, with homes, churches, schools, and community centers acting as artistic laboratories of creative innovation, community engagement, and civic pride.

Imagine Flint as a regional creative hub with a dynamic creative economy, where arts and culture are an integral piece in defining local quality of life and artists are the City's innovative problem solvers and visionary thinkers.

Flint is on the verge of achieving this vision. Flint is one of Michigan's top arts and culture destinations, home to world-class facilities such as the Flint Cultural Center and a strong network of civic and grassroots organizations. However, we must first face existing realities: art education has been cut in many schools, some residents express unequal access to the City's art and culture resources, and the City's extensive cultural offerings are often not well coordinated.

The "Arts and Culture Plan" is a roadmap to overcoming those obstacles and to actualizing a new community vision. By following the recommendations outlined in this chapter, arts and culture can become a part of everybody's daily life and be accessible to all.

SOCIAL EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY

Arts and Culture can be a powerful medium to articulate injustices and bring societal inequities to light. We must recognize arts and culture as a tool in promoting social equity and awareness and empower residents of all backgrounds and neighborhoods to share their stories.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Arts and culture is an integral piece in defining local quality of life. While providing pleasure and enjoyment to viewers, art is also a strong outlet for personal growth, self-expression, and wellness. It can also be utilized to beautify the City's environment by adding color and visual appeal.

YOUTH

Access to arts and culture is incredibly important for shaping positive youth behavior. Through developing cognitive skills and increasing academic success, engaging in the arts can deter young people from involvement in negative behaviors such as crime. Youth who are grounded in their cultural traditions and histories are confident and resilient.

RESHAPING THE ECONOMY

Creative industries are key drivers of economic growth. By becoming a regional creative hub and cultivating local arts entrepreneurs, Flint can encourage urban regeneration and increase tourism opportunities.

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Artists stand ready to transform Flint. Flint's vacant land and structures present artists with a unique opportunity to turn these spaces into beautiful and vibrant installations. Similarly, involvement in arts and culture creates lifelong learners who can proactively respond to the ever-changing needs of self and society.

CIVIC LIFE

Arts and culture support civic life in many ways. Art can be a bridge between cultures, as well as a way to discover meaning and shape conversations about challenging topics. Local traditions, celebrations, and lore remind us of who we are and what makes Flint unique.

GOAL:

Arts and culture should be a part of everyone's daily life and accessible to all.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The ways in which the Goal & Objectives of the Infrastructure and Community Facilities Plan have been influenced by the guiding principles are indicated using the following symbols.

- ***Social Equity & Sustainability***
- ***Reshaping the Economy***
- ***Quality of Life***
- ***Adapting to Change***
- ***Youth***
- ***Civic Life***

Objective #1

Use art and cultural programming to create dynamic public spaces.

Leveraging local talents to create public art and culturally rich programming will beautify and energize our communities and allow residents to freely express themselves.

Objective #2

Integrate arts and culture into Flint's neighborhoods.

Arts and culture should not be confined to museums and universities, but cultivated and celebrated in homes, churches, schools, and community centers across the City. Empowering residents to engage in visual, spoken, written, and performance art broadens cultural participation and communicates Flint's rich diversity.

Objective #3

Expand access to and involvement in arts and cultural activities.

By improving awareness of the opportunities that do exist, designing offerings to be culturally relevant, and reinforcing a commitment to serve those with the greatest barriers to participation, we can ensure that every person has the opportunity to be enriched and to enrich others through arts and culture.

Objective #4

Increase youth participation in arts and cultural programming.

Expanding arts and cultural activities for all of our youth will stimulate a lifelong love for learning, provide safe outlets for self-expression, and encourage creative and critical thinking.

Objective #5

Develop a thriving local "creative economy" of artists, creative professionals, and cottage arts industries.

Flint can invest in its future by creating, attracting, and sustaining job opportunities for forward-thinking artists, entrepreneurs, musicians, and creative professionals.

Objective #6

Brand Flint as a regional creative hub and market Flint's cultural offerings both internally (to residents) and externally (to tourists, prospective residents, and businesses).

By advertising and promoting Flint's unique opportunities, Flint can capitalize on increasing demand for cultural offerings and attract tourists, new residents, and businesses to both make Flint residents aware of the City's wonderful assets and ensure broader, more diverse audiences for the City's institutions.

Objective #7

Develop a sustainable, long-term mechanism to implement the Arts and Culture Plan and create a stable funding source for arts and culture organizations and programming.

Whether forming a new entity or tapping into existing organizations, implementation requires coordinated action, continued advocacy for arts and culture, and a commitment to fund raising to ensure long-term sustainability.

Objective #8

Use the arts and culture to encourage civic discourse and community problem solving.

Arts and culture can be used as a mechanism to engage stakeholders in dialogue about tough community challenges, share ideas, and collectively discover potential solutions.

11 ARTS AND CULTURE PLAN
RECOMMENDATIONS & BEST PRACTICES

Although many people throughout the world are familiar with Flint's plight of industrial disinvestment, manufacturing decline, and population loss, fewer realize that the City is a strong arts and cultural community. Despite years of economic decline, many arts and cultural organizations have not only managed to survive, but in some cases have been able to expand services. A 2013 sample of 10% of Flint's arts and cultural organizations, ranging from a nationally recognized team of teenage spoken-word artists to an award-winning art museum, highlight the impact of these organizations on Flint. Collectively, these organizations spent approximately $11.4 million in employee salaries and served nearly 1.1 million visitors (encounters) annually. Many more small grassroots arts groups and cultural organizations contribute to the vibrancy of Flint.

Arts and culture play an important role in preserving Flint's local history, establishing an identity and sense of place, contributing to the local economy, and providing educational enrichment. Visual arts, performing arts, literary arts, public art, community events and festivals, historic preservation, and more, represent the wide and diverse range of offerings that collectively comprise the arts and cultural foundation of Flint.

With a history of support from residents who are passionate about the arts and culture, Flint will continue to sustain and build upon its existing offerings to further enhance the programs, facilities, education, and outreach related to arts and culture.

This chapter describes how the City can partner with cultural entities to enhance the presence of art and culture in the community. A Plan translates the cultural needs and identity of a community into a tool for implementing recommendations. The Arts and Culture Plan presents an opportunity to establish greater communication and collaboration between Flint arts and cultural organizations, increase accessibility to services, expand participation, recognize additional funding opportunities, revitalize the built environment, assert the City's identity through cultural expression, and promote a positive image of the City of Flint.

Arts and culture enrich our lives and improve our life experience. Moving forward, the City must continue to leverage arts and culture as a way to strengthen Flint's overall image, and quality of life while recognizing that arts and culture must be accessible and reflect the heritage and diversity of our residents.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Arts & Culture Organizations 268
Flint Cultural Center 268
Grassroots Arts Organizations 268
Festivals & Flint Traditions 270
Social Group-Specific Organizations 270
Greater Flint Arts Council 270
Community Arts & Cultural Surveys 270
Greater Flint Community Cultural Plan: Forging Links 270
Our Town Grant 270
Arts & Culture Priorities 271
Revitalization through Art 271
Neighborhood Arts & Culture Integration 271
Access & Involvement 272
Youth & Education 272
Attracting & Retaining Artists & Creative Professionals 273
Funding for the Arts 273
Marketing Art & Cultural Opportunities 274
Civic Engagement 274

Source: Adam Lock

ARTS & CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS

The City boasts world-class cultural amenities on a scale that is uncommon for a community of our size. Additionally, more than eighty smaller arts and cultural organizations throughout the county and approximately 15,000 independent artists have found a home in Flint. This is remarkable given severe cuts in arts funding in recent years. While many groups still struggle financially, Flint is very fortunate to house major cultural institutions that receive substantial funding and support from private and public donors. Our rich arts and culture community is one of our greatest assets.

Genesee County's arts and cultural organizations range from the fairly large to very small. Together, they provide richness to the cultural offerings in the City of Flint. Some organizations work close to the grassroots and make a difference by providing sustained support to a small group of people or seek to address immediate challenges such as blight and youth violence through an artistic approach. Others have a singular mission of holding a one-day festival to bring thousands of visitors into the City and change Flint's image. Additionally, some organizations focus on serving the cultural needs of specific social groups, such as children, or a particular ethnicity. These groups span high art, popular culture, and diverse heritages, all of which strengthen the overall arts and culture scene.

Flint Cultural Center

Flint has a wide range of arts and cultural institutions that provide high-quality programs and events for people of all ages. The largest concentration of these facilities is located in the Flint Cultural Center, a campus with 8 major arts and cultural institutions with combined annual budgets of over $15 million. The Flint Cultural Center includes Sloan Museum and Buick Gallery, Longway Planetarium, and The Whiting, which are operated by the non-profit organization of Flint Cultural Center Corporation (FCCC). The standalone institutions of the Flint Public Library (FPL), Flint Institute of Arts (FIA), and Flint Institute of Music (FIM) complete the primary institutions of the Flint Cultural Center. Sarvis Center, a banquet and events center, was recently purchased by FCCC from the Flint Community Schools.

The FCCC facilities have a combined annual visitorship of over 185,900 and generate over $6.2 million in revenue.

FIM (which includes the Flint School of Performing Arts, Flint Symphony Orchestra, and Flint Youth Theatre), FPL and FIA (which includes a museum and art school) together serve nearly 700,000 visitors annually and employ 176 people. The variety of institutions comprising the Cultural Center generates a diverse spectrum of exhibits, events, performances, and educational programs for the general public and school children.

Although the Flint Cultural Center is an amazing resource, many Flint residents have limited interaction with Cultural Center institutions. The Flint Public Library is the organization whose patrons most closely reflect the diversity of Flint in terms of age, income, and race. This is likely due to a number of factors, including the library's primary emphasis on Flint (the Genesee District Library serves communities outside the City), its free services, and attention to programs that cater to the varied needs and interests of Flint residents. The Flint Public Library has faced financial challenges related to the loss of millage revenue on which it relies, resulting in staffing cuts, branch closures, and reductions in hours. Finding ways to stabilize funding will be critical to prevent further reductions in access to this vital civic institution.

Organizations such as the Flint Institute of Music and Flint Institute of Arts have begun working to expand access and opportunity for underserved populations. Both have initiated programs to reduce or eliminate cost barriers through scholarships or free exhibit days.

Building relationships with other local organizations is another strategy they are using to either deliver selected programs in community settings (such as FIM's Troubadours, who travel to schools and youth program sites to introduce youth to classical instruments) or bring new populations in (such as partnering with Head Start to bring low-income preschoolers and their families to FIA).

Similarly, while much of the Whiting's success stems from offering entertaining shows that attract tourists and visitors from beyond Flint, FCCC served 59,000 students in 2013. Many of them were reached through partnerships with schools that either brought educationally-relevant works directly to students or utilized the talents of visiting artists and resources at Sloan Museum to enhance professional development for teachers. The organizations of Flint's Cultural Center have unique and special gifts to offer the community. These are promising practices that can serve as a foundation for continued growth and inclusion.

Grassroots Arts Organizations

Many of the smaller arts organizations survive with a generous helping of volunteer leadership and scrappy persistence. These organizations may or may not have legal 501c3 status, may or may not have any paid staff, and may or may not have a dedicated space for rehearsals and an office. While many of the smallest groups may be content to operate informally, those seeking to expand and sustain their work frequently struggle with finding the funding and building the governance and management systems to do so.

Although there has been strong support from local funders and limited capacity building through organizations like BEST and the Greater Flint Arts Council, greater attention should be paid to growing and stabilizing these small arts and cultural organizations. In some instances, these organizations may be better served by working as a program of a non-profit organization that can provide administrative and fundraising support while they focus on providing services. In other communities, this has proven an effective strategy in ensuring the long-term sustainability of grassroots arts and cultural organizations.

CITY OF FLINT
Cultural Facilities

Cultural Facilities Legend

- *Public Art (murals, sculptures, statues)*
- *Historical Sites*
- *Venues*
- *College/University Facilities*
- *Museums/Other Cultural*

Cultural Facilities Inventory

Public Art

1. *House of Alterations*
2. *Hispanic Technology Center*
3. *Flint Stool and Chair Mural*
4. *Flint History Mural*
5. *Durant and Dort Statues*
6. *Automotive Pioneers Statues*
7. *Greater Flint Arts Council & Vernor's Mural*
8. *The Rock*
9. *Howard Estates*
10. *Semmens Transmissions Mural*

Historical Sites

11. *Berston Field House*
12. *Donnelly Pavillion*
13. *Applewood Estate*
14. *Whaley House*
15. *Smith/Aldridge House*
16. *Durant Dort Office Building*
17. *Carriage Factory No. 1*
18. *Charles Nash House*
19. *First National Bank of Flint*
20. *Masonic Temple*
21. *Court Street United Methodist Church*
22. *Stockton House*
23. *Superintendent's Cottage*
24. *UAW Sit Down Memorial*
25. *Quinn Chapel AME Church*

Venues

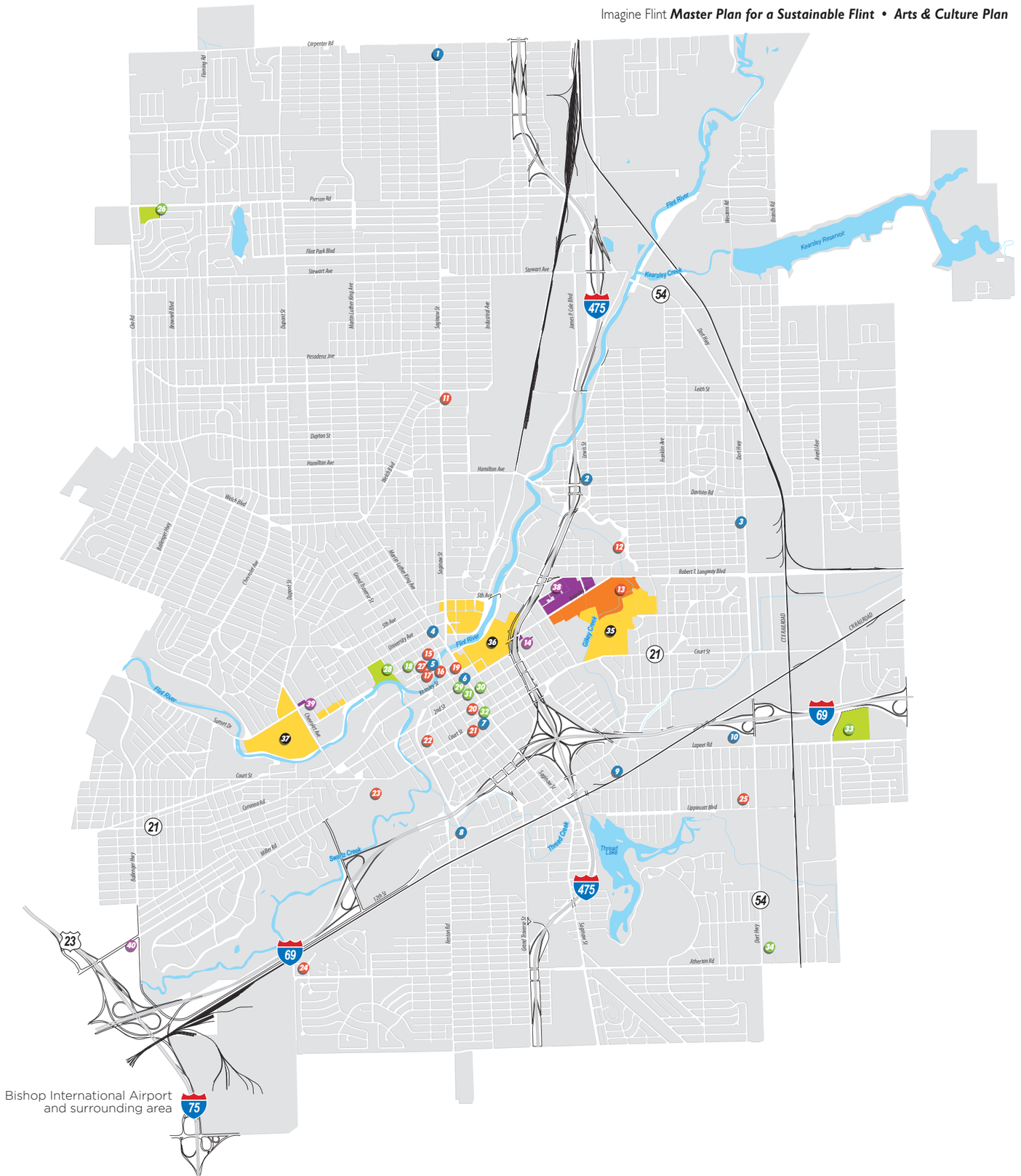
26. *New McCree Theater*
27. *Good Beans Anteroom*
28. *Atwood Stadium*
29. *Flint Local 432*
30. *The Capitol Theatre*
31. *Buckham Gallery*
32. *Greater Flint Arts Council*
33. *Perani Areana and Events Center*
34. *Machine Shop Concert Lounge*

College/University Facilties

35. *Mott Community College*
36. *University of Michigan - Flint*
37. *Kettering Unversity*

Museums/Other Cultural

38. *Flint Civic/Cultural Campus*
    - *Whiting Center*
    - *Longway Planetarium*
    - *Sloan Museum of Art*
    - *Flint Youth Theatre*
    - *Flint Institute of Music*
    - *Flint Institute of Arts*
    - *Flint Public Library*
    - *Sarvis Conference Center*
39. *Flint Children's Museum*
40. *Flint Community Players*



Festivals & Flint Traditions

Flint has a history all its own and many festivals celebrate the unique flavors of the City. As the quintessential car town, Flint's summertime Back to the Bricks car cruise has grown exponentially in the few years since its inception, attracting people from across the Midwest to showcase their classic cars. The Crim Festival of Races has likewise come to be a mainstay of August, and the blue line on the pavement marking the course of the 10-mile race is a visual reminder of the event throughout the year. Such events, along with the monuments commemorating the Sit-Down Strike and iconic landmarks like the painted block at Hammerberg, shape a common reference point for Flint. When you see the Weatherball, you know you're home. As Flint charts its future path, honoring our collective local culture will remain important.

Social Group-Specific Organizations

While there are some elements of local culture that most of us in Flint can relate to, we are a diverse group of people with traditions, languages, art forms and legacies of our own. Children have places, such as the Flint Children's Museum, that are designed to activate and engage their distinct way of exploring the world. Some arts groups celebrate the art forms of specific racial or ethnic groups—Flint currently has organizations dedicated to African drum and dance, Mexican folkloric ballet and mariachi performance, and traditional Indian dance, to name a few.

Just as important to the cultural fabric of Flint are the organizations that may not have an arts focus at all, but nonetheless celebrate, preserve, and share the legacies and experiences of their ethnic group. Examples include groups organized around Hispanic, Arab American, African American, or Jewish heritage. The work of these groups can be harnessed to deepen cross-cultural understanding and help young people build a sense of connection to their roots.

Many of these organizations are small and face challenges in capacity and fundraising similar to other grassroots organizations. Strengthening organizations that provide culturally and ethnically rich programming will help ensure that arts and culture in Flint remains culturally relevant to our population.

Greater Flint Arts Council

The Greater Flint Arts Council (GFAC) is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to be a catalyst of, and advocate for, increased artistic and cultural enrichment in our ethnically diverse community. The Council strives to promote and celebrate the arts by building new partnerships and laying the foundations of cultural growth for all arts in our community. In addition to offering a number of arts and culture related programs, the GFAC offers technical assistance, such as workshops and training to aid arts administrators, marketers, and fundraisers.

COMMUNITY ARTS & CULTURAL SURVEYS

This plan reflects the input received during the Imagine Flint intensive public input process, but also the results of two city-wide cultural focused surveys: the Greater Flint Community Cultural Plan Forging Links and the Our Town Grant surveys. The results of the surveys demonstrate that the people of Flint recognize the value of the arts and culture to the City and in their lives.

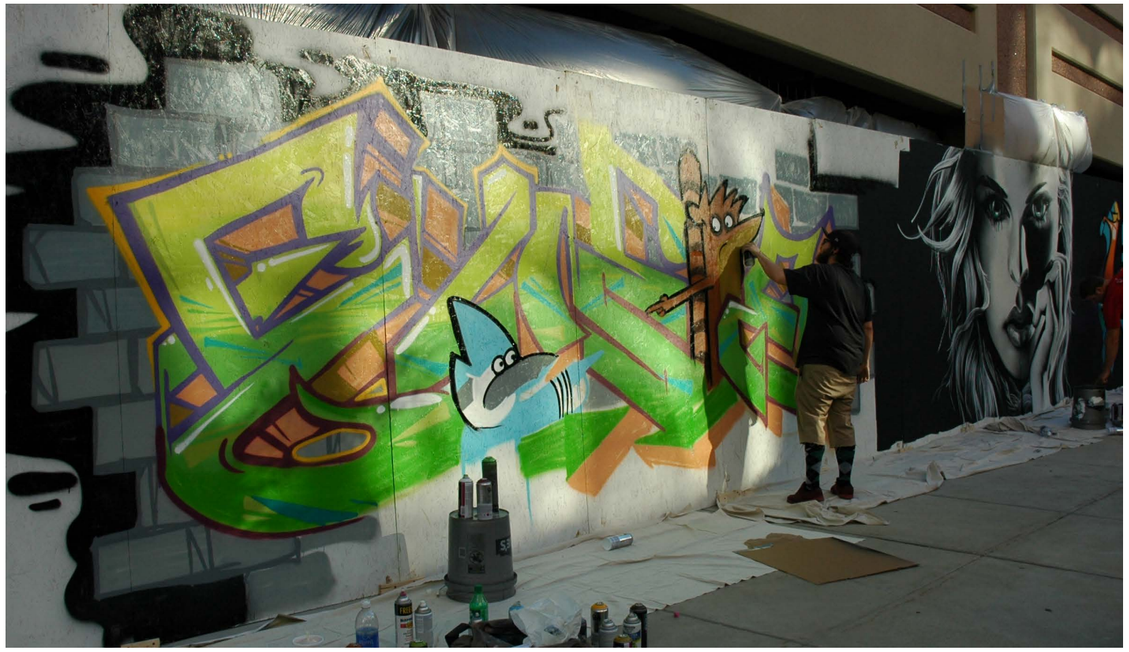
Greater Flint Community Cultural Plan: Forging Links

In the fall of 2004, the Greater Flints Arts Council and representatives from Flint's cultural centers led the development of Forging Links and created a cultural plan that defined a vision for Flint's cultural scene. Reaching out to more than 150 artists, the comprehensive survey was conducted and identified a series of priorities. The cultural plan ultimately recommended creating a center for youth expression, starting a fine arts academy, establishing an arts advocacy group, fully utilizing downtown Flint as a cultural asset, and providing more opportunities in Flint.

Our Town Grant

In 2012, the City of Flint and the Greater Flint Arts Council were awarded an Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. This was matched by local funders and partners to help incorporate Arts and Culture into the City's new Flint Master Plan and to fully and creatively engage local citizens in the process of planning. With the assistance of the BEST Project and Greater Flint Arts Council, the Our Town project launched a survey of artists, arts organizations, and arts supporters.

The newer survey results closely mirrored those priorities in arts and culture identified in 2004. Respondents prioritized youth programming first, closely followed by the need to involve more Flint residents in the arts and develop vibrant places for arts and cultural events. The new survey highlighted a deeper understanding of how public art could transform the City's blight.



Source: Joel Rash

ARTS & CULTURE PRIORITIES

The planning process identified key needs to be addressed and opportunities to be explored. The recommendations of the plan are underscored by the following themes that were identified from the various outreach efforts.

- Revitalization through Art
- Neighborhood Arts and Culture Integration
- Access & Involvement
- Youth & Education
- Attracting and Retaining Artists and Creative Professionals
- Funding for the Arts
- Marketing Art & Cultural Opportunities
- Civic Engagement

Insight collected from the surveys builds the basis for the priorities outlined in the Arts & Culture Plan. Recommendations address the continued health of the arts and cultural environment, and of the community as a whole.

Revitalization through Art

Attracting new audiences from outside of Genesee County due to the negative perception of the City has proven to be a significant obstacle for Flint. Participants of the 2004 GFAC and 2012 Our Town survey efforts state that attracting visitors to Flint is difficult because of the lack of exciting, clean, and safe places to visit and attend a cultural event. Art can be a catalyst for creating vibrant and inviting spaces. However, the growth of downtown festivals and events over the last several years has demonstrated the power of arts and culture in creating a desirable destination.

Art can be utilized to revitalize Flint's public spaces. Public art is also an avenue for revitalization when it empowers local residents and artists to reclaim vacant spaces for community art projects. This could include reclaiming housing to convert to artist work studios, or creating temporary art installations at brownfields and other underutilized spaces. Local arts organizations should work with the Planning Department to develop policy guidelines for artists interested in installing public pieces of art.

One form of public art that Flint has plentiful examples of is murals. Countless buildings, ranging from vacant storefronts to busy community centers, public housing complexes, and private businesses feature original works of mural art on their exteriors. Often, these projects are undertaken with an artist and community or youth group working together to create a vision that honors that particular place. Murals and other forms of public art communicate that a place is cared for, which can have the effect of deterring crime (as a component of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design).

Neighborhood Arts & Culture Integration

While central institutions, like those of the Flint Cultural Center and Applewood Estate, provide exceptional opportunities for involvement in the arts, neighborhoods need arts and culture too. The City can encourage partnerships and strategies that provide programs that are accessible in terms of cultural relevancy, price, and location. Several avenues can be pursued for bringing art to the City's neighborhoods to make involvement more easily accessible and welcome visitors to explore the cultural heritage of distinct neighborhoods.

One way to bring arts and culture to neighborhoods is by private businesses making it part of their approach. The Good Beans Café, located in the Carriage Town neighborhood, illustrates this opportunity. While many strategies for neighborhood arts and culture integration focus on non-profit and government efforts, Good Beans Café shows how to blend arts and culture with their primary business- coffee. The café features visual art on the walls from local artists and uses an attached room (dubbed "The Anteroom") for live music, a recording studio, poetry, and theatre performances.

The combination is good for the café business and good for artists who have a supportive space to sell their works and perform their craft. Private businesses should consider ways to enhance their spaces through art or consider how they may provide a platform for cultural events.

The Artists in Residence program, which placed artist leaders in all nine wards of the City as part of the NEA Our Town grant, demonstrated another avenue for integrating art and culture into Flint's neighborhoods. Neighborhood Art Parades were also organized by the Flint Public Art Project in conjunction with neighborhood organizations. One factor common to both approaches was the commitment to put arts resources where people already lived. Additionally, the City should encourage conversations regarding the creation of formal neighborhood support networks to connect neighborhoods with community-wide arts and cultural resources.

The City should look favorably on the inclusion of arts and culture programs within neighborhoods as standalone community arts centers or as part of multi-purpose community facilities. The reuse of closed schools and/or other abandoned buildings or co-locating with existing compatible organizations present two options. Schools are often located in the heart of a neighborhood, so their productive re-use can help stabilize the surrounding area. Because many closed schools may come with high energy costs, investments in efficiency improvements may help these efforts succeed.

Success Story: Former Selby Elementary School

The former Selby Elementary School was sold to a non-profit organization. The "New" McCree Theatre, which is dedicated to telling the African American Story in the African American Voice, now manages the building. Other arts and community groups (including the African Drum and Dance Parent Association) utilize classrooms for rehearsal space and the auditorium for performances. Repurposing the former school in this way addresses three needs, embedding culturally relevant arts into neighborhoods, restoring a vacant school to productive use, and providing a reliable home for small organizations.

CITY ARTS TEAM

This program is similar to Artshare, using local artists to give demonstrations and "hand-on" activities. The City Arts Team works throughout the summer months and offers programs through community centers for children and senior citizens. Evaluation interviews are held with each recipient organization to insure quality programming and help make plans for future offerings.

Access & Involvement

Outreach uncovered perceptions that access to arts and culture in Flint can be difficult. Even though there are many arts and cultural activities available at almost any time during the year, there are segments of the community that are not attending for a number of reasons, including:

- They feel unwelcome.
- The programming is not representative of their culture or does not appeal to their aesthetics.
- The price is unaffordable.
- The location is inconvenient.
- The time and/or day do not fit their lifestyle.
- They have received no information or communication about the event.

Previous assessments show that the audiences most underserved are African Americans and youth in general. The issue is one of not only increasing audience diversity at current offerings, but also of increasing the diversity of future program options for the underserved. The City should increase access and involvement for all residents of Flint. The City can encourage major cultural institutions, such as those of the Flint Cultural Center and the Greater Flint Arts Council (GFAC), to increase accessibility and provide arts and cultural programming for a wide range of interests. Increased marketing efforts and integrating arts into of the City's neighborhoods, discussed earlier, will also create additional avenues for awareness of programs and getting involved.

There are already successful programs in place that effectively provide artistic and cultural opportunities to underserved residents. For instance, Tapology, housed in the City-owned Berston Field House, offers dance instruction workshops, historical education, and concert performances with a focus on Flint youth. In such cases, the challenge is not so much to adjust program offerings to appeal to the intended audience, but rather to assist with capacity to raise funds, provide stable spaces to practice and perform, and access back-office services that relieve leanly-staffed organizations to deliver effective programs.

While the awareness and diversity of programming offered will effectively increase involvement in artistic and cultural opportunities, other components influence accessibility. The theme of access encompasses many diverse elements such as safety in public spaces, zoning and policy, effective communication, geographic distribution, and transportation. The City must utilize the recommendations provided in the other chapters of this Plan to ensure the goals and objectives of the Arts and Culture Plan can be realized.

Youth & Education

The arts are an important part of educating our youth. According to Americans for the Arts, involvement in art and cultural education strengthens problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, adding to overall academic achievement and school success, while also nurturing important values such as being part of a team; respecting alternative viewpoints; and appreciating and being aware of different cultures and traditions. The City has amazing arts and cultural assets, but with significant cuts in arts programming at schools, exposure is limited and inconsistent. While many youths may seek out the arts outside of school, many do not.

The Flint community has an important opportunity to bring arts and culture programming to its entire youth population. The City should encourage partners in schools and out of schools to increase opportunities for youth involvement in arts and culture through the following strategies.

Education

Arts and culture education enhances positive youth development in many ways, ranging from nurturing creativity and self-expression to deepening understanding of people, histories, and ideas, to building technical skills. For the Flint Community Schools (FCS), bolstering its arts and culture education programs is important in order to attract families that expect robust offerings.

In 2013, FCS decided to initiate an arts education planning process that will assess current offerings, needs, and opportunities to provide every student with high-quality arts education. From this process the district expects to have a clear plan for how it will provide visual, performing, and media arts education to K-12 students throughout the district. As part of the effort, FCS intends to adopt an arts education curriculum in compliance with state standards and infuse arts into other core subjects.

Establishing a district-wide comprehensive arts education plan will provide a consistent partnership framework for the many community organizations wishing to work with FCS on supplemental arts programs.

Local colleges and universities offer avenues for pursuing studies in arts and culture as well as venues for artistic and cultural activities.

Local college and university venues include Mott Community College (MCC) Library, University of Michigan (UM)-Flint Theatre, Library, and University Pavilion, and Kettering Library and Scharchburg Archives. MCC provides Associate's degrees in Media Arts and Technology, Graphic Design, and Photography, as well as programs in areas such as Studio Arts or Music to position them to transfer to a four-year institution. UM offers Bachelor's degrees in several fields including Studio Art, Visual Communication, Art Education, Art History, Theatre, and Dance. UM also offers Master-level programs in Arts Administration and Liberal Studies in American Theatre. Beyond enriching the lives of UM students, internships and other programs can add mutual benefit to the University and community-based programs and should be pursued.

STEM to STEAM

Currently, innovation and education remains tied to the STEM subjects – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. However, in the last century, art was joined with these same principles (STEM + ART = STEAM), driving innovation as much as the other four subjects. STEM to STEAM is a movement to transform research policy to place art and design at a higher importance, and to

The more we interact, the less we will be divided. The more we get to know each other, the less we will fear each other. The more we experience programs of peace, the less we will experience incidents of violence.

- Our Town Report

Source: Brett Carlsen

Source: Joel Rash

encourage the integration of art and design in K-20 curriculum. Whether or not the STEM to STEAM shift happens nationally, Flint can further integrate arts into youth life by forging effective partnerships between education and the arts.

After School & Community-Based Programming

Extracurricular arts educational programs can also provide opportunities for Flint's youth. The City should work with partners to map and identify gaps in available after school and summer programming to engage students in the arts. An "Arts Job Fair" for youth, high school graduates, and university-level students or art internships and externships could provide opportunities for students to translate talents learned in these programs into art related careers.

Existing successful programs should also be continued. Raise It Up! Youth Awareness promotes youth engagement, expression, and empowerment through workshops held at schools, youth centers, and churches. The Flint Youth Theatre and other youth centered programming offered through Cultural Center based organizations and the Flint Children's Museum also provide Flint's youth with arts and cultural experiences that encourage critical thinking and build on concepts learned in the classroom. These types of arts and cultural programs are valuable enhancements to school-based offerings.

Parents & Youth Involvement

Parent/caregiver involvement in arts programming is crucial for their children's involvement. Survey participants stressed that the lack of parental commitment to the arts is a major barrier for youth involvement. Without parental involvement, many children that need services are never reached. By getting parents and caregivers involved and interested in the arts, it is more likely their children will have an interest in participating in programming on an ongoing basis. Partnerships with Parent-Teacher Organizations and similar groups can encourage active parent involvement in the arts or with their children's artistic endeavors. This will assist in fostering households that are supportive of artistic activities.

Attracting & Retaining Artists and Creative Professionals

Access to cultural opportunities is one reason people want to visit and live in cities. Distinctive cultural amenities attract tourism and bring direct spending into local economies. Attracting and retaining artists and creative professionals is one way to invest in the vitality of Flint.

Establishing arts-related businesses, especially near centers of commerce, can help activate underutilized areas. Strategies for attracting such creative businesses might involve providing low or no cost loans to artists and creative professionals or working with the Downtown Development Authority to develop a plan to support art-related business in the Downtown. Independent artists could benefit from more opportunities to exhibit and perform their work and having access to an artist resource center. Such efforts should be explored by interested public, private, and non-profit partners. When successful, they can compel artists to invest their talents in the community and convince aspiring artists to pursue their dreams in Flint.

Successful programming like Artwalk helps bring local art work to interested citizens. Artwalk, organized by the Greater Flint Arts Council, offers a variety of open house receptions, free to the public, to promote the diversity of creative offerings in the Downtown. The program has continued to grow in popularity, providing much needed entertainment to the Downtown as well as raising Flint's visibility in the Arts and Culture Community.

Funding for the Arts

The ability to raise funds for capital improvements, event programming, and general maintenance is a challenge for Flint's arts and cultural entities in a climate of limited funding and declining economic conditions. Even institutions such as those at the Flint Cultural Center, which traditionally have had more dependable funding sources than many smaller organizations, are experiencing reductions in the amount of resources available. In order to preserve the rich arts and culture community in Flint, it will become increasingly important to explore and stabilize funding opportunities for local artists and cultural organizations that keep the creative community alive.

Aside from exploring untapped public and private funding sources, new and unique financing mechanisms should be considered to divert more funding to cultural assets throughout the City.

Several methods of expanding support for the arts and culture that have had some success in other communities are described below. The City should support conversations by local arts and culture organizations to explore mechanisms such as these that can help stabilize funding.

United Fund for the Arts

A United Fund for the Arts has been used elsewhere to support local cultural and arts offerings by raising and allocating funds to its member organizations. Such a fund can additionally serve as a community-wide resource for ensuring excellence in programming and maintaining the reputation of the organizations it supports. Such programs are typically led by a board of directors that is comprised of respected business and community leaders that are invested in arts and culture in their community.

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

The City of Flint collaborated with local artists and arts organizations to explore the role that artists play in communities. With funding provided from a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, local artists were hired in each ward of the City, through the Master Plan, to engage the residents in the arts. The artists come from many creative backgrounds including spoken word, literary work, theater, beautification, gardening, visual art, sculpture, performance, and percussion. Some projects proposed by the artists include signs and artwork by area children, paper lanterns, and theater performances.

Annual Fundraising or Awards Event

Some communities coordinate an annual fundraising event that draws attention from the public to a thriving local art scene. The cornerstone of this fundraiser could be a "Community Arts Awards" event that recognizes excellence in various aspects of arts production, including arts administration, arts patrons, business support of the arts, community development, education, and outstanding artistic works and programs. Funds raised through the event generally are used to support a variety of art and cultural programs through a mechanism such as an arts council.

Percent for the Arts

A "Percent for the Arts" program is a financing mechanism for funding the installation of public art where private funding is limited or nonexistent. Such policies most frequently take the form of a city ordinance, where a fee is charged to large new developments, usually as a percentage of the project cost.

A successful instance of this program is in Chicago, IL, which has had a Percent for Arts ordinance for funding original artwork since 1978. The ordinance stipulates that 1.33% of the cost of construction or renovation of municipal buildings and public spaces must be devoted to public art on the property. In addition, at least half of the commission must be given to Chicago area artists in order to support the local creative community.

Marketing Art & Cultural Opportunities

Flint's arts and cultural facilities are on par with facilities seen in cities double its size. They present a diverse range of offerings with facilities like The Whiting, which showcases national acts, to smaller facilities like the Flint Youth Theatre that provide local youths with opportunities in the performing arts. Places like Applewood Estate and Whaley Historical House and Museum provide visitors with a unique look at Flint's cultural history. These first-class cultural facilities are some of Flint's finest features, but would-be tourists may not know of them.

The community's cultural institutions should market art and cultural opportunities in Flint. The Flint and Genesee County Chamber of Commerce has developed the "See What's Possible" marketing campaign to promote Flint and Genesee County. In this campaign, many of the City's major cultural institutions are highlighted utilizing multiple forms of media. It is important to continue to coordinate with the Chamber to promote available arts and cultural programming through this campaign.

Marketing will provide greater awareness of Flint's many arts and cultural opportunities to residents and visitors who may not have previously known. This may include improving and maintaining a comprehensive and publicly available database of artists, creative professionals, and art venues including professional and informal artists, arts organizations, art galleries, and performing spaces.

Another approach may include improving wayfinding signage to create easier navigation to community cultural institutions.

Civic Engagement

As the Arts and Culture Chapter was being developed, many community stakeholders noted the important role arts and culture can play as a vehicle for community dialogue. One example of that was the Artist in Residence component of the NEA Our Town Grant, which placed an artist in each of the City's nine wards to help engage residents in discussions about the Master Plan through arts and cultural activities. As the work of implementing the Master Plan begins, it will be critical to continue to engage residents and arts and culture can serve as a tool for ongoing civic engagement.

In addition, arts and culture will remain a valuable conduit for opening community conversations around challenging topics and social and political differences. Organizations should draw upon the power of the arts to create conditions for thoughtful dialogue and exchange when seeking to bridge divides.

Many cities have an Arts Authority or Arts Commission in charge of shepherding local arts and culture plans, leading marketing efforts, advocating for arts and culture funding, and in some cases distributing funding generated through programs such as a "Percent for the Arts." These organizations may or may not be operated under the auspices of a local government authority. While it is clear that the City of Flint must be involved in helping implement the Arts and Culture Plan, it is unclear whether the City has the capacity to manage an Arts Authority or Commission.

However, during the development of this Plan, community stakeholders rallied around this notion of having a single coordinating body charged with making sure the Arts and Culture Plan is being actively implemented. Therefore, it is recommended that additional meetings are convened with various stakeholders including representatives from local government (both city and county) to look into whether an existing organization could fulfill the role or whether a new coordinating body should be formed, and determine the appropriate role for such an entity.

11 ARTS & CULTURE PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents the strategies needed to implement the goals and objectives of the Arts & Culture Plan. Taken together, the objectives and strategies included in this section provide specific direction and serve as a guide for the evaluation of development proposals and land use alternatives.

To provide the City with a reliable policy guide for decision-making, the objectives and strategies are based significantly on community input received through the master planning process. In addition to broad community input, these objectives and strategies are based on input from the 20-member Arts and Culture Advisory Group, Steering Committee, City officials, City staff, and observations and assessment from the Imagine Flint Project Team.

Implementation Matrix

The following Implementation Matrix groups strategies by topic within each objective and identifies anticipated time frame, relative cost, and the entities, including City of Flint departments and partner organizations, potentially responsible for the implementation. The matrix also identifies key metrics needed to track implementation progress.

Time Frame

A general time frame is assigned to each strategy, considering the cost of various types of improvements and their ability to set other actions in motion. Generally, low-cost strategies with easy implementation are given the short-term time frame, though some other actions are given this designation based on their high level of priority in meeting community objectives or ensuring the safety of residents.

Each strategy in the Implementation Matrix is indicated with one of the following:

- ***Short:*** low-cost, ease of implementation, directly addressing top priorities, or critical to the advancement of other strategies, and to be implemented within the next 1-5 years
- ***Medium:*** important actions that have some level of significant cost, and can be implemented within the next 5-10 years
- ***Long:*** actions that often require significant amounts of funding that must be planned for over time, or require other strategies to be completed prior to their implementation

Public Cost Estimate

Public cost estimate is represented by a scale ranging from $ to $$$. The costs in this column refer only to public costs. Below is a description of the cost scale:

- **$**: Actions that require primarily internal staff time requiring mostly regulatory changes, policy updates, or strategic partnerships with limited outside funding required
- **$$**: Actions that require outside consulting services assistance or relatively minor investment in infrastructure or project development
- **$$$**: Actions that require intensive planning, engineering, or design, and significant investment in infrastructure or project development

Responsible Entities & Partner Organizations

City government alone is not capable of implementing the Master Plan. This is a community vision which relies upon Flint's greatest assets, its people and community stakeholders to help implement desired aspirations."

With regard to citing those entities responsible for implementation, it should be noted that it is anticipated that, from a policy standpoint, the Mayor and City Council will be involved in the majority of these actions.

Where a City Department should be involved, that department has been listed. Where general administrative leadership is needed, the City of Flint has been listed. Strategies, such as recommended technical studies and analyses that would likely benefit from outside expertise, have also been highlighted.

Unforeseen Partnership Opportunities

Every effort was made to identify a comprehensive list of potential partner organizations for inclusion in the implementation matrix. As a community of over 100,000 with a rich history of volunteerism and over 100 foundations active in Genesee County, there may be instances where a deserving organization that is well-matched to one of the plan objectives or strategies has been excluded from a list of potential partners for a given topic.

Similarly, there may come a time when a partner organization identified in the implementation table merged with another organization or otherwise ceases to exist. As with the rest of the Master Plan, the implementation table is a flexible document that should be regularly updated and revised to reflect the evolving needs and assets of the Flint community.

Progress Indicator

Key progress indicators have been provided for each strategy grouping. Progress indicators identify quantifiable metrics for which data should be available on a regular basis and indicate desired trends for each metric. These indicators represent measurable achievements that move the City toward realization of Master Plan objectives. These progress indicators will enable the City to monitor its effectiveness at implementing plan recommendations.

ARTS & CULTURE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 1	Use art and cultural programming to create dynamic public spaces.				
Underutilized Spaces	Establish a program to allow registered artists to scavenge vacant, City-owned properties for re-usable materials.	Medium	$	• Community-Based Organizations • City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Business Community • Genessee County Land Bank Authority	• Increase in the number of arts related businesses in Flint • Increase in the number of art installations • Increase in the number of vacant spaces and underutilized buildings reclaimed for artistic or cultural purposes
	Encourage pop-up cultural spaces in underutilized storefronts.	Medium	$		
	Empower local residents to reclaim vacant spaces utilizing community arts projects.	Medium	$		
	Partner with community artists to create temporary art installations in brown fields, along fences, overpasses, viaducts and other spaces in the City.	Short	$		
	Work with partners to reclaim houses and convert to artist housing.	Medium	$$		
	Create community art centers throughout Flint by reusing closed schools and/or other abandoned buildings	Long	$$$		
	Select and install art in public places.	Medium	$		
Revitalization Guidelines	Create a plan to employ local artists in helping re-imagine and revitalize Flint's 67 parks.	Short	$	• Community-Based Organizations • Arts Council • City of Flint Planning & Development Department • City of Flint Department of Parks & Recreation • Genesee County Parks Department • Local Funders	• Increase in the number of art installations in the City's parks • Increase in the number of proposals for revitalized public spaces
	Create guidelines and incentive programs to convert underutilized spaces for cultural uses.	Short	$		
	Develop policy guidelines for the maintenance of future public art.	Short	$		
Objective 2	Integrate arts and culture into Flint's neighborhoods.				
Neighborhood Involvement	Work with local artists and creative professionals to help neighborhoods express their local identity and increase citizen involvement and pride.	Short	$	• Community-Based Organizations • Community Artists and Creative Professionals • Arts Council • Downtown Development Authority • Neighborhood Associations & Block Clubs	• Increase in the number of art installations in each of the City's neighborhoods • Increase in number of culturally relevant art, events, and programming
	Develop arts and cultural opportunities that are representative or our City's demographics and cultural heritage.	Short	$		
	Ensure cultural events are appealing and accessible to, and inclusive of all residents of Flint.	Short	$		
Neighborhood Centers	Work with local partners to advocate for arts, facilities and programs throughout the City.	Short	$$	• Community-Based Organizations • Arts Council • Downtown Development Authority • Local Businesses • Neighborhood Associations & Block Clubs	• Increase in the number of residents engaging in arts and cultural related activities • Increase in the number of neighborhoods housing artists or artist facilities • Increase in the number of art programs and facilities outside of the Downtown and Cultural Center
	Encourage private businesses to integrate arts and culture into their space and provide a platform for cultural activities.	Short	$		
	Develop neighborhood based arts and cultural programming located in multi-purpose community centers.	Medium	$$		
Objective 3	Expand access to and involvement in arts and cultural activities.				
Access & Involvement	Work with major cultural institutions and the Arts Council to increase accessibility and provide arts and cultural programming for a wide range of interests.	Short	$	• Community-Based Organizations • Arts Council • Local Funders • City of Flint • Genesee County • Mass Transit Authority	• Increase in the number of diverse arts and cultural programs and activities • Increase in annual revenues of grassroots, community-based organizations • increase in residents engaging in arts and cultural related activities
	Build the capacity of grassroots, community-based providing arts and cultural programming for underserved populations.	Short	$		
	Increase involvement in arts and cultural activities by addressing other challenges to access such as safety in public spaces, zoning and policy, effective communication, geographic distribution, and transportation.	Short	$$		

ARTS & CULTURE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Objective 4	Increase youth participation in arts and cultural programming.				
Arts Involvement	Provide youth arts exhibit spaces with curated exhibitions featuring youth-only art.	Short	$	• Flint Community Schools • Local Colleges & Universities • Community-Based Organizations • Arts Council • Youth Serving Agencies • Religious Institutions	• Increase in the number of children participating in arts and cultural activities and visits to art and cultural venues • Increase in the number of youth only artworks on display
	Advocate for the creation of artistic and cultural venues for youth and their families.	Medium	$		
	Encourage collaboration among the community's many colleges, universities, and public schools.	Medium	$		
	Ensure cultural events are appealing and accessible to, and inclusive of all Flint residents, particularly youth.	Long	$		
	Create internships and externships opportunities for aspiring, young artists.	Short	$		
Arts Education	Invite regionally and nationally acclaimed artists to give lectures, demonstrations, and critiques with local artists.	Short	$$	• Flint Community Schools • Local Colleges & Universities • Flint Public Library • Children's Museum • Sloan Museum and Longway Planetarium • Flint Institute of Arts • Flint Institute of Music • Community-Based Organizations • Arts Council • Parent Teacher Organizations	• Increase in the number of visiting artists at local institutions • Increase in the number of arts related courses for grades K-12 • Increase in the number of before and after school arts programs • Increase in the number of K-12 and higher education graduates choosing arts related career paths.
	Forge partnerships between the education and arts to integrate arts into the S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education model.	Medium	$$		
	Assist Flint Community Schools in integrating arts and cultural education into the curriculum.	Medium	$		
	Work with Parent Teacher Organizations to encourage active parent involvement in the arts and their children's artistic endeavors.	Short	$		
	Partner with community organizations to initiate arts and cultural programming for pre-K-12 during and after school.	Short	$$		
	Create internship, externship, and apprenticeship opportunities for students to gain hands on experience with local artists and creative professionals or with arts and cultural organizations.	Short	$		
Objective 5	Develop a thriving local "creative economy" of artists, creative professionals, and cottage arts industries.				
Creative Business Enterprise	Provide low and/or no-cost loans to creative enterprises.	Short	$	• ArtServe Michigan • Chamber of Commerce • Local Funders • Arts Council • Community-Based Organizations • Downtown Development Authority • Planning & Development Department	• Increase in the number of new art or cultural startup businesses • Increase in the number of performances given by local artists • Increase in the number of art related employees • Decrease in industrial waste going into local landfills • Increase in the number of low and no-cost loans given for creative enterprises
	Work with the Downtown Development Authority to develop a plan to support artist related businesses in Downtown.	Short	$		
	Revise zoning and building codes to encourage artist live/work, incubator, and retail spaces.	Short	$$		
	Create an online artist marketplace for opportunities to sell artwork.	Short	$$		
Artist Resources	Create incentives to encourage artists to move into areas seeking reinvestment.	Short	$	• ArtServe Michigan • Chamber of Commerce • Local Funders • Arts Council • Community-Based Organizations • Downtown Development Authority • Planning & Development Department	• Increase in the number of new arts or cultural startup businesses • Increase in the number of artists utilizing low-cost health insurance • Increase in the number of performances given by local artists • Increase in the number of art related employees • Decrease in industrial waste going into local landfills
	Work with local partners to provide low-cost portable equipment rental for mobile stage productions.	Short	$		
	Provide low-cost health insurance programs for self-employed artists.	Short	$		
	Provide more opportunities for artists to exhibit and perform their work in public spaces and buildings.	Medium	$		
	Make City Hall Dome available for use by local artists and equip with equipment resources for artists.	Medium	$$		
	Create an artist resource center to provide equipment, workspace, and general information to local artists.	Medium	$		

ARTS & CULTURE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGY		TIME FRAME	PUBLIC COST ESTIMATE	DEPARTMENT / ORGANIZATION	PROGRESS INDICATOR
Arts & Culture Appreciation	Invite artists and creative professionals to perform or display artwork at public events and public meetings.	Short	$	• Neighborhood Associations & Block Clubs • Community-Based Organizations • Arts Council • City of Flint • Genesee County	• Increase in the number of performances and displays by local artists • Increase in the percentage of artists serving on the City Commissions, Neighborhood Associations, and Block Clubs
	Encourage artists and creative professionals to serve on City Commissions, Neighborhood Associations, and Block Clubs.	Short	$		
	Support networks to connect neighborhoods with community-wide arts and culture resources.	Long	$		
Objective 6	Brand Flint as a regional art hub and market Flint's cultural offerings both internally (to residents) and externally (to tourists, prospective residents, and businesses).				
Information Access	Improve and maintain a comprehensive and publicly available database of artist and art infrastructure including professional and informal artists, arts organizations, art galleries, and performing spaces.	Short	$	• Arts Council, Chamber of Commerce • Downtown Development Authority • Flint Public Library • ArtServe Michigan	• Increase in the number of visitors to Flint's arts and cultural facilities • Increase in the number of cataloged public art work • Increase in number of people utilizing arts and cultural information webpages
	Catalog current public art work in Flint.	Short	$		
	Establish a single portal of art and cultural information to better promote Flint's rich arts and cultural assets.	Short	$		
Advertising & Marketing	Improve wayfinding and signage to create stronger access between the community cultural institutions.	Short	$	• Local Media, Chamber of Commerce • Arts Council • Community-Based Organizations • Downtown Development Authority	• Increase in the number of visitors to Flint's arts and cultural facilities and events
	Create a multi-media marketing campaign to promote the City's major arts and cultural institutions.	Medium	$$		
	Share data and arts and cultural stories with local and national media to highlight the strength of Flint's Arts and Culture Community.	Short	$		
	Use the vibrant local arts scene as a selling point in all advertising.	Short	$		
	Advertise City history and traditions through public art installments and local festivals.	Short	$		
Objective 7	Develop a sustainable, long-term mechanism to implement the Arts & Culture Plan and create a stable funding source for arts and culture organizations and programming.				
Funding	Explore the development of a formal coordinating entity such as an Arts Authority to lead the implementation of the Arts & Culture Plan including fund raising.	Short	$	• Local Funders • Arts Council • Community-Based Organizations • City of Flint Planning & Development Department • Genesee County	• Increase in the amount of outside funding secured for arts and cultural related programs • Increase in the revenue generated from fundraising events • Increase in the City revenue generated by arts or cultural related businesses and programs
	Identify ways to increase funding for the arts in Flint, which could include mechanisms such as a United Fund of the Arts or Percent for the Arts.	Short	$		
	Work collaborative with the county on the possible establishment of a city/county arts millage and/or hotel/motel tax fund.	Short	$		
	Use an annual Community Arts Award event to highlight economic impact of arts and culture in the community.	Short	$		
	Compile and publish data about the economic impact of arts and culture on the Flint economy.	Short	$		
Objective 8	Use the arts and culture to encourage civic discourse and community problem solving.				
Civic Engagement	Expand the "Artists in Residence" program.	Medium	$$	• Arts Council • Community Artists • ArtServe Michigan • Chamber of Commerce • City of Flint	• Increase in number of applications to participate as "Artists in Residence" • Increase in the number of participants attending "Artists in Residence" programs • Increase in number of public meetings involving artists to engage community • Positive evaluation of public meetings
	Invite artists to participate in designing community engagement activities and public meetings to facilitate positive dialogue.	Short	$		

12 MASTER PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FLINT
IMAGINE FLINT MOVING FORWARD

Source: Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

12 IMAGINE FLINT MOVING FORWARD

The Master Plan sets forth an agreed-upon "road map" for growth and development within the City of Flint over the next 20 years. It represents considerable effort on the part of the Master Plan Steering Committee and Advisory Groups, City staff, the Planning Commission, the City Council, and the Flint community. In many ways, however, the planning process in Flint has just begun. Adoption of the new Master Plan is only the first step in the much longer journey of guiding change within the community and implementing the recommendations of the Plan.

This section highlights the next steps that should be undertaken to begin the process of plan implementation.

These include:

- Use the Master Plan on a day-to-day basis to guide City policies and decision-making;
- Review and update the Zoning Ordinance and other development controls to reflect policies presented in the Master Plan;
- Develop and utilize a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to plan for recommended infrastructure improvements;
- Promote cooperation and participation among various agencies, organizations, community groups, and individuals;
- Prepare a 5-year Strategic Plan to prioritize objectives and list accomplishments of preceding years on an annual basis;
- Explore possible funding sources and implementation techniques;
- Enhance public communication and citizen engagement in decision-making; and,
- Update the Master Plan at regular intervals.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Use The Plan On A Day-To-Day Basis..... 282
Review Development Controls 282
Capital Improvements Plan..... 282
Change How The City Operates..... 282
Promote Cooperation & Participation..... 283
Enhance Public Communication..... 283
Prepare A Strategic Plan 283
Ongoing Community Involvement & Accountability.....283
Neighborhood Planning Process..... 284
Sub-Area Plans 284
Update The Plan On A Regular Basis..... 284

USE THE PLAN ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS

The Master Plan is Flint's official policy guide for improvement and development. It is essential that the Plan be used on a regular basis by City staff, boards and commissions to review and evaluate all proposals for improvement and development within the community, prioritize public expenditures, and encourage private sector investment. Specifically, agencies and service providers should reference the Plan when assessing investment in new facilities, infrastructure, staffing, or programming. The Planning Commission and City Council should refer to the Plan for guidance in making regulatory recommendations and actions that impact development.

REVIEW DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

Zoning is an important regulatory tool for implementing planning policy. It establishes the types of uses to be allowed on specific properties and prescribes the overall character and intensity of permitted development. Following completion of the new Master Plan, the City will engage in the process of rewriting and updating its zoning ordinance by 2014. This will include a more detailed assessment of the current zoning ordinance with a focus on how existing regulations promote or hinder the advancement of the recommendations of the Master Plan including the Land Use Plan and corresponding place types.

The Place-Based Land Use Plan establishes guidelines for the quality, character and intensity of development, and should greatly assist the City in formulating and revising zoning and development code regulations that better reflect the unique needs and aspirations of the Flint community. This task will have a focus on the principles of sustainability identified in the Master Plan, and will respond to existing conditions and new opportunities while creating balanced transitions where needed, and avoiding widespread nonconformities. More detailed discussion of the Zoning Plan is located in ***Chapter 4: Land Use Plan.***

In addition to the zoning update, a review and update of the City's various development controls including property maintenance, sign regulations, building code, and other related codes and ordinances, should be conducted to ensure that all are consistent with, and complement the Master Plan.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

Flint's financial resources will always be limited, and public dollars must be spent wisely. Following adoption of the Master Plan, a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) will be developed in 2014 as a critical tool for implementing the recommendations of the Master Plan. A CIP is a comprehensive schedule of prioritized public improvement projects, typically extending over a five-year period. In creating a CIP, the City will be able to appropriately focus infrastructure improvements on supporting the existing population and non-residential users, while ensuring new development and redevelopment can be executed as directed by the Master Plan.

A Capital Improvements Plan typically schedules the implementation of a range of specific projects related to the Master Plan, particularly the restoration and upgrading of existing utilities and infrastructure facilities. Expansion or improvement of City facilities would also be included in the CIP. A CIP also assigns priorities to identified projects and includes cost estimates and potential funding sources.

Non-governmental entities frequently use a CIP to map out growth and investment in facilities and infrastructure. As the City develops and monitors its own Capital Improvement Plan, City staff should coordinate with other community facilities providers to ensure that investment is occurring in a logical manner and synergies can be created between public, quasi-public, and private improvements.

The CIP should be regularly updated in conjunction with updates to the Master Plan and the development of a five-year Strategic Plan.

CHANGE HOW THE CITY OPERATES

In addition to revisions to the Zoning Ordinance and the creation of a Capital Improvements Plan discussed elsewhere in this chapter, the City will undertake an Organizational Realignment study, and a Fiscal Balance analysis following adoption of the Master Plan. These studies will identify recommended ways to shift City government organization and practices to be better prepared to carry out the Master Plan.

The City can use these recommendations as a guide for modernizing its systems, promoting consistency, improving communications and access, and ensuring measurable results.

PROMOTE COOPERATION & PARTICIPATION

The City of Flint must take the leadership role on several of the items in this plan that pertain directly to City infrastructure, priorities, and decisions. However, this plan is for the Flint community as a whole, and therefore the leadership of non-profit organizations, businesses and developers, other governmental agencies, schools and residents, is integral to its success. Moving forward, the City should use this Master Plan as the foundation for its partnerships.

In the course of rolling out the Master Plan, the City should undertake efforts to inform and educate partners and the general public about what is in the Plan, and seek their ongoing participation in its implementation.

Enhance Public Communication

The process undertaken to create the Master Plan was, in and of itself, an important step in educating the community about the relevance of planning and the City's role in defining its future. Much positive momentum has been forged through the Master Plan Steering Committee and Advisory Groups, more than 300 public outreach and engagement activities, and interactive web-based engagement. To build on this foundation, the City should ensure that the Plan's major recommendations and "vision" for the future are conveyed to the entire community.

In addition to an annual Master Plan Update Event, the City should also consider other techniques for responding quickly to public questions and concerns regarding planning and development. For example, the City might prepare a new informational brochure and online information on how to apply for zoning, building, subdivision, and other development related permits and approvals. It might also consider a special newsletter and/or webpage features that focus on frequently raised questions and concerns regarding planning and development.

PREPARE A STRATEGIC PLAN & TRACK PROGRESS

The City should prepare a five-year Strategic Plan which highlights improvement and development projects or activities to be undertaken during in the coming years. The Capital Improvement Plan described earlier in this chapter should represent a component of the Strategic Plan. However, the Strategic Plan must go beyond the City's investments in infrastructure and community services to address programs or policies.

The Strategic Plan should build upon the Implementation Matrices contained within each of the Master Plan chapters, and contain a prioritized list of actions including:

- A detailed description of the projects and activities to be undertaken;
- The priority of each project or activity;
- An indication of the public and private sector responsibilities for initiating and participating in each activity; and,
- A suggestion of the funding sources and assistance programs that might potentially be available for implementing each project or activity.

To remain current, the Strategic Plan should be reviewed and updated regularly alongside other City budgeting and planning initiatives.

Ongoing Community Involvement & Accountability

Community engagement was essential to creating this Master Plan, and will remain critical throughout the implementation phase. Effective practices for community engagement by the City will be integrated into the Organizational Alignment recommendations. This will help ensure that the kind of community engagement residents have come to expect through this process can be institutionalized by the City. In addition, there are specific ways to promote continued accountability and public participation during the Master Plan's implementation.

Tracking Implementation

It is important that the City keep track of and make public its progress with regard to implementing the Master Plan. The Planning Department should collect data annually to measure progress using the metrics provided in the Implementation Matrix of each Master Plan chapter. A report summarizing implementation progress in relation to identified metrics and benchmarks should be created every year.

Master Plan Update Event

The City should also work with partner organizations to host an annual Master Plan Update Event to communicate progress to the broader community, and get feedback on strategies for improving plan implementation. Ideally, this event would be similar in a format to the 500-attendee Master Plan Vision and Goals Workshop held on March 9, 2013, which featured interactive key pad polling and engaged participants in a conversation about Flint.

The City could use the event to gauge support for and prioritize projects under consideration for the coming year(s) with regard to capital improvements as well as other Strategic Plan initiatives. The Master Plan Update Event could also feature a brainstorming session where residents and stakeholders are asked to identify new strategies for addressing specific issues identified in the Master Plan.

Engaged Citizenry

The Master Plan is a guiding document by law, but it is incumbent upon voters to hold their elected officials accountable to ensure effective implementation of Master Plan recommendations. The recommendations of the Master Plan are based on a foundation of extensive community outreach that received input from more than 5,000 participants. Support from City officials and staff is critical to plan implementation, and Flint residents can use their voice in the democratic process to continue to show their support for those officials who adhere to the Master Plan.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROCESS

Flint residents are passionate about their neighborhoods, so neighborhood planning is an important part of the Master Plan's implementation process. While three neighborhood plans have been formally adopted by the City (Flint Park Lake, Smith Village, and Northeast Village Neighborhood) these plans should be amended if needed and used as a guide for investing resources in those areas.

In addition, several neighborhoods have developed plans that have not been officially adopted by the City. These also should be reviewed, updated, and adopted. Lastly, new neighborhood plans should be created for areas without them. To this end, the City Planning Department has committed to developing between 10-15 neighborhood plans, covering every residential area, by 2020.

In conjunction with the development of neighborhood plans, the City should continue to routinely engage neighborhood groups and host community outreach events at the neighborhood level, to identify issues and vet potential projects under consideration. These events will serve as a primary means of engaging Flint residents in the decision-making process and when combined with the neighborhood plans, will ensure that city-wide policies established in the Master Plan are responsive to the needs and desires of the local community.

SUB-AREA PLANS

Eight sub-areas identified in the Master Plan represent eight different conditions that exist in the City, such as traditional commercial corridors, employment nodes, and small-scale commercial areas. The more detailed recommendations that emerge from these sub-areas will serve as a tool box of ideas that can be applied to similar conditions in other parts of Flint.

While many of the initial community engagement sessions were held in the summer of 2013, the recommendations will be developed and refined in early 2014.

UPDATE THE PLAN ON A REGULAR BASIS

It is important to emphasize that the Master Plan is not a static document. If community attitudes change, or new issues arise which are beyond the scope of the current Plan, the Plan should be revised and updated accordingly.

Per state law, the absolute maximum length of time that can pass without an official Master Plan Update is five years, Although a proposal to amend the Plan can be brought forth at any time, the City should regularly undertake a systematic review of the Plan. The annual Master Plan Update Event can inform this review process. Ideally, this review should coincide with the preparation of the annual budget and Capital Improvement Plan.

In this manner, recommendations or changes relating to capital improvements or other programs can be considered as part of the upcoming commitments for the fiscal year. In turn, development regulations may need to be amended to most accurately reflect the intent of any modifications to the Master Plan. Routine examination of the Plan will help ensure that the planning program remains relevant to community needs and aspirations.

The City should:

- Make the plan available online for free, provide hard copies at the City Hall available for purchase, and have a copy on file at the public library for reference;
- Provide assistance to the public in explaining the Plan and its relationship to private and public development projects and other proposals, as appropriate;
- Assist the Planning Commission and City Council in the day-to-day administration, interpretation, and application of the Plan;
- Maintain a list of current possible amendments, issues, or needs which may be a subject of change, addition, or deletion from the Master Plan; and,
- Coordinate with, and assist the Planning Commission and City Council in the Plan amendment process.