

LIVONIA  
STARTS NOW V21

BOOK 4 of 4

# STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

*How do we secure Livonia's future?*

# Acknowledgments

**Thank you!** The participation and cooperation of community leaders, residents, business owners and stakeholders in the preparation of the LIVONIA VISION 21 MASTER PLAN is greatly appreciated and we thank everyone who participated in its development. The content in this Plan reflects the on-going collaboration between residents, stakeholders, and the City of Livonia.

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LIVONIA VISION 21 Public Open House

## Introduction

The **Strategic Development Book** presents tools and techniques that residents, community leaders, and City staff can use to implement the land use plan. Plan implementation depends on local support from those in the community with the vision and tenacity who are willing to invest time and effort realizing LIVONIA VISION 21. Community improvement requires a compelling vision, persistence, flexibility to respond to changing needs, awareness of opportunities, and an ability to achieve consensus.

# Continuous Outreach

LIVONIA VISION 21's success depends to a great extent on efforts to inform and educate residents and Livonia stakeholders about the Plan and the need for regulatory measures to implement it. Successful implementation requires the support and active participation of residents, property owners, and business owners. Once adopted, continued public promotion and marketing activities about the Plan's implementation will create a sense of ownership by City residents. Initial public outreach should be focused on implementation, not revising the content.

## ENGAGING LIVONIA

Citizens, business groups, and public agencies must all be involved in the implementation of LIVONIA VISION 21 to make it successful. Examples of activities include:

- Joint workshops with the City Council and Planning Commission to discuss the implementation of this plan
- Creating a Social Media page for LIVONIA VISION 21 to update with project accomplishments
- “Tabling” at community events
- Annual or biannual Master Plan working sessions at the Planning Commission and City Council
- Creating a condensed brochure version of the Master Plan to distribute widely to community members

## CONDENSED BROCHURE

The City can produce a more reader-friendly form of the Plan. Most individuals will not take the time to read a long planning document. However, a small brochure with reduced versions of the Future Land Use Map combined with condensed versions of the goals, objectives and implementation plan sections would make an attractive alternative. These brochures could be distributed to individuals at City Hall, on the website, or even mailed to residents and businesses in Livonia.

## MAINTAINING THE PLAN

Another way for the general public to stay informed about the Master Plan is to keep the Planning Commission and City Council actively involved in maintaining it. LIVONIA VISION 21 is intended to be a living document and continually reviewed and updated. An annual joint meeting between the Planning Commission and City Council should be held to review the Plan and any amendments. This will help ensure that the Plan is not forgotten, and that its strategies and recommendations are implemented. Then, every five years, or earlier, if the Planning Commission feels appropriate, another full-scale Master Planning effort should be undertaken. These steps help keep the public involved and ensure that policy makers continue to reference strategies in current decisions and project evaluations.



LIVONIA VISION 21 Public Open House

# Three-Year Priority Project List

LIVONIA VISION 21 is an action-oriented plan. Through the Charrette process and input from the Vision 21 Steering Committee seven priority projects were identified for immediate implementation. These projects are high-impact catalyzing activities that will move forward LIVONIA VISION 21 at a rapid pace.

*“I envision our city having an art center to provide space for all the various groups that bring culture, art, music, dance, theatre, etc. to our residents. It is long overdue. An amphitheater behind City Hall would bring more summer enjoyment. We need more than sports to attract young families. We should bring back neighborhood schools too.”*

– Livonia Public Engagement Participant

## PRIORITY PROJECTS:

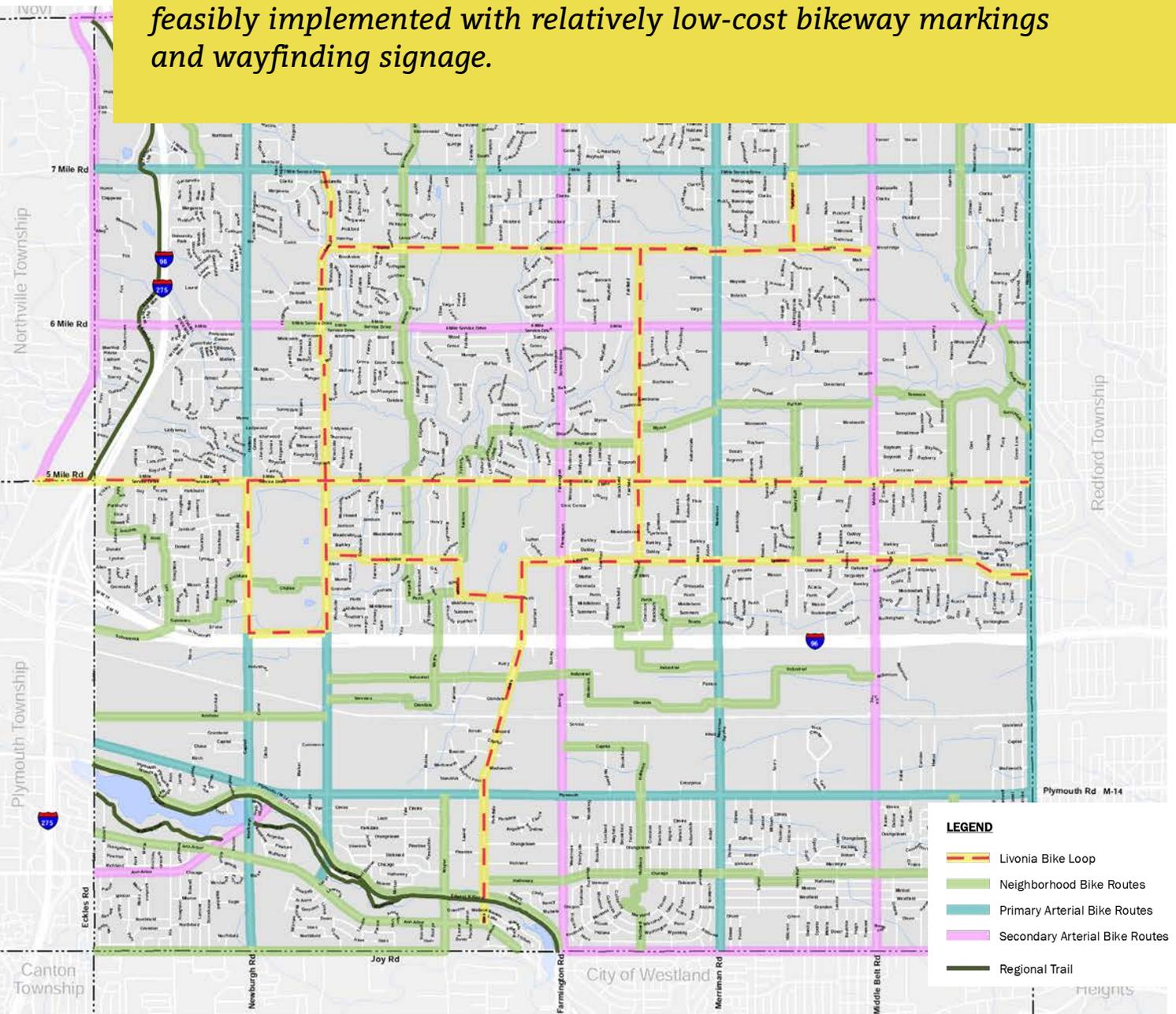
1. **Zoning Ordinance Update:** Update the Zoning Ordinance to jump start LIVONIA VISION 21 implementation.
2. **City Center Development Plan:** Develop a detailed development and feasibility study for City Center. Include City, institutional and school operational needs, development triggers, and phasing.
3. **Plymouth Road Corridor Plan:** Create an urban design framework for Plymouth Road that both unifies and respects the many character shifts from east to west.
4. **Livonia Bike Loop:** Continue efforts to construct the Livonia Bike Loop recommended in the 2015 Bike Walk Livonia Plan.
5. **Transit and Innovative Mobility Study:** Enhance the City’s transportation vision by exploring a new vision for transit and shared mobility in Livonia.
6. **Update Capital Improvement Plan (CIP):** Continue the City’s efforts to fund priority projects by maintaining its Capital Improvement Plan.
7. **Update Infrastructure Plan:** Update the City’s infrastructure plan to stay current with the future development vision for Livonia.

Figure 4.1: Excerpt of Livonia Bike Loop Map

### LIVONIA BIKE LOOP, 2015

*Realization of this priority project will connect 13 parks, 11 schools and 7 commercial districts across the City.*

*Planned entirely on locally controlled roads, the Bike Loop is a feasibly implemented with relatively low-cost bikeway markings and wayfinding signage.*



# Action Plan

This section presents tools and techniques that residents, community leaders, and City administration can use to implement this LIVONIA VISION 21 Plan. The tools and techniques identified herein are available for use by Michigan communities under current enabling legislation. Specific recommendations for implementing certain goals and objectives established by residents during the public engagement efforts are also provided.



*Providing for a Healthy Variety of Housing Options, Livonia, MI*

LIVONIA VISION 21 recommends a future vision for the community. This Plan builds upon Livonia’s existing assets and opportunities to attract new development and new residents. Moving forward, Livonia will continue to be economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable; a community where people want to live, work, visit and play.

The goals and objectives of LIVONIA VISION 21 should be reviewed often and be considered in decision making by the City. Successful implementation of this plan will be the result of actions taken by City Council, City Administration, the Plymouth Road Development Authority, the Livonia Economic Development Corporation, the Livonia Brownfield Authority, the Planning Commission, public agencies, private residents and organizations, and other elected and appointed officials.

This section identifies and describes actions and tools available to implement the vision created in this Plan. Broadly stated, LIVONIA VISION 21 will be implemented incrementally by working on the goals identified for the planning themes.

## **LIVONIA VISION 21 PLANNING THEMES:**

1. Housing and Neighborhoods
2. Transportation
3. Sustainability and Resiliency
4. Healthy Communities
5. Economic Development
6. Parks, Trails and Open Space
7. Infrastructure
8. Urban Design

The tables on the following pages present a detailed summary of all of the recommended implementation activities, including partners for completing the activity, and available funding resources for each activity.



# Action Plan Key

## PRIORITY

<b>A</b>	Most Important
<b>B</b>	Very Important
<b>C</b>	Important

## TIMEFRAME

<b>1</b>	1-3 years
<b>2</b>	3-5 years
<b>3</b>	5+ years

## RESPONSIBILITY (COLOR)

	Project Lead
	Key Participant
	Contributor

## ENTITY ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BO</b>	Business Owners
<b>CM</b>	Community Members
<b>CS</b>	City Staff
<b>GC</b>	Greenleaf Commission
<b>HO</b>	Home Owners
<b>MDOT</b>	Michigan Department of Transportation
<b>PC</b>	Planning Commission & City Council
<b>PRDA</b>	Plymouth Road Development Authority
<b>SG</b>	Southeast Michigan Council of Government
<b>SM</b>	State of Michigan
<b>WC</b>	Wayne County / Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)

## FUNDING

### PUBLIC

Includes public funds from the City operating budget, County, and State funding. May also include local government bonds and grants.

### PRIVATE

Includes funds from private sources such as grant monies, corporate funding, or property owners.

### PRDA/TIF

Tax increment financing provided by an authorized body.

# Housing and Neighborhoods



GOAL: Maintain Livonia’s place in Southeast Michigan as a City that provides safe, attractive, and vibrant neighborhoods that can accommodate and welcome residents at all stages of life.

Table 4.1: Housing and Neighborhoods Actions

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERSHIP			FUNDING		
			CITY	OTHER GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TIF / PRDA
1.1 Support a system of organized land use to provide greater housing choices, where new and redevelopment areas respect existing neighborhoods.	A	1	CS PC	WC	CM BO	●		
1.2 Encourage residential developments which are needed by persons of all ages, incomes and household sizes.	A	1	CS PC		CM BO	●		●
1.3 Seamlessly incorporate multiple family “missing middle” housing within established neighborhoods through infill development and strong urban design.	A	2	CS	WC SM	CM HO	●	●	
1.4 Promote the development of multiple small-scale and walkable commercial and service districts that serve the immediately adjacent neighborhoods.	A	2	CS PC	MDOT	CM	●		
1.5 Support programs that assist with homeownership for first time buyers and incentivize rehabilitation of aging housing stock.	A	2	CS PRDA PC	WC	BO	●	●	●
1.6 Establish individual neighborhood planning frameworks to assist in neighborhood placemaking, revitalization, and/or transitions	A	1	CS PRDA		CM HO	●		●

# Transportation

GOAL: Continue investment in improving and maintaining vehicular and nonmotorized infrastructure. Ensure that the City’s transportation network provides accessibility and connectivity to City destinations, is designed for people, and responds to advances in transportation technology.



Table 4.2: Transportations Actions

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERSHIP			FUNDING		
			CITY	OTHER GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TIF / PRDA
2.1 Maintain the City’s well-developed network of highways, roads, and streets to accommodate the safe and efficient movement of vehicles.	B	1	CS PC	MDOT	CM BO	●		
2.2 Promote the use of alternative modes of transportation such as ridesharing, bicycling, walking, and transit throughout the metropolitan area.	B	1	CS PRDA	MDOT SG GC	CM	●		●
2.3 Improve the City’s network of trails, bicycle amenities, and other connections.	A	2	CS	WC SM SG	CM HO	●	●	
2.4 Implement a comprehensive pedestrian network that focuses on creating safe intersections and crossings, encourages pedestrian-scale streetscapes, and supports walkable land use arrangements.	A	2	CS	MDOT	CM	●	●	
2.5 Prepare for the emergence of innovative transportation technologies by revisioning traditional uses of the transportation network and by investing in new mobility strategies and “smart” infrastructure.	A	3	CS PRDA PC	SG	BO	●	●	●

# Sustainability and Resiliency



GOAL: Support land use planning efforts that encourage environmentally-friendly development. Facilitate efforts that promote air quality, greenhouse gas reduction, and energy and water conservation.

Table 4.3: Sustainability and Resiliency Actions

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERSHIP			FUNDING		
			CITY	OTHER GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TIF / PRDA
3.1 Promote land use patterns that increase sustainability, support broadband provision and green technology, and resiliency in buildings and transportation systems by making sustainability a critical element when developing new zoning regulations and modifying old regulations and the Future Land Use map.	B	1	CS PC	SG GC	CM BO	•	•	
3.2 Conserve and restore open spaces, waterways, tree canopies, and other natural resources to increase resiliency, adaptability, and biological integrity.	B	2	CS	SG	CM	•	•	•
3.3 Commit to mitigating the City’s climate impacts, including reducing energy, land, and water consumption and improving outdoor and indoor air quality.	A	2	CS	WC SM	CM HO	•	•	
3.4 Think beyond first costs and consider long-term, cumulative impacts when making infrastructure and policy decisions.	A	1	CS PC	WC	CM	•		
3.5 Prepare the public and city staff for emergencies by updating emergency plans and expanding emergency management initiatives.	C	3	CS PC		BO CM	•	•	•

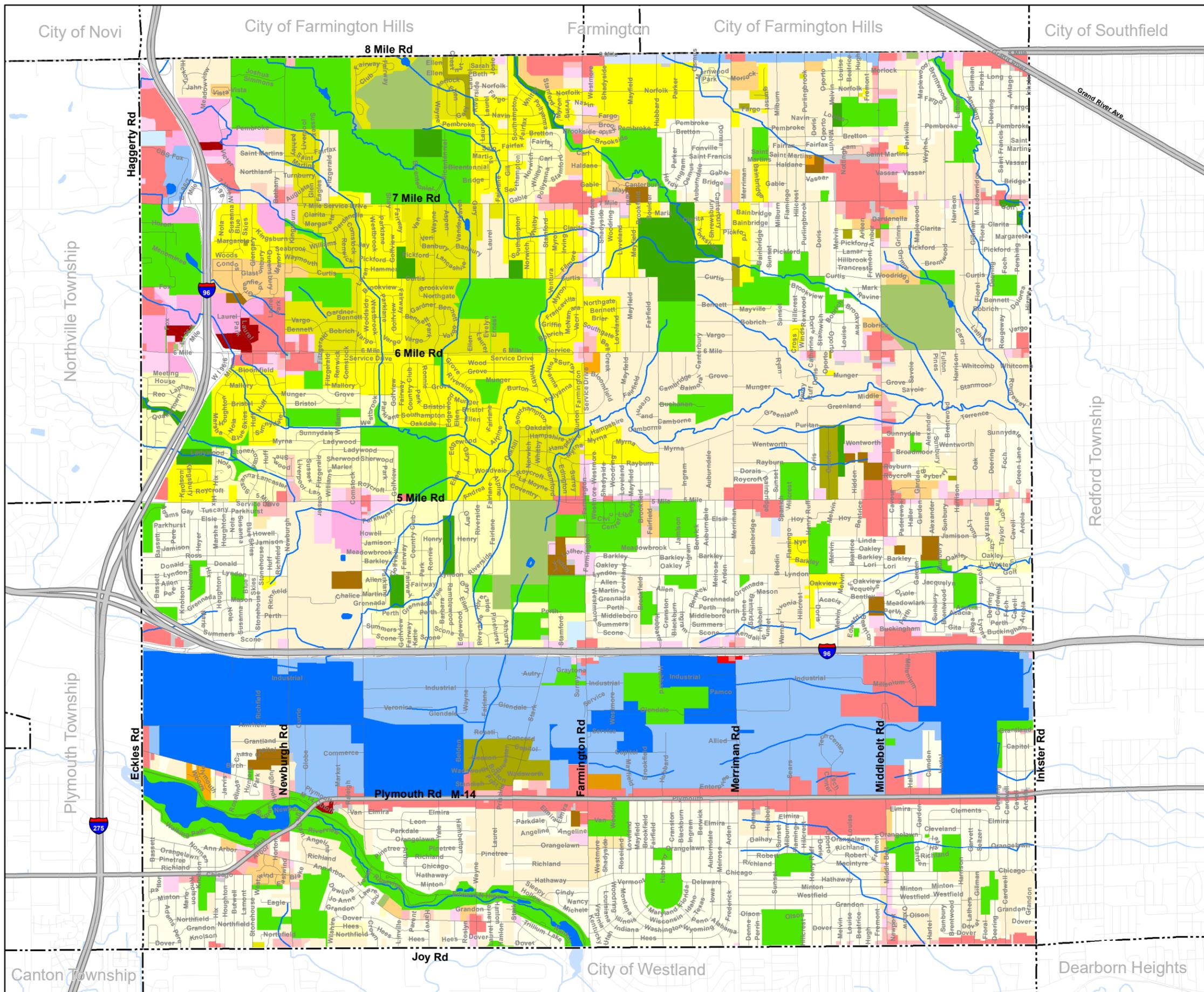
# Healthy Communities



GOAL: Maintain the City of Livonia’s transparent, effective, innovative, and proactive municipal leadership. Ensure that Livonia continues to offer an inclusive, healthy, safe, and hazard free environment in which to live, work, and enjoy recreation.

Table 4.4: Healthy Communities

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERSHIP			FUNDING		
			CITY	OTHER GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TIF / PRDA
4.1 Continue to prioritize good governance and leadership by operating in an open and financially stable manner, focusing on maintaining high levels of citizen involvement and achieving measurable results.	A	1	CS PC		CM BO	•		
4.2 Partner with local medical providers to create innovative health and wellness initiatives that increase active living and citizen well-being.	A	1	CS PRDA	MDOT	CM BO	•		•
4.3 Ensure that programming and facilities offered by all entities including the City of Livonia, schools, parks and recreation, the library, and others are meeting the needs of all City residents (families, youth, seniors, underrepresented communities, etc.).	A	1	CS	WC SM	CM HO	•	•	
4.4 Establish a marketing and branding campaign to increase awareness about Livonia’s strong quality of life.	A	1	CS		CM BO	•		



DRAFT

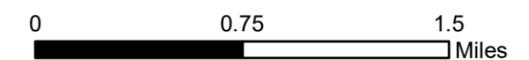
# Zoning Map

City of Livonia, Michigan

December 2017

## LEGEND

- AG General Agriculture
- C-1 Local Business
- C-2 General Business
- C-3 Highway services
- C-4 High-Rise Commercial
- M-1 Light Manufacturing
- M-2 General Manufacturing
- ML Manufacturing Limited
- NP Nature Preserve
- OS Office Services
- P Parking
- PL Public Lands
- PO High-Rise Professional Office
- R-1 One Family Residential (60' x 120' Lots)
- R-2 One Family Residential (70' x 120' Lots)
- R-3 One Family Residential (80' x 120' Lots)
- R-4 One Family Residential (90' x 130' Lots)
- R-5 One Family Residential (100' x 150' Lots)
- R-6 Two Family Residential
- R-7 Multiple Family Residential
- R-8 High Rise Multiple Family Residential
- R-8C Condominium High Rise Multiple Family Residential
- R-9 Housing for the Elderly
- R-C Condominium Residential
- RE Research, Engineering
- RUF Rural Urban Farm



Data Source: City of Livonia, 2015, Michigan Geographic Framework, Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 10a.



# Economic Development



GOAL: Retain and promote Livonia’s diverse mix of commercial and industrial uses in defined locations throughout the City that provide desired employment, goods, and services for residents, visitors, and workers alike. Encourage economic development that responds to the changing economy while positioning the City to enhance its tax base and maintain a stable and diverse revenue source.

Table 4.5: Economic Development Actions

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERSHIP			FUNDING		
			CITY	OTHER GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TIF / PRDA
5.1 Assist the education and business communities in developing a competitive workforce to provide job skills demanded by the regional market place and employment opportunities for local graduates.	A	2	CS PC	WC MDOT	CMBO	●		
5.2 Focus on retaining existing businesses and industry.	A	1	CS PRDA		CM BO	●		●
5.3 Target outreach to innovative companies (knowledge-based and high technology industrial) to ensure a diverse and resilient economic base.	A	1	CS	WC SM	CM HO	●	●	
5.4 Establish a framework to incentivize creative redevelopment of unoccupied “big-box retail.”	A	1	CS PC		CM	●		

# Parks, Trails, and Open Space



GOAL: Build on the success and opportunities within existing recreation facilities to provide quality of life benefits for City of Livonia residents, including active living, accessibility to recreation, and environmental preservation.

**Table 4.6: Parks, Trails, and Open Space Actions**

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERSHIP			FUNDING		
			CITY	OTHER GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TIF / PRDA
6.1 Continue to develop and maintain comprehensive park, trail, recreational, fitness, and sports facilities and programs.	A	1	CS PC	SG	CMBO	●		
6.2 Preserve and/or incorporate natural drainage and flood plains wherever possible into park and recreation sites.	A	2	CS PRDA	SG	CM	●		●
6.3 Pursue funding sources and develop partnerships and advocates to manage park needs.	A	1	CS	WC SM SG	CM HO	●	●	
6.4 Develop, maintain, and preserve sufficient open space and recreation facilities to fully satisfy the wide variety of recreation needs of residents.	A	2	CS	WC SG	CM	●		

# Infrastructure



GOAL: Invest in improving and maintaining City infrastructure to ensure that City services can be available for all current and future development. Implement innovative and effective strategies for maintenance and improvement of the stormwater, wastewater, solid waste, and recycling systems to ensure the health and safety of Livonia’s residents.

Table 4.7: Infrastructure Actions

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERSHIP			FUNDING		
			CITY	OTHER GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TIF / PRDA
7.1 Invest in and implement comprehensive and innovative urban water management, green infrastructure practices, and renewable energy systems.	B	2	CS PC	WC SG	CM BO	•	•	
7.2 Provide appropriate resources for staff to maintain and improve infrastructure systems.	A	1	CS PRDA	SG WC	CM	•		•
7.3 Explore opportunities for infrastructure system improvements as new technology becomes available.	A	2	CS	WC SM SG	CM HO	•	•	
7.4 Increase the use of renewable resources to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.	A	1	CS		CM	•		

# Urban Design



GOAL: Achieve a positive and lasting community image by encouraging high quality and durable materials, energy efficient buildings, and current best practices for human scale and aesthetic character. Strive to incorporate design elements that contribute to a sense of place within the community.

Table 4.8: Urban Design Actions

OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNERSHIP			FUNDING		
			CITY	OTHER GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TIF / PRDA
8.1 Incorporate unique and functional community design components with all new developments, public spaces, and streetscapes.	A	2	CS PC	WC SM MDOT	CM BO	●		
8.2 Identify gateway locations to target urban design to announce arrival into Livonia.	A	1	CS PRDA	WC SM MDOT	CM BO	●		●
8.3 Enhance landscaping and site design through redevelopment to enhance the sense of place along major strip corridors.	A	2	CS	WC SM MDOT	CM HO	●	●	
8.4 Reserve underdeveloped land for high quality development emphasizing the use of high quality materials and the establishment of a sense of place.	A	1	CS		CM	●		

# Zoning Plan

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary regulatory tool for the City to implement the land use mapping element of the LIVONIA VISION 21 Plan. The City of Livonia Future Land Use Map indicates residential growth areas of different densities and provides locations for mixed use, parks and community uses, commercial and industrial uses.

The land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map and the corresponding descriptions set land use policy to guide future development in the City. The Future Land Use Plan provides general land use development principals that are consistent with the City’s goals and objectives for growth. The Zoning Map has precise boundaries, standards and permitted uses that are adopted as law.

A Zoning Plan is required by the Michigan Planning and Zoning Enabling Acts. Section 33(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended, requires that the Master Plan shall serve as the basis for the community’s Zoning Plan. Additionally, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006, as amended, requires a zoning plan to be prepared as the basis for the zoning ordinance. The Zoning Plan must be based on an inventory of conditions pertinent to zoning in the municipality and the purposes for which zoning may be adopted (as described in Section 201 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act).

The following table presents the City of Livonia Zoning Districts that apply to each of this Plan’s Future Land Use designations. Where new regulations are recommended to implement the LIVONIA VISION 21 Plan, the “*new district*” or “*district revisions*” descriptions is included along with the applicable zoning districts.

The LIVONIA VISION 21 Future Land Use Plan sets a new vision for the City by creating opportunities for infill housing, neighborhood investment, mixed use centers and a vibrant City Center development around the Civic Center Campus. As a result of this new direction, not all of the LIVONIA VISION 21 future land use categories will match up with the current location or regulations of the Zoning District to which they most closely correspond. Zoning Ordinance text amendments, map amendments or new Zoning Districts will be necessary to implement the Future Land Use Plan. The key recommended revisions the Zoning Ordinance are discussed in the next section and Table 4.1 details the Zoning Plan.

**Table 4.9: Table 4.1: Future Land Use and Zoning Map Correlation**

Future Land Use Designation	Zoning Districts
Low Density Residential	R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, RUF, P, AG
Medium Density Residential	R-1, R-2, R-6, R-7, <i>District Revisions</i>
High Density Residential	R-7, R-8, R-8c, R-9, R-C, <i>District Revisions</i>
Corridor Commercial	C-1, C-2, C-3, OS, <i>District Revisions</i>
Regional Commercial	C-4, OS, PO, RE, <i>District Revisions</i>
City Center	Residential Districts, <i>New District</i>
Mixed Development Center	Residential Districts, <i>New District</i>
Tech and Manufacturing	RE, M-1, M-2, ML
Parks and Community	NP, PL, AG, NP

Source: McKenna, 2018

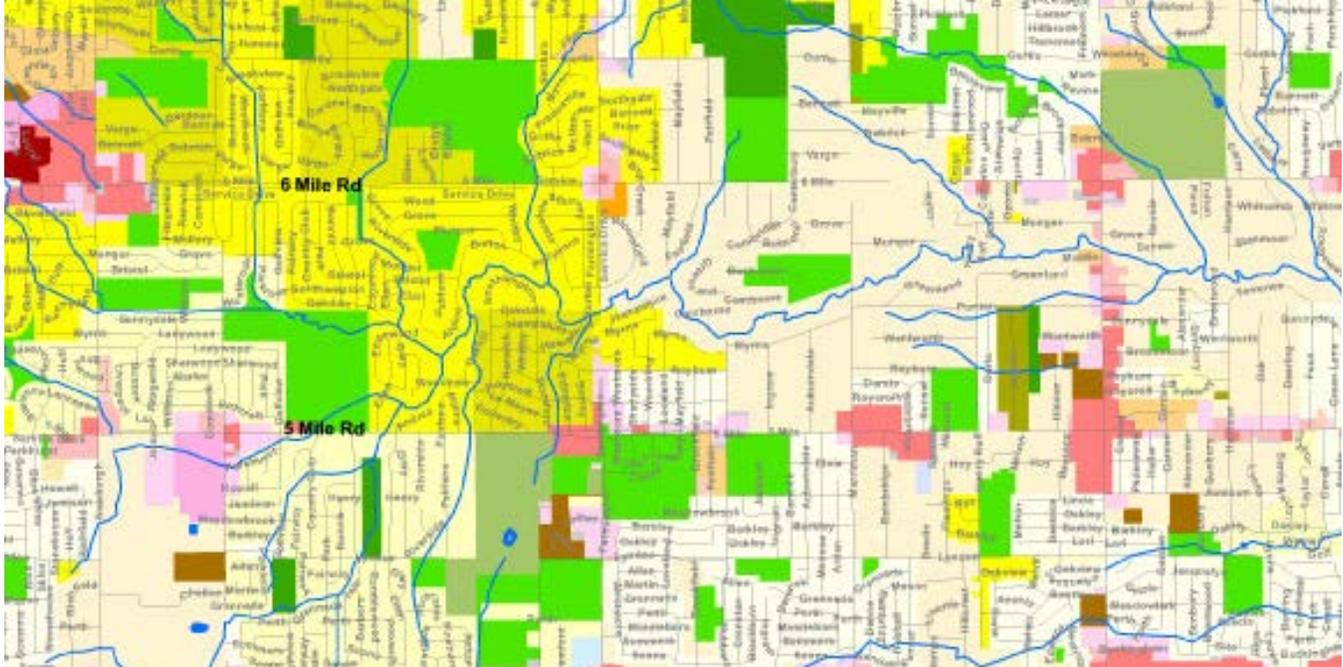


Figure 4.2: Excerpt of Livonia Zoning Map

## RECOMMENDED REVISIONS TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE AND ZONING MAP

In order to meet the goals of this Master Plan, the following revisions to the Zoning Ordinance and Map are recommended:

- New Zoning Districts that incorporate form-based regulations should be created for the Mixed Development Center and City Center designations.
- The Commercial Districts, C-1, C-2, and C-3, should be simplified and consolidated into a new district corresponding to the development intensity of the corridor commercial designation.
- The Commercial District C-4 should be modified to reflect a regional commercial designation with higher intensity development and traffic that results from its proximity to I-96 and I-275.
- The Office Districts should be eliminated - the eligible uses and standards of OS should be incorporated into a corresponding corridor district and the eligible uses and standards of PO into a regional commercial district.
- The five One-Family Residential Districts should be simplified and consolidated.
- The six Multiple-Family Residential Districts should be simplified and consolidated.
- New incentives and standards for infill housing and neighborhood investment should be developed for districts corresponding to the medium density residential designation. Strategies for affordable housing, accessory dwelling units, and adaptive reuse should be considered.
- The three Planned Unit Development (PUD) Districts should be simplified and consolidated.
- The Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed and edited according to lean-zoning principals. Regulations that do not contribute to the implementation of the Future Land Use Plan should be eliminated or reduced in scope.
- Additional incentives to encourage sustainable use of land, materials, energy, and resources should be developed for all districts.
- The City should consider initiating rezonings of the Mixed Development Centers and the City Center areas.

# Conventional Zoning Procedures

## REZONING TO IMPLEMENT THE MASTER PLAN

The land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map provide the basis for evaluating future rezoning requests. Zoning actions that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map usually receive deferential and favorable judicial review if challenged. The Master Plan should be the principal source of information in the investigation of all rezoning requests. The City may initiate rezoning necessary to place land in conformance with the Future Land Use Map, or they may wait for property owners to come forward.

## PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

Planned development involves the use of special zoning requirements and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. Planned developments should achieve a higher quality of development than might otherwise be possible. Continued use of planned development is recommended to achieve development in accordance with the goals and objectives of this Plan.

Planned development can be used as the regulatory tool to permit open space zoning or cluster development and to facilitate mixed use redevelopment in the Mixed-Use Centers or City Center.

## PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Rather than simply regulate development on the basis of dimensional standards, many communities are establishing performance standards to regulate development based on the permissible effects or impacts of a proposed use. Performance standards should be used to supplement conventional zoning standards. Performance standards can be developed to regulate noise, dust, vibration, odor, glare and heat, safety hazards, and environmental impacts such as air and water pollution. The complexity of the performance standards should be based in part on the capacity of City staff to administer the standards.

Performance standards can be particularly useful in achieving environmental and resource protection goals. If based on a strong body of research, standards can be developed that relate to critical environmental areas (such as floodplains, wetlands, lakes, woodlands, groundwater recharge areas, and unique wildlife habitats), and natural resource areas.

## INCENTIVE ZONING

Incentive zoning allows a developer to exceed the dimensional limitations in the Zoning Ordinance if the developer agrees to fulfill conditions specified in the Ordinance. Incentive zoning should be considered to promote innovative land planning techniques identified in the Plan. For example, a possible increase in density can be used as an incentive for developments that implement open space zoning standards.

## SETBACKS AND OTHER STANDARDS

It is important to review the required setbacks and other dimensional standards to be certain that they promote the desired type of development and respect historical setbacks and architectural scale. For example, if side or rear parking is preferred, then it may be necessary to mandate a build-to line that is close to the front lot line.

# Innovative Zoning Techniques

## **OVERLAY ZONING**

Overlay zoning allows the City to impose a new set of regulations on a special area within an existing zoning district. In an area where an overlay zone is established, the property is placed simultaneously in the two zones, and the property may be developed only under the applicable conditions and requirements of both zones. Thus, the overlay district regulations supplement the regulations of the underlying zoning district. Overlay zoning has been used in other communities to address special conditions and features, such as historic areas, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas, without disrupting the underlying zoning plan.

## **DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT**

Although there is no explicit legislative authority for such agreements, many Michigan communities have used development agreements to achieve a mutual understanding between the developer and City concerning the conditions under which development can occur. Development agreements are often negotiated as part of a planned development approval, allowing the community and developer to address complex issues that cannot be adequately addressed on a typical site plan. Development agreements might prove useful to achieve desired developments, especially if or when a mixed-use development is proposed.

## **INCLUSIONARY ZONING**

Inclusionary zoning is the practice of providing a percentage of affordable housing to be included during the development of new residential projects. Developments that propose a certain percentage of affordable housing are typically allowed incentives such as higher density or reduction of dimensional requirements. Inclusionary zoning programs can help transition residents from living in rental units to homeownership.

## **FORM-BASED CODE**

Form based code is regulation that focuses first physical design and form of the buildings and public spaces. Form based codes yield predictable development processes and clearly show community expectations. A form-based code would be based off of the community's vision for development densities and material standards. A form-based code would be minimally ideal for the City's mixed development centers and city center, where the relationship between buildings, public spaces and streets will be key to creating the desired sense of place.

## **LEAN ZONING**

The City could benefit from applying lean zoning principles to a Zoning Ordinance update. Lean zoning is the simplification of zoning codes and the removal of redundant text. Typically, lean zoning revisions are made through a series of small incremental changes to zoning ordinances but can be incorporated into comprehensive revisions.

# Capital Improvements Plan

A Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) can serve as a tool for public relations, helping to inform the public on the municipality’s investment plan on infrastructure. This section reviews the City’s past plan and outlines the most efficient process for creating a future plan.

## BACKGROUND

A CIP is a tool to identify and prioritize the long-term capital project requirements of a local unit of government. The CIP is a schedule of proposed improvements to a community’s public facilities that includes a prioritization of projects over a 6 year period. The first year of the CIP is the capital budget and the CIP is annually updated.

The CIP’s relationship to the master plan, as stated in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008), is “to further the desirable future development of the local unit of government under the master plan.” To accomplish this, the planning commission, legislative body, or chief administrative official (depending on language in the charter), shall annually prepare the CIP to assist the planning commission and board or council in reviewing and approving public infrastructure projects, such as streets, parks, and utility infrastructure.

Livonia completed a CIP in 2016, covering years 2016–2021. Projects that the plan covered, include the following: Paving Infrastructure, Water and Sewer Infrastructure, Buildings, Technology, Vehicles, Equipment, and Land Purchase or Improvement.

Major highlights of the 2016–2021 Program include:

### 2016

- Proposed General Fund Expenditures, \$6,115,989

### 2016–2021

- Proposed Total Expenditures, \$172,712,090
- Proposed City Share of Total Expenditures, \$156,837,090



Livonia Civic Center Library, Livonia MI

*Quality public facilities, are essential in securing a high quality of life for residents of Livonia. Careful, prioritized planning to fund and maintain these facilities is important in ensuring a successful future.*

## CIP PROCESS

A process known to be successful in creating CIPs is as follows:

### 1. Define CIP Process and Roles

- Mayor communicates the mission and vision of the CIP process to City Staff
- Appoint a CIP coordinator to lead the project
- Identify participants and roles for CIP preparation
- Establish a CIP review team
- Review and update capital improvement policies
- Collect data to assist with review, including budget projections, master plan amendments, policy changes and new regulations
- Define cost threshold, lifespan and types of projects to qualify for CIP
- Establish agreement on priority system to evaluate projects. Key considerations should include:
  - » Is the project supported by the Master Plan or other plans?
  - » Is it legally required?
  - » Is it fiscally responsible?
  - » Is it a high priority for the community?
- Other considerations include:
  - » Relationship to or coordination with other projects
  - » Estimate of annual income from projects
  - » Estimate of annual operating expenses
  - » Duration of project
  - » Sequencing Project mandated by the state and/or federal law
  - » Projects essential to public health or safety
  - » Projects that save in operating costs

### 2. Hold Launch Meeting

- The CIP Review Team hosts launch meeting to explain purpose of CIP and roles in the process
- Members of the public are encouraged to share information about infrastructure needs and priorities
- Project lead summarized feedback from the public and provides to staff for consideration in identifying project

### 3. Identify Projects

- Complete asset inventory of existing capital investments, which includes
  - » Age, condition and replacement dates
  - » Status of projects currently underway
- Develop a schedule for replacement and improvement needs based on asset inventory
- Complete project application forms of projects to be considered for CIP

### 4. Evaluate and Score Projects

- The CIP Review Team uses criteria established in Step 1 to evaluate and score project requests (scoring can be done individually or as a team)

### 5. Rank Projects and Draft the CIP

- The CIP Review Team ranks projects based on:
  - » Criteria established in Step 1
  - » Available funding
  - » Capacity to complete projects
- The project lead organized the projects into a table, with funding shown over 6 years (unfunded projects should also be included and scheduled for later years or compiled in a separate section)

### 6. Review and Approve the CIP

- The CIP Review Team provides draft to the Planning Commission
- Planning Commission reviews and conducts public hearing
- Planning Commission adopts the CIP and forwards to Council or Board
- Council or Board adopts CIP and uses for annual budget
- For communities with two year budgets, the second year is a simple update
- Update costs, funding sources, and timing for a six-year system

## KEY FINDINGS

Considering the life span of the last Capital Improvements Plan, it is important for the City to update the plan with new community goals in mind.

# Economic Development Tools

Successful implementation of the LIVONIA VISION 21 Plan will depend on the ability of the City to secure necessary financing. Besides the general fund, the following sources of revenue are available to the City:

## **DEDICATED MILLAGE**

Special millages can be used to generate revenues for a specific purpose. For example, one Michigan community has a special land acquisition fund that is supported by a one-quarter mill property tax. A land acquisition fund would be a useful tool to promote open space preservation in the City or assemble property for redevelopment. Millages can also be used to generate funds for capital improvements. Finally, a sidewalk millage could be used to address sidewalks gaps and streetscape improvements within the City.

## **SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS**

Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefited by specific public improvements (paving, drainage improvements, etc.) to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the assumed benefits to the property affected. Special assessment funding might prove useful to implement some of the recommendations for the City Center, Mixed Development Centers, or commercial corridors. Special assessments are also useful in upgrading street lighting in residential areas, and street trees and streetscaping in highly visible areas. The most important point regarding special assessments to keep in mind is that they must be supported by those in the area of the assessment, or they are doomed to failure. Therefore, before a special assessment is presented to the public, it must be well thought out, and the benefits versus costs well demonstrated.

## **BOND PROGRAMS**

Bonds are one of the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for specific community project and are paid off by the general public through property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of projects that generate revenues. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project (for example, water and sewer service charges). While bonding is a very common method of funding projects, it is important to remember that this is long-term debt, and that it is dependent on the growth in the tax base. Therefore, it is essential that property values are protected, and that the reputation of the community is well maintained to keep its bonds an attractive investment. It is also important to know how much debt a community can realistically afford. If a community is too heavily committed to paying off debt, its credit rating can be damaged. Bonds are useful; however, their use should be balanced with the other methods of funding available to a community.

## **TAX INCREMENT FINANCING**

Tax increment financing is authorized by the Downtown Development Authority Act, Neighborhood Authority Act, Corridor Improvement Act, and the Local Development Finance Authority Act. When a tax increment finance district is established, the state equalized value of all properties in the district is recorded. Every year thereafter, the property tax revenue generated by any increase in the total state equalized value is "captured" by the authority to finance the improvements set forth in a development plan. Often, revenue bonds are issued to finance the improvements, and the tax increment revenues are used to repay the bonds.

## **MDNR RECREATION GRANT PROGRAMS**

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grants are available for park development and land acquisition.

The City can use this program to finance park land acquisition and development. In the future, the City may wish to seek MNRTF funding for acquisition of land principally for open space and natural resource preservation purposes, and to implement its identified projects in the 5 Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

## **TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)**

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) provides for a variety of alternative transportation. The TAP replaces the funding from previous programs including Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails, Safe Routes to School, and several other discretionary programs, wrapping them into a single funding source. The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) offers funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience through implementing a number of transportation improvements, including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety programs, historic preservation and rehabilitation of transportation facilities, environmental mitigation activities, and safe routes to school programs.

SEMCOG awarded over \$9.2 million in TAP funding in fiscal year 2018. Funds can be used for a wide variety of projects, including non-motorized improvements, green infrastructure, and projects encouraging students in grades K through 8 to walk or bike to school. Eligible applicants include incorporated cities and villages, county road commissions, and public transit agencies. Other organizations can apply, but they must be sponsored by one of the eligible applicants just described. A signed agreement between the sponsored and sponsoring agencies must be completed for the application to be considered. A call for TAP project applications is made annually in late January or early February. Applications are generally due late April, with award notices issued in July.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG)**

CDBG's can be used for numerous community improvement projects in addition to housing rehabilitation. Criteria, however, require that they be used primarily to improve housing opportunities, and recreational and social opportunities for distressed portions of the community. CDBG funds can also be used for community economic development. Therefore, those areas of Livonia where the lower income households live should be identified and targeted for projects needed to improve conditions in those areas. Small area neighborhood plans would aid in identifying what types of projects would benefit areas in decline to stabilize those areas and permit them to reverse the conditions which are negatively impacting them. By using CDBG funds in distressed portions of the community, funds that would have been spent in completing those improvements are freed up to be used elsewhere. Therefore, while the residents of a distressed portion of the community benefit directly from the CDBG program, the City in general benefits by having funds that would have been spent available for other improvements. CDBG include Downtown Infrastructure Grants, Downtown Façade Grants, and Blight Elimination Grants.

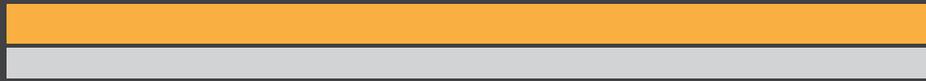
## **REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES PROGRAM**

According to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) program measures and certifies communities that integrate transparency, predictability and efficiency into their development practices with the goal of realizing a community-supported redevelopment vision that is inviting to investors. The RRC has developed a set of Best Practices for communities to follow to build a clear and transparent development process. The six RRC Best Practices include:

- Community Plans and Public Outreach
- Zoning Regulations
- Development Review Process
- Recruitment and Education
- Redevelopment Ready Sites
- Community Prosperity

The RRC program will make the City more attractive for investors and help stimulate development.

**LIVONIA VISION 21**  
CITY OF LIVONIA, MI



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