

Master Plan 2023

CITY OF HARPER WOODS, MICHIGAN



City of Harper Woods, Wayne County, Michigan
2023 Master Plan
RESOLUTION of ADOPTION

September 27, 2023

WHEREAS the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008), as amended, provides for a City Planning Commission to prepare and adopt a Master Plan for physical development of the community; and

WHEREAS the City of Harper Woods Planning Commission has prepared such a Master Plan for the City's physical development in compliance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, including relevant charts, maps and text; and

WHEREAS the Harper Woods Planning Commission has provided multiple opportunities for public participation in the planning process; and

WHEREAS the Harper Woods City Council approved the draft Plan for distribution, and subsequently the Master Plan was so distributed for review by surrounding communities and other public agencies as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act; and

WHEREAS the Harper Woods Planning Commission held a formal public hearing on the draft Master Plan on July 26, 2023 in order to provide additional opportunity for public comment; and

WHEREAS all comments received during the planning process have been carefully considered and the Planning Commission is satisfied that the Master Plan is ready for adoption.

WHEREAS the Harper Woods Planning Commission recognizes that the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map are flexible guides for public and private decision-making that will aid the City improve and maintain outstanding quality of life for all residents.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Harper Woods Planning Commission hereby adopts the Harper Woods 2023 Master Plan, as presented at the public meeting held on July 26, 2023.

Motion by Kien, **Supported** by Williams


AYES: Vargo, Hakim, Kien, Poynter, Serraiocco and Williams

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Koresky and Mercer



Gregory Vargo, Planning Commission Chairperson



Leslie Frank, City Clerk



Master Plan 2023

CITY OF HARPER WOODS, MICHIGAN

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Acknowledgments

The participation and cooperation of community leaders and residents in the preparation of the Harper Woods Master Plan is greatly appreciated. We acknowledge the efforts of the following individuals.

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Introduction

About the Plan

PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

The last Master Plan for the City of Harper Woods was adopted in 2013. Since then, the community has undergone some minor and major changes. While many of Harper Woods' desirable characteristics have been maintained, the changing regional environment and the evolution of housing and shopping preferences require that the City evaluate its existing conditions and policies to preserve and improve the quality of life enjoyed by residents of the community.

Definitive goals for the future are necessary to direct redevelopment, protect the character of the community, and provide guidelines for residential and commercial development within the city. This Master Plan represents the commitment of the administration and Harper Woods residents to maintain and improve the residential and commercial development standards, and continue to provide a welcoming and inclusive community.

The 2023 Master Plan update is the result of data collection and analysis, meetings, and discussions with the Community and Economic Development Department and Planning Commission, along with input from residents and stakeholders. It consists of text, charts, maps and analysis regarding development within the community. The Future Land Use Plan Map provides the basis for the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance.

This Master Plan update examines existing conditions, identifies the goals of the community and provides recommended methods for achieving these goals.

STATE OF MICHIGAN LAWS ON PLANNING

Master planning in Michigan is regulated by the 2008 Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA). The MPEA requires at least every five (5) years after adoption of a master plan each municipal Planning Commission review the master plan and determine whether to amend the master plan or adopt a new master plan. Harper Woods partnered with the Redevelopment Ready Community Program to perform this substantial update. The master plan must address land use and infrastructure issues and may project 20 years or more into the future. The master plan must include maps, plats, charts, and descriptions showing the Planning Commission's recommendations for the physical development of Harper Woods into the future.

In general, the MPEA requires that the master plan include information on the following:

1. Goals and objectives for the future
2. Key opportunities and challenges
3. Community demographics
4. Land uses (residential, parkland, industrial, etc.)
5. Community facilities
6. Transportation

Public Engagement Overview

- **May 2022.** The scope of work for Harper Woods' Master Plan was presented to the City Council for their review and approval.
- **July 2022.** The Planning Commission and City Council formally kicked off the Master Planning process as part of a joint meeting.
- **August 2022.** The Notice of Intent to Plan was distributed to neighboring municipalities and various organizations.
- **October 2022.** An engagement website was launched that featured participation activities, announcements, and feedback. Over the next two months, four (4) distinct efforts were made to involve Harper Woods's residents, business owners, and other stakeholders in the Master Plan process. These efforts are summarized below.

IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS

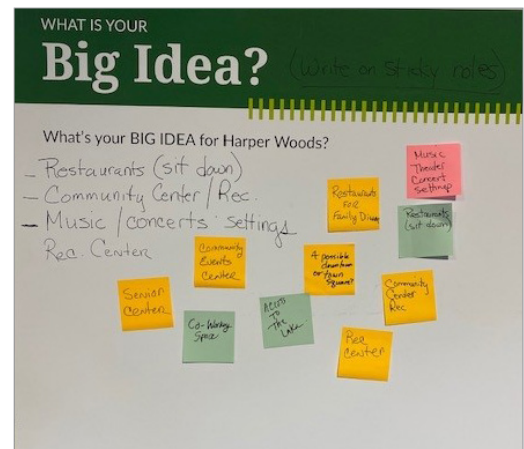
10/18/22 | OPEN HOUSE #1

Approximately 20 people attended a public open house hosted by the City of Harper Woods. The purpose of the event was to solicit feedback on residents' vision for the future of the community and to engage in broad discussions about possibilities for the Kelly Road Corridor and housing diversity. Additionally, residents were given the opportunity to ask questions about and comment on the master planning process.

Residents were presented with three different stations, each of which asked them a question. The questions and responses are featured below.

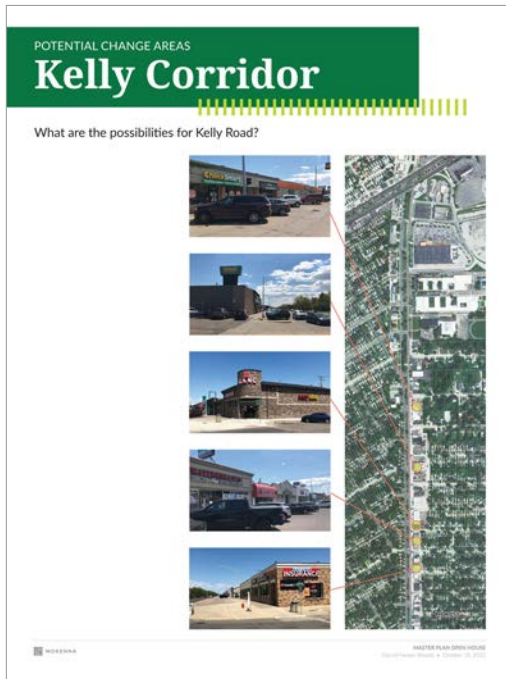
“What is your Big Idea?”

Answers centered around **beautifying the city** and **enlivening business districts**. Ideas included establishing outdoor dining, launching a small business week, creating a mural and public art program, and adding a splash pad.



“What are the possibilities for Kelly Road?”

When imagining the future of Kelly Road, a clear pattern emerged from the responses: people want a **safe, clean, updated corridor** where they can **live, shop, and play**. Residents emphasize the need for more code enforcement along Kelly Road, as well as frequent trash cans and lighting, to improve the safety and cleanliness of the area. They also noted that they would like to see a mix of commercial and residential options, as well as a greater diversity of business types.



“Which housing choices should be available in Harper Woods?”

In this activity, attendees were shown eight different housing types and asked to “vote” on which ones they preferred using dot stickers; they could also leave a sticky note explaining their choice. Overwhelmingly, **people chose the 2-3 story lofts as the housing type they would like to see more of in Harper Woods**. People also expressed mixed favor toward townhomes and “cottage courts,” which is a housing arrangement where several single-family bungalows are clustered together around a central courtyard. In general, attendees also expressed a desire attract younger families by diversifying and updating the city’s housing stock.

11/29/22 | OPEN HOUSE #2

Approximately 30 people attended a second public open house hosted by the City of Harper Woods. In attendance were the Mayor of Harper Woods, as well as several current and former city council and planning commission members. In addition to a slightly higher turnout, the second open house had a greater range of ages among the attendees. The same three stations were presented to the public at the second open house, plus one additional station called “Draw Your Neighborhood.” The questions and responses discussed are listed below.

“What is your Big Idea?”

Answers centered around **creating community gathering spaces and improving the entertainment options** in the city. Attendees noted that they would like to have more space for events and suggest a variety of options, such as a senior center, community center, and co-working space. People also expressed a desire for a defined “downtown,” area, where they can access live music, restaurants, and other events.



“What are the possibilities for Kelly Road?”

Consistent with the first open house, people expressed the desire for a **safe, clean, updated Kelly Road where they can both live and shop**. Residents expressed a desire for a more walkable business district with a mix of housing and retail, as well as restaurants, studios, offices, and other family-friendly establishments.

“Which housing choices should be available in Harper Woods?”

At the second open house, people once again chose the **2-3 story lofts** as the housing type they would like to see more of in Harper Woods. However, in contrast to the first open house, people **also expressed a clear and strong preference for brownstone-style** townhomes, duplexes, and cottage courts. Consistent with the first open house, there was little to no interest in new rowhouses, small apartments, or traditional-style single-family residential. However, respondents did emphasize the importance of updating and beautifying the city’s existing single-family homes.

“Draw Your Neighborhood”

Attendees were given a map of the city and asked to draw a general boundary around the area that feels like their neighborhood. This exercise revealed that people do not feel like the commercial area between Eight Mile Road and Vernier Road is a part of Harper Woods. Additionally, the neighborhoods that people drew tended to include one or more public spaces as a central feature—Salter Park, the Library, and Johnston Park emerged as clear favorites. It also became apparent that the I-94 corridor was a major barrier, and that people living east of the freeway felt like their neighborhood included both Harper Woods and Grosse Pointe Woods. Lastly, people generally expressed that Harper Woods feels like one big neighborhood, rather than many separate smaller ones.

VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

From early-October to late-December, the public was able to offer input through a dedicated project website. Two primary communication outlets were offered, which mirrored the exercises conducted at the in-person, Open House events. The surveys are summarized below.

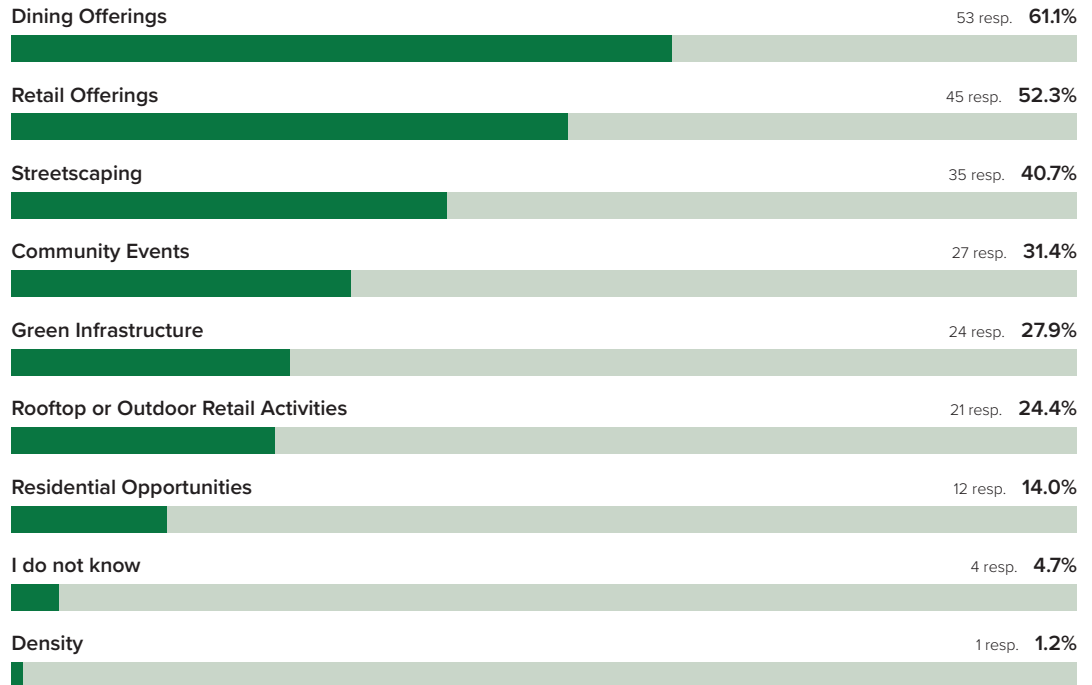
10/01/22–1/15/23 | ONLINE SURVEY

86 people filled out a 20-minute online survey that asked participants a set of 17 non-demographic questions and four (4) demographic questions. A paper survey was also made available at City Hall.

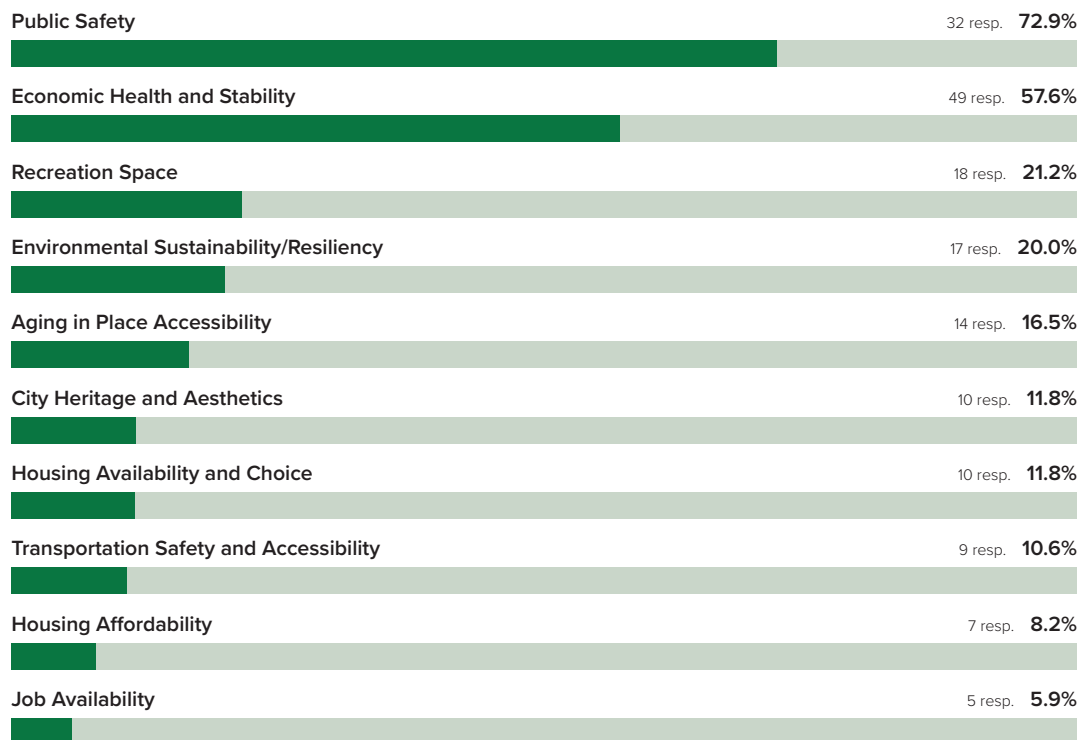
In general, the majority of respondents were 55-65 years old, owned their homes, had lived in Harper Woods for 11 years or more, and identified as white. Additionally, most people indicated that they would like to continue living in Harper Woods for the next five to ten years.

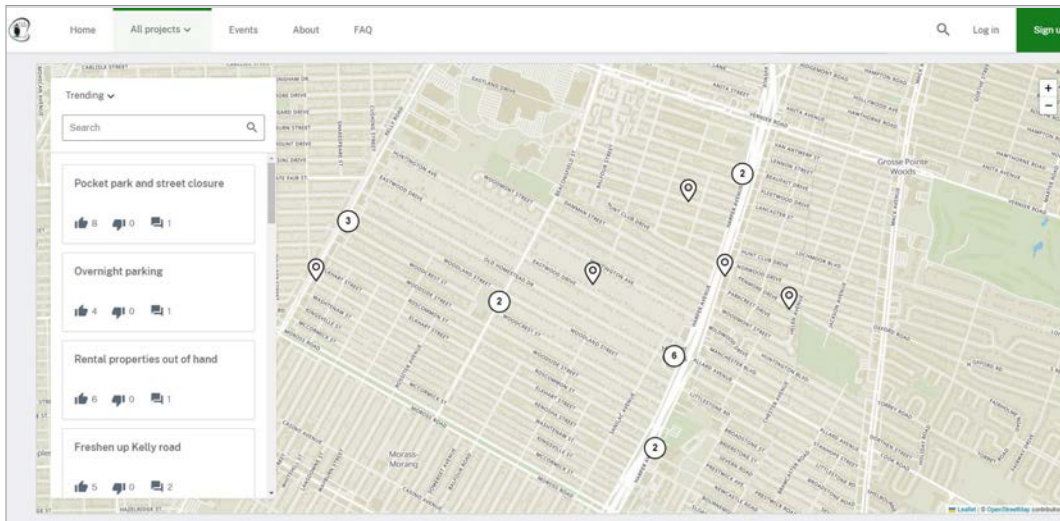
As a part of the survey, people were asked what they liked and disliked about Harper Woods today. Respondents **expressed a general dissatisfaction with the range of commercial options in the city**, but are **happy with the city’s current parks and open space options**. 59.2% of respondents voted that the mix of business along Kelly Road is not adequate and that there should be a greater diversity of options. More than half of the respondents indicated that they are concerned about the city’s public safety and economic health. See polling results below.

“What Do You Wish Harper Woods Offered More of?”



“Which topics are your biggest concerns for Harper Woods as it continues to change over time?”





10/01/22–1/15/23 | ONLINE MAPPING ACTIVITY

33 people participated in this spatial exercise that asked residents to drop either a Like, Dislike, or Idea pin on any location within city boundaries. Participants were also able to leave a comment on their pin, which could be up-voted or down-voted by other participants. The following “pins” received the greatest number of up-votes (i.e. support):

- A pocket park and partial street closure near Kelly Road
- Public art along Kelly Road
- A dog park in Salter Park
- Cleanup and beautification of Parkcrest Hotel

FEEDBACK TRENDS

Across all online engagement, the website had 633 unique visitors. Across all in-person events, the planning team received over 100 comments covering a range of topics. These numbers represent strong interest and participation in building a vision for the city's future. Data analysis and idea synthesis from each event is available in the Appendix; below are some of the key themes that came up most often during online and in-person engagement.

SAFETY, BEAUTIFICATION, AND AESTHETICS

Harper Woods has good housing stock and much of it is well cared-for. However, residents have noticed that many businesses and homes are not maintained well. Residents would like to see enforcement increased in the following areas: overnight parking, speeding, lawn care, rental property maintenance, signage on commercial properties, snow removal, and other ordinance violations. These are examples of a desire to increase code enforcement capacity, since code enforcement and city aesthetics go hand-in-hand. Residents noted that speeding cars in residential neighborhoods is a safety concern for pedestrians and other motorists. Harper Woods also currently relies on assistance from other municipalities for fire and emergency services; residents would like to see fully staffed, fully funded, and independent public safety departments. Another frequent suggestion was to beautify the city through the installation of public art. Suggestions included high school art contests, temporary art installations on windows in vacant storefronts, murals, and sculptures.

KELLY ROAD CORRIDOR AND BUSINESSES

The success of the Kelly Road corridor is important to the future success of Harper Woods. Engaged stakeholders would like to see Kelly become more pedestrian-friendly, with a cleaner environment and additional lights installed. Residents are currently dissatisfied with the lack of variety among businesses in the city. Residents would prefer adding more multi-use spaces that would offer residential and commercial opportunities. Additional street design, public art, and park enhancements promote a pedestrian-friendly environment.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

To support the attraction of a younger demographic, residents noted that a greater diversity in the housing stock is needed. Embracing a variety of housing standards through accessory dwelling units, multi-family housing, and varying height standards can promote density/walkability, affordability, and accessibility for younger people and seniors. The most desired options that promote housing diversity included mid-rise apartment buildings, brownstones, duplexes, and cottage courts.

COMMUNITY AND RECREATION

As communities recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, residents are looking for ways to interact with one another and re-establish a sense of place. Residents desire a brick-and-mortar recreation building—a community center that includes wellness activities, programs, a gym for adults, a pool, and community gathering spaces. Residents also desire more parks throughout the city, as well as Harper Woods-sponsored events. Regional events such as festivals and live music performances would help build community and draw visitors from across metro Detroit.

Vision for 2045

The City of Harper Woods is a thriving city of close-knit, safe neighborhoods and active commercial corridors that supports longstanding residents throughout all stages of life and attracts new residents seeking an inclusive and connected community.

This Plan intends to protect, preserve, and support the city's established neighborhoods, while also providing the tools for growth and development in logical, practical, and incremental ways. The City of Harper Woods will retain and enhance its identity as a community of desirable and well-maintained neighborhoods and commercial destinations, while proactively planning to incorporate improvements in housing diversity, sustainability, placemaking, and other areas.

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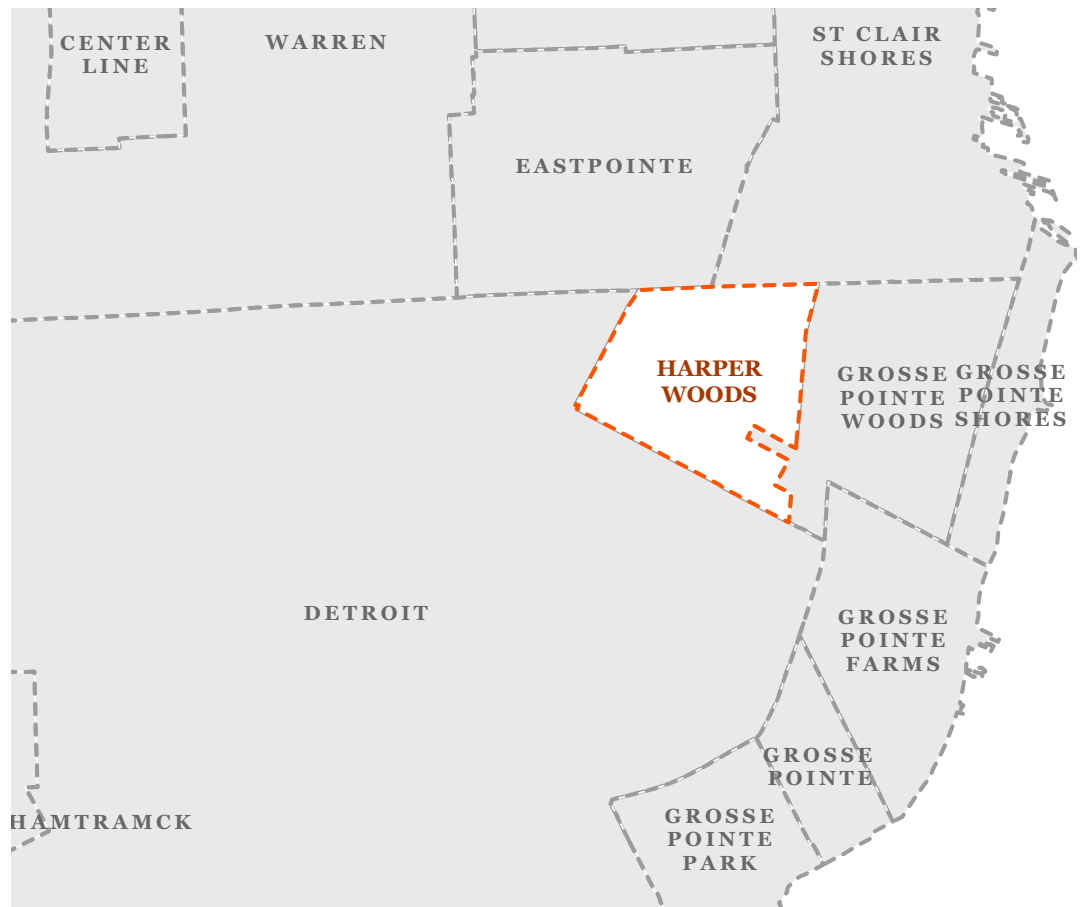
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Background

Context and Location

Harper Woods sits in the northeast corner of Wayne County. Harper Woods shares its northern border with the cities of St. Clair Shores and Eastpointe, its western and southern borders with Detroit, and its eastern border with Grosse Pointe Woods. The city has excellent accessibility in all directions by way of Interstate 94.

Map 1. Location



In northern Harper Woods, land along Vernier is developed as commercial and regional commercial, similar to the existing development in Harper Woods. To the east, one would not even be aware that they had crossed the city boundary into Grosse Pointe Woods if there was not a welcome sign posted. To the west, Kelly Road is a divided boulevard; therefore, there is a substantial buffer between the commercial uses in Harper Woods and the residential and office mix in Detroit. Fortunately, the Kelly Road median minimizes the negative impacts the commercial development in Harper Woods may have on the residential development in Detroit. To the south is existing, lower quality residential development in the City of Detroit. There is a recognizable difference in the quality of the roads and maintenance of the lots between Harper Woods and Detroit. Harper Woods must concentrate some efforts to preventing any deterioration in the housing stock along this boundary.

Harper Woods has gone through a number of evolutions, from its early years as a bedroom community for the City of Detroit to a suburban cultural destination with its drive-in, teen clubs, and Eastland shopping mall, and finally taking on much of its current form and character during the last twenty years, as Eastland Center closed its doors and residents seek to build new opportunities.



Relevant Adopted Plans and Policies

HARPER WOODS MASTER PLAN (2013)

In 2013, the City of Harper Woods adopted its most recent master plan. The 2013 Master Plan incorporates economic and demographic changes, the Great Recession of 2007-2009, and strategies for zoning, neighborhood preservation, and economic development. According to the 2010 Census, Harper Woods saw White residents decline to 48.5% of the population—down from 85.9% just 10 years earlier. Meanwhile the population of Black residents grew from 10.2% in 2000 to 45.3% in 2010. There was also a decrease in the number of households, decrease in income, and decrease in owner-occupancy rate. Goals and opportunities for the city included blight remediation, office development, a City Hall expansion, streetscape improvement, and more coordination with residents and businesses. The Master Plan also had chapters detailing a traffic circulation analysis, economic analysis, and future land use plan.

SWOT ANALYSIS (WAYNE COUNTY RETAIL RECOVERY PLAN) (2021)

Prepared in 2021, the Wayne County Retail SWOT Analysis is part of Wayne County Economic Development Corporation's Retail Recovery Plan prompted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The plan aims to conduct a detailed analysis of market conditions, detail community-level strategies, and identify and categorize commercial corridors in Wayne County to help determine strategies to overcome the pandemic's impact. A SWOT analysis is a planning technique that identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This SWOT analysis examines the Kelly Road and Eight Mile/Vernier corridors, and considers management and marketing, governmental support, small business viability, and private property conditions. Strengths and opportunities include wide sidewalks suitable for walkability, presence of street trees, and a diversity of uses that exist along the corridors. Weaknesses and threats include limited parking for customers, street crossings that are dangerous or unappealing to pedestrians, of local place identity, and absentee property owners.

KELLY ROAD CORRIDOR PLAN (2018)

Prepared in 2018, the Kelly Road Corridor Plan was a collaboration between the City of Harpers Woods, LifeBUILDERS (a nonprofit organization that serves Detroit), and a graduate student team from the University of Michigan. The plan outlines strategies to improve retail and economic development opportunities, the built environment and transportation landscape, and the quality of life in the surrounding areas in order to foster a more cohesive, vibrant, and welcoming corridor. Kelly Road is a vitally important corridor for the cities of Harper Woods and Detroit, as it forms the border between the cities in the northeast corner of Wayne County, Michigan. Kelly Road was once a thriving commercial corridor, providing goods and services for residents; however, currently, Kelly Road struggles with vacancy, blight, and declining economic activity. The plan includes physical conditions assessments, focus groups, renter interviews, business owner surveys, a retail gap analysis, and implementation strategies. The plan also provides recommendations for increasing the variety and quality of retail, marketing Kelly Road, promoting local entrepreneurship, improving physical attractiveness, improving streetscape redesign, and promoting cohesion between Harper Woods and Detroit.

NEIGHBORHOODS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (2017)

In 2016 and 2017, the City of Harper Woods conducted a joint planning effort with neighboring Detroit community members to address concerns about deteriorating neighborhood conditions, especially in the southwest portion of the city. A task force consisting of city staff and community members convened community meetings and created value statements with associated desired actions to be taken.

The plan articulates the values of Beautiful Neighborhoods, support for Education, Crime Reduction, Community Mindedness, increased Community Activities, and Functioning Infrastructure and City Services.

Major Changes Since the 2013 Master Plan Update

EASTLAND MALL TRANSFORMS TO EASTLAND COMMERCE CENTER

Eastland Center suffered more than a decade of decline amidst national trends challenging traditional enclosed malls. The mall lost several anchor stores and entered financial receivership in 2015. The property was sold at auction in 2018. In 2021, NorthPoint Development purchased the mall property and is in the process of redeveloping the site into an industrial complex with three buildings, totaling 1.03 million square feet of tenant space. This transformation was accomplished through a Planned Unit Development, as industrial use was not contemplated in the previous master plan nor permitted in the RS-1 district.

Eastland Commerce Center represents an economic opportunity for the city, but also requires the reconsideration of land use policies around it to ensure that economic potential is realized and potential conflicts with neighboring land uses are mitigated.

POUPARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLOSURE

In 2019, the Grosse Pointe Board of Education closed Charles A. Poupard Elementary School in the face of declining enrollment in the district. The site has been marketed by the Board, and as of this writing is under consideration for redevelopment into housing.

IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As it did throughout the world, the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant challenges in Harper Woods. The pandemic accelerated trends that were already challenging many brick-and-mortar restaurants and retailers (e.g., competition from online retailers, third-party food delivery, changes in daytime population), and finalized the demise of Eastland Center. However, since many people started working from home, the pandemic recalibrated and strengthened the importance of neighborhoods in people's daily lives.

Some of these changes may last past the pandemic and impact the future of Harper Woods. Hybrid working may continue to increase the importance of mixed-use development, and favor neighborhoods that have access to walkable amenities and recreation. Restaurants and entertainment businesses will likely need to adapt to changed habits, including increased demand for take-out and delivery services, which will affect efforts to enable walkable urbanism in Harper Woods' commercial corridors.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

PRESERVING RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER

Persistent feedback across several planning efforts indicates a desire to address deteriorating neighborhood conditions, vacant properties and other blighting factors that challenge quality of life. The southwest corner of the city is especially in need of movement toward revitalization, but certain issues regarding enforcement of existing codes and maintenance persist citywide.

LACK OF HOUSING DIVERSITY

A Residential Target Market Analysis pertaining to the City of Harper Woods was prepared by LandUseUSA Urban Strategies in 2021. One key finding is that “there is a mismatch between Harper Woods’ existing supply of housing and current demand for housing by format. Traditional detached houses comprise 85% of the city’s housing stock, whereas only 69% of those likely to move to Harper Woods are inclined to seek this housing type. The remaining 31% of migrating households are inclined to seek attached housing formats, of which only 15% of Harper Woods’ housing stock is comprised.”

To support existing residents as they age, and to support potential future residents, Harper Woods must diversify its current housing stock.

AMELIORATING POTENTIAL LAND USE CONFLICTS

The Eastland Commerce Center is arguably the most significant, transformational development in decades in Harper Woods. The transformation of the site into a modern industrial center brings great economic opportunity to Harper Woods. However, the site was not zoned for industrial use, nor was industrial use considered in the previous Master Plans. Therefore, a key opportunity for the city is to reconsider future land uses and ameliorate potential conflicts.

KELLY ROAD REDEVELOPMENT

The success of the Kelly Road corridor is critical to the success of the City of Harper Woods. The corridor holds much of the city's commercial land and offers the best opportunity for developing a vital, mixed-use commercial corridor and accomplishing placemaking and economic goals. Past planning efforts, like the 2018 Kelly Road Corridor Plan, have charted a future for Kelly Road, but there is a need for revised policy and an implementation plan to realize the corridor's potential.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

Stakeholder input from this planning process identified a desire to support and grow local small businesses for Harper Woods entrepreneurs. The closing of Eastland Center displaced a group of small, mostly independent businesses. Existing commercial building stock is not available or conducive to housing small start-ups, but transformation of the Kelly Road corridor in particular could help fulfill this need.

03

Community Profile

Introduction

Harper Woods remains a desirable place to live, work, and play. Part of understanding what makes the city unique is understanding the composition of who lives there, which can be done by analyzing demographic data. Using statistics primarily obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, the descriptions and charts below provide a relative comparison of the City of Harper Woods, Wayne County, and the State of Michigan. This type of broad stroke comparison is useful in understanding the city's long-term trends.

Is the community growing rapidly, slowly, or is it declining? Is the community getting older? Are households getting bigger? Is the community becoming more or less racially diverse? How educated is the community? These are the questions readily available Census data can help answer. In doing so, the administration can be better prepared for imminent changes in the types of public services it offers, the types of businesses it wants to attract, and the type of character it wants to maintain or establish.

AGE

State trends show that the population of Michigan is growing older. As people live longer lives and new birth rates slow, many communities are seeing a shift in the types of services needed to accommodate an older population. However, Harper Woods is unique among Detroit’s many suburban communities - the city’s population is actually getting younger. Age trends have a push-and-pull relationship with various sectors from the downtown retail and service industry, to parks and recreation facilities, to the availability of affordable housing.

From 1980 to 2020 the median age of Harper Woods’ residents steadily declined from 45.8 to 37.2 years old. From 1990-2020, there was a substantial decrease in the population 65 years and older, and a significant increase in the populations aged 5-17 and 35-64 (Table 1).

Table 1. Harper Woods Population Change, 1990-2020

	1990	2000	2010	2020	Population Change, 1990-2020	
Ages 0-4	868	913	875	780	↓ 88	↓ 10.14%
Ages 5-17	1,862	2,280	2,814	2,775	↑ 913	↑ 49.03%
Ages 18-34	3,457	3,223	2,819	3,084	↓ 373	↓ 10.79%
Ages 35-64	4,618	5,007	5,910	5,276	↑ 658	↑ 14.25%
Ages 65 and over	4,098	2,831	1,818	1,914	↓ 2184	↓ 53.29%
Total Population	14,903	14,254	14,236	15,492	↑ 589	↑ 3.95%

In its 2045 Forecast, SEMCOG estimates that the population ages 64 and under will decline while the population ages 65 and over will increase (Table 2). However, SEMCOG’s 2045 Forecast may prove to be incorrect if Harper Woods continues its recent history of attracting younger residents, particularly those with children. Of the total population in 2020, 55.2% were female and 44.8% were male. This balance has remained constant since the last update.

Table 2. Harper Woods Forecasted Population Change, 2015-2045

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Pop. Change, 2015-2045	
Ages 0-4	878	780	852	840	806	824	824	↓ 54	↓ 6.2%
Ages 5-17	2,779	2,775	2,267	2,252	2,190	2,247	2,237	↓ 542	↓ 19.5%
Ages 18-24	1,467	1,193	1,215	1,162	1,166	1,164	1,147	↓ 320	↓ 21.8%
Ages 25-54	5,974	5,306	5,406	5,283	5,464	5,441	5,460	↓ 514	↓ 8.6%
Ages 55-64	2,209	1,861	2,010	1,904	1,693	1,788	1,881	↓ 328	↓ 14.8%
Ages 65 and over	1,601	1,914	2,637	2,927	3,081	3,138	3,133	↑ 1,332	↑ 83.2%
Total Population	14,236	13,829	13,513	13,045	13,038	13,026	13,044	↓ 1,192	↓ 8.4%

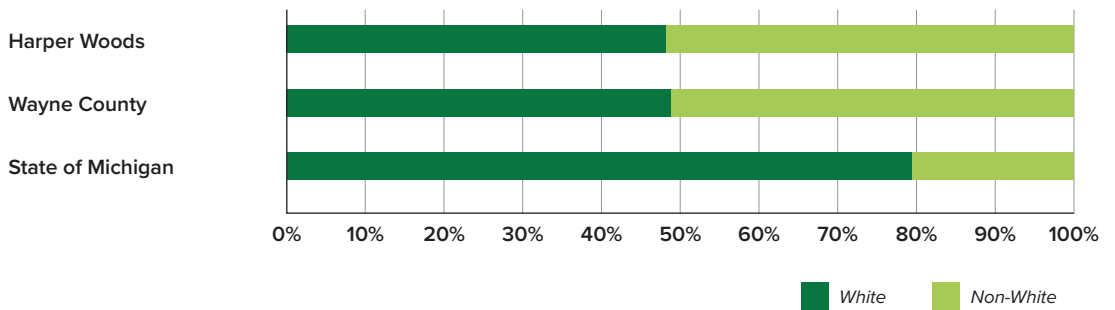
RACE

Race and ethnicity are important factors to consider when planning for a community. Because of longstanding historical barriers, some groups still face unequal impacts from land use and community development decisions within a city. Additionally, special efforts may be necessary to reach historically underserved or minority populations to ensure representation and participation in community discussions and decision-making.

Over the past several decades, the racial composition of Harper Woods has become more diverse. In 2010, 48.5% of city residents were White, 45.3% were Black, 1.4% were Asian, 2.4% were Multi-Racial, and 0.4% were another race. However, in the last 10 years, Harper Woods has become a majority-Black city. In 2020, 64.0% of city residents were Black, 37.8% were White, 2.2% were Asian, and 5.0% were Multiracial.

As Harper Woods looks towards maintaining and increasing its college-aged and young adult population, it will increasingly diversify. Ensuring that historically underserved populations are included in decision-making will become ever more important. Additionally, providing a range of housing, employment, education, recreation, and entertainment opportunities can help support a diverse population.

Figure 1. Racial Diversity in Harper Woods, Wayne County, and the State of Michigan



Source: 2020, U.S. Census Bureau

EDUCATION & EARNINGS

Of the population over the age of 25 in 1990, 23% did not have a high school diploma or equivalency. In the year 2020, this percentage had declined to 8.8%. Additionally, the percentages of residents who graduated high school, attended college, or graduated with an associate’s degree were greater in Harper Woods than in Wayne County or the state of Michigan (Table 3). However, the percentage of residents who have obtained a bachelor’s degree is higher than Wayne County and lower than the State of Michigan. Harper Woods also has a lower percentage of residents with Graduate/Professional degrees than the State but is equal to the County.

The educational attainment of Harper Woods adults is common for areas with older populations because the need for higher level of education in previous generations was not necessary for steady employment. However, there are indications that more and more of the population have been graduating high school and have been seeking additional training and education beyond high school.

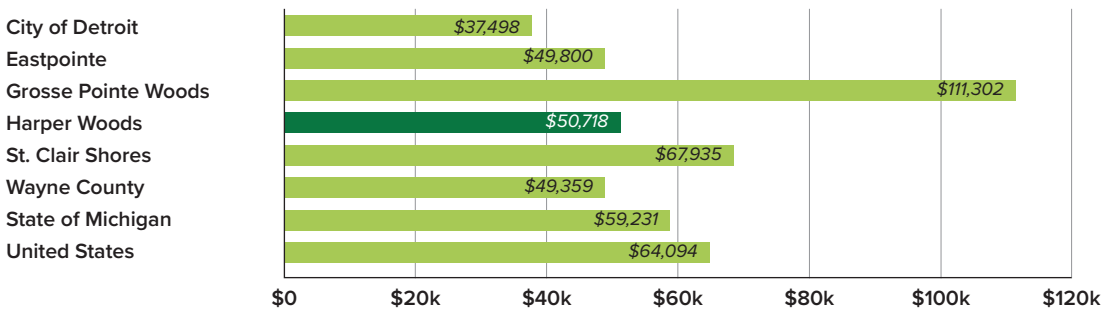
Table 3. Educational Attainment, Harper Woods vs Nearby Communities

	Harper Woods	Wayne County	State of Michigan
Graduate/Professional Degree	9.9%	9.9%	11.7%
Bachelor's Degree	16.0%	15.3%	18.3%
Associate's Degree	10.3%	8.6%	9.6%
Some College, No Degree	25.4%	24.1%	23.2%
High School Graduate	29.8%	29.2%	28.5%
Did Not Graduate High School	8.6%	12.9%	8.7%

The City of Harper Woods continues to be a relatively stable community in terms of income and employment. While the median household income in Harper Woods is slightly higher than the Wayne County median, it is lower than the statewide and nationwide medians (Figure 2). Figure 2 also compares the median household income levels of surrounding communities.

Due to the severe national recession that began in the late 2000s, median household incomes had been declining as a result. In fact, all of the median household incomes in Figure 2 were lower in 2010 than they were in 2000. However, that trend has reversed, as all median household incomes presented in Figure 2 in 2020 were higher than they were in 2010.

Figure 2. Median Household Income in Harper Woods vs Nearby Communities, 2020



POPULATION

When the Master Plan was adopted in 1973, Harper Woods was at the end of a substantial growth period (121 percent increase from 1950 to 1970). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, this growth in population had reached its peak and was starting to level off and decline.

In 1960, Harper Woods' population had grown from 9,148 people in 1950 to 19,995 people, an increase of 119 percent. This growth was part of the nation-wide trend of population growth known as the "baby boomer" generation. As the "baby boomer" generation expanded, their parents sought more room and better opportunities in the suburbs of larger cities. Located on the northeastern boundary of Detroit, Harper Woods was ideally situated to benefit from this migration. By 1970, this growth has leveled off and the population of the city was 20,188.

During the 1970's, however, the population began to decline by an average 2.0% per year. During that decade, Harper Woods ranked fifth in the state in its rate of population decrease. The population continued to decrease from the 1980's to the 2010s, although at a lower rate. The 2020 population was 15,492 (Figure 3), an 8.8% increase from 2010, reversing four decades of decline.

Figure 3. Harper Woods Population, 1950-2020

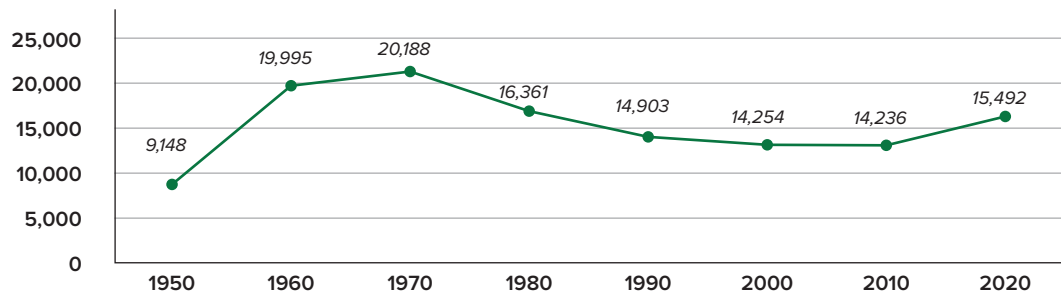
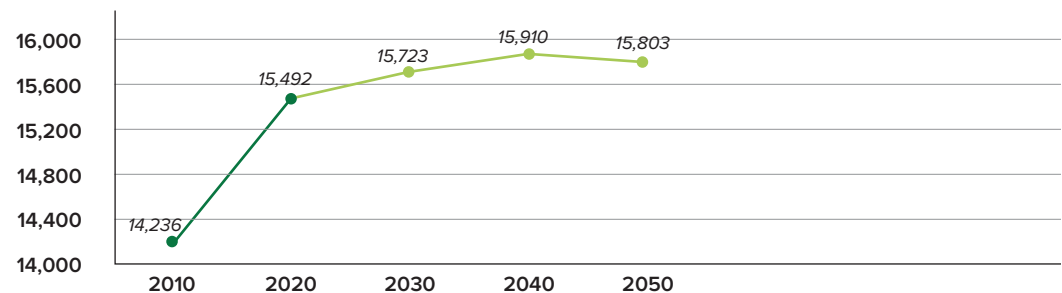


Figure 4. Harper Woods Projected Population, 2020-2050



In its 2050 Forecast, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) estimates that the population in 2050 will be 15,803 persons (Figure 4). If SEMCOG's forecasting model is correct, the population of Harper Woods will remain very stable, with a 2% net increase from 2020-2050.

SUMMARY–KEY FINDINGS

The residents of the City of Harper Woods are as educated and have similar incomes to others throughout Wayne County. However, these incomes are slightly lower than the State of Michigan.

In the past decade, the population of the city has increased. Projections show population stability over the next 20 years. In general, the population is unlikely to fluctuate dramatically and will probably remain just near 15,000 for the foreseeable future.

As the population gets older, one question is whether Harper Woods can diversify its population, job opportunities, and housing choices. Established employment centers in neighboring cities and counties means Harper Woods will need to compete for their share of young professionals and their subsequent economic activity.

These issues and their solutions, in many ways, involve the entire city, as well as regional and statewide planning initiatives and land use subsidies. The majority of this Plan will focus on those things that the city administration and its residents can do to ensure that the Harper Woods remains a great place to live and raise a family.

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04

Land Use and Housing

Introduction

Harper Woods is largely built out, and thus must concentrate efforts related to land use on the preservation of strengths, strategic redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and housing diversity to ensure that the built environment serves the community and allows it to thrive in the coming decades.

Existing Conditions: Land Use

Examining existing land uses is an essential first step in the preparation of a community master plan. The existing land use survey provides a snapshot of land use and development activity at a given moment in time and becomes part of the community’s historical record of development patterns, activities and land uses. As a community shapes its master plan and resolves and balances its land use and development issues, the land use survey remains a valuable resource and reference point.

“What is land use?”

- **Land use is a term that refers to the activities happening on a piece of property.** Land use can be described in general or very specific terms. For example, the land use for the Kroger on Harper Ave could be called “grocery,” or more generally “commercial.” Similarly, the land use for Chandler Park Academy could be called “education,” or more generally “semi-public.”

The following table breaks down the existing land use in Harper Woods into general categories. This table displays the totals for parceled land in Harper Woods, meaning roadways are not included in the calculations. “Uncategorized” land includes land that does not fit into the other categories, such as tiny slivers of vacant land next to the highway.

Land Use Category	Acres	Percentage
Single Family	897.1	71.5%
Two Family	57.0	4.5%
Office	11.6	0.9%
General Commercial	25.7	2.1%
Local Commercial	2.8	0.2%
Industrial	117.2	9.3%
Park	23.3	1.9%
Public	45.6	3.6%
Semi-Public	73.3	5.8%
Uncategorized	0.2	0.02%
Total	1,253.8	100.0%

LAND USE CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS



SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

This classification includes one-family detached units. Typical existing lot widths are 40 to 50 feet wide and 100 to 150 feet deep. Lower densities with lot widths of approximately 100 feet and 170 to 200 foot depths are generally located along Huntington, Eastwood, and Old Homestead between I-94 and Kelly Road, and along Woodland and Woodcrest between I-94 and Beaconsfield.



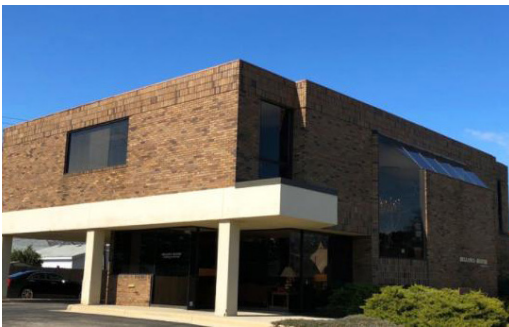
TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

This classification includes two-family dwelling units (duplexes). Two-family residential is located on two blocks of Roscommon Avenue.



MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

This classification includes 3+ unit residential buildings. Multiple family developments are generally located close to commercial areas and primary transportation routes, such as Harper Avenue.



OFFICE

This classification includes low-intensity office uses, such as dental clinics, legal offices, and real estate businesses. These uses are generally concentrated along north Harper Avenue and Vernier. These uses maintain a compatible relationship with the adjacent residential by creating an appropriate transition between the neighborhoods and the freeway.



LOCAL COMMERCIAL

This classification includes retail and service uses designed to provide the day-to-day shopping and serve local residents. The category includes uses such as grocery markets, drug stores, liquor stores, salons, barber shops, small restaurants, take-out restaurants, etc.



GENERAL COMMERCIAL

This classification includes commercial activity that serves a regional population, such as gas stations, fast food establishments, or big-box stores. These uses are primarily located along major thoroughfares and draw from passing traffic on Kelly Road, Harper Avenue, Eight Mile, and Vernier Road.



INDUSTRIAL

This classification includes all industrial uses, such as manufacturing, assembling, general fabricating, warehousing and similar uses. This category is nearly entirely comprised of the Eastland Commerce Center site.



PUBLIC

This classification includes property owned by federal, state, county, or city governments and the public school district. Examples are the city hall, library, post office, and Tyrone Elementary. These uses are highly concentrated in the southeast corner of the city and in the northwest corner. The schools are located on roadways that can handle higher volumes of traffic but are still considered part of the neighborhood.



SEMI-PUBLIC

This classification includes facilities that are privately owned or operated but are used by the public, such as churches, private clubs, private schools, training centers, and hospitals.



PARK

This classification includes parks, natural areas, and private outdoor recreational facilities. This category can also be called “open space” more generally.

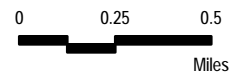


Existing Land Use

Harper Woods, Michigan

LEGEND

- Single Family
- Two Family
- Multiple Family
- Office
- Local Commercial
- General Commercial
- Industrial
- Semi-Public
- Public
- Park
- Harper Woods Boundary
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Freeways



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
 Data Sources:
 Wayne County, 2018.
 State of Michigan, 2020.
 SEMCOG, 2022.
 McKenna, 2023.



Existing Conditions: Housing

This section illustrates the key similarities and differences of households, housing tenure, value, and type within the city, region, and the state.

HOUSEHOLDS

“What is a housing unit and what is a household?”

- **A housing unit is one building - or one part of a building - that is used as personal living space.** One single-family house, one apartment, or one side of a duplex are all considered one housing unit.
- **A household is the group of people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence.** Households come in a variety of sizes and shapes, such as married-couple families, female-headed households, or a single person living alone.

As with the total population, the numbers of households in Harper Woods had been declining over the past few decades. However, the average household size (i.e. the number of people living together in one household) increased from 2000-2020. This means that more people are living together rather than alone, sometimes out of need (because affordable housing isn't available) and sometimes out of choice.

For example, it is becoming more common across the nation for elderly parents to move in with their children, either to care for grandchildren or because they need assistance themselves as they age. These arrangements are called “multi-generational households,” which are households that have two or more generations of adults living in the same housing unit. This trend, combined with the loss of available housing units, is helping to drive the increase in average household size.

Table 4. Harper Woods Total Households and Average Household Size, 1990-2020

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Total Households	6,529	6,573	6,292	5,814	5,171
Average Household Size	2.48	2.27	2.24	2.42	2.49

Table 4 demonstrates a slight increase in households from 1980 to 1990 and a significant decrease from 1990 to 2020. Despite any new construction or decrease in vacancy that occurred between 1980-2000, the smaller average sizes of families and households

accelerated the decrease in total population during this period. Total households have declined and will remain lower than previous years unless more new housing is constructed to meet current tastes and price ranges.

This underscores the need for Harper Woods to continue to attract younger, working families with children or those planning to have children to keep the city’s population stable. This can be accomplished by a number of methods, including: maintaining an adequate supply of quality, affordable housing; improving the aesthetics and visual aspects of the city’s corridors and entrances, making Harper Woods a more attractive place to live and visit; and providing retail and commercial services which address their needs. The city must further promote and enhance the elements it has to offer young families such as recreational facilities and quality educational services.

Table 5. Harper Woods Household Composition, 2000-2020

	2000	2010	2020	Household Change, 2000-2020	
Two or more persons without children	2,230	1,875	2,086	↓ 144	↓ 6.46%
Live alone, 65+	1,056	724	647	↓ 409	↓ 38.73%
Live alone, under 65	1,180	1,224	831	↓ 349	↓ 29.58%
With children	1,826	1,991	1,607	↓ 219	↓ 11.99%
Total Households	6,292	5,814	5,171	↓ 1,121	↓ 17.82%

Of the 5,171 households in the city in 2020, 71.4% had 2 or more people and 28.6% had only 1 person living alone.

One of the most important factors illustrated in Table 5 is the number of households with children. While the percentage of total households in Harper Woods declined by 17.8% from 2000-2020, the percentage of households with children decreased by only 11.99% over the same period. The slower rate of decline in households with children compared to total households can likely be attributed to the much higher rate of decline in people living alone.

Generally, households with children want affordable homes with 2, 3 or 4 bedrooms, a good school system or nearby private schools, and adequate parks and recreation. Additionally, an increase in this segment will increase the demands on the schools and on parks and recreation. For more information on schools and parks, please see Chapter 7 (Public Infrastructure, Facilities, and Services).

The number of households in Harper Woods has decreased very slowly since 1970. SEMCOG projections show a slight uptick in the next ten years, followed by a return to the overall trend of slow decrease through 2040.

Table 6. Harper Woods Owner- and Renter-Occupied Housing Units, 2000-2020

Owner-Occupied Housing Units	2000	2010	2020	Household Size Change, 2000-2020	
1 Person	1,680	1,333	933	↓ 747	↓ 44.46%
2 Persons	1,709	1,247	1,183	↓ 526	↓ 30.78%
3 Persons	749	690	556	↓ 193	↓ 25.77%
4 Persons	1,037	872	479	↓ 558	↓ 53.81%

Renter-Occupied Housing Units	2000	2010	2020	Household Size Change, 2000-2020	
1 Person	556	615	545	↓ 11	↓ 1.98%
2 Persons	301	412	613	↑ 312	↑ 103.65%
3 Persons	159	261	414	↑ 255	↑ 160.38%
4 Persons	101	384	448	↑ 347	↑ 343.56%

The size of households is another important factor to consider when planning for the future. As Table 6 illustrates, the number of 2-person households (which includes married couples and single parents with a child) and 1-person households is significantly greater than the number of households with 3 or more persons. The latter includes married couple families with one or more children and single parents with 2 or more children.

Table 6 also demonstrates that a portion of the population shifted from owner-occupied housing to renter-occupied housing from 2000-2020. In fact, almost all segments of owner-occupied housing decreased while all segments of renter-occupied housing increased during this period. This shift from owner-occupied to renter-occupied housing is largely attributed to the severe recession that began in the late 2000s. This recession plagued the national housing market, resulting in millions of home foreclosures nationwide from 2008-2012. In the wake of this foreclosure crisis, many of the people who lost their home to foreclosure no longer had the funds, credit, or desire to own a home, and chose to rent instead. Additionally, many of the single-family homes that were previously owner-occupied have been divided and converted into renter-occupied units.

It is also important to note that housing has become more unaffordable over time - across Michigan, starter homes (houses under 800 square feet) are harder to find and afford. As such, many young families are choosing to rent, rather than buy. This trend is reflected in the drastic decline in the number of 3-person and 4-person owner-occupied households in Harper Woods between 2000 and 2010.

These statistics place further emphasis on the need to attract and retain families to the City of Harper Woods. Due to the durable, quality housing stock, many first time home buyers and married couples with no children may find Harper Woods attractive to their needs.

Although the majority of households are 2 or more people, policies will also need to be established to also be inclusive of single people, particularly the elderly. It is important to remember that Michigan as a whole is aging, even as Harper Woods' population gets slightly younger. Many seniors want to stay in their community as they age, near family and friends, and housing must be provided that meets their needs for aging-in-place. This may include assisted living, but also single-story ranches, condos, and other accessible housing types.

TENURE

Harper Woods has a consistently high rate of owner occupancy: 80.1% in 1990 and 82.2% in 2000. However, that rate has declined in recent decades: 71.2% in 2010 and 60.1% in 2020. This decrease was due to the severe recession at the end of the 2000s that resulted in significantly large numbers of home foreclosures; this trend continued into the following decade. The percentage of renter-occupied housing units rose from 17.8% in 2000 to 39.1% in 2020.

The housing tenure breakdown has become less favorable over the last decade, with 60.9% of occupied housing units being owner-occupied in 2020, and the remaining 39.1% of occupied housing units being renter-occupied. This represents a difference of over 10% since 2010, in which 71.2% were owner-occupied, while 28.8% were renter-occupied. Additionally 592 housing units (10.3%) are vacant.

Table 7. Housing Tenure, 1990-2020

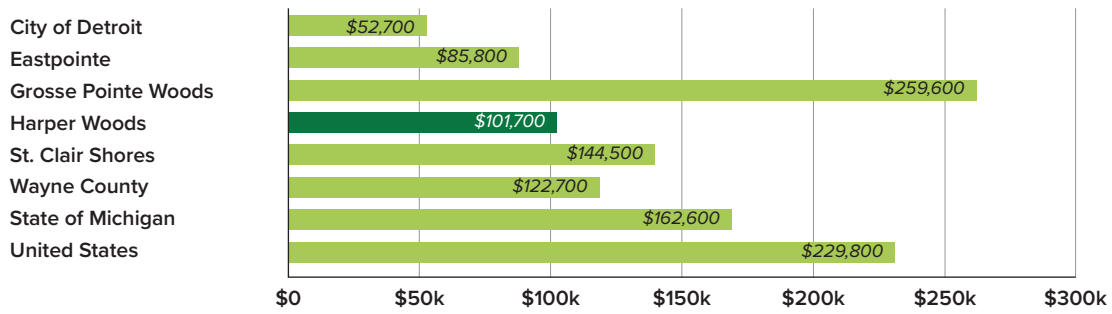
	1990	2000	2010	2020
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	5,299	5,175	4,142	3,151
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	1,273	1,117	1,672	2,020
Total Occupied Housing Units	6,572	6,292	5,814	5,171
Vacant Housing Units	172	222	690	592
Total Housing Units	6,744	6,514	6,504	5,763

VALUE

The median housing value in Harper Woods, as illustrated in Figure 5 below, was \$101,700 in 2020. Although this was higher than the median housing value of surrounding municipalities of Detroit and Eastpointe, it was lower than that of Grosse Pointe Woods, St. Clair Shores, Wayne County, the state of Michigan, and the United States. As previously stated, the severe recession that began in the late 2000s resulted in millions of home foreclosures nationwide. This inevitably depressed housing values, and southeast Michigan was more negatively affected than most other areas of the country.

Since 2010, Harper Woods, Detroit, and Eastpointe all lost housing value. However, other areas have seen tremendous growth in median housing value in the last decade, including Grosse Pointe Woods and the State of Michigan overall. St. Clair Shores and Wayne County have experienced marginal growth.

Figure 5. 2020 Median Housing Value in Harper Woods vs Nearby Communities, the State of Michigan, and the Nation



Despite the decline in housing values caused by the national recession in the late 2000's, Harper Woods has made a concerted effort in keeping housing values at a reasonably attainable level, while at the same time keeping them high enough to guarantee good, quality structures. This makes Harper Woods an attractive choice for younger, working families and first-time buyers.

Table 8. Housing Value in Harper Woods

Value	Estimated Number
Less than \$50,000	498
\$50,000 to \$99,999	1,029
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,144
\$150,000 to \$199,999	338
\$200,000 to \$299,999	113
\$300,000 to \$499,999	6
\$500,000 to \$999,999	11
\$1,000,000 or more	12
Total	3,151

NOTE: The American Community Survey (ACS) is an estimate based on sample data and not an official count. Certain outliers (in this case, housing values at the upper end of the range) are likely anomalies due to statistical sampling that do not reflect actual conditions.

TYPE

Another important characteristic of a community’s housing is the type of housing. Despite the predominance of single-family dwellings, Harper Woods does offer a variety of housing types (apartments, condos, and duplexes). The number of housing units has decreased between 1990 and 2020 (Table 9). Part of this decrease was the 260 units that were lost with the demolition of an apartment complex in 1996 for the construction of regional shopping uses on the Eastland Center property.

Table 9. Housing Types in Harper Woods

	1990	2000	2010	2020
One-Family Detached	5,256	5,297	5,061	4,739
One-Family Attached	144	171	258	236
Two-Family/Duplex	25	11	0	30
Multi-Unit Apartments	1,291	1,035	1,085	750
Mobile Homes	2	0	0	8
Other Units	26	0	0	0
Total Housing Units	6,744	6,514	6,404	5,763

NOTE: The American Community Survey (ACS) is an estimate based on sample data and not an official count. Certain outliers (in this case, the presence of mobile homes) are likely anomalies due to statistical sampling that do not reflect actual conditions.

There are a variety of housing types available, and those options should continually be evaluated to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the community. As previously stated, there are housing types that are specifically desired by senior citizens and people living with disabilities.

Harper Woods’ housing stock is relatively old, and most of the units were built in the same time period - more than half of the total housing units were built between 1950 and 1959. Overall, more than 85% of the housing units were built between 1940 and 1969, with a small burst between 1985 and 1988. While proper maintenance can extend the life of any structure, many of these units may be nearing the end of their useful lives. Demolition of some units and reconstruction may become necessary. Strict enforcement of the housing code is of utmost importance to keep these homes from deteriorating.

The housing code should be examined and evaluated for its effectiveness in dealing with the problems of maintaining Harper Woods housing stock, and the problems that strict enforcement may pose for homeowners. If appropriate, the housing code should be revised and programs established to assist homeowners with compliance. Additionally, revisions may be necessary to increase the design standards for new home construction to ensure new home construction and improvements are in keeping with the character of the area. Financing programs for new home buyers may be necessary for rehabilitation of homes.

Key Trends, Challenges and Opportunities

NEW INDUSTRIAL LAND

The creation of the Eastland Commerce Center is one of the most dramatic changes to land use in the city’s recent history. Over the past 5 years the logistics industry has been booming—as more people order products online, the demand for shipping centers, warehouses, and trucking agencies has increased. The conversion of the site from a underutilized and vacant mall into a logistics center is a local reflection of this national trend.

The Eastland site presents a clear opportunity for the community: to turn a vacant site into a community asset. The redevelopment of the site will include a new sidewalk along Vernier (completing the city’s only sidewalk gap), on-site stormwater infrastructure to reduce flooding, and it is poised to provide both jobs and local tax revenue for Harper Woods. The site also has the potential to catalyze further development in the outlots along Vernier and Eight Mile Roads. However, the Eastland site also presents some challenges: increased truck traffic and potential for vehicle conflicts on Vernier Road, more wear and tear on local roads, and noise and air pollution felt by nearby residents. As such, the Eastland site is both an opportunity and a challenge as the city pursues its redevelopment.

SCHOOL REORGANIZATIONS

The City of Harper Woods is served by numerous public and private schools. In recent years — especially in the wake of the Covid-19 Pandemic — school districts across the state have been undergoing “reorganizations,” whereby they close some of their facilities and consolidate students into the remaining schools. Additionally, charter schools have continued to grow in popularity as parents seek out specialized curricula or educational experiences for their children.

The closure of Pourpard Elementary by Grosse Pointe Public Schools (GPPS) was a major challenge for numerous Harper Woods families. The closure was especially difficult for Harper Woods’s low-income families, who could not afford to move houses or pay increased transportation costs.

However, the now-vacant Poupard School site now presents a key redevelopment opportunity. Since Harper Woods is almost completely built-out, large contiguous parcels are very rare. These parcels can be used for more creative types of development, such as a mixed-use commercial-residential buildings, community centers, and other uses that require more land. As school reorganizations continue, more sites may become available in the future.

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

Today, Harper Woods faces two challenges with its housing stock: supporting the aging population and attracting the younger population. Most of the houses in Harper Woods are of good quality, but they are older and are not designed to accommodate people with limited mobility. Additionally, the city's existing housing stock does not appeal to young, working professionals, who are often looking for a stepping-stone to home ownership.

There is a mismatch between Harper Woods's existing supply of housing and current demand. More people are favoring housing options that are not the traditional single-family house—townhomes, flats, apartments, and even tiny homes are growing in popularity across the nation. The 2021 Market Study for Harper Woods found that traditional detached houses comprise 85% of the city's housing stock, but only 69% of people who are likely to move to Harper Woods want a traditional detached house. Meanwhile, only 15% of Harper Woods's housing stock is comprised of these other non-traditional options, but 31% of people who are likely to move to Harper Woods want a non-traditional option. This disconnect demonstrates the need — and opportunity for — new housing types in Harper Woods.

ENHANCING EXISTING BUILDINGS

The Kelly Road corridor is Harper Woods main commercial center since the closure of the Eastland site, and has been the subject of intensive planning over the past five years. The 2018 Kelly Road Study concluded that the area has enormous potential for redevelopment; through careful design and investment, Kelly Road could be transformed from a one-story commercial strip into a multi-story, mixed-use, pedestrian friendly business district, where people can live, shop, work, and find entertainment.

The biggest challenge for the redevelopment of Kelly Road is financing. To attract and encourage investment, improvements are needed to the roadway, sidewalks, and streetscape. Further, all of these improvements have to be coordinated with Wayne County, which has jurisdiction over the roadway. Zoning changes may also be needed to allow for a greater variety of uses and types of buildings. Lastly, property owners have to be willing to participate in the redevelopment effort, and the city may need to provide assistance for things like facade renovations.

REUSE OF PARKING LOTS

See “Unused and Underused Space” on page 72 for discussion about the reuse of parking lots.

Future Land Use

Based on a comprehensive planning process, the Future Land Use plan serves as a guide for the community's vision for the next 20 years. It is based on an analysis of existing land use issues facing Harper Woods, demographic and housing data, physical constraints and resources, community infrastructure, circulation patterns, community engagement, and the goals and objectives of this plan.

Through land use planning and zoning controls, the City intends to ensure that the character of neighborhoods are preserved, that housing diversity supports new and existing residents throughout their life and at multiple income levels, that economic development is encouraged, and that the designated mixed use areas become vibrant and exciting places.

This Future Land Use plan constitutes the development guide to the City of Harper Woods, and as the city moves into the future, the plan must be regularly updated to address how development and physical change have impacted the infrastructure and existing conditions.

Neighborhood Residential

This category maintains and enhances the city's existing stable neighborhoods by supporting sidewalks and street lighting, as well incorporating new housing types and opportunities.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

- Single-family homes
- Duplexes
- Townhomes, subject to design standards
- Cottage Courts, subject to design standards
- Neighborhood parks and/or open space
- Convenient access to schools, places of worship, and government facilities.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

In Neighborhood Residential areas, streets should be well-connected to one another to provide access to major city roads as well as to adjacent neighborhoods. These streets have lower traffic volumes and should be characterized by lower speeds, mitigating the effects of pass-through traffic as necessary and appropriate. The street pattern should also incorporate sidewalk or bike path infrastructure accessible on both sides of the street and multiple neighborhood entry and exit locations.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Sites should be designed to give homes a front and back yard (or nearby usable green space), while maintaining a human, walkable scale that promotes social interaction and reduces unnecessary and unused lawn space. Buildings should be designed with quality materials and consistent with architectural styles common in the greater Wayne County area. Alternative architectural styles may be appropriate in some neighborhoods, provided that the unique design enhances the general character of the area. Buildings should include front (street) entrances to encourage connection to the street, and garages should be located in rear yards to the extent possible.

Existing Character



Planned Character



Multi-Family Neighborhood

This category is characterized by multi-family residential housing units, such as apartment complexes, with higher density. Multi-Family Neighborhood areas should be located within walkable distance to community nodes such as retail centers, schools, and large employers. The Multi-Family Neighborhood areas are characterized by the city's existing multi-family buildings and immediately surrounding parcels.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

Typical uses include multi-unit residential dwelling units such as apartment complexes. The areas designated as Multi-Family Residential are planned for a minimum of 9 units per acre. However, higher density development is also appropriate here if it is determined that specific sites may comfortably accommodate more units.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

Streets should feature elements such as sidewalks, pedestrian scale lighting, and a tree canopy. Multi-Family Neighborhood land uses should be concentrated near frequently traveled road corridors in the city. Streets should be accessible and safe for active transportation users, especially transit riders and bicyclists.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Sites should be designed to maintain a walkable scale that promotes social interaction and reduces unnecessary and unused lawn space for multi-unit dwellings. Buildings should be designed with quality materials and consistent with architectural styles common in the greater Wayne County area. Alternative architectural styles may be appropriate in some areas, provided that the more unique design enhances the general character of the area. Buildings should include front (street) entrances to encourage connection to the street. Multi-Family Neighborhood sites should include green spaces and/ or appropriate landscaping consistent with the surrounding area. Developments should be scaled accordingly as to appropriately transition with the surrounding land uses. In general, developments should not obstruct the view or character of adjacent neighborhoods. Taller developments should be placed adjacent to commercial or industrial areas.

Existing Character



Planned Character



Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial

This category encompasses a mixture of retail and service uses that are of a scale accessible and desirable to the pedestrian. Live-work units or other small-scale mixed uses may also be appropriate.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

- Low-intensity businesses, such as small retail stores, personal services, small offices (including medical), should populate ground floors of buildings.
- Includes uses that serve the nearby neighborhood such as a small drug store, hair salon or dry cleaners.
- Some professional offices such as medical and dental which serve the community may be appropriate.

INCOMPATIBLE LAND USES:

- Vehicle-oriented and uses which require substantial parking areas, outdoor sales and/or storage should be discouraged.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

The character of these areas should address the needs of the pedestrian through wide sidewalks and inviting entrances to the businesses. A pedestrian zone should be created in these areas which establish safe pedestrian circulation from business to business. Typically, this includes a wide sidewalk, street trees and/or planter boxes and benches or other amenities which the business owners determine appropriate. Improvements to these areas should be uniform along the corridor in order to create a consistent theme.

An example of where a pedestrian zone would be appropriate is the area between the curb and the property line along Harper Ave. The pedestrian zone would feature additional landscaping and trees to more effectively buffer the I-94 corridor from active uses.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Buildings should be built with durable materials and should be architecturally compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. Where practical, buildings should front on the street and provide parking to the rear. Large areas of parking should be broken up with landscaped islands and trees. Parking space requirements may vary based on the location of the development and availability of shared parking.

Existing Character



Planned Character



Mixed-Use Corridor

This land use category is designed to facilitate the revitalization of the Kelly Road Corridor and incorporates mixed uses to promote walkability, livability and economic growth.

APPROPRIATE LAND USES

- Commercial, mixed-uses and some multi-story residential
- First-floor uses can include first-floor restaurants, offices, businesses, or residential as part of new multi-floor development or adaptive reuse.
- Upper-floor uses should include office, residential and/or other commercial establishments with upper floor dwelling units or businesses.
- Single-use developments should be approved only if they clearly support the economic vibrancy, mixed use vision, and walkability of the surrounding area.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

The public realm in this designation should prioritize pedestrian access and safety, minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflicts, and maintain connections between side streets and Kelly Road.

BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Buildings should be built with high-quality materials and should be architecturally compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. Buildings with a connection to the street, including designs with attractive front facades, entrances, and patios are all highly encouraged. Architectural variation is highly encouraged to add character on long and connected facades.

Where practical, buildings should front the street and provide parking to the rear. Parking areas should be broken up with landscaped islands and trees. Parking space requirements may vary based on the location of the development and availability of shared parking.

Existing Character



Planned Character



General Commercial

This category allows for a wider variety of commercial goods requiring greater land areas.

These uses include retail and service establishments which are commonly dependent on high accessibility and visibility. Because these uses generate heavier traffic volumes and undesirable visual impacts, proper site design should be required. Given the visibility of sites in this designation, site design is especially important to assure a quality image for Harper Woods. These elements should include architectural, landscaping and access management standards.

Regional Commercial

This category includes large scale developments that serve as a buffer and transition from industrial uses.

The existing auto-oriented developments surrounding the Eastland Center are the primary uses within this category. Any new development should include appropriately landscaped parking lots and architecturally appropriate design. The ideal future for existing developments is to incorporate more pervious surface in the parking areas and to develop existing excess parking into active commercial use. Improved connections for the pedestrian or cyclist shopper should be considered.

The Eastland Village Apartments on Beaconsfield is a potential area for Regional Commercial facilities. Although this Plan acknowledges the likely continued use of the existing apartments at this location, a proposal for their replacement with commercial uses that would be less sensitive to their adjacency to industrial land should be seriously considered and carefully evaluated.

Industrial

This category includes larger-scale establishments that have the potential to impact adjacent land uses.

Appropriate land uses include logistics, warehousing, office, manufacturing, research and development businesses, creative industries/artisan facilities (in certain circumstances) This designation is planned for the land currently developed as the Eastland Commerce Center. Developments should be designed and operated to be respectful of their surroundings, with minimal truck traffic, noise, odor, dust, or outdoor storage/operations.

Flex Overlays

Two overlay categories are proposed. These areas afford flexibility in future land use. Depending on the pace or sequence of redevelopment and revitalization efforts, the City acknowledges that some flexibility is necessary.

RESIDENTIAL FLEX OVERLAY

This category facilitates revitalization by permitting townhomes and other forms of multifamily development that is consistent with the neighborhood scale and character of single family districts. Furthermore, this designation permits additional housing diversity and facilitates the creation of more ‘rooftops’ near the Kelly Road commercial corridor.

The southwest corner of the city (from Roscommon to the city boundary, from Kelly to Harper) suffers from relatively high disinvestment and property vacancy. This area also contains some of the smallest lot sizes in the city. Land here is currently zoned R-2, which permits duplexes and is already zoned to permit a modest amount of housing diversity.

The vacancy rate and condition of the housing stock in this area make it a candidate for redevelopment and potential transformation. However, the small lot size and current zoning do not allow for transformational development.

VERNIER FLEX OVERLAY

This category welcomes a mix of uses along Vernier, in the event of a redevelopment proposal, including, semi-public, commercial and multi-family uses. By designating flexibility in this area, the City can support continuation of existing uses while at the same time planing and allowing for creative development proposals that more appropriately address Vernier’s new character as an intensified truck route. All municipal parks and school properties which provide open space areas that may be used for public recreation are included in this category. A majority of these areas are located within residential districts. These areas not only provide for the outdoor recreation needs of city residents, they also include most of the open green spaces in the city that are otherwise fully urbanized. These open spaces add to the character of the city’s neighborhoods, providing both a visual and psychological relief from urban life.

Minor changes to the Vernier corridor are anticipated in this plan, primarily an intensification and more active utilization of the land currently used for excess parking in the triangular area between Vernier and Eight Mile. Other than this area, the corridor is not anticipated to change much, given the established uses (primarily public, semi-public and multifamily apartments).

Public

This category includes all City-owned and operated property including municipal offices, the library, public schools and parks.

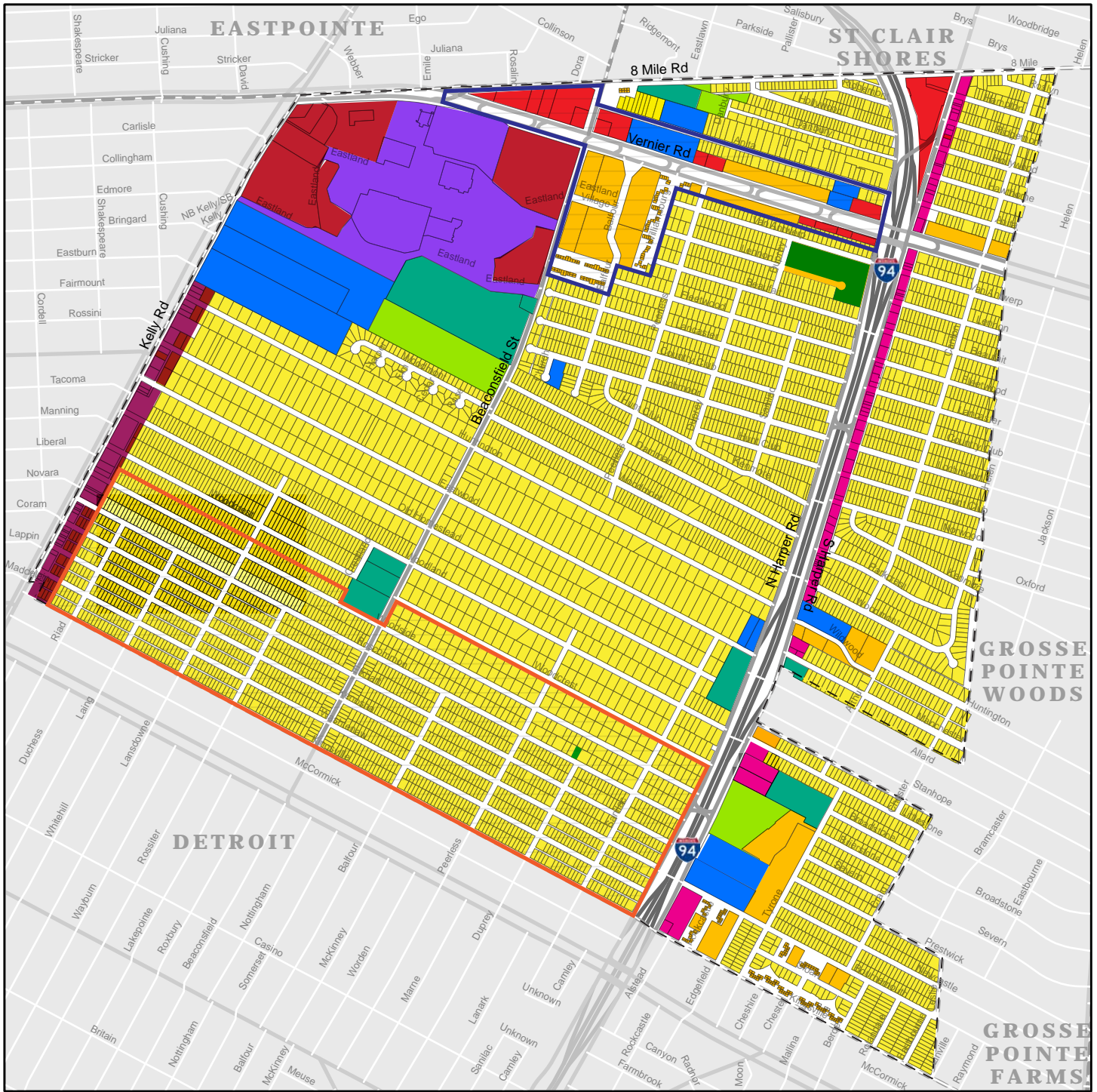
These uses should be promoted — and possibly expanded — to continue to serve the needs of the community. Reuse of these sites, along with semi-public uses should be limited to community facilities of some type to ensure future populations are provided nearby services.

Although they are not designated on the map, the City should consider acquisition of additional pocket parks within neighborhoods, as is currently being pursued on Roscommon. This may be possible when a vacant lot goes up for sale or a home is vacated and for sale. Pocket parks should be scattered throughout the city to serve the immediate neighborhood. Potential locations should be planned ahead through the Recreation Plan preparation process. If these lands are ultimately purchased, the Future Land Use Map should be revised to include these properties as public land to be preserved.

Semi-Public

This category preserves the community facilities for Harper Woods residents, such as religious institutions, private schools and private clubs.

Similar to public uses, these uses provide a substantial benefit to residents; therefore, these sites should be preserved and reuse must be limited to a similar use serving the residents of the city. These may be more intermixed with residential, and the amount may increase as the community develops. Some existing semi-public uses are designated as single family residential, though their current use may be appropriate, while other uses within this category may not be suitable due to lot size, adjacent uses and accessibility.

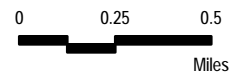


Future Land Use

Harper Woods, Michigan

LEGEND

- Neighborhood Residential
- Multi-Family Neighborhood
- Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial
- Mixed-Use Corridor
- General Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Industrial
- Semi-Public
- Public
- Park
- Harper Woods Boundary
- Vernier Flex
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Residential Flex
- Freeways



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
 Data Sources:
 Wayne County, 2018.
 State of Michigan, 2020.
 SEMCOG, 2022.
 McKenna, 2023.



Goals and Objectives

LAND USE AND HOUSING

GOAL 1

Maintain and enhance Harper Woods neighborhoods to ensure they are safe, attractive, and vibrant.

Objective 1a Revitalize vacant, unkept, or aging housing stock where needed.

Actions:

- » Communicate housing resources to residents annually, at a minimum (County-wide renovation program, non-profit housing assistance, etc.).
- » Create an advertising program for city-owned vacant land/property.
- » Launch a block group ambassador / representative program to identify, enlist and train champions to report code issues.

Objective 1b Strengthen code enforcement programs for residential properties.

Actions:

- » Create a digital / mobile-friendly version of the property complaint form.
- » Increase the frequency of required rental inspections.

GOAL 2

Provide a diverse range of quality housing choices

Objective 2a Encourage residential developments that are needed by persons of all ages, backgrounds, incomes, and physical capabilities.

Actions:

- » Expand the allowable types and locations for accessory dwelling units (ADUs).
- » Adopt the Michigan Municipal League (MML) pattern book OR commission Harper Woods-specific pre-approved house plans for alternative housing types (duplex, triplex, quadplex, etc.).
- » Reduce permit fees and provide expedited permitting for development that incorporate universal design principles.
- » Train development review staff to check for age-friendly development features.
- » Create a pre-approved contractor list that residents can use to obtain age-friendly retrofit services.

Objective 2b Retrofit underutilized or vacant properties for unique, modern, and creative housing options.

Actions:

- » Develop neighborhood design standards for new infill housing.
- » Lower the requirement for minimum square footage to allow for a greater range of housing types.

GOAL 3

Support walkable neighborhoods by strengthening the Kelly Road, Vernier/8-Mile, and Harper commercial corridors.

Objective 3a Enable the transformation of Kelly Road into a mixed-use corridor.

Actions:

- » Increase the allowable height to 3 stories for new buildings or building redevelopments.
- » Expand the range of allowable uses to include a mix of residential, office, semi-public, and commercial uses.
- » Modernize the parking requirements or eliminate parking minimums along the Kelly Road corridor to encourage infill and reoccupation of existing buildings.

Objective 3b Strengthen the appearance and vitality of the Harper Road corridor.

Actions:

- » Expand the range of allowable uses, with a particular focus on pedestrian-oriented commercial.
- » Provide better buffering between I-94 and the Harper Road Corridor.

Objective 3c Ensure adequate buffering on the Vernier Road corridor.

Actions:

- » Review zoning ordinance regulations for public, semi-public and commercial zoning districts to ensure that these areas effectively buffer surrounding neighborhoods from the impacts of industrial activity and increased truck traffic on Vernier Road.

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05

Economic Development

Introduction

Though challenged by underutilized and vacant commercial space, the city's commercial districts contain opportunities for redevelopment and reuse in a manner that will boost the local economy while enhancing a vibrant and pedestrian friendly environment. The Master Plan promotes a well planned and integrated system of commercial and office uses that will serve the needs of the city residents, enhance the image of the city, and strengthen the city's tax and employment base.

Existing Conditions: Economy

EMPLOYMENT

The workers of Harper Woods encompass a fair mix of occupation categories (Table 10). When comparing the workforce of Harper Woods to the workforces of Wayne County, the state of Michigan, and the United States, two areas that stand out are manufacturing and educational services, and health care and social assistance. In 2020, Harper Woods' workforce was less reliant on manufacturing than Wayne County and Michigan, but more reliant than the United States.

Additionally, Harper Woods is more reliant on educational services, and health care and social assistance. The percentage in educational services, and health care and social assistance has grown from 21.3% in 2000 to 27.9% in 2010 to 30.3% in 2020. Over the decades, Harper Woods has consistently had higher rates of educational services, and health care and social assistance than Wayne County, Michigan, and the United States.

Table 10. Occupation Categories

	United States	Michigan	Wayne County	Harper Woods
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1.7%	1.1%	3.0%	0.1%
Construction	6.7%	5.5%	4.3%	4.4%
Manufacturing	10.0%	18.6%	17.7%	14.4%
Wholesale trade	2.5%	2.4%	2.4%	3.6%
Retail trade	11.0%	10.7%	10.2%	10.2%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5.5%	4.4%	6.4%	3.6%
Information	2.0%	1.3%	1.4%	1.9%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	0.7%	5.6%	6.0%	6.7%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	11.7%	9.7%	10.6%	7.3%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	23.3%	23.4%	23.0%	30.3%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	9.4%	9.2%	10.0%	10.0%
Other services, except public administration	4.8%	4.6%	4.5%	3.3%
Public administration	4.7%	3.5%	3.4%	4.3%

The increase in persons in the educational services, and health care and social assistance industry indicates a shift in the demographics of the city, most likely caused by new residents and the ever-changing regional economy. The diversity of industries is a positive

indication of the attractiveness of Harper Woods to newcomers and puts Harper Woods at a competitive advantage. The variety of occupations reaffirms that Harper Woods is a stable community in which to live.

LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

POPULATION AGE

The age of those typically considered part of the labor force ranges between 18 and 64 years old. Approximately 61% of the population in 2020 falls into this category. It was also estimated that slightly more than 13% of the population is over the age of 65 with the remaining percentage of the population too young to be considered part of the labor force.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

In 2020, high school graduation was the highest level of educational attainment in Harper Woods, with 29.8% of residents 25 and over having attained a diploma or equivalent. 8.6% of residents 25 years and over did not have a high school diploma. Therefore, job training may be necessary and employment should include positions which do not require a college degree in order to serve the needs of Harper Woods residents. This may include a variety of service, administrative, and retail positions. Almost 37% of residents age 25 and over have obtained an Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, or other professional Degree. This is an indication that a large portion of the population is eligible for higher skill employment opportunities or possibly business ownership within the city.

The educational attainment of Harper Woods residents has been increasing over the years. Therefore, in the future higher skilled employment opportunities should be made available in the area to support college graduates.

OCCUPATIONAL BREAKDOWN

More Harper Woods residents were employed in educational services, and health care and social assistance (30.3%) than in any other industry in 2020. New and existing businesses should pull from this large segment of skilled labor. Because of the characteristics of the city's workforce, an increase in educational services, health care, and social assistance positions would benefit the city's current and future population. Healthcare services and education services are projected to grow by 28.4% and 6.3% respectively in the SEMCOG region from 2015-2045.

INCOME

The median income in the city increased by \$5,885 from \$44,833 in 2010 to \$50,718 in 2020. This increase was largely attributed to a prosperous economic environment in the southeast Michigan region and the nation. Going forward, Harper Woods should continue to encourage employment within the city that offers its workforce an income sufficient to meet their living expenses.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL MARKET TRENDS

Based on the 2045 Regional Forecast prepared by SEMCOG, the region as a whole is expected to increase in population and in number of households. Employment trends for 2015-2045 are estimated in the table below. While manufacturing (-26.9%) and retail trade (-13.1%) are expected to decline in the region, areas of significant growth will be in professional and technical services & corporate HQ (29.2%), healthcare services (28.4%), administrative, support, & waste services (16.9%), and leisure & hospitality (11.5%).

Table 11. Regional Employment Trends and Projections, 2015-2045

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Change 2015-2045	
Natural Resources, Mining, & Construction	128,238	139,468	134,679	134,051	135,405	135,677	135,937	↑ 7,699	↑ 6%
Manufacturing	264,051	255,548	241,442	224,040	212,884	203,501	193,079	↓ 70,972	↓ 26.9%
Wholesale Trade	100,371	103,073	103,146	102,250	102,436	102,438	101,832	↑ 1,461	↑ 1.5%
Retail Trade	270,318	275,922	264,583	251,733	247,291	242,116	234,864	↓ 35,454	↓ 13.1%
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	101,299	102,426	100,619	99,476	100,165	100,897	101,211	↓ 88	↓ 0.1%
Information & Financial Activities	294,740	302,604	298,939	294,980	297,387	299,219	299,188	↑ 4,448	↑ 1.5%
Professional and Technical Services & Corporate HQ	326,111	347,863	358,616	370,727	388,945	406,341	421,372	↑ 95,261	↑ 29.2%
Administrative, Support, & Waste Services	206,307	214,523	219,879	223,052	229,825	236,383	241,136	↑ 34,829	↑ 16.9%
Education Services	197,078	201,549	201,791	202,064	204,742	207,418	209,566	↑ 12,488	↑ 6.3%
Healthcare Services	382,516	403,908	419,173	427,466	449,085	471,854	491,295	↑ 108,779	↑ 28.4%
Leisure & Hospitality	248,362	259,527	263,039	264,099	268,963	273,403	277,003	↑ 28,641	↑ 11.5%
Other Services	162,934	167,058	164,955	163,034	163,690	163,422	161,592	↓ 1,342	↓ 0.8%
Public Administration	91,898	92,301	91,850	91,534	91,725	91,921	91,923	↑ 25	↑ 0%
Total Employment	2,774,223	2,865,770	2,862,711	2,848,506	2,892,543	2,934,590	2,959,998	↑ 185,775	↑ 6.7%

The City of Harper Woods is located in the northeast corner of Wayne County. Though much of the economic activity in the city affects communities beyond Wayne County limits, it is important to understand the trends of the County and how it compares to the city.

The State of Michigan continues to be a national leader in investment and productivity of manufacturing and research and development. Wayne County and the rest of the SEMCOG region play a leading role in this activity. The SEMCOG region's economy continues to slowly change from a manufacturing-based economy to a service-based economy that focuses on education, healthcare, and knowledge-based services.

EMPLOYMENT FORECAST

Total employment in the SEMCOG region is expected to increase by 6.7% from 2020 to 2040. However, over the same period, the number of jobs in manufacturing and retail trade are expected to decline. The decline in manufacturing and retail trade can be attributed to many reasons including employers leaving the community, businesses becoming more efficient, and the national trend of changing over from high labor to low labor intensive operations.

SEMCOG projects that areas of significant employment growth in the SEMCOG region will be in professional and technical services & corporate HQ (29.2%); healthcare services (28.4%); administrative, support, & waste services (16.9%); and leisure and hospitality (11.5%). These employment forecasts are most significant because they reflect the underlying long-term strength of the regional economy. Harper Woods can benefit from this growth provided it is properly accommodated for the future.

REGIONAL DEMAND

According to SEMCOG, the region is expected to add 185,775 jobs between 2015 and 2045—a growth rate of 6.71%. This includes replacement jobs and new jobs to the region. Many of the industries where growth is projected will inevitably lead to additional construction of office space.

The demand for health care in the region is projected to grow steadily. Many of the new health care jobs will be to care for our aging and growing population. Most of these jobs are in outpatient and ancillary services rather than hospitals. This is an excellent growth opportunity for Harper Woods based on the existing health care office space and the high percentage of city residents who are either over the age of 65 in 2020 (12.4%) or will be over the age of 65 in 2045 (21.3%). The main challenge will be to retain existing health care professionals in the city and attract new health care professionals as the demands for health care change.

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

Presently, the City of Harper Woods' only incentive for commercial or industrial development is the city's Brownfield Authority, which provides assistance for the redevelopment of contaminated properties. However, many metro Detroit communities have been launching incentives programs to recruit new business, retain existing ones, and diversify their overall economic base. There are several types of incentives that can be used to assist with real estate redevelopment and business attraction efforts. These include, among others, tax abatements, tax increment financing, revolving loan funds, low interest loans and grants, and expedited planning and building permits. One or all these incentives should be considered by the City of Harper Woods to encourage redevelopment along Kelly Road.

PUBLIC ACT 210—COMMERCIAL REHABILITATION ACT

This incentive encourages the rehabilitation of commercial property by abating the property taxes generated from new investment for a period up to 10 years. Properties must meet eligibility requirements, such as being vacant or obsolete, and be in an established local Commercial Rehabilitation District. The State Tax Commission is responsible for final approval and issuance of Commercial Rehabilitation certificates. A similar act called the Commercial Redevelopment Act (also known as PA 255 or the Commercial Facilities Exemption) has been employed in other communities like Ecorse to a similar effect.

PUBLIC ACT 198—INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES EXEMPTION

PA 198 was created by the State of Michigan to provide a stimulus in the form of significant tax incentives to industries that renovate and expand aging plants, build new plants, and promote establishment of research and development laboratories. Property tax abatements are provided to build new plants or renovate and expand aging assembly, manufacturing, and research plants. An Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption certificate can offer as much as a 50% reduction in ad-valorem taxes for up to 12 years. The State Tax Commission is responsible for final approval and issuance of Industrial Facilities Exemption certificates.

PUBLIC ACT 328—NEW PERSONAL PROPERTY EXEMPTION

This incentive allows eligible businesses to abate personal property taxes on new investments in the city. Eligible projects include manufacturing, mining, research and development, wholesale trade, and office operations. The State Tax Commission is responsible for final approval and issuance of Personal Property Tax Exemption certificates.

PERMIT DISCOUNTS

Some communities waive or reduce permit fees to encourage development. Other communities reward certain types of projects, such as new housing developments, with expedited reviews to fast-track the overall development process.

EXISTING COUNTY AND STATE INCENTIVES

Although the City of Harper Woods does not have control over these programs, it can market these programs to existing and prospective business owners to encourage development. Additionally, both the State of Michigan and Wayne County have their own Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities and grant programs.

WAYNE COUNTY INDUSTRIAL REVENUE BONDS

This is Wayne County's loan program, which they use to finance major economic development projects (typically of an industrial nature).

WAYNE COUNTY PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM (PACE)

This program rewards businesses for making energy-efficient changes. The County covers up to 100% of the cost for improvements that increase energy efficiency, water efficiency, and/or renewable energy measures. The cost is recouped by the County through a special tax assessment on the property over a 10-20 year period.

MICHIGAN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

This program is available to eligible businesses that create qualified new jobs and/or make qualified new investment in Michigan. This is a new incentive program available from the Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) in cooperation with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). The program is designed to provide grants, loans, and other economic assistance to businesses for highly competitive projects in Michigan that create jobs and/or provide investment.

MICHIGAN STATE PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Since a State of Emergency was declared in March of 2020 in response to COVID-19, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) has launched 23 economic relief and recovery programs to provide vital economic support to businesses, entrepreneurs, workers, and communities across all 83 Michigan counties to support the frontlines in the fight against COVID-19.

MICHIGAN NEW JOBS TRAINING PROGRAM

Designed as an economic development tool, the Michigan New Jobs Training Program allows community colleges to provide free training for employers that are creating new jobs and/or expanding operations in Michigan. The training for the newly hired workers is paid by capturing the state income tax associated with the new employees' wages. Schoolcraft College is the nearest location to Harper Woods offering the New Jobs Training Program.



EIGHT MILE AND VERNIER DISTRICT

The Eight Mile and Vernier District is dominated by the Eastland Commerce Center site. This area was once planned to be redeveloped into a mixed-use district, composed of numerous buildings that had retail on the ground floor and residential units on upper floors. However, the lack of private interest in such a project, the continued issues with crime, and the presence of a development proposal for an industrial park on the site has since caused a reconsideration of the vision for the site. The impending use of the site is as a three-building industrial complex, consisting of more than one million square feet of tenant space.

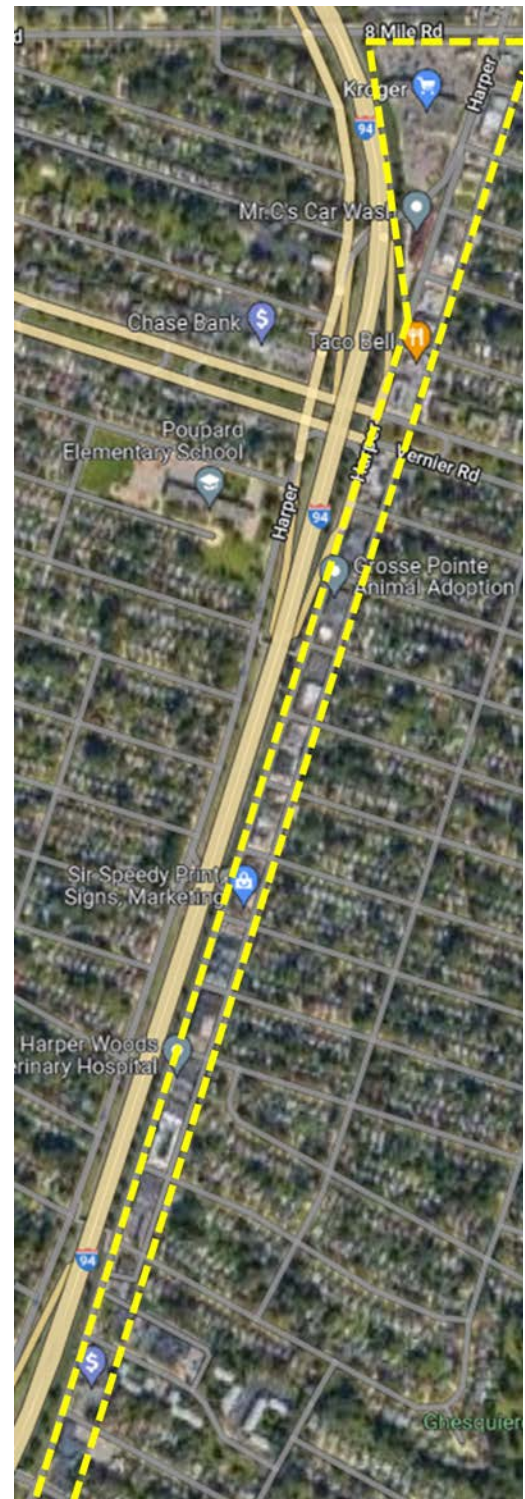
There are several other notable businesses that compose the Eight Mile and Vernier district: Home Depot, Family Dollar, Lowe's, Dollar Tree, several fast-casual restaurants, and numerous medical and training centers. Prior to the closure of the former Eastland Mall, the district was composed of 68% retail business, whereas today it is now mostly food and general goods/services. Overall, the district currently serves customers arriving at their destination by car, as well as students and staff from the high schools and middle schools to the immediate south.

One of the biggest challenges for the district is the high volume of vehicle traffic along 8-Mile and Vernier, which see roughly 19,000 cars per day. This volume is expected to increase with the opening of the Eastland Commerce Center, which will primarily serve trucking and logistics businesses. The corridor has amenities like lighting and street trees, but does not have the complete suite of features that would make it pedestrian friendly, such as trash cans, places to sit, and parks and plazas. As such, the area is transitioning more toward an auto-commercial and light-industrial node, rather than a pedestrian destination. More about the Eastland Commerce Center can be found in "Recent Developments" on page 64.

HARPER BUSINESS DISTRICT

The Harper business district extends along Harper Road for the length of the city, with the highest concentration of business at the intersection of Harper and Eight Mile. This intersection features Kroger, several fast-food restaurants, and a select few service businesses in a single strip. The remainder of the district to the south is occupied by a wide variety of commercial and semi-commercial uses, including contractor establishments, convenience stores and gas stations, medical laboratories and offices, lenders, and banks. There are also several multi-family apartments along Harper.

The Harper business district has developed a character that is responsive to its location, which is directly along I-94. The sound and air pollution from the highway make it less suitable for residential development. However, there are numerous uses along Harper that serve the neighborhoods to the east, including Salter Memorial Park. The park is bounded by Tyrone Elementary School, Park Place retirement community, Peace and Goodwill Baptist Church, and Distinctive College Prep. This clustering of uses is a notable departure from the commercial character of the remainder of the corridor.



Development Sites

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

EASTLAND COMMERCE CENTER

Eastland Commerce Center, on the former site of the Eastland Center mall, will be a Class-A industrial business center featuring three warehouses. Class A industrial buildings typically represent the newest and best-quality structures that exist in the market having the best amenities. These class A industrial buildings are generally located in prime locations and attract high-quality tenants with low vacancy rates. Upon completion, the Eastland Commerce Center will offer a total of 1,031,000 square feet of speculative flex warehouse space.

The site is under construction at the time of this writing. The center is being developed speculatively, and no tenants have yet been identified. However, given the site's strategic location proximate to I-94 and near the Wayne County/Macomb County border, it is anticipated that several types of industrial users may lease the space. The site was developed utilizing a planned unit development, as the opportunity for an industrial use of any kind was not anticipated at the time of the last Master Plan.

COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT

There has been modest commercial redevelopment and reoccupation of commercial structures in recent years. The building at 19992 Kelly was recently adaptively reused, converting a former single-occupant utility use to office suites. A drive-through coffee restaurant was completed in 2023 at 19353 Vernier. There have been a few site or parking lot improvements, but overall there has not been any other significant new development activity in Harper Woods in recent years.

PRIORITY REDEVELOPMENT SITES

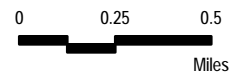
Harper Woods is primarily built out and remains relatively stable with regard to new development. However, there are key sites that, due to current underutilization, their location, or other factors, are currently opportunity sites for redevelopment, and/or they may become subject to development pressure in the future. It is prudent to think strategically about the desired future character and how their redevelopment may most positively influence the rest of the community. The City has identified several of these sites through the Master Plan process.

	Site	Priority	Vision
1.	Poupard School Site	Immediate	Multi-family redevelopment including green space, and a variety of rowhouses, duplexes, and Accessory Dwelling Units
2.	20876 Harper	Medium Term	Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Infill
3.	19992 Kelly Road	Medium Term	Reoccupancy or adaptive re-use of existing building to business incubator, neighborhood commercial, or residential.
4.	20570 Kelly Road: CCI / CTE Building Outlot	Long Term	Development of a portion of existing parking lot into commercial outlot / convenience service or retail.
5.	20790 Harper Avenue	Medium Term	Adaptive reuse / redevelopment of existing building for pedestrian-oriented retail or service use.
6.	19801 Vernier Road (Parking Lot)	Medium Term	Redevelopment / reconfiguration of excess parking into commercial amenity.
7.	Tyrone St. Frontage at Park Pl.	Long Term	Development of former athletic fields to mixed-use recreation center / multi-family / senior housing.
8.	19233—19305 Vernier Road (Parking Lot)	Medium Term	Redevelopment / reconfiguration of excess parking into commercial amenity.



Priority Redevelopment Sites

Harper Woods, Michigan



Basemap Source: Michigan Center
for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
Data Sources:
Wayne County, 2018.
State of Michigan, 2020.
SEMCOG, 2022.
McKenna, 2023.



1. POUPARD SCHOOL SITE (20655 LENNON)

Current Zoning: R-1B Single-Family Residential

Future Land Use: Neighborhood Residential / Multi-Family Residential

The Poupard School site is an approximately 6.5-acre parcel that is the former site of Poupard Elementary School. The Grosse Pointe Public School System endeavors to dispose of the property, and the City of Harper Woods desires that it is redeveloped into primarily 'missing middle' medium-density housing. All utilities are currently available at the site, as it recently housed an operating school.

The preferred development scenario, illustrated in Figure 6 below, identifies a total of 127 housing units at a density of 19 dwelling units per acre.



Current condition of Poupard School Site

Figure 6. Redevelopment Concept Plan for 20655 Lennon

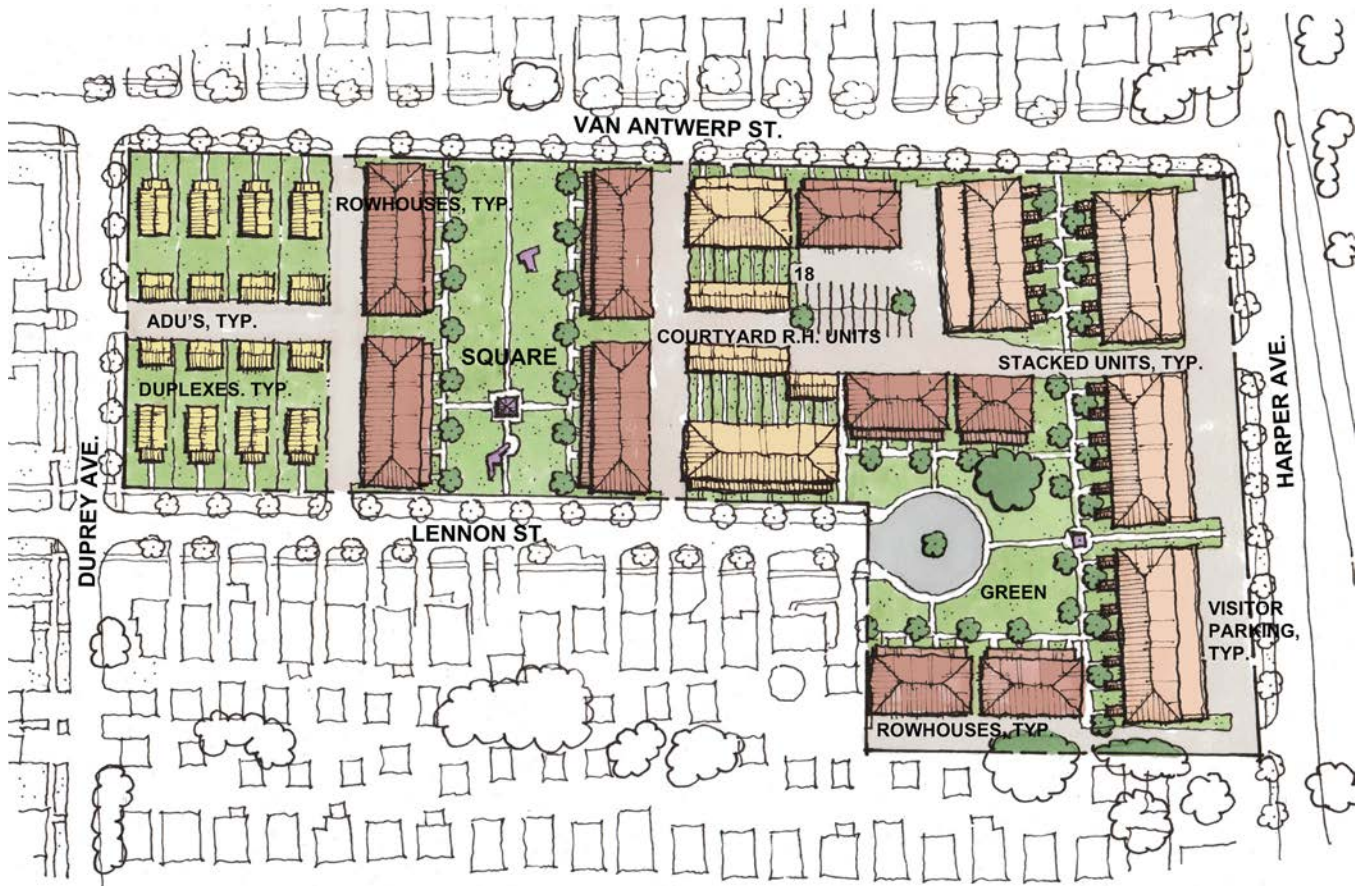
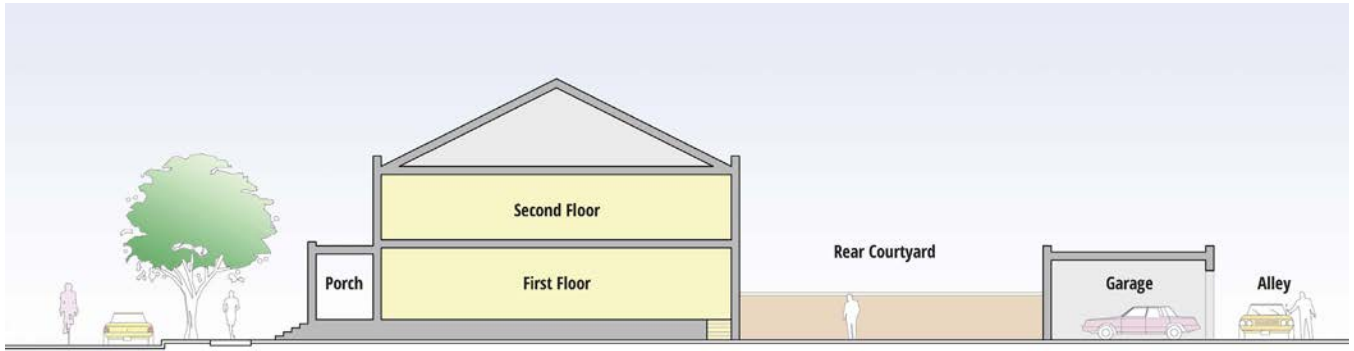
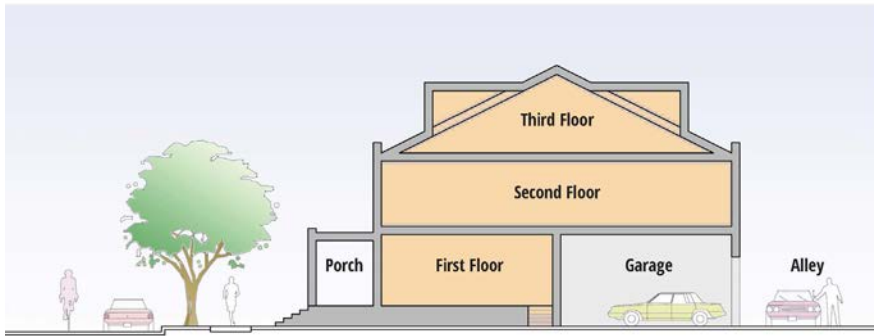


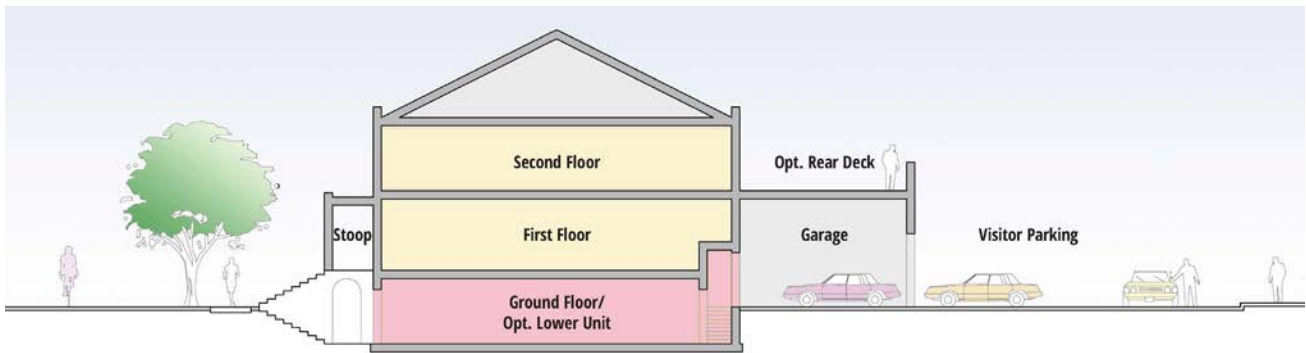
Figure 7. Conceptual Unit Types for Preferred Development Scenario



ROWHOUSE TYPE A



ROWHOUSE TYPE B



ROWHOUSE TYPE C

2. 20876 HARPER

Current Zoning: C-2 Special Business

Future Land Use: Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial

Acreage: .07

This site sits in the northern portion of the Harper corridor, and is one of very few vacant commercial parcels in the city. It is well-suited to receive pedestrian-oriented commercial infill development.



Current condition of 20876 Harper

3. 19992 KELLY

Current Zoning: C-1 General Business

Future Land Use: Mixed-Use Corridor

Acreage: 1.09

This underutilized property in the center of the Kelly Road corridor has an existing building and parking lot. The property has seen recent investment but is not currently utilized to its fullest potential and could potentially be adaptively reused as residential, office, or a mixed use.



Current condition of 19992 Kelly

4. 20570 KELLY ROAD: CCI / CTE BUILDING OUTLOT

Current Zoning: RS-1 Regional Shopping Center

Future Land Use: Regional Commercial

Acreage: Approximately 0.5

This property is used as the parking lot for the Harper Woods School District's College and Career Institute. However, due to the site's strategic location, the large parking lot is underutilized. The site could potentially accept outlot commercial development that would coexist with the existing building's use and also provide convenience retail or service amenities to proximate employees.



Current condition of 20570 Kelly



Current condition of 20790 Harper

5. 20790 HARPER

Current Zoning: C-2 Special Business

Future Land Use: Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial

Acreage: .29

This vacant building could be adaptively reused to host a variety of uses that would be compatible with the Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial future land use designation.



Current condition of 19081 Vernier

6. 19081 VERNIER RD. PARKING LOT

Current Zoning: R-1C Single Family Residential

Future Land Use: Vernier Flex Overlay

Acreage: Approximately 1.4

This 1.4-acre parking lot serves the Harper Woods Middle School, but is underutilized and could eventually host a more productive use on the Vernier frontage.



Current condition of 20570 Kelly

7. TYRONE ST. FRONTAGE

Current Zoning: R-1B Single Family Residential

Future Land Use: Multi-Family Residential

Acreage: Approximately 2.8

Given its proximity to Salter Park, existing senior housing and additional residential uses, this vacant property could be more productively utilized as multi-family residential, a new Harper Woods community center, or a development that incorporates both.

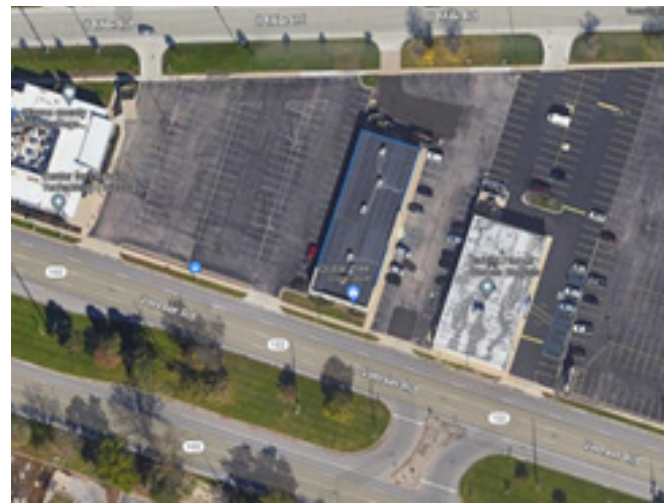
8. 19233—19305 VERNIER ROAD (PARKING LOT)

Current Zoning: C-1 General Business

Future Land Use: Vernier Flex Overlay

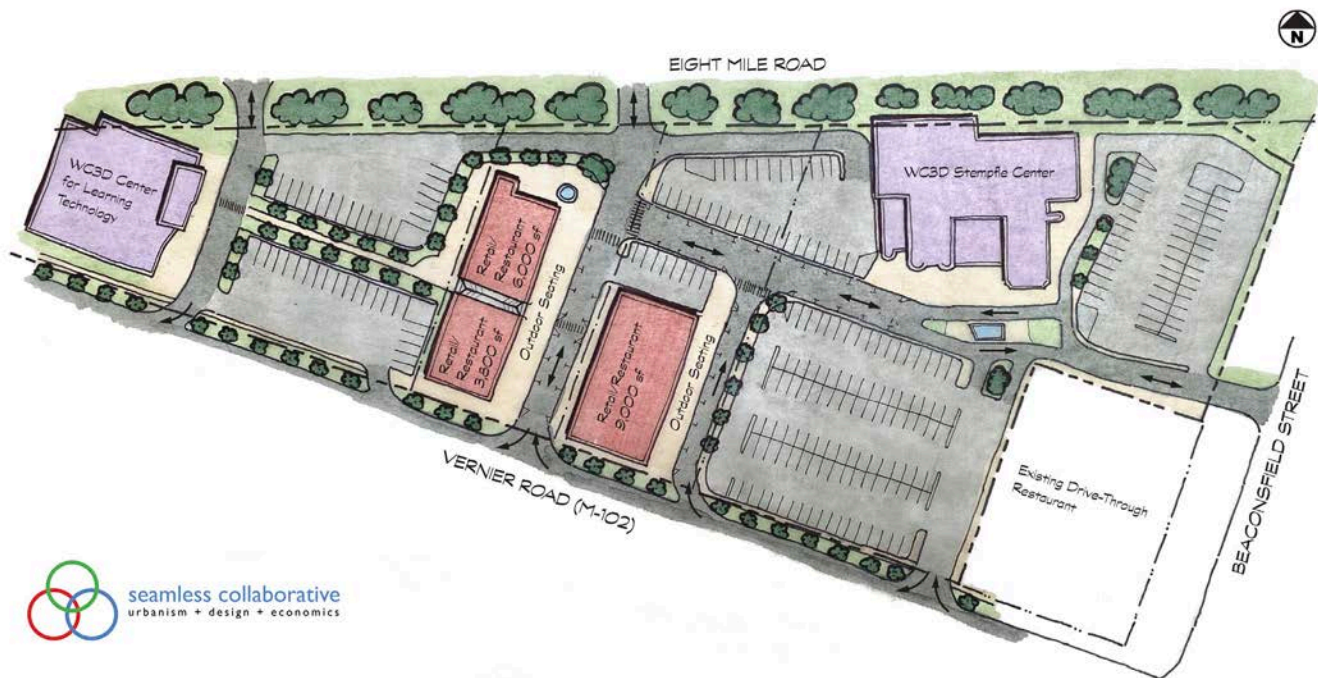
Acreeage: 1.09

This parking lot, situated amongst semi-public uses, could be more productively utilized in a way that adds proximate commercial and walkable amenity to the adjacent semi-public uses and, with enhanced/additional pedestrian crossing of Vernier, employees of the Eastland Commerce Center in addition to serving regional commercial customers.



Current condition of 19233 Vernier

Figure 8. Conceptual Plan for Parking Lot Infill - 19233 Vernier



Key Trends, Challenges and Opportunities

UNUSED AND UNDERUSED SPACE

Like many suburban communities, Harper Woods is faced with an overabundance of under-used or unused space. This category of space includes obsolete buildings, vacant lots, and unused parking lots. Generally, these spaces do not contribute to the local economy, quality of life, or aesthetics of the city, and have numerous negative impacts. For example, parking lots prevent rainwater from soaking directly into the ground and cause increased flooding. Additionally, unused space is a burden on pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users— to anyone traveling on Vernier, it is evident that the walk past the Eastland Site is nothing short of a chore.

Many communities are loosening the restrictions on these underused spaces to encourage redevelopment. For example, the City of Ecorse eliminated its local parking mandates to make it easier for business to re-occupy existing buildings. Now, entrepreneurs no longer have to worry if there is enough parking on site to satisfy the city, and instead can simply ask themselves “is there enough parking to meet my needs?” Many cities across the state and country are freeing up obsolete buildings and lots for purchase, and developers are purchasing them for re-development and re-occupancy. This trend presents a key opportunity for Harper Woods, which has under-used space along Eight Mile, Vernier, and Kelly Road. With the planned Eastland Commerce Center, the city is already on the path to finding creative solutions for vacant and obsolete properties.

RENT

Though comprehensive data are not available, the 2021 Wayne County Retail Recovery Plan SWOT Analysis reports that commercial rent for Harper Woods falls significantly below the median for the County. Low rents can threaten the retail community by perpetuating a cycle of disinvestment in which buildings are neglected, customer activity is discouraged, and rents are driven further below the median.

IMPACT OF THE “GREAT RECESSION” AND PANDEMIC INFLATION

The global financial crisis that began in 2008 had a significant impact on Harper Woods. While residents’ income and employment remained steady, housing values fell. This resulted in lower turnover in the housing stock as residents stayed in their homes to ride out the crisis. Housing construction in the city stopped almost completely—according to the US Census, only 25 new housing units were constructed between 2000 and present day.

The 2008 financial crisis and 2020 Covid-19 pandemic also brought about foreclosures for many families. However, with many former homeowners losing their homes, the market for rentals spiked, and this trend impacted the city. Between 2000 and 2020, the average rent for an apartment in Harper Woods (irrespective of size) increased from \$863 to \$1,170. While some aspects of the housing market recovered during the pandemic, the housing market has been slow to show reliable progress, meaning many housing prices are expected to decline in the future once again while rents continue to increase.

As retailers face higher costs, they are also confronted with a loss of patronage due to the combined effects of the pandemic and long-term population loss. From 2018-2020, the population in Harper Woods decreased by 1.3%, while the overall Wayne County population decreased by 0.56% during the same period. As a result, retailers that once benefited from a more densely populated community are required to realize sales elsewhere to cover overhead costs or will close. As customers tighten their budgets under extreme inflation in 2022, business owners are experiencing a compounding challenge.

Goals and Objectives

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Promote a well planned and integrated system of commercial and office uses that will serve the needs of the city residents, enhance the image of the city, and strengthen the city's tax and employment base.

GOAL 1

Grow the local Harper Woods economy

Objective 1a Improve workforce training to attract and retain talent.

Actions:

- » Advertise existing workforce training opportunities.
- » Partner with Michigan Works! center at 7 Mile and Gratiot to advertise and expand services in Harper Woods.
- » Connect Harper Woods high school students to local job training opportunities.
- » Advertise and/or offer workforce-related trainings (computer skills, resume writing, etc.)

Objective 1b Attract and retain a diverse range of businesses.

Actions:

- » Enhance the Harper Woods development handbook to simplify the occupation of commercial space by small businesses.

GOAL 2

Recruit new development for priority redevelopment sites.

Objective 2a Prepare priority sites by updating local policies to ensure balanced development.

Actions:

- » Actively market priority redevelopment sites.
- » Ensure adequate infrastructure is in place to accommodate redevelopment at these sites.
- » Create a standard template for development agreements regarding infrastructure cost-sharing.
- » Explore the creation of commercial redevelopment districts (i.e. tax abatements).

GOAL 3

Ensure coordination with other economic development strategies and plans.

Objective 3a Routinely coordinate with local and regional agencies to align economic development programs and policies.

Actions:

- » Annually review Wayne County and SEMCOG's economic development strategies.
- » Identify joint grant opportunities that could be pursued with neighboring communities.
- » Reach out to neighboring communities to pursue joint grant opportunities.
- » Prepare a template for annual reporting on the city's economic development progress.
- » Annually distribute the economic development report to neighboring governments.

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06

Transportation and Circulation

Introduction

Harper Woods is arranged on a grid system of roads, which makes it easier for people to reach destinations, distributes the traffic relatively evenly, and relieves congestion. The scale and arrangement of the existing grid yields some unintended speeding and cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets. The sidewalk network is nearly complete and residents consider Harper Woods very walkable.

The Master Plan envisions increased safety, managed truck traffic, pedestrian-focused enhancements and a circulation system that equitably serves all users of the public rights of way in Harper Woods.

Existing Conditions: Transportation and Circulation

COMPLETE STREETS

Harper Woods recognizes the importance of street infrastructure that accommodates more than just the automobile, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bus stops, and curb ramps. This infrastructure makes streets in the city safe and accessible for all users. Such infrastructure is referred to as “complete streets,” which are designed and operated to enable safe access for pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and transit users at all ages and levels of ability.

There is no one design prescription for complete streets because each street has a different purpose, but all are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road. For example, a complete street on Kelly Road will look quite different from a complete street on Woodcrest. Elements of a complete street may include sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, bus stops, crosswalks, median islands, crossing signals, curb extensions, street furniture, and more.



MOTORIZED NETWORK

The major north-south streets in the city include Beaconsfield Street, Kelly Road, and Harper Avenue, while the main east-west streets are Vernier Road and Eight Mile Road (and Moross Road, which is just outside the city limits to the south). A number of roads such as Huntington tend to have higher volumes and higher speeds because they are wider and provide direct connections between Harper Avenue and Kelly Road.

The configuration of the road network and some long residential blocks lead to excessive vehicular speeds throughout the neighborhoods, as is commonly witnessed on Woodland, Huntington, Old Homestead, and Eastwood.

TRUCK ROUTES

The two official truck routes through Harper Woods are Vernier Road (aka State route 102) and Interstate 94, which has 13 foot 8 inch clearance.

ABOUT THE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed the National Functional Classification (NFC) to classify all highways, streets, and roads according to their function. This system has been in place since the 1960s and is recognized as the official road classification system by the FHWA. The following paragraphs describe each category in the NFC. The map to the right shows how Harper Woods streets and roads are classified.

Principal Arterials

Principal arterials carry vehicles over long distances and connect population centers. They provide access to places that create major traffic, such as airports and regional shopping centers. Examples of principal arterials are interstate highways and other freeways, as well as state routes between large cities and significant surface streets in large cities.

Minor Arterials

Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials, except they function to carry trips of shorter distances. There are no minor arterials in the city.

Collector Streets

Collector streets connect neighborhood areas of concentrated land use development to minor and principal arterials. They provide access to parcels of property and funnel traffic from residential areas to arterials.

Local Streets

Local streets provide access from individual properties to collector streets. They serve as routes through residential development. Local streets are the main interior streets of the city, depending on the density of residential development. Movement of through traffic is deliberately discouraged on local streets.









Map 4. Roadway Classifications



Roadway Classification

Harper Woods, Michigan

LEGEND

-  Harper Woods Boundary
-  Other Municipal Boundaries
- National Functional Classification**
-  Principal Arterial
-  Minor Arterial
-  Major Collector
-  Minor Collector
-  Local Road
-  Freeways



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
 Data Sources:
 Wayne County, 2018.
 State of Michigan, 2020.
 SEMCOG, 2022.
 McKenna, 2023.



Map 5. Traffic Volume



Traffic Volume

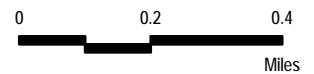
Harper Woods, Michigan

LEGEND

- Harper Woods Boundary
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Streets

Annual Average Daily Traffic

- Under 5,000 cars per day
- 5,001 - 25,000 cars per day
- 25,001 - 50,000 cars per day
- 50,001 - 75,000 cars per day



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
 Data Sources:
 Wayne County, 2018.
 State of Michigan, 2020.
 SEMCOG, 2022.
 McKenna, 2023.



TRAFFIC CALMING

Traffic calming methods respond to public concerns about speeding and cut-through traffic, particularly on neighborhood streets. Traffic calming is the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. Traffic calming measures are designed to:

- Reduce through traffic
- Reduce occurrence of excessive speeding
- Reduce accidents
- Provide safer environment for pedestrians and children

Some examples of traffic calming interventions include:

- Chicanes, which are curb extensions on otherwise straight streets, causing travel lanes to bend one way and then bend back the other way to the original direction of travel.
- Chokers, which are curb extensions at mid-block that narrow a street by widening the sidewalk, causing traffic to slow down when entering and exiting.
- Neckdowns, which are curb extensions at intersections that reduce roadway width curb to curb, increasing pedestrian safety.
- Speed tables or cushions, which are essentially flat topped speed bumps often constructed with brick or other textured materials on the flat section, reducing speeds.

CONTINUOUS MAINTENANCE

As a built-out city, roadways are a major expenditure in Harper Woods capital budget. The administration has and should continue to be committed to a regular schedule of maintenance based on the life cycle of the city's roads. Every effort should be made to coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions and the Wayne County Road Commission on roads that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

NON-MOTORIZED NETWORK

SIDEWALKS

As presented in the Community Engagement section, the community enjoys the city's sidewalks and describes their city as an extremely "walkable" community. Harper Woods has an almost complete network of sidewalks that connect every house with every community facility, commercial district, and other neighborhoods.

However, one key gap in sidewalk remains along Vernier Road between Dollar Tree and Family Dollar. Additionally, there are very few crosswalks along Vernier Road and Eight Mile Road.

Crosswalks are encouraged for pedestrian safety and there are likely places where further study is needed to determine if mid-block crossings are warranted. Painted crosswalks alert drivers of where to expect people crossing. Additionally, countdown signals can be used to enhance crosswalks by showing how much time remains before the traffic signal changes.

TRANSIT

The city has routine bus stops along Harper Avenue, Vernier Road, and a portion of Eight Mile Road. Harper Woods sits in the middle of a transit route "jog," where buses use Harper Road to jump over from Moross Road to Kelly Road.

Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART)

The highest level of service for SMART in the area is located along Vernier Avenue and Harper Avenue. Regular routes allow access to downtown Detroit and follow major roads in the area facilitating access to many surrounding communities.

Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT)

DDOT provides bus service in and around the City of Detroit. There is DDOT service along Kelly Road and a few other stops along Eight Mile Road/Vernier Avenue within the city. This service provides residents with a second public transit method to travel downtown.

Other Public Transportation

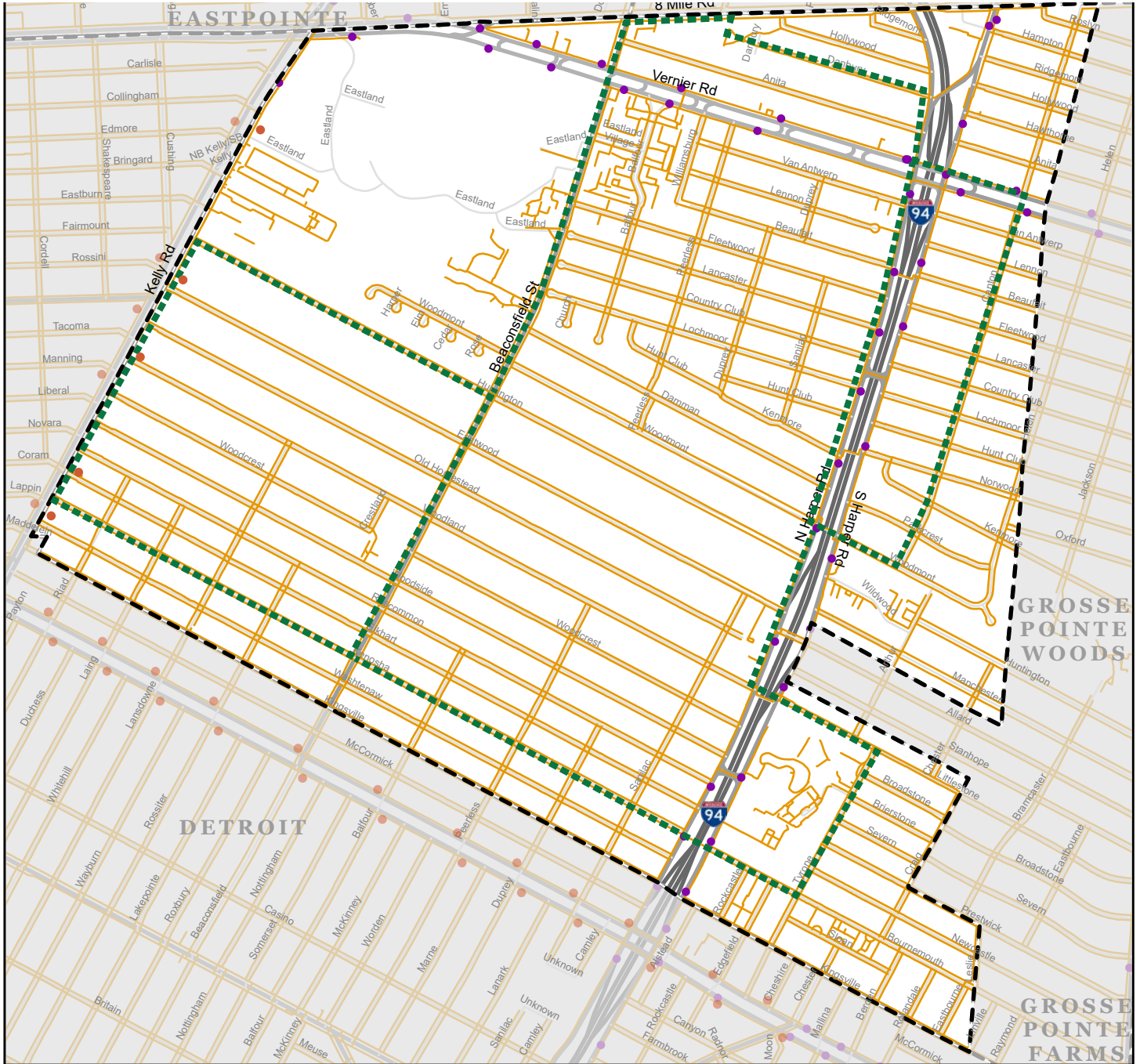
Residents of the area are also provided with the Connector bus and Pointe Area Assisted Transport Service (PAATS) which provide call-ahead transport service to residents. The Connector is provided by the City through a contract with SMART and provides curb to curb service to all residents and services a smaller vicinity. PAATS provides service for Harper Woods residents and residents of the five Grosse Pointes. This service is only for senior citizens and those that are physically disabled. PAATS provides door-to-door service to many destinations, including the major medical facilities in the area. Both van services are equipped for wheelchair transport.

BICYCLE FACILITIES

There are no designated bike lanes or other bike facilities in the Harper Woods. Schools and the municipal buildings provide bike racks, but businesses generally do not.

To facilitate equity among users of the transportation system, the city should consider separate bike paths or bike lanes in the street where a high level of bicycle use is anticipated, such as on Beaconsfield Road. A potential bike route is illustrated in Map 6.

Map 6. Active Transportation



Active Transportation

Harper Woods, Michigan

LEGEND

- SMART Bus Stops
- Sidewalks
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Harper Woods Boundary
- Major Streets
- Freeways
- Potential Bike Route
- DDOT Bus Stops



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
 Data Sources:
 Wayne County, 2018.
 State of Michigan, 2020.
 SEMCOG, 2022.
 McKenna, 2023.



Key Trends, Challenges and Opportunities

ROAD OWNERSHIP

The mixed jurisdiction of the roadways in Harper Woods presents a challenge for redevelopment. Coordination with external agencies (Wayne County and MDOT) can be complex and lengthy, and has the potential to delay applications for new businesses along Kelly Road, Vernier, and Eight Mile. Additionally, Wayne County has struggled with staffing and funding since the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic, which makes implementing the Kelley Road redevelopment vision more difficult to coordinate.

MICRO-MOBILITY

Today, sidewalks and pathways are not only used by pedestrians, but also by scooter riders, skateboarders, people who use mobility devices such as motorized wheelchairs, and more. These forms of transportation are referred to as micro-mobility; they get people to places that are farther away than they would typically walk, but closer than they would typically drive or bike. Many communities have been modifying their local laws to accommodate new types of micro-mobility, such as e-scooters, while some cities are even converting their bike lanes into “micro-mobility lanes.”

A SAFE, COMPLETE PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Compared to many other small Michigan cities, Harper Woods is unique - it has a 99% complete sidewalk network. The only gap in the network is along the northern side of the Eastland Commerce Center site, and the gap will be filled under the current development plan for the site. Harper Woods string pedestrian network is one of its greatest asset, as it makes it easy for children to walk to school, residents to walk to key amenities (e.g. the grocery store, pharmacy, workplace, etc.), and transit users to access bus stops.

Today, residents can meet most of their basic needs within a 20-45 minute walk. However, some challenges remain— some streets have inaccessible sidewalk curbs, speeding along residential roads, inadequate lighting, and infrequent crosswalks. Despite these challenges, the city has the opportunity to take advantage of its existing network through improvements and routine maintenance to make all of Harper Woods a safe, enjoyable place for pedestrians.

INDUSTRIAL/LOGISTICS TRAFFIC

The Eastland Commerce Center site redevelopment has created a new challenge in the city: accommodating truck traffic while still ensuring the safety of pedestrians and other vehicles on the road. Vernier Road is currently the primary truck route for access to I-94, and it is expected that truck traffic will mostly increase along this corridor. However, Vernier Road has very few mid-block pedestrian crossings, meaning there is a higher likelihood of conflict between vehicles and jay-walkers. Additionally, it is possible that trucks will try to use nearby roads, such as Beaconsfield Street, to try to circumvent backups during peak travel times of the day. Lastly, it is expected that the increased truck traffic will substantially alter the character of Vernier Road, and increased landscaping will be needed to buffer the existing houses and apartments from the impacts of traffic.

Goals and Objectives

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

GOAL 1

Improve mid-block safety

Objective 1a Deploy traffic calming tools where appropriate.

Actions:

- » Deploy traffic calming strategies on long residential streets (e.g., Woodland, Woodcrest, Woodside).
- » Investigate feasibility of a road diet on Beaconsfield south of Eastland Drive.
- » Deploy safe crossings around active school sites.

Objective 1b Resolve potential vehicle-pedestrian conflicts on Kelly Road.

Actions:

- » Clearly delineate the interior sidewalk along the entire length of the Kelly Road corridor.
- » Use exterior paved islands for landscaping or planters to discourage pedestrian use and enhance the appearance of the corridor.
- » Create additional safe pedestrian crossing points across Kelly Road to encourage access from residential areas to the Kelly Road businesses.

GOAL 2

Beautify the streetscape

Objective 2a Enhance the maintenance of commercial areas.

Actions:

- » Install trash cans along commercial corridors, especially Kelly Road.
- » Design, organize and launch a business-sponsored beautification program that beautifies the entire city, with particular focus on commercial areas.

Actions:

- » Establish a Public Arts Commission.

- » Develop a dedicated ‘in-lieu’ program for new large-scale developments whereby funds to support public art may be exchanged for flexibility in development regulations (e.g. minimum landscaping requirements).
- » De-regulate and encourage murals.

GOAL 3

Manage truck traffic

Objective 3a Ensure truck routes are limited to appropriate streets.

Actions:

- » Add appropriate signage for restricted movements and appropriate routes.
- » Design intersections of service streets with larger turning radius, which will accommodate the truck traffic.
- » Review Zoning Ordinance regulations to ensure that appropriate loading and service areas are adequate outside of the public right of way.
- » Develop and advertise a mechanism for citizen reporting of cut-throughs or other inappropriate truck movement.

GOAL 4

Improve conditions for active transportation users

Objective 4a Improve transit stop amenities, working with partners as appropriate.

Actions:

- » Ensure there are accessible, paved paths to all bus stops.
- » Adopt design guidelines for the streetscape at bus stop locations.
- » Conduct a bus stop inventory using the FHWA inventory checklist.
- » Enhance existing bus stop amenities to include stop information, seating, and miniature trash bins.

Objective 4b Enhance the usability of Harper Woods streets for bicycle users.

Actions:

- » Study implementation feasibility of priority bicycle routes as identified in this plan.
- » Implement micro-mobility/ bicycle lanes on priority routes as identified in this plan. Improve the accessibility, maintenance and usability of existing pedestrian crossings.

Actions:

- » Ensure ADA ramps are installed and maintained for all existing pedestrian crossings.
- » Maintain pedestrian crossings across I-94 to ensure accessible passage for all users.

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07

Public
Infrastructure,
Facilities, and
Services

Introduction

There are several needs of vital importance to a community which are most often not provided by private enterprise. As a result, these facilities and services must be provided by governmental and/or semi-public organizations. With some exceptions, engaged stakeholders are generally satisfied with public services and facilities. The Master Plan envisions continued and enhanced public service provision, enhanced accessibility to public places, and increased recreational opportunities in Harper Woods.

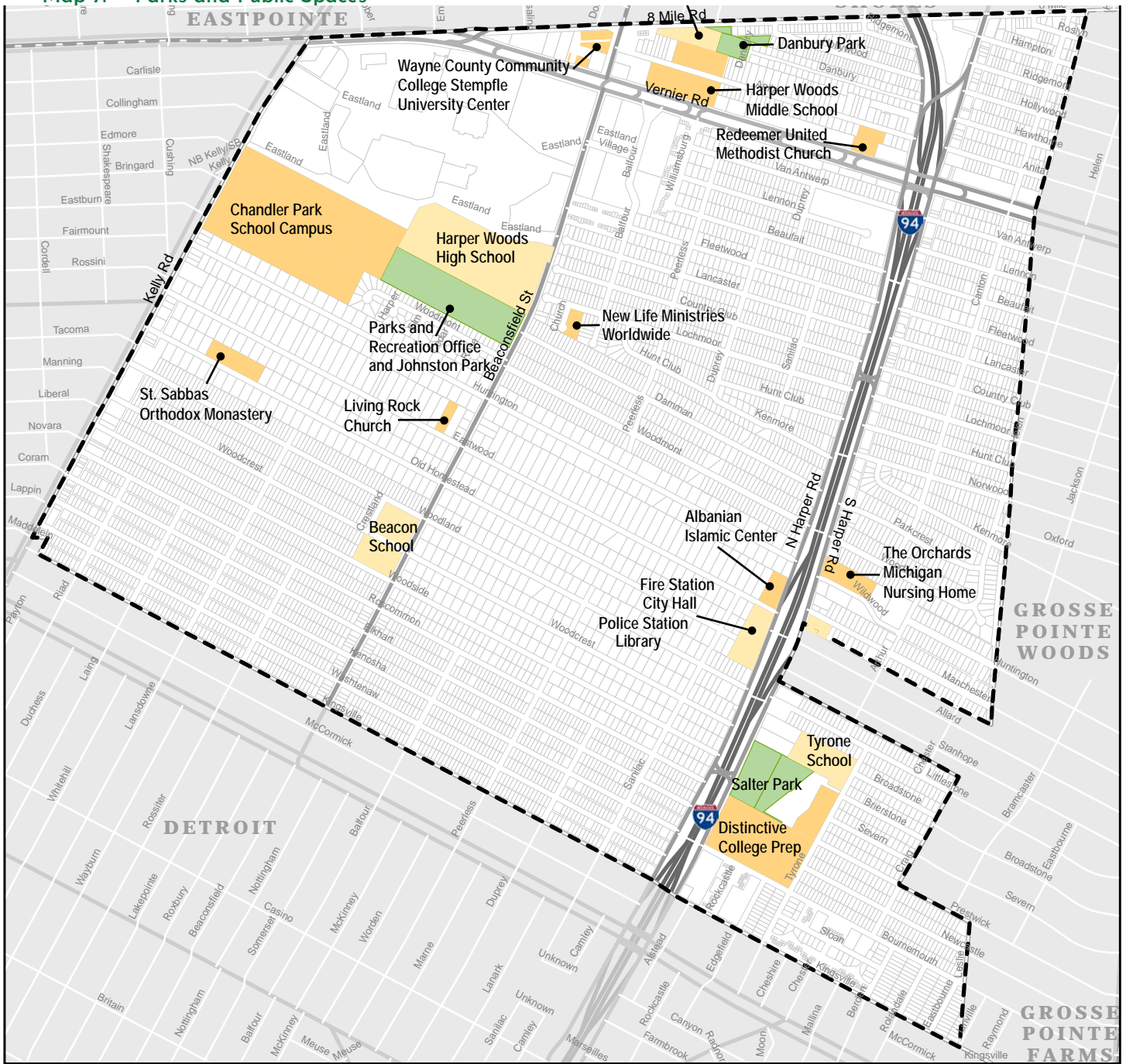
Existing Conditions: Public Facilities and Services

Harper Woods residents receive services from several public agencies. The City of Harper Woods provides public safety, maintenance, administration, building and zoning, assessing, and library services to the community. Meanwhile, the following additional agencies serve Harper Woods:

- **Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).** Controls all maintenance, construction, and traffic planning for I-94 and Vernier Road
- **Wayne County.** Controls all maintenance, construction, and traffic planning for Kelly Road and reviews development plans to assess their impact on the stormwater system (e.g. rainfall runoff from new parking lots, buildings, etc.)
- **Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage District (MRIDDD).** Operates the water treatment facility that cleans Harper Woods' storm water

The City of Harper Woods's administrative buildings include the Fire Station, City Hall, Police Station, Library, DPW yard, and the Neighborhood and Economic Development Center. The city's three existing parks are Danbury, Salter, and Johnson Park. There are also numerous semi-public facilities in Harper Woods, including churches, schoolyards, and medical facilities. All public and semi-public facilities are shown in the map on the following page.

Map 7. Parks and Public Spaces

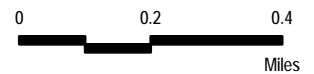


Parks and Public Spaces

Harper Woods, Michigan

LEGEND

- Park
- Public
- Semi-Public
- Harper Woods Boundary
- Parcels
- Other Municipal Boundaries
- Major Streets
- Freeways



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
 Data Sources:
 Wayne County, 2018.
 State of Michigan, 2020.
 SEMCOG, 2022.
 McKenna, 2023.





MUNICIPAL BUILDING

The Municipal Building is located at 19617 Harper Avenue, on the western side of I-94. The building has four key functions:

1. City Hall
2. Fire Department
3. Police Department
4. District Court 32A

The Municipal Building is almost as old as the city itself (founded in 1951) and has long been home to its many departments. It is directly accessible by foot, bike, car, or bus, and there is a SMART bus stop located just steps from the main entrance.



LIBRARY

The Harper Woods Library is located directly south of the Municipal Building, with which it shares a parking lot. The library is technically a part of the City of Harper Woods, but it is operated by a Board of Trustees that is separate from the rest of the city administration. In recent years the library has begun offering many more digital programs to expand access to resources and engagement with the community. Some of these resources include, but are not limited to:

- Online, self-guided tutoring
- Digital books and audiobooks
- Acenstry.com (Library Edition)
- The “Go Library Card,” which offers library cardholders discounts at retail and food businesses throughout the area
- Michigan Activity Pass, which is a program that allows you to “check out” a pass to various Michigan destinations—parks, museums, and more—just as you would check out a library book.



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS (DPW)

The City's DPW yard is located off Eight Mile, at the northern edge of the city. DPW is responsible for the maintenance of all streets, sidewalks, signs, and any trees that are located on public property. Additionally, DPW maintains a variety of underground infrastructure, including the city's water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer pipes.

DPW also runs a variety of programs to help keep the city clean and attractive, such as the tree planting program, fall leaf pickup, garbage pickup, and storm drain cleanup. Lastly, DPW helps other city departments with all of their maintenance needs inside the city's buildings.

The existing DPW yard and maintenance building is located next to Danbury Park. There are several open lawn areas, currently vacant, that surround the building and could be used for expansion in the future.



NEIGHBORHOOD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Harper Woods Economic Development Center is located at 20100 Kelly Road. The Center includes office space for the Community and Economic Development Department and other administrative staff, touchdown space for the Harper Woods Police Department, and a community meeting room with associated support spaces.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Currently, the City owns and operates three parks. In addition, the basement of the public library is used for meetings and aerobics classes. All these facilities are owned and maintained by the City of Harper Woods. There are also numerous school sites around the city that act as de-facto parks. These facilities, when available, are used by the Department of Recreation to provide recreation programs. The public elementary schools have play structures and equipment such as swings and slides. In addition, the middle school and high school have ball fields, hard court areas and gymnasiums, and a pool for indoor recreation.

Several privately-owned recreation facilities are also located in or near the City of Harper Woods. A total of six private or charter schools contain several acres of open space and indoor and outdoor facilities. Other private recreational facilities are located in adjacent communities. Although use of these facilities is limited to those who can afford the fees, they do address certain recreation needs. Adjacent community facilities include ice rinks, golf courses, the YMCA, and bowling alleys.

The Recreation Advisory Board, which oversees parks and recreation, is comprised of five Harper Woods residents who advise the City Council and the Director of Parks and Recreation on various park and recreation issues. Any suggestions and concerns of City residents concerning facilities and programs are brought up and discussed by the Board.

PROGRAMS

A very large variety of recreation programs is offered in the City of Harper Woods. While many programs are organized by the Recreation Department, some private groups organize activities — mainly for youth — including the NU MEN (Neighborhood United: Maximum Effort Now) youth service organization, which focuses on leadership and basketball.

The Recreation Department uses many non-city facilities to house its recreation programs. The city is dependent on the Harper Woods school facilities to provide its swimming, arts and crafts, martial arts, yoga, gymnastics and softball programs. Since Harper Woods does not have an indoor recreation facility, all indoor recreation programs are located at school sites. A verbal agreement between the City and the Harper Woods School Board gives city residents use of the school facilities only after official school functions are finished for the day. Recreation programming is scheduled three times per year. These program sessions include the Autumn Program, Winter Program and the Summer Program. The Recreation Department publishes a handout for each program throughout the year; the Autumn and Winter programs are often advertised together.

DEFICIENCIES

In 2018, Harper Woods adopted its most recent Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which describes the current condition of the city's parks and offers an implementation plan that outlines park and recreation deficiencies and suggests improvements.

During the planning process for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a survey was sent out to residents to assess the current wants and needs for the park system. This survey revealed that many residents are satisfied with the conditions of the existing parks; 73.59% of survey respondents rated the condition and maintenance of the City's parks as "Excellent" or "Good." However, only 58.7% of survey respondents were satisfied with the number and type of parks and recreation opportunities available in Harper Woods. Residents also expressed a desire for:

- A community center with meeting space and amenities for youth and seniors
- A greater diversity in the types of equipment in the city's parks—more paths, adventure-style play equipment, and flexible sport courts was requested
- Better advertising of events and programs hosted by the Parks and Recreation Department

As such, the 2018 Plan outlined the deficiencies of the city's current parks system and issued the following recommendations:

- Improve accessibility at all parks and buildings (none of which currently meet the ADA guidelines for accessible amenities)
- Develop more programs for teenagers
- Improve trail and path linkages throughout the city
- Improve the safety of the parks through physical design

SCHOOLS

The following agencies operate schools that serve the residents of Harper Woods:

- **Harper Woods School District (HWSD).** Operates all the public schools in Harper Woods (Beacon and Tyrone Elementaries, Harper Woods Middle and High Schools, and the College and Career Institute Center)
- **Grosse Pointe Public Schools (GPPS).** Serves Harper Woods residents that live north of Damman Street (since the closure of Poupard Elementary, GPPS no longer operates and school buildings in Harper Woods)
- **Saginaw Valley State University.** Operates all the Chandler Park Academy schools, which are charter schools serving K-12 students from Harper Woods and beyond
- **Oakland University.** Operates Distinctive College Prep, which is a charter school serving K-6 students from Harper Woods and beyond
- **Wayne County Community College District.** Operates several college campuses throughout Wayne County, serving all residents of Harper Woods. Residents are eligible for discounted tuition at any of these campuses and may even get free tuition if they qualify for the State of Michigan Reconnect program, which provides scholarships to those who do not yet have a college degree

HWSD spends roughly \$35,000,000 each year to operate all of the district's existing schools and programs. During 2021, the district's expenditures dropped by roughly \$1,844,000 due to the lower facilities cost of educating students remotely during the Covid-19 pandemic. Pre-pandemic, HWSD had 2,600 students and employed roughly 97 teachers, 4 guidance counselors, 11 instructional aides, 23 administrators, and 50 other employees.

Existing Conditions: Infrastructure

PUBLIC WATER

The City of Harper Woods purchases water from the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) water through its distribution system, which provides water to nearly forty percent of Michigan's population. GLWA draws from the Detroit River, which is replenished by rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and underground aquifers.

As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) limits the number of certain contaminants in water. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) also limits contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health. EGLE performed a source water assessment in 2004 to determine the contamination level of GLWA's Detroit River water. The report described GLWA's Detroit River intakes as highly susceptible to potential contamination. However, all four GLWA water treatment plants that service the City of Detroit and draw water from the Detroit River have historically provided satisfactory treatment and met EPA drinking water standards.

GLWA Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP) provides direct assistance to low-income homeowners who have aging plumbing infrastructure, water bills, or other general water needs.

STORM SEWER

The Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining the storm sewer system in the city. After rainfall hits the earth, it flows into the storm drains and is transported via the storm sewer to treatment facilities. These treatment facilities help clean the water before it is returned into lakes and rivers—this step is necessary to remove all the dirt and pollutants that the rainfall picked up on its route to the storm sewer. In Harper Woods, the Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage District (MRIDDD) operates the treatment facilities that receive storm drainage from the Cities of Harper Woods, St. Clair Shores, and Grosse Pointe Woods. The main treatment facility—called the Milk River Retention Treatment Basin—is located at 1190 Parkway Drive in Grosse Pointe Woods. MRIDDD facilities are operated by Wayne County.

After being treated, the stormwater ultimately drains to Lake St. Clair. When an extreme storm event occurs, the water from the stormwater system overflows into the sewer system. This arrangement is very common in downriver communities and is called a “combined” treatment system. However, this overflow has hazardous consequences for wastewater treatment. When stormwater overwhelms the sewer capacity, some of the sewage bypasses the primary and secondary treatment and is instead released directly into Lake St. Clair. Although the City cannot afford to separate the system at this time, it remains a future priority.

SANITARY SEWER

The City of Harper Woods is also served by sanitary sewers throughout its borders. The sanitary and storm sewers are not combined, as is common in many smaller communities. The sanitary is sent to and treated by the City of Detroit.

Key Trends, Challenges and Opportunities

INCREASED RECREATION DEMAND

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for urban green space has grown across the nation as people recreate closer to home, rather than travel far distances to major attractions or national parks. In tandem with climate change adaptation described above, green infrastructure is being recognized as a way to add green space into the small pockets of cities that are currently lacking. For example, a rain garden designed to capture roadway runoff can make a busy street more enjoyable for pedestrians. Harper Woods could benefit from green infrastructure projects and pocket parks in areas where large green spaces cannot be constructed.

Additionally, there are several areas of Harper Woods where residents cannot readily access a park. The City has been working to develop a pocket park in the southwest corner, and there remains enormous potential for more pocket parks on vacant residential lots throughout the city.

SMART MONITORING

Leveraging recent advances in technologies, “smart” water systems are poised to transform the future of water resources management by enabling real-time sensing and control. For example, a University of Michigan civil and environmental engineering team is using autonomous sensors and valves to create “smart” stormwater systems that reduce flooding, provide more accurate forecasting, and improve water quality. Sensors measure the quality of the water, how much of it is flowing through the system at any given time, and other variables. Smart sewer monitoring could help Harper Woods and its connected communities in the MIRDDD to detect combined-sewer overflow events, and then make targeted infrastructure changes to improve system capacity.

COMMUNITY CENTER

Harper Woods does not currently have a community center, but there is notable demand for one. There are several opportunity sites, as identified in Chapter 6, where the city could pursue a community center in tandem with a private development. For example, a community center could be located on the first floor of a multi-family residential building.

Goals and Objectives

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES, AND SERVICES

Continue to provide all segments of the population with high quality and affordable services and facilities.

GOAL 1

Provide every resident with high-quality, nearby recreation

Objective 1a Maintain a current Recreation Plan to ensure funding eligibility for Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) grant opportunities.

Actions:

- » Update the most recent (2018-2022) Parks and Recreation Plan.
- » Review the Recreation Plan annually to ensure alignment with current goals.

Objective 1b Develop additional pocket parks as opportunities become available.

Actions:

- » Implement the planned Roscommon pocket park.
- » Review and monitor the inventory of City-owned greenspace for additional opportunities.

GOAL 2

Facilitate adaptive reuse of public and semi-public sites

Objective 2a Work with the Grosse Pointe School District to ensure redevelopment of Poupard School site into contemporary housing.

Actions:

- » Revise zoning regulations to permit the desired vision at this site.
- » Continue to participate in the development process to ensure the City's goals are realized.

Objective 2b Complete predevelopment/due diligence activities for Tyrone Street frontage property near Salter Park.

Actions:

- » Commission a survey of the property to confirm existing conditions.
- » Hire an appraiser to determine current value of property.
- » Commission a Phase I Environmental Assessment for the site.

GOAL 3

Ensure accessibility at public buildings for all residents, regardless of age or ability

Objective 3a Assess and identify barriers to accessibility at the city Municipal Offices, the Harper Woods Library, and the 32nd District court.

Actions:

- » Perform an accessibility self-evaluation as identified by the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division.
- » Create (or update) the Harper Woods ADA Transition Plan.

GOAL 4

Track and plan public improvements

Objective 4a Monitor Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to ensure alignment with city goals.

Actions:

- » Update the CIP annually to include all planned public infrastructure and development projects.
- » Review the CIP quarterly or semi-annually against the budget.

Objective 4b Share the costs of infrastructure improvements with developers.

Actions:

- » Enable Ordinances that allow for sharing of costs for infrastructure.
- » Review cost capture mechanisms and identify opportunities for private participation in the funding of improvements.
- » Create a clear procedure for easement dedications.

08

Natural Resources and Environment

Introduction

Green spaces—from parks to wilderness— provide shade and relief from the heat, improve people’s mental health, and offer spaces for residents of all ages—and animals—to explore, recreate, and flourish. The conversion of natural land into urban land creates surfaces that deflect stormwater and increase flooding and pollution in waterways; green space helps to counteract this by absorbing stormwater, which improves not only water quality but also community finances by taking some of the burden off public infrastructure.

Existing Conditions: Natural Resources and Environment

GREEN SPACE AND URBAN TREE CANOPY

Trees are one of the greatest assets a community can have, due to their many benefits—mental and physical health, shade, flood reduction, habitat for animals, aesthetic beauty, and more.

According to the Arbor Day Foundation’s Alliance for Community Trees, a healthy tree canopy in cities provides numerous benefits including:

- **Increased Property Values.** Homes that are landscaped with trees are worth more and sell faster than homes without trees.
- **Cleaner Places.** There is less graffiti, vandalism, and littering in outdoor spaces with trees.
- **Cleaner Air.** Trees clean the air by absorbing pollutants.
- **Less Noise.** Trees reduce noise pollution by absorbing sounds.
- **Slower Driving Speeds.** Trees have been found to reduce overall driving speeds, with faster drivers and slower drivers both slowing down in the presence of trees.
- **Cooler Temperatures.** A mature tree canopy reduces air temperatures by 5-10 degrees Fahrenheit.

The bulk of Harper Woods’ trees are clustered in the center of the city along Huntington, Eastwood, Old Homestead, and Woodland. These trees are located in homeowner’s back yards and the majority of the trees are oaks with some occasional evergreens and maples interspersed. Some homes have more unique trees, such as cottonwoods, white pines, and catalpa trees, all of which are well-suited to the Michigan climate. In general, the backyard trees in this neighborhood are mature (over 40 years of age), while the trees along the street range from newly planted to mature. The street trees tend to be either sugar maples or locust trees.

There is also a notable concentration of street trees along Williamsburg Court, which are all locusts and maples that were planted at the same time the housing complex was developed. There is another cluster of trees along Danbury Lane, although a notable lack of trees in Danbury Park. Besides these areas, tree coverage is relatively even - but low - across all neighborhoods in the city.

The areas most lacking trees in the city include the Eastland Commerce Center site, the city’s commercial streets (Kelly, Harper, Vernier, and Eight Mile), and the school properties, which are mostly covered by lawns or athletic fields. The City-owned parks also have relatively few trees, although some small starter trees have been recently added to Salter Park.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND STORMWATER RUNOFF

Stormwater infrastructure, which includes green infrastructure, is a form of public infrastructure that often goes unnoticed on a dry day. However, these systems play a vital role in every Michigan community because Michigan is one of the most water-rich and rainy states in the country, and is projected to receive more rainfall each year. Stormwater infrastructure in legacy communities, like Harper Woods, has traditionally consisted of solely storm drains and pipes, which directly dispose of the water into Lake St. Clair. However, pervious (vegetated) surfaces that capture stormwater are now broadly considered to be an emerging part of the stormwater infrastructure system because they help control floods and naturally cleanse dirty runoff. These features, such as rain gardens, wetlands, and swales, both improve water quality and make the community more attractive by preserving valuable recreation land and wildlife habitat, as well as lowering air temperatures.

SEMCOG’s Green Infrastructure Vision for Southeast Michigan is a framework that guides the preservation and future implementation of green infrastructure in Southeast Michigan. The vision benchmarks the amount of green infrastructure in the region, identifies future green infrastructure opportunities, and recommends strategic implementation approaches. The Vision details the various benefits of green infrastructure, including economic value, water quality, air quality and recreation.

Green infrastructure can be defined as any natural feature that captures stormwater and helps it soak into the ground. Green infrastructure is defined in two broad categories in Southeast Michigan. First, it includes ecosystems that are present in the natural, undisturbed environment such as wetlands, woodlands, prairies, and parks. Second, it includes constructed or built infrastructure such as rain gardens, bioswales, or community gardens, all of which capture runoff. Although Harper Woods does not have any green infrastructure today, there are numerous public and private locations where it would be suitable throughout the city, especially on the Eastland Commerce Center site.

Table 12. Benefits of Green Infrastructure

Water Quality	Green infrastructure reduces the amount of polluted stormwater runoff entering our rivers and lakes. In cities with combined sewer systems, green infrastructure is being used to reduce sewer overflows during storms.
Flooding	Green infrastructure can reduce flood risk by slowing and reducing stormwater runoff into waterways.
Water Supply	Harvesting rainwater is good for outdoor irrigation and some indoor uses. Water infiltrated into the soil recharges groundwater and increases flow into rivers.
Quality of Life	Green infrastructure provides aesthetic benefits to the area by increasing the amount of a community’s green space.
Recreation	Green infrastructure can provide recreational and tourism opportunities including increased access to hiking, hunting, fishing, and bird watching.
Economic Growth	Green infrastructure can increase residential property values located near trails, parks, and waterways. In addition, green infrastructure is one way to attract and retain the knowledge-based workforce in our region.
Traffic Calming	Green infrastructure techniques along roads can also be used to slow traffic and provide a buffer between the roadway and pedestrians.
Habitat Connections	Green infrastructure can provide needed links in habitat corridors to strengthen and support rare and important plant and animal areas in the community.

Air Quality	Increased vegetation positively impacts air quality through carbon sequestration, the capture of fugitive dust, and removal of air pollutants.
Individual Health	Green infrastructure encourages outdoor physical activity, which can have a positive impact in fighting obesity and chronic diseases.
Public Finances	Green infrastructure can reduce a community's infrastructure costs by using natural systems rather than built systems, and by avoiding building lengthy new stormwater pipes.
Energy and Climate	Implementing techniques such as green roofs, increased tree plantings around buildings, converting turfgrass to no-mow areas, and reclaiming stormwater for use onsite can reduce energy consumption and save money.

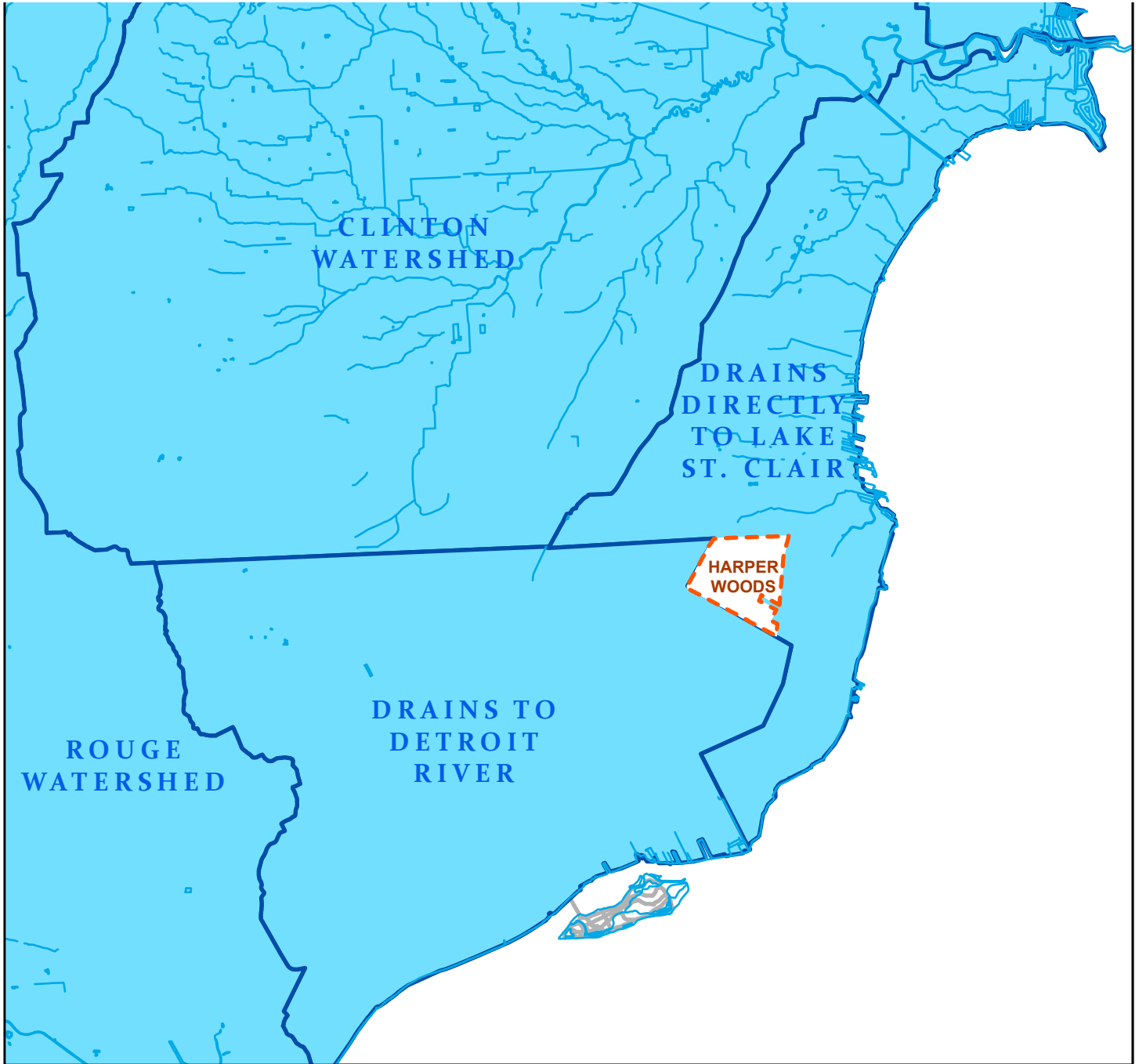
WATERSHED

Harper Woods is located in the Clinton River Watershed, which is a 760-square mile area that comprises thousands of lakes, ponds, wetlands, marshes, and bogs—as well as creeks and streams. These streams and rivers all drain into one common body of water, Lake St. Clair.

Lake St. Clair is the 15th largest lake in the United States at over 430 square miles and is sometimes affectionately referred to as the sixth Great Lake. Essential to the Saint Lawrence Seaway shipping route, Lake St. Clair connects Lake Huron to Lake Erie and to vessels traveling to the Atlantic Ocean. The Clinton River, its watershed, and Lake St. Clair are a valuable resource that serves important ecological functions and provides the region with drinking water, tourism, wildlife habitat, boating, fishing, and other recreational activities.

Each watershed is made up of sub-watersheds, and Harper Woods is covered by the Lake St. Clair Direct Drainage Sub-watershed. The Clinton River Watershed Council prepared a detailed plan for each sub-watershed in 2006, which helps guide local and regional decisions about water resources. Since that time local governments, community leaders, citizens' groups, businesses, and environmental organizations have worked together to implement the plan. The landscape of the sub-watershed today is vastly different from its pre-development conditions. Only 0.30 square miles of woodland and wetland exist, which is less than 1% of the woodland and wetland areas that existed in 1830. Today, 71% of the sub-watershed is used for single-family residences, 9% for commercial and office use, and 6% for institutional use, which includes public facilities, schools, and hospitals.




Map 9. Watershed Location

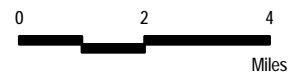


Watershed Location

Harper Woods, Michigan

LEGEND

-  Harper Woods Boundary
-  Streams and Drains
-  Watersheds



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
Data Sources:
Wayne County, 2018.
State of Michigan, 2020.
SEMCOG, 2022.
McKenna, 2023.



Key Trends, Challenges and Opportunities

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. These shifts may be natural, such as through variations in the solar cycle. But since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas. Burning fossil fuels generates greenhouse gas emissions that act like a blanket wrapped around the Earth, trapping the sun's heat and raising temperatures.

People are exposed to climate change through changing weather patterns (e.g. more intense and frequent extreme storm events) and indirectly through changes in water, air, food quality and quantity, ecosystems, agriculture, and economy. Climate change is already having noticeable health impacts on those who live in Michigan's baseline cloudy and snowy climate, with rising temperatures leading to more dangerously hot days, flooding, and air pollution. Harper Woods is most directly impacted by the increases in temperature, which pose a direct threat to human health during the summer months. The city has the opportunity to lessen the heat impacts of climate change through increased street tree planting, especially in the outer neighborhoods of the city where trees are currently lacking.

ON-SITE STORMWATER CAPTURE

Parking lots, both publicly and privately owned, represent a major category of green infrastructure opportunity. Many cities across the country, and in metro Detroit, are requiring green infrastructure as a part of all new parking lot construction and are retrofitting existing parking lots with bioswales to reduce runoff.

Many Michigan communities, including Detroit, are also encouraging rain gardens. Rain gardens help relieve the traditional stormwater system during heavy storms, and the plants and flowers can contribute to neighborhood beautification.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AS TRAFFIC CALMING

As a built-out city, Harper Woods is well suited to leverage green infrastructure to increase green space and stormwater capture. To maximize those efforts, the City could co-locate green infrastructure with traffic calming measures, incorporating vegetation as a way to slow traffic and improve roadway safety. For example, infiltration planters can be placed in pedestrian crossing bump-outs to increase drivers' sense of closeness to the curb and encourage slower speeds.

Goals and Objectives

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

GOAL 1

Foster resilience by enhancing the city's ability to mitigate the impacts of climate change

Objective 1a Work green infrastructure into the city fabric.

Actions:

- » Adopt zoning language that sets maximum impervious surface coverages by district.
- » Work with stakeholders to create and adopt a formal green infrastructure policy.
- » Ensure future parks and green spaces are designed to capture stormwater.

Objective 1b Incentivize impervious surface reduction.

Actions:

- » Investigate offering a rain garden / bioswale credit pilot program.
- » Consider density or other design bonuses for effective on-site stormwater capture.

Objective 1c Enhance the existing tree canopy.

Actions:

- » Plant street trees in neighborhoods where they are lacking.
- » Promote tree planting in city parks and other public areas.
- » Require tree improvements as part of any development along Kelly, Harper and Vernier Roads.
- » Review the zoning ordinance to ensure there are adequate tree requirements for parking lots.

GOAL 2

Coordinate environmental efforts across entities

Objective 2a Participate in regional and neighboring communities' environmental programs.

Actions:

- » Continue active participation in MIRDDD and disseminate information to the Harper Woods public.
- » Advertise and participate in events hosted by the Clinton River Watershed Council.
- » Disseminate sustainability information provided by the Clinton River Watershed Council to Harper Woods residents.

Objective 2b Routinely inform and partner with other agencies to effectively implement environmental policy.

Actions:

- » Annually share an update of the environmental portion of the Master Plan Implementation table with neighboring communities.
- » Coordinate with applicants and Wayne County to ensure all developments that requires stormwater review are evaluated appropriately.

09

Implementation Plan

Introduction

The goals and objectives of a Master Plan have little weight without a clear and practical implementation plan. When used consistently, the information in this chapter provides a foundation for the appropriate planning, development, and regulation of city resources.

To maximize the effectiveness of this plan, a user's guide has been developed to delineate the administrative responsibilities of the City. Additionally, a project prioritization and implementation matrix, including funding opportunities and responsible parties, will help the City organize around future redevelopment. Finally, this chapter provides in-depth descriptions of potential funding sources, community partners, and relevant city codes to better facilitate the use of this plan.

User's Guide

The User's Guide found below is a simple tool for residents and City staff to better understand their role in implementing the Master Plan. For each task, the matrix guides users on when and how to use the Master Plan for making development decisions.

Table 13. User's Guide: How to Use the Master Plan


When to Use the Master Plan	Data Reference	Setting Budget Priorities	Evaluating Land Uses	As Design Guidelines	Defense of Zoning Decisions
Rezoning ¹	<p>Check proposed use for compatibility with existing land uses around site.</p> <p>Check classification of roads serving site.</p> <p>Check goals, objectives and actions related to site or area, e.g. downtown.</p> <p>Are community facilities serving site adequate?</p>		Is the proposed use consistent with future use of site and area on future land use map?		Does data, future land use map and goals, objectives and actions support zoning of site?
Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment ¹	Supportable Plan		What implication does amendment have on future land use and goals, objectives and actions?		Does data, future land use map and goals, objectives and actions support zoning text change? (e.g. required site improvements or standards.)
Special Land Use and Site Plan Review ¹	<p>Do data in plan support the need for the use?</p> <p>Is proposed use compatible with surrounding existing uses?</p>		Is the use appropriate for the area based on goals, objectives and actions in the plan?	Check standards for the proposed use or surrounding area, e.g. paths, landscaping, corridor improvements that should be conditions of approval.	Does data, future land use map and goals, objectives and actions support conditions of special approval or site plan approval?
Capital Improvement Program	Check inventory of public facilities and demographic data for support of proposed projects.	Are projects, expenditures and priorities supported by goals, objectives and actions, or discussed elsewhere in plan?			

When to Use the Master Plan	Data Reference	Setting Budget Priorities	Evaluating Land Uses	As Design Guidelines	Defense of Zoning Decisions
Special programs: economic development, parks, trails, gateway improvements, etc.	Check inventory of public facilities. Use demographic data. Use economic data. Check description of funding sources.		Are proposed improvements consistent with priorities in goals, objectives and actions?	Does project design/ location conform to corridor, paths and gateway plan?	
Preparing Grant Applications	Use data and other descriptive information in preparing support documentation for grant request.	Are projects, expenditures and priorities supported by goals, objectives and actions, or discussed elsewhere in plan?			


1 *While this chart provides a useful tool in using the Master Plan it is recommended that the City continue to seek the guidance of a professional planner and/or attorney in matters related to proposed zoning map or text changes or site plan and special land use approvals.*

Projects: Priority and Responsibility

Objective	Action	Time Frame	Lead	Priority
Chapter 4: Land Use and Housing				
1a Revitalize vacant, unkept, or aging housing stock where needed.	Communicate housing resources to residents annually, at a minimum (County-wide renovation program, non-profit housing assistance, etc.)	→	CS	●
	Create an advertising program for city-owned vacant land/property.	●	CS	●
	Launch a block group ambassador / representative program to identify, enlist and train champions to report code issues.	●●	BC CM	●
1b Strengthen code enforcement programs for residential properties.	! Create a digital / mobile-friendly version of the property complaint form.	●	CS	●
	Increase the frequency of required rental inspections.	●●	CS	●
2a Encourage residential developments that are needed by persons of all ages, backgrounds, incomes, and physical capabilities.	Expand the allowable types and locations for accessory dwelling units (ADUs).	●●	OC PC	●
	Adopt the Michigan Municipal League (MML) pattern book OR commission Harper Woods-specific pre-approved house plans for alternative housing types (duplex, triplex, quadplex, etc.).	●●●	CS CC	●
	! Reduce permit fees and provide expedited permitting for development that incorporate universal design principles.	●	CS PC	●
	Train development review staff to check for age-friendly development features.	●●	CS NP	●
	Create a pre-approved contractor list that residents can use to obtain age-friendly retrofit services.	●●	CS	●
2b Retrofit underutilized or vacant properties for unique, modern, and creative housing options.	Develop neighborhood design standards for new infill housing.	●●	PC	●
	! Lower the requirement for minimum square footage to allow for a greater range of housing types.	●	PC	●
PRIORITY LEVEL	LEAD			
● High	<i>City Government</i>	<i>Other Government</i>	<i>Private/Non-Profit</i>	
● Medium	BC Beautification Commission	GLWA Great Lakes Water Authority	SEMCOG Southeast Michigan Council of Governments	BO Business Owners
● Low	CC City Council	MDOT Michigan Department of Transportation	SOM State of Michigan	CM Community Members
TIME FRAME	CS City Staff	MRIDDD Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage District	WC Wayne County	DEV Developers
● Near Term (0-2 years)	OC Ordinance Committee	NJ Neighboring Jurisdictions	SD School Districts	HO Homeowners
●● Medium Term (3-6 years)	PC Planning Commission			NP Non-Profits
●●● Long Term (7-10 years)	RB Recreation Advisory Board			
→ Ongoing				

Objective	Action	Time Frame	Lead	Priority
3a Enable the transformation of Kelly Road into a mixed-use corridor.	 Increase the allowable height to 3 stories for new buildings or building redevelopments.	●	PC	●
	Expand the range of allowable uses to include a mix of residential, office, semi-public, and commercial uses.	●●	PC	●
	Modernize the parking requirements or eliminate parking minimums along the Kelly Road corridor to encourage infill and reoccupation of existing buildings.	●●	PC	●
3b Strengthen the appearance and vitality of the Harper Road corridor.	Expand the range of allowable uses, with a particular focus on pedestrian-oriented commercial.	●●	PC	●
	Provide better buffering between I-94 and the Harper Road Corridor.	●●●	CS	●
3c Ensure adequate buffering on the Vernier Road corridor.	Review zoning ordinance regulations for public, semi-public and commercial zoning districts to ensure that these areas effectively buffer surrounding neighborhoods from the impacts of industrial activity and increased truck traffic on Vernier Road.	●●	CS	●

Chapter 5: Economic Development

1a Improve workforce training to attract and retain talent.	Advertise existing workforce training opportunities.	→	CS CC	●
	Partner with Michigan Works! center at 7 Mile and Gratiot to advertise and expand services in Harper Woods.	●	NP CC	●
	Connect Harper Woods High School students to local job training opportunities.	→	SD CC	●
	Advertise and/or offer workforce-related trainings (computer skills, resume writing, etc.)	●●●	CS	●
1b Attract and retain a diverse range of businesses.	 Enhance the current Guide to Development to facilitate the occupation of commercial space by small businesses, and advertise it's availability to owners and potential business owners.	●	CS	●
2a Prepare priority sites by updating local policies to ensure balanced development.	Actively market priority redevelopment sites.	●●	CS WC SOM	●
	Ensure adequate infrastructure is in place to accommodate redevelopment at these sites.	●●●	WC MDOT CS GLWA	●
	Create a standard template for development agreements regarding infrastructure cost-sharing.	●●	CS	●
	Explore the creation of commercial redevelopment districts (tax abatements).	●●●	CS CC	●

PRIORITY LEVEL

- High
- Medium
- Low

TIME FRAME

- Near Term (0-2 years)
- Medium Term (3-6 years)
- Long Term (7-10 years)
- Ongoing

LEAD

City Government

- BC** Beautification Commission
- CC** City Council
- CS** City Staff
- OC** Ordinance Committee
- PC** Planning Commission
- RB** Recreation Advisory Board

Other Government

- GLWA** Great Lakes Water Authority
- MDOT** Michigan Department of Transportation
- MRIDD** Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage District
- NJ** Neighboring Jurisdictions

SEMCOG

- SEMCOG** Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
- SOM** State of Michigan
- WC** Wayne County
- SD** School Districts

Private/Non-Profit



























- BO** Business Owners
- CM** Community Members
- DEV** Developers
- HO** Homeowners
- NP** Non-Profits

Objective	Action	Time Frame	Lead	Priority
3a Routinely coordinate with local and regional agencies to align economic development programs and policies.	Annually review Wayne County and SEMCOG's economic development strategies.	→	CS	●
	Identify joint grant opportunities that could be pursued with neighboring communities.	→	CS NJ	●
	Reach out to neighboring communities to pursue joint grant opportunities.	→	CC CS NJ	●
	! Prepare a template for annual reporting on the city's economic development progress.	●	CS	●
	Annually distribute the economic development report to neighboring governments.	→	CS	●

Chapter 6: Transportation and Circulation




1a Deploy traffic calming where appropriate.	Deploy traffic calming strategies on long residential streets (e.g., Woodland, Woodcrest, Woodside).	● ● ●	CS HO	●
	Investigate feasibility of a road diet on Beaconsfield, south of Eastland Drive and Anita Street.	● ●	CS CM	●
	Deploy safe crossings around active school sites.	● ● ●	CS SD WC	●
1b Resolve potential vehicle-pedestrian conflicts on Kelly Road.	Clearly delineate the interior sidewalk along the entire length of the Kelly Road corridor.	● ● ●	CS WC	●
	Use exterior paved islands for landscaping or planters to discourage pedestrian use and enhance the appearance of the corridor.	● ●	CS WC	●
	Create additional safe pedestrian crossing points across Kelly Road to encourage access from residential areas to the Kelly Road businesses.	● ● ●	WC	●
2a Enhance the maintenance of commercial areas.	Install trash cans along commercial corridors, especially Kelly Road.	● ●	CS NP BO	●
	Design, organize and launch a business-sponsored beautification program.	● ● ●	CS BO	●
2b Beautify the city throughout, with particular focus on commercial areas.	Establish a Public Arts Commission.	●	CC	●
	Develop a dedicated 'in-lieu' program for new large-scale developments whereby they contribute funds to support public art.	● ●	CC CS	●
	De-regulate and encourage murals.	●	CS	●





PRIORITY LEVEL ● High ● Medium ● Low	LEAD <i>City Government</i> BC Beautification Commission CC City Council CS City Staff OC Ordinance Committee PC Planning Commission RB Recreation Advisory Board			<i>Other Government</i> GLWA Great Lakes Water Authority MDOT Michigan Department of Transportation MRIDDD Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage District NJ Neighboring Jurisdictions			SEMCOG Southeast Michigan Council of Governments SOM State of Michigan WC Wayne County SD School Districts			<i>Private/Non-Profit</i> BO Business Owners CM Community Members DEV Developers HO Homeowners NP Non-Profits		
	TIME FRAME ● Near Term (0-2 years) ● ● Medium Term (3-6 years) ● ● ● Long Term (7-10 years) → Ongoing											

Objective	Action	Time Frame	Lead	Priority
3a Ensure truck routes are limited to appropriate streets.	 Add appropriate signage for restricted movements and appropriate routes.		WC MDOT	
	To better accommodate the truck traffic, intersections of service streets should be designed with larger turning radius.		WC MDOT	
	Review Zoning Ordinance regulations to ensure that appropriate loading and service areas are adequate outside of the public right of way.		PC	
	Develop and advertise a mechanism for citizen reporting of cut-throughs or other inappropriate truck movement.		CS	
4a Improve transit stop amenities, working with partners as appropriate.	Ensure there are accessible, paved paths to all bus stops.		NJ CS	
	Adopt design guidelines for the streetscape at bus stop locations.		BC PC	
	 Conduct a bus stop inventory using the FHWA inventory checklist.		CS	
	Enhance existing bus stop amenities to include stop information, seating, and miniature trash bins.		NJ	
4b Enhance the usability of Harper Woods streets for bicycle users.	Study implementation feasibility of priority bicycle routes as identified in this plan.		CS	
	Implement micro-mobility/ bicycle lanes on priority routes as identified in this plan.		WC MDOT CS	
4c Improve the accessibility, maintenance and usability of existing pedestrian crossings.	Ensure ADA ramps are installed and maintained for all existing pedestrian crossings.		WC MDOT CS	
	Maintain pedestrian crossings across I-94 to ensure accessible passage for all users.		MDOT	

Chapter 7: Public Infrastructure, Facilities, and Services

1a Maintain a current Recreation Plan to ensure funding eligibility for Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) grant opportunities.	Update the most recent (2018-2022) Parks and Recreation Plan.		CS	
	Review the Recreation Plan annually to ensure alignment with current City goals.		RB	
1b Develop additional pocket parks as opportunities become available.	Implement the planned Roscommon pocket park.		RB CS	
	Review and monitor the inventory of City-owned greenspace for additional opportunities.		RB CS	
2a Work with the Grosse Pointe School District to ensure redevelopment of Poupard School site into contemporary housing.	Revise zoning regulations to permit the desired vision at this site.		CS PC	
	Continue to participate in the development process to ensure the City's goals are realized.		DEV CS	

PRIORITY LEVEL
 High
 Medium
 Low

TIME FRAME
 Near Term (0-2 years)
 Medium Term (3-6 years)
 Long Term (7-10 years)
 Ongoing

LEAD

City Government

BC Beautification Commission
CC City Council
CS City Staff
OC Ordinance Committee
PC Planning Commission
RB Recreation Advisory Board

Other Government

GLWA Great Lakes Water Authority
MDOT Michigan Department of Transportation
MRIDDD Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage District
NJ Neighboring Jurisdictions

SEMCOG

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
SOM State of Michigan
WC Wayne County
SD School Districts

Private/Non-Profit

BO Business Owners
CM Community Members
DEV Developers
HO Homeowners
NP Non-Profits

Objective	Action	Time Frame	Lead	Priority
2b Complete predevelopment/due diligence activities for Tyrone Street frontage property near Salter Park.	Commission a survey of the property to confirm existing conditions.	●●	CS	●
	Hire an appraiser to determine current value of property.	●	CS	●
	Commission a Phase I Environmental Assessment for the site.	●●	CS	●
3a Assess and identify barriers to accessibility at the City Municipal Offices, the Harper Woods Library, and the 32n District court.	Perform an accessibility self-evaluation as identified by the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division.	●●	CS	●
	Create (or update) the Harper Woods ADA Transition Plan.	●●●	CS	●
4a Monitor Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to ensure alignment with City goals.	Update the CIP annually to include all planned public infrastructure and development projects.	→	CS	●
	Review the CIP quarterly or semi-annually against the budget.	→	CS	●
4b Share the costs of infrastructure improvements with developers.	Enable Ordinances that allow for sharing of costs for infrastructure.	●●	OC CC	●
	Review cost capture mechanisms and identify opportunities for private participation in the funding of improvements.	●●	CS	●
	! Create a clear procedure for easement dedications.	●	CS WC	●

Chapter 8: Natural Resources and Environment

1a Work green infrastructure into the city fabric.	Adopt zoning language that sets maximum impervious surface coverages by district.	●	PC	●
	Work with stakeholders to create and adopt a formal green infrastructure policy.	●●●	CC NP MRIDDD	●
	Ensure future parks and green spaces are designed to capture stormwater.	→	CS RB	●
1b Incentivize impervious surface reduction.	Investigate offering a rain garden / bioswale credit pilot program.	●●	CS NP	●
	Consider density or other design bonuses for effective on-site stormwater capture.	●	PC	●
1c Enhance the existing tree canopy.	Plant street trees in neighborhoods where they are lacking.	→	CS NP CM	●
	Promote tree planting in City parks and other public areas.	●●	CS RB	●
	Require tree improvements as part of any development along Kelly, Harper and Vernier Roads.	●●	PC	●
	Review the zoning ordinance to ensure there are adequate tree requirements for parking lots.	●	PC	●

PRIORITY LEVEL ● High ● Medium ● Low	LEAD <i>City Government</i> BC Beautification Commission CC City Council CS City Staff OC Ordinance Committee PC Planning Commission RB Recreation Advisory Board	<i>Other Government</i> GLWA Great Lakes Water Authority MDOT Michigan Department of Transportation MRIDDD Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage District NJ Neighboring Jurisdictions	SEMCOG Southeast Michigan Council of Governments SOM State of Michigan WC Wayne County SD School Districts	<i>Private/Non-Profit</i> BO Business Owners CM Community Members DEV Developers HO Homeowners NP Non-Profits

Objective	Action	Time Frame	Lead	Priority
2a Participate in regional and neighboring communities' environmental programs.	Continue active participation in MIRDDD and disseminate information to the Harper Woods public.	→	CS MIRDDD CC	●
	Advertise and participate in events hosted by the Clinton River Watershed Council.	→	CS NP	●
	Disseminate sustainability information provided by the Clinton River Watershed Council to Harper Woods residents.	→	CS NP	●
2b Routinely inform and partners with other agencies to ensure the most effective implementation of environmental policy.	Annually share an update of the environmental portion of the Master Plan Implementation table with neighboring communities.	→	NJ CC SEMCOG	●
	Coordinate with applicants and Wayne County to ensure all developments that requires stormwater review are evaluated appropriately.	→	CS WC	●

PRIORITY LEVEL	LEAD	<i>Other Government</i>		<i>Private/Non-Profit</i>
● High	<i>City Government</i>	GLWA Great Lakes Water Authority	SEMCOG Southeast Michigan Council of Governments	BO Business Owners
● Medium	BC Beautification Commission	MDOT Michigan Department of Transportation	SOM State of Michigan	CM Community Members
● Low	CC City Council	MRIDDD Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage District	WC Wayne County	DEV Developers
	CS City Staff	NJ Neighboring Jurisdictions	SD School Districts	HO Homeowners
	OC Ordinance Committee			NP Non-Profits
	PC Planning Commission			
	RB Recreation Advisory Board			
TIME FRAME				
● Near Term (0-2 years)				
●● Medium Term (3-6 years)				
●●● Long Term (7-10 years)				
→ Ongoing				

Implementation Tools

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is used to evaluate, prioritize, and structure financing of public improvement projects. The City has begun to prepare and annually update a Capital Improvements Program.

The CIP provides a basis for a systematic review of proposed improvements related to the Master Plan by the Planning Commission, and creates an opportunity to coordinate timing, location, and financing of those projects. In general, capital improvement programs are most often presented in terms of specific fiscal year listings, although there are some shown in terms of priority categories with a more flexible time schedule.

The capital improvements process should include the following steps:

1. Inventory of potential projects as related to the Master Plan, including preliminary cost estimation and initial prioritization.
2. Evaluation of projects proposed, in addition to those in the Plan, by various sponsors and City departments.
3. Financial analysis of the proposed projects in terms of the available community revenues.
4. Project scheduling for five years.
5. Recommendation of first year projects (capital improvement budget) to City Council.
6. Formal approval of the capital improvement budget.

The role of the planning agency is primarily to identify potential projects as related to the Master Plan, coordinate material submitted by others, and work with financial officials in assembling facts for decision by the City Council.

CODES AND ORDINANCES

Without reasonable, firm codes and ordinances, a City cannot carry out the best of plans. With the use of the police power, a City can guide private development, redevelopment and rehabilitation in a coordinated plan. Among the more important codes within the city are:

ZONING

The Zoning Ordinance is a primary tool for Master Plan implementation. Zoning is the regulation of the use of land and buildings, including their height and bulk, the proportion of lot that may be covered by them, and the density of population. Zoning is enacted under the police power of the State for the purpose of promoting health, safety, and general welfare and has long been supported constitutionally by the U.S. Supreme Court and the Michigan courts.

The purpose of zoning is to assist in orderly development and growth. It is also used to protect property values and investments. Because of the impact it can have on the use of land and related services, zoning regulations must be related to the Master Plan. Zoning is an instrument for effecting that part of the Plan relating to the use and development of land. Through the process of amendments, site plan review, special approval of certain land uses and administration, the City implements its zoning in conformance with the Master Plan.

Depending on the rate of development change and requests for change in the zoning map, an annual review of the zoning map should be made. The zoning ordinance must be flexible so that as changes in the population, economic base, and land use relationships occur in the city, the ordinance can be revised to reflect new objectives of the Master Plan. As necessary, amendments to improve the ordinance should be considered so as to carry out the objectives of the Master Plan. It is generally accepted practice to provide zoning on the basis of a five year land use projection, whereas the plan is a longer projection.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODES

The housing code can be supplemented by other related ordinances such as a nuisance code, weed control code, and sidewalk repair regulations. Similar to the housing codes, these ordinances establish minimum standards governing the condition and maintenance of properties.

The city is an older, substantially developed community. As time passes, existing structures will become older, and proper maintenance of these structures will become increasingly more important. Therefore, it is recommended that the city re examine all existing codes which pertain to property maintenance. These codes should be strengthened to assure that a well-administered and coordinated property maintenance program is in place in the city.

NON-OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING INSPECTION AND LANDLORD LICENSING CODE

Non-owner occupied housing is subject to inspection in Harper Woods, and a landlord licensing code is in effect. Landlords who do not live in Wayne County must employ a local management company. The utilization and effectiveness of these tools should be continuously evaluated.

COOPERATION

Any coordinated planning program requires good liaison between the city Planning Commission and other city administrative departments, the School Board, citizen committees, local business groups, and other organizations. Recommendations by the Commission to the Council and other departments could aid in priority site selection and development; preparing a program for development of specific districts; and decreasing the cost of development by outlining in advance the needs and location of various functions, thereby avoiding duplication in expenditures.

Implementation will also require cooperation between governmental units. Maximum impact will be achieved only if the City is able to achieve cooperation from other units of government and agencies. For example, road improvements will affect quality of life, but decisions regarding some city roads are made by the Wayne County Roads Division, Michigan Department of Transportation, and SEMCOG. Clearly, these other agencies must be aware of the City's land use planning objectives.

PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT

The necessity of citizen participation and understanding of the planning process and the Plan cannot be over emphasized. A carefully organized public education program is needed to organize and identify public support in any community development plan. The lack of citizen understanding and support can seriously limit implementation of the planning proposals. The failure to support needed bond issues, failure to elect progressive officials, and litigation concerning taxation, special assessments, zoning, and public improvements are some of the results of public misunderstanding of long range plans.

In order to organize public support most effectively, the City must emphasize the reasons for the planning program and encourage citizen participation in the adoption of the Plan and the continued planning process. Public education can be achieved through informational presentations at various local functions, newspaper articles, and preparation of simple summary statements on plans for distribution. Participation by residents in various civic groups is evidence of community involvement.

CONTINUOUS PLANNING

A role of the Planning Commission is to provide recommendations to the City Council and Administration. This planning function is a continuous process which does not terminate with the completion of the Master Plan. The various districts in the city will continue to undergo change over time. Planning is an on going process of identification, adjustment, and response to problems or opportunities that arise. In order to sustain the planning process and generate positive results, maintain momentum, and respond to change; the Plan should be reviewed and updated every five years, at a minimum.

In addition, the Planning Commission or other designated committees, under the direction of the City Council, can prepare organizational plans for specific issues or areas of concern as specified in the Master Plan. Such plans may include a Central Business District plan, corridor plans, housing maintenance programs, or a recreation plan.

Potential Funding Sources

Successful implementation of projects will depend on the ability of the City to secure the necessary financing. Besides the general fund, there are several sources of revenues which the City could utilize and should investigate in more detail. The primary potential funding sources are summarized below:

MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (MSHDA)

- **Home Improvement Program.** This program provides low interest loans for home improvements through local lending institutions. The Home Improvement Program (HIP) is not targeted to any specific area, but can be utilized city wide. Interest rates on loans are related to income. The property must be twenty years or older in age or in need of repair: The loans must be utilized to correct items that are hazardous to health and safety, or for items related to energy conservation.
- **Neighborhood Improvement Program.** The Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP) is another home improvement program developed by MSHDA, but it is directed toward specific revitalization areas. Loans, with interest rates dependent on income, are made available to homeowners within such areas. The program operates very similarly to the HIP with local lending institutions participating in the program.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG)

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is an annual allocation of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to local governments for a wide range of community development activities, including housing rehabilitation, public and neighborhood improvements, and economic development activities that primarily benefit low and moderate income persons. Wayne County is the distributing body for CDBG funds.

BROWNFIELD FINANCING REDEVELOPMENT ACTS, PUBLIC ACTS 381, 382, AND 383 OF 1996

These Acts establish a new method of utilizing the TIF financing mechanism. This new initiative can be used by a community and land owner or potential user working together to finance the cleanup and reuse of contaminated property. Costs which can be funded include the demolition of buildings necessary to remove the hazardous substances, and new construction if needed to protect against exposure to hazardous substances that are to remain. An important feature of this new initiative is that it restores the ability to capture state and local school taxes but only from the taxes paid by the user of the redeveloped contaminated site. The city has an existing Brownfield Authority, which it can continue to use to capture and distribute brownfield funds.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA), PUBLIC ACT 197 OF 1975

A Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is a non profit development corporation which exists for the purpose of promoting a desirable environment for businesses and residents and implementing economic revitalization projects. Projects can be implemented by the DDA through a variety of financing techniques, including bond issues, tax increment financing, and public and private contributions.

The foregoing State Enabling Legislation plays an important part in expanding the capacity of the city to attract and accommodate economic development. A successful program, however, is predicated in major part on having the fiscal resources necessary to support or provide for development or redevelopment activities. Without some financial participation by the community, many projects have little chance of becoming reality.

A critical element for spurring economic development is the creation within the community of profit making opportunities for the private sector. Without the basic profit incentive built into a project, its chances of success will be limited. Thus, if conditions appear to be shaky for a particular project the community wants to see built, the community must be prepared to advance risk capital that may not otherwise be available.

PRINCIPAL SHOPPING DISTRICTS ACT, PUBLIC ACT 120 OF 1961, AS AMENDED

This Act provides for the establishment of principal shopping districts and for the undertaking of certain activities within these districts. Municipalities are permitted to complete street and pedestrian improvements; acquire property for and construct parking facilities, and construct pedestrian malls along with other facilities that “serve the public interest.”

The municipality may also create a board for the management of certain additional ongoing activities. These activities include various initiatives to promote economic development (e.g. market studies, public relations campaigns, and retail and institutional promotions). In addition, the maintenance, security, and operation of the principal shopping district may be carried out through this board. For ease of description, this board is often referred to throughout the state as a Downtown Management Board (DMB) and the area it represents as the Principal Shopping District (PSD).

The DMB is composed of a number of members determined by the City at the time of authorization with a majority of the members being nominees of individual businesses within the PSD. One member is a representative of adjoining residential neighborhoods and one member is a representative of city government. All board members are appointed by the chief executive officer of the city with the concurrence of the governing body.

DMB's throughout Michigan engage in a variety of activities including the operation of public parking systems, cooperative advertising campaigns, and various promotions and special events.

The DMB may be funded through grants and contributions and may also use the proceeds of special assessments levied by the governing body on property within the PSD specifically for maintenance, security, and operation purposes of the DMB. All assessments are levied in accordance with the city's special assessment policies and procedures.

- **Advantages.** The advantage of this approach is that it focuses responsibility and accountability for the completion of various initiatives on a single organization. The organization is business driven, yet closely linked to the City through the appointment process and funding arrangements. It is therefore an organizational expression of the partnership between the City and business interests. Its powers to conduct cooperative advertising and promotion, undertake public relations, maintenance, security and general operation are broad enough to address many of the strategies outlined previously.
- **Disadvantages.** The chief disadvantage of this approach is that the DMB does not possess broad redevelopment and public infrastructure development powers. It also does not have access to a dedicated millage or the ability to undertake tax increment financing.

ADDITIONAL FINANCING TOOLS

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

DEDICATED MILLAGE

A special voted millage can be used to generate revenue for a specific purpose.

SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS

Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefited by specific public improvements, such as paving and drainage improvements, to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the assumed benefits to the property affected.

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 projects and are paid off by the general public with property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of projects that generate revenue. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project (for example, water and sewer service charges).

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

This technique allows for the financing of public improvements through the assessing of property taxes, on an equitable basis, to benefiting property owners in a specific district.

REHABILITATION ACT, PUBLIC ACT 344 OF 1945

Act 344 of the Public Acts of 1945 is the basic Michigan rehabilitation statute. It provides powers and procedures for local governments to acquire, assemble, and finance the redevelopment of blighted areas for general rehabilitation purposes.

SECTION 202/8

This is a federally sponsored program which provides mortgage financing and rent subsidies for the construction and maintenance of elderly housing. Only non profit, private organizations (such as churches, unions, fraternal and other non profit organizations) are eligible sponsors; but local governments usually cooperate in the assembly of land, applications, public improvements and supportive actions. Such projects are tax exempt, but the State rebates an equivalent amount to local tax jurisdictions.

MAINTENANCE OF SHOPPING AREAS ACT, PUBLIC ACT 260 OF 1984

An amendment of Act. No. 120 of 1961, now authorizes cities to establish special assessment districts to be used for the maintenance of commercial areas. Act No. 260, Public Acts of 1984, retitles the original to read: "An act to authorize the redevelopment of principal shopping areas of certain cities; to permit the creation of revenue and the bonding of certain cities for such redevelopment projects. "Basically, Act 260 expands the original act to allow the use of special assessment districts to be used not only for the redevelopment project, but now, also for the continued and on going maintenance, promotion, and security of a redevelopment project. The act also provides for the creation of a board for the management of activities within the redevelopment project, and allows for the issuance of special assessment bonds in anticipation of future collections of special assessments for the redevelopment.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Act No. 425 of 1984 deals with inter governmental land transfer for economic development projects, instead of through annexation. In the past, as many economic development project expanded beyond one governmental unit's boundaries, it required annexation of land area from the neighboring unit. Implementation of Act No. 425 will permit this process to occur by a conditional transfer of property controlled by a written contract between affected units for renewable periods of up to 50 years. This act will allow two or more units of government to actually share a given land area (sort of a joint custody) for purposes of economic development projects. The sharing, under this act, may involve public services, taxes, and other general revenue, as provided by contract, rather than the all or nothing approach of annexation. In addition, there are many other Michigan laws which provide for intergovernmental cooperation on mutually beneficial projects.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCING ACT, PUBLIC ACT 281 OF 1986

Act No. 281 of 1986 is intended to replace Public Act 450 of 1980 as the means of making tax increment financing procedures available to assist industrial development. The principal intent of the act is to promote economic growth and prevent unemployment. Eligible activities include the support of business investment in districts in which the primary activity is 1) manufacture of goods or materials, 2) agricultural processing, or 3) a high technology activity that has as its primary purpose research, product development, engineering, laboratory testing, or development of industrial technology." A municipality

wishing to use the Act 281 of 1986 must create an authority. The local development finance authority exercises the powers provided in the act within the boundaries specified by the municipality's resolution. Areas included in the authority boundaries do not have to be contiguous. Only one authority may be created by a municipality.

GRANTS

Public grants from various agencies are available for specific municipal projects. Grant acquisition will be important in the future for many projects or recreational opportunities.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Offered through the Department of Natural Resources, these grants are 50/50 matching grants for land acquisition and development of outdoor recreation facilities. Eligible projects receive a reimbursement from the Federal government equal to half the total project cost. The other half may be provided in the form of cash outlay, donation of land, or by credit for certain locally assumed costs. To be eligible, the City must have an approved, up to date recreation plan that has been formally adopted by the City Council. Facilities which may be developed with these funds include, but are not limited to, soccer fields, ball diamonds, tennis courts, playgrounds, fitness trails, picnic areas, archery ranges, and ice rinks.

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

This fund replaced the Michigan Land Trust Fund in October, 1985. All proposals for local grants must include a local match of at least 25 percent of a total project cost. Projects eligible for funding include: 1) acquisition of land or rights to land for recreational uses or for protection of the land for environmental importance or scenic beauty; 2) development of public outdoor recreation or resource protection facilities (i.e., picnic areas, winter sports areas, playgrounds, ballfields, tennis courts, trails, etc.); 3) indoor facilities if their primary purpose is to support outdoor recreation. Eligible indoor facilities include nature interpretive buildings and park visitor centers. Also eligible are outdoor recreation support buildings such as restrooms, maintenance, and storage buildings. Proposed local government fund recipients must have a recreation plan no more than five years old that is approved by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA-21)

Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA-21) grants are available for improvements to the city's transportation system, including motorized and non-motorized systems. This federal program provides funding for all types of transportation-related projects, and has been used throughout Michigan by communities to further a range of improvements. This funding may be useful in implementing a streetscape improvement program along Main Street.

Private Sources

Private sources for grants also exist. Foundations and utility companies are a common source for private grants for municipal projects. These grants are usually special purpose and limited to specific geographic areas.

10

Zoning Plan

Table 14. Zoning Plan Table

Category	Summary	Appropriate Zoning District
Neighborhood Residential	This category maintains and enhances the city’s existing stable neighborhoods by supporting sidewalks and street lighting, as well incorporating new housing types and opportunities.	R-1 districts, with revisions
Multi-Family Neighborhood	This category is characterized by multi-family residential housing units, such as apartment complexes, with higher density. Multi-Family Neighborhood areas should be located within walkable distance to community nodes such as retail centers, schools, and large employers. The Multi-Family Neighborhood areas are characterized by the city’s existing multi family buildings and immediately surrounding parcels.	R-2, with revisions
Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial	This category encompasses a mixture of retail and service uses that are of a scale accessible and desirable to the pedestrian. Live-work units or other small-scale mixed uses may also be appropriate.	C-1 and C-2, with revisions or New Zoning District
Mixed-Use Corridor	This corridor facilitates the revitalization of the Kelly Road Corridor and incorporates mixed uses to promote walkability, livability and economic growth.	New Zoning District
General Commercial	This category allows for a wider variety of commercial goods requiring greater land areas.	C-1, C-2
Regional Commercial	This category includes large scale developments that serve as a buffer and transition from industrial uses.	C-1
Flex Overlays	<p>The Residential Flex Overlay facilitates revitalization by permitting townhomes and other forms of multifamily development that is consistent with the neighborhood scale and character of single family districts. Furthermore, this designation permits additional housing diversity and facilitates the creation of more ‘rooftops’ near the Kelly Road commercial corridor.</p> <p>The Vernier Flex Overlay allows for a mix of uses along Vernier, in the event of a redevelopment proposal, including, semi-public, commercial and multi-family uses. By designating flexibility in this area, city policy can support continuation of existing uses while at the same time planning and allowing for creative development proposals that more appropriately address Vernier’s new character as an intensified truck route.</p>	New Overlay District
Industrial	This category includes larger-scale establishments that have the potential to impact adjacent land uses. General Industrial areas should have heavy buffers and deep setbacks to minimize any adverse impacts upon adjoining properties.	Eastland Commerce Center PUD
Park, Public	This category includes all City-owned and operated property including municipal offices, the library, public schools and parks.	R-1
Semi-Public	This category preserves the community facilities for Harper Woods residents, such as religious institutions, private schools and private clubs.	R-1

OTHER ZONING CHANGES

Code Section (if applicable)	Change
10-221 Article VI	Revise the list of permitted and special land uses for the commercial districts along Kelly Road to allow for a greater variety of uses and types of buildings, including a mix of residential, office, semi-public, and commercial uses.
Article VI	In all residential districts, lower the minimum required square footage.
10-282 and 10-291	Revise the public, semi-public and commercial zoning districts to include consistent buffering requirements when adjacent to residentially zoned properties near Vernier Road.
10-460 to 10-463	Revise the regulations for truck loading and service areas to provide for adequate space off-street for these functions.
Undetermined	Revise the zoning ordinance to permit the desired vision at the Poupard Elementary site.
10-204	Set maximum impervious surface coverages by zoning district.
10-452	Revise the tree and vegetation requirements for parking lots to ensure they are adequate and consistent.
Article VI	Revise the list of permitted and special land uses in all residential districts to specify the allowable types and locations for accessory dwelling units (ADUs).
Article VI	Revise the list of permitted and special land uses in all residential districts to specify the allowable types and locations for a greater variety of housing options.
10-292	Update the design standards for new infill housing.
10-205	Increase the allowable height to 3 stories in the commercial districts along Kelly Road.
10-420	Decrease the parking requirements or eliminate parking minimums along the Kelly Road corridor.
10-282 Article VI	Revise the list of permitted and special land uses for the commercial districts along Harper Road, with a particular focus on pedestrian-oriented commercial.
New	Create a new section to allow for in-lieu public art dedications and specify its applicability to large-scale developments.
10-237	Revise the signage section to de-regulate and encourage murals.
	Consider density or other design bonuses for effective on-site stormwater capture.
10-282	Revise the landscaping requirements to include tree improvements as part of any development in the Kelly, Harper, and Vernier Roads commercial and industrial districts.
10-240	Evaluate and revise parking requirements to broaden access to shared parking, modernize use-specific parking requirements, and allow for Planning Commission discretion to modify minimum parking requirements when appropriate and justified.



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