



City of Imlay City
Lapeer County, Michigan

MASTER PLAN





This Master Plan represents over a year of dedicated work by the elected and appointed officials of the City of Imlay City, staff and consultants. Specifically, the following officials and staff deserve special recognition.

City Commission

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Marty Rankin, Mayor Pro Tem
Greg Dennis, Commissioner
Al Ramirez, Commissioner
Brian Badder, Commissioner
Amy Planck, Commissioner
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I hereby certify that the City of Imlay City Planning Commission adopted this Master Plan, in accordance with Section 43 of Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended. After holding a public hearing on December 23, 2014, the Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission.

Planning Commission Secretary

Date: _____



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I. INTRODUCTION



A. INTRODUCTION

The future land use decisions made by the City of Imlay City will have a fundamental impact on the character and quality of life in the community. Historically, Imlay City has been a fairly quiet community with a limited amount of new development. In the past 10 to 15 years, there has been a large increase in the amount of commercial and industrial growth in the City. This is due in large part to good access from M-53 and I-69, but also the residential growth that has occurred in Imlay City. Although the Michigan economy has slowed considerably, growth from Oakland County and Macomb County is expected to continue moving northward. This growth pressure is expected to continue to impact Imlay City during the life of this Master Plan and beyond.

During the preparation of this Plan it became clear that Imlay City residents are concerned about maintaining the quality of their community, particularly the quality of residential life and the community's small town flavor. At the public open house that was conducted to gain input on the Master Plan residents noted that they liked the following aspects of life in Imlay City:

- "A friendly community"
- "Friendliness"
- "Small town feel"
- "Ethnic mix"
- "Small town atmosphere – friendly"

This Master Plan is intended to continue the City's efforts to protect and preserve these qualities on which residents place such great value while allowing the City to grow and prosper in a responsible manner.

B. WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

A Master Plan is a document that pulls together the goals, desires and vision of the community as they relate to land use. It acts as a "guide" for future land use decisions and provides a framework upon which the zoning ordinance, and any amendments, can be based. The City of Imlay City Master Plan identifies and examines a wide range of physical issues including population, housing, public services, natural resources, traffic and circulation, utilities, and land use. The implications of each is analyzed and translated into a series of issues, goals and recommendations to be followed by the City. This effort culminates in the creation of a Future Land Use Plan, which identifies what the future land uses should be for all areas of the City for ten or so years. The Future Land Use Plan is the result of, and based upon, the entire master planning effort.





In short, the Master Plan is a well thought-out document that is intended to give long-term guidance to the daily decisions that must be made with regard to land use. Land uses and individual land use cases change over time. People request variances or question whether or not the Zoning Ordinance allows them to conduct a particular activity on their land. The Master Plan is a resource that can be referred to by the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals or the City Commission as they look to resolve questions relating to land use.

This Master Plan is part of a broader effort by Imlay City to improve policies, ordinances and guidelines that will help achieve this vision. Other influences will also contribute to the vision, including but not limited to:

- Downtown Development Authority’s Downtown Plan
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Capital Improvements Plan
- Utilities Plan

Comparing the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance

The Master Plan provides general direction on the future development patterns, policies, and actions for community leaders to consider. While the Master Plan does not change the Zoning Ordinance or zoning of any property, some of the plan recommendations will be implemented through text and map amendments. Some of the other differences between the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance are listed below.

Master Plan	Zoning Ordinance
Provides general policies, a guide.	Provides specific regulations, the law.
Describes what should happen in the future – recommended land use for the next 20 years, not necessarily the recommended use for today.	Describes what is and what is not allowed today, based on existing conditions.
Includes recommendations that involve other agencies and groups.	Deals only with development-related issues under City control.
Flexible to respond to changing conditions.	Fairly rigid, requires formal amendment to change.

Using The Master Plan

The Master Plan will be used primarily by the City Commission, the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals as a guide in making land use decisions. Applicants seeking approval from any of



these bodies will also find the Master Plan to be a valuable tool for understanding the long-term goals of the City. The Master Plan can likewise be used by other citizen committees to assist them in their review of issues that are land use-related.

The Master Plan also acts as the starting point for all Zoning Ordinance updates and amendments. Michigan State law requires that the Zoning Ordinance and zoning amendments be based upon a Master Plan. The Master Plan gives a legal basis for zoning and identifies how the community is protecting the "health, safety and welfare" of the population. In the event that either the Zoning Ordinance or a decision of either the Planning Commission or City Commission is challenged in court, the Master Plan will help provide the planning rationale to support the land use regulation.

The City Commission, Planning Commission, and the public should continuously reference the Master Plan in order to:

- Review development proposals – to confirm any given proposal meets all goals and objectives of the Master Plan.
- Review rezoning requests – to confirm the request is consistent with the City’s criteria to consider rezonings including existing conditions, the future land use map, the appropriate timing of the change, consistency with the goals and policies of the Master Plan, and potential impacts on the City.
- Provide a basis for amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and zoning map - to help realize and enforce plan goals.
- Understand expectations for the future land use patterns and desired land use types in the community – to inform potential residents and businesses about Imlay City and its future.
- Identify and recommend physical improvements – to provide direction for provision of roadways, streetscapes, entryways, non-motorized pathways, parks, and community facilities.
- Provide specific design standards related to buildings, landscaping, and other site improvements - to guide development and redevelopment throughout the community.

When Will The Master Plan Be Updated Again?

According to Michigan Law, Master Plans must be updated every five years. Amendments can be made on a regular basis as changing conditions dictate. The Future Land Use Plan, which is part of this Master Plan, may be updated more regularly as requests are made for changes in zoning designation. The correct way to deal with a request for such a change is to first examine the future land use designation to see if it matches the requested zoning classification. If it does not, then the Planning Commission should first consider whether conditions



or circumstances have changed since the Master Plan was updated that dictate an amendment to the Future Land Use Plan. If conditions have not changed, then the request for a Master Plan amendment should be denied. Likewise, the request for a change in zoning should also be denied. All zoning actions should be based upon the direction of the Master Plan.



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II. COMMUNITY PROFILE

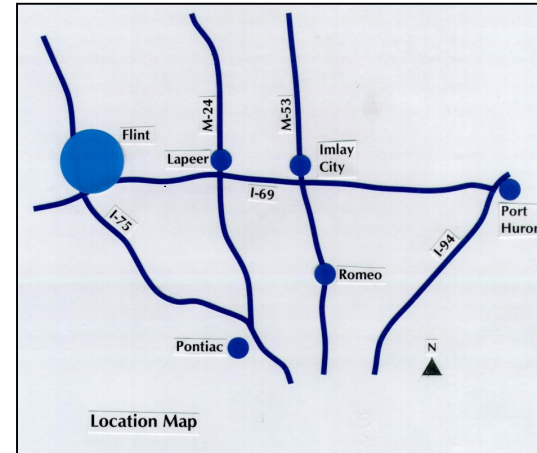




A. OVERVIEW

Imlay City is named after William H. Imlay who was an early settler in the area. The City’s early growth was largely due to the existence of several railroads that traversed this area of Michigan. Established in 1870, the community’s population reached 500 people within the first year and a half. By then, Imlay City contained a school, two hotels, four general stores, two hardware stores, a furniture store, a drugstore, two carriage and blacksmith shops, a saw and planing mill, a livery stable and an elevator. By 1914, the town began building around streetcar lines.¹ Imlay City has continued to grow since then and has become a comprehensive community that offers a full range of services to residents and the surrounding community. The City also has increasingly become a bedroom community for the metro Detroit area to the south.

Imlay City is located in the southeast portion of Lapeer County, approximately 55 miles north of Detroit and halfway between Flint and Port Huron. The City encompasses 2.5 square miles and is located immediately north of Interstate 69, as illustrated on the map inset. The City is part of the Detroit-Warren-Livonia Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which is composed of Lapeer, Livingston, Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair, and Wayne Counties. Good highway access, including proximity to I-69 and I-94 and I-75 (via I-69) enhances Imlay City’s capability for long-term development and local and intra-county commerce.



B. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Data provided by the U.S. Census for 2010 was used to update the Demographic Profile. The following is a summary of the key findings from that analysis:

Population Observations:

- Although the population in Imlay City declined by 7 % between 2000 and 2010, the City has grown by 23% since 1990 and by 45% since 1980. By comparison, Lapeer County population grew by .5% between 2000 and 2010, grew 18% since 1990 and 26% since 1980.

POPULATION TRENDS

	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Change	
					1980-2010	2000-2010
Imlay City	2,482	2,921	3,869	3,597	44.9%	-7.0%
Lapeer County	70,038	74,768	87,904	88,319	26.1%	0.5%
State of Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	6.7%	-0.6%

¹ Source: Imlay City Historical Society



- Age of residents in the City is somewhat stable. The median age in 2010 was 33 years, up from 32.2 years in 2000.
- Imlay City is a diversifying community. The number of residents who identify with two or more races more than doubled since 2000.
- The number of Hispanic residents increased by forty percent (40%) since 2000. The US Census reports that over 26% of Hispanic residents are Mexican, which is the only Latino category that increased in population between 2000 and 2010.

AGE BREAKDOWN

	2000	2010	Change 00-10
85+	126	94	-25.4%
75-84	243	169	-30.5%
65-74	222	196	-11.7%
60-64	133	144	8.3%
55-59	124	181	46.0%
45-54	396	454	14.6%
35-44	539	463	-14.1%
25-34	562	474	-15.7%
20-24	305	239	-21.6%
15-19	288	257	-10.8%
10-14	289	293	1.4%
5-9	313	337	7.7%
Under 5	329	296	-10.0%

RACE

	2000		2010		Change 00-10
White	3,430	88.7%	2,983	82.9%	-13.0%
Black	22	0.6%	34	0.9%	54.5%
Asian	51	1.3%	21	0.6%	-58.8%
Native American	11	0.3%	10	0.3%	-9.1%
Other	301	7.8%	434	12.1%	44.2%
Multi-racial	54	1.4%	115	3.2%	113.0%

ETHNICITY

Mexican	601	15.5	943	26.2%	56.91%
Puerto Rican	83	2.1	53	1.5%	-36.14%
Other Hispanic or Latino	59	1.5	46	1.3%	-22.03%
Total Hispanic/Latino (and % of total population)	743	19.2%	1,042	29.0%	40.2%

Housing Observations:

- Not surprisingly, the median housing value in the city grew only slightly from 2000 (\$112,400) to 2010 (\$117,800). During that time, the State of Michigan and the nation experienced an economic recession that negatively affected property values across the state.
- In 2010, the most commonly occupied home was valued between \$100,000 to \$150,000.
- Just over half (51%) of homes in the City consist of single-family homes, but townhome/attached condo residency is on the rise, increasing by over 80% since 2000.

MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE

	2000	2010	Change 00-10
Imlay City	\$112,400	\$117,800	4.8%
Imlay Township	\$145,300	\$179,300	23.4%
Almont	\$135,400	\$137,700	1.7%
Lapeer	\$107,900	\$112,200	4.0%
Romeo	\$151,600	\$173,100	14.2%
Lapeer County	\$134,600	\$143,200	6.4%

HOUSING TENURE

	2000	2010	Change 00-10
Owner-occupied	855	773	-9.6%
Renter-occupied	641	583	-9.0%
Vacant	103	244	136.9%



- More homes in 2010 (15%) were vacant than in 2000 (6%).
- Housing values in the city are increasing, but not as fast as other surrounding communities like Imlay Township and Romeo.

Economic Observations:

- Where median income levels have dropped in many similar communities like Almont and Romeo, income in Imlay City increased 8.8% between 2000 (\$32,436) and 2010 (\$35,278). However, when compared to those same communities, Imlay City residents earn less than those in other communities.
- At the State level, unemployment rates almost doubled between 2000 and 2010, but Imlay City only saw a 15.7% increase in unemployment during that same time.

MEDIAN INCOME COMPARISONS

	2000	2010	Change 00-10
Imlay City	\$32,436	\$35,278	8.8%
Imlay Township	\$60,362	\$63,088	4.5%
Almont	\$53,984	\$48,214	-10.7%
Lapeer	\$35,526	\$33,316	-6.2%
Romeo	\$48,015	\$44,355	-7.6%
Lapeer County	\$51,717	\$55,005	6.4%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	2000		2010	
Less than \$10,000	166	11.1%	220	16.7%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	201	13.5%	60	4.5%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	223	15.0%	201	15.2%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	212	14.2%	177	13.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	282	18.9%	213	16.1%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	220	14.8%	180	13.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	78	5.2%	163	12.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	67	4.5%	80	6.1%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	41	2.8%	26	2.0%

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

	2000	2010	Change 00-10
Imlay City	6.9%	8.0%	15.7%
Lapeer County	5.5%	8.5%	54.5%
Michigan	5.8%	11.5%	98.9%



- The top occupation of residents in 2010 was "Production, Transportation and Material Moving Occupations", which was also the top occupation in 2000.
- Similarly, the top industry ("Manufacturing") in which residents worked did not change since 2000.

INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION

OCCUPATION	2000		2010	
	%	Rank	%	Rank
▪ Production, transportation, and material moving	34.9%	1	30%	1
▪ Service	16.9%	4	28%	2
▪ Sales and office	18.1%	3	20%	3
▪ Management, business, science, and arts	19.8%	2	16%	4
▪ Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	10.4%	5	7%	5
INDUSTRY				
▪ Manufacturing	34.3%	1	30.0%	1
▪ Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	8.6%	4	11.1%	2
▪ Retail trade	11.1%	3	9.5%	3
▪ Wholesale trade	1.0%	13	0.0%	4
▪ Construction	8.3%	5	8.5%	5
▪ Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	4.1%	8	8.8%	6
▪ Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services	4.5%	7	7.9%	7
▪ Public administration	1.2%	10	7.1%	8
▪ Educational services, health care and social assistance	16.1%	2	6.9%	9
▪ Other services, except public administration	3.3%	9	5.2%	10
▪ Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	6.2%	6	2.6%	11
▪ Information	1.0%	11	1.6%	12
▪ Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.4%	12	0.8%	13



MAP ONE: EXISTING LAND USE

C. EXISTING LAND USE

A fundamental step in preparing a community master plan is to analyze existing land use patterns. This analysis not only identifies what and where particular uses have occurred, it also provides insight as to where future development might occur and where conflicts may exist or develop.

Presently, the City of Imlay City encompasses a total land area of approximately 1,585 acres, of which roughly 1,125 acres (70%) have been developed. Map One, Existing Land Use, presents a generalized picture of existing land uses in the City. A discussion of the land uses shown on the map is detailed below.

Single-Family Residential

The single-family residential category includes single-family detached, single-family attached and manufactured homes. The residential areas in Imlay City are fairly evenly dispersed to the north and south of the downtown area. Single-family dwelling units are the predominant housing type in the City. Of the 325 acres developed for residential uses, 88% is dedicated to single-family homes. The majority of the older housing stock is located north of the downtown while more recent construction is located further south and west, including a manufactured housing park just north of I-69. Both areas are characterized by streets in a traditional grid pattern lined by mature street trees.



Multiple-Family Residential

Multiple-family residential development is characterized as having three or more dwelling units. Imlay City has multiple family dwelling units dispersed throughout the City. Approximately 12% of the residential acreage in the City is developed with multiple-family dwellings. Several of the multiple-family residential complexes are senior citizen or assisted living facilities, including a new facility at the City's northwest corner off North Blacks Corner Road. Some apartment style duplexes are located in the areas abutting the downtown, a large apartment complex is located along S. Almont Avenue north of Newark Road, and another complex is located off of W. Imlay City Road in the City's northwest corner. There are also a number of older, single family structures to the north of downtown that have been converted into multiple-family dwellings.



Public and Institutional

Public and Institutional land uses include those parcels owned and operated by the City, utility companies, schools, religious institutions, and other not-for profit organizations for civic purposes. These land uses do not include parks and recreational facilities, which are

categorized separately below. These areas comprise over 225 acres (20%) of developed land in Imlay City. The western portion of the City contains the high school, middle school, elementary school and educational service center. The fairgrounds, along M-53 near the middle of the City, also encompass a significant amount of land, and the fairgrounds board intends for the facility to have a long-term presence in Imlay City. The City Hall, building, fire and police stations, post office, senior center, public library, and historical museum are all located within the downtown area. Several churches can be found within the City and are located along M-53 as well as within the neighborhoods to the north and south of the downtown. The municipal water treatment plant and public works department are located on the east side of M-53.

Parks and Recreation

The City owns several parks including the 9-acre Lion's Park, Old School Park, Rotary Park, and Veteran's Park. Parks, which are described further in Section F below, make up a total of approximately 19 acres in Imlay City. Events held in the City include the Winter Playground, Cinco de Mayo, Polly Ann Trail Walk, Summer Concert Series, CSB Bank Ice Cream Social, Blueberry Parade, Summer Movie Series, Street Scarecrow Decorating Contest, and Merchant Trick or Treat.

Commercial

Commercial land uses refer to business retail and service operations outside of the Central Business District (CBD). CBD and office uses are classified separately below. Most of the existing commercial uses are located along the Cedar Street (M-53) corridor, with some overflow on Capac Road (M-21) and Newark Road. Commercial land uses make up approximately 11.5% of developed land in the City. Uses range from large scale shopping centers to smaller, service-oriented businesses like banks and eating establishments. Most of the recent commercial development activity has continued to locate along M-53.

Downtown

The downtown covers approximately seven acres along Third Street between M-53 and Almont Avenue. It is a traditional downtown characterized primarily by two story buildings with no front yards and



on-street parking. Most first floors are occupied by specialty retail uses such as gift shops, hair styling salons, restaurants and offices. Some of the historic buildings have been restored while others are in need of structural or visual improvements. There are few vacancies on the first floors but several of the upper floors could be better utilized for residential and office uses. The CBD has become a popular location for businesses catering to Imlay City's Hispanic population.

Office

Office land uses include those businesses such as realtors, medical offices, insurance brokers, and financial service providers. Land devoted to office uses cover 11 acres in the City and are generally found along the major commercial corridors of M-53 and M-21.

Industrial

Imlay City's industrial development is concentrated in four primary locations: the industrial park east of Cedar Street; south of downtown along W. Second Street; along Blacks Corner Road; and south of Newark Road on both sides of M-53, including the Rubber Enterprises facility. Industrial uses comprise 161 acres (14.3%) of the developed land in the City.

Agricultural

The only substantial areas of agriculture in Imlay City are located in the southwestern and northeastern corners of the City. They comprise approximately 150 acres of land, or nearly 10% of the City's total land area. The agricultural lands in this area are considered to be very productive. Crops in this area include corn, celery, cucumbers, beans, onions and other vegetables. Some of the lands formerly in agricultural use have been recently converted to a single-family attached condominium development along S. Almont Avenue and Newark Road.

Vacant Land

Imlay City's vacant land is largely located east of M-53 behind the commercial development that fronts the highway and in the industrial park. There are also several key undeveloped parcels along M-53 and along Newark Road. Smaller undeveloped parcels are distributed throughout the City. Some vacant land is located in low-lying areas along streams that are prone to flooding, but most vacant parcels face few constraints and will likely be developed as the market warrants.





D. TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

Overview of Transportation Systems

Land uses and transportation systems function interdependently. More intensive land uses require higher road capacity; lower intensity land uses require less capacity. A minimum level of service is expected for all land uses and must be maintained to ensure a properly functioning transportation network.

The transportation system in Imlay City includes an interstate highway (I-69), two state highways (M-53 and M-21), and the Canadian National Railway which crosses over M-53 immediately adjacent to the downtown area. There is no transit, but the City has adopted a pathways plan to help accommodate non-motorized transportation.

Circulation Patterns

Overall, Imlay City has a good road system, predominantly characterized by a grid street pattern and well-maintained roads. Circulation patterns pose no substantial restrictions to development or growth in the City. Van Dyke Road/Cedar Street (M-53) is the major north to south thoroughfare through the City and Almont Avenue and Blacks Corners Road provide local north-south access. Capac and Newark Roads are the primary east-west thoroughfares, while Fourth Street and Borland Road provide local east-west connections. All of these roads are fully paved and offer easy access to the primary commercial corridors and to Interstate 69, providing quick and easy access to surrounding metropolitan areas.

The residential neighborhoods and downtown are separated from the main thoroughfares and are generally accessed by local streets with lower traffic volumes and slower speeds. Because the majority of traffic is concentrated on the primary streets, downtown Imlay City and the residential neighborhoods have a quaint atmosphere that residents find very attractive.

E. ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

While Imlay City does not have extensive natural features such as hills, lakes, rivers, soils, and woodlands, its existing features are an important resource to the community. Sound planning must examine the differences in the natural environment across the City's landscape.

The planning process addresses the relationship between the land's natural features and its suitability for accommodating development and improvements. Data on natural features was assessed based on maps and surveys and is described in terms of capability and suitability for development. For survey and analysis purposes, the environment of Imlay City is divided into the following primary natural systems which have an impact on the character of Imlay City.



Topography

The topography of Imlay City is generally flat and poses no significant constraint to development. The elevation ranges from 830 feet to 810 feet above sea level with a gradual slope from the southwest to northeast. The City's most varied topography is generally located along the streams in the east end of the City and in the City's northwest corner.

Surface Water

The north branch of the Belle River runs southwest to northeast through the northwest corner of the City and through Lion's Park. It then turns south and runs just east of the City limits. Two small streams or drains on the eastern portion of the city drain to the river, one of which is underground in the vicinity of M-53. These are the only significant water features.

Soils

The predominant soil associations in the area are composed of the gray-brown podzolic type and are typical of heavy forestation. This soil type is useful for growing a variety of crops including grains, vegetables, and fruit trees.

Floodplains

Surface water drainage in the City is provided by a system of improved storm drains and natural water courses. The north branch of the Belle River, the Bigelow Drain, and two small tributaries located between Borland Road and Third Street comprise the natural system.

The drains, however, are prone to flooding in times of extreme wet weather. Existing floodplains are located along these water courses as well as along the extreme east boundary of the City. The City has made extensive improvements to the drains and their storm water capacities. In response, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) revised the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) in 2007.

F. RECREATION AND PATHWAYS

In addition to the many recreation facilities provided through the public schools, the City maintains five parks, which are described below.

North of downtown, east of the municipal offices and west of M-53, is the Imlay City public outdoor swimming pool which is open during the summer months. Additional details on parks and recreation for the City can be found in the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides guidance regarding the need for new or expanded parks or recreation facilities. The guidelines are based on the National Parks and Recreation Association's standards, which are summarized in the table below. These standards are intended to help communities determine if they are providing



adequate facilities for local residents. What they do not do is consider recreational facilities provided by others at public schools, private property and the Eastern Michigan County Fairgrounds. Therefore, they must be considered within the context of these other facilities.

PARKS ASSESSMENT

Park Type	Existing acreage	Standard (acres / 1,000 residents)	Suggested Acreage	Surplus / Deficiency
Mini-parks	1.4	0.375	1.3	0.1
Old School Park	0.5			
Rotary Park	0.9			
Neighborhood parks	3.5	1.5	5.4	-1.9
Veteran's Park	3.5			
Community parks	14.3	6.5	23.4	-9.1
Lion's Park	9.3			
Lamb Steele	5			
Totals	19.2	-	30.1	-10.9
2010 Population = 3,597				

Lamb Steele Park - Downtown

Lamb Steele Park, situated downtown just behind the Imlay City municipal offices, is one of the City's most attractive assets. It contains picnic tables, benches, a grill and a gazebo that is used for special events, including weddings, and is the location of weekly live music during the summer movie series. Proximity to the Farmer's Market and City pool makes it a frequently used park.

Lion's Park - Blacks Corners Road

The City's largest park, Lion's Park includes a covered pavilion that can be rented for group events, grills, picnic tables, benches, restrooms, sand beach volleyball courts, a large soccer field, baseball diamond, a slide and more.

Old School Park - Fifth Street at Bancroft

As a mini-park, Old School Park serves its purpose of providing a place for local recreation. While small, it is still used regularly because of its family-friendly atmosphere and facilities. The park is fenced and contains an outdoor grill and adequate seating for parents observing their children. The playground includes swings, a digger, and a large play structure.

Rotary Park - East First Street

Rotary Park is an active playground that includes five pieces of playground equipment and a gazebo. There are swings, a slide and a shaded bench in the back of the park to enjoy.



Veteran's Park - Between Cheney & Titus Streets

Located in the center of a strong residential area, Veteran's Park provides a serene environment for leisure activity. A mulched walking path winds around the perimeter of the park, which is lined with pine trees and park benches. It features a small parking area, grill, slide, log playhouse and other toys. A trailhead was developed along Fourth Street east of Blacks Corners. The trailhead includes a parking lot, hitching posts, bench, bike rack, exercise feature, and information board.

Polly Ann Trail

The Polly Ann Trail is a 20-mile former rail corridor from Bordman Road to Kings Mill, passing through Dryden, Imlay City, and Lum. This trail connects to the Polly Ann Trail in Oakland County, which will eventually connect to the Paint Creek, Clinton River, and Macomb-Orchard Trails.

The Friends of the Polly Ann Trail of Lapeer County is a grass roots organization of citizens that supports the development and operation of the Polly Ann Trail in Lapeer County. The group was formed in October of 1997 to promote the acquisition of the unused rail corridor once known as the Polly Ann Railroad. Their mission is to support the development of the Polly Ann Trail through community informational campaigns, political action, volunteer labor, and fundraising projects.

Imlay City Pathways

Sidewalks exist throughout the City, mostly in the traditional core and in newer residential developments. In the past, non-motorized facilities along South Cedar Street were patchy and incomplete. To improve the non-motorized system, the City has a Pathways Plan (discussed further in Chapter V) and ordinances that will help complete a network of sidewalks and pathways.

- Ten foot wide asphalt bikepaths are required along the entire frontage of any development located along Cedar Street (M-53).
- Five foot wide concrete sidewalks are required along both sides of all internal roads within any residential subdivision, site condominium, and multiple family developments.

G. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Imlay City's City Hall, Fire Department, Police Department, and Library are all located in the downtown area. Other community facilities include the fairgrounds, public schools, and civic institutions such as the Eagle's Club.





RECREATION AND PATHWAYS MAP

III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES





A. OVERVIEW

A primary purpose of the Master Plan is to give direction about the future use of land in a community. For the Plan to work effectively, it must reflect the views of the people who live and own property there while balancing the rights of individuals and reflecting the technical evaluation carried out in preparing the Plan. A common set of goals and objectives have been developed that express these desires.

Goals are general statements of purpose that will drive the future of the City. Objectives included are those targeted items that will further each goal. Actions, which are included at the end of this chapter, include the list of steps needed to achieve the goals and objectives listed below.

Goals:

General purpose statements

Objectives:

Targeted actions needed to achieve the goal

Actions:

Specific steps required to implement the objective statements (See Chapter V)

The City of Imlay City aims to be a community that works with its neighbors to improve the regional quality of life, provide quality places to live, a prosperous economy, efficient services, and a helpful and cooperative governmental atmosphere.

B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

OVERALL

- 1 Maintain Imlay City’s reputation as a great small town.**
 - 1.1 Maintain an up-to-date Zoning Ordinance that reflects current trends in land use and development.
 - 1.2 Identify key entryways into the City and prepare plans to create a stronger gateway image development for corridors into the City.
 - 1.3 Create a set of development guidelines that provide the quality standards that are expected in the City, and publish incentives that may be issued for qualifying projects.
 - 1.4 Develop and maintain a five year capital improvement program to prioritize the expansion or installation of public facilities and services in relation to funding availability.
- 2 Coordinate with other agencies, municipalities, businesses and citizens to share project responsibilities, reduce project overlapping, and maximize usefulness of City resources.**



- 2.1 Communicate information of interest to residents through the City's web page and newsletters.
- 2.2 Initiate regular discussions with the Fair Board to identify current needs, future plans, and potential impacts to the Fairgrounds.
- 2.3 Encourage the continued provision of high quality school facilities that contribute to the desired quality of life and that attract new residents and businesses to the City.
- 2.4 Work with the Imlay City Downtown Development Authority to collectively plan for the downtown, and to collaborate on implementation efforts.
- 2.5 Support community organizations and citizen groups in their efforts to provide needed facilities and services that benefit the community.
- 2.6 Work with high speed internet providers to expand service to residents and businesses in the Imlay City area.
- 2.7 Explore opportunities for joint services and facilities with other groups including schools, churches, surrounding communities, and organizations.

RESIDENTIAL

3 Protect existing residential neighborhoods and maintain quality homes.

- 3.1 Stabilize residential areas by preventing the encroachment of incompatible land uses into residential neighborhoods.
- 3.2 Promote maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing and residential neighborhoods.
- 3.3 Enforce zoning, building code and property maintenance regulations to ensure that rental units do not become a blight on the community.

4 Support new residential developments that offer a variety of quality housing options.

- 4.1 Allow for a mix of dwelling types and densities, where they can be supported by the market, and served by adequate infrastructure and services.
- 4.2 Support the creation of residential units on the upper floors of commercial buildings in downtown Imlay City.
- 4.3 Attract developments that offer affordable and appropriate housing for seniors.
- 4.4 Promote Planned Development Districts and flexible zoning options for development proposals that may require some regulatory flexibility, but that will result in higher quality development options.
- 4.5 Require future residential developments to be served by a grid road system that is integrated with the city's existing road system.
- 4.6 Encourage usable and convenient open space be provided with new residential development.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL

5 Maintain the historical character and aesthetics of downtown Imlay City.

- 5.1 Continue to support a blend of civic, retail, office, service, residential and entertainment uses that help create an active environment throughout the day and into the evening.

- 5.2 Discourage the relocation of local (e.g. Imlay City offices), state and federal (e.g. post office) institutional uses outside of the downtown.
- 5.3 Discourage auto-oriented and suburban-style developments that are not appropriate for downtown environments.
- 5.4 Promote community events in the downtown area to attract business and attention to downtown shops.
- 5.5 Promote visual and physical links between Cedar Street (M-53) and downtown Imlay City, such as landscaped walkways, streetscapes, and public art.
- 5.6 Continue to enforce maintenance and design codes, and improve or restore the façades of buildings in the downtown area.
- 5.7 Encourage additional outdoor seating areas for local restaurants and businesses.
- 5.8 Maintain attractive entryways into the downtown; especially at the M-53/3rd Street intersection.
- 5.9 Retain the residential neighborhoods near downtown Imlay City to add vitality to the downtown and provide convenient services to those residents.

6 Identify locations for general commercial growth, and provide guidance to future developers.

- 6.1 Allow gradual expansion of the commercial area farther west along the north side of Newark Road, being careful to protect the proposed residential neighborhood from development on the north side of Newark Road, west of South Almont Avenue.
- 6.2 Promote high-quality standards for new commercial developments, including building design, signs, lighting, parking and loading facilities, access design, and landscaping.
- 6.3 Direct auto-oriented businesses and suburban-style retail uses that are not appropriate in the downtown to the General Commercial district.

7 Maintain a strong industrial base in the City.

- 7.1 Maintain existing industrial uses by facilitating expansion plans and removing regulatory barriers.
- 7.2 Investigate, through discussions with Imlay Township, opportunities to add industrial land to the City.
- 7.3 Ensure new industrial uses are located and developed so that they create minimal impacts on nearby uses.

PARKS & RECREATION

8 Provide a comprehensive system of public and private parks, recreation facilities and open spaces that are accessible to residents.

- 8.1 Promote the continued implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- 8.2 Promote the continued implementation of the pathway system throughout the City, as shown on Map 2 – Non-motorized Facilities Plan.
- 8.3 Explore opportunities for joint recreational services with other groups including schools, churches, surrounding communities, and organizations.



- 8.4 Encourage the inclusion of usable open space within the development of new residential subdivisions.
- 8.5 Acknowledge the Fairgrounds as a contributor to the overall parks and recreation system in Imlay City, and work with the Fair Board to identify and encourage an expanded range of activities that serve the overall needs of City residents.

TRANSPORTATION

9 Maintain a safe, balanced, and coordinated multi-modal transportation system adequate to accommodate the current and future needs of Imlay City.

- 9.1 Continue to implement a continuous non-motorized pathway system, separate from the traveled thoroughfares that link residents to existing pathways, community facilities, schools, businesses, landmarks and adjacent communities.
- 9.2 Ensure adequate provisions for the on-going maintenance of pedestrian pathways.
- 9.3 Ensure off-street parking areas are appropriately sized and developed in a manner that is aesthetically pleasing.
- 9.4 Coordinate long-range transportation needs with MDOT, the Lapeer County Road Commission, and adjacent communities.
- 9.5 Encourage use of transportation impact studies to determine the amount of parking, and road improvements that may be needed to provide safe access to development.
- 9.6 Link new subdivisions with existing residential areas to form neighborhoods, including street and pathway connections.
- 9.7 Encourage the connection of and shared use of parking lots, especially between businesses or uses that have different peak parking demands.



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IV. KEY DEVELOPMENT AREAS





A. OVERVIEW

Because of the generally developed nature of the City, additional focus is being placed on redevelopment of vacant, obsolete or underutilized sites and areas, and planning for future community expansion. Because of the municipal services offered by Imlay City, it is expected that, as development in the vicinity around the City continues, additional demand for utilities and services may come from sites not currently within the City boundary. To communicate the vision for these key areas of the City, this plan focuses on the following two critical area types:

- **Future Development Areas.** These sites include vacant sites within the City, or future areas that may be acquired. These sites have the potential to enhance or detract from their surroundings, so direction is provided regarding the future vision for them, which respect nearby buildings, uses and character.
- **Redevelopment Areas.** These are areas that could be enhanced or that are in need of more drastic change or redevelopment. This plan provides ideas and resources that may help improve the visual or economic stability of certain sites. Changes to these sites are likely to take more effort and time, but if accomplished, could positively impact the community.

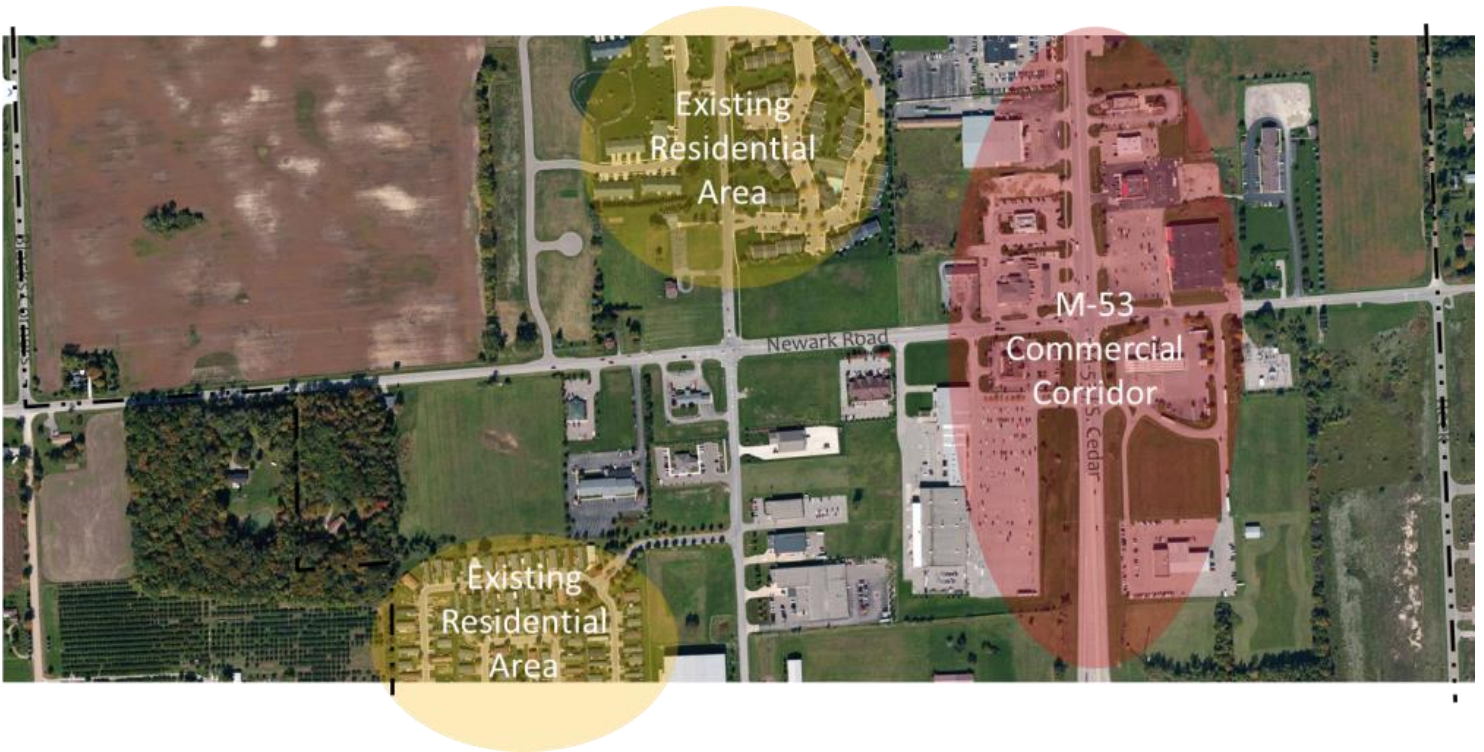
B. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Limited sites remain for new development in the City, yet demand for services and improvements continue to rise. Available land consists mainly of lots in existing industrial parks and along the eastern City boundary, where influence of the Belle River creates unsuitable development conditions. Other vacant areas are located in the north end of the City, and some along Newark Road (discussed below). As a center of development in the region, many residents visit Imlay City for their daily shopping and service needs. Demand for commercial development sites is now again on the rise, and without room to grow, future development has the potential to scatter throughout surrounding communities, which is likely to cause unforeseen consequences like traffic congestion or installation of costly infrastructure.

Understanding its role in providing goods and services to residents within the greater Imlay City area, the discussions below explain how the City envisions its commercial areas redeveloping and where potential expansion could occur, in order to meet regional demands.

Newark Road Corridor

Newark Road is a corridor that runs east/west through the City. It intersects with M-53 approximately 0.4 miles north of the I-69 interchange. With such proximity to the highway, and the commercial frontage along M-53 that spans both north and south of Newark Road, the corridor is now becoming a focus for future development.



Many parcels along the corridor are deeper than some existing commercial sites, and therefore have the potential for larger-scale development. The following actions may be taken:

- **Subarea Plan.** As opposed to letting development occur randomly, prepare a specific corridor plan that considers the policy suggestions below, to help pre-plan for development, and encourage the character and type of development that is desired.
- **Market Study.** To support any changes in policy or zoning for this corridor, a full study of the demand for commercial space may be conducted to ensure it will not create a surplus of available land which can be detrimental to existing businesses. The intent is to provide an “overflow” district when the existing districts are full.
- **Zoning.** To implement recommendations of this plan, and those from any subarea plan, develop a new zoning district that considers the unique site conditions and land use interactions that exist along the corridor.



- **Access Management Plan.** Prepare an access management plan to pre-plan for shared access and future traffic signals.
- **Traffic Impact Studies.** Allow large-scale or “big box” retailers to submit impact studies to determine the amount of parking and transportation improvements that should be required.
- **Streetscaping.** Distinguish the corridor from other commercial areas in the City, through landscaping, signage, non-motorized facilities, etc.
- **Development Guidelines.** Like other areas of the corridor, Newark Road needs to have unifying design elements that will give it its own unique character. The guidelines on page 35 should be implemented during site plan review.

Future City Expansion

While development in surrounding communities is expected to an extent, the City understands its role in providing areas for regional commercial businesses and others that may simply be too large for surrounding areas. For this reason the City feels it is important to identify potential growth areas, in case demand for annexation begins as developers look for sites with access (or potential access) to public water and sewer services. This is, in part, why the Newark Road corridor is being considered for commercial development. However, as this plan projects the City’s vision well into the future, it is expected that the available land inside its current boundary will continue to be developed and there will come a day when expansion of the City may be appropriate, both in response to a need for new development opportunities, but also in response to demand from developers for the utilities and services that the City can provide.

The annexation process involves a transfer of land from one jurisdiction to another by petition or resolution. They can be controversial because of emotional or political reasons, but if evaluated objectively, can be considered a positive change for a community or region. Some of these reasons include:

- Maximizing development near urbanizing areas is the most cost-effective way to deal with growth. Expanding existing infrastructure, rather than building new systems, benefits the vast majority of taxpayers.
- Annexation makes it easier for the region to compete for new jobs and provide public services to residents and businesses.
- Annexing land into the city can be preferable since Imlay City currently is the employment core of the area. As a stronger core, Imlay City only stands to improve the region’s attractiveness as a whole.
- Annexation helps ensure the cost for city services will be funded by those who benefit from them. In other words, if not annexed,

development must be served by the community where it is located, which may raise residential tax dollars, especially if new services or equipment is needed to serve them.

- Prohibiting annexation leads to deteriorating city centers, multiple mini-cities with duplicative services and a proliferation of overlapping tax districts that drain state and county financial resources.
- Prohibiting annexation forces some development on septic tanks, substandard wells and privately operated sewage treatment plants that significantly increase environmental and public health risks.
- Prohibiting annexation removes the issue from local control and into the hands of legislators who are often under more political pressure.

Demand for new development is most likely to occur near the I-69 expressway, where access and visibility are most attractive. Below is a quick assessment of the various development types that may be attracted to the City:

- **Industrial.** The City has a strong industrial base, and as a result, industrial property is now more scarce in the City. Remaining lots in the City's industrial park have dwindled to those that are most difficult to develop. Future development areas should include ways to extend or expand the City's industrial park availability. This may include extending Folk Court from the current industrial park, to providing new industrial areas east of Reek Road.
- **Office/Medical.** As industrial development increases and the regional economy continues to strengthen, it is likely that additional spin-off businesses will locate in the City. The City is ripe to attract a regional headquarters or medical facility, which are generally not provided in the City. The City would embrace such a larger "community anchor," but still encourages an economic diversity that will not tie the community to one land owner. Therefore, the City is ready to facilitate location selection, plan approvals, and infrastructure upgrades to accommodate such development, and is committed to allowing supportive ancillary businesses that will best benefit the regional economy.
- **Residential.** Some industrial speculators have indicated that the City needs additional residential options for their higher-income executives, and also for their factory workers. Meeting these demands will require an array of housing types, from attached units (like townhomes or duplexes) to larger lot single-family residences. While some of this demand can be met by developing existing parcels in the City (such as the land at Blacks Corners and Newark Road, additional demand may still exist, and would likely continue into the future as the City continues to grow.

- **General Commercial.** The City maintains adequate land for general commercial land uses, so future development areas should first prioritize accommodating new uses and facilities that are not currently prevalent. Therefore, the City does not expect to designate new development areas for commercial uses.

To best prepare for future development, the City plans to take the following steps:

- **Utility Study.** Develop a utility study that ensures adequate supply for existing and planned development to determine the amount of capacity for future annexed sites.
- **Feasibility Study.** To determine the amount of needed land, closely evaluate development potential of existing vacant sites, especially those on the east boundary where wetlands are present.
- **Market Analysis.** While the above describes what type of development the City expects, in reality, development will respond to economic market demands. To best poise the City to capture future development potential, a thorough analysis of the market should be conducted. This will help the City identify gaps in the local economy, identify favorable uses to attract, and then identify the types of infrastructure and amenities that may be needed to serve them.
- **Coordination.** Work closely with surrounding communities to identify and plan for development at the perimeter of the City.

C. REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

Downtown

Downtown Imlay City is a unique place with considerable character. The DDA and the City are actively implementing the *City of Imlay City Streetscape Enhancement Project*. To date, substantial improvements have been completed. Major landscaping, including street trees, has been added. Many façade improvements have been made through DDA assistance; pocket parks have been improved with landscaping, seating, decorative fencing and lighting; banners are used to add color and unify the streetscape; and parking lots adjacent to the railroad tracks have been screened with landscaping and decorative fencing.

The DDA and the City actively promote the improved downtown to prospective investors and developers. Additional information regarding activities and programs offered for downtown development and redevelopment can be found in the Imlay City Downtown Development Authority's Development Plan. Projects to improve the quality of experience in the downtown include the potential creation of



a pavilion at the old DPW garage to support a farmer's market or other events and placemaking strategies to enhance the character of downtown.

M-53 Corridor

Traffic along the M-53 corridor has noticeably increased over the years due to growth from the northern Detroit suburbs and increased traffic on I-69. Traffic accidents along the M-53 corridor have also increased. In response to this, in fall of 2014, the City requested that MDOT complete a traffic signal study along M-53. Currently, there are only two traffic signals on M-53 in the City limits; one at Newark Road and the other at old M-21 (Capac Road).

As development along M-53 continues to grow, the City will realize continued increase in traffic. Due to the lengthy stretch between traffic signals and increased traffic and speed, motorists are not able to safely identify and access businesses along this corridor, which is an economic detriment for the City. Further, the M-53 corridor lacks sufficient lighting and is visually unappealing.

In recent years, the State Legislature, MDOT and the Michigan Municipal League have determined that "placemaking" is necessary for the growth and prosperity of communities in Michigan. The transportation aspect of placemaking includes several concepts, including traffic calming through reduced lanes or construction of boulevards, development of bicycle lanes, pedestrian paths, attractive street lighting, and access management.

In order to properly plan for improvements in the M-53 corridor, a corridor study of M-53 is necessary for the safety and economic well-being of the City.

- **Subarea Plan.** As opposed to letting development occur randomly, prepare a specific corridor plan that considers the policy suggestions below, to help pre-plan for development, and encourage the character and type of development that is desired.
- **Market Study.** To support any changes in policy or zoning for this corridor, a full study of the demand for commercial space may be conducted to ensure it will not create a surplus of available land which can be detrimental to existing businesses.
- **Zoning.** To implement recommendations of this plan, and those from any subarea plan, develop a new zoning district that considers the unique site conditions and land use interactions that exist along the corridor.



- **Access Management Plan.** Prepare an access management plan to pre-plan for shared access and future traffic signals.
- **Traffic Impact Studies.** Require drive-through, large-scale or “big box” retailers to submit impact studies to determine the amount of parking and transportation improvements that should be required.
- **Streetscaping.** Distinguish the corridor from other commercial areas in the City, through landscaping, signage, lighting, non-motorized facilities, etc.
- **Development Guidelines.** Like other areas of the community, M-53 needs to have unifying design elements that will give it its own unique character. The guidelines on page 35 should be implemented during site plan review.

North Cedar Street Corridor

It is clear from recent improvements and results of the visioning session that there is a desire to upgrade the quality and appearance of development in the North Cedar Street corridor from First Street to Capac Road. This stretch of M-53 is in transition and the future use has not been adequately defined. It is different from the rest of M-53 since there are still single-family structures in existence and the road has only two lanes. The lots are also smaller than those elsewhere on the corridor and therefore are limited for redevelopment purposes.

This area is best suited for either single-family residential or small scale office uses. To accomplish this, the following actions may be taken:

- **Subarea Plan.** To further evaluate the needs of businesses and residents along the corridor, the City may develop a subarea plan for the North Cedar Street Corridor. The Plan would be designed to consider the different setbacks, parking, landscaping and lighting standards more characteristic of a smaller-scale commercial corridor.
- **Zoning.** To implement the recommendations of this Plan and any subarea plan, a new zoning district may be developed that considers the unique site conditions and land use interactions that exist along the corridor.
- **Development Guidelines.** In many ways, North Cedar Street maintains its own character, but it could be strengthened through uniform standards for development. The guidelines on page 35 should be considered during site plan review.

Capac Road

Like M-53, Capac Road needs a visual and land use identity that can be created, in part, through streetscape improvements and site design

requirements. The hope is that an upgraded image will attract new investment such as those made with the Rite Aid development.

- **Uses.** Capac Road contains an array of commercial uses. As such, it “competes” with other commercial districts. Additional uses such as professional office, senior housing or attached residential could help increase daytime and evening populations to re-energize the corridor.
- **Access.** Some buildings and properties along the north side of Capac Road are underutilized. Careful planning and redevelopment of these sites will be required to ensure proper access onto Capac Road, good building and site design, building character, and proper buffering from adjacent sites.
- **Parking Spaces.** The City has made changes to the zoning ordinance that promotes flexibility when applying the parking requirements that are often very rigid. Allowing for shared parking and reductions where supported by a traffic impact study, will provide the flexibility necessary to promote redevelopment along the corridor, as some sites have a surplus of parking, while others maintain lots which may not be large enough to accommodate potential uses.
- **Parking Lot Design.** Many of the existing parking lots were installed several years ago and may need improvement. New and redevelopment applications should be encouraged to improve site conditions as opportunities arise. New parking lots should be located away from the road so buildings are the focus of the site. Rear yard parking can often be easier to connect and share.
- **Additional Zoning Flexibility.** Most of the parcels along the corridor are developed; therefore, redevelopment will require some consideration of the fact that certain elements like buildings and parking are more costly to move or replace than others like landscaping, signage and lighting. The City may allow additional flexibility for these situations, so that new regulations do not deter potential investors.
- **Gateway.** Entryway features can be used to announce key community gateways. Key gateways may be erected at the west and east ends of Capac Road. Gateway features could include welcome to Imlay City signs with landscaping, sculptures or other structural elements. The design should complement other gateways into the City.
- **Development Guidelines.** The guidelines on page 35 should be considered when reviewing development or redevelopment proposals on properties along Capac Road.



D. DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The development guidelines below are provided to:

1. Allow for efficient and safe movement of traffic into and around commercial development sites.
2. Consider and provide for non-motorized improvements as development takes place.
3. Upgrade the overall appearance of buildings and sites, and gradually bring non-conforming sites into better compliance.
4. Begin to establish common themes for the unique areas through distinctive architecture, landscaping, lighting, signage, etc.
5. Accommodate reasonable redevelopment of sites, especially considering physical conditions and constraints.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

	Newark Road	Capac Road	Industrial Parks	N. Cedar Road	S. Cedar Road	New Development Areas
DISTRICTS AND USES						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allow for conversion of existing residential structures for commercial or office uses. If maintained, these structures can create a “cottage” style commercial district that can accommodate smaller-scale uses in an attractive environment. 	■			■		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider a form-based ordinance alternative that can better accommodate mixed-use and quasi-urban environments envisioned. 	■			■		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carefully craft a list of uses that allow for compatibility amongst different districts, rather than foster competition. 	■	■		■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise the list of uses to consider uses in the “new economy” such as intelligence-based or clean technology industries. 			■			■
SITE LAYOUT						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locate buildings so they help obscure parking, service, loading, delivery and waste areas and other similar necessities which may detract from the overall appearance of the corridor. 		■	■		■	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outside storage of goods within view of public rights-of-way should be prohibited. Strong screening should be required where storage areas are visible from public roads. 	■	■	■	■	■	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mass buildings toward the front lot line, rather than placing front yard parking or storage there. This makes the buildings and architecture the focal point of the corridor, helps obscure unsightly elements of the site, and 	■	■				■



DESIGN GUIDELINES

	Newark Road	Capac Road	Industrial Parks	N. Cedar Road	S. Cedar Road	New Development Areas
allows commercial activity to be located farther away from residential neighbors.						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow narrower side yard setbacks, provided that other fire and building codes are met. 	■	■		■	■	■
VEHICULAR CIRCULATION/PARKING						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep parking to the sides and rear of the building where practical. 	■					■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All driveways, parking lots, and walks should be paved, either with asphalt or concrete, and maintained without large cracks or deterioration of the surface. Masonry pavers are an optional decorative opportunity. 	■	■	■	■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driveways and parking lots should maintain a defined edge. Use of concrete curbing is preferred over wheel stops. 	■	■	■	■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As reasonable, require adjoining businesses to share driveways and eliminate unnecessary curb cuts. In addition, as opportunities arise, relocate and enhance major entrances as needed to visually organize the corridor. 	■	■		■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced side yard setbacks should be allowed for sites that propose to share parking. 	■	■		■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking lot landscaping should be allowed at the periphery of the paved lot, rather than internal to it. The size of existing parcels, or the nature of the use is such that internal landscaping requirements will only consume scarce land area and increase the prominence of the parking lot. 		■	■	■	■	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exterior night lighting of buildings and parking lots should provide illumination adequate for security and enhance the architectural theme of the building. 	■	■	■	■	■	■
PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where not already required, evaluate the need for wider pathways along roads where non-motorized activity is expected. 	■	■		■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential style landscaping should be allowed for sites that maintain existing residential structures. 	■			■		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide pedestrian linkages from building entrances to parking lots, pathways, and neighboring businesses. 	■	■		■	■	■



DESIGN GUIDELINES

	Newark Road	Capac Road	Industrial Parks	N. Cedar Road	S. Cedar Road	New Development Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide and maintain painted warning striping (crosswalks) in parking lots and driveways where pedestrians must cross. 	■	■		■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide bike racks and benches in easily accessible locations. 	■			■	■	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize contiguous hedgerows or knee walls to screen parking lots visible from the road. Ensure they are located outside of clear vision areas at driveway entrances and intersections to minimize visual interference. 	■			■		■
LANDSCAPING/OPEN SPACE						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape the curb lawn, or the planting strip located between the road edge and the sidewalk. Gravel or mulch alternatives should be prohibited. 	■	■	■	■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a buffer of at least thirty feet along property lines shared by commercial and residential uses. This setback should include some screening – trees, a fence or wall. 	■	■	■		■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute a street tree program to help unify and distinguish the district. 	■			■		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscaping should emphasize simple design and quality materials. Easy maintenance should be a prime consideration when irrigation is not proposed. 	■	■	■	■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artificial plantings should be avoided and rocks, boulders, wood chips, etc. should not be used as a replacement for landscaping. Small gravel that can scatter into roadways should be avoided. 	■	■	■	■	■	■
BUILDING DESIGN						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate loading, service and delivery bay doors so that they do not face onto a public right-of-way. 	■			■		■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service and delivery bays, garage doors and loading/unloading doors may not face adjacent residential districts. 		■	■		■	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where unusual site constraints make buffers between incompatible uses impossible, screening, consisting of a combination of landscaping, walls or fences is required. 	■	■	■	■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building size and scale should be consistent with nearby buildings. 	■			■		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider a limit to the building size to promote more compatibility with adjacent residential land uses. 	■			■		



DESIGN GUIDELINES

	Newark Road	Capac Road	Industrial Parks	N. Cedar Road	S. Cedar Road	New Development Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administrative/office segment of the building should utilize quality architecture with variable building lines, rooflines, architectural accents, and brick facades similar to community and regional scale commercial development. 			■			■
ARCHITECTURE						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Durable building materials which provide an attractive, quality appearance should be chosen. Brick, decorative masonry block, or a combination thereof is preferred. “Dryvit” should be avoided as a primary material on the ground level façade. 	■	■	■	■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Color selection should be made on the basis of aesthetic unity and to articulate special elements of design. Bright, offensive colors such as florescent yellow should be avoided, especially as the primary color. 	■	■	■	■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large-scale buildings with long walls should include articulation, architectural features and creative building massing is proposed that will reduce the building’s visual impact. 		■	■		■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use windows to maintain a sense of scale and add interest to the building. Long, blank facades along sides visible to the public should be avoided. 	■			■		■
SIGNAGE						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compatibility with their surroundings in terms of size, shape, color, texture, and lighting and not promote visual competition with other signs along the corridor. 	■	■	■	■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directional signs should be limited to the number necessary to direct patrons throughout the site. 	■	■		■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign bases should be constructed of the same materials as the building. 	■	■		■	■	■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage may be smaller in scale where visibility is not as crucial. 	■		■	■		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider allowing larger or taller signage where highway visibility is critical to success of the district. 			■		■	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider allowing alternative lighting types like LEDs that may be more energy efficient or decorative, when they achieve the intent of safe illumination without nuisance. 	■	■	■	■	■	■



STORMWATER						
▪ Encourage the use of shared stormwater detention systems for multiple sites.	■	■	■	■	■	■
▪ Where required, detention/retention ponds should maintain a natural grade that will not require safety fencing.	■	■	■	■	■	■
▪ Encourage detention pond design that emulates a natural environment.	■	■	■	■	■	■
▪ Where additional detention cannot be provided as part of redevelopment applications, efforts should at least be made to improve the quality of stormwater leaving the site.	■	■	■	■	■	■



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V. IMPLEMENTATION





A. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Map which is summarized in this section is the culmination of the master planning process. Map Three and the associated narrative entitled “Land Use Categories” make up the Future Land Use Plan. The Future Land Use Plan is based upon consideration of the analysis, the trends in development, the results of the critical issues analysis, and the issues, goals, and recommendations set forth in the Plan. It reflects the input of the Planning Commission, the City Commission and the residents of Imlay City.

The Future Land Use Map indicates what the land uses should be in Imlay City ten or more years from now. This does not mean that the City should change its zoning districts immediately to correspond to the Future Land Use Map. Some of the districts will match existing conditions while others will not. What it does mean, however, is that it should be a "road map" for the location of land uses in the City over time.

The Future Land Use Map is intended to guide land use decisions in Imlay City and assist City officials with the development of land use regulations. It can be an invaluable tool when used to evaluate requests for rezonings, vacation of rights-of-way or for variances from the Zoning Ordinance. Requests that do not follow the Future Land Use Map should be denied. If City officials wish to amend the Future Land Use Map to reflect changing conditions, then this should be done before a change in zoning is approved and should be based on appropriate research and land use practices.

Single-Family Residential

This designation is intended for single-family residential development with lot sizes that are currently typical of the community. Existing densities within this designation range from 4.5 units per acre to 5.8 units per acre. This designation is intended to recognize and maintain the older established residential areas of the City which were developed with a consistent lot size and development pattern. The grid system subdivision design, architecturally significant homes and smaller urban lots are typical for this designation.

Recommended density for future single-family development is 4 to 5.5 units per acre. This density level is conditioned, however, on the ability of the development to meet all other area requirements without needing variances. It is also the desire to provide new developments that display some of the characteristics of the historic, traditional neighborhoods in the City. New developments that utilize



a more traditional, grid pattern and provide common open space can utilize the higher density standard above.

Areas chosen for inclusion in this designation were primarily based on existing housing density; a need to reserve more land for similar development; availability of public sewer and water; and environmental factors which would permit this range of housing density. This designation is consistent with the Plan goal to provide new single-family residential development in the City.

Multiple-Family Residential

This designation is intended for multiple-family residential development with a density of up to 14 units per acre. This density level is conditioned, however, on the ability of the development to meet all other area requirements.

Areas designated as Multiple-Family were selected based primarily on existing high density development, close proximity to major thoroughfares and low impact to Imlay City streets. Some of the multiple-family residential areas on the Future Land Use Map are larger complexes while others are buildings with only three or four units. This designation also furthers the goal to provide for a variety of housing types and values.

It is not the intent of this designation to encourage the conversion of larger, single-family residential structures into multiple family units. Conversely, new areas designated for multiple-family development should only include undeveloped land areas, not conversion of existing buildings.

Office

This designation is intended for low intensity, retail oriented office uses. It is designed specifically for low intensity office uses along M-53, Capac Road and other locations where offices can be an effective transitional use between higher intensity uses, such as commercial and industrial, and residential uses.

The office areas will allow the conversion of single family homes for business purposes, while minimizing negative impacts on traffic volumes and adjacent residential districts. They must, however, meet all requirements of the Zoning Ordinance including screening and buffers. Businesses could include medical office, financial office, personal services, and similar uses.

The lots fronting the south side of Borland Road, west of Reek Road, are identified as Office use since there may eventually be redevelopment for some or all of these lots. This designation also provides an appropriate transition between the



agricultural/residential area to the east in Imlay Township and the commercial shopping center to the south.

Downtown

This designation is intended for a blend of retail, office, and service establishments. The focus of this designation should be entertainment, specialty retailing, small offices and government buildings. Residential uses (primarily apartments) also fit into this mixture of uses and help to create activity after the businesses have closed. Higher site design standards should be implemented for this designation because it is a strong focal point for the City.

The area identified as Central Business on the Future Land Use Map is the downtown area of Imlay City and runs primarily along Third Street from M-53 west to Almont Ave.

Commercial

This designation is intended for the widest variety of retail and service businesses. Businesses could range from apparel shops, auto service, and restaurants through small commercial strip centers. Locations for this designation are based on collector or arterial frontage; low impact to Imlay City streets; proximity to existing commercial developments of a similar type; and compatibility to adjacent uses. For the commercial areas adjacent to M-53, this designation is intended to serve the commercial needs of the motoring public.

It is not the intent of the City to allow commercial land uses to sprawl throughout the community or in all areas along M-53 and Capac Road. Much of the M-53 frontage north of the railroad overpass is not designated commercial. This area is to remain for residential and office uses as a break or relief from the continuous commercial along the highway. In addition, this area has a narrower road right-of-way and smaller lot sizes than the area to the south.

Industrial

This designation is primarily intended for general light industrial development and the designations are located primarily on the west, south and east edges of the City. The location of the industrial designation was determined by the existing location of Imlay City's industrial parks and uses. There is also older industrial land located to the immediate south of downtown. This land has been used for general industrial uses, largely because of its proximity to the rail corridor.

The area on the south side of Newark Road, west of Reek Road, is vacant but is zoned industrial. A mixture of commercial, office and light industrial may be more appropriate for the site, given the close proximity to M-53. Sensitivity to the abutting land uses in Imlay





Township must be shown both in the arrangement of uses and site design requirements.

Since there is a finite amount of industrial land, it is important to maintain the integrity of the available land by ensuring development from industrial users only. Because of their size and potential impacts, heavier commercial land uses such as truck repair and lumber yards are also appropriate uses for the industrial areas.

Quasi-Public/Institutional

This designation is intended for uses that serve a large segment of the public, including government agencies. Also included are schools, churches, cemeteries and nursing homes. These uses are scattered throughout the City and should be listed as special land uses in any zoning district where they are to be permitted. This is due to the propensity of these uses to expand in response to the growing population; thereby having the potential to impact adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Fairgrounds

The area designated under this category is the County fairgrounds property. Since the previous Master Plan update, significant investment has been made to upgrade the fairgrounds and its facilities. The land area of the fairgrounds has also been expanded with the acquisition of several acres. The fairgrounds are expected to remain during the life of this Master Plan update. The fairgrounds are currently zoned for residential purposes and this zoning does not include a 'fairgrounds' as a permitted or special land use. The Zoning Ordinance should be amended to recognize the fairgrounds. Should the fairgrounds cease to exist in the future and the land becomes available for development, alternative land uses must be evaluated for the site. If this is the case in the future, it is the City's intention to see development of the fairgrounds property that is consistent with the established pattern of development along M-53. That is, to encourage high quality commercial uses along the frontage of M-53 that transition into residential land uses similar to those already established along South Almont Avenue.





FUTURE LAND USE MAP



B. REDEVELOPMENT READY PLAN

The State of Michigan has developed the Redevelopment Ready Communities program to reduce disinvestment that may threaten the stability of older or established communities. The program includes an evaluation of communities to determine how well they are facilitating development, whether by developing a vision for future development activity, providing regulations and procedures that streamline and simplify the process, creating educational programs to train staff and officials, or communicating all of these things to the public in a way that is convenient, welcoming and easy to understand.



A limited number of communities are accepted into the program by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), based on an evaluation of their adherence to a set of best practices developed by a panel of experts. The program challenges communities to be flexible while seeking quality development that supports sense of place. MEDC offers a list of criteria to help assess local “redevelopment readiness”. When evaluating the City, it was found that it already meets many of the criteria. A checklist of actions, based on the MEDC’s Redevelopment Ready Guidelines, shows those items that have already been done:

✓ Complete	– In Progress	☐ Not Yet Complete
------------	---------------	--------------------

Master Plan:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| ✓ Is Current | – Includes Economic Development Strategy (similar to CIP) |
| – Is available online | |

CIP:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| ✓ ID priority redevelopment areas | ☐ 2 to 5 year action plan |
| ✓ Redevelopment Strategy and Tools | ☐ Generally consistent track record of meeting CIP goals |
| ✓ Budget/Master Plan/CIP coordination | ☐ Considers Utility capacity relative to planned growth |
| – Is available online | |

DDA Plan:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| ✓ Boundaries of DDA established | ✓ Mixed Use |
| ✓ IDs development projects | ✓ Identifies open space |
| ✓ Considers pedestrian oriented development | ✓ Is available online |

Zoning Ordinance:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| ✓ Is available online | ✓ PUDs allowed for flexibility |
| ✓ Is clear and easy to understand | ✓ Clear conditional land use standards |
| ✓ Allows mixed-use by right | ✓ Clear conditional zoning procedures |



- ✓ Timeliness of reviews
- ✓ Mixed use living has been considered
- ✓ Minimum sidewalk width
- ✓ Flexible parking
- ✓ Alternative parking management
- Downtown zoning provides for storefronts, zero lot lines, density, etc.

- Form-based code considered for priority districts
- Uses allowed in Industrial Districts consider new economy types
- Variety of neighborhood classifications
- Pedestrian-oriented districts
- Bicycle parking considered
- Street lighting requirements
- Streetscape and traffic calming

Planning and Zoning Administration:

- Development Guide
- Development Tracking process

- Fee Schedule reviewed

Public Involvement Plan:

- Identifies key stakeholders in the community
- Methods to solicit input
- Venues

- Efforts are taken above basic methods (mailers, charrettes, public meetings, focus groups, social networking, etc. are used)

Procedural:

- ✓ One person identified to receive applications and facilitate the process
- ✓ Staff are helpful
- ✓ Roles of staff, consultants and officials is clear
- ✓ Pre-application meetings offered

- ✓ Assists developer in contacting neighbors to discuss their project
- ✓ Prompt processing of applications
- ✓ Solicits customer feedback to identify ways to improve the system more
- Joint site plan review team assembled

Training:

- Dedicated funds for staff, PC, ZBA, Elected Body, etc.
- Tracks training attendance

- Training information is shared regularly
- Joint meetings held regularly

Boards and Commissions:

- ✓ Applications available online
- ✓ Information packets sent in advance of meeting

- Desired skill sets for various boards is advertised

Redevelopment Plan:

- ✓ Includes public visioning
- ✓ Priority sites identified
- ✓ Action plan for priority sites
- ✓ Identify local advocates for redevelopment
- Priority site evaluation checklist
- Marketing plan

- Steering Committee includes elected, appointed and general public
- Preliminary market research
- Financial support from other groups
- Property Information Packages created for priority sites are online



C. ZONING PLAN

Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008 (the Michigan Planning Enabling Act) requires Master Plans to identify the relationship between its future land use designations and the community’s zoning ordinance districts.

While there are many programs and activities important to the overall implementation of this plan, zoning is the single most significant mechanism for achieving the desired land use pattern and quality of development advocated in the plan. Because the future land use map is a long range vision of how land uses should evolve over time, it should not be confused with the zoning map, which is a current (short-term) mechanism for regulating development. The following table summarizes how the future land use map relates to the City’s zoning districts.

ZONING PLAN

Future Land Use	Density or Intensity	Maximum Density	Zoning District
Single Family Residential	4 to 5.5	4.54	R-1, One Family Residential
		5.81	R-2, One Family Residential
Multiple Family Residential	14	8.00	R-T, Two Family Residential
		36.30	RM-1 Multiple Family Residential
Office	Moderate Intensity	-	OS-1, Office Service
Commercial	High Intensity	-	B-1, Local Business
	Moderate Intensity	-	B-3, General Business
Central Business	Moderate Intensity	-	B-2, Central Business
Fairgrounds	Seasonal	-	Fairgrounds
Industrial	High Intensity	-	I-1, Industrial
		-	I-2, Heavy Industrial
Public & Institutional	Low Intensity	-	Various

Zoning Policy and Regulations

To implement the recommendations of this plan, the City may revise the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the following:

- A revised list of permitted uses that addresses modern uses, such as industrial uses demanded in the new service-based economy and residential options in demand by seniors and young professionals

- Potential new zoning districts for the Newark Road corridor, North Cedar Street corridor, additional residential options, or redevelopment overlay districts
- A form-based code for the Downtown district
- Provisions for bicycle parking, where appropriate, either as a requirement or as a replacement for some vehicular parking

D. COMPLETE STREETS PLAN

Historically, transportation decisions were made in the interest of motorized safety, and while such efforts have resulted in improved safety on Michigan roads, they have also resulted in degraded environments for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders. For years, road right-of-ways have served their function of moving vehicular traffic; however they are a tremendous public asset that can be used for much more. They represent important connections within a community, provide routes for travel and commerce, and project the first impression that will shape the community’s image.

Traditionally, transportation planning focused on moving cars and trucks efficiently. Different streets were categorized with others, and all planned to have consistent right-of-way widths and function. In that era, land use was primarily considered in relationship to the amount or type of traffic it created, and not necessarily the quality of development or the places it created. Since the 1970’s, transportation planning philosophies are shifting to one that focuses on safety for everyone who might use road rights-of-ways, such as bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, as well as those with a variety of ability - from children, to the elderly, to the disabled – all need safe and varied routes to accommodate their individual travel needs. Roads should still be preserved for their intended function, but they should also be designed to accommodate all expected users of the road.

Non-Motorized facilities are beneficial for the following reasons:

- They provide additional connections between homes, schools, parks, public transportation, offices, and retail destinations.
- Dedicated facilities for walking, biking or transit improve safety by reducing potential crashes between motorized and non-motorized users.
- They encourage walking and bicycling, with corresponding health and fitness benefits.
- They can help ease transportation problems by increasing the transportation network’s overall capacity and reducing congestion.





- They provide options to make fewer driving trips, resulting in savings on operation and maintenance of motor vehicles.
- They help enhance the economic vitality of connected commercial areas.
- They support sustainability goals and objectives by advocating a reduction in fuel use and a corresponding reduction in air pollution and carbon emissions.

Motorized Recommendations

Roads in the City have had a tremendous influence on development. As people’s first impression of the City, they immediately convey the character of Imlay City. Many of the streets in the City fall under the City’s jurisdiction. However, a variety of streets are managed by the Lapeer County Road Commission and State of Michigan (MDOT).

- **Access Management.** The City currently manages access points along M-53 / Cedar Street through the zoning ordinance. As part of the site plan review process, cross-access and driveway location provisions are encouraged by granting additional flexibility for parking and additional signage, where other conditions are met.
- **Site Development Requirements.** The Planning Commission can request submittal of Traffic Impact Studies to evaluate the need for passing lanes, deceleration lanes, etc. on City streets. Additional regulations may apply on County and MDOT Roads.

Non-Motorized Recommendations

Recent legislative and policy changes at the State and Federal level are paving the way for a new way of thinking about transportation. Not surprisingly, increasing fuel costs, desires to improve air quality, concerns about community health, coupled with campaigns to end obesity, especially among children and teens, have all contributed to a demand for travel alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle. Complete Streets seeks to meet that demand through policy and regulatory changes that shift the focus from solely auto-oriented planning to one that considers “all users” of the roadway.

MDOT ROADS
 M-53 / Cedar Street
 M-21 / Capac Road
 I-69

LAPEER COUNTY ROADS
 Blacks Corners Road
 Reek Road



Improving sidewalk and pathway systems will encourage more walking within the community, especially for those taking shorter trips. They also provide travel options for those without access to a personal vehicle, such as students, seniors and those with limited ability. A proposed pathway system for Imlay City is shown on Map Two: Non-Motorized Facilities Plan, which indicates the following:

- **Polly Ann Trail.** The Polly Ann Trail traverses the northwest portion of the City. Once completed, the trail will link the City’s residential areas to parks, schools, government facilities, and commercial districts.
- **Sidewalks and Bikepaths.** Bikepaths and sidewalks are currently required by the City in certain places. Sidewalks are generally required in residential areas of the City, and wider bikepaths required along the entire length of M-53 / Cedar Street. However, the City’s Pathways Plan endorses bikepaths along more roads than just M-53. Additional bikepaths are envisioned along portions of First Street, Borland Road, Almont Avenue, Newark Road, in addition to more connections to the Polly Ann Trail, to new developments, and along the Belle River.
- **Shared Roadway.** Many bicyclists use existing roads and road shoulders for travel. Shared roads are typically indicated by the “sharrow” pavement marking, but can be made even more visible through painted lanes, signage or physical barriers. Where feasible and where a need exists, road shoulders can be widened or paved to improve safety and comfort for non-motorized users.
- **Mid-block Crossings.** Sometimes, an enhanced pedestrian crossing can facilitate access across the street at unsignalized locations. Elements like pedestrian refuge medians within the roadway, pedestrian-activated traffic signals or flashers, pavement striping and signage can be used to improve safety and comfort for all users.
- **Sidewalk Maintenance.** Sidewalks provide a level of comfort for pedestrians, and should be maintained free of obstructions and hazards. This includes filling in gaps, replacing cracked or heaving slabs, widening sidewalks where activity is high, and clearing the walkways of vegetation, obstacles and snow.





E. ACTION PLAN

To encapsulate the ideas of this Master Plan, the following table was created to provide direction to the City when it begins to implement the Master Plan. It includes the following:

- Recommended Projects.** Projects that will help achieve the goals and recommendations of this plan are listed. They may be general in nature or more specific, depending on the level of information and study that has already been completed. Additional tasks will likely arise over time, and as the Planning Commission continues to review the Master Plan and identify additional projects.
- Priorities.** Each project is identified as either an *immediate task* – those that should begin right away, a *short term task* – those that should be completed within the next five to ten years, a *long term task* – those that are important, but due to resource limitations or other factors, may take longer than ten years to complete, an *annual task* – those that should be completed each year, or an *ongoing task* – those that should apply on a continual basis. In reality, projects will be completed as time and resources allow, but these priorities will help the City determine which projects may need more immediate attention.
- Project Leaders.** Alongside each project are the groups or people who may initiate the project, or assist with its completion. Additional resources and assistance may come from others not listed, but the goal is to at least assign a steward for each project to ensure it is not forgotten. Those listed include the Planning Commission, the City Commission, City Staff and Administration, Other Boards (which may include the DDA, Department of Public Works, Parks Board, etc.), and Consultants (who may include experts in Planning, Engineering, Information Technology, Marketing, etc.)

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

	Suggested Project Leader(s)				
	Planning Commission	City Commission	City Staff / Administration	Other Boards	Consultants
IMMEDIATE					
Update the City website to include published plans and policies; to publish desired skills for the various City boards and commissions; and provide development manuals, redevelopment assistance, and interactive community elements that may be developed in the future,			■		■
Review other related plans, such as the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, DDA Plan and Capital Improvements Plan to determine if revisions are needed in response to this Master Plan.	■			■	
Create a Development Handbook with design and quality standards, development review procedures, application forms and City-offered incentives			■		■



RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

	Suggested Project Leader(s)				
	Planning Commission	City Commission	City Staff / Administration	Other Boards	Consultants
SHORT TERM					
Identify key development and redevelopment parcels and create preliminary pro forma for marketing on the City’s website			■	■	
Evaluate current planning and zoning fees to ensure the City is collecting enough fees to cover its costs for review and administration of the project, and/or to ensure that applicants are not being over-charged.		■			
Adopt Zoning Ordinance amendments to implement this Master Plan (see Zoning Plan)	■	■			■
Develop subarea plans for the North Cedar Road and Newark Road corridors	■				■
Develop a Public Involvement Plan that identifies key stakeholders, methods and venues to solicit input		■	■		
Meet with neighboring communities to discuss regional planning for the area	■	■	■	■	■
LONG TERM					
Evaluate utility capacity in the City relative to planned growth		■			■
Develop a streetscape plan for Capac Road	■			■	■
Coordinate with other recreation providers and/or acquire additional parkland pursuant to achieve the goals of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan		■	■	■	
Complete non-motorized pathway system		■	■	■	
ANNUAL					
Establish annual joint meetings with the City Commission, DDA, and Planning Commission		■	■	■	
Prepare an Annual Report that summarizes development activity for the year, which may then be used to track development and determine needed policy or regulatory changes	■				■
Consistently evaluate progress of the Master Plan	■		■		
Earmark a portion of the City’s Planning and Zoning budget to ongoing training for Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals officials		■			



RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

	Suggested Project Leader(s)				
	Planning Commission	City Commission	City Staff / Administration	Other Boards	Consultants
ONGOING					
Work with the Lapeer County Road Commission and Michigan Department of Transportation on road improvement projects		■		■	
Continue to engage the community, its residents, businesses and institutions, to continually refine the actions of the City	■	■	■	■	■
Identify funding sources for capital projects		■	■	■	
Update the City website to include materials that may be published in the future, such as development manuals, redevelopment assistance, and interactive community elements like street light outage reporting, emergency alert notices, etc.			■		



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APPENDIX: CITIZEN INPUT





Development of this document was directed by the Imlay City Planning Commission. Their responsibility is to ensure the Master Plan reflects and addresses commonly shared concerns amongst the community. This Master Plan relies in part on the input received from previous document updates. However, to help validate their understanding of citizen opinions, the City used information from the Community Visioning conducted in March 2013 by the Michigan Rural Council, along with an online survey. That effort focused on generating activity in the downtown area. Lists generated from that effort include community assets, challenges, goals, and suggested projects, which are listed below.

ASSETS, CHALLENGES AND GOALS FROM PUBLIC VISIONING SESSION 3/7/13

<p>Assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ #1 or 2 location in area for franchises such as TSC, Speedway, Ben Franklin ▪ Active service clubs ▪ Available sites and buildings ▪ Available workers ▪ Beautiful downtown ▪ Blueberry festival ▪ Certified business park ▪ Chef at country side romine’s ▪ Churches ▪ Close knit community ▪ Close proximity of amenities ▪ Collaboration ▪ Community involvement ▪ Devoted business community ▪ Diverse culture (2) ▪ Duthler Surveyor ▪ Established policies in city government ▪ Excellent schools (2) ▪ Fairgrounds and location (2) ▪ Farmer’s market ▪ Festivals/events ▪ Good restaurants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ History/museum ▪ I 69/M53 location center of rural area ▪ Larger employers ▪ Library ▪ Local paper ▪ Low crime ▪ M 53/I 69 ▪ Manufacturing base ▪ Museums ▪ Newer municipal buildings/DPW/Police ▪ Nice entrance to downtown ▪ Off the highway downtown ▪ Old School Park ▪ Pro-business attitude ▪ Public amenities ▪ Quality of life amenities - services ▪ Room to grow ▪ Safety and public safety ▪ SEED group ▪ Solid, core businesses ▪ Substance to grow from ▪ Utilities and services
<p>Challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acceptance of new ideas ▪ City/Township cooperation ▪ Decline of post office ▪ Downtown noise; fire siren; trains ▪ Employment opportunities for youth ▪ Finances to grow; capital equipment maintenance ▪ Food /utilities/housing for low income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited curriculum at local schools ▪ Limited downtown business hours/not responsive to market demand ▪ Limited entertainment options ▪ Local regulations ▪ More options for recreation/entertainment/ shopping ▪ No defined “image”



Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Haven't embraced diversity ▪ Infrastructure failing ▪ Lack of franchise businesses ▪ Lack of growth and jobs ▪ Lack of identity ▪ Lack of recreation ▪ Lack of support for local retailers ▪ Lack of tax base ▪ Lack of traffic at local retailers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not a destination ▪ Not the gateway ▪ Public transportation ▪ Representation for tax payers ▪ Road maintenance ▪ Senior transportation ▪ taxes ▪ Too many regulations
	<p style="text-align: center;">SHORT TERM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Push to get things started together ▪ Prioritize – SMART goals ▪ Address short term goals – just do it! ▪ Finish Bancroft St ▪ Better attendance at public events – more of city and civic leadership represented ▪ Maximize social media ▪ Promote extension and connection of events and assets ▪ 2nd home of events – fair grounds ▪ Use welcome center to market Imlay City ▪ Affordable Public Transit ▪ Pet Friendly downtown ▪ Dog park ▪ Connect Polly Ann trail to downtown ▪ Create identity and marketing strategy ▪ Get more people at events ▪ Create a business support group ▪ Maintain landscaping downtown ▪ Expand downtown events ▪ Rec center 	<p style="text-align: center;">LONG TERM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fill industrial building in park ▪ Food Hub ▪ Health care facility/urgent care ▪ Attract a university ▪ Infrastructure improvements ▪ Attract retailers and services



PROJECT IDEAS FROM PUBLIC VISIONING SESSION 3/7/13

Downtown Promotions	
<i>Events:</i>	Cinco de Mayo, Mexican Festival, Farmer's Market, Blueberry festival, concerts/movies in the park, walking tour
<i>Places:</i>	Historic District, Polly Ann Trail, Gazebo Park, swimming pool, churches, Museum, Farmer's market, train viewing station, Senior Center
Outdoor Artists and Eats Festival	
<i>Local Assets:</i>	High-end chefs, Julie Welch Graphic Design, Erin Wetzel Photography, Focus Studio, Community Choir and Concert band, Gem and Diamond sculptor, Learning center stoves
<i>Strong Local Places:</i>	Kelly's pet salon, Nacho's, Silver Grill
<i>Parks:</i>	Veterans, Rotary, Lions, Old School
Dog Park in Lions Park	
<i>Where:</i>	Lions park, Polly Ann Trail
<i>Potential Partners:</i>	Vlasic, Rotary, American Legion, Eagles Club, Lions Club
Winter Festival	
<i>Activities:</i>	Gourd festival, Polar plunge, Snow/ice sculpture contest, Carriage rides, Snowmobile race, challenge, pull, etc, Chili, food competition, Blueberry Festival auction, Ice skating/or hockey, Train watching, beer tent, kid's mud pit
<i>Restaurants:</i>	Nacho's, Lucky's
Job Fair	
<i>Advertisers:</i>	Three car dealerships, Vlasic, Florist shops, BNI, Locally owned media, Farmers/ag base, Champion Bus, Hyponex, Carrot farm – Lindy's, Interior design – Cindy- Carpet barn, Banks – variety, Jeweler – Jeff, Chef Michael, Toyo Seat
Expand Fairground Activity	
<i>Possibilities:</i>	Woods and Water, Relay for Life, 4-H, RV Auctions
Promote Community Growth (including branding)	
<i>Community Assets:</i>	Variety of church food pantries - School year long food program
<i>Physical Assets:</i>	Traffic, crossroads, Industrial parks
<i>Local Groups:</i>	4 county community foundations, PTA, Chamber, Rotary, DDA, Lions, Lapeer County Community Foundation

An online survey was conducted to receive as much input as possible with the resources available. Only five citizens commented, which may indicate either a lack of knowledge in the survey or a lack of interest or concern. The results of that survey are provided below.



ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Answer Options	Response Percent
What do you like best about living in Imlay City right now? (Check only one)	
Location	0.0%
Neighborhoods	75.0%
Schools	0.0%
Community facilities & services	0.0%
Proximity to I-69	25.0%
Other (please specify)	
1 It is a safe community. Good Police Dept.	

What are the most important issues facing Imlay City today? (check all that apply)	
Need to protect natural features	0.0%
Better pathway system	0.0%
Increased traffic	0.0%
Need to slow down the pace of development	20.0%
Need more growth and development	20.0%
Improve Public Services	20.0%
Need higher quality development overall	40.0%
Need more/better commercial businesses	40.0%
Need more/better housing diversity	0.0%
Need more/better jobs	40.0%

Please list ONE thing you would most like to see improved in Imlay City.	
1	Dress up van dyke between Newark and M24
2	Small town environment
3	With the increase in crime over-all, I think we need more police officers. Almont is a smaller community than Imlay City, but has more police officers.
4	the variety of businesses i.e. shopping options
5	More family restaurants. We MISS Tietz'.

What should be the City's top improvement priority for transportation? (check only one)	
Develop sidewalks & pathways	33.3%
Reduce congestion on main roads	0.0%
Improve subdivision road conditions/maintenance	0.0%
Limit the number & spacing of driveways to improve circulation	0.0%
Improve access to highways	0.0%
Connect streets in residential developments	0.0%
Improve the appearance of roads with signage and landscaping	66.7%
Add more/better signage to help find your way around town	0.0%
Other (please specify)	
1	traffic flow near Kroger



ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Answer Options

- 2 Fix the horrible streets. Add curb and gutter where needed.

**Response
Percent**

Please indicate which of the following you feel is the most important goal for the City by checking the appropriate "TOP GOAL" column. Check the "REMOVE" column if you feel a goal should be removed.

	TOP GOAL	REMOVE
Develop & maintain a five year capital improvement program to prioritize public facilities and services in relation to funding availability.	67%	33%
Assist & guide community organizations & citizen groups that provide needed community facilities and services that benefit the community.	33%	67%
Work with the Downtown Development Authority to promote community events & activities downtown.	33%	67%
Maintain quality police & fire protection and acceptable response times.	100%	0%
Promote shared stormwater systems amongst developments to reduce environmental impacts and maintenance issues.	50%	50%
Communicate information to residents through the City's web page & newsletters.	100%	0%

Are you satisfied with the quality of life in Imlay City?

Yes	100.0%
No	0.0%
Undecided	0.0%

What should be the City's priority for parks? (check only one)

Parks should be accessible to those with special needs or disabilities	0.0%
Provide open spaces for walking and leisure activities like picnicking	20.0%
Partner with other communities to develop larger parks and sports fields	20.0%
Focus on smaller playgrounds located within neighborhoods	0.0%
Make sure parks are safe and maintained	60.0%
Provide larger, multi-use parks rather than smaller parks designed for only one use (i.e. nature preserve or sports field or playground)	0.0%

What should be the City's top improvement priority for the environment? (check only one)

Limit the intensity of development along Belle River, Hunt Drain and other water resources	25.0%
Flood prevention	0.0%
Protection of public drinking water supply	75.0%



ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Answer Options	Response Percent
What should be the City’s top improvement priority related to community character? (check only one)	
Ordinance enforcement	25.0%
Improve the sidewalks and pathway network	0.0%
Improve design of new residential developments	0.0%
Enhance City entryways	25.0%
Encourage more activity downtown	50.0%
Other (please specify)	
1 <i>Nothing needs to be done.</i>	

When developing new residential neighborhoods, what is the most important factor for the City to consider? (check only one)	
Preservation of natural open space	50.0%
Larger lot sizes	25.0%
Smaller lot sizes	0.0%
Connection of streets	0.0%
Inclusion of developed neighborhood parks (i.e. offers play structures, paths, etc.)	25.0%
Providing a variety of housing types	0.0%

When considering new commercial development, what is the most important factor for the City to consider? (please check one)	
Site location should be separate from residential areas	50.0%
Site location should be mixed into residential areas	0.0%
High-quality building design and architecture	50.0%
Site design (i.e. how the property is laid out with respect to setbacks, parking, landscaping, etc.)	0.0%
Site location should be within existing commercial areas	0.0%
Safe driveway access and locations	0.0%
Other (please specify)	
1 <i>Limit Commercial development</i>	

What improvement do you think would most benefit Downtown? (check only one)	
New businesses	33.3%
Pedestrian amenities	0.0%
Public gathering places	0.0%
Different mix of businesses	66.7%
More convenient parking	0.0%
Streetscape improvements	0.0%
More housing downtown	0.0%
Other (please specify)	
1 <i>Downtown should include all of the business on van dyke</i>	



ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Answer Options	Response Percent		
Do you think that there is the right amount of the following land uses in Imlay City?			
	Needs More of This Use	Has the Right Amount of This Use	Has Too Much of This Use
Single Family Residential	20%	80%	0%
Multiple Family Residential	20%	60%	20%
Manufactured Housing	0%	60%	40%
Commercial/Office	60%	40%	0%
Industrial	60%	20%	20%
Institutional	20%	80%	0%
Public Recreation	60%	40%	0%
Private Recreation	40%	60%	0%

Please write any additional comments you might have regarding the future growth of the City.	
1	<i>Please make the main road Van dyke more appealing to passers through by burying the utilities and installing upscale lighting and landscaping similar to places like Chesaning and Frankenmuth. POLICE the speeds in residential areas...25 mph means 25 mph!!!!</i>
2	<i>We need to maintain our Public Safety. That is why I chose to move to Imlay City in the first place. Our population is growing, so should our Police Department.</i>
3	<i>I think that the fairgrounds should be moved to allow for more commercial development along the M-53 corridor and to alleviate traffic congestion and noise in the residential areas surrounding the current site. I think that there is plenty of land available off M-53 that will support the fairgrounds and still be readily accessible to/from I-69. Also, we need to diversify the shopping/dining selections. We have enough auto parts and car dealerships; we have enough gas stations and fast food places; we have enough "dollar" stores. Thirdly, we overdid the new directional signage. Although very nicely done, there are too many and some of them are too big and obstruct the view--particularly the one at the corner of Almont Ave and M-21 across from the Marathon gas station--it is in the clear vision area.</i>