

# REQUEST for DEVELOPER QUALIFICATIONS



700 NORTH  
WEAVER  
AVENUE  
**Fremont,  
Michigan**

## TIMELINE

RFQ released:  
**04/27/2022**

Site Showcase  
event: **05/11/2022**

RFQ proposals due:  
**06/27/2022**

Evaluation period:  
**06/28/22 – 07/28/22**

Finalists teams  
notified: **07/29/2022**

Finalist teams  
presentation to  
evaluation committee:  
**August 2022**

Finalize terms of a  
development and  
purchase agreement:  
**September 2022**



**MICHIGAN ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**



## REQUEST FOR DEVELOPER QUALIFICATIONS

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# 700 N WEAVER AVE. FREMONT, MICHIGAN

Redevelopment Ready Site

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APRIL 2022



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## 700 N WEAVER AVE FREMONT, MICHIGAN

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The City of Fremont seeks a development partner for an approximately 7 acre site between N Division Ave and N Weaver Ave, just north of Hemlock St. The City is eager to work with qualified respondents to negotiate a mutually beneficial arrangement.

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*Michigan*  
**FREMONT**  
NOW AND ALWAYS - A FINE CITY - A GREAT COMMUNITY

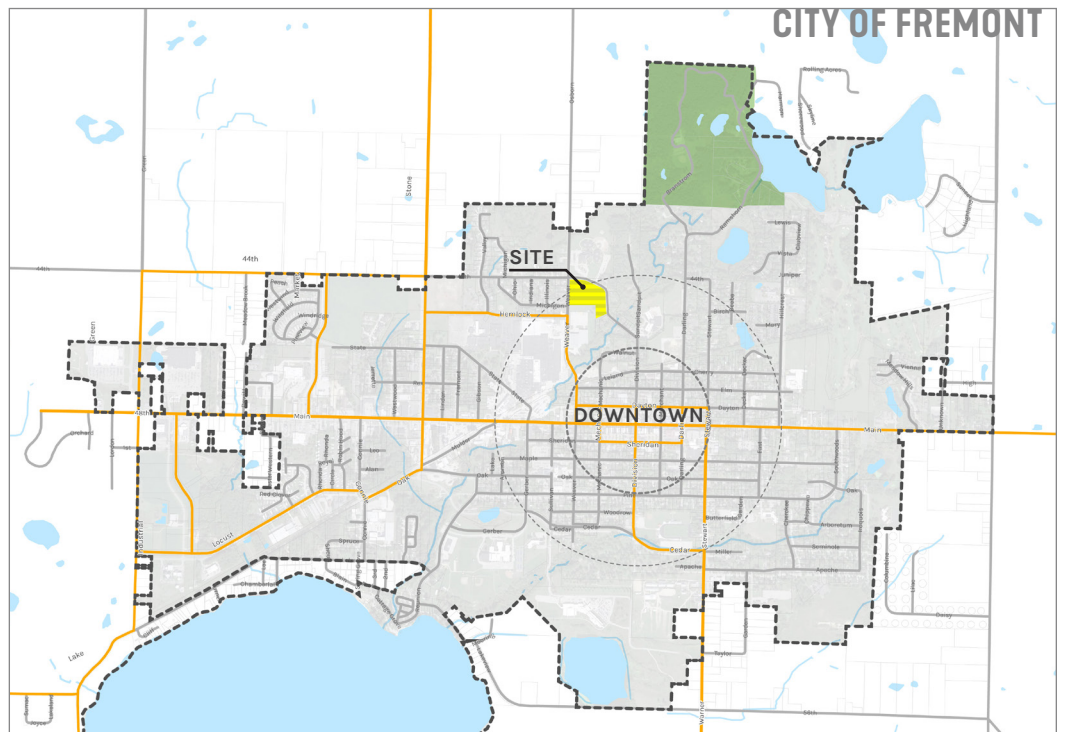


# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

The City of Fremont seeks a development partner for an approximately 7 acre site between N Division Ave and N Weaver Ave, just north of Hemlock St. Located just north of downtown and the Gerber Products campus, the site currently sits vacant, formally serving Gerber before city ownership. The site provides potential opportunity for a transition of vacant land to single-family residential neighborhoods.

The city's goal is to partner with a developer to transform this site and meet the growing community demand for market rate housing, with a focus on walkability and community gathering spaces. This development would position Fremont as a welcoming community for all ages and family types, drawing customers to its local businesses, and supporting employment centers by continuing to attract a local workforce.

The city is very supportive of development on this site and is eager to increase and diversify the area's market rate housing stock. The ultimate goal is to provide residents, both current and future, with housing that's affordable and well-connected to the broader community, while complementing existing neighborhood character.

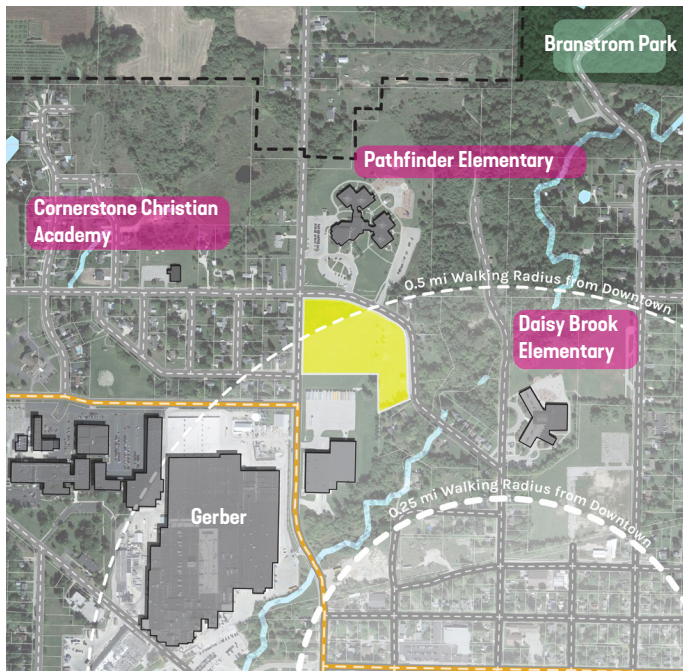


# COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

## CITY OF FREMONT

The City of Fremont is a dynamic community, home to a variety of businesses, regional health care facilities, advanced manufacturing, recreational opportunities and tourism. The city is home to the original Gerber Products site, one of Fremont's largest community anchors.

With a population of 4,516 (2020) within the city and over 14,000 as a community, Fremont attracts visitors and locals alike to its active downtown and commercial districts, which are in close proximity to various parks and lakes, providing many opportunities for recreation.



## NEIGHBORHOOD

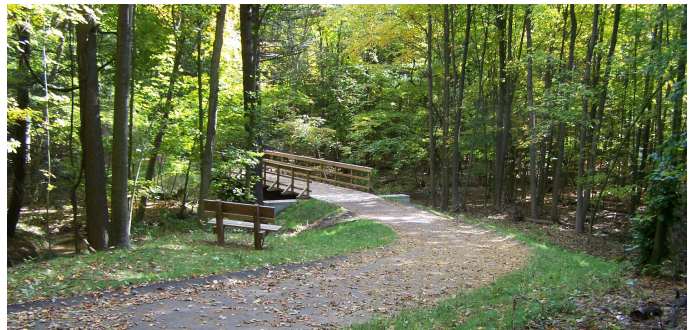
Largely comprised of single-family residential homes, the neighborhood is walkable, kid-friendly, and provides access to community and regional anchors. The neighborhood boasts employment centers like Gerber, as well as community institutions like the Cornerstone Christian Academy, Pathfinder Elementary and Daisy Brook Elementary. Connected by a non-motorized pathway, Branstrom Park provides recreational opportunity to neighborhood residents and visitors.



Fremont Municipal Offices - Downtown



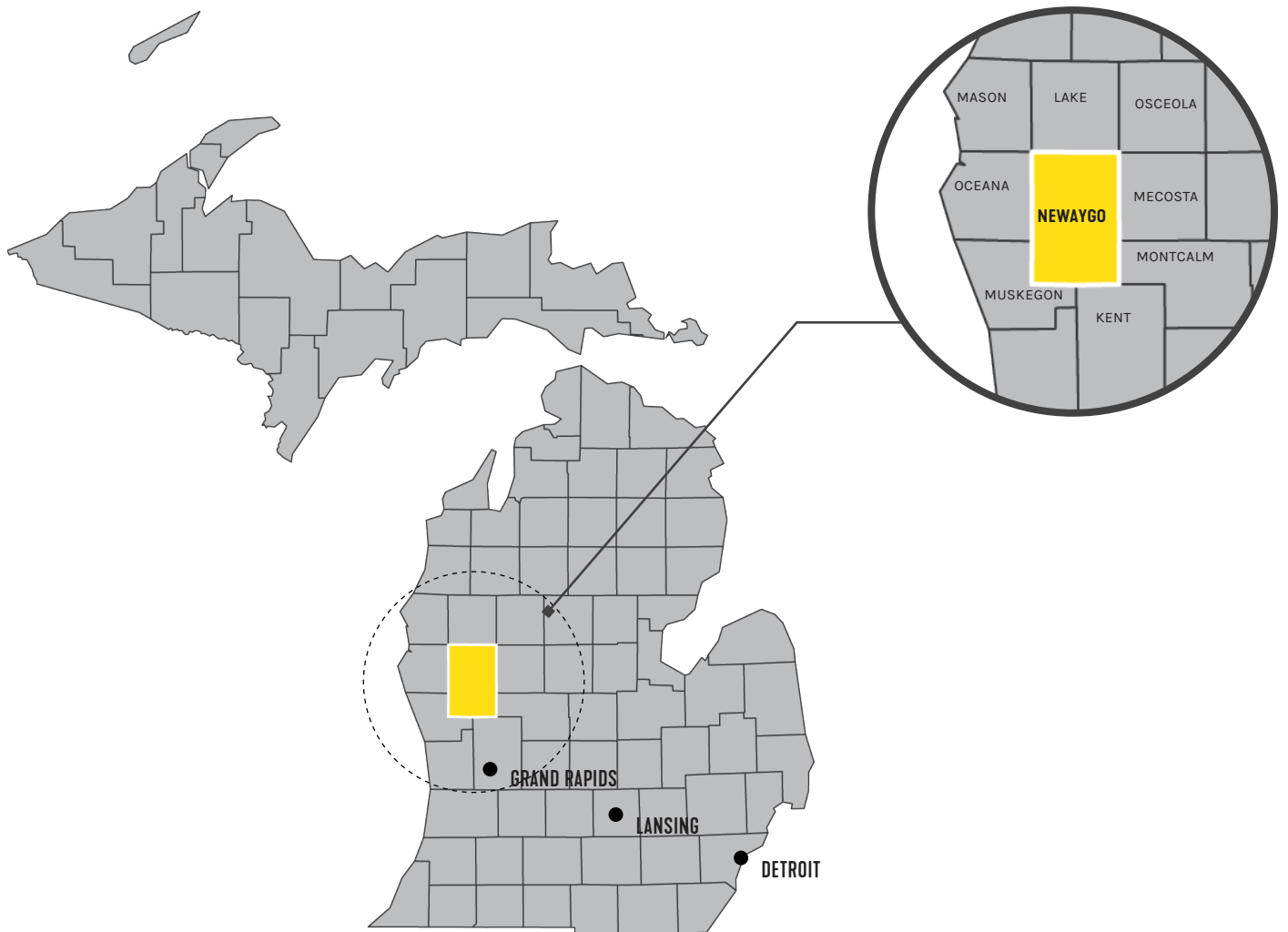
Darling Walkway & Oak Arch Sculpture - Downtown



Town & County Path - Fremont Industrial Park

## NEWAYGO COUNTY

Newaygo County is located 30 miles off the shores of Lake Michigan, 140 miles northeast of Chicago, 165 miles west of Detroit, and 45 miles north of Grand Rapids. The area is serviced by M-82 as well as the Fremont Municipal Airport. Home to 49,978 people (2020), the county is an attraction for tourists and locals alike, offering arts and entertainment venues, festivals, restaurants, museums, and retail. People visit Newaygo County to enjoy it's outdoor opportunities like parks, biking and hiking trails, camping sites, boating, fishing and golfing.





# MARKET CONDITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A Preliminary Housing Analysis was prepared for this site and is included as an attachment to this RFQ. The housing analysis, prepared by Bowen National Research in the fall of 2021, includes these key findings:

- **Both Newaygo County and the City of Fremont will continue to experience positive demographic growth through 2026.** All projected growth is expected to be among households (both owners and renters) earning \$60,000 or more, generally 80%-120% of Area Median Household Income (AMHI).
- **There is a lack of conventional rental product currently available within the Fremont PMA (Primary Market Area) (Newaygo County).** All rental communities surveyed (both affordable and affordable market-rate) are fully occupied, nearly all of which maintain a waiting list (some of which are up to 128 households, or 12 months in length) for the next available unit. This illustrates that significant pent-up demand exists for additional rental housing within the market.
- **The supply of modern affordable for-sale housing product is also limited within the Fremont PMA.** Less than 16.0% of all owner-occupied housing units within the PMA have been built since 2000, and only 2.1% have been built within the past decade. Currently, only six single-family homes built since 2010 were identified as for sale within the Fremont PMA, the majority of which are priced at or above \$250,000. The general lack of affordable, modern, for-sale product within the area suggests there may also be a development opportunity within the Fremont market.
- **Demand estimates support for both affordable rental and for-sale housing development within the Fremont PMA.** Based on the demand estimates, it is approximated that up to 193 affordable rental units and/or up to 169 affordable for-sale units are needed within the Fremont PMA. This assumes that a new affordable community offers housing targeting households at various income levels between 60% and 120% of AMHI.



It is not likely that a single site can attract the entire number of rental and/or for-sale housing units needed within Fremont. Ultimately, marketing efforts throughout the county and the project's competitiveness (location, rents, design, bedroom types, unit sizes and amenities) will dictate the actual market share that a new affordable development is able to attract. Nonetheless, the above analysis should serve as a guide of the potential development opportunities that exist for additional affordable housing within Newaygo County.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Homes valued between \$100,000 and \$149,999 represent the largest share of owner-occupied housing units within both the PMA and the City of Fremont.
- As illustrated in Table 1, most renters within the market are paying between \$500 and \$1,000 in gross rent.
- In 2021, homeowners occupied 82.6% of all occupied housing units, while the remaining 17.4% were occupied by renters within the PMA. This composition of households is typical for a rural market, such as Newaygo County. The composition of households slightly differs within the City of Fremont, with a higher share of renter households. This indicates that rental product is more prominent and likely in higher demand within the City of Fremont, as compared to other areas comprised within the PMA

A complete housing analysis is available from MEDC upon request.

TABLE 1: MEDIAN GROSS RENT

GROSS RENT	NUMBER	SHARE
<\$300	278	8.2%
\$300-\$500	458	13.5%
\$500-\$750	903	26.6%
\$750-\$1,000	862	25.4%
\$1,000-\$1,500	380	11.2%
\$1,500-\$2,000	48	1.4%
\$2,000+	10	0.3%
No Cash Rent	452	13.3%
Total	3,395	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey (2015-2019); ESRI; Urban Design Group; Bowen National Research

TABLE 2: VACANCY STATUS

VACANCY STATUS - PMA (NEWAYGO COUNTY)	PERCENT OF VACANT UNITS
For Rent	1.1%
For Sale Only	4.5%
Rented/Sold, Not Occupied	3.0%
For Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	81.0%
Other Vacant	10.4%

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey (ACS); Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

# SITE OVERVIEW

The site is located at the intersection of Weaver Ave and Division Ave, north of Hemlock Street, and just south of Pathfinder Elementary School. The approximately 7 acre parcel abuts single-family residential homes to the east and west, with Pathfinder to the north, and the Gerber campus to the south. On the west and north sides of the site, sidewalks run north/south, providing pedestrian connection.

The site has many advantages being located within walking distance of the downtown district. It's about 0.4 miles from the Downtown Fremont Farmers Market, 0.6 miles from the Fremont Area District Library, 0.7 miles from the Fremont Community Recreation Center, and less than 0.5 miles from entertainment and retail destinations located within the downtown. The site is well-connected to adjacent neighborhoods with single-family housing.

There are pedestrian connectivity and amenity opportunities within the site, with an emphasis on streetscape development, and a continuous sidewalk system.



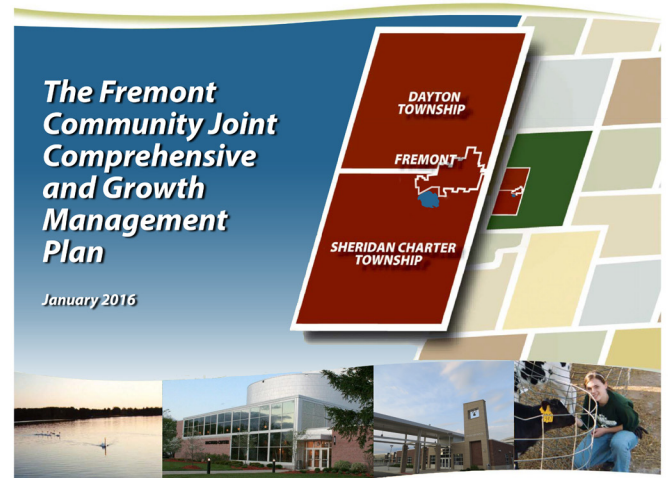
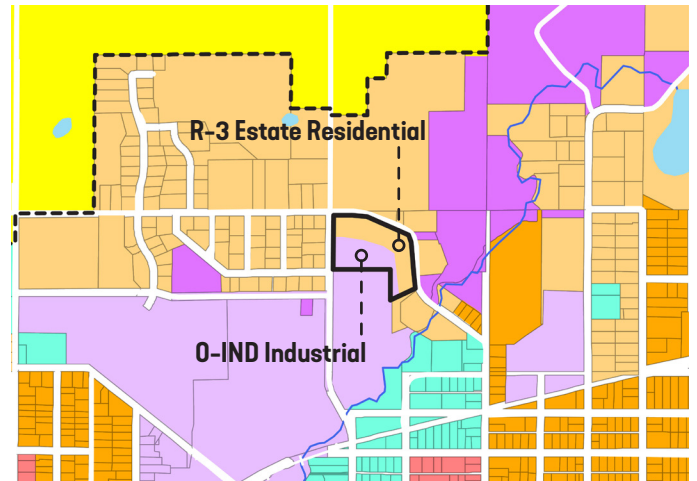
## RELATED PLANS

Fremont’s most recent planning document is the 2016 Comprehensive and Growth Management Plan, which is currently being updated. Its goal is to enhance the relationship between the townships and the city when responding to growth and community demand. In addition, the 2019 Recreation Master Plan seeks to provide more recreational opportunities and regional connectivity for Fremont residents. The City is also in the process of completing its 2020 to 2040 Comprehensive Capital Plan, with the goal of identifying community visions and opportunities for improvement in housing availability, programming, land use, mobility and infrastructural systems within the city. An updated future land use and zoning plan will be provided in June.

## ZONING

The site is currently zoned partially O-IND (Industrial) on the southern portion of the site adjacent to the Gerber campus, and R-3 Estate Residential on the northern portion of the site which hugs Division and fronts Pathfinder Elementary School.

The City of Fremont is currently pursuing a rezoning of the property to allow for the development as currently envisioned. The rezoning will encourage a range of housing types, including single family and attached multifamily housing typologies. The City of Fremont will discuss zoning and site development standards with the selected development partner once rezoning is approved.



# SITE UTILITIES

This site is served by public streets to the east (Division Ave) north (44th Street) and west (Weaver Ave). Full access to utilities is provided from these adjacent streets. As previously stated, the city closed a section of Weaver Ave just south of the site, in service to the Gerber campus. An alternative public street will be created on the south portion of the site, connecting Michigan Ave to Division Ave.

Time to complete the Site Plan Review process takes between 1-3 months depending on initial completeness of the site plan at the time the application is submitted for review.

**Natural Gas:** DTE Energy, tel (855) 383-4249

**Electric:** Consumers Energy, tel (800) 477-5050

**Streets, water/sewer and right-of-way:**

City of Fremont, Public Works Department  
tel. (231)-924-2101

Brian Hettinger, Public Works Superintendent  
101 E Main Street  
Fremont, MI 49412

**Cable TV/Internet/Phone:** Comcast

**Fiber & Wireless Internet:** NCATS



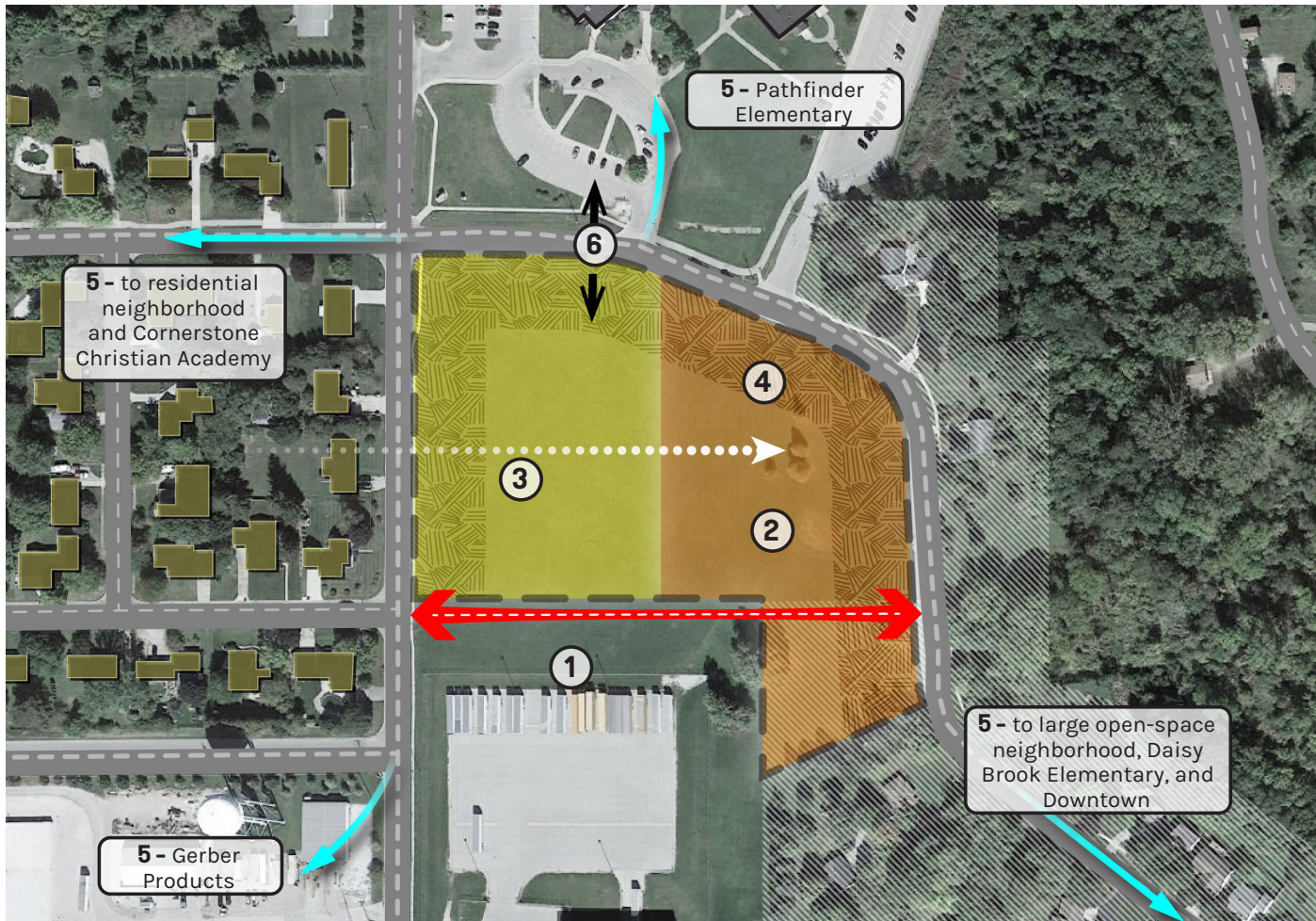
# PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT VISION



Based on the market analysis, master plan, zoning ordinance, stakeholder and staff input meetings, a preferred development scenario was established. With the help of a development partner, the scenario is only one of several possible visions that could be realized.

The low/medium-density residential development represented here is in line with the current goals and values of Fremont. Prioritizing a safe, walkable streetscape along Division connects the site to nearby schools, anchor institutions within the downtown, nearby parks, employment centers like Gerber and the surrounding neighborhood. Detached homes and attached townhomes provide potential for garages integrated into buildings. A range of residential unit types, from detached homes to attached two-story apartments could occupy the space, providing a much needed set of affordable options to the neighborhood.

A new public street to the south redirects traffic with the closure of south Weaver, connecting residents and visitors to Division, the downtown, and nearby schools while also maintaining space for the pedestrian. Open space and landscaping surrounds the property, creating a setback between the site, surrounding streets, and the existing single-family homes within the neighborhood fabric. Proposed single-family homes adjacent to Weaver create a blending of typologies, buffering the higher density units from the existing organization of the neighborhood. While this is the preferred vision, this scenario is negotiable with qualified developers, and the city is eager to initiate rental and/or for-sale market rate housing in a mutually agreeable way. The proposed scenario will need to fulfill the basic parameters outlined in this RFQ, including a mix of housing types, open space buffers, and walkable connections.

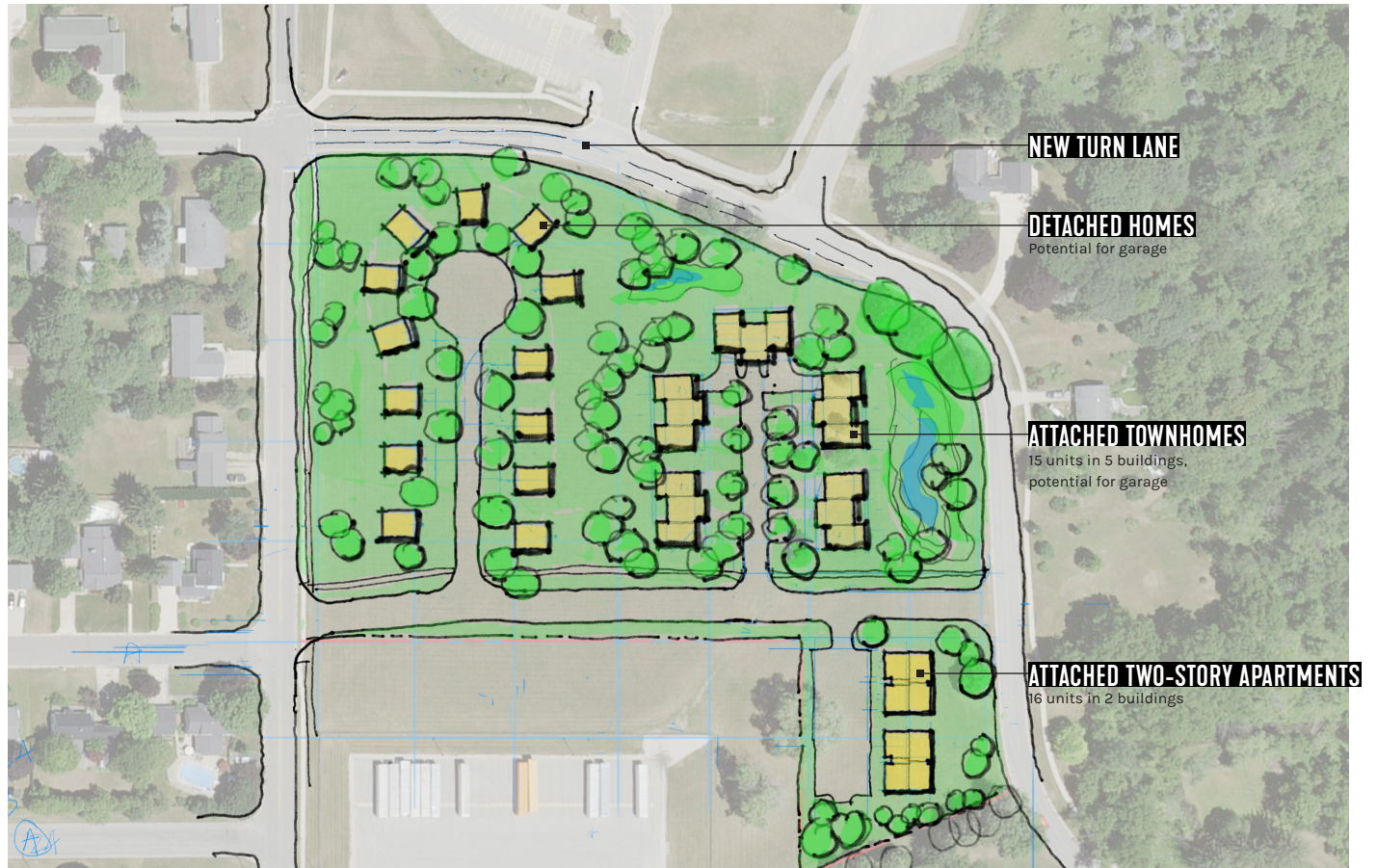


## DESIGN GOALS

- ① **New street and sidewalk connecting Weaver and Division**
- ② **Apartment Homes and/or townhomes**
- ③ **Density transition between residential neighborhood and apartments**
- ④ **Greenspace buffer**
- ⑤ **Connecting to the downtown/rest of city**
- ⑥ **New turn lane on 44th St near Pathfinder Elementary**

# DEVELOPMENT VISION

44 TOTAL UNITS



DETACHED HOMES	
NUMBER OF FLOORS	1.5-2.5
TOTAL UNITS	13

ATTACHED TOWNHOMES	
NUMBER OF FLOORS	1-2
TOTAL UNITS	15
TOTAL BUILDINGS	5

ATTACHED TWO-STORY APARTMENT	
NUMBER OF FLOORS	2
TOTAL UNITS	16
TOTAL BUILDINGS	2

## DESIGN ASSUMPTIONS

The product may include a variety of housing types including, but not limited to detached single family homes and/or traditional garden and/or townhome-style rental product. The pricing structure will ultimately be contingent upon the design elements of the units built. Regardless, the city would expect that any units built are compatible with the housing stock existing within the surrounding neighborhood.

## PARKING ASSUMPTIONS

- 2 off-street parking spaces for each single family and townhome unit (which may include garage spaces)
- 1.5 off-street parking spaces per apartment unit



## FREMONT NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

During community input, participants stressed the desire to maintain the historic, family-oriented character of the neighborhood as a welcoming residential area with walkable connections to nearby municipal amenities such as elementary schools, religious institutions, employment centers, and the downtown. Inclusion of street trees, non-motorized connections, traffic calming elements, shared public gathering spaces like community gardens and parks are desired to support the existing neighborhood character.



Example of a mixed housing typology neighborhood organization with street trees and consistent non-motorized connections.



# PROJECT INCENTIVES

The State of Michigan and City of Fremont are committed to making sure that all available incentives may be leveraged to ensure the selected developer can achieve a quality outcome commensurate with the project vision and goals. Such incentives may include the following:

## STATE

### ARCHITECTURAL & ENGINEERING ALLOWANCE

MEDC's Redevelopment Services Team will provide up to \$100,000 in funds to the City of Fremont to reimburse their chosen development team for architectural and engineering costs associated with readying the chosen priority site for development. These funds are provided to help remove early financial barriers associated with A&E, and encourage the developer to continue down the path toward project construction. The MEDC and the city are committed to collaborate with the selected developer to ensure this tool is used efficiently and successfully.

## LOCAL

### PROPERTY TRANSFER

The city plans to transfer ownership of the property to the chosen developer at no cost.

### INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

The City of Fremont will finance the construction of turn lanes on adjacent streets, and the construction of the connecting street across the southern part of the site, including water and sanitary sewer infrastructure extensions. Water/sewer tap fees to be discounted.

### BROADBAND INCENTIVES

Currently seeking funding for fiber implementation.

### INFRASTRUCTURE/HOUSING GRANTS

Community development grant funding available for new housing development projects. Funds provided for utility extension and implementation costs.

# SUBMISSION FORMAT AND CONTENTS

The City of Fremont will review and evaluate all complete proposals in response to this request for qualifications (RFQ) to identify and engage with qualified developers for 700 N Weaver. An initial response to this RFQ must include the following information:

- **Letter of interest:** Provide a letter (up to three pages) identifying the development team and providing a brief description of the team's vision for the site.
- **Concept plans or renderings** of a vision for site development if different from the conceptual site plan contained in the RFQ.
- **Development experience/portfolio:** Provide a short description of past projects of a similar nature completed by the development team (up to 10 pages). Include a description of the projects, cost, completion date, and references.
- **Evidence of the development team's fiscal capacity** to undertake the proposed project.
- **Resume** of the firm and lead team members.

City of Fremont may seek additional information upon receipt of a development proposal. The RFQ and responses should not be considered a legally binding agreement. Upon selection of a qualified development team, the city will enter into a pre-development agreement including purchase price, due diligence period, and other terms.

## PROPOSAL FORMAT

All submissions should be submitted in PDF via email to the city's economic development team at [citymanager@fremontmi.gov](mailto:citymanager@fremontmi.gov)

Additionally, either a paper copy or digital copy on USB shall be sent to the address below:

City of Fremont, City Manager, C/O Todd Blake, 101 E Main Street, Fremont, MI 49412

## RESPONSES TO:

City of Fremont, Todd Blake, City Manager  
[citymanager@fremontmi.gov](mailto:citymanager@fremontmi.gov)  
101 E Main Street  
Fremont, MI 49412

## CONTACT/QUESTIONS

- Andy Harrington, Planning & Zoning:  
[zoning@fremontmi.gov](mailto:zoning@fremontmi.gov)
- Todd Blake, City Manager: (231) 924-2101

# EVALUATION CRITERIA

The City of Fremont supports the further growth of its residential neighborhoods in order to complement current and future downtown business enterprises. Accordingly, city staff will evaluate responses based on the criteria stated within this document. Given the uniqueness of the anticipated development, developer qualifications and experience will be assigned the greatest value including but not limited to the following;

- Developer qualifications and experience
- Creativity and unique concepts in proposed development vision and program
- Conceptual financial structure
- Financial history/stability
- Ability to attract a diverse clientele representative of the Fremont community

The City of Fremont encourages the developer to utilize the services of local builders and trades in the construction of the development.

# SCHEDULE FOR REVIEW AND SELECTION

The schedule for receipt and evaluation of proposals is anticipated to be as follows:

- **RFQ Release:** 04/27/2022
- **Site Showcase Event:** 05/11/2022
- **RFQ Proposals Due:** 06/27/2022
- **Evaluation Period:** 06/28/2022-07/28/2022
- **Finalist Teams Notified:** 07/29/2022
- **Finalist Teams Presentation to Evaluation Committee:** August 2022
- **Finalize Terms of Development & Purchase Agreement:** September 2022

# APPENDIX

Available upon request from MEDC:

- Pro forma
- Property survey
- Housing study

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