



# **CITY OF FERNDALE MASTER PLAN**

**FERNDALE, MI**

**JANUARY 2017**

## Acknowledgments

### Planning Commission Members

Kate Baker, Chair  
Sara Roediger (past Chair)  
Christa Azar  
Deborah Brazen  
Michael Cascio  
Joshua Farr  
Nina Kelly  
Dan Martin, Council member  
Ian Williamson

### City Council

David Coulter, Mayor  
Melanie Piana, Mayor Pro Tem  
Raylon Leaks-May  
Dan Martin  
Greg Pawlica

### City Staff

City Manager, April Lynch  
Assistant City Manager, Joseph Gacioch  
City Attorney, Dan Christ  
Community and Economic Development  
Director, Jordan Twardy  
Community and Economic Development  
Director (past), Derek Delacourt  
City Planner, Justin Lyons  
Communications Director, Kara Sokol  
Department of Public Works Director, Loyd  
Cureton

Parks and Recreation Director, Jill Manchik

### Master Plan Steering Committee

Citizens For A Fair Ferndale, Kat Bruner James  
Republic Parking, Kevin Canze  
Ferndale Senior Group, Jeannie Davis  
Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce Executive  
Director, Kim Hart  
Downtown Development Authority Board,  
Michael Hennes  
Downtown Development Authority Executive  
Director, Barry Hicks  
Ferndale Parks and Recreation Advisory Board,  
Everett Keyser  
Ferndale Area Public Library Director (past),  
Jessica Keyser  
Melanie Piana, Mayor Pro Tem  
Ferndale Schools Superintendent, Blake Prewitt  
Ferndale Environmental Sustainability  
Commission, Jennifer Young

### Consulting Partners

Hamilton Anderson Associates  
Gibbs Planning Group

## Letter from the Mayor / Planning Commission

I am pleased to present Ferndale's newly revised Master Land Use Plan—a roadmap for how our city will direct its efforts over the next five-to-ten years.

Master plans don't often make front-page headlines, though they should. Our master plan sets a common vision for the City and guides our strategic efforts in key areas such as land use; housing and neighborhoods; economic vitality; recreation and open space; transportation and mobility; and city services, facilities, and infrastructure. Over a year in the making, this update is the result of direction by City Council and extensive research by Hamilton Anderson Associates and Ferndale's Community and Economic Development Department.

Ferndale's 2008 master plan set a vision by assessing existing conditions and creating a strong framework for the future. The 2017 update builds upon this framework by focusing its attention on implementation, citing more than 100 action items with key roles and identified task leaders to carry them out. It also focuses heavily on sustainability, which can be seen in every section of the plan—from sustainable housing and land use to the cultivation and maintenance of Ferndale's urban forest and parklands.

The City's adoption of a master plan update that maps out a modern, community-oriented vision of Ferndale is an essential piece of legislation. I encourage everyone to become familiar with the MLUP, available for download at [bit.ly/Ferndale\\_MLUP](https://bit.ly/Ferndale_MLUP), and I look forward to working closely with you all as we continue to grow our beloved and intrepid city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Coulter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" being more prominent than the last name "Coulter".

Mayor David Coulter

# Adoption

## **CITY OF FERNDALE RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY OF FERNDALE, MICHIGAN MASTER PLAN**

The City of Ferndale Planning Commission, under the provisions of MCL §125.3807 of PA 33 of 2008 of the State of Michigan may approve a Master Plan; and

MCL §125.3845 of PA 33 of 2008 requires the Planning Commission to review and, if necessary, revise or amend the Plan at least once every five years and the current *City of Ferndale Master Plan - Preserve, Enhance, Diversify* was adopted in July 2008; and

The City of Ferndale Planning Commission recognized the need to revise and approve a Master Plan, including establishment and support of visions, goals and actions, implementations and the Future Land Use Plan as described within the document; and

In connection with the preparation of the City-wide Master Plan, the Planning Commission carefully and comprehensively surveyed and studied present conditions, projections of future growth of the City of Ferndale, and the relation of the City of Ferndale to neighboring areas and jurisdictions; and

The Master Plan has been prepared for the purpose of guiding and accomplishing coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the City of Ferndale and its environs; and

The Master Plan is organized around principles of Progress, Equity, Sustainability, and Resilience; and

The Planning Commission forwarded copies of the Draft Master Plan to all adjoining jurisdictions, the Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Department, SEMCOG, Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan, the Ferndale Chamber of Commerce, the Ferndale DDA, the Ferndale and Hazel Park school districts and to all utilities and railroads operating within the City; and

Preparation of the Master Plan included public meetings, numerous workshops and the required public hearing held by the by the Planning Commission; and

The Planning Commission was assisted by Hamilton Anderson Associates, Sara Roediger, Derek Delacourt, and others in the preparation of the Master Plan; and

The Planning Commission considered the testimony presented at the public hearing, and written testimony received prior to the closing of the public record; and

After the preparation of the Draft Master Plan as a proposed revision to the *City of Ferndale Master Plan* for the City, the Planning Commission gave notice of the time and place of the Public Hearing by giving notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the City, on the City's website, in announcements on social media, and through email and regular mail to surrounding communities and concerned entities; and

The Planning Commission held the required public hearing on the Master Plan in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 300 East Nine Mile Road, Ferndale, Michigan on January 18, 2017 and thereafter approved the Master Plan and pursuant to MCL §125.3843 of PA 33 of 2008 forwarded the Master Plan to the Ferndale Council for consideration.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Ferndale Council of Ferndale, Michigan, that the Master Plan is approved, pursuant to MCL §125.3843 of PA 33 of 2008. The Master Plan consists of the following:

- a. The publication entitled the *City of Ferndale Master Plan* dated January 2017; and
- b. The *Existing Land Use Map* and the *Future Land Use Map* contained therein; and
- c. The *Action Plan* contained therein;

**IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Ferndale Council directs that the Ferndale City Clerk cause this Resolution to be included on the inside of the front or back cover of the Master Plan and, if the future land use map is a separate document from the text of the Master Plan, on the future land use map.

**IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED** the Ferndale City Clerk or the secretary of the Planning Commission forwarded a copy of the Master Plan to Oakland County Planning and Economic Development and those entities to which copies of the proposed master plan were required to be submitted under MCL §125.3841(2).

This Resolution being put to vote on roll call, the Ferndale Council voted as follows:

**AYES:** Council Members Leaks-May, Martin, Pawlica, Piana, and Mayor Coulter

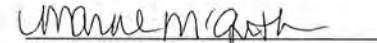
**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**RESOLUTION ADOPTED**

### **CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION**

I certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of the Resolution passed at a meeting of the Ferndale City Council held on the 23rd day of January, 2017.

  
MARNE MCGRATH, CITY CLERK





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>01</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY</b>
<b>32</b>	<b>LAND USE</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>CITY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE</b>
<b>66</b>	<b>HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS</b>		
<b>86</b>	<b>ECONOMIC VITALITY</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>ACTION PLAN</b>
<b>105</b>	<b>RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>APPENDIX: RESIDENTIAL, OFFICE, &amp; RETAIL MARKET STUDIES EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES</b>

# INTRODUCTION

The Ferndale Master Plan 2016 is an update of the City of Ferndale's Master Plan, a comprehensive and citizen-driven effort to plan for Ferndale's future with a common vision and a set of actions. While Ferndale has long been at the forefront of progressive urban development, events and trends over the past several decades have prompted the City to think about planning and development in an even more enlightened, creative, and responsible way. The planning process began in the spring of 2015, and over the next year and a half, residents and other stakeholders shared their thoughts on how Ferndale should move forward beyond the next five to ten years. Public input combined with analyses of current, historic, and future conditions in Ferndale, forms the vision for the city's future and the basis for the recommendations in the plan.

# PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Since the City's last Master Plan in 2008, the national economy went through the Great Recession and has rebounded in new ways, Ferndale's downtown has emerged as one of the most popular in the region, and new pedestrian and bike amenities have given a boost to the quality of life and regional image of Ferndale. But there is still much to do to keep the city's infrastructure sustainable, advance the local economy, plan for future transit, and fully realize the potential of Ferndale's traditional urban neighborhoods. This Master Plan sets the vision and action plans for these issues as Ferndale moves towards the future.

A Master Plan is a document required by the State that records existing conditions and describes municipal policies and actions related to land use, culture and the economy, housing and neighborhoods, recreation and open space, transportation and mobility, and public services and facilities. The Plan sets a common vision, goals, and actions for where the City should head during the next five to ten years and beyond, and is used to guide decision-making for City staff and officials. Updating the Master Plan provides the opportunity to build on the current positive initiatives in Ferndale while addressing emerging challenges.

A Master Plan establishes policy to direct the City and recommends review of and possible amendments to zoning regulations. The Master Plan is not the law and does not itself change zoning regulations. It provides direction for the future, whereas the Zoning Ordinance regulates the current use of land. The City's elected and appointed officials as well as City staff should have a strong working knowledge of the Master Plan and will apply the recommendations of the Plan when drafting or amending land use regulations, preparing specialized plans, allocating budgets, and reviewing development or redevelopment proposals.

In addition to this Master Plan, there are a number of specialized local and regional planning documents. This Plan recognizes these complementary efforts as part of the City's overall Master Plan.

Other active plans include:

## *Local*

- **Parks and Recreation Master Plan**, City of Ferndale (2009; updated 2016)
- **Goal-Setting & Strategic Plan**, City of Ferndale (2015; updated annually)
- **Ferndale Moves: Ferndale's Multi-Modal Plan**, City of Ferndale (2014)
- **Public Participation Plan**, City of Ferndale (2014)
- **Capital Improvement Plan**, City of Ferndale (2013)
- **Downtown Development Plan**, City of Ferndale (2007)

## *Regional*

- **Action: 2018**, Eight Mile Boulevard Association Growth Plan (2015)
- **Woodward Avenue Rapid Transit Locally Preferred Alternative**, SEMCOG (2014)
- **Regional Master Transit Plan**, Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (2016)

# OVERVIEW OF FERNDALE

*"The City of Ferndale, Michigan is typical of many Midwest suburban communities. Located in Oakland County and adjacent to the City of Detroit, it was first inhabited by Native Americans and situated on the site of a major Native American Trail connecting Detroit with Saginaw Bay and the Straits of Mackinac. It was first settled by homesteading farmers in the nineteenth century. It grew slowly until the advent of the automobile and the opening of the Ford Motor Company plant in nearby Highland Park. In 1918 it was incorporated as a village and in 1927 as a city. Since that time it has become one of the major suburbs north of Detroit."*<sup>1</sup>

Today the City of Ferndale is a vibrant inner ring suburb of Detroit. Positioned between Eight Mile Road, I-75, and I-696, Ferndale is conveniently located within the metropolitan Detroit region and has easy access to numerous regional destinations. Occupying nearly four square miles, this resilient City has continued to be a desirable community in which to live or visit. Its success in part can be attributed to its traditional downtown, established neighborhoods, and cultural diversity.

<sup>1</sup>Excerpt from "Ferndale of Yesterday" Forward written by Dr. Philip P. Mason Professor of History, Wayne State University





## Ferndale Today

Ferndale continues to stabilize and experience reinvestment since the end of the Great Recession due to a nationwide, renewed interest in walkable places and traditional neighborhoods. The last Master Plan, completed in 2008, focused on enhancing what had already been established to ensure Ferndale remained a desirable place to live, work, and visit. The 2016 Plan takes a slightly different approach, one focused less on growth and more on ensuring our efforts and investments both create value and meet the tests of time. This Master Plan not only looks back at the accomplishments of the last ten years, but looks further back at the centuries-old, tried-and-true, pre-car ideas that the most admired places exhibit to understand how Ferndale can most successfully create the conditions for that kind of vibrant, supportive development to happen.

The last 50 years were spent on suburbanization and auto-oriented development. Fortunately, Ferndale resisted much of the harmful changes, in some ways intentionally and in other ways by being overlooked for not having qualities easily amenable to sprawling development. Some of the lasting consequences of this planning and development era in Ferndale include the imbalanced priority to automobiles on Woodward Avenue over other users, increases in house and lot sizes, and an

increase in the distance between where people live and where they work.

Ferndale has worked hard to have largely preserved its urban street grid, small lots, alleys, close-knit neighborhoods, architectural history, and entrepreneurial culture. Ferndale does not require a major structural overhaul with these assets. Instead, using lessons learned from the past and looking toward a more sustainable future, Ferndale has the opportunity to intentionally return to a more traditional pattern of development, one focused on people, neighborhoods, and businesses that last and create value.

While Ferndale is inherently walkable and changes have been made to make it even better, there is still room for improvement. Barriers in the form of highways, major roadways, and railroads inhibit the pedestrian connection between neighborhoods and surrounding communities.

Although still in planning phases, there is a possibility that bus rapid transit (BRT) could be implemented along Woodward Avenue in the coming decade, creating an attractive and valuable transportation asset for communities including Ferndale. This, combined with the knowledge of economic trends in the late 20th century and emerging economic trends, provide a market-based vision of the possibilities and directive for Ferndale's future.

Most importantly, the people who care about Ferndale's future are passionate about bringing life to that vision. Ferndale's residents and stakeholders generally share a common vision of what should be done to improve Ferndale and build a stronger, more sustainable city within a collaborative region. **This document articulates that vision and makes recommendations to set Ferndale on a solid path, but its success and sustainability are intimately linked to sustained civic activism and community engagement.**



## Population

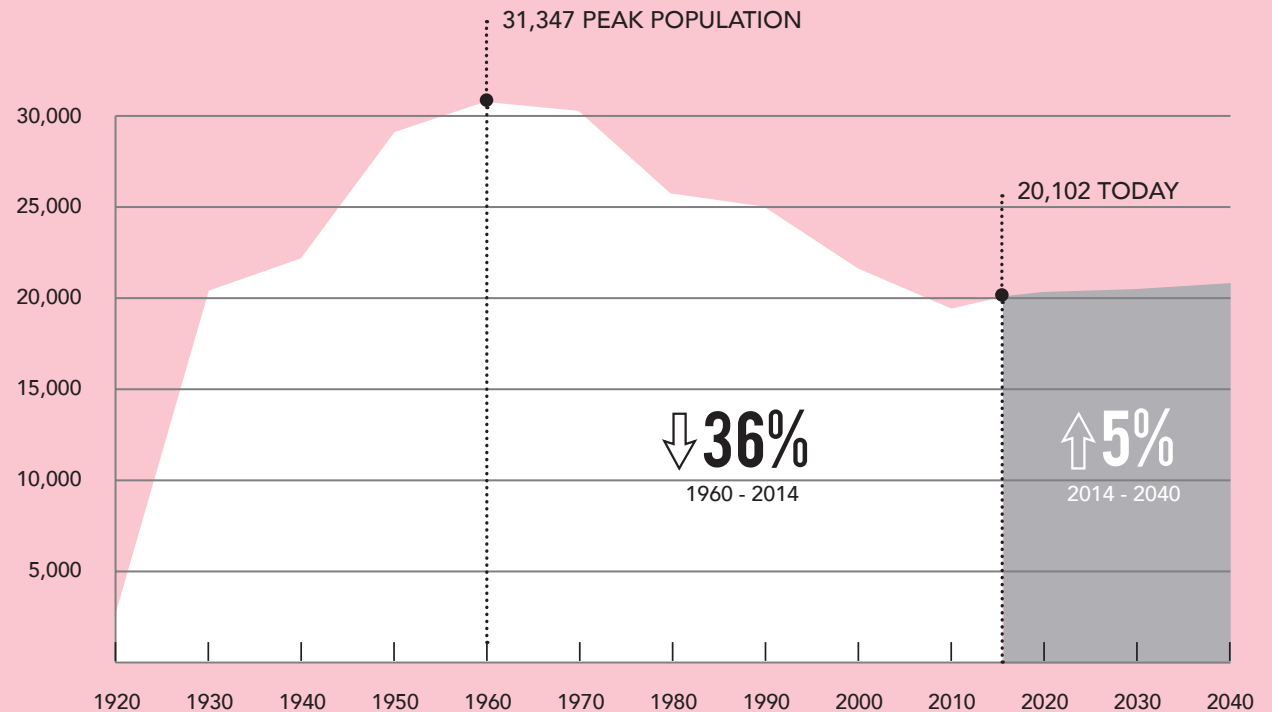
Ferndale's population steadily grew from its incorporation into a village in 1918 through the 1950's when the population peaked at approximately 31,000 people in 1960. The largest period of growth occurred in the 1920's during the time Ferndale was incorporated into a City (1927) and it served as a bedroom community for residents who could take the trolley — running in the median strip of Woodward Avenue from Downtown Detroit to Pontiac — to shop or work in Detroit.

Since the 1960s, the population has steadily decreased to just 19,900 people in 2010. Like many of its surrounding communities, Ferndale lost much of its population between 2000 and 2010 resulting from the Great Recession. While recent counts show a slight uptick in Ferndale's population similar to surrounding communities — up 1% in 2014 since 2010 — SEMCOG's demographic forecast of the region's population through 2040 predicts populations will not return to pre-2010 levels.

Current population projections predict the population will slowly increase to 20,442 people in 2020 and to 20,982 people in 2040, a total increase of 5.4% from 2010 to 2040.

In 2014, the population density in Ferndale was estimated at 8.1 persons per acre, projected to increase slightly to 8.5 by 2040.

### POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS



Data Sources (entire page): U.S. Decennial Census, 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates, SEMCOG 2040 Forecast (2012)

TOTAL (2014)	20,102 PEOPLE
DENSITY	8.1 PERSONS / ACRE
PEAK (1960)	31,347 PEOPLE
1960 TO 2014	-36%
30-YR. PROJECTION	+5%

## Households

According to 2014 estimates, there were 9,381 households present in Ferndale. The household distribution in Ferndale is not typical of its nearby peer communities, although somewhat similar to Royal Oak. Ferndale has a lower proportion of Family households (43%) and a higher proportion of households classified as Non-Family (57%) than surrounding communities and the Detroit Metropolitan Statistical Area overall. The census classifies a Family household as two or more people (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption residing in the same housing unit; it classifies a Non-Family household as one person or more people who are not related.

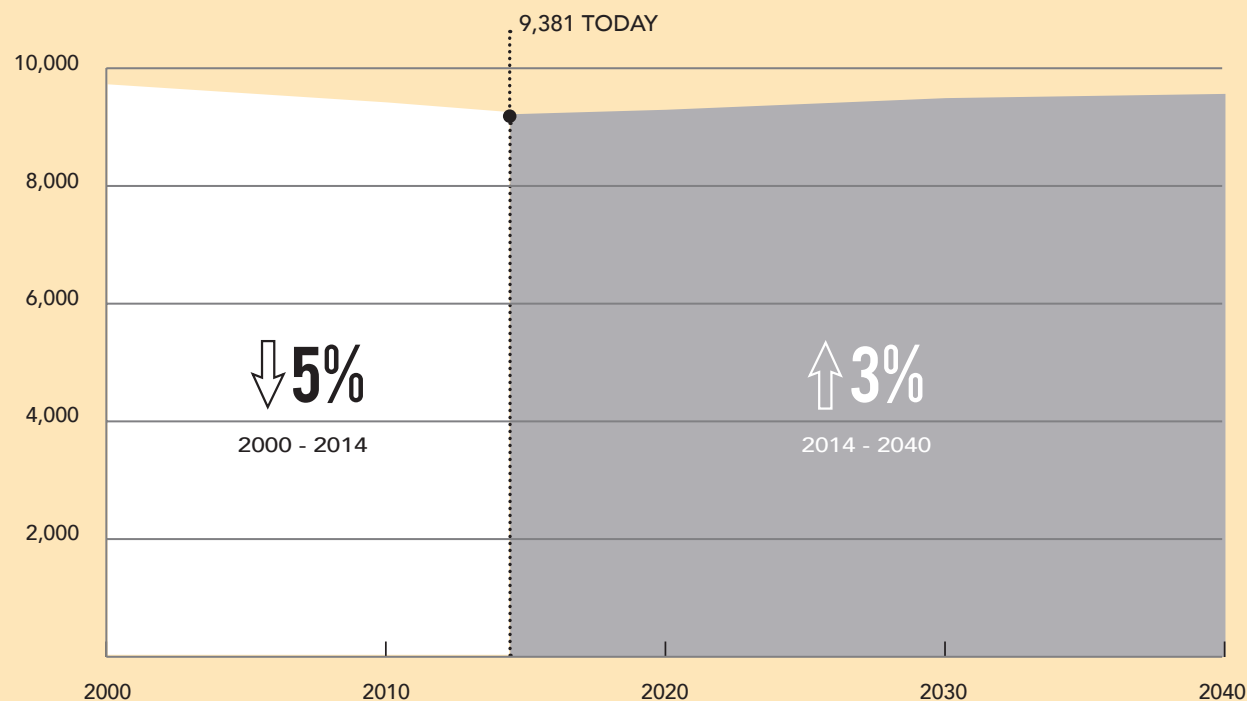
The lower proportion of Family households in Ferndale is largely attributed to the number of single persons living alone, accounting for 43% of all Non-Family households. Of those living alone, 7% are 65 years or older.

The average household size of 2.14 persons per household is relatively small and has been declining (2.23 persons per household in 2000). The decline in household size is consistent with a national downward trend due to people having fewer children and living longer. Current projections predict the number of households in Ferndale will modestly increase 3.3% over the next 30 years to 9,689 in 2040.

The number of households with children under 18 years old in Ferndale (21%) is generally lower than its surrounding communities and the region overall with the exception of Royal Oak (19%); however, other communities including Pleasant Ridge and Hazel Park are similarly low (23% and 27%, respectively).

TOTAL (2014)	<b>9,381 HOUSEHOLDS</b>
30-YR. PROJECTION	<b>+3%</b>
AVERAGE SIZE	<b>2.14 PERSONS</b>
FAMILY	<b>43%</b>
NON-FAMILY	<b>57%</b>

### NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS (OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS)



Data Sources (entire page): U.S. Decennial Census, 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates, SEMCOG 2040 Forecast (2012)

## Race and Ethnicity

Ferndale, with 85% of its population considered white, has a higher proportion of white residents than the Detroit MSA at 70%. While this number suggests a relatively homogeneous racial makeup in Ferndale, the city has become more diverse since 2000 when 97% of the population was considered white. The Hispanic population in Ferndale increased 2% since 2000, slightly higher than the region as a whole which increased by approximately 1%. Progress towards a more racially and ethnically diverse population over the past decade is a positive step towards Ferndale's ongoing goal to embrace demographic and cultural diversity within the community.

WHITE	85%
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	9%
ASIAN	1%
OTHER	5%
HISPANIC	4%

## Age and Gender

The median age of Ferndale residents is 35.0 years of age and is lower than surrounding communities and the Detroit MSA overall (39.7). The largest age group in Ferndale is the 25-34 years group, which accounts for nearly a quarter of Ferndale's population (23.5%). This is consistent with Ferndale's age trends over the last decade as more young professionals and couples have moved to Ferndale for its affordable housing options, close-knit neighborhoods, and walkable downtown.

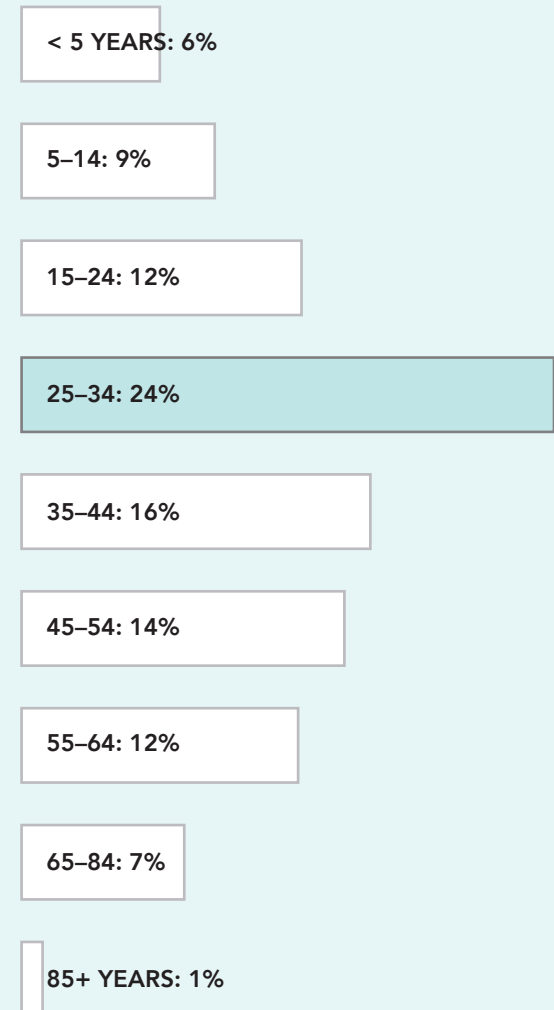
The smallest age groups include Ferndale's youth (under 14 years) and older residents (65 years and older). While Ferndale's youngest and oldest residents are currently a minority in the age category, the number of senior citizens in Ferndale is expected to increase as part of a national trend of aging Baby Boomers that will likely be entering retirement over the next ten years.

The male-to-female ratio is close to 1:1, with 51% male and 49% female.

MEDIAN AGE (YEARS)	35.0
<18 YEARS	11.4%
65+ YEARS	8.3%
<hr/>	
FEMALE	49%
MALE	51%

### AGE DISTRIBUTION

CITY OF FERNDALDE



Data Sources (entire page): 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Decennial Census



## Income and Poverty

Oakland County is amongst the wealthiest counties in the nation; however, the economy within the County varies widely, with Ferndale representing close to the average for the area. The median household income in Ferndale is \$50,590, lower than Oakland County (\$66,436) and the Detroit MSA (\$52,305).

17% of Ferndale residents (3,421 people) are living below the poverty level according to the Census, similar to the Detroit MSA overall. This number has increased slightly in Ferndale since 2000 (15%).

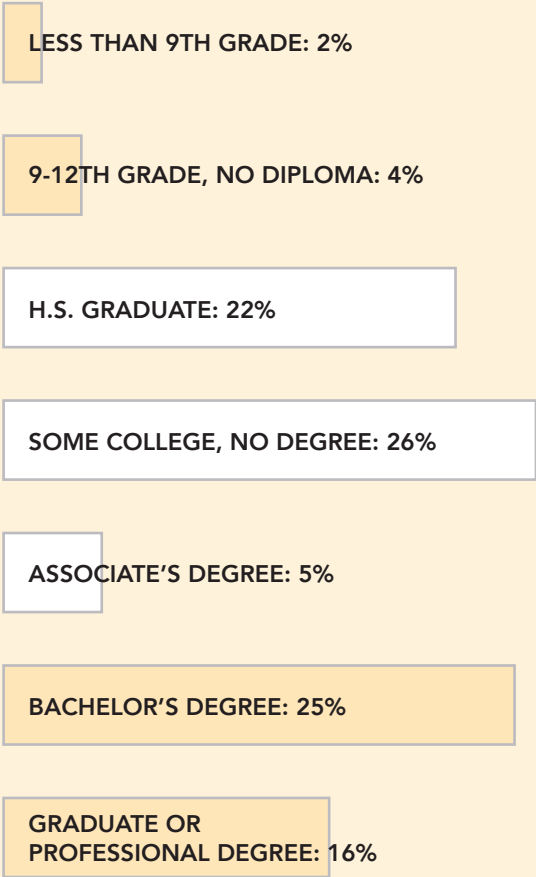
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	
FERNDALE	\$ 50,590
OAKLAND CO.	\$ 66,436
DETROIT MSA	\$ 52,305
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	
FERNDALE	11%
OAKLAND CO.	9%
DETROIT MSA	13%
POP. BELOW POVERTY LEVEL	
FERNDALE	17%
OAKLAND CO.	10%
DETROIT MSA	17%

## Education

Approximately 41% of Ferndale residents 25 years or older hold a Bachelor's degree or higher, slightly lower than Oakland County (44%) but considerably higher than the Detroit MSA (29%). Only 6% of Ferndale residents 25 or older do not have a high school diploma.

< HS (NO DIPLOMA)	6%
HS GRAD OR HIGHER	94%
BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER	41%

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT POPULATION AGE 25+ YEARS, CITY OF FERNDALE



Data Sources (entire page): 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Decennial Census

Housing

There are 10,520 housing units in Ferndale, resulting in a density of 4.2 dwelling units per acre. While Ferndale’s housing density is generally higher than surrounding communities and considerably higher than Oakland County overall (0.9), it is still lower than other communities with walkable, thriving neighborhoods.

Of the total housing units, 9,381 are occupied, resulting in an 11% vacancy rate (up from 4% in 2000). Of the occupied units, 60% are owned (down from 71% in 2000) and 40% are rented. According to the Census, the decrease in homeownership is consistent with national trends across all age groups but especially among the Millennial generation (under 35 years of age).

HOUSING UNITS	10,520
DENSITY	4.2 UNITS / ACRE
OCCUPIED	89%
VACANT	11%
OWNER-OCCUPIED	60%
RENTER-OCCUPIED	40%

Data Source: 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Image Sources: Zillow (top left, top right, middle left), Google Earth (middle right, bottom left, bottom right)

CURRENT HOUSING STOCK



ONE UNIT, DETACHED: 80%



ONE UNIT, ATTACHED: 3%



TWO UNITS: 7%



THREE OR MORE UNITS: 10%



LIVE-WORK (PART OF “ONE UNIT, ATTACHED” ABOVE)



SENIOR (PART OF “THREE OR MORE UNITS” ABOVE)

## How Ferndale Compares

Looking at Ferndale in the context of neighboring communities, the county, and the region provides a snapshot of Ferndale's unique attributes and how the City differs from its surroundings on demographic and economic factors.

### POPULATION CHANGE (2000-2014)

Huntington Woods	+3%
Oakland County	+2%
Oak Park	-1%
Pleasant Ridge	-3%
Royal Oak	-3%
<b>Ferndale</b>	<b>-9%</b>
Hazel Park	-13%
Wayne County	-13%
Detroit	-27%
Royal Oak Township	-50%
Detroit MSA	N/A

### BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER (2014)

Huntington Woods	79%
Pleasant Ridge	63%
Royal Oak	51%
Oakland County	44%
<b>Ferndale</b>	<b>41%</b>
Detroit MSA (Region)	29%
Oak Park	29%
Wayne County	22%
Detroit	13%
Hazel Park	11%
Royal Oak Township	10%

### POPULATION DENSITY (2014)

	Persons Per Acre
Hazel Park	9.2
Oak Park	9.0
<b>Ferndale</b>	<b>8.1</b>
Detroit	7.8
Royal Oak Township	7.7
Royal Oak	7.7
Pleasant Ridge	7.0
Huntington Woods	6.7
Wayne County	4.6
Oakland County	2.2
Detroit MSA	1.7

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, AGE 16+ (2014)

Huntington Woods	3%
Pleasant Ridge	5%
Royal Oak	6%
Oakland County	9%
<b>Ferndale</b>	<b>11%</b>
Detroit MSA (Region)	13%
Oak Park	14%
Wayne County	17%
Detroit	17%
Hazel Park	27%
Royal Oak Township	28%

### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2014)

Huntington Woods	\$113.7K
Pleasant Ridge	\$100.5K
Oakland County	\$66.4K
Royal Oak	\$64.8K
Detroit MSA (Region)	\$52.3K
<b>Ferndale</b>	<b>\$50.6K</b>
Oak Park	\$47.3K
Wayne County	\$41.4K
Hazel Park	\$31.6K
Detroit	\$26.1K
Royal Oak Township	\$25.5K

### POPULATION IN POVERTY (2014)

Huntington Woods	2%
Pleasant Ridge	3%
Royal Oak	8%
Oakland County	10%
<b>Ferndale</b>	<b>17%</b>
Detroit MSA (Region)	17%
Oak Park	19%
Wayne County	25%
Hazel Park	29%
Royal Oak Township	36%
Detroit	40%

# Land Use

Existing land use patterns show distinct commercial and industrial corridors that serve as delineation lines to residential neighborhoods. Neighborhoods consist almost entirely of single-family homes, with parks, institutional uses, and multi-family uses sprinkled within. There are several areas within the City that host a broader mix of uses, including the Hilton, West Marshall, and South Livernois corridors.

## EXISTING LAND USE

SOURCE: CITY OF FERNDAL, 2015

LAND USE	ACREAGE	% OF TOTAL
Single-Family Residential	1,148	47%
Multi-Family Residential	31	1%
Commercial/Office	108	4%
Industrial	240	10%
Institutional	142	6%
Open Space	85	3%
Right-of-Way/Utility	645	26%
Vacant	67	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,465</b>	<b>100%</b>

## EXISTING LAND USE



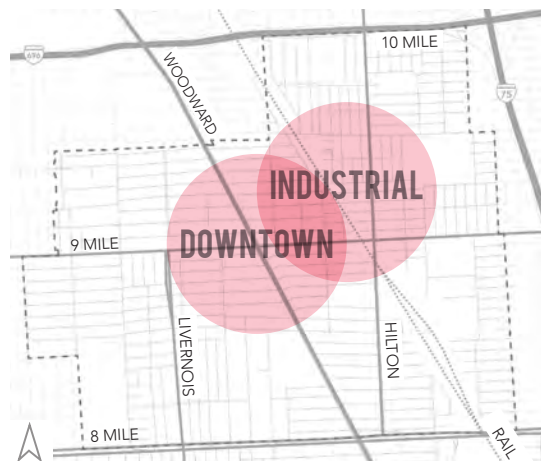
SOURCE: CITY OF FERNDAL, HAA



## Market Studies

Early in the Master Plan process, stakeholders identified two major areas of change in Ferndale's future: Downtown and the Industrial area. The two areas were studied in more detail to better inform the Master Plan, including market analyses to understand the types and sizes of retail, office, and residential uses that are likely to be supportable in these areas currently and in the future. The findings from these market analyses particularly informed recommendations in this Plan related to housing and neighborhoods, economic vitality, and the land use and zoning policies needed to support their future development.

The full market study reports by Gibbs Planning Group can be found in the appendix.

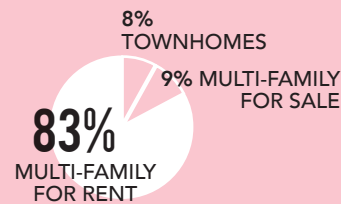


### DOWNTOWN STUDY AREA

#### RESIDENTIAL DEMAND

**520 UNITS**

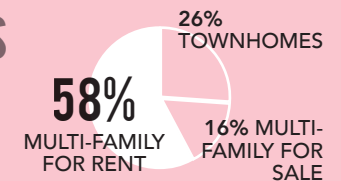
OVER THE NEXT  
5 YEARS  
(104 UNITS / YEAR)



### INDUSTRIAL STUDY AREA

**415 UNITS**

OVER THE NEXT  
5 YEARS  
(83 UNITS / YEAR)



#### RETAIL



40-60 NEW RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS CAN BE  
PRESENTLY SUPPORTED



20-30 NEW RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS CAN BE  
PRESENTLY SUPPORTED

#### OFFICE

**106,000SF**

ADDITIONAL OFFICE SPACE IN  
NEXT 15 YEARS



130 ADDITIONAL OFFICE  
WORKERS IN NEXT 15 YEARS

**40,300SF**

ADDITIONAL OFFICE SPACE IN  
NEXT 15 YEARS



80 ADDITIONAL OFFICE  
WORKERS IN NEXT 15 YEARS

# Transportation

## STREETS

Streets make up approximately 25% of the land area in Ferndale and serve an important multi-faceted role in the city for transportation, business activity, residents' quality of life, and the environment. Ferndale's Department of Public Works (DPW) maintains 75 miles of streets. In 2015, residents approved a road repair bond to rehabilitate and resurface City streets. The bond also includes traffic signal replacement and traffic calming.

While this plan considers Ferndale's streets to serve more functions than that of transportation corridors, Ferndale's streets are classified here by their level of mobility and access to communicate the road's character of service. The types of streets found in Ferndale include: principal arterials, minor arterials, collector streets, local streets, and alleys.

## TRANSIT

Public transit service in Ferndale and Metro Detroit is provided by the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART).

In 2012, the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) was created to plan for and coordinate public transportation in the four-county region and to deliver rapid transit in the region. The RTA's first priority is to provide a network of rapid transit routes along the region's major corridors, including Woodward Avenue.

## TRANSPORTATION





## Non-Motorized Transportation

Non-motorized transportation refers to bicycle and pedestrian travel on streets, sidewalks, and pathways. The City has implemented several types of non-motorized facilities in recent years as it continues to implement its multi-modal network plan. In 2016, the City of Ferndale and five neighboring communities launched the Woodward Corridor Neighborhood Bicycle Network, a highly visible bike route connecting the communities.

The full multi-modal plan, resources, and recent news can be found on Ferndale Moves, the City's online transportation dialogue and resource center. [www.ferndalemoves.com](http://www.ferndalemoves.com)

Ferndale's **bike lanes** are portions of the roadway that are designated by striping, signage, and pavement markings for the use of bicyclists.

Ferndale's **bike routes** contain a combination of on-street shared lanes (also called "sharrows") and wayfinding signage along preferred bicycle routes. The bike routes are part of the Woodward Corridor Neighborhood Bicycle Network, connecting Ferndale and several neighboring communities.

**Bike hubs** are located at key points of the bicycle network to provide cyclists with a map of the route and tools to perform basic bike repairs and maintenance.

### NON-MOTORIZED FACILITIES

— Bike Lanes    - - - Bike Sharrow    — Bike Route    (Bike Icon) Bike Hub    ■ Parks



SOURCE: CITY OF FERNDAL, HAA

## Public Services & Facilities

### CITY HALL

Ferndale City Hall, located at 300 East Nine Mile Road, was built in 1965. The 11,400 square foot building houses the City's administrative staff including offices for the City Manager, Clerk, Finance, and Community and Economic Development and is the City's primary site for public meetings. City Hall was renovated in 2010 to better provide services to residents, visitors, and businesses.

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

The mission of the Ferndale Police Department is to, "Protect the rights of all persons ... to be free from criminal attack, to be secure in their possessions and to live in peace." Members of the Ferndale Police Department patrol the Ferndale community of over 20,000 people. Located at 310 East Nine Mile Road adjacent to City Hall, the Department occupies a 14,516 square foot facility. Averaging a response time of three minutes to all calls for service, this Department is service orientated. The officers conduct house checks, Neighborhood Watch, Ferndale Police Chaplain Program, street light outage surveys, attend block parties and can frequently be found in the local schools. As Ferndale has become a center for night life, the Department assigns Police Mountain Bike Officers to patrol the downtown during peak activity hours.

### FIRE RESCUE

Ferndale Fire Rescue's mission is to proactively and effectively protect all citizens and visitors through prevention, inspection, education, and ongoing training programs to ensure the safety of the communities we serve. Emergencies — whether caused by fire, manmade or natural disasters, traumatic injury, or medical conditions — will be handled by the rapid response of educated, well-trained professionals who provide the Emergency Medical Services, technical rescue, firefighting, and Hazardous Materials skills needed to mitigate the emergency. Knowing a single agency cannot handle all events on our own, Ferndale Fire Rescue is committed to the OAKWAY Mutual Aid Group, a full service and response, multi-jurisdictional mutual aid group and member 3202 of the Michigan Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MI-MABAS). Ferndale Fire Rescue commits to this mission in its totality while always remaining professional and nice.

The Ferndale Fire Department operates out of two fire stations due to the railway splitting the community: Fire Headquarters (1635 Livernois Avenue, built in 1957) and Fire Station 2 (1070 East Nine Mile Road, built in 1957).

Fire protection and rescue and HazMat services are provided by the department to the cities of Ferndale and Pleasant Ridge and to the Charter Township of Royal Oak. The cities of Ferndale and Pleasant Ridge also receive Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

from the Department. The Fire Prevention Bureau provides code enforcement, fire cause investigation, and fire safety education to the community of Ferndale.

The "OAKWAY" mutual aid pact (MABAS 3202) is made up of the communities of Birmingham, Bloomfield Township, Madison Heights, Royal Oak, Southfield, Waterford, and West Bloomfield.

Ferndale Fire Rescue also participates in an "Automatic Aid" (AutoAid) pact with the cities of Hazel Park and Madison Heights. AutoAid is an immediate response for fires from the other participating communities.

### 43RD DISTRICT COURT

The two story, approximately 12,000 square foot facility located at 305 East Nine Mile Road was built in 1971 and remodeled in 2014. The District Court handles all traffic cases including formal and informal hearings, trials and parking. The District Court has exclusive jurisdiction in all civil litigation up to \$25,000, small claims, garnishment proceedings and evictions. In the criminal area, the District Court handles all arraignments, most misdemeanor cases, the setting and acceptance of bail, bench and jury trials, sentencing and preliminary examinations in felony cases.



## LIBRARY

The Ferndale Public Library opened its doors in November of 1930 inside one room of the former Central School building near the corner of East Nine Mile and Woodward. In 1954, the Library moved one lot over to its current location at 222 East Nine Mile Road. The Library's book and materials collection has grown over the years, starting at around 2,000 to nearly 72,000 items as of August 2016. The collection includes DVDs, music CDs, audiobooks, and downloadable eBooks and audiobooks.

In 2007, a millage to expand the size and services of the Library was approved by voters, leading to a renovation in 2010 that doubled the Library's building size, expanded the Children's Department, added new public computers, a space for teens, a multi-purpose community meeting room, and installed an eco-friendly green roof, making it a leader in energy-efficient and environmental design. The Library received Silver LEED certification in 2014.

Voters recently approved the replacement of this millage in 2016 as a means to reinforce the Library against the lingering effects of the 2008 recession and increase its operating budget. With this support from the community, the Library is currently on pace to be open seven days a week in early 2017. With the increased funding, the Ferndale Library will upgrade the public computer workstations, order more on-demand digital resources (like eBooks, audiobooks, and online learning tools) and organize more literacy programs for K-12th grade readers.

## HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Operated by the Historical Society, the Historical Museum has been open since 1983. The museum is located on Livernois south of Nine Mile Road, housed in a building which was given to the City by the Canadian Legion Post No. 71. The Historical Society utilizes the facility for research and as a repository for all things Ferndale. The Museum has an extensive collection of photographs, maps and artifacts that document the history, growth and development of Ferndale. In 2013, the museum celebrated its 30th anniversary.



*Ferndale Public Library*



*Ferndale Public Library Courtyard*



*Ferndale Historical Museum*

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Ferndale Public School District serves the municipalities of Ferndale, Pleasant Ridge, Oak Park, and Royal Oak Township. The School District has a long history of distinguished alumni and a well-rounded education. This is one of the most diverse school districts in the state, both racially and socio-economically. Ferndale elementary schools are focused on project-based learning, outdoor education, socio-emotional education, and a strong academic base. Students from Ferndale attend colleges all over the country including Ivy League schools. The school district is also home to the Cambridge International Program and Baker Early College. A Ferndale education is best summed up by its motto: Dignity, Diversity, Dreams.

The school district is comprised of the following buildings:

- Ferndale Early Childhood Center (Preschool)
- Ferndale Lower Elementary School (K-2)
- Ferndale Upper Elementary School (3-5)
- Ferndale Middle School (6-8)
- Ferndale High School (9-12)
- University High School (9-12, tri-county magnet school)
- Tri-County Educational Center (9-12, tri-county alternative education)

- Hazel Parks School District also operates Webb Elementary located in Ferndale and Webster Early Childhood Center, just outside the Ferndale/Hazel Park border.

## PARKS & RECREATION

The Recreation Department develops programs for the City's 14 park facilities, totaling approximately 89 acres of land which are physically maintained by the Department of Public Works. A complete analysis of the recreation needs and specific park recommendations is located within the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which was updated in 2016 concurrently with this Master Plan.

Since the last Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2008-2015), the Recreation Department has implemented many of the community's requests. A majority of the parks have been updated with new benches and tables, modern play structures, and landscaping. A dog park installed at Wilson Park in 2015 issued roughly 150 memberships in its first six months.



Ferndale Dog Park



## Parks & Open Space

Ferndale offers 4.4 acres of open space per 1,000 residents. The City's neighborhood parks, which are the basic unit of the park system, are distributed throughout the city, covering most of the population within a 1/4- to 1/2-mile radius (a 5 to 10 minute walk).

### PUBLIC PARKS

SOURCE: CITY OF FERNDALE, 2016

PARK	ACREAGE
<b>(A)</b> Martin Road Park	31.82
<b>(B)</b> Harding Park	17.65
<b>(C)</b> Geary Park	9.65
<b>(D)</b> Wilson Park	7.34
<b>(E)</b> Garbutt Park	6.53
<b>(F)</b> Lennon Memorial Park	4.18
<b>(G)</b> Wanda Park	3.17
<b>(H)</b> Kulick Community Center	2.82
<b>(I)</b> Oppenheim Park	2.35
<b>(J)</b> Fair Park	1.27
<b>(K)</b> Vester Park	0.89
<b>(L)</b> Oakridge Park	0.54
<b>(M)</b> Marie Park	0.22
<b>(N)</b> Schiffer Park	0.13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88.56</b>

### PARKS BY TYPE

■ Community (10+ acres)
 ■ Neighborhood (1-10 acres)
 ■ Mini (<1 acre)



SOURCE: CITY OF FERNDALE, HAA

# THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Ferndale Master Plan is a culmination of a year and a half-long planning process that began in 2015. The process included many steps and input from a variety of stakeholders to gain the greatest understanding of the community and the people who belong to it. The process involved compiling market data, census data, mapping, field observations, experiential input from community members and stakeholders, and best practices based on projects in similar contexts. The resulting Master Plan is specific to the people and physical characteristics of the Ferndale community.

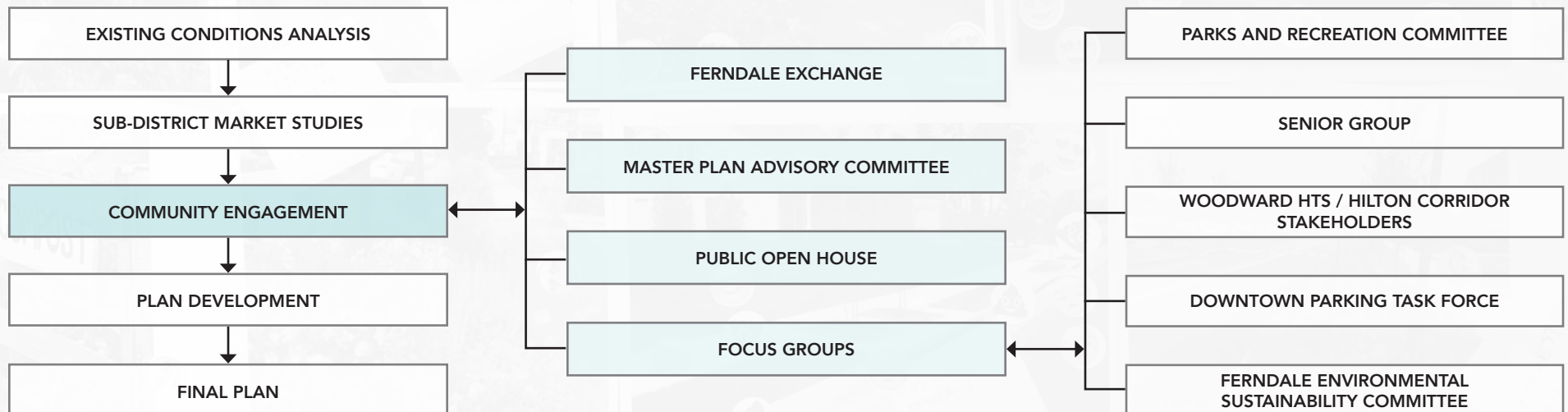
The major components of the planning process were:

- **Existing Conditions Analysis:** info gathering of demographic and physical conditions; review of existing plans, initiatives, and recent development.
- **Sub-District Market Studies:** residential, retail, and office market analyses for the Downtown and Industrial Sub-Districts.
- **Community Engagement:** outreach through Ferndale Exchange, the Master Plan Advisory Committee, focus groups, a public open house, and committee and board meetings.

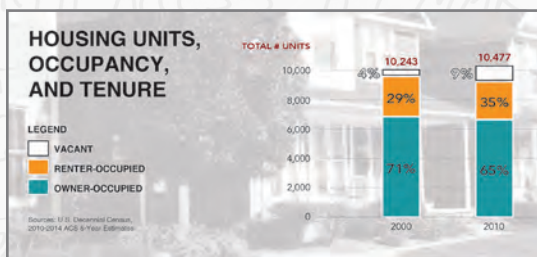
- **Plan Development:** development of recommendations, the implementation strategy, and public support.

## Community Engagement

The community engagement approach sought creative ways to engage residents and stakeholders in the planning process toward the ultimate goal of creating a community-driven Master Plan. The range of engagement strategies afforded a diversity of unique perspectives and local knowledge to come forward throughout the planning process.



## FERNDALE EXCHANGE



Opportunities for community engagement included:

- **Ferndale Exchange** ([www.ferndale-exchange.org](http://www.ferndale-exchange.org)), created to serve as an online platform for information sharing between residents, visitors, business owners, City officials, and anyone else with a stake or interest in Ferndale's Future. Ferndale Exchange was the primary engagement tool for the Master Plan process as it offered a modern, accessible, and creative way for residents and stakeholders to participate in planning. The website offered the opportunity to gather public feedback and input on an ongoing basis, allowing participants to engage in new ways – such as taking polls, sharing pictures, and viewing and responding to other comments – as well as a complement to the more traditional “town hall” meetings. At the end of the planning process, Ferndale Exchange had received 40,000 views and 260 responses as well as additional responses to the posts on the City's Facebook page.

- The **Master Plan Advisory Committee**, consisting of representatives from various City departments, committees and boards, and other groups within the community. The information shared at the bi-monthly meetings included progress updates from the planning team, topical discussions to identify major areas of change and interest, and input for the larger community engagement efforts. Committee members were asked to be a voice for their respective groups throughout the planning process to ensure their goals, insight, and feedback would be represented in the Master Plan. Committee members were also instrumental in relaying information back to their respective groups and encouraging others to participate in the public engagement process, including Ferndale Exchange and the Open House.

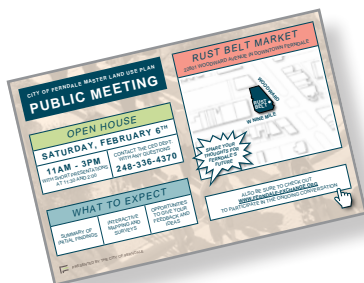
>> Quotes and results from all community engagement activities are woven throughout the Master Plan.



- A public **Open House**, held at the Rust Belt Market in Downtown Ferndale, provided an opportunity to share with the community preliminary findings and gather insight and ideas about Ferndale's major areas of change. This more traditional engagement method was intended to reach members of the public less inclined to participate online via Ferndale Exchange, particularly the senior population, as well as passersby shopping at the Rust Belt that day. The Open House supplemented Ferndale Exchange by providing another medium for sharing the ideas, initial findings, and questions that were posted on Ferndale Exchange. It also provided in-person opportunities to ask the planning team and City staff questions and discuss topics in detail.

The Open House was a full day affair, including presentations of initial findings, visual preference surveys, topic tables, and a variety of opportunities to provide feedback and ideas. Over 120 people attended the event and offered their input on Ferndale's major areas of change and their ideas for the future.

## PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE



- A number of **focus groups**, identified by the Planning Commission and City staff, were held as a way to prioritize issues and gather input on specific questions. Groups that were involved include:
  - The **Ferndale Environmental Sustainability Committee** (FESC) played an essential role in integrating environmental sustainability into the planning process and plan recommendations. The group defined what 'sustainability' means in Ferndale and opportunities to implement sustainability practices into City policy and code. Most importantly, the FESC identified the need for a culture shift and recognized the opportunity for the Master Plan to be an agent for that change.
  - The **Woodward Heights/Hilton Corridor** focus group consisted of business and property owners within the area and was a key informer for the recommendations related to Ferndale's Industrial Sub-District. The half-day workshop identified opportunities for more innovative land uses with the overarching goal of maintaining an authentic, working industrial district. While the group identified the value in allowing the district's evolution to continue organically, they also recognized it is something that must be carefully considered, actively managed, and protected for it to flourish.

- The **Downtown Parking Task Force** is a group of stakeholders convened by the City to address the role of parking in supporting a vibrant, balanced Downtown district. The group of business owners, property owners, parking consultants, and City staff generated a number of short- and long-term strategies to improve parking, but emphasized that parking is not the end goal — rather, that parking is one of several strategies needed to achieve the primary mission of a vibrant, balanced Downtown.

**Hello!**  
My name is: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: *Theresa Smith*

As a senior...  
My greatest JOY in Ferndale is: *walking, enjoying the trees, breeze, everything*  
My greatest CHALLENGE in Ferndale is: *old house, lots of work*  
My greatest HOPE for Ferndale is: *city works for all ages*  
My FAVORITE MEMORY in Ferndale is: *raising my daughter here*  
My big idea for Ferndale is: *support it, welcome to live here*

My name is: \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY OF FERNDALE MASTER LAND USE PLAN  
SENIOR GROUP MEETING**

**OPEN HOUSE**  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup>

9:30 - 11AM  
WITH A SHORT PRESENTATION

CONTACT THE CED DEPT. WITH ANY QUESTIONS  
248-336-4370

**WHAT TO EXPECT**

SUMMARY OF INITIAL FINDINGS	HANDS-ON MAPPING AND SURVEYS	OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK AND IDEAS
-----------------------------	------------------------------	--

PRESENTED BY THE CITY OF FERNDALE

**KULICK COMMUNITY CENTER**  
1201 LIVERNOIS, FERNDALE, MI • 248-544-6767

PEARSON  
KULICK CENTER  
BOMBARDIER  
HAZELHURST  
W. MARSHALL

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS FOR FERNDALE'S FUTURE

ALSO CHECK OUT [WWW.FERNDALE-EXCHANGE.ORG](http://WWW.FERNDALE-EXCHANGE.ORG) TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ONGOING CONVERSATION

Senior Group Ideas and Promotional Flyer

- The **Senior Group** meetings aimed to engage older residents to share their unique perspective on living in Ferndale. Seniors shared their greatest joys, challenges, and ideas for today as well as their hopes and concerns for the future. Meetings included a visual preference survey, open discussions, and a survey that asked for the same feedback as posted on the web-based Ferndale Exchange.
- The **Parks and Recreation Committee** (PARC) was a key informer of the Recreation and Open Space chapter of this Master Plan. Concurrent with this planning process, the City of Ferndale conducted an update to their Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Along with ideas and insight from the PARC, a community-wide survey generated a lot of ideas for strengthening the connection between people and Ferndale's open spaces, especially diversifying the programs offered through the Recreation Department, focusing on natural landscapes, and increasing the urban tree canopy throughout the city.

# VISION

Our vision for Ferndale is organized around principles of **progress, equity, sustainability, and resilience**:

- **Progressive.** Ferndale will strive to retain and enhance its status as a regional leader — in culture, innovation, and transportation. Ferndale will look for new ways to lead by example as well as work with its neighbors on issues including housing, transportation, jobs, and the environment.
- **Equitable.** Ferndale will be an inclusive community that offers appealing housing, job, education, transportation, neighborhood-serving retail, and recreation opportunities for all, and where anyone, regardless of status or race, can thrive.
- **Sustainable.** Ferndale will strive to minimize its environmental footprint by focusing on the impacts and management of buildings, energy, transportation, and waste. Efforts and investment will be geared toward the creation of long-term assets rather than liabilities.
- **Resilient.** Ferndale's neighborhoods, economy, and infrastructure will be strengthened to withstand and emerge from the effects of 21st century economic and environmental threats and challenges. Ferndale will shift the focus from growth for the sake of growth to the creation of strong systems equipped with the nimble ability to respond to adverse events like economic downturns and extreme weather events.



# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The **six recommendations chapters** of the Master Plan present a wide range of actions to build on Ferndale's strengths and improve its weaknesses related to land use and quality of life in the City.

Recommendations are intended to reflect how Ferndale residents, businesses, and other community members envision Ferndale's future and the goals the City wishes to achieve to move closer to that vision. They are rooted in community input, market data, best practices, and the realities of Ferndale's opportunities and challenges.

The six recommendations sections together comprise the City's updated Master Plan:

- **Land Use** addresses the types of land uses in the City and how they affect residents' quality of life and business in the City. This section includes the future land use map, a tool that indicates where existing land uses should be preserved and where properties should be positioned to accommodate new or different land uses. This section also recommends zoning and procedural changes intended to help the City achieve its land use goals.
- **Housing & Neighborhoods** speaks to the types of housing in the City, neighborhood character and sense of community, resident retention, and resident attraction. This section addresses the needs of homeowners, renters, landlords, developers, and policy makers.
- **Economic Vitality** speaks to Ferndale's variety of unique business districts and how they affect residents, visitors, business opportunities, and street life in the city. This section focuses on ensuring Ferndale's economy is a strong and dynamic collection of assets that are sustainable and resilient over time through the promotion of existing assets, entrepreneurialism, and neighborhood-serving services and retail.
- **Recreation & Open Space** proposes strategies to improve parks and open spaces in a way that is more diverse, connected, and better suited to users' needs and preferences. This section also focuses on developing the City's urban tree canopy for a more attractive and environmentally-friendly landscape.
- **Transportation & Mobility** describes the need and desire to offer more diverse transportation options and to connect neighborhoods by restructuring roads and through regional advocacy. Recommendations in this section are focused on increasing affordable, attractive, healthy, and accessible ways for all users to travel.
- **City Services, Facilities, & Infrastructure** calls for City Hall to be a model and an effective resource for enacting change through the integration of more sustainable practices and by building capacity at City Hall. This section proposes opportunities to empower residents and complement the private sector, especially knowledge sharing across City departments and with the public. Helping the community reach its goals relies on the alignment of public agencies around a common, shared vision that links decision making to larger strategies.



# LAND USE

## GOAL 1: UPDATE MAPS, CODES, AND PROCEDURES.

- L1.1 Update the future land use plan.
- L1.2 Incorporate a special purpose narrative for key redevelopment sites.
- L1.3 Create an inclusive process to establish a vision, goals, and expectations for key redevelopment sites to ensure appropriate land uses and good design.
- L1.4 Restore Ferndale's public alleys.
- L1.5 Consider creating design standards and guidelines for commercial corridors.
- L1.6 Identify areas of the city where change towards a more walkable, mixed-use urban pattern is anticipated and would be appropriate for future form-based code.

## GOAL 2: REVISE RESIDENTIAL ZONING REGULATIONS TO ENSURE ZONING SUPPORTS AND PROMOTES APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT AND GREATER HOUSING CHOICE.

- L2.1 Revise R2 and R3 standards to ensure zoning promotes dense, walkable "Urban Residential" neighborhoods and desirable housing types.
- L2.2 Revise MXD-1 and MXD-2 standards to ensure zoning promotes desired mixed-use development.
- L2.3 Expand senior living housing options in urban districts and commercial corridors.
- L2.4 Add "Loft" as a residential use, and create "loft review criteria" for special land use review, such as in the Industrial Sub-District.

## GOAL 3: PROTECT AND SUPPORT THE INDUSTRIAL SUB-DISTRICT TO ALLOW NEW USES WHILE PRESERVING ITS FUNCTIONALITY AND CHARACTER.

- L3.1 Allow the conversion of industrial space to residential use ("lofts") in the Industrial Sub-District subject to a special land use permit and "loft review criteria."
- L3.2 Create an appropriate street typology for roadways within the Industrial Sub-District with contextual considerations such as the accommodation of large trucks and multiple users.
- L3.3 Identify opportunities to integrate green stormwater infrastructure in the Industrial Sub-District and implement.

## GOAL 4: CREATE THE FRAMEWORK FOR RESPONSIBLE, SUPPORTIVE PARKING FACILITIES.

- L4.1 Create a long-term parking plan with a clear vision and decision-making framework.
- L4.2 Revise P-1 Vehicular Parking zoning district standards and reevaluate its application.
- L4.3 Reduce parking minimums for residential uses.
- L4.4 Revise non-residential parking requirements to align with transit-oriented development patterns and evolving transportation trends, such as car share, ride share, and autonomous vehicles.
- L4.5 Continue to update, utilize, and promote Ferndale's payment in lieu of parking provision.
- L4.6 Enhance design standards for parking facilities abutting rights-of-way, especially in Downtown and Mixed Use land use areas.

## GOAL 5: IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS.

- L5.1 Update the zoning ordinance to allow for sustainable energy production.
- L5.2 Review and update city ordinances to allow for green stormwater Infrastructure design.
- L5.3 Improve Planned Natural Landscape procedures to ensure properties are registered and marked.
- L5.4 Create and adopt a Dark Sky Lighting Ordinance.



# HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS



## GOAL 1: EXPAND HOUSING SERVICES FOR HOMEOWNERS, RENTERS, AND LANDLORDS.

- H1.1 Promote Ferndale as a great place to live.
- H1.2 Support new landlords and renters with “Welcome to Ferndale” resources.
- H1.3 Promote good landlords through an incentives and marketing program.
- H1.4 Provide education and resources to residents on ‘green’ residential practices for their properties and homes.

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT EXISTING RESIDENTS AND PRESERVE THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK.

- H2.1 Improve code compliance and enforcement effectiveness.
- H2.2 Provide support for homeowners to update and remodel their homes and properties.
- H2.3 Assist residents in need with maintenance and repairs.

## GOAL 3: PROMOTE NEIGHBORHOODS AND EXPAND LOCAL CAPACITY.

- H3.1 Encourage neighborhood stewardship and provide resources for neighbors to organize.
- H3.2 Create a collection of house and neighborhood tours that market Ferndale’s history and unique qualities.
- H3.3 Promote neighborhood amenities, such as parks, schools, and other quality of life elements.

## GOAL 4: PURSUE AND ENCOURAGE NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

- H4.1 Create a common vision and a communication plan for affordable housing.
- H4.2 Identify potential sites for affordable housing and senior housing near transit and services.
- H4.3 Pursue strategic partnerships to develop senior housing at different income levels.
- H4.4 Create design guidelines for “small lot” infill housing; utilize the process as a test for form-based code.
- H4.5 Integrate more housing options Downtown.
- H4.6 Integrate compatible housing options within the Industrial Sub-District.

# ECONOMIC VITALITY



## GOAL 1: PROMOTE A BALANCED, MIXED-USE DOWNTOWN.

- E1.1 Create a retail attraction strategy to sustain a healthy and diverse local business community.

## GOAL 2: FOSTER A MODERN INDUSTRIAL SUB-DISTRICT THAT SUPPORTS JOB GROWTH AND A SMALL-SCALE MIX OF NEW COMMERCIAL USES.

- E2.1 Promote property and business owner organization in the Industrial Sub-District.
- E2.2 Encourage small- to medium-scale retail storefronts associated with on-site production and manufacturing.

## GOAL 3: CREATE STRONG AND DISTINCT NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL NODES.

- E3.1 Allow and encourage neighborhood commercial development to give residents retail amenities in their neighborhoods, such as neighborhood food markets and cafes.
- E3.2 Cultivate distinct retail clusters in different neighborhoods.
- E3.3 Update signage and storefront design standards and codes to meet or exceed generally accepted industry standards; establish a Storefront Design Committee to approve proposed storefronts and signage.
- E3.4 Establish a storefront and signage improvement matching grant fund; sunset existing non-conforming signage by 2025.

## GOAL 4: SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY AND HELP SMALL BUSINESSES THRIVE.

- E4.1 Support the development of entrepreneurship networks and assistance to startup firms.
- E4.2 Create alternative pathways to normal procurement practices.
- E4.3 Promote opportunities for pop-ups and temporary retailers.

## GOAL 5: CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS TO WORK IN FERNDAL.

- E5.1 Increase the number of primary jobs in Ferndale; pursue opportunities to attract one or more signature office tenants.
- E5.2 Increase the number of people who are both employed and live in Ferndale; benchmark progress with an agreed target based on the vision and market studies.

## GOAL 6: PROMOTE LOCAL ARTS.

- E6.1 Identify pilot projects for placemaking in targeted areas.
- E6.2 Leverage art and trades for education and skills training opportunities.
- E6.3 Provide studio space to foster collaboration, creativity, and innovation.

# RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE



## GOAL 1: IMPROVE EXISTING PARKS, RECREATION FACILITIES, AND PROGRAMS.

- R1.1 Create a cohesive family of park amenities.
- R1.2 Evaluate and update programming as needed to meet community needs and to diversify offerings.
- R1.3 Improve access, visibility, and activity at parks in every neighborhood.
- R1.4 Expand seasonal use of parks.
- R1.5 Renovate Martin Road Park.
- R1.6 Improve and activate Schiffer Park.
- R1.7 Consider the long-term use of the Kulick Community Center.
- R1.8 Provide wi-fi and charging ports at select parks.
- R1.9 Enhance neighborhood stewardship of parks to increase positive identification with neighborhood parks.

## GOAL 2: PURSUE LONG-TERM OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW PUBLIC SPACES.

- R2.1 Continue to explore options for designated open spaces Downtown.
- R2.2 Consider a Downtown community center presence.
- R2.3 Create a network of parks and non-motorized routes around Ferndale and between neighboring communities.
- R2.4 Provide passive recreation spaces and education on natural landscapes.
- R2.5 Create a public art program for parks and public spaces.

## GOAL 3: PLAN FOR FERNDALE'S URBAN TREE CANOPY.

- R3.1 Establish a City Forester to lead and coordinate Ferndale's urban forest initiatives.
- R3.2 Continue the street tree program through regular updates to the plan and the inventory; establish a dedicated budget.
- R3.3 Expand the tree program to parks and private properties.
- R3.4 Create a Ferndale street tree nursery.
- R3.5 Consider the re-use of urban wood.
- R3.6 Offer opportunities for community planting and gardening.

# TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY



## GOAL 1: PROMOTE AND IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION DIVERSITY.

- T1.1 Establish a designated staff position for someone with experience in transportation planning to coordinate transportation planning within Ferndale and be a representative within larger community transportation conversations.
- T1.2 Continue to utilize and regularly update Ferndale Moves as the City's primary non-motorized transportation resource.
- T1.3 Identify opportunities and secure a budget to expand and maintain the non-motorized network.
- T1.4 Create a program to educate the public and City departments on the usage of non-motorized infrastructure.
- T1.5 Connect to regional and national walking and biking events (or create Ferndale's own!).
- T1.6 Continue to promote and expand car share and ride share opportunities.
- T1.7 Establish a position on regional transportation priorities and funding.

## GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN WALKABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND CONNECTIVITY AT MAJOR CORRIDORS.

- T2.1 Work with MDOT to improve pedestrian conditions and safety at major roads, particularly Woodward and Eight Mile Road.
- T2.2 Connect Livernois between West Nine Mile and Withington.
- T2.3 Create safe, accessible, and attractive pedestrian and bicycle connections at underpasses, overpasses, viaducts, and railroad crossings.
- T2.4 Continue to explore long-term recommendations for bringing Eight Mile/Woodward intersection to grade.

## GOAL 3: PROMOTE AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS.

- T3.1 Maintain representation/advocacy position on regional transportation planning committees.
- T3.2 Improve the transit experience by improving transit stop facilities.

## GOAL 4: IMPROVE AND SUPPORT BIKE INFRASTRUCTURE AND CULTURE.

- T4.1 Support a complete bike network in Ferndale and between neighboring communities.
- T4.2 Provide safe and convenient bike parking.
- T4.3 Explore opportunities for a bike share program.

## GOAL 5: CONSIDER VEHICULAR PARKING NEEDS IN THE SHORT TERM, THE FUTURE, AND THE UNFORESEEN FUTURE.

- T5.1 Implement "non-capacity" strategies to improve the current system.
- T5.2 Coordinate parking "capacity" planning with a responsible decision-making strategy rooted in sustainability.



# CITY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

## GOAL 1: UTILIZE PUBLIC PROJECTS TO IMPLEMENT AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND RAISE AWARENESS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

- C1.1 Establish a designated staff position for someone with experience in environmental sustainability to coordinate sustainability efforts within Ferndale and act as a go-between connecting City Hall and any parties affected by measures designed to improve environmental sustainability in Ferndale.
- C1.2 Create an RFQ process for qualified architects and contractors in sustainable design.
- C1.3 Create baseline standards for building upgrades and new construction.
- C1.4 Create baseline standards for incorporating green infrastructure into improvement projects of public right-of-ways, alleys, and parking facilities.
- C1.5 Be a model of sustainable design in the upcoming DPW Yards renovation.
- C1.6 Work with other communities to secure funding and create a plan to separate sewer systems.
- C1.7 Create promotional materials for residents and businesses describing the various sustainable practices that can be deployed in the city.

## GOAL 2: INCREASE RECYCLING OPTIONS.

- C2.1 Add recycling to public trash receptacles Downtown, at public facilities, at public events, and in parks.
- C2.2 Increase business recycling through code requirements and/or incentive programs.
- C2.3 Create a coalition of communities to work with regional authorities to increase access to recycling.
- C2.4 Create a drop-off program at the DPW Yard for less common recycling items.
- C2.5 Create a Zero Waste Event planning guide with a variety of tools and best practices.

## GOAL 3: CONSERVE ENERGY RESOURCES.

- C3.1 Continue to convert street lighting to LED.
- C3.2 Use savings from energy efficiency upgrades to create a revolving fund for future energy reduction upgrades.

## GOAL 4: EXPAND THE USE OF GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE.

- C4.1 Develop zoning incentives for integrating green stormwater infrastructure into Downtown development projects.
- C4.2 Integrate green stormwater infrastructure into parks.
- C4.3 Promote the use of permeable pavement and other options for limiting the amount of stormwater runoff.

## GOAL 5: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION RESOURCES AT CITY HALL.

- C5.1 Improve communication efforts to residents, businesses, and visitors to promote events, recent achievements, and Ferndale's best assets.
- C5.2 Improve the user experience of the City's website to be an efficient resource for information, transparency, and basic functions.
- C5.3 Upgrade records keeping, data management, and sharing between City departments.



The following chapters describe each goal and action item in detail, including measurable outcomes, successful examples from other places, and public input from the planning process.

A detailed **Action Plan** with task leaders and anticipated timelines can be found at the end of the plan, following the recommendations chapters.



# LAND USE

## LAND USE, ZONING, OVERLAYS, CORRIDORS, SUB-DISTRICTS

The City of Ferndale encompasses roughly four square miles due north of Detroit and at the center of the Detroit metropolitan region. While one of the smallest cities in the region, Ferndale is one of the most diverse, containing a variety of neighborhood types, from mixed-use urban neighborhoods in and around its downtown to more traditional single-family neighborhoods to industrial districts. The planning process revealed the need for some changes to how the City uses its land – some small and some big – in order for Ferndale to realize a more progressive, equitable, sustainable, and resilient future.

# GOALS

The recommendations comprising the LAND USE section of the Master Plan are based on data and public input collected during the planning process. Recommendations are organized into four goal areas. Together, the goals and their related actions support the vision for Ferndale's future.

## **GOAL 1:**

Update maps, codes, and procedures.

## **GOAL 2:**

Revise residential zoning regulations to ensure zoning supports and promotes appropriate development and greater housing choice.

## **GOAL 3:**

Protect and support the Industrial Sub-District to allow new uses while preserving its functionality and character.

## **GOAL 4:**

Create the framework for responsible, supportive parking facilities.



# GOAL 1:

## Update maps, codes, and procedures.

An essential and proactive step to realizing Ferndale's vision for its future is writing that vision into the Zoning Ordinance and communicating it to community members and developers interested in investing in the City. Making small improvements to Ferndale's regulating and guiding maps, codes, and procedures will strengthen the City's ability to guide development so it aligns with the community's vision. The following land use and zoning recommendations related to maps, codes, and procedures support Goal 1.



### L1.1: Update the future land use plan.

The future land use plan describes the vision for land use in the City and serves as the primary policy document to guide decisions on the development of vacant land and the redevelopment of existing sites.

The future land use vision is not expected to occur immediately following adoption of the plan; rather, it is intended to be implemented over time as properties develop and change use.

The future land use plan should be referenced when reviewing items such as site plans, rezonings, special land uses, planned unit developments, and variances. Deviations from the future land use plan should be carefully considered to ensure that consistency is maintained when making decisions on planning and development issues.

A number of factors were considered during development of the future land use plan. With input received from the public and the expertise of City staff and the Planning Commission, the following factors were considered:

- Consistency with established land use patterns.
- Relationship between adjacent land uses and surrounding communities.
- Minimization of incompatible land uses.
- Existing planning policies and zoning regulations.
- Regional planning efforts along Woodward Avenue and Eight Mile Road.
- Fluctuation of market conditions.
- Availability and capacity of infrastructure including roads, alleys, utilities, and transportation facilities.

- Preservation of open space and incorporation of sustainable development principles.

The future land use categories include:

- Low Density Residential
- Urban Residential
- Mixed Use
- Downtown
- Commercial/Office
- Industrial
- Open Space

These following pages describe each land use category's intended use and character of the area within the city.

#### L1.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Update the future land use map.
- Update the future land use text.

#### WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN AND THE ZONING ORDINANCE?

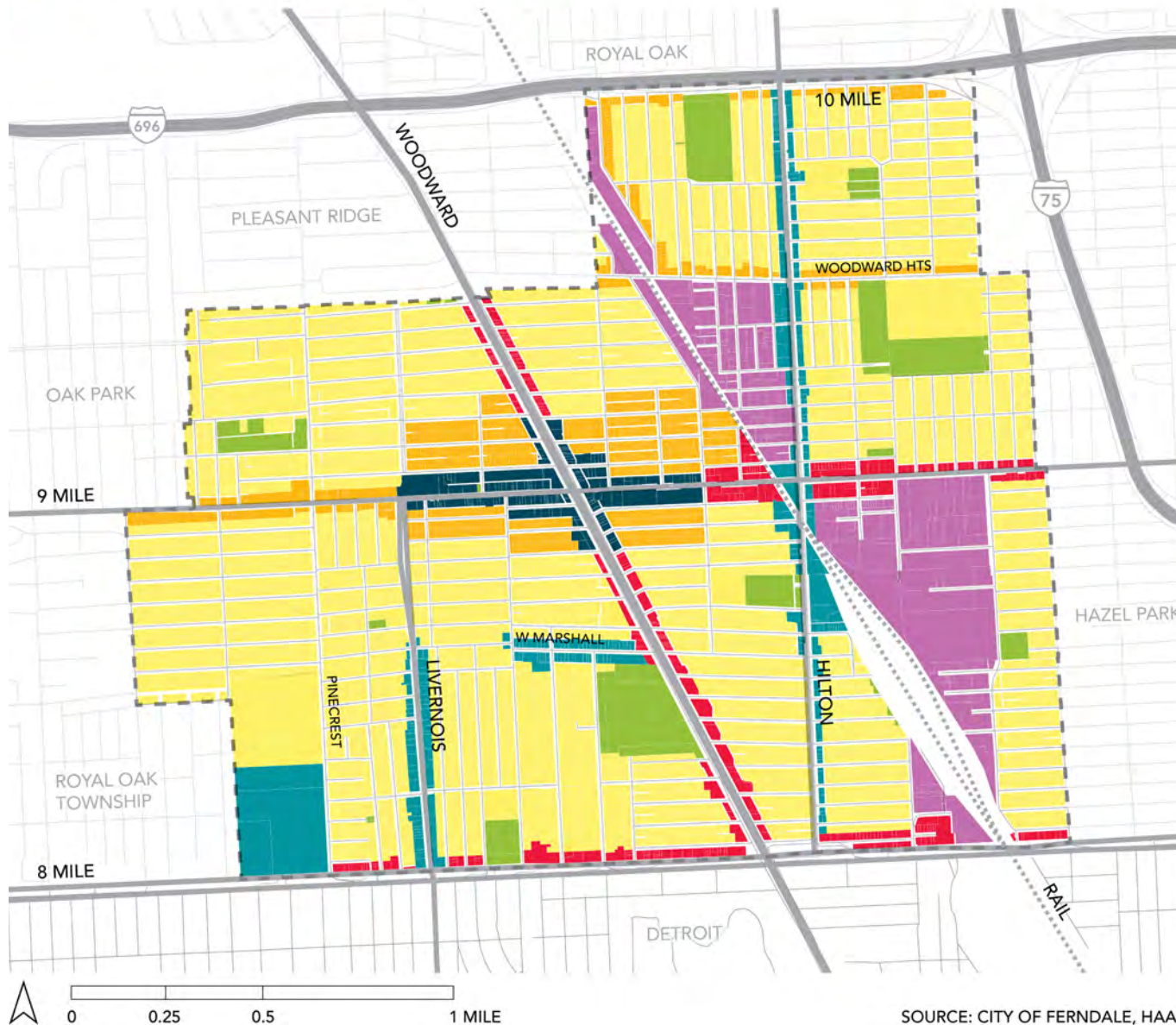
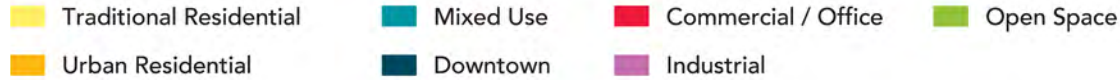
**Future Land Use Plan/Master Plan:** A guide for the future use of land; intended to guide planning decisions and zoning changes; intended to be implemented over time.

**Zoning Ordinance:** A legal document that regulates the use of land in the present.

*Source: Michigan Association of Planning, [planningmi.org](http://planningmi.org)*



## FUTURE LAND USE



SOURCE: CITY OF FERNDALE, HAA

## FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES: INTENDED USE AND CHARACTER

**Traditional Residential** areas account for a vast majority of the city and generally correspond with the R-1 zoning district. The predominant housing type is the single-family house on a 35-foot-wide or larger parcel located within a connected urban street grid, but may also include compatible low-density housing types, such as townhouses and duplexes.

These areas also encourage a small-scale mix of neighborhood-serving amenities and services, including schools, parks, religious institutions, government buildings, and retail, which help define many of Ferndale's neighborhoods and contribute to their walkability. Non-residential uses should not adversely impact the surrounding neighborhoods in terms of traffic, parking, noise, or hours of operation.

New developments should be compatible with the existing neighborhood fabric in terms of building design and materials, placement, and scale to preserve each area's established character.

**Urban Residential** areas accommodate a greater mix of housing types, including more dense residential development in the form of compact single-family homes; townhouses; multi-unit housing types including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, live-work units, and apartment buildings; and accessory dwelling units. These areas are typically supported by public alleys, which should be improved, maintained, and utilized for vehicular site access, circulation, and service to maintain a compact walkable environment.

Urban Residential areas serve as a transition between Traditional Residential neighborhoods and more intense land uses such as Downtown, commercial corridors, and the I-696 service drive and generally correspond with R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts. This plan seeks to diversify the types of housing available in the community and increase the density of housing close to Downtown and transit corridors. New development should be compatible with existing single-family homes and encourage their continuance as part of the diverse mixture of residential options.

**Mixed Use** areas blend a variety of residential and small-scale businesses with residential density levels similar to Urban Residential. This category generally aligns with MXD-1 and MXD-2 zoning districts and are typically located along secondary corridors where there already exists a mix of residential, businesses, and enhanced streetscapes, often with their own distinct character.

Appropriate new development in Mixed Use areas includes vertical mixed-use – such as ground-floor retail with residential units on the upper floors – multi-family housing types, live-work units, and small-scale retail, services, and offices that are compatible with adjacent residential uses. The intent of this district is to allow residents the ability to walk to neighborhood-serving services and amenities to meet their daily needs.

Building and site design should enhance the walkability and livability of the area. Careful consideration should be given to the relationship of buildings to the street through building placement, orientation, and facade features; pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access; and public and private outdoor spaces. These areas may be opportunities for significant redevelopment and therefore potential candidates for future form-based code.

**Commercial/Office** areas encompass a wide range of general retail, service, and office uses. These areas serve the day-to-day needs of residents and provide employment opportunities within Ferndale.

All sites should be designed to minimize noise, light, and traffic impacts on abutting residential areas. Commercial/Office areas located along Woodward north of Downtown should minimize auto-oriented uses (such as drive-through facilities and vehicle-related services), limit dangerous access, and encourage pedestrian-oriented design. This category generally corresponds with the C-1, C-2, C-3, and OS zoning districts located along Woodward, East Nine Mile, and Eight Mile.

**Downtown** is an active, medium-to-high density, mixed-use area that provides a mix of residential and employment uses with retail that caters to residents and workers. Appropriate development types support active ground-floor retail and services and contain upper floors for a supportive mix of residential and office space. Downtown supports dense residential and commercial development to support and maintain an active mixed-use neighborhood that is supported by services, amenities, and transit. This category generally corresponds with the CBD zoning district.

Design and placement of buildings should be consistent with National Main Street Design parameters that promote a walkable Downtown district through a mix of uses and enhanced pedestrian amenities. This includes zero lot setbacks, wide sidewalks, enhanced streetscape, and shared access and parking facilities. Auto-oriented uses including drive-through establishments, automobile service, and automobile sales are highly discouraged.

**Industrial** areas consist of manufacturing, warehousing, and research and development uses which provide important employment opportunities and tax base for the City. These areas also support a limited amount of office, retail, and residential — as specified by the zoning ordinance — to encourage the re-use of existing structures, provide opportunity to enhance their businesses, and provide users in the area with some nearby services and amenities. This plan supports the establishment of green industries, the implementation of green infrastructure, and encourages the creative re-use of properties that complement industrial uses.

As many of the industrial properties are within close proximity of established neighborhoods, industrial uses should provide adequate buffers consisting of a mixture of landscaping and screening walls along areas that border residential areas and designed to minimize adverse effects to the community such as truck traffic, noise, and odors. Street design and new development should be compatible with the existing industrial fabric to preserve the function and character of industrial land. This category generally corresponds with M-1 and M-2.

**Open Space** areas include Ferndale's parks, cemeteries, and other open space landscapes that provide recreational opportunities and environmental benefits. These spaces are typically managed by the Ferndale Recreation Department and Department of Public Works, but other organizations including resident groups may contribute to programming and maintenance.

This plan encourages the integration of more non-traditional landscapes into Ferndale's parks and other open spaces, such as ecological landscapes (meadows, tall grasses, bioswales, etc.) and productive landscapes (community gardens, greenhouses, urban forest, etc.). Non-traditional landscapes support native plants and species, help manage stormwater, and cost less to construct and maintain. This category does not correspond with any particular zoning district; rather, Open Space areas are located where they best serve their surrounding neighborhoods.

## THE CASE FOR INDUSTRIAL

20th century industry conjures thoughts of the "old economy" – assembly lines, heavy equipment, noise, vibration, odor, and outdated facilities – but Ferndale's industrial landscape has evolved over time to accommodate a wide range of lower impact manufacturing and production activities that continues to provide the community with jobs, services, and a diverse tax base. Industrial development provides multiple economic and quality of life benefits not typically recognized when we think about the "new economy" and walkable urban places, but is in fact integral to a balanced, diverse, and mixed-use environment for the community.

Industrial land and activity provides a wide range of economic, social, and even environmental benefits to the community. Evidence includes:

- Manufacturing has consistently added jobs since the end of the Great Recession.
- Manufacturing is a principal source for research-and-development and innovation.
- Manufacturing jobs are more able than retail and most service jobs to provide a middle-income standard of living.
- Manufacturing jobs in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields tend to have a wage premium.
- Approximately half of STEM jobs do not require a four-year college degree, providing opportunity to the less educated and disadvantaged segment of the population.
- Industrial land is needed for the efficient provision of public services, including the parking and maintenance of service vehicles and operating recycling and waste-collection facilities.

Limiting housing in industrial areas also sends a signal to the market that the City is focusing on appropriately densifying neighborhoods where housing should be prioritized. (In Ferndale's case, that is Downtown, Urban Residential, and Mixed Use areas.)

**While the conversion of industrial land to non-industrial uses can be tempting, recent studies provide compelling evidence for why preserving industrial land is worthwhile, and case studies from other cities demonstrate the need for policy to intervene in order to protect industrial land from market pressures.**

The preservation of industrial land contributes to Ferndale's vision for a progressive, equitable, sustainable, and resilient future. A number of cities use new policy and other tools to combat enticing and sometimes lucrative proposals to convert industrial land to commercial and residential development. Cities are using zoning as a catalyst for industrial real estate development and to protect industrial business from the escalating rents and perceived incompatibilities that come from residential and commercial development. Examples include Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, and San Diego.

*Source: "Sustainable Urban Industrial Development, Planning Advisory Service Report" (Leigh, Hoelzel, Kraft, & Dempwolf; 2014); Gibbs Planning Group*



### STUDY: SAINT PAUL, MN

A 2012 fiscal impact study calculated expenditure-to-revenue ratios for residential, non-industrial, and industrial land uses, and found that industrial land had the lowest ratios. In other words, industrial land in Saint Paul bolsters the budget by requiring less than 70 cents worth of services for every dollar it contributes to the public coffers. The report also notes that while these ratios vary depending on the specific location, industry is generally fiscally beneficial to a municipality.

### PRECEDENT: NEW YORK, NY



As part of its 2005 industrial policy, the Bloomberg administration introduced the Industrial Business Zone (IBZ) designation. It guarantees that there will not be upzoning to residential in any of the IBZs. The intent of the policy is to prevent further conversion of industrial land to non-industrial uses, as well as provide industrial businesses with more certainty about their ability to remain and/or expand in their current locations.

Image Source: [www.newyorkyimby.com](http://www.newyorkyimby.com)

### PRECEDENT: PHILADELPHIA, PA



In 2010, the City of Philadelphia updated its industrial zones and added two intermediate industrial mixed-use zones. These categories protect land supporting traditional industrial activity from non-industrial encroachment, while also allowing less-intensive industrial activities to exist alongside residential and commercial establishments.

Image Source: [www.houzz.com](http://www.houzz.com)

## L1.2:

### Incorporate a special purpose narrative for key redevelopment sites.

A few undeveloped or underutilized sites in Ferndale have the potential to affect transformative change within Ferndale. In these cases, a general land use or zoning classification does not offer enough information to guide redevelopment in keeping with the community's vision and market potential. A special purpose narrative associated with the future land use plan for each "key redevelopment site" would inform the future reuse and redevelopment of key properties. In addition to the ideal mix of uses for each site, the descriptive narratives should also include design principles that align with Master Plan recommendations and Zoning Ordinance standards.

The future land use map identifies five key redevelopment sites. The following site-specific descriptions are intended to be a starting point for developing vision narratives for each site. Narratives should be vetted, refined, and further developed by a representative stakeholder committee to ensure the vision for each site is inclusive and well-informed, as recommended in the next section L1.3.





FERNDALE KEY REDEVELOPMENT SITES

## LEGEND

- A** Hayes Lemmerz
- B** Troy Lot
- C** Withington Lot
- D** Industrial Sub-District
- E** DPW Yards
- F** Adaptive Re-Use of Commercial Corridors



HAYES LEMMERZ REDEVELOPMENT SITE ON 8 MILE ROAD

## << KEY REDEVELOPMENT SITES

**A. Hayes Lemmerz.** Located at the southwest corner of the city, the 42-acre vacant Hayes Lemmerz site is the largest redevelopment site in Ferndale. The site is bordered by Eight Mile Road to the south, Ferndale High School to the north, and single-family residential to the west and east. Currently zoned M-1 Limited Industrial, this site contains environmental constraints that may limit use of the site; however, this plan encourages the selected developer to work with the City to pursue financial assistance to remediate the site if residential use is considered. The site also contains the main building that housed the original Hayes Lemmerz operation, which has a strong presence on Eight Mile Road and should be preserved and incorporated into the site's reuse if feasible.

The Hayes Lemmerz site is envisioned as a comprehensive mixed-use development, and its large size and adjacent uses present the opportunity to offer a range of potential uses, including light industrial, office, commercial, healthcare, recreation, and residential. A rezoning or use of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) may need to occur to accommodate the vision for future development. The auto-oriented nature of this location should be carefully considered when determining appropriate residential uses for the site. Uses such as senior and affordable housing would be better suited where there is more walkable access to services, amenities, and transit.

Site design should respect the surrounding residential neighborhoods, especially as it relates to truck and commercial traffic and circulation, and the site should strive to provide connections to the established street grid and adjacent properties surrounding the site. Redevelopment should also be cognizant of the existing site features, including mature tree stands that should be preserved as much as possible. With regard to Ferndale's sustainability goals, this site should, at minimum, incorporate modern environmental standards for buildings, site design, and infrastructure and demonstrate a balance of densities, urban design features, and mitigation. Of course, sustainable design that goes beyond minimal standards is encouraged.



INDUSTRIAL SUB-DISTRICT IN NORTHEAST FERNDALE

**B. Troy Lot.** The 1.12 acre city-owned Troy Lot in Downtown Ferndale is bordered by West Troy Street, a service alley, and Allen Street. The surface lot is the second largest in the City's public parking system and exhibits the highest occupancy rate during peak hours, according to a parking traffic study conducted by Republic Parking in 2015. The public lot is heavily used by Downtown employee permit holders, Downtown visitors, as well as typical daily use. It is common for the lot to be relied upon to support seasonal events and is walkable to transit, services, and entertainment.

In early 2015, an independent parking committee put together by Ferndale Mayor Dave Coulter and the Downtown Development Association Chair unanimously identified three surface lots to evaluate for potential-mixed use development in Downtown Ferndale. The recommendations of the Committee were supported by a (1) Target Market Analysis conducted by Gibbs Planning for the Downtown trade area, (2) a cursory feasibility study of the selected lots executed by Hamilton Anderson Associates as part of the concurrent 2016 Master Plan update, (3) parking traffic studies conducted by Republic Parking in 2015, and (4) public input from previous Downtown development concepts.

In October, 2016, the Troy Lot was selected as the preferred location to pursue a Downtown mixed-use parking development. This selection was supported by the Downtown Parking Committee, Ferndale DDA, Planning Commission, and City Council. This site is considered to be versatile in its attraction for potential future office, commercial, and/or residential developers.

To realize this vision, new development should be coordinated closely with a stakeholder group that accurately represents the affected parties' interests, concerns, and expectations for the site. Design should incorporate context-sensitive strategies to maintain the alley, prioritize pedestrian circulation at the street level, and appropriately relate the building to the different street characters and adjacent uses on Troy and Allen Streets.



WITHINGTON LOT IN DOWNTOWN FERNDALE

**C. Withington Lot.** The two acre city-owned Withington Lot in Downtown Ferndale is bordered by West Withington Street, two service alleys, and Planavon Street on the north side of West Nine Mile. Currently Downtown's largest and most used public parking lot, the site is envisioned as a key redevelopment site for incorporating a mix of uses in line with demand for Downtown office space, residential, and public parking. This site is within ideal walking distance of services, amenities, transit, and entertainment to support employees and residents.

Despite positive market conditions and developer attention, barriers to redevelopment remain. The Withington Lot is very large and currently provides a critical supply of parking to nearby small businesses, thus affecting and influencing a variety of stakeholders. Redevelopment of the site is expected to simultaneously supply a vibrant, dense, and mixed-use addition to Downtown while balancing the small-scale urbanism of Ferndale's Downtown on Nine Mile and adjacent single-family residential along Withington.

To realize this vision, new development should be coordinated closely with a stakeholder group that accurately represents the affected parties' interests, concerns, and expectations for the site. Design should incorporate strategies to break up the overall length of the block, utilize alleys, prioritize pedestrian circulation, and appropriately relate the building to the different street and adjacent use contexts.



INDUSTRIAL SUB-DISTRICT IN NORTHEAST FERNDALE

**D. Industrial Sub-District.** Loosely defined as the area bordered by the railroad, Woodward Heights, Hilton, and Nine Mile, the Industrial Sub-District has the potential to be a regional hub for creative industry. This area is one of the few industrial districts of its kind in the region, containing properties currently used for an eclectic mix of manufacturing, assembly, artisanal crafts, technology, and education. This area was identified as one of Ferndale's major areas of change during the planning process due to the evolving nature of industry as well as recent development pressure to integrate residential and commercial uses here.

During the planning process, a focus group of business and property owners in this area expressed interest in having more places to walk to and take customers, with the overarching goal to preserve the industrial character and functionality of the district. New development on any sites within this area should consult a common sub-district stakeholder group to ensure the character, viability, and sustainability of the area is maintained. This stakeholder group would act as an advisory group to ensure new development and redevelopment aligns with the overall district vision. The future land use of this area is predominantly Industrial to maintain industry as the primary use with Mixed Use along Hilton Road to provide retail and residential at the periphery along the multi-modal corridor.





DPW MAIN FACILITY IN NORTHEAST FERNDALE



DPW STORAGE FACILITY IN SOUTHWEST FERNDALE

**E. DPW Yards.** One of Ferndale’s goals is to continue to upgrade the City’s municipal facilities and sites to ensure City-owned structures and land maximize the environmental quality, economic vitality, and social health of the city while serving as a model for highest and best use practices. An ideal opportunity to initiate this process is the City’s Department of Public Works (DPW) Yards.

The DPW main facility, located in the city’s northeast quadrant along the railroad tracks at East Cambourne Street and Paxton Street, contains several storage and repair garages, manufacturing shops, equipment storage facilities, an animal shelter, a salt barn, gas pumps, offices, conference rooms, and locker rooms, all built between 1920 and 2003. The DPW storage yard, located on the westernmost border of the city on Northend Avenue between Republic Avenue and Central Street, is currently used to store vehicles, equipment, and various recyclable materials. In their current state, the DPW yards are functional properties for managing City services, but one or both could be upgraded to be more dynamic, multi-purpose municipal sites.

The City should consider a feasibility study, including design and cost estimates, for the consolidation of the two facilities to one facility. During the consolidation study, the City should explore a location large enough to accommodate large vehicles and implement appropriate screening from adjacent residential uses. The City should utilize proceeds from the sale of the surplus facility for the development of a new, state-of-the-art facility, designed to meet high environmental performance standards as well as incorporate educational components for the public. New amenities may include: DPW offices; a community classroom; a City plant nursery; and material, equipment, and vehicle storage. This new facility could serve as a demonstration center to educate residents and visitors about stormwater management, native plantings, and general sustainability practices to get the community more involved in improving Ferndale’s urban forest and environmental sustainability.





EXISTING COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS ON 8 MILE ROAD

#### PRECEDENT: THE LUNA LODGE MOTEL



Built as a motel in 1949, the historic but once derelict Luna Lodge (Albuquerque, NM) was converted into 30 apartments for low-income individuals. The project preserves and emphasizes many of the architectural elements of the original motel while providing a modern affordable housing solution for the surrounding community.

Image Source: [www.newlifehomesnm.com](http://www.newlifehomesnm.com)

**F. Adaptive re-use of commercial corridors.** Ferndale’s major commercial corridors – Woodward Avenue, Eight Mile Road, and Nine Mile Road – contain a diverse architectural catalog of Ferndale’s history. The vision for these corridors is to provide a range of services and amenities as well as employment opportunities to residents and visitors in a vibrant environment that is uniquely Ferndale.

Although many existing businesses and organizations foster well-kept properties, other properties have fallen into vacancy, disrepair, neglect, or are simply underutilized and therefore not positively contributing to the creation of lively commercial streets. While parts of Woodward and Eight Mile within and close to Downtown Ferndale have received development attention in recent years, other parts of the corridors contain underutilized land and buildings that have potential to be assets within Ferndale’s commercial corridors with investment.

Ferndale’s commercial corridors are envisioned to serve as attractive entries to the city and vibrant connections between neighboring communities, improved to provide a unifying character of small businesses, retail, and supporting services with architectural diversity representing the past and present. Adaptive re-use of commercial structures will strengthen the character and brand of Ferndale’s commercial corridors, and targeted investment in facade and streetscape

improvements will support the appeal and accessibility. The connection to nearby residential neighborhoods, shared borders with neighboring communities, and proximity to Detroit position the corridors as ideal districts to attract creative developers and entrepreneurs.

These corridors boast a number of mid-century motels, offices, and auto-oriented service buildings that underpin the redevelopment potential of these commercial corridors. They historically contained more compact and contiguous blocks of commercial businesses that have become fragmented by parking lots, excessive curb cuts, and vacancy over time. New development should seek to repair these corridors with more compact development patterns that prioritize human-scale development and prioritize establishing continuity over offering automobile convenience. Proposed investment in infrastructure includes significant roadway, bridge, and viaduct improvements on Woodward and on Eight Mile (in line with the “Woodward Complete Streets Plan” and Eight Mile Boulevard Association efforts) to address lane reductions, safety, and the accommodation of multiple users.

*“It will help connect Ferndale to the growing Avenue of Fashion on Livernois, south of 8 Mile.”*

*“...We need to clean up the area around the 8 Mile overpass. It’s a tough problem to solve -- but it can be done.”*

Eight Mile Road, in particular, presents an immense challenge to becoming a regional connector rather than a divider as it has been historically assigned. Through strategic investments in infrastructure and property improvement, the City should leverage the Eight Mile corridor as a catalyst for stronger connections and shared socioeconomic impact between Ferndale and the neighboring cities of Detroit, Hazel Park, and Oak Park. Key priorities for Eight Mile include:

- Non-motorized accessibility on the Woodward and Livernois corridors and related improvements to both intersections.
- Mid-block crossings at key locations along Ferndale's frontage, such as Garbutt Park and the Hayes Lemmerz site in Ferndale, and the Michigan State Fairgrounds Site in Detroit.
- Collaborative issue advocacy and strategic planning on transit access, bicycle facilities, and other improvements to the corridor via mutual participation in organizations such as the Eight Mile Boulevard Association (8MBA).
- Leverage the 8MBA Design Guidelines as a common standard for design quality along the corridor.
- Shared data gathering on economic activity and demographics that affect neighborhoods on both sides of Eight Mile.

- Collaboration on complementary design elements, wayfinding signage, public art and other legibility tools to reinforce synergies between retail clusters along Livernois and Woodward, as well as shared connections to an Eight Mile regional identity.
- Additional corridor efforts as described throughout the Master Plan, including action items L1.5, T2.1, T2.3, and T2.4.

The key to successfully modernizing these corridors rests in the ability to tackle the nuts and bolts of revitalizing commercial corridors to attract businesses and developers, manage parking, improve code compliance, and improve their physical character (including lighting, sidewalks, landscaping, signage, public art, and the scale of roadways themselves). Ferndale and neighboring communities will need to develop a comprehensive strategy for business recruitment, incentive programs (such as facade improvement grants), and roadway reconstruction to foster the type of re-use envisioned. Continuing to prioritize active partnerships among the various stakeholders along the corridors – including neighboring municipalities, the Eight Mile Boulevard Association, and Woodward Avenue Action Association – is necessary to enact this vision.

#### L1.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Update the future land use map to include key redevelopment sites with reference and access to their narrative.

#### PRECEDENT: O.W.L. RESTAURANT



A former Royal Oak deli on Woodward Avenue has been transformed into a modern diner. While many of the iconic landmarks along Woodward have disappeared over the years, the new owners made it part of their mission to preserve the distinctive curved sign. The interior design also highlights other Woodward Avenue facts and landmarks.

*Image Source: Detroit Free Press, [www.freep.com](http://www.freep.com)*

#### PRECEDENT: ACE HOTEL & SWIM CLUB



The hotel in Palm Springs, CA was originally built in the mid-60's as a desert modern extension of a national chain hotel brand but fell into neglect by the 1970's. Today, the place has been revived as a boutique hotel, spa, and resort, featuring the original design qualities to create a unique setting for meetings, wedding, and other events.

*Image Source: [www.acehotel.com/palmsprings](http://www.acehotel.com/palmsprings)*

### **L1.3:** **Create an inclusive process to establish a vision, goals, and expectations for key redevelopment sites to ensure appropriate land uses and good design.**

Each of Ferndale's key redevelopment sites has its own assets and challenges and unique set of stakeholders; therefore, a place-based, site-specific approach to guiding development is recommended. A vision committee for each site should include a cross-section of stakeholders, including representatives from relevant City departments (planning, public works, transportation, sustainability, etc.), boards and committees, and nearby residents and business owners. Creating an inclusive and transparent process for these sites should aim to form a vision and address any and all potential concerns at an early stage in order to guide developers and reduce opposing views during later stages of planning and development.

Using the descriptions in recommendation L1.2 as a starting point, committees should meet to establish a vision, goals, and expectations for new development, then meet regularly to identify changes and possibilities for consensus building with the larger community. At minimum, the narrative should include the overall vision, ideal mix of uses, design principles (form,

circulation, materials, etc.), consistency with adjacent uses, and neighborhood character. This process would additionally be utilized for any new key development sites that emerge in the future.

#### **L1.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Create a vision committee for each of the key redevelopment sites.
- Create a complete vision narrative (vision, ideal mix of uses, design principles, character) to be used to guide future developers.

### **L1.4:** **Restore Ferndale's public alleys.**

One of the most important policy and operational shifts for Ferndale's future is restoring the city's public alleys. Alleys provide a critical local access function, serving many residential and commercial areas as well as preserving the traditional urban fabric of more compact development and walkable streets. Alleys offer one of the best ways to increase density within the existing urban fabric through compact, infill development – where single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes, and other medium-density housing types are arranged next to one another without being separated

by driveways and underutilized side lots (see also L2.1). Alleys also present the opportunity for accessory dwelling units, such as alley flats or granny flats, which add density within the existing neighborhood fabric. Furthermore, alleys can provide additional environmental benefits by incorporating appropriate green infrastructure such as bioretention planters, street trees, and permeable paving.

Many of Ferndale's alleys have been vacated over time, having been considered unnecessary or less preferred to curb cuts and driveways for private residences and businesses; however, Ferndale's vision for a denser urban core and walkable streets requires alleys and thus a policy shift to preserve and utilize those remaining alleys.

#### **LOCAL PRECEDENT: VESTER STREET**



Vester Street in Ferndale is a good example of compact development made possible through the use of existing alleys.

*Image Source: Bing Maps*



Most of Ferndale's remaining public alleys are opportunistically located in "Urban Residential" land use areas which border Downtown and are targeted for medium density.

The City should, first and foremost, reverse its policy and prohibit future alley conversions and vacations as well as require the use of alleys for both residential and commercial sites. It will be important that alleys are multi-modal – accommodating private vehicles, service vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians – to ensure they serve their primary access and circulation purposes. Along with the reversal in policy, the City should allocate a dedicated budget for the improvement and proper maintenance of all public alleys. Adjacent property owners should be kept informed and involved in decisions about alleys.

#### L1.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Reverse published City policy statements that previously recommended the vacating of any alleys.
- Dedicate a budget to improve and maintain existing alleys.
- Require use of existing alleys in new development projects.

#### ALLEYS

— Paved — Unimproved — No Access / Closed / Grass



SOURCE: CITY OF FERNDALE, HAA



### **L1.5:** **Consider creating design standards and guidelines for commercial corridors.**

Design standards and guidelines are a tool used to improve the character of development, typically in areas targeted for pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development such as downtowns and other commercial corridors. They are intended to be used in the planning and pre-design phase of new development or renovation of existing buildings to promote attractive, pedestrian-friendly, and context sensitive design and are typically applied, in addition to zoning standards, to specific areas, known as an “overlay” district.

Currently, the City’s “TOD District Overlay” provides additional design requirements for areas in the CBD and along Woodward; however, it is limited in scope and geography. The City should consider reconceptualizing the overlay district as one that applies to all or targeted portions of Ferndale’s commercial corridors – Woodward, Nine Mile, Eight Mile, Hilton, South Livernois, and West Marshall. The new and improved overlay would build on the “TOD District Overlay” standards to include additional design elements that deeply impact the public realm, such as lighting, signage, parking areas, and implementation of green stormwater infrastructure.

### **L1.6:** **Identify areas of the city where change towards a more walkable, mixed-use urban pattern is anticipated and would be appropriate for future form-based code.**

Based on the success and lessons learned from implementing design standards and guidelines in Ferndale’s commercial corridors (see L1.5), the City should consider transitioning these areas and others to form-based code (FBC). FBC takes design standards and guidelines to another level, offering more concise and predictable standards and a more streamlined process than what the combination of land use zoning and overlay districts necessitates.

Form-based codes are an alternative approach to conventional zoning, which is oriented around regulating land use and may not address certain physical characteristics that contribute to a community’s sense of place. In parts of Ferndale where the City has a more specific vision for development, conventional zoning may not be the right tool as it can often shape the built environment in unintended and occasionally unwanted ways. Alternatively, form-based codes, which emphasize the physical character of development (the form), can be an efficient, predictable, and attractive way to assure high levels of walkability and urbanism.

#### **L1.5 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create design standards and guidelines for all of Ferndale’s targeted commercial corridors.

*“Ferndale is a place where people take walks and smile at each other! No where is this more true than at Western Market, which feels like an old town square.”*

#### **LOCAL PRECEDENT: DOWNTOWN FERNDALE**



Downtown Ferndale is an award-winning main street recognized by the National Main Street Center and National Trust for Historic Preservation for its overall strength and commercial district revitalization. Preserving the district’s walkability is a top priority for both residents and visitors.

*Image Source: Ferndale DDA*

Form-based code can be integrated into the existing system by adopting a form-based code for a specific planning area such as a neighborhood or district, leaving land use-based zoning in place in other parts of the city. The form-based code would reside within the structural and legal framework of a conventional code, either as a freestanding unified document simply referenced within the conventional zoning ordinance or housed entirely within the existing conventional zoning ordinance. It is important to note: the goal is to create an effective hybrid code in which form-based and use-based standards regulate side by side, not a meshing of conventional zoning codes with urban design standards that tend to compromise the integrity of both regulating mechanisms.

In order to assess the necessity and viability of integrating form-based code in Ferndale, the City should identify specific areas of the community where form-based code may be appropriate, then evaluate the existing code's effectiveness in these areas. Selection criteria includes places or neighborhoods that are or are envisioned to be mixed use, finer grained, contain a mix of housing types, and where the design of individual building character and streetscape design have an important role in defining the public realm. Form-based codes can be applied at a variety of scales and can be implemented incrementally.

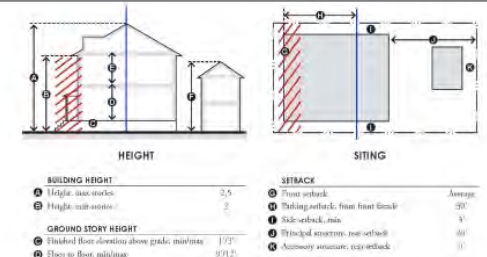
Potential areas where form-based code may be appropriate in Ferndale include:

- Downtown
- Downtown-adjacent neighborhoods ("Urban Residential")
- Mixed-use corridors ("Mixed Use")
- Underperforming commercial corridors
- Undeveloped infill areas intended to accommodate growth.

#### L1.6 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Begin a staff education program on form-based codes.
- Identify areas of the city that may be suitable for future form-based code.

#### WHAT IS "FORM-BASED CODE"?



"A form-based code is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. A form-based code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law. A form-based code offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation."

—Form-Based Codes Institute  
Image Source: [www.code-studio.com](http://www.code-studio.com)

#### HOW IS FORM-BASED CODE DIFFERENT THAN DESIGN GUIDELINES AND CONVENTION ZONING?

**Conventional zoning:** Use-based regulations, with emphasis on individual property use, lot size, density, and building placement.

**Design guidelines:** Conventional zoning requirements plus advisory (not regulatory) guidelines to achieve additional objectives of the built environment.

**Form-based codes:** Form-based regulations, with emphasis on the relationships between building types (or mix of types), streets, and blocks.

Source: Form-Based Codes Institute, [formbasedcodes.org](http://formbasedcodes.org)

# GOAL 2:

## Revise residential zoning regulations to ensure zoning supports and promotes appropriate development and greater housing choice.

The City's current zoning standards for residential and mixed-use residential zones do not always adequately foster the desirable types of new development for which they are intended. The description of these districts and their associated standards should be updated to better foster desirable residential development and greater housing choice with particular attention paid to criteria that encourages transit-oriented development, improved walkability, and housing diversity. The following land use and zoning recommendations related to residential uses support Goal 2.



### L2.1: Revise R2 and R3 standards to ensure zoning promotes dense, walkable “Urban Residential” neighborhoods and desirable housing types.

R2 and R3 includes the city’s “Urban Residential” land use areas surrounding Downtown, consisting primarily of detached single-family houses on lots ranging from 30’ to 40’, except where lots have been combined. Most lots also back up to existing alleys, though not all have been actively maintained in recent years. These areas strive to achieve higher densities of residential population within active commercial and transit environments through compact development. (See L1.1 for a full description of the “Urban Residential” future land use category and appropriate development types.)

While intended to promote a mix of denser new development, the R2 and R3 zoning regulations do not allow all forms of new construction that could have a positive impact on density and good urban form. The standards of these residential districts should be updated to better foster the qualities of a walkable neighborhood that is dense by virtue of being compact and promotes infill housing that complements the established character of the neighborhood. While integrating new housing types is important, the preservation

of older homes is critical to fostering community identity and celebrating the authentic and unique assets of each neighborhood.

R2 and R3 have already been identified by previous planning efforts as ideal locations for compact urban living; however, current standards for lot width, lot coverage, FAR, parking, and site access have taken shape in unintended and occasionally unwanted ways. Current standards also unintentionally restrict some of the infill development types that are actually the most compatible with the existing fabric (such as compact single-family homes), which are favorable for creating density and walkable neighborhoods and are aesthetically desirable.

The following recommendations build on the community’s vision and recent market studies, identifying regulatory changes that should be considered to foster the type of development envisioned for these areas.

#### **Both R2 and R3:**

- Where alleys are present, require access to sites to be from alleys and side streets to facilitate appropriate vehicular access and promotion of compact development (see L1.4 for more on the use of alleys).
- Where alleys are present, prohibit future curb cuts/driveways to maintain the pedestrian environment and promote compact development.



- Where alleys are not present, limit maximum width of driveways and encourage shared use between properties to protect the pedestrian environment at the street.
- Where alleys are present, reduce minimum lot width to 30' to promote compact development and the continuation of existing/historic development patterns.
- Reduce residential parking requirements to alleviate unnecessary requirements for developers and promote alternative modes of transportation. Reductions can be tied to distance from transit and/or availability of alternative transportation, such as car share stations on site.
- Remove maximum lot coverage to allow additions and the construction of accessory dwelling units. (The building code, FAR, and setbacks provide sufficient regulations for buildable area.)

## R2:

- Increase maximum units per acre to promote greater housing diversity such as accessory dwelling units and townhomes.

## R3:

- Allow detached single-family houses as new construction to promote infill that is compatible with existing development patterns.

The preceding recommendations are revisions to the City's existing zoning ordinance; however, the City should monitor the code's effectiveness and may wish to explore other mechanisms for regulating and/or guiding development in the future, such as infill design guidelines (see L1.5) or form-based code (see L1.6).

### L2.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Evaluate and revise zoning standards for R2 and R3 classifications per recommendations above.

*"We are an urban neighborhood that is lucky enough to be able to govern itself, and we are located basically in the center of the region. That is a huge economic development opportunity, although it means that we need to act like an urban community. We can't be scared of height, density, or mixed uses in our new developments. We need enough parking, but not huge surface lots. We need to support regional transit and continue to be a leader in non-motorized transportation."*

*"[Ferndale has] good bones (location, layout, existing architecture, committed residents) with growing pains (finding best ways for new development/redevelopment, updating old infrastructure, accommodating aging and changing population)."*

### LOCAL PRECEDENT: CAMBOURNE STREET



Cambourne Street on the east side of Ferndale is compact and connected, with almost 2 times more housing potential on the block than blocks with 50' or greater lot widths. Cambourne's density is made possible by use of the alleys.

*Image Source: Google Earth*

### PRECEDENT: RETURNING TO SMALL LOTS



The City of Austin is pursuing a small lot infill tool that allows developers to build following the original land plats of 25-foot lots. This tool reverses the growing minimum lot size standard that the City adopted over time, enabling more compact development in more traditional neighborhood design.

*Image Source: [www.evolveaustin.org](http://www.evolveaustin.org)*

## **L2.2: Revise MXD-1 and MXD-2 standards to ensure zoning promotes desired mixed-use development.**

Developing and reinforcing Ferndale's "Mixed Use" districts to suit current residents and businesses and attract new ones calls for identifying and building upon the important attributes of each unique area and ensuring the opportunities to develop are not unnecessarily limited by zoning. Ferndale's "Mixed Use" land use areas are typically characterized by their adjacency to multi-modal connectors within the city and a range of small businesses. These include the north and south Hilton corridors, south Livernois corridor, and West Marshall. Hilton and Livernois have seen recent streetscape improvements to reduce vehicular travel lanes, add on-street parking, and integrate bicycle and pedestrian facilities such as bike lanes, bike racks, and mid-block crossings to boost the overall usability and attractiveness of the corridors and set the stage for more housing and businesses in these key activity centers. These corridors also contain an attractive older building stock and character that supply opportunities for creative re-use for a range of entrepreneurial and artistic uses and residential lofts.

The improved scale and pedestrian-oriented design of the streets and the existing character call for increasing residential density in Ferndale's "Mixed Use" areas, leveraging previous investments and current development momentum. Establishing more housing options within these corridors through adaptive reuse or new construction will be critical to catalyzing and supporting vibrant mixed-use environments. As part of this effort, the City should examine existing zoning regulations in its MXD-1 and MXD-2 mixed use zones to ensure they do not limit the potential for new housing development.

Potential issues with existing MXD-1 and MXD-2 zoning regulations include:

- Maximum building height is 35', essentially limiting housing typologies to townhomes and low-rise apartment buildings.
- "Loft" (conversion of non-residential use to residential use) is not a permitted residential use (not currently listed in the zoning ordinance; see L2.4), limiting the possibility of reusing existing buildings.
- Sale and display of merchandise is prohibited in the front setback, limiting retailers' ability to creatively market their goods.

The following recommendations build on the community's vision, identifying regulatory changes that should be considered to foster the type of development envisioned for its mixed-use corridors.

### **MXD-1 and MXD-2:**

- Increase height maximum to four stories to provide more architectural flexibility in housing typologies.
- Add "loft" as a permitted residential use.
- Where alleys are present, encourage their use for access and rear parking.
- Where alleys are not present, minimize curb cuts, limit maximum width of driveways, and encourage shared use of driveways between properties with parking to the rear to protect the pedestrian environment at the street.

The above recommendations are proposed revisions to the City's existing zoning ordinance; however, the City should monitor the code's effectiveness and may wish to explore other mechanisms for regulating and/or guiding development in the future, such as form-based code (see L1.6).

### **L2.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Evaluate and revise zoning standards for MXD-1 and MXD-2 classifications per recommendations above.

## **L2.3: Expand senior living housing options in urban districts and commercial corridors.**

Across the country, growing numbers of Baby Boomers are downsizing and moving into downtowns and other neighborhoods with amenities. Unfortunately, many housing options available for seniors and those with handicap accessibility needs are located in auto-oriented areas that do not offer viable alternatives to driving. One of the best products is one that combines independent living and assisted living so residents have the benefits of both over time without having to move. Furthermore, location in a mixed-use commercial environment near transit increases their independence exponentially, allowing residents to stay active, independent, and engaged in the community without having to drive.

Ferndale is an excellent community for older residents because it has so many walkable neighborhoods; however, there are simply not a many choices in the market and current zoning regulations limit the potential of providing better senior housing where it is ideally located – Downtown and along transit corridors.

Potential issues with existing zoning regulations include:

- Assisted living is only permitted (as a special use) in R3, R4, MXD-1, and MXD-2 districts (i.e., CBD, C2, and C3 district regulations do not permit a combined independent and assisted living senior development).
- Districts that currently permit both assisted living and multi-family dwellings (R3, R4, MXD-1, and MXD-2) are limited by height and density regulations as well as less ideal locations compared to Woodward and Nine Mile.

To promote more housing choices for seniors in Ferndale’s walkable, transit-served neighborhoods, the City should consider allowing assisted living as a special land use in the CBD, C2, and C3 zoning districts. This change would allow the opportunity for the development of more variety in senior living options in a desirable location with a process in place to review its appropriateness. Criteria for special land use review should ensure development has the appropriate urban form and provides residents with access to an independent lifestyle.

See recommendations H4.2 and H4.3 for more about promoting the kind of senior development desired in Downtown and walkable commercial corridors.

### **L2.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Consider allowing assisted living as a special use in CBD, C2, and C3 districts.

#### **PRECEDENT: LAGRANGE POINTE**



LaGrange Pointe is a 30-unit independent living apartment building, located in the suburban downtown of La Grange, IL. The location and environment affords its senior residents walkable access to many of the shops, restaurants, banks, churches, services, transportation, and cultural activities.

*Image Source: [www.lagrangepointe.com](http://www.lagrangepointe.com)*



## **L2.4: Add “Loft” as a residential use, and create “loft review criteria” for special land use review, such as in the Industrial Sub-District.**

Market studies and public input throughout the planning process have shown a strong desire to add more variety in housing options available within Ferndale. While housing can take many different forms and many can be found within the city limits of Ferndale, repurposing older buildings is an opportunity that could add new housing types within the community while simultaneously re-using existing land and building stock that may be vacant and/or obsolete. The City should revise the zoning ordinance and add “loft” as a possible residential use – with accompanying definition and use regulations – that would allow for the conversion of non-residential space to residential use in existing buildings.

In amending the zoning ordinance to allow for this new type of housing, the City should also create a set of review criteria for converting non-residential buildings to residential uses. These criteria should evaluate how the proposed redevelopment affects the health, safety, and welfare of potential residents and how the redevelopment will affect the character of the neighborhood and surrounding uses.

### **L2.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Add “loft” definition and use regulations to the zoning ordinance.
- Create “loft review criteria” for special land use review.

### **DEFINITION: “LOFT”**



A “loft” typically refers to a dwelling unit in a building originally constructed for non-residential (commercial or industrial) use.

The Planning Commission should work to refine a suitable definition for Ferndale and decide where it is appropriate to allow lofts to be converted to residential use by special use permit.

*Image Source: HAA*

### **PRECEDENT: LOFT REVIEW CRITERIA**

The City of Detroit utilizes a “Loft Review Committee” that reviews a set of established criteria before approving the proposed use. Criteria includes:

- Basic public health, safety, welfare provisions.
- Any areas surrounding the proposed loft site that, by their intense industrial nature, may have potential health impacts or provide a nuisance for occupants of loft dwelling units.
- Former and current surrounding uses.
- Any transition of the area that surrounds the proposed loft site from a previously exclusive industrial area into a mixed use or nonindustrial use area.
- The loft development’s potential for impeding the normal and orderly development of surrounding property for industrial uses permitted in that district.
- The loft development’s potential to be detrimental to or endanger the physical or economic well-being of viable industrial use or growth.
- The loft development’s potential for substantially diminishing or impairing industrial property values where intense current or future industrial use exists or is planned.

*Source: The City of Detroit Zoning Ordinance*

# GOAL 3:

**Protect and support the Industrial Sub-District to allow new uses while preserving its functionality and character.**

Because this Master Plan is the first document to recognize the evolving nature of the Industrial Sub-District, existing planning and regulatory documents do not convey, encourage, or regulate the types of future development envisioned for the area. The zoning ordinance and public works priorities should be updated to reflect the vision for the area to incorporate a greater mix of uses and supportive infrastructure while preserving its functionality and character of a working industrial district and employment center. The following land use and zoning recommendations related to the Industrial Sub-District support Goal 3.



PROPOSED CHARACTER: INDUSTRIAL SUB-DISTRICT

## **L3.1: Allow the conversion of industrial space to residential use ("lofts") in the Industrial Sub-District subject to a special land use permit and "loft review criteria."**

With the addition of "loft" as a residential use recognized, defined, and regulated by

the zoning ordinance (see recommendation L2.4), the Industrial Sub-District is a likely area of the city for which small-scale conversion of non-residential buildings may be appropriate. Generally regulated by the M-1 Limited Industrial zoning classification, the Industrial Sub-District contains a vibrant mix of light industrial businesses and demonstrates the interest and compatibility for a small-scale mix of residential to complement the employment, artistic, and productive functions of the district.

While there is demand for housing in this area, it is critical that the integration of any residential uses does not diminish the industrial character, functionality, or employment capacity of the district, or limit the ability of businesses within the area to conduct business for any reason. To facilitate the introduction of housing within the Industrial Sub-District, the City should allow “loft” as a special land use in the M-1 zone and utilize “loft review criteria” to evaluate its appropriateness (see L2.4).

The ability to regulate the type and amount of housing in this area will allow for the introduction of residential to the district while maintaining its industrial character. The City should continuously monitor the Industrial Sub-District and consult with its stakeholders to ensure that the industrial nature and economy functions of the district are not diminished or lost.

### L3.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Add “loft” as a special land use in the M-1 zoning district; evaluate appropriateness with “loft review criteria”.

### **L3.2: Create an appropriate street typology for roadways within the Industrial Sub-District with contextual considerations such as the accommodation of large trucks and multiple users.**

Roadways within the Industrial Sub-District have a significant transportation connectivity function serving industrial areas. The accommodation of large trucks should be a significant design consideration. Surrounding land use is primarily industrial but may begin to integrate a small-scale mix of retail, restaurant, residential, and office in accordance with other recommendations for the Industrial Sub-District within this Master Plan. To support the area as it evolves, pedestrian and bicycle traffic should be expected and provided for though not to the detriment of the industrial character and functionality.

An appropriate street typology should include street trees, street lighting, slow speeds, and opportunities for green infrastructure including bioswales, bioretention planters, pervious pavement, and permeable pavers. Expected primary users include trucks and cars; secondary users include pedestrians and bicyclists.

### L3.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Create a street typology for industrial roadways illustrating examples of appropriate design elements and dimensions, its function, and the nature of adjacent land uses.

#### LOCAL PRECEDENT: NEXT STEP STUDIO & GALLERY



Kaiser Suidan is a local resident and owner of Next Step Studio in Ferndale. Kaiser renovated an industrial site along Hilton Street into a live/work space for his home, workspace, gallery, and sculpture garden. His renovation also included streetscape improvements to the entire block adjacent to his property.

Image Source: [www.nextstepstudio.com](http://www.nextstepstudio.com)



### **L3.3:** **Identify opportunities to integrate green stormwater infrastructure in the Industrial Sub-District and implement.**

As the City looks to the future and for ways to be more sustainable and resilient, the implementation of green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) will be an important component to achieving these goals. While the deployment of GSI to control stormwater runoff is important in all areas of the city, it is especially important in the Industrial Sub-District where there is a larger amount of impervious surface and fewer trees than other locations throughout the city.

Public rights-of-way are one opportunity to integrate GSI throughout the district, especially as the City reviews its street typologies and makes right-of-way improvements. Many properties within this district also contain underutilized land in their front setbacks and other areas containing large swaths of pavement.

The City should encourage property owners to integrate appropriate green infrastructure treatments where possible to improve stormwater management in the area. Potential opportunities for GSI include adding trees, bioretention planters, bioswales in underutilized setbacks; replacing impervious surfaces with pervious concrete or asphalt or permeable pavers; implementing green alleys and green roofs to mitigate runoff; and capturing and reusing stormwater in cisterns.

#### **L3.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Identify opportunities for the City to integrate GSI into the right-of-ways.
- Identify and promote opportunities for property owners to integrate GSI into their land and buildings.

#### **PRECEDENT: INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT TREE PROGRAM**



Recognizing how much impervious surface the city's industrial districts contain, the City of Portland created a tree program to remove concrete and plant trees. The program worked closely with property owners and tenants to avoid loading zones and adjust tree placement to keep signage visible. Since 2010, the program has made over 600 concrete cut-outs for trees, removing nearly 14,000 square feet of concrete to allow for additional stormwater infiltration.

*Image Source: [www.portlandoregon.gov](http://www.portlandoregon.gov)*

#### **RESOURCE: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE VISION FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN**



SEMCOG's "Green Infrastructure Vision for Southeast Michigan", completed in 2014, is a framework that guides preservation and implementation of green infrastructure in the region. The vision document includes green infrastructure in two broad categories: natural green infrastructure and constructed green infrastructure. *Source: [semcog.org](http://semcog.org)*

#### **RESOURCE: GREAT LAKES GREEN STREETS GUIDEBOOK**



SEMCOG's "Great Lakes Green Streets Guidebook" is a compilation of road projects using green infrastructure within the region. The document provides local case studies including key features, benefits, challenges, and costs of completed projects.

*Source: [semcog.org](http://semcog.org)*

# GOAL 4:

## Create the framework for responsible, supportive parking facilities.

Parking poses a recurring challenge to simultaneously please residents, visitors, businesses, developers, and City staff. It is a dominant physical characteristic and conversation topic of Ferndale's Downtown, and a frequent driver of new development plans city-wide. Recognition of these persistent code-related issues, coupled with recent trends and the anticipation of bus rapid transit (BRT), requires the revision of the City's parking requirements that reflect users' needs and are more supportive of a dense, walkable, transit-served community. The following land use and zoning recommendations related to parking facilities support Goal 4.



### L4.1:

#### Create a long-term parking plan with a clear vision and decision-making framework.

City decision-makers urgently need a thorough understanding of existing and anticipated parking needs to guide future investment for Downtown's long-term strength and viability. Immediate short-term needs and a desire to introduce more long-term solutions make planning for parking difficult to manage. Balancing investment in fixing things now and investing in the future can only be realized with a clear vision of what a "successful parking system" looks like and who it serves. Without a coordinated strategic approach to investment in new and existing parking facilities, Ferndale's parking facilities will not fulfill its full potential for serving the multiple users it should be intended for.

Initial steps have been taken by the City to create a "parking task force" that identify the city's current needs and potential solutions. The City should expand on this stakeholder network to create a framework for decision-making in the future. While market studies offer a glimpse into future development, the future is uncertain and is likely to present unique challenges and opportunities that cannot be predicted in advance. For that reason, the creation of a decision-making framework in which City staff, business owners, and developers can

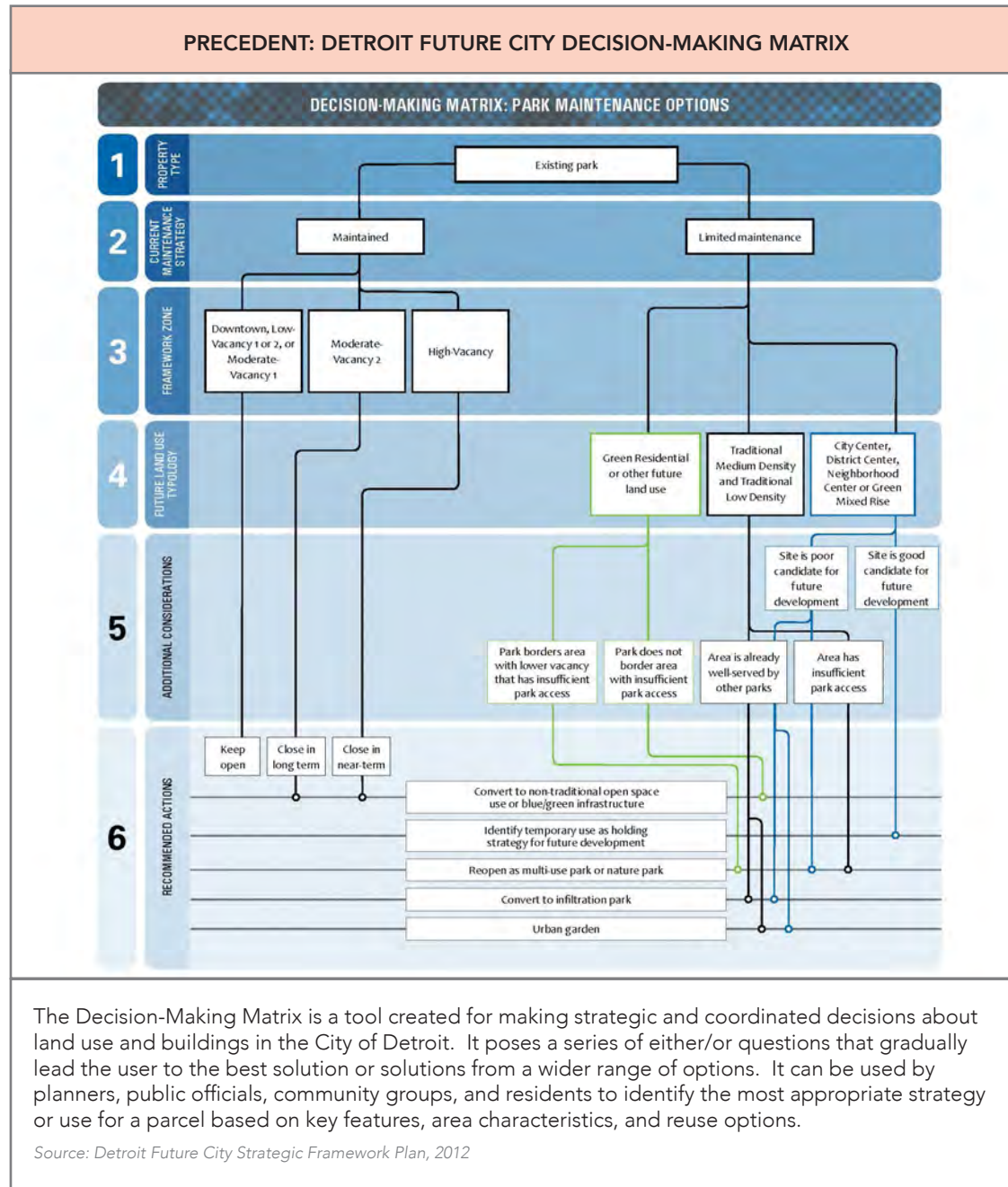
make informed decisions that produce the best outcomes for the city and its residents would be a valuable tool.

A decision-making framework should help decision-makers solve a parking-related problem, leading users to the best solution or solutions from the wider range of theoretical options. The framework should accommodate for unknown conditions in the future and be flexible enough to allow for more detailed information that may arise to inform the decision. This framework should be designed for scenarios in the future in which the market demands additional parking facilities while protecting against an oversupply or unjustified investment.

#### **L4.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Create a vision for public parking facilities in Ferndale.
- Create a coordinated long-term plan for public parking facilities.
- Create a decision-making framework for public parking facilities in the unforeseen future.

# PRECEDENT: DETROIT FUTURE CITY DECISION-MAKING MATRIX



The Decision-Making Matrix is a tool created for making strategic and coordinated decisions about land use and buildings in the City of Detroit. It poses a series of either/or questions that gradually lead the user to the best solution or solutions from a wider range of options. It can be used by planners, public officials, community groups, and residents to identify the most appropriate strategy or use for a parcel based on key features, area characteristics, and reuse options.

Source: Detroit Future City Strategic Framework Plan, 2012

## L4.2:

### Revise P-1 Vehicular Parking zoning district standards and reevaluate its application.

Ferndale contains a handful of parcels along Woodward zoned P-1 Vehicular Parking that are intended to serve as parking function for businesses and a transition space between commercial and residential land uses. At the same time, Ferndale is committed to increasing transportation options, reversing auto-oriented design patterns, and protecting its neighborhoods. When examining the current uses of land zoned P-1 – many of which are still viable residential dwellings – it is evident the zoning map and text is presently both overly rigid, in its prescribed single-use encroachment on existing community character, and overly permissive, in its lack of design standards to protect the street character and adjacent residential fabric.

The City should revise the P-1 standards in the zoning ordinance to remove any unintended consequences and reevaluate the zoning map to ensure P-1's geographic application is appropriate. The overarching intent of the following recommendations is to make the zoning classification more flexible and compatible with existing character and to downgrade parking to a secondary use only where there is a demonstrated need and subject to higher design standards.



The following recommendations should be considered:

**Permit residential dwellings** (multi-family, two-family, single-family) to ensure current uses are allowed to continue and be redeveloped in the future, increase compatibility with adjacent residential, protect property values, and increase flexibility of use within the regulation.

**Permit off-street parking** in P-1, subject to design standards, for:

- Accessory use to a principal use
- Primary use for public parking

**Enhance design standards for off-street parking areas** to ensure:

- Access is maintained from the alley where one is present to prevent additional curb cuts on residential streets.
- Lighting does not adversely affect adjacent properties and residential units or spill into the dark night sky (see L5.4).
- Parking is the only activity on the site, requiring trash and loading activities to take place on the principal site.
- Landscaping, screening, and drainage are in accordance with zoning standards.

**Review the zoning map** on a parcel-by-parcel basis to determine if P-1 is still an appropriate classification for the site.

#### L4.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Revise P-1 zoning district standards per recommendations above.
- Reevaluate and revise the P-1 zoning map application on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

#### PRECEDENT: CITY-OWNED SHARED PARKING LOTS



The City should consider the strategic acquisition and operation of City-owned public parking lots in P-1 areas. The intent would be to physically and operationally consolidate parking into a shared off-street parking system for nearby businesses, rather than a profusion of separate and scattered parking lots throughout commercial corridors. Municipally-owned and operated lots can not only alleviate developers from providing individual parking lots for each project, this system also provides the City with greater control over the design and maintenance of the parking areas.

*Image Source: HAA*

#### L4.3:

#### **Reduce parking minimums for residential uses.**

For the City, developers, and residents, minimum off-street parking requirements present numerous and costly challenges. While Ferndale and its surrounding metro area are working to improve transportation options and the need for a car is still very prevalent for most people, minimum off-street parking requirements are generally too high, causing greater supply of parking than there is demand.

In Ferndale, there are a minimum of two spaces required for a single-family dwelling, regardless of the location or if the household only needs one space. Similarly and potentially more problematic, a minimum of four spaces are required for a two-family dwelling.

The most obvious solution is to reduce or eliminate parking minimums, but a more palatable change might be to adjust them more precisely by neighborhood or by zoning district. If an area is well-served by transit (future bus rapid transit, light rail, or streetcar), it should not require as many spaces. In addition, to mitigate any pressure on on-street spaces, developers could pay into a community transit fund that goes toward improving public transportation.

Ferndale's current zoning regulations in many ways is already trying to mitigate excessive parking through exemptions, reductions, and maximums; however, lowering the minimum parking requirements would further contribute to this effort, reducing the impacts of excessive parking and shifting development decisions on land use and site design from centering around parking cars to instead centering around people.

The following recommendations should be considered as potential options for changing Ferndale's off-street minimum parking standard for residential uses:

- Reduce minimums for development within 1/4-mile (1,320 feet) of transit.
- Reduce minimums or allow for the replacement of parking spaces when other transportation options are present on site, such as car share, bike share, and/or bike parking.
- Allow for the payment in lieu of parking city-wide where contributions go into a City fund for transportation and shared parking facilities.
- Encourage developers to unbundle rents and sales of residential units from parking spaces, allowing the household to decide if they would like to or need to take on the expense of a parking space.
- Remove minimums entirely; potentially replace with maximums.

The City should consider which solution or combination of solutions make the most sense, monitor the impact of any changes to the code through studies and consultation as needed, and adjust or expand the zoning adjustments as needed.

#### L4.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Reduce minimum parking requirements for residential uses.

#### POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH PARKING MINIMUMS

Parking is an important design feature but is often overly encouraged in cities through off-street parking minimum code requirements. Problems with parking minimums include:

- The convenience of off-street parking spaces promotes driving.
- The more spaces developers are required to build, the less space there is for better uses such as retail or more residential units.
- The developer mandate drives up the cost per residential unit, typically translating to higher rents or sales prices.
- From a resident's perspective, parking is typically bundled into the cost of rent or sale of a unit, even if the resident does not need it.
- Parking lots are typically impervious surfaces, increasing stormwater runoff, urban heat islands, and water pollution.
- Parking lots spread development apart, making streets, neighborhoods, and the city less walkable and bikable.
- Parking lots are not very attractive and do not contribute to the walk appeal of a place.

#### PRECEDENT: PARKING REDUCTIONS IN NORWOOD, OH

In 2013, the City of Norwood eliminated minimum parking requirements for all single family, office, and retail uses. All other uses are subject to significantly reduced requirements with reductions based on shared parking and proximity to public transportation.

#### PRECEDENT: ENVISION FRANKLIN PARKING REPORT

A local non-profit group in Frankfort, KY, EnvisionFranklinCounty, conducted a study to look at parking rates during peak and off-peak times at different commercial land uses. The study was inspired by the observed number of vastly underutilized lots across the city. Using the group's report, the planning commission and staff made reductions to parking requirements as well as added pervious pavement requirements.

#### EMPLOYER-PAID TRANSIT PASSES



Employer-paid transit passes reduce the demand for parking rather than increase the supply of parking. *Image source: travelportland.com*

### **L4.4: Revise non-residential parking requirements to align with transit-oriented development patterns and evolving transportation trends, such as car share, ride share, and autonomous vehicles.**

Equipped with its own set of challenges and characteristics, Ferndale's non-residential parking minimums should be realigned to better serve the emerging needs of its future. The sharing economy and culture – consisting of improved public transportation, car share, bike share, and ride share services – is already reducing the need for private vehicles and parking spaces on a per person basis.

Reducing parking minimums – or better yet, eliminating minimums altogether – especially in transit-accessible areas will be a better use of our land, reduce rent for tenants, give developers more flexibility, and promote more overall travel options. Developers would still be allowed to build parking if they see a demand for it; reducing or eliminating parking would simply remove the rule that forces them to build spaces the market might not want. Currently, Ferndale's zoning code in many ways already tries to mitigate excessive parking through exemptions, reductions, and maximums; however, reducing or eliminating minimum parking requirements would be a more effective and concise method for achieving this goal.

Furthermore, though it is still too early to predict exactly how, autonomous vehicles hold the potential to change the way we live and the way land is used, having impacts on our daily commute, how services are delivered, how roads are used, and the amount of parking needed. And lastly, parking minimums in general hinder development, perpetuate traffic and car reliance, and diminish the pedestrian environment. As transportation technology continues to improve, so should parking. The City should identify staff to stay abreast of Autonomous Vehicles legislation, utilize Oakland County's department of Emerging Sectors for communication with peer cities, and continue to stay engaged with the Detroit Regional Chamber's Michigan Mobility Initiative including the Smart Corridor Public-Private Partnership and the University of Michigan's Mobility Transformation Center.

The following recommendations should be considered as potential options for changing Ferndale's off-street minimum parking standards for non-residential uses:

- Remove minimums entirely; potentially replace with maximums.
- Reduce minimums for development within 1/4-mile (1320 feet) of transit.
- Reduce minimums or allow for the replacement of parking spaces when other transportation options are present on site, such as car share, bike share, and/or bike parking.



- Allow for payment in lieu of parking city-wide, where contributions go into a City fund for transportation and shared parking facilities.
- Extend allowable distance to shared or on-site parking facilities to within 1,000 feet.

Priority for parking reform should be given to the Downtown and areas near transit. The City should continue to monitor transportation trends and their impacts on parking as data emerges.

In addition to regulatory changes, the City should seek ways to encourage the use of transit and non-motorized facilities to reduce demand for parking in general.

#### AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES: IN 2020 AND BEYOND



Industry experts and automakers predict autonomous technology will be introduced in phases, making drastic advances from 2020 to 2040 and beyond. Car design and the way we structure physical space will evolve significantly, resulting in opportunities to improve the way resources, particularly space, are allocated.

Image Source: [cdn.bmwblog.com](http://cdn.bmwblog.com)

### **L4.5: Continue to update, utilize, and promote Ferndale's payment in lieu of parking provision.**

Under the current standards, Ferndale's zoning ordinance allows developers to pay a fee in lieu of providing the required minimum parking spaces in the Downtown area (parcels zoned "CBD"). The fee revenue is collected in a fund and used by the City to provide and maintain publicly-owned parking spaces in lieu of the privately owned parking spaces that developers would have provided. This program has numerous advantages and should continue to be promoted as long as there are minimum parking requirements Downtown.

Advantages of payment in lieu of parking include:

- Providing developers with an alternative, especially where providing all required spaces would be difficult or extremely expensive.
- Providing shared parking, which is more efficient than single-use private parking.
- Improving urban design by consolidating off-street parking on sites that do not diminish the pedestrian environment, allowing continuous storefronts without gaps for adjacent surface parking lots.
- Requiring fewer variances, where payment in lieu of parking is an equitable option available to all developers.

An option the City may consider to enhance this program is to require a payment in lieu of parking, rather than offering it as a choice. Mandated fees would require a long-term parking strategy to ensure resident, employee, and visitor needs are properly accommodated within a larger plan, and has proven to be a successful mechanism to encourage shared parking, discourage proliferation of surface parking lots, emphasize continuous storefronts, improve the pedestrian environment, reduce traffic congestion, and improve urban design.

The City may also consider expanding this option to areas outside the CBD, such as along Woodward, where consolidated municipal parking would benefit developers and businesses rather than providing individual private lots.

#### **L4.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Reduce or eliminate parking minimums for non-residential uses, especially Downtown and near transit.

#### **L4.5 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Update, utilize, and enhance the promotion of "payment in lieu of parking in the CBD" as long as minimum parking requirements are in place.
- Consider expansion to areas outside of the CBD.

## **L4.6:** **Enhance design standards for parking facilities abutting rights-of-way, especially in Downtown and Mixed Use land use areas.**

Parking lots proliferate the city including in Ferndale's Downtown and other pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use areas. Parking lots consume vital land, separate buildings from public sidewalks, break up continuity of the street wall, and can be visually unappealing if not screened and landscaped appropriately. Current zoning standards for parking design are fairly undemanding, and Ferndale's "TOD District Overlay" ordinance does not directly address surface parking lots or parking structures.

The City should review and enhance zoning standards to ensure parking design complements the built environment where high pedestrian activity is targeted. Different conditions of different parts of the city, particularly with respect to their viability as walkable mixed-use districts, dictate different levels of standards. The City should focus on enhancing standards for its Downtown and Mixed Use districts using best practices such as the City of Detroit's "Traditional Main Street Overlay" which lists standards and guidelines for parking lots and structures. Revised standards should then be applied within



PROPOSED CHARACTER: SUPPORTIVE PARKING FACILITIES

the zoning ordinance to targeted zones (CBD, MXD-1, MXD-2), as an amendment to the TOD District Overlay ordinance, or another regulating mechanism determined appropriate by the City.

### **L4.6 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Enhance design standards for surface parking lots and parking structures abutting right-of-ways in Downtown and Mixed Use areas.

*"We need to continue to be a good neighbor. Ferndale's development should be positive for Oak Park, Hazel Park, and Royal Oak Township, not a hardship for them. We should work with the City of Detroit to connect ourselves to the Avenue of Fashion/Fairgrounds/Sherwood Forest/Palmer Woods area, especially in light of new development interest there. In short, we can and should have a coherent, inclusive, vibrant urban district encompassing all of the cool places in and around our town."*

# GOAL 5:

## Improve environmental sustainability standards.

While Ferndale has introduced a number of environmental sustainability measures to city code, it also leaves out some of the opportunities Ferndale could leverage to foster more qualities of a sustainable city. Regulatory documents should be updated to include a larger acceptance of sustainable design possibilities, rather than limit possibilities by virtue of omission and outdated code. The zoning ordinance should specifically permit all of the land use activities identified as possible and desirable by the City. Doing so will show an active desire for thinking long-term and being a regional leader in sustainability.

While this goal focuses specifically on what Ferndale can do to improve environmental sustainability standards within the city, we cannot have a sustainable city if the surrounding region is not sustainable as well; therefore, steps taken to stand out as a leader should also serve as a model as an attempt to affect what happens in the surrounding region. The following land use and zoning recommendations related to environmental sustainability support Goal 5.



### L5.1: Update the zoning ordinance to allow for sustainable energy production.

As the City of Ferndale looks to continue to be a leader in sustainability, one way to achieve this goal is to expand the range of renewable energy production that is allowed within the city. The zoning code currently allows for the production of clean renewable energy from wind and from solar as an accessory use. Adding solar energy production to the list of allowable uses in the zoning ordinance will demonstrate Ferndale's desire to be a leader in sustainability.

### L5.2: Review and update City ordinances to allow for green stormwater infrastructure design.

Residents have expressed a strong interest and desire to install a variety of green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) projects on their property, ranging from rain gardens and bioswales to permeable pavement and ribbon driveways; however, not all of these projects are currently allowed by city code. The City should review and revise City ordinances as needed to ensure residents have the opportunity to implement the small-scale GSI treatments on their properties that are encouraged by the City.

#### L5.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Add solar energy production to the list of allowable uses in the zoning ordinance.

#### L5.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Review and revise City ordinances to ensure desired green stormwater infrastructure treatments are allowable by code.

#### PRECEDENT: RIBBON DRIVEWAYS



"Ribbon driveways" use less concrete and incorporate more landscape features on private properties, reducing the amount of stormwater runoff. This type of driveway has been increasingly encouraged by cities across the country for its environmental benefits and aesthetic appeal.

Image Source: [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)



### **L5.3:** **Improve Planned Natural Landscape procedures to ensure properties are registered and marked.**

With the introduction of the planned natural landscape ordinance in 2015, Ferndale residents are allowed and encouraged to transform their yards using native plants. While there are many benefits from keeping a natural landscape as opposed to a traditional grass lawn – including saving on effort, money, water, and providing environmental benefits – and examples can be seen around the community, there needs to be more education around these landscapes. Education needs include continuing to promote this to residents as an option for their yard and providing information on how to properly convert and care for a natural yard.

The ordinance requires homeowners to register their planned natural landscaped yards with code enforcement to help them in knowing where such yards are. In addition to registering, the City should consider a mechanism to physically mark natural yards so that the deliberate purpose and intent of a planned natural landscape is evident to neighbors while the ordinance is still in its infancy. This could be accomplished by creating subtle signage that the City provides to registered homeowners once installed that identifies a planned natural landscape and is visible to neighbors and code enforcement officials.

#### **L5.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Continue to promote properly executed planned natural landscapes as an option for residents.
- Create a visual/physical component to accompany registered natural yards.

#### **PRECEDENT: URBAN FOREST PLANTING SIGNAGE**



Friends of the Urban Forest (San Francisco, CA) marks its planted street trees and sidewalk gardens throughout the city with informational signage. The simple signage describes the initiative and the benefits of urban trees.

*Image Sources: Friends of the Urban Forest; [www.fuf.net](http://www.fuf.net)*

### **L5.4:** **Create and adopt a Dark Sky Lighting Ordinance.**

In urbanized areas across the globe, light pollution is almost a universal issue. While the city of Ferndale falls within a larger metropolitan region, Ferndale can take steps to become a leader. In order to do this, the City should adopt and enforce a Dark Sky Ordinance to limit glare and light trespass. This ordinance should specify the type of lighting that can be used at various locations throughout the city to best limit glare and further light pollution.

#### **L5.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create and adopt a dark sky lighting ordinance.

*"The parking and building LED lights at the new shopping plaza... are extremely bright and ruin the hometown feel of our neighborhood. The neighbors are investigating the problem with the city and hopefully it will be fixed soon. The city needs to ban these types of LED lights. Follow the example at [the] plaza on the west side of Woodward. The building and parking lights are soft and inviting. Also, please make the owners of this plaza install attractive garbage cans. I pick up garbage on my lawn daily that blows in from Woodward..."*

# HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

## EXISTING HOMES, NEW HOUSING, RESIDENT ATTRACTION AND RETENTION, HOUSING SERVICES

Ferndale's neighborhoods are typically defined by their many strengths: compact single-family homes; walkable, tree-lined streets; and friendly neighbors. Yet within these strengths exist challenges in the diversity of housing options available, the ability to retain residents through changing life stages, connecting residents to each other, and providing quality housing for all people – young and old, low- and high-income, single and married, with or without children, retired and working, newcomer or longtime resident.

The overarching goal of the Housing and Neighborhoods chapter is to provide for a diversity of housing choice that together create neighborhoods that are welcoming to all. The following goals and recommendations focus on strategies to expand the types of housing Ferndale offers as well as strategies to continue supporting existing residents and the existing housing stock that contribute to each neighborhood's unique character and authenticity.

*"I think it's important to have a strong community for households with children in Ferndale, so that households who may be having their first child do not think they have to move out of Ferndale in order to have that child community or support."*

# GOALS

The recommendations comprising the HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS section of the Master Plan are based on data and public input collected during the planning process. Recommendations are organized into four goal areas. Together, the goals and their related actions support the vision for Ferndale's future.

## **GOAL 1:**

Expand housing services for homeowners, renters, and landlords.

## **GOAL 2:**

Support existing residents and preserve the existing housing stock.

## **GOAL 3:**

Promote neighborhoods and expand local capacity.

## **GOAL 4:**

Pursue and encourage new housing development opportunities.



# GOAL 1:

## Expand housing services for homeowners, renters, and landlords.

The planning process identified a number of ways Ferndale can provide housing services to its residents to ensure those investing in Ferndale feel supported and can stay in Ferndale even as they transition through different stages of life, from renting an apartment to buying a starter home to updating and retiring in that home.

While many residents in Ferndale have firmly established roots in the city, census data shows the City of Ferndale has a slightly higher resident turnover rate than many of its peer communities. This makes it more difficult to establish a continuous sense of community among residents who want to feel connected to their neighbors. It is also less likely that short-term residents will make investments in their homes, neighborhoods, and the larger community. Housing mobility is especially common among renters, of which Ferndale has many. Increasing the homeownership rate and ensuring rental properties are well-maintained are key to retaining residents and strengthening neighborhoods overall.

The following recommendations set forth a number of policies and programs to improve services for residents with the goals of increasing resident retention, increasing the number of homeowners, and maintaining a high-quality condition of rental properties.



### H1.1: Promote Ferndale as a great place to live.

Among its many good qualities, Ferndale is an inner-ring suburb with walkable neighborhoods, tree-lined streets, a vibrant downtown, thriving small businesses, a strong sense of community, close proximity to major highways and employment centers, good public services and facilities, and development momentum that points to a promising future. According to the National Association of Realtors, walkability is quickly becoming one of the most important factors in choosing where to live, and Ferndale should proudly advertise this increasingly coveted asset. Stronger resident retention occurs naturally with the maintenance and improvement of high-quality housing options, streets, schools, and the overall quality of life in Ferndale; meanwhile, Ferndale can advertise its achievements and inherent qualities that already make it a great place to live.

The City should continue to develop its marketing materials to sell Ferndale's best assets to current and prospective residents, both in print and on the City's website. It is critical to get current and potential residents to look beyond Ferndale as a short-term place to live and take into account many of the advantages Ferndale has as a place to establish roots. Marketing materials should make current residents proud and confident about living in Ferndale and convince potential residents about the high value in investing in Ferndale. Along with advertising why Ferndale is great, marketing materials should also include resources that help residents connect with the City and to community organizations, such as neighborhood block groups and recreation programs.

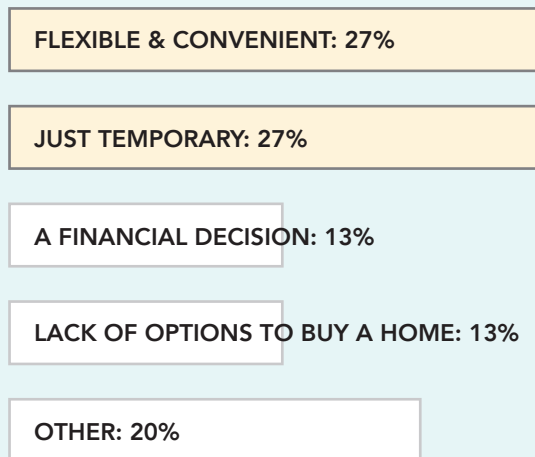
#### H1.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Develop a cohesive communication plan to promote Ferndale to existing, new, and prospective residents.
- Increase resident retention rate.

*"...Ferndale is like a small town in all the best possible ways. Neighbors know one another, the neighborhoods are walkable, and the downtown is cool and inviting. These are traits that can be \*really\* hard for suburban cities to maintain, and I applaud Ferndale for embracing both the new and the traditional."*

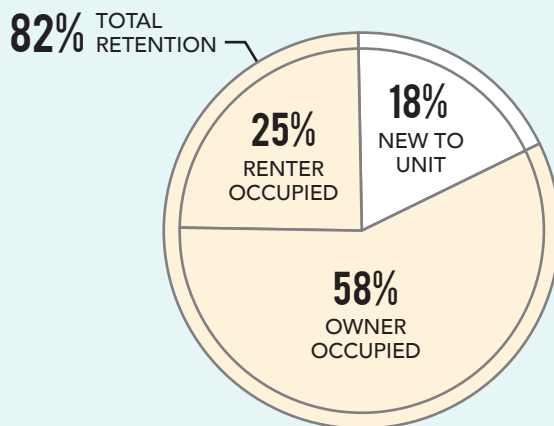
**IF YOU ARE A CURRENT RENTER IN FERNDALDE, WHAT ARE THE REASONS AFFECTING YOUR CHOICE TO RENT INSTEAD OF OWN A HOME IN FERNDALDE?**

RESPONSES FROM FERNDALDE-EXCHANGE



**FERNDALDE RESIDENT RETENTION, 2014**

LIVED IN SAME HOUSING UNIT AS 1 YEAR AGO



Source: 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates

**H1.2: Support new landlords and renters with “Welcome to Ferndale” resources.**

As renting becomes more common across the country, ensuring renters feel part of the community is critical to strengthening neighborhoods. Like homeowners, landlords and renters should be aware of city-wide and neighborhood-based resources, and expectations for the upkeep and condition of their properties. Providing these basic resources and ground rules ensures rental properties are well maintained and facilitate an environment that allows tenants to be more educated, involved, and comfortable with their neighborhood and city. Similarly, this is an opportunity to provide landlords with best practices on how to be a good landlord and what to expect from the City.

**H1.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create “Welcome to Ferndale” resources targeted to landlords and residents.

**H1.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create an incentives program to promote good landlords.

**H1.3: Promote good landlords through an incentives and marketing program.**

Promoting good landlord-tenant relationships will help boost property maintenance and resident retention. Ideally, landlords do more than just cash checks every month and, at minimum, should be reachable when tenants have questions, maintenance requests, or concerns. But there are also things landlords can do beyond fulfilling the basic expectations; good landlords treat tenants as customers and aim to keep their best customers for as long as possible and to attract new customers.

Establishing an incentives program for good landlords willing to go the extra mile can help promote good landlord-tenant relationships and the rental market in Ferndale. For example, this could be a regular feature in the local newsletter about a good landlord and what they do to be a great landlord. Whatever the program is, the purpose should be to promote responsible, professional landlords who are in turn able to keep long-term, qualified tenants.

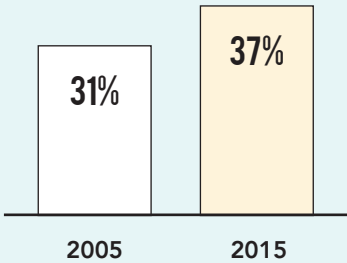
*“Homes are prohibitively expensive.”*

*“Still saving to buy a home.”*

*“Previous foreclosure, skyrocketing home prices in Ferndale, and uncertainty in the metro Detroit job market.”*

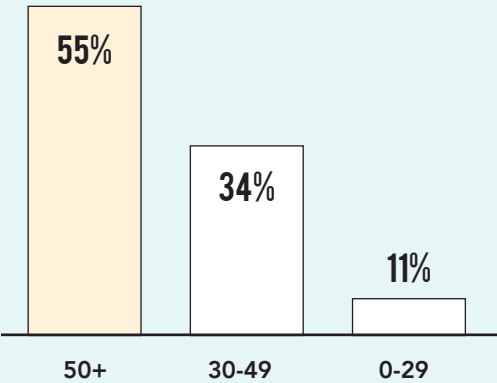
RENTAL TRENDS

In U.S. Overall



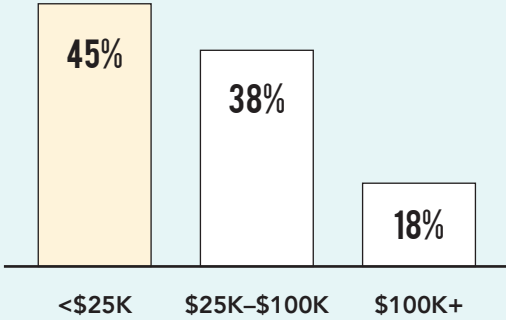
The share of renters among all U.S. households rose from 31% to 37% from 2005 to 2015, the **largest increase** during any 10-year period on record.

By Age Group



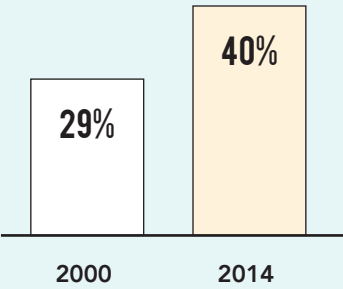
Households 50 years or older made up 55% of the growth, followed by ages 30 to 49 (34%) and 29 and under (11%).

By Annual Income



Renters making less than \$25K represent the highest growth (45%), followed by those with incomes of \$25K to \$100K (38%) and \$100 and over (18%).

In Ferndale



Similarly, Ferndale's rental rates have surged over the last decade. The share of renters among all Ferndale households rose from 29% to 40% from 2000 to 2014.

Sources: Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census 2000





## H1.4:

### Provide education and resources to residents on “green” residential practices for their properties and homes.

Many residents have expressed interest in implementing more “green” practices within their homes and properties, such as more ways to recycle waste and conserve water and energy. Not only are residents interested, but many of Ferndale’s older homes need some level of retrofitting to meet modern efficiency standards. 79% of Ferndale homes were built prior to 1960 and some lack modern systems and/or energy- and water-efficient systems. Improving the physical condition of these aging homes and incorporating green building practices will not only save homeowners money on utility costs but will improve the overall quality and long-term home operation and maintenance.

Awareness and education are key factors in motivating residents to make a change. Many residents making small changes on private properties and through individual choices make a cumulative impact on reducing the city’s overall resource consumption. Because most of these practices are voluntary, the City should select resources that focus on awareness, education, and motivation. Recommendations include:

- Create a guide to promote green building and landscape practices on residential properties. The guide should be designed to educate residents interested in utilizing these practices in their homes and on their properties, including descriptions, photographs, best practices, and local resources to assist residents in properly executing these practices. Topics could range from low-cost things residents can do in their homes today to save money and energy to more complex but highly impactful practices that typically require more time, money, or assistance. Educational resources may also include things residents can do outside of their homes to contribute to a more sustainable community, such as buying local goods and services and using mass or non-motorized forms of transit when possible.
- Provide demonstration projects on common green practices for residential properties; consider partnering with existing organizations.
- Provide incentives for homeowners and developers, such as financial assistance, land use credits, government process incentives, and/or education and marketing assistance.
- Identify interested residents and block groups for pilot projects to test methods and show how these practices can be implemented.
- Facilitate a tool share program between DPW, local businesses, and other relevant entities to provide renters with necessary equipment to maintain their properties.

### WHAT ‘GREEN’ PRACTICES ARE YOU INTERESTED IN OR ALREADY DOING AS A RESIDENT?

FERNDALE EXCHANGE

RECYCLING: 93%

FOOD WASTE COMPOSTING: 45%

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT: 53%

ENERGY INVESTMENTS IN MY HOME: 56%

NON-MOTORIZED AND/OR SHARED  
TRANSPORTATION: 69%

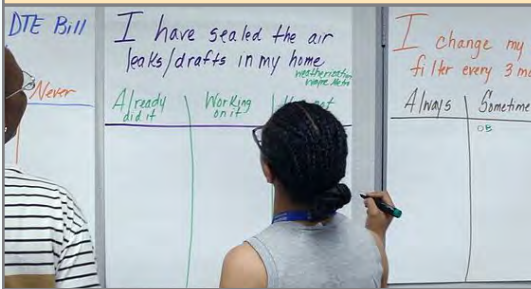
BUYING LOCAL FOOD AND GOODS: 75%

### H1.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Select a number of viable green residential practices to promote in the community.
- Identify the best method(s) to promote green practices: guides, demonstration projects, incentives, pilot projects, and/or other.

## GREEN INITIATIVE PRECEDENTS, PROGRAMS, AND TOOLS

### ECOWORKS' RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS



EcoWorks' programs teach residents methods for reducing energy and water usage to lower their utility bills. [www.ecoworksdetroit.org](http://www.ecoworksdetroit.org)

Image Source: [www.ecoworksdetroit.org](http://www.ecoworksdetroit.org)

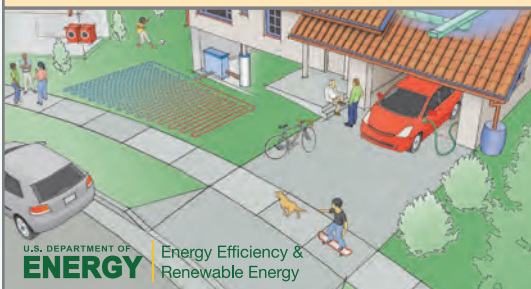
### DTE ENERGY HOME ENERGY CONSULTATIONS



DTE Energy provides free consultations to help residents identify ways to reduce the amount of energy their homes use. [www.dteenergy.com](http://www.dteenergy.com)

Image Source: [www.dteenergy.com](http://www.dteenergy.com)

### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY "ENERGY SAVER"



"Energy Saver" is a resource for ways residents can reduce energy usage as well as a step-by-step guide to making home energy improvements. [www.energysaver.gov](http://www.energysaver.gov)

Image Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)

### DETROIT FUTURE CITY "WORKING WITH LOTS: A FIELD GUIDE"



"Working With Lots" is a collection of landscape designs for residential and commercial properties that emphasize stormwater management and local resiliency. [www.dfc-lots.com](http://www.dfc-lots.com)

Image Source: [www.dfc-lots.com](http://www.dfc-lots.com)

"[Ferndale should have] incentives for reducing permeable surface as well as native and/or urban resilient tree species."

"No pesticides, no fertilizers, keep heating low in winter, low cooling in summer."

"Planted shade canopy trees."



"Become a 'Bee City'!!!"

"Native plantings [in the parks] with educational signage."

"More stormwater infrastructure [to address] Saratoga [street] flooding."



# GOAL 2:

## Support existing residents and preserve the existing housing stock.

As of 2014, Ferndale had approximately 20,000 residents and 10,520 existing housing structures, comprising 48% of the total land area of the city. Retaining residents and preserving older homes in good condition are key components of maintaining authenticity and a sense of community, especially as Ferndale integrates new housing types and continues to attract new residents. The City will be ensuring the long-term strength of its housing stock and neighborhoods by investing in existing residents and housing. The following recommendations support this goal.



### H2.1: Improve code compliance and enforcement effectiveness.

Code compliance and proper enforcement is one mechanism the City has for

maintaining and improving the quality of housing; however, a lack of communication and overly punitive action can diminish the relationship between residents and the City. During the planning process, residents described instances of receiving unfair ticketing for minor infractions without knowing the code they were violating or without ever receiving a warning. Improved education and communication on the local housing code among residents, code officers, and the City is necessary to effectively improve both code compliance and enforcement. Overall, the goal should be to refocus efforts on bringing properties into compliance through correctional actions rather than punitive actions.

Strategies for improving code compliance may include:

- Improve the "Code Enforcement" content on the City's website: post the Ferndale housing code and list common infractions to increase awareness and use of the code.
- Train residents on common code violations at community events and workshops.
- Evaluate and continue to improve the City's mechanisms for reviewing and recording code violations to ensure consistency across code officers; explore ways to consolidate services.

### H2.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Update and improve the "Code Enforcement" content on the City's website.
- Establish regular code training programs for residents and code officers.
- Achieve a reduction in code violations and complaints over time.

### HOUSING STRUCTURES BY YEAR BUILT CITY OF FERNDALE

1930 OR EARLIER: 3,813

1940 - 1949: 2,560

1950 - 1959: 1,952

1960 - 1969: 753

1970 - 1979: 561

1980 - 1989: 315

1990 - 1999: 217

2000 - 2009: 349

2010 OR LATER: 32



**PRECEDENT:  
THE ALLEY FLAT INITIATIVE**



The Alley Flat Initiative in Austin, Texas provides information about a new sustainable and affordable housing alternative within the community. The web-based resource provides information about eligibility, planning, financing, designing, building, and living in these housing types, including a set of housing models that have already been built.

*Image Source: [www.thealleyflatinitiative.org](http://www.thealleyflatinitiative.org)*

## **H2.2: Provide support for homeowners to update and remodel their homes and properties.**

Much of Ferndale's housing stock is on the older and smaller end of the spectrum relative to nearby communities. During the planning process, residents spoke of their interest in renovating their existing homes – from making investments in energy efficient appliances to making second-story additions to their current homes – but felt they lacked the resources and capacity to do so. A general consensus among residents was that it seems easier to move than to go through a renovation or remodel – a contributing factor to Ferndale's challenge of retaining residents.

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are another type of property renovation that can be an excellent way of adding people within the existing fabric through compact development and efficient land use. In addition to adding density to existing properties, ADUs can provide homeowners with the opportunity to have a small income property or guest house.

To preserve and improve Ferndale's existing housing stock and retain residents, it is important to ensure residents and property owners know about available resources to make home improvements and feel comfortable knowing what is allowed and possible. Strategies for providing residents with resources to update and remodel their homes and properties may include:

- Ensure residents are aware of what is allowed by zoning and building code.
- Develop a list of local examples of updates and remodeling projects.
- Develop a list of licensed local contractors.
- Promote energy efficient investments, their environmental and economic benefits, and the financial assistance resources available to do so.
- Conduct home improvement and repair workshops to address the specific home improvement and maintenance issues experienced by homeowners, including energy efficiency and additions.
- Encourage the proper execution of neighborhood-sensitive accessory dwelling units in denser residential zones, such as apartments above garages, carriage homes, backyard cottages, and guest suites.
- Work with local banks to identify lending options and market services.

### **H2.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Identify desirable home and property improvements (additions, alley flats, etc.), and ensure these are allowable by code.
- Identify the best strategies to promote the desirable home and property renovations.

## H2.3: Assist residents in need with maintenance and repairs.

Seniors, low-income households, and residents with disabilities can be particularly burdened by the task of home improvements and maintenance, physically and/or financially. Residents' ability to remain in their homes where they have established roots in their neighborhood is an important stabilizing factor for neighborhoods (referred to as 'aging in place' for older residents). Supporting these residents will also ensure Ferndale's population remains diverse in age and income.

Options to explore may include partnering with non-profit or philanthropic organizations that would perform maintenance and repair services for free or at a reduced cost as well as the use of City's community development funds. Another consideration for ensuring homes are more physically accessible, safe, and enjoyable to use and navigate for users now and in the future is to promote new housing construction that incorporates 'universal design' strategies.

*"[Ferndale has a] lack of wheelchair accessible housing! [We] have been searching in Ferndale for 4 months and have only found one property that we could reasonably put an offer on. It seems we missed the burst of old, cheap houses prime for renovation and now the few options available are flipped homes where we'd have to tear out and redo most of the work done on them to make it accessible."*

### H2.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Establish a partnership with an organization that would perform maintenance for free or at reduced cost for eligible households.
- Encourage or incentivize universal design strategies in new housing construction.

#### UNIVERSAL DESIGN

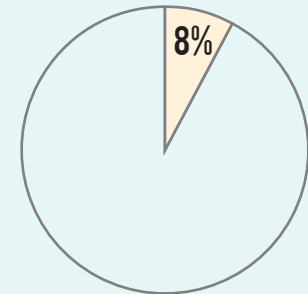
The term "universal design" describes the concept of designing all products and the built environment to be usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status in life.

#### AGING IN PLACE

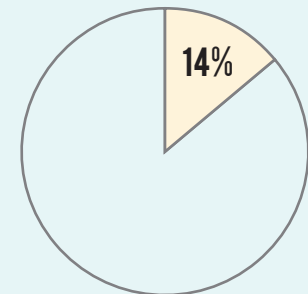
"Aging in place" refers to the ability to live in one's own home or community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level.<sup>2</sup> Aging in place may require an older resident to make modifications to their current home or require finding a new home within the community that better suits their needs.

"Universal design" in home building or remodeling is one way of enabling residents to age in place.

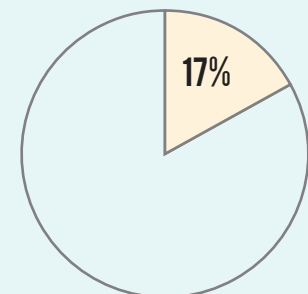
### POPULATION POTENTIALLY IN NEED CITY OF FERNDALE



POPULATION 65+  
YEARS OLD



POPULATION 18+ YEARS  
OLD WITH DISABILITY



POPULATION BELOW  
POVERTY LINE

Source: 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates

# GOAL 3:

## Promote neighborhoods and expand local capacity.

Strong neighborhoods and community building are vital for the success of Ferndale's future. A network of engaged residents and civic groups can serve as important partners with the City to bring about changes needed to continue improving each neighborhood and Ferndale as a whole. Through the planning process, residents expressed a strong interest in forming neighborhood groups, either formally or informally, such as block clubs and neighborhood organizations. The benefits of healthy civic organization are many, and they can vary in style from group to group depending on their unique needs and interests.

One of the most pronounced needs recognized by residents is more opportunities to connect with neighbors. Reasons to connect include simply getting to know one another, having regular social events like block parties and picnics, having a shared means of communicating regularly and appropriately, addressing specific concerns, raising funds to make improvements on a block or nearby park, and being a voice within the larger community.

Effective organization can also serve to empower residents to guide the future of their neighborhoods and city. Functional and unified groups may have the ability to partner and work with the City on planning and development visioning and decision-making, establishing a complementary relationship between community-level planning and city-level planning that represents a majority of residents rather than a few passionate individuals.

The following recommendations support Goal 3 by fostering more interaction among young and old, new and long-time residents, renters and homeowners, and people of all lifestyles, races, ethnicities, and incomes.



*"I think our residential density is a huge strength. I love sitting on my front porch and chatting with neighbors who are also sitting on theirs. You can't get that in sprawling neighborhoods."*

*"I live on the east side Hilton and 9 Mile area and I LOVE my neighborhood but there are... things I'd like to see changed."*

*One would be to actually be paid attention to - we're not Hazel Park but cross Hilton and we seem to disappear."*

## HOW INTERESTED WOULD YOU BE IN JOINING A NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION IN THE FUTURE?

RESPONSES FROM FERNDALE-EXCHANGE

VERY INTERESTED: 58%

SOMEWHAT INTERESTED: 37%

NOT AT ALL INTERESTED: 5%

### LOCAL PRECEDENT: THE DALES NEIGHBORHOOD



"The Dales" is one of Ferndale's active neighborhood organizations, founded in 2012 by two residents to connect and get to know neighbors. The organization hosts annual block parties, shares news with one another via their social network website, and has been the recipient of local grants to support their activities.

Image Source: [facebook.com/TheDalesNeighborhood](https://www.facebook.com/TheDalesNeighborhood)

**RESOURCE:  
MICHIGAN COMMUNITY RESOURCES**



Michigan Community Resources (MCR) provides tools and resources for organizing and building a neighborhood group as well as workshops on fundraising and grant writing.

Image Source: [www.mi-community.org](http://www.mi-community.org)

**PRECEDENT: CORKTOWN HISTORICAL HOME & GARDEN TOUR**



The Corktown Historical Home and Garden Tour is an annual event that tours the neighborhood's unique homes, churches, and businesses. The tour highlights old, new, and adaptively reused buildings.

Image Source: [www.detroit.curbed.com](http://www.detroit.curbed.com)

**H3.1:  
Encourage neighborhood stewardship and provide resources for neighbors to organize.**

Throughout the planning process, residents expressed interest in getting together with neighbors more often, either formally or informally; the question they had was *how*. Since getting started can be the hardest part of neighborhood organization and the City recognizes the importance of residents taking an active role in their neighborhoods, the City of Ferndale can help overcome this hurdle both by being a resource to facilitate this process and by creating an information brochure and/or webpage.

The City currently lists established neighborhood groups on its website, but today there are few groups and the webpage is difficult to find. The City should continue to develop and promote access to a comprehensive list of community groups as neighborhood groups grow and more groups are established. For example, the online webpage should be easy to access, include information on how to join a group, and provide contact information for each group and City staff who can help.

**H3.2:  
Create a collection of house and neighborhood tours that market Ferndale's history and unique qualities.**

Currently, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) runs several tours focused on the downtown; however, Ferndale has a lot to celebrate in its neighborhoods. Tours offer the opportunity to promote Ferndale and celebrate its history, local landmarks, and unseen treasures. This could also be an opportunity to highlight successful examples of naturalized landscapes, adaptively re-used buildings, alley flats, and other accessory dwelling units in the future.

**H3.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Create a "how-to" resource for neighbors to form an organization.
- Improve, continually update, and promote access to a comprehensive list of community groups.

**H3.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Identify potential tour themes aligned with promoting Ferndale's vision and goals.



### **H3.3:**

#### **Promote neighborhood amenities, such as parks, schools, and other quality of life elements.**

Many outsiders and even Ferndale residents see Ferndale as one singular community within Metro Detroit and are unfamiliar with the different neighborhoods within the city and what each has to offer. During the planning process, residents expressed unfamiliarity with park names, schools, and events going on essentially in their back yard. Promoting Ferndale's neighborhoods and their unique assets can further assist marketing the City to existing and potential residents and improve the connections residents have with one another and the amenities in their own neighborhood. Promotion topics can include events at the parks, school district achievements, streetscape improvements, and green infrastructure projects.

#### **H3.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Identify and keep records of "quality of life" elements at the neighborhood level [parks, schools, events, businesses, etc.].
- Market the "quality of life" elements at the neighborhood level (e.g., send flyers for a 'music in the park event' to residents within ¼-mile of the park).

## **GOAL 4:**

### **Pursue and encourage new housing development opportunities.**

Since the economic recession, Ferndale's population has begun to stabilize and is projected to grow slightly through 2040. Throughout the planning process, residents and stakeholders have been very passionate about the way they want Ferndale to grow, including the types of housing that should be encouraged and the importance of being an inclusive community, providing options for people of all incomes, ages, and races.

Approximately 80% of Ferndale's housing stock is more than 50 years old, and approximately 80% is single-family detached homes. Ferndale needs to diversify its housing choices to compete successfully with its neighboring communities and plan for changing demographics. The following recommendations support pursuing and encouraging new housing development opportunities.



### **H4.1:**

#### **Create a common vision and a communication plan for affordable housing.**

Throughout the planning process, residents and other stakeholders recognized the need to promote and provide permanent affordable housing as part of Ferndale's overall housing goals. Future transit on Woodward Avenue and key redevelopment sites along this corridor provide ideal conditions for developing this housing type in the future; however, affordable housing carries many interpretations, is often described in confusing terms, and can be a dividing topic.

First, the City should establish a common and clear vision around what "affordable housing" means and how Ferndale envisions affordable housing as part of its future so everyone has a similar understanding. Further complicating conversations is the use of a variety of terms – low-income housing, moderate-income housing, workforce housing, supportive housing, transitional housing – that are not always clear to the public or local government and can lead to confusion. Establishing this vision in clear and understandable terms can help set the stage for productive, transparent conversations about affordable housing now and in the future.

Next, Ferndale should promote this vision with an effective campaign geared to changing the face of affordable housing. One mechanism to engage the community productively and appropriately on this policy-driven and numbers-based topic is to humanize it. For example, creating a series of stories featuring interviews with people who live in Ferndale offers glimpses into other people's experiences and challenges with housing costs that might be different from their own. The people profiled could represent a diverse socio-economic demographic from the waiter/college student to the retired school teacher. An effective communication plan should reduce stereotypes, alleviate uncertainty, and promote a communicative and welcome environment for future projects as they come forward.

#### H4.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Create a common and clear vision about "affordable housing" in Ferndale.
- Create a communication plan for promoting the vision.

## H4.2: Identify potential sites for affordable housing and senior housing near transit and services.

Ferndale has limited existing options for affordable and senior housing in terms of both number of units available and the diversity of housing types offered. Most of the options that currently exist are located outside of Ferndale's most walkable areas nearest services and amenities. Since residents seeking affordable or senior housing may not be able to afford or operate a car, it is important that new developments are sited in areas that have good access to public transportation, services, and amenities.

One of the challenges to providing affordable housing options in the places they make the most sense – in walkable neighborhoods with access to services, amenities, and transit – will be the competition with affluent households who also want to live in these amenity-rich environments. As transportation infrastructure improves on Woodward and other major corridors, it is possible these projects could feed into affordability problems as rising rents occur around new transit stops, open spaces, and retail amenities; however, there are effective tools to tackle these issues if Ferndale makes affordable housing development a priority and puts the right tools into place.

### WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

"Affordable housing" means many things to many people. In general, it means housing that costs 30% or less of a household's income. The types and prices of "affordable" housing can therefore vary dramatically by income level and household size. In many cases a family can afford a home at full market value, but in other cases a subsidy is necessary to make a home affordable. The different types of affordable housing can include market-rate or subsidized units and can serve different income levels and populations. Types of affordable housing include:

- Permanent or long-term affordable housing
- Workforce housing
- Supportive housing
- Transitional housing

*Adapted from Michigan Planner (March/April 2016)*

### PRECEDENT: TOWN HALL APARTMENTS



Town Hall Apartments (Chicago, IL) is a mixed-income housing development exclusively for residents aged 55 or older. It is located in a walkable mixed-use neighborhood within steps of public transit and features building amenities such as a shared terrace facing the lively street, fitness room, computer lab, and bike parking.

*Image Source: [www.heartlandhousing.org](http://www.heartlandhousing.org)*

To ensure Ferndale is an inclusive community – open and accessible to a diversity of people – the City should strive to provide a number of affordable housing units, ideally within a mixed-income environment as these tend to perform better than segregated-income developments. The challenge is to balance requirements with incentives to facilitate the environment for developers to produce market-rate housing that includes affordable housing.

Using City assets is one way to address affordability needs other than market forces alone or through subsidies alone. The City should consider requiring a percentage of affordable units as part of City-issued development projects or land sale. Similarly, the City should explore mechanisms and partnerships with developers to create workforce housing to provide options for people who work in Ferndale to live in Ferndale, ensuring they are not forced to live outside the area due to high housing costs. Communities such as Ann Arbor and Traverse City have recently explored workforce housing strategies. One of the most effective tools, ‘inclusionary zoning’, is not currently permitted under State law; however, this is something that can change with advocacy. An inclusionary incentive is a tool that could potentially be utilized in the interim.

#### H4.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Identify potential sites for senior and affordable housing that would be served by transit, services, and amenities.
- Consider requirements and/or incentives to providing a percentage of affordable units as part of new development in selected target areas.
- Set target for adding affordable housing units and senior housing units by 2021, 2026.

## SENIOR POPULATION

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Michigan’s population is getting older at a faster rate than other states, and the 65-74 age group is the fastest growing cohort in the state.

PLACE	MEDIAN AGE (2000)	MEDIAN AGE (2014)	% CHANGE
Ferndale	33.5	35.0	4%
Pleasant Ridge	40.5	46.6	15%
Oak Park	34.6	36.8	6%
Hazel Park	33.0	36.1	9%
Huntington Woods	40.6	43.1	6%
Royal Oak	36.9	37.7	2%
Royal Oak Township	34.2	36.6	7%
Detroit	30.9	35.1	14%
Oakland County	36.7	40.7	11%
Wayne County	34.0	37.7	11%
Michigan	35.5	39.3	11%
United States	35.3	37.4	6%

Sources: 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates, City of Ferndale

## SENIOR HOUSING UNITS

**ELDERLY/DISABLED PUBLIC HOUSING:** 165<sup>1</sup>

**NURSING HOME:** 66

**ASSISTED LIVING:** 99<sup>2</sup>

**ACTIVE/INDEPENDENT ADULT COMMUNITIES:** 0

**CONTINUAL CARE RETIREMENT HOUSING:** 0

<sup>1</sup> The Ferndale Housing Commission (FHC) provides public housing with a selection preference for those who are elderly or disabled. The FHC’s housing properties include two high-rise apartment buildings and 43 scattered site family homes.

<sup>2</sup> Proposed St. James Living, expected 2017

### **H4.3:** **Pursue strategic partnerships to develop senior housing at different income levels.**

Demand for additional senior housing at different income levels is evident from the public input and range of current offerings in Ferndale. Furthermore, the senior population will continue to grow as the population ages into this cohort. Regardless of income, seniors generally have less ability or appetite for owning and driving a car; therefore, potential sites for new senior housing should be in areas within walking distance of services and amenities and along transit corridors. While the Ferndale Housing Authority has approximately 330 units of senior housing, these are concentrated to just five properties and limited to public housing, assisted living, and nursing home living types. Few are located in the City's most walkable areas, and housing options do not include those targeted to moderate-income or higher-income senior households or active, independent seniors.

To reverse this general lack of alternatives for seniors across all income levels, the City should actively pursue qualified developers with successful portfolios of senior housing development in walkable urban places. Another option to explore is partnerships with one or more of the area hospitals for assisted living or nursing home developments. These developments are also staff-intensive and can provide a good source of jobs.

#### **H4.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Establish partnerships with qualified developers for senior housing at different income levels.

#### **WHAT ARE "ADU'S"?**



Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are additional housing units that reside on the property of another house. ADUs take on multiple forms and names, including granny flats, alley flats, and carriage homes. ADUs offer a relatively low impact way to increase density, allow homeowners an opportunity to generate rental income, and the possibility for housing aging family members. The presence of alleys and permissive zoning are important to promoting the development of ADUs.

*Image Source: [www.smartgrowthamerica.org](http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org)*

### **H4.4:** **Create design guidelines for "small lot" infill housing; utilize the process as a test for form-based code.**

Ferndale's "small lots" generally have a frontage of 30 to 40 feet wide and are located in the "Urban Residential" land use category that are zoned R2 and R3. These lots are critical to maintaining compact development in Ferndale that yields a higher density and walkability than places where housing is spread out by larger lots and lot combinations.

Creating a set of design guidelines would serve as a resource for developers, property owners, and City personnel for directing desirable infill projects on Ferndale's smaller lots. The resource would also serve to counteract perceived obstacles posed by small lots by providing a number of viable options. Design guidelines should allow flexibility in the planning of desirable development given variations in siting, lot sizes, density, or setbacks; the presence of alleys; and/or non-conventional residential unit types. It should be the intent of the guidelines to be specific enough to guide development while being flexible so as not to preclude creative design solutions.



Maintaining small lots is part of the vision for a Ferndale that is compact and connected, and therefore more sustainable, and relies on policy changes proposed in the Land Use section (see L2.1). Given the success and lessons learned from creating a design toolkit and guidelines for small lots, the City should consider codifying the guidelines into a form-based code.

#### H4.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Create a design toolkit with design guidelines for “small lot” infill housing.
- Utilize the infill design guidelines and as a test for future form-based code.

#### PRECEDENT: CITY OF AUSTIN “SPECIAL USE INFILL OPTIONS & DESIGN TOOLS”

“Special Use Infill Options and Design Tools” adopted by the City of Austin includes a set of land use options for promoting a greater diversity of housing types and to improve compatibility between existing neighborhoods and new development. The design tools offer different types of infill and design solutions that could occur on small lots, with a focus on creating benefits such as accessibility to services and amenities by means other than the automobile and a diversity of housing for different ages, incomes, and lifestyles.



PROPOSED CHARACTER: SMALL-LOT RESIDENTIAL INFILL

*“...It seems that the only thing most developers seem interested in building here are larger buildings... Why not find developers that are interested in doing a lot of small in-fill projects?...”*

*“To me the allure of Ferndale is that you can own a house with a yard yet live in the “city” so I think we need more affordable and accessible houses...”*

*“I think one of the biggest barriers to growth and improvement are people’s unwillingness for change and growth within the city. Our city’s population is growing and demands change...”*

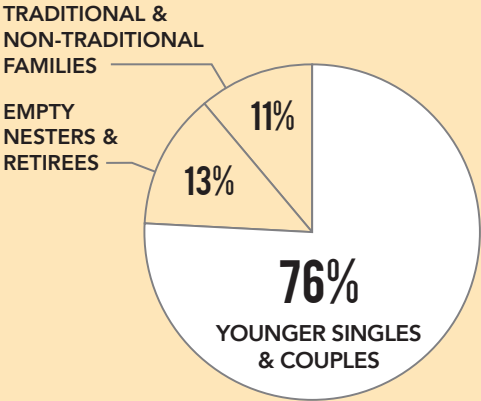
# HOUSING STUDY

A residential market study was conducted to determine the potential for new rental and for-sale dwelling units within the City of Ferndale’s Downtown and Industrial areas as part of the Master Plan process. These two areas were chosen due to their potential as two of the city’s major areas of change in the future.

By determining the **target households** (what types of people want to live here) and their **housing preferences**, the market study produced a detailed breakdown of the **target residential mix** for each sub-district.

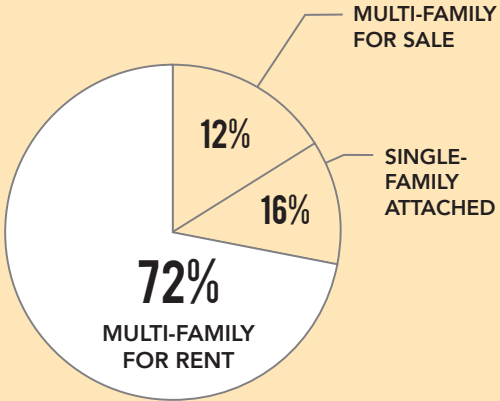


TARGET HOUSEHOLDS  
[WHO WANTS TO LIVE IN FERNDALE]



40% of those looking for new housing in Ferndale are households already living in Ferndale.

HOUSING PREFERENCES  
[OF THE TARGET HOUSEHOLDS]



Ferndale also has market demand for single-family detached homes; however, limited land supply and high property values make new detached homes impractical in most cases.

“I’d also love to see more construction of new housing that can accommodate families and stays consistent with our values of walkability and urban design.”

“[I’d like to see] affordable, downtown apartments and condos.”

“The Woodward corridor can support high-rise, that’s about it. None of the other roads can handle the traffic.”

TARGET RESIDENTIAL MIX

STUDY AREA	ANNUAL MARKET DEMAND	5-YEAR TOTAL MARKET DEMAND
Downtown Sub-District	104 Units	520 Units
Industrial Sub-District	83 Units	415 Units
TOTAL	187 Units	935 Units

Source (All Data on Page): Ferndale Market Studies, 2015 (Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Gibbs Planning Group)

THE FOLLOWING PAGES PROVIDE A MORE DETAILED BREAKDOWN FOR EACH SUB-DISTRICT →

## H4.5: Integrate more housing options Downtown.

The increasing interest in walkable urban places coupled with the expectation for future transit along Woodward Avenue has positioned Downtown Ferndale for its next stage of redevelopment. The City has long-identified the Downtown area for increased residential units; however, current offerings are still limited. A recent market study provides evidence of demand in Downtown Ferndale from a variety of ages and household types seeking the amenities of living Downtown: younger singles and couples, traditional and non-traditional families, and empty nesters and retirees. These households are specifically looking for multi-family rental, multi-family for-sale, and single-family attached housing types. Given the market potential and preferences for these housing types, Downtown could absorb over 100 new units per year, resulting in approximately 520 units over the next five years.

Accordingly, new housing development Downtown should be suitable for a variety of users over the long-term to avoid the exclusion of certain household types. The City should encourage building owners and developers to consider projects that are attractive to a wide range of occupants according to the market data available.

### H4.5 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Growth in multi-family and single-family attached housing units in the Downtown Sub-District as a percentage of total housing units.

*"More multiple-family housing downtown would help support the businesses and make it even more lively.*

*With our residential neighborhoods being basically built-out, that seems like the place to focus."*

*"Definitely more townhomes and apartments. A greater population density would only help put more people out and about in the city."*

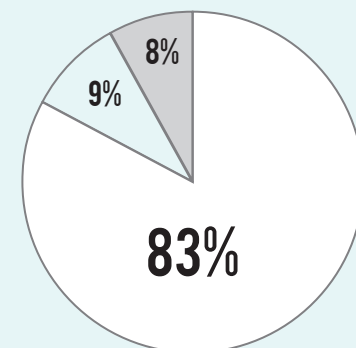
### TARGET RESIDENTIAL MIX

DOWNTOWN SUB-DISTRICT

HOUSING TYPE	ANNUAL MARKET DEMAND	5-YEAR TOTAL MARKET DEMAND
<b>Multi-Family for Rent</b> [Lofts, Apartments]	87 Units	435 Units
<b>Multi-Family for Sale</b> [Lofts, Condos]	9 Units	45 Units
<b>Single-Family Attached</b> [Townhouses, Rowhouses, Flexhouses, Duplexes]	8 Units	40 Units
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104 Units</b>	<b>520 Units</b>

### HOUSING DEMAND BY TYPE

DOWNTOWN SUB-DISTRICT



- MULTI-FAMILY FOR RENT
- MULTI-FAMILY FOR SALE
- SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED

## H4.6: Integrate compatible housing options within the Industrial Sub-District.

The recent market study shows demand for housing in the Industrial Sub-District. Focus group conversations with stakeholders in this area have expressed an interest in allowing the incremental addition of housing units so long as the industrial character is preserved and current uses can continue. New housing could come in the form of conversions of existing non-residential buildings to residential use (i.e., “loft”), which can be a good way to re-use obsolete buildings and allow for live-work opportunities. Allowing residential lofts as a ‘special land use’ within the M-1 Limited Industrial district with “loft review criteria” would provide an additional screening step to ensure the industrial character and function is not diminished by a proposed conversion to residential use. The integration of “lofts” in this district relies on revisions to the zoning ordinance recommended in the Land Use section (see L 2.4).

The market study also looked at corridors outside the Industrial Sub-District that are ripe for integrating more diverse housing types as new construction, including parcels along Hilton, the north side of Woodward Heights, and 10 Mile. Many of these areas are already zoned for mixed use, single-family attached, multi-family housing, and/or accessory dwelling units.

### H4.6 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

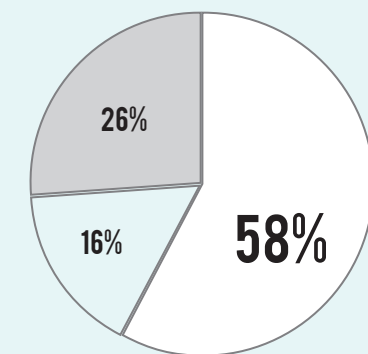
- Growth in multi-family and single-family attached housing units in the Industrial Sub-District as a percentage of total housing units.

*“It appears that we have a sufficient amount of yarded, single family homes. I don’t think we need a whole lot more. Nice townhomes or some more nice condos would be a nice touch, it seems. I think we want to keep Ferndale unique, as it is, and a welcoming and supportive community. I talked with people who have expressed an interest in a condo in Ferndale -- but it’s slim pickings...”*

### TARGET RESIDENTIAL MIX INDUSTRIAL SUB-DISTRICT

HOUSING TYPE	ANNUAL MARKET DEMAND	5-YEAR TOTAL MARKET DEMAND
<b>Multi-Family for Rent</b> [Lofts, Apartments]	48 Units	240 Units
<b>Multi-Family for Sale</b> [Lofts, Condos]	13 Units	65 Units
<b>Single-Family Attached</b> [Townhouses, Rowhouses, Flexhouses, Duplexes]	22 Units	110 Units
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83 Units</b>	<b>415 Units</b>

### HOUSING DEMAND BY TYPE INDUSTRIAL SUB-DISTRICT



- MULTI-FAMILY FOR RENT
- MULTI-FAMILY FOR SALE
- SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED



# ECONOMIC VITALITY

## SMALL BUSINESSES, ANCHORS, TOURISM/EVENTS, DOWNTOWN, INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

When outsiders think of Ferndale, most people think of its downtown. Downtown is the city's largest commercial district and activity node, with lively, pedestrian-friendly streets and an eclectic mix of stores and entertainment options. Downtown is an important hub for employment and commerce and a symbol of Ferndale, but it is not the only area with economic potential or character in the city. Ferndale's industrial areas play a noticeable role in the city's creative, innovative, and hands-on part of the economy and culture. Before the prevalence of the automobile and strict land use zoning practices, neighborhoods were rich with corner stores, post offices, barber shops, and other services and amenities that met the daily needs of residents within a comfortable walking distance. Evidence of this exists today in Ferndale in pockets of Hilton, Livernois, and West Marshall streets and are valuable assets to build on as the preference for walkable communities with stores, services, parks, and other amenities continue to increase both locally and nationally. By definition, walkable neighborhoods have a mix of housing and non-residential uses in settings where residents do not need a car to meet all of their daily needs. Fortunately, Ferndale has the foundation in place that it can respond to these changing preferences and meet this demand by building on and strengthening its existing commercial assets.

Ferndale has demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs and should continue that commitment by ensuring tools such as zoning, incentives, and marketing effectively promote Ferndale's various economic districts as focal points for public, private, and philanthropic investment. Successful districts efficiently and effectively serve the needs of local businesses and customers while enabling improvements to the public realm. Ferndale's neighborhood commercial streets, Downtown, the Industrial Sub-District, and Eight Mile each have a unique and critical role in the city's diverse economy. With proactive and coordinated investment strategies, Ferndale can remain a city of truly walkable neighborhoods and unmistakable vitality. This chapter is not about new economic growth, per se; rather, it is about economic vitality – ensuring Ferndale's economy is a strong and dynamic collection of assets that are sustainable and resilient.

*"[We need] a more measured, sensible, smart way of growing slowly for the long range sustainability. Instead we seem to lurch from one big new issue to the next crisis."*

# GOALS

The recommendations comprising the ECONOMIC VITALITY section of the Master Plan are based on data and public input collected during the planning process. Recommendations are organized into six goal areas. Together, the goals and their related actions support Ferndale's vision for the future of our City.

## **GOAL 1:**

Promote a balanced, mixed-use downtown.

## **GOAL 2:**

Foster a modern Industrial Sub-District that supports job growth and a small-scale mix of new commercial uses.

## **GOAL 3:**

Create strong and distinct neighborhood commercial nodes.

## **GOAL 4:**

Support entrepreneurial activity and help small businesses thrive.

## **GOAL 5:**

Create more opportunities for residents to work in Ferndale.

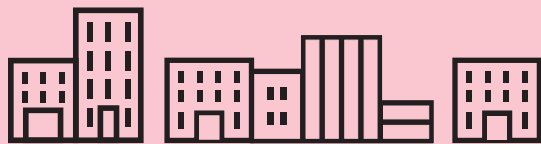
## **GOAL 6:**

Promote local arts.

# GOAL 1:

## Promote a balanced, mixed-use Downtown.

Downtown Ferndale has become a local and regional destination, characterized by a diversity of culture, creativity, and small businesses through investment over the last decade. It is important to ensure the district continues to be welcoming to both residents and visitors alike and has a balanced mix of uses that supports that goal. Using recent market study data to guide the right mix of new residential, retail, and office development, the City should utilize strategies to support existing businesses and recruit new businesses that will positively contribute to the vision for Downtown. The following economic vitality recommendations related to Downtown support Goal 1.



*"There's so many great places to go across the metro, but I can't make an argument for skipping these places right here in Ferndale!"*

### **E1.1:** **Create a retail attraction strategy to sustain a healthy and diverse local business community.**

A recent market study found Downtown can presently support up to 118,500 square feet of new retail and restaurant development given the existing and projected future consumer base of nearby residents, employees, and visitors. It is well-known, however, that not all retail is the same and the right mix is critical. For example, a beauty salon and a bar generally have different hours of operation, parking needs, and generate different levels of activity. During the planning process, participants voiced their desire for Downtown retailers to extend their operating hours and their feeling that Downtown has become over-burdened by the noise and parking congestion generated by restaurants and bars.

The City should continually strive to find the right balance of retailers and restaurants, new and old, to sustain a healthy and diverse local business community. A business recruitment strategy that actively seeks out prospective retailers and works with them to find the right location to fit their business needs can help market Downtown in ways that overcome perceived obstacles to opening shop in Ferndale. A recruitment strategy is also a proactive way to select retailers that will positively contribute to the desired character, such as longer operating

hours and neighborhood-serving goods and services. Business recruitment is an ongoing effort that may be done by the City in-house with training or by hiring a third party. The task requires creating a targeted list of potential retailers the City would like to have in the district, gathering and maintaining an inventory of available space and price per square foot, and using this information to serve as a matchmaker between prospective retailers and property owners.

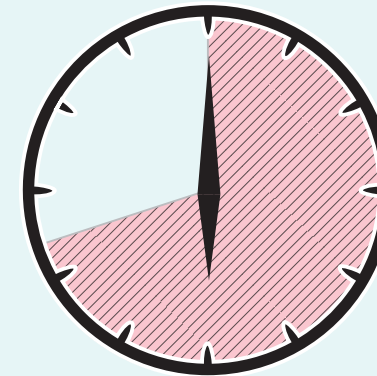
The City should explore possible mechanisms for funding the activities and services needed to achieve this goal. One option could be to create a Business Improvement District (BID) or a Principal Shopping District (PSD). While the City currently uses tax increment financing (TIF) to fund certain services in the Downtown, the BID/PSD would serve a different role in that it would be used specifically for business recruitment and marketing funding. Establishing a BID/PSD for Downtown could provide the district with the opportunity to finance targeted business recruitment and retention along with more robust marketing activities that are not currently funded or could not be funded otherwise.

#### **E1.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create an active business recruitment strategy (in-house or third party).
- Establish a funding mechanism specifically for business recruitment, marketing, and promotion.

DOWNTOWN FERNDALE SUPPORTABLE RETAIL			
RETAIL CATEGORY	2015 ESTIMATED SUPPORTABLE SF	2015 ESTIMATED RETAIL SALES	NO. OF STORES
RETAILERS			
Apparel & Shoe Stores	14,000 SF	\$4,055,300	7-10
Auto Parts Stores	1,500 SF	\$361,900	1
Book & Music Stores	600 SF	\$125,400	<1
Department Store Merchandise	10,500 SF	\$3,478,200	4-5
Electronics & Appliance Stores	4,400 SF	\$1,550,500	2-3
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	3,400 SF	\$936,400	1
General Merchandise Stores	33,600 SF	\$10,742,400	10-12
Grocery Stores	5,100 SF	\$1,923,800	1
Hardware & Garden Supply Stores	6,400 SF	\$1,580,300	2-3
Jewelry Stores	1,700 SF	\$635,300	1-2
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4,500 SF	\$1,223,800	2-3
Office Supplies & Gift Stores	3,000 SF	\$852,200	2-3
Pharmacy	7,800 SF	\$2,548,000	1-2
Sporting Goods & Hobby Stores	3,700 SF	\$1,012,000	1-2
RETAILER TOTALS	100,200 SF	\$31,025,500	35-50

Table continues on following page...



**70%**  
OF ALL  
CONSUMER  
RETAIL SPENDING\*  
TAKES PLACE  
AFTER 6 PM

\*Brick and mortar stores

Source: Roger Brooks International

*"Downtown Ferndale needs more retail and retail with evening hours."*

*"I feel that Ferndale could definitely use some more retail. Specifically retail that is open outside of the normal 9-5pm workday hours."*

*"I think it would be great to create some retail/restaurant infrastructure around parents who want to go out with their kids – in California, there are neighborhood pubs that have activities and zones for children's play, while also serve food and beer for grown ups. Ferndale has a great opportunity to grow on our "diverse small town charm", and offer something for everyone!"*



DOWNTOWN FERNDAL E SUPPORTABLE RETAIL			
RETAIL CATEGORY	2015 ESTIMATED SUPPORTABLE SF	2015 ESTIMATED RETAIL SALES	NO. OF STORES
RESTAURANTS			
Bars, Breweries & Pubs	4,000 SF	\$1,572,100	1-2
Full-Service Restaurants	8,200 SF	\$3,703,500	2-3
Limited-Service Eating Places	4,000 SF	\$1,695,800	1-3
Special Food Services	2,100 SF	\$776,300	1-2
RESTAURANT TOTALS	18,300 SF	\$7,747,700	5-10
RETAILER & RESTAURANT TOTALS	118,500 SF	\$38,773,200	40-60

Source: Gibbs Planning Group



DOWNTOWN FERNDAL E CAN SUPPORT

**118,500 SF**

OF NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT\*

\*New stores and/or absorbed by existing businesses

Source: Gibbs Planning Group

*"Our neighborhoods streets have become cut-thro ughs for Oakland County's party town."*

*"I think kids growing up with the opportunity available in downtown Ferndale, from Treat Dreams to Rustbelt, to witness what a strong core of small businesses means for those young and old, is really special."*

*"[When I bring people to Downtown Ferndale...] We always make sure to walk down 9 Mile through the core of the downtown regardless of where we're going (frequently Treat Dreams, Anita's, Local, or Rust Belt). Visitors always seem impressed and come away with not only a better impression of Ferndale, but of Metro Detroit as a whole."*

*"[There is a] lack of barrier free (wheelchair or otherwise handicap accessible) housing, office space, and special event spaces... Shopping and dining is also difficult for people with limited mobility (for example, no good places for pick up and drop off at busy times on Nine Mile and Woodward businesses)."*



# GOAL 2:

## Foster a modern Industrial Sub-District that supports job growth and a small-scale mix of new commercial uses.

The preservation of industrial land uses was identified as an important goal for Ferndale's future, but there are ways industrial areas can be enhanced to foster job growth and support businesses. A focus group with stakeholders in the Industrial Sub-District revealed significant interest in welcoming a small-scale mix of new commercial uses to complement and enhance the character and business activity in the area, such as retail storefronts associated with product manufacturers and café or dining establishments for employees to take clients. A recent market analysis supports the addition of neighborhood-serving retail space in the sub-district, particularly along Hilton that has the visibility, traffic, and non-motorized infrastructure to support walkable clusters of retail and expand the consumer base. The market analysis also found the sub-district can support additional office space that would expand the employee base in the area.

Some industrial land and buildings are no longer suitable for modern industrial use due to several factors including site or building obsolescence and spatial needs for emerging industries. Ferndale should welcome the opportunity for new uses of existing infrastructure without compromising the viability of existing and new industrial uses. Adding small-scale, complementary commercial uses to the sub-district provides additional opportunities for light industrial business to create value added products, increase marketing potential, and foster a more vibrant, mixed-use district. The following economic vitality recommendations related to the Industrial Sub-District support Goal 2.



*"Street front retail & lunch places. Second level office or residential. Interior streets and blocks intensified with manufacturing to maximize tax inputs to the City. No chemicals or burning."*

*"I don't know about that many houses in that area. Especially since they would most likely be built by todays standard on size? I think a smaller mix of both residential and office would be better."*

### INDUSTRIAL SUB-DISTRICT POTENTIAL

Source: Gibbs Planning Group

#### SUPPORTABLE RETAIL (SF) TODAY



The Industrial Sub-District can presently support an additional 20,000 to 30,000 SF of neighborhood-serving retail, particularly along Hilton.

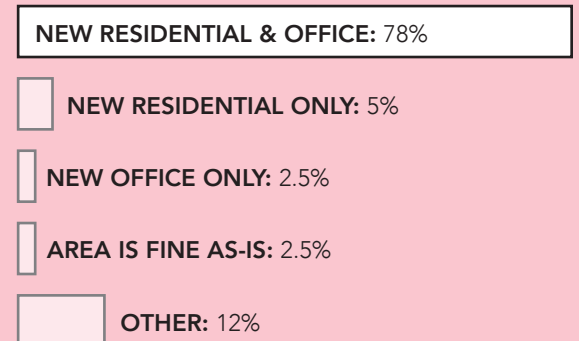
#### SUPPORTABLE OFFICE DEVELOPMENT (SF)



The Industrial Sub-District can support an additional 13,000 SF of office development over the next 5 years and is projected to grow over the next 15 years, totaling an additional 40,300 SF of new office space in the district.

### HOW DO YOU ENVISION THE FUTURE OF THE WOODWARD HEIGHTS/HILTON ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA?

FERNDALE-EXCHANGE



## **E2.1: Promote property and business owner organization in the Industrial Sub-District.**

As one of Ferndale's major areas of change, the Industrial Sub-District should establish a stakeholder group to guide development and advocate for the vision for the district. Long-term success of the area will be achieved with the cooperation and collaboration of both the public and private sectors. A committed and representative stakeholder group with a common vision for the area is critical to coordinating public planning, infrastructure, and financing tools with their own development expertise, entrepreneurial savvy, and private capital. During the planning process, a focus group with stakeholders in the district expressed their interest in ongoing engagement with one another and the City. The City should encourage the continued development of such stakeholder organizations to ensure it has visionary and knowledgeable partners now and in the future.

While working with the City is an important component of an organized stakeholder group, an organization also provides a platform for collaboration among property and business owners themselves. Networking events hosted by and for business owners provide a place and

time to exchange ideas, know-how, and potentially benefit from local business-to-business products and services offered by one another. Best practices could also be formalized by creating a guide for expanding businesses and renovating properties, including local examples and what is allowed by zoning.

### **E2.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Establish an Industrial Sub-District stakeholder group or committee..

### **PRECEDENT: NEXT STEP STUDIOS & GALLERY**



Next Step Studio & Gallery, located in Ferndale, MI, is owned and operated by Ceramicist Kaiser Suidan. Since its inception, the gallery's mission has been to seek out and represent young and upcoming talent that Kaiser felt deserved a wider audience.

*Image Source: nextstepstudio.com*

## **E2.2: Encourage small- to medium-scale retail storefronts associated with on-site production and manufacturing.**

During the planning process, business owners in the Industrial Sub-District expressed interest in having a small-scale mix of amenities and services nearby and opening their own storefronts to sell and showcase their products and services. Currently, the zoning ordinance allows business owners to establish accessory retail and business services associated with on-site production facilities and other principal uses; however, the regulation could be promoted to encourage its use and potentially expanded to include more activities that further neighborhood goals for livability and sustainability. Along with currently permitted ancillary retail, the City should consider allowing restaurants that are ancillary to on-site principal uses and non-ancillary retail and restaurant in a limited and conditional capacity. The overarching goal is to guide development that is sensitive to the context of the sub-district, provide value-added opportunities for business owners and entrepreneurs, and provide opportunities to repurpose older buildings.

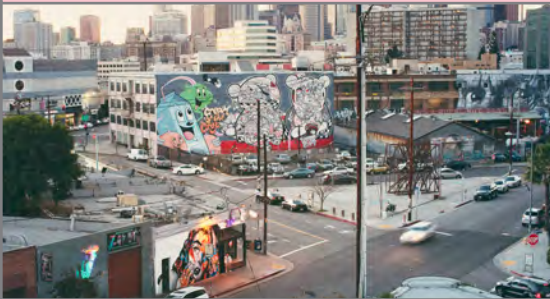
## E2.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Promote accessory retail associated with production to existing business owners.
- Consider restaurant/bar as a permitted ancillary use to on-site principal use.
- Consider non-ancillary retail and restaurant/bar as permitted but limited (e.g., limited by square footage) uses.

*"More mixed use, but I think the light industrial is a great asset to Ferndale and should be kept. The railroad crossing at Woodward Heights should be improved."*

*"I believe that Hilton Rd and some of the more industrial areas provide great opportunity for new businesses."*

### PRECEDENT: ARTS DISTRICT ORDINANCE



The LA Arts District Ordinance limits individual, non-ancillary restaurants and retail establishments to a maximum of 8,000 SF and 10,000 SF, respectively, to maintain the employment, artistic, and productive functions of the neighborhood while allowing opportunities for the creation of new businesses.

Image Source: [www.timeout.com](http://www.timeout.com)

### PRECEDENT: WOODWARD THROWBACKS



Woodward Throwbacks (Detroit, MI) is a reclaimed wood and product manufacturing company that recently opened a storefront in part of their workshop and storage building. The company previously sold their products online, in other stores and boutiques, and at various marketplace events in the region. The storefront gives the company a brick-and-mortar local presence and facilitated the renovation of a formerly vacant building.

Image Source: [woodwardthrowbacks.com](http://woodwardthrowbacks.com)





# GOAL 3:

## Create strong and distinct neighborhood commercial nodes.

Ferndale was developed with a diverse and distributed collection of commercial nodes. Concentrations of small businesses formed along neighborhood commercial streets including Hilton, South Livernois, and West Marshall. Downtown was built as a hub for civic facilities, business, and entertainment. Industrial uses were developed alongside the City's infrastructure networks. Fortunately, this diverse and distributed collection remains intact, some areas thriving, some reemerging, and some ripe for reinvestment. Some areas currently lack a distinct niche, marketing identity, or are restricted by a lower level of development readiness that could help spur additional private investment. The strategy for these districts should include the promotion of neighborhood-serving businesses accompanied by residential density, improvement and upgrade of infrastructure that enhances the public realm, and promotion of a vision or identity that helps attract additional businesses. The City should test and develop initiatives designed to maximize private investment.

The following economic vitality recommendations related to strong and distinct neighborhood commercial nodes support Goal 3.



### **E3.1:** **Allow and encourage neighborhood commercial development to give residents retail amenities in their neighborhoods, such as neighborhood food markets and cafes.**

Not all designated mixed-use corridors need to have commercial components in every building; rather, the intent is to have an appropriate scale of neighborhood-serving amenities and services within walking distance of a residential population that can support them. Neighborhood cafes and food markets are especially successful in neighborhood settings because they provide daily goods and services to a frequently returning customer base.

To encourage neighborhood commercial development, the City should review zoning codes to ensure neighborhood commercial is permitted in areas where it is desired; ensure the costs for small businesses to buy, rent, or renovate a building are not too high; and ensure local regulations for starting new businesses are not too complex. Facilitating walkability in targeted commercial districts is also another way that the City can encourage neighborhood commercial development. Slowing traffic, widening sidewalks, promoting outdoor seating and dining, and planting street trees/planters can all improve the pedestrian landscape and help small businesses thrive.

#### **E3.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Review and adjust zoning codes, if necessary, to ensure neighborhood commercial is permitted and not cost-prohibitive.
- Review and simplify local regulations, if necessary, for starting new businesses.
- Explore opportunities to improve walkability in neighborhood commercial districts.
- Review and adjust parking requirements, if necessary, to ensure neighborhood-serving businesses are not overburdened by parking requirements.

### STUDY: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WALKABILITY AND ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE



Walkable urban places command the highest rents and for-sale home values. Compared to drivable neighborhoods, average walkable neighborhood rents and for-sale prices are higher by the following percentages:

OFFICE RENT/S.F.....	+ 4%
RETAIL RENT/S.F.....	+ 15%
RESIDENTIAL RENT/S.F.....	+ 28%
FOR-SALE HOME VALUE/S.F.....	+ 13-15%

Data Source: "The WalkUP Wake-Up Call: Michigan Metros", Leinberger & Lynch (2015) / Image Source: HAA

*"It is already taking shape, but there seems to be a great opportunity on Livernois between 8 Mile and Marshall to add retail and other businesses. It will help connect Ferndale to the growing Avenue of Fashion on Livernois, south of 8 Mile."*

## E3.2: Cultivate distinct retail clusters in different neighborhoods.

Distinct retail clusters have an authentic community character grown from the ground up, exuding a richness of place and identity through a communication of memorable physical qualities and activity. Some elements that can distinguish one place from another include local art and history, older buildings, visible outdoor activity (seating, dining), and a mix of complementary businesses that attract a diverse group of people. Promoting Ferndale's authentic character will create a prized treasure for the local community and will communicate a recognizable niche or brand that can help attract additional businesses. Ferndale's neighborhood retail clusters include:

- Downtown
- Hilton
- South Livernois
- West Marshall
- Eight Mile Road

Each of Ferndale's retail clusters should build their existing assets and unique qualities and hold true to those principles over time. A valuable tool for reinforcing character may be to create a

character profile and action plan for each cluster, setting priorities for actions and investments that will leverage existing assets. Plans should rely on data and observation collection and an active dialogue with existing businesses and neighborhood residents.

### E3.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Explore and promote existing assets and unique qualities of each retail cluster.

## E3.3: Update signage and storefront design standards and codes to meet or exceed generally accepted industry standards; establish a Storefront Design Committee to approve proposed storefronts and signage.

Ferndale's diverse collection of commercial districts is in large part defined by the character and quality of their individual storefronts. Signage, windows, lighting, awnings, and relationship to the sidewalk and street provide people with first impressions of the businesses that are associated with them and can serve as

an invitation to shoppers. Well-designed storefronts can create a high-quality shopping environment that invites people to experience it over and over.

To enhance Ferndale's commercial storefronts, the City should update signage and storefront design standards and codes to meet or exceed generally accepted industry standards and establish a Storefront Design Committee to help facilitate the updated regulations. The committee would be responsible for educating the community about good storefront design, assisting small businesses in code compliance and potential storefront improvement grants, and approving proposed storefronts and signage. The committee would work closely with other committees and City departments such as the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), Economic Development Department, and Communications Department in developing and promoting any incentive and education programs. This committee would have the benefit of serving districts throughout the city, but may work more closely or defer to established DDA processes within the Downtown area.

### **E3.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Update signage and storefront design standards and codes.
- Establish a Storefront Design Committee.

### **E3.4:**

### **Establish a storefront and signage improvement matching grant fund; sunset existing non-conforming signage by 2025.**

An effective way to strengthen conditions in targeted commercial areas is by establishing a storefront improvement matching grant program. This program combines the efforts of the public and private sectors by providing an incentive to encourage private investment in updating storefronts with the commitment from the local government or other local sponsor to match the private contribution. A funding program also provides an equitable opportunity for non-conforming signage to come into compliance within a reasonable time so that the City can sunset non-conforming signage by 2025.

### **E3.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Establish a storefront improvement matching grant fund and program.
- Sunset existing non-conforming signage by 2025.



# GOAL 4:

## Support entrepreneurial activity and help small businesses thrive.

Building on the local business culture, Ferndale has potential to be one of the region's most desirable entrepreneurial communities. New businesses and creative enterprises can mix with existing industrial uses to further attract regional, national, and perhaps global talent. New housing and office space and continued improvements to neighborhood commercial nodes will provide a walkable environment that entrepreneurs and small businesses will want to locate. Small business attraction will come through the City's ability to offer low-cost access to shared services and resources. The following economic vitality recommendations related to entrepreneurial activity and small businesses support Goal 4.



### **E4.1:** Support the development of entrepreneurship networks and assistance to startup firms.

While it is important to help people start businesses, helping businesses grow is equally important to strengthening the local economy. Similarly, entrepreneurship requires experimentation and innovation but sharing information and experiences is critical to replicating successful models. Many opportunities in local entrepreneurship do not require a lot of start-up capital but rely heavily on access to a broad customer base and local resources.

The City should work with the private sector to ensure entrepreneurs have the resources, infrastructure, and information they need to take their business to the next level. Small business days, small business guides, and social programs/events are ways the City can help entrepreneurs network and grow the small business community in Ferndale. Access to small business loans and/or grants and business development classes are ways that community development organizations, financial institutions, educational institutions, and other organizations can be involved in encouraging successful business growth. Whether through public or private assistance, the City can help coordinate

and advertise these initiatives or facilitate the development of a small business association to take this on.

#### **E4.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create a small business assistance program.

### **E4.2:** Create alternative pathways to normal procurement practices.

While Ferndale residents and others in the region have made a concerted effort to "buy local" in recent years, larger institutions and governmental entities have a tougher time being more nimble and making changes to entrenched standards. The City can help break down these barriers by identifying opportunities for procurement from local service providers and manufacturers. By leveraging existing local demand, Ferndale can be a leader in connecting local businesses with local and regional supply chains, maximizing the economic impact on Ferndale and the region. Furthermore, the City can be a leader in innovative procurement by reviewing its own procurement processes and exploring more open-minded solutions that draws on local businesses.



#### E4.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Identify opportunities Ferndale can facilitate local procurement for larger institutions and companies.
- Identify opportunities the City can innovate its own procurement paths.

#### PRECEDENT: "OUTBOX"



Outbox is a brightly colored workspace in downtown Silver Spring, MD designed to seat 20 people and equipped with wi-fi and outlets. Temporarily located in an urban plaza, the workspace offers passersby an alternative to the typical office or work-from-home desk in the warm months. The pop-up structure was designed by a group of local university students.

Image Source: Clark W. Day, [www.Citylab.com](http://www.Citylab.com)

*"As someone that works from home in Ferndale, I indirectly do live and work in Ferndale. One idea from the perspective of someone with a flexible work arrangement would be co-working space so that I can change my location and work around other people."*

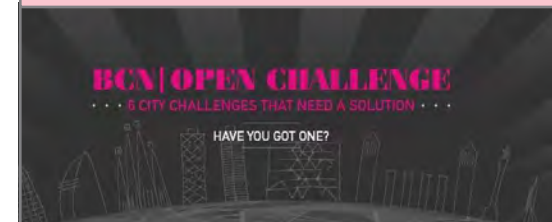
#### E4.3: Promote opportunities for pop-ups and temporary retailers.

Ferndale already offers a number of opportunities for entrepreneurs, including sidewalk vendor permits, Rust Belt Market, and the DDA's efforts to activate vacant storefronts. The City should continue these initiatives and look for new ways to match unused space with good ideas to promote entrepreneurship and answer community needs. New ways to utilize the pop-up model may include co-working spaces, outdoor workspaces, galleries, food carts, and parklets.

#### E4.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Create a list of community needs and underutilized spaces for potential pop-up opportunities.

#### PRECEDENT: BARCELONA OPEN CHALLENGE



BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL  
WANTS TO HIRE YOU AND ENABLE YOU TO

**ckow**

Barcelona invites you to tackle you the following **6** challenges



Minimizing bicycle theft in the city

Barcelona launched an innovative procurement initiative to help the City procure solutions to community design and quality-of-life challenges such as monitoring pedestrian activity and reducing bicycle thefts. The initiative issues a "call for solutions" to a particular problem to which vendors respond with creative ideas and inventive solutions for accomplishing the goal. The process opens the work to a wider range of companies and individuals, sparking entrepreneurial energy, and generates a pool of ideas that may not have been thought of.

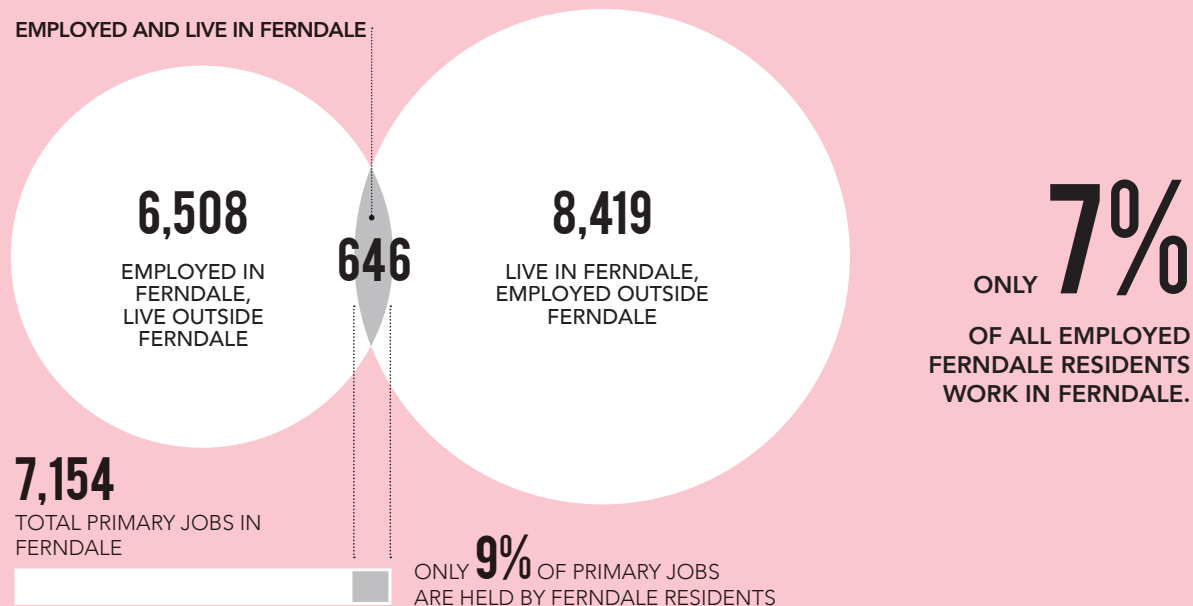
Image Source: [www.bcnopenchallenge.org](http://www.bcnopenchallenge.org)

# GOAL 5:

## Create more opportunities for residents to work in Ferndale.

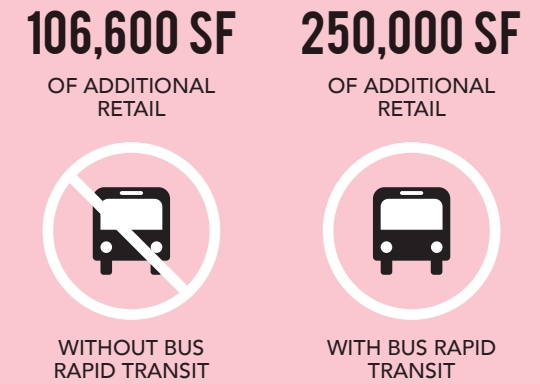
Creating more opportunities for residents to work in Ferndale aligns with goals for an equitable and sustainable city. While many residents are employed by major healthcare and educational institutions anchored in places outside the city, there are other sectors of the economy that Ferndale can provide and grow within its boundaries, particularly local entrepreneurship and web-based industries. Projected demand for office space and employment growth in these economic sectors, especially in a city with advantageous proximity to Detroit and the Woodward Corridor, support the attraction of new employment opportunities. Providing opportunities for those who live in Ferndale to also work in Ferndale, will offer a higher quality of life to residents and increase local spending, daytime activity, and resident attraction that contribute to a more vibrant Ferndale. The following economic vitality recommendations related to creating opportunities for residents to work in Ferndale support Goal 5.

### INFLOW-OUTFLOW OF PRIMARY JOBS



Source: 2013 LEHD On The Map

IN THE NEXT 15 YEARS, DOWNTOWN FERNDALE CAN SUPPORT:



IN THE NEXT 15 YEARS, OFFICE EMPLOYMENT IN FERNDALE IS PROJECTED TO REPRESENT AN INCREASING MARKET SHARE OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT:



Source: Ferndale Office Market Study, 2015, Gibbs Planning Group

*"I've worked in Ferndale for nearly 8 years now. We've owned our home here for almost 6. Being a mile away from work and downtown makes it easy to meet your community and feel like part of something."*

*"[Living and working in Ferndale] is a highly appealing ideal, but finding a position with pay that's high enough, a home with rent/mortgage that's low enough, and a job that is fulfilling and challenging enough is exceedingly rare."*

## **E5.1: Increase the number of primary jobs in Ferndale; pursue opportunities to attract one or more signature office tenants.**

A recent employment forecast for Ferndale, produced by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), estimates annual employment growth between 1.2% and 1.8% over the next 15 years. For the entire 15 year period, the City will add approximately 2,400 new jobs in labor categories with the greatest rate of annual growth, with office employment representing an increasing market share of total employment. Although much of the employment growth comes from the expansion of local business, spillover from the redevelopment of the Woodward Corridor will make significant contributions. As revitalization along Woodward Avenue becomes constrained by space, market economics, access to transit, and climbing housing rates, Metro Detroit's inner-ring communities, such as Ferndale, will become more attractive because of competitive commercial rents, residential housing prices, and larger contiguous development opportunities for new reuse conversion projects.

These projections can be used to understand future job growth and to explore proactive, equitable, and sustainable ways to support that growth. Ferndale's ongoing investment in infrastructure, building rehabilitation, and City services will attract investors, new businesses, and employees, but the City should continue to monitor these initiatives to ensure they are aligned with employer and worker needs and preferences.

Based on employment growth and site obsolescence, demand for additional office space in the two study areas – Downtown and the Industrial Sub-District – can support an additional 106,600 SF and 40,3000 SF, respectively, over the next 15 years. This office space will primary serve the class B office space needs of existing tenants' organic job growth and relocation from surrounding communities. Should bus rapid transit (BRT) be realized with a stop designated for Downtown Ferndale, it is plausible that the study area could attract two to three signature office tenants, and the overall office demand could increase by 250,000 SF by 2030. Similarly, due to favorable location and community amenities, it is possible that without BRT, Downtown Ferndale could attract a regional or national satellite company to open in the study area and significantly outperform the market demand.

### **E5.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Increase the number of primary jobs in Ferndale, setting goals for every 5 years based on the market study and regional forecasts.
- Attract one or more signature office tenants to Downtown Ferndale.

*"For white-collar professionals, Ferndale does not have a sufficient number and scope of employers to make [living and working in Ferndale] a possibility for most. I have a few neighbors who work and live in Ferndale, and I envy them, but as housing prices rise it will be more difficult for many residents to both live and work in the community. We have many wonderful entrepreneurs and local business owners, but not everyone can be (or wants to be) an entrepreneur or business owner."*

*"Shorter commute is a wonderful thing."*

*"I live and work here. I had to create my own job."*



## E5.2:

**Increase the number of people who are both employed and live in Ferndale; benchmark progress with an agreed target based on the vision and market studies.**

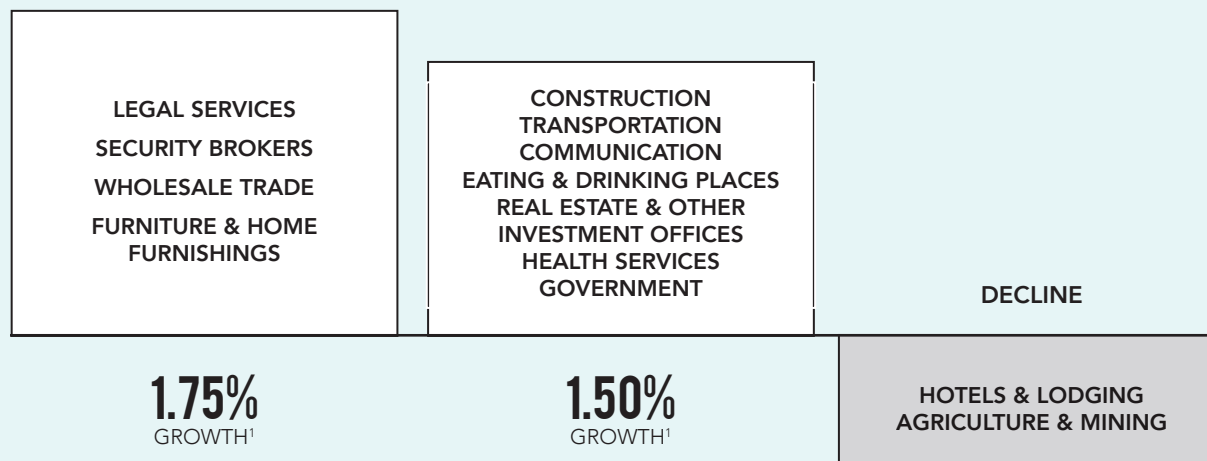
While increasing the number of jobs in the City is important, a concerted effort to link jobs to residents is important to improving Ferndale's overall economic and social health. In Ferndale, only 9% of Ferndale jobs are held by Ferndalians. Proximity to employment can influence a range of economic and social outcomes, from local fiscal health to the employment prospects of residents, particularly low-income households and households with lesser access to transportation. This can be addressed in part by expanding the economic base – increasing the number and variety of jobs – but should be accompanied by developing specific mechanisms for offering jobs to residents. Working with local employers to target specific positions and documenting education and training requirements are some ways to increase awareness of potential job opportunities within the community.

### E5.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Increase the number of people who are both employed and live in Ferndale.

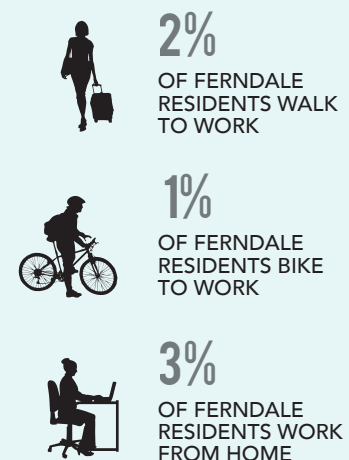
*"I would absolutely LOVE to work in Ferndale. The less time I spend in my car the better for me, the environment, the roads, my dog, my bank account and my free time. I don't have a sense of the work opportunities in Ferndale right now, nor would I be able to name more than a couple non-food industry employers. Maybe an upcoming post could be about what businesses and industries (non-retail or food) are in the City?"*

### PROJECTED ANNUAL GROWTH BY LABOR CATEGORIES



<sup>1</sup>Sources of growth within study areas are through expansion of local businesses and spillover from the redevelopment of the Woodward corridor.

### COMMUTING TO WORK



Source: 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates



# GOAL 6:

## Promote local arts.

Entrepreneurship and artistic expression have long been celebrated components of Ferndale's identity. Obsolete buildings and underutilized open space provide the opportunity for repurposing space to imagine, invest, and create new forms of industry and art. Studios, galleries, music venues, research labs, and other collaborative flex spaces provide unique environments for exploring, testing, sharing, and expanding ideas. Fostering these environments for research, small-scale production, and artisanal retail stimulate economic activity and entrepreneurship and provide opportunities to offer job and skills training. Furthermore, creative environments stimulate more active streets and public spaces by generating resources to improve parts of the city, such as adaptive building re-use, innovative open spaces, 'tactical urbanism', green technologies, and green infrastructure. The following economic vitality goals related to promoting local arts support Goal 6.



### E6.1: Identify pilot projects for placemaking in targeted areas.

While this plan proposes larger place-based and regulatory reform strategies for growing commercial nodes and improving open spaces, a placemaking strategy that utilizes local arts and culture assets can provide a creative and innovative complement to these efforts. Placemaking is a community-based, hands-on process for shaping the physical environment and can be effectively done using simple, short-term, low-cost interventions to bring energy and amenities to a space. Examples include movable chairs, public art, music, and road-diet tactics – projects that generate immediate interest and encourage community buy-in by demonstrating the effectiveness of a new idea.

The City should work with the Arts and Cultural Commission and local businesses to capitalize on local art assets to identify pilot projects for placemaking in targeted commercial nodes and underutilized public spaces. In commercial nodes, placemaking can be used to improve the pedestrian-oriented environment including sidewalks, streets, lighting, signage, and vacant storefronts.

Engaging local arts for these activities not only improves the image and sense of place but contributes to the overall economic health by increasing visibility of existing businesses, attracting new businesses, and increasing local spending. Placemaking can also be used to activate underutilized open space in Ferndale parks to increase local visitorship and further foster a community's sense of pride and ownership in their parks.

#### E6.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Identify locations for placemaking.
- Identify and promote arts and event spaces and landscapes.

#### TACTICAL URBANISM



"Tactical urbanism" is a term to describe small-scale, low cost efforts to initiate action toward long-term change. This approach allows local stakeholders to test new ideas before making substantial political and financial commitments. *Image Source: HAA*

### PRECEDENT: TRAFFIC CALMING THROUGH PLACEMAKING



'Tactical urbanism' can be an effective placemaking tool for transforming a road into one that is more walkable and positive for economic vitality. Streets and neighborhoods with wider sidewalks, narrow streets, and on-street parking tend to slow traffic, creating a more welcoming environment for pedestrians.

Image Source: [www.smalltownurbanism.com](http://www.smalltownurbanism.com)

### PRECEDENT: TREE TOWN MURALS



TreeTown Murals (Ann Arbor, MI) is an organization that works with individuals, schools and institutions, and businesses to create mural art throughout the community. The organization's mission is to encourage community involvement in economic development. Image Source: [www.weho.org](http://www.weho.org)

## E6.2: Leverage art and trades for education and skills training opportunities.

Local entrepreneurship has the potential to address employment, workforce training, and youth development gaps. Local entrepreneurship includes a range of potential economic opportunities including formalizing informal jobs, growing businesses of the self-employed, and aiding in business creation for existing and potential entrepreneurs. Maintaining Ferndale's artistic and entrepreneurial culture requires passing on the trades, skills, and lessons learned from one generation to another for businesses and crafts. Furthermore, an emerging set of modern trades, or high-tech manufacturing, need people with skills for jobs that combine technology and traditional skills. Artisanal and modern trades, manufacturing, and production all have a place in the future economy and can provide well-paying jobs to people of all levels of education and experiences.

The City should establish programs that provide resources and skills development training to people of all ages and backgrounds. Programs may include hands-on training in traditional trades and fine craftsmanship for people who share an interest in artisanal trades; youth after-school programs and workshops that provide exposure to new ideas and

experiences; and workforce development training for jobs responding to specific market needs. Local partners such as schools, community organizations, and local employers should be tapped for creating innovative partnerships for workforce and youth development.

### E6.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Create partnerships with local employers, institutions, and organizations.
- Establish programs that provide resources and skills development training.

### PRECEDENT: GRID ALTERNATIVES



GRID Alternatives Greater Los Angeles teaches volunteers how to install solar panels with the purpose of getting them industry jobs later. The program is an example of training for demand-driven jobs and the changing nature of manufacturing and construction jobs, bringing together traditional skills with new technology.

Image Source: [www.gridalternatives.org](http://www.gridalternatives.org)

#### RESOURCE: MICHIGAN COUNCIL FOR ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS (MCACA)

The MCACA strengthens arts and culture in Michigan by increasing its visibility; supporting arts education; encouraging new, creative and innovative works of art; and broadening cultural understanding. The MCACA is also a source of arts and culture grant funding in a variety of categories including project support, operational support, capital improvements, and arts in education residency.

Source: [www.michiganbusiness.org/arts](http://www.michiganbusiness.org/arts)

#### PRECEDENT: PONYRIDE



Ponyride (Detroit, MI) provides inexpensive space for artists and entrepreneurs to work and share knowledge, resources, and networks. The former warehouse is home to over 30 organizations in addition to individuals and businesses utilizing a co-working space and the artist residency program.

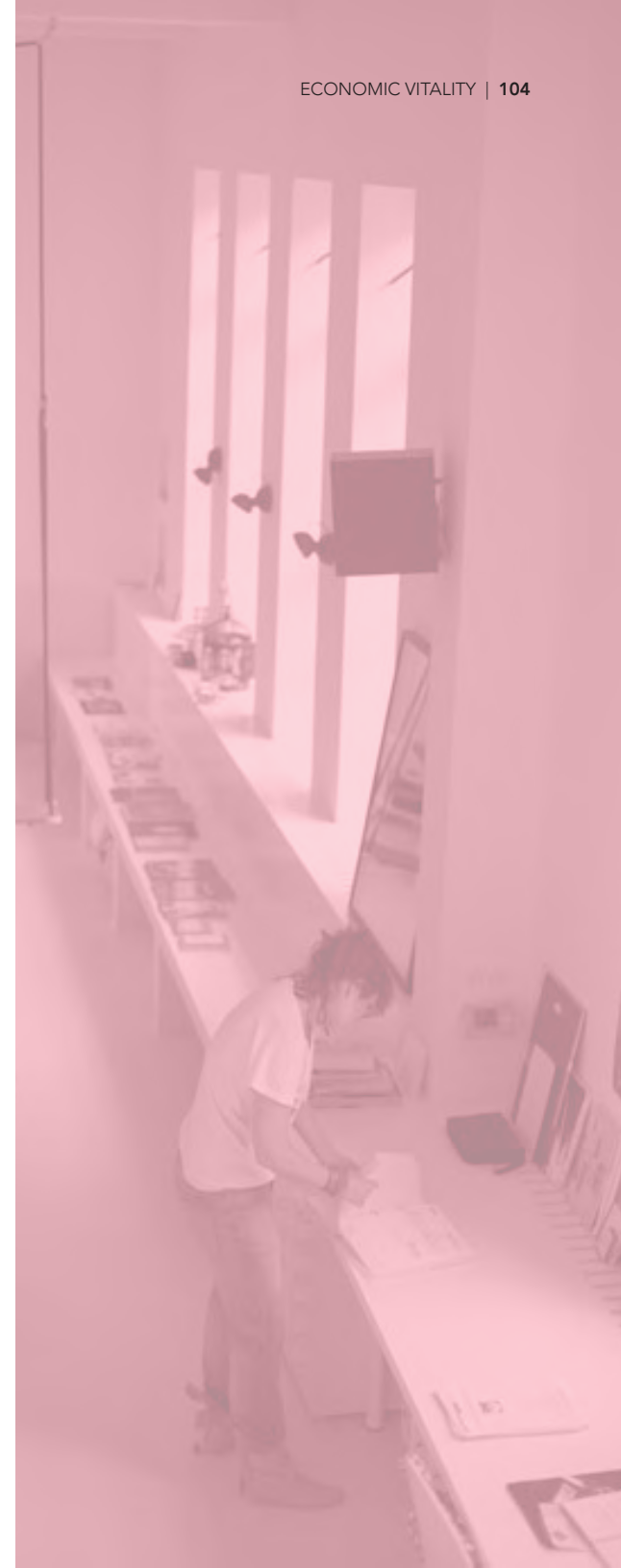
Image Source: [www.onthegrid.net](http://www.onthegrid.net)

### **E6.3:** **Provide studio space to foster collaboration, creativity, and innovation.**

Physical space where people can meet, work, and display their work plays a key role in unlocking ideas, partnerships, and professional opportunities for artists and entrepreneurs. Building on the success of the Rust Belt Market — Ferndale’s marketplace to showcase local talent, launch small start-ups, and serve as a storefront for 50 independently-owned businesses — the City should explore opportunities to provide physical space for the creation and exploration stage that eventually hatches business ideas and transformative art. Dedicated studio space would offer the opportunity for artists to learn from one another, share resources and materials, expand personal work, and increase their exposure and interaction in a professional environment. Providing this space within the City would further Ferndale’s commitment to arts and culture and expand the network of resources for artists in the community.

#### **E6.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Establish artist studio space for emerging artists to explore, learn, and exhibit their work.
- Identify additional opportunities for the City to include emerging artists in placemaking initiatives.





# RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

## PARKS, PUBLIC SPACES, PROGRAMMING, TREES

Ferndale is somewhat limited in open space, with only four square miles and a desire to responsibly densify. Fortunately, the City owns and maintains a number of parks of various sizes distributed throughout the city to serve almost all residents within a quarter-mile, or a 5 minute walk. Open space also takes other landscape forms, including streets and alleys, cemeteries, and private yards. Each of these contribute to Ferndale's social and environmental health and have the potential to be even more productive and multi-functional parts of the city's landscape. The planning process and an assessment of existing open spaces revealed ways in which Ferndale's recreation and open space network could be more innovative, purposeful, and meaningful to its users. The following goals and recommendations address ways to improve existing parks and programs, opportunities for the future, and developing Ferndale's streets as open spaces to create a more walkable, livable, and sustainable city.

The City of Ferndale conducted a Parks and Recreation Master Plan update concurrently with the City Master Planning process. Naturally, many of the same goals and recommendations arose in the public input session for the city-wide process as those specifically geared to parks and recreation.

The following recommendations, while also present in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, are relevant to the city-wide Master Plan because they require the support of many City departments and impact the overall goals and vision of the city as a whole.



# GOALS

The recommendations comprising the RECREATION & OPEN SPACE section of the Master Plan are based on data and public input collected during the planning process. Recommendations are organized into three goal areas. Together, the goals and their related actions support the vision for Ferndale's future.

## **GOAL 1:**

Improve existing parks, recreation facilities, and programs.

## **GOAL 2:**

Pursue long-term opportunities for new public spaces.

## **GOAL 3:**

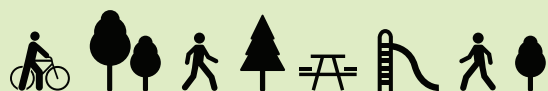
Plan for Ferndale's urban tree canopy.

# GOAL 1:

## Improve existing parks, recreation facilities, and programs.

The City owns and maintains 14 parks and recreation facilities including the Kulick Community Center and the Ferndale Activity Center. Each park is typically nestled within Ferndale's neighborhoods. While they geographically serve almost the entire city within a short walking distance, Ferndale parks are not reaching their full potential in terms of resident attraction, space utilization, and landscape productivity. During the planning process, some participants noted they had never heard of some of Ferndale's parks or only knew the name of the park nearest their home. Existing parks, facilities, and programs could be improved to better serve residents needs and interests with more interesting and diverse landscapes and by updating the types of recreation programs offered. The following recreation and open space recommendations related to existing parks, facilities, and programs support Goal 1.

A map of Ferndale's parks can be found in the Introduction.



### **R1.1:** Create a cohesive family of park amenities.

Parks have the potential to enhance a city's identity and be a neighborhood hub for nearby residents. The current practice of selecting and replacing equipment and amenities individually as needed results in a patchwork collection of benches, signage, and other park elements and is often a time consuming process for the Recreation Department and Department of Public Works (DPW) to select and approve elements each time. The City should create a cohesive family of park amenities to streamline DPW's job and visually link different parks and facilities across the city. At minimum, the system should include the park elements and amenities found in each park to provide a baseline of visual unity: signage, seating elements, waste receptacles, water fountains, and light fixtures.

#### **L1.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Create a cohesive family of park amenities for the "baseline" elements found in every park.

*"I think Ferndale puts a lot of pride in providing parks and recreation services to its residents and it shows. We have beautiful parks and an amazing non-motorized transportation network."*

*"I'd love to see more creative landscaping (including stormwater retention features), more permanent soccer goals, a pool, updated seating and non-paved trails."*

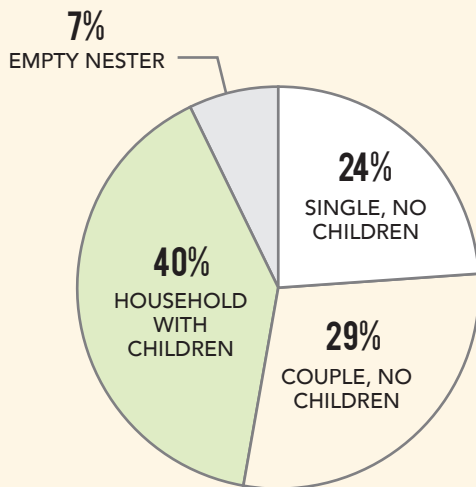
*"[I would visit Ferndale parks more often if] the grass drained better or there were stroller paths."*

### **R1.2:** Evaluate and update programming as needed to meet community needs and to diversify offerings.

A public space can be almost anywhere and any size, but programming is the key to generating activity and increasing positive use in that space. In their current state, Ferndale's traditional parks and program offerings do not reflect the city's population or the activities that are most important to them. Over time, Ferndale's population make-up has changed, and its recreation programs should be updated to reflect those changes.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE

FERNDALDE PARKS & RECREATION COMMUNITY SURVEY 2016



### PRECEDENT: BIKES & YOGA BELLE ISLE, DETROIT



Bikes and Yoga is a weekly program hosted by Detroit Community Yoga on Belle Isle. The program starts with a bike ride around the island, and is followed by an hour of yoga on Sunset Point.

Image Source: James Brown/Free Face

While Ferndale parks scored well in terms of number and size of parks in the Community Survey, they scored low on variety of activities available at the parks, programs offered, and connections between parks. Respondents agreed on a need for more recreation and enrichment programs geared toward teens and adults. They mentioned current programming caters primarily to children and seniors. Furthermore, respondents' top reasons for visiting parks and participating in activities were more informal and spontaneous (versus highly planned or requiring regular commitment), such as regular exercise, relaxation, spending time with family and friends, community events, and environmental programs.

Using the Community Survey to understand Ferndale's population demographics and preferences, the City should evaluate and update its programming to better meet the needs and interests of the people they intend to serve. While planning for and implementing new programs requires more time and funding, incremental changes to how the parks are used can make Ferndale parks more relevant to its residents, such as trails within and between parks, natural landscapes, and movable tables and chairs that allow for informal gathering spaces.

To make better use of existing parks and increase visibility, the City could relocate, even on a temporary or occasional basis, some of its current recreation programs from inside the community center to more visible public spaces, such as exercise classes in the park and/or municipal facilities or storefronts located Downtown. Additionally, the City should consider exploring partnerships with private sponsors to help provide regular programming in community parks.

*"...Many adult events are senior based during the day when <60 y/o are usually working."*

*"Currently, I haven't seen any activities or park features that have appealed to someone in their mid- 20's like me. I'd like to be able to walk through a park with interesting and diverse features, but most appear to be typically just fields."*

*"Our "parks" are just fields. There is really no reason to take grandchildren to Ferndale parks."*

### R1.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Evaluate and update programs offered through the Recreation Department.
- Identify recreation programs that can take place in visible public places.

*"Have features in the parks that are appealing to adults (running tracks, swimming pool, native landscaping to look at, community gardens to engage in, or adult outdoor exercise equipment like the Dequindre Cut)"*



### **R1.3:** **Improve access, visibility, and activity at parks in every neighborhood.**

Accessible, visible, and active parks at the neighborhood-level are essential to supporting an excellent quality of life for all of its residents in all of its neighborhoods. Currently, Ferndale's parks vary significantly in how well-known and visited they are, creating a sense of imbalance among the parks system as a whole. To provide equitable open space to residents in each of its neighborhoods, all of Ferndale's parks must be:

- Accessible to a wide range of potential users to maximize legibility (ease of understanding the environment) and physical movement to, from, and around the park.
- Highly visible from the interior and exterior to enhance park users' feelings of comfort and security.
- Activated (programmed) appropriately in relation to its size, needs of the surrounding neighborhood, and the population it is intended to serve.

Achieving this vision is about ensuring every neighborhood park provides an equitable level of accessible, usable, and inviting open space to all of its residents across the entire city. Not all parks provide the same amenities or generate the same amount of activity, but no user should be turned away due to lack of access or perception of

safety. The City should establish "baseline" standards in each of these categories and ensure every park meets or exceeds the standards through physical improvements, marketing and promotional efforts, and programming. Improving accessibility, visibility, and activity in every park will in turn increase users' willingness to use a space and increase the positive association residents have with their neighborhood parks.

### **R1.4:** **Expand seasonal use of parks.**

While the parks generally offer high-quality recreation opportunities throughout the warm weather months, there is opportunity to expand these offerings to all four seasons to provide a broader range of activities for residents. Currently, the Kulick Community Recreation Center is the only year-round indoor recreation facility in the city and Martin Road Park's sledding hill is the only park with an outdoor winter recreation feature.

In order to provide year-round recreational opportunities to residents, the Recreation Department should explore a range of winter recreation opportunities using the Community Survey responses to understand which winter activities residents are most interested in. Winter programming could take several forms, with individual park activities such as ice skating or sledding, or the creation of a network of connected amenities such as warming huts or trail heads that could be accessed through winter modes of transportation such as cross country skiing, fat bikes, and snowshoeing.

#### **R1.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Establish "baseline" standards for accessibility, visibility, and activity.
- Evaluate and improve parks as needed based on established "baseline" standards.

#### **R1.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Expand seasonal use of parks.

*"[Ferndale needs] more awareness and events - I didn't even realize some of these parks exist, and if there was more leisure seating I might use them more."*

#### **PRECEDENT: "WINTER CITY STRATEGY"**



In 2010, the City of Edmonton launched a WinterCity Strategy campaign to help Edmontonians embrace their cold climate. Programming is focused on outdoor activities, mobility, and social events.

*Image Source: Edmonton Economic Development Corp.*



## R1.5: Renovate Martin Road Park.

Martin Road Park is Ferndale's largest park, containing 32 acres and located in the northeast part of the city at Woodward Heights and Martin Road. The park currently contains multiple sports fields, play structures, a sledding/lookout hill, a picnic area, a restrooms facility, and a concessions building. Overall, the park lacks connectivity between the surrounding neighborhood streets and sidewalks, lacks accessible connections between features within the park, and is programmed primarily for active recreation and lacks opportunities for passive or low-impact recreation.

Early in the planning process, it was determined the park warranted special study to improve this community-wide amenity and understand the preferences of Ferndale residents. Martin Road Park has tremendous potential not just as a great community amenity but also as a visitor draw, that could increase local spending. A number of short- and long-term strategies should be considered in its renovation. The complete Martin Road Park master plan design that incorporates the elements below can be found in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2016.

### Short term improvements:

- Improve the entrance at Lewiston Avenue parking lot with a drop-off entrance plaza, specialty paving, and signage.
- Improve the entrance at Orchard Avenue and Leitch Street with specialty paving, signage, and improved pedestrian crossings over Orchard Ave.
- Improve the entrance at Orchard Avenue and Martin Road Park with improved crosswalks, landscaping, and signage.
- Create pedestrian entry and path to the park from Woodward Heights.
- Improve the perimeter with a new sidewalk along Orchard Avenue and Martin Road.
- Enhance landscape buffer on north property edge to screen existing parking and service yard at the school.

## WHAT KIND OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES WOULD YOU LIKE TO KEEP OR ADD TO MARTIN ROAD PARK?

TOP 5 RESPONSES FROM THE FERNDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMUNITY SURVEY 2016

NATURAL LANDSCAPE AREAS: 42%

WALKING PATHS: 42%

CONCERTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS: 41%

AMPHITHEATER / PERFORMING ARTS VENUE: 35%

COMMUNITY GARDEN: 34%

*"[I would add to Martin Road Park] A more naturalized landscape, not just flat green grass or a field of wildflowers. Get some interesting plantings, elevation change..."*

*"I live near Martin Park, but there is no sidewalk into the park, so I can't really get there from Woodward Heights."*

*"Martin Rd park has major drainage issues - the park is a muddy mess. We also need a walking path and for the bathrooms to be open."*

### Improve circulation and neighborhood connectivity:

- Extend Farrow Street north to connect to the Lewiston Avenue parking lot.
- Create a pedestrian plaza with benches and planters where the park meets the school property to its north.
- Explore the potential to expand and improve parking areas to maximize number of spaces.
- Create an accessible, paved pathway that connects park entrances and amenities within the park and also functions as an exercise loop.

### Add stormwater features and natural landscapes:

- Create a pond to collect stormwater and function as an ice rink in the winter.
- Incorporate a naturalized planting area to provide habitat for wildlife and reduce lawn maintenance.
- Incorporate a garden area with perennial plants, an aggregate path, and seating.

### Improve existing facilities and explore new program opportunities:

- Improve the sledding hill to incorporate a lookout and seating area at the crest of the hill.
- Add an amphitheater shelter, utilizing the south side of the sledding hill for amphitheater seating and functioning as a picnic shelter when not in use.
- Construct a multi-use structure for concessions, restrooms, changing rooms, storage, and multi-purpose indoor space.
- Improve playgrounds with age-appropriate and universally accessible equipment, surfacing, and benches around the perimeter.
- Improve existing sports fields (soccer, football, baseball, and softball).
- Redistribute picnic tables and grills throughout the park along the recreation pathway.
- Add a sand volleyball court.
- Add a flexible paved play space for court games such as basketball and tennis.
- Add a splash pad with inclusive play components and benches around the perimeter of the play area.

#### R1.5 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Create a master plan for Martin Road Park.
- Renovate Martin Road Park.

### MARTIN ROAD PARK TODAY



Images Source: HAA





PROPOSED CHARACTER: MARTIN ROAD PARK RENOVATION



## R1.6: Improve and activate Schiffer Park.

Schiffer Park is the only City-owned park in Ferndale's Downtown. While only 0.13 acres (the city's smallest park), Schiffer Park has the potential to provide a significant open space amenity within the Downtown's dense built environment that otherwise consists of large amounts of impervious surfaces from buildings and roads. The City should explore opportunities to make the park more flexible for potential programming opportunities and more welcoming to casual passersby. The space has the potential to serve both as a passive seating and gathering area and host civic events. Its close proximity to retail amenities provide a natural connection to social activity already occurring.

The park is currently an urban plaza with fixed picnic tables and benches, trees in large planters, a drinking fountain, and audio sound capabilities. At minimum, the large concrete planters and fixed picnic tables, that limit the flexibility and usable square footage of the space, should be removed and replaced with movable site furnishings and planters in smaller or in-ground containers. Additional improvements and programming opportunities to consider include electrical outlets, wi-fi capability, removable bollards, specialty lighting,

and opportunities to activate the facade of the adjacent building. As the DDA is a major stakeholder in Downtown, the City should work with the organization to select site furnishings, other improvements, and program opportunities that will promote and facilitate desired activities.

### R1.6 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Improve Schiffer Park.

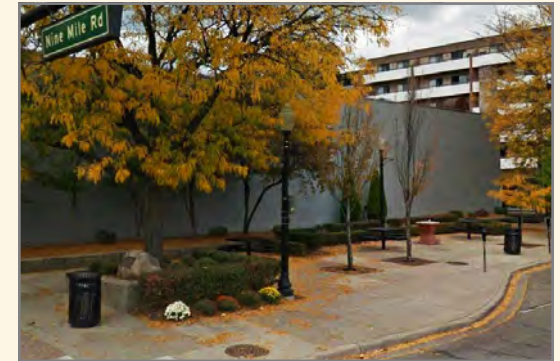
*"I love my neighborhood, but if I could improve one thing, it would be a green space close to downtown. I'd love to get take-out and sit in a green park to enjoy my lunch."*

### FLEXIBLE DESIGN



Flexible design is one of the key principles of a successful urban park. For the use of the park to change during the course of the day, week, and year, flexibility should be built in. Movable chairs, tables, umbrellas, and games and nearby storage for these items are important. *Image Source: HAA*

## SCHIFFER PARK TODAY



*Image Sources: Google Earth, HAA*



## KULICK COMMUNITY CENTER TODAY



### **R1.7:**

## **Consider the long-term use of the Kulick Community Center.**

The Gerry Kulick Community Center opened in 2001 in a former elementary school building. The building is the only year-round public indoor recreation facility in the city, consisting of a gymnasium, fitness studio, dance studio, activity rooms, meeting rooms, kitchen, dining room, and offices for the Recreation Department and Senior Services. Many of the recreation programs offered by Ferndale take place within this building. Outdoor facilities on the property include an off-street parking lot, playground equipment, a basketball hoop, picnic tables, and open space used for recreation and events. While the building underwent extensive renovations when it first opened, the fitness equipment has become outdated and other parts of the building need major upgrades and renovations to meet standards and needs.

The City should carefully evaluate the goals, needs, and expectations for the city's community center and determine whether or not the current facility will be able to meet those needs. It will be especially important to consider how the Recreation Department's program offerings will change and the impact that would have on activities and spatial needs at the Kulick Center. Strategies for the facility should be aligned with the City's strategies for strong neighborhoods, the provision of quality city services and amenities, sustainability, and the betterment of the city overall.

### **R1.7 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Evaluate the long-term viability of the Kulick Community Center.

*"Kulick Center is so unapproachable and widely underused. The entire facility should be reevaluated to the city's needs."*

*"Larger gym or indoor tennis court at Kulick Community Center."*

*"Would love more movies in the park (especially Kulick)."*

*"Kulick Center needs upgrades to meeting rooms and workout room, wifi in the parks."*

## **R1.8:** **Provide wi-fi and charging ports at select parks.**

Wireless internet (wi-fi) provides another way for people to be connected – socially, for businesses, and for information. Establishing free wi-fi access and charging ports in Ferndale’s parks has the potential to increase park patronage and diversify park users, improving park utilization overall. The City should identify parks that would be most appropriate for this and pursue funding. Highly trafficked places such as Schiffer Park and the Kulick Community Center would be ideal candidates for this amenity.

### **R1.8 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Identify select parks and funding to establish free wi-fi access and charging ports.

*“Wifi! I work remote and would love to spend more time in parks and at the community center but wifi is a must. Kulick would be a perfect place for me to teach some community tech classes - but the wifi wasn't reliable enough to do so.”*

## **R1.9:** **Enhance neighborhood stewardship of parks to increase positive identification with neighborhood parks.**

Park stewardship is another way for residents to become involved with community projects and specifically their neighbors and neighborhoods. Stewardship activities may include planting native species, removal of invasive species, trail restoration, ecological restoration, taking inventories of plants and animals, trash pickup, and special event staffing. Events like the annual volunteer event, Clean the Ferndale Up, could be a biannual or quarterly opportunity to increase park stewardship. The City should also consider taking on the coordination of volunteerism and stewardship as part of Recreation Department’s services as a way to both improve parks and build community.

### **R1.9 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Incorporate volunteer and stewardship coordination within the Recreation Department.

*“[Ferndale needs] more community events to draw people to the parks and to each other.”*

## **HOW INTERESTED ARE YOU IN DONATING YOUR TIME OR SKILLS TO THE COMMUNITY TO ENHANCE PROGRAMS, PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACES?**

FERNDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMUNITY SURVEY 2016

**VERY INTERESTED: 17%**

**SOMEWHAT INTERESTED: 56%**

**SOMEWHAT UNINTERESTED: 16%**

**NOT INTERESTED AT ALL: 12%**

### **PRECEDENT: STEWARDSHIP WORKDAYS**



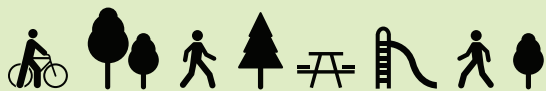
The City of Ann Arbor organizes volunteer stewardship events in its parks and nature areas. Events include removing invasive plants, planting native species, improving trails, and participating in monthly discussion topics with other volunteer and professional land stewards. These year-round events are opportunities to meet and socialize with neighbors, improve and transform parks residents care about, and learn and ask questions.

Image Source: City of Ann Arbor, [www.a2gov.org](http://www.a2gov.org)

# GOAL 2:

## Pursue long-term opportunities for new public spaces.

Many people in Ferndale, as elsewhere, still think of parks and recreation as traditional green grass parks and a drab community center. Yet the reality is continuing demographic trends and best practices from peer communities suggest these types of facilities do not serve or interest all of its residents. People want to be in walkable, mixed-use environments and open space can take on a variety of new purposes: public art, stormwater management, education, and civic gathering. Pursuing this idea requires a change in the way we think about parks and recreation and public space in general. It offers the opportunity to be more progressive, connected, and sustainable. The following recreation and open space recommendations related to pursuing long-term opportunities for new public spaces support Goal 2.



### **R2.1:** Continue to explore options for designated open spaces Downtown.

Downtown Ferndale supports a wide range of commercial and cultural activities to support residents and attract visitors; however, it lacks a true civic gathering place. Currently, Schiffer Park is Downtown's only public park, and while it provides a critical open space feature, it is too small to host larger civic events. Vester Street has been used in recent years for outdoor summer movies, and larger events typically take place in surface parking lots and closed streets.

While local events can be an exciting part of the city's cultural and social life, the City should continue to monitor the economic and cultural benefits of hosting regional events that have greater demands on the city's infrastructure and economy. As Downtown continues to evolve, the temporary collection of current event spaces may no longer be available or suitable for events in the future. Over time, it is critical that the City continues to ensure there is a City-owned open space appropriately scaled for the community.

In absence of open space requirements in the zoning ordinance, the City should continue to explore options for providing open space in Downtown in addition to improving Schiffer Park.

Opportunities may come in the form of pocket parks, urban plazas, pedestrian alleys, or other types and may be City-owned or privately-owned public spaces created by leveraging new development. These spaces should work together to ensure Downtown Ferndale provides quality open space in sufficient quantity and variety to meet the needs of downtown workers, residents, and visitors.

#### **R2.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Establish options for creating quality open spaces Downtown.

#### **PRECEDENT: ALLEYWAY TO PUBLIC PLAZA**



NoHo Plaza (Los Angeles, CA) is a redesign project that transformed an alleyway into a pedestrian plaza as part of a city-wide program to convert underutilized spaces into vibrant community places. The local business improvement district (BID) supplies furnishings and ongoing management of the space.

*Image Source: Project for Public Spaces, [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)*

## **R2.2:** **Consider a Downtown community center presence.**

A large portion of Ferndale's recreation programs happen inside the Kulick Center where they go unseen and spin-off economic and social benefits are limited. Offering a space Downtown, big or small, will increase visibility of the Recreation Department itself, offer an opportunity to showcase its activities, and provide a central location to people to check out programs being offered. The City should consider opportunities such as vacant or underutilized buildings, storefronts, and public open spaces for a potential Recreation Department community center presence.

### **R2.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Explore opportunities for a community center presence Downtown.

*"I would create a series of paved biking/walking/ wheelchair-friendly paths that link all the parks together and connects them to downtown. I would make sure that this plan creates a easy way to cross the train tracks in a wheelchair, which is currently very difficult."*

## **R2.3:** **Create a network of parks and non-motorized routes around Ferndale and between neighboring communities.**

A network of open space and recreation assets can unify Ferndale's various parks, increase visibility of the parks, connect amenities across the city, establish a new amenity in and of itself, and promote healthy living. This network would allow Ferndale parks, and perhaps even those in neighboring communities, to work together as a system so amenities are not contained to one park or neighborhood but are shared across the city.

A successful wayfinding system – signage, map, and accessible routes between parks – will promote the parks and non-motorized routes and visually help people navigate from place to place. Wayfinding might also include information about what each park offers, such as an exercise trail or playground. A connected network would provide more exposure to all of the city parks and facilities and serve as an exercise amenity to walkers, runners, and bikers. This network could be realized in a number of ways, as simple as an urban trail head in a highly visible location like Schiffer Park, or appear at various locations throughout the city. Wayfinding should not conflict or add visual chaos to other signage and wayfinding systems in the city. The City should consider how this

initiative can complement or be folded into the newly established Woodward Corridor Neighborhood Bicycle Network.

### **R2.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Integrate Ferndale parks into a city-wide wayfinding system.

## **R2.4:** **Provide passive recreation spaces and education on natural landscapes.**

While parks play an important role in the community, these landscapes have the potential to provide more than opportunities for active recreation. There are opportunities within Ferndale's parks to incorporate passive recreation and natural landscapes that can provide a range of benefits to the community from interesting open space for residents to ecological services, such as decreasing stormwater runoff. Passive recreation and natural landscapes also have a lower impact on the environment than active recreation areas.



Dedicating space for passive recreation and natural landscapes can also provide an educational opportunity for residents to learn about the benefits of native plantings and natural landscapes. These plantings can also be used to raise awareness around the City's planned natural landscape and dispel myths about items that can be planted. Educational signage is one way to communicate information about natural, cultural, and historic features that brings more meaning and interest to a subject and adds to the enjoyment of a user.

#### R2.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Incorporate planned passive recreation spaces within Ferndale's parks.
- Incorporate natural landscapes within Ferndale's parks.
- Incorporate educational signage in parks.

*"More natural areas [would improve parks]. More parks or areas of parks for those of us who aren't on sports teams and don't have small children."*

*"I think our parks should try to provide a better balance of natural habitats and gardens to big open fields. Our parks have a lot of flat lawn, but excluding the sports fields, we should try to decrease the amount of lawn we have."*

*"I would like to see some community gardens and some programming around it (maybe a children's garden...). Also more natural landscaping and programming around that too - there was lots of interest in the natural landscaping talk at the library last night, but it would be nice to have hands-on activities outside."*

#### HOW IMPORTANT ARE NATURAL LANDSCAPES FOR FERNDALE TO PLAN FOR, MAINTAIN, OR IMPROVE?

FERNDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMUNITY SURVEY 2016

**HIGH PRIORITY: 51%**

**MEDIUM PRIORITY: 29%**

**LOW PRIORITY: 15%**

**NOT NEEDED: 5%**

#### PASSIVE RECREATION



"Passive recreation" refers to non-consumptive recreational uses such as wildlife observations, walking, biking, and canoeing. Passive recreational uses typically have the least impact on the environment.

Image Source: HAA

#### PRECEDENT: NATURAL LANDSCAPES & EDUCATION



When paired with natural landscapes, interpretive (or educational) signage provides information to teach users the value of the natural resources, helping people feel invested in the environment in which they live.

Image Source: [www.segd.org](http://www.segd.org)

## R2.5: Create a public art program for parks and public spaces.

Public art occupies a unique position within the art world: it is free, often outdoors, open to everyone, and you can come as you are. Public art can also foster a sense of community and attachment. The Knight Foundation found that “social offerings, openness and welcome-ness,” and, importantly, the “aesthetics of a place – its art, parks, and green spaces,” ranked higher than education, safety, and the local economy as a “driver of attachment.” Public art often functions as civic gathering and identifiable meeting places within a city.

To further demonstrate Ferndale’s commitment to arts and culture, add intrigue to its cityscape, foster a greater sense of community, the City should facilitate the installation of public art in its parks and other public spaces. The Recreation Department could collaborate with emerging and established art organizations and artists to provide a new platform to display their work and reach wider audiences. Work could be displayed more permanently or be temporary (such as a decided period of less than one year), and may be featured in prominent community parks, neighborhood parks and playground, or more discrete locations.

Securing adequate funding is a key piece of any public art program. Potential funding streams include:

- **Public/private sector collaboration**, where the City or businesses partner with existing local programs.
- **Percent-for-art ordinances**, where a percentage of capital improvement projects is retained for the commissioning of public artworks.
- **Soliciting participation from developers**, where the City encourages or incentivizes private developers to introduce works of public art into their projects.
- **Alternative funding sources**, may include other City tax or revenue streams, foundation grants, historical societies and commissions, or other means.

The Recreation Department should collaborate with the Ferndale DDA that has embraced opportunities to bring public art Downtown to understand best practices and consider potential partnerships.

### R2.5 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Create a public art program for parks and public spaces.

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE VARIETY OF ART AND CULTURAL EVENTS IN FERNDALE?

FERNDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMUNITY SURVEY 2016

EXCELLENT: 13%

GOOD: 25%

FAIR: 29%

POOR: 11%

DON'T KNOW: 22%

### PRECEDENT: ART METERS



Art Meters (Houston, TX) is a placemaking project that transformed functioning city meters into temporary sculptures. Funding for the project came from the City of Houston General Services Department and the Parking Management Division.

Image Source: [www.actstudios.com](http://www.actstudios.com)

# GOAL 3:

## Plan for Ferndale's urban tree canopy.

Trees are a vital piece of a city's infrastructure. Healthy tree-lined streets are a key component to creating a more walkable, livable, and sustainable city and providing economic benefits to residents, businesses, and the City in terms of both added value and dollars saved. Trees can provide many benefits to the residents including health and environmental benefits, such as increased air quality and stormwater benefits.

Ferndale is currently undergoing a city-wide street tree study to take a census of all trees within the city, analyze the current tree canopy coverage, understand the gaps, and set goals for improvements. This data will allow Ferndale to create a long-term plan for trees and vegetation in the city's landscape. Growing, protecting, managing, and funding Ferndale's street trees can all be tough challenges faced by the City's Department of Public Works (DPW). The following strategies should help Ferndale to proactively manage and grow the City's street tree population.

### R3.1: Establish a City Forester to lead and coordinate Ferndale's urban forest initiatives.

The urban tree canopy that makes up Ferndale's urban forest is a living organism requiring care and maintenance so it can remain healthy and provide residents with the many benefits that are associated with urban trees. To lead this initiative, the City of Ferndale should dedicate a qualified city staff member as a City Forester. This position would be responsible for the care and maintenance of the City's trees (public properties, parks, and right-of-ways) as well as provide resources and educational opportunities for residents to understand the benefits of trees and the role that residents can play in increasing the tree canopy within the city.

#### R3.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

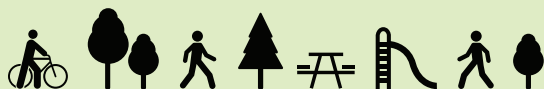
- Establish a City Forester.

### R3.2: Continue the street tree program through regular updates to the plan and the inventory; establish a dedicated budget.

Using the information from the street tree study, Ferndale should create a cohesive vision for the long-term care and management of Ferndale's street trees. This vision should proactively address issues such as maintenance, funding, species diversity, and distribution of trees as well as set realistic population and coverage goals for improving and benchmarking Ferndale's tree canopy. This city-wide vision for street trees should be periodically updated to reflect changing conditions and canopy cover needs.

#### R3.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Dedicate a budget for the continuation of the street tree program, including a regular inventory and plan updates.



### **R3.3:** **Expand the tree program to parks and private properties.**

While there is opportunity to increase the tree canopy within the City of Ferndale and a street tree program will aim to maximize opportunities in that specific area, there are limited options in the public realm simply due to space.

Two locations where Ferndale can look to increase its tree canopy is within parks, where space is available, and on private property, such as residential yards. Ferndale should develop a program to encourage and incentivize residents to add to the city's tree canopy by planting trees in their yards.

To assist private property owners, a "tree selection guide" could be created and made available to encourage tree choices that are compatible with the planting location, minimize damage to other public improvements, and promote species diversity. Providing the opportunity for property owners to buy plantings in bulk – potentially through the City or at an annual Arbor Day event – would similarly encourage desirable planting types as well as provide an affordable option.

#### **R3.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Select an achievable tree canopy coverage goal or goals (public realm, private realm, and/or overall) based on best practices of peer communities.
- Benchmark progress toward goals over time.
- Develop a program to encourage and/or incentivize property owners to increase the tree canopy on private properties.

#### **PRECEDENT: TREE CANOPY GOAL SETTING**



Using current technology and data extraction methods, the City of Seattle recently conducted an assessment of the city-wide tree canopy coverage. The city set the goal to advance its current canopy coverage from 23% to 30% by 2040.

*Image Source: HAA*

### **R3.4:** **Create a Ferndale street tree nursery.**

Any program that seeks to increase tree canopy will require access to the desired amount and species of trees. Once planted, trees provide numerous environmental benefits; however, acquiring new trees often requires shipments over a great distance to the location where they will be planted, creating a negative environmental impact and adding costs for transportation.

The creation of a city-owned and/or operated street tree nursery would provide the opportunity for a steady stream of trees from within Ferndale to be replanted as needed within the city. The nursery would allow the City to grow all or a portion of the trees needed within the city, reducing environmental and transportation costs. The presence of a tree nursery can also be used to raise awareness around growing the urban forest and tree canopy.

#### **R3.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create a Ferndale street tree nursery.



### **R3.5:** **Consider the re-use of urban wood waste.**

The term “urban wood waste” is used to describe waste from wood products, trees, or a combination. Urban wood removed from city streets or private properties through tree removal or trimming holds the potential for re-use and aligns with Ferndale’s environmental sustainability goals. The City’s wood waste can provide material for second-life products such as furniture, lumber and other building materials, paper, art, and biomass energy. Using trees throughout their entire life-cycle and beyond can reduce the quantity or altogether prevent wood waste from being sent to the landfill. The City should consider responsible avenues and partnerships for wood waste and salvage.

#### **R3.5 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Establish partnerships for recycling Ferndale’s urban wood.

### **R3.6:** **Offer opportunities for community planting and gardening.**

Engaging residents in community planting and gardening events can be a positive way to both increase the tree canopy and increase civic engagement. In addition to working with the community to plant and maintain trees, these events also provide additional opportunities to engage and educate residents on the benefits of urban tree canopy, the City’s goals for expanding the urban tree canopy, and what steps residents can take to help.

#### **R3.6 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create events and/or volunteer opportunities for community planting.

*“I would love to have a community pool and community farm/garden.”*

*“I would like to see more organized events that bring the community together...”*

#### **PRECEDENT:** **THE GREENING OF DETROIT**



Each year, the Greening of Detroit recruits thousands of volunteers to help plant trees, clean up parks, and work in farm gardens.

*Image Source: [www.greeningofdetroit.com](http://www.greeningofdetroit.com)*

#### **PRECEDENT:** **THE URBANWOOD PROJECT**



The Urbanwood Project is a partnership between local recycling/conservation organizations and local small businesses that recycles Southeast Michigan’s fall urban trees for lumber, flooring, millwork and cabinetry, counter and tabletop slabs, and other household uses. The shared retail operation sells wood to buyers for a diverse number of purposes, from manufacturing picture frames to construction materials for a local library.

*Image Source: [www.secondwavemedia.com](http://www.secondwavemedia.com)*

# TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

## STREETS, WALKABILITY, MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION, PARKING

Transportation plays an integral role in the social, economic, and environmental landscape of Ferndale. In Ferndale today, as in many other communities in Southeast Michigan, transportation is dominated by the automobile, but the city and the region are beginning to see a shift. Ferndale in particular has been a leader in advocating for a wider range of transportation options and has created new transportation assets within the city from which it can build on to improve facilities for those who choose to use non-motorized or public transportation as their preferred mode of transportation.

Over the last decade Ferndale has become a recognized leader in the region, adding over five miles of cycling infrastructure to roadways, including buffered bike lanes, bike corrals, and other improvements geared toward bicycle and pedestrian mobility and safety. In 2016, the City partnered with five neighboring municipalities to launch a bicycle network between the communities with signed bike routes, improved pedestrian crossings, and bike repair stations.

Even with these pedestrian and bicycle improvements, true mobility enhancement will only come with the onset of high-quality transit within the region. As an inner ring suburb straddling a major regional thoroughfare, Ferndale has an exceptional opportunity to leverage planned investments in transit in the coming years, most notably the bus rapid transit (BRT) line planned for Woodward Avenue.

Ferndale remains a relatively small municipality within a much larger region, and improving transportation options for Ferndale residents and building connections across communities is a regional task that is much more than Ferndale can accomplish on its own. Ferndale should continue planning for a more equitable, sustainable city that offers its residents a high quality of life by working within the city, with other communities, and with regional agencies to continually improve access to quality transportation options.



# GOALS

The recommendations comprising the TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY section of the Master Plan are based on data and public input collected during the planning process. Recommendations are organized into five goal areas. Together, the goals and their related actions support Ferndale's vision for the future of our City.

## **GOAL 1:**

Promote and improve transportation diversity.

## **GOAL 2:**

Strengthen walkability, accessibility, and connectivity at major corridors.

## **GOAL 3:**

Promote and improve access to public transportation options.

## **GOAL 4:**

Improve and support bike infrastructure and culture.

## **GOAL 5:**

Consider vehicular parking needs in the short term, the future, and the unforeseen future.

# GOAL 1:

## Promote and improve transportation diversity.

Like many other cities in Southeast Michigan, the vast majority of residents commute by private automobile. Currently within Ferndale, there is a great deal of momentum toward increasing transportation options for residents. The City should continue to support increasing the availability of options to residents such as public transit and improvements in non-motorized infrastructure. The following transportation and mobility recommendations related to transportation diversity support Goal 1.



*"...While I would struggle to say a decent thing about metro Detroit's public transit, us Woodward communities luck out in one of the few thoroughfares that seem to work fairly well in this regard. Older kids should take advantage of this, appreciate it, and expect more as they become adults. An opportunity to hop on the 450/460 and get somewhere different, for a couple bucks... is a whole new world for a 15 year old."*

### **T1.1:** Establish a designated staff position for someone with experience in transportation planning to coordinate transportation planning within Ferndale and be a representative within larger community transportation conversations.

Ferndale is not alone in creating a quality transportation environment within the region; in fact, the transportation system is one of the aspects of life most linked to the region. With more and more people and organizations getting involved in working for better transportation in the region, it is important for Ferndale to have a qualified, designated individual or group to represent Ferndale, advocate for Ferndale's positions, and coordinate the various public transit, non-motorized transit, and vehicular transportation efforts in motion. A designated transportation staff member would have an open ear both to the authorities and to ordinary users of the systems, giving them the ability to advocate for better conditions, shape policy, and align interests.

A dedicated transportation manager will ensure that Ferndale is well represented in regional transportation discussions and will be the clearing house to promote and improve transportation in the city itself, acting as a go-between connecting city

hall, community groups, cyclists, runners, and anyone who might be affected by new measures initiated to improved residents' transportation experience.

#### **T1.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Establish a designated staff position responsible for transportation planning and coordination within the city and region.

#### **WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES FOR FERNDALE?** FERNDALE-EXCHANGE

**BETTER PEDESTRIAN CONDITIONS AT OUR MAJOR CORRIDORS: 19%**

**BETTER SIDEWALKS AND SAFER STREETS: 15%**

**BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: 15%**

**BETTER PUBLIC PARKING: 15%**

**BETTER OR MORE BICYCLE LANES: 12%**

**UPGRADING AND MAINTAINING EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE: 12%**

**INTEGRATING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE INTO OUR STREETS: 9%**



## WHAT TYPE OF TRANSPORTATION CHANGES MIGHT YOU BE INTERESTED IN MAKING IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

FERNDALE-EXCHANGE

I'D LIKE TO BE ABLE TO TAKE DAILY TRIPS ON PUBLIC TRANSIT: 33%

I'D LIKE TO MAKE MORE TRIPS ON MY BIKE: 29%

I'D LIKE TO BOTH LIVE AND WORK IN FERNDALE: 17%

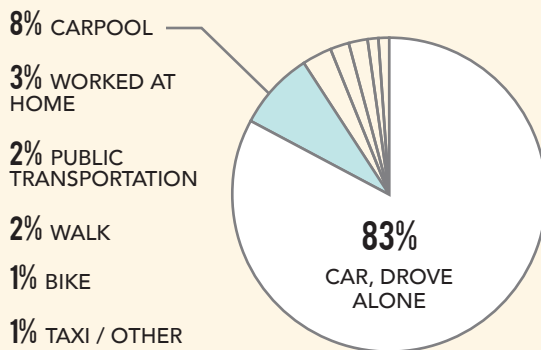
I'D LIKE TO BE A ONE-CAR HOUSEHOLD: 17%

I'D LIKE TO BE COMPLETELY CARLESS: 4%

NO CHANGES. I LIKE MY ROUTINE: 0%

## COMMUTING TO WORK, 2014

CITY OF FERNDALE, WORKERS 16 YEARS +



Source: 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates

## T1.2:

**Continue to utilize and regularly update Ferndale Moves as the City's primary non-motorized transportation resource.**

Beginning in 2012, the City of Ferndale began the process of creating a comprehensive multi-modal transportation vision and implementation plan for the city, branded as "Ferndale Moves." This vision has led to the introduction of a coordinated system of non-motorized infrastructure that has incrementally been implemented throughout the city, particularly by making significant non-motorized infrastructure improvements in coordination with road resurfacing projects. Ferndale should continue to update this plan to ensure recommendations are aligned with the current context, meet the expectations of the community, and reflect current best practices as the vision continues to be implemented.

### T1.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Update Ferndale Moves.

## T1.3:

**Identify opportunities and secure a budget to expand and maintain the non-motorized network.**

To enable the expansion and maintenance of non-motorized infrastructure in Ferndale, the City must continue to identify opportunities for funding the network through a combination of dedicated funds and grants. In recent years, grants such as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) have allowed the City to implement several projects within its non-motorized plan, including the road reconstruction of South Livernois and the new Woodward Corridor Neighborhood Bicycle Network.

The City can also ensure that there is a continued dedicated and permanent funding stream for improvements to the non-motorized network by integrating non-motorized improvements into all future right-of-way improvements so that local funding for non-motorized infrastructure can be applied as it would be for road improvements.

### T1.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Secure a dedicated budget for maintenance and priority projects in the non-motorized implementation plan.
- Identify additional funding opportunities and partnerships for grants.

## **T1.4: Create a program to educate the public and City departments on the usage of non-motorized infrastructure.**

As the City of Ferndale expands its transportation portfolio, some of the mobility options will be new to Ferndale's roads and new to many of its users. As with any new idea, people should not be expected to interact perfectly with new infrastructure the first time that they encounter it, and it's likely there will be a sense of uncertainty among some users and motorists on the correct method to use this new infrastructure.

To reduce uncertainty and maximize benefits, the City should take efforts to educate the public on the correct usage of any new non-motorized infrastructure that is installed within the city for cyclists, motorists, and pedestrians. It is important that all parties understand the basic functions of the transportation network and how to enter, park, and unload next to and walk around bicycle infrastructure. Education materials may include printed and web-based flyers on the correct use of the infrastructure, continued communication in Ferndale Moves, and temporary signage as new infrastructure is implemented.

The City should also take care to ensure city departments are aware of the correct usage of any new infrastructure. This includes parking officials and public safety personnel such as police and fire. City officials should also be trained as ambassadors for this new infrastructure, teaching residents and visitors to Ferndale about safe usage of non-motorized infrastructure.

### **T1.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create public and interdepartmental education programs on the usage of non-motorized infrastructure.

### **PRECEDENT: WALKABLE LANCASTER**



Lancaster, PA is considered one of the best cities in America for walking to work and the overall quality of life. Lancaster's compact size and amenity-rich streets make commuting by foot efficient and enjoyable. According to census data, 10% of the working population walks to work.

Image Source: [www.discoverlancaster.com](http://www.discoverlancaster.com)

## **T1.5: Connect to regional and national walking and biking events (or create Ferndale's own!).**

In order to promote the use of non-motorized methods of transportation Ferndale should connect to regional events such as Bike to Work Day and the League of American Bicyclists' National Bike Month. While these events have the opportunity to promote the use of non-motorized as a viable transportation option, there is also the opportunity for Ferndale to sponsor more of its own events to promote walking and cycling within Ferndale. For example, the Downtown Ferndale Bike Rodeo event could be expanded to focus on all ages of cyclists in the City.

### **T1.5 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Establish and promote biannual walking and biking events in Ferndale.

*"[Ferndale needs] more bike racks! Especially in under utilized spots."*

*"[Ferndale needs] more electric car charging stations."*

## **T1.6:** **Continue to promote and expand car share and ride share opportunities.**

When looking at opportunities to integrate new forms of mobility, it is important to look at how they interact with one another and how they might operate outside the lens of our current transportation paradigm. Improved non-motorized networks and the introduction of future bus rapid transit (BRT) coupled with emerging car sharing services (such as Zipcar), ride sharing services (such as Uber and Lyft), and automated driving technologies offer the opportunity to provide a connected system that bridges gaps in accessibility and connectivity in Ferndale and the region.

In addition to providing residents with more transportation options, car sharing and ride sharing services have the potential to reduce the number of vehicles on the road or using parking spaces, either on a particular day or overall if households decide not to own personal automobiles. Car share can also provide those who work in the community with increased mobility options, where employees arrive by foot, bike, or public transit and have the availability of an automobile, if needed, for trips once they reach their office. Similarly, ride share is increasingly becoming tied to the daily commute across the country, where commuter buses, van pools, and company shuttles provide convenient, more affordable ways for getting to and

from work, much like the informal carpools we know today. Promoting these middle-tier transit options can help bridge the gap between private cars and public transportation and reduce investment and spatial needs for other auto-related infrastructure, most notably parking, as the number of automobiles and vehicle miles traveled are reduced.

### **T1.6 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Expand and promote public and private car sharing and ride sharing options as part of a larger transportation system.

### **LOCAL PRECEDENT: ZIPCAR IN DOWNTOWN FERNDALE**



Ferndale launched car share service at several locations in Summer 2016. The City should continue to offer highly visible and easily accessible car share opportunities in Ferndale.

*Image Source: HAA*

## **T1.7:** **Establish a position on regional transportation priorities and funding.**

With the potential for a regional transit system, desire for more and better non-motorized transportation, and maintaining existing roads and highways, competition for transportation projects and dollars becomes tough. To effectively advocate for better transportation and mobility options, it is important for the City of Ferndale to establish a clear position on the issues and to inform residents of the community on the benefits of public and non-motorized transportation. As part of the efforts of building support for these priorities, the City should continue to promote topics on transportation and activate residents and stakeholders to determine the future of their city.

### **T1.7 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Establish a position on regional transportation priorities and funding.

*"[Michigan] transit improvements are a HUGE opportunity for Ferndale to be on the cutting edge of auto independence in the region."*



# GOAL 2:

## Strengthen walkability, accessibility, and connectivity at major corridors.

Ferndale's major infrastructure corridors are both one of the city's greatest assets and challenges. Participants in the civic engagement process identified the need for better pedestrian conditions at our major corridors as the number one priority for Ferndale. Woodward, Eight Mile, 10 Mile/I-696, and the railroad are efficient when it comes to moving cars and freight but disconnect neighborhoods and present major obstacles for pedestrian, bicyclists, and people with disabilities. Improving these corridors for non-motorized movement along and across them will better connect people and places around the city and contribute strongly to residents' quality of life. The following transportation and mobility recommendations related to walkability, accessibility, and connectivity at major corridors support Goal 2.



### T2.1: Work with MDOT to improve pedestrian conditions and safety at major roads, particularly Woodward Avenue and Eight Mile Road.

While Ferndale is full of walkable streets, there are still some streets that present major obstacles for walkability. Ferndale is bisected by major roadways, particularly Woodward Avenue (M-1) and Eight Mile (M-102), which carry high traffic volumes at high speeds through the city and region. These two roadways account for 14 of the 20 most dangerous intersections within the city. The size of these roadways can present a difficult and menacing environment for bicyclists, pedestrians, and people with disabilities due to long exposure times and multi-leg crossings, limiting the walkability and quality of life of the community.

While Woodward and Eight Mile are important vehicular transportation spines for the city as well as the region at large, they can be both efficient and safe for all users at the same time. The opportunity to improve pedestrian conditions and safety at major roads includes traffic calming, reducing crossing distances, increasing the frequency of crossings, and increasing the quality of crossings

and sidewalks. Furthermore, these major roadways and intersections present tremendous potential to fulfill latent demand for public space by reclaiming parts of the right-of-way for pedestrians.

Transforming these state highways into safer multi-modal streets and intersections will not take place over night and is not something that the City of Ferndale can do on its own. The City should continue to build its relationships with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and neighboring communities to improve roadways and crossings. Safety and quality of the pedestrian experience is also important near transit locations to further the multi-modal connections, transit safety, and transit experience available to users in Ferndale.

#### **T2.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Work with MDOT and neighboring communities to:
  - Redesign major intersections to safely accommodate more users within the right-of-way (i.e., reallocate space to bike lanes and sidewalks).
  - Reduce pedestrian crossing distances on Woodward and Eight Mile.
  - Increase frequency of pedestrian crossing locations on Woodward and Eight Mile.
  - Increase the quality of pedestrian crossings on Woodward and Eight Mile.

## **T2.2:** **Connect Livernois between** **West Nine Mile and Withington.**

In its current state, Livernois between West Nine Mile and Withington extends through the parking lot for Ferndale Foods. The City should reestablish this right-of-way to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment and connected street network. As this street is reestablished, the City should consider green infrastructure and other amenities that can help further the community's sustainability goals.

### **T2.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Reestablish the Livernois street right-of-way between West Nine Mile and Withington.

*"I would like to see a better connector to downtown at Livernois. 9 Mile/Pinecrest is great, Withington to Planavon to 9 Mile is fine, 'cutting' through Ferndale Foods lot at Livernois is a back alley mess feel for cars, pedestrians and bikes."*

*"I would like the exit/entrance lanes in/out of the Ferndale Foods parking lot to be changed. The exit lane at Withington and Livernois is confusing because no one is supposed to be using the parking lot as a cut-through yet people do. Also people turn into the lot all the time when they are not supposed to, which cause confusion at the three way stop."*

*"The intersection [of Livernois and 9 Mile] is unnecessarily complicated for a 3 way intersection. Would also love to see solutions to the challenge of connecting Livernois north and south of 9 Mile."*

## **T2.3:** **Create safe, accessible,** **and attractive pedestrian** **and bicycle connections at** **underpasses, overpasses,** **viaducts, and railroad crossings.**

A more walkable and bikable Ferndale requires addressing the unpleasant conditions at underpasses, overpasses, viaducts, and railroad crossings that present challenges to walkers, bikers, and people with disabilities. Improving accessibility at these infrastructure joints will not only improve pedestrian and bicycling conditions but also strengthen connections to Ferndale's neighboring communities that are otherwise separated by large multi-lane roadways.

Ferndale should work with MDOT and neighboring communities to provide safety and accessibility enhancements to improve non-motorized connectivity across and under these major roadways (Eight Mile and 10 Mile/I-696). Similarly, the railroad, which bisects the eastern portion of the city and separates Ferndale neighborhoods from one another, has four at-grade crossings that should be improved with a combination of physical, audio, and visual treatments to serve the accessibility needs of all people. A railroad viaduct on Eight Mile should also

be improved with adequate lighting and general maintenance to provide better conditions for non-motorized travelers. All of these projects have the additional potential to become creative assets within the city landscape rather than places to pass through.

### **T2.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Work with MDOT and Detroit to improve the underpass on 8 Mile at Woodward.
- Work with MDOT and Royal Oak to improve the overpasses across I-696 at Bermuda and Hilton.
- Work with the Canadian National (CN) Railroad and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to improve railroad crossings at Woodward Heights, Cambourne, East 9 Mile, and Hilton.
- Work with the CN Railroad, FRA, and MDOT to improve the underside of the viaduct on 8 Mile.

### **PRECEDENT: MIDTOWN VIADUCTS**



Community development organizations in Detroit partnered to transform the undersides of three viaducts with public art and light. The partnering organizations issued a call for proposals that asked for designs that combined art, light, functionality, and sustainable materials.

Image Source: [www.midtownviaducts.com](http://www.midtownviaducts.com)

## T2.4: Continue to explore long-term recommendations for bringing Eight Mile/Woodward intersection to grade.

In its current state, the intersection of Eight Mile and Woodward is a grade-separated crossing, carrying a high volume of vehicular traffic but hampering the mobility and economic potential of the intersection. Removing the underpass and returning Woodward to grade would transform the street from a highway to a more walkable, bikable, business-friendly interchange. While this is a major change that requires further study and long-term planning, it could be an extraordinary transformation that serves as a nexus for multi-modal transportation for the region.

The City of Ferndale should continue to work with MDOT, neighboring communities, and regional organizations to explore the feasibility and opportunities of bringing the Eight Mile/Woodward intersection to grade in the future. In the interim, this working group should explore short-term implementation strategies to improve the safety for all modes of transit, test road reconfiguration, and begin to change perceptions and use of the interchange.

### T2.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Work with MDOT, neighboring communities, and regional organizations to explore short-term and long-term implementation strategies for improving the Eight Mile/Woodward intersection.

#### PRECEDENT: PLEASANT RIDGE MAIN STREET STUDY



Pleasant Ridge, one of Ferndale's neighboring communities, used barrels and road tape to test and study the impact of how removing a lane of vehicular traffic on Main Street could make the area safer and more attractive for bicyclists and pedestrians. The success of the project led to a permanent road reconfiguring that has improved the area and created a better connection to its neighboring community, Royal Oak, to the north. The project was also part of a long-term concept for bringing Woodward to grade at 10 Mile/I-696.

Image Source: Woodward Avenue Action Association

*"The Eight Mile overpass bridge not only unnecessarily separates us from the Green Acres neighborhood of Detroit, it also creates unsafe areas, especially for walking, due to decreased visibility."*

*"That Bridge has got to Go!!!"*

*"I see TONS of opportunity [for Ferndale]. Redeveloping underutilized spaces into multi-use (downtown, Hilton, Livernois). Maybe the 8 Mile bridge will come down one day, and the Ferndale side of that intersection will be revitalized. Can you imagine how impressive the gateway between Ferndale and Detroit could be?"*





# GOAL 3:

## Promote and improve access to public transportation options.

Ferndale and the metropolitan region are heavily car-dependent, in part due to ingrained habits but more fundamentally due to a lack of viable alternatives. Today, 93% of Ferndale residents are employed outside the city, and for most, a car is the most reliable and convenient way for them to get to their jobs; however, rising fuel prices and environmental issues are starting to shift preferences. For households without cars, lack of public transportation options additionally presents challenges to access and choice of employment. The City should continue to work with other communities in the region to improve public transportation, addressing the systems we have now as well as advocating for a more robust system in the future. The following transportation and mobility recommendations related to improving public transportation options support Goal 3.



### T3.1: Maintain representation/advocacy position on regional transportation planning committees.

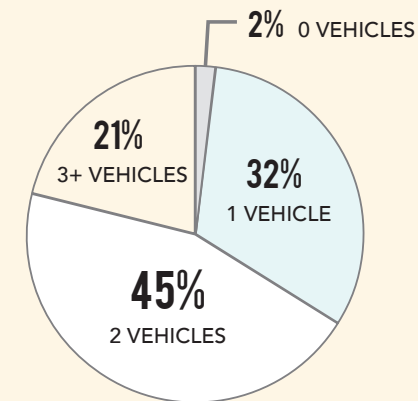
With transportation being a critical component of a strong region, the City of Ferndale should continue to advocate for a strong and connected transportation system that serves residents and provides them with reliable, safe, and affordable connections to locations throughout the region. Advocacy should include participation with transportation agencies such as the Regional Transportation Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) as well as participation in planning for future transit such as the recently completed Alternatives Analysis for bus rapid transit on Woodward Avenue.

#### T3.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Maintain representation on regional transportation planning committees.

*"Ferndale needs to encourage the M1 rail to get at least to 8 Mile. The linking of the city to Downtown Detroit would be HUGE..."*

VEHICLES AVAILABLE BY HOUSEHOLD  
CITY OF FERNDALE, WORKERS 16 YEARS +



80%

OF ALL-PURPOSE TRANSIT RIDERS, WHO USE TRANSIT REGULARLY FOR ALL TYPES OF TRIPS, TYPICALLY GET TO TRANSIT ON FOOT



53%

OF COMMUTERS, WHO USE TRANSIT REGULARLY TO GET TO WORK, GET TO TRANSIT ON FOOT



57%

OF OCCASIONAL RIDERS, WHO USE TRANSIT ONLY ONCE IN A WHILE, GET TO TRANSIT ON FOOT

Source: TransitCenter/Center for Neighborhood Technology, 2016

### **T3.2:** **Improve the transit experience by improving transit stop facilities.**

The majority of bus stops in Ferndale are identified only by a simple sign in the ground. The City of Ferndale should work with SMART and the RTA to develop and implement improved bus stop facilities. Facilities should provide transit riders with an good pedestrian experience for the trip to and from the bus stop. At minimum, bus stops should include a bench for riders to sit while they wait, but may also include shelter to protect riders from the elements and bike racks to facilitate multi-modal journeys. Improving transit stops is also an opportunity to represent Ferndale as a creative, environmental leader in the region.

#### **T3.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Improve transit stop facilities.

## **GOAL 4:** **Improve and support bike infrastructure and culture.**

In recent years, the Ferndale community has embraced a restructuring of its roads to integrate more transportation modes within them, especially bike infrastructure and reduced travel lanes for vehicles. Still, there is work to be done to provide more optimal and complete connections for bicyclists. Continuing to improve, connect, and expand the bike network within Ferndale and between neighboring communities will make cycling a more attractive mode of transit, improving access to affordable transportation options overall and contributing positively to environmental and personal health. The following transportation and mobility recommendations related to bike infrastructure and culture support Goal 4.



### **T4.1:** **Support a complete bike network in Ferndale and between neighboring communities.**

For biking to be an attractive and effective way of getting people from one place to another, we need good bikeways (buffered bike lanes, striped bike lanes, shared lanes) but also connected bikeways. A comprehensive bike network that connects regional destinations will help increase mobility and access to opportunities within Ferndale and beyond its borders.

Ferndale should continue to coordinate with neighboring communities to enhance bike infrastructure and prioritize improvements so that projects result in a connected network. A successful recent example is the City's role in establishing the Woodward Corridor Neighborhood Bicycle Network, a 2016 recipient of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant award, to improve bike routes and link together Ferndale and five surrounding communities. Ensuring Ferndale Moves, Ferndale's comprehensive multi-modal plan (see T1.2), aligns with neighboring communities' plans will also facilitate a connected network and maximize investments.

City staff should also work with business owners, the DDA, and local cycling enthusiasts to create a bicycling advocacy group within Ferndale and explore becoming a League of American Bicyclists designated Bicycle Friendly Community.

#### **T4.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Expand the bike network within Ferndale.
- Expand the bike network between Ferndale and neighboring communities.
- Create a bicycling advocacy group within Ferndale; explore becoming a League of American Bicyclists designated Bicycle Friendly Community.

#### **T4.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Increase the provision of bike parking for new development through zoning requirements and/or incentives.
- Encourage private property owners to provide good quality and ample bike parking suited for their users and site.



### **T4.2: Provide safe and convenient bike parking.**

Just like cars, a key factor in deciding to travel by bike is the availability of secure parking at the destination. While the City has in recent years implemented a range of safe, convenient, and secure bike parking options, including converting on-street automobile parking to bicycle parking, there are opportunities to encourage the private sector to increase the supply of bicycle parking within the city. The City should consider revising the zoning ordinance to require or incentivize more bicycle parking, both short-term and long-term facilities, than currently required, for new construction projects. Supplying a bike parking guide (print or mobile application) to businesses and other property owners can also facilitate a supply of good quality and ample bike parking throughout the city that is appropriately suited for the users and site characteristics that differ among properties.

New modes of transportation such as bus rapid transit also increase the need to consider multi-modal trips. The provision of bike parking should be included near transit stations to provide more residents with easy access to these transportation amenities.

### **T4.3: Explore opportunities for a bike share program.**

On an individual level, riding a bike can save money while improving personal health at the same time. Through bike share services, many communities are making it possible for people to use bikes without even owning one or having their personal bike on hand for short or impromptu trips, like a quick trip during the work day. As Ferndale advances in its efforts to attract more employers bike share services may also be offered at the business or institutional level, where companies offer access to the bike share program as an employee benefit, for example. The City of Ferndale should explore opportunities to offer and promote bike share to residents and businesses throughout the community as another means of expanding transportation options within the city. Because Ferndale is a relatively small community within a larger region, it may be more practical and useful to partner with other communities in the creation of a joint bike share system.

#### **T4.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Explore the provision of a city-wide or multi-city public bike share program.
- Encourage larger employers to offer bike share to employees.



# GOAL 5:

## Consider vehicular parking needs in the short term, the future, and the unforeseen future.

Addressing Ferndale’s vehicular parking needs must balance the expectations of drivers and businesses with the needs of productive, walkable places. The types of parking needs include “non-capacity” issues, referring to improvements needed within the current parking system for better performance, and “capacity” issues, referring to directly increasing the number of available parking spaces. In the context of planning for the future, another dilemma is the question of how to plan parking capacity when great changes in cars and how they park may be just a few years away. Lastly, the oversaturation of restaurants/bars Downtown has been identified as the primary driver of peak demand and congestion on the parking system and is sought to be more balanced in the future. With all of this in mind – immediate needs, projected needs, and unforeseen changes, and drivers of demand – addressing vehicular parking needs requires creating solutions that are adaptable to changing circumstances in the future. The following transportation and mobility recommendations related to vehicular parking needs support Goal 5.



### T5.1:

#### Implement “non-capacity” strategies to improve the current system.

Although the City has identified a need for more parking spaces to support businesses and new development Downtown, improving the current system’s ability to better serve users is a valuable opportunity to maximize existing infrastructure and make lower-cost, less capital-intensive investments in the interim. Developed by a committee consisting of Downtown business and property owners, representatives from the Downtown Development Authority, city staff, and parking consultants, “non-capacity” recommendations for Downtown Ferndale include:

- Develop and implement a pilot valet service to manage periods of peak demand and increase user convenience.
- Develop and implement a dynamic parking plan and fee schedule designed to incentivize the use of parking lots with lower demand.
- Improve parking signage and wayfinding to parking facilities and nearby destinations.
- Continue to promote and improve shared district parking to maximize investment and land use.



- Establish an exemption to off-street parking requirements in the CBD for any newly converted or created office space to incentivize developers and increase daytime users of existing parking spaces and Downtown.
- Reduce minimum parking requirements for residential and non-residential uses (see L4.3 and L4.4).
- Identify a percentage cap on the allowable square footage of restaurant/bar establishments in Downtown prior to the completion of any capacity-increasing projects. Once identified, work to offer incentive for appropriate new businesses.

These recommendations are intended to provide immediate improvements to the existing parking system as well as strategies to alleviate temporary loss of parking spaces during the construction period of any parking structures in the future.

#### **T5.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Vet and implement “non-capacity” strategies to improve the current system.

## **T5.2: Coordinate parking “capacity” planning with a responsible decision- making strategy rooted in sustainability.**

Many people, city leaders, market projections, and parking studies point to the need to develop a parking structure or multiple structures to meet current needs and accommodate future growth. Assumptions about the future, however – be it new development or autonomous vehicles – has associated risks. Parking is expensive to build and are saddled with a large amount of unused space would be a tremendous waste of valuable resources. Changes in policy, technology, consumer behavior, and regional transportation increasingly make the future less predictable; therefore, decisions on parking investments must be rooted in sustainability.

The overarching goal is not to build more parking but to accommodate growth, ideally without over-investing in additional parking or inefficiently using land. Along with creating a decision-making framework (see L4.2) and reducing minimum parking requirements (see L4.3 and L4.4), the City should consider the following recommendations:

- Continue to promote, improve, and actively manage shared district parking, especially with the flexibility and efficiency to accommodate additional facilities and users within the system.
- Consider opportunities to buy, lease, or share existing parking facilities before creating new infrastructure.
- Consider integrating shared transportation amenities such as car share and bike share as well as bike parking to reduce overall demand for individual parking spaces.
- Pair capacity increases with new development and associated, documented demand for daytime, evening, and weekend users.
- Consider alternative uses and/or users if one or more subset of parking users (e.g., a major office tenant) leaves the system.

These recommendations are intended to act as a list of considerations for making financially and environmentally sustainable decisions in the future when considering parking capacity investments, emphasizing caution not to overbuild in the short term for demand that may not be present in the long term. These recommendations should be intricately linked to recommendation L4.2 for creating a decision-making framework for future parking.

#### **T5.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Ensure any “capacity” investments on the books are associated with documented demand and are part of a shared district parking system.

# CITY SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

CITY HALL, GOVERNMENT, SCHOOLS, LIBRARY, POLICE, FIRE, MUSEUM, PARKS, COURT

For Ferndale to achieve the proposed goals in this plan, the various activities and people involved must be grounded in a single, coordinated, strategic system. City Hall is the appropriate entity to facilitate this system, having the ability to ensure City departments operate consistently across all aspects of land management and regulation, make decisions based on a clear vision and policy goals, utilize available legal and financial tools as efficiently as possible, and communicate clear and consistent messages to residents and stakeholder groups.

City Hall has the responsibility of being:

- **A facilitator**, enabling good development and empowering residents through policy and programs.
- **A coordinator**, connecting people, groups, information, and resources within an interrelated system.
- **A model**, promoting progressive, equitable, sustainable, and resilient development and city systems by example.

Ferndale City Hall is already playing these roles in many ways, but such small and large changes in thinking and procedures requires a moment of regrouping and reorganizing to realign priorities into a shared vision. An effective City Hall will facilitate outcomes that will benefit the community by strengthening neighborhoods, fostering economic vitality, and creating new opportunities for infrastructure and innovation.



# GOALS

The recommendations comprising the CITY SERVICES, FACILITIES, & INFRASTRUCTURE section of the Master Plan are based on data and public input collected during the planning process. Recommendations are organized into five goal areas. Together, the goals and their related actions support Ferndale's vision for the future of our City.

## **GOAL 1:**

Utilize public projects to implement and promote environmental sustainable design and raise awareness within the community.

## **GOAL 2:**

Increase recycling options.

## **GOAL 3:**

Conserve energy resources.

## **GOAL 4:**

Expand the use of green stormwater infrastructure.

## **GOAL 5:**

Improve communication resources at City Hall.

# GOAL 1:

## Utilize public projects to implement and promote sustainable design and raise awareness within the community.

The City of Ferndale and its residents have ambitious and respectable goals for incorporating more environmental sustainability practices throughout the city, including buildings, homes, roads, and city systems. The City should strive to be a model for sustainable design practices to help improve energy efficiency, maximize municipal resources, and improve the environment overall. Setting standards for municipal infrastructure upgrades and new construction will ensure all new investments incorporate sustainable design practices, setting an example for reform. The City can further initiate change from City Hall by promoting sustainable practices to residents and by working with surrounding communities to improve shared resources. The following recommendations related to sustainable design at City Hall support Goal 1.



### **C1.1:** **Establish a designated staff position for someone with experience in environmental sustainability to coordinate sustainability efforts within Ferndale and act as a go-between connecting City Hall and any parties affected by measures designed to improve environmental sustainability in Ferndale.**

As Ferndale continues to work toward its sustainability goals, it should take steps to ensure that all actions taken by the City and its stakeholders are strategic and coordinated. To this end, Ferndale should create a designated staff position to work across all departments within the City government as well as community organizations and residents. This position would be responsible for the coordination, education, representation, and advocacy of environmental sustainability in Ferndale and within the region.

Engaging residents, business owners, and developers who live and work in Ferndale is a key component of making environmental changes, especially because sustainable practices are often voluntary and require a change in the way people typically go about their lives, from how to travel from one place to the next to making home improvements. This position should ensure the public understands the intent of the City's policies and regulations and how they may be affected by them as well as serve as a source of information to provide residents and others with the information they need to begin to implement projects, such as a rain garden or a pervious driveway, on their property. A qualified sustainability coordinator would have the ability to identify funding sources and implement many of the recommendations in this plan.

#### **C1.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Establish a designated staff position responsible for environmental sustainability planning and coordination.

## **C1.2:** **Create an RFQ process for qualified architects and contractors in sustainable design.**

As the City continues to upgrade facilities and integrate a range of sustainability projects, such as green stormwater infrastructure, it is important that the City is aware of a range of architects and landscape architects who are skilled in the design of sustainable projects. Additionally, while a quality design is only part of completing a project, the construction and installation of these projects is equally important to ensure that each project is generating its maximum benefit. The City should take steps to ensure that all contractors are fully qualified in the installation of sustainable design and green stormwater infrastructure.

### **C1.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Identify qualified architects and contractors.

## **C1.3:** **Create baseline standards for building upgrades and new construction.**

To continue being a leader in sustainability in the region, the City of Ferndale should develop and implement sustainability standards for all public facility upgrades and the construction of new facilities. These can include, but are not limited to, energy and water efficiency and on-site stormwater mitigation. These standards will allow the City to lead by example, showcasing advancements in environmental sustainability one property at a time as well as providing a clear indication of the goals and values for development within the community.

### **C1.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- Create standards for municipal facility upgrades and new construction.

### **PRECEDENT: DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR 'GREENING' SURFACE PARKING LOTS**



Toronto's "Design Guidelines For 'Greening' Surface Parking Lots" provide specific measures which developers, designers, and reviewers of surface parking lots can apply to help meet city policies and environmental performance targets.

*Image Source: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)*

### **PRECEDENT: MUNICIPAL RAIN GARDENS**



The City of Grand Rapids has three rain gardens on the grounds of its public-works building complex, collecting thousands of gallons of stormwater runoff during major rainfall events. The City estimates it has kept 1.5 million gallons of stormwater out of the Grand River and the municipal treatment plant. The cost for the City to install one garden was \$35,000, compared to traditional drainage infrastructure that would have cost \$60,000.

*Source: [Crain's Detroit Business](http://Crain's Detroit Business). Image Source: City of Grand Rapids ([www.grcity.us](http://www.grcity.us))*



**C1.4:**  
**Create baseline standards for incorporating green infrastructure into improvement projects of public rights-of-way, alleys, and parking facilities.**

Public rights-of-way, alleys, and parking facilities, typically impervious surfaces, comprise a large percentage of land area in the city, presenting a challenge to stormwater management but also an immense opportunity to make improvements. Ferndale should develop a baseline standard for incorporating green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) into all public infrastructure projects. This could include the integration of pervious pavement, bioswales, and street trees into roadways, median strips, alleyways, and parking lots, especially as these become eligible for capital improvements. The integration of GSI in public infrastructure, in tandem with upgrading municipal buildings (see C1.3), can transform the City's properties into valuable and even productive assets that sustain themselves and support the city over time.

**C1.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create green stormwater infrastructure standards for public infrastructure upgrades and new construction.



PROPOSED CHARACTER: DPW YARD & LEARNING CENTER

**C1.5:**  
**Be a model of sustainable design in the upcoming DPW Yards renovation.**

One way the City of Ferndale can continue to promote environmental sustainability within the community is to continue to lead by example and incorporate sustainability elements into public facility upgrades. The next opportunity for this will be the potential consolidation/upgrade to the DPW Yards. The design of this facility should also be conscious of the entirely new opportunity for the DPW to act as

educator, demonstrating sustainability elements such as green stormwater infrastructure and/or solar power to the public so they can see the benefits and learn practical application practices. The site is also recognized as a key redevelopment site in the future land use plan (see L1.2).

**C1.5 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Implement green infrastructure standards for municipal buildings (C1.3).

**C1.6:**  
**Work with other communities to secure funding and create a plan to separate sewer systems.**

Currently the City of Ferndale is served by a combined sewer overflow (CSO) system which mixes stormwater in with waste water and transports it to a wastewater treatment plant. While this system has sufficient capacity to accommodate the waste water needs of the city and region on a daily basis, major storms can cause the system to discharge raw and partially-treated sewage into the regions lakes and rivers. As a long-term solution to this problem, the City of Ferndale should work with other communities that are served by the CSO system as well as the Great Lakes Water Authority to develop funding and a plan to convert the system from a combined system to a separated sewer system in the future.

**C1.6 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create a separated sewer plan.

**C1.7 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

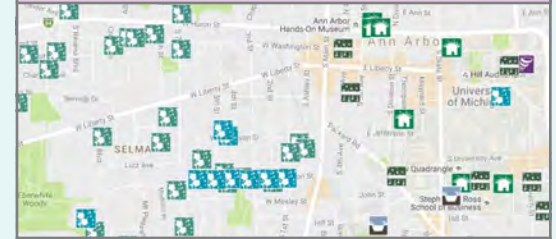
- Increase the number of sustainability projects implemented by residents and businesses.

**C1.7:**  
**Create promotional materials for residents and businesses describing the various sustainable practices that can be deployed in the city.**

Including residents and businesses in the City's effort to be a regional leader in sustainability can make a far greater impact than what the City can do on its own. Empowering residents through education on the benefits of sustainable design and the promotion of available resources can fill an 'information gap' for those who may not seek out information and resources on their own. While residents and businesses desire Ferndale to be a leader in sustainability, they may not be aware of what they can do to help meet these goals.

The City should create marketing and promotional materials to help educate residents, businesses, other property owners, and developers on the range of opportunities they have to integrate sustainable design practices into their properties and buildings during either renovations or new construction. These may include simple instructions such as the benefits of increasing tree canopy and/or more complex installations such as rain gardens, planned natural landscapes, and other green stormwater infrastructure elements.

**PRECEDENT:**  
**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE INVENTORY**



The Huron River Watershed Council, Washtenaw County, and the City of Ann Arbor partnered to develop a public inventory of green infrastructure projects to promote local knowledge. The interactive map shows project locations and types that have been implemented by residents, community organizations, institutions, and businesses.

*Image Source: Google via [www.hwrc.org](http://www.hwrc.org)*

**PRECEDENT:**  
**DOWNSPOUT DISCONNECTION**



Downspout disconnection is a simple residential practice that redirects rooftop downspouts from draining into the storm sewer to draining into rain barrels, cisterns, or permeable areas.

*Image Source: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)*

# GOAL 2:

## Increase recycling options.

The City of Ferndale has taken considerable strides to provide residents with convenient and low-cost options for recycling household items; however, there are many opportunities beyond the curbside bin for Ferndale to recycle much more as a community. The City should continue to operate and improve residential recycling programs, and, more importantly, focus efforts on increasing non-residential recycling, including industrial waste, commercial waste, and recycling in parks, public places, and at events. In tandem with more rigorous recycling programs, the City should find ways to reduce the amount of waste generated across all land use types. The following recommendations related to increasing recycling throughout the city support Goal 2.



### C2.1:

#### Add recycling to public trash receptacles Downtown, at public facilities, at public events, and in parks.

A key step to increasing the amount of solid waste that is diverted from landfills and recycled is to increase access to recycling for residents and visitors alike. To this end, the City should add recycling receptacles at the point of disposal throughout the city, including sidewalks, transit stops, public facilities, schools, and parks. Highly visible and trafficked places especially next to regular landfill waste bins will enhance Ferndale's core waste service by providing yet another convenient way for people to properly dispose of their recyclable waste. In addition to the placement of recycling bins at accessible and convenient locations throughout the city, bins should be appropriately marked so that recyclables are not contaminated with other forms of waste.

The City may also use the addition of recycling receptacles as a communication campaign to promote recycling. Opportunities for promoting a recycling message may include using public space to advertise (bus stops, billboards, recycling trucks, etc.), social media, the City's website, and schools.

#### C2.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Increase the number of recycling receptacles added to locations across the city.

*"[Ferndale parks need] recycling bins! And pet stations near trash cans for clean up."*



**4.4 LB**

THE AVERAGE AMERICAN GENERATES 4.4 POUNDS OF TRASH PER DAY.<sup>1</sup>



**20-30%**

COMPOSTING FOOD SCRAPS AND YARD WASTE CAN REDUCE 20-30% OF WHAT IS TYPICALLY THROWN AWAY.<sup>1</sup>



**15-20%**

THE STATE OF MICHIGAN'S RECYCLING RATE IS ESTIMATED AT 15-20%, ONE OF THE LOWEST IN THE COUNTRY.<sup>2</sup>

Sources: (1) U.S. EPA, (2) Department of Environmental Quality, State of Michigan



## **C2.2:** **Increase business recycling through code requirements and/or incentive programs.**

In order to increase the amount of solid waste that is diverted from landfills and recycled, the City should develop programs that require and/or incentivize businesses to recycle. This initiative should motivate businesses to properly separate recyclables and even compostables and keep them out of the landfill, helping Ferndale achieve its goals for increasing recycling options and reducing waste throughout the city.

Requirements and/or incentives should not only seek to improve business recycling of common materials such as paper, plastics, and cardboard, they should also seek to specifically reduce the types of waste generated by businesses, including food service waste (containers, utensils, food) and industrial waste (bulk, hazardous materials). Encouraging restaurants and other food service businesses, in particular, has the potential to remove a significant amount of food waste from the trash stream for use in the production of compost.

Both code requirements and incentive programs should be paired with recycling education and assistance from the City or other qualified organization to help business owners. Potential funding mechanisms for initiating ordinance compliance and incentives programs may

include local/state grants, tax credits, and rebates.

Initiating the program in targeted pilot areas such as Downtown can be a useful process in educating other businesses and the public, raising awareness of Ferndale's recycling goals, and understanding the challenges to this process. Using lessons learned and developing resources to help businesses, the program could then be extended to other areas and eventually city-wide in the future.

### **C2.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Increase business recycling participation rate.

### **C2.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Increase resident recycling participation rate.

## **C2.3:** **Create a coalition of communities to work with regional authorities to increase access to recycling.**

Ferndale, along with many other nearby communities, is served by the Southeastern Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority (SOCRRA), who provides these communities with curbside recycling for residents and businesses. While Ferndale is a relatively small community there are options to partner with other communities that are served by SOCRRA to take steps to increase access to recycling options and improve rates of participation.

While curbside recycling is available to residents, there is the potential to improve the number of residents recycling household materials. There is also the opportunity to increase access to recycling for items that are not covered by the curbside program. Currently these items can be dropped off at the Recycling Drop-Off Center in Troy. A partnership of communities could work with SOCRRA to create additional drop-off locations to increase convenience of recycling for residents.



## **21% OF WASTE STREAM**

**MORE FOOD REACHES LANDFILLS AND INCINERATORS THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE MATERIAL IN OUR EVERYDAY TRASH IN THE U.S., APPROXIMATELY 21% OF THE WASTE STREAM.**

*Source: U.S. EPA*

## **C2.4:** **Create a drop-off program at the DPW Yard for less common recycling items.**

While the curbside recycling program accepts many common household waste items such as bottles and jars, several forms of plastic, metal cans and foil, paper, and cardboard, the curbside program does not cover everything that can be recycled. If residents desire to recycle items not accepted by the curbside program, such as electronics, they have to travel to the SOCRRA drop-off site located in Troy. To provide a more convenient opportunity to recycle less common items, Ferndale should consider creating a local drop-off location. The DPW Yard may be a good location for this service, especially in the future as it undergoes renovations and upgrades to the site and facilities.

### **C2.4 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Establish a local drop-off site for items not covered by the curbside recycling program.

### **C2.5 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Create a Zero Waste Event planning guide.

## **C2.5:** **Create a Zero Waste Event planning guide with a variety of tools and best practices.**

Ferndale is home to a number of events of all sizes throughout the city, ranging from large festivals such as the annual DIY Street Fair to smaller community events like Outdoor Movie Nights. To most effectively reduce solid waste generated by and at events, the City should create a Zero Waste Event planning guide to raise awareness and help event organizers in preparing their event with tools and best practices in mind. Zero Waste Events follow sustainable practices to send the least possible amount of waste to the landfill and can be highly effective in reducing waste through careful planning and management of events. A planning guide can be a useful tool in helping event organizers reduce the amount of waste items typically used for events, such as single-use plastics (think: cups, utensils, water bottles) and excessive use of paper (invitations, flyers, signage), as well as best practices for capturing non-contaminated recyclable or compostable materials generated from the event.

### **PRECEDENT: ZERO WASTE CHECKLIST**



A zero waste checklist can help event organizers in setting up a zero waste event, including complying with city ordinances and working with vendors.

*Image Source: [www.sfenvironment.org](http://www.sfenvironment.org)*

### **PRECEDENT: ENVIRONMENTAL PURCHASING PROGRAM**



An environmental purchasing program can be a policy or a guide to help consumers - residents, businesses, organizations - buy products that support the environment and local economy while fulfilling procurement needs. The program can be tailored to a target audience and suggest a range of environmental purchasing practices including buying local, choosing recycled products, and minimizing packaging materials.

*Image Source: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)*

# GOAL 3:

## Conserve energy resources.

Energy conservation is another component of commitment to sustainability and major opportunity to improving land use in Ferndale. Making energy investments in homes, buildings, and streets will reduce overall energy consumption, save money on energy bills, and reduce the need for new power supplies. The City can utilize guides, policies and incentives, and communication streams to promote energy efficiency investments through City Hall and into the neighborhoods. The following recommendations related to conserving energy resources support Goal 3.



### 50% SAVINGS

LED LIGHTING ACCOUNTS FOR 50% ENERGY SAVINGS HIGH-PRESSURE SODIUM LIGHT PREDECESSORS.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

### C3.1:

#### Continue to convert street lighting to LED.

LED lighting is one of today's most energy-efficient way cities can upgrade their services to use less energy and last longer. In addition to the energy savings of approximately 50% over the high-pressure sodium light predecessors, other benefits from LED lighting include; increased life span, higher light output, reduced glare, and better color rendering, resulting in better night time visibility. The improved light quality can provide better night time visibility as well as making it easier to comply with a dark sky lighting initiative (see L5.4). The City of Ferndale should continue the conversion of conventional street lighting to LED for these energy, maintenance, and aesthetic benefits.

#### C3.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:

- Convert all street lighting to LED.
- Measure and benchmark conversion progress over time.
- Record benefits (e.g., energy savings, maintenance savings, lighting conditions for pedestrians and drivers, etc.).

### C3.2:

#### Use savings from energy efficiency upgrades to create a revolving fund for future energy reduction upgrades.

One of the barriers to making investments in sustainability is the upfront cost. To overcome this barrier, the City should create a revolving fund to pay for future energy efficiency upgrades from the cost savings of previous investments in upgrades. This fund will create a stable and continuous funding source for the City to continue investing in energy efficiency and sustainability.

#### C3.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Create a revolving fund for sustainability investments.



### 15% OF ENERGY USE

LIGHTING ACCOUNTS FOR 15% OF TOTAL ENERGY USE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

Source: Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS)

# GOAL 4:

## Expand the use of green stormwater infrastructure.

Green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) can help address water and air quality issues, manage extreme weather impacts, improve municipal operations, and provide the community with additional greenery. The City can expand the use of GSI on its land, streets, and buildings through regulatory tools, communication efforts, and targeted projects. Although denser areas have the most impervious surfaces and thus the most runoff, they unfortunately also have the fewest opportunities to integrate GSI. Identifying viable opportunities, promoting their benefits, and providing resources can help the public and private sector confront and overcome barriers. The following recommendations related to expanding green stormwater infrastructure support Goal 4.



### C4.1: Develop zoning incentives for integrating green stormwater infrastructure into Downtown development projects.

While there are many things the City can do to incorporate green stormwater infrastructure into existing public projects, such as parks, public facilities, and streetscape improvements, there are also many opportunities to incorporate green stormwater infrastructure into new development. This is especially important in Ferndale's Downtown where there is a higher level of impervious surface and due to the higher intensity of land development and fewer opportunities for natural interventions.

To advance sustainability goals Downtown, the City should develop a series of incentives and regulations within the zoning ordinance that promote the use of green stormwater infrastructure within new development projects. Zoning standards and incentives should aim to be realistic and flexible enough to achieve the City's sustainability goals without stifling development. Successful implementation of this could expand to other parts of the City in the future.

*"I think that maintaining what we currently own and anything new that we build is crucially important."*

#### C4.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Develop zoning standards and/or incentives for providing green stormwater infrastructure in Downtown development projects.

#### PRECEDENT: SEATTLE GREEN FACTOR



Seattle Green Factor is a score-based code requirement created to increase the amount and improve the quality of the landscape in new development. Under this code, developers can choose from a range of sustainability elements to implement to meet the zoning requirements, including green roofs, rain gardens, vegetated walls, and trees and shrubs, native plants, and food gardens. The Green Factor is especially targeted toward higher density districts.

*Image Source: [www.seattle.gov](http://www.seattle.gov)*



## **C4.2:** **Integrate green stormwater infrastructure into parks.**

While the primary function for Ferndale's parks is to provide residents with opportunities for respite and recreation, parks also hold the potential added environmental benefits through the integration of green stormwater infrastructure (GSI). There are range of GSI types that could be incorporated into existing parks, from small rain gardens and bioswales to larger landscapes such as tree plantings and native meadows. GSI within parks also presents the opportunity to increase awareness and educate residents and visitors about the benefits of GSI, especially through interpretive signage.

While integrating GSI aligns with residents' desire for more diverse landscapes and offerings at Ferndale parks, it should be integrated to complement the overarching goal of providing recreational opportunities to residents.

### **C4.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Increase the number of green stormwater infrastructure projects implemented in parks.

## **C4.3:** **Promote the use of permeable pavement and other options for limiting the amount of stormwater runoff.**

Permeable pavements are another green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) element that can be implemented to further Ferndale's goals for limiting stormwater runoff entering the combined sewer system (CSO). Permeable pavements infiltrate, treat, and/or store rainwater where it falls and can be cost effective where land values are high and flooding is a problem.

The City should promote and incentivize the use of permeable pavement, especially in areas with high concentrations of impervious surfaces such as the Downtown and industrial districts, including alleys and parking areas. While the City has many opportunities to consider permeable pavements in infrastructure and facilities improvements, reducing runoff from privately-owned sites, such as commercial parking lots and residential driveways, can greatly reduce the stormwater burden on the CSO system. In addition to amendments to the zoning ordinance to allow or require GSI, the City should create promotional materials so that business owners and residents fully understand the benefits and maintenance requirements of GSI. The City should also work with developers to integrate permeable pavement and other GSI into new developments.

*"More natural areas [in parks]. More parks or areas of parks for those of us who aren't on sports teams and don't have small children."*

*"Parks could use visual interest by including more trees and natural scapes. Trees provide a sense of shelter, places to relax and commune, and separation from the busy life."*

### **C4.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Promote and incentivize the use of permeable pavement on privately-owned commercial and residential properties.

### **PRECEDENT: GREEN PARKS**



Green Parks (Philadelphia, PA) is a municipal program that uses stormwater management tools such as rain gardens, stormwater tree trenches, and porous paving to capture runoff water from rain and snow storms. The program encourages residents to nominate parks for green stormwater infrastructure projects.

*Image Source: [www.phillywatersheds.org](http://www.phillywatersheds.org)*

# GOAL 5:

## Improve communication resources at City Hall.

In recent years, technology has changed the way we communicate and share information, from storing data to filling out forms, to finding out what time a store opens. Many technological upgrades have been made incrementally over time, resulting in more but not necessarily updated or easily accessible information. The City's website, Communications department, and internal records keeping and sharing each play a role in providing more efficient and responsive services to residents, businesses, and visitors. Improving the quality of these resources, in their own right and as part of an interrelated system, will make better use of city resources to support residents and city systems. The following recommendations related to communication resources at City Hall support Goal 5.



### C5.1: Improve communication efforts to residents, businesses, and visitors to promote events, recent achievements, and Ferndale's best assets.

Even though Ferndale has that "small town" feel, it can still be hard to get the word out at times, especially with so much competition for attention in the digital age. A strong communication plan that draws on the local qualities that make Ferndale unique – events, recent achievements, and greatest assets – can increase awareness of positive things happening in the city and heighten the sense of community. Ferndale should celebrate the assets it has, especially when it improves them and creates new ones, such as school district achievements and new bike lanes, which can help overcome perceived obstacles. Embracing and promoting Ferndale's specialties and achievements should make residents proud and make others think about visiting or even moving to the city.

*"Advertising! I'm active on FB but find out about events after they happen."*

#### C5.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:

- Utilize a communication plan that focuses on Ferndale's assets, events, and recent achievements.

*"We have not had to the chance to explore the community as we just moved to the area in September, we are looking forward to trying many new things, but would need to be alerted to upcoming events and services. An e-blast is better than just having it posted on a website as I don't always remember to check websites."*

*"PLEASE send us mailers when there is going to be a 5K on our street. It would be nice to have a map of the route and the closure times for each street ahead of time and sent to me in my mail instead of the sign just saying "Sunday no parking". Thank you!"*

*"I do not get mailers from Ferndale because although we live in Ferndale we are in Hazel Park schools. I assume that is the reason we do not get the mailers and I have to search out what is going on in Ferndale."*

*"Did you know that this is the first year in a decade that the Ferndale Public Schools count is higher than the previous year? AND there is a waiting list at the preschool level. Ferndale's schools are currently engaging in cutting edge work and people are seeking it out."*

## **C5.2:** **Improve the user experience of the City's website to be an efficient resource for information, transparency, and basic functions.**

The City's website is a resource center for information about municipal codes, permits and applications, city services and departments, events, and recent news, among many other things. Along with information delivery, the website also aids in establishing greater transparency in local government and provides the convenience for basic functions, such as submitting applications and paying bills. The current website also connects users to its affiliate sites – Ferndale Moves (multi-modal transportation), Park Ferndale (parking), and Downtown Ferndale. The result is a web of information that is extensive but sometimes difficult to find or too many clicks away.

### **C5.2 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

- Improve the user experience of the City's website.

### **C5.3 MEASURABLE OUTCOME:**

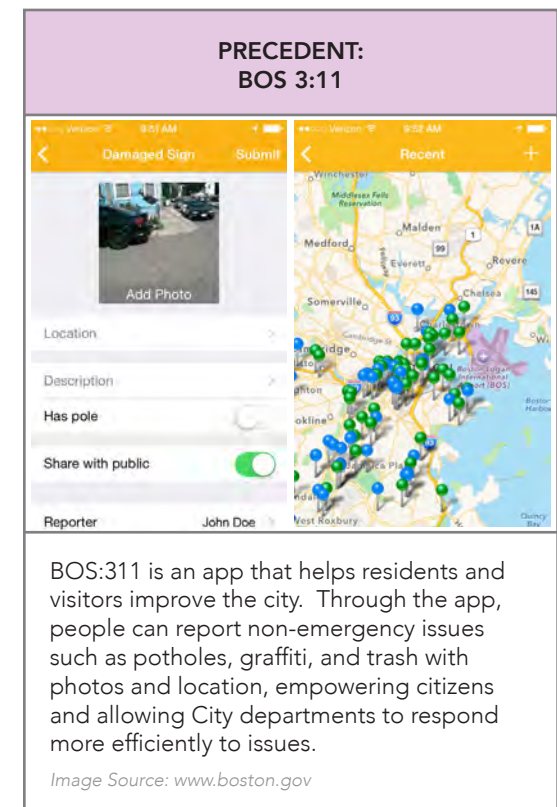
- Upgrade records keeping, data management, and sharing between City departments.

For content and category heavy sites like the City's website, navigation and maintenance are extremely important. Working with a web consultant, the City should determine what general and specific information is most frequently requested and what information needs to be regularly updated. The process of improving the website should include discussions on maintaining the content, including how, how often, and who is responsible. Improving the ease of use and navigation of the website will not only make life easier for residents, visitors, and businesses in Ferndale, it can also promote efficiency at City Hall as a more effective communication and function tool.

## **C5.3:** **Upgrade records keeping, data management, and sharing between City departments.**

Computers, shared networks, and hand-held devices in the field not only make City Hall greener but also more efficient. Eliminating outdated processes and continuing to modernize record keeping and data management will enhance the City's ability to share, track and retrieve information between departments. For example, maintaining updated and sharable Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping capabilities and information

– streets, building footprints, utilities, trees, zoning, etc. – is especially useful for the departments that commonly reference physical data, such as the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Community and Economic Development Department (CED). A good system could also be used to facilitate other recommendations in this plan, including managing the urban tree canopy (see R3.1), improving code compliance (see H2.1), and maintaining inventory of commercial space (see E1.1).



# ACTION PLAN

In order for the Master Plan to be implemented, the City and community partners must carry out the actions needed to achieve the goals and the community's vision for Ferndale's future. Each action includes a time frame in which the action should be carried out and the task leader(s) most likely to carry out the action. The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item; others listed are recommended collaborators.

The Action Plan should be updated frequently to recognize actions that have been completed and those that should be put into motion. Updates may also recognize when an action is discovered to be the wrong tool to accomplish a particular goal, in which case the City should determine an alternate action towards achieving the goal.



## Key Theme: Sustainability

Sustainability is a key theme integrated throughout and during the planning process and is incorporated throughout the City of Ferndale Master Plan. It is purposefully not a separate chapter of the plan; rather, it is integrated throughout the various planning elements.

The City of Ferndale utilizes a Triple Bottom Line approach — Environmental Equity, Community Equity, and Economic Equity — to sustainability. These three filters drive sustainability in the long-term planning of the City. By using these three factors in decision-making, it becomes easy and natural to ensure that the overall tenants of sustainability are thoughtfully and carefully programmed into each municipal function.

## Time Frame

**NOW:** Begin work immediately upon plan adoption.

**NEAR:** Begin work within 1-2 years. Inform the task leader(s) today and initiate a committee if necessary. The committee should meet at least (1) time per year starting now until the time of implementation to ensure any further work and study on the action is completed and implementation begins on time.

**NEXT:** Begin work within 3-5 years. Inform the task leader(s) today and initiate a committee if necessary. The committee should meet at least (1) time per year starting now until the time of implementation to ensure any further work and study on the action is completed and implementation begins on time.

**ONGOING:** Actions that require continuous monitoring or effort.

## Task Leaders Involved

### CITY GOVERNMENT:

- City Manager
- Communications
- Community & Economic Development (CED)
- Department of Public Works (DPW)
- Recreation Department (Rec Dept)
- Sustainability Position\*
- Transportation Position\*

*\*proposed new position*

### BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

- Arts and Cultural Commission
- Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
- Ferndale Environmental Sustainability Commission (FESC)
- Ferndale Housing Commission (FHC)
- Parks and Recreation Committee (PARC)
- Planning Commission (PC)

## The Role of City Council

The City Council is the law-making and policy-forming branch of Ferndale's City Government. They are ultimately responsible for the Master Plan, its adoption, and its implementation. Their involvement in conversations around policy tasks will be essential to ensuring the Master Plan and City goals remain aligned with one another over time, for supporting policy changes, and for finding room in the budget to implement Master Plan actions.

# LAND USE

GOAL 1: UPDATE MAPS, CODES, AND PROCEDURES.			
ACTION		TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
L1.1	Update the future land use plan.	Now	PC, CED
L1.2	Incorporate a special purpose narrative for key redevelopment sites.	Now	PC, CED
L1.3	Create an inclusive process to establish a vision, goals, and expectations for key redevelopment sites to ensure appropriate land uses and good design.	Now	PC, CED
L1.4	Restore Ferndale's public alleys.	Now	PC, CED, DPW
L1.5	Consider creating design standards and guidelines for commercial corridors.	Now	DDA, PC, CED
L1.6	Identify areas of the city where change towards a more walkable, mixed-use urban pattern is anticipated and would be appropriate for future form-based code.	Near	PC, CED, DDA
GOAL 2: REVISE RESIDENTIAL ZONING REGULATIONS TO ENSURE ZONING SUPPORTS AND PROMOTES APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT AND GREATER HOUSING CHOICE.			
L2.1	Revise R2 and R3 standards to ensure zoning promotes dense, walkable "Urban Residential" neighborhoods and desirable housing types.	Now	PC, CED
L2.2	Revise MXD-1 and MXD-2 standards to ensure zoning promotes desired mixed-use development.	Now	PC, CED
L2.3	Expand senior living housing options in urban districts and commercial corridors.	Now	PC, CED
L2.4	Add "Loft" as a residential use, and create "loft review criteria" for special land use review, such as in the Industrial Sub-District.	Near	PC, CED, Industrial Sub-District stakeholders

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.

# LAND USE CONTINUED

GOAL 3: PROTECT AND SUPPORT THE INDUSTRIAL SUB-DISTRICT TO ALLOW NEW USES WHILE PRESERVING ITS FUNCTIONALITY AND CHARACTER.		
ACTION	TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
L3.1 Allow the conversion of industrial space to residential use (“lofts”) in the Industrial Sub-District subject to a special land use permit and “loft review criteria.”	Near	PC, CED, Industrial Sub-District stakeholders
L3.2 Create an appropriate street typology for roadways within the Industrial Sub-District with contextual considerations such as the accommodation of large trucks and multiple users.	Near	PC, DPW, Industrial Sub-District stakeholders
L3.3 Identify opportunities to integrate green stormwater infrastructure in the Industrial Sub-District and implement.	Near	DPW, Industrial Sub-District stakeholders
GOAL 4: CREATE THE FRAMEWORK FOR RESPONSIBLE, SUPPORTIVE PARKING FACILITIES.		
L4.1 Create a long-term parking plan with a clear vision and decision-making framework.	Near	City Manager, CED, DDA
L4.2 Revise P-1 Vehicular Parking zoning district standards and reevaluate its application.	Near	PC, CED, City Manager, DPW
L4.3 Reduce parking minimums for residential uses.	Near	PC, CED
L4.4 Revise non-residential parking requirements to align with transit-oriented development patterns and evolving transportation trends, such as car share, ride share, and autonomous vehicles.	Near	PC, CED
L4.5 Continue to update, utilize, and promote Ferndale’s payment in lieu of parking provision.	Near	PC, CED, DDA
L4.6 Enhance design standards for parking facilities abutting rights-of-way, especially in Downtown and Mixed Use land use areas.	Now	PC, CED, Code Enforcement

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.

# LAND USE CONTINUED

GOAL 5: IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS.			
ACTION		TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
L5.1	Update the zoning ordinance to allow for sustainable energy production.	Near	FESC, PC
L5.2	Review and update city ordinances to allow for green stormwater Infrastructure design.	Near	FESC, PC, DPW
L5.3	Improve Planned Natural Landscape procedures to ensure properties are registered and marked.	Now	FESC, PC, CED, Code Enforcement
L5.4	Create and adopt a Dark Sky Lighting Ordinance.	Now	PC, FESC

# HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

GOAL 1: EXPAND HOUSING SERVICES FOR HOMEOWNERS, RENTERS, AND LANDLORDS.			
H1.1	Promote Ferndale as a great place to live.	Now	Communications, CED, DDA, FHC
H1.2	Support new landlords and renters with “Welcome to Ferndale” resources.	Near	Communications, CED
H1.3	Promote good landlords through an incentives and marketing program.	Now	CED, Communications
H1.4	Provide education and resources to residents on ‘green’ residential practices for their properties and homes.	Near	FESC, Code Enforcement
GOAL 2: SUPPORT EXISTING RESIDENTS AND PRESERVE THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK.			
H2.1	Improve code compliance and enforcement effectiveness.	Near	CED, Code Enforcement
H2.2	Provide support for homeowners to update and remodel their homes and properties.	Near	CED, Communications, FESC
H2.3	Assist residents in need with maintenance and repairs.	Near	CED, Communications

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.



# HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS CONTINUED

GOAL 3: PROMOTE NEIGHBORHOODS AND EXPAND LOCAL CAPACITY.			
ACTION		TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
H3.1	Encourage neighborhood stewardship and provide resources for neighbors to organize.	Near	Communications
H3.2	Create a collection of house and neighborhood tours that market Ferndale's history and unique qualities.	Near	CED, Historical Society
H3.3	Promote neighborhood amenities, such as parks, schools, and other quality of life elements.	Near	Communications
GOAL 4: PURSUE AND ENCOURAGE NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.			
H4.1	Create a common vision and a communication plan for affordable housing.	Now	CED, FHC
H4.2	Identify potential sites for affordable housing and senior housing near transit and services.	Near	CED, PC, FHC
H4.3	Pursue strategic partnerships to develop senior housing at different income levels.	Near	CED, FHC
H4.4	Create design guidelines for "small lot" infill housing; utilize the process as a test for form-based code.	Near	PC, CED
H4.5	Integrate more housing options Downtown.	Near	CED
H4.6	Integrate compatible housing options within the Industrial Sub-District.	Near	CED

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.

# ECONOMIC VITALITY

GOAL 1: PROMOTE A BALANCED, MIXED-USE DOWNTOWN.		
ACTION	TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
E1.1	Create a retail attraction strategy to sustain a healthy and diverse local business community.	Near DDA, CED
GOAL 2: FOSTER A MODERN INDUSTRIAL SUB-DISTRICT THAT SUPPORTS JOB GROWTH AND A SMALL-SCALE MIX OF NEW COMMERCIAL USES.		
E2.1	Promote property and business owner organization in the Industrial Sub-District.	Near CED, Industrial Sub-District stakeholders
E2.2	Encourage small- to medium-scale retail storefronts associated with on-site production and manufacturing.	Near CED, Industrial Sub-District stakeholders
GOAL 3: CREATE STRONG AND DISTINCT NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL NODES.		
E3.1	Allow and encourage neighborhood commercial development to give residents retail amenities in their neighborhoods, such as neighborhood food markets and cafes.	Near PC, CED
E3.2	Cultivate distinct retail clusters in different neighborhoods.	Near PC, CED
E3.3	Update signage and storefront design standards and codes to meet or exceed generally accepted industry standards; establish a Storefront Design Committee to approve proposed storefronts and signage.	Near PC, CED, DDA
E3.4	Establish a storefront and signage improvement matching grant fund; sunset existing non-conforming signage by 2025.	Near CED, DDA
GOAL 4: SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY AND HELP SMALL BUSINESSES THRIVE.		
E4.1	Support the development of entrepreneurship networks and assistance to startup firms.	Near CED
E4.2	Create alternative pathways to normal procurement practices.	Near CED, DDA
E4.3	Promote opportunities for pop-ups and temporary retailers.	Near CED, DDA

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.

# ECONOMIC VITALITY CONTINUED

GOAL 5: CREATE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS TO WORK IN FERNDALE.			
ACTION		TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
E5.1	Increase the number of primary jobs in Ferndale; pursue opportunities to attract one or more signature office tenants.	Ongoing	CED, PC, DDA
E5.2	Increase the number of people who are both employed and live in Ferndale; benchmark progress with an agreed target based on the vision and market studies.	Ongoing	CED
GOAL 6: PROMOTE LOCAL ARTS.			
E6.1	Identify pilot projects for placemaking in targeted areas.	Near	CED, Arts & Cultural Commission
E6.2	Leverage art and trades for education and skills training opportunities.	Near	CED
E6.3	Provide studio space to foster collaboration, creativity, and innovation.	Near	CED

# RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

GOAL 1: IMPROVE EXISTING PARKS, RECREATION FACILITIES, AND PROGRAMS.			
R1.1	Create a cohesive family of park amenities.	Near	Rec Dept, DPW, PARC
R1.2	Evaluate and update programming as needed to meet community needs and to diversify offerings.	Near	Rec Dept, PARC
R1.3	Improve access, visibility, and activity at parks in every neighborhood.	Near	Rec Dept, DPW
R1.4	Expand seasonal use of parks.	Next	Rec Dept, CED, DPW
R1.5	Renovate Martin Road Park.	Near	Rec Dept, DPW
R1.6	Improve and activate Schiffer Park.	Near	Rec Dept, DPW, DDA

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.

# RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE CONTINUED

ACTION		TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
R1.7	Consider the long-term use of the Kulick Community Center.	Near	Rec Dept, DPW
R1.8	Provide wi-fi and charging ports at select parks.	Near	Rec Dept
R1.9	Enhance neighborhood stewardship of parks to increase positive identification with neighborhood parks.	Now	Rec Dept, CED, FESC
<b>GOAL 2: PURSUE LONG-TERM OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW PUBLIC SPACES.</b>			
R2.1	Continue to explore options for designated open spaces Downtown.	Near	Rec Dept, DDA
R2.2	Consider a Downtown community center presence.	Next	Rec Dept, DDA
R2.3	Create a network of parks and non-motorized routes around Ferndale and between neighboring communities.	Near	Rec Dept, CED
R2.4	Provide passive recreation spaces and education on natural landscapes.	Near	Rec Dept, FESC, DPW
R2.5	Create a public art program for parks and public spaces.	Near	CED, Rec Dept, Arts & Cultural Commission
<b>GOAL 3: PLAN FOR FERNDALE'S URBAN TREE CANOPY.</b>			
R3.1	Establish a City Forester to lead and coordinate Ferndale's urban forest initiatives.	Near	DPW, City Manager
R3.2	Continue the street tree program through regular updates to the plan and the inventory; establish a dedicated budget.	Ongoing	DPW
R3.3	Expand the tree program to parks and private properties.	Near	DPW
R3.4	Create a Ferndale street tree nursery.	Next	DPW, PARC
R3.5	Consider the re-use of urban wood.	Near	DPW
R3.6	Offer opportunities for community planting and gardening.	Near	CED, DPW, FESC

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.



# TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

GOAL 1: PROMOTE AND IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION DIVERSITY.			
ACTION		TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
T1.1	Establish a designated staff position for someone with experience in transportation planning to coordinate transportation planning within Ferndale and be a representative within larger community transportation conversations.	Near	CED, DPW, City Manager
T1.2	Continue to utilize and regularly update Ferndale Moves as the City's primary non-motorized transportation resource.	Ongoing	PC, CED, DPW
T1.3	Identify opportunities and secure a budget to expand and maintain the non-motorized network.	Now	PC, Transportation Position, DPW
T1.4	Create a program to educate the public and City departments on the usage of non-motorized infrastructure.	Now	Transportation Position
T1.5	Connect to regional and national walking and biking events (or create Ferndale's own!).	Near	Transportation Position
T1.6	Continue to promote and expand car share and ride share opportunities.	Now	Transportation Position
T1.7	Establish a position on regional transportation priorities and funding.	Near	Transportation Position, City Manager
GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN WALKABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND CONNECTIVITY AT MAJOR CORRIDORS.			
T2.1	Work with MDOT to improve pedestrian conditions and safety at major roads, particularly Woodward and 8 Mile Road.	Near	Transportation Position
T2.2	Connect Livernois between West 9 Mile and Withington.	Near	Transportation Position, PC
T2.3	Create safe, accessible, and attractive pedestrian and bicycle connections at underpasses, overpasses, viaducts, and railroad crossings.	Near	Transportation Position
T2.4	Continue to explore long-term recommendations for bringing 8 Mile/Woodward intersection to grade.	Next	Transportation Position

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.

# TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY CONTINUED

GOAL 3: PROMOTE AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS.		
ACTION	TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
T3.1	Maintain representation/advocacy position on regional transportation planning committees.	Now Transportation Position, City Manager
T3.2	Improve the transit experience by improving transit stop facilities.	Near Transportation Position
GOAL 4: IMPROVE AND SUPPORT BIKE INFRASTRUCTURE AND CULTURE.		
T4.1	Support a complete bike network in Ferndale and between neighboring communities.	Now Transportation Position
T4.2	Provide safe and convenient bike parking.	Near Transportation Position
T4.3	Explore opportunities for a bike share program.	Near Transportation Position
GOAL 5: ADDRESS VEHICULAR PARKING NEEDS.		
T5.1	Implement “non-capacity” strategies to improve the current system.	Now Transportation Position
T5.2	Coordinate parking “capacity” planning with a responsible decision-making strategy rooted in sustainability.	Now Transportation Position, City Manager

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.

# CITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

GOAL 1: UTILIZE PUBLIC PROJECTS TO IMPLEMENT AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND RAISE AWARENESS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.			
ACTION		TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
C1.1	Establish a designated staff position for someone with experience in environmental sustainability to coordinate sustainability efforts within Ferndale and act as a go-between connecting City Hall and any parties affected by measures designed to improve environmental sustainability in Ferndale.	Near	CED, DPW, City Manager
C1.2	Create an RFQ process for qualified architects and contractors in sustainable design.	Near	CED, FESC
C1.3	Create baseline standards for building upgrades and new construction.	Now	CED, FESC
C1.4	Create baseline standards for incorporating green infrastructure into improvement projects of public right-of-ways, alleys, and parking facilities.	Near	CED, DPW, FESC
C1.5	Be a model of sustainable design in the upcoming DPW Yards renovation.	Near	CED, DPW, FESC
C1.6	Work with other communities to secure funding and create a plan to separate sewer systems.	Ongoing	CED, DPW, City Manager
C1.7	Create promotional materials for residents and businesses describing the various sustainable practices that can be deployed in the city.	Now / Ongoing	Sustainability Position, DPW, FESC
GOAL 2: INCREASE RECYCLING OPTIONS.			
C2.1	Add recycling to public trash receptacles Downtown, at public facilities, at public events, and in parks.	Now	Sustainability Position, DPW
C2.2	Increase business recycling through code requirements and/or incentive programs.	Near	Sustainability Position, DDA
C2.3	Create a coalition of communities to work with regional authorities to increase access to recycling.	Near	Sustainability Position, FESC
C2.4	Create a drop-off program at the DPW Yard for less common recycling items.	Near	Sustainability Position, DPW
C2.5	Create a Zero Waste Event planning guide with a variety of tools and best practices.	Near	Sustainability Position

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.

# CITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES CONTINUED

GOAL 3: CONSERVE ENERGY RESOURCES.			
ACTION		TIME FRAME	TASK LEADER(S)*
C3.1	Continue to convert street lighting to LED.	Ongoing	DPW
C3.2	Use savings from energy efficiency upgrades to create a revolving fund for future energy reduction upgrades.	Now	CED
GOAL 4: EXPAND THE USE OF GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE.			
C4.1	Develop zoning incentives for integrating green stormwater infrastructure into Downtown development projects.	Near	DPW, CED, PC
C4.2	Integrate green stormwater infrastructure into parks.	Near	Rec Dept, DPW, PARC
C4.3	Promote the use of permeable pavement and other options for limiting the amount of stormwater runoff.	Near	DPW, FESC
GOAL 5: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION RESOURCES AT CITY HALL.			
C5.1	Improve communication efforts to residents, businesses, and visitors to promote events, recent achievements, and Ferndale's best assets.	Near	CED
C5.2	Improve the user experience of the City's website to be an efficient resource for information, transparency, and basic functions.	Near	CED
C5.3	Upgrade records keeping, data management, and sharing between City departments.	Near	CED, all city departments

\*The task leader listed **first** should be the primary lead on the action item. Others listed are recommended collaborators.