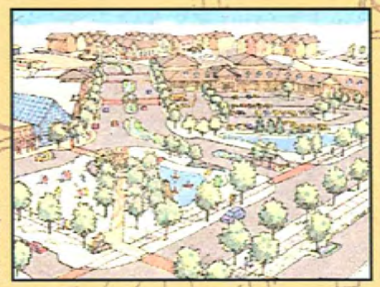
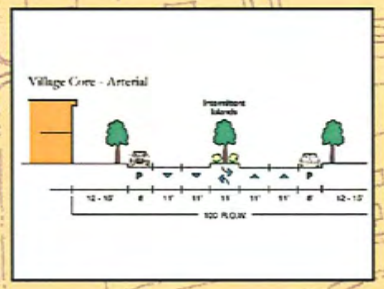
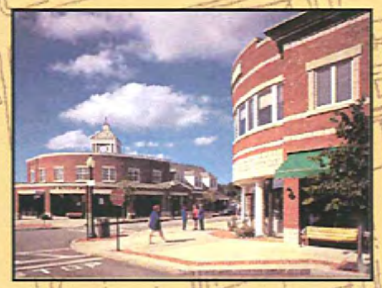
Village Theme Development Plan







charter township
oshtemo

Oshtemo Charter Township
Kalamazoo County, Michigan

Oshtemo Charter Township
Village Theme Development Plan

Oshtemo Charter Township, Kalamazoo County, Michigan

Prepared for:

Oshtemo Charter Township Downtown Development Authority

With Assistance from:

McKenna Associates, Incorporated

DDA Adoption: February 1, 2006
Township Board Adoption: March 14, 2006

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Development Authority undertook the development of this Village Theme Development Plan as a continuation of previous planning and development efforts to ensure the future of Downtown Oshtemo as a viable asset to the community. By identifying a unifying design theme and developing a plan for its implementation throughout the district, the DDA intends to begin the process of establishing the Oshtemo Village area as a distinct place, which is attractive for residents and visitors. The Village Theme Development Plan is the result of a six month long planning process that included: extensive input from the public and stakeholders (people with direct influence on the future of the Oshtemo Charter Township); assessment of the existing physical and land use conditions; and the preparation of the Design Plan itself. Although the Downtown Development Authority has provided the leadership for this Plan, the results reflect the valuable participation of Township officials, administration, merchants, residents, and other community representatives.

This document contains the recommendations for design and redevelopment of the Oshtemo Village area. It also includes summaries of the results from public input events held throughout the process.

The Village Theme Development Plan is expressed through text and graphics. The ideas expressed in these chapters are only as good as the implementation mechanisms used to put them into action. Recommendations regarding implementation are included in Section VIII. The drawings and concepts contained within this plan are just a limited set of the many possible scenarios that could result from the implementation of this plan. They by no means require or mandate the action depicted in the drawing or picture.

II. BACKGROUND

Oshtemo Charter Township is located just west of the City of Kalamazoo. Within the Township, the historic Oshtemo Village area developed at the intersection of Stadium Drive and 9th Street. The community was often referred to as a Village although it never incorporated as such. Later in this plan, we will recommend that the area again be referred to by this name for market identification and branding purposes. To kick that effort off and to simplify this document, we will refer to the study area for this plan as simply the Oshtemo Village.

Prior to the construction of the interstate highways that border Oshtemo Township, 9th Street and Stadium Drive served as major access roads for this area. Oshtemo Village formed at the junction of these roads. Today, much of the through traffic has shifted to the south and east onto I-94 and US-131, but Oshtemo Village remains a busy junction and a viable business district. The Village is near both of these highways and can serve travelers on either road. Plus, the Township and its neighbors to the south and west have experienced tremendous residential growth, which has resulted in additional traffic in this area and expanded the potential market to be served by this center.

With growth, however, come new challenges as well as new opportunities. While the market has expanded, so has the competition. New commercial centers have developed in all directions providing new competition and requiring the old Village to evolve or become obsolete.

Township leaders have recognized this and responded by focusing attention to this critical area in the Township. It began in 1993 with the adoption of the Township Master Land Use Plan. That Plan established the Village as a focus area and identified goals and objectives for this area. These focused around creating a small-town pedestrian friendly atmosphere that fosters a sense of community.

Oshtemo Charter Township Master Land Use Plan – 2004:
"The Plan envisions the village area as a safe place with a strong sense of community and a pedestrian orientation. These can be achieved through a traffic control plan, sidewalks, and mixed land uses that include small service/retail-type businesses."

Oshtemo Charter Township DDA Development Plan, General Policy Statement – 2004:
"The Oshtemo Village area will be a vital center of commercial, light industrial and residential activity where residents and visitors may enjoy the benefits of a small community carefully integrated into the larger region. Land uses will be arranged to support one another and businesses and services in the community will serve both local and other residents of the community. Vehicular and pedestrian traffic will be accommodated to provide safe and convenient access to both residential areas and to local businesses."

The Plan was then implemented with the Zoning Ordinance beginning in 2000. A Village Commercial, "VC", Zoning Classification was created requiring buildings at the street front, sidewalks, and design standards. Finally, in 2004, with the creation of a DDA and the adoption of a Development Plan, the Township had another tool available to begin implementing their vision.

The Village Theme Development Plan represents the first of what is planned to be several projects by the DDA and Township to improve Oshtemo Village and address the objectives of the Development Plan and Master Plan Focus Area.

Diversity of Use

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPALS

The Village Theme Development Plan for Oshtemo is based on the following seven (7) basic principles for reshaping traditional villages:

Promotion of Diversity of Use

The Oshtemo Village area currently has a range of retail uses including offices, restaurants, and daily needs shopping uses, including a grocery. This mix needs to be reinforced and expanded in all areas including offices, retailing, culture, and entertainment as well as residences, recreation, public spaces and special events.

Emphasis on Compactness

Emphasis on Compactness

The core of the study area should be walkable, and new uses and physical improvements should support the pedestrian environment. The boundaries of the core area should be clear and recognizable.

Intensity

Development, including traffic and parking, as well as land use densities should be designed so that the continuity is not disrupted by the intrusion of "dead", vacant spaces.

Accessibility

While a priority for pedestrians must be maintained, both a clear vehicular pattern and parking for the short-term shopper need to be defined and implemented.

Maintenance of Balance

Successful villages are able to achieve a balance of activities that result in a vitality that attracts businesses and residents to their core. Care must be taken to balance the following:

day – night
weekday – weekend
office – retail
concentration – over concentration
high activity – congestion
auto – pedestrian

A balance of activities with accessibility as a priority.

Creation of Functional Links

Pedestrian walks and routes between activity centers must be convenient, direct, safe, and attractive.

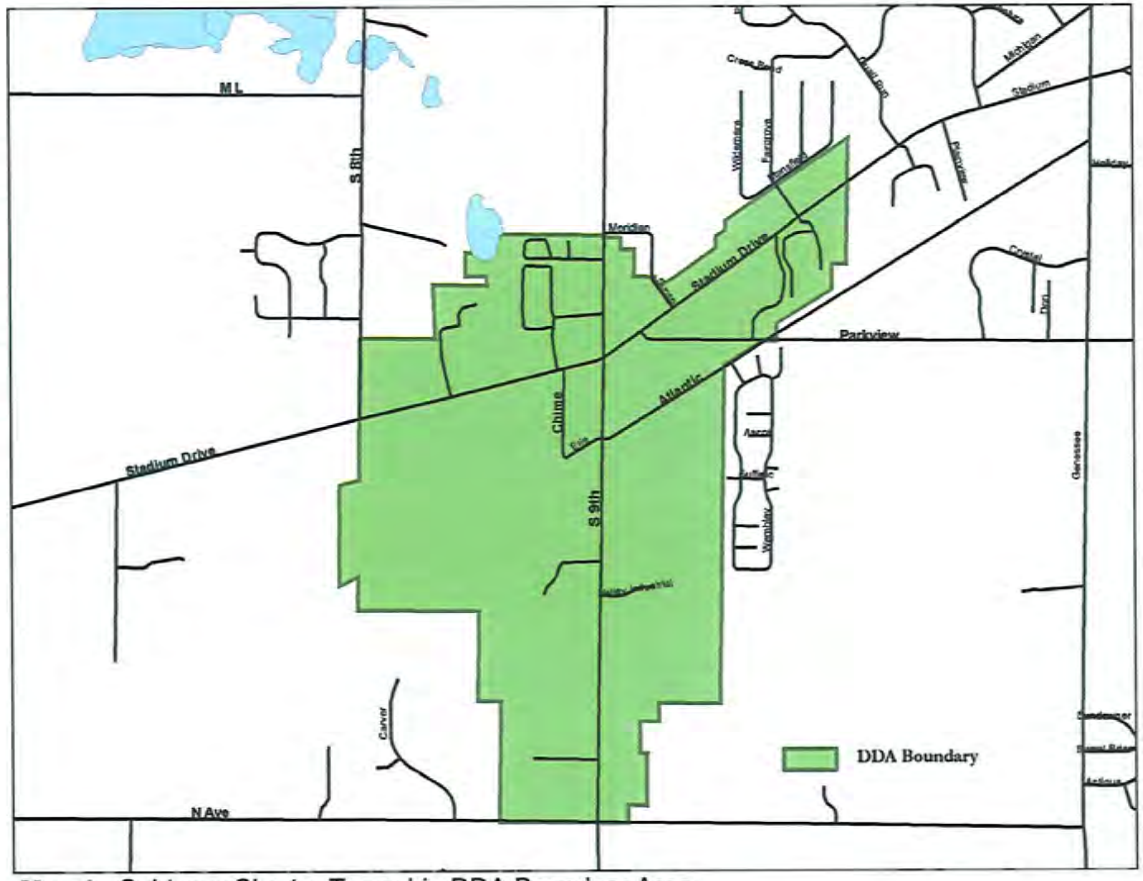
Safe, functional links

Construction of a Positive Identity

The current form and character of the main Village area does not create a cohesive, positive image of a place one wants to linger or enjoy. Enhancement and preservation of a safe, pleasant, quality, exciting place should be developed and regularly reinforced.

REGIONAL LOCATION

Oshtemo Charter Township is located in Kalamazoo County, west of the City of Kalamazoo. The Township is near the crossroads of I-94 and US-131, which is located just to the southeast of the intersection of 9th Street and Stadium Drive. This junction is also the site of the historic Oshtemo Village settlement. This is the heart of the DDA's development area and the subject area for this Plan. It covers approximately 532 acres. Stadium Drive provides access to US-131, to the east and 9th Street provides access to I-94 to the south and M-43 to the north. In 2004, traffic counts estimated over 22,000 vehicles traveled through this area each day.



Map 1. Oshtemo Charter Township DDA Boundary Area

III. ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

This portion of the Village Theme Development Plan is designed to provide an assessment of the current conditions in Oshtemo Village based on data collected by the consultants, information contained in other studies or reports, or input received from stakeholders. This assessment focuses primarily on the physical conditions that exist in the Village but also touches on some of the economic elements as well.

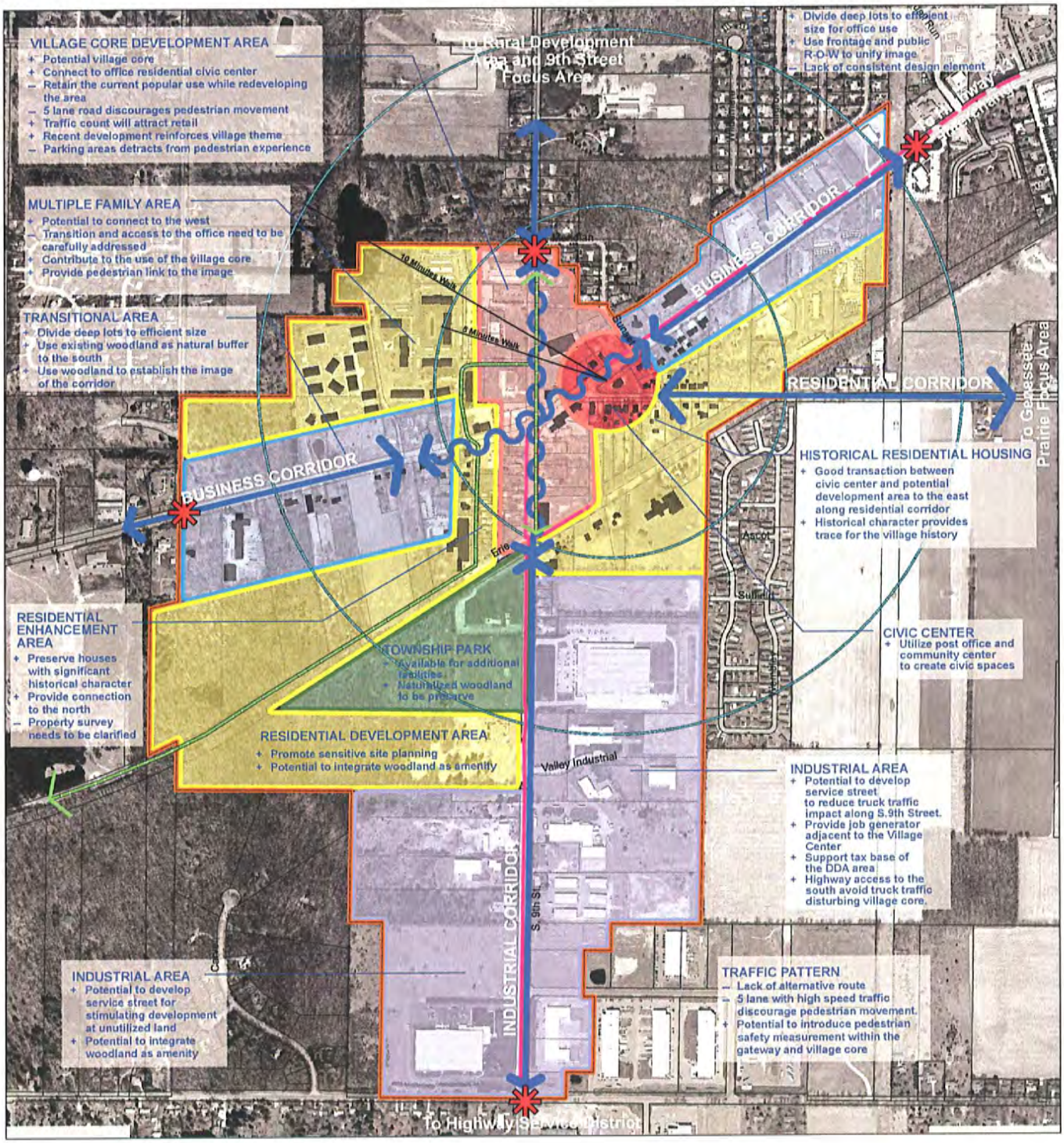
OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

In order to have a better sense of the existing conditions, particularly in the eyes of the individuals that live, work, and play in the Village, a Design Workshop was hosted in order to collect input and relevant information regarding the study area from key individuals and stakeholders related to the project. Select individuals were sent invitations and/or were contacted directly and invited to participate in this event. Held in early July, an entire day was spent meeting with various individuals representing government agencies, property owners, Township officials, residents, developers, and DDA members. The consultants also took time to collect information and take pictures.

The result of this effort was a comprehensive look at the key issues surrounding the Village area. In one day, most of the issues emerged as well as the opinions of key stakeholders within the Village. An Opportunities and Constraints Map (Map 2) was generated based on the results of that day. It represents both the comments from the conversations held during the day as well as conclusions generated during this visit. It is not intended as the final design plan, merely as a communication of ideas. Opportunities represent strengths of the area. Constraints are weaknesses. The Township and the DDA need to be aware of both of these in order to have an effective and efficient plan.

McKenna ASSOCIATES

Oshtemo Charter Township, Kalamazoo County, Michigan



LEGEND:

- Residential Development Area
- Transitional Development Area
- Civic Center
- Retail Office Redevelopment
- Industrial
- Township Park
- DDA Boundary
- Vehicular Traffic
- Bike Path
- Sidewalk
- Gateway

Opportunities and Constraints

Base Map Source: Oshtemo Charter Township

0 250 500 Feet

09/14/2006

ECONOMIC COMPETITION

With the growing population in and around the Village over the past 10 – 20 years, the economic market within the study area and throughout Oshtemo Township has grown significantly. In addition, traffic volumes have increased on the major roads in the Village – Stadium Drive and 9th Street – due to growth in Texas Township and Mattawan and the increased enrollment at Kalamazoo Valley Community College (in Texas Township). With this large potential market comes additional competition.

New Development near 9th Street and Main in Oshtemo Township

Recent development in Oshtemo Township along M-43 near 9th Street is a primary competitor. This area, however, has a different focus, with several big box stores and smaller retail franchises on out lot pads surrounding them. While competing with the Village, this area has a different character and niche in the market. To the south, Texas Corners has a very similar character and niche in the market. Although smaller than Oshtemo Village, Texas Corners (at 8th Street and Q Avenue in Texas Township) contains some of the same uses and qualities that the Village strives for in this Plan.

Other primary sources of competition come from the surrounding region. Both Kalamazoo and Portage have multiple commercial centers serving both specific neighborhoods and the regional area. These centers have diverse characters and are scattered throughout the metro region. Closest competitors to the Village area are likely the Stadium Drive corridor in Kalamazoo, Oakland Drive and Parkview in Kalamazoo, Drake Road and West Main in Kalamazoo/Oshtemo Township, and the Westnedge Avenue corridor in Portage and Kalamazoo.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

The next series of issues relate to the current physical conditions of Oshtemo Village. In order to understand how the design of an area should be modified to make it work better, we must first understand how it is currently designed. The

Village was analyzed in terms of physical conditions, traffic, zoning, vacancy control, and land assembly and redevelopment needs.

Stadium Drive and 9th Street intersection (looking south)

Building Conditions

Many of the buildings in Oshtemo Village reflect nearly a century of varied redevelopment. The architecture represents a range from early 20th Century residential homes and structures to contemporary commercial strip centers and buildings. As a result, the architecture and the buildings do not blend together to form an appealing collection. There is not a consistent, unifying theme or style that permeates the area signifying that this is Oshtemo Village. Although none of the buildings appear to be in bad shape, the lack of compatibility takes away from the appearance and significance of the area overall.

Residential development along Chime Street

The single family housing areas within the Village are located primarily along Chime and Parkview. This housing appears to have been developed in the 1950's and 1960's. Some of the residential structures in this area are in better condition than others. The same can be said for the residential uses that exist along 9th Street just south of Stadium. In both cases, these present redevelopment opportunities as the Plan is implemented. In some of these cases, detached single family Residential uses may not represent optimal use of the property.

Light Industrial building off of 9th Street

The buildings in the industrial district immediately south of the Village are in good condition. Most of these have been built in the last quarter century. Due to the condition of the buildings, the large setbacks, and the specific uses contained in these buildings, the impacts of this development seem limited on the surrounding area. Few buildings in the Village have the architectural elements of a traditional commercial structure. These include large storefront windows, defined architectural features like a base and a cap, and interesting façade features like awnings, banners, or signage. These buildings are built to and oriented towards the street. Some of the

existing structures like the church or the community center have elements of this nature but are not commercial structures.

Signage is also an important component of building design and the overall design of the area. Currently, there is a mixture of sign types present in the Village, likely due to signs being developed at different times under different regulations. The majority are 15 – 20 foot tall pylon signs with illuminated panels. Almost each use has its own sign with very few centers having joint signs with multiple businesses identified. Along the fringe of the Village, some businesses have smaller, ground signs that are approximately four to six feet tall and are externally illuminated, if at all.

There are no public parking areas located within the Village. Parking is provided on site for each of the businesses and uses. On average, the majority of the parking is located in front of the building with very little screening or internal parking lot landscaping. The parking is setback from the road by a grass strip. In some cases, the parking for one use flows into the parking lot for an adjacent use creating what amounts to an alternate drive system. However, because these access points are not well defined, such as with curbs or landscaped islands, it is difficult to tell where or if they exist.

There is little to no pedestrian orientation within the Village. There are no crosswalks available to cross at any of the intersections within the area, although there are pedestrian signals and "push to walk" buttons at Stadium Drive at 9th Street. There is a sidewalk on the northside of Stadium, which runs from the Post Office northeast away from the Village. There are also sidewalks on both sides of 9th Street from Stadium south to Atlantic and then only on the west side from Atlantic south to the Township boundary. The lack of sidewalks makes it dangerous and unfriendly for residents and visitors to walk to or around the Village. This does not stop people, however, as they walk to this area for groceries, recreation, and to catch buses.

Signage and commercial development at Stadium / 9th intersection.

Village grocery store with large parking in front.

Lack of sidewalks along Stadium Drive.

All of these elements are arranged around one intersection of two primary roads – 9th Street and Stadium Drive. These roads are five lanes wide in three directions and three lanes wide to the north. The width of pavement, the amount of traffic, and the speed of traffic create a difficult environment for establishing a strong sense of place and community. In an effort to create a Village–scale environment that is more pedestrian friendly and encourages visitors to stop and shoppers to go from shop to shop, the focus will have to shift from the primary roads towards internal roads, designated to create an alternate traffic network around the community. This will establish a block structure for the urban fabric instead of the present linear (strip) form. The block structure will help alleviate both traffic and pedestrian concerns.

The sense of place is lost in the sea of asphalt due to the small scale of the development

Figure 1 on the following page illustrates the existing conditions in the Village area. This illustration visually demonstrates many of the issues that have been and will be discussed. It shows the variety of types and locations of buildings and structures throughout the area. Also, the lack of form or structure to the fabric of the community is evident. There are still large areas of unused land and a tremendous reliance on the two primary roadways.

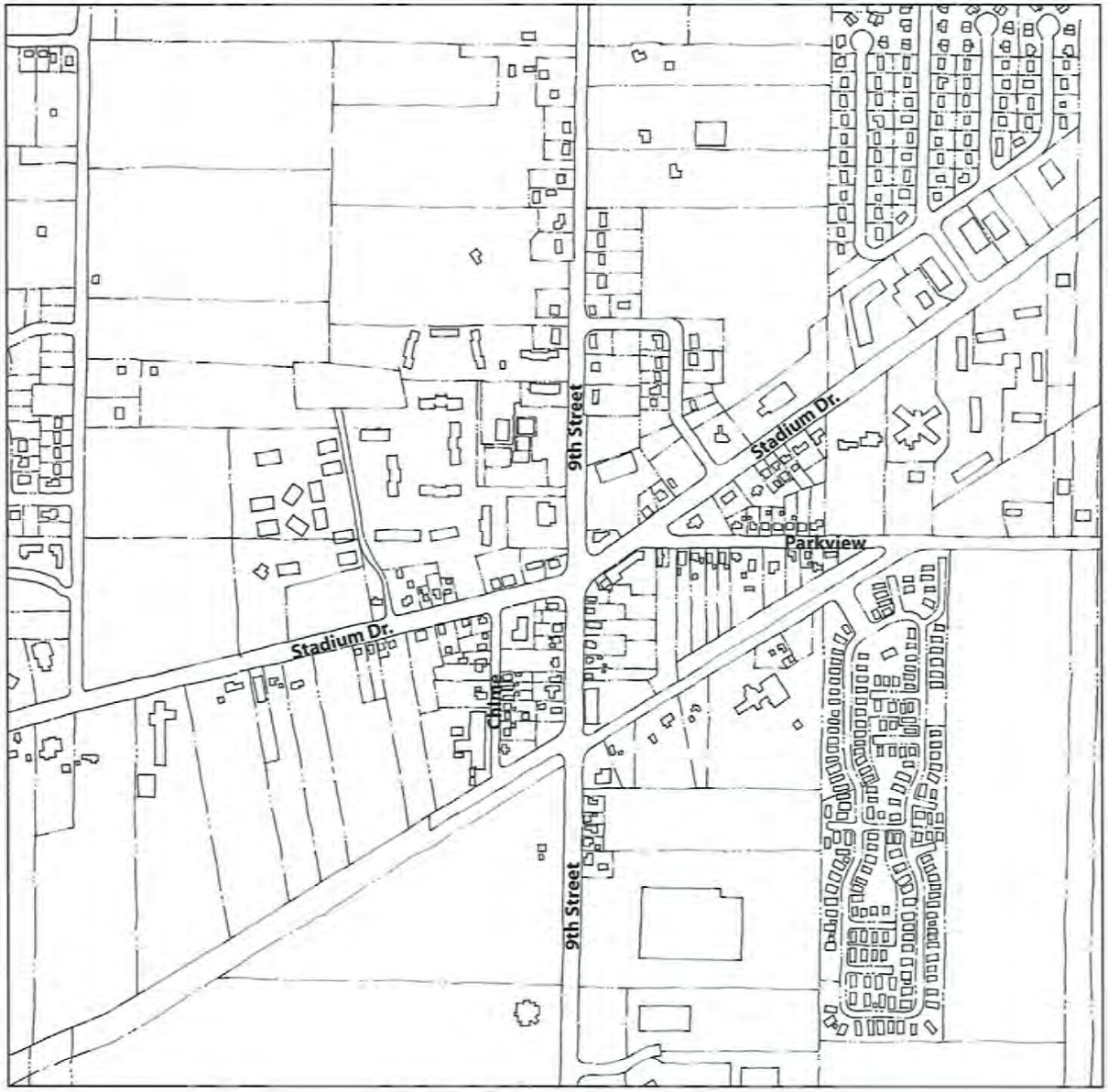


Figure 1. Existing conditions and urban form in the Village Area.

Historic Structures

Two studies have been conducted recently on the history of the Township and the structures within it. In July 1997, Stephanie Wood of Western Michigan University prepared a history of Oshtemo Township including research on historic sites by Beth Timmerman. Then in July, 1999, a deeper analysis was completed of the historic resources in the Township by Pastmasters.

The 1999 study mentioned structures that contributed to the historic nature of the community and recommended the possible formation of a historic district near the existing DDA area. This area captures the history of the Township with houses covering all eras of architectural development. There were 47 structures within the potential boundary of the historic district that were considered to be contributing to the character of the site. The recommendation to establish a historic district would then make property owners within that area eligible for Federal Historic Preservation and Michigan Homeowners Historic Preservation Tax Credits.

Although 47 structures were determined to be contributing within the area near the Stadium Drive and 9th Street intersection, a few stand out. These structures were identified in the 1997 inventory conducted by Timmerman and Wood are identified below:

1. William J. and Margaret Barnard House - 7001 Stadium Drive
   Two-story Tudor revival style house built in the early to mid 1930's. The home is characterized by its many gables and dormers, its large front lawn, and brick and concrete construction. It remains a single family home today with little variation from the original design.

2. Oshtemo Methodist Church – 6600 Stadium Drive
   This Italianate style structure was built in 1861 as the first church in the Township. The arched windows characterize the façade. A few additions have been made over the years including an expansion to the east, an

Barnard House

entryway to the basement, and a handicap access ramp. It remains a signature of the area and a home to a Methodist congregation.

3. 1870 Schoolhouse – 6667 Stadium Drive
The 1870 schoolhouse was built in the Italianate style as a home to the growing population of School District 10. The original building included only the portion to the west. The section to the east is believed to have been added around 1922. The addition was well done so as to blend nicely with the existing building and its materials. Other changes to the building include window replacements and construction of a new porch shelter, both of which were done so as to match the existing structure and elements. The building is currently privately owned.

1870 Schoolhouse

These buildings along with the other contributing structures in the district help to establish the current character and theme of the district. Although there are various architectural styles and elements demonstrated in these structures, each is traditional and contains similar elements and details. These similarities are brought forth later in the Plan when we discuss design recommendations, as the plan recommends that future development carry forward many of the elements characterized in these structures. This is also what was preferred during the public input.

Traffic Conditions

Several issues were discussed with respect to the existing traffic conditions in Oshtemo Village. Both 9th Street and Stadium Drive are primary roads in the County and carry a significant amount of traffic through the Village area. The level of traffic has increased in recent years because of the level of development in the Township and surrounding areas – most noticeably Texas Township and Mattawan. Also, students going to Kalamazoo Valley Community College in Texas Township will often travel west on Stadium Drive and then turn south on 9th Street. In a summer of 2003 traffic count by the Kalamazoo County Road Commission, 24,952 vehicles were counted for a 24-hour period westbound on Stadium Drive west of Fairgrove. In the summer of 2004, 16,951 were counted heading west of 9th Street on Stadium, and 14,354 vehicles were counted heading north of Stadium on 9th Street. These numbers and anecdotal evidence demonstrate high volumes of traffic travel south from Stadium Drive on 9th Street. Also, since these counts were taken in the summer, they do not account for student traffic traveling west on Stadium Drive and driving south on 9th Street as they go from apartments on Drake Road and in Kalamazoo towards the Kalamazoo Valley Community College Campus.

Traffic conditions and considerations dominate the design or planning considerations at the Stadium and 9th Street intersection.

As a result of these traffic levels, it is very difficult to maneuver in and around the Village at peak times of the day. Left turns into and out of businesses are nearly impossible. Furthermore, with the number of vehicles turning left from Stadium Drive onto 9th Street, the stacking lane at this signal backs up over a quarter of a mile temporarily blocking other vehicles from crossing that lane.

Maneuvering is especially difficult for trucks and pedestrians. Without access roads, service roads, or alleys, trucks must also use these primary roads for deliveries, trash pick-up, or other service. For some of the businesses, which are converted single family homes, maneuvering in and out of parking areas requires use of the right of way. Not only does this block traffic briefly, but it also creates dangerous situations for everyone involved.

Similarly, pedestrians and bicyclists are also forced to improvise. Only a small portion of the right of way within the Village has sidewalks or pathways. For the rest, pedestrians are required to walk on the road or over the grassy street lawn. At the intersection of 9th Street and Stadium, there are no crosswalks, although there is a pedestrian signal and a "push to walk" button. This is already an imposing intersection for pedestrians due to the distance required to travel and the amount of traffic, but the absence of a crosswalk adds to the difficulty.

The Kalamazoo County Road Commission has proposed improvements at the intersection of Parkview and Stadium to alleviate safety and visibility concerns at that intersection and attempt to address some of the congestion issues. The proposed improvements call for realignment of the intersection including realignment, signalization, crosswalks, and closure of several of the five adjacent driveways on the north side of Stadium. The intersection will include a consolidated access into the shopping area to the north. The project will compete for funding in 2006 for construction in 2007.

In 2008, the Road Commission is planning to widen 9th Street to three lanes, including non-motorized facilities, beginning at Stadium and extending north to KL Avenue. This will begin to address the additional traffic using this road to access the development to the north as well as the vehicles turning on 9th Street to access the new housing between Stadium and KL. The improvements will make 9th Street a much more desirable and functional north-south route within the township as the corridor continues to develop.

There have been many suggestions made in regards to improving or alleviating the traffic conditions in the Village area. A constraint that limits the Township's and the Road Commission's ability to implement many of these suggestions is the lack of right of way along these roadways. Stadium Drive only has 100 feet of right of way. 9th Street has 100 feet of right of way to the south of Stadium Drive and 66 feet to the north. This significantly limits the amount of room available to install traffic

improvements, considering that utilities, sidewalks, parking, and streetscape improvements are also desired within this right of way.

The existing circulation system within and around the Village area is shown in Figure 2. This drawing quickly demonstrates the Village's reliance on the two primary roads and the lack of a network of collector and local roads to support the function of those arterials.

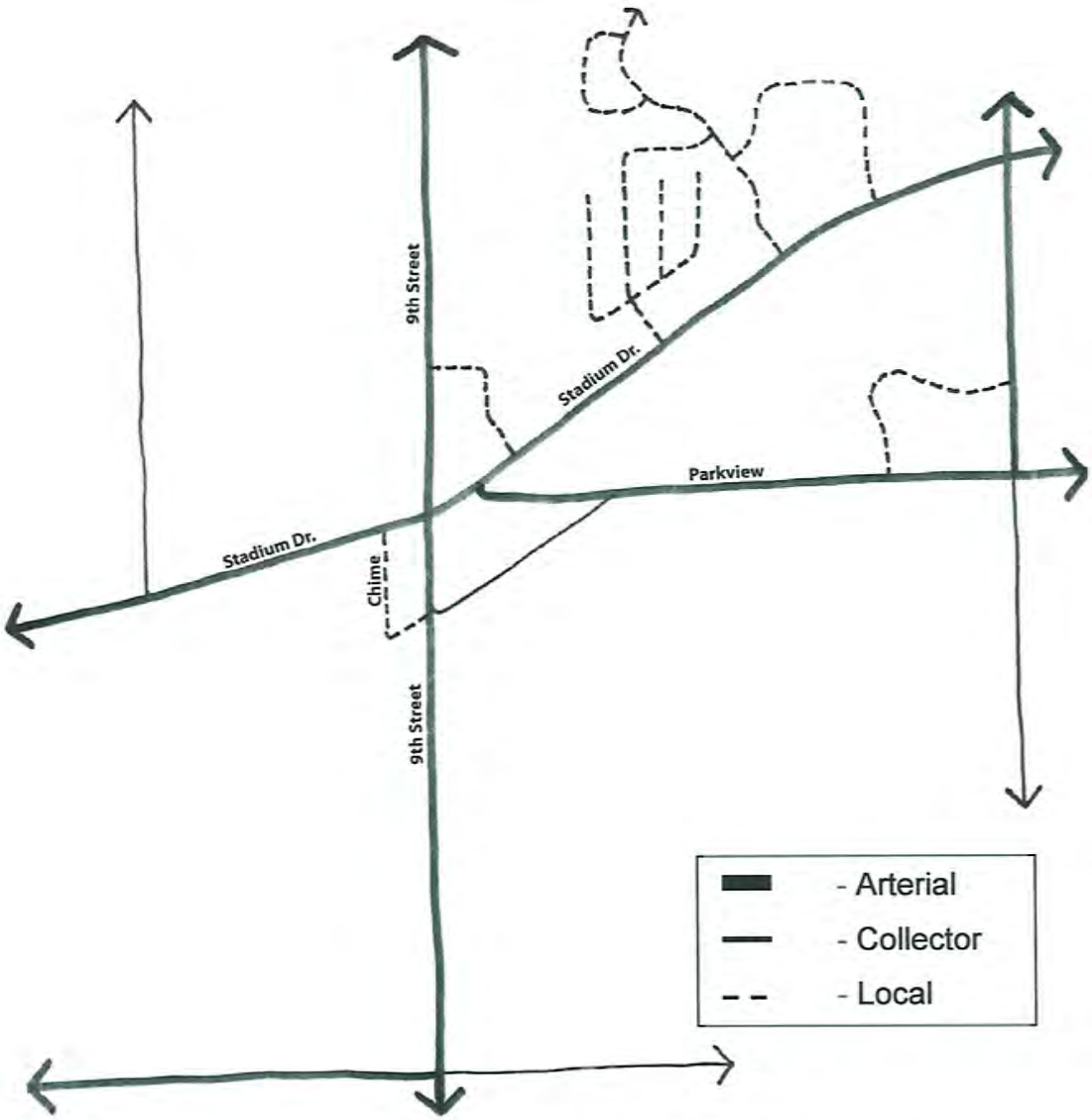


FIGURE 2. Existing Circulation System and Local Road Classifications.

Zoning

As mentioned earlier, Oshtemo Charter Township established the Village Commercial zoning district in 2000 to begin implementing their vision of what Oshtemo Village should be. This zoning includes reduced front yard setbacks, little to no parking in the front yards, architectural standards, signage standards, and other restrictions and guidelines geared towards creating a Village atmosphere.

To date, two buildings have been approved and constructed based on the Village Commercial zoning: a multi-tenant office building at the northeast corner of Atlantic and 9th Street and a multi-tenant retail building on the south side of Stadium Drive between Parkview and 9th Street. In addition, another development has been recently approved (fall 2005) based on the zoning but has not yet been constructed.

Multi-tenant office building near Atlantic and 9th Street recently built to the new standards

Multi-tenant retail building near on Stadium between 9th Street and Parkview.

IV. PUBLIC INPUT

The input of Township residents is fundamental in crafting goals, objectives, and policies that reflect their desires for their community. The following section outlines the procedures followed and input received from the Community Visioning Session and the Visual Preference Survey. This input was an important part of the development of the Theme Development Study.

COMMUNITY VISIONING

To ensure the success of the Village Theme Development Plan, the participation of residents, elected and appointed officials, and community business leaders is essential. A study that has the support of as wide a community base as possible will more likely be utilized and referenced as opposed to remaining on a shelf. A Design Plan with little support will not have as much of an influence on the day-to-day planning activities that affect the community. An effective way of building a comprehensive community base is by building a consensus through the community visioning process.

The Visioning Workshop included a number of activities during which community residents and stakeholders discussed planning related issues and determined which issues are of the highest priority. Community stakeholders consisted of residents, elected and appointed officials, business owners, landowners, and all other interested parties. These stakeholders were invited personally via letter to the workshop session. Also, a press release was printed in the Township newsletter as well as the local newspaper.

Following a Visual Preference Survey (as described below), workshop participants were given several planning related topics for discussion. By sharing their experiences and viewpoints on the various issues, the participants have an opportunity to learn from each other and relate other experiences to their own,

Visioning Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the DDA Development Area?

   Strengths (# votes)
   - Post Office (3)
   - Hardings (2)
   - Flesher Field (2)

   Weaknesses (# votes)
   - Traffic and Speed (3)
   - KCRC "policies" (2)
   - Semi-truck Traffic (1)

2. What word would you use to describe the Village area:

   a). as it exists today? (# votes)
   - Lack of cohesiveness (1)
   - Chaotic (1)
   - Lacks personality (1)
   - Community (1)

   b). as you would like it to exist in 10 years? (# votes)
   - Streetscape (6)
   - Pedestrian friendly (3)
   - Quaint Village (3)
   - 7 others tied with 3 votes

building a mutual understanding of the importance of the issues to their community. After discussing and compiling lists of ideas on these various topics, residents performed an exercise to determine the issues with the highest priority in the community.

Participants were asked to discuss three specific questions: what are the strengths and weaknesses of the Village area; provide one word to describe the Village area now and one word to describe it in 10 years; and what specific uses they would like to see in the Village area? Each small group was given an opportunity to discuss each topic. During the discussion, the moderator of the group listed all of the ideas on large boards. After all four groups had an opportunity to discuss each of the three topics, the groups shared the results of their discussions. One topic at a time, each group shared their ideas. This allowed for some discussion between the groups and some comparison between results.

Once all of the ideas had been shared, participants were given an opportunity to select their favorites. They were given six stickers, which they were told to use to vote for their favorite ideas posted on the sheets hanging on the walls of the room. In theory, two stickers were provided for each of the three questions, but if someone felt more strongly about a particular category or idea, they could use their stickers there. However, no more than three stickers could be placed on any single idea. (A list of all ideas and votes is included in the appendix). This is done to identify priority issues within the community.

The results of the discussion demonstrate frustration with existing conditions. Primarily, the frustration is focused on traffic conditions and the varied combination of uses and designs present within the Village area. However, it is also clear that there is optimism and hope in Oshtemo. People see change in the future. They see a change for the better ten years from now. The things they see and want are small town elements: gathering spaces, walking paths, small shops and neighborhoods, streetscape amenities, small businesses, and consistency in design and layouts.

3. What specific uses would you like to see in this area in the future?
   - Small businesses (5)
   - Bike/walking paths/ Non motorized stuff (5)
   - Soccer & baseball fields, basketball courts (4)
   - Healthcare provider (4)

Residents and stakeholders concluded the workshop with a better understanding of their fellow residents and with a mutual interest in the Village Theme Development Plan. With their issues and concerns now brought to the forefront, the residents have a vested interest in seeing the results of the Study.

VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

During the Community Visioning Workshop, attendees participated in a Visual Preference Survey (VPS). A VPS is a survey which uses a series of images and asks respondents to rate how much they like those images. A total of 86 images were shown to the participants at the Community Visioning Sessions. Members of the Township DDA and Township Board of Trustees were given disposable cameras to take pictures of places and design elements that they liked. These included various images of the greater Kalamazoo area and other communities around Michigan. These images accounted for nearly half of the 86 used in the survey. Respondents were asked to rate on a scale from –5 to +5 how much pride they had or would have for Oshtemo Charter Township when they saw each image. A summary of the results and complete analysis is included in the appendix.

In general, the results from the 24 surveys that were completed confirmed much of the work that had already been completed by the Township during the process of developing the focus area plan, the Village Commercial Zoning Ordinance, and the DDA Development Plan. The survey results showed a preference for a Village style of development with buildings oriented towards the street and parking located to the side or rear of the buildings. Traditional design elements were preferred including storefront windows, durable building materials, vertical elements, and a definitive base, middle, and capital. Pictures of significantly landscaped, green, or softer developments were preferred to those with less landscaping or harsher, urban environments indicating a preference for similar development.

TOP VOTE GETTERS
Visual Preference Survey

Roads / Paths / Streetscapes

Open / Civic Space

Parking & Parking Location

Building Orientation

Building Character

Although this is only one piece of public input and only a small percentage of Township residents participated in the survey, the results are consistent with other plans prepared by the Township and with other input that has been received through this process. Therefore, the Township can be comfortable using this data and feedback as one of the elements used to craft the recommendations for this Village Theme Development Plan. The information will also be useful for other applications as well.

Elements of Village Design

OTHER PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

Besides the Community Visioning Session, there were two other opportunities for the public to participate in the Village Theme Development Plan process. The first was the Design Workshop, which was held in early July, 2005. The design team spent all day at the Oshtemo Community Center within the study area. Key stakeholders – property owners, developers, decision makers, business owners, residents, etc. – were invited to meet with the team and share their input regarding the area. The public was also invited to participate through an article in the Township newsletter and the Kalamazoo Gazette. Participants were asked about the existing conditions, the problems with the area, the positive aspects of the area, and their plans for the future. This was critical information at the early stages of the design process. It gave the design team and the DDA an idea of the key issues and the primary goals of the public and the stakeholders within this area.

The final opportunity for public input into the development of the plan was a public presentation of the final draft. This was held on January 17, 2006 at the Community Center in the study area. All residents of the community were invited to attend and participate in the discussion. A presentation was made describing the plan, its intent, its implications, and how it was created. Those in attendance were then given an opportunity to share their thoughts and ask questions regarding the plan. The majority of the questions and discussion focused on the implementation of the plan and how it intended to address the traffic and circulation concerns.

V. PLANNING AREAS

Planning areas are distinct areas of development within the Village study area. They consist of a mix of land uses with distinctive characteristics. They are distinct because of the uses, the character of the buildings, or the fabric of the community. The planning area map (Map 3) illustrates the following character areas:

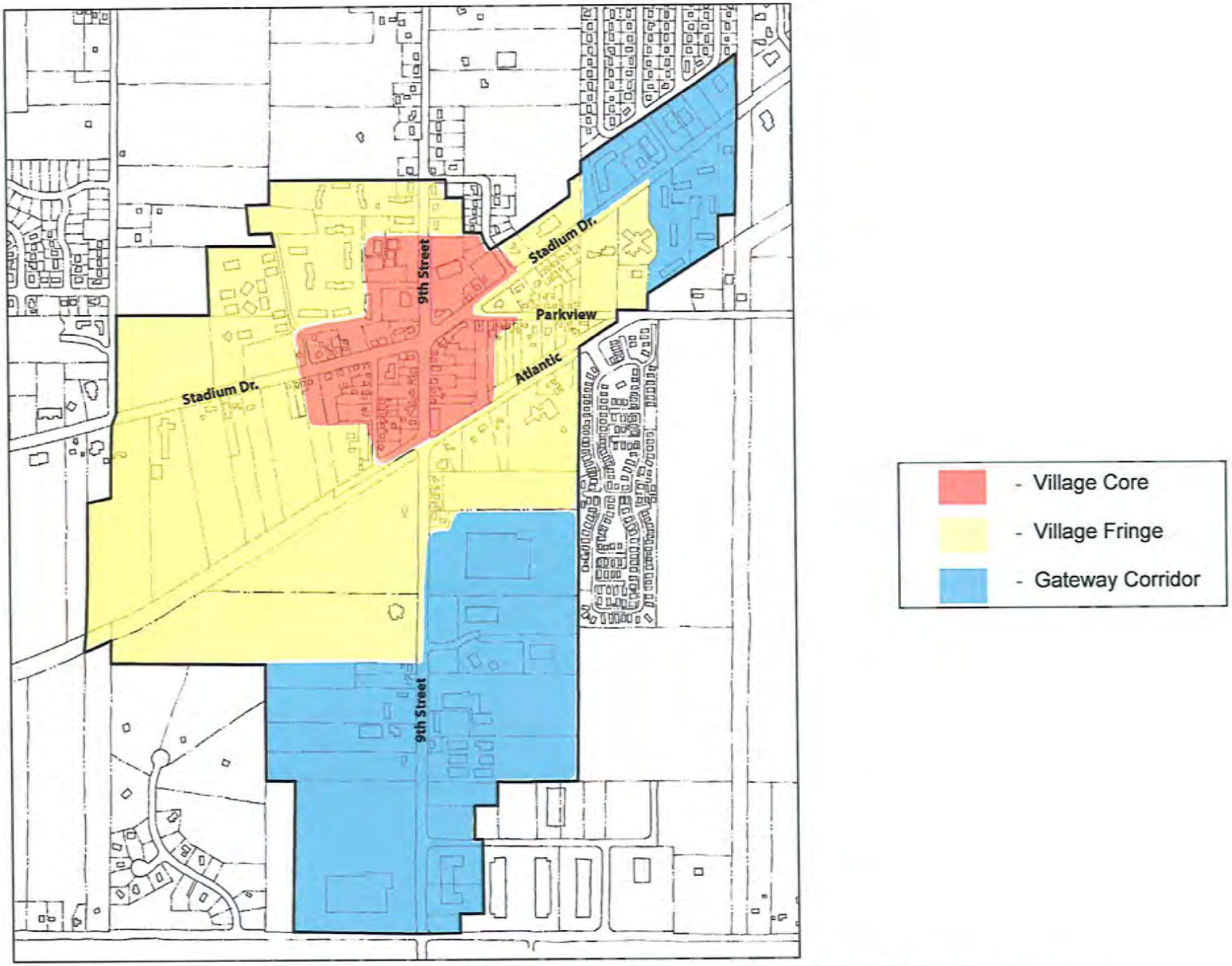
Village Core. The purpose of the Village Core is to provide a pedestrian oriented area with a mixture of commercial, retail, and residential uses integrated horizontally or vertically at a greater intensity than the surrounding area. It is the intent to provide an integrated mix of uses in close proximity to provide an innovative and stimulating environment and encourage walking, biking, and transit use while also accommodating the automobile and boosting the market for commercial goods and services. This is the heart of the Village and should be the focus of most redevelopment/development efforts in the beginning. Every effort should be made to attract quality businesses to vacant and underutilized sites in the Core areas.

Village Fringe. The Village Fringe district is an extension of the Village Core district. The district is pedestrian oriented including a network of streets and pedestrian connections. Off the major roads, the Fringe area is a place for residential neighborhoods and other predominately residential uses. There are many areas within the Village Fringe that are or could be available for development or redevelopment. While the Core is the heart of the Village, the Fringe is where the greatest transformation may occur. Every effort should be made to ensure that this development is of the highest quality possible.

Gateway Corridor. The purpose and intent of the Gateway Corridor district is to provide an area, which allows for a diversified base of commercial and light industrial businesses. Some expansion of the road network is suggested with pedestrian connections in order to ease traffic burdens and make additional land accessible for development. It is less likely that uses will redevelop in this area, so standards should be created to maintain or improve existing and future development. (In addition to

these gateways, the other two gateway entrances to the Village not contained within this planning area will also receive gateway treatments.) These and the other gateways are entryways to the Village and should be a nice welcome mat for visitors and residents alike.

These planning areas are used to designate different standards or guidelines within the entire Study Area. Each area has its own character and quality and therefore each guideline should not apply equally to each area. Although each area is unique, there are many consistent characteristics that run through each of them including the traditional Village theme. These consistent elements help to tie the three pieces together while the differences in the standards are in respect of the different uses and character present in each area. Along boundaries, transitions should be made smoothly by respecting the form and character of the surrounding development when designing projects in this area. The planning areas are provided as a means of organizing the design principles and guidelines provided above. They are illustrated on Map 3 in a general manner as opposed to a parcel specific delineation. A parcel level determination would be made during implementation.



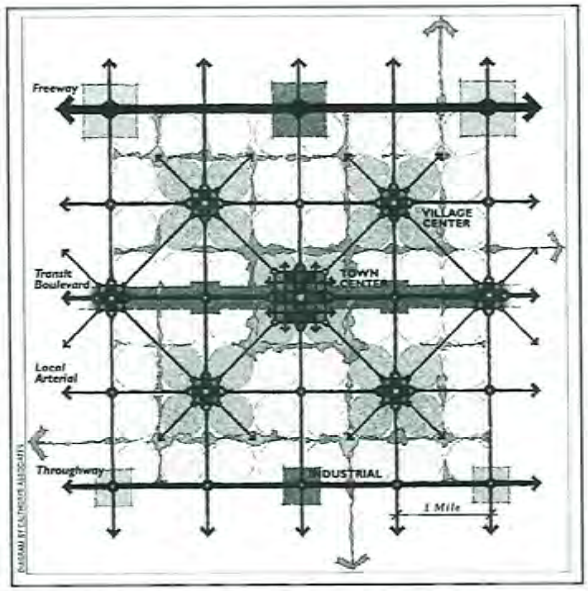
MAP 3. Planning Areas. This map illustrates the three different planning areas within the Village area where the design recommendations are applied. The outline of the area shown is the same as the DDA boundary.

VI. CIRCULATION

The purpose of the Circulation guidelines is to create a detailed framework of attractive streets designed to quickly and easily move pedestrians, bicyclists, shoppers, employees, residents, and both destination and through traffic within the Village area. As detailed previously in this report, the Village study area is centered on an intersection of two County primary roads with high traffic levels. Addressing traffic levels of this magnitude is a complicated process, particularly considering that the roads are under the jurisdiction of the Kalamazoo County Road Commission. Some recommendations and ideas are included below for addressing and accommodating these conditions. However, a specific traffic and circulation study will be required to determine the most appropriate and efficient improvements for this area.

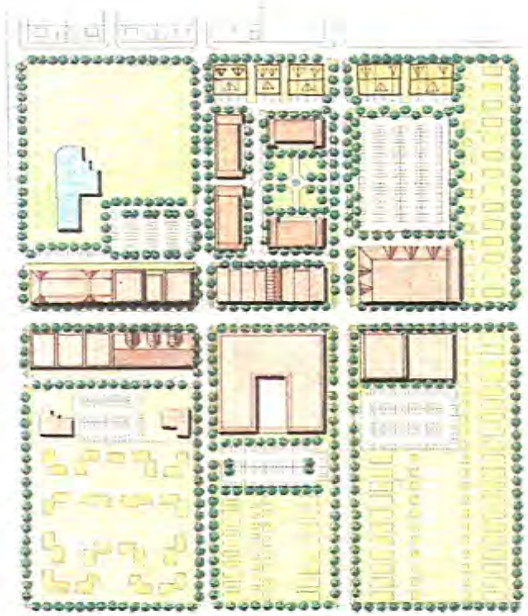
The Circulation guidelines and recommendations are based on the following principles:

- The street network should provide multiple options for reaching major destinations, such as the school, church, or major commercial centers.
- New streets, bikeways, paths, and trails should connect to existing adjacent neighborhoods.
- Traffic calming measures should be used to eliminate short cuts through residential areas.
- Multiple connecting streets throughout the study area should knit the Village area together, not form barriers.
- Streets, bikeways, and walkways should create a unifying circulation network that provides convenient routes throughout the community.



Providing a more continuous circulation network allows for more access points into and out of an area and less reliance on heavily traveled roads.

GRID BLOCK PATTERN



In order to create a more inter-connected community and take traffic pressure off of the primary roads, interior roads must be constructed resulting in the creation of blocks throughout the Village area. The block system provides access to the rear of large parcels within the area opening additional portions of the Village to development and use. This access can also be used for deliveries and loading and for residential traffic, all of which currently relies on the primary roads and adds to congestion in the district.

A pattern of blocks is also more pedestrian friendly. The short blocks with connector streets and intersections provide multiple alternatives for pedestrians. They are not limited to walking along one stretch of busy roadway. Further, the intersections and blocks slow traffic making the area safer for pedestrians.

Most importantly for this area, however, the grid pattern establishes an alternate street network. Motorists might no longer be as dependent on the Stadium Drive and 9th Street intersection as they are now. An alternate network creates other possible ways to get in and around the Village without creating additional congestion. No longer would all traffic, regardless of destination, be dependent on just two roads to maneuver through this area.

Of all the circulation policies and recommendations, this is by far the most important. It has the greatest potential to directly impact the most significant issues facing the Village: traffic congestion and lack of pedestrian facilities. It will take interagency cooperation and public/private partnerships, and a traffic study is required to confirm street alignments and priorities. But these measures should be a first priority for all parties involved.

CIRCULATION PLAN

A revised circulation plan for the study area has been prepared and is shown on Figure 3. This plan includes provisions for new roads and streets establishing the grid road network as prescribed above. The revised plan identifies the roads on the plan by their designation. Some of these roads may be constructed with private, public, and TIF funds. Others may be installed by the private sector through the course of development on individual parcels. Figure 3 also includes the planning area designations shown earlier in Map 3 to designate the various planning districts within the study area. These designations are shown to help identify which roads fall under which classification in a particular planning area. Suggested design recommendations are based on this type of designation.

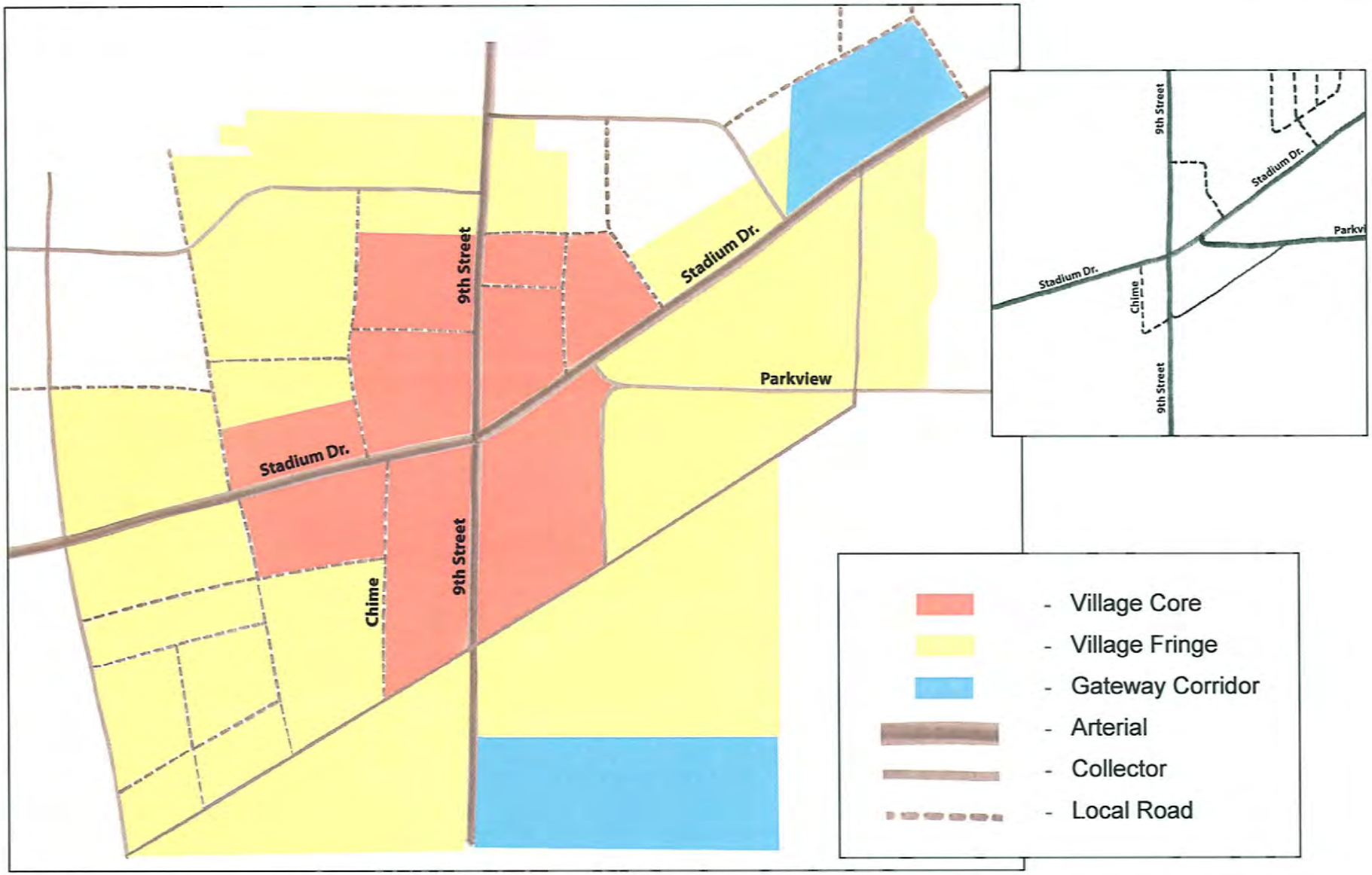


Figure 3. Future Circulation Plan. Potential Road network through Village area adhering to Village design guidelines is shown along with the planning area designations. The existing circulation network is shown in the attached window for comparison purposes. Implementation of this Plan will need to be verified through a formal traffic study.

ARTERIALS

Arterial streets serve regional mobility by connecting the Village area to different parts of the Township and the greater Kalamazoo area. Stadium Drive and 9th Street are considered arterials within the study area. Parkview is also considered an arterial by the Road Commission although it functions more like a collector in this area.

Arterials should be continuous throughout the planning areas with signalized interruptions provided at intersections with other arterials or with collectors with at least one half mile separation between interruptions where feasible. Driveways and curb cuts are not encouraged from abutting residential properties. For commercial uses, driveways and curb cuts should not be allowed except as necessary due to preexisting street and parcel relationships. Such uses are encouraged to provide shared driveways and rear access if available.

A significant issue along arterials currently being experienced in the Township is high speeds. With few stops and 45-55 mile per hour speed limits outside the study area, vehicles come into the Village at high speeds. Methods to reduce speeds should be sought, including reduced lane widths, creating a more grid oriented street network, and increasing the density of development. These methods will also encourage the Road Commission to reduce the speed limits in this area.

On-street parking should be permitted on arterials within the Village Core but not within the other planning areas.

Arterial streets provide routes for the METRO regional transit system. Appropriate bus stop spaces should be provided along arterial roads. Future planning for park and ride lots should be considered.

Considering the size of the road and the amount of traffic along arterials, providing space for pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles is critical. Continuous sidewalks

with a minimum width of 5 feet (12 feet in the Core area) are encouraged on both sides of arterial roads. This will provide adequate width for pedestrians to walk along these roads and access uses along arterials. In addition, providing an extra three to five foot bike lane along the roadway for bicycles will provide a safe place for these to travel. Unfortunately, there may not be adequate room for this to occur in the right of way that is available in the Village Core and have room left to provide on street parking and adequate pedestrian space. However, within this enclosed environment, the circulation system should be safe enough to accommodate bicycles and motorists, particularly once the grid system is developed.

COLLECTORS

Collector streets provide circulation within regions, connecting neighborhoods with each other and to adjacent commercial areas. Parkview and Atlantic serve as collectors within the study area, although Parkview is considered an arterial by the Road Commission.

Curb cuts and driveway access should be permitted onto collectors in commercial districts. Driveways and curb cuts for individual parcels, however, should not be permitted onto collectors in residential areas except where necessary due to preexisting street and parcel relationships. On-street parking is encouraged on collector streets.

Collectors should be provided within and around the Village area to begin to form large blocks. These blocks will then be further broken down by alleys and local streets. Pedestrian routes and sidewalks should be provided. Bike lanes should also be provided along collectors. Because of the fewer vehicles and reduced speeds, collectors are safer roads for bicyclists.

LOCAL STREETS

Local streets provide access to and provide for limited, low speed circulation within neighborhoods and districts. Local streets should generally not be more than a quarter-mile in continuous length and should be parallel to each other at approximately 400 foot intervals. Local streets generally do not require signalized intersections with larger roads. When intersecting with other local streets, stop sign intersections are sufficient.

Local streets should provide on-street parallel parking on both sides of the road. Transit routes are not generally considered appropriate for local streets unless the buses are using the local streets to access bus stops or major traffic generators. Continuous pedestrian walkways should be provided on both sides of each local street.

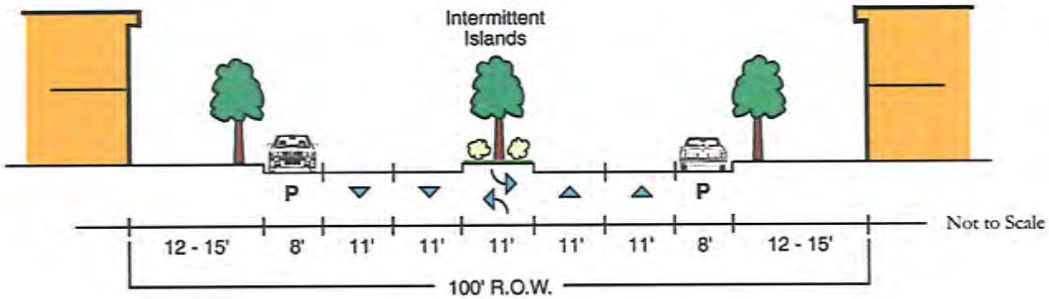
ROAD NETWORK STANDARDS

Table 1 displays the recommended standards for the various types of roads in each of the three planning areas in the Village Study area (see pages 27 or 31). Implementation of these standards will require modification of engineering, subdivision, and Zoning Ordinance standards as well as Road Commission policies. Figure 4 below provides cross-section depictions of how some of these proposed standards could be implemented within the existing right of way conditions.

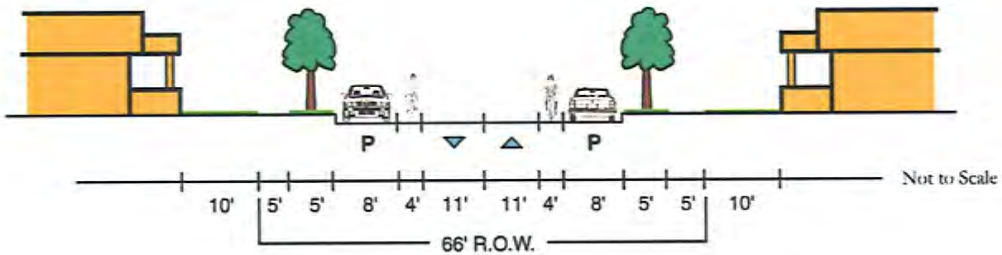
Table 1. Proposed Road Network Requirements

Road Type	Right of Way	Lanes (11' Width)	On-Street Parking (8' Width)	Public Frontage	Private Frontage	Parking Location
VILLAGE CORE						
Arterial	100'	4 + Turn	Yes (2 sides)	Raised planters, Sidewalk (12'-15')	0-5' setback	RY only
Collector	66'	2 + Turn + Bike Lane (4')	Yes (2 sides)	Continuous treelawn (5'), sidewalk (5')	10' setback	RY, SY (limited) only
Local Road	66'	2 + Bike lanes (4')	Yes (2 sides)	Continuous treelawn (5'), sidewalk (5')	10-20' setback	RY, SY (limited) only
VILLAGE FRINGE						
Arterial	100'	4 + Turn + Bike Lane (4')	No	Continuous treelawn (13'), sidewalk (5')	15-25' setback	RY, SY only
Collector	66'	2 + Turn + Bike Lane (4')	Yes (2 sides)	Continuous treelawn (5'), sidewalk (5')	15-25' setback	RY, SY only
Local Road	66'	2 + 2 Bike Lane(4')	Yes (2 sides)	Continuous treelawn (5'), sidewalk (5')	15-25' setback	RY, SY only
GATEWAY CORRIDOR						
Arterial	100'	4 + Turn + Bike Lane (4')	No	Continuous treelawn (13'), sidewalk (5')	80' setback	FY (one row), RY, SY
Collector	66'	2 + Turn + Bike Lane (4')	Yes (2 sides)	Continuous treelawn (5'), sidewalk (5')	20-80' setback	FY (one row), RY, SY
Local Road	66'	2 + Bike Lane (4')	Yes (2 sides)	Continuous treelawn (5'), sidewalk (5')	20-80' setback	FY (one row), RY, SY

Village Core - Arterial



Village Fringe - Collector



Gateway Corridor - Arterial

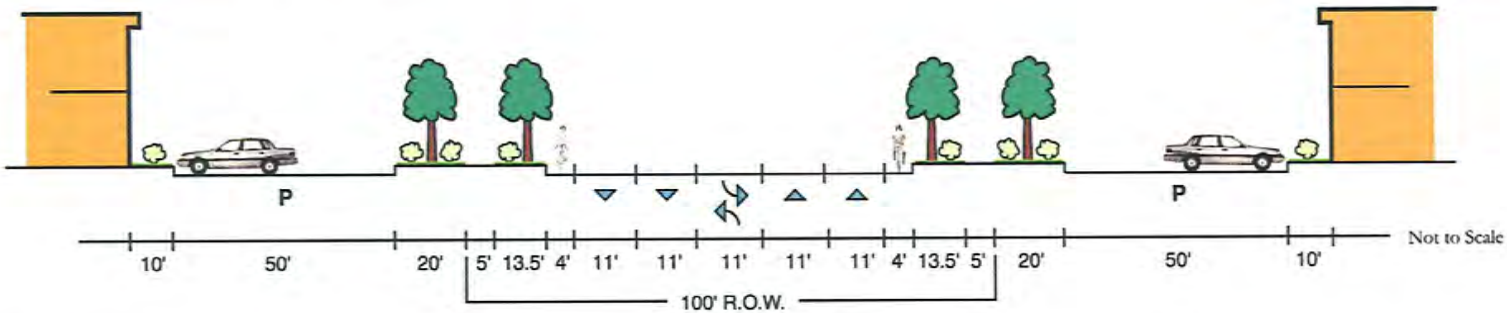


Figure 4. Conceptual cross-section drawings illustrating two of the road types in the three planning areas and how the various improvements can be installed within the right of way and proposed setback standards.

ALLEYS

Alleys provide secondary access to residential and commercial properties. Alleys are located parallel to local and collector streets at the rear of properties that take their primary access from these other streets. In commercial areas, alleys provide space for utilities and access for parking, garbage collection, and delivery services. In residential areas, alleys provide access to garages, and may provide secondary access for emergency services.

No parking should be permitted within the alley travel lane, nor should alleys be utilized as bus transit routes. Alleys may be used for bicycle circulation and for pedestrian circulation. However, separate pathways for either should not be required.

TRANSIT

METRO transit currently provides service to the Oshtemo Village area. This is important service as it allows residents of the area access to regional employers, it carries students to regional educational facilities, and it brings employees to the Village for work. Local transit stops at popular or central destinations should be provided and provisions should be made so that buses stopping do not disrupt traffic.

GATEWAYS

Gateways are located at the entrances into the Village area along the two arterials. There are four gateways for the Village area, although current traffic counts and future land use projections indicate that the north, south, and east gateways are the most prominent and heavily utilized. As a result of recent development in Texas

Township to the south and commercial development along M-43 to the north, the gateway at the southern border will take on new emphasis.

Gateways set the tone for the district area and are opportunities to highlight the Oshtemo Village experience. They are the welcome mat for the Village and provide the first impression for visitors and residents alike. That first impression should be a positive one in order to maintain a high quality of life for residents of the area and to enhance the image, reputation, and value of the commercial services and properties located in the Village.

To do this, gateway areas should include prominent features, landscaping, or signage that send a clear message that vehicles have made a transition into the Oshtemo Village area. The gateway features do not all have to be the same, but they should be similar in order to avoid confusion. They should be designed along the Village style theme that will be described below. They should not create safety hazards for passing motorists, but they should be noteworthy and should evoke pride in the community. Potential design schemes for gateway features are provided in the column to the right.

A subtle gateway treatment with a theme that can be repeated.

The Gateway can also introduce the name of the district or area.

TRAFFIC CALMING

A primary concern of all parties who participated in this process was traffic: slowing the traffic, reducing the traffic congestion, reducing the speed of traffic or otherwise creating a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. Typical traffic calming measures such as speed bumps, chicanes, and traffic circles are not practical along Stadium Drive and 9th Street because of the large traffic volumes that utilize these roads and the designated function of these roads to carry traffic. Also, a roundabout is not practical because of the limited right of way available at the intersection. Along arterials, the primary strategies are lane narrowing, traffic distribution, and speed limit reductions.

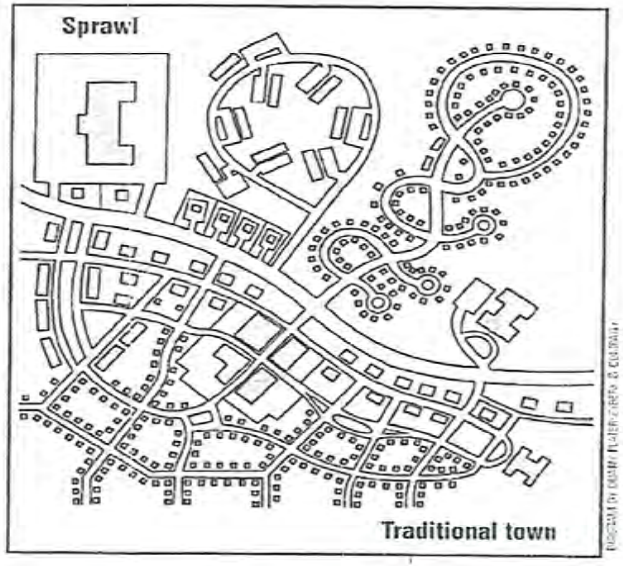
A number of techniques can be used to narrow the lanes, including simply painting the lines closer together. By installing a median, mid-block island, or otherwise widening the pedestrian and landscape areas beside the road, we can add landscaping, block turning movements, and occupy area formerly occupied by traffic lanes. (Some studies indicate that utilizing a median without eliminating traffic lanes can increase the speed of traffic.) Bike lanes and/or on-street parking can also be used to occupy pavement and cause the reduction of lane width.

Another alternative is to reduce the number of lanes. By reducing the number of through lanes along the arterials from 4 to 2, the traffic not only slows but congestion may be reduced as some vehicles seek alternatives to the Stadium and 9th Street intersection.

To reduce traffic congestion, one method is to provide an alternate road network. Presently, the only roads serving this area are the two arterials and some local roads. By providing a broader road network, vehicles would have alternative routes to choose from besides going through the Stadium Drive/9th Street intersection.

Simply bypassing the area through the construction of a bypass or outerbelt-like road around the Village might serve to reduce congestion and address traffic concerns. But this would not be a wise economic solution for the DDA or the Township. The primary market serving the retailers in the Village is from the thousands of vehicles that travel through the area each day. Those vehicles must still go through the Village in order to maintain that market. The goal is not to remove those vehicles but to lessen the congestion and to make it easier for vehicles to maneuver within the Village during times of congestion by providing an alternate road network.

These are preliminary recommendations based on best practices and examples from other communities. A detailed traffic study should be conducted in order to determine the proper methods to be used and the possible impacts.



Interconnected streets reduce the impacts of sprawl and reduce congestion on primary roads.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

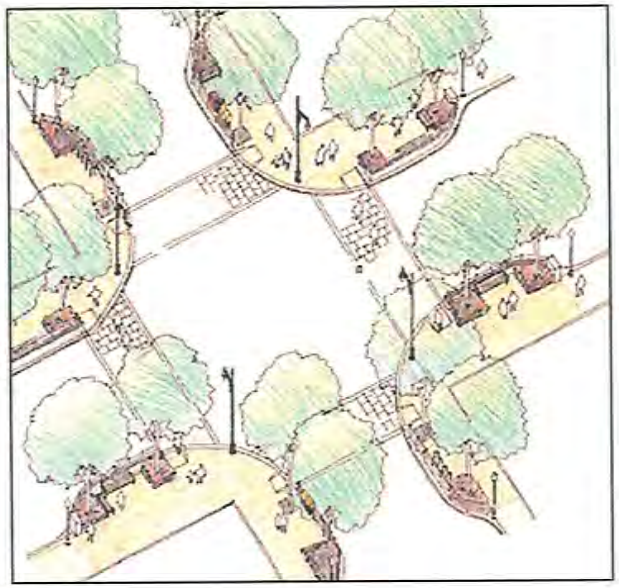
The lack of pedestrian facilities and amenities within the study area was a critical issue identified through the public input process. Without sidewalks and designated crosswalks, the pedestrian is lost along Stadium Drive and 9th Street and left vulnerable to the quickly passing vehicles. The same can be said for the bicyclists with no bike lanes and little shoulder available for relief.

Providing the means for pedestrians to access and walk around the Village Area has been identified as an objective of the community in the Township Master Plan and the DDA Development Plan. This includes improvements such as sidewalks, speed reduction, and other amenities. All contribute to a more pedestrian friendly environment.

The other challenge is slowing the traffic enough that the people feel comfortable walking. If possible, roadway improvements, such as bumpouts at the intersection, help to slow traffic and close the distance required for someone to cross. Also mid-block islands or medians can be provided as a resting place at a mid-block crosswalk while also serving to slow traffic speeds. Sidewalks are recommended on both sides of all streets in the district. Sidewalks in the Village Core are wider to accommodate additional foot traffic, streetscape amenities, and displays. At each intersection, designated crosswalks (some with contrasting materials) and push button signals are also recommended to protect pedestrians.

Providing mid-block crossings with median islands will also help to get pedestrians across the street, particularly along 9th Street where there is not expected to be signalized intersections in the future. This is also important for providing access to the park for all those living on the east side of 9th Street.

The combination of alleviating traffic, providing sidewalks, and creating a streetscape to reduce the scale of the corridors will help to create a more pedestrian friendly environment. With these improvements, the core of the Village will become a much



Bumpouts reduce the distance for pedestrians to cross and give the impression that the road surface is narrowed.

more desirable place for pedestrians. The improvements also create an environment where people want to spend time and interact, which helps to build community. As they gather and interact, they also shop, eat, and spend money at the stores and businesses in the Village without ever having to move their vehicle. By enhancing the quality of the environment surrounding these properties, the DDA can help to improve the business at these properties as well.

VII. DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the Village Theme Design Plan (Design Plan) is to establish a detailed link between the policies established by the Township Master Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance as well as the DDA Development Plan and the actual designs for project proposals. The Design Plan is intended as an implementation mechanism to assist the Township in bringing these plans and ideas into reality.

To this point, the tools in place in the Township have succeeded in establishing strong policies in line with the intent and purpose of the Master Land Use Plan for the Village area. However, interpretation and implementation of those policies has been difficult. Further, with the creation of a DDA and the ability to use TIF funds from the district for public improvements, a plan suggesting such improvements was needed. The Design Plan provides recommendations for public improvements as well as suggestions for redevelopment on private property. The Plan can then be used to establish design guidelines, enhance zoning regulations, and provide incentives for development that will result in a high quality, well-designed, sustainable Village area.

The development of this Plan was based on the results of the analysis of the existing conditions within the Village area, conversations with Township officials and administration, review of existing documents and plans, and public input. This information was compiled together to develop the recommendations and strategies contained within this plan.

The policies and guidelines set forth have been described in detail in the following pages. When taken together, the recommendations create a Village-oriented theme design in keeping with the input received during the planning process and the previous work created by the Township.

OPEN SPACE

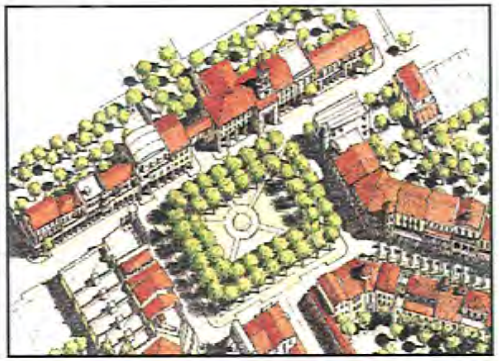
The purpose of the open space guidelines is to provide public and semi-public spaces that enhance the quality of life for Oshtemo Village and Township residents. Open space may be public or privately owned and maintained and may come in many shapes and sizes. Open space may include areas for active recreation and youth activities or it may be areas set aside for the preservation of natural resources or the passive enjoyment of the natural environment.

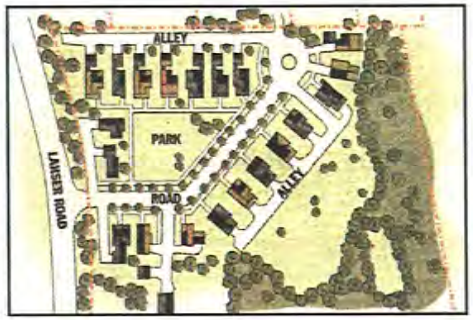
Within the Village area, the only current area of dedicated open space is the Township Park, Flescher Field, located on the south side of the Village Core along 9th Street. This well-used facility includes soccer and baseball fields, a picnic area, playground, parking, restrooms, and a significant undeveloped, forested area with some lightly maintained trails through them. The Park is a tremendous resource for the Township and the Village area. However, access to the park is a concern, particularly for nearby residents who may like to allow their children to walk or bike to the park unsupervised. Providing smaller pocket parks with playgrounds for children or passive space for other residents to enjoy without having to cross major roadways should be a priority. Expanding the use of the park and providing for additional activities is also desired.

The Village area and the area immediately surrounding it do not contain many significant natural features. Much of the area has either been developed or cleared for farming. Nonetheless, the public input results clearly show a preference for softer, greener settings and places. Therefore, development of the Village area should be done thoughtfully to prevent total destruction of the surrounding landscape, and where necessary, incorporation of landscape elements and green space should be encouraged to provide a softer, greener development.

One of the functions of open space is to provide a gathering space for residents. Examples would include a plaza or village square. These are areas of hardscape or softscape, which allow for public gatherings. They have lighting, signage, seating,

Images with Lush Green Landscaping were preferred in the Visual Preference Survey





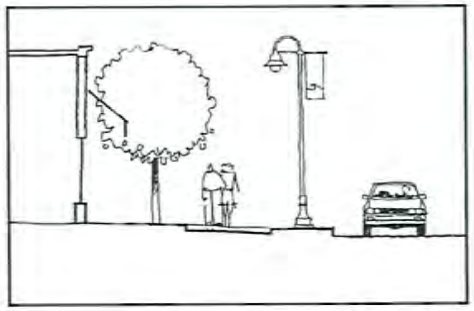
and public art as well as provisions for public entertainment. Plazas are more paved than squares and integrated into building developments. Courtyards should also be considered within commercial developments. These are semi-public open spaces with seating areas, which are available during open hours. These elements are envisioned in the Village Core area.

It is also envisioned that small pocket parks will be integrated into new neighborhoods that are built along the Village Fringe. These parks will be built to serve the immediately surrounding residents and may only include a small playground or a picnic area.

A system of sidewalks and trails should be planned integrating all of the major open space areas in the Township with each other as well as with other major open space areas in the metropolitan region, the nearby Kal-Haven Trail, and the trail systems of the adjacent communities.

STREETSCAPE

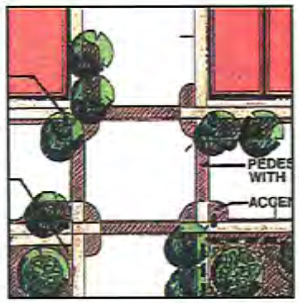
In order to help enhance the street design, soften the traffic and road conditions, and enhance the pedestrian environment, the following streetscape design improvements are encouraged:



Lighting. Streetlights should be scaled for lighting the pedestrian way at approximately 16 foot height and 50 foot on center. Two level lights may be appropriate within the Core area along arterials. Additional lighting may include building and signage lighting as well as accent lighting on buildings and landscaping. Spacing of streetlights may expand in the Gateway Corridor area.

Street Trees. Street trees should be placed approximately 25 feet on center within tree wells with grates. There should be bulb outs with accent trees at intersections and mid-block crossings to emphasize the crossing, slow the traffic, and reduce the

distance necessary to be crossed. In addition, 60% of the front setback that is not occupied by building should be landscaped to enhance the appearance of the corridor.



Intersections. Pedestrian crossings should be clearly designated with wide striping at a minimum. Accent paving such as interlock pavers, brick, or stamped concrete are strongly encouraged at key intersections in the core area.

Sidewalk Design. Sidewalks should be a minimum of 12 feet wide on commercial streets along storefronts in the Village Core, and 5 feet wide along all other street frontages. A minimum 4-foot tree lawn should be located between the narrower sidewalks and the curb. Accent paving such as interlocking pavers, brick in accent bands, or stamped concrete are strongly encouraged along retail walks and crossings. Amenities should be featured such as planters, benches, and trash containers. Where such amenities are provided a minimum 5-foot wide pedestrian path should be maintained on trails around amenities on the sidewalk.

Along existing roadways and in front of existing development, it may be difficult to achieve these standards within the current right of way. In those instances, additional sidewalk width required should be located within the required front yard and placed in an easement allowing public access.

Other Amenities. The streetscape should be made more attractive through the incorporation of additional streetscape amenities consistent with the vision and intent of the Plan. Planter boxes and hanging baskets should be installed between each street lamp in the Village Core with hanging baskets on lamps along arterials in the other planning areas. These will add more landscaping in the core area and soften the wide sidewalk. Seasonal flags and banners are also encouraged along arterials in the district. Newspaper boxes should be sited appropriately so as not to disrupt the streetscape or encourage littering. Locations against buildings are most appropriate.

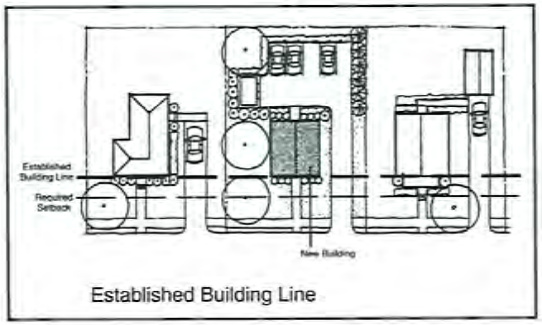
Signage. Where possible, public signage should be consistent with pedestrian lighting and coordinated as part of street furniture. Commercial signage should be designed as an integral part of the site and should not cover, obscure, or take away from the architectural elements of the building or the overall design of the development. Signage should be sympathetic to the design and architecture of its surroundings. Commercial ground signs should be incorporated into the landscaping.

These streetscape enhancements will primarily be implemented through DDA and private investments. Enhancement grants may be obtained to assist with these expenses. However, for large developments involving construction of new roads or extensive frontage, the private sector may be required to install specified fixtures and elements if not already installed in that area.

It is desired to locate the majority of these elements within the right of way or private road easement boundaries. This may be difficult along some existing roads due to the limited width of the right of way and the expanse of the roads. (The cross-section drawings in Figure 4 on Page 36 show a few possibilities for making this happen.) In those instances, they will be placed in easements on the private property. Streetscape elements should be located along the sidewalk so that a minimum five foot wide pedestrian path is maintained along the sidewalk, consistent with ADA requirements. This may require the addition of a bump out or additional sidewalk width adjacent to the sidewalk in some areas. Street profile drawings in the circulation section show the streetscape elements and how they work together to create the street system. Approximately 12 feet is required to accommodate the sidewalk, tree lawn (if applicable), street trees, street lights, benches, and other streetscape elements.

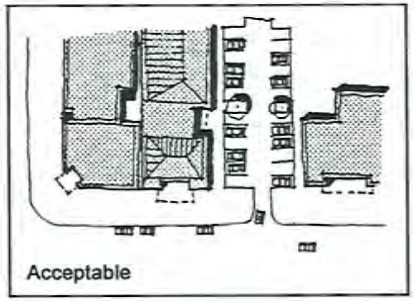
SITE PLANNING

The guidelines for site planning will be unique for each part of the Village area. Site planning guidelines include requirements for layout of the building, parking, utilities, landscaping, etc. These layout decisions have a tremendous impact on the appearance of a site and the character of an area. The following site planning standards and guidelines assist in creating a cohesive Village atmosphere.

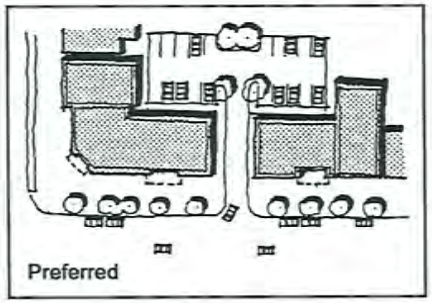


Established Building Line

Site Planning. Buildings should be located and oriented to the street creating a strong coordinated streetscape and presentation to the public frontage. Where internal streets are provided, buildings may be oriented towards those as well. Buildings are strongly encouraged to be located on corners of blocks so as to define intersections and create terminal vistas. Entries should be located along the street frontage with secondary entries from parking areas.


Acceptable

Building Location. Buildings and site development should contribute to a cohesive Village pattern, define and frame the public streets and plazas, and reinforce the goals of providing mixed uses and creating a walkable area. Residential buildings should be oriented towards the street with a minimal front porch setback and raised entries. In the fringe and gateway areas, buildings should be located relatively close to the street to create a consistent and attractive streetscape. Front setback areas should be attractively landscaped with some walkways and seating areas permitted. The Road Network Requirement Matrix in the Circulation section provides recommendations in this regard.


Preferred

Street Frontage. Buildings should extend a minimum of 75% of all primary street frontages. For buildings located on corner lots, a smaller percentage may be permitted along side or access roads.

Parking. Parking areas should be located to the rear and sides of the building to encourage a pedestrian-friendly street edge with low screen walls and landscaping. One row of parking in the front yard is permitted in the Gateway Corridor area

consistent with current development. Surface parking lots are encouraged to have a landscape perimeter and one tree for each seven spaces located along the perimeter or within the parking field. A modest reduction in parking is permitted for uses that share facilities. Once again, see the Road Network Requirement Matrix in the Circulation section for specific recommendations regarding parking locations.

This parking lot is at the rear of the building, which fronts on a mixed use shopping street.

Parking Structures. Parking structures are encouraged to be located behind retail buildings, but may be allowed to extend above retail space to the building frontage. The location of parking structures should minimize their street frontage, and all ground level frontages should be lined with retail or service commercial uses. Parking structures should conform to building design regulations and their facades should be designed with similar materials and opening proportions to commercial buildings.

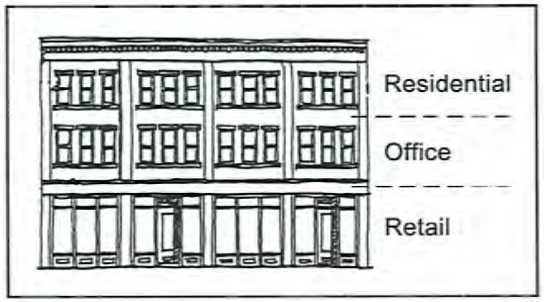
Utilities, Service, and Trash. Areas designated for utilities, service, and trash are encouraged to be located away from residential uses and pedestrian paths and screened from view by enclosures, which are consistent with the architectural design of the building. All overhead utilities should be buried underground.

Unique Features. Unique elements, whether they are a part of the site design or the building design, are encouraged provided that the elements do not detract from the overall design theme and form of the surrounding community. These features should be unique to the Township and the Village area and are reflective of the history and theme that has and will define this area. Example elements could include public art, a clock tower, fence rows, a gazebo for public sitting, or other traditionally styled architectural elements.

BUILDING TYPES

When regulating an area based on its design, the type or form of a building becomes more important than the use intended for it. In that sense, it does not matter as much whether a building is intended to be used as a bakery, a butcher, or a bookstore. It does not matter as much if there are law offices up stairs or loft apartments. The point is more what form the building takes and whether or not that form is compatible with the form of adjacent structures.

The existing Village area already contains a broad variety of uses, ranging from single-family residential to commercial to light industrial. The proposed building types include all of these.



Mixed Use Building

Mixed Use Retail/Office and Residential. Retail Mixed Use Buildings are comprised of ground floor retail space with commercial or residential uses above. Retail mixed use buildings are encouraged in the core area. This type of building adds intensity to the development site and vitality to the street level with active uses. These buildings are typically two to three stories in height. Retail uses should occupy over 90% of the ground floor building frontage and these storefronts should be over 50% transparent. Retail storefronts may be semi-recessed and should have entry canopies, awnings, or arcades.

Commercial

Commercial. Commercial structures vary based on size and specific use. Smaller-scale stores are desired for the area due to the reduced impacts on the Village scheme and circulation when compared to larger scale uses found in nearby competing markets. Smaller-scale uses may be either local or national chains, and they should contribute to a cohesive urban pattern while defining and framing the public streets and plazas, reinforcing the mixed use street, and helping to create a walkable district. Where large lot retail development is provided, it should be set back and screened by smaller-scale uses or surrounded by frontage stores so it appears to be a smaller-scale use itself. In all cases, special storefront details and ornamentation should be used to create a unified development that is not franchised but is coordinated with the rest

of the development in the Village Area. Buildings should be one to two stories in height and built towards the street.

Public / Semi-public. Public buildings are important landmarks in both neighborhoods and urbanized areas. Public Buildings - from the scale of a neighborhood library to a County courthouse - should be designed with special care and dignity. Public buildings should occupy important intersections or front on public spaces. They should be of a monumental scale to distinguish them from surrounding structures.

Attached Residential. Attached, multi-family residential buildings provide either rental or homeownership opportunities in the Village area. These include apartments, condominiums, townhouses, duplexes, and senior housing communities. They provide individuals the opportunity to live near shopping, entertainment, and employment, as well as good transportation. Common open space areas should be provided or private areas if available for each unit. Buildings should orient themselves to the street with ground floor units having individual entries to the outside.

Attached Residential

Detached Residential. In the Village Fringe areas, small lots are provided for single family homes in the existing neighborhoods surrounding the Village core. In these areas, the visual impact of parking should be minimized via garages removed from the front facades. Housed should have small front yard setback areas. Entryways should be emphasized, and porches should be large enough for seating.

Detached Residential

Light Industrial. Along the 9th Street Gateway Corridor area, there are several light industrial uses that have developed in this area. These uses have taken advantage of the transportation options and available land in this area. It is expected that this type of building will remain and that there will be limited expansion of this building type as the circulation system develops and the back half of the existing properties develop. New light industrial buildings should maintain the large front setback from the arterial, and landscaping along 9th Street should be enhanced in order to further

screen these uses. Parking should be located to the side and rear of the building. Truck parking and outdoor storage areas should be well screened and positioned to the rear of the building out of sight of any residential areas.

Special Purpose Building. There are some buildings that are unique based on the use contained within them, such as a hotel. These are almost like special land uses in the Village area. They would need to be treated with special conditions in each area.

Historic Structures. Historic structures determined by the Township to possess uniquely valuable characteristics should be provided with additional protection from demolition and renovation. Historic use and restoration standards should be crafted for applicable sites, defining the type of work that is permitted on the sites and the work that requires special permission from the DDA, Planning Commission, or Historic Commission (if and/or when it is established). Existing buildings with historical integrity should be maintained or restored similar to their original form and design. New buildings should be carefully designed to integrate within this design scheme and fabric.

USES

At this time, it is difficult to dictate specific uses or even use areas within the Village area. The current zoning permits a mix of uses consistent with the existing uses. Any changes would need to be supported by a market study detailing the amount of commercial or residential uses that can be supported in the Village area. Nonetheless, general recommendations based on building types are provided within this Plan.

BUILDING DESIGN

Building design principles are provided as a precursor to the development of design guidelines for the Village study area. That process will have to specify the particular areas where each guideline will apply, to what type of building they will apply, and how they will be applied. The following are provided as general principles of the Village design theme.

Development Massing. Buildings should be massed to reflect adjacent uses in order to maintain the streetscape, while making allowances for residential uses and other specific building types as appropriate. Building massing is particularly important at major intersections, particularly 9th Street and Stadium. The highest density and greatest height of development should be located at this corner. Corner buildings should incorporate special features and materials that reinforce important intersections with buildings of unique architectural merit. Rear entrances with access to parking should be treated with similar detail and quality as primary entrances.

Special attention should be paid to the pedestrian level.

Ground Level Treatment. Special attention should be given to craftsmanship and detailing within pedestrian range of touch and view. The use of special storefront detailing, façade ornamentation, quality materials, signage that enhances the architecture, and awnings or canopies can reinforce the pedestrian nature of the street. At least 50% of the commercial storefront should be transparent.

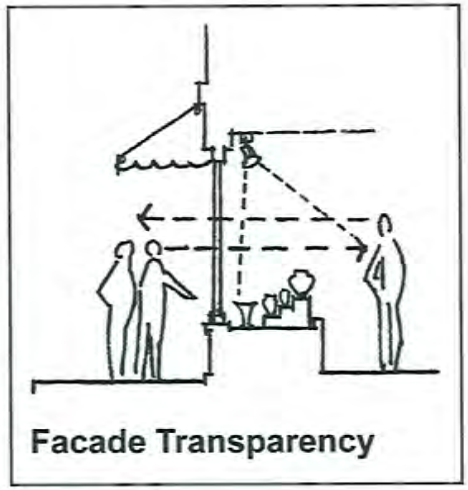
Building Materials. Building materials should be used to articulate building elements, such as the base, body, parapets, bays, arcades, or other structural elements. Building materials should convey a sense of integrity, permanence, and durability rather than appliqué.

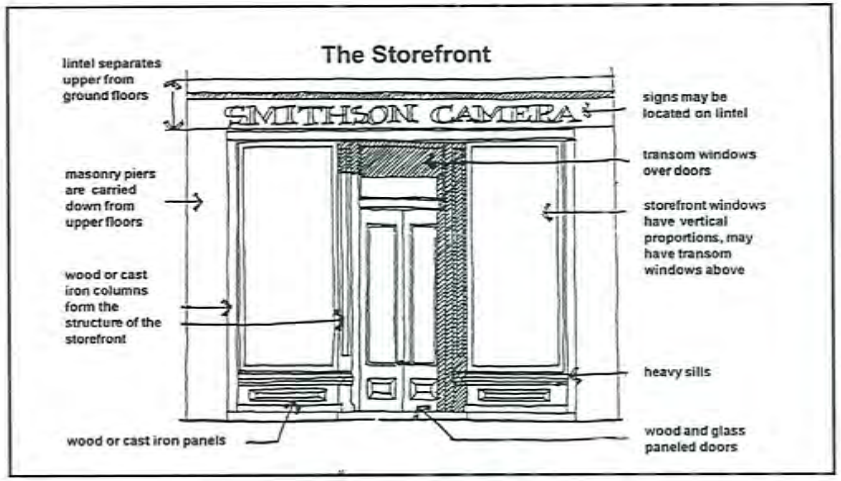
Façade Treatment. To create a pedestrian scale and character, the facades should avoid large expanses of blank walls, vertical or horizontal. Facades should be articulated through architectural treatment (either a change in the façade design and material or an offset of 2 feet or more) in a relatively small rhythm of approximately

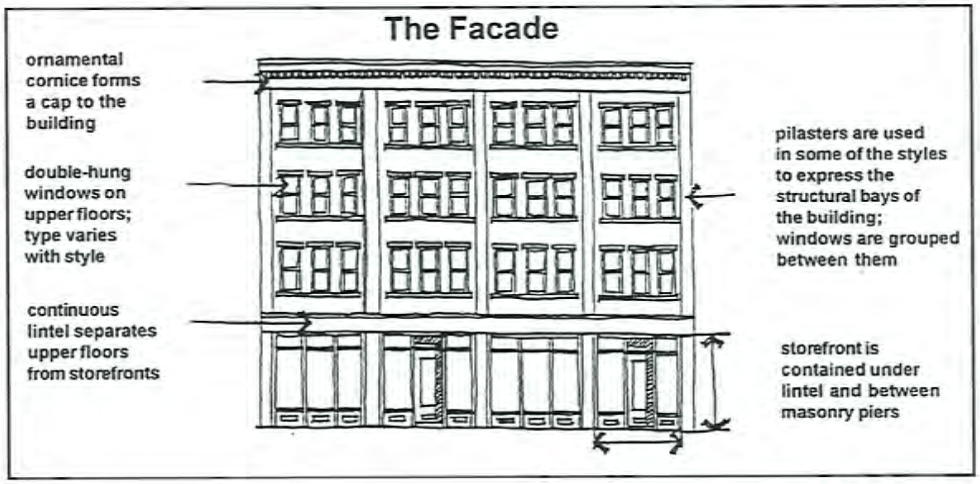
25 to 30 feet and be generally vertical in proportion. Building facades should animate the street, providing interest to passers-by.

Base / Cap. Building facades should be articulated with a building base, body, and capital or parapet edge. The base should include at least the first floor and be separated from the upper floors by a continuous lintel. The upper floors should have a consistent style and compose the body of the building. An ornamental cornice should form the cap of the building.

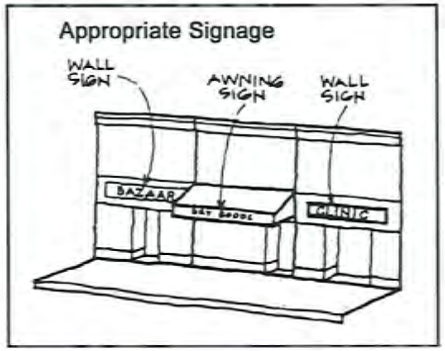
Windows. Building walls should be punctuated by well-proportioned (generally vertical) openings that provide relief, detail, and variation on the façade. Windows should be generously inset to create shade and shadow, adding greatly to the richness of the façade. Tinted or reflective glass is strongly discouraged. Double hung windows and/or munions are encouraged. At least 50% of the façade should be voids (windows/doors).







Signs. Signs must call attention to the individual buildings and identify the businesses within, but they should also work together as a whole in order to contribute to the overall image of the Village area. Signs should be coordinated in appearance and be sympathetic to the architecture of the building and the design of the area. Signs should not be internally illuminated or exceed the height of the building. Wall and awning signs are appropriate for the study area, particularly the Village Core. Perpendicular wall signs that protrude from the building wall are also acceptable provided they are done in a consistent manner. Ground signs may be permitted outside the Village Core, provided they are incorporated into the landscaping design, consistent with the design of the building, and do not detract from the overall impression of he area.



Building Height. In order to provide the density necessary to sustain the surrounding businesses as well as to provide the visual impression of an historic Village community, buildings in the Village Core area should be at least two stories in height. Variation up to three stores is desired, especially at the corner of Stadium and 9th Street.

Buildings in the Village Core that are one story in height should be constructed with pitched roofs or taller facades with appropriate articulation to give an impression of height and maintain the character and form of the district. Beyond the Village Core, one story buildings are more acceptable, whether these are residences, offices or light industries. These buildings however should be required to have a pitched roof, which provides additional height and is consistent with the historic character of the existing structures.

The upper picture shows the impact of a two-story building in a core district, while the lower picture shows how a pitched roof can give an impression of height.

Roof Treatment. Treatment should be consistent with architectural form and massing. The roof should provide a strong edge, through detailing, to the building form, whether a parapet or sloped roof. Screening of roof top equipment is encouraged. Roof forms and pitches of new residential structures should be similar to forms and pitches commonly found in nearby neighborhoods.

Table 2 below demonstrates how these various design guidelines and recommendations can be distributed and applied across the three planning areas introduced earlier in the Plan (page 27). Each area has a distinct character and purpose. Therefore, the guidelines will not apply equally across the entire study area. The differences are subtle however, in order to preserve the coordinated Village theme.

Table 2
Design Recommendations in Planning Areas

	VILLAGE CORE	VILLAGE FRINGE	GATEWAY CORRIDOR
Circulation			
Sidewalks	Required	Required	Required
Transit Stops	Required	Permitted	Permitted
Alleys	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Open Space			
Elements	Plaza / Square	Public / Pocket Park	Green Space
Bike lanes / Pathways	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Streetscape			
Pedestrian Street Lighting	50' o.c.	50' o.c.	75' o.c.
Street Trees	25' o.c.	25' o.c.	25' o.c.
Crosswalks	Decorative	Standard	Standard
Sidewalk	12' wide	5' wide	5' wide
Streetscape Amenities i.e. (Benches, Trash cans, Planters etc.)	Required	Permitted	Permitted
Site Planning			
Orientation	0-5' setback (to allow for nooks or outdoor dining)	Front on Street (15-25' setback)	Setback from street(although still oriented to street)
Street Frontage	Buildings along 75% of frontage	Buildings along 75% of frontage	Buildings along 50% of frontage
Parking	Rear / Side (on certain streets)	Rear / Side	Rear / Side / Front (one row)
Building Types			
Mixed Use	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Commercial	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Public / Semi Public	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Attached Residential	Permitted	Permitted	Special
Detached Residential	Permitted	Permitted	Special
Light Industrial	Not Permitted	Not Permitted	Permitted
Special Purpose Buildings	Special	Special	Special

VIII. IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the recommendations and principles contained in the Village Theme Development Plan will occur over time. There is no one tool available to implement these recommendations. Rather many different individuals and groups will need to be involved over a long period of time to result in the development of this theme.

INFILL REDEVELOPMENT

Realization of the Design Plan will occur through a combination of new development and infill redevelopment. Infill redevelopment is the process by which structures or parcels that are not being fully utilized are redeveloped in order to get greater return from the site. This is most likely to occur in the Village Core and the Village Fringe. Outdated buildings, buildings that do not match the standards recommended in this Plan, or uses that are underutilizing the site are likely targets. Through redevelopment, the Township comes closer to achieving its mission and the intent of the Plan.

That being the case, the Township and the DDA will want to encourage this redevelopment. This can be done in a number of different ways. First, a reward can be provided such as a density bonus for two story structures or allowance for mixed uses. This reward may offset some of the cost of the redevelopment. Another way is to create public parking in the Village Core. Then, parking requirements can be reduced or waived in the district because they are satisfied within public areas. This saves costs and allows for maximum use of private land.

Regardless of incentives or encouragement, some properties will be slow to redevelop. This may be a result of when they were constructed, property owner reluctance, or market difficulties. It is a gradual process and will not occur overnight.

The DDA can purchase property and redevelop it themselves if they desire, but this is costly and risky, and it requires that the properties be for sale.

The following examples demonstrate a few possibilities for how properties in the district could be developed or redeveloped in accordance with the recommendations in this Plan. The scenarios show key areas within the Township, how they exist now, and how they could be developed or redeveloped by applying these standards. They are not intended to require or mandate development in these forms, only to demonstrate their application upon implementation. Dozens of opportunities exist for each site; these represent only a few.

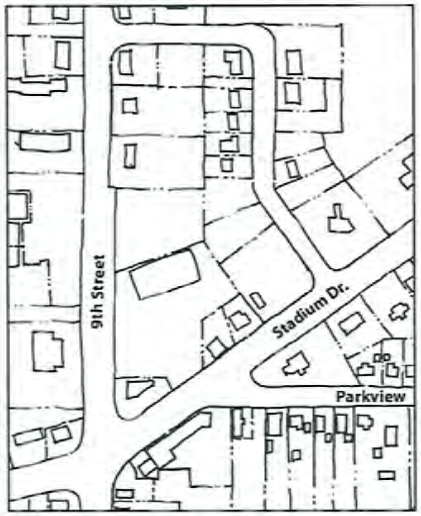
1. Oshtemo Village Center.

The northeast corner of the Stadium Drive / 9th Street intersection is currently developed in a suburban style with a large retail structure (grocery store) set far back from the street, a large amount of parking in front, and assorted retail outlots along the street. We understand that the grocery store has intentions of redeveloping and expanding their facility, which provides an opportunity to implement these recommendations. The scenario shown in Figure 5 provides a larger grocery store and leaves it towards the rear of the site as typically desired by these users. However, the street frontage, and particularly the intersection, is lined with mixed use and retail structures to create a more pedestrian friendly, Village atmosphere. An internal road network provides access to the uses and parking while providing a road for the buildings to use for orientation.

2. South 9th Street Corridor.

The 9th Street corridor at the Stadium Drive intersection and immediately south is currently dominated by detached single family structures, some of which have been converted to retail or office uses. These structures help maintain the historic

Existing Development



Potential Redevelopment

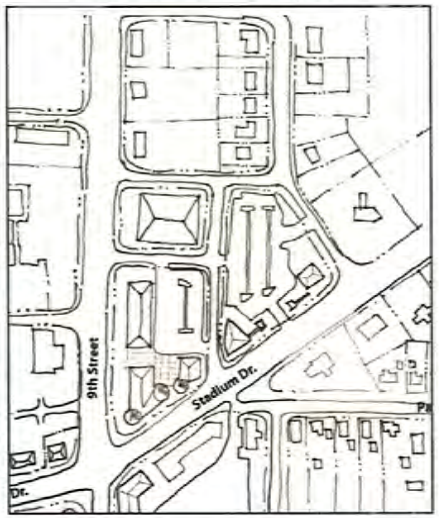


FIGURE 5. Oshtemo Village Center Scenario. This Scenario shows possible redevelopment of the northeast corner of Stadium Drive / 9th Street. The grocery store is enlarged and additional buildings are constructed along the street frontage and at the intersection corner.

character of the Village, the oldest Section of the Township. One possibility for the future is to maintain these detached residences, fixing up those that need it, and using the structures for residential and commercial purposes similar to how it appears today. This would provide a historic, residential gateway to the Core, similar to what is found in many traditional small towns. Another possibility is that this corridor may be redeveloped consistent with the Village design theme, providing a block of office/retail buildings, which screen the parking and buffer the residential uses located behind them. This scenario is demonstrated in Figure 6. The most critical area along this corridor is the intersection of Stadium and 9th Street, an area that is currently ignored. Signature, mixed use, two to three story buildings are located at these corners to frame the critical intersection, create vistas from the roadway, and establish a sense of identification within the Village.

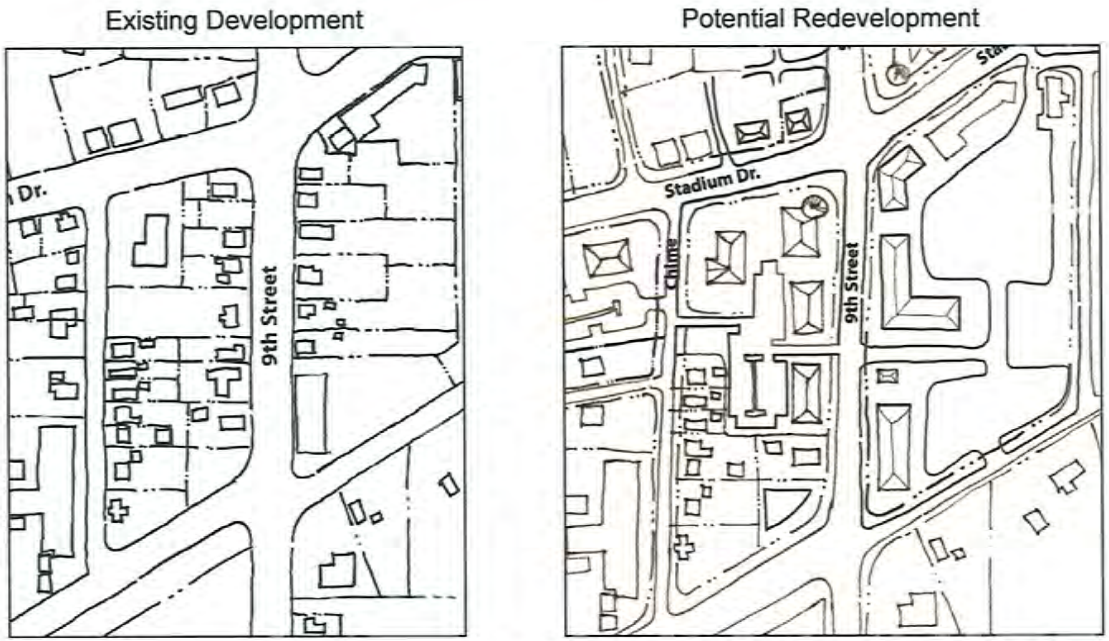
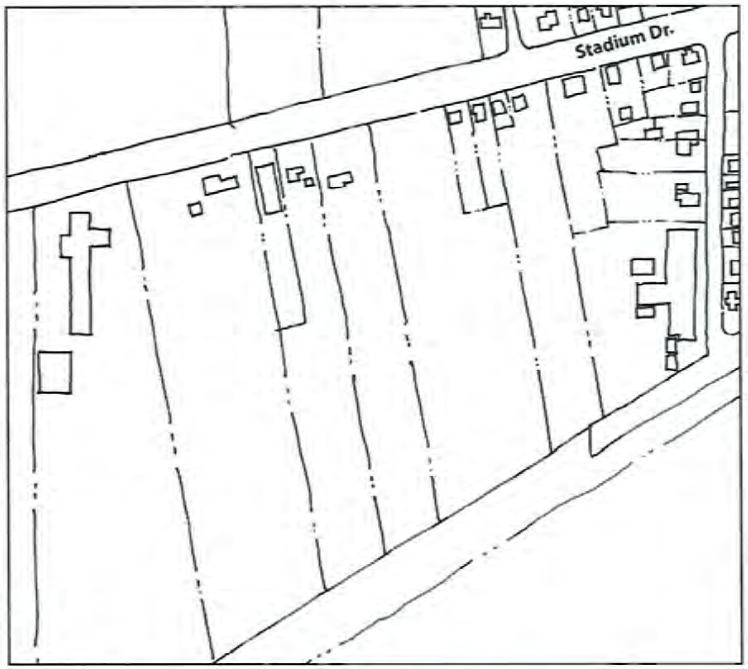


FIGURE 6. South 9th Street Corridor Scenario. This scenario shows the possible redevelopment of the parcels just south of the 9th Street and Stadium Drive intersection. Signature buildings are located at the corners, and the corridor has been redeveloped to include commercial, office, and mixed-use structures.

3. Village Fringe – Backlots West of 9th Street.

West of 9th Street, the Stadium Drive corridor is currently much less developed than east of 9th Street. As a result, many of the parcels, particularly on the south side of the road, are very deep. The majority of these properties are unused. By developing the road system in this area, these lots can be opened up to additional development possibilities. The portions of the lots located off the primary roads would likely be used for detached residential development with the frontage used for commercial or office development. Figure 7 shows a small area along Stadium, but this same pattern could be repeated to the west.

Existing Development



Potential Redevelopment

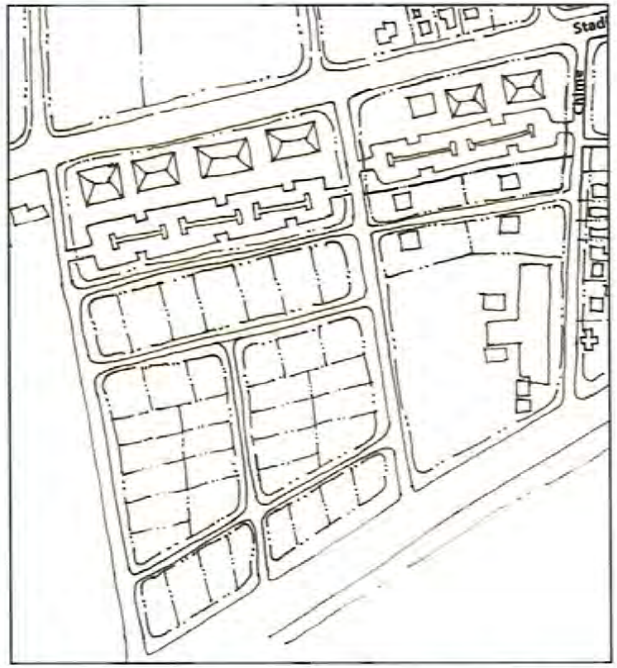


FIGURE 7. Village Fringe Scenario. This scenario shows the possible redevelopment of the large lots on the south side of Stadium west of 9th Street. Additional roads open the back of these deep lots to the possibility of detached residential development. The Stadium Road frontage is reserved for commercial development.

ZONING ORDINANCE

From a regulatory perspective, Zoning Ordinance amendments may be necessary in order to implement the recommendations of this Plan. In order to fully implement the principles and guidelines within this Plan, a Form-Based Code may be developed for the Village area. A Form-Based Code is a different type of Zoning Ordinance. As opposed to the traditional Euclidean zoning, form-based zoning allocates standards and regulations based on the form and design of the structure. Use is still considered, but it is a much smaller component of the decision process. Instead, elements of site layout, urban form, and building design are paramount in order to establish the desired public realm.

Example of a Formed Based Code

This type of a Code with regulations based more on form than use would be ideal for the Village area. In this area, the form of the development and its impact on the adjacent public spaces are more important than what is being done in the building. Standards are still included to limit high impact uses and auto-oriented uses, but in general a variety of uses are permitted provided the form of the buildings match what is permitted.

If the Township does not take the step of developing Form Based Regulations for the Village areas, some amendments to the existing Zoning Ordinance requirements will still be necessary to implement these recommendations.

The Village area is mostly located within the VC – Village Commercial zoning district. However, portions of the study area extend beyond the existing VC boundaries into the RR, R2, R3, R4, R5, C-1, I-R, and I-1 districts. The design plan divides the DDA district into three planning areas based on the characteristics within each and future redevelopment potential. There are minor differences in what is recommended for each planning area.

Two approaches can be taken to implementing the guidelines into the Zoning Ordinance. First, two new districts can be created in addition to the Village

Commercial district to correlate with the three planning areas. Then, appropriate standards can be prepared or amended to implement the recommendations of the Plan. Or, an overlay district can be created to overlay on top of the existing zoning in this area. The existing zoning districts would not need to be modified, but uses in these areas would also have to satisfy the standards of the overlay district, which would be based on the recommendations of the Plan. Either approach would be effective, although the second may be quicker and easier due to the fact that it does not impact existing zoning.

Regardless of how the changes are inserted into the Zoning Ordinance, we would recommend making a few changes to the VC – Village Commercial district standards, which comprises the majority of the study area, in order to be consistent with the recommendations of this Plan. The following is a list of some of the possible amendments to the VC district we would recommend.

- Setback standards should be adjusted to match recommendations. They should also be more defined to limit variation in the urban form.

- Height standard should be amended to allow three story buildings in the Village Core.

- Provision allowing for a deviation for front yard parking should be eliminated.

- The limit on the size of the building should be eliminated or increased to accommodate larger mixed use buildings. Buildings over a certain size could be made a special land use if there is a concern about scale and impact.

- The FAR standard should be eliminated. The results are too unpredictable. If it is maintained, it should be increased because it does not allow for large buildings over one story.

- Design standard language should be reviewed to incorporate recommendations from the Plan.

- Standard requiring pitched roofs should be stronger, particularly for one story buildings.

- No design standards are provided for signs besides height and size. We recommend adding language regarding materials, illumination, and consistency with building design.

- Landscaping standards will have to be adjusted based on recommendations to include street trees and planter areas as applicable. Front yard landscaping requirements will want to be reviewed, particularly in the core area where the front yard is primarily sidewalk.

The Township will also want to review its Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinance and other development review ordinances and subdivision design standards to ensure that the standards and requirements in these documents do not preclude any of the recommendations or principles presented in this Plan. Many of the ideas presented here will require new development or substantial redevelopment within the district and may require some flexibility in accepted development standards. If the actual principles and recommendations presented in this study are not applied directly, then room for this type of flexibility should be provided at a minimum.

MASTER LAND USE PLAN

The Township's Master Land Use Plan will not need to be updated as a result of this Plan. The recommendations provided above fit in with the goals and objectives of the Village Focus Area.

BRANDING

In order to become more marketable and be more identifiable to residents in the larger community, the Township should start a branding campaign for the Village area. One problem for the Village area is that it has no identification. It technically is not a Village in the governmental sense, but it looks like a Village. It was the heart of the Township in the beginning and remains the area with the highest concentration of historical structures in the Township. So, why should it not be Oshtemo Village? Name it. Put up signs. Create a color scheme, font, and logo for the area consistent with the design and theme described above and use it on entry signs, road signs, and community signs in the area. Others will begin to buy into it as well. Soon, residential developments will be referred to as the "Village Hills," and the commercial development will be the "Shops at the Village." Right now there is nothing to identify with, but just a simple name to go with the place can make a tremendous difference.

MARKET STUDY

A Market Study is a critical component to be completed in the near future. A market study was an item identified in the DDA's Development Plan. The purpose of this study was to identify a cohesive design theme for the area and strategies for its implementation. The next step is to figure out who it can apply to. It is difficult to know whether or not this should be primarily retail, primarily office, primarily

residential, or some combination of all of those without a better understanding of the current market.

A market study will provide clear information regarding the amount of square footage that can be supported in the current and future markets for various types of uses. Then, using that information with the information in this design study, a firm plan for recruitment can be developed. This can be provided to developers and realtors as they market land to potential investors and business owners. It can also be provided directly to the retailers and business owners who may be considering locating in the village area.

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

One of the first physical improvement projects typically implemented by a DDA involves streetscape improvements. This often involves receipt of an enhancement grant from the State or Federal Government, or the work is completed in tandem with other improvements to the road or utilities.

Streetscape improvements can include a full range of potential projects, and specific improvements can be phased in over time. Possible improvements include installation of sidewalks, decorative pedestrian level street lighting, street trees, and other coordinated pedestrian amenities including benches and trash cans. This is one of the broadest measures the Township can take to improve the aesthetics across the district without getting involved with private property.

A plan for streetscape improvements can be developed so that the various elements must be installed by the private sector as the sites are redeveloped or improved. However, considering the improvements made by installing these amenities across the entire district at once and the unknown timing of development on individual sites, it is suggested that this be a public project of the DDA.

PUBLIC PARKING

Currently, the parking for each of the uses in the Village area is provided for on each individual lot. As a result, most businesses have their own driveway, the area is not conducive to parking at one shop and walking to another, and there is no reduction in pavement as a result of shared parking.

Developing commercial centers are always concerned about parking. If there is not adequate parking, then customers will go where it is more convenient for them to shop. One way the DDA can ease this fear is to purchase property and provide public parking within the Village area. The parking must be accessible from the arterial roads. However, it should not be visible from the road frontage; the frontage should be reserved for buildings and storefronts. The parking should be free in order to compete with similar markets and commercial centers in the area.

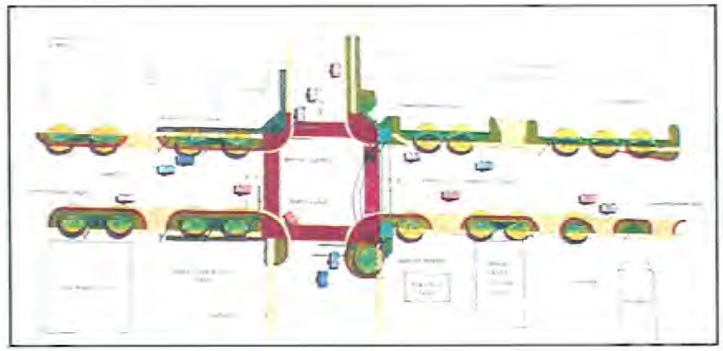
DESIGN ASSISTANCE / FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

Implementing these recommendations and principles may challenge some property owners. Certain projects that would not have required the assistance of an architect or professional designer previously might now require such assistance in order to be certain that the required guidelines are being followed. One way to ease this transition and provide some assistance is to provide technical assistance to qualifying applicants from a local architect or designer. The DDA would contract with the local professional to provide 2-3 hours of advisory service to each individual sent before them by the DDA or Township, to be reimbursed by the DDA. This reduces the possible interpretations of the guidelines and helps property owners who may not have needed a professional prior to these standards afford one at this time.

In addition, a fund can be established to provide grants to property owners for improvements to building facades. Plans that provide proposed improvements satisfying Township and DDA requirements and are approved by an advisory

committee are granted funds to be used for improvements to building facades and exteriors. Typically, not much money is provided to each applicant, but it often helps make up for the additional cost of the design requirements placed on the buildings within the guideline areas.

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS



Earlier in the Plan, the circulation system in and around the Village was described along with suggested improvements to the system to ease concerns related to the speed and congestion. Primary among these suggestions is the creation of an alternative road network that provides better access throughout the Village Core. The internal roads provide additional opportunities for local traffic to access residences, businesses, and service areas. The development of this system is critical to the efforts to reduce traffic volumes in the district. Investment in this type of street network will have the greatest impact on calming the congestion in the Village and creating a more manageable and pedestrian-friendly environment.

Developing the road network, however, is not an immediate process. Construction of new roads will be both publicly and privately financed with some being constructed as a part of new development and others being developed through DDA funding. A traffic study should be completed soon identifying an achievable circulation pattern and a phasing plan for the proposed road network in order to most efficiently address the needs of the community.

As new roads are developed, new opportunities for development will emerge. The strength, vision, and intent of the Plan will have to remain paramount. This includes protecting the strength and integrity of the Village Core. The new roads will open up new development possibilities, but significant development that is not in keeping with the intent of the Plan can weaken or undermine the strength of the Village Core. In order to maintain the market viability of the core, the greatest density of

development should be directed to the core area, and single family residential and smaller scale uses located towards the edge of the Village area.

TIMEFRAME

An important question is how long will it take before this Plan becomes a reality? Because of its dependence on the private market and a wide variety of implementation measures – many of which are expensive – it is not easy to predict the timing of the Plan's implementation. Some items involving further analysis, like a traffic study or market study, are likely to happen rather quickly. Other items that demand high costs and partnerships with many participants will likely take time to develop.

Whereas some communities may be disappointed at that notion, there is considerable momentum in Oshtemo Township that indicates this is an area on the rise. As the Kalamazoo region has grown, Oshtemo Township has been one of the more desirable locations for that growth to occur. Now, with the introduction of the Kalamazoo Promise and the guarantee of free college tuition to Kalamazoo Public School graduates (65-100% depending on the amount of time spent in the district; the majority of Oshtemo Township is in Kalamazoo Public School District), the attention of new development in the area is squarely on Oshtemo Township. The residential demand and additional households will spur commercial growth and demand and continue to increase the viability of the Village Core.

Based on the priorities that are established, the funding that is provided, and the aggressiveness with which implementation is pursued by both the public and private sectors, significant physical changes could be in place within the Core area in a five to seven year time span. That time period is necessary for the analysis to be complete, the proper regulations to be put in place, and the funding and enthusiasm to be generated. Once evidence of the Plan's success can be demonstrated, the momentum will continue to generate within the Village area.

FUNDING

Another significant question will be how to fund many of the ideas and recommendations contained within this Plan. These are big ideas, some of which will require significant investments to implement. Some of the recommendations involve public infrastructure and improvements within the public right-of-way. Other recommendations involve private improvements and private property.

Public improvement projects may be funded through a number of different mechanisms. The primary source of funds will be DDA funds generated through tax increment financing within the district. These funds can be spent directly or additional funds can be borrowed in anticipation of future allocation. Other fund sources may include Township general funds, special assessments, bonds, grants, and private donations. Typical grant sources include highway enhancement grants and DNR recreation grants.

Private improvements should be installed and constructed as a part of development and at the time of development. As an incentive to encourage certain developments, the DDA may consider assisting in the funding of some of these improvements, particularly those located in the public right of way.

PUBLIC PRIORITIES

In moving forward with the recommendations contained within this Plan, the Township and the DDA must develop a list of priorities. Table 3 below identifies the items described above as priority implementation measures for this plan, and proposes priority designations for each item. However, the Township and DDA will have to monitor and adjust these designations depending on funding availability and future priorities. High priority items may commence within 1-2 years; medium priority items may commence within 2-4 years; and low priority items will likely commence after 3-5 years or more. Road improvement projects, although

considered high priority projects, are expected to be extended over a significant amount of time simply due to the costs involved.

Table 3
Recommended Implementation Measures

RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE
Review and Update Township Regulations	High	1-2 Years	Township, DDA	TIFA, General Fund
Traffic / Circulation Study	High	1 Year	DDA	TIFA, Transportation Grant
Market Study	High	1 Year	DDA	TIFA
Branding	Medium	1-2 Years	DDA	TIFA
Streetscape Improvements	Medium	2-5 Years	DDA, Property Owners	TIFA, Transportation Grant, Private Funds, Bonds
Design Assistance / Façade Improvement Incentives	Low	3-5 Years	DDA	TIFA
Road Improvements	High	2-5+ Years	DDA, Township, County, Property Owners	TIFA, General Funds, Transportation Grants, Road Commission Funds, Private Funds, Bonds
Public Parking	Medium	4-7 Years	DDA	TIFA, Bonds

APPENDIX

1. Design Workshop Summary
2. Visioning Workshop Discussion Notes
3. Visual Preference Survey Summary
4. Visual Preference Survey Scores and Images

Oshtemo Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority

Theme Development and Design Plan
Kick-off Meeting and Design Workshop Summary

Jodi Stefforia / Mary Lynn Bugge – Township Staff

- The DDA is a somewhat historic district but probably not a viable place to establish a designated historic district
- Concern over multifamily and student rental
- There is a core and a few fringe areas on either side

John Byrnes / Tom Hohm – Kalamazoo County Road Commission

- Staffs position is to get traffic through the area
- Expressed some willingness to consider alternatives
  - But had not budget to consider alternatives
  - Also have to deal with speed of traffic in the area, resistence to on-street parking, and limited room within the right of way for boulevards, parking, and other amenities
- Considerable amount of stacking is needed at 9th Street on Stadium due to KVCC traffic
  - A bypass could be considered

Postmaster

- Began process of getting new building earlier this year; hopes to hear something this fall
  - Currently on month to month lease; would like to stay in area if not at current site
  - Planning on approximately 4000 square feet of future space
- If at current site, future development would include realignment of curb cuts and driveways

Gary Start / Al Tyler – Kalamazoo Public Schools

- Chime Elementary School – considered a good school in KPS but is too small, is unattractive, the property is too small, a lot of money invested in portable classrooms, and the circulation on site is poor for parking and bus pick up/drop off

- KPS owns land in the Township just north of DDA on 9th Street

  - Would like to build a new facility
  - But construction would have to be approved by voters district-wide; maybe in May
  - They would like to have a residential neighborhood around the school if they build on the northern site and would consider being a partner in such a project if asked

- If new building constructed, they do not typically sell the old buildings; however a sale to the Township would not be out of character

Dennis and Linda Raher – Residents on Stadium

- Do a lot of walking and biking within the Township

  - Use the back roads; can't bike on Stadium
  - Pedestrian friendliness not there - trees and bushes growing over the ROW and curb
  - Believe more maintenance and pedestrian amenities are required in the area

- A lot of walkers and bikers in the area: get to bus stop, coming from bus stop, going to store, going to work, etc. (No bus stop west of 9th St.)

- Their property has house and 9 acres of wood on Stadium, and they will probably sell soon

  - Higher impact less desirable business on both sides of house
  - House close to busy road and surrounded by business

Harding's Market

- They have a formula for their stores they do not want to deviate from

  - The building is located at the back with loading on four sides and the parking up front

- They were not pleased with alternatives to locate liner stores along the side or front but promised to help the Township in any way

- They are leasing the site but would like to buy

Mehdi Purazrang – Sandwich Shop at corner

- Would like to redevelop the property he owns, which includes adjacent residential properties
  - He would prefer a conventional strip center
  - However, he was tempted by the idea of a mixed use/multi-level center once he had an understanding of what it meant
- Traffic flow and access on his property will be the most significant issues

Greg Taylor – Phoenix Properties

- Would like to redevelop the properties across from his retail center (Sherwood and kennel) but believes that the highest/best use for those sites is standard commercial with parking in front and not Village Commercial as described in the plan.
- Despite his concerns, he believes there is a high level of viability in this area
  - The traffic from 12th Street to N Avenue is a significant number
  - Unfortunately, there are no brownfield credits or no historical tax credits available to developers to encourage development
- The idea of the Village is admirable but not appropriate for this market
  - No one here used to common walls, alleys, and easements in the Village concept
  - Highest and best uses cannot handle parking in rear and buildings along frontage
  - Bank / small office / professional is appropriate here
  - DDA should invest in high return items like access roads – not fluff like street lights

David Keyte, Signature Associates

- Does not believe he can see buildings in the market with zero foot setbacks and Village Commercial zoning
  - Has concerns about lot coverage requirement
  - Believes Stadium should be an office corridor
- Prefers to keep retail separate from office and in smaller buildings

Deb Everett, Neil Cikora - Trustees

- Traffic and Recreation were primary concerns in the study area
- Not only is there a large amount of traffic, but there are no pedestrian amenities
  - Create a pedestrian friendly environment with streetscape elements and theme like Frankenmuth
  - Use a boulevard to manage the traffic and introduce additional landscaping
  - Also need additional access routes – such as a road along the Township property behind to Atlantic parallel to 9th Street
- Additional recreation options should be created with increased accessibility – perhaps a mini park on land behind Community Center

Dennis Berkebile – Chairman, Kalamazoo County Road Commission

- Staff bound by existing policies / procedures of the Road Commission
  - But, are those policies/procedures correct? Is there a new idea that is better? I'm open to it. Bring it to me.
  - The KCRC has been dictating land use in Townships, and that should not be the case
  - That is being addressed and policies and procedures are being standardized
  - Texas Township was able to do some creative things by bringing the ideas forward and working with the Commission – stamped crosswalks, colored street lights and signals
- Boulevards were never permitted and are now being considered
  - Now a policy to allow sprinklers within the landscaped median
  - Was permitted in the Midlink Business Park

OSHTEMO TOWNSHIP DDA
VILLAGE DESIGN THEME DEVELOMENT STUDY
COMMUNITY VISIONING WORKSHOP * SEPTEMBER 21, 2005

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1) **What are the strengths and weaknesses of the DDA Development area in the Township?**

Strengths

- Post Office - 3
- Hardings - 2
- Flesher Field - 2
- Some sidewalks - 1
- Space - 1
- Caring people - 1
- Location - 1
- Small neighborhood businesses – 1
- Greenspace - 1
- Historical School building - 1
- Opportunity for new streets
- DDA
- Township Board's attitude
- Planning Commission attitude
- Business Owner attitude
- Historical buildings
- Traffic
- Existing Community plans
- Place
- Reinvestment
- Commercial development
- Attempts at Planning
- Roof top growth
- School
- Exposure
- Business Core (Physical Proximity)
- Community atmosphere
- Mix of Uses
- Access to highways
- Convenient Services
- Friendly Services

Weaknesses

- Traffic and speed - 3
- KCRC "Policies" - 3
- Semi truck traffic - 1
- Streets
- Aging structures (Upkeep) / "Abandoned" and poorly maintained buildings
- Lack of People
- Perception of regulation
- DDA – Lack of visibility
- Residents being forced out by business
- Disjointed community
    - Architecture
    - Zoning
- Not pedestrian friendly
- Poor architecture
- Width of streets
- Lack of community focus
- Attitude of some owners Re: Change
- Ability to utilize rear of parcels
- Driveways – too many
- Lack of a streetscape
- Time horizon for change
- Traffic level

2) **What word would you use to describe the Village area. . .**

a) **as it exists today?**

- Lack of cohesiveness - 1
- Chaotic - 1
- Lacks personality - 1
- Community - 1
- Hodgepodge
- Focusless
- Transient
- Holes
- Scary vehiculars
- Pass thru
- Potential for Development
- Pedestrian unfriendly
- Not enough greenway
- Traffic too high
- Lack of pedestrian scale
- Lack of community focus
- Traffic speed / excess speed
- Journey vs. destination
- Cold
- Disjointed
- Ugly – "mismatch"
- Patchwork
- Nondescript
- Convenient
- Familiar
- Transitional
- Change

b) as you would like it to exist in 10 years

- Streetscape - 6
- Bandshell and/or gazebo - 3
- Pedestrian friendly - 3
- Street lights (old fashioned) - 3
- Flowers - 3
- Boulevards - 3
- Less driveways - 3
- Sidewalks - 3
- Quaint Village - 3
- Business friendly - 3
- Unified – tied together - 2
- Consistent character - 2
- Benches - 2
- Destination - 2
- Connectivity between sites - 2
- More flexible regulations - 2
- Year round community events - 1
- Family friendly - 1
- Aesthetically attractive – 1
- Recognizable - 1
- More trees - 1
- Continuity - 1
- Mayberry
- Cohesive development
- Community focused
- Desire to make place happen
- Fun destination
- Integration of uses
- Small town feel

3) What specific uses would you like to see in this area in the future?

- Small businesses - 5
- Bike/walking paths/ Non motorized stuff - 5
- Soccer & baseball fields, basketball courts - 4
- Healthcare provider - 4
- No bars or casinos - 3
- Residential – townhomes, single family on small lots - 3
- Tavern and Grille - 3
- Art and Antiques Places & Shops - 2
- Sidewalks and Crosswalks - 2
- School renovated for small businesses - 2
- Jazz in Park/concerts - 2
    - Bandshell with concessions
- Centralized parking - 1
- More single homes/less condos - 1
- Bed and Breakfast - 1
- Restaurants – sit down – mid-level - 1
- Bandshell and movies with popcorn - 1
- Medical Offices - 1
- Fountain - 1
- Skating rink - 1
- Village atmosphere (cozy stores) - 1
- Restaurants and pubs - 1
    - With outside seating to add to atmosphere
- Residential with commercial
- Greenspaces
- Community gardens
- Retail space
- Office space
- Skate park
- Quality row houses / town homes
- Residential over commercial
- Light manufacturing down 9th
- Storm shelter/Community building
- Evening life
- Mix of businesses – service and retail
- Pharmacy
- Coffee shop
- Roundabout at boulevard end
- "Marie's New and Improved" restaurant
- Buildings updated
- Public transportation facilities
- Better roads/Pedestrian friendly

Oshtemo Charter Township DDA
Village Design Theme Development Plan

Visual Preference Survey Results
September 21, 2005

At the September 21st, 2005 visioning sessions for the Oshtemo Charter Township Village Design Theme Development Plan, residents in attendance participated in a Visual Preference Survey. A Visual Preference Survey is an exercise where participants are shown a variety of images and then asked to rate them on a survey form. The responses are combined to provide results for the overall group, and the average scores for the various images are then compared against one another.

A total of 24 surveys were completed. Respondents were shown a total of 86 images, which were broken down into five categories. Each category related to a specific element of the design theme that was being analyzed for this project: roads/parking/streetscape, civic and open space, parking orientation, building orientation, and building character. Respondents were asked to look at these images and provide a immediate response reaction to the picture relative to the theme of the category. Specifically, they were to rate the picture on a scale ranging from –5 to +5, with –5 indicating they really did not like the picture and +5 indicating they really liked the picture.

A brief presentation including example images was provided at the start to ensure that everyone understood the mechanics and the purpose of the exercise. In this analysis, we will present overall results in each category as well as some specific analyses that may be of some interest. We will also present some general conclusions that can be drawn from these

results. We encourage the Township to use these results for other projects as well, such as the Zoning Ordinance.

Overall Results

The most favored picture of them all was that of a trail going through green space (#8 in the open space category – 3.78). The least favored was the picture of a standard Hollywood Video franchise (#9 in the building character category – -2.35). Overall, there was a broad range of results. For most pictures, the full range of scores were represented. This shows that when dealing with something like design and character, there truly are many different opinions. However, as can be seen by comparing the average scores to one another, clearly there are some images or themes that are more preferred to others.

In putting the presentation together, specific images were selected in order to test certain hypotheses and determine theme preferences among participants. As each category is described, the various ideas that were tested will be described.

14

Roads / Paths / Streetscapes

This category explored ideas focused on road improvements, pathways, and streetscape. Categories of images within this group were limited to those three items primarily. Different types of road improvements were shown in an attempt to gauge preference. Similarly, different types of streetscape elements were shown to determine which were preferred.

12

Generally, the results were mostly positive, indicating that primarily positive images were shown. However, within the categories, some general themes came through, and will reappear throughout the other

categories. There was a preference for softer, greener images. Smaller, less urban scale images were preferred to those at a more urban, downtown scale. Specifically, in terms of road improvements, medians were preferred to roundabouts. Also, traditional gaslight streetlight fixtures were preferred to more modern or decorative fixtures.

The table below lists the three images with the highest total scores and the three images with the lowest total scores. Those images are displayed in the column to the right. The table also provides the averages for each of the groups included within this category.

	TOTAL AVERAGE			TOTAL AVERAGE
14	*3.26*		*Pathways*	*2.59*
12	*3.04*		*Streetscape – Village Core*	*1.68*
15	*2.96*		*Road Improvements*	*1.73*
			Streetscape - Streetlights	*1.43*
17	*-1.83*		*Streetscape - Sidewalks*	*1.37*
6	*-0.14*			
2	*0.24*			

It is interesting to note that the highest rated image, in fact the highest rated image of the entire survey, was clearly not of a urbanized scale at all. It shows a sidewalk meandering past a residential neighborhood without a roadway or a commercial use in sight. This image received not one negative response. Furthermore, when comparing image #2 to image #12, they both show similar settings. However, the results were very different. Image #12 has more landscaping and a taller tree. Image #2 is more stark with less landscaping. This preference for softer, greener development will appear again throughout the results.

15

17

6

2

Open / Civic Space

The next category was Open / Civic Space. The participants were asked to focus on the idea of providing gathering spaces, park spaces, and public spaces for social interaction and recreation in the Village area. Various images of both active and passive recreation space, civic space, and other gathering spaces were used in this category. Within the category, there were two groups presented without the participants knowledge. There were some images that were more urban than others. These spaces would be appropriate in a vibrant, mixed use area such as the Village core. However, the results indicated that these were not preferred. Although many received positive averages, they were at the bottom of the list, while the less urban settings scored at the top of the list.

Similar to the results for the roads and paths category, the theme from these results was that participants preferred softer, small town settings to those that might be experienced in more urbanized areas. Generally, pictures with more landscaping and green space were preferred to those with less. Also, smaller, passive areas and areas for sitting and gathering were preferred to active areas or places for events and functions.

The table below lists the three images with the highest total scores and the three images with the lowest total scores. Those images are displayed in the column to the right. It also shows the scores for the two groups within this category.

8

6

1

	TOTAL AVERAGE			TOTAL AVERAGE
8	*3.78*		*Less Urban*	*2.40*
6	*3.30*		*More Urban*	*0.66*
1	*3.13*			
14	*-0.43*			
5	*-0.41*			
4	*0.13*			

14

5

4

The smaller, out of the way spaces appear to be the most preferred when compared to the larger spaces that dominate a setting or a core area. A place to relax, meet with friends, or read a book – these are the places that are preferred.

Parking / Parking Location

The next category of images was Parking / Parking Location. This category focused on different ways to provide parking in a Village setting and how that parking is oriented to the fabric of the community. For example, the parking can be in front of the building, behind the building, on the street, or in a garage. The orientation of the parking determines the location of the building and has a tremendous impact on the character of the area.

Within this category, there were four groups of images with each group referring to the orientation of the parking: on-street, in front of building, behind / beside building, or in garage. In general, these were the lowest rated results of any. No image scored higher than a 1.61 average. The average for all of the images in the category was barely above zero.

Those at the top of the category were from the on-street parking group. These images, as well as images that attempted to hide the parking or break it up were the most preferred.

The table below lists the three images with the highest total scores and the three images with the lowest total scores. Those images are displayed in the column to the right. It also shows the scores for each of the four groups within the category.

	TOTAL AVERAGE			TOTAL AVERAGE
9	*1.61*		*On-Street*	*0.98*
5	*1.50*		*Garage*	*-0.14*
12	*1.35*		*Behind / Beside*	*-0.50*
			Front	*-0.72*
2	*-2.00*			
7	*-1.50*			
1	*-1.36*			

Again, the primary results from this category are that on-street parking is preferred. However, in general, when you look beyond those categories, the larger themes again emerge. Even image #12, which shows parking in front of a building, is one of the top three selected. This is because it is done on a small scale with landscaping used to soften the edges and break up the pavement. This is particularly evident when comparing #12 to #'s 2, 7, and 1. The on-street parking image with the lowest average - #3, 0.17 – had the lowest average score likely because it had the harshest environment with the fewest landscaped amenities.

9

5

12

2

7

1

Building Orientation

The next category was Building Orientation. Similar to Parking Orientation, Building Orientation addresses how the buildings are situated on the lot. Buildings can either face the street, or they can face the parking lot. To create a pedestrian friendly environment, the Village Commercial district encourages buildings to be built along the street.

There were basically two groups of pictures within this category: oriented towards the street and oriented towards the parking lot. There were a couple of images that show buildings somewhat oriented towards the street, but they still have some parking in between. They are included in the "towards parking" group but provide a transition as well.

A review of the results shows that those buildings oriented towards the street are all at the top of the list, and those buildings oriented towards the parking lots are all at the bottom of the list. The images are lined up in such order that even the transitional images that were included are located in the middle as they are ranked by average score.

This indicates a clear preference by the participants for buildings oriented towards the street. This is traditional, pedestrian, and logical for a Village setting. As we look closer at the images and the results, those that scored highest within each group are those that included the most landscaping and had the softest approaches. This is the same theme that has been emerging throughout all of the categories.

The table below lists the three images with the highest total scores and the three images with the lowest total scores. Those images are displayed in the column to the right. The average scores for the two separate groups are also included in this table.

11

6

14

	TOTAL AVERAGE			TOTAL AVERAGE
11	*2.88*		*Towards Street*	*2.28*
6	*2.81*		*Towards Parking*	*-0.25*
14	*2.79*			
9	*-1.27*			
2	*-1.05*			
7	*-0.48*			

9

2

7

Having reviewed the previous categories, the results here are not surprising. The participants preferred the buildings oriented towards the street and with greener, softer edges. Specifically, images #6 and #10 did not receive a single negative vote, two of very few images to accomplish that feat. This is important considering how difficult it is to reach agreement or consensus on items as subjective as these.

Building Character

The next category was Building Character. This was the largest category with the most pictures included. The focus in this category was on the architecture and the design of the buildings. We attempted to determine preferences for different types and styles of buildings by showing a variety of styles and themes. However, the variety of images could be categorized into three primary groups: traditional, suburban, contemporary. The traditional category represented images from small towns, older Village settings, and modern developments with design guidelines with traditional elements. The suburban category represented images from conventional suburban developments. These include strip centers, franchise oriented design, and automobile oriented building features. The contemporary category represented images of more

modern buildings and designs. The architectural designs, features, and elements of these buildings are unique and distinctive and characteristic of modern places.

The traditional group of images were clearly the preferred for the participants. With one exception, all of the traditional images had an average score higher than 1.00, and image #26 did not receive a single vote lower than "2". In reviewing minimum scores, this was the highest minimum score of all images in the slideshow. The suburban group of images was the next most preferred category, although the scores were not nearly as positive as for the traditional group. Within the group, images of franchise architecture seemed to evoke the most negative responses while new development and development with elaborate and innovative design elements received the most favorable responses. The lowest scores were reserved for the contemporary group. The elements and features that make up this type of architecture are clearly not preferred in the Village area.

The table below lists the three images with the highest total scores and the three images with the lowest total scores. Those images are displayed in the column to the right. The average scores for the two separate groups are also included in this table.

	TOTAL AVERAGE			TOTAL AVERAGE
26	*3.67*		*Traditional*	*1.78*
13	*3.08*		*Suburban*	*-0.69*
16	*2.33*		*Contemporary*	*-1.44*
9	*-2.35*			
15	*-2.00*			
11	*-1.63*			

26

13

16

9

These results show a preference for a particular style of architecture and design. The style and theme is a traditional, small town, Village style. This design theme and style is not universally present or cohesive within the Oshtemo Village area at this time and will have to be instituted through redevelopment and design standards. Many of the most preferred images were new developments, indicating that even though the structures were not necessarily original, the fact that they represented the elements and features of the original towns and Villages was all that was important. Some of the key elements appeared to be window openings, storefronts, canopies, and a defined base, middle, and cap to the buildings.

15

11

The images also included mixed use buildings and three or four story buildings. None of these scored negatively within the traditional group. Participants may not have recognized the mix of uses, but building height can easily be recognized. The results showed that having buildings three or four stories in height is not viewed negatively, at least by this panel, when it is designed in a traditional manner. Those buildings at a similar elevation in a contemporary design were not accepted positively.

General Conclusions

As the process of determining the best design and theme for this area continues and is eventually implemented, there will be opportunities to look back at these results and use them again. They will be helpful in guiding Township decisions on design guidelines as well as on redevelopment decisions and reviews. Updates to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance may also spring from discussions using these results. During those discussions, additional conclusions may emerge. However, some general conclusions immediately come to mind upon first review of these results.

1. In general, the participants preferred a Village oriented design theme with buildings oriented towards the street, parking along the road, and traditional design elements (storefront windows, bottom/middle/top, brick facades).

2. There is a preference for developments that include significant landscaping and green areas as opposed to vast expanses of concrete, sharp corners and edges, or other harsh urban characteristics.

3. Buildings should be built on and oriented towards the street. Front entries should be located along street frontages with secondary entrances provided towards the parking located to the rear or side of the building.

4. Passive areas of open space should be provided as areas of gathering space and as a means of enhancing the green space and landscaping in the community.

5. Development in the Village core should be of high quality. The most preferred images were those that had to follow design guidelines or were of new developments.

Oshtemo Township Visioning Session

September 21, 2005

Visual Preference Survey Results Summary

(Average Scores, Per Category, In Descending Order)

Roads / Paths / Streetscapes				Roads / Paths / Streetscapes		
Photo #	Picture	Avg. Score		Photo #	Picture	Avg. Score
14		3.26		18		1.91
12		3.04		4		1.86
15		2.96		7		1.68
13		2.82		19		1.61
5		2.50		16		1.17
11		2.36		3		1.04
9		2.14		1		0.61
8		2.13		2		.24
10		2.05		6		-0.14
20		1.91		17		-1.83

Open / Civic Space				Open / Civic Space		
Photo #	Picture	Avg. Score		Photo #	Picture	Avg. Score
8		3.78		11		1.59
6		3.30		2		0.50
1		3.13		12		0.43
9		2.50		13		0.24
7		2.36		4		0.13
10		2.30		5		-0.41
3		2.00		14		-0.43

Parking & Parking Location				Parking & Parking Location		
Photo #	Picture	Avg. Score		Photo #	Picture	Avg. Score
9		1.61		8		-0.30
5		1.50		10		-0.55
12		1.35		4		-0.70
6		1.09		1		-1.36
11		1.04		7		-1.50
3		0.17		2		-2.00

Building Orientation			Building Orientation		
Photo #	Picture	Avg. Score	Photo #	Picture	Avg. Score
11		2.88	13		0.70
6		2.81	5		0.67
14		2.79	8		0.50
10		2.61	4		0.14
1		2.35	7		-0.48
12		2.14	2		-1.05
3		2.00	9		-1.27
Building Character			**Building Character**		
Photo #	Picture	Avg. Score	Photo #	Picture	Avg. Score
26		3.67	17		-0.17
13		3.08	14		-0.48
16		2.33	7		-0.58
19		2.25	6		-0.96

23		2.00		8		-1.04
25		1.75		4		-1.08
5		1.71		2		-1.21
3		1.46		22		-1.26
20		1.43		24		-1.29
12		1.39		18		-1.42
10		1.33		11		-1.63
21		1.17		15		-2.00
1		0.08		9		-2.35

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