



Village of Paw Paw

Van Buren County, Michigan

Master Plan 2010



LSL Planning, Inc.
Community Planning Consultants

**Village of Paw Paw
Van Buren County, Michigan
2010 Master Plan
Adopted March 22, 2010**

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**Master Plan
Steering
Committee**

Ellyn Jones
Kathleen Larson
Mary McIntosh
Julie Pioch
Roman Plaszczak
Don Rook
Dondi Squires

Larry Nielsen, Village Manager

Rebecca Harvey, AICP, PCP, Village Planning Consultant

with assistance from



LSL Planning, Inc.

Community Planning Consultants

15 Ionia Southwest, Suite 450
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616-336-7750
www.lslplanning.com

Paw Paw Master Plan 2010

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Executive Summary

The 2010 Village of Paw Paw Master Plan is built on an understanding of the past and the present, and desires for the future. The process to prepare the Plan began with an understanding of existing community conditions (the Community Snapshot). These in turn helped the Master Plan Steering Committee and consultants to better understand Paw Paw's land use issues and its opportunities.

The Master Plan reflects the desires of Paw Paw's citizens for the future development of their community. Through focus groups, community workshops, Public Workshops in a Box™, online surveys and public meetings, citizens made known their hopes and a vision for their future. This public process formed the *planning framework* of the Master Plan.

Based on public input, a *vision* for the community was developed that provides a foundation for goals, strategies and the future land use plan. The vision is summarized as follows:

Our Vision for the Village of Paw Paw is a community characterized by:

- A unique small town atmosphere;
- A beautiful natural environment;
- A diverse business community; and
- A commitment to progress.

Together, these elements provide the Village of Paw Paw with a **premier quality of life** and a community that residents are **proud to call home**.

This vision became the catalyst for the goals and strategies that provide a foundation for land use planning. The vision, goals and strategies are the *planning principles* that are the focus of the Future Land Use Plan.

The Future Land Use Plan includes four important elements: 1) A *future land use map* that categorizes the lands in the Village into distinct land use designations; 2) *descriptions* of the land use designations, to show how long term development, redevelopment or preservation of various areas in the Village is planned or anticipated; 3) *specific land use elements* that go beyond the land use designations to show how

specific properties, neighborhoods or corridors should be developed or redeveloped; and 4) *subarea plans*, which are detailed plans for distinct and unique areas within Paw Paw.

The Plan also includes an Implementation Matrix that provides the Village with a "road map" to implement its recommendations. The recommendations have been prioritized, and responsible parties identified.

A Master Plan remains useful only if it is implemented and consulted when making land use decisions. As such, the Plan should be a determining factor when deciding on development and rezoning requests. Typically, such requests should conform to the Master Plan.

This does not mean that the Village should never deviate from the Plan. However, such deviations should be made only after very careful consideration. It may be prudent to amend this Plan when conditions warrant.

By statute, the Plan must be reviewed every 5 years to determine if it should be updated or replaced. The Planning Commission, as part of their required annual report, should review the Plan and report to the Village Council on the Plan's effectiveness.

This Master Plan conforms to the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008). The plan was adopted by the Paw Paw Village Council on March 22, 2010.



Community Forum: Bistro 120, Oct. 3, 2008

Chapter 1.

The Master Plan

What is a Master Plan?

Every community has a responsibility to look beyond day-to-day issues and focus on the long-range consequences of their land use and zoning decisions. Similarly, the community must have a document that provides guidance for land use and development by considering a wide range of possible futures. For the Village of Paw Paw, this long-range view is provided through the Master Plan.

A major annexation south of Interstate 94, a possible Wal-Mart superstore, a stagnant economy and the desire for a vibrant Downtown have highlighted growing concerns over land use. Village leaders and residents are interested in encouraging quality new growth by promoting the things that make Paw Paw unique. At the same time they are also interested in preserving the community's small town character.

In truth, no community can solve every problem or answer all of the contrasting concerns about land development. But advocates for both development and preservation have common goals; each wants "better planning." Decision makers, then, are tasked with balancing the interests of landowners wishing to develop their properties with maintaining the features that attracted people to the community in the first place.

Those "quality of life" features – small town atmosphere, friendly neighbors, the wine industry, regionally-known restaurants, lakes, natural features, and schools – are what make Paw Paw unique. A successful Master Plan must consider these elements, along with protection of the environment, and takes steps that will ensure that development "fits" in the area. Accordingly, use of the right planning tools is needed to assure that the Village continues to be a special place.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) gives municipalities the authority to adopt a Master Plan to "address land use and infrastructure issues and may project 20 years or more into the future." This Plan is a look

into the next 20 or more years, based on the desires of the citizens of Paw Paw for the use of land within the Village.

How Will the Plan Be Used?

The Plan serves many functions and can be used in a variety of ways, but its usefulness is determined by the willingness of the Village to actively support and implement its vision and goals. A plan that is not actively followed and implemented may lead to problems in the future. Failure to follow the plan may discredit attempts to use the plan as a defense for legal actions that may result from challenges by property owners or developers.

Likewise, consistent and vigorous use of the plan will lend credibility to implement controversial land use decisions and rezonings. While the courts of the State of Michigan do not recognize the absolute authority of the Master Plan, they do lend much more credibility to actions supported by careful planning than those that appear to be taken arbitrarily against an individual property owner.

1. The Master Plan is a general statement of the Village's vision, goals and policies. It provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's desires for the future.
2. The Plan aids in daily land use decision-making. The vision and goals outlined in the Plan are intended to guide the Planning Commission and the Village Council in their deliberations on zoning, subdivision, capital improvements, and other matters relating to land use and development. Accordingly, the Plan provides a stable, long-term basis for decision making which will provide a balance of land uses and an orderly development process.
3. The Plan provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are based. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Act 110 of 2006) requires that the zoning ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare. It is important to note that the Master Plan and accompanying maps do not replace other Village Ordinances, specifically the Zoning Ordinance and map. Zoning is

only one of the legal devices used to implement the Master Plan.

4. The Plan attempts to coordinate public improvements and private developments. For example, public investments such as road or utility improvements should be located in areas identified in the Plan as resulting in the greatest benefit to the Village and its residents.

The Master Plan is also a component used in making decisions about public services. To be fiscally responsible and give the Village a measure of control over future growth, new infrastructure should correspond with the Master Plan.

5. The Plan serves as an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers, and adjacent communities a clear indication of the Village's direction for the future.

Relationship to Zoning

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act states that the "zoning ordinance shall be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare, (and) to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability..." The Master Plan is the long range planning document upon which planning and zoning decisions are based, including creating and amending the Village Zoning Ordinance. Although the Master Plan is a policy document and does not have the force of law, it is the basis of the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map, and zoning decisions that are inconsistent with the Master Plan may be found to be improper by the courts.

The Master Plan is the document that lays out the Village's future, while the Zoning Ordinance provides the day-to-day regulations for land use. Therefore, the land use designations on the Future Land Use Map may not directly correlate with the zoning districts or existing uses. However, the Master Plan reflects the community's long range desires for land development, so as land uses and market demands change, it is expected that future rezonings will be made to conform to the Master Plan.

The areas delineated on the Future Land Use Map are called "land use designations" and are

different from zoning districts on the Zoning Map. It is important to remember the differences between a land use designation and a zoning district. The land use designation is the desired long range land use, whereas the zoning district dictates what can happen now.

Chapter 5 contains a "zoning plan" that describes how the land use designations on the Future Land Use Map correlate to the zoning districts on the Zoning Map. The zoning plan can be used as a guide to determine how the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to implement the recommendations of this Master Plan.

Keeping the Plan Current

Fulfilling the Vision outlined in the Plan will not occur overnight. The Master Plan provides a sense of direction for the present and is a guide for the future. Understanding this, the Plan should not be rigidly administered; changing conditions that can affect its original intentions should be acknowledged and addressed.

A Plan that is not referenced on a continual basis, or one that is outdated, can weaken decisions. Over time, goals may be achieved and new ones needed, or individual zoning decisions may change the direction of development in a certain part of the Village. Where decisions lead to land use approvals that are contrary to the plan, it should be amended to reflect these changes.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires the Planning Commission to make an annual report to the Village Council concerning its operations and the status of planning activities. As part of preparing this report, the Planning Commission should hold an annual meeting to review the Plan and make a report on ensuring that changes are taken into consideration and that amendments are made to keep it current and consistent with Village philosophies. The Planning Commission should periodically solicit public opinion about the Master plan using surveys, public meetings, or other means. By routinely following these procedures, the Master Plan will continue to be an up-to-date and reliable planning tool.

The Planning Act also requires municipalities to review their current Master Plan at least every

five years to determine whether amendments are needed, or if the process for a new Plan should be started. An annual Planning Commission review, documented through meeting minutes, will not only fulfill this requirement, but will also ensure that the Plan remains a relevant and useful document.

Previous Planning Efforts

Village Master Plans

The Village last adopted a master plan in 1998, “The Village of Paw Paw Land Use Plan Update,” which provided an overall framework for planning and development within the Village. This was an update to a previous plan, adopted in 1989.

The analysis of strengths and weaknesses in the 1998 Plan mirrors many of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified during the development of this Plan. However, the housing market was much stronger in 1998. Since that time an emerging weakness in the home mortgage and financing system has threatened the decline of some Village neighborhoods.

The 1998 Future Land Use Map generally reflected existing land uses and to a degree some of its recommendations have been completed. This includes the Downtown streetscape improvements, but many remain.

The 1998 Plan was amended after land south of I-94 was annexed in 1999. The annexed area along M-40 was designated as commercial and the existing manufactured housing developments as low to medium density residential. The majority of the property, west of County Road 665 was designated industrial. However, there has been no industrial growth in this area (the only major development here has been the Bronson Hospital Outpatient facility; a Wal-Mart was approved on M-40, but has not been constructed).

Other Plans

In 2008, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission completed the Paw Paw River Watershed Management Plan. This plan encompasses the entire 5,818 acre watershed, from its source at the far western edge of Ka-

lamazoo County, to its terminus joining the St. Joseph River, just north of where the St. Joseph empties into Lake Michigan. In Paw Paw, the East and West branches of the Paw Paw River join to form the South Branch, just above the bridge at Michigan Avenue, at the southern end of Maple Lake.

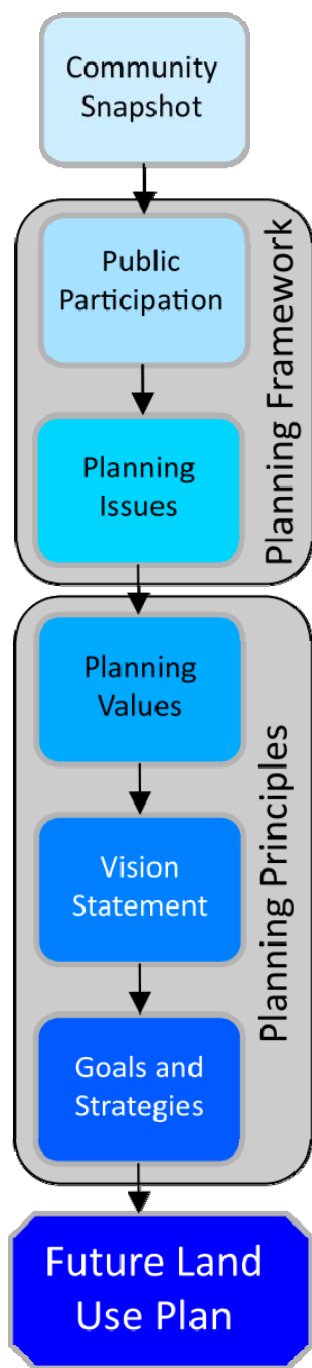
The Watershed Management Plan is an ambitious and detailed study of the watershed and the impact of development on water quality and habitat. It designates the Paw Paw area as a High Priority Urban Management Area. The plan recommends best management practices for stormwater and road maintenance, a county-wide ban on the use of phosphorus, and adopting local stormwater ordinances. The plan is an excellent guide to implement best management practices near waterfronts and should be utilized to ensure that water quality improves.

In addition to the above, Van Buren County has a farmland preservation ordinance outlined in the county's master plan. Both Antwerp and Paw Paw townships, adjacent to the Village of Paw Paw, are participants in the county plan and have farmland preservation strategies in their master plans. Regional planning efforts between these entities could help further township farmland preservation goals and village redevelopment and infrastructure improvement goals.

The Village of Paw Paw participated in a Red Arrow Corridor planning process by the Anderson Economics Consulting Group, with a concluding report dated 2001. While report data may be out of date, the conclusions and strategies for regional marketing and economic development participation with other Van Buren County Red Arrow Corridor communities may still be pertinent and worth periodic review. The report can be found online at: <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cdnr/redarrowcatreport.pdf>

Creating the Master Plan

The 2010 Master Plan was a collaborative effort between the Village staff and the citizens of Paw Paw. In 2008, the Planning Commission hired a planning consultant (LSL Planning of Grand Rapids, MI) to assist them in preparing a new Mas-



ter Plan and a steering committee composed of Village officials, business owners and citizens was formed to help guide the process. The Master Plan was created in four major steps.

First, information about the community was gathered – demographics, history, economic and market data, maps, and other background material. This information is summarized in the **Community Snapshot** (Chapter 2). These data were used to identify preliminary issues that were discussed during the second step, the **Planning Framework**.

Through a variety of efforts, the public had an opportunity to participate in a process to determine the values important to them. Several techniques were used to engage the public. Six focus group meetings were held with individuals representing specific community interests. In addition, a Community Forum was held at the Bistro 120 Restaurant in October, 2008. Participants identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and discussed issues related to Village land uses.

Several Public Workshops in a Box™ were held to encourage participation by those who

normally do not attend public meetings or hearings. At these meetings a host would pick up a box of workshop materials and invited friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc. would attend a gathering at a home, church hall, coffee shop, or anywhere attendees felt comfortable. These self-directed meetings were used to solicit additional issues and ideas from the public.

The Village also received input from the public via the local newspaper and web site. Finally, after the initial draft document was completed,

a Community Workshop was held on March 19, 2009 to allow public review and reaction to the concepts and ideas. All of these techniques were used to identify the planning issues that affect the community. A summary of the results of the public participation process and a listing of the planning issues are found in Chapter 3, **Planning Framework**.

Based on the outcomes of the Planning Framework, the third step resulted in the development of **Planning Principles**. These principles consist of a Vision, Goals and Strategies that are the foundation for the future land use plan. The Planning Principles are described in Chapter 4.

Finally, using the Planning Principles as a guide, a **Future Land Use Plan** and Future Land Use Map were prepared. The Future Land Use Plan is found in Chapter 5. In addition, an **Implementation Plan** (Chapter 6) was created, to guide this Plan into action.

After review by the Steering Committee, the entire Master Plan draft was then submitted to the Planning Commission, to begin the adoption process required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. The draft plan was reviewed by the Village Council and then released for review by the surrounding townships and the Van Buren County Planning Commission. After completing the mandated review period, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 29, 2009 and the plan was adopted by the Village Council on March 22, 2010. The resolution of adoption is copied on the inside back cover of this document, in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

How Does the Master Plan Affect You?

How the Master Plan affects you depends on your particular situation:

- If you are a *property owner*, you may have several interests, including not only your property, but properties that are similarly designated.
- As a *homeowner*, you may be interested in the properties in your immediate neighborhood and you may wish to know what uses are proposed for vacant land.

- As an *owner of vacant property* you may want to know what land uses are proposed for your property.
- As a *resident* you may be interested in the overall planning concepts, as expressed by its Goals. These statements should give you an indication of the Planning Commission's view of the Village now, and in the future.

How Should You Use This Plan?

Again, use of the Plan depends on your interest in the future of Paw Paw. Generally, here is a procedure you should follow:

Step #1 What land use is proposed for your property, or the area surrounding your property?

This information is on the Future Land Use map in Chapter 5. This map is divided into separate land use categories. Find the land use category in which your property is located.

Step #2 Determine how the Village views development in your area.

The Future Land Use Plan (Chapter 5) and map indicates the type of development planned for your area; it may be fairly specific, or somewhat general. This part of the Plan provides some reasonable direction to the Planning Commission, as well as information to property owners about development within the Village.

Step #3 Determine the meaning of the land use designation for your property.

In Step #1 you were asked to determine the land use category for your property. Find the category that applies to your property and read the land use designation. Depending on the nature of your interest, this may be as far as you want to go. If you have a specific proposal that does not match the expectations of the Plan, you may want to look at it in more detail.

Step #4 Determine how your property is affected.

The Future Land Use designation indicates the planned use for your property. *This does not mean that you cannot continue the use that you currently have.* Land use within Paw Paw is also affected by the zoning, so see the Zoning Or-

dinance or call the Village offices for more information.

The Master Plan may have a profound impact on the future of your property, regardless of whether you are a developer, landowner or homeowner. As a resident and property owner of Paw Paw, it is important that you become familiar with the Plan and what it may mean to you and your community.

Chapter 2. Community Snapshot

A community snapshot is the foundation of the Master Plan. To know where to go, you first need to know where you have been and where you are.

The Village of Paw Paw is located in east-central Van Buren County at the intersection of Interstate 94 and M-40, approximately 20 miles west of downtown Kalamazoo. The Village is situated between Antwerp Township to the east and Paw Paw Township to the west. Located within Southwest Michigan's wine and fruit producing region, Paw Paw has established itself as a destination for wine tasting and outdoor recreation, with Maple Lake providing waterfront opportunities for Village residents and visitors. With easy access to I-94 and situated approximately 2 hours from both Chicago and Detroit, the Village has traditionally been an attractive setting for industries that heavily depend on transportation.

Paw Paw employs workers in local industry, but many also commute to Kalamazoo and surrounding areas. Retail and service businesses have expanded in the community to support both visitors and Village residents. Since a great deal of the developable land has already been built upon and much of the remaining vacant land is affected by limitations imposed by wetlands, drainage patterns and topography, redevelopment will play an important role in the community's future.

The Village of Paw Paw is a full service municipality, providing wastewater, water, and elec-

trical utilities. In addition, the Village has its own streets and parks departments, which maintain over 100 acres of public lands and more than 30 miles of major and local streets. Besides its own police department, Paw Paw is also home to the Van Buren County Sheriff's Department and a State Police command post. The Village is a member of a five-unit fire department with four surrounding townships.

The Village government has kept up to date with technology and is meeting new economy needs by providing fiber optic broadband service to each property. As the county seat, much of the land downtown is dedicated to the county courthouse, county administration and government services. At the time of this Plan, the Village appoints a Planning Commission, a Parks and Recreation Committee, a Historical Commission, a Downtown Development Authority, a Revolving Loan Committee, and a Cable TV Board.

Historical Overview

Paw Paw was settled in 1828 and named for the pawpaw trees that once grew along the Paw Paw River. Today, pawpaw trees are less common in the area, due to the clearing of forests. The Village of Paw Paw has a beautiful setting and bountiful natural resources, primarily water and soils. Just as with much of southwest Michigan, the area has an ideal climate for fruit production. This was recognized by early settlers to Van Buren County and the Village.

Peter Gremps platted the Village of Paw Paw and founded the community's first store, mill, and public house. A tavern in the Village,



Regional Location and Context

founded in 1834 by Daniel Dodge, was one of the principal stopping places along the Territorial Road between Chicago and Detroit (what is now Red Arrow Highway/Michigan Avenue). In 1840 the Van Buren County seat was relocated from neighboring Lawrence to Paw Paw. At the turn of the century, when South Haven became the largest community in Van Buren County, an attempt was made to wrest the

county seat away from Paw Paw. After several votes and many protests, the county seat remained in Paw Paw and still does to this day.

Paw Paw is known for its wineries, its beautiful lakefront, and quality schools. The Village Hall is located in the former County Court House, which was relocated to

Michigan Avenue. This building is one of four listed on the National Register of Historic Places; the others are the Van Buren County Courthouse, the Carnegie Library (now the Carnegie Center) and the waterworks building (now the site of the Warner's Winery/Kevin's Restaurant).



Village Hall, 1920's



Michigan Avenue, Downtown

imity of I-94 have fueled an expansion of commercial uses outward from the downtown to the Village boundaries.

Downtown

Downtown Paw Paw, located on Michigan Avenue is a mix of retail, office, and civic uses, along with some upper story residential dwellings. The downtown is located approximately one mile north of the I-94 interchange. Maple Lake is a prominent near-downtown resource and provides an attractive backdrop for events and celebrations.

The Downtown area contains many attractive buildings and exudes a classic village atmosphere. The many restaurants and the movie theater keep the district vital and active into the evening.

Downtown has several key destination businesses and attractions that are a draw for people and shoppers. Parking is ample both along the street and in Village-owned lots behind and adjacent to stores, shops and restaurants.

This parking is convenient because many businesses have developed very attractive rear building entrances. Therefore, customers parking in the lots behind Michigan Avenue are easily able to identify and enter shops through the rear for added convenience.

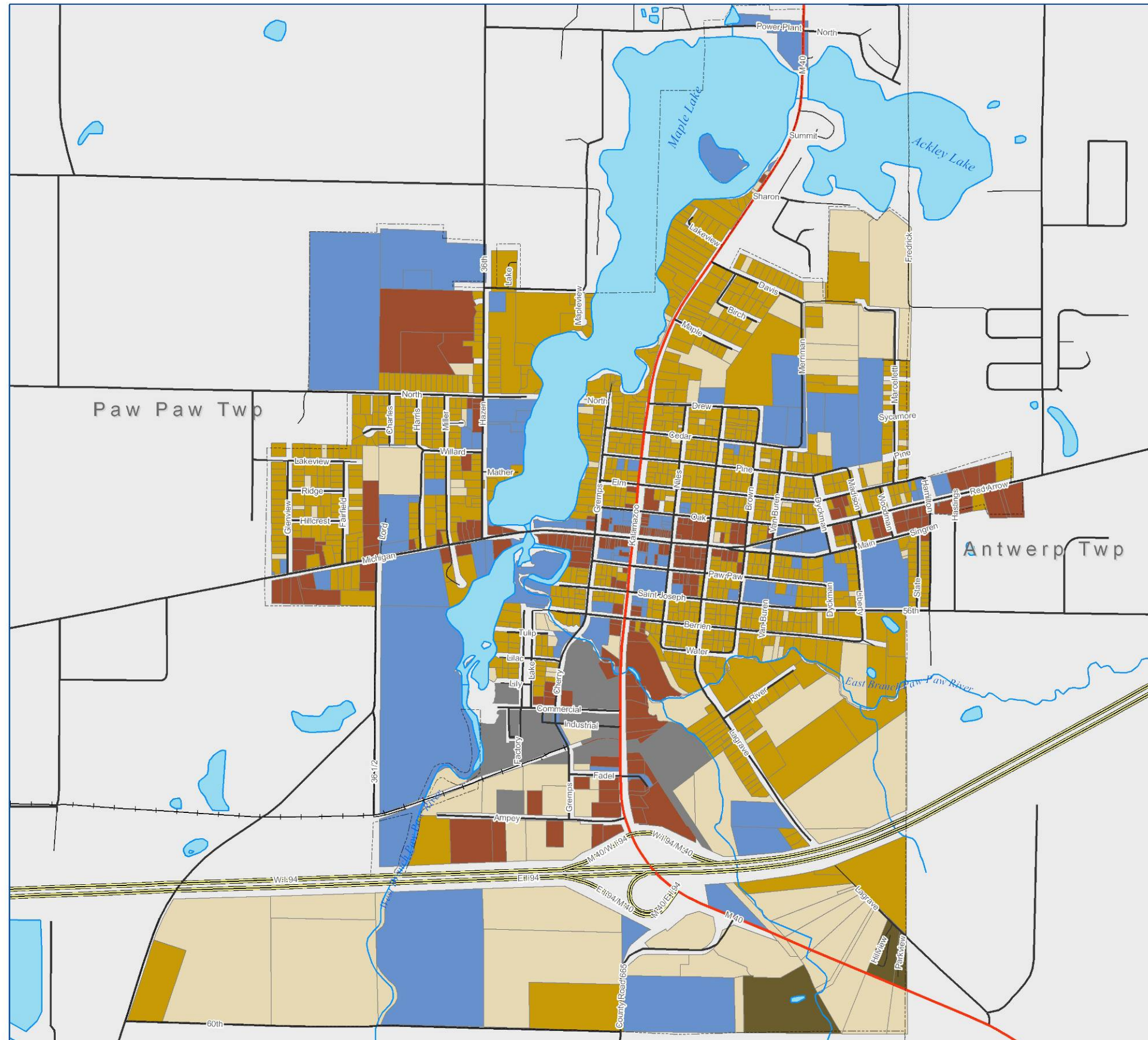
While convenience is important, on-street building entrances should remain as visible, convenient, and attractive. Michigan Avenue should be viewed as the prime market street and any attempts to close or down-grade storefront entrances should be discouraged. These entrances help define and reinforce the public sidewalk space that makes downtown special, creating a very positive and exciting retail and dining/entertainment experience. These characteristics help set downtown apart from the "suburban" retail developments that boast easy access and parking in their large street-front surface lots.

However, the Downtown faces challenges. There are empty storefronts, and some facades need to be improved or restored. Pedestrian mobility is affected by an additional 6-inch step up from the curb level, resulting in difficulties for those with disabilities. In addition, areas with long curb cuts or expanses of parking areas adjacent to sidewalks discourage pedestrian activity.

Physical Characteristics

Land Use

Map I shows existing land uses in the Village. Commercial land uses have developed along the Village's two main corridors: M-40/Kalamazoo Street and Red Arrow Highway/Michigan Avenue. The high visibility and easy access of Red Arrow Highway/Michigan Avenue and the prox-



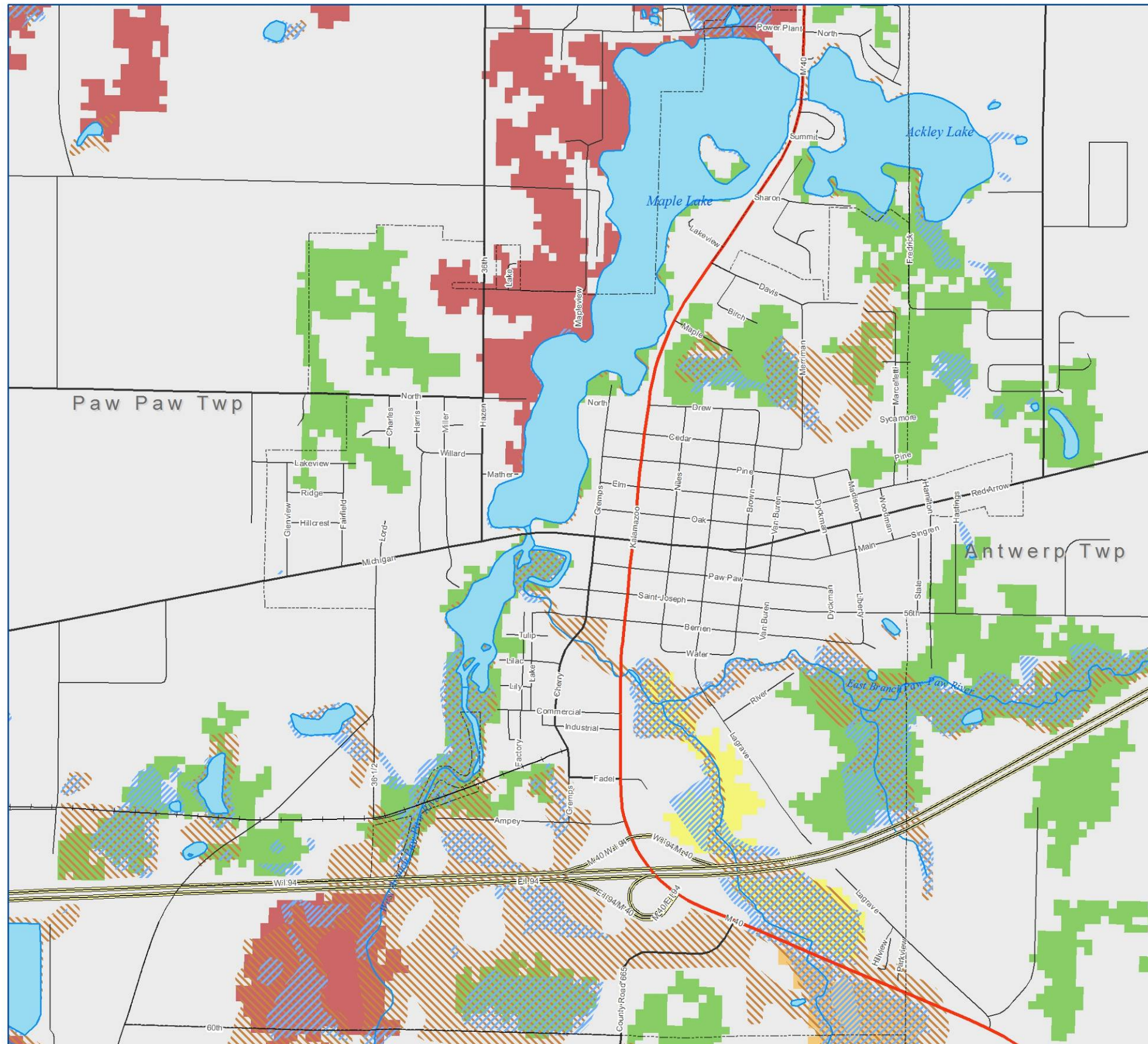
Map 1
Existing Land Use
 Master Plan
 Village of Paw Paw
 Van Buren County, MI

- Residential
- Manufactured Home Community
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Commercial/Office
- Industrial
- Vacant



Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Van Buren County GIS








Map 2





Natural Features

Master Plan
Village of Paw Paw
Van Buren County, MI


 Wetlands
 Areas Containing Wetland Soils
 Wetlands and Wetland Soils

Potential Conservation Areas


Priority Score

 1 - 7
 8 - 11
 12 - 19
 20 - 34

Draft March 2009

0 750 1,500 3,000
 Feet 

Source: National Wetland Inventory, Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Van Buren County GIS


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Kalamazoo Street Corridor and Other Business Areas

The M-40/Kalamazoo Street corridor is defined by the I-94 interchange. Highway oriented commercial uses have developed from I-94 north along M-40 to just south of the downtown. Uses include fast food, automotive services, and light industrial. Ampey Avenue branches off from Kalamazoo Street and provides access to several highway oriented uses.

While this is a successful corridor, some buildings need to be updated. Pedestrian mobility is also limited, as there are few safe locations to cross the street. Sidewalks are discontinuous and for much of the corridor are located along the curb, directly next to traffic.

There are also commercial areas beginning in the townships at the east and west entrances to the community on Red Arrow Highway/Michigan Avenue. These areas are classic “road into town” neighborhoods, consisting mostly of automobile oriented uses and services and a variety of retail establishments.

Residential

Most residential development is located adjacent to downtown to the north, south, and east. These neighborhoods are characterized by older homes on small lots and many share property lines with commercial and industrial uses. This has raised issues of compatibility, transitions and property maintenance, especially for those neighborhoods abutting heavy commercial areas. A mixture of older, cottage style homes, as well as new lakefront homes, can be found on the shores of Maple Lake. Once a regional vacation retreat, Maple Lake spawned many small cottages which have since been converted to year-round homes.

Newer, subdivision-style residential development is located on the north side of Michigan Avenue, west of Maple Lake. This area developed as the Village began to grow and expand. The middle and elementary schools are located in these neighborhoods (Paw Paw High School is located 2 miles east of the Village, on Red Arrow Highway in Antwerp Township). Also within these neighborhoods is Bronson-Lakeview Hospital, which is on the west side of Maple Lake and is a major area employer.

Industrial

Industrial land uses are located west of Kalamazoo Street near Factory Street and Industrial Avenue. Due to challenging economic times and other factors, several industries have left, leaving vacant buildings and land with a potential for redevelopment. The Coca Cola/Minute Maid bottling plant, one of the largest in the state, is located west of the Village in Paw Paw Township. While located outside Paw Paw, it nevertheless plays a major role as an employer, and its related truck traffic is an important issue because the main access to the plant from I-94 is through the Village and downtown.

South of I-94

In 1999, the Village annexed approximately 387 acres south of I-94, between the interstate



One of Paw Paw's fine older homes

and 60th Street. Much of this land is vacant, although there is a manufactured (mobile) home community that is accessed from South La-Grave Avenue and a manufactured (modular) home subdivision just west of M-40. A farm and home store is also located on M-40. A Wal-Mart superstore was approved here in 2007, but construction plans are on hold, with approvals expiring in 2009. To the west, Bronson Hospital, a major landholder in this area, has constructed an Outpatient Center, which provides offices for primary care physicians, labs, and rehabilitation facilities. Bronson owns more land here, which may provide development opportunities.

Village Assets

Paw Paw celebrates several unique assets that are not common to similar sized communities. These include seven family-owned restaurants, some with a regional draw, that are popular with residents and visitors alike. As the county seat, the local economy is bolstered by relatively secure government activities and employment. The Village also has its own hospital and movie theater. In addition, as the focus of the wine industry in Van Buren County, Paw Paw



Maple Lake

is a destination for tourists and wine enthusiasts. These are qualities that should be emphasized and built upon as the Village continues to grow and develop.

Paw Paw schools have a reputation for excellence. This is an attraction for housing and economic development. Both the Middle School and the Lower/ Upper Elementary schools are located in the Village (the high school is approximately 2 miles east, in Antwerp Township). The student population and related traffic impacts the Village. There are 2,231 students enrolled in pre-school through adult education. The schools are also a significant employer. For the next 10 years, the school district has adequate land for growth. Additionally, Lutheran and Catholic elementary schools are located in the Village.

Natural Features

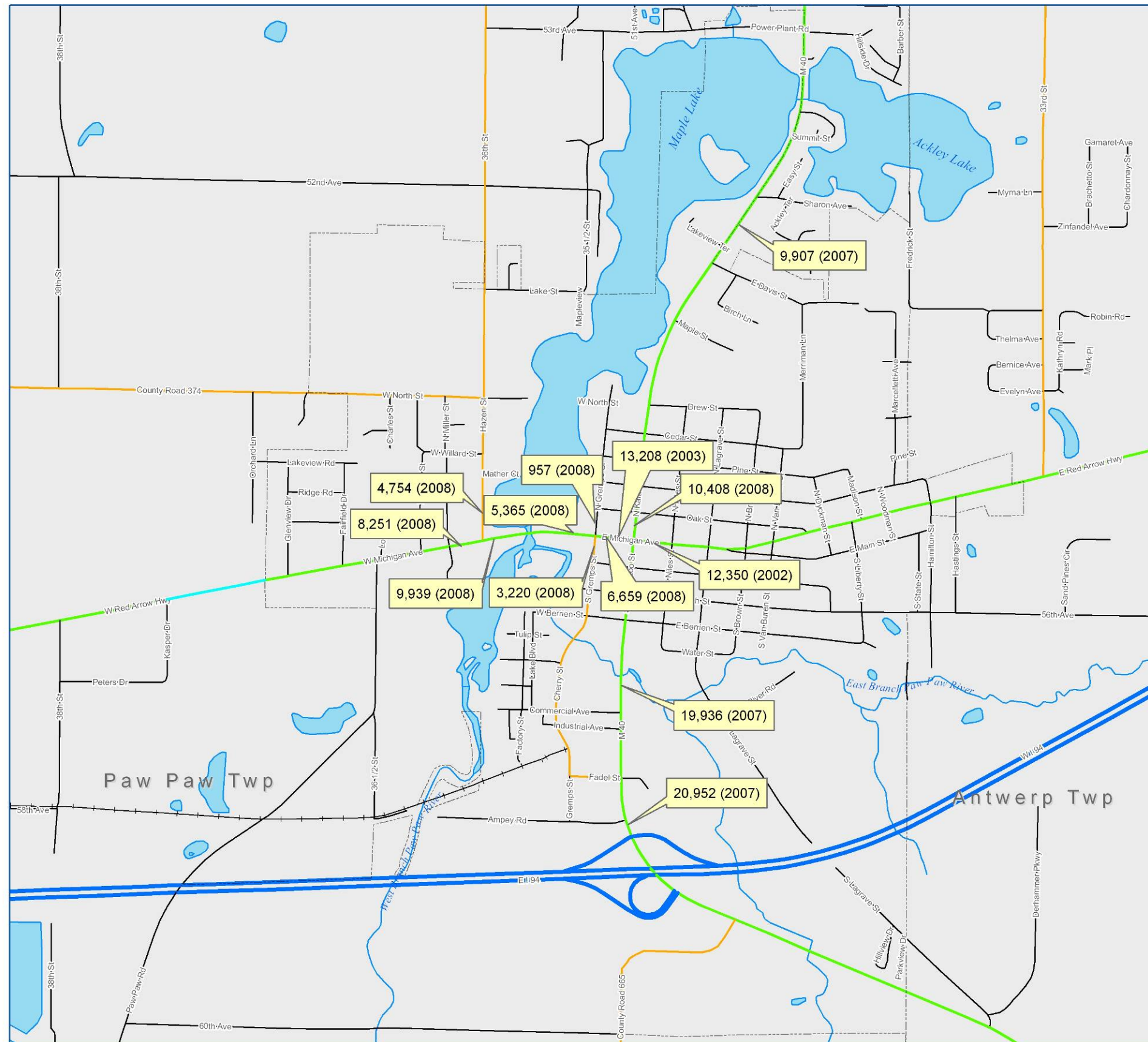
Paw Paw is fortunate to be located at the confluence of the east and west branches of the Paw Paw River that feed the 172-acre Maple Lake. Built by the Village in 1907, the reservoir was built to provide power and flood control; however, the dam no longer generates electricity. The lake provides many recreational opportunities, including fishing, boating and kayaking, and the marshy lowlands surrounding the river and lake offer a natural habitat for a wide variety of woodland and wetland creatures.

Map 2 shows lakes, streams and wetlands in and near the Village. Wetlands along the east and west branches of the Paw Paw River, as well as some low area wetlands, are mostly found to the south. This map also shows Potential Conservation Areas (PCAs). The *Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Potential Conservation Areas* report by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (August, 2007) defines PCAs as “places on the landscape dominated by native vegetation that have various levels of potential for harboring high quality natural areas and unique natural features. In addition these areas may provide critical ecological services such as maintaining water quality and quantity, soil development and stabilization, pollination of cropland, wildlife travel corridors, stopover sites for migratory birds, sources of genetic diversity, and floodwater retention.”¹ The higher PCA score indicates a greater concentration or higher quality presence of these factors.

Topography

Paw Paw’s topography is relatively flat with minor slope variations near the rivers and Maple Lake. The area south of I-94 between County Road 665 and M-40 is the highest elevation and the area north of Maple Lake on the southwest corner of 51st Avenue and M-40 is the lowest.

¹ For more information on the PCAs and the PCA scores, see Paskus, J.J. and H.D. Enander. 2007. *Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties Potential Conservation Areas: Providing Ecological Information for a Green Infrastructure Plan*. Report to the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, Benton Harbor, MI. Report number MNFI 2007-10.



Map 3
Road Network
 Master Plan
 Village of Paw Paw
 Van Buren County, MI

- Interstate
- Minor Arterial
- Collectors
- Local
- +— Railroad
- 20,952 (2007) Traffic Count (year)

0 800 1,600 3,200 Feet

Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Van Buren County GIS

LSL Planning, Inc.
 Community Planning Consultants

Water Features

The East and West branches of the Paw Paw River flow north into the Village and join near the south end of Maple Lake at Michigan Avenue to form the South Branch. The river flows north from the Maple Lake dam to the main stream of the Paw Paw River in Waverly Township. With the confluence of two river branches and a lake impoundment within its borders, the Village plays a critical role in addressing Paw Paw River watershed issues.

Water quality in Maple Lake has become an issue because of sediment loading and storm water runoff that brings chemicals and nutrients into Maple Lake from the Gates Drain (Briggs Pond) and the West Michigan Avenue/Red Arrow Highway storm drainage system. This has resulted in arsenic contamination and a shallower, warmer lake leading to excessive weed growth.

In past years, the lake's water level has been lowered to allow removal of sediments from Briggs Pond and Maple Lake. This is no longer financially viable. In recent years, the lake level has been lowered to allow trash removal from shorelines, and maintenance to private docks, seawalls and Village assets such as the hydrodam, a boat launch and dock, and the pedestrian bridge to Maple Island.

The Village has commissioned studies and management plans to explore sediment and nutrient loading options. The Village also continues to work with the County Drain Commissioner's office and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality regarding watershed issues, to implement water quality programs as well as improve the fishery.

Upstream from Maple Lake is Briggs Pond, a small impoundment of the West Branch just above its confluence with the East Branch. It is fed by a significant wetland that separates the southeast from the southwest portions of the Village. This pond is also impacted by sediment and agricultural run-off, as well as by the industrial brownfields just to the south.

The Village has approximately 185 acres of wetlands and 249 acres of wetland-type soils, as defined by the National Wetlands Inventory. These areas are important habitats for a di-

verse array of plants and animals that are key to watershed health. Wetlands also contribute to the beauty of the area.

Transportation/Access

The Village is well served by Interstate 94, linking the community to Kalamazoo, Benton Harbor and eventually Chicago. The major north-south route (M-40/Kalamazoo Street) connects to Allegan and Holland and through Lawton to Indiana. The Village is bisected by Michigan Avenue, part of the Red Arrow Highway, which was once the main east-west route in this portion of Southwest Michigan.

Until recently, Paw Paw has been served by the West Michigan Railroad, a short line traveling west to Hartford, where freight cars are transferred to the CSX main line. Since the closing of the DuoTang plant, however, there has been no freight service to Paw Paw. Passenger rail is available nearby in Kalamazoo via the Blue Water and Wolverine Amtrak lines, west to Chicago or east to Detroit/Pontiac and Port Huron. The nearest passenger airports are in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. **Map 3** shows the functional classifications of Village streets. Also shown are available traffic counts at key locations.

As previously noted, truck traffic through the Village is an issue. Trucks accessing the Coca Cola/Minute Maid plant and the Ralph Moyle Truck Terminal on Red Arrow Highway west of the Village exit from I-94 onto Kalamazoo Street/M-40 and continue north to Michigan Avenue, where they turn left (west). As a result, truck traffic is heavy on Kalamazoo and through the western section of the Village. Truck traffic through the Kalamazoo/Michigan intersection not only impacts vehicular and pedestrian movements in the heart of Downtown but also its character as a desirable place to shop, live, and have fun.

Table 1

Surrounding Community Comparison - Population					
Geography	1990	2000	2007	Change 1990 - 2000	Change 2000 - 2007
Village of Paw Paw	3,169	3,363	3,239	6.12%	-3.69%
Village of Lawton	1,685	1,859	1,807	10.33%	-2.80%
Village of Mattawan	2,456	2,536	2,820	3.26%	11.20%
Antwerp Township	9,293	10,813	12,412	16.36%	14.79%
Paw Paw Township	6,701	7,091	6,868	5.82%	-3.14%
Van Buren County	70,060	76,263	77,931	8.85%	2.19%
State of Michigan	9,295,297	9,938,444	10,071,822	6.92%	1.34%

Source: US Census 2000; US Census Population Estimate Program

Table 2

Analogous Community Comparison - Population					
Geography	1990	2000	2007	Change 1990 - 2000	Change 2000 - 2007
Village of Paw Paw	3,169	3,363	3,239	6.12%	-3.69%
Otsego	3,937	3,933	3,838	-0.10%	-2.42%
Plainwell	4,057	3,933	3,873	-3.06%	-1.53%
Portland	3,889	3,789	3,710	-2.57%	-2.08%
Wayland	2,751	3,939	3,831	43.18%	-2.74%
Whitehall	3,027	2,884	2,810	-4.72%	-2.57%

Source: US Census 2000; US Census Population Estimate Program

Demographics

Population

According to the most recent United States Census estimates for 2007, Paw Paw has a population of 3,239. Between 1990 and 2000, the Village experienced a moderate level of growth; however, estimates for the years since 2000 indicate a population decline. This is not unusual to Paw Paw, as throughout the State of Michigan, difficult economic times and out-migration have resulted in a population slow-down or decline in many communities. Because Paw Paw is nearly built-out, its best hope is a stable to slight increase in population. Much will depend on the economy, enhancements that build on the community's character and its assets, and the demand for infill and redevelopment.

To help identify its unique characteristics, Paw Paw was compared to five West Michigan communities. These communities all share a similar population (2007 estimate) and rate of population change (2000-2007) and all are located just off an interstate highway. These data show how Paw Paw compares demographically to communities with similar attributes. Comparison data for the surrounding townships and nearby villages are shown in **Tables 1** and **2**.

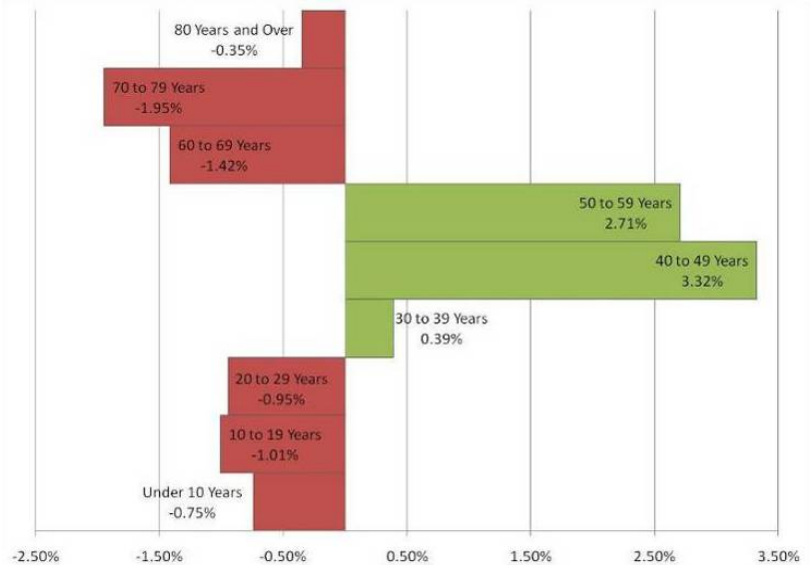
Age Breakdown

The median age of Paw Paw residents rose slightly between 1990 and 2000 from 34.5 to 36.3. This is lower than the change in median age for neighboring communities and Van Buren County and the State of Michigan as a whole. Communities surrounding Paw Paw, as well as the selected communities, are generally

experiencing a greater increase in the median age as seen in **Tables 3 and 4**.

While Paw Paw is aging, between 1990 and 2000 the group with the highest growth rate was age 40 to 49 followed closely by those 50 to 59. **Figure 1** describes the change in the percentage of the total population for each age group during that period. In 1990, the 40 to 49 age group comprised 11.5% of the population but in 2000 this same group increased its share to 14.8%, an increase of 3.3%. This same pattern is seen with the 50 to 59 age group; typically associated with empty-nesters and early retirement age couples looking to downsize their living space in response to lifestyle changes. The Village should aim to provide a range of housing options to cater to this age group.

Figure 1 – Percent Change in Age Group Share of Total Population 1990-2000



Census and population trends for the US and Michigan indicate that 16% of the population today is age 60 and older; by 2025 this will climb to 18% or almost one in every five persons. In Van Buren County today there are 12,579 persons over age 60, with a projection of 16,104 persons age 60 and over by 2025. Currently 19% of Van Buren County seniors are disabled and 10% live in poverty. A senior population explosion is expected between 2010 to 2025 with the following patterns:

- **60-64** age group, slowest growth (this peaks in 2020)
- **65-69**, five times faster growth rate than 60 to 64 (this peaks in 2026)
- **70-74**, highest rate of growth and highest need for services – continuous growth
- **75-79**, high growth rate – continuous growth
- **80 – 84**, a bit slower growth rate, but this group is a heavy consumer of services
- **85 and over**, this group will grow slow and then pick up after 2024²

This trend to a growing senior population taken with housing demand (pages 22 and 23)

² Source: Presentation by Eastern Van Buren County Senior Services, based on data by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, 2009. More information at www.pawpaw.net/goseniors

Table 3

Surrounding Community Comparison - Median Age			
Geography	1990	2000	Change 1990 - 2000
Village of Paw Paw	34.5	36.3	1.8
Village of Lawton	34.1	36.9	2.8
Village of Mattawan	31.3	32.9	1.6
Antwerp Township	32.5	35.1	2.6
Paw Paw Township	35.0	37.6	2.6
Van Buren County	33.3	36.6	3.3
State of Michigan	32.6	35.5	2.9

Source of this and all following tables: US Census Bureau

Table 4

Analogous Community Comparison - Median Age			
Geography	1990	2000	Change 1990 - 2000
Wayland	30.6	30.7	0.1
Village of Paw Paw	34.5	36.3	1.8
Portland	30.9	33.5	2.6
Plainwell	33.0	36.2	3.2
Otsego	30.4	34.1	3.7
Whitehall	36.3	40.0	3.7

presents Paw Paw with an opportunity to develop middle- and higher-end nior independent and continuing care housing such as townhouses, niums and resident care housing.

One dramatic concern facing the State is the loss of residents aged 20 to 39. This age group is typically comprised of young, educated professionals and working families with children that support local school districts. While all age groups are important to a community, the 20 to 39 age group is generally seen as an indicator for vitality and economic health. Its loss is significant because it represents the prime years for family formation, which, in concert with limited new housing opportunities due to near build out, may translate in a decline of school-aged children.

While many Michigan communities are finding it difficult to keep and attract residents in the 20 to 39 age group, Paw Paw has been able to maintain a relatively steady number. In 1990, 30.3% of the population was age 20-39; a minimal drop to 29.8% was reflected in 2000.

Table 5 shows (by community) the 20 to 30 age group as a percent of the total population. Of the comparable communities, Paw Paw had the smallest change in the percentage of total population for the 20 to 39 age group.

The importance of maintaining solid single-family residential neighborhoods, or in creating new ones, cannot be overlooked. Yet, as the Village's population ages the need for broader housing choices increases. Land use relationships that consider both an aging population and younger families should be a priority in coming years.

Racial Composition

The majority of Paw Paw residents are white, although minority representation grew slightly between 1990 and 2000 from approximately 4% to just over 7% of the overall population. Similarly, Van Buren County also saw an increase in the minority population from 10% in 1990 to 12% in 2000 (see **Figure 2**).

Table 5

20 - 39 Age Group Percentage of Population – Analogous Communities			
Geography	% of Total Population 1990	% of Total Population 2000	Change in % of Total Population 1990-2000
Village of Paw Paw	30.29%	29.74%	-0.55%
Wayland	33.44%	32.47%	-0.97%
Portland	32.71%	28.87%	-3.83%
Plainwell	31.11%	27.03%	-4.08%
Michigan	32.59%	28.11%	-4.48%
Otsego	33.30%	28.81%	-4.49%
Van Buren County	29.24%	24.68%	-4.56%
Whitehall	28.15%	22.36%	-5.78%

Paw Paw and Van Buren County both experienced an increase in the percentage of persons of Hispanic origin between 1990 and 2000. The Hispanic population represented 2% of the population of the Village in 1990 and 3% in 2000. Van Buren County saw a larger increase in the Hispanic population from 3% in 1990 to 7% of the population in 2000. This is largely due to the expansion of the prosperous fruit pro-

Figure 2 - Racial Composition - 2000

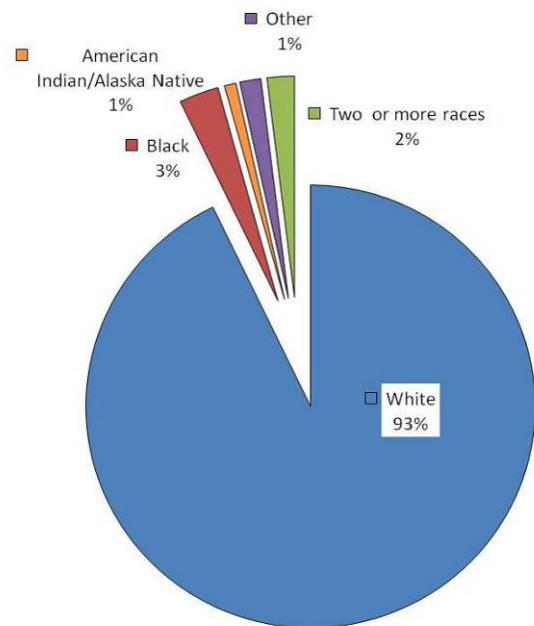


Table 6

Analogous Community Comparison - Household Characteristics								
Geography	Number of Households - 1990	Number of Households - 2000	Change - Number of Households	Avg. Household Size - 1990	Avg. Household Size - 2000	Change - Avg. Household Size	Median Year Structure Built	Median Owner-Occupied Home Value
Village of Paw Paw	1,313	1,417	7.92%	2.34	2.27	-2.99%	1955	\$84,300
Otsego	1,500	1,553	3.53%	2.62	2.51	-4.20%	1948	\$88,900
Whitehall	1,173	1,165	-0.68%	2.47	2.35	-4.86%	1959	\$89,400
Wayland	1,006	1,466	45.73%	2.62	2.61	-0.38%	1982	\$90,700
Plainwell	1,488	1,506	1.21%	2.59	2.48	-4.25%	1954	\$97,100
Portland	1,448	1,507	4.07%	2.67	2.51	-5.99%	1953	\$102,000

duction industry in southwest Michigan and the permanent settlement of migrant workers.

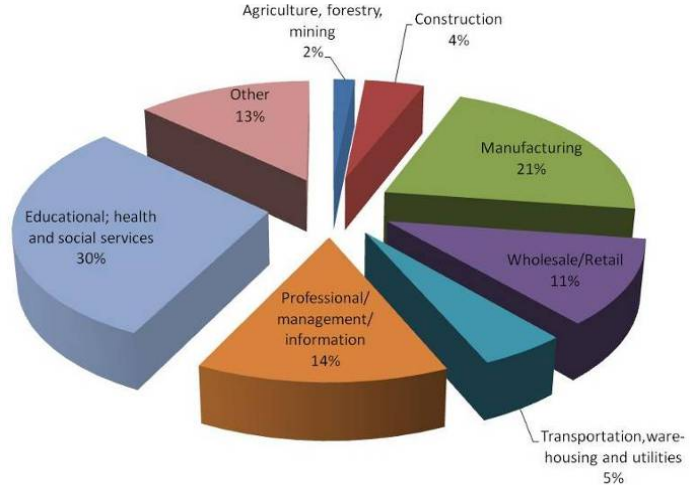
Household Characteristics

Between 1990 and 2000 the number of households in Paw Paw grew by almost 8%. This is consistent with the 6.1% increase in population during the same period, and a 3% decrease in average household size. This is also consistent with comparable communities and with national trends. More people are remaining single and families tend to have fewer children; therefore, the number of households increases but size typically decreases.

The age of housing can sometimes influence the need for code enforcement and general neighborhood quality. The median year of housing structures built in Paw Paw is 1955. This is consistent with the comparable communities (with the exception of Wayland, which experienced a surge of new housing between 1990 and 2000) (see **Table 6**). An aging housing stock can result in a decline of property maintenance and upkeep. Recognizing this issue and promoting a policy of property maintenance enforcement will aid in maintaining and rehabilitating strong, single-family neighborhoods.

The median value in 2000 for owner-occupied homes in Paw Paw was \$84,300. This is well below the State of Michigan (\$110,300) but close to Van Buren County (\$90,100). This helps reinforce the need to focus on maintaining strong single-family neighborhoods, reinvesting in ones that need help, and enforcing property upkeep and zoning regulations.

Figure 3 – Employment Composition - 2000



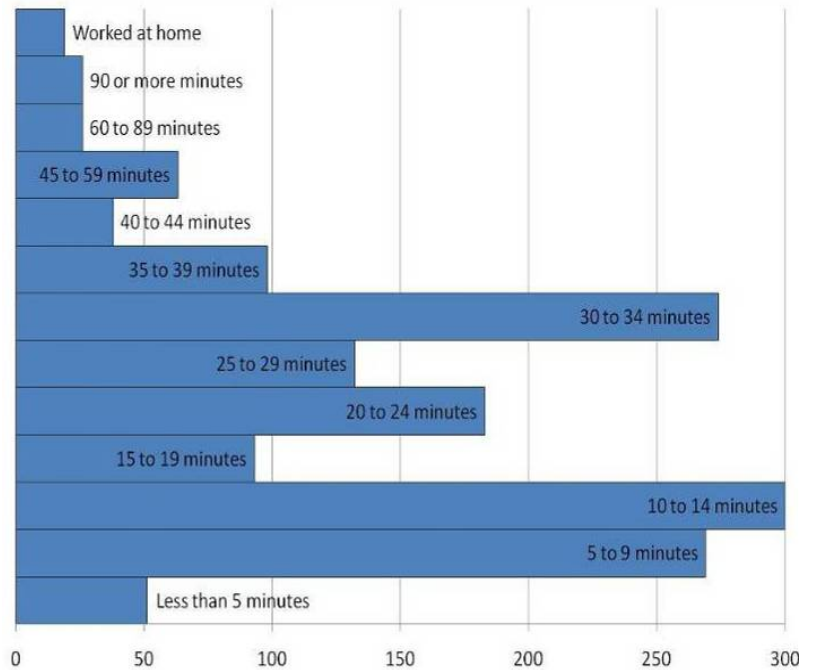
Employment

Paw Paw residents have a fairly diverse employment base that ranges from white- to blue-collar jobs. Twenty-one percent of Paw Paw residents work in the manufacturing sector and the Coca-Cola North America/Minute Maid plant west of the Village most likely contributes to those numbers. Some industries have closed in the last few years; therefore, the number of residents employed in manufacturing has declined since 2000.

Paw Paw’s education, health, and social services sector has the highest number of employees at 30% (see **Figure 3**). Bronson/Lakeview Community Hospital, as well as the newer Bronson Hospital Outpatient Center, both contribute to that large percentage.

Many Paw Paw workers also commute and work outside of the Village. Fifty-three percent of Village workers commute 20 minutes or more (see **Figure 4**). Residents working in Kalamazoo most likely represent those commuters traveling 30 to 34 minutes to work (17%). Contributing to the large number of residents working in education, health, and social services are Kalamazoo-based employers such as Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, Bronson and Borgess hospitals, Pfizer, Stryker, MPI and others. A large commuter population has implications for Village land use. Providing a wide array of housing options, a small town setting, a unique downtown and recreation opportunities will aid in retaining and attracting commuting residents. The key will be to offer a lifestyle that is not available near larger employment centers.

Figure 4 - Travel Time to Work - 2000



Income

Paw Paw has a median household income that is less than that of the State and Van Buren County (**Table 7**). Paw Paw’s median income also falls slightly lower than the average median income for the eight comparison communities (**Table 8**). The percentage of the population that falls below the poverty level is, however, among the lowest of all comparison communities. It is also lower than that for Van Buren County and the State of Michigan.

Table 7

Surrounding Community Comparison - Income		
Geography	Median Household Income	% Below Poverty Level
Village of Lawton	\$36,250	11.47%
Village of Paw Paw	\$38,750	5.71%
Van Buren County	\$39,365	11.13%
Village of Mattawan	\$42,241	3.78%
Paw Paw Township	\$43,802	7.04%
State of Michigan	\$44,667	10.53%
Antwerp Township	\$50,556	5.36%

Housing

Housing in and around Paw Paw is generally well maintained. Predominately, housing takes the form of detached single-family structures of wood, masonry, stone and mixed materials.

Approximately two thirds of the housing was built prior to 1969. There is some limited new construction of single family homes as well as redevelopment of downtown structures to accommodate upper-floor residential uses.

Table 8

Analogous Community Comparison – Income		
Geography	Median Household Income	% Below Poverty Level
Otsego	\$37,525	6.90%
Whitehall	\$37,641	7.28%
Village of Paw Paw	\$38,750	5.71%
Plainwell	\$39,590	6.10%
Wayland	\$41,852	7.87%
Portland	\$45,656	6.65%

The most striking demographic characteristic is the high percent of renter-occupied housing. In 2000, just over 43% of Paw Paw’s housing units were renter-occupied, only slightly lower than the 46% in 1990. The rental housing rate for Paw Paw is significantly higher than any of the comparable communities shown in **Tables 9** and **10**. Such a high percentage could indicate a fluid and mobile population with weak ties to the community. This may also help explain Paw Paw’s lower median income level and lower median home values. Strong, single-family neighborhoods should be bolstered to help support and provide desirable locations for home ownership.

There has been some recent reinvestment in the downtown to increase the available housing choices for Paw Paw residents. The conversion of upper-floor residential uses allows property owners to increase the amount of revenue generating space and gives consumers choices for housing beyond detached single family structures.

Housing Supply and Demand

Housing supply is based on the US Census statistics on for-rent and owner-occupied housing by price point. Demand for housing is based on an analysis of household income. The US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Affordability

Housing Supply and Demand

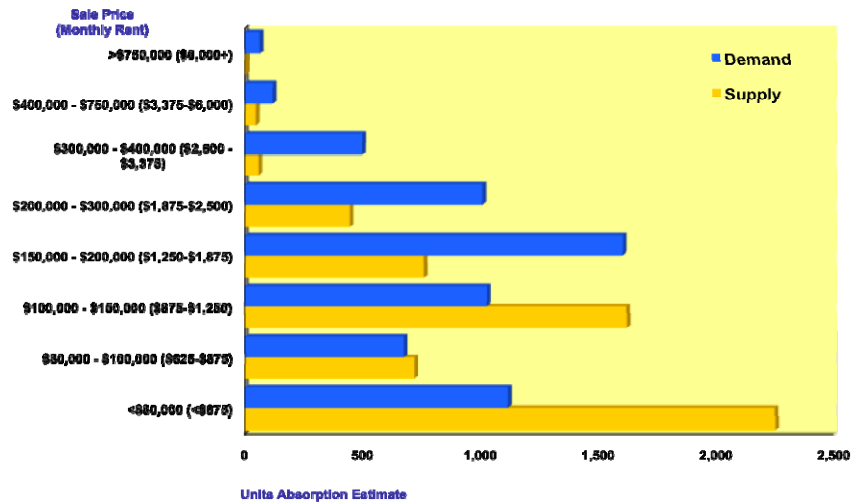


Figure 5: Housing Supply and Demand

Standards are applied to the numbers of households in each income category to suggest the price of the residential structure they could afford.

Based on this data, **Figure 5** indicates that there is opportunity to absorb some new housing priced between \$150,000 and \$300,000, based on an analysis of residential income and existing home values. There also appears to be sufficient stock of work-force (or lower priced) housing. Therefore, this indicates a potential demand for higher-end housing that is not being met in the local market. This demand also presents an opportunity for independent senior housing such as condominiums, townhouses, and continuing care.

Table 9

Surrounding Community Comparison – Housing		
Geography	% Vacant Housing Units	% Renter Occupied Housing Units
Village of Paw Paw	6.22%	43.19%
Village of Lawton	8.68%	31.15%
Village of Mattawan	6.15%	17.69%
Antwerp Township	5.14%	15.38%
Paw Paw Township	14.69%	29.01%
Van Buren County	17.64%	20.43%
State of Michigan	10.59%	26.22%

Table 10

Analogous Community Comparison - Housing		
Geography	% Vacant Housing Units	% Renter Occupied Housing Units
Village of Paw Paw	6.22%	43.19%
Otsego	4.84%	31.49%
Plainwell	5.46%	30.61%
Portland	4.26%	25.08%
Wayland	7.86%	30.22%
Whitehall	7.69%	34.85%

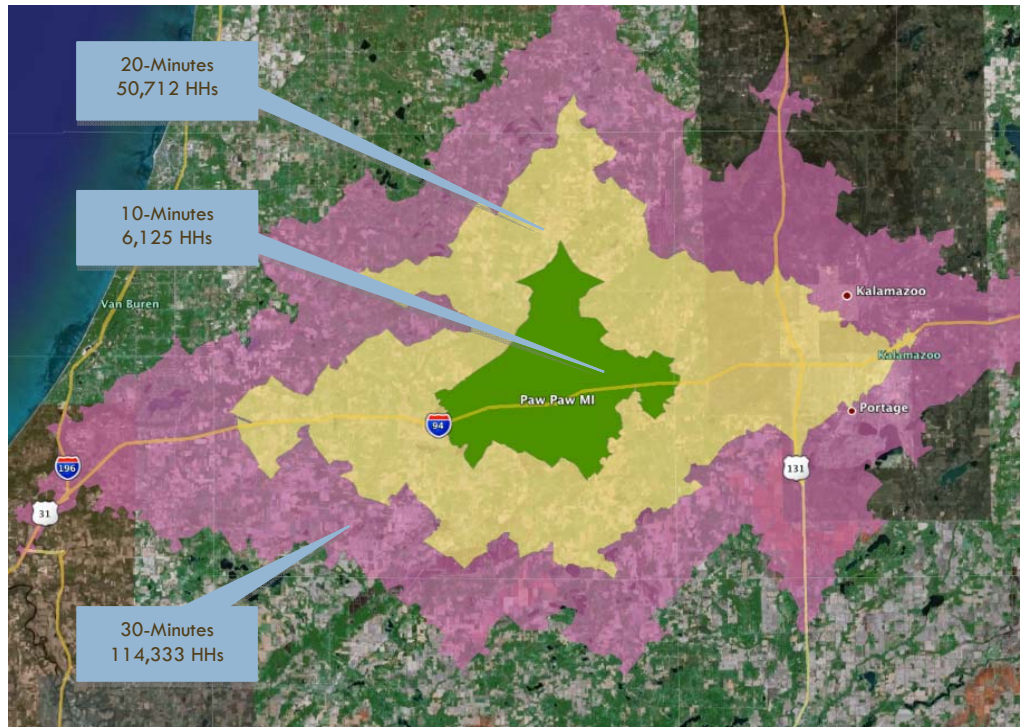


Figure 6: Households within 30 Minutes of Paw Paw

Economics

Regional Context

There is a significant concentration of households within a short drive of Paw Paw. Based on analysis of the transportation network in southwest Michigan, it is estimated that over 114,000 households are within 30 minutes of the Village. **Figure 6** shows this area to extend several miles in each direction, especially along I-94; encompassing the Kalamazoo metropolitan area as well as being close to the Benton Harbor/St. Joseph area. With approximately 30,000 vehicles traveling through Paw Paw on I-94 each day, the interstate makes the Village accessible from major population centers in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, as well as metropolitan Chicago.

Regional Economic Influences

In 2009, the economy in the United States is facing economic pressures from a number of different directions. Business activity has slowed dramatically, consumer spending is contracting, the credit markets are tight and consumer confidence is at historic lows.

Manufacturing – particularly of big-ticket items such as automobiles – has been especially hard hit, as the troubles in the financial and capital markets have precipitated steep declines in consumer spending. Michigan and its sizable manufacturing economy has experienced a significant economic downturn. As of April 2009, unemployment statewide has risen to 12.8% from 7.6% a year ago.³

In western Michigan, some direct impacts from this national influence can be felt. The local unemployment rate in the Kalamazoo-Portage MSA⁴ (which includes Paw Paw) is 9.9% at the time of this report, compared to 6.2% the previous year.

Health care is a bright spot for job growth that has particular bearing on Paw Paw. Bronson Lakeview Hospital, with two major facilities in Paw Paw, appears to be working toward further expansion and job growth.

³ Michigan Labor Market News, April 2008.

⁴ Kalamazoo-Portage MSA includes Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties, per the US Census 2007 MSA Definition.

Additionally, employment by government entities – either Federal, State or Local – has also increased over the past 12 months, contrary to the job losses generally experienced in the private sector. Because manufacturing represents one-fifth of the employment base in Van Buren County, however, there remains concern that job growth will feel continued pressure through the current economic recession.

Tourism

Southwest Michigan is an important tourism destination for travelers from the midwest and beyond. Tourism represents a significant economic engine, employing nearly 200,000 Michigan residents statewide and generating nearly \$900 million in state taxes.

In 2007, tourism generated \$18.1 billion of travel and related spending in the state.⁵ Overall, however, spending has declined since 2006. Although spending from out-of-state travelers was up by 4%, spending from in-state travelers was down by 10%. Tourism generates, on average, \$175 per person per day.

During 2008, tourism activity appears to have decreased due to cooler summer weather, rising gas prices and a general downturn in national and regional economics.⁶ The outlook for tourism statewide in future years is generally guarded. The exception, however, is the southwestern quadrant of the state, which is not expected to experience a significant decrease in tourism revenue.⁷

Keys to the region’s draw include:

- The proximity of Southwestern Michigan to major population centers in the Midwest.

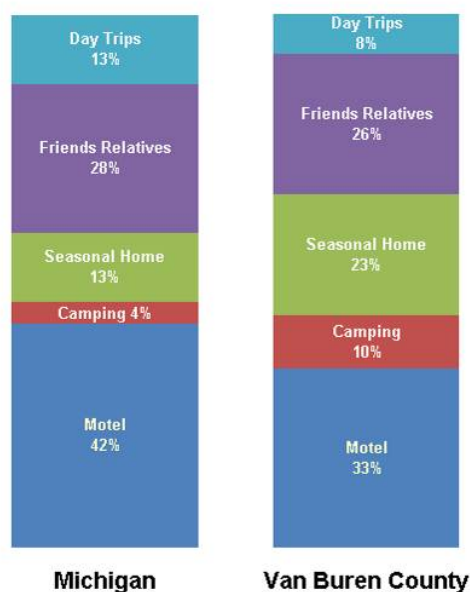
- Attractive natural environments, including many lakes, waterfront, forest and trails for recreation.

The Paw Paw area and Van Buren County is home to many important regional tourism destinations, such as wineries, resorts, lakes and auto racing, among others. In addition, there are over 3,000 homes held for seasonal or vacation use within 30 minutes of Paw Paw.

Van Buren County receives a significant number of seasonal visitors with its many vacation homes/cottages. Nearly one quarter of all spending on tourism in the County goes to expenses related to stays at seasonal homes. Camping is another spending category that appears strong relative to the State average. Conversely, spending at hotels and motels is underrepresented in the County.

The Michigan Wine Industry is of particular importance in the Southwest part of the state. A recent report by the Michigan Grape and Wine Industry Council reports that Michigan’s 64 wineries contribute nearly \$800 million to the State’s economy each year – a figure that rose 5% in 2008, even as many economic indicators showed declines. The industry reports \$8.6 million in tourism-related

Tourism Spending by Type



Source: MSU Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. 2000.

⁵ Michigan Economic Development Corporation **2007 Pure Michigan Tourism Study.**

⁶ A full economic impact analysis of 2008 Michigan Tourism is not available at this printing. The report titled “Driving Tourism 2009” issued to the Michigan Governor’s Conference in March of 2009 is cited herein.

⁷ *ibid*, “Regional Revenue Projections and Actual Assessments (CVB Survey Results).”

expenditures by over 800,000 annual visitors to Michigan wineries.⁸

St. Julian Winery and the Warner Winery located in Paw Paw are two of many vineyards and wineries in Southwest Michigan. Tourism to these two important wine destinations is estimated to generate between 50,000 and 100,000 visitors to Paw Paw each year.⁹

Conclusion

Paw Paw is a desirable place to live, with historic village charm, unique and beautiful natural assets, and a claim as one of the premier wine growing and processing areas in the Midwest. Although the population has not increased, this is consistent with other Michigan communities. But with its proximity to large metropolitan areas and small-town charm, Paw Paw is well positioned for development and a positive future.



⁸ Economic Impact of Michigan Grapes and Wines, 2005. MKF Research LLC.

⁹ Based on approximations from average daily traffic estimates of tours and individual visitors in season from winery staff.

Chapter 3. Planning Framework

This Master Plan is based on public participation and the identified planning issues that helped define planning principles and a community vision.

Public Participation

Several methods to engage the public were employed to help identify issues and priorities and to prepare the Master Plan. From small group settings, such as focus groups and Public Workshops in a Box™ to larger groups such as the Community Forum and the Planning Workshop, residents and stakeholders were afforded several opportunities to provide input.

Steering Committee

A seven member steering committee was appointed to oversee the development of the Master Plan and to advise the planning consultants. To create a framework for public participation, several workshops were held to identify issues and opportunities for positive change.

Focus Groups

Six focus group meetings were held with different community interest groups:

1. Downtown
2. Other businesses
3. Major employers
4. Neighborhoods
5. Interested outside groups, such as the surrounding townships
6. High school students

Each group was presented with a series of questions and a lively exchange ensued with several issues and ideas being discussed. Each individual was also asked to prioritize a series of potential issues. They were asked:

“Suppose all of the resources—time, money, people, etc.—that will be devoted to these priorities is represented by 100 points. How would you allocate those 100 points across the list of priorities?”

“For example: There are 10 items ... If you think they are all equal, you would assign 10 points to each. Or, you might decide

that one priority is so important that you assign all 100 points to it. Or, you might decide to give points to only four items: 50, 30, 10, 10.”

The Downtown focus groups ranked “Downtown shopping” and “atmosphere” as the highest priorities. Employers and business owners outside the downtown ranked business expansion and attracting employees as key. Transportation was an important issue to the interested outsiders, while neighborhood groups and residents felt that housing choices and preserving the natural environment should take priority. On the other hand, high school students focused on youth activities, with a strong desire for a skateboard park and other youth-oriented programs.

The focus group rankings are all interdependent. Taken together, they are all critical for a high quality of life in any community.

Community Forum

On October 3, 2008, a Community Forum was held at the Bistro 120 Restaurant in Downtown Paw Paw. This event was open to all citizens and 35 persons attended.

After a short presentation about the process to develop a Master Plan the participants split up into smaller working groups. Each group was asked to identify Paw Paw’s *strengths, weaknesses, opportunities* and *threats* (SWOT). Participants then prioritized the SWOT results and identified on a map the things they liked and did not like about the Village and opportunities for change.

Participants felt that among Paw Paw’s strengths, the wineries, Maple Lake, and local, family-owned restaurants were its best assets. The weaknesses most often cited were empty storefronts, poorly maintained properties, and the need for more coordinated community signs. Weed growth in Maple Lake was also mentioned as a weakness. Important opportunities to build upon included Paw Paw’s unique character as a destination, Maple Lake, and tourism. The greatest threats were the loss of local businesses, the loss or degrading of natural resources (such as clean water, wetlands,

etc.) and the potential impact on businesses if a Wal-Mart is built in the community.

The groups most frequently mapped Downtown, Maple Lake, and the brownfield/industrial area as the most important sites for improvement or redevelopment.

Public Workshops in a Box™

Public Workshops in a Box™ is a proven way to involve those citizens who normally do not attend public events or hearings. Six Public Workshops in a Box™ kits were checked out during the process to prepare Paw Paw's Master Plan and three were returned. Each participating group was asked to identify the five most important issues facing Paw Paw. Among the more frequent responses were filling empty storefronts, restoring Maple Lake, and improving safety.

After a group discussion, each participant filled out an *Individual Response Form*. This form asked that several of Paw Paw's attributes be ranked on a five-point scale ranging from Excellent to Poor. Those receiving the highest ratings (Excellent or Good) include "Paw Paw's Natural Environment" and "Public Utilities and Services." Those receiving low marks (Fair or Poor) were "Recreational and Community Facilities" and "Business Attraction and Filling Vacant Properties."

Finally, each group identified areas on a map they considered assets and those that needed attention. Similar to the Community Forum, most highlighted Downtown, Maple Lake and the industrial area as important features to be addressed by the Master Plan.

Community Planning Workshop

A workshop was held on March 19, 2009 at the Carnegie Center to preview the draft Master Plan. Displays were placed around the room describing the draft Future Land Use Map and the individual elements of the Plan. Participants were encouraged to browse the displays, ask questions and provide input on a questionnaire. In general, the participants voiced general assent to the major recommendations of the draft Plan, but also provided valuable input on certain specific elements.

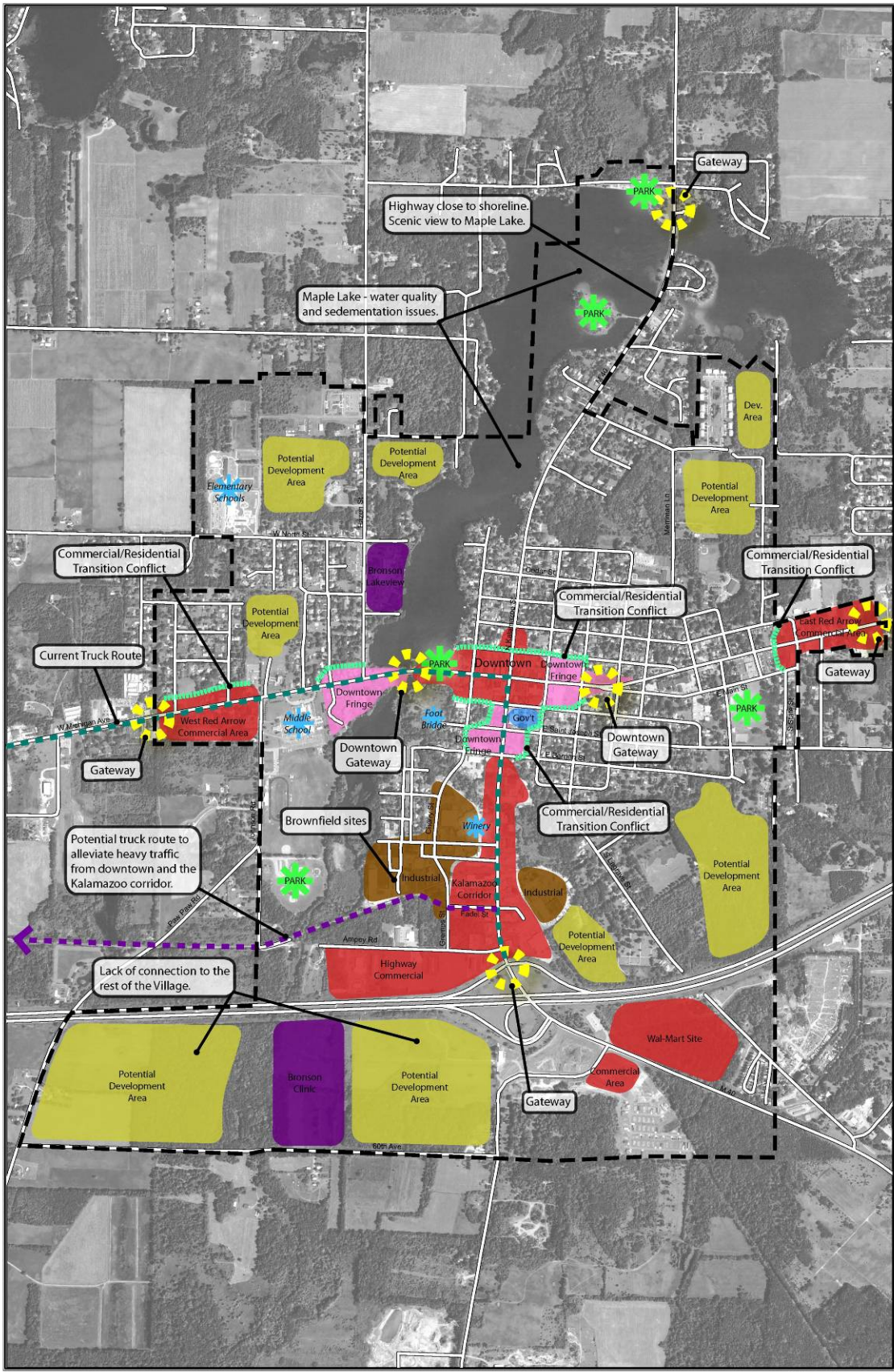
Key Findings and Planning Issues

As a result of the public's involvement in the planning process, several key issues were identified. Issues related to land use or a specific geographic location were mapped on the Village-Wide Planning Issues map (see **Map 4**). Since many issues were specific to Downtown and the Kalamazoo Street corridor, more detailed maps of these areas were also created (**Maps 5 and 6**).

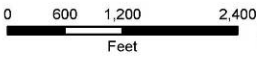
While the maps reveal many issues, they can be summarized as follows:

1. **Downtown** – attracting shoppers, making the area pedestrian friendly, rehabilitating buildings, improving streetscapes, and addressing parking.
2. **The Kalamazoo Avenue corridor** – making it safer for pedestrians, creating an attractive gateway into the Village, leading travelers to Downtown from I-94, and enhancing way-finding.
3. **Truck Traffic** – reducing the volume of trucks on Kalamazoo Street and East Michigan Avenue and minimizing their impact on the Kalamazoo/Michigan intersection and Downtown.
4. **Industrial Area Redevelopment** – redeveloping brownfields near the West Branch of the Paw Paw River.
5. **Housing** – attracting a greater variety of housing, especially "high end" housing, rehabilitating the existing housing stock, and enhancing property maintenance.
6. **Maple Lake/East and West Branches** – improving water quality and enhancing access to the waterfront.
7. **Southern Paw Paw** – developing the mostly vacant lands south of I-94 and the land proposed for a Wal-Mart store.
8. **Youth Activities** – keeping area youth active and involved, and retaining them in the community even after graduation.

These planning issues are the foundation of the planning principles outlined in the next chapter.

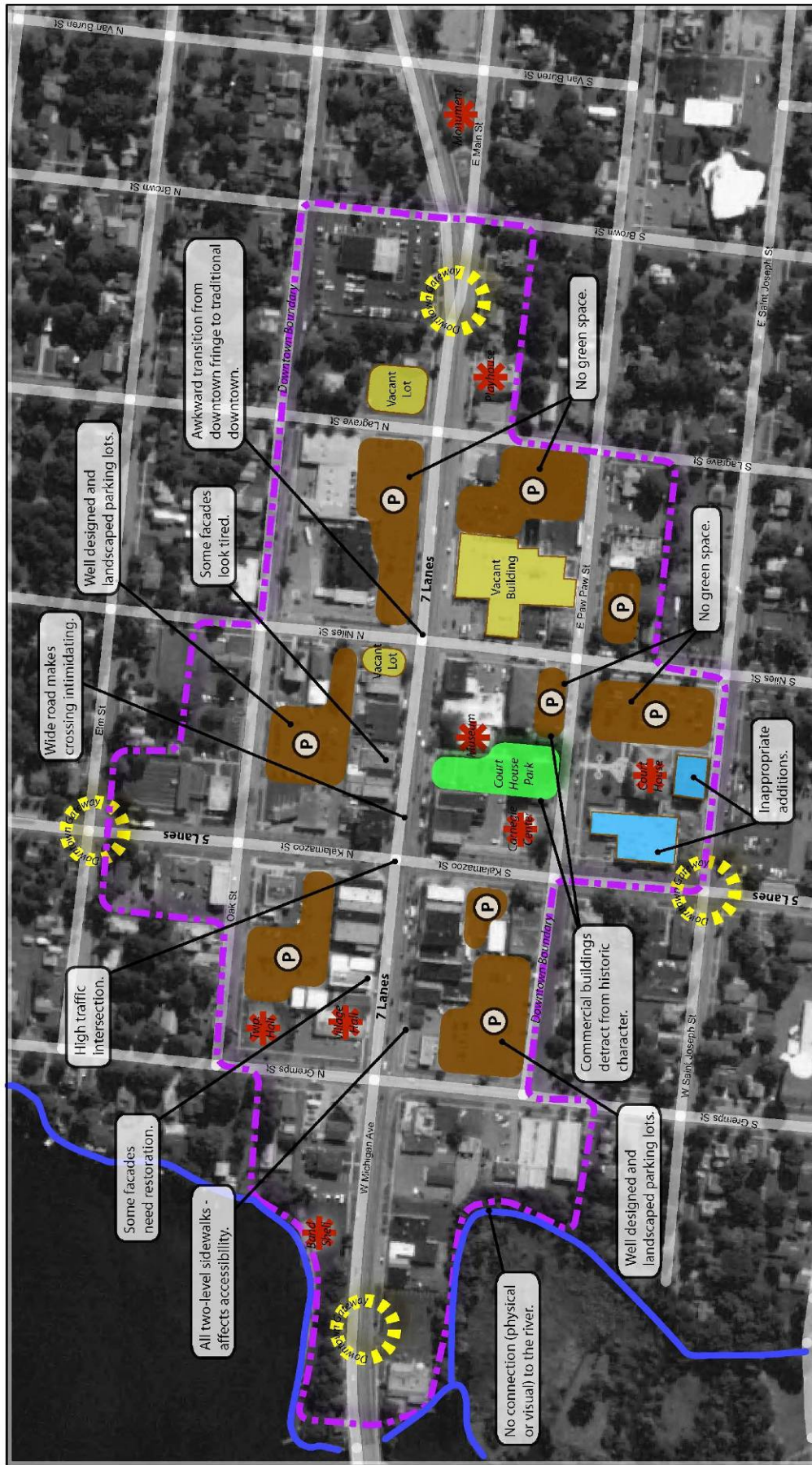


Village of Paw Paw
Van Buren County, Michigan



Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Van Buren County GIS

Map 4
Village Issues

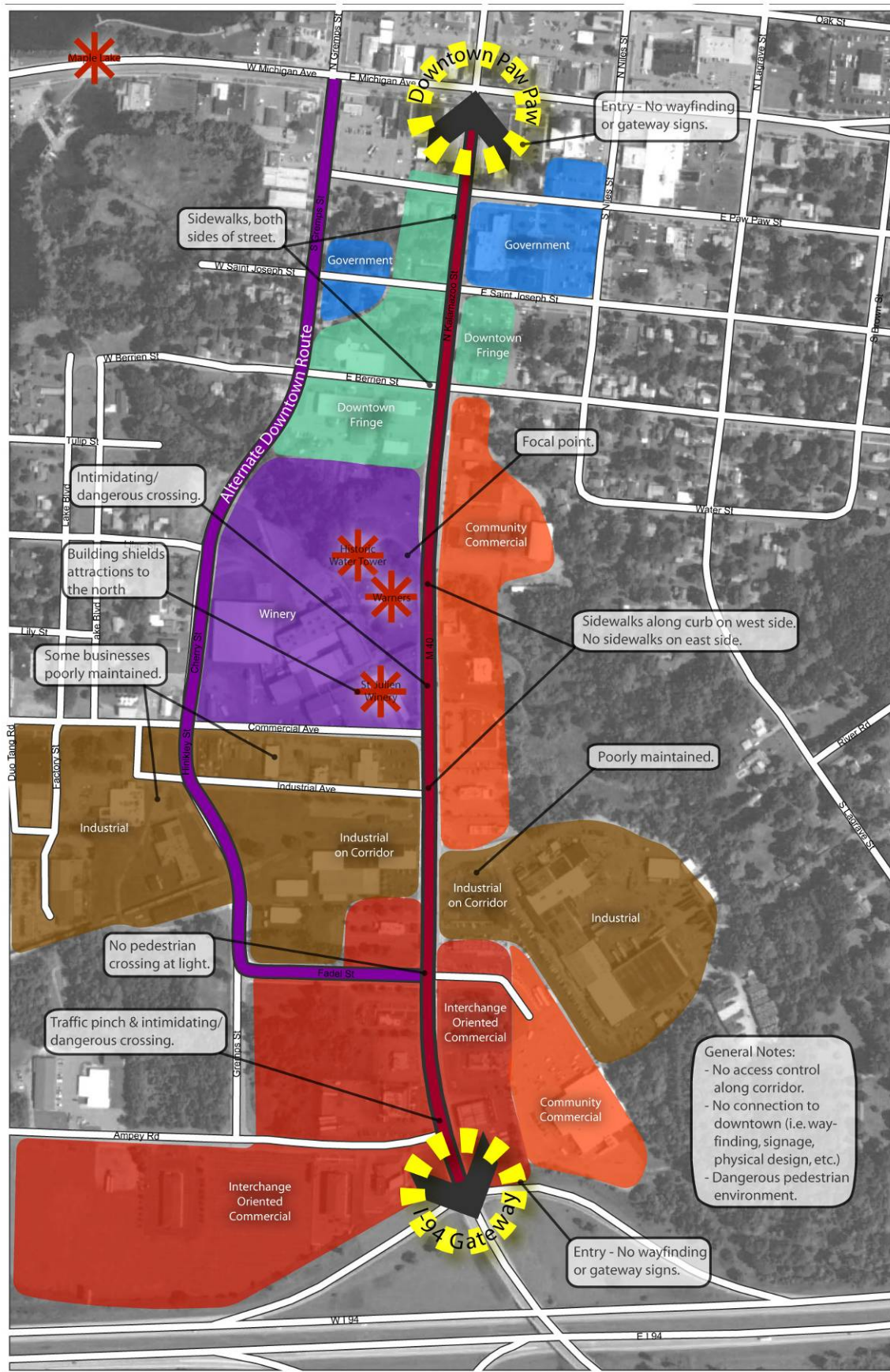


Map 5
Downtown Issues

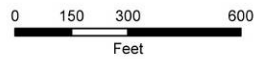
Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Van Buren County GIS



Village of Paw Paw
Van Buren County, Michigan



Village of Paw Paw
Van Buren County, Michigan



Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Van Buren County GIS

Map 6
M-40 Corridor
Issues

Chapter 4. Planning Principles

The Planning Issues identified by the public help to define underlying community planning values, which in turn form the structure of the Master Plan. These values are used to formulate a land use *vision*, from which planning goals and strategies can be created. Overall, these values, vision, goals and strategies are the *planning principles* upon which the Future Land Use plan is based.

Planning Values

The following planning values are formed from the previously-discussed Planning Issues and input from the public. They are based on the beliefs, feelings and desires of residents and stakeholders and are the source of the vision statement, as described below.

- Paw Paw residents feel strongly about their home town. They appreciate its small town, friendly atmosphere, and prefer living and shopping in Paw Paw over nearby metropolitan areas.
- Natural resources are important; they are valued for their beauty, their recreation potential, and their contribution to the environment.
- Paw Paw has a special “feel and character” that should be preserved and promoted; this ambiance is most evident in the Downtown and near Maple Lake.
- Paw Paw has advantages that similar communities do not enjoy, that need to be promoted and preserved. These include being the county seat, several family owned restaurants (some that are regionally known), the wine industry, health care facilities, a strong business presence on I-94, and a lake.
- Preventing deterioration (in particular homes, neighborhoods, and the Downtown) and promoting new, high quality development is important to draw higher income and new economy workers to Paw Paw.

- Local businesses are an important resource that should be promoted through sound planning and marketing. Visitors must be encouraged to explore the entire community and not just the wineries.
- Area youth need more places to do things and should be involved in any programs that affect them and the future of their home town. It is important that young people choose to stay in the community (or return at some point in their career) because of the quality lifestyle Paw Paw can provide.

Vision

A *vision* is a statement that describes how the community sees its future unfolding. Communities that meet their land use challenges successfully have developed a clear sense of the past and present as well as where they want the community to go in the future. Having a vision can motivate decision makers and residents by providing a clear sense of direction. However, the vision represents an ideal; it may not be attained in its entirety, but it can and should motivate and guide community actions. Moreover, the vision is not set in stone. The Village must regularly revisit the vision to account for unanticipated change.

The vision should motivate the community to action. Therefore, the vision is the starting point for the goals and strategies that follow. These, in turn, are the basis of the future land use plan.

The Vision is divided into four *vision elements*, which help clarify and focus the vision towards action, through goals and specific strategies. The following Community Vision is a result of the planning values and the issues identified during the public participation process.

Our Vision for the Village of Paw Paw is a community characterized by:

- *A unique small town atmosphere – neighborhoods, shops and businesses that serve the needs of the Village, with an emphasis on service, friendliness and home town ambiance. The Downtown is the focal point of small town living, with quaint and historic buildings that provide a bridge between the*

past, present and future. Neighborhoods are safe and friendly and traffic is calm. Residents are proud of the history and heritage of the community.

- *A beautiful natural environment* – a quality lakefront and scenic riparian areas near rivers and wetlands that provide a unique and beautiful setting. These are valued by the community, evidenced by efforts to provide access to the lake and natural areas and protection of water quality and natural habitats.
- *A diverse business community* – stores, services, and employers that meet the needs of local residents, attract travelers and set Paw Paw apart from other communities. Local businesses meet most needs of local residents, so out-of-town shopping is generally not necessary. Business areas, such as the Kalamazoo Corridor and Downtown, feed off one another and provide a catalyst for business growth.
- *A commitment to progress* – characterized by a concerted effort to preserve the past, maintain and improve neighborhoods, clean up old industrial areas, protect natural areas, afford opportunities for area youth and provide quality infrastructure and services to area residents.

Together, these elements provide the Village of Paw Paw with a **premier quality of life** and a community that residents are **proud to call home**.

Realizing the Vision: Goals and Strategies

The above vision inspires particular goals and strategies that can be implemented through the Future Land Use Plan. The following goals and strategies are grouped according to the four Vision Elements as listed above.

A *goal* is a general statement of a desired outcome. To be effective, a goal must be realistic and achievable. The goals take the broad statements of the vision and focus them into specific outcomes, enabling us to paint a picture of the future as the residents of Paw Paw would like to see it.

A *strategy* is a more specific action that leads to the outcomes proposed by the goals. Strategies are the starting point for implementation and provide a basis for the recommendations of the Future Land Use Plan. Each goal is followed by a set of strategies.

Vision Element: A Unique Small Town Atmosphere

Goal: Preserve and promote Downtown Paw Paw.

Strategy: Encourage Downtown reinvestment by emphasizing its historic character and providing incentives to rehabilitate historic buildings.

Strategy: Promote Downtown businesses through local organizations, such as the Downtown Development Authority and the Chamber of Commerce.

Strategy: Improve the pedestrian atmosphere and safety by making it less intimidating to cross Kalamazoo Avenue and Michigan Avenue.

Strategy: Make Downtown more accessible by rebuilding Michigan Avenue to a higher elevation or widening the sidewalks enough that the need for the additional step up to the storefront level is eliminated.

Strategy: Encourage mixed uses, including upper floor dwellings, in and near the Downtown.

Strategy: Continue to invest in parking improvements to support Downtown businesses and residents.

Strategy: Provide vehicle- and pedestrian-level wayfinding in the Downtown area to guide motorists and pedestrians to attractions.

Goal: Promote safe and efficient transportation within and through the community

Strategy: Explore alternate routes for trucks using M-40 and Michigan Avenue/Red Arrow Highway to access industries west of the Village, such as an extension of Fadel to the west along the railroad corridor to 38th Street.

Strategy: Improve turning movements at key intersections to allow trucks to use alternate routes within the Village, such as redesign and

construction of the Gremps and Michigan Avenue intersection.

Strategy: Work cooperatively with the Van Buren County Road Commission and Paw Paw Township to create an alternative truck route.

Strategy: Explore a connection between Kalamazoo and LaGrave Streets to better connect neighborhoods with business areas.

Strategy: Provide marked pedestrian crossings at key locations (with signalization, if needed).

Strategy: Improve traffic movements in and near Bronson-Lakeview Hospital and the schools near Hazen Street, particularly during peak traffic hours.

Strategy: Enhance community gateway entrances to inform the public that they are entering a special place.

Strategy: Implement “complete streets” (www.completestreets.org) concepts, which plan and allow for motorized and non-motorized traffic on all streets.

Goal: Retain the elements that make Paw Paw unique

Strategy: Aggressively market Paw Paw’s restaurants, wineries and lodging as a unique destination between Chicago and Detroit.

Strategy: Work with Van Buren County to beautify the area around the Courthouse and County Administration Building.

Strategy: Continue to promote Paw Paw’s heritage through events such as the Wine Festival. These events should be marketed to a larger, regional audience.

Strategy: Enhance community gateways that define for public that they are entering a special place.

Vision Element: A Beautiful Natural Environment

Goal: Recognize and promote Maple Lake as a community asset

Strategy: Create a long-term plan for lake dredging and other improvements, including funding and capital equipment needs.

Strategy: Seek opportunities to expand or enhance the vista around the lake.

Strategy: Create additional open space along the Michigan Avenue lakefront by removing the existing structures near the Hazen Street intersection.

Goal: Protect the water quality in Maple Lake and the Paw Paw River watershed

Strategy: Widely distribute the Paw Paw River Watershed Study and implement the recommendations of the study that apply to the Village.

Strategy: Determine a comprehensive strategy for monitoring water quality and a plan for implementing water quality improvements.

Strategy: To prevent nutrient loading from adjacent lawns, enforce current regulations that prohibit phosphorus-based fertilizers and other potential contaminants.

Strategy: Educate waterfront homeowners about environmentally friendly practices.

Strategy: Provide zoning and financial incentives for waterfront owners to create vegetative buffers, rain gardens, and other low-impact solutions.

Strategy: Work cooperatively with upstream landowners and communities to protect and enhance water quality and existing wetlands.

Strategy: Implement low impact development standards in new developments and redevelopments, especially in areas in close proximity to surface water bodies such as wetlands, the branches of the Paw Paw River, Briggs Pond and Maple Lake.

Goal: Provide recreational opportunities that take advantage of the natural environment

Strategy: Plan for non-motorized paths along the Paw Paw River branches and Maple Lake and street corridors that will connect parks, schools and business areas.

Strategy: Plan for ecologically sensitive public access to the Briggs Pond area, such as a boardwalk into the marsh. Work with the School District and other educational institutions and environmental groups to provide

education on wetlands and environmental protection.

Vision Element: A Diverse Business Community

Goal: Promote Kalamazoo Avenue and other business corridors

Strategy: Identify and use public spaces to establish gateway entrances which draw traffic in and extend streetscape improvements to these gateways.

Strategy: Work with business owners to cross promote businesses and attractions in the community (e.g., provide coupons for other businesses, promotional material for attractions, etc.)

Strategy: Make the Kalamazoo Avenue corridor more attractive, with streetscape improvements and landscaping.

Strategy: Extend streetscape improvements to the east and west commercial entries into the Village on Michigan Avenue/Red Arrow Highway.

Goal: Diversify the economic base of the Village

Strategy: Adopt policies that attract “new economy” workers, such as promoting home occupations and extending wireless and broadband service throughout the Village.

Strategy: Promote the adaptive reuse of old and vacant structures by new businesses.

Strategy: Promote Paw Paw’s location between Chicago and Detroit as a premier location for “new economy” businesses.

Goal: Encourage travelers to explore beyond the Kalamazoo Corridor and the wineries

Strategy: Create a wayfinding system to guide motorists to Downtown and to local attractions.

Strategy: Create a unified streetscape that is similar to the Downtown streetscape, with unified street furniture, signs, streetlamps, etc., to provide a visual and “atmospheric” connection to the Downtown area.

Strategy: Create a program to encourage travelers to visit other attractions, such as a

coupon book available at Kalamazoo Street restaurants and gas stations, for businesses and attractions in other parts of the Village.

Vision Element: A Commitment to Progress

Goal: Clean up and redevelop the industrial area

Strategy: Seek and acquire funds for brown-field redevelopment, including costs of assessment, demolition and new development.

Strategy: Consider alternate locations for industrial development, such as along the planned truck bypass.

Strategy: Take advantage of the location along the East Branch and Briggs Pond to create a high-quality, higher density residential development.

Goal: Provide activities and opportunities for Paw Paw’s youth

Strategy: Find an appropriate location for a skate park, which should be partially funded by donations (of money and in-kind services) from area youth.

Strategy: Create a Paw Paw “youth council” who will regularly advise the Village Council on the needs and concerns of area youth.

Strategy: Create a Youth Leadership Academy, which trains area youth in local government and issues and encourages further involvement in local issues.

Goal: Promote residential development and maintain homes and businesses so that neighborhoods are attractive and safe, property values are protected, and residents have housing choices throughout the life cycle.

Strategy: Adopt a strong property maintenance program and ensure consistent enforcement.

Strategy: Educate the public about property maintenance.

Strategy: Provide incentives to clean up and improve property (such as a subsidized paint program and regular community clean-up days).

Strategy: Identify locations for constructing higher-priced market rate homes, condomi-

niums, townhouses, etc. to make the community attractive to entrepreneurs and upper management employees as well as seniors and other retirees.

Strategy: Promote housing styles serving residents throughout the life cycle, including independent living units, assisted living and continuing care facilities, and identify appropriate locations.

Goal: Make the Kalamazoo Corridor more pedestrian friendly

Strategy: Provide pedestrian signals at key locations.

Strategy: Provide sidewalks that are (to the degree possible) set well back from the curb, to promote a feeling of safety.

Strategy: Provide pedestrian amenities, such as benches and walkways, at key focal points along the Corridor (e.g., the bridge over the East Branch, near the winery, etc.).

Strategy: Connect the corridor with pedestrian pathways and sidewalks to Downtown, the lake and other areas within the Village.

Chapter 5. Future Land Use

Future Land Use Designations

Map 7 shows how land uses in Paw Paw (identified in the map legend) should develop and highlights specific elements and subareas that are described later in this chapter.

LDR, Low Density Residential

This designation consists of single family dwellings with a base density of 3 dwelling units per acre or less and generally results in lots that are 10,000 square feet or greater. Properties within this designation are north of Drew Street in the northern half of the Village and the Lake Boulevard area in the southern half. Also included is the neighborhood of older homes on the east side of Maple Lake.

The public frequently commented that the Village needed new residential development, particularly “higher end” housing. Several areas south of I-94 are appropriate for this kind of development and are also shown as LDR. In addition, the large, vacant or mostly vacant areas along South LaGrave Street, south of the East Branch of the Paw Paw River, are also appropriate locations for LDR development. The existing wooded areas in this neighborhood would be attractive for large lot, custom homes.

MDR, Medium Density Residential

MDR consists of single and two family dwellings on smaller lots, mostly located in older neighborhoods. It generally reflects existing land use patterns with a base density of 3.5 to 6 dwelling units per acre and lot sizes between 6,000 and 8,700 square feet.

The majority of the Village’s current residentially developed area is designated MDR and encompasses the neighborhoods surrounding the Village Center. These areas were mostly developed in the early part of the 20th Century. The neighborhoods on the west side of Maple Lake, although newer, were also developed at MDR densities. This designation may also be appropriate for independent living units for senior citizens who remain active, but no longer de-

sire the maintenance responsibilities of single family detached dwellings.

HDR, High Density Residential

The High Density Residential designation consists of multiple family dwellings (3 or more units per building). Generally, development within this designation will be apartment complexes, condominium apartments, townhouse complexes and senior housing (independent/assisted living and continual care), ranging in density from 7 to 12 dwelling units per acre. The HDR designation reflects both existing multiple family development and land planned for additional high density residential projects.

This designation includes the proposed redevelopment of the former DuoTang industrial site, which is later described in more detail.

MHC Manufactured Housing Community

MHC includes two existing manufactured housing communities in the southern part of the Village. One manufactured (mobile) housing community, accessed from South LaGrave Street, has land on which to expand; whereas the modular home development on Becky Boulevard is accessed from CR 655 and has numerous building sites available. It is expected that these developments will meet the demand for manufactured housing during the life of this Plan.

MXD, Mixed Density

Areas close to Downtown are designated MXD, Mixed Density. This designation recognizes that there are older, large homes near the Downtown that have been divided into two or more apartments, while others remain as single family. This designation recognizes the usefulness of duplex and multiple family dwellings near employment areas such as the Downtown, but also encourages the preservation of single family homes near the center of the Village.

Further division of existing homes into apartments should be carefully reviewed by the Planning Commission and Village Council as special land uses. When a division is permitted, it should be conditioned upon maintaining the

single family character of the building and locating parking in the side or rear. Special criteria and regulations should be developed to address these conditions.

DC, Downtown Commercial

This designation encompasses Downtown Paw Paw. Because Downtown is different from the other commercial areas in the Village, it requires special consideration. This area includes the traditional Michigan Avenue downtown as well as the surrounding business areas. A sub-area plan for the Downtown district is later discussed.

HC, Highway Commercial

At the south entrance to the Village, at Kalamazoo Street and Ampey Avenue, there is a collection of businesses that are clearly oriented towards serving I-94 travelers. Uses include restaurants, motels, gas stations and convenience stores. This designation is extended to south of I-94, on the east side of M-40, which is the site previously approved for a Wal-Mart store.

Because of the “gateway” nature of this designation and its location within the Kalamazoo Corridor, site design and building standards should be considered to ensure that future development reflects the gateway. Residents and visitors should feel that they have entered someplace special, rather than the typical commercial interchange area. This can be accomplished by adoption of requirements in the Zoning Ordinance and by adding gateway elements, such as “welcome” and wayfinding signs, special landscape treatments, etc.

In addition, development of the area south of I-94 should be sensitive to the environmental constraints in this area. This is discussed in more detail below (see “Large Scale Retail Development”).

CC, Corridor Commercial

CC consists of two commercial areas: Kalamazoo Street north of Fadel Street, and the entrance to the Village off Red Arrow Highway/Michigan Avenue at the east end of the Village. This designation is characterized by au-

to-oriented businesses such as restaurants, service stations and retail stores.

This district should present an attractive entrance to the Village and include streetscape improvements such as lighting and signs announcing that motorists have entered a new and special place. To provide continuity and connections between the corridors and the Village center these elements should be compatible to those employed in the Downtown.

Considerations for the Kalamazoo Corridor are later described in more detail.

C/O Commercial/Office

Areas designated C/O are appropriate for offices, research facilities and light commercial uses. Retail buildings should be limited to no more than 10,000 square feet of gross floor area. Other facilities, such as corporate offices or research laboratories, can be larger, but should be designed to a higher quality standard.

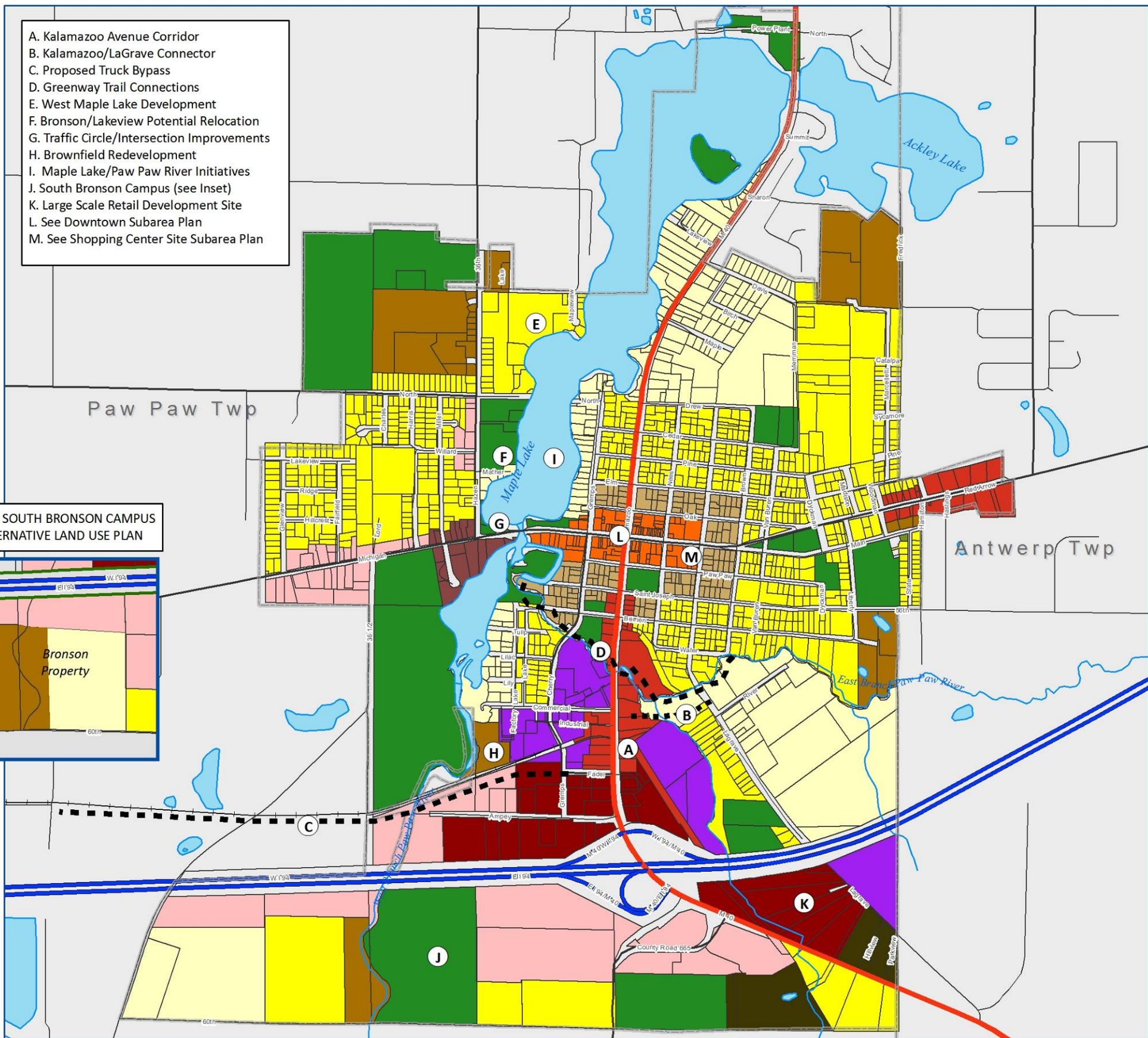
This designation is shown at the western entrance to the Village on Red Arrow Highway and across Hazen Street from Bronson/Lakeview Hospital. C/O is also planned for the area along I-94, on both the north and south sides of the freeway. The areas fronting the freeway and the proposed truck bypass (see below) are especially appropriate, since office and research facilities are attracted towards freeway frontage.

Site and building design is very important and should project an upscale image. For this reason, plain metal buildings should be prohibited and a new zoning district or overlay should be created that addresses site design and architectural and landscaping requirements.

The C/O designation often provides a transition between intensive, non-residential uses and less intensive uses, such as residential. Therefore, zoning of these areas should be sensitive to transitional boundaries, and should include requirements for buffers and landscaping.

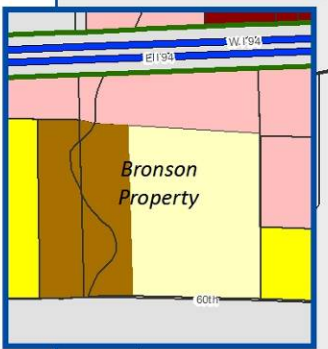
MU, Mixed Use

This designation promotes the blending of businesses and dwellings within the same development or building. Low-intensity businesses and



- A. Kalamazoo Avenue Corridor
- B. Kalamazoo/LaGrave Connector
- C. Proposed Truck Bypass
- D. Greenway Trail Connections
- E. West Maple Lake Development
- F. Bronson/Lakeview Potential Relocation
- G. Traffic Circle/Intersection Improvements
- H. Brownfield Redevelopment
- I. Maple Lake/Paw Paw River Initiatives
- J. South Bronson Campus (see Inset)
- K. Large Scale Retail Development Site
- L. See Downtown Subarea Plan
- M. See Shopping Center Site Subarea Plan

INSET: SOUTH BRONSON CAMPUS
ALTERNATIVE LAND USE PLAN



Map 7

Future Land Use

Master Plan
Village of Paw Paw
Van Buren County, MI

- LDR - Low Density Residential
- MDR - Medium Density Residential
- HDR - High Density Residential
- MXD - Mixed Density
- MHC - Manufactured Home Community
- MU - Mixed Use
- DC - Downtown Core
- C/O - Commercial/Office
- CC - Corridor Commercial
- HC - Highway Commercial
- LI - Light Industrial
- P - Public



Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Van Buren County GIS



institutions that serve nearby neighborhoods are appropriate, such as offices, small retail stores and personal service establishments.

The area designated MU is located at the west entrance to the Downtown Commercial district and presents an opportunity to create a sense of arrival (also see the discussion related to the Michigan Avenue/Hazen Street intersection). New, mixed use developments can be incorporated along with existing development to create a vibrant mix of shops, services and multiple family dwellings.

P Public

This designation includes institutional uses such as hospitals/clinics, public schools, and government buildings. Public parks are also included. Because of their nature they are not expected to change over time. Their public use should be recognized and buffers or other appropriate transitions should be implemented on private property as those sites develop.

The current Bronson/Lakeview Hospital campus on Hazen Street is also within this designation. Since Bronson owns land south of I-94 and has already begun developing it, there is a possibility that the hospital will be moved to the I-94 campus. Possible scenarios for redeveloping the current hospital site will be discussed in greater detail later in this report.

The area along Maple Lake at the northeast corner of Michigan Avenue and Hazen Street should become open space as existing properties are sold or become inactive. The existing uses (the gas station/convenience store and vacant ice cream stand) are on lots that are too small to allow good access and parking, expansion or redevelopment.

LI, Light Industrial

When the 1997 Plan was amended to include the annexed lands south of I-94, it designated much of the area west of CR 655 as Light Industrial. With the completion of the Bronson Outpatient Clinic that designation is no longer appropriate.

The existing industrial area north of I-94 (except for the area designated HDR and planned for redevelopment as later described) is pro-

posed to remain as light industrial. This designation encourages small, non-polluting industries. However, the Plan proposes an eventual move of all industrial uses away from the Kalamazoo Street Corridor with those sites redeveloped, over time, as Corridor Commercial (see the discussion of the Kalamazoo Corridor below).

Specific Plan Elements

Map 7 also indicates specific elements that help implement the Plan. The letters preceding each element correspond to the Future Land Use Map.

A. Kalamazoo Corridor

While the Kalamazoo Corridor may be a major economic benefit for Paw Paw, its suburban “strip” character (dominated by parking lots and buildings set back from the street, poorly defined pedestrian amenities, and the lack of street trees and attractive landscapes) tends to create an impression that Paw Paw is really no different than any other highway-oriented community. Therefore, it is important to re-vision this area as a gateway to all of the community and make it a catalyst for bringing shoppers, diners and travelers into Downtown and other parts of the Village.

The Plan envisions a common streetscape theme (that will contain elements complementary to the Downtown) to give a unified look and “feel” to the corridor that residents and visitors will associate with all of Paw Paw. Lighting, signs and pedestrian amenities will make the area more attractive and unique. Examples shown include lighting, street furniture, street signs and traffic signals that evoke a feeling that this community is a special place.

Pedestrian walkways should be planned at strategic locations to allow shoppers and diners to visit several venues without having to get back in their cars. Brick or concrete pavers at intersections can also help differentiate pedestrian corridors and walkways, making crossing a street feel safer.

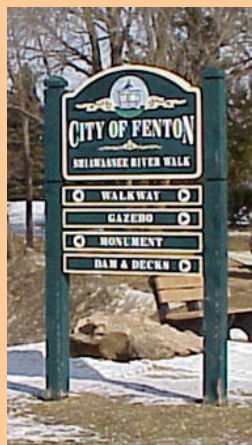
The East Branch of the Paw Paw River is a designated cold water trout stream that runs through the Village. This beautiful stream, which runs under Kalamazoo Street and is virtually unknown to vehicular and pedestrian



*Kalamazoo
Corridor
Streetscape
and Safety
Enhancements*



Example corridor enhancements



Wayfinding sign examples



Kalamazoo Corridor looking west

traffic, presents an opportunity to the Village. This plan envisions streetscape changes which would showcase the stream crossing and allow pedestrian enjoyment of the crossing.

A well-designed gateway, just north of the I-94 interchange, will also help define this key community entrance. It should be integrated with a comprehensive, Village-wide wayfinding system that guides travelers to community destinations (see examples).

The wayfinding system should also direct pedestrians and cyclists to the planned trails along the East Branch of the Paw Paw River (see Non-Motorized Trail Connections, below).

B. Kalamazoo/LaGrave Connector

To improve access to the Kalamazoo Corridor and improve connectivity to the southeastern neighborhoods, a street connection between

Kalamazoo and LaGrave streets is proposed. This connector street would relieve traffic on Berrien Street, which is currently the closest connector from these neighborhoods to Kalamazoo Street.

C. Truck Bypass

Currently, trucks entering the Village from I-94 heading towards the Coca Cola/Minute Maid plant or Ralph Moyle Trucking have no reasonable alternative but to use Kalamazoo Street and then turn left onto Michigan Avenue. Since Kalamazoo Street/M-40 is a State highway, it must be kept up to standards that accommodate heavy truck traffic, and trucks have the right to access it. This plan does not necessarily propose to prohibit trucks on M-40 through the Downtown, but instead proposes an alternate route to the west side of the Village.



Since the closing of the DuoTang plant, the West Michigan Railroad is no longer active. Part or all of the railroad right-of-way could be re-used as a new roadway to provide a bypass truck route. The road would follow the railroad right-of-way until it intersects 38th Street in Paw Paw Township. Trucks can then proceed north on 38th Street to Red Arrow Highway.

This route crosses the West Branch of the Paw Paw River as well as a significant wetland area in Paw Paw Township west of the Village. Removing the existing railroad bridge structures and replacing them with roadway bridges would have little or no more impact on these natural features than do the existing railroad structures.

Another advantage of this route is that it provides major access to lands in both the Village and the Township that have visibility from I-94. Office complexes and high-tech industries prefer high visibility along freeway corridors. Therefore, completion of this bypass would result in making land along the bypass, particularly the lands between the bypass and I-94, very valuable for employment-related development.

D. Non-Motorized Trail Connections

The Plan shows possible trail connections

between the Michigan Avenue bridge area and the Kalamazoo Corridor. A greenway trail along the East Branch of the Paw Paw River is proposed. **Figure 8** shows a potential alignment of this trail, along with connections to pedestrian corridors on major streets.

The natural environment of Paw Paw is one of its distinctive strengths and an attribute to the community. The physical and psychological

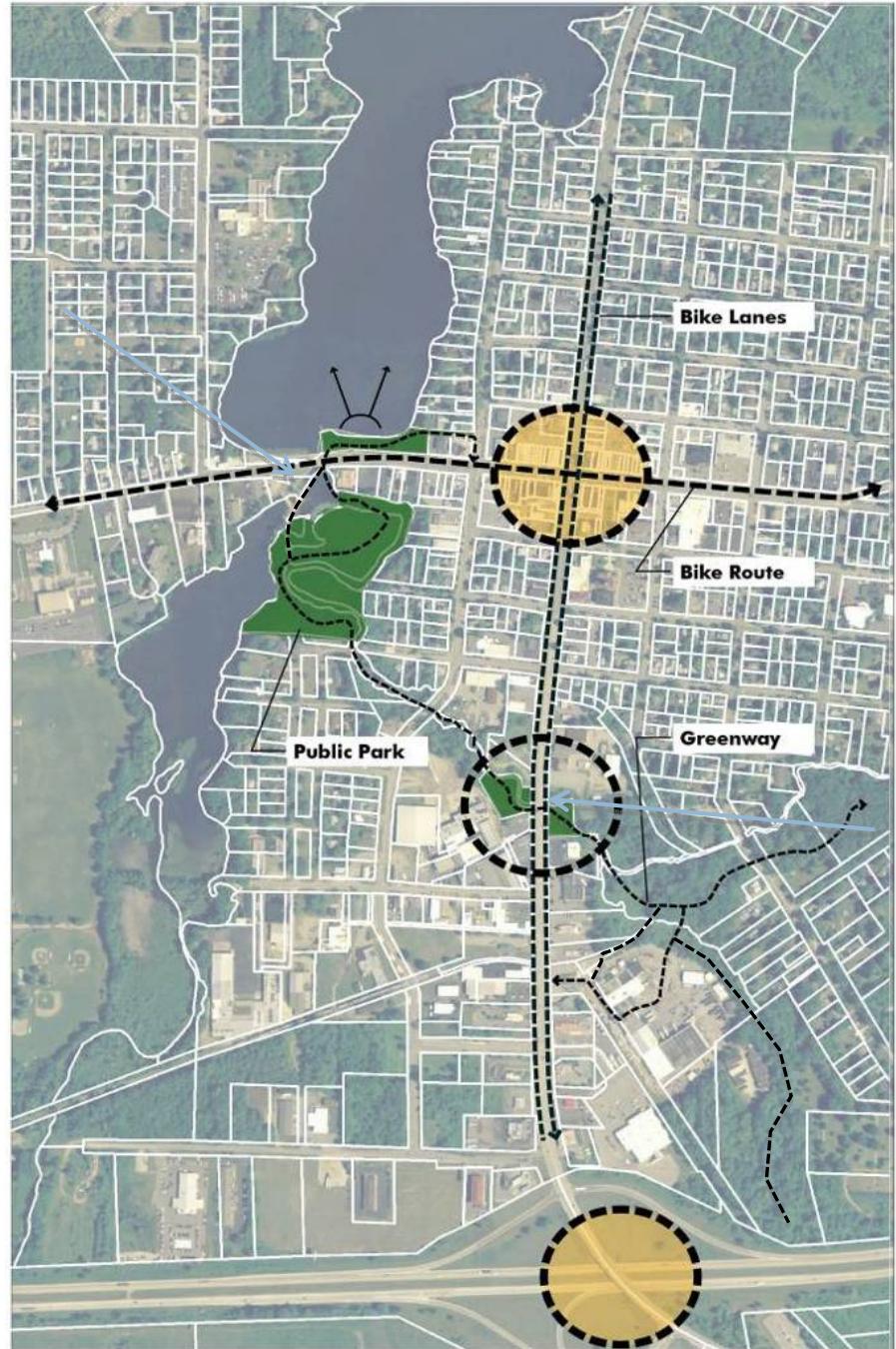


Figure 8: Non-Motorized Trails and Connections

connection between downtown Paw Paw, the Courthouse area, the Winery and the Interstate could, however, be strengthened with a more prominent non-motorized path.

Presently, there are some paths near the south end of Maple Lake, adjacent to downtown. The paths do not connect through to South Kalamazoo, but could, through a development of trails along the creekbed meandering from the Winery.

This connection could be further continued – perhaps through an under-road enhancement to the creek bridge – south and east to connect with the grocery store near I-94 and the neighborhoods to the east. The resulting trail system could include enhancement of the parking lot at Warner’s Winery for use as a trailhead.

The paths also do not connect to the upper part of the lake or along North Kalamazoo Street/M-40 (sidewalks, lake- or road-side lanes or paths). However, in 2010 MDOT will be adding a walking path along Maple Lake, between the Maple Island bridge and the boat launch, as part of the M-40 reconstruction. Pathway connections further around Maple Lake should continue to be a goal, as a completed trail system would enhance the Village.

Further development of bicycle lanes or widened sidewalks along Kalamazoo Street and Michigan Avenue might provide easy access for residents and visitors to venture into and explore Paw Paw. The trail system would be an important linkage to encourage non-motorized circulation between the Lakefront Area and the southern retail district along South Kalamazoo Street.

E. West Maple Lake Development

One of this plan’s strategies is to:

“Identify locations where higher priced market rate homes can be built, to make the community attractive to entrepreneurs and upper management employees.”

There are several areas in the Village where more expensive homes (as compared to existing housing within the Village) could be built. Lakefront homes typically bring a premium and



Figure 9: Clustered Lakefront Development Example

are often sought by those with higher incomes. Current lakefront land values also suggest higher priced construction. The area on the west side of Maple Lake is a prime development area for such higher-end housing.

Currently, this area is developed with single family homes, mostly on large lots. Some of these lots could potentially be divided to provide high-end single family home sites with lake access and views. This development should, however, follow low impact design standards, be clustered and provide open space. This will maintain and preserve as much as the existing woodlands as possible, and provide a natural buffer between developed areas and the lake. This open-space approach will help to preserve water quality by providing a filter between development-related runoff and the lake.

Figure 9 shows an example of a lakefront cluster development. This concept could also be extended to allow mixed density developments, allowing townhomes or smaller, garden-style apartment buildings with lake views.

F. Potential Bronson-Lakeview Hospital Relocation

Since purchasing Lakeview Hospital, Bronson has committed to maintaining it at its current location. However, Bronson has constructed a major outpatient facility south of I-94 and owns a significant amount of land in that area. At the same time, Bronson-Lakeview Hospital is constrained from significant growth due to the lake and existing development.

This Plan recognizes that Bronson could relocate from its lakeside campus at some point and if this were to occur, a plan to redevelop the existing site will be necessary. Portions of the existing hospital may be suitable for an assisted living facility or a skilled nursing care facility, or both. These uses do not require as much parking, so much of the existing south parking lot could be reduced, and the north lot could likely be eliminated.

A hospital move could provide an opportunity for the Village to claim more public space along the lakefront. A new park and a pedestrian/bike trail could be established, beginning at the east end of North Street and proceeding along the lakeshore to Michigan Avenue. This trail would also extend west along North Avenue to connect to the schools. The Village would have to work with the homeowners on Mather Court and Hazen Street to obtain right-of-way along the lakefront. If this is not possible, the trail could follow Mather Court back to Hazen and utilize existing sidewalks (which would be widened to allow for bicycle traffic).

Extending the development proposed for the West Maple Lake area into this site would also be appropriate. Land along the lake should be reserved for open space and trails, as outlined above.

The existing medical office building south of the hospital, as well as the medical offices on the west side of Hazen Street, could be maintained; however, doctors tend to prefer locations near the hospital. These offices could be re-used by government, school or non-profit organizations, or could become low-impact businesses such as commercial day care centers or commercial trade schools.

G. Hazen Street/Michigan Avenue

Hazen Street is the main access to Bronson Lakeview Hospital and the Early and Late Elementary School campuses. As such, there are

weekday traffic issues in this neighborhood during the school year, as end-of-the-school day buses conflict with a shift change at the hospital, around 3:30 PM. Based on the network of streets, the only reasonable access to Michigan Avenue and the east side of the Village is via Hazen Street. Hazen does connect to Power Plant Drive to access M-40 at the north end of Maple Lake, but the majority of the traffic goes south to Michigan Avenue, and then east across the Maple Lake bridge.

Unfortunately, there are few options to create an additional outlet. There are other streets that connect West North Street to Michigan Avenue, but they go through strictly single family neighborhoods where heavy through traffic would not be appropriate. An additional outlet from West North Street to the west would offer little relief, since the majority of the traffic leaving the area appears to head west onto Michigan Avenue.

The Village should work with the hospital and the school district to arrive at a good solution to this traffic issue. Staggering the release of school children, as an option, would spread traffic impacts out and lessen the daily peak. The hospital could also spread shift times for employees over a longer period so that employees do not all arrive at the same time (and leave at the same time, as well). Sidewalks should be added to the west side of Hazen Street to make it a safer environment for children and hospital employees who choose to walk to school or to work. This may also help relieve the traffic situation and lessen the daily peak volumes.

If these strategies do not improve the traffic situation, the Village should evaluate intersection improvements and en-



Hazen Street/Michigan Avenue Roundabout Concept

hanced signalization. A study should be conducted to determine if an additional traffic light to the hospital parking lot is needed. If so, this light should be timed with the light at North Street to efficiently distribute the traffic. In addition, the north drive to the hospital should be eliminated and a new access from North Street should be created. The traffic signal at North Street could then be timed to better distribute this traffic.



3-way roundabout example

Further, a roundabout at the Hazen/Michigan intersection is recommended. Roundabouts have proven to be safe and efficient; a high volume of traffic can move through in less time than through a traditional signalized intersection. In addition, a roundabout presents a unique opportunity to create an exciting and attractive entrance to the Downtown. Although further study is needed, it appears that there is adequate land to accommodate an efficient and functional layout.

In addition to the above, if a truck bypass is constructed, traffic leaving this area will have an additional option to access the east side of the Village and the I-94 interchange. When left turns are difficult due to traffic volume, some motorists could opt to turn right on Michigan Avenue and left on 36th Street to the new bypass, thus accessing the east side of the Village and the I-94 interchange. However, this option would only be necessary during the times of heaviest traffic volume, as a traffic circle is a very efficient way to move left-turning traffic through an intersection.

Even if the hospital relocates to the south, as outlined above, these improvements will help with traffic flow during peak school drop-off and pick-up times and improve pedestrian access to the area. These traffic improvements would also provide important ‘gateway’ entrances that let travelers know they are entering a special part of the community.

H. Brownfield Redevelopment

The description for the HRD High Density Residential designation mentions redevelopment of the old DuoTang site. Its location on the West Branch of the Paw Paw River makes it a prime redevelopment site especially for higher density residential use, such as high-end condominiums or independent senior housing.

New development should take advantage of river views while still providing public access to the waterfront. To make this a viable project an appropriate transition to nearby industrial areas to the east and south must be provided. If properly executed, this redevelopment could also encourage improvements to the residential areas near the river and Briggs Pond, north of this site.

I. Maple Lake – Paw Paw River

To preserve Maple Lake and the East and West Branches of the Paw Paw River as community assets as well as a source of water for the region, this Plan recommends that the Paw Paw River Watershed Management Plan be implemented as it applies to the Village of Paw Paw.¹⁰ In addition, this Plan recommends that the Village explore zoning tools to protect the watershed and the lake. These include waterfront setbacks, vegetative buffers (including incentives to create buffers on properties without them) and low impact design requirements. In addition, education of waterfront homeowners on

¹⁰ See “Urban Area Tasks” on Page 10-2 and the “Urban Management Areas” Implementation Matrix on Page 10-7 of the *Paw Paw River Watershed Management Plan*, Southwestern Michigan Planning Commission, Benton Harbor, MI (2008)

shoreline protection techniques is recommended.

J. South Bronson Campus

As noted above, Bronson Hospital owns a large amount of land south of I-94 in addition to the Outpatient Center. This land is designated P Public on the Future Land Use Map. However, just as with the Lakeview campus, there is a possibility that some or all of this land may be used for something other than health care facilities. An alternative plan is shown as an inset, to anticipate this possibility.

Should Bronson ever sell any or all of the property for development, the land along the Interstate would be appropriate for C/O development as described for that land use designation. The property near the river would be appropriate for clustered development (similar to that proposed for the West Maple Lake area) and higher-quality multiple family dwellings or senior housing. The remainder of the property would be appropriately developed with low density residential dwellings.

K. Large Scale Retail Development

This site is shown in the Highway Commercial designation and is south I-94 and west of M-40. In the past, both K-Mart and Wal-Mart have explored this area for development.

Wal-Mart, the most recent and current interested developer at the time of this report, had received site plan approval for development of a Wal-Mart superstore. The significant development issues had largely been resolved through the approval process. Among the matters resolved were the limitations placed on ingress and egress along M-40, a limited access state highway at that point. Wal-Mart and the Michigan Department of Transportation reached an agreement for access locations. Another matter was the protection and maintenance of wetland areas within the site. Resolution with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality was reached via agreements with the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. Water supply matters between the developers and the Village have also been discussed.

This area will remain a site of interest to development, even if Wal-Mart ultimately decides to

not pursue development. The Village may wish to repeat the Wal-Mart site plan conditions as well as the access and wetland prior arrangements when considering future developer contacts for this site.

Subarea Plans

Map 7 identifies two subareas deserving of special consideration. The following subarea plans provide additional detail for land uses and improvements in those areas.

L. Downtown

Downtown Paw Paw is the retail, cultural and historic center of the Village. As such, it deserves special consideration. **Figure 10** provides a concept for development and redevelopment of this major community asset.



Downtown Boulevard example

Currently, Michigan Avenue through Downtown consists of two through lanes in each direction, a center left turn lane, and parking lanes at the curb, for a total of 7 lanes. The most recent traffic counts on Michigan Avenue show a daily volume between 12,300 and 13,200 vehicles, and there is no reason to expect that this will increase significantly. Based on generally accepted transportation planning standards, two travel lanes in each direction is typically not necessary until traffic volumes exceed 18,000 vehicles per day. Therefore, there is far more vehicle capacity on Michigan Avenue through the downtown area than there is traffic volume.

The Downtown Subarea concept shows reducing the roadway to 5 lanes; with parking lanes adjacent to the curb, one through lane in each



- ① Intersection Features and Improvements
- ② Landscaped Boulevards
- ③ Additional On-Street Parking Spaces

Figure 10: Downtown Concept

direction, and a center boulevard/left turn lane. The boulevard ends before each intersection to accommodate a left turn lane. As a result, downtown sidewalks could be widened to about 24 feet (see the cross section in **Figure II**).

This additional room provides an important advantage. There would now be enough width to gradually slope sidewalks to the street, thereby eliminating the existing 6-inch step from the parking to the storefront level. The pitch of the sidewalk would be slight so that it would not be discernible. This additional width would also allow a planting area to accommodate trees and landscaping; elements of the streets-

cape, such as benches, trash receptacles, and lighting; and opportunities for outdoor dining.

Another advantage to this approach is that it provides for more on-street parking on Kalamazoo Street, both north and south of Michigan Avenue. As proposed, the concept does not affect the number of parallel parking spaces on Michigan Avenue. If this concept is implemented, there should be a net gain of on-street parking spaces for the downtown area.

In addition to the land use strategies outlined in this chapter, the Appendix also contains information and strategies for economic vitality in the Downtown.

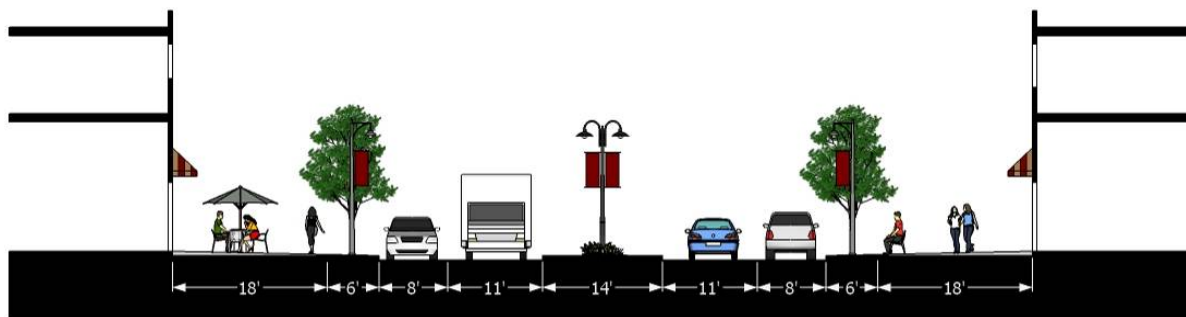


Figure 11: Proposed Downtown Cross Section



Figure 12 Shopping Center Site Opportunities (looking south)

M. “Shopping Center” Site

One downtown site offers a unique opportunity to provide infill development and increased connectivity. The former “Shopping Center” supermarket site location along East Michigan Street is a sizable tract of land encompassing nearly a complete block (see **Figure 12**).

The existing configuration of the property is less than optimal:

- The site contains a deteriorating structure and can be viewed as an underperforming civic asset.
- There is a lengthy expanse of non-descript brick walls and curb-cuts along Michigan Avenue.
- The prominent corner at Michigan Avenue and Niles Street is not developed to its full potential.

However, there are a number of positive features which make this site a good candidate for redevelopment:

- Size (nearly one full city block).

- Good parking and access from multiple directions.
- Consolidated ownership.
- Adjacent to Michigan Avenue and the existing downtown retail area.
- Strong on-site businesses (the Paw Paw Pharmacy and the law office building).
- Potential linkage to the Courthouse.
- Opportunity to re-energize the corner of Michigan and Niles.
- Opportunity to create a more animated and exciting pedestrian path along the south side of Michigan – provide for on-street activity (gathering, seating, etc.)

For these reasons, this Plan recommends demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site.

Redevelopment Concept

Figure 13 presents a redevelopment concept for this site. The “green” connections along Niles Street help to integrate the site with County facilities, allowing pedestrians and



Figure 13 Shopping Center Redevelopment Concept

workers easy access while providing a more pleasant walking experience.

The concept also focuses activity on the corner, with parking in the rear. The size of the building could vary; however, the concept shows it at 22,000 square feet. At least two stories should be encouraged (or a minimum height of 22 feet at the parapet), to make the new building fit in with the established downtown character.

Potential uses include retail, a restaurant with a sidewalk café, medical offices or clinics, health club, or a community-oriented use such as a community center, indoor recreation center, or some other similar use.

As mentioned, the plan also considers “green” corridors to the Courthouse and County Office Building sites, with pedestrian enhancements such as improved sidewalks and street

crossings. This concept also adds much-needed green space to the Courthouse parking area.

The Appendix contains an economic development strategy for funding this project.

Zoning Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) requires the Master Plan to include a Zoning Plan, which “include(s) an explanation of how the land use categories on the land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map.”

Table II summarizes the land use designations and identifies related zoning districts as outlined in the Paw Paw Zoning Ordinance, as well as providing recommendations to implement the Master Plan through the regulations of the Zoning Ordinance.

Table 11: Zoning Plan

Future Land Use Plan Designation	Corresponding Zoning Districts
LDR Low Density Residential	<p><u>R-1 Single Family Residence District</u>, with a minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet. The intent of the R-1 District is to “preserve those areas which have developed strictly as single family detached units on separate lots.”</p> <p>To implement the Plan recommendations to provide for more high-end housing, the Village may wish to create a new district with a larger minimum lot area (at least 20,000 square feet, perhaps as large as 1 acre).</p>
MDR Medium Density Residential	<p><u>R-2, Single Family Residential</u>, with a minimum lot area of 8,700 square feet. The character of this district is “mainly urban, single family home of earlier construction on single lots.” This district also permits two-family dwellings. This district encompasses most of the Village.</p>
HDR High Density Residential	<p><u>RM Multiple Family Residential</u>. This district is intended to allow for multiple family development at a density of 8 to 14 dwelling units per acre, slightly higher than the 7-12 du/a recommended for the HDR land use designation. The Village should consider limiting the number of dwelling units in a building to ensure that new developments are at a scale that is appropriate to the small town character of the Village.</p>
MHC Manufactured Home Community	<p><u>RMH Residential Mobile Home District</u>. The requirements of this district, combined with the rules of the Michigan Manufactured Housing Commission, are adequate to allow for reasonable expansion of the two existing communities without adverse impacts on neighboring properties.</p>
P Public	<p>There is no corresponding district to this designation. However, parks, schools and government buildings are either permitted or special land uses in all of the single family residential districts.</p>
DC Downtown Core	<p><u>CBD Central Business District</u>. This district allows for uses that are consistent with the recommendations of the Downtown Core and the Subarea Plan. Mixed use structures are allowed by right.</p>

Future Land Use Plan Designation	Corresponding Zoning Districts
CC Corridor Commercial	<p><u>B-2 General Business District</u>. This district encompasses most of the business areas in the Village outside of downtown. The ordinance also contains a B-1 Local Business District, but it appears that only one property in the Village is within this district. The B-1 District is the only one that allows adult businesses (as a special land use). Typically, these uses are restricted to industrial areas that are buffered from residential neighborhoods. The Village should consider amending the ordinance to place adult uses in the General Industrial district.</p>
HC Highway Commercial	<p>Also <u>B-2, General Business District</u>. The uses in this designation are located near the main gateways of the Village. In order to implement the plan, the Village should consider creating a separate zoning district or an overlay district for this area, to ensure that the gateway to the Village reflects its unique character.</p>
C/O Commercial/Office	<p>This designation encompasses several zoning districts, including <u>B-2 General Commercial, R-O Restricted Office, and I-1, Light Industrial</u>. Since properties within this designation could be in any one of these zoning districts, the Village may wish to consider an overlay district for certain areas, to ensure that the recommendation of the Plan are implemented.</p>
LI Light Industrial	<p><u>I-1 Light Industrial and I-2 General Industrial</u>. There are no truly “heavy” industrial uses in the Village, so there may be no need for two classifications. Consolidating all industrial areas into a single district, with some desirable, but generally considered “heavy” uses listed as special land uses, would be more efficient and would better implement the recommendations of this Plan.</p>
MU Mixed Use	<p>There is no corresponding district (although the CBD Central Business District allows mixed use buildings). The MU-designated area on the west side of Maple Lake is intended to serve as a gateway to Downtown and provide a mix of housing opportunities near the Village center. To implement this recommendation, a new zoning district is necessary.</p>
MXD Mixed Density	<p>There is no corresponding district. The MXD area mostly encompasses areas in the R-2 Single Family district, but some properties are in other districts. Implementation of this designation is best accomplished with an overlay district that would set specific mixed density requirements while maintaining the general requirements of the underlying district.</p>

Future Land Use Plan Designation	Corresponding Zoning Districts
Districts Not Designated	<p>There is no land use designation corresponding to the P Parking District. The purpose of the P District is to provide for parking in adjacent commercial or industrial districts while maintaining a buffer between those districts and nearby residential districts. However, this can be achieved through other means. Since there are few properties within the P District, the Village should consider whether this district is truly necessary.</p>

Chapter 6. Implementation

A master plan is only useful as long as it is implemented and consulted when making land use decisions. This chapter outlines actions for implementing the Master Plan.

Project Priorities

The actions are listed with a “priority number” as follows:

Priority 1 projects are those that should be given immediate and concentrated effort. These are the first projects that should be commenced after this Master Plan has been adopted. Any preliminary steps that must be taken to implement the action (such as seeking funding, changes in local ordinances, etc.) should be commenced immediately. Those Priority 1 projects that have a longer time horizon should be revisited on an as-needed basis

and should be incorporated into other applicable long-term planning programs, such as a capital improvements plan.

Priority 2 projects are those that are necessary to implement the plan, but either depend upon commencement or completion of Priority 1 projects, or do not have the same immediacy of Priority 1 projects. Once commenced, however, these projects should be considered important and should be pursued until completion.

Priority 3 projects are those that implement elements of this plan, but are not urgent and can be delayed for a longer period of time. These projects are more susceptible to budgetary constraints.

Some projects within the matrix do not have a specified timing period because they are based on less predictable factors such as land availability, etc. The timing for these projects is explained within the matrix.

Implementation Matrix

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies			
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
1. Review the Zoning Ordinance to determine if any existing regulations inhibit implementation of this plan, and make changes as necessary.	Staff, Planning Commission, Village Council	Within 1 year	1
2. Create new Zoning Ordinance requirements to implement this plan, including mixed uses, overlay districts, Form-Based Development districts and appropriate density requirements.	Staff, Planning Commission, Village Council	Within 1 year	1
3. Review and initiate amendments to the Zoning Map in order to implement this plan.	Staff, Planning Commission, Village Council	As needed	2
4. Adopt design requirements in the zoning ordinance for new development where appropriate, including traditional downtown, commercial development and office/employment areas.	Staff, Planning Commission, Village Council, DDA	1 year	2
5. Review and revise the Master Plan in response to changing needs and priorities.	Staff, Planning Commission, Village Council	Annually and as needed	2
6. Develop a six-year Capital Improvements Plan to prioritize projects and Village funding.	Staff, Planning Commission, Village Council	Within 1 year and annually	1

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies			
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
7. Educate property owners about property maintenance.	Staff, Village Council	Within 1 year	3
8. Create, fund and implement a streetscape program for commercial areas.	Staff, Village Council	1 – 3 years	2
9. Complete, fund and implement a wayfinding sign plan.	Staff, Village Council	1 – 5 years	2
10. Complete a pathways plan as part of updating the Village Parks and Recreation Plan, and as an update to this Master Plan.	Staff, Planning Commission, Village Council	1 – 5 years	2
11. Work with the Chamber and the Downtown Development Authority to create a strategic leasing plan.	Staff, DDA, Chamber of Commerce, Village Council	1 – 2 years	3
12. Work with Bronson-Lakeview Hospital and the Paw Paw School District to provide staggered shifts to spread out traffic over a longer period of time.	Staff, Chamber, Paw Paw Schools, Bronson Hospital, Village Council	Within 1 year	1
13. Work with the Paw Paw School District and area youth organizations to create a “youth cabinet,” who will advise the Village on policies affecting area youth.	Staff, Village Council, Paw Paw Schools, area youth organizations	Within 1 year	1
14. Implement the recommendations of the Paw Paw River Watershed Study, including adopting ordinances to protect shorelines and encourage or require low impact development.	Staff, Village Council, Planning Commission, SW Michigan Planning Commission, County and state agencies	1 – 5 years	1
15. Promote opportunities for “lifecycle” housing, including independent living units, assisted living and continual care.	Staff, Village Council, Planning Commission, area senior advocacy agencies	1 – 5 years	2
16. Work to expand senior services to the Paw Paw area.	Staff, Village Council, area senior service agencies	1 – 3 years	3
17. Ensure new development is public transit friendly. Work with Van Buren Public Transit to install signs and amenities for stopping points.	Staff, Planning Commission via Site Plan standards and review, Village Council	1 – 2 years	1

Land Acquisition and Development			
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
1. Acquire properties on the north and west side of the Maple Lake Bridge to create a new open space corridor.	Village Council, Planning Commission	When available	3

Land Acquisition and Development			
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
2. Work with the owner of the Shopping Center site to prepare the site for redevelopment; assist with acquisition and preparation of the site, if necessary.	Staff, Village Council, DDA	Within 1 year	2
3. Seek a developer for the Shopping Center Site and complete the redevelopment.	Staff, Chamber of Commerce, Village Council	1 – 3 years	2
4. Seek brownfield assessment and remediation funding for the former DuoTang site and other abandoned industrial sites.	Staff, Village Council	1 – 2 years	1
5. Seek a developer for the DuoTang site and complete the redevelopment.	Staff, Village Council	2 – 5 years	2
6. Seek funding opportunities to implement the Downtown Subarea Plan.	Staff, Planning Commission, Village Council	1 – 2 years	1
7. Work with the Public Services Department to replace downtown streets together with other needed infrastructure improvements to implement the Downtown Subarea Plan.	Staff, Village Council	3 – 5 years	2
8. Implement the Streetscape Plan for Downtown and Kalamazoo Street.	Staff, Village Council	4 – 6 years	2
9. Create and implement a Wayfinding Plan.	Staff, Village Council	3 – 6 years	2
10. Identify, acquire, and develop a site for skateboarding and BMX bike uses.	Staff, Village Council, Paw Paw Schools, Youth Cabinet, youth organizations	1-3 years and when land is available	2
11. Acquire land along Maple Lake for public access, if land currently occupied by Bronson-Lakeview Hospital becomes available.	Staff, Planning Commission, Recreation Committee, Village Council	If land becomes available	3

Transportation Corridors			
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
1. Acquire right-of-way as needed to create the Fadel Street truck bypass, and work with permitting agencies for water crossings.	Staff, Village Council	Within 1 year	1
2. Working with Paw Paw Township, fund and complete the Fadel Street truck bypass.	Staff, Village Council, Paw Paw Township	2 – 5 years	1
3. Acquire right-of-way, if necessary, to implement the Hazen Street plan element.	Staff, Village Council	1 – 5 years	2
4. Acquire right-of-way and funding to create the Kalamazoo/LaGrave Street Connector.	Staff, Village Council	3 – 5 years	3

Transportation Corridors			
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
5. Implement the trail connections recommendations of this Plan and a future Pathways Plan.	Staff, Planning Commission, Village Council	4 – 10 years	3
6. Improve pedestrian safety downtown through consolidating drives and streetwalls on Michigan Avenue.	Staff, Village Council	1 – 5 years	2

Keeping the Plan Up-to-Date

Change is constant and usually unpredictable, and there may be circumstances that warrant changes to the zoning boundaries that are not consistent with the Master Plan. If and when this occurs, the Master Plan should be updated to conform to the changed circumstances. Because of the time and process required for

amending the Plan, such changes should be considered carefully.

The following table contains a series of evaluation factors that may be used to determine if a proposed development warrants a change to the land use designation on the Future Land Use Plan map.

Future Land Use Evaluation Factors	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Does the proposed new classification meet the qualifications noted in the appropriate section of the Master Plan?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Are the zoning districts and their uses that may apply to the new classification compatible with and appropriate in the vicinity of the property under consideration?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Have any conditions changed in the area since the Master Plan was adopted that justify this change?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Will there be any community impacts that should be considered, such as increased traffic, or others that might create a need for additional services or improvements?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Are there any environmental considerations that may be contrary to the intent of the existing or proposed classification of that land use?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Was the property improperly classified when the plan was adopted or amended? Are the qualities of the property (or area) different than those that are described in the plan?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Will there be any adverse effects on adjacent properties as a result of the proposed land use change?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	What impacts will result on the public health, safety, and welfare?

Conclusion

Although this plan is a comprehensive guide for land use planning over the next 20 years, there is no way to predict what changes may occur that are not contemplated. Therefore, decisions related to development should be considered carefully in light of the recommendations of the Master Plan.

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Act 110 of the Michigan Public Acts of 2006) requires the Village's Zoning Ordinance to be "based on a plan to promote the public health, safety and welfare, to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability, to limit the improper use of land, to conserve natural resources and energy, to meet the needs of the state's residents for food, fiber and other natural resources, places of residence...and other uses of land." Since the zoning map is a part of the Zoning Ordinance, changes to zoning boundaries should be in conformance with the Master Plan. If future development decisions take these factors into account, and if the Plan is reviewed on a regular basis and updated when necessary, then Paw Paw can be assured that development will reflect the desires of its citizens, reflected through the adopted Master Plan.

Appendix

Paw Paw Economic Development Strategy

Regional Context

Paw Paw is located in the southwest of Lower Michigan, along the Interstate 94 corridor between Benton Harbor and Kalamazoo. Paw Paw is a small but relatively stable market. It is located along a major transportation corridor linking southwest Michigan to Kalamazoo and

Approximately 30,000 vehicles per day travel on I-94. Paw Paw's adjacency to the Interstate makes it accessible from many major population centers in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana as well as Chicago.

Regional Economic Influences

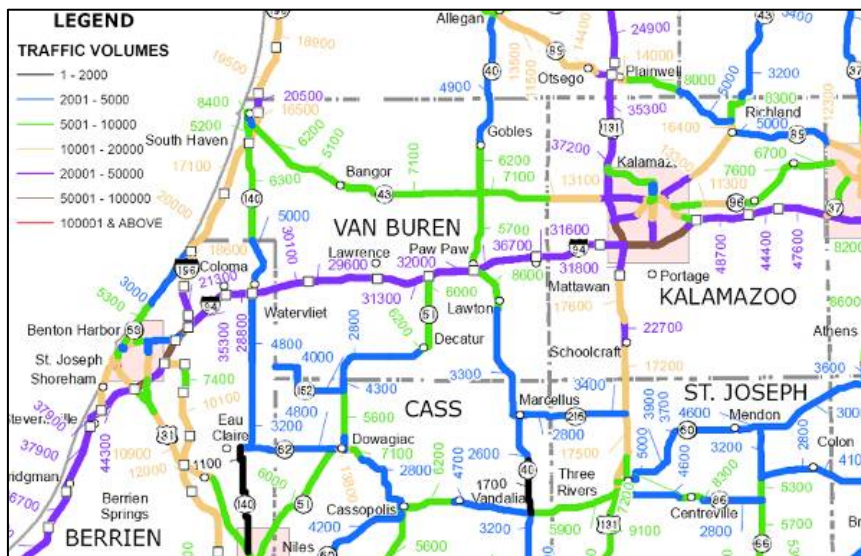
In 2009 and 2010, the economy in the United States is facing economic pressures from a number of different directions. Business activity has slowed dramatically, consumer spending is contracting, the credit markets are tight and consumer confidence is at historic lows.

Manufacturing – particularly big ticket items such as automobiles – has been especially hard hit, as the troubles in the financial and capital markets have precipitated steep declines in consumer spending. Michigan and its sizable manufacturing economy has experienced a significant economic downturn. As of April 2009, unemployment statewide has

risen to 12.8%¹² from 7.6% a year ago.

In western Michigan, some direct impacts from this national influence can be felt. The local unemployment rate in Kalamazoo-Portage MSA¹³ (which includes Paw Paw) is 9.9%, compared to 6.2% a year ago.

Health care is a bright spot for job growth that has particular bearing on Paw Paw. Lakeview Hospital – located in Paw Paw – appears to be working toward further expansion and job growth, following its recent acquisition by the Bronson Healthcare organization.



Traffic In and Around Van Buren County

areas east to Detroit. The metropolitan areas of Grand Rapids, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo and South Bend are all located within a 50-mile radius.

Within the Village itself, the 2000 Census reported 3,363 persons in 1,417 households. 2008 estimates¹¹ suggest that the population has grown slightly, to 3,449 persons in 1,472 households.

There are a significant number of households within a short drive of Paw Paw. Current year estimates suggest that over 114,000 households live within a 30-minute drive of the Village.

¹¹ Current Year Estimates, 2008. ESRI. Most recent data from the US Census Bureau in 2007 show a population of 3,239; housing estimates for 2007 are not available.

¹² Michigan Labor Market News, April 2008.

¹³ Kalamazoo-Portage MSA includes Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties, per the US Census 2007 MSA Definition.

Additionally, employment by government entities – either Federal, State or Local – has also increased over the past 12 months, contrary to the job losses generally experienced in the private sector. Because manufacturing represents one-fifth of the employment base in Van Buren County, however, there remains concern that job growth will feel continued pressure through the current economic recession.



Well-landscaped parking lots and attractive rear entrances

Downtown Shopping District

The business district along Michigan Avenue is very well situated along two heavily trafficked corridors, with many important retail tenants that draw customer traffic into Downtown Paw Paw.

Parking is available both along the street in designated lots behind and adjacent to merchants. One point of particular strength is the manner

in which retailers have embraced the rear parking lots through development of very attractive rear entrances. Customers parking in the lots behind Michigan Avenue are easily able to identify and enter shops through “front doors” that are actually in the back of the retail buildings. This creates a very positive and convenient retail experience and makes the downtown better able to compete with more “suburban” retail developments that boast easy access and



■■■■■ *Curb cuts/parking lots along sidewalks*

Downtown Lake District - Maple Lake is adjacent to downtown Paw Paw – just a short walk from the intersection of Kalamazoo and Michigan. There are a number of restaurants, the movie theater, the Sugar Bear and other retail along this corridor from Kalamazoo to the Maple Lake Park Shelter/Amphitheater. However, there are areas where pedestrians must cross several curb cuts or walk adjacent to parking lots. Pedestrians tend to avoid these areas, which leads to less pedestrian activity and street vitality.

parking in their large street-front surface lots.

There is a compelling collection of dining options in and around Downtown. This collection of restaurants provides an important regional draw for residents, tourists and vacationers throughout the year.

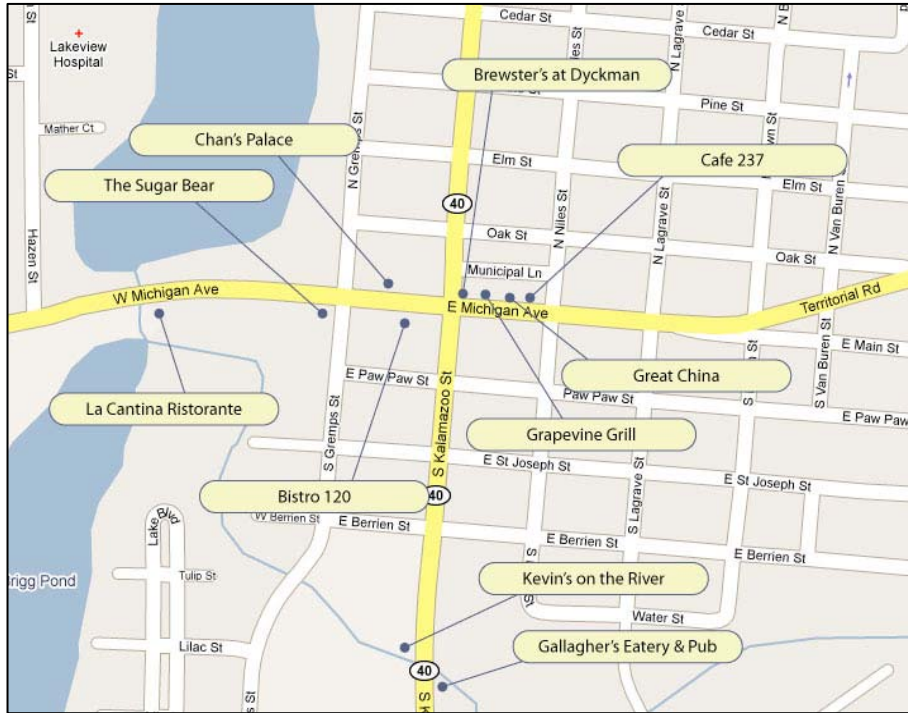
The synergy between the wineries and restaurants deserves promotional focus. Paw Paw is already a niche for both winery tourism and “experience dining,” and the two should be jointly marketed to generate additional customer visits to both.

Downtown Retail Circulation

The retail / business environment on “Main Street” Paw Paw is very attractive and welcoming. Wide sidewalks and on-street amenities serve to encourage customers to circulate around the many businesses operation on Michigan and Kalamazoo. However, the sidewalks take a second step up from the street level, with a six inch curb. This limits pedestrian mobility.

Because the downtown business environment functions as both a pedestrian shopping area as well as a major transportation conduit, the physical environment must support both efficient movement of vehicles and safe and attractive circulation of pedestrians. Where possible, vehicular accesses bisecting the pedestrian path should be designed to provide good visibility and access for the driver and easy and safe crossing for the pedestrian.

Areas of multiple curb cuts where pedestrians must be concerned with vehicles coming from different directions, as well as open areas along sidewalks adjacent to parking lots, discourage



Restaurants near Downtown Paw Paw

walking. New access management techniques, combined with landscaping and streetwalls along parking areas, can help to restore pedestrian vitality.

Summary of Market Opportunities

The Paw Paw Downtown Business District has an opportunity to focus on a number of distinct market segments.

Residents provide the largest and most consistent support for downtown businesses. In addition, important other markets are served as well such as tourists and visitors to Paw Paw, summer residents and vacationers, and travelers along the Interstate.

The table below summarizes the dimensions, needs and potential outreach strategies for each of these market segments for Paw Paw businesses, followed by a more detailed discussion of market strategies for each segment.

Residents:

Consumers living in or around Paw Paw provide the primary market for its goods and services. The needs of these consumers vary from

daily sustenance shopping, service and dining to periodic entertainment and recreation.

The Paw Paw Downtown Development Authority (DDA) already encourages residents to “buy local” through its “Shop Smart, Shop Local” campaign. This sentiment is important, since the livelihood of the Downtown is dependent upon the local residents as its primary source of business.

Efforts should be made to continually update the product offerings and merchandising to address the needs of local consumers. Opportunities exist for expansions in the retail mix, and strategic recruitment should be a priority to expand the array of goods and services available.

The DDA can also lead retail infill through creation of a retail incubator program. Such programs can encourage retail infill through mentoring, business financing, training, planning and marketing strategy. This relatively new capability under the State DDA law (adopted in

March, 2008) could be an important tool for downtown retail infill.

As previously mentioned, a comprehensive system of signage and wayfinding along with improvements to the pedestrian thoroughfare would help set apart the Downtown as a welcoming and pleasant shopping area. This will help residents to see their community as a special place as well as help to “show off” the local community to outsiders.

Marketing outreach should rely on word of mouth, as well as advertising in local newspapers. Providing incentives such as discounts and coupons can be powerful promotional tools. Finally, retailers should strive to exceed expectations on service, quality and the entire customer experience when given the opportunity to meet the needs of the local consumer.

Tourist & Wine Enthusiasts

Tourists and visitors to Paw Paw from outside the area looking for a day of shopping or a meal represent an important market force for Paw Paw’s economy. The dining, wining and special-

	Paw Paw Village & Nearby Residents	Tourists & Wine Enthusiasts	Summer Residents & Vacationers	Highway Travelers
Size & Growth:	Stable to Growing 1,500 households in Village 6,000 with 10-Minutes	30,000 - 50,000 Annually Growing	Over 3,000 Homes within 30-minutes Growing	30,000 Vehicles Daily Stable
Consumer Needs:	Household Needs Restaurants / Services Recreation	Fine Dining Entertainment Specialty Shopping	Dining / Entertainment Arts / Shopping	Quick Dining Road Services Convenience Shopping
Outreach Strategies:	"Buy Local" Campaign Recruit New Retail Tenants Retail Incubator Signs / Wayfinding	"Paw Paw Dine and Wine" Shared Advertising Tourism Coordination Couponing Signs / Wayfinding	"Summer Scavenger Hunt" Special Events Trails / Connections Signs / Wayfinding	Convenient Access Attractive Gateways Signs / Wayfinding
Advertising & Media:	Local Media Newspaper Special Events	Wine / Restaurant Guides Outdoor Advertising State Tourism Marketing Web Sites	Local Media Direct Mail Window Placards Web Site	Highway Signage Clear Highway Sight Lines Overpass Gateway Signage Outdoor Advertising

ty shopping available in town should jointly market the experience of Paw Paw as a destination for Wining, Dining, Shopping and Fun.

Advertising effectiveness rises with the number of exposures a consumer gets. Increasing the exposures is costly and therefore sharing in the cost of a consolidated marketing message can be beneficial for all businesses. Therefore, businesses along Kalamazoo Street that are oriented to overnight visitors and day travelers, as well as the wineries and restaurants, should work together with the DDA to promote the entire community.

Summer Residents / Vacationers

There are over 3,000 summer homes within 30-minutes of Paw Paw. This is a growing market and could provide an important, albeit seasonal, source of economic activity.

Vacationers and summer residents should be drawn into Paw Paw for its restaurants, shopping and entertainment. Live music could be used to increase the appeal of the Paw Paw destination.

Movies at the Strand, live theater with the Paw Paw Village Players or outdoor theater should be marketed widely to summer residents. Outdoor movies in the park might also attract visitors downtown and spark other evening shopping activity.

Children's programs should be encouraged to attract families to Paw Paw in the summer for educational and arts activities. For example, a "Scavenger Hunt" could be an interesting marketing ploy to encourage exploration of the district, with special promotional incentives for visiting businesses in Paw Paw.

Recreational boat, canoe or paddleboat rental would be good way to link the activities along Michigan to the beautiful lakefront. Promoting the branches of the Paw Paw River as a kayak trail (providing portage facilities where necessary) may also bring new tourists to the area.

Marketing activities should be focused on reaching a wider audience. Travelers to the southwest part of Michigan frequently come from neighboring states. Advertising should appear in state travel guides and web sites, travel brochure displays along interstates and at



Paw Paw "Dine and Wine" - Print/Web Advertising Campaign Potential



The Strand Theater is one of only a few movie screens outside the major metro areas in Southwest Michigan.

welcome centers. A summer circular and web site could announce events and make vacationers aware of Paw Paw activities.

Highway Travelers

The Interstate provides a high number of travelers heading east and west that support businesses near the exits.

Convenience is king for these consumers and the automobile (and truck) will be the method of access.

Sales of gasoline, fast food and other convenience items certainly benefit directly from these travelers. It is important to note that once these travelers exit the freeway, an opportunity exists to draw them into Downtown. Gateways, signs and wayfinding to draw customers from the Interstate north along Kalamazoo Street should set the tone for the ‘branding’ of Paw Paw and encourage exploration of the village.



Interstate Overpass Gateway Signage Example

There is a distinct opportunity to announce Paw Paw along the Interstate. Certainly, exit signs and other Michigan DOT signage is possible. Additionally, traditional outdoor / billboard advertising can be effective in making travelers aware of Paw Paw’s offerings. Attractive signage on the interstate overpass is also a possible means of announcing Paw Paw as a unique destination along I-94.

Retail Spending – Supply and Demand

Opportunities for leasing additional retail space periodically present themselves to communities. Today, Paw Paw has a few available retail spaces available for lease downtown.

Unlike a shopping mall where leasing decisions are centralized, a “Main Street” community such as Paw Paw is often left to a reactive response to the leasing choices of property owners.

By following a more thoughtful, strategic approach to leasing by following the needs of the consumer, the property owner benefits by filling up vacant space with tenants more likely to succeed. Furthermore, such pragmatic leasing best serves the community by filling undermet consumer needs.

Because consumer shopping patterns tend toward large scale ‘category killer’ big box retail such as Walmart, Target and Barnes and Noble (to name a few), downtown and village retail must seek appropriate tenants wishing to offer a more locally serving and enhanced retail experience.

Specialty retail in and around a “Main Street” district offers consumers an alternative experience to strip malls and other automobile-centric shopping (i.e., park-shop-park-shop). Shopping downtown can be both convenient and explorative (i.e., park, shop, walk, shop, etc).

The merchants that thrive in this environment offer superior customer service, a unique product mix and a personal touch to the retail experience that larger retail operations cannot offer.

The following table summarizes some specialty retail categories that appear to be underserved within the Village of Paw Paw. This demand is based on figures of consumer spending by category from the US Survey of Consumer Expenditure. Supply is based on data from business operations in Paw Paw from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Highlighted Specialty Retail Opportunities

Village of Paw Paw Unmet Retail Demand

	Consumer Demand	Existing Supply	Unmet Demand	Retail Opportunity in Square Feet*
Overall Retail Sales	\$90,469,557	\$53,372,573	-\$37,096,984	

Specialty Retail Opportunities

Home Furnishing Stores	\$559,059	\$360,796	\$198,263	661
Men's Clothing Stores	\$106,140	\$612	\$105,528	352
Women's Clothing Stores	\$390,261	\$56,201	\$334,060	1,114
Children's, Infants Clothing Stores	\$90,977	\$2,453	\$88,524	295
Family Clothing Stores	\$863,064	\$427,400	\$435,664	1,452
Clothing Accessories Stores	\$34,359	\$0	\$34,359	115
Other Clothing Stores	\$101,222	\$0	\$101,222	337
Shoe Stores	\$292,594	\$0	\$292,594	975
Jewelry Stores	\$269,950	\$0	\$269,950	900
Luggage and Leather Goods Stores	\$23,661	\$0	\$23,661	79
Special Foodservices	\$413,043	\$301,373	\$111,670	372
Drinking Places	\$254,794	\$156,493	\$98,301	328
Sporting Goods Stores	\$320,514	\$15,325	305,189	1,017
Hobby, Toys and Games Stores	\$202,260	\$0	202,260	674
Book Stores	\$173,979	\$86,685	\$87,294	291
News Dealers and Newsstands	\$12,352	\$1,529	\$10,823	36
Music CDs, Record Stores	\$96,104	\$0	\$96,104	320

Source: Claritas Marketing, FSA Analysis, US Census Survey of Consumer Expenditure 2007.

* Assuming an average retail sales figure of \$300 / sf based on Urban Land Institute (ULI) and FSA estimates.

Retail Opportunities for Expansion

Apparel is a category that appears to be underserved locally. Certainly some purchases of fashion goods will continue to go to malls in the region, but there is opportunity to expand apparel retail space by approximately 3,000 square feet. Care should be taken to program the merchandising of this apparel retail to address both the needs of local consumers but also attract shopping from tourists and summer residents.

Additional retail opportunities include:

- Sporting goods (1,000 square feet)
- Toys / games / hobbies (600 square feet)
- Books (300 square feet)
- Music / CDs (320 square feet)

There are available retail spaces in the downtown – most notably on important corners such as Kalamazoo and Michigan – which could accommodate small infill retail tenants.

Strengthening and Expanding Downtown Retail

Tactic 1: Retain and Strengthen Merchants

The most important aspect of a downtown retail strategy is the systematic attention to protecting the interests and position of existing anchor merchants. Closing businesses has a severely detrimental effect on the vitality of downtown business districts. Furthermore,

recruiting new businesses is time consuming and costly.

Identifying 'at risk' businesses involves careful attention to subtle clues, such as:

- Poor Merchandising / Store Presentation
- Hit and Miss Hours
- Temporary Signs
- Constant Sales
- Consistent Complaints

Challenges for downtown merchants are many and diverse. One in four small retail businesses fail. Lack of experience, under-capitalization and lack of succession planning in family businesses are frequently cited as reasons for failure. A clear understanding of customer needs and retail merchandising helps strengthen the merchants chances for long-term viability.

Tactic 2: Merchant Associations

Shopping malls speak with a coordinate marketing message, a strategically designed environment and central control and decision-making. Such controls are not directly possible in Downtown Business Districts, where multiple merchants and business owners operate in relative isolation.

The DDA should form a specific Merchant's Association to encourage collective cooperation by coordinating the district's activities – much like a manager oversees a mall. This association would hopefully include all downtown merchants and would focus on the business of retail management and recruitment for Downtown Paw Paw. The DDA may want to hire a part-time manager to handle these duties.

A well-organized Merchant's Group can reach beyond a simple calendar of monthly meetings to delegate certain responsibilities for tenant recruitment, merchandising strategy training, business development (accounting, human resources), etc.

Because it would be a voluntary organization, a Merchant's Association must be carefully organized around the idea of raising the overall success of the district. The DDA can play an important oversight and funding role for the Merchant's Association. Each business' future profits are, in many ways, tied to the overall success of the district. Therefore, by extension,

their fortunes are tied to their neighbor retailers. Seeing each other as associates working together to create a cohesive customer experience in Downtown – rather than merely competitors – allows for more cooperative actions toward overall sustainability.

Potential Merchant Association Activities:

- Cross Promotions
- Shared Advertising
- Coordinated Maintenance
- Mentoring / Training
- Strategic Recruitment
- Signage / Wayfinding
- Shared Parking

Tactic 3: Generate Trial Visits through Special Events

Special events are more than opportunities to offer the community a 'get-together' – they are key chances for the downtown business district to show off its wares and take advantage of increased customer traffic. Such events provide businesses with key marketing opportunities to expose new customers to their merchandise and the downtown shopping experience.

Existing festivals and other events should be coordinated with the downtown retailers to get the best exposure for merchants and the biggest economic impact to the community. Whenever possible, stores should be open during the special event and customers should be able to easily access the downtown shopping district while the event is underway. Bringing merchandise, refreshments and other special promotions outside the store to the storefront, sidewalk or other prominent position allows merchants to leverage this influx of customers for maximum exposure.

Certainly, special events present some challenges. Parking and access are made more difficult with the higher volume of traffic. The physical location(s) of the special events sometimes cannot allow all merchants equal exposure to the crowds. If the needs of the merchants are considered and communication is open and interactive in the planning stages, special events downtown can become powerful promotional opportunities and economic engines for Downtown.

Tactic 4: Market Ready Spaces

While the Paw Paw downtown retail district competes with other retail destinations for customers, it is important to consider that it also competes for *tenants*.

Retailers require sufficient unencumbered shop space, high ceilings, service access and ample parking. The size and physical configuration of leasable retail space in “Downtown Main Street” frequently cannot meet all of these demands. To counter this, the downtown and the village should look for opportunities to do the following:

- Create larger spaces – combine smaller broken up spaces into larger leasable footprints.
- Provide for unencumbered shop space and headroom – retail benefits from good internal sight lines, sufficient head room for lighting and an open feel. Combining and removing support columns (where possible) allows for more flexible shop configurations.
- Provide convenient back of shop access and storage. Deliveries, office operations and storage needs must also be accommodated.
- Parking – provide for parking that is easily accessed, safe, well lit and centrally located. Provide incentives and regulations, if necessary, to keep daily office worker and employee parking away from the prime customer spaces.

Tactic 5: Critical Mass

Assembling a significant quantity of retail and restaurant destinations in close proximity creates a sense of retail mass and builds awareness of the district. Downtown Paw Paw is fortunate in that it already supports many different retail merchants and dining opportunities, including some key anchor destinations such as the Hallmark Store and the hardware store. Continuing to build on this collection will be important to insuring the continued success of downtown retail.

Where possible, merchants should be located close to one another and convenient to

parking. Distractions that deter natural shopper exploration and circulation among merchants should be avoided where possible. These include first floor office uses, empty stores, vacant lots causing gaps in the street wall, numerous curb cuts and open parking areas along sidewalks and similar impediments detract from the consumer experience. Therefore, special effort should be made to fill empty retail locations with new merchants as vacancy and turnover occurs.

Tactic 6: Strategic Recruitment

Much like a mall manager, the Downtown must actively seek out new retail tenants. This outreach effort involves identification of specific retail gaps in the marketplace. The exhibit on the previous page suggests a number of categories of consumer spending that appear to have unmet local demand. These can serve as a starting point to frame potential targets.

In general, there are three categories of downtown retailers:

- National Chains
- Regional Stores
- Local Independents

The site selection criteria of each differs, but will always depend on access to customers so local demographics, economics and traffic visibility are key.

Being a smaller town removed from a major metropolitan area, Paw Paw cannot offer potential retail tenants a densely populated suburban destination. It can, however, leverage its access to Interstate traffic and strong tourism with a stable local population .

National chains prefer larger retail stores along major traffic thoroughfares and intersections. Paw Paw has such sites nearer the Interstate, so it is unlikely that they would pass up the exposure that the Interstate provides. For downtown retail, however, regional stores and locally run independents provide the best chance of infill expansion.

The process of identifying targets for recruitment involves an interactive discussion about merchants from adjacent markets or concepts from similar communities. There is no

'one-stop' resource for such tenant recruitment (as there is with national chains).

Assigning responsibility to someone within the downtown – either within the Village or the Merchant's Association – to actively recruit for Paw Paw is critical. There must be a voice for marketing the Downtown Retail District. Once identified, this Downtown Business District Manager can assemble a list of potential retail categories to seek out and potential merchants to contact.

Franchise operators offer an important market for recruitment, as many national retailers have franchise programs that empower local owners to leverage the brand and merchandising power of the national chain in a locally-serving location. To encourage this, collateral materials must be produced to summarize the characteristics that make Paw Paw unique as well as the key retail metrics merchants use to inform their site selection – household counts by radii, demographics, traffic and tourism. Regional meetings, such as the International Council on Shopping Centers (ICSC) provide opportunities for Paw Paw's merchant association or manager to interact with larger regional and nation retail merchants. More locally, the experience of local leadership and community leaders can help to identify merchants 'doing well' in other markets. Leaders can then seek out these merchants to suggest that they open an additional location in Paw Paw.

Supermarket Redevelopment Site

A proposed redevelopment subarea plan for the former Supermarket site is in Chapter 5. This addendum determines a possible development strategy for the Village to follow in order to redevelop this site.

Development Scenario

To illustrate the project's possibilities, the following summary provides estimates of general costs, revenues and financial feasibility.

Acquisition of the Supermarket parcels is estimated (based on a review of the Auditor's records) at \$400,000 (see Infill Site Parcels

table, below). Demolition of the existing structures is estimated to cost an additional \$200,000. Construction of a new, two-story, urban structure of modern design is estimated at \$80 per square foot (according to RS Means 2007 Square Foot Costs local building cost manual). The total 40,000 square feet is assumed to cost \$3.4 million. Parking and other site improvements is estimated at \$300,000. Architectural, engineering, financing, management and other 'soft costs' are estimated at \$645,000. The total cost of acquisition and construction – assuming the above – is just under \$5 million.

The above estimate assumes this newly developed space could be leased at rates at or above other Downtown Paw Paw properties due to its proximity to parking and other Downtown anchor sites. Revenues are expected to be just under \$400,000 per year with allowance for vacancy and other operational costs.

Assuming a 30% loan-to-value commercial mortgage at 7 percent over a 25-year amortization period, debt service is estimated at approximately \$300,000 per year. Therefore, the property could generate as much as \$100,000 per year.

Valuing the development at either cost of construction or through a simplified capitalized rate¹⁴ shows a completed value of nearly \$5 million. Based on the tax contribution of surrounding parcels, the newly developed property would be expected to generate over \$150,000 in annual property taxes. This is an increase over current tax revenues of over \$136,000 per year.

DDA Development Strategy

Certainly, the above financial model shows the potential for such a development to be led by the private sector. If, for instance, the current owner(s) of the site would redevelop, the land

¹⁴ Capitalized rate (or cap rate) based valuation is a calculation of return based on an income stream. In this case, the Net Operating Income (NOI) is divided by an estimate of market returns for similar investments to derive an estimate of market value based on the annual return to the equity investor(s).

cost could be reduced by the amount of equity they hold. This would improve the return from the project.

Should the current owner(s) be uninterested in development, a private developer could be solicited from the community or beyond through the issuance of a request for development proposal. The DDA could take a position as the developer in partnerships with the current owners as a joint venture to develop the site. If the DDA must act alone, it has the authority to acquire the site for redevelopment.

Primarily, the redevelopment strategy should focus on identification of tenant(s) for the new development and work backward through development economics and incentives. The potential development could house multiple tenants or be designed around one particular use.

Potential Tenants Strategies:

Multiple User Scenario

- First Floor Retail – Restaurant – Deli/Coffee – Books – Apparel – Sporting Goods – Toys/Games
- Upper Floor Professional Office or Apartments
- First Floor Medical Office / Clinic

Single User Scenarios

- Community Center
- Education Facility

The DDA has the legal mandate to take an active role in the participation of a redevelopment of the supermarket site and to issue bonds based on tax increment financing (TIF) revenues to offset public improvements to the site such as streets, parking and utility costs. A number of other development tools are available depending on the uses considered for the site:¹⁵

- If the property were to be considered for public use (such as a Community Center) a **Local Development Financing Authority (LDFA)** can facilitate public projects to encourage local development, to prevent conditions of unemployment and to promote growth. (1986 PA 281, MCL 125.2151)
- If environmental conditions prohibit redevelopment, a **Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA)** may be created to clean up the sites, thus allowing the property to revert to productive economic use. (1996 PA 381, MCL 125.2651)
- An **Economic Development Corporation (EDC)** may be created to issue bonds and otherwise facilitate the development of industrial or not-for-profit enterprises. (1974 PA 338, MCL 125.1601)
- A **Principal Shopping District (PSD)** may be created to levy special assessments for the development or redevelopment of a principal shopping to support retail activities in the area. (1961 PA 120, MCL 125.981)
- A **Business Improvement District (BID)** may be created to develop a more successful and profitable business climate in a defined area, and to collect revenues, levy special assessments and issue bonds to pay for its activities. (1961 PA 120 of, MCL 125.981)

Other DDAs in Michigan have developed a number of programs to facilitate Downtown Redevelopment. Examples include:

- The **Building Reuse Incentives Program** is designed to reduce the incidence of vacancy in older downtown buildings, by providing financial assistance to property owners to overcome the unique and challenging barriers associated with reusing older buildings. Assistance may only be used to improve barrier free access, improve fire suppression systems, improve fire-rated stair towers, upgrade utilities, or for facade improvements.

¹⁵ Michigan Municipal League, Economic Development Tools, March 2002.

- **Streetscape Improvement Grants** are available to eligible property owners to cover a portion of the cost of streetscape improvements adjacent to the property. The program is designed to improve the appearance and usability of sidewalks and pedestrian ways, and to improve the safety of downtown by improving walking surfaces that have deteriorated.
- Public Act 198 - **Industrial Tax Abatement** offers 50% of real and personal property tax abatement for up to twelve (12) years for qualified new construction and equipment.
- Public Act 328- **New Personal Property Tax Abatement** offers a 100% tax abatement on all new personal property for up to nine (9) years for qualified businesses and personal property.

Cost Summary

Item	Qty	Cost Per	Cost
Land Acquisition	na	na	\$400,000
Demo/Site Work/Prep	20,000	\$10.00 / sf	\$200,000
Vertical Construction	40,000	\$85.00 / sf	\$3,400,000
Parking	40,000	\$7.50 / sf	\$300,000
Soft Costs (~15% of Project Costs)			\$645,000
Project Total			\$4,945,000
Equity Requirement (30%)			\$1,483,500
Amount Financed			\$3,461,500
Annual Debt Service Estimate (7%, 25-yr amortization)			\$297,033



Supermarket Development Concept

Preliminary Revenue Estimate

Use	Size	Lease Rate	Annual Revenue
First Floor Retail	6,000	\$14.00 / sf	\$84,000
First Floor Medical/Office	12,000	\$12.00 / sf	\$144,000
Upper Floor Office	18,000	\$12.00 / sf	\$216,000
Total Gross Rents			\$444,000
Vacancy / Operational / Other Costs (10% of Gross)			\$44,400
Estimated Net Operating Income (NOI)			\$399,600
Debt Service (see above)			\$297,033
Annual Net (NOI - Debt Service)			\$102,567
Cap Rate Market Valuation	Cap Rate:	8%	\$4,995,000
Assessed Value (50% of Market Value)			\$2,497,500
Estimated Tax Contribution	Rate:	0.0650	\$162,278
Annual Increase in Tax Contribution			\$136,447

Infill Site Parcels

Current Assessed Value and Property Tax Contributions

Parcel #	Owner	Use	Taxable Value	Taxes		
				Winter	Summer	Total
80-47-123-001-00	J & J ENTERPRISES	Office on SW Corner of Site	\$109,400	\$4,250	\$2,909	\$7,158
80-47-123-002-00	IMUS FAMILY LIMITED LIABILITY	Vacant Supermarket / Parking	\$231,900	\$9,008	\$6,166	\$15,174
80-47-123-003-00	IMUS MARVIN & LINDA	Vacant Supermarket / Parking	\$9,100	\$352	\$241	\$593
80-47-123-007-00	IMUS FAMILY LIMITED LIABILITY	Vacant Supermarket / Parking	\$2,800	\$109	\$74	\$183
80-47-123-009-00	IMUS FAMILY LIMITED LIABILITY	Vacant Supermarket / Parking	\$11,600	\$451	\$308	\$759
80-47-123-010-00	IMUS FAMILY LIMITED LIABILITY	Vacant Supermarket / Parking	\$18,400	\$715	\$489	\$1,204
80-47-123-012-00	IMUS FAMILY LIMITED LIABILITY	Vacant Supermarket / Parking	\$11,600	\$451	\$308	\$759
	Supermarket Site Total		\$285,400			\$18,672
80-47-123-011-00	VILLAGE PHARMACY PROPERTIES	Pharmacy / Parking	\$8,100	\$315	\$215	\$530
80-47-123-011-50	VILLAGE PHARMACY PROPERTIES	Pharmacy / Parking	\$81,700	\$2,988	\$2,046	\$5,034
	Pharmacy Total		\$89,800			\$5,564
	Redevelopment Site Total (excluding Pharmacy)		\$394,800			\$25,831

Housing

Housing in and around Paw Paw is generally very well maintained – although it appears to be showing its age in places. Predominately, housing takes the form of detached single-family structures of wood, masonry, stone and mixed materials. Approximately two thirds of the housing was built prior to 1969 with the median year of construction being 1955.¹⁶

There is some limited new construction of single family homes. The rate of new construction has fallen dramatically in the past years and is likely to continue to come under pressure from current troubles in the lending environment. The 148 building permits issued county-wide in 2007 was a decrease of 40 percent from the previous year.

There has been some recent reinvestment in the downtown to increase the available housing choices for Paw Paw residents. The conversion of upper-floor residential uses allows property owners to increase the amount of revenue generating space and gives consumers choices for housing beyond detached single family structures.

Efforts should be made to provide for housing that addresses a wide variety of residential needs. Housing built in the post-World War II era tended to be homogeneous in its design and amenity. This trend continued through the 1950s and '60s.

Younger households – singles and young couples – have need for economic value, safety

Reported Building Permits by Year: Van Buren County				
Building Type	Buildings	Units	Total Cost	Avg. Cost per Building
2007				
Single Family	141	141	\$ 25,937,538	\$ 183,954
Two Family	1	2	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000
Three and Four Family	1	3	\$ 335,350	\$ 335,350
Five or More Family	5	60	\$ 5,139,880	\$ 1,027,976
Total	148	206	\$ 31,482,768	
2006				
Single Family	246	246	\$ 35,513,456	\$ 144,364
Two Family	1	2	\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000
Five or More Family	1	25	\$ 5,800,000	\$ 5,800,000
Total	248	273	\$ 41,713,456	
2005				
Single Family	313	313	\$ 50,168,619	\$ 160,283
Total	313	313	\$ 50,168,619	
Source: US Census Building Permit Database.				

and an active lifestyle. Their housing choices reflect this – apartments, small starter homes, fixer-uppers and urban areas attract these homeowners.

Young families have similar needs but begin to gravitate toward larger spaces to accommodate children, yards and proximity to schools and parks.

As the nest empties, space for raising children becomes less important. Maintenance demands of larger homes often spark couples to 'right-size' their housing once the kids have moved out. Access to community amenities such as parks, paths, shopping, arts and other civic amenities become important. Single floor housing designs are attractive to these homeowners as they consider their long term needs.

The retirement lifestyle today looks vastly different than that of a generation ago. Active

¹⁶ US Census 2000 Survey of Housing.

Recent Home Sales in and Near Paw Paw

Address	Sale Price	Sale Date
214 W Willard St	\$90,834	3-Mar-09
407 N Kalamazoo St	\$81,000	13-Feb-09
624 E Berrien St	\$75,098	20-Jan-09
408 W North St	\$79,000	12-Jan-09
631 Lakeview Rd	\$75,000	20-Jan-09
60888 Cty. Road 653	\$70,000	3-Mar-09
52171 Ackley Ter	\$115,000	6-Jan-09
52964 33rd St	\$103,818	23-Jan-09
822 S Lagrave St	\$85,500	24-Nov-08
64290 Cty. Road 665	\$68,500	5-Feb-09
36647 Paw Paw Rd	\$92,000	13-Jan-09
48663 M 40	\$93,500	18-Dec-08
60244 Cty. Road 665	\$126,000	3-Nov-08
36241 Valley Dr	\$83,900	12-Nov-08
35204 51st Ave	\$120,000	19-Nov-08
161 Lilac St	\$100,000	18-Sep-08
905 E Michigan Ave	\$92,000	15-Sep-08
727 Birch Ln	\$92,500	8-Sep-08
52169 M 40	\$127,000	22-Oct-08
34135 Vauxhall Dr	\$105,000	19-Dec-08
46045 33rd St	\$130,000	8-Jan-09
48069 M 40	\$130,800	3-Nov-08
51630 30th St	\$77,075	20-Nov-08
56660 41st St	\$97,500	17-Nov-08

Source: Online research April 2009, Public Records, Trulia, Realtor.com

pursuits, arts, education and entertainment are all important aspects of today’s active, post-full time family. Continued ‘second-career’ pursuits, travel and second homes influence the housing choices for these consumers.

Long term health care options, and access to ‘step-up’ retirement housing with communal

services and care are important as retirees make choices about their long term housing needs. Being forced to leave friends, family and neighbors to move to the appropriate housing is something that works against the general sense of community. All facets of housing and care should be accommodated locally to allow the community to age together.

Housing Market Conditions

The market for residential housing in 2009 is under significant stress. Nationally, housing construction is near all time lows and the volume of existing home sales is down significantly from volumes during the previous decade. Foreclosures are at record levels. These forces, along with the weak jobs market combined with general uncertainty about the future for consumers, has brought the housing market to a standstill.

There is some indication that the bottom has been reached, however, and history has shown that recessions are a natural market phenomenon and growth will resume in the future.

As the table of recent sales shows, there have been a number of transactions involving very low sales prices. As foreclosures occur, the low cost of these transactions hurts surrounding property values, since values are generally derived from comparison to others sales in the marketplace. As foreclosure activity slows once the economy recovers, sale prices should also recover.

Recent listings (see table on next page), demonstrate a more normalized pricing structure. Prices in Paw Paw seem to range from under \$50 per square foot for older, modest homes to a high of over \$150 per square foot for larger, estate-type homes. The typical home in Paw Paw appears to be in the range of \$75-\$125 per square foot.

Compared to neighboring communities, Paw Paw appears to offer a strong housing market. A summary of current listings and recent sales compared to other areas shows that Paw Paw has not declined as much as some other communities

and has a strong average list price (influenced by Paw Paw's current listing of two estate properties in excess of \$800,000).

Housing Opportunities/Strategies

- Until foreclosure activity subsides, efforts should be made to mitigate the effects of abandoned and vacant properties. General upkeep on these properties is important as any buyers who visit Paw Paw to view occupied homes for potential may be deterred by poor housing conditions.
- Expansion of housing stock should focus on the needs of an aging population. Smaller patio homes with single-floor layouts, accessible features and easily maintained grounds are attractive to consumers considering homes for retirement. The detached condominium concepts are common for empty-nest consumers – with 2- or 3-bedrooms, attached garages, screen porches, open interiors and maintained yards.
- Upper floor residential units in downtown – as with the newly renovated Dyckman building – are attractive to residents wanting no maintenance and close-in living to downtown's activity centers.

Single family home development should focus on the natural beauty of Paw Paw and Maple Lake. While there are some 'estate' homes with very large floor plans and sizable grounds, likely the market for these very expensive units is limited. A wider market exists for housing priced in the \$150,000 - \$300,000 price range. Certainly these units would be smaller – likely

less than 3,500 square feet – and would not have lots of the size of the larger estate homes. The amenities and adjacency to Paw Paw's wonderful natural beauty would make such units very attractive.

Recent Listings of Paw Paw Single Family Homes

Address:	Listed Size (sq. ft.)	List Price:	Price per Sq.Ft.
309 E Davis	1,050	\$124,900	\$119
51353 Summit St	1,330	\$169,999	\$128
117 W St Joseph	1,344	\$58,995	\$44
36455 52nd Ave	1,530	\$125,000	\$82
213 N LaGrave	2,065	\$109,900	\$53
34048 Hillside	2,160	\$139,000	\$64
51566 Jordan St	2,174	\$159,900	\$74
511 N LaGrave	2,256	\$159,900	\$71
211 N Gremps	4,796	\$899,000	\$187
731 N Kalamazoo	7,940	\$869,000	\$109

Source: Online research April 2009, Trulia, Realtor.com, Prudential, etc. Not comprehensive.

Current Listings, Recent Sales in Analogous Communities

Area	Avg. Listing Price	No. of Listings	Recent Sales	Avg. Sale Price	Avg. Sale Price vs Prev Year
Otsego	\$150,044	52	85	\$72,000	-22%
Whitehall	\$252,433	245	77	\$93,602	27%
Wayland	\$232,324	115	123	\$82,700	-31%
Plainwell	\$225,208	90	130	\$96,800	-25%
Portland	\$157,058	95	58	\$116,500	-7%
Paw Paw	\$212,084	81	130	\$81,000	-12%

Source: Online research April 2009, Public Records, Trulia, Realtor.com

VILLAGE OF PAW PAW
COUNTY OF VAN BUREN, MICHIGAN

Resolution No. 10-06

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT UPDATED MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development and preservation of all lands in the Village; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission prepared a proposed updated Master Plan and submitted the plan to the Village Council for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, on August 10, 2009, the Village Council received and reviewed the proposed Master Plan prepared by the Planning Commission and authorized distribution of the Master Plan to the Notice Group entities identified in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, In accordance with the requirements of Section 41 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008), notice was sent on August 17, 2009 the draft plan was distributed to the adjoining municipalities, the Van Buren County Planning Commission, and others in accordance with the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 29, 2009 consider public comment on the proposed updated Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed updated Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Village Council finds that the proposed updated Master Plan is desirable and proper and furthers the use, preservation, and development goals and strategies of the Village; and

WHEREAS, the MPEA authorizes the Village Council to assert by resolution its right to approve or reject the proposed Master Plan;

THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. ***Adoption of 2010 Master Plan.*** The Village Council of the Village of Paw Paw hereby approves and adopts the proposed 2010 Master Plan, including all of the chapters, figures, maps and tables contained therein. Pursuant to MCL 125.3843 the Village Council has asserted its right to approve or reject the proposed Master Plan and therefore the approval granted herein is the final step for adoption of the plan as provided in MCL 125.3843 and therefore the plan is effective as of *MARCH 22*, 2010.
2. ***Distribution to Notice Group.*** The Village Council approves distribution of the adopted plan to the Notice Group as identified in the Act.

3. **Findings of Fact.** The Village Council has made the foregoing determination based on a review of existing land uses in the Village, a review of the existing Master Plan provisions and maps, input received from the Planning Commission and public hearing, and with the assistance of a professional planning group, and finds that the updated Master Plan will accurately reflect and implement the Village's goals and strategies for the use, preservation, and development of lands in Village of Paw Paw.
4. **Effective Date.** The Master Plan shall be effective as of the date of adoption of this resolution.

Record:

The foregoing resolution offered by Council Member McIntosh.

Second offered by Council Member Rohr.

Upon roll call vote the following voted:

"Aye": PLASZCZAK, LARCIOUSE, ROHR, PROCK, WILHELM, McINTOSH

"Nay": n/a

Absent: BASINGER

The Village President, Roman Plaszczak, declared the resolution adopted / rejected.
(strike one)



Christopher Tapper, Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, Christopher Tapper, the duly appointed Clerk of the VILLAGE OF PAW PAW, do hereby certify that the above is a true and exact copy of a Resolution, passed by the Paw Paw Village Council, on March 22 2010 the original of which is on file at the Paw Paw Village Hall.

Date: March 22, 2010



Christopher Tapper, Clerk

