

# The City of Fenton



2021  
Master Plan

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Master Plan is a result of invaluable input, expertise, and collaboration between many organizations and individuals. It would not have been possible without their assistance, guidance, time, and dedication to the updates to this Master Plan.

## City of Fenton Community Residents

## City Council Members

Sue Osborn, Mayor  
Patricia Lockwood, Mayor Pro Tem  
Tracy Bottecelli, Councilwoman  
Scott Grossmeyer, Councilman  
Brad Jacob, Councilman  
David McDermott, Councilman  
Sean Sage, Councilman

## Planning Commission Members

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## What is a Master Plan?

The master plan is a document created by the City of Fenton Planning Commission and adopted by the City Council to guide the future growth and development of the city. A sound master plan helps ensure that Fenton remains a highly desirable place to live, work, or visit. This can be accomplished by preserving and enhancing the qualities of the city that the residents, businesses, and property owners consider important.

The master plan identifies and analyzes the city's physical elements to create a set of goals, policies, and recommendations to direct decisions regarding future land use, neighborhood and transportation improvements, and special strategies for key areas in the city. Because the plan offers a balance between the interests and rights of private property owners with those of the entire community, it effectively assists city leaders in making substantive, thoughtful decisions for the community while considering long-term implications.

## The Differences between a Master Plan and a Zoning Ordinance

The master plan provides a general direction for future development, and while it does not change the zoning of or any zoning regulations applying to any property, implementation of the plan will be through zoning reviews, along with zoning ordinance text and map amendments.

## Past Planning Efforts

The last version of the City of Fenton Master Plan was adopted in 2009. This Plan is an update of the existing Master Plan that further addresses topics including:

- The desire to maintain the long-term viability of the downtown area, arguably one of Fenton's most valuable assets. The adoption of the "City of Fenton Downtown Master Plan and Design Guidelines" outlines steps to preserve and enhance the historic downtown. The Plan is included as an appendix to this Master Plan.
- Situations where one land use is not compatible with an adjacent land use.
- Intersections and roadway sections which need attention due to rapidly increasing traffic volumes.
- The changing needs of City residents. For example, the Plan discusses approaches to deal with housing and service needs for the City's increasing percentage of residents over age 65.
- The desire to provide a land use pattern which translates to a diversified tax based and keeps the City's tax rates relatively low while providing quality facilities and services.

## Process

This Master Plan represents a two-year update effort by the City of Fenton Planning Commission, City officials, and the general public. Their effort included research, public meetings, and reviews of draft information throughout the master planning process.

Public involvement was an important consideration in the planning process. All of the Planning Commission meetings were open to the public. An Open House was held at the Community Center on November 22, 2017. The public was also involved in a more formal manner at a public hearing held in the spring of 2009. Following the public hearing, the Plan was re-examined and adopted.

## Plan Goals

### Land Use

- Eliminate or minimize impacts of existing land use conflicts and prevent new conflicts from occurring through sound planning and zoning.
- Provide guidance to developers and property owners that encourages attractive and effective site and landscape design.
- Prevent commercial intrusion into the residential areas along North Leroy, north of the Commercial Business District (CBD), by maintaining the commercial district boundaries identified in the North Leroy Street Subarea Plan.
- Ensure that future uses in Silver Lake Village protect the original mixed-use intent of the Preliminary Planned Unit Development (PUD) Plan while meeting market demands.
- Ensure that all vacant parcels of land in the City are developed in accordance with the Future Land Use designation in the Master Plan.
- Prevent incompatible land uses from being introduced at the City's borders in neighboring municipalities.

### Housing

- Allow for a variety of housing types in the appropriate zoning districts but retain a strong single-family residential orientation.
- Permit the conversion of single-family homes to multiple-family only where they will be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Encourage the preservation of individual historic homes, as well as larger neighborhoods, as appropriate.
- Continue to provide and improve housing opportunities for low/moderate income individuals and families.

### Economy

- Continue to improve the image, design, cohesiveness and vitality of Downtown Fenton.
- Upgrade the mixture of businesses and create a quality image for the North Leroy Street commercial corridor.

- Improve the appearance of both existing and new buildings from U.S. 23 through existing and proposed zoning regulations.
- Continue to encourage the redevelopment of existing commercial/office buildings and sites throughout the city.
- Establish zoning requirements which will provide a foundation for quality light industrial development and that also address the aesthetics of development as viewed from the U.S. 23 freeway.
- Ensure that adequate industrial land is available for future development when the existing industrial parks are full.
- Maintain the current amount of industrially-zoned land in the industrial parks and prevent any further encroachment from commercial uses. In addition, continue the designation of a portion of the industrial park for non-retail oriented, research and development (R&D) office uses only.

### **Transportation**

- Ensure that the integrity and related capacity of the road system is maintained in the northeast area of the City and near the commercial development along North Leroy Street.
- Improve the efficiency and design of the circulation system in and around the Downtown area.
- Improve traffic safety at all rail crossings.
- Maintain public access to vacant tracts of developable land and improve traffic operations/preserve capacity through the development and adoption of a driveway design ordinance. These design and construction standards would be a separate ordinance outside the Zoning Ordinance.
- Provide safe and efficient pedestrian connections throughout the City.

### **Natural Features**

- Preserve and improve the City's unique and valuable natural resources and protect them from the impacts of development.
- Make improvements to areas adjacent to natural features that will improve public visibility and access.
- Ensure that the City's Wellhead Protection Area is secure from inappropriate land uses and activities.

### **Community Facilities**

- Provide for barrier-free access to all public facilities and programs.
- Ensure that adequate public utilities are available for all areas of the City.

## 2. COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

### A. Existing Land Use

An important step in formulation of a Master Plan is an analysis of existing land uses. This analysis not only identifies what and where particular uses have occurred, but it highlights where future development might occur and where land use conflicts may exist or develop. The existing land use calculations provided herein will also allow a comparison with the future land use calculations to help determine the extent of land that is available for specific uses.

It is clear from Figure One that the Single-Family Residential categories represent the largest active uses of land in the City of Fenton, with a combined total of over 1,600 acres. Land designated as Vacant encompasses the second largest amount of acreage overall with over 650 acres. Map One Existing Land Use identifies nine different land use categories as follows:

**Figure 1:**

**Existing Land Use**

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Low Density Single-Family	1,046	28.5%
Medium Density Single-Family	617	16.8%
Multiple-Family	181	4.9%
Commercial	366	10.0%
Office	45	1.2%
Industrial	259	7.0%
Civic/Institutional	324	8.8%
Parks and Open Space	187	5.1%
Vacant	647	17.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,671</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Low Density Single-Family Residential.** Low Density Single-Family Residential uses consist of large lot, single-family residential development. Covering over a quarter of the City, this is that largest land use category out of all uses. Typically described as “suburban” residential development, this classification is characteristic of many of the more recently developed neighborhoods. Uses in this designation have a maximum density of one to three dwelling units per acre, and in many cases are found on lots of one acre or more.



**Medium Density Single-Family Residential.** Medium Density Single-Family Residential uses primarily consist of single-family residential development, including manufactured homes, but also may include attached single-family condos and duplexes. This designation applies to houses on small, urban lots, many of which are historic homes developed prior to the use of zoning. Medium Density Single-Family Detached uses are concentrated around the Downtown and many represent the earliest neighborhoods in Fenton. The density of the medium density single-family residential classification ranges from four to six dwelling units per acre.



**Multiple-Family.** Multiple-family includes buildings that house more than one unit, including apartment complexes and senior facilities. The density for multiple-family residential development is considered seven or more dwelling units per acre. These uses are scattered throughout the city.



**Commercial.** Commercial uses include the widest variety of general and neighborhood retail and service businesses including restaurants and automotive establishments. Most of these uses have developed along major

streets in Fenton including Owen Road, Leroy Street, Silver Lake Road, and Silver Parkway.

**Office.** Representative uses include professional offices for doctors, dentists, lawyers, engineers, accountants, etc.; real estate and insurance offices as well as banks and other financial institutions that typically serve the local population.

**Industrial.** This classification includes manufacturing and storage facilities. Industrial uses in Fenton could be generally classified as light industrial because of the minimal off-site impacts they generate.

**Civic/Institutional.** This category refers to municipal facilities that utilize tax dollars for facility development and maintenance. Civic/Institutional uses include City Hall, the Community Center, the Police Station, the Fire Station, the Post Office, and the public water well areas. Addition uses include churches, schools and cemeteries, nursing homes, convalescent centers and similar facilities that are available to the general public.

**Parks and Open Space.** The Parks and Open Space category includes all City-owned parks and vacant land. In addition, the 100-plus acre nature preserve located north of Dauner Road is included which provides a substantial amount of natural feature preservation and passive recreational opportunities such as nature study and walking trails.

**Vacant.** This land use category identifies all undeveloped land. Much of the vacant land in Fenton is covered with natural features including wetlands, floodplains, and poor soil conditions.



## B. Population & Housing

### Population Trends

Fenton first experienced dynamic population growth between 1860 and 1870, when the population increased from 735 to 2,353. During the next century, there was slow, but steady population growth. Fenton’s growth rate increased dramatically for two decades between 1950 and 1970 as the population went from 4,226 to 8,284.

In the 1970s and 1980s the population of Fenton fell by 200 people, representing a decrease of 7.3%. This can be attributed primarily to the economic downturn of the 1970s. Rising oil prices and changes in technology severely impacted the automobile industry. This, in turn, affected Flint and surrounding communities which are heavily dependent upon automobile manufacturing. The surrounding communities did, however, experience population growth when Fenton did not.

The population of Fenton increased from 10,582 to 11,756 between 2000 and 2010. This was an indicator of improvement in the local and regional economy. Since that time, there has been a significant increase in new development and residential growth.

Many communities, including the City of Fenton, recorded population increases. Much of this growth is due to people who commute to work in the Detroit and Flint metropolitan areas. I-75 and U.S. 23 provide quick access to these major employment centers.

Some of the older cities, such as Flint and Grand Blanc, have experienced an overall decrease in population. Some of the population loss can be attributed to suburbanization toward outlying communities and decreased household size while a portion can be attributed to an overall decrease in jobs directly tied to General Motors. While GM has increased investment significantly in the past 4 years, it has not increased employment enough to impact significant population increase. While Flint’s population has been in decline, according to their most recent master plan, daytime population spikes near 135,000; much of which is due to increased employment opportunities for workers in southern Genesee County and the City of Fenton.

Figure 2:  
Population Trends

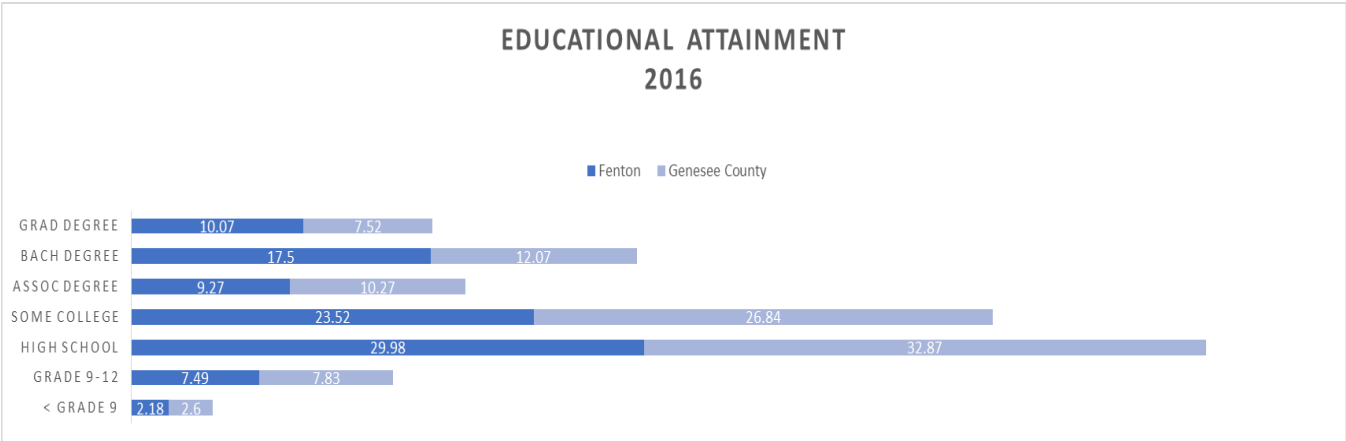
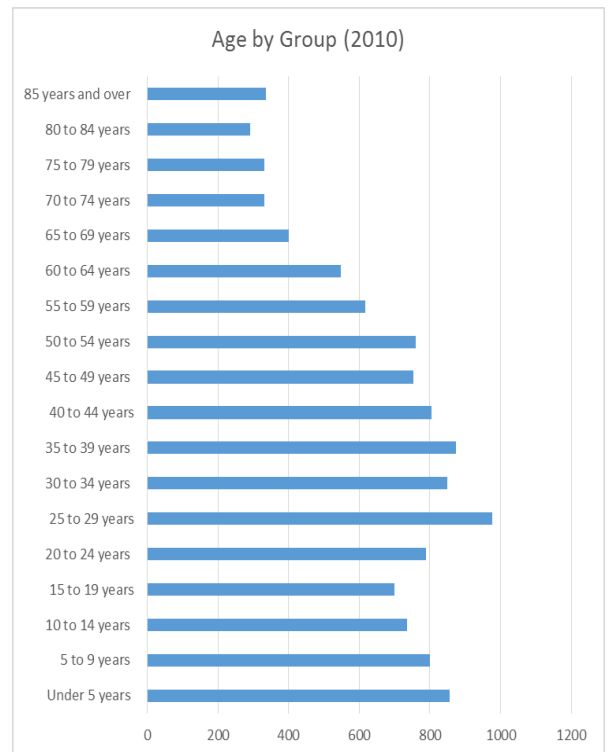
	2000	2010	10-00 % Change
<b>City of Fenton</b>	10,582	11,756	10%
<b>City of Flushing</b>	8,348	8,382	0.4%
<b>City of Grand Blanc</b>	8,242	8,261	0.2%
<b>City of Linden</b>	2,861	3,981	28.1%
<b>City of Swartz Creek</b>	5,102	5,753	11.3%
<b>Fenton Township</b>	12,968	15,552	17.0%
<b>Flushing Township</b>	10,230	10,640	4%
<b>Grand Blanc Township</b>	29,827	35,705	16.5%
<b>Genesee County</b>	436,141	424,969	-2.6%
<b>State of Michigan</b>	9,938,444	9,883,640	-0.6%

Source: 2000 & 2010 U.S. Census

**Population Build-Out.** Determining the potential population if all remaining land develops as currently zoned, called a build-out analysis, is helpful in estimating future population. The build-out consists of an inventory of the existing undeveloped land within the City and those likely to develop for residential uses. Based on current zoning and building requirements, the estimated number of additional residential units was calculated. This figure was then multiplied by the 2000 City of Fenton average household size to determine the build-out population. At full build-out the City of Fenton’s population can be expected to reach nearly 15,000. When build-out will occur depends upon on several factors including growth rates, land availability, trends in household size, and market conditions. Full build out is expected to occur within the next ten to twenty years.

**Age Structure.** The median age of the city is 36, however the two largest age groups within the city are those between 20 and 29 (15.37%) as well as 65+ (16.74). The ratio of men (47%) to women (53%) in Fenton has held steady since 2000.

**Education.** The level of educational attainment in the City tends to be higher than that for Genesee County and the State of Michigan as a whole. Almost 92% of the City's adult population (25 years and older) are high school graduates and over 28.2% have acquired a bachelor's degree or higher.



**Household Income.** Median Household income in Fenton is \$44,776 which is 5% higher than that of Genesee County, but 9% lower than the State of Michigan and 19% lower than the national average. The largest individual cohort of households in Fenton earn \$100,000+ at 15.5% of all households, but combined, households earning between \$10,000 and \$50,000 make up the majority of City of Fenton Households.

## Housing Characteristics

The total number of housing units in the City of Fenton increased slightly between 2000 and 2010 but saw a very small decrease between 2010 and 2015. This could be due to the poor housing market after the 2009 US recession. At the same time, Fenton saw a more significant drop in owner occupancy from 2000-2010 which is expected during a time of recession as homes are lost to foreclosure increasing the demand for rental property. The City still reflects a healthy ratio of owner occupied to renter occupied, but falls below the national average of 64% owner occupied.

**Goal**  
Allow for a variety of housing types in the appropriate zoning districts, but retain a strong single-family residential orientation.

**Figure 3:**  
**City of Fenton Housing Statistics (US Census)**

2000	2010	2015	
4,959	5,572	5,525	Total Units
4,335	5,067	4,989	Occupied Units
2,874 (66.3%)	2,987 (59%)	2,945 (59.03%)	Owner Occupied
1,461 (33.7%)	2,080 (41%)	2,044 (40.97%)	Renter Occupied

Another housing trend is shrinking household size. While there was a small decrease from 2.38 to 2.27 persons per household, this reflects the larger national trend of American’s putting off marriage and starting families to a later age. A direct reflection of this is the decrease in family vs. non-family households. Family households comprised of 62.5% of total households in 2000 and now reflect 58.3% of total households. This is also indicative of the changing housing landscape within the City with the addition of several post-2000 multi-family developments in Silver Lake Village and recent multi-family housing additions downtown with the Cornerstone Building.

According to the Zillow Home Value index, the median value for single family homes is \$282,700, which is greater than the national median value of \$184,900. Fenton home values did decline during the 2009 recession, but not nearly at the rate or depth of the rest of Genesee County. Due to this, Fenton did not see the same high home foreclosure rate as experienced by the rest of the county. It was still impacted by home foreclosures, causing housing vacancies, but due to the high demand for middle income housing in Fenton, many of the foreclosed homes were able to be purchased and remained occupied.

## Opportunity

A clear opportunity moving forward for the City of Fenton is the ability to add middle income housing throughout the city. Middle income housing can comprise a variety of different housing styles including single- and multi-family with an emphasis placed on density, diversity, walkability and affordability. This would continue to support the growing young professional and empty nest populations within the city. These populations are looking for a more urban environment in a price range between \$130,000 and \$220,000.

## C. Economy

Much of what happens in Fenton economically is due to the business climate in the greater Flint and Detroit areas. Many Fenton residents work in these metropolitan areas and several Fenton industries subcontract work with companies located there.

Fenton's economy has recovered well since the 2009 recessions with an unemployment rate of 4.1%, better than Genesee County at 4.8%, the City of Flint at 10.2% and the United States at 5%. That is not to say though that the economy of Fenton is as good as it could be. Since 2010, Fenton has seen a significant decrease in median household income from \$50,622 to \$44,776 adjusted for inflation. During this same period, households living at or below the poverty level increased from 8.5% to 15.2%.

Jobs are being created in Oakland County at a greater rate than population growth, resulting in employees that are not residents of Oakland County. The older suburbs located in southern Oakland County are land-locked, while the northern suburbs have community policies for growth management and/or no-growth.

With the tremendous growth in jobs moving along the I-75 corridor in the east and central portions of Oakland County, Genesee and Lapeer Counties will be substantial beneficiaries of the resulting spin-off in housing production. Genesee County, in particular, has the infrastructure to accommodate significant population increases. This growth in residential development has increased the demand for retail services throughout the County.

The City of Fenton has developed at a much faster rate than previously predicted, partially due to the success of Silver Lake Village. Originally thought to be fully developed after twenty years, this area was near full capacity less than ten years later.

In summary, Fenton has benefited from the overall success of the metropolitan region. Continued interest and development in the community can be attributed to these factors as well as:

- Accessibility to major transportation routes
- Proximity to large metropolitan areas
- Presence of natural features
- Abundance of recreational opportunities, many of which are provided by the numerous lakes in the area
- High-quality public amenities including schools, libraries, public safety, sewer and water systems
- Small-town atmosphere
- Affordability

## Fenton Retail Market

The size of the area's retail market is growing in response to the expansion in the number of residents. The driving force behind this household expansion has been the growth of the new employment concentration in Auburn Hills, Western Oakland County, and the Automation Alley. As the number of employees has grown, they have sought more convenient and affordable housing. That expansion has reached into most of the bedroom communities of Genesee County, including the City of Fenton.

As a result, Fenton has become a regional shopping destination for residents in southern Genesee County, northern Livingston County, and northwestern Oakland County. Silver Lake Village and North Leroy Street are community shopping centers for the Fenton area. Large retailers such as Target and Wal-Mart as well as smaller specialty stores and restaurants, such as The Iron Grate, The Ivory Loft, The Laundry, Crust Bakery, Fenton Fire Hall, Rough Draught, Andiamo, Ciao, and Sagano, bring people outside Fenton into the City. It is expected that retail growth will expand as people continue to relocate into the region. The demand for additional businesses continues to remain strong due to this steady increase in regional population. As additional development occurs, Fenton will continue to serve as a regional commercial center.

## Fenton Industrial Market

Today's modern industrial park is the evolutionary product of more than a decade of development experience in the United States and abroad. During these years, private real estate developers, public agencies, and others have successfully demonstrated that a well-located, properly serviced, and carefully designed tract of land with facilities suited for business and industry can be a tremendous asset to a community.

The industrial base in Fenton is continuing to show growth in the community with companies like Creative Foam, Epic Machine, Acument, Atlas Technologies, Kuka-AT, and many others continuing to add employees around the current strength of the automotive industry.

Currently there is a shortage of industrial buildings within Genesee County and the I-69 Thumb region. This is putting increased pressure on companies looking to locate in Fenton and Genesee County to either locate in facilities outside of the county or to build a new facility at \$3 to \$4 dollars per square foot more than purchasing and renovating an existing facility. Fortunately, The State of Michigan through the Michigan Business Development Program and the City of Fenton through a PA 198 Tax Abatement are able, in certain situations, to utilize these incentives to help offset the additional cost of construction.

According to the 2010 census, many Fenton residents continue to commute to their place of employment and have an average commute time of 26 minutes to destinations primarily in Flint, Oakland County, Livingston County, and Washtenaw County.

Industrial development in Genesee County is considerable. Lately, the absorption of industrial land in Fenton has been relatively slow. Recent surges in industrial park space demand has not exhausted the supply of land, but the amount of vacant land is limited. The City has begun expanding the allowable

### Goal

Upgrade the mixture of businesses and create a quality image for the North Leroy Street commercial corridor.

### Goal

Ensure that adequate industrial land is available for future development when the existing industrial parks are full.

### Goal

Maintain the current amount of industrially-zoned land in the industrial parks and prevent any further encroachment from commercial uses. In addition, continue the designation of a portion of the industrial park for non-retail-oriented R&D office uses only.

uses at the periphery of some industrial areas, including the creation of a mixed-use PUD at Silver Lake Road and Fenway Drive. This change will encourage specialty retail and service uses to locate side-by-side with research & development and residential uses.

## D. Transportation

Fenton maintains several minor arterial and urban collector roads as well as a system of sidewalks within the City. U.S. 23, a major north/south interstate, runs through the western portion of the City. U.S. 23 is maintained by the Michigan Department of Transportation, as are portions of Silver Lake and Owen Roads, where they intersect with the interstate. The presence of this highway has been instrumental in shaping the growth in Fenton.



### Issues and Opportunities

- Corridors have excessive driveways.
- Some streets need improvements.
- The City needs connecting streets in newly developing areas.
- Increasing roadway volumes have reduced traffic flow.

### Redesigning Corridors

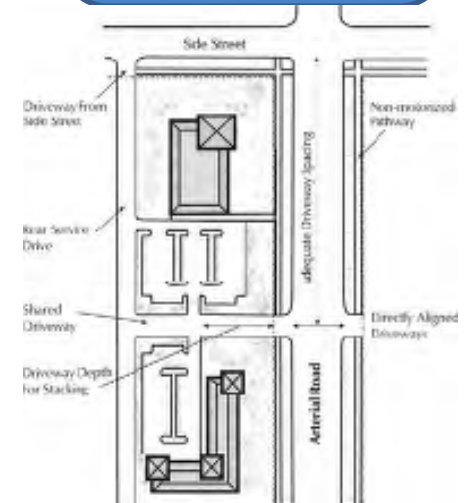
Revised street design standards that more adequately include consideration of all users, green design, and improved safety will facilitate implementation of more efficient, harmonized streets throughout the City of Fenton. Redesigning corridors with center median islands (to add green space and calm traffic) can affect improved development potential and visual character while also reducing crash potential and congestion. Where capacity is being more fully utilized, access management and intersection improvements can improve traffic flow and reduce crashes for vehicles while also promoting walking and biking through fewer driveway crossings and more visible intersections.

### Access Management

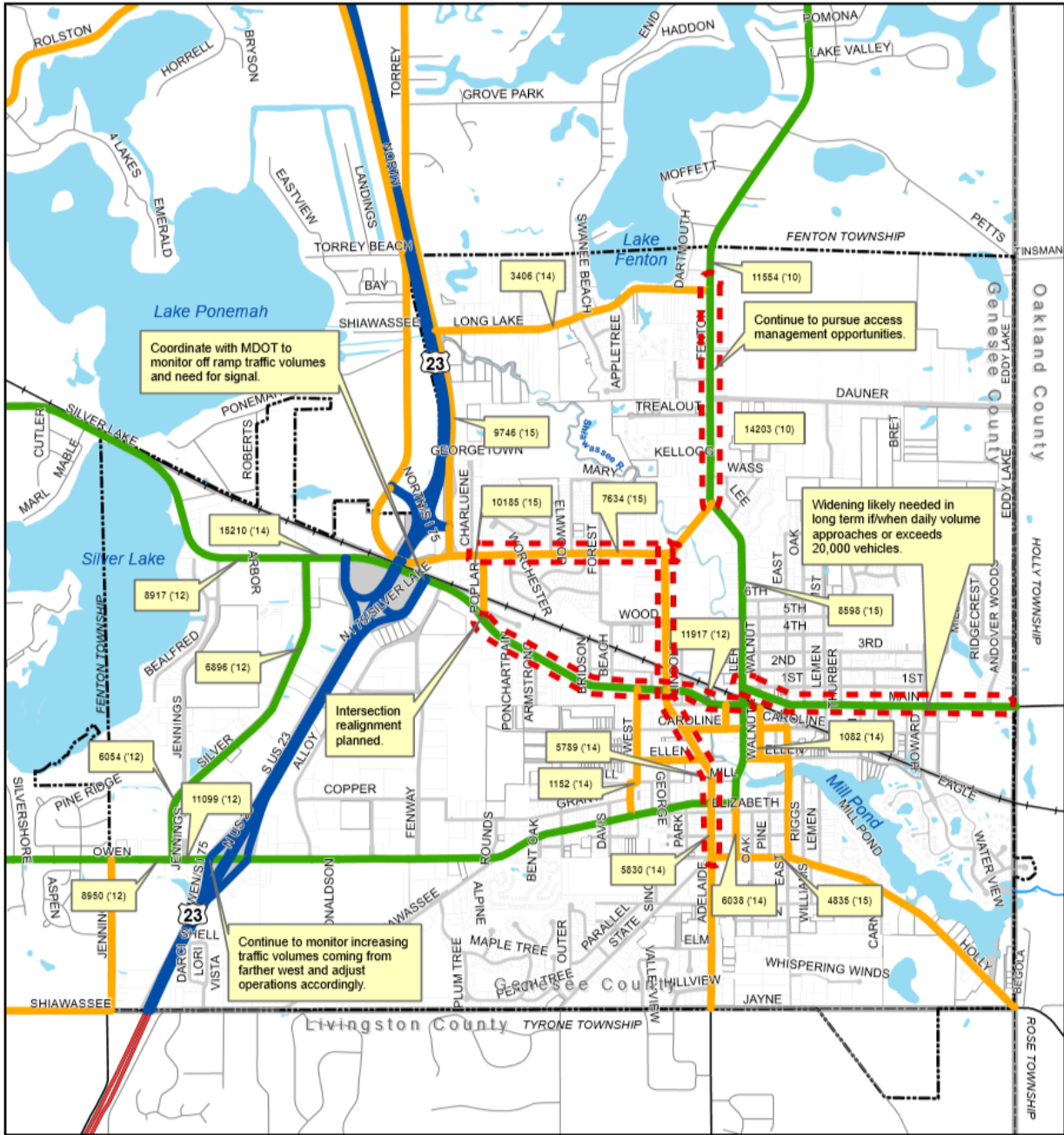
Access management employs design elements to increase the efficiency of roads through controls on the number, spacing and placement of driveways. Numerous national and State-wide studies demonstrate that access management can reduce the potential for crashes, and help preserve the street's ability to carry traffic. Fewer driveways can create more attractive and pedestrian friendly roadways. The City of Fenton already promotes use of access management techniques and has been successful in modifying sites when reviewing redevelopment projects. There are some existing developments that predate the City's access management regulations; the City should seek creative solutions to access related issues in these areas.

One aspect of access management is to limit the number of driveways in the "operation area" of a signalized intersection (the area where autos are frequently stacked waiting at a traffic signal). Another focus is to promote good driveway spacing. This helps motorists locate access more easily and reduces the impact of turning vehicles on the flow of other vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. A third component is to reduce conflicts of turning vehicles by either aligning access points or ensuring they are adequately spaced (offset) from access on the other sides of the street.

**Goal**  
Improve the efficiency and design of the circulation system in and around the Downtown area.



For more information on the U.S. 23/Owen Road and N. Leroy Street corridors, see Section 3: Subarea Plans



**Functional Classification**

-  Interstate
-  Minor Arterial
-  Collector

Average Daily Traffic Count (Year)

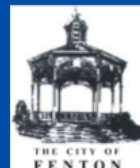
**Map Five - Transportation**



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

DRAFT: April 2017

Data Sources: City of Fenton, MCGI



## Non-Motorized

The non-motorized transportation system consists of the City's sidewalk and pathway system. Although not currently used in Fenton, dedicated bike lanes, located adjacent to the vehicular portion of a road, may be used to accommodate higher-speed non-motorized travel. Sidewalks generally accommodate foot traffic and shorter trips, while pathways are commonly wider to accommodate both foot and wheeled, non-motorized travel. An interconnected system of sidewalks and pathways not only provides residents an alternative travel option for shorter trips, they also provide recreation opportunities, improve connections throughout the City, help reduce isolation, and can even help reduce traffic volumes to some degree. A more walkable community also has significant health benefits for its residents by giving people the opportunity for additional exercise.



Throughout the community, the existing system of sidewalks and pathways should be continually upgraded, taking into consideration the factors discussed below.

**Continuity.** Maintaining an interconnected system of sidewalks, leading to community or regional pathways, enhances the pedestrian and non-motorized environment. The City should vigorously pursue filling in gaps in the system that act as barriers. This includes ensuring that sidewalks internal to a neighborhood maintain a connection to the main road or other pathway systems, and that commercial or civic destinations include non-motorized connections and amenities for users. While there is a well-established system of pathways and sidewalks throughout the City, some gaps do exist. The City should prioritize future pathway improvements based on their expected use and location. Gaps that prevent full connection between major destinations should be of the highest concern.

**Convenience.** While people will walk farther distances for exercise/recreation purposes, the average pedestrian will not walk more than 15 minutes or a ¼ mile to reach their destination. Therefore, convenient routes must be offered to encourage more pedestrian activity as an alternative to driving. This includes considerations for road crossings, conflicts with others using the same pathway, continuity of the pathway, and directness of the route. Inconvenient systems can encourage unsafe activity or use of non-designated pathways or crossings. Where the City wishes to increase pedestrian activity, it should ensure that continuous pathways are provided that offer numerous, safe crossings that bring the pedestrian to the forefront of consideration, rather than making the automobile the priority.

**Safety.** Proper lighting, maintenance, and crossing enhancements will bring an enhanced sense of comfort and safety to sidewalk and pathway users, which in turn encourages more use. The City should work toward reducing the posted speed limits for motorists where high pedestrian activity exists, or where it is encouraged. Statistics show that 85% of vehicle-to-pedestrian crashes result in death to the pedestrian for a vehicle traveling at 40 mph, versus only a 15% rate for a vehicle traveling at 20 mph.

### Goal

Provide safe and efficient pedestrian connections throughout the City.

While City funds may be used for sidewalk maintenance, the community in general should also share in this commitment. Options to accomplish this include:

- Requiring the installation of pathways along major roads and sidewalks throughout the interior of new development projects
- Requiring an escrow or performance guarantee when transfer of property ownership occurs for residential lots that have not maintained or installed their sidewalks.

**Accessibility.** Residents with disabilities often rely heavily on public transit as their primary means of travel and non-motorized systems to access transit. However, their unique needs are often overlooked when designing them. When considering improvements to these systems, the following considerations should be included:

- Pedestrian signals that produce an audible sound to indicate signal changes can be installed at critical intersections.
- Maintain a consistent intersection design, so disabled users can easily anticipate where a bench, pedestrian crossing button, or shelter is located.
- Install textured materials, such as brick or stamped concrete, at the edges of sidewalks to indicate where the walk ends and the motorized travel lanes of the road begin.
- Include medians in the design or redesign of intersections, especially where a high volume of pedestrian activity is expected. Medians provide safer crosswalk options for all residents.

**Safe Routes to School.** This MDOT-led initiative is designed to encourage walking or biking to school by providing a safer environment for children. In exchange for an action plan prepared by each school, the state offers money for physical improvements and programs aimed at increasing students' use of the non-motorized system as a means to and from school. The City could assist in coordination and engineering assistance for schools wishing to participate.

One of the priority locations in the City of Fenton is the stretch of Owen Road from the west side of U.S. 23 to Donelson Drive. Pedestrians, and more specifically students, lack crosswalks over the U.S. 23 bridge and sidewalks in front of the Sunoco site, the Mega Coney Island site, and the Fenton School District property on Owen Road.

**Shiawassee Riverwalk.** The Shiawassee Riverwalk spans O'Donnell, Millpond, and Rackham Parks and was originally funded under MDNR Grant #88-160. The grant was to acquire the land connecting the parks and is still in use as a walkway along the Shiawassee River. A current project includes plans to extend the Riverwalk from Caroline Street to Silver Lake Road. Related improvements are also planned for the Millpond Park, including an accessible kayak/canoe launch and dock as well as an accessible new playground area. A new Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant application request has been submitted to the State for possible funding assistance.

**The State Bank Trail.** The LAFF Pathway Inc. (Linden, Argentine Township, Fenton, Fenton Township) group and Southern Lakes Parks and Recreation are working to develop a non-motorized pathway system to connect all of the above communities. Phase 1 connecting Argentine Township to Linden is complete and Phase 2, from Fenton to Linden along Silver Lake Road, has received private funding to match public funding opportunities and is accordingly named The State Bank Trail.

## E. Natural Features

Fenton contains many prominent natural features such as the Shiawassee River, wetlands, and wooded areas. As shown on Map Two, these features are scattered throughout the City. Natural features help define the character of a City and therefore their preservation will help maintain the desirable character of the community.

### Floodplains

The Shiawassee River meanders through the city of Fenton. Additionally, the southern portion of Lake Fenton is located on the northern City border and the eastern portion of Silver Lake is located on the western border. These three water bodies bound the majority of the floodplains in the city. Additional floodplains are also found in the northeast corner of the city. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is charged with regulating floodplains in the State of Michigan.

Development within the 100-year floodplain is limited by the Fenton Zoning Ordinance, in the Flood Hazard Area Overlay Zone, to ensure that the floodplain can adequately carry and discharge a base flood. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant must confirm that the flood line shown on the site plan is consistent with the flood hazard area report prepared for the City of Fenton.

### Wetlands

Wetlands have many valuable and unique attributes. They include stormwater recharge, controlling the rate of runoff, improving groundwater quality, providing erosion control, and lessening the effects of flooding. Additionally, they can provide open space and enhance the aesthetics of the City, and promote the preservation of habitat for plants, fish, and/or wildlife.

### Woodlands

Woodlands are basically large tree stands and represent a valuable natural resource providing a wide variety of benefits. They offer visual relief from the man-made environment. They can also be used to effectively buffer land uses, create focal points, protect plant and animal habitat, and improve the aesthetics of the City. As a result, property values are usually higher in wooded areas than a development void of natural vegetation.

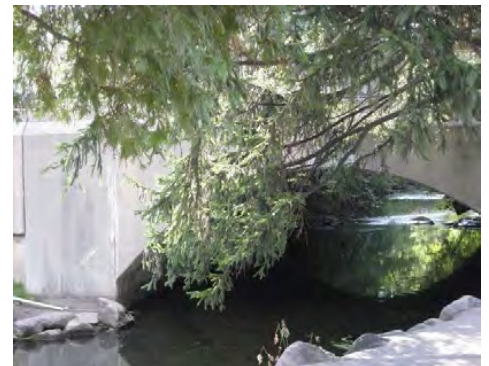


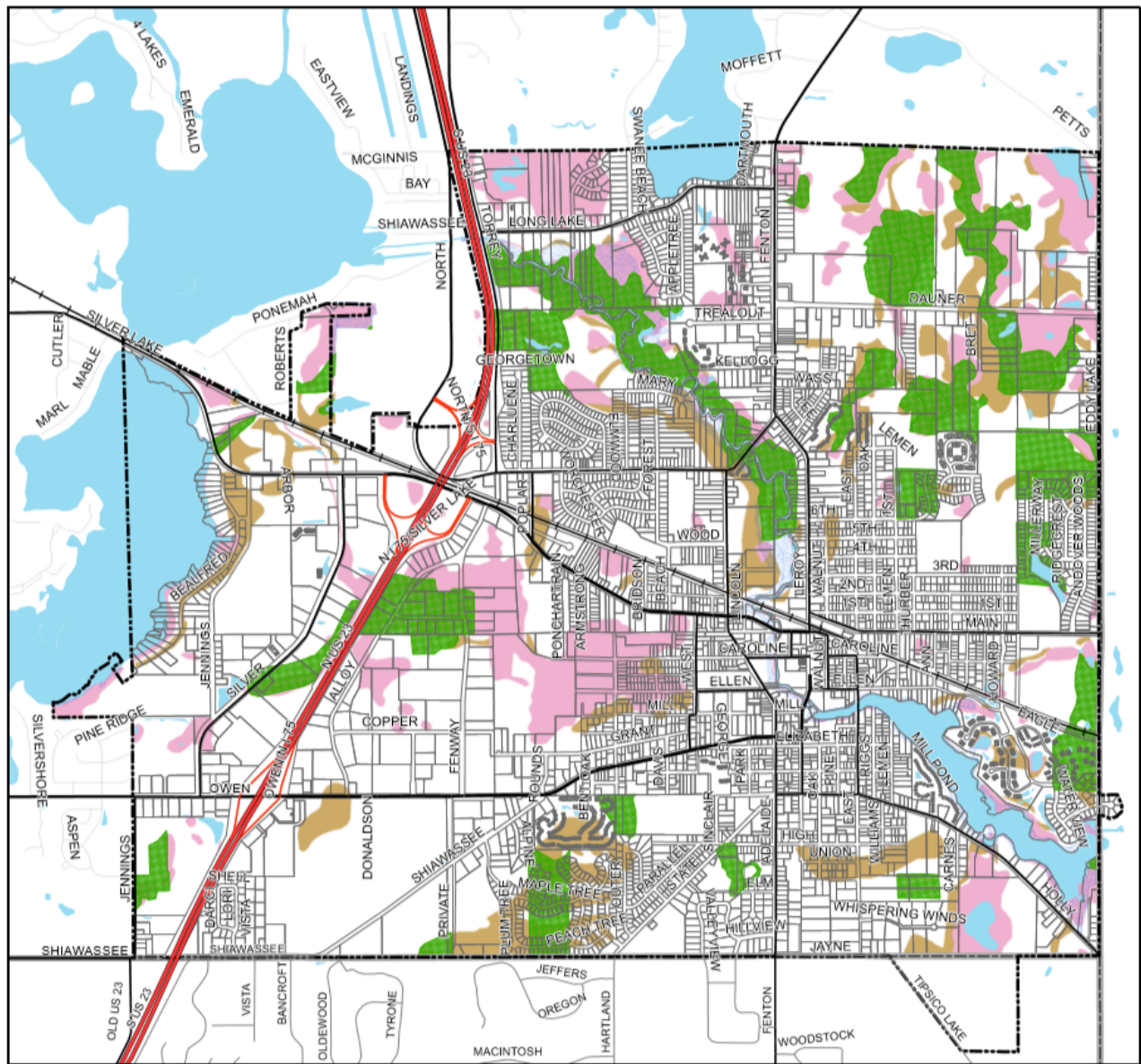
#### Goal

Make improvements to areas adjacent to natural features that will improve public visibility and access.

#### Goal

Preserve and improve the City's unique and valuable natural resources, and protect them from the impacts of development.





- City Limits
- County Boundaries
- Parcel Boundaries
- Water
- Woodlands
- Floodplain
- Wetlands
- Poor Soils

NOTE: This map is intended to depict the general location of natural features and to serve as a guide for community-wide planning. This map does not create any legally enforceable presumptions regarding whether property that is or is not included on this map is in fact a regulated wetland or floodplain. There may be areas not shown on this map that are subject to regulation. This map should not be considered a substitute for on-site field inspections conducted by certified professionals which is necessary to delineate the precise boundaries of protected natural features.

**Map Two - Natural Features**

DRAFT: April 2017  
 Data Sources:  
 City of Fenton, MCGI

A SAFEbuilt Company

## F. Community Facilities

This section of the plan will provide an inventory of the City's facilities and include the following: water and sewer services, government buildings, public schools, and parks. All community facilities are shown on Map 3.

### Utilities

**Water Service.** The existing water service area for the City of Fenton encompasses nearly all developments within the boundaries of the City of Fenton, except for portions along W. Shiawassee Avenue, S. Long Lake Road, Dauner Road East, Eddy Lake Road, and Oak Street, north of Sixth Street. In addition to water service provided to City residents, two subdivisions to the south of Fenton in Livingston County, are serviced from the City distribution system.

Supplying the water demand of the City are four groundwater low service wells located approximately 2000 feet south of Lake Ponemah within the City of Fenton. Two wells (wells #6 & #7) are located 1000 feet west of the treatment plant and one well (#5) is located next to the plant. Yet another well was recently installed nearby but is not yet on-line. Treated water is subsequently pumped to the distribution system by three high service pumps located at the plant.

**Water Treatment Plant.** The new plant started operating in July of 2004 and was primarily constructed in order to remove arsenic, which is settled out during the softening process. The arsenic rule was proposed by the EPA on January 22, 2001 and adopted on January 23, 2002. In Michigan, the City needed to meet the requirements of the rule by January 23, 2006. The rule set the maximum contaminant limit (MCL) to 10 Parts Per Billion (ppb) which was a reduction from 50 ppb. Since the start-up of the new plant the arsenic levels tested quarterly have been Non-Detect (ND) levels.

The City of Fenton is one of the few cities within Genesee County that supplies its own water to its residents. The plant is designed to treat a maximum capacity of 4.0 million gallons per day (MGD) with the ability to expand to 5.0 MGD. The City pumps approximately 400 million gallons of water per year. There are four ground water wells with the capability of pumping 4.5 MGD for treatment. The plant has two ground storage tanks that hold a total of 1.5 million gallons of water.

There are five full time employees to run daily operations and maintenance of the plant. All employees are licensed according to the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act. The plant is equipped to run a state certified bacteriological laboratory. This enables the plant personnel to perform the over 1200 bacteriological sample tests each year that are necessary for operations.

Over 100 tests are performed each day in order to make sure the plant meets its treatment goals. The plant uses eight different treatment additives that are certified for use in drinking water. The City's water quality is constantly being tested. Each year a Water Quality Report is developed and submitted to the State of Michigan for review.

**Water Distribution System.** The existing City of Fenton water distribution system consists of a highly- developed network of water mains supplying water



#### Goal

Ensure that adequate public utilities are available for all areas of the city.

to most areas of the City. The system lies within one pressure district, except for one subdivision in Livingston County on the east side of Adelaide Street at the southern limits of the supply system. This subdivision lies within a separate district served by an in-line booster station and is located outside the City Limits. A new water treatment plant was constructed in 2004 which has softened the water and lowered the levels of calcium and iron.

The water system includes 1.0 and 0.5 mg ground water storage tanks located approximately 2500 feet south of the southern City limits on the east side of Adelaide Street. The tanks function as an elevated tank due to the ground elevation of their location, approximately 200 feet above the ground elevation of the water plant.

**Sanitary Sewer System.** The City of Fenton is part of the Genesee County Sanitary Sewer District No. 3, which treats sanitary sewage for the communities of Fenton, Fenton Township, and Linden. The county's treatment plant, built in 1965, has undergone several additions to increase capacity over the last twenty years. The City is responsible for maintenance of the collection system leading to the treatment plant.

As of 1999 the City had purchased 12,000 equivalent units in the treatment plant (1 unit is equivalent to a household of 3.5 persons using 90 gallons of water per capita per day or 315 GPD). They are currently using 8,750 units (72% of capacity) leaving an unused capacity of 3,250 units. Sanitary sewer capacity should not be a limiting factor for development in the foreseeable future. Future improvements will be funded by a \$12.5 million bond issue, to be paid off over five years with increased sewer tap-in fees.

## **Parks and Recreation**

Quality of life in the City of Fenton is closely related to the availability of parks, open space, and recreation activities. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan must be updated every five years per the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) requirements. The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is to guide decisions affecting the future development and improvement of the City's parks, recreation facilities, and programs.

The Parks Plan includes a physical inventory of all parks and recreation facilities located in Fenton and describes the improvements and projects that the community intends to accomplish during the life of the plan. Each of the projects is justified in terms of the goals of the plan, the identified needs of the residents and other criteria related to the recreation opportunities in the community. Figure Four below summarizes the City's park inventory; please refer to the current Parks and Recreation Master Plan for a discussion of specific recreation needs and recommendations.

**Figure 4  
City-Owned Parks**

<b>Park</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Facilities</b>
<b>Franklin D. Adams Park</b>	1.5	South Long Lake Road at Appletree Drive, on the north end of the city	One ball field, ½ basketball court and backboard, swing set, play area, and picnic area
<b>Bush Park</b>	8.0	Behind the St. John Elementary School on North Adelaide Street and N. Leroy Street at 5 <sup>th</sup> Street	Two volleyball courts, swing sets, jungle gyms, other play facilities, picnic areas, a pavilion, and gazebo
<b>Conklin Park</b>	1.0	Between the CNN/Grand Trunk Railroad and Silver Lake Road, east of U.S. 23	Picnic area with a swing set and gazebo
<b>Freedom Park</b>	0.35	Between West Shiawassee, Elizabeth and Park Streets	Benches, a picnic area, and a war monument
<b>Millpond Park</b>	2.3	Next to Fenton City Hall and also on the north side of the Shiawassee River	Picnic areas, a gazebo, a footbridge over the river, a swing set, play equipment, and a Riverwalk
<b>Oak Park</b>	1.0	Oak Park Drive, just north of North Road	A swing set and Community Garden
<b>O'Donnell Park</b>	0.6	Corner of Ellen and East Streets overlooking the Millpond	Picnic area, fishing platform, gazebo, open space, and the Riverwalk
<b>Rackham Park</b>	3.0	On the Shiawassee River, just south of the Fenton Community Center	Two tennis courts, walking path, and a walking bridge over the Shiawassee River
<b>Strom Park</b>	0.7	East Street, overlooking the Millpond	Small boat launch and viewing area, part of the Shiawassee Riverwalk system, picnic area, parking area, and wayfinding signs
<b>Fenton Community Center</b>	3.3	Downtown Fenton	Large open room, a kitchen, meeting rooms, rest rooms, and arts area
<b>Silver Lake Park</b>	35.4	Jennings Road at the west end of the city	Ball fields, volleyball courts, horseshoe pits, a variety of play equipment, trails, picnic areas with pavilions, 300 feet of beach area with lifeguards, and concessions

**Outdoor Sculptures and Tour.** Outdoor sculptures are on display in downtown Fenton along LeRoy Street from Silver Lake Road to Shiawassee Avenue. A self-guided Outdoor Sculpture Tour brochure/map is now available at Fenton City offices and select area businesses, providing sculpture locations, artist biographies, media styles, and more. While participating in this sculpture walking tour, one can learn more about the art, the city, and add about 1¼ miles to a FitBit daily log.

## Public Schools

Schools within the City of Fenton are primarily in the Fenton Area Public Schools District, although the northeast portion of the City is in the Lake Fenton School District. The Fenton Area Public Schools District covers 35 square miles in three counties and has a total enrollment for the 2005-06 school year of over 3,700 students. All the District's school buildings are located within the Fenton City limits. The majority of students who attend the Fenton Area Public Schools are transported to their school on District owned buses.

- **Fenton High School.** The high school was built in 1969 and is in good condition due to various improvements over the past years.
- **Andrew G. Schmidt Middle School.** The newest addition to the District, the Middle School serves the 5th through 8th grades.
- **North Road Elementary.** This school serves kindergarten through 4th grade.
- **State Road Elementary.** This school serves kindergarten through 4th grade.
- **Tomek Eastern Elementary.** This school serves kindergarten through 4th grade.
- **Ellen Street Campus Early Childhood Programs.**

## Public Buildings

The following public buildings have been examined as to age, condition, and ability to meet the spatial needs for which they are intended.

**City Hall.** The City Hall building located on South Leroy at the Mill Pond was constructed in 1976. Its downtown location makes it easily accessible to the City's residents. Presently it is adequately housing necessary government functions. The building, a one-story structure, was designed so that a second story could be added if the need arises; however, there are no plans for expansion.

**Police Station.** The police station, constructed in 1976, is immediately adjacent to City Hall. The facility is in good condition and no additional station buildings will be required unless new areas are annexed to the City.

**Fire Station.** Recently constructed, the fire station is located on Walnut Street, just east of downtown. In addition to the City, Fenton also supplies fire service to Tyrone Township. If growth and the demand for fire services increase substantially in Tyrone Township, a station may be needed within the Township. If this were to happen, the building would be built by the Township and Fenton would supply the staff and equipment.

**Fenton Community Center.** The Fenton Community Center is located on South Leroy Street adjacent to Fenton Square. The center is used for classes, meetings, and wedding receptions. It also provides a location for senior citizen activities including travel, hot lunches, and card playing. The building was built in 1937 and is in good condition. An approximate two-story, 5,443 square foot addition was added on the south side of the building in 2014 and has expanded the programming capabilities of the Center.



### Goal

Provide for barrier-free access to all public facilities and programs.



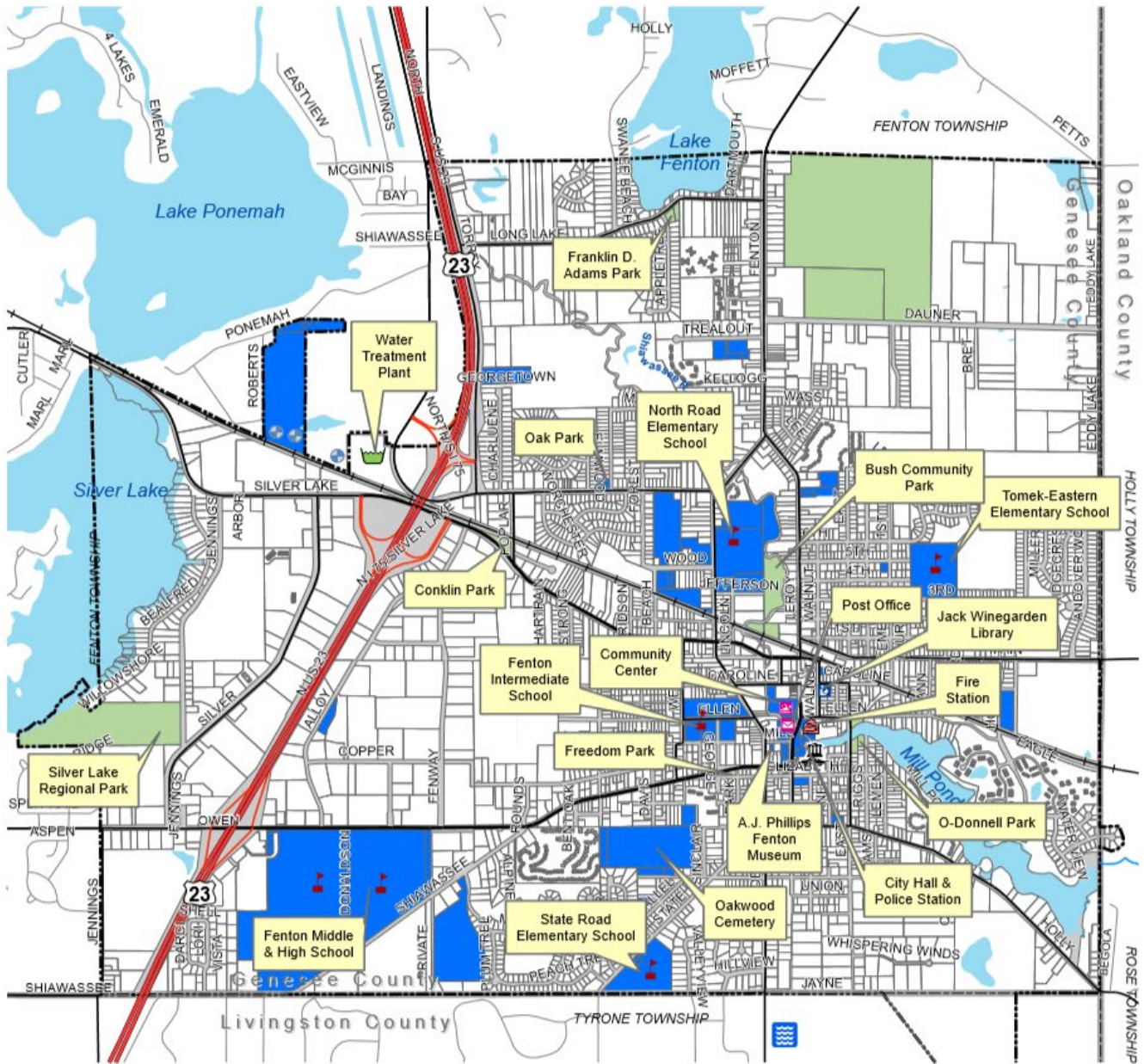
**Jack Winegarden Library.** Part of the Genesee District Library System, the City owns the building, but the Genesee District Library provides the books and staff. The building was constructed in 1940 and is structurally sound. There were interior renovations to the facility completed in 2015 to improve the functionality of the building. There is not an identified need for additional branches in the City and there are no expansion plans for the present facility.

**A.J. Phillips Fenton Museum.** Housed in the former library, the building is an historic structure built in 1894. The building is structurally sound and there are no current plans to expand the facility.

**Department of Public Works (DPW) Garage.** The City of Fenton has a state-of-the-art DPW facility on N. Alloy Drive in the Fenton Industrial Park.

**Post Office.** The Post Office is located at Mill Street and South Leroy. The non-profit facility was built in 1985 and is structurally sound. The existing building will meet spatial needs for the next five-year period and expected expansion can be addressed at the current site. The post office is run independently of the City.





**Existing Land Use**

-  Civic
-  Parks & Open Space
-  City Hall
-  Community Center
-  Water Storage Tank
-  Water Treatment Plant
-  Parks & Recreation

-  Police
-  Post Office
-  School
-  Fire
-  Library
-  Well

**Map Three - Community Facilities**

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

DRAFT: April 2017  
Data Sources:  
City of Fenton, MCGI




### 3. SUBAREAS

#### A. Owen Road – U.S. 23

Undeveloped commercial sites are rare in the City of Fenton, especially since the Silver Lake Village development is nearing buildout and the Target PUD site is complete. A few scattered sites remain, but new activity in the City is expected to come in the form of redevelopment. Recognizing this potential, the City has undertaken a subarea plan for land near the U.S. 23/Owen Road interchange as part of the Master Plan. The Study was completed in 2011 and led to redevelopment of the State Bank site into a Culver's Restaurant. Moreover, the City of Fenton has had success with past subarea plans and the goal is to build on current momentum toward quality redevelopment in this highly visible area of the City.

The U.S. 23/Owen Road area has seen a considerable amount of growth and new development over the past 20 years. Much of this has been the redevelopment of existing sites. Spillover market demand from Silver Lake Village, Walmart, and the Shoppes of Fenton PUD has led to the upgrade of existing sites and buildings such as Speedway, BP/Tim Hortons, Taco Bell, Arby's and KFC. It is expected that there will be continued demand to improve properties in this area and the City needs to be prepared to accommodate new investment in a coordinated, comprehensive fashion. This includes determining the most appropriate combination of land uses, identifying any necessary infrastructure improvements, and providing a comprehensive strategy for cross access and safe traffic flow between the sites.

The study area consists of four quadrants represented by the "four corners" created at the U.S. 23/Owen Road Interchange, as shown in the subarea boundary map below. Workshop sessions were held with business and property owners in the district to discuss potential redevelopment and improvement options. Public meetings were also held with the Planning Commission to review existing conditions in the corridor, preliminary design concepts and the draft final design concepts.



**A. The Northeast Corner.** This quadrant includes properties behind the BP minimart, Taco Bell, McDonald's, Culver's etc. Coordinated access and redevelopment is crucial here, where existing traffic signals and nearby uses limit the amount of additional traffic that can be accommodated.

**B. Fenton Public School Site.** There has been some discussion of additional outlets being created on the Fenton School property at the entrance to the Shoppes of Fenton. This study intends to identify challenges and feasibility of development of this site.

**C. Sunoco Mini-Mart.** Although a functioning business, this site is poorly maintained and underutilized. Part of the building is vacant, and redevelopment of the site could benefit both the property owner and the community. This site is a potential brownfield site since it was once a fuel dispensing facility and is likely contaminated. This Subarea Plan intends to produce redevelopment concepts and 3-D models that will help market the site for redevelopment.

**D. Boston's Pizza.** The primary challenge with this area has been the left turn access into and out of the property. This Plan will examine the site of the restaurant and surrounding sites to develop a circulation plan for the area.

## Circulation

Access in the area was entirely reconfigured with the BP/Taco Bell redevelopment, including installation of a new traffic signal, which now also serves the Shoppes of Fenton to the south. A quarter mile east of this signal is another signal at the Donaldson Drive intersection that leads to the Fenton High School and Middle School entrances and creates a precarious condition that limits options for future controlled access locations along Owen Road. Because the existing traffic signals are likely to remain for the long-term, they present a fixed variable that must be worked around. This plan seeks to evaluate existing access and suggest management and feasible ways to improve circulation and safety given existing conditions.

## Site Specific Observations

Existing conditions were evaluated through the use of aerial photographs, on-site observation, and analysis of existing approved site plans to establish a framework to develop the conceptual plans. Topography in some areas posed a barrier to redevelopment or cross-access, and in others, unknown opportunities were identified. The site evaluation yielded the following:

**Area A:** As noted, circulation in this area has been under study by the City and its traffic consultant for quite some time, and great care has been given to the driveway placement and operations, including the installation of a new traffic signal to manage growing traffic volumes. All of the signals in this area were synchronized in 2011 to optimize traffic flow. A rear service drive was originally considered to connect the BP site with Taco Bell, McDonalds, and Culver's at the corner of Owen Road and Alloy Drive. However, the topography at the rear of the Culver's site and McDonald's sites create a barrier to cross-access so the connection is being made at the front of the sites. Lack of cross-access will require vehicles to use individual driveways or the BP traffic signal, but increased use of this signal is not advised. The intersection, especially the north side, is not equipped to handle additional traffic, so alternative ingress and egress must be provided if sites to the north are to be redeveloped. Redevelopment opportunities exist behind the BP and Taco Bell site, on the parcels containing existing industrial buildings. The site behind BP is occupied

but underutilized and the building behind Taco Bell consists of a sequence of unorganized additions and could be developed in a more efficient manner.

**Area B:** Fenton High School is located at the southeast corner of Owen Road and the BP traffic signal. At the northwest corner of the property is a vacant area that could be sold and redeveloped using the existing traffic signal for access because the south side of the intersection was designed to carry greater volumes of traffic. There is a large berm located along the Shoppes of Fenton entrance drive that would need to be excavated, but the task is not insurmountable. The Fenton Public School District is currently investigating development possibilities for the site.

**Area C:** The existing Sunoco gas station is outdated and is a possible Brownfield site. It contains obsolete pumps and does not take full advantage of the site. It was established that the rear portion of the site, which was originally thought to be an opportunity for expansion, contains a steep slope that prohibits full use. This rear portion is part of the 3401 Owen Road site to the west, but it is still a large parcel nonetheless and could be used for shared parking at some point in the future.

**Area D:** The current Boston's Pizza and surrounding sites were developed individually. Development of the restaurant, adjoining gas station to the west, and the K-Mart store to the north all surrounded an existing residential structure, which is now being used as a small-scale office. The original scope of this Plan included only the Boston's site and how to improve cross-access between these few parcels, but it seems appropriate to consider all of the land east of Silver Parkway and south of K-Mart. Good north/south cross-access is already provided along the rear of the sites fronting Silver Parkway. Coordinated circulation and use of cross-access between the Boston's site, the gas station, and K-Mart would improve access options in general, and would alleviate some existing concerns, especially for eastbound traffic turning out of the Boston's driveway, which is located especially close to the U.S. 23 interchange.

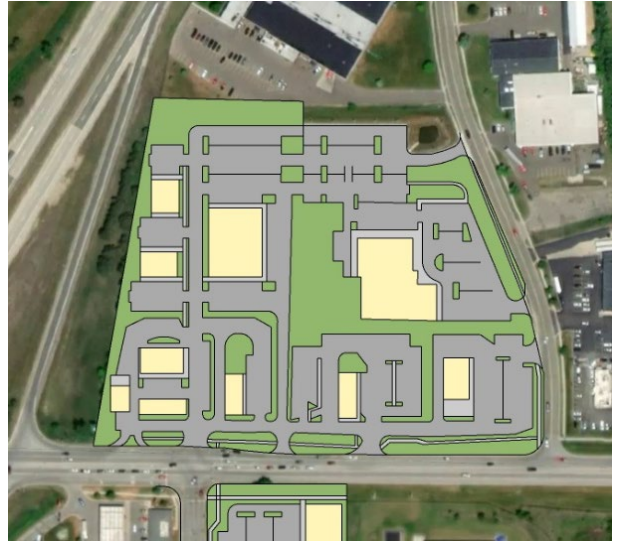
## Concept Layouts

The following section contains site specific concept layouts that seek to embody the themes above. They are intended to spark interest in the future redevelopment potential in this area.

### The Northeast Corner (Area A) Concept Plan

Key recommendations for this area include:

- Encourage coordinated redevelopment using the PUD option to ensure proper circulation and quality building design.
- Promote more office-related industrial uses, which create additional demand for local services, but that generate only moderate traffic.
- Direct traffic generated from redevelopment to the north and away from the BP traffic signal. Site design should naturally discourage cut-through traffic.
- Maintain a positive image from the U.S. 23 highway. Buildings should present their best facade and use detention and other site elements as an attractive feature. Plazas and pedestrian areas are encouraged to provide outdoor seating and dining areas for employees.
- Provide pedestrian connections between uses within and around the site to minimize the need for vehicle trips.



### Fenton Public School Site (Area B) Concept Plan

Key recommendations for this area include:

- Rezone the site from LDR, Low Density Residential, to GBD, General Business District/Planned Unit Development (PUD). The site could accommodate two sit-down restaurant uses, or something comparable.
- Maintain the front building line established by the Speedway site.
- Use the Shoppes of Fenton driveway for access and restrict direct access to Owen Road.
- The driveway should be located as far south of Owen Road as possible.
- Providing parking facilities in the rear of the site will allow maximum driveway spacing from the traffic signal.
- Provide pedestrian connections to the school site, including along the Owen Road frontage.



### **Sunoco Mini-Mart (Area C) Concept Plan**

Key recommendations for this area include:

- Encourage full redevelopment of the site, incorporating usable portions of the undeveloped land to the rear. This would allow the station to potentially double the number of pump islands and incorporate a fast food tenant.
- Restrict the number of driveways to Owen Road. Provide cross-access to the adjacent 3401 Owen Road site and use directional driveways if needed.
- Maintain a positive image from the U.S. 23 highway. All sides of the new building should present an attractive facade and use landscaping to enhance the site design.

### **Boston's Pizza Former (Area D) Concept Plan**

Key recommendations for this area include:

- Promote infill development within underused land areas. For example, a small office or low-intensity commercial building could be built on the rear portion of the Huntington Bank site.
- Encourage full cross-access between properties east of Silver Parkway and south of the K-Mart driveway. The conceptual layout provided is one option that considers existing building locations and parcel lines; however, other options could be implemented if buildings redevelop or parcels are reconfigured.
- Consider creating a new PUD or extending the Silver Lake Village PUD to encompass all the sites, which would allow more flexibility in site layout, while still protecting the City's interests in improving building quality.

## B. Downtown

The City of Fenton’s downtown area consists of approximately 93 acres. The general boundaries of this area are generally defined by Sixth Street on the north, Adelaide Street on the west, Elizabeth Street on the south, and East Street on the east. The main street for the downtown area is LeRoy which runs north and south from Sixth Street on the north to Shiawassee Avenue on the south.

Downtown Fenton is divided into five districts and one River Overlay District. Each of these areas has individual distinctive features and boundaries that set them apart from one another. At the same time, each district contributes to and forms linkages to each other and together make up Downtown Fenton.

The districts include: North Leroy, Rail, Downtown, Government/Civic, Dibbleville, and the River Overlay.

The graphic below illustrates the location of each of these six Development Districts, and the accompanying text summarizes the intent and distinctive design features for each district.

### Rail District

*Design Goal: Unify and link the downtown area with businesses and residents in the Rail District, preserve the historic architecture, make the railroad tracks an attribute instead of a barrier, and encourage art and entertainment related activities and businesses.*

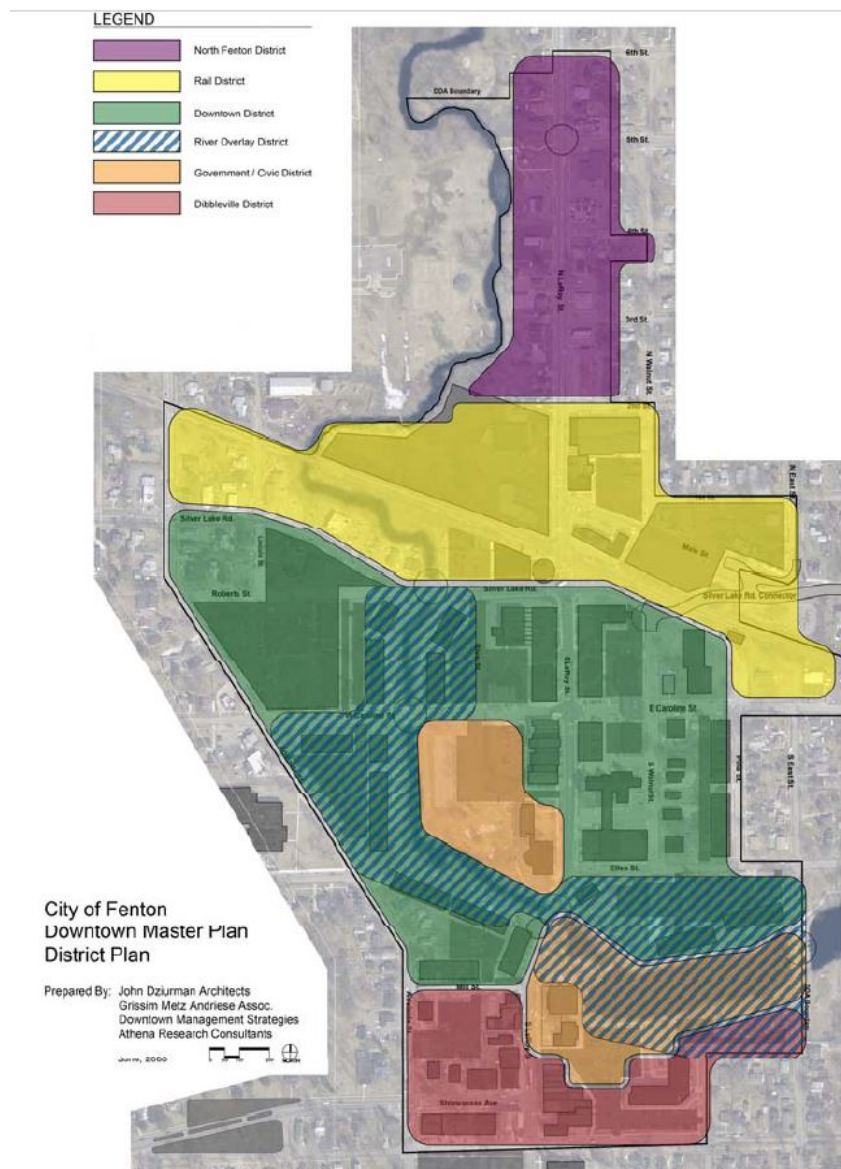
#### District Objectives

- Revitalize and unify the district to make it more viable and visually connected to the Downtown District.
- Add a combination of transitional residential, a live-work arts incubator, a year around farmer’s market, and other complementary uses to support a festival atmosphere and culturally related activities.
- Take advantage of the unique historic architecture of the Depot, Bean Company, and the Fenton Hotel buildings.

### Downtown District

*Design Goal: Revitalize the character of the original downtown commercial area by providing a new pedestrian friendly mixed-use business and residential area while exhibiting a distinct identity utilizing culture and art as a major economic focus.*

For additional information relating to the goals, ideas and recommendations identified for these districts, refer to the City of Fenton document entitled “Implementation Strategies Plan, City of Fenton, Downtown Master Plan”.



### **District Objectives**

- Restore and rebuild the character of a traditional cohesive downtown commercial and residential district.
- Design new development, in areas where the original downtown fabric has been damaged, as a grid of streets and alleys. Reconnect the existing street grid in areas where streets have been cut off.
- Restore the original historic architectural features of the remaining original cluster of four commercial buildings, fronting along the west side of LeRoy Street and located in the southwest corner of the intersection of Caroline and LeRoy.
- Buildings are to consist of mixed uses and to provide and promote 24-hour activity.
- Provide ample parking on all streets and in the rear of all buildings.
- Provide pedestrian level detail and scale in building architecture, window displays, art, signage and graphics.

### **River Overlay District**

*Design Goal: Enhance access and visibility of the Shiawassee River throughout the entire downtown area; transform all the bridges into individual expressions of public sculpture, lighting and decoration, so that they become an integral part of the image and character of the City; create a continuous river walkway from East Street to Bush Park; and create commercial and residential development in selective locations to provide opportunities for shopping, dining, recreation, cultural activities, and a unique living environment in the downtown area.*

### **District Objectives**

- Open up the views and access to the Shiawassee River, particularly from all streets and bridges that cross over it.
- Emphasize and enhance bridge crossings and design for pedestrian use as well as vehicular use.
- Promote quality residential and mixed-use residential projects along the River corridor.
- Add a new pedestrian bridge crossing between Caroline and LeRoy Streets behind the Community Center.

## Government / Civic District

*District Goal: Create a unified identity for the downtown's civic buildings and open space grounds. Also, improve pedestrian connections across this district to the other districts.*

### District Objectives

- Link together the City Hall, Police Department, Old Fire Hall, Historical Museum, and Cultural/Community Center to the heart of Fenton utilizing the river walks along the Shiawassee River and Mill Pond and the LeRoy Street bridge plaza to create strong connections and community landmarks.
- Strengthen the design of the outdoor park areas and features to better accommodate active and passive recreational activities, and to improve capability to handle different sized crowds from small intimate user groups to large community events.
- Improve the quality of all building exteriors, landscape, site furnishings, terraces, and lighting.

## Dibbleville District

*District Goal: Preserve and emphasize the historical character and origin of Fenton; stabilize and restore all historic buildings, develop compatible infill buildings to strengthen the District; promote, improve and expand the character and charm of this historic shopping district; and create an appropriate gateway for visitors arriving in the downtown area from the south and west.*

### District Objectives

- Add sympathetic and appropriate infill buildings to fill in the gaps between existing buildings so that Dibbleville is more cohesive and provides visitors more retail opportunities.
- Provide adequate, well-lit, and easy to find parking with convenient pedestrian access to and from parking and retail areas.
- Add more pedestrian amenities such as plaques, historical information, benches, and music.
- Improve the quality and character of Freedom Park to incorporate it into a gateway to signal to visitors their arrival into the downtown area.

## Downtown Development Plan

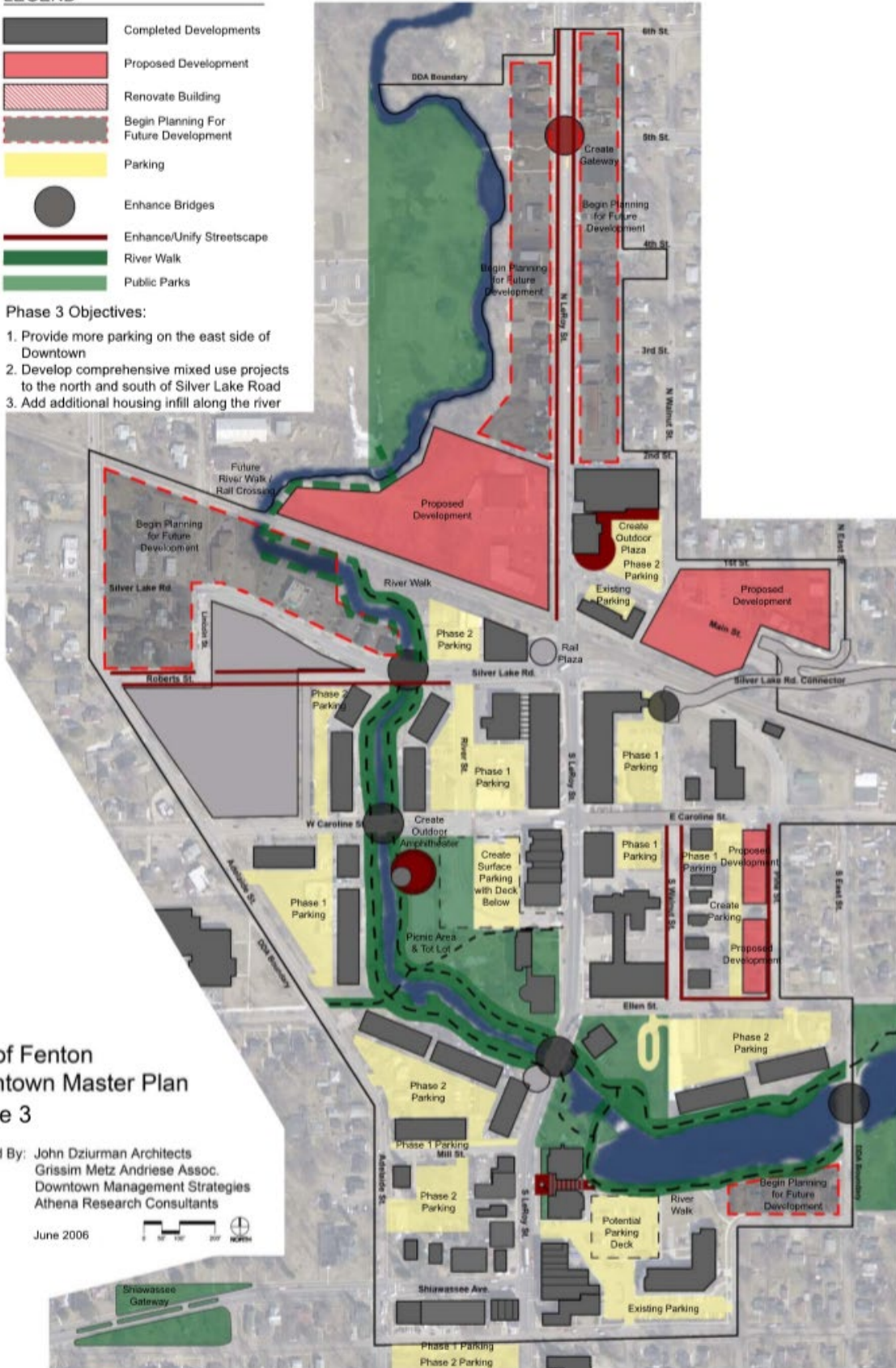
To implement the goals and objectives above and provide more detailed direction for new and infill development, the Downtown Master Plan also includes phased maps showing locations for new buildings, renovated buildings, open space, parking, and future planning areas. The attached Phase 3 Map summarizes the planning for all three phases and gives good direction to the Central Business District Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning overlay that regulates development downtown. Please note that the North Leroy Street area designated as “Begin Planning for Future Development” has now been planned and is detailed in the next section.

**LEGEND**

-  Completed Developments
-  Proposed Development
-  Renovate Building
-  Begin Planning For Future Development
-  Parking
-  Enhance Bridges
-  Enhance/Unify Streetscape
-  River Walk
-  Public Parks

**Phase 3 Objectives:**

1. Provide more parking on the east side of Downtown
2. Develop comprehensive mixed use projects to the north and south of Silver Lake Road
3. Add additional housing infill along the river



**City of Fenton  
Downtown Master Plan  
Phase 3**

Prepared By: John Dziurman Architects  
Grissim Metz Andriese Assoc.  
Downtown Management Strategies  
Athena Research Consultants

June 2006 

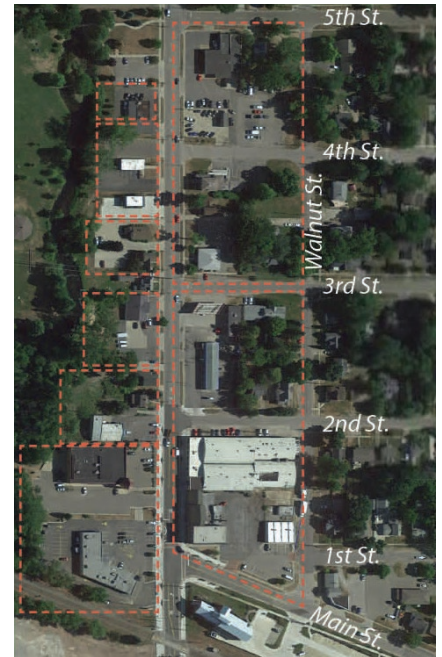


### North Leroy District

Previous master plans provided a vision and strategies for the core downtown. Now that downtown has had significant public and private investment, the opportunity to capitalize on further redevelopment potential lies in the North Leroy Street corridor. The area north of the railroad tracks was identified in previous master plans for “future planning” and this section seeks to provide more specific direction for how mixed- use redevelopment can occur. Redevelopment here can build on the proximity to the downtown while providing a careful transition to nearby neighborhoods.

#### District Objectives

- Strengthen street edge with buildings fronting the street
- Continue streetscape improvements from the downtown
- 5-10’ easement or build-to line may be required to ensure adequate pedestrian space along North Leroy Street
- Promote views of the river and park and incorporate pedestrian access to trail network
- The west side terrain change presents a challenge but also an opportunity for creative multi-story architecture
- Incorporate housing to provide additional urban living options
- Building heights taller at southern end, step down north of 3rd Street, and residential heights facing Walnut Street
- Reduce number of driveways
- Look for shared parking opportunities
- Integrate open space and plazas for outdoor gathering



*In order to maximize redevelopment potential, parcels along the corridor could be assembled.*



- Townhouses
- Mid-block pedestrian access
- Riverfront trail
- 4th Street
- Historic Home
- 2 Story Mixed-Use
- 3rd Street
- Plaza/outdoor dining
- On-street parking
- Parking Structure with Liner buildings
- 2nd Street
- Pedestrian connections to riverfront trail
- 3 Story Mixed-Use (4th floor stepped back)
- Existing Hotel
- 1st Street

- Existing Buildings
- 3-4 Story Mixed-Use
- 2 Story Mixed-Use
- Townhouses
- Access Connections

North Leroy Concept Plan

## 4. ACTION PLAN

### A. Implementation

This plan serves as the policy guide for moving Fenton forward, guiding decisions about future physical and economic development. Transforming the plan's goals into reality will require a long-term commitment and political consensus. The plan is designed to be a road map for action, incorporating strategies, specific projects, and programs that will achieve the desired results.

This chapter synthesizes the many plan recommendations and identifies the actions and timing needed to transform the plan's vision into reality.

#### Tenets of Successful Implementation

The input received through the master plan process provided a foundation to help achieve the city's vision, community support, commitment, and involvement must continue.

##### **Commitment**

Successful plan implementation will be directly related to a committed City leadership. While elected and appointed officials - the Mayor, City Commission, and Planning Commission - will have a strong leadership role, many others - City department directors, staff, and leaders from the community's many institutions and organizations - will also be instrumental in supporting the plan.

However, commitment reaches beyond just these individuals and includes the array of stakeholders. Citizens, landowners, developers, and business owners interested in how Fenton develops must unite toward the plan's common vision.

##### **Integrate with Project Design**

City officials and departments must embrace the plan, applying its recommendations to help shape annual budgets, work programs, and the design of capital improvements. For example, the City's engineering practices can support implementation through infrastructure improvements, streets, and storm systems designed consistent with plan policies and recommendations. Each department, staff person, and elected official should find it a benefit, if not an obligation, to reference the plan when making decisions and setting priorities.

##### **Guidance for Development Decisions**

This plan is designed for routine use and should be consistently employed during any process affecting the community's future. Private investment decisions by developers, corporations, and land owners should consider the plan's direction. Other planning efforts for neighborhoods, corridors, and community facilities should be in harmony with the master plan. Finally, the plan should be used when reviewing development proposals and referenced in related reports and studies.

##### **Evaluation and Monitoring**

This plan has been developed with a degree of flexibility, allowing nimble responses to emerging conditions, challenges, and opportunities. To help ensure the plan stays fresh and useful, periodic reviews and amendments are required.

This will ensure plan goals, objectives, and recommendations reflect changing community needs, expectations, and financial realities.

Any new detailed subarea plans should be adopted as master plan amendments. Finally, Michigan law stipulates the plan be reviewed at least every five years. Updates should reflect changing conditions, unanticipated opportunities, and acknowledge the implementation to date.

## B. Future Land Use

Communities employ land use planning as the primary tool to define sustainable and supportive land use arrangements and to avoid or correct conflicts. Land use conflicts occur when incompatible uses are co-located, resulting in various short and long-term problems. In time, the resulting nuisances can depreciate the desirability and value of all affected properties.

Conversely, future development that is a potential community asset can be identified during this same process. Potentially conflicting land uses can benefit the neighborhoods in which they are located, and the community at-large, if appropriately arranged. The relationship between industrial uses and residential neighborhoods is a good example; when properly sited, industrial land uses can provide nearby jobs for residents and support area retail.

### Future Land Use Districts

The following descriptions summarize the uses depicted on the Future Land Use map on the following page.

**Low Density Single-Family Residential.** This district is intended for single-family residential development on lots typically less than one unit per acre. Future residential development within this district should not exceed two units per acre.

**Medium Density Single-Family Detached Residential.** This district is intended for single-family residential development on smaller lots ranging from 1.7 to 5.5 units per acre. Recommended density for future development is two to five units per acre. This density level is conditioned, however, on the ability of the development to meet all other area requirements without needing variances and on the impact on environmental features on the site. Areas chosen for inclusion in this district were primarily based on existing housing density; a need to reserve more land for similar development; availability of public sewer and water; and environmental factors which would permit this range of housing density.

**Urban Residential.** This district surrounding Fenton's downtown is intended to provide housing options including a blend of single-family detached and attached homes, duplex, and multiple-family residential uses. Future densities of up to eight units per acre will accommodate the more urban characteristics in this area of Fenton. As with the MDSFDR District, this density level is conditioned on the ability of the development to meet all other area requirements without needing variances and on the impact on environmental features on the site. Future development must be architecturally consistent with surrounding buildings and match the current density of the surrounding

structures. Conversion of large single-family homes to multiple-family structures should be discouraged.

**Multiple-Family.** This district is intended for Multiple-Family residential development with a density of up to 14 units per acre. This density level is conditioned, however, on the ability of the development to meet all other area requirements without obtaining variances and on the impact on environmental features on the site. Areas designated as Multiple-Family were selected based primarily on existing high-density development; close proximity to U.S. 23; low impacts to Fenton streets; and soil conditions suitable for this development type. Most of these areas are fully developed due to the considerable amount of multiple-family developments that currently exist within the City.

**Office.** This district is intended for low-intensity, higher intensity, and business park office uses. It is designed specifically for low-intensity office uses along Owen Road, at the intersection with Shiawassee, on Grant Street near the intersection with Rounds Drive, and on Adelaide just north of Shiawassee, where a transition of single-family homes to commercial uses has occurred. The low-intensity office areas will allow the use of single-family homes for business purposes, while minimizing negative impacts on traffic volumes and adjacent single-family homes. Businesses could include medical offices, financial offices, personal services, and similar uses.

The Office District also provides for higher intensity office uses, including areas in Silver Lake Village that are planned and zoned for the development of larger office complexes, as well as business park-type office uses on Alloy Drive to the south of Silver Lake Road. Larger office uses and the office park concept are compatible with industrial uses because they require minimal signage and generate less traffic, especially if on-site amenities are provided for personnel.

**Downtown.** This district is intended for a blend of retail, office, and service establishments. The focus of this district should be entertainment, specialty retailing, small offices and government buildings. Residential uses primarily made up of second story units, live/work units, and townhomes also fit into this mixture of uses and help to create activity after the businesses have closed. Higher site design standards have been developed for this district because it is a strong focal point for the city. The Appendix contains the City of Fenton Downtown Design Guidelines.

**Neighborhood Business.** The Neighborhood Business district category is designed to accommodate limited commercial and office services primarily servicing nearby residential neighborhoods. Neighborhood Business areas are planned for non-prominent, less visual locations. At the present time, the City is adequately serviced by Neighborhood Business districts on North Leroy Street. Should there be future demand for a small grocery store, mini-mart, or doctor's office to serve a developing area, the developer will have to justify that the need exists, through a market analysis, and the City must ensure that it is not creating a "spot zone." A neighborhood commercial zone may not be considered a spot zone if the permitted uses will accommodate an underserved residential area and the local demand is proven.

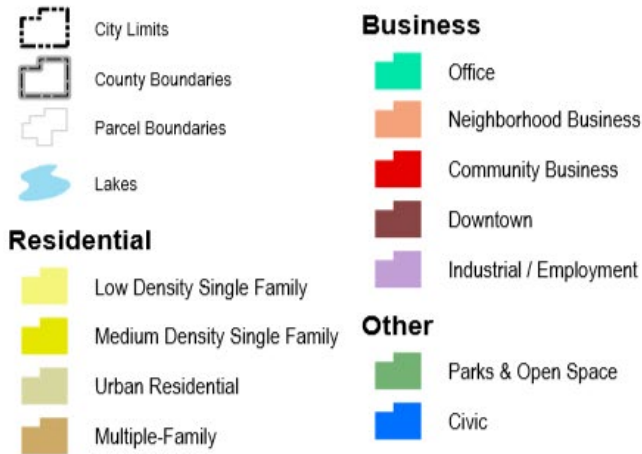
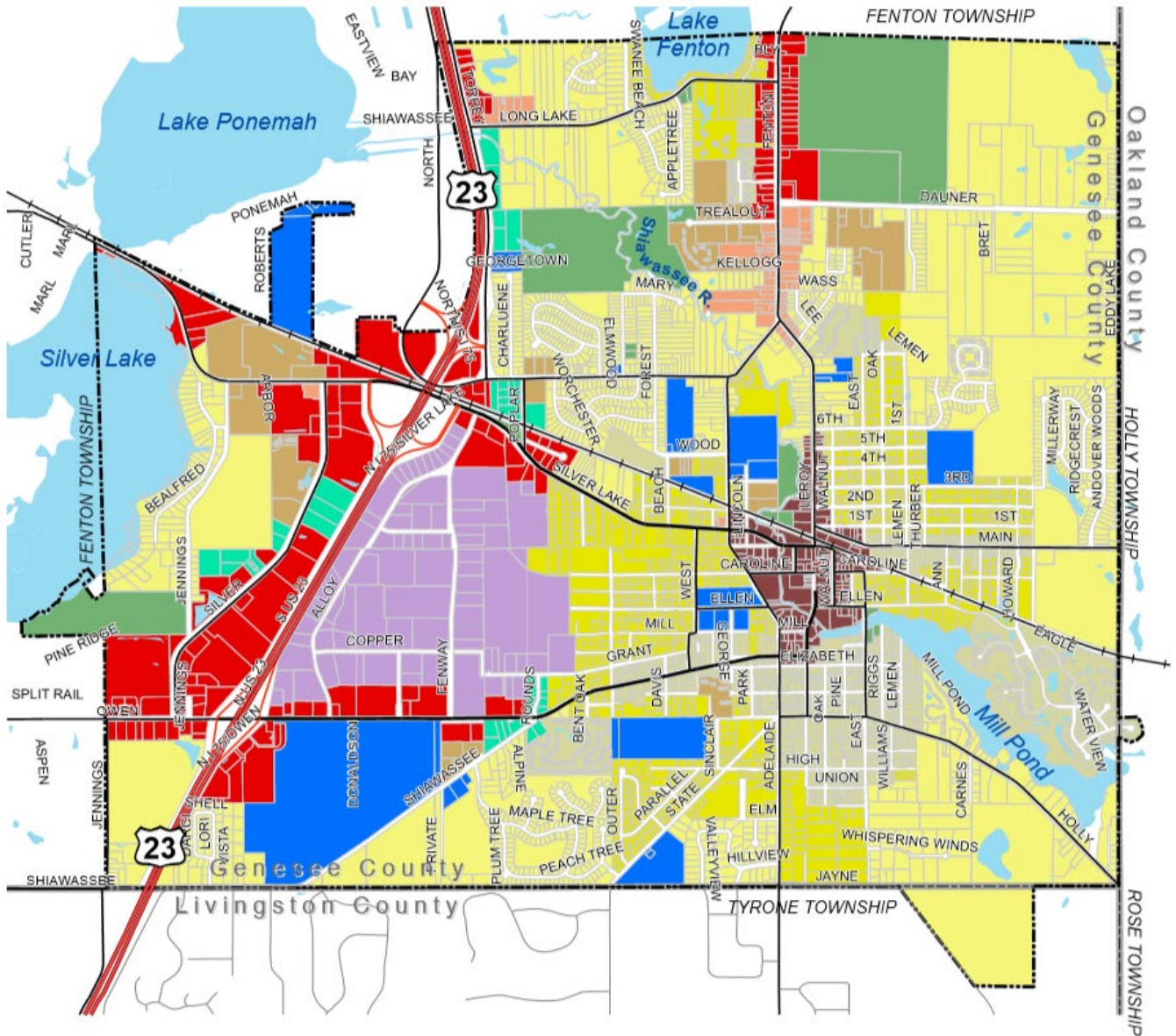
**Community Business.** This district is intended for the widest variety of retail and service businesses. Businesses could range from apparel shops, auto service, and restaurants through small commercial strip centers and office buildings. Locations for this district are based on collector or arterial frontage; low impact to Fenton streets; proximity to existing commercial developments of a similar type; and compatibility to adjacent uses. For the commercial areas adjacent to U.S. 23, this district is intended to serve the commercial needs of the motoring public. Future development of commercial uses at this location should be conditioned upon the completion of the Silver Lake/Poplar intersection improvements.

**Industrial / Employment.** This district is intended for general light industrial development that will not have a negative impact on adjacent residential neighborhoods through the creation of smoke, noise, odor, vibration, etc. The location of this district was determined by the existing location of Fenton's industrial parks. As mentioned in the regional perspective section, it is anticipated that the available supply of vacant land in the industrial parks will eventually be fully developed. It is therefore important to maintain the integrity of the available land for industrial use only. One exception to this rule is the land north of the BP station on Owen Road, which is designated as industrial on the Future Land Use Map. This area may be appropriate for commercial and possible office uses if coordinated and safe access can be achieved between the sites through rear service drives, access from Alloy Drive or other access management techniques.

**Civic.** This district is intended for uses intended to serve a large segment of the public but are not government agencies. Included are schools, churches, cemeteries, and senior facilities. These uses are scattered throughout the City and the more intensive uses should be listed as special land uses in any zoning district where they are to be permitted. This is due to the propensity of these uses to expand in response to the growing population; thereby having the potential to impact adjacent residential neighborhoods.

**Parkland.** This district identifies the various public park lands that are located throughout the City and discussed in the City of Fenton Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Also included in the nature preserve located on Dauner Road. This property conserves a substantial amount of natural features in the community as well as provide passive recreational opportunities such as nature study and walking trails for City residents.

**Shoreline Conservation.** This district is intended for the preservation of the natural qualities associated with the Shiawassee River and Mill Pond shorelines. It is recommended that public ownership or easements be obtained within this district so that the fine natural qualities of these areas may be enjoyed by the general public. If public ownership is not feasible or practicable, environmental standards may be necessary to protect and preserve the shoreline areas. The areas within this district were determined based on the fixed location of the Shiawassee River.



**Map Four - Future Land Use**

DRAFT: April 2017  
Data Sources:  
City of Fenton, MCGI

## C. Zoning Plan

While there are many programs and activities important to the overall implementation of this plan, zoning is the single most significant mechanism for achieving the desired land use pattern and quality of development advocated in the plan. This section provides a useful guide relative to the inconsistencies between current zoning patterns and proposed future land use designations.

Because the future land use map is a long-range vision of how land uses should evolve over time, it should not be confused with the City's zoning map, which is a current (short term) mechanism for regulating development.

Therefore, not all properties should be immediately rezoned to correspond with the plan. The Future Land Use Plan is intended to serve as a guide for land use decisions over a longer period of time (5 to 15 years).

The plan categories correspond to zoning districts, but there is some generalization. The following table provides a zoning plan indicating how the future land use categories in this master plan relate to the zoning districts in the zoning ordinance. In certain instances, more than one zoning district may be applicable to a future land use category.

Zoning changes in accordance with the plan should be made gradually so that change can be managed. The Future Land Use map as well as the plan's goals, objectives, and development recommendations should be consulted to judge the merits of a rezoning request. In review of rezoning and development proposals, the City should consider the following sequencing standards:

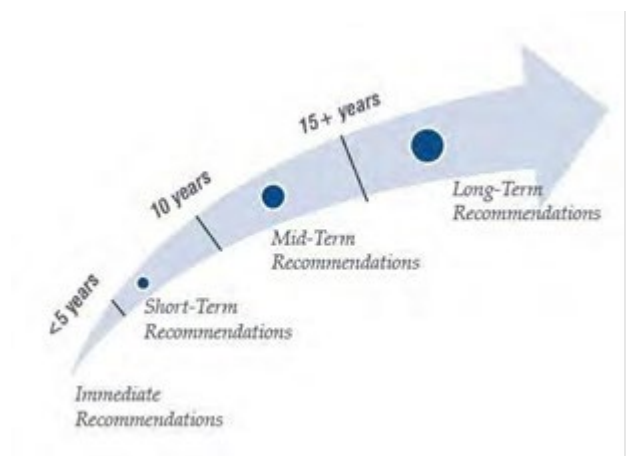
- Any rezoning or development proposal must be compatible with the master plan as a whole and be able to stand and function on its own without harm to the quality of surrounding land uses.
- There must be sufficient public infrastructure to accommodate any proposed development or the types of uses that would be allowed under the requested zoning change. This must include sufficient sewer and water capacity, transportation improvements as determined by a traffic impact study, and all other necessary infrastructure improvements provided concurrent with the development.
- The environmental conditions of the site should be capable of accommodating the types of development or potential uses allowed with a zoning change. The impact to natural features should be minimized to the maximum extent practical with the most important resources preserved.
- Rezoning needs to be linked as closely as possible to the timing of development and land use change. Premature rezoning without a specific development proposal and site plan should be avoided to minimize land use conflicts, property value decline, and maintenance and safety problems.
- Sites proposed for rezoning to accommodate change in land use need to have sufficient width and area to facilitate development that satisfies the design guidelines of this plan, requirements of the zoning ordinance, and not create odd parcel configurations.

Zoning Plan	Zoning Districts													
	PUD Planned Unit Development	RDR Rural Density Residential	LDR Low Density Residential	LMR Low/Medium Density Residential	MDR Medium Density Residential	MHR Medium/High Density Residential	HDR High Density Residential	NBD Neighborhood Business District	CBD Central Business District	GBD General Business District	OSD Office Service District	OPD Office Park District	IND Industrial	PC Parks and Cemeteries
<b>Future Land Use Categories</b>														
Low Density Single-Family Detached Residential		■	■											
Medium Density Single-Family Detached Residential				■	■									
Urban Residential						■								
Multiple-Family							■							
Office										■	■			
Downtown									■					
Neighborhood Business								■						
Community Business									■					
Industrial/Employment													■	
Civic			■											■
Parkland														■
Shoreline Conservation														■

## D. Action Table

For the City Master Plan to be an effective document for the next ten years, steps must be identified to guide community leaders towards implementation. This chapter summarizes the goals and the recommendations described throughout the plan and serves as a quick reference for the Planning Commission and others to monitor progress or serve as a checklist for implementing the plan.

The following table identifies major steps and projects designed to maintain and improve the City of Fenton. Implementation of these items will have a positive impact on the character and vitality of the community. They will also help the City deal with the increasing pressures of growth and related impacts. Many of the implementation recommendations presented herein will require the close cooperation of many bodies. The final column in the table indicates the primary group(s) responsible for implementation.



<b>Action</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Land Use</b>		
Continue taking an active role in the redevelopment of key sites throughout the city, encouraging coordinated development through creative zoning tools like Planned Unit Developments (PUDs).	Ongoing	Administration, Planning Commission (PC) & City Council
Update the Zoning Ordinance to begin implementing the new Master Plan	Short-term	Administration, PC & City Council
Update the Sign Ordinance to reflect current case law and direction from the City Attorney.	Short-term	Administration, PC & City Council
Investigate the potential for enhancements to public spaces in the Downtown.	Short-term	Administration, DDA, PC, Parks Commission & City Council
Review the Master Plan in 5 years per Michigan Planning Enabling Act.	Mid-Term	Administration, PC & City Council
<b>Housing</b>		
Continue vigilant enforcement of housing, rental, and property maintenance codes.	Ongoing	Administration & City Council
Provide additional housing opportunities in the downtown for empty nesters and those looking for urban housing opportunities.	Ongoing	Administration, DDA, PC & City Council
Continue to support programs that encourage homeownership.	Ongoing	Administration & City Council
Investigate the feasibility of affordable housing developments in locations that will not change the essential character of the surrounding neighborhoods.	Short-term	Administration & Planning Commission
<b>Economy</b>		
Continue working with developers and property owners to develop and redevelop downtown buildings and sites into multi-story, mixed-use developments.	Ongoing	Administration, DDA, PC, & City Council
Redevelop sites in the downtown so there are no longer parking lots fronting streets or suburban type developments.	Ongoing	Administration, PC, City Council & developers
Promote the improvement and restoration of facades in the downtown area, for buildings identified to be preserved in the downtown plan.	Ongoing	Administration & DDA
Encourage the re-occupancy of vacant retail buildings throughout the city while upgrading the sites to meet current ordinance standards.	Ongoing	Administration & PC
Develop a plan to create additional public parking in the downtown area.	Short-term	Administration, DDA, PC & City Council
Become certified as a Redevelopment Ready Community under the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.	Short- & Mid-Term	Administration & City Council
Build a public parking deck in the downtown.	Mid-Term	Administration, PC, DDA, City Council, State of Michigan

Action	Priority	Responsibility
<b>Transportation</b>		
Continue to implement access management for sites located along major thoroughfares in the city.	Ongoing	Administration & PC
Continue to support sidewalk and pathway connections throughout the city, especially where infill sections are needed.	Ongoing	Administration & PC
Plan, design, and obtain funding for sidewalks and crosswalks over U.S. 23 at Owen Road, to Donaldson Drive.	Mid-term	Administration, PC, City Council, DDA
<b>Community Facilities</b>		
Provide sewer and water hookups to areas that are currently not serviced in the City, concurrent with new development proposals.	Ongoing	Administration, PC, & City Council
Continue to follow the recommendations in the City of Fenton Parks & Recreation Master Plan	Ongoing	Administration, Parks & Recreation Commission, PC, & City Council