

# Plainwell Paper Mill Community Reuse Planning Project



Mill Committee Meeting #3 and  
Open House: December 21, 2004

# Project Background



## *Project Sponsor & Funding:*

City of Plainwell, MI

US EPA Region 5 and EPA Superfund Redevelopment Initiative

## *Project Purpose:*

Provide community's guidance to US EPA and MDEQ on the community's reuse goals for the Plainwell Paper Mill property

Provide opportunity for community to learn about the site and discuss community preferences for the site's potential future uses

## *Project Structure:*

Seven-month community planning process

Managed by 30-member, community-based Land Use Committee

Committee working with environmental consulting company E<sup>2</sup> Inc.

# Agenda for Tonight's Open House

- **Project Overview**
- **Site Reuse Design Strategy**
- **Community Discussion**

# Key Project Considerations

## *Reuse Planning at Superfund sites*

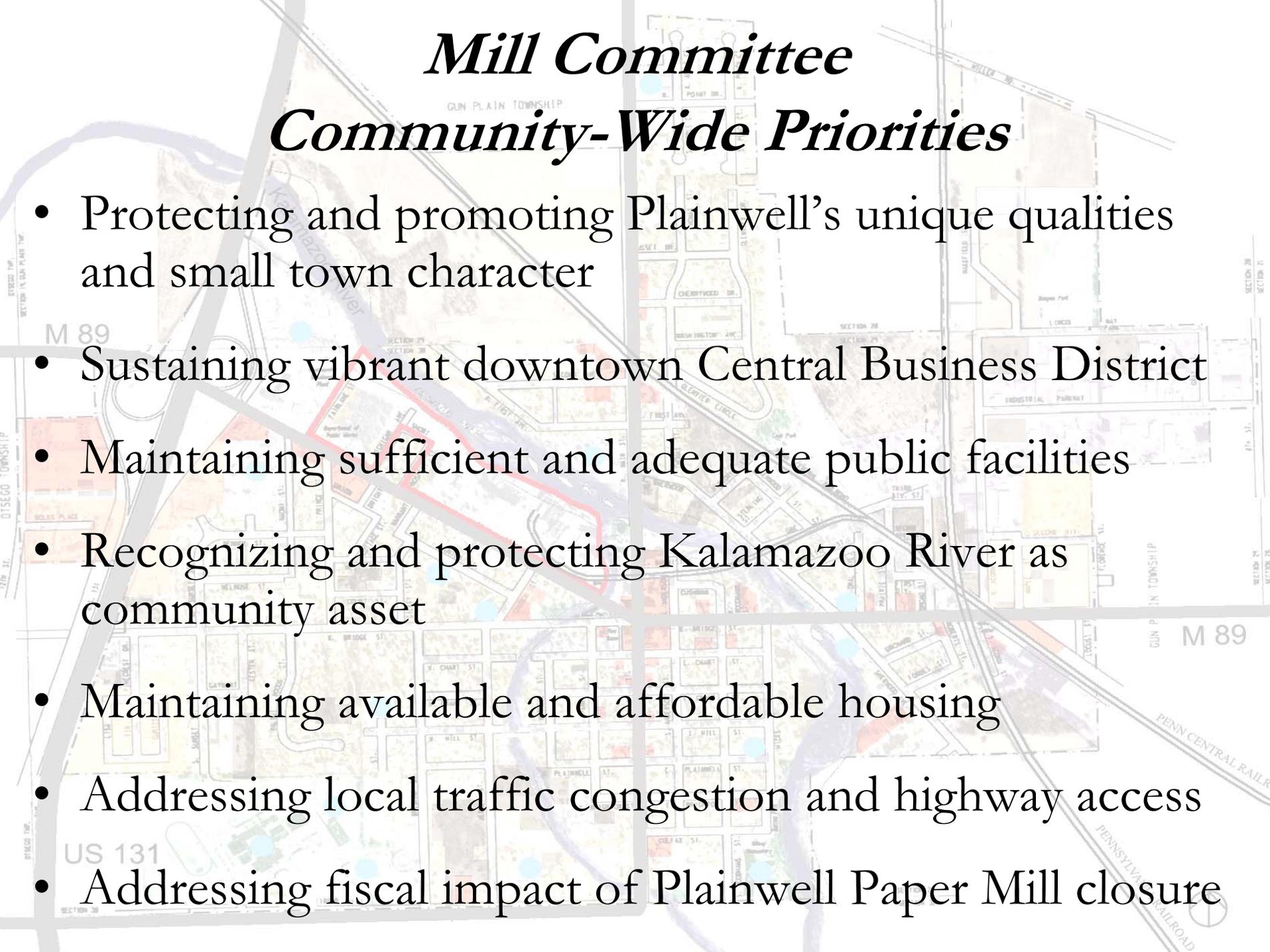
Long-term process that informs site investigations

## *Mill Property Ownership Status*

Potential opportunity to transfer the property's ownership to the City of Plainwell

## *Property's Remedial Status*

Additional environmental investigations needed to identify areas that may require remediation and areas that may be available for future use



# *Mill Committee*

## *Community-Wide Priorities*

- Protecting and promoting Plainwell's unique qualities and small town character
- Sustaining vibrant downtown Central Business District
- Maintaining sufficient and adequate public facilities
- Recognizing and protecting Kalamazoo River as community asset
- Maintaining available and affordable housing
- Addressing local traffic congestion and highway access
- Addressing fiscal impact of Plainwell Paper Mill closure

# *Mill Committee*

## *Site Reuse Priorities*

### *Residential and Civic/Cultural Land Uses*

- Residential development as part of mix of residential, commercial, civic, cultural, and recreational land uses at the property
- Medium- and high-density housing catering to current and new residents, providing opportunity to live downtown
- Civic and cultural opportunities could include relocation of city hall, auditorium, education facilities, teen center, heritage space

### *Commercial Office and Retail Land Uses*

- Commercial land uses could generate tax revenues and help sustain Plainwell as a unique “destination” location
- Potential uses: outlet mall, movie theater, microbrewery, riverside restaurant, office space, and banquet facility/meeting hall/conference center

# *Mill Committee*

## *Site Reuse Priorities*

### *Recreational and Ecological Land Uses*

- Recreational and ecological land uses should serve as a “ribbon” that connects portions of the property together and connects the property with its surroundings
- Potential uses: rock wall, neighborhood park, skate park, ice arena, bike trails, river walk, river access points, and adaptive reuse of paper mill structures for recreation/education

### *Historic Preservation*

- Portions of the property’s historic mill building and other structures should be preserved
- Permanent facilities could include a museum or dedicated space recognizing paper mill’s history and significance as part of community’s heritage

# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Overview outline

- Recap Key Issues
- Primary Project Goals
- Guiding Principles
- Site Strategies Update
- Next Steps and Conclusions



# *Mill Committee Site Reuse Priorities*

## *August 2004 Draft Site Reuse Design Strategy Feedback*

- Emphasis on importance of pedestrian and vehicular access to, and circulation within, the property
- Importance of the visibility of the renovated mill office building
- Effectiveness of the civic square and public park outlined in the strategy
- Adaptive reuse of former structures on the property as an effective way to recognize the property's history

# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Recap Key Issues

- Flexibility through strong structure
- Site Access and Traffic Studies needed
- Mixed Use, Building Typologies
- Civic Core and Parks as Spatial Structure
- Site Remediation
- Rehabilitation and Restoration of Mill
- Phasing Strategies

# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Primary Goals

Creation of an attractive and economically viable place for Plainwell to live and work that:

- Promotes community gathering
- Provides a mix of residential, commercial and civic uses and densities
- Promotes commerce and attracts visitors to Plainwell
- Provides access to and protection of the natural environment
- Recognizes and celebrates the local history of the Mill
- Employs an organizing structure that allows for flexibility

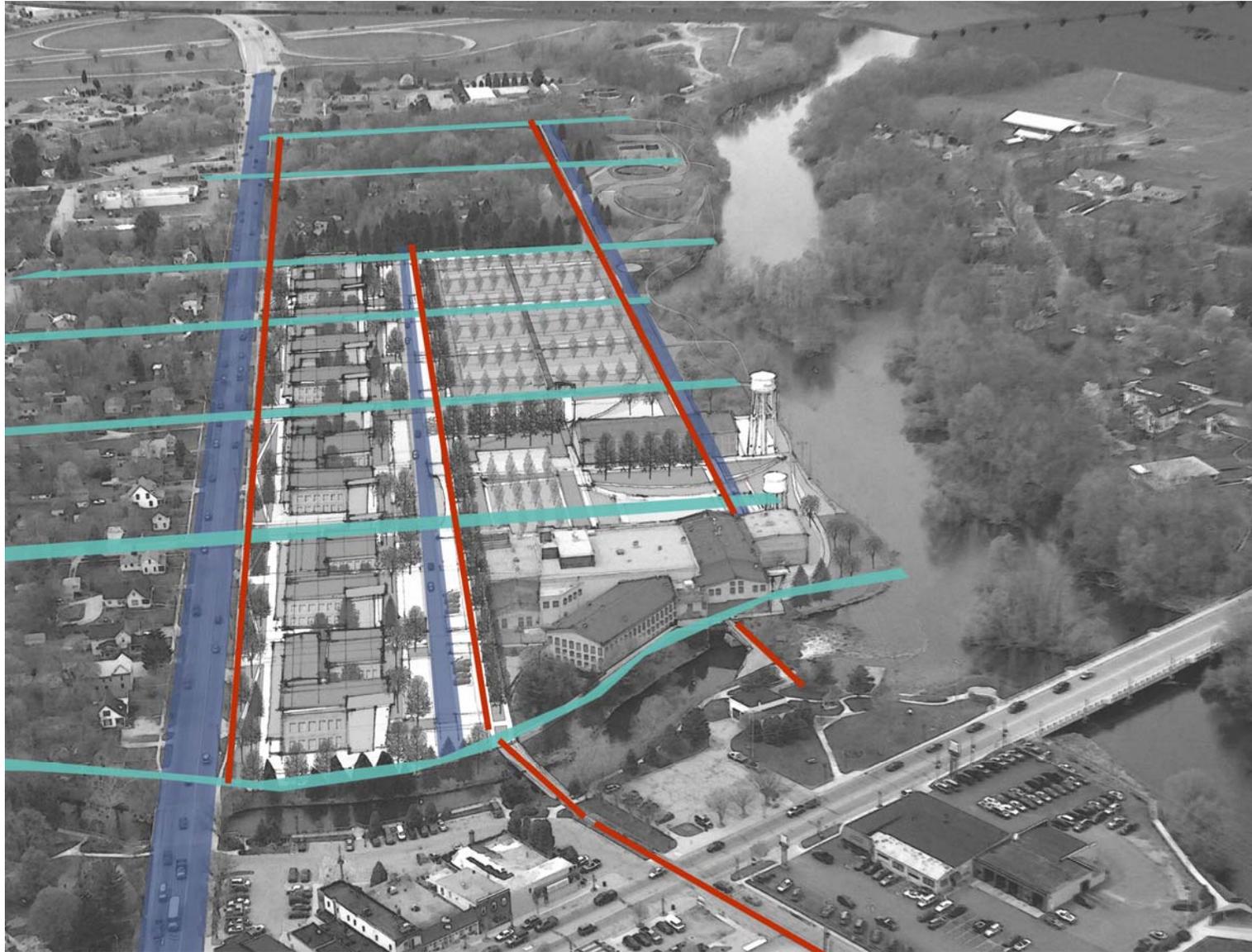
# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Guiding Principles and Strategies

- Flexibility through structure- Infrastructure as a skeleton
- Responsiveness to context, patterns and scale
- Celebration of site history
- Protection and enhancement of the natural environment
- Engage city/ site flows and systems as opportunities for creating a balanced, effective and healthy environment

# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Infrastructure



# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Flexibility and Infrastructure

- Create a strong and layered system of roads, pathways, parking and outdoor spaces
- Integrate measures into this system that manage stormwater, provide shade, structure movement and enhance attractiveness of the setting
- Create a strong systems of inter-related outdoor spaces that support the community: parks, squares, gardens and streetscape
- Incorporate Biological methods of site remediation into this system

# Plainwell Paper Mill

Existing patterns and scale



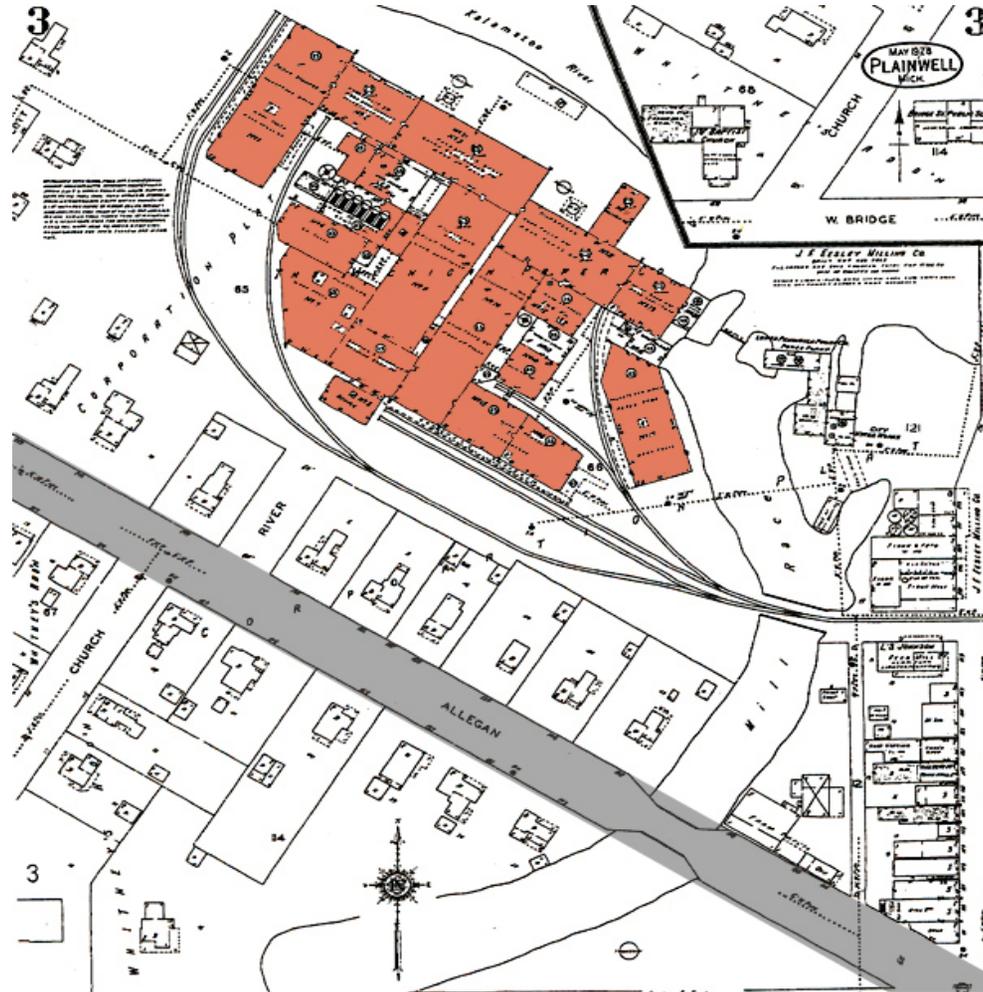
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## Context , Patterns and Scale

- Extend urban grid structure from adjacent street system
- Promote density while maintaining diverse volumes and scales
- Model new buildings on local precedents: Mill, downtown, etc.
- Mix uses and scales
- Develop material palettes that are sympathetic to local patterns
- Promote a pedestrian friendly setting

# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Site History



# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Site History

- Recycle and reuse salvageable material and structures
- Reimagine site archaeological elements for new uses
- Avoid erasing artifacts present on site, imagine as sculptural elements
- Re-establish strong visual presence of original mill buildings
- Interpret and communicate history of Mill wherever possible

# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Environment



# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Protection of the Environment

- Promote sustainable building practices
- Avoid toxic materials and materials that degrade the environment
- Minimize negative impacts on watersheds, groundwater and native plant and animal communities
- Re-establish strong riparian forest buffers to the river
- Celebrate the enjoyment of the natural amenities of the site

# Plainwell Paper Mill Flows



# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Flows and Systems

- Coordinate utilities and infrastructure
- Coordinate and study vehicular and pedestrian traffic
- Recognize site and regional hydrology and watershed issues
- Promote stormwater management best practices
- Anticipate the influence of daily and seasonal cycles and schedules ( programming)

# Plainwell Paper Mill Design Guidelines Recap

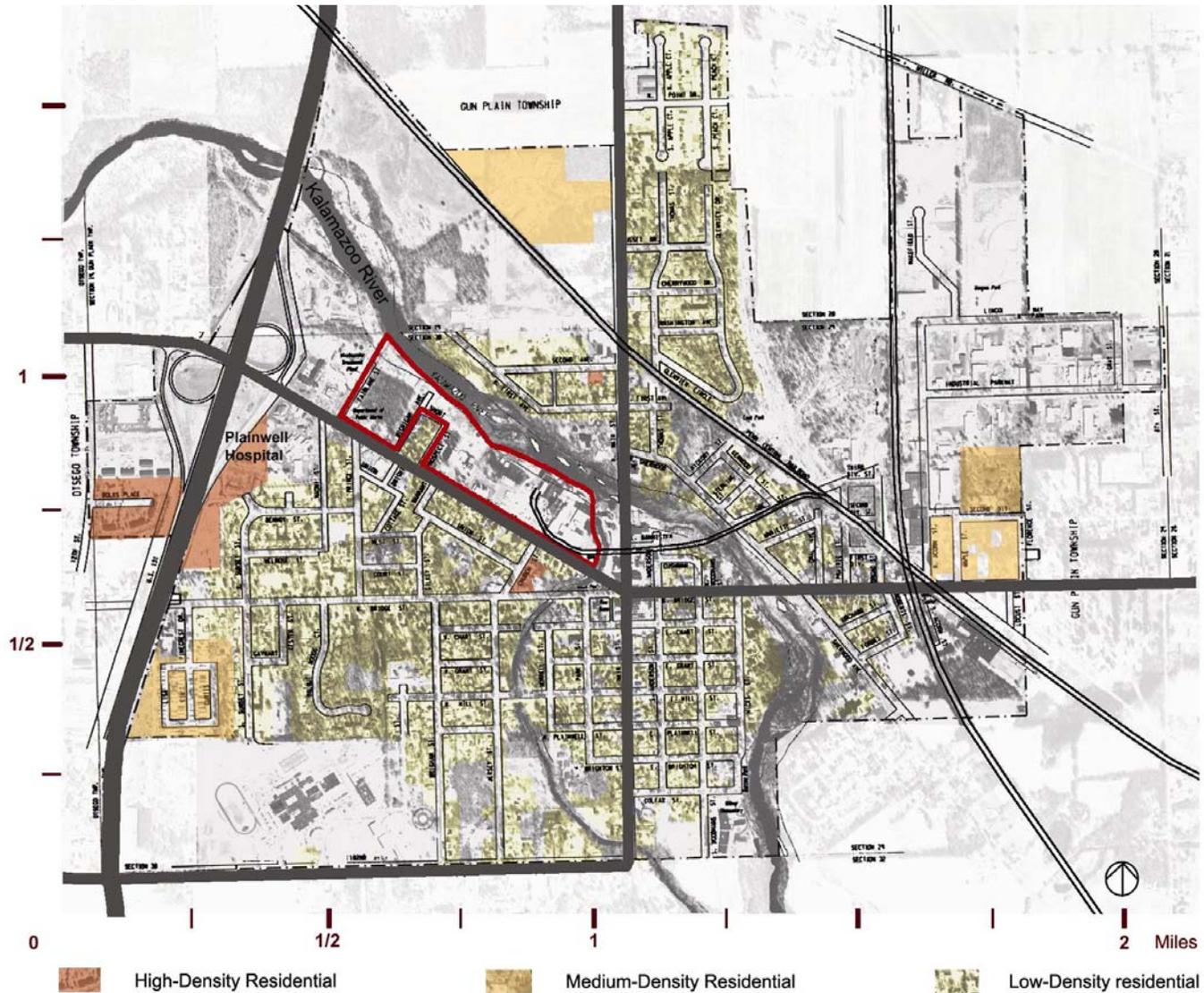
- Infrastructure as a Framework for growth
- Sustainability/ Environmental Impacts
- Flexibility
- Cultural and Natural History
- Flows, Systems and Program

# Plainwell Paper Mill

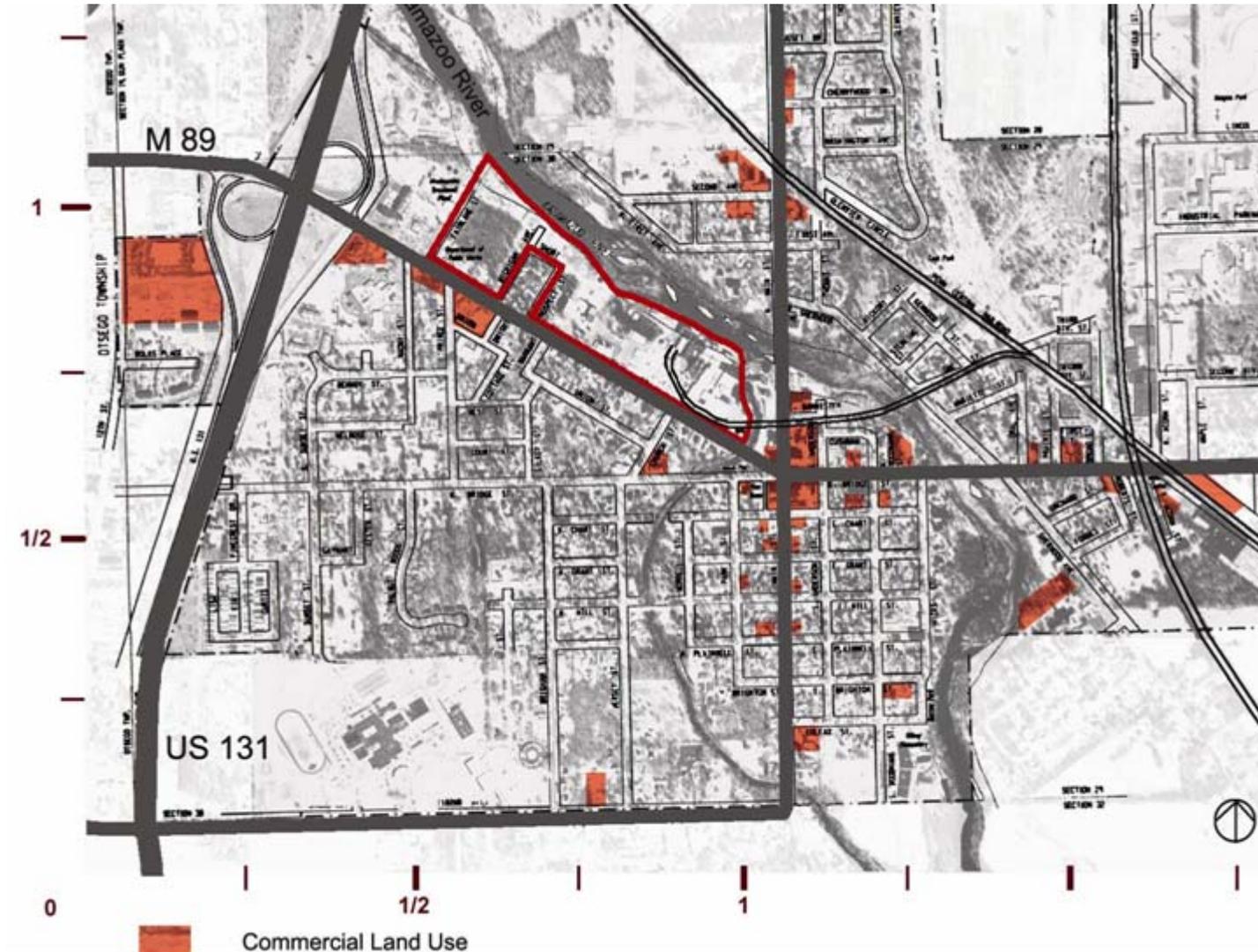
Design Site Overview and Strategies for Development



# Plainwell Paper Mill Residential Context

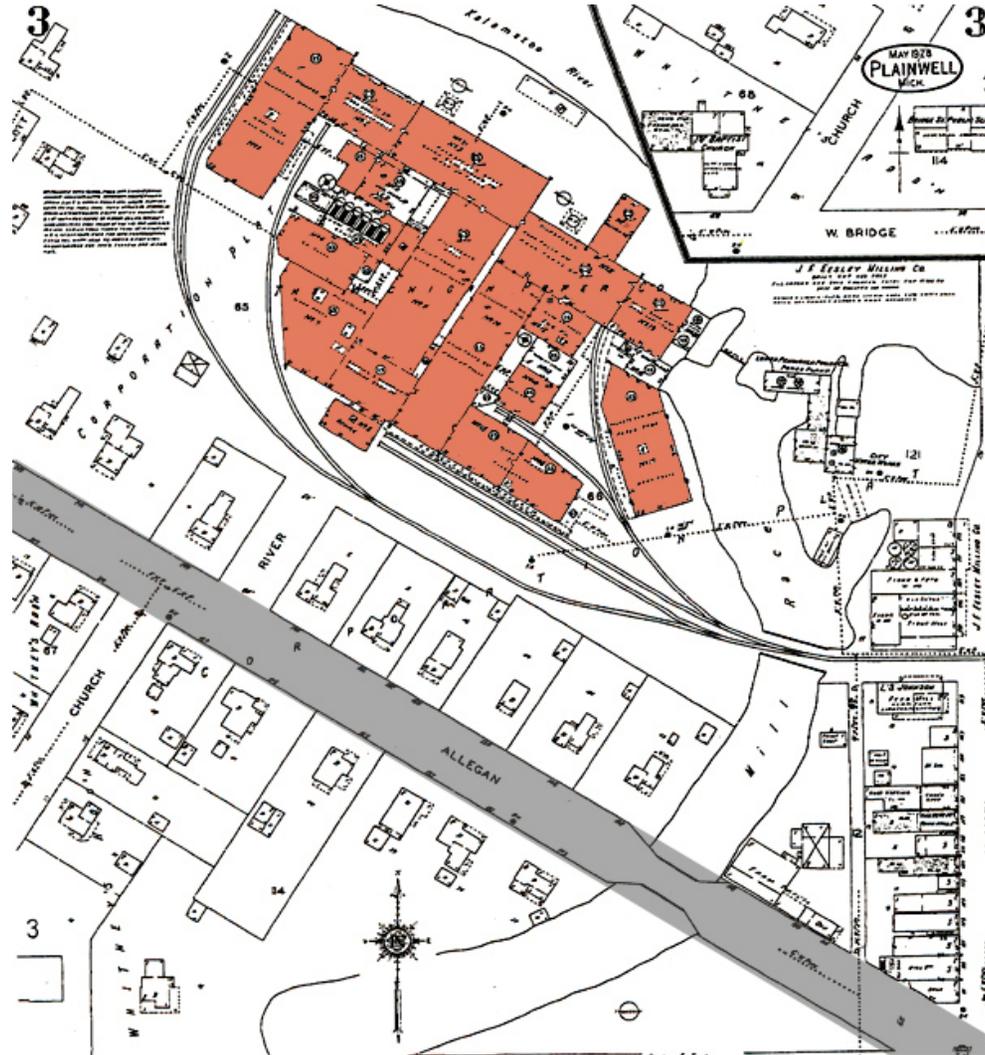


# Plainwell Paper Mill Commercial Context



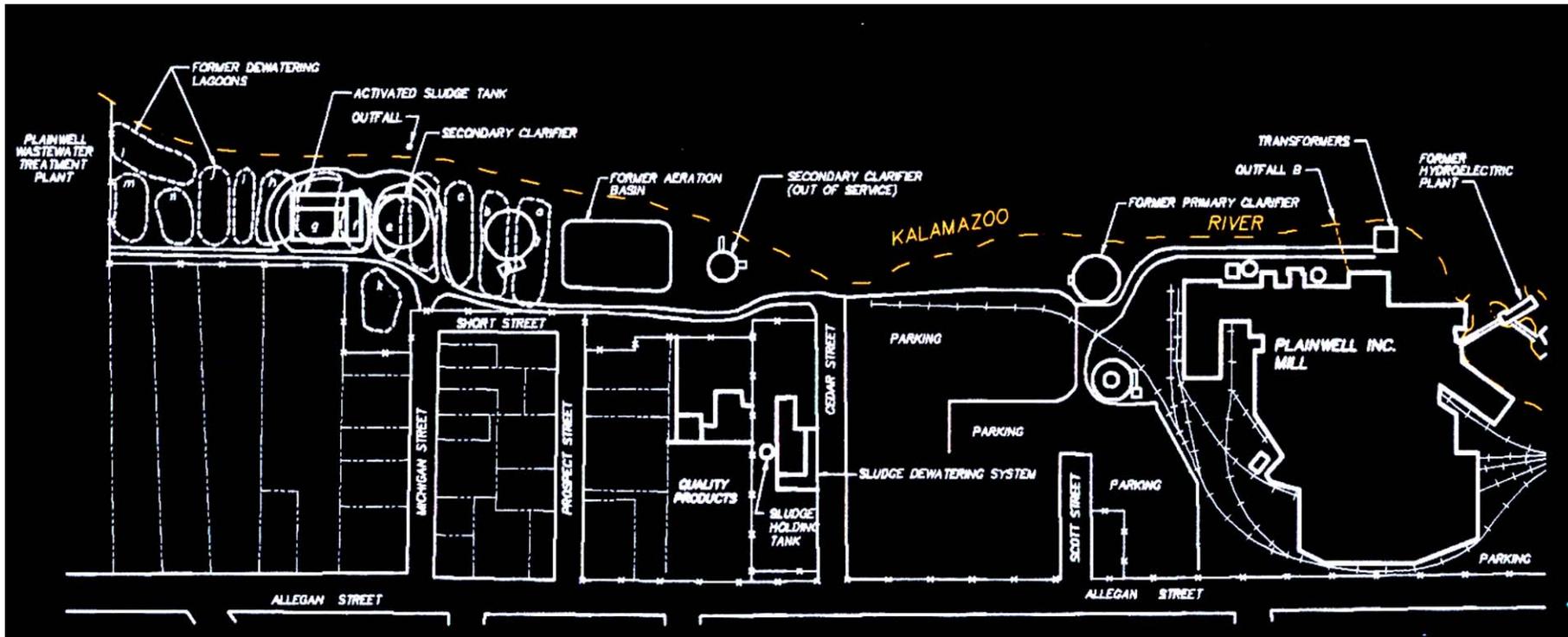
# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Historic Site Conditions - 1928



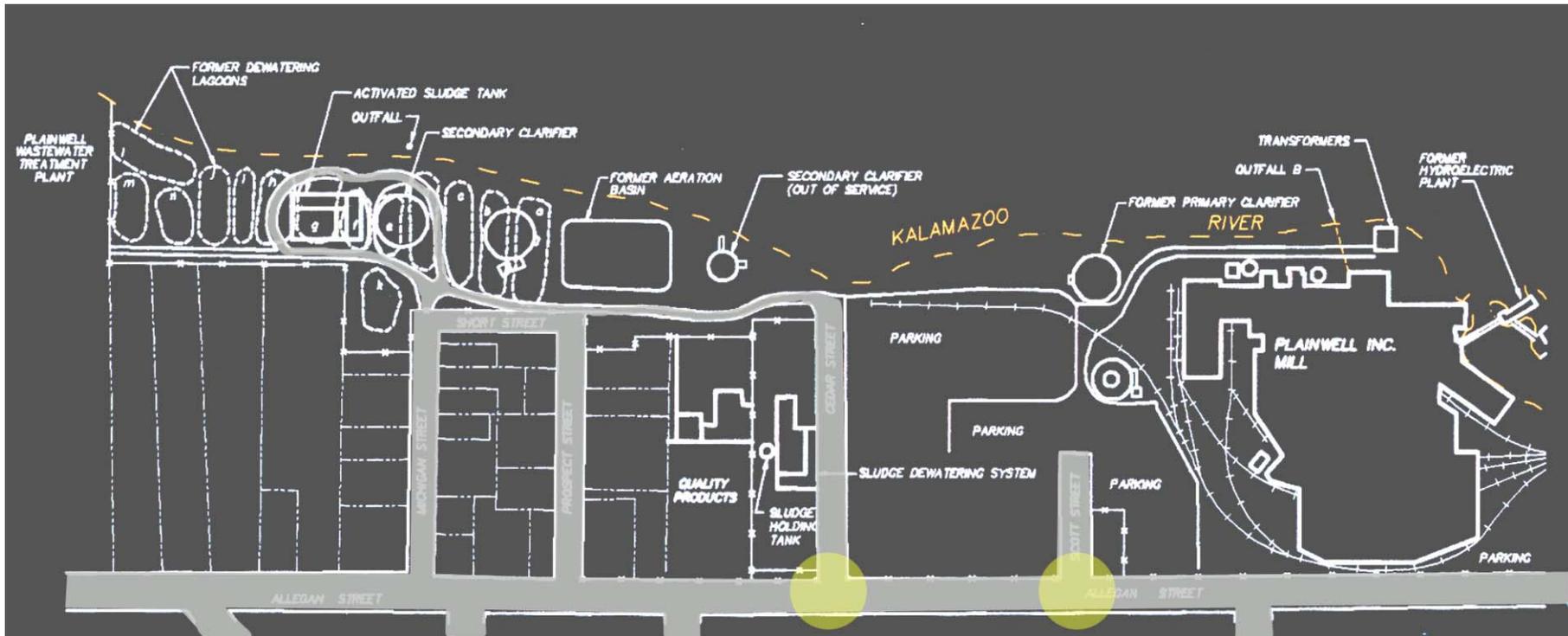
# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Existing Site Conditions



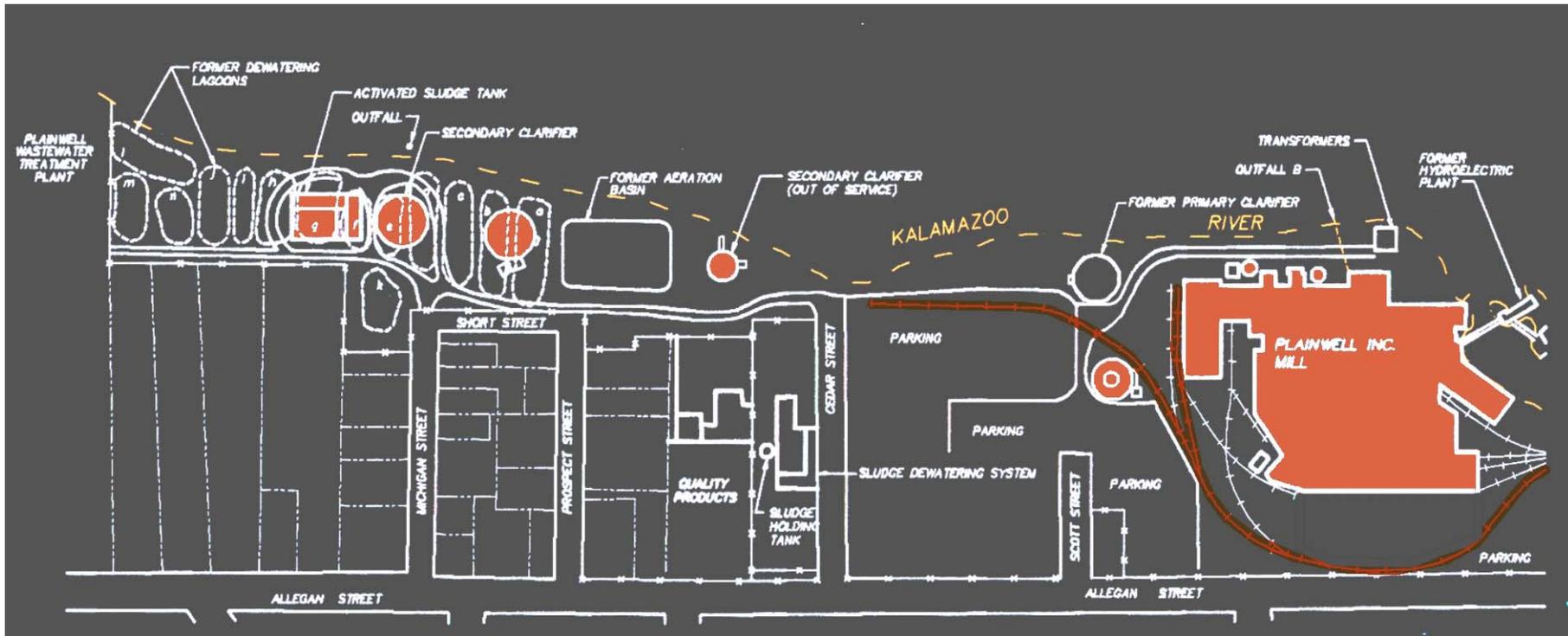
# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Existing Circulation / Access



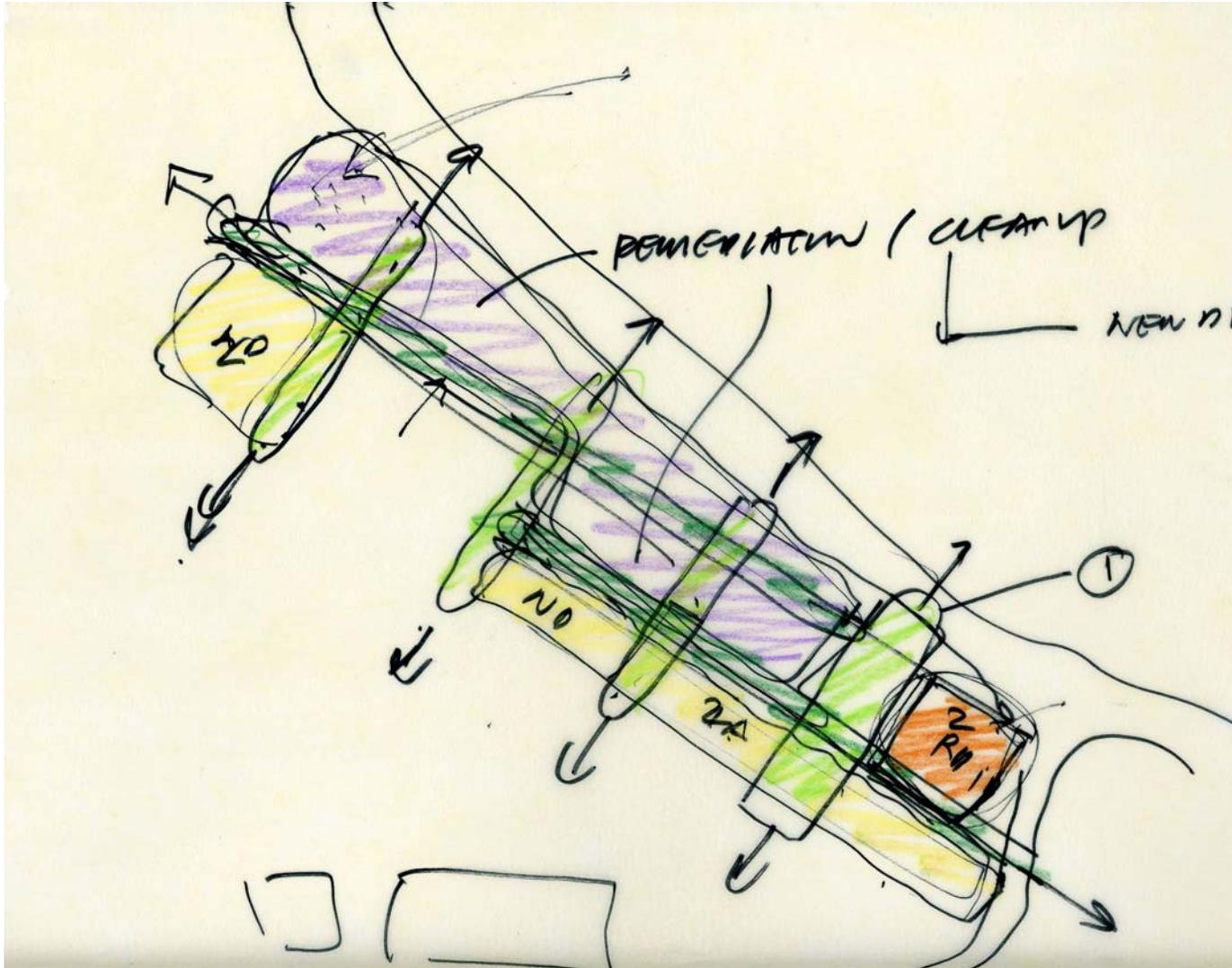
# Plainwell Paper Mill

## Key Historic Buildings / Landscape Features



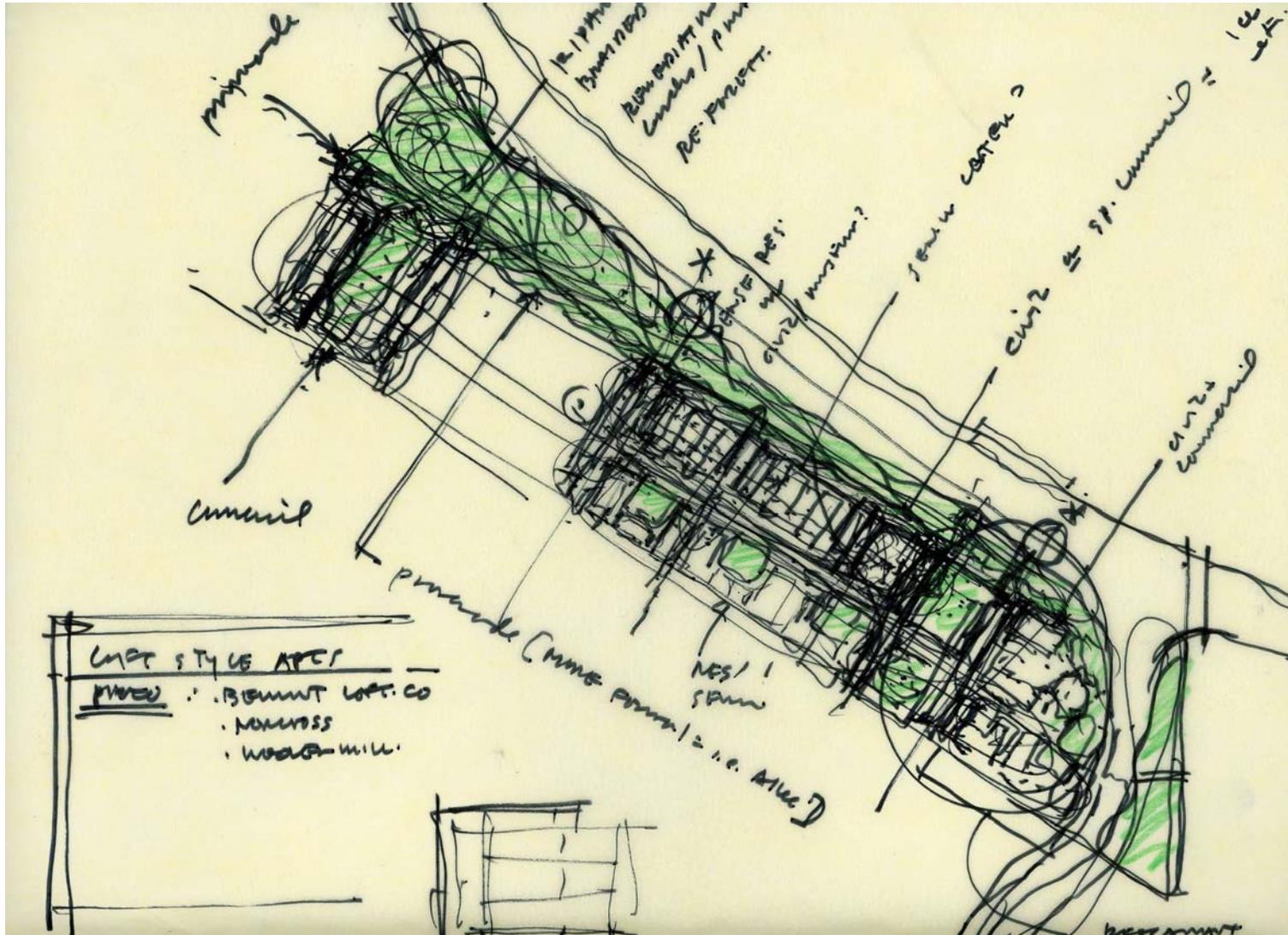
# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Site Strategies: Site Structure Diagram



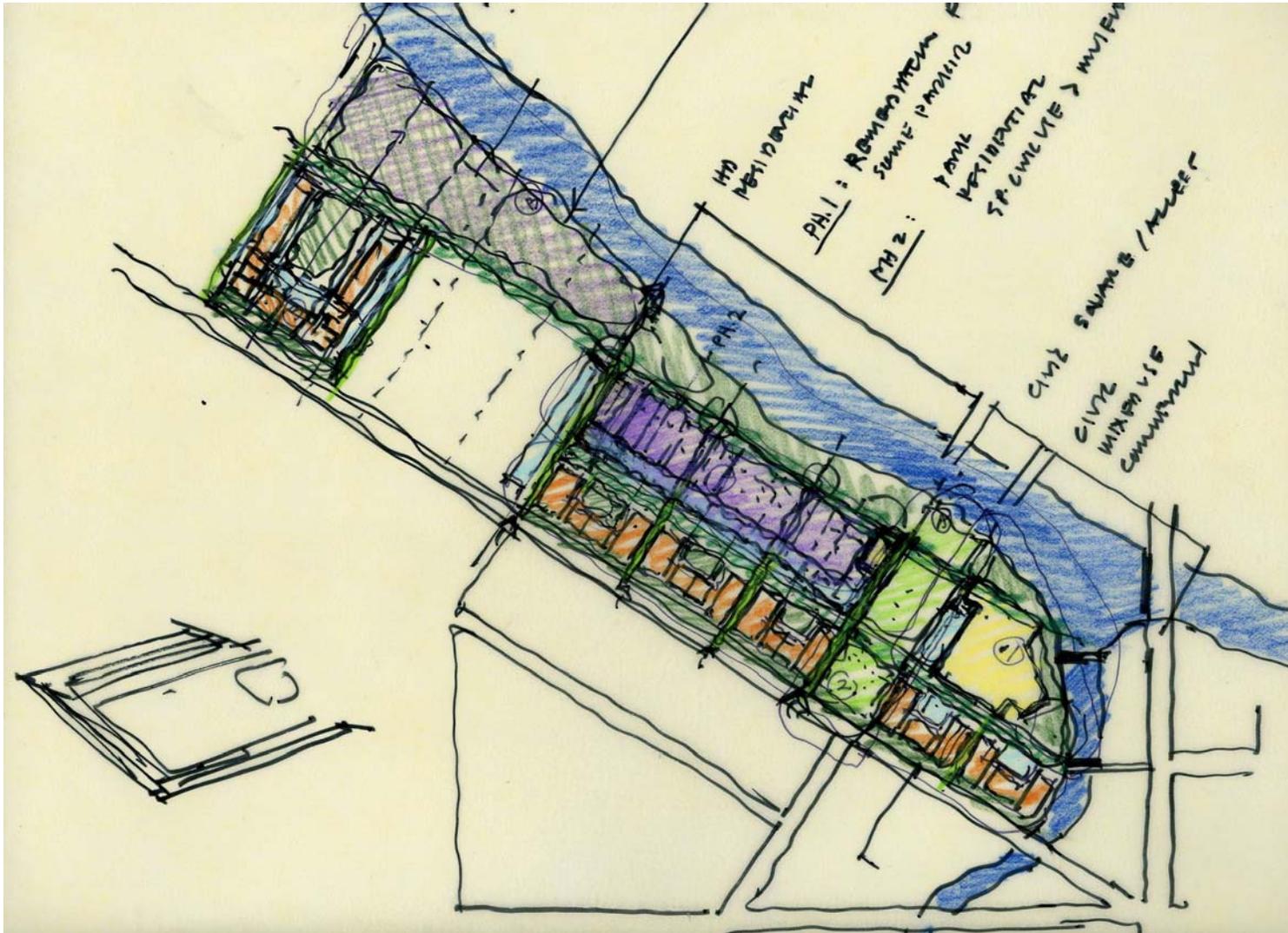
# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Site Strategies: Process Sketches



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Site Strategies: Process Sketches



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

Existing site



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

Kalamazoo River corridor



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

Original Mill building



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Primary Roads



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

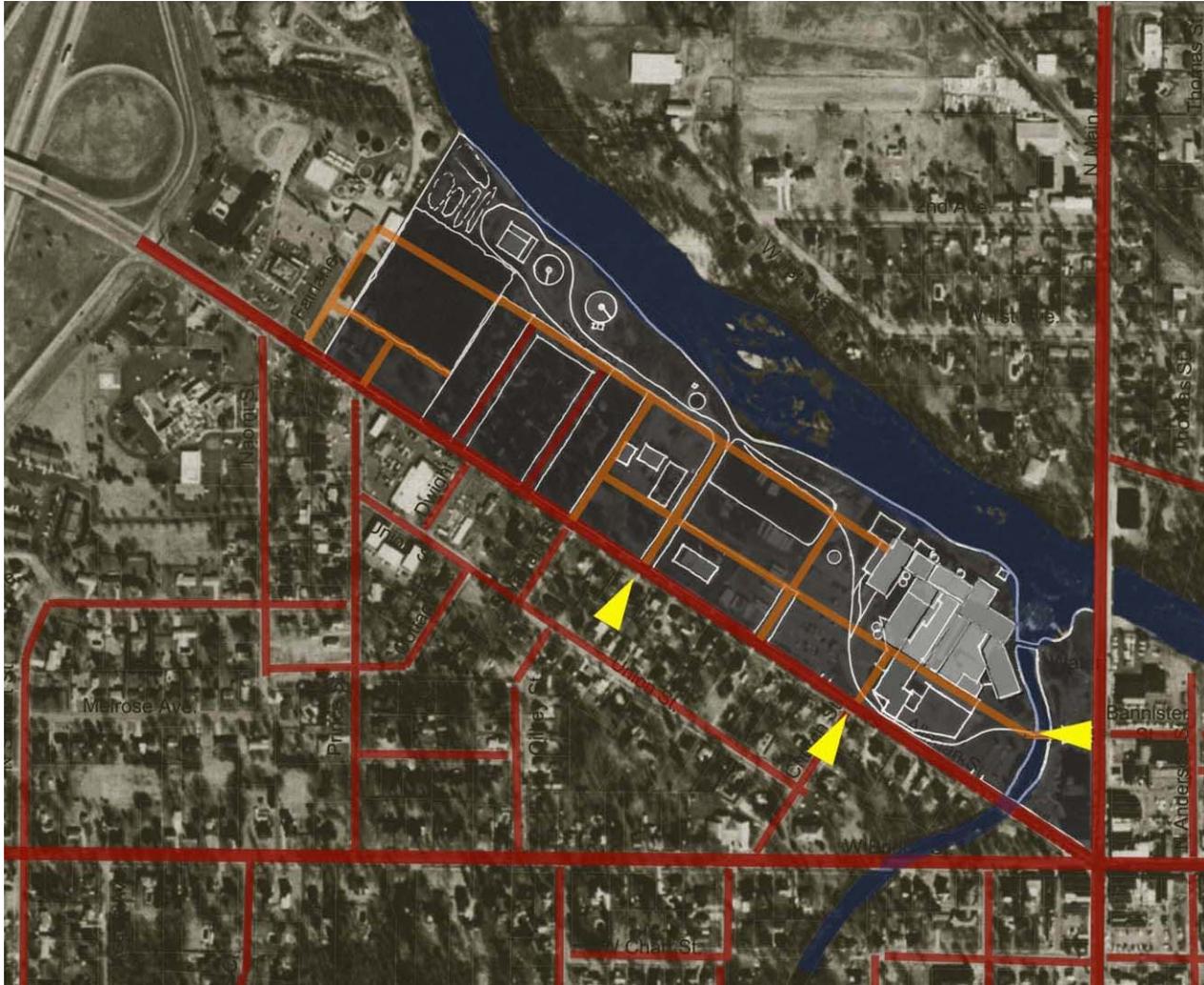
## Secondary roads





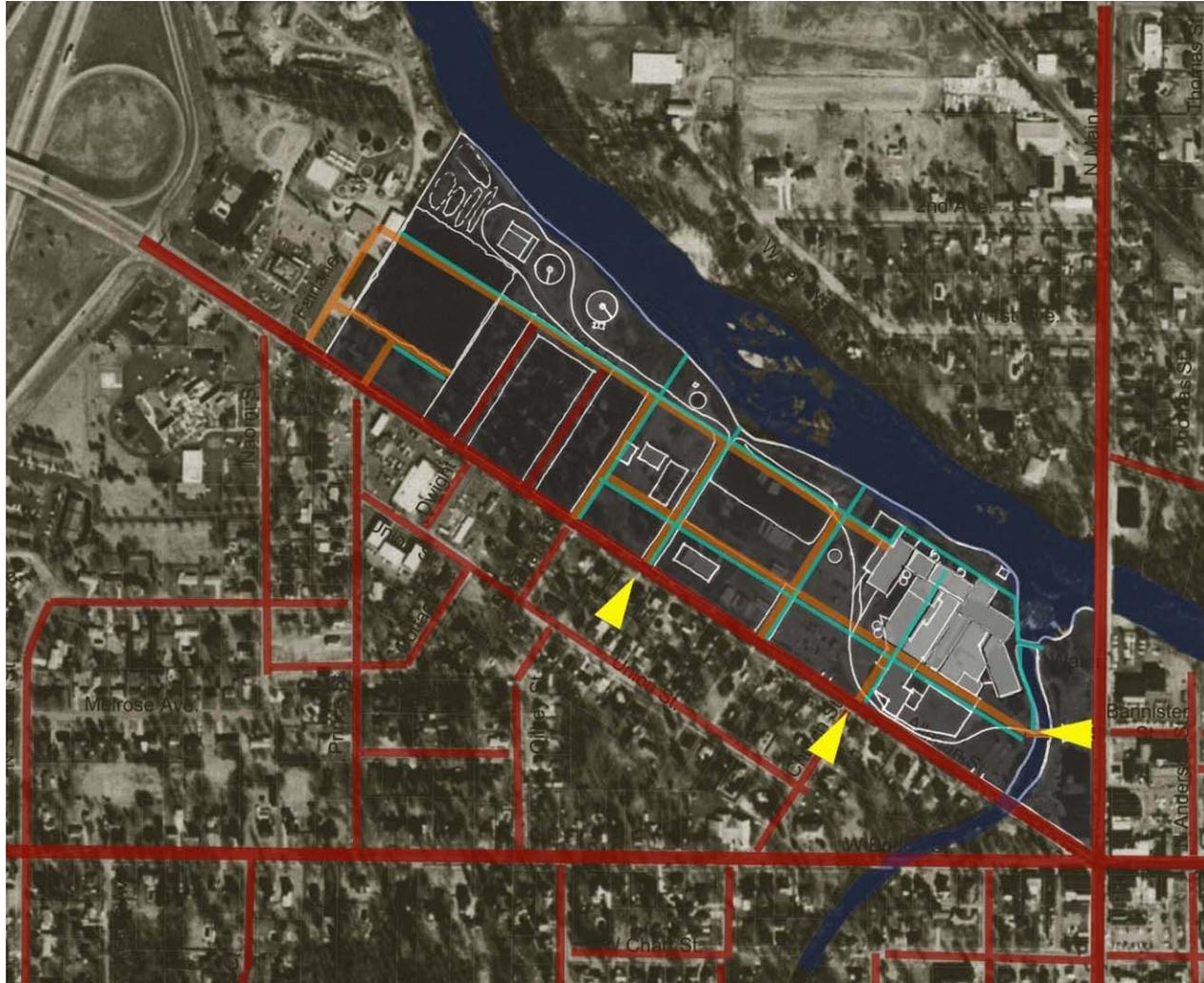
# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Internal Circulation 1



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Internal Pedestrian Connections



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Park Fabric



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Civic Square



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Parking/ Park Zones



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Primary Development Zones



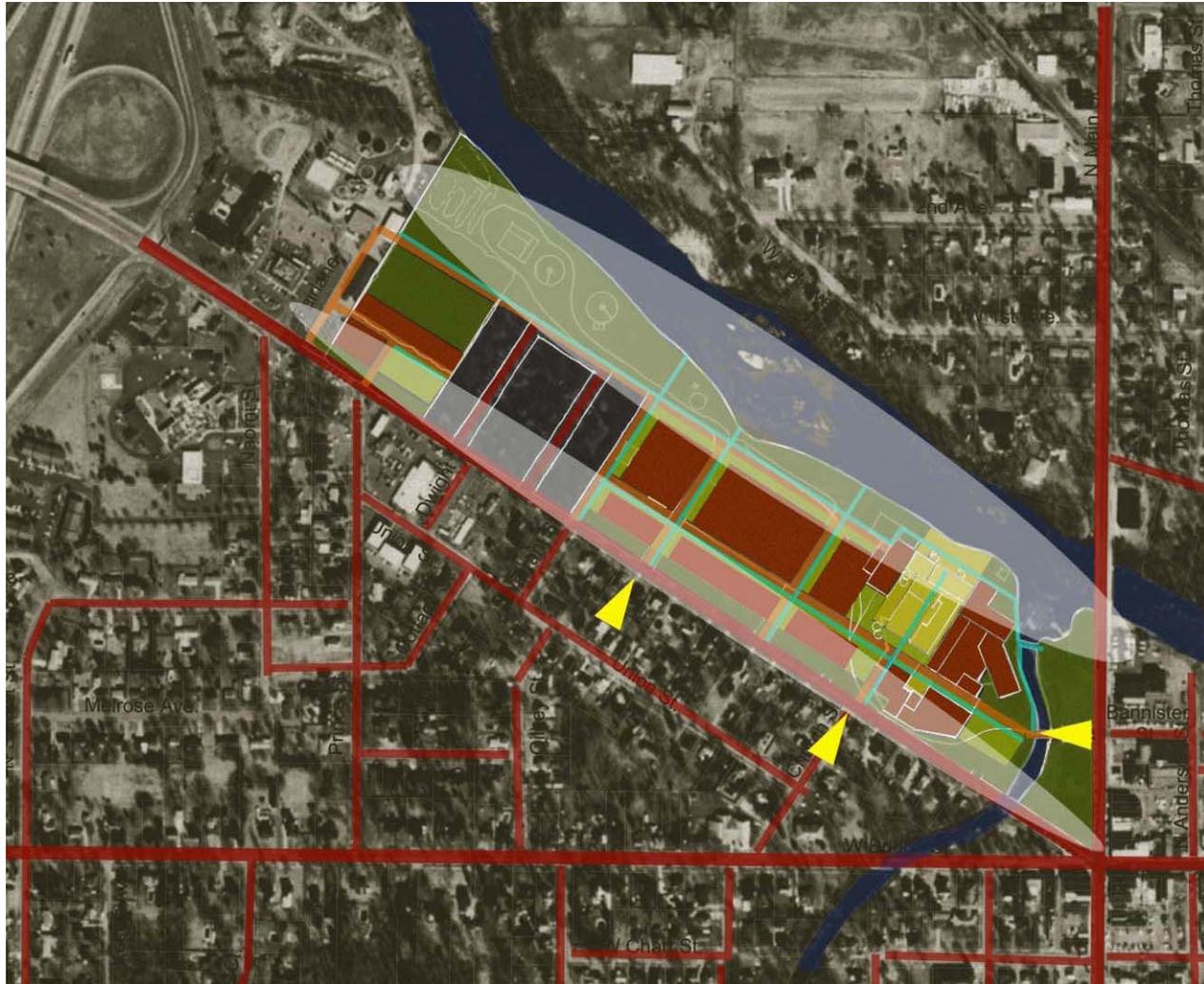
# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Secondary Development Zones



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Park Zones



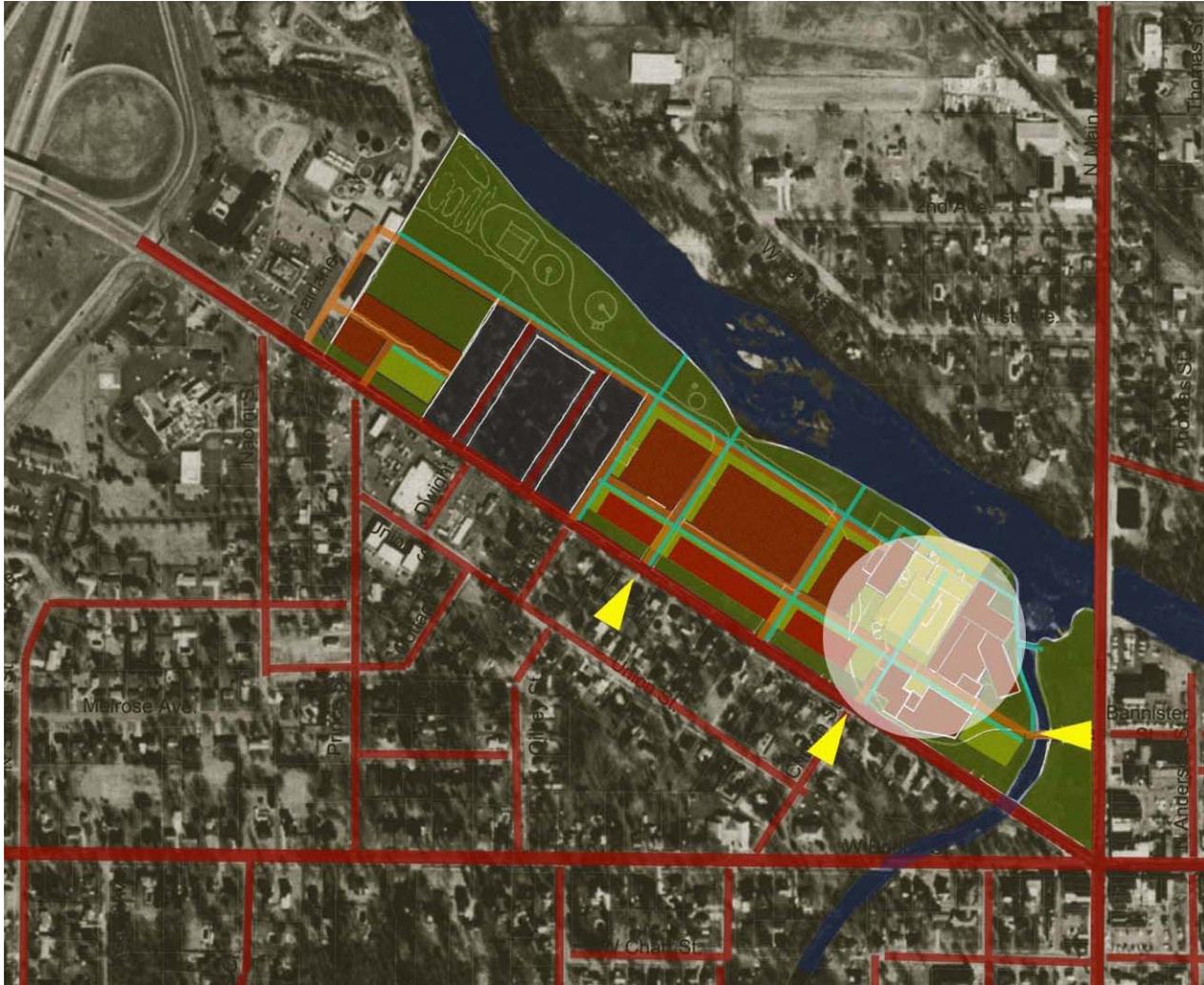
# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Development Zones



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Civic Zone



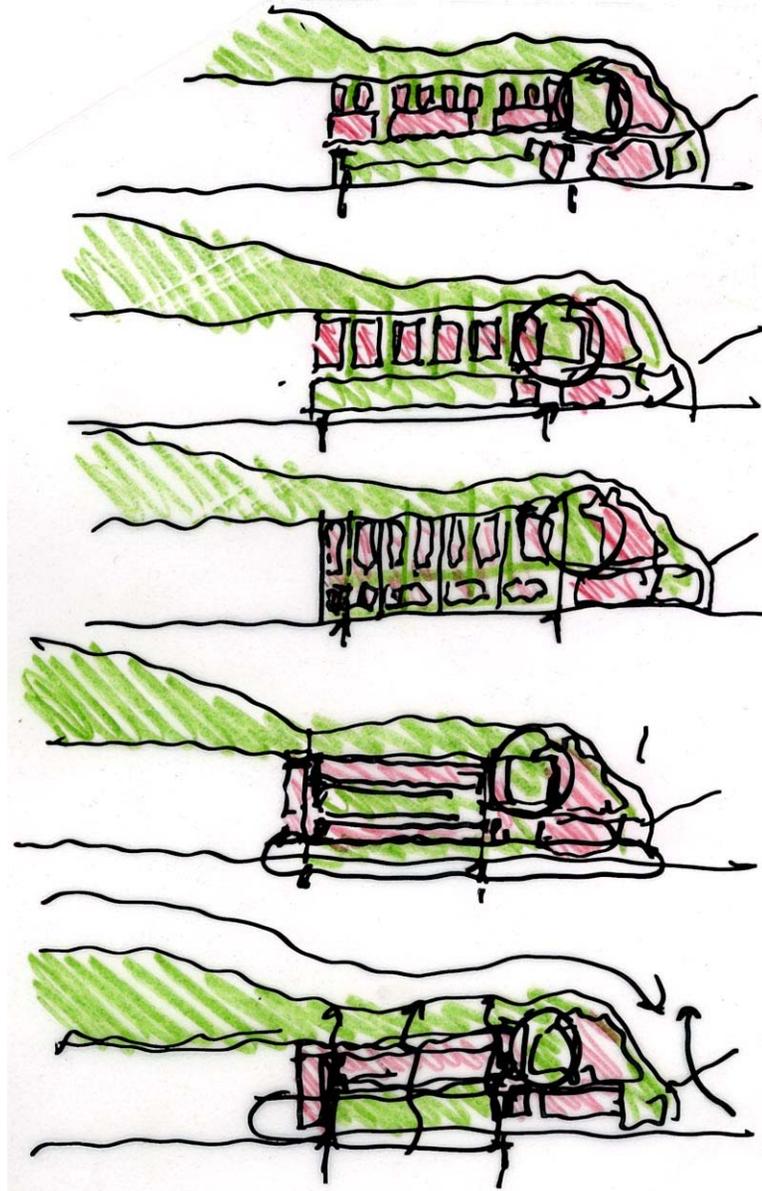
# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Civic Square

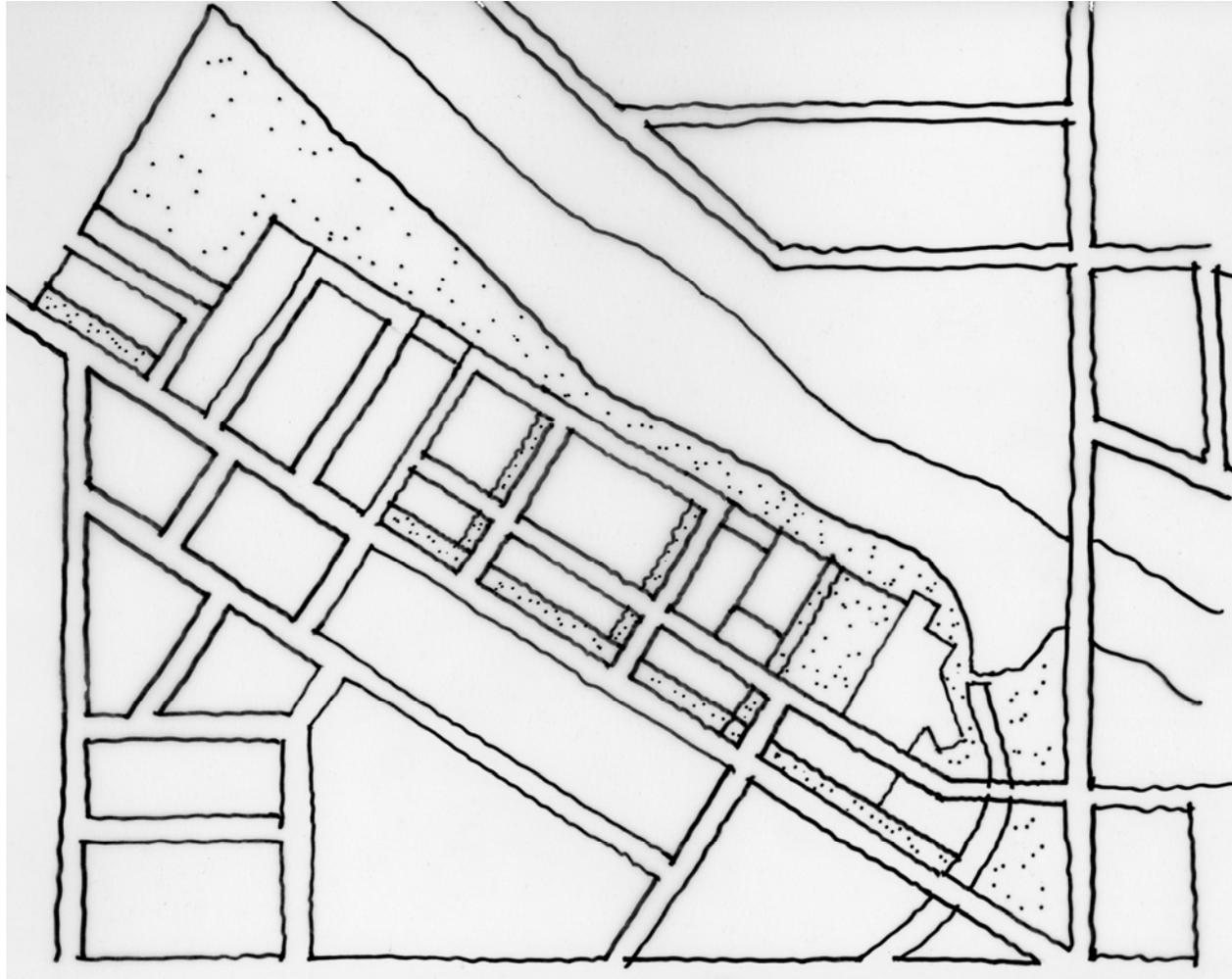


# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

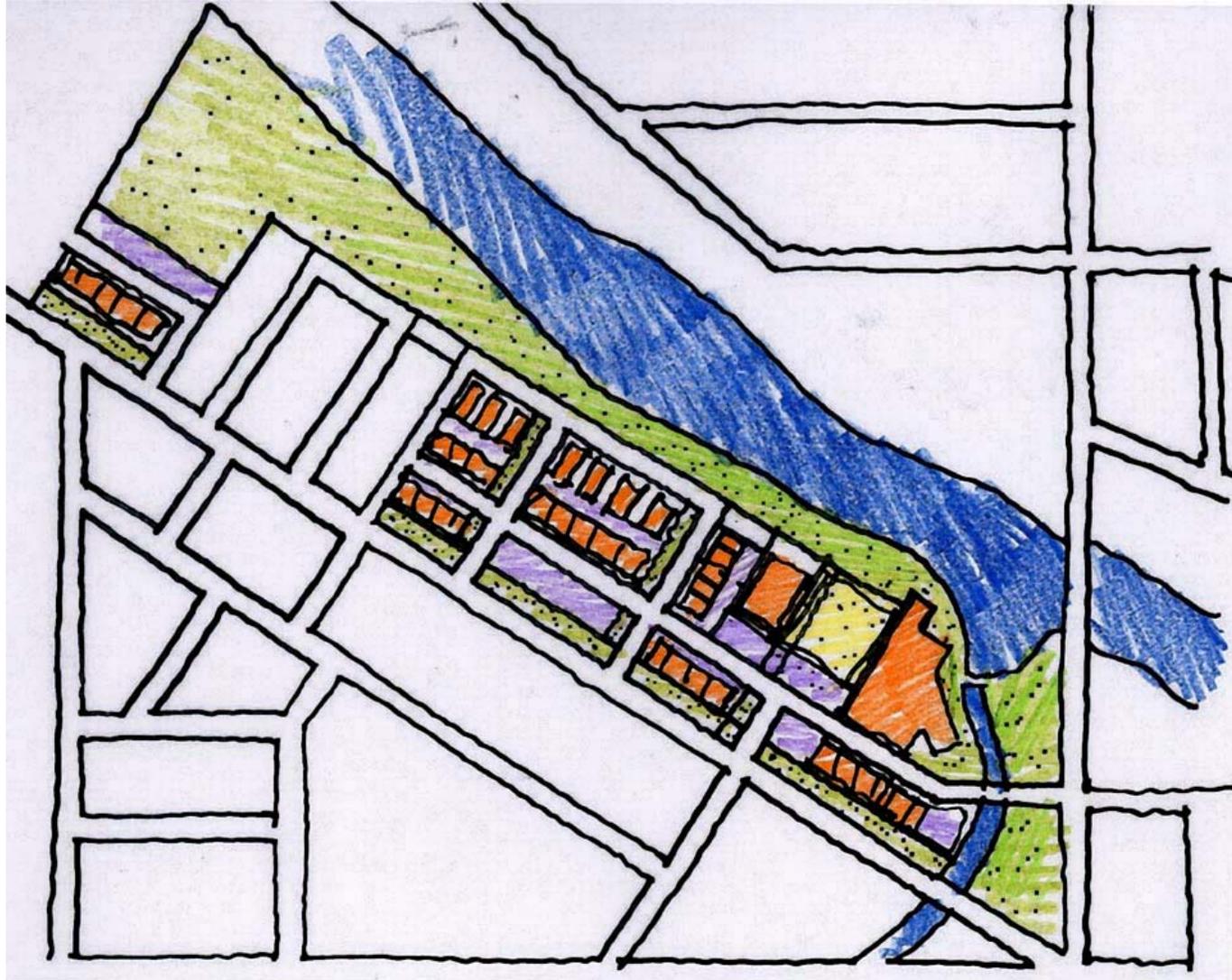
## Site Strategies



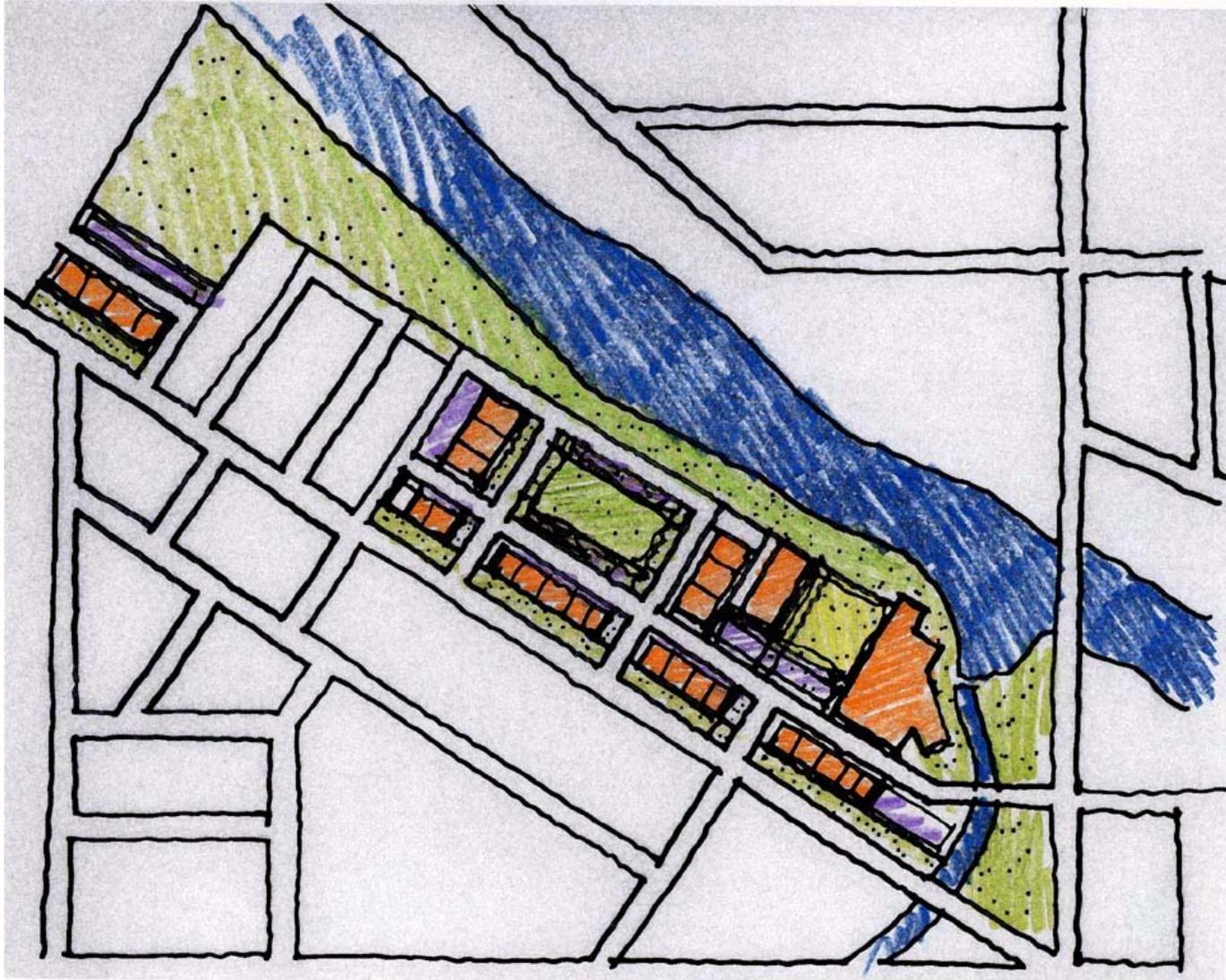
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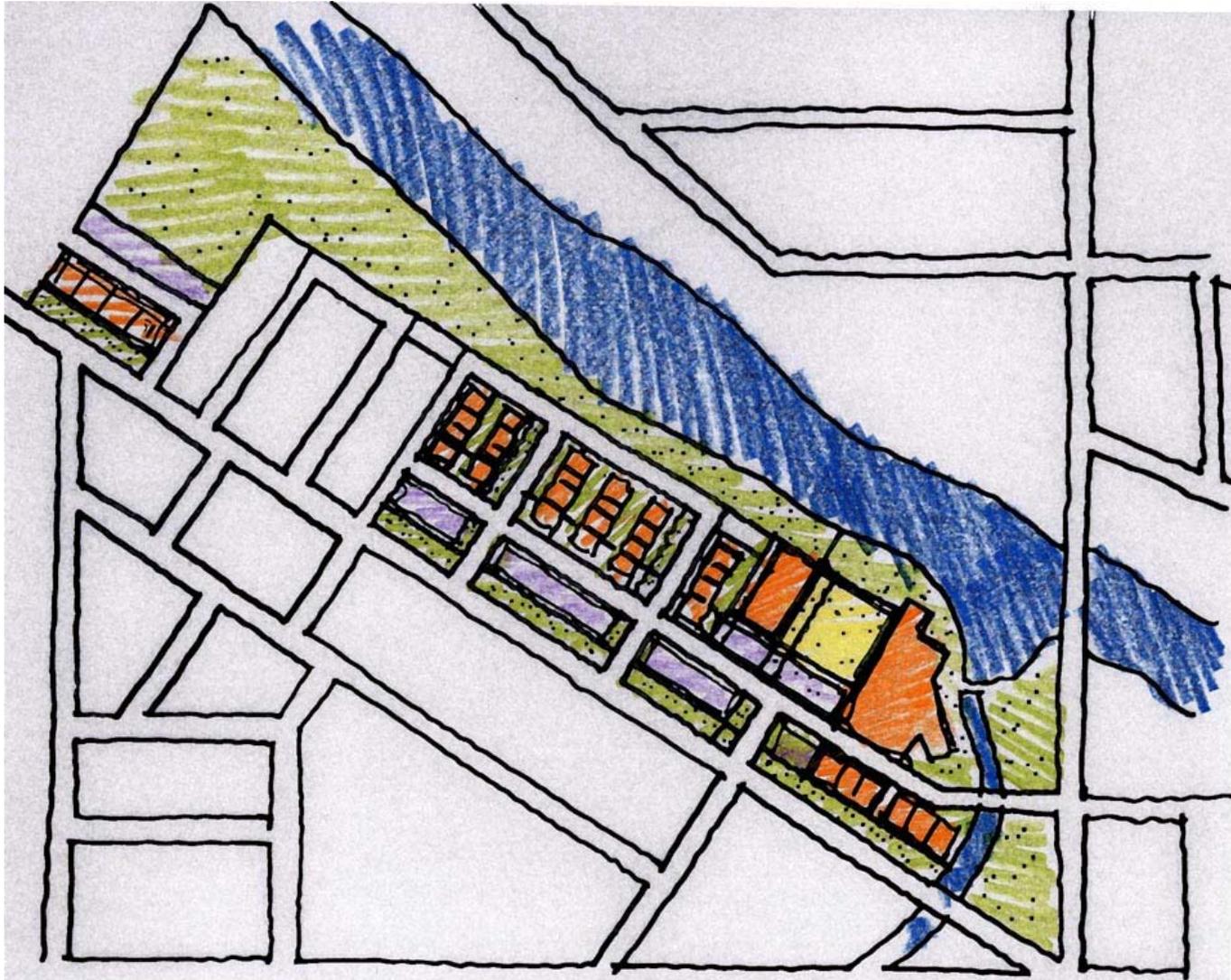
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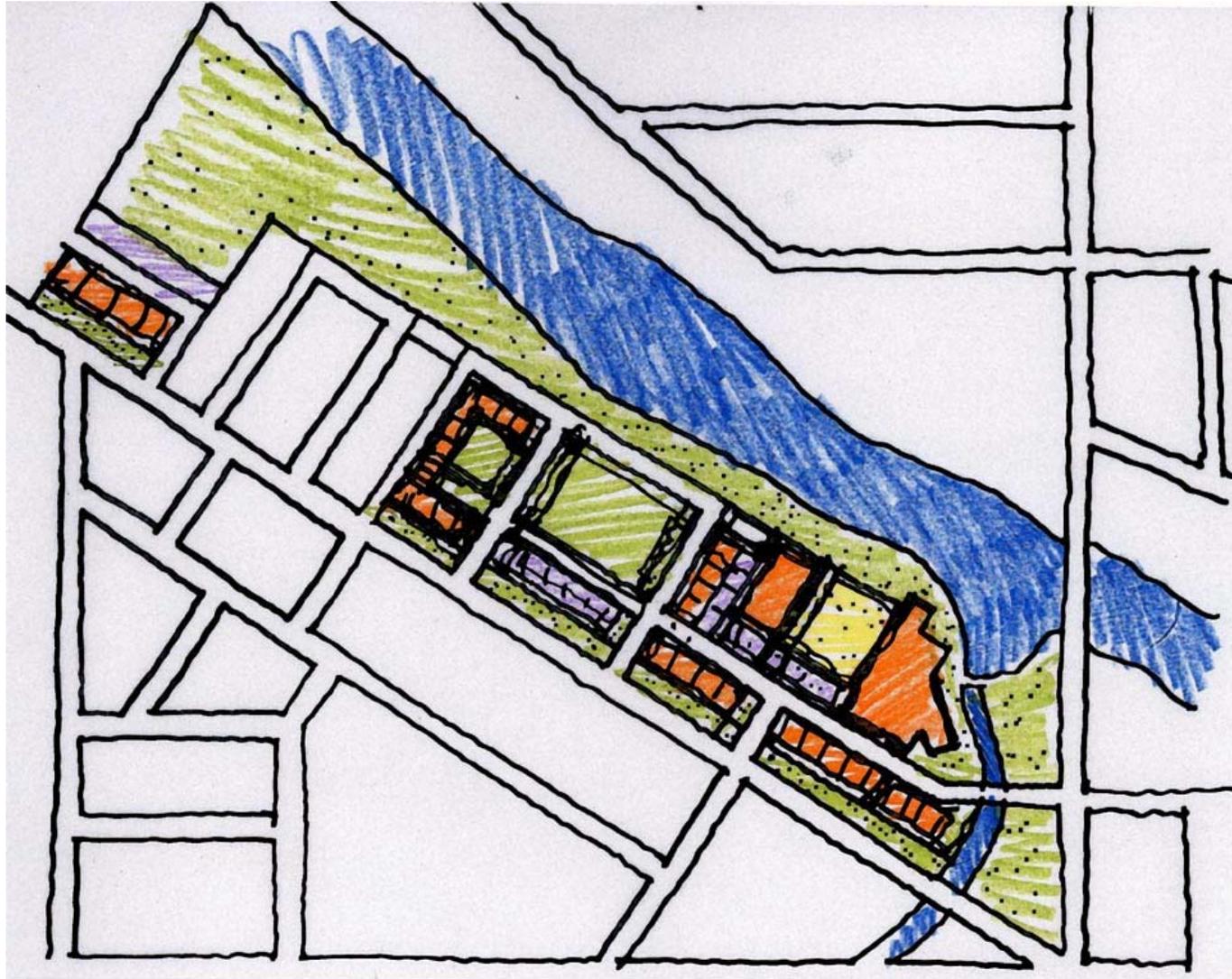
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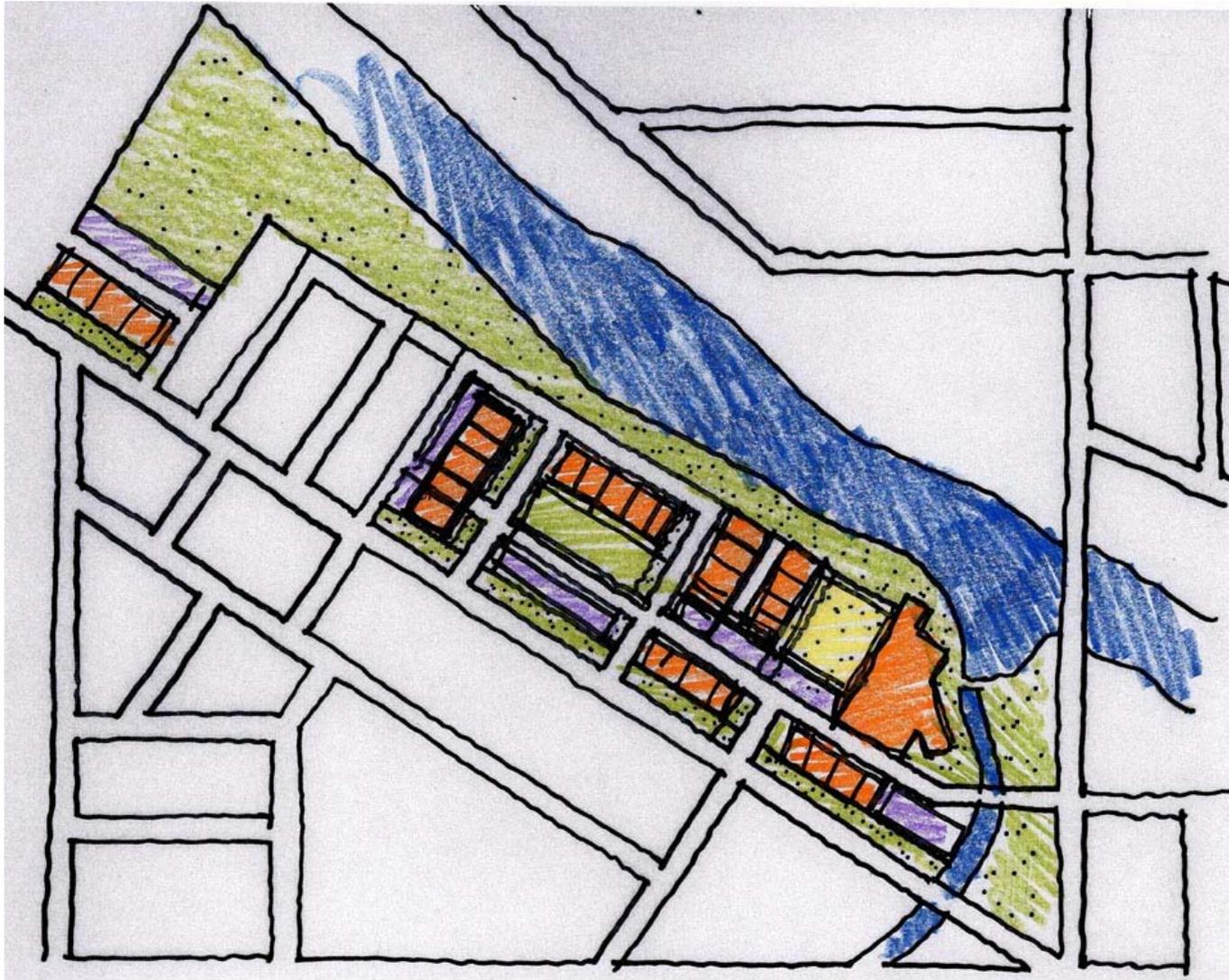
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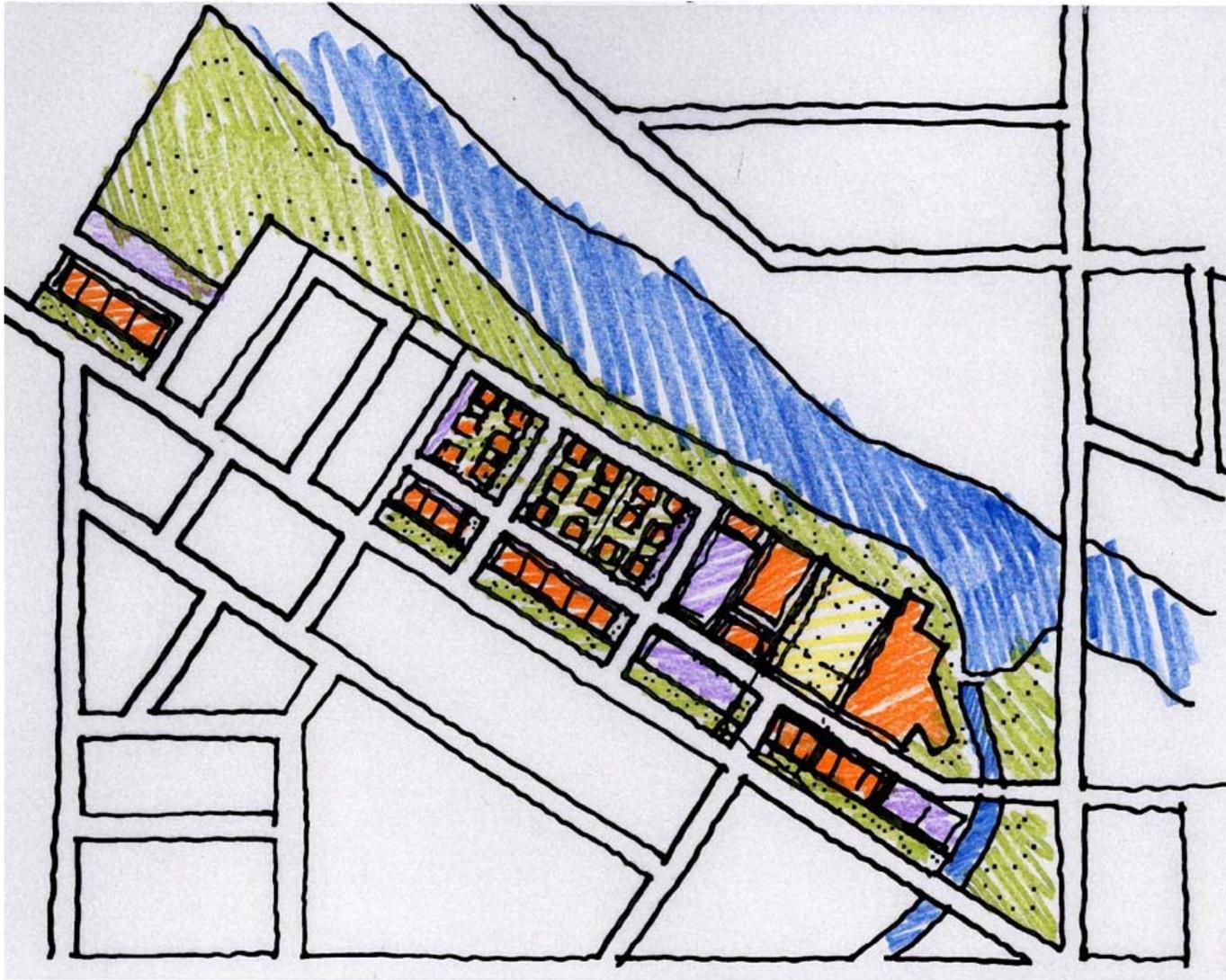
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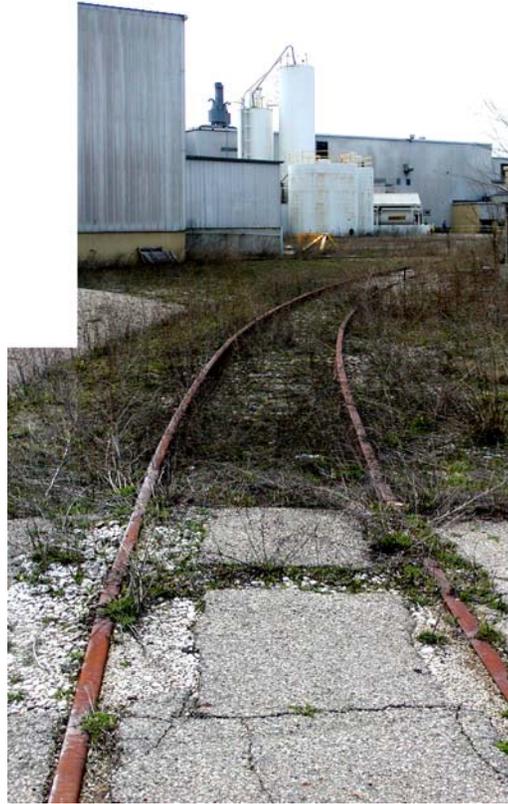


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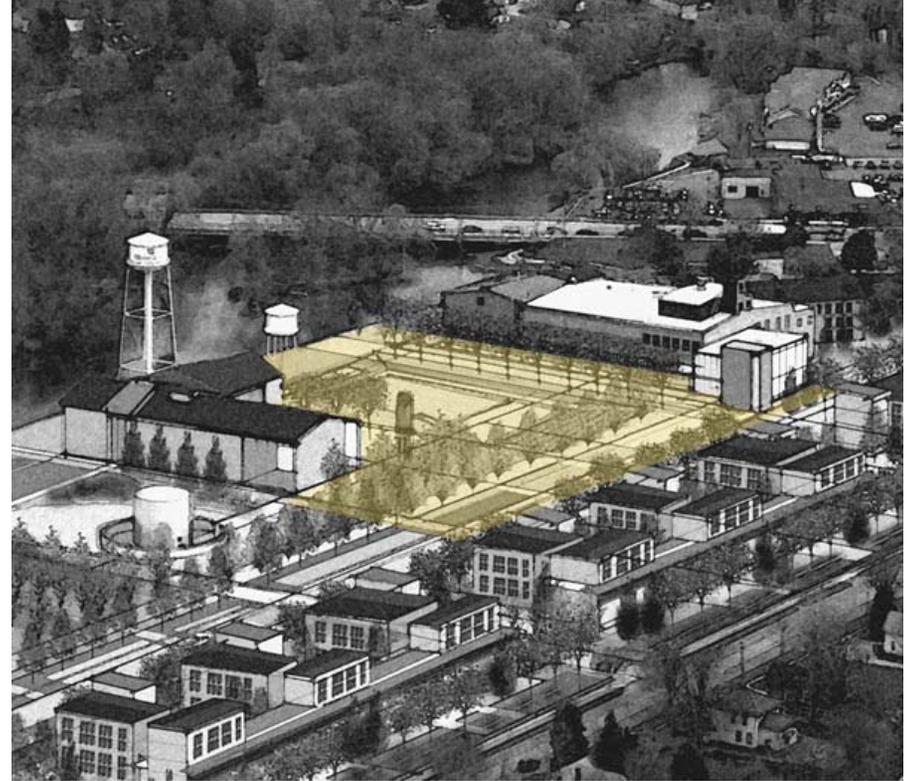
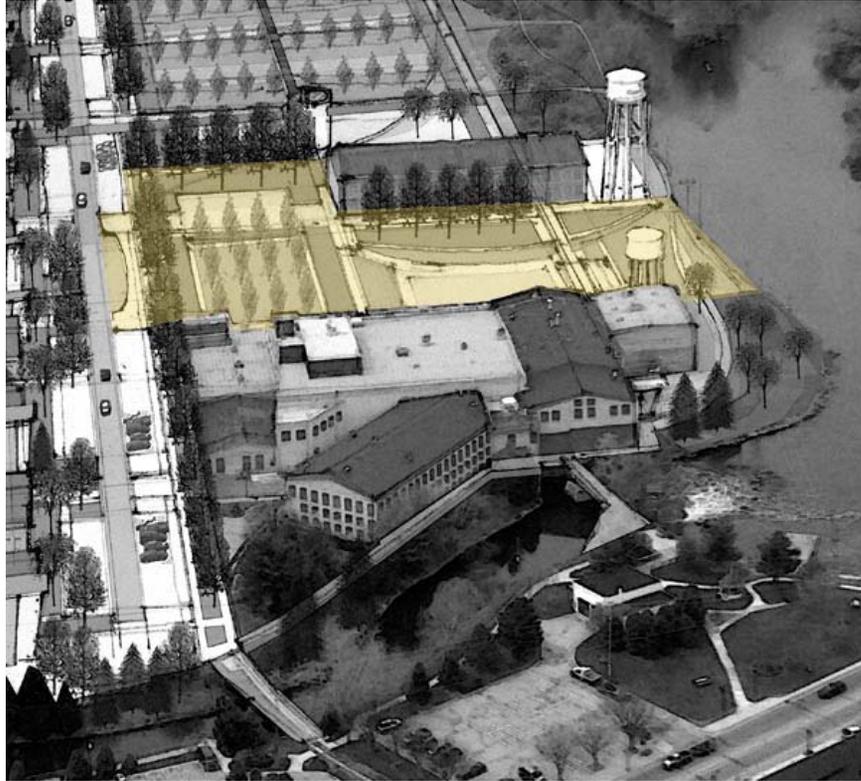
# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

Existing and future conditions



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Mill Redevelopment & Civic Core Zone



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Existing Mill Building



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Potential Civic & Commercial Core



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

Existing Mill from Kalamazoo River



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Potential Civic & Commercial Core River Connection



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Existing Site Parking Area



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Potential Circulation and Civic Core



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Mill Redevelopment & Civic Core Zone



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Mill Redevelopment & Civic Core Zone



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Building Typologies



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Remediation Zones & Riparian Habitat Park



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Existing Site Artifact



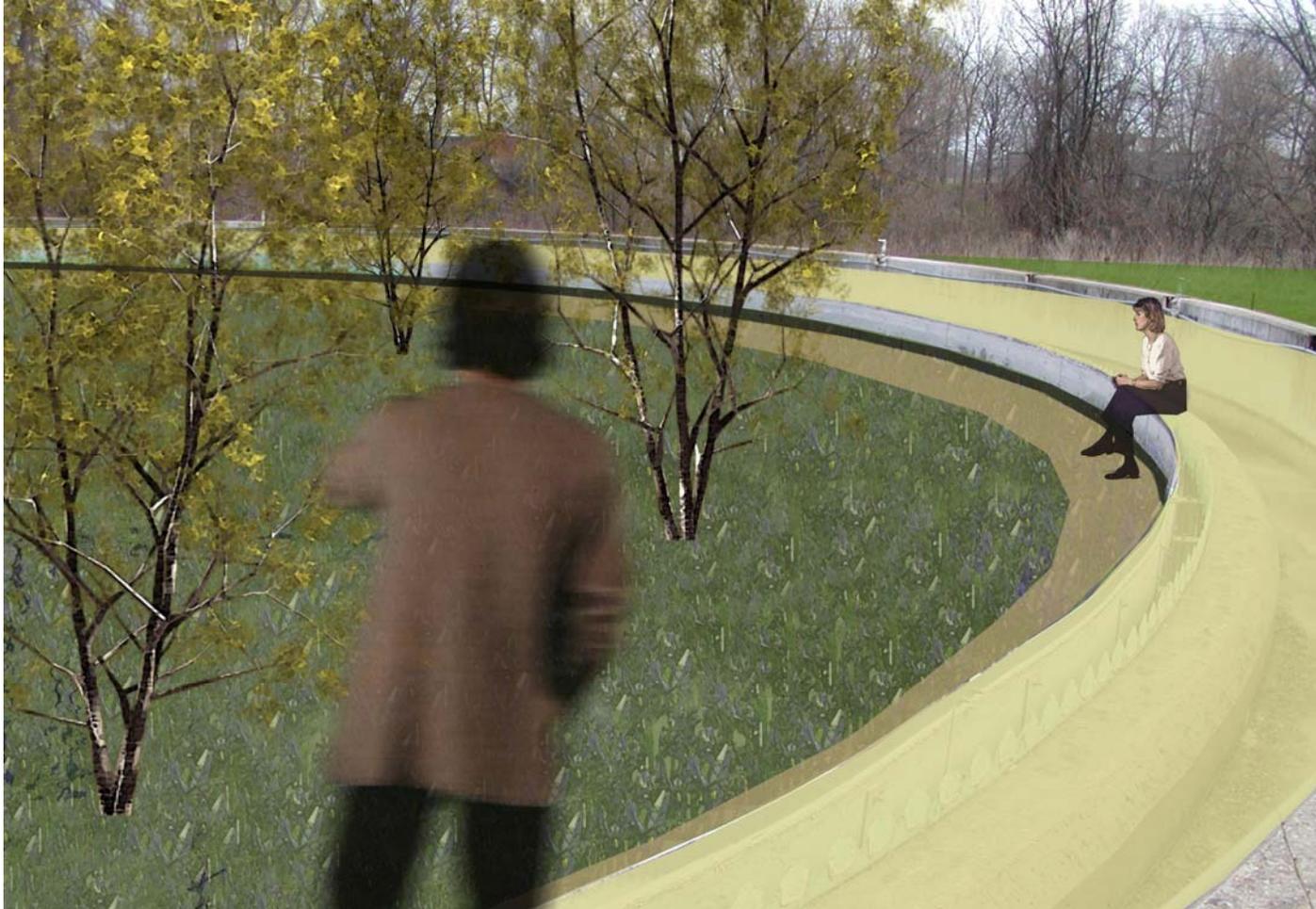
# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Potential Strategic Reuse as Skatepark Garden



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Potential Remediation Garden and Informal Gathering Space



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Existing Site



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Potential Site Trail System



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Remediation Zones & Riparian Habitat Park



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Landscape Infrastructure



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

## Landscape Infrastructure



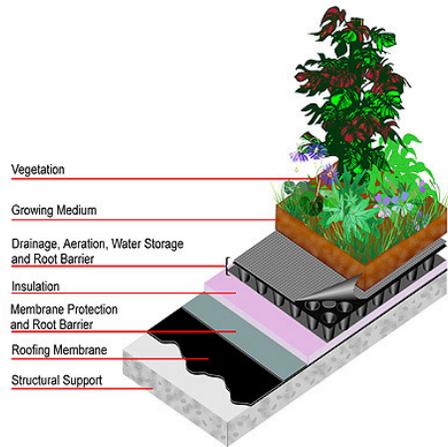
# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies



# Plainwell Paper Mill Site Strategies

Existing Site from the Southwest



# Plainwell Paper Mill

## CONCLUSIONS

- A Great place to live and work
- A place that benefits the natural environment
- A place that remembers its past
- A place that promotes a healthy future
- A place that becomes the heart of Plainwell