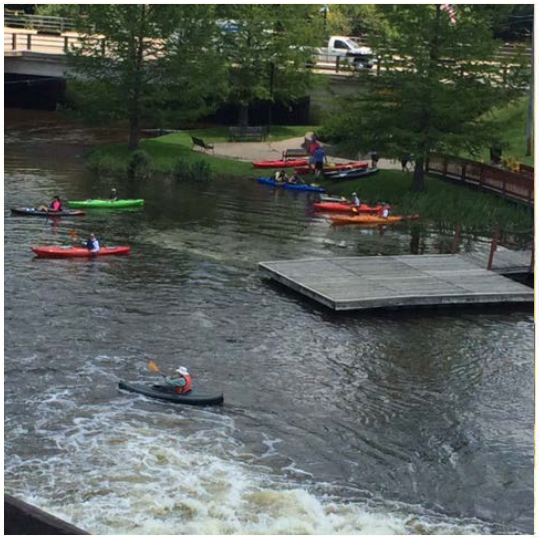
2016 Master Plan



City of Plainwell

City of Plainwell
Allegan County, Michigan
2016 Master Plan
Adopted [insert date of adoption]

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Plainwell is located on the eastern edge of Allegan County, in Southwest Michigan. The City is completely surrounded by Gun Plain Charter Township, except for a small portion west of US-131 that borders Otsego Township. With its location close to the Kalamazoo/Portage and Grand Rapids metropolitan areas, Plainwell is well-situated within a region that has enjoyed a more stable economic atmosphere than faced by many other Michigan communities.

Plainwell is known as "The Island City" because one cannot enter downtown from any direction without first crossing a bridge. The Kalamazoo River and the Plainwell Millrace form an island around the original town plat providing a beautiful and unique setting for Plainwell and making it a special place.

A Short History…

Dr. Cyrenius Thompson first settled Plainwell in 1831. He became the first postmaster in 1833. According to "A Twentieth Century History of Allegan County, Michigan" by Henry F. Thomas (1907), Plainwell was established on the Plank Road (today's Main Street) that was built between Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids in 1852. "So it happened that a Mr. Wellever bought an acre of land at the junction, in the angle between what are now Allegan and Main streets, and in the fall of 1853 began the construction of the historic Plainwell House…He did not remain long enough to see his enterprise through, but sold the land and the unfinished house to Orson D. Dunham, who late in the fall of 1853 bought forty acres surrounding the Wellever tract and shortly after became owner of the hotel site. The Plainwell House was opened to public entertainment in July, 1854."

The Plainwell House was torn down in 1891, but Plainwell was by then established as a center for transportation and commerce. The City was platted in 1863 and incorporated as a village in 1869, with a population of approximately 200. The first railroad arrived in 1868. The community adopted a new charter and became a City in 1934.

To provide power to the growing community, a millrace was constructed across the bend in the Kalamazoo River in 1856, thus surrounding the new village with water. The power afforded by the river and the millrace attracted industry, including the Michigan Paper Company, later known as the Plainwell Paper Company. The paper mill was a major area employer from its opening in 1887 until it shuttered its doors in 2000. The City purchased the shuttered mill to facilitate its redevelopment in 2006.

Plainwell has grown steadily over the years, with a population peak in 1990 of 4,057.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Although the Plainwell/Otsego area provides diverse employment and shopping opportunities, it has increasingly become a bedroom community for commuters to Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids.

Plainwell is the birthplace of syndicated cartoonist Dave Coverly, creator of the Speed Bump comic strip, character actor Ed Gale, and writer and journalist Kathleen Davis. In 2016, Plainwell native Jack Conklin was selected in the first round of the NFL draft by the Tennessee Titans.

Master Planning

Master Plans

The comprehensive plan is a policy document created by the City of Plainwell Planning Commission to guide the future growth and development of the City.

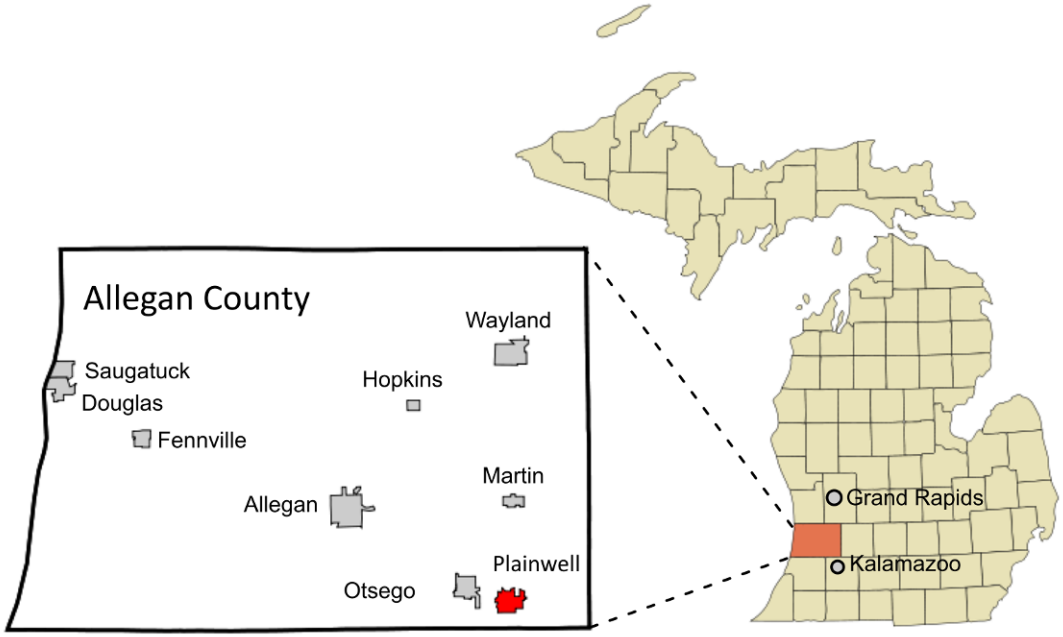
A sound master plan helps ensure that Plainwell remains a highly desirable place to live, work, and visit. This can be accomplished by preserving and enhancing the qualities of the City that the residents, businesses, and property owners consider important. The plan also allows the City to respond to new trends and approaches.

The comprehensive plan identifies and analyzes the City's physical elements to create a set of goals, objectives, 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.

Past Planning Efforts

Plainwell has a strong tradition of planning. The first community plan was adopted in 1979 and focused on the residential character of the City. In 1986 a new master plan was created which recommended expanding City boundaries and protecting historical areas. As a result, several properties and two historic districts were nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. Since that time, however, Gun Plain Township adopted a charter which has effectively prevented future annexations and boundary expansions.

In 1988, the City started a strategic planning process, which resulted in the Plainwell 2020 Plan. As part of the effort, task force recommendations addressed such diverse



Plainwell and Allegan County

topics as Historic Preservation, Health and Human Services, Cultural/Fine Arts, Recreational Opportunities, Riverfront Development/Community Beautification Economic Development, Public Safety, and Transportation/Municipal Services. One result of this process was the 1991 Parks and Recreation Plan, the City's first.

The Plainwell Master Plan was updated again in 2004. That plan focused on neighborhood character, redevelopment areas and infill opportunities.

Other Plans

In 1981, the Plainwell Downtown Development Authority was formed, and in 1985 the DDA adopted the Downtown Development Plan. The plan was updated in 1991 and most recently in 2007.

The City's parks and recreation plan has been updated every five years since first being adopted in 1991. The current plan, adopted in 2016, provides many valuable recommendations for developing parks and recreation resources within the City, as well as a non-motorized transportation plan. At the time of this master plan update, the City is currently undergoing an update to its parks and recreation plan that will include proposed park facility improvements and regional trail connections.

Paper Mill Redevelopment Plans

When the Plainwell Paper Company ended business and closed the mill in 2000, the City began a proactive planning process for its redevelopment. It was recognized early on, for industrial purposes, the building was obsolete. In 2006, the City acquired the 36-acre site to facilitate its redevelopment.

The City has been working to craft a concept for the site, including reuse of the historic brick buildings, environmental remediation, and new commercial and residential development, including open space and access to the river. As of winter 2016, the paper mill site is now a mixed-use community space serving a multitude of users such as the City Hall, public safety department, an environmental engineering company, and a farmers market. The site is well-integrated with public art, community open space, and a restored bridge.

2009 Master Plan

The 2009 Master Plan was a collaborative effort between the City and the citizens of Plainwell. A Steering Committee composed of appointed and elected officials, business owners and citizens was formed to help guide the process. A city-wide Community Survey was utilized to determine opinions about a variety of topics including the desires for the City's future. In addition to the Community Survey, several community stakeholders were interviewed to determine their perspective on community desires (one of the stakeholder groups was the high school student senate).

A public workshop was also held to focus on and further examine the initially identified planning issues and to begin testing the validity of community values, goals, and strategies.

2016 Master Plan

The 2016 Master Plan updated various components of the previous 2009 plan.

First, a technical review of the previous plan was conducted to provide initial recommendations, ensure compliance with State-required content, and evaluate the effectiveness of action items to accomplish community goals. Information about the community was then gathered in the form of updated demographics and existing land use. This information is summarized in Chapter 2, *Plainwell Today*.

A new city-wide Community Survey was initiated to gauge residents' attitudes toward various aspects affecting the City's future and to understand any changing attitudes from the previous 2009 planning effort. Survey results are summarized in the Appendix.

Following the Community Survey, a public workshop was held at City Hall on January 28, 2016. The workshop was organized around topic areas such as transportation, land use development, policy, and community values. Input from the workshop was used to formulate specific actions and policies and confirm the Future Land Use Plan, found in Chapter 3, *Plainwell Tomorrow*.

A priority of the 2016 Master Plan was to obtain the City's certification as a "Redevelopment Ready Community" (RRC) from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) as well as incorporate best planning practices to best position the City to facilitate redevelopment in targeted locations.

After review by the Steering Committee, the entire Master Plan draft was then submitted to the Planning Commission, to begin the adoption process required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. The draft plan was reviewed by the City Council and then released for review to the surrounding communities. After completing the mandated review period, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on [insert date] and the plan was adopted by the City Council on [insert date]. The resolution of adoption is copied on the inside back cover of this document, in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

Plainwell is an active and vibrant community

Plainwell is a vibrant and active community with abundant natural features, fine neighborhoods, and a viable downtown. The community has several assets not usually found in a city of its size. For instance, Borgess Pipp Hospital provides high-quality health care to the region and Plainwell's two ice cream dairies are known throughout the area (Plainwell Ice Cream continues to be voted best ice cream in South West Michigan). The Old Mill Brewpub on Bridge St. has been voted as one of the top three best restaurants in South West Michigan

To envision the future of the City, it helps to remember what makes Plainwell unique today. This chapter examines the characteristics that make the City special, and lists related planning values that help focus planning strategies.

Natural Features

Plainwell is blessed with many miles of shoreline with the Kalamazoo River and the millrace forming "The Island City." The Kalamazoo River traverses Plainwell flowing from southeast to northwest on its way to Lake Michigan. Fortunately, the flood plain formed by these watercourses is not very wide, affecting (for the most part) only those properties adjacent to the river or to the millrace.

There are a few areas of wetlands which are identified on the National Wetland Inventory as "riverine" wetlands adjacent to the river and the millrace south of Bridge Street.

Topographically, the City is fairly flat and development is not hindered by steep slopes or topographic variations. There are some areas of undeveloped land with significant stands of trees. The land east of Thurl Cook Park contains many mature trees that should be preserved to the greatest degree possible.

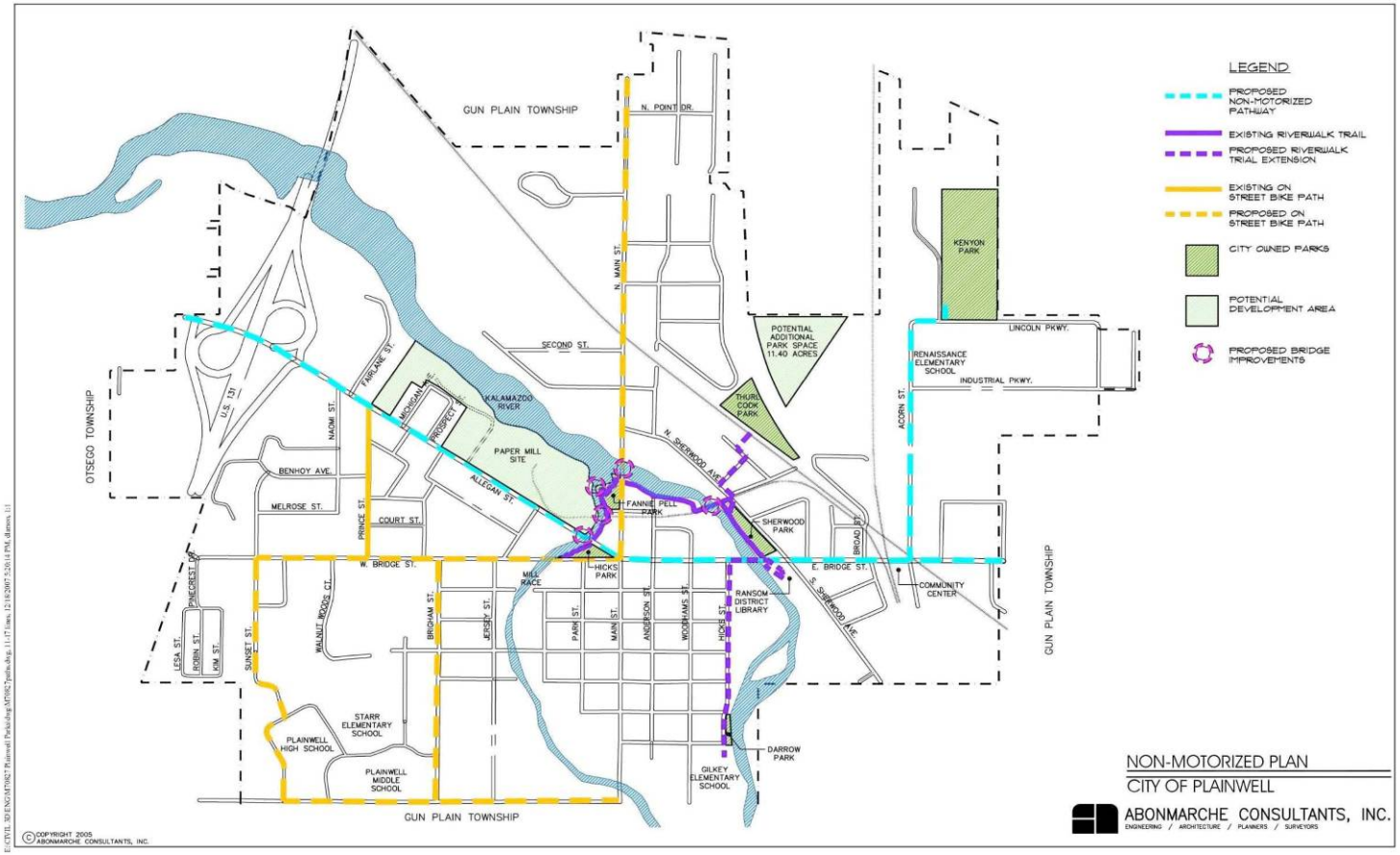
The river and millrace, which cut off some streets and result in access issues, are still key assets to the community and should be preserved and enhanced. Otherwise, natural features do not place significant limitations on development. In fact, they help create a unique setting for Plainwell.

Planning Values

Natural Features

- Respect, protect and celebrate the river and the millrace.
- Woodlands, mature tree stands, and street trees add to Plainwell's ambience and character and must be protected and enhanced.
- Being "The Island City" is unique and makes Plainwell stand out among area communities.

Chapter 2: Plainwell Today



Non-Motorized Plan (Parks and Recreation Plan, 2016) – Patrick Hudson, AICP, CFM Michigan Township Services

Transportation

Plainwell is well-connected to the West Michigan region with its location on M-89 and a full interchange on the US-131 Freeway. The freeway forms most of its western boundary, and the interchange is fully within the City limits. M-89 bisects Plainwell north and south and provides access to the many businesses to the west in Otsego Township, as well as to the cities of Otsego and Allegan. Going east, M-89 connects with Richland, the Gull Lake area and Battle Creek. US-131 provides access to nearby Kalamazoo (10 miles south) and Grand Rapids (35 miles north) and connects to Interstate 94 just 16 miles to the south. This connection affords convenient access to the Chicago and Detroit metropolitan areas.

Just to the north of Plainwell, travelers can access US-131 from 106th Street; however, this is not a full interchange. An entrance ramp allows traffic to go north on US-131 and there is an exit to 106th Street from southbound lanes. This partially configured interchange impacts traffic flow in the surrounding area and downtown Plainwell.

Major gateway entrances into Plainwell, especially from US-131, unfortunately fail to celebrate the community as a special place with an active and continually improving downtown and historic neighborhoods. For example, the small welcome sign on the south side of M-89 is lost among the several other signs and traffic control devices. Wayfinding signs are also lacking to help guide visitors to downtown or other venues.

In 2013, the City and the Michigan Department of Transportation completed its two-year reconstruction of M-89 from US-131 to the intersection of Main Street/East Bridge Street/West Allegan Street, which included reconstruction of the bridge over the Millrace and closure of West Bridge Street and a redesigned intersection of Main Street/East Bridge Street/West Allegan Street (pictured below). During that time, the closed portion of West Bridge St. replaced with a raised, brick paved pedestrian walkway.

Planning Values

Transportation

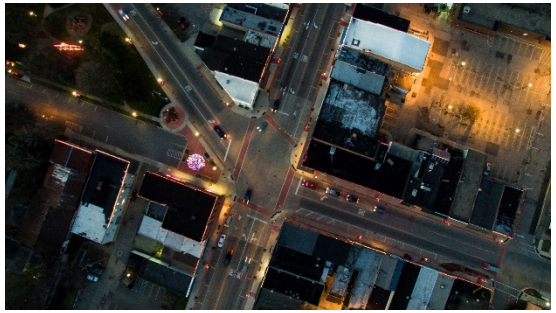
- Convenient and efficient transportation connections with the region and beyond are important and make living, working, and commuting easy in Plainwell.
- Gateway entrances should identify and better promote Plainwell as a special place.

Complete Streets

Planning the City's transportation system involves more than just moving vehicles efficiently and safely. A transportation system needs to meet the needs of all types of users – motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and individuals with disabilities. In some cases, this is accomplished with lower vehicle speeds to be supportive of bicyclists and pedestrians, while in other places, wider vehicle lanes and higher speeds may be needed to allow for movement of vehicles and goods.

The design of the transportation system also needs to reflect the context of adjacent land uses. Nationally, this approach is often referred to as "complete streets," harmonizing streets with their surroundings while interlacing transportation networks to meet the mobility needs of all users. The City should implement context-sensitive street design solutions to accommodate all users and ability levels by installing ADA-compliant curbs and ramps, pedestrian-friendly crosswalks, sidewalks of appropriate width and distance from roadway, and on-street bicycle facilities (where feasible and appropriate).

BEFORE: Traffic backup on Allegan Street (looking south) prior to intersection improvements



AFTER: Intersection improvements on Bridge St. helped alleviate traffic congestion at the intersection

Non-Motorized Transportation

The Plainwell Riverwalk begins in Sherwood Park, crosses the river on an old railroad trestle, passes behind the bandshell and follows the Kalamazoo River, passing under the Main Street bridge and over to the Millrace. The trail then follows the Millrace through Fannie Pell Park, passes under the Allegan Street bridge, and ends at Hicks Park, where it connects to the sidewalks on

Bridge Street.

Bike lanes were recently added to North and South Main Street following the reconstruction of M-89 in 2013. From Starr Road to Grant Street and Bannister Street to First Avenue, the roadway contains standard, four-foot wide bike lanes. First Avenue to Wedgewood Drive contains buffered bike lanes, and Grant Street to Bannister Street contains shared lane markings ("sharrows"). As part of the redevelopment of the former paper mill, a multi-use pathway is planned for the south side of the riverbank.

Planning Values

Complete Streets

- Non-motorized connections between neighborhoods, schools, parks and shopping areas must add to the quality of life in Plainwell.
- Support a "complete streets" approach; transportation for all types of travelers of all ages and abilities.

Existing Land Use

Plainwell is almost entirely developed, with a central downtown, well-kept historic neighborhoods, and newer development in more outlying areas. Commercial activity is focused downtown and on arterial streets that lead to the downtown; employment uses are concentrated in the northeast.

Vacant former Harding's Market, Downtown Plainwell

Waterfront

Although Plainwell is split by the Kalamazoo River and millrace and inter-connected by only two bridges, there is generally not a sense that neighborhoods are isolated or unduly divided. The Kalamazoo River and millrace currently present a prime opportunity for additional waterfront development. With the on-going redevelopment of the former paper mill, a new park and trail have been constructed along the Kalamazoo riverfront east of the Millrace to capitalize on its unique location on one of the City's natural assets.

Public/Quasi-Public

Plainwell's schools, including athletic and recreation facilities, are concentrated at the Plainwell School Complex in the southwest corner of the City; parks and community facilities are located throughout. While the City's compact layout makes it easy to reach Plainwell's parks and schools from surrounding neighborhoods and the downtown, implementing the non-motorized transportation recommendations would enhance those connections.

Commercial

Downtown, while facing some vacancies, remains relatively stable, and buildings are currently being rehabilitated or restored. Besides the Mill, the former Harding's Supermarket is the largest vacant building in the heart of downtown. Creative approaches to enhance the viability of retail

and potential alternate uses will need to be explored.

The approaches into Plainwell from the north, east, and west are all characterized by commercial development. Commercial activity on North Main Street outside of the downtown is generally auto-oriented, such as service stations and auto supply/repair shops. On M-89, approaching from the east, there is a unique collection of buildings concentrated at the rail crossing. These old grain mills and railroad buildings have been redeveloped into unique shops, offices, and a microbrewery and are located nearby Plainwell's famous ice cream parlors.

The approach on M-89 from the US-131 interchange is oriented toward highway traffic with gas stations, convenience stores, and a hotel. The Borgess-Pipp Hospital is also located here, but its entrance and approaches are not well defined. Further east, Harding's has taken over the old Big Top Market and has renovated the building and relocated the historic neon Harding's Market sign once located along North Main Street to in front of its new location on M-89. However, there are several vacant lots along the corridor and the transition between this commercial area and the residential neighborhoods leading into downtown is not particularly successful.

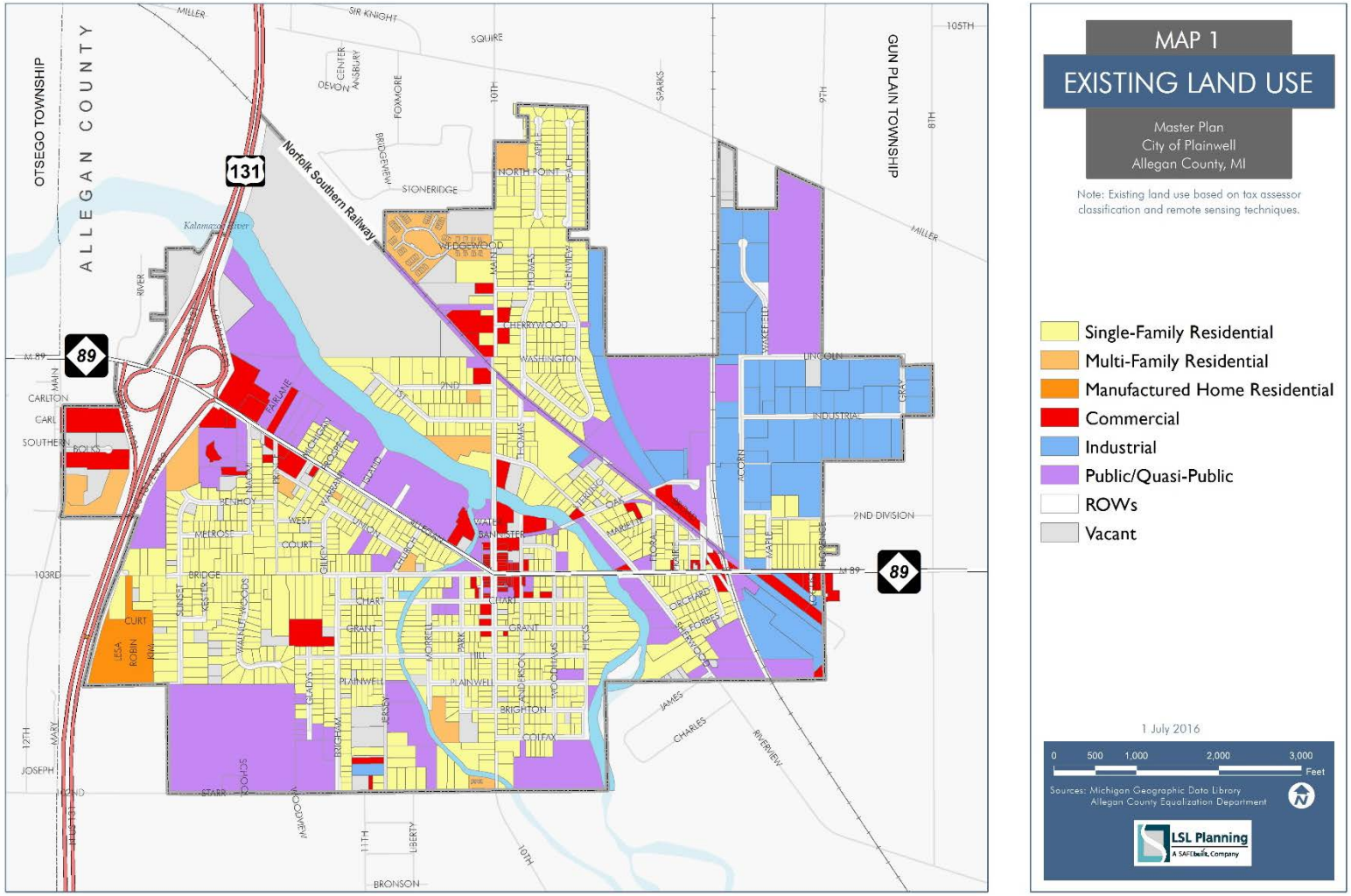
Map 1 shows existing land uses. Significant vacant parcels in the City include a large wooded parcel north of Oak Street and a large parcel along the north side of the Kalamazoo River. The downtown central business district is located in the heart of the City at the intersections of Bridge, Main, and Allegan streets. US-131 forms the western boundary of the City with single-family residential neighborhoods outlying the existing commercial areas along M-89 and around downtown. The northeast portion of the City contains a mix of industrial and more intensive commercial uses contained within the City's industrial park. Additional residential development exists north of the river primarily on larger lots and contains some of the City's newer residential development. City-owned lands comprise a large portion of the existing land use and includes parks, trails, public parking lots, and redevelopment sites such as the former paper mill and Harding's.

Planning Values

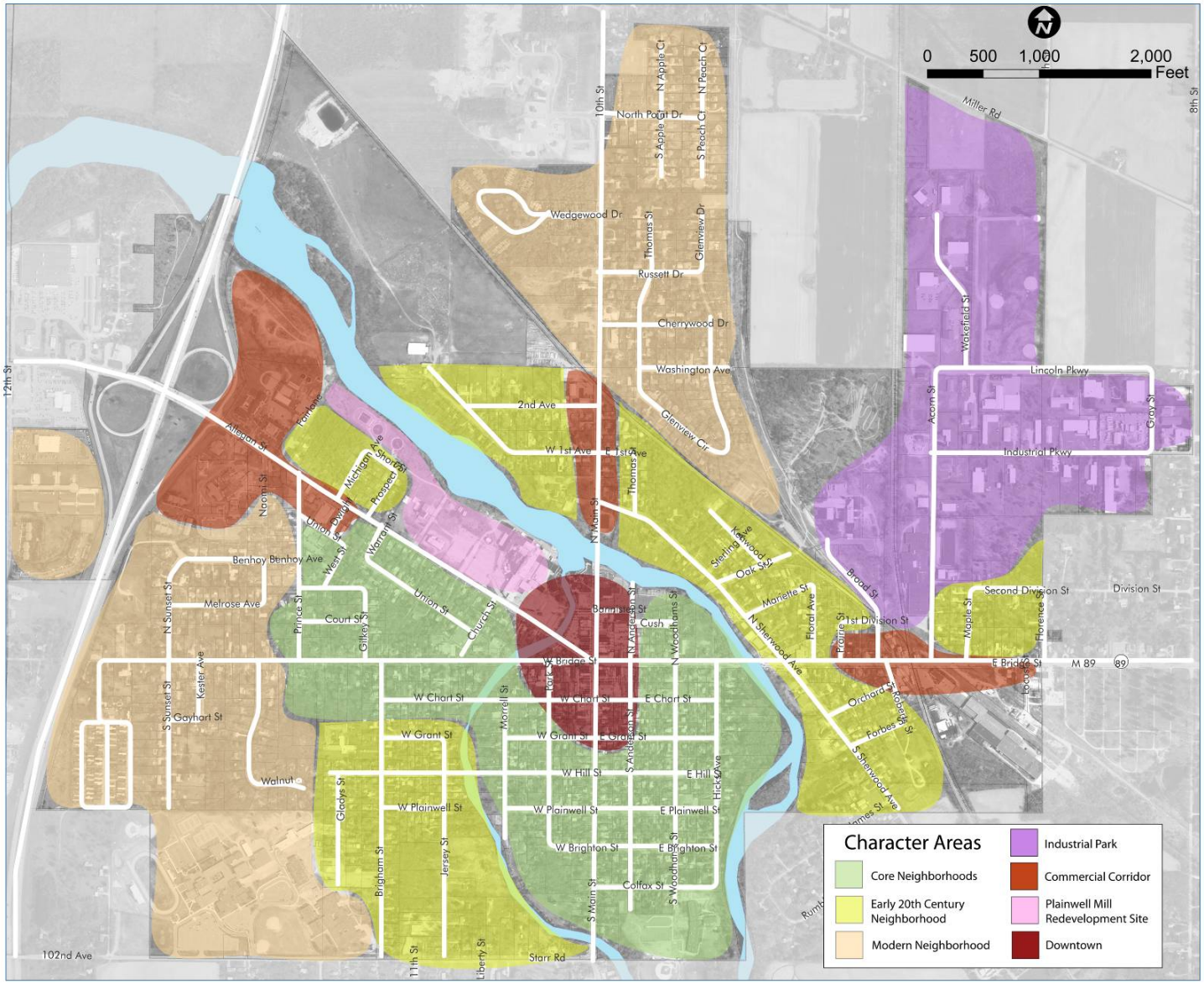
Existing Land Use

- Plainwell's pattern of development must support strong neighborhoods and viable shopping and employment areas.
- The development of vacant land must respect the natural environment and setting and result in enhancing the City as a whole.
- Community gateways should celebrate Plainwell as a unique place and guide travelers to downtown and other attractions.
- Establish sensitive and compatible transitions from commercial to residential uses.
- Capitalize on waterfront development opportunities while continuing to protect natural resources.

Map 1: Existing Land Use



Map 2: Character Areas



Land Use and Character

Residential Character & Land Use

Residential Character

Plainwell can be classified by three different residential neighborhood types. Map 2 identifies where certain types of neighborhoods, each with a particular character, are located. Residential neighborhoods are described as follows:

Core Neighborhoods

Core Neighborhoods are those that were developed as part of the original settlement of the City mostly prior to 1900. This area includes the original street grid on the island and the Bridge Street Historic District. The average density in Core Neighborhoods is 3 to 4 units per acre.

Homes are characterized by popular architectural and vernacular styles of the Victorian period, such as Gothic Revival, Italianate and Queen Anne. Even many of the more modest homes contain certain aspects of these style elements.

Early 20th Century Neighborhoods

These areas developed in the first half of the 1900s. The residential areas on the north side of the river and south of the Otsego railroad spur, the neighborhood just west of the millrace, and the small neighborhood north of East Bridge Street and west of the railroad tracks, all fall into this category.

In this area, streets are arranged in a grid pattern and small front porches, less ornamentation and (usually) detached garages, characterize homes. Styles include Cape Cod and Prairie. Lot sizes are slightly larger and the average density is approximately 2.5 to 3 units per acre.

Modern Neighborhoods

Modern Neighborhoods are areas that developed after World War II, including the new subdivisions east of North Main Street and north of the river, and the neighborhoods in the western part of the City, north of the Starr School Campus. This area also includes the City's only manufactured housing park.

These neighborhoods are arranged on curvilinear streets, often terminating in a cul-de-sac. The homes generally do not have front porches, as outdoor living is more focused on private back yards. Garages are attached to the home and are often a dominant part of the front façade. Some newer homes have stylistic architectural elements, but most are fairly homogeneous tract

Home types within Residential Character Areas: Core Neighborhoods (left); Early 20th Century Neighborhoods (center); Modern Neighborhoods (right)

homes that have been individualized by their owners. Similar to the Early 20th Century Neighborhoods, the average density is 2.5 to 3 units per acre.

Planning Values

Residential Neighborhoods

- The fact that residents take pride in their neighborhoods should be celebrated and supported.
- Plainwell's neighborhoods must continue to be strong, distinct from one another and a core unit of social life.
- Each neighborhood type has a distinct character that should be preserved and enhanced.
- Maintenance of homes and neighborhoods is important and both homeowners and rental property owners should be held to a high standard.

Non-Residential Character & Land Use

Non-Residential Character

There are three distinct non-residential character areas:

Downtown

Plainwell's downtown falls within a National Register Historic District and is characterized by classic one-, two- and three-story commercial buildings. Some building owners have restored façades to their original appearance. Others, however, suffer from well-intentioned but architecturally inappropriate improvements that have occurred over time and have dramatically affected the overall appearance and character of downtown. Downtown is a mix of offices, retail stores, and restaurants and, for the most part, the transition from downtown to surrounding neighborhoods is orderly. The north end, however, is affected by auto-oriented uses that are not consistent with the character of downtown and turn their back to the Kalamazoo River.

Commercial Corridors

Major commercial corridors are located on Allegan Street and North Main Street, as well as the commercial and industrial uses on East Bridge Street. While these areas typically contain auto-oriented uses, the old grain mill and freight house on East Bridge Street, as well as the regionally-known ice cream dairy, may encourage a more unique and pedestrian-friendly environment.

Industrial Park

The industrial uses and the Plainwell Industrial Park are located in the northeast corner of the City. Most of the sites in the park have been developed with fairly stable businesses and vacancies are infrequent.

Planning Values

Non-Residential Areas

- Downtown should remain the City's business center and its historic and cultural core.
- Corridors containing businesses that are geared to the traveling public should project a positive impression of Plainwell and encourage visitors to explore the rest of the community.
- Capitalize on and promote unique regional draws, such as the ice cream dairies and popular, well-known restaurants that should be maintained and promoted.
- Redevelopment of the paper mill is a community priority.

Non-residential character areas: Downtown (upper left); East Bridge Street (lower left); Allegan Street (right)

People

Population Trends

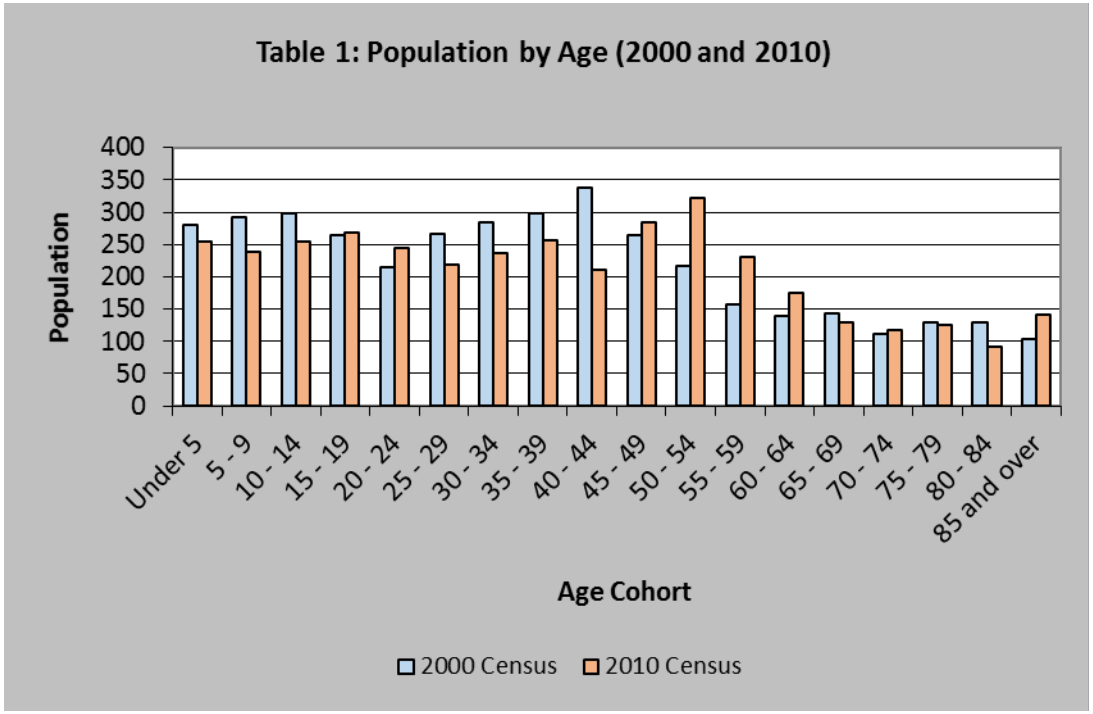
Plainwell's reported population from the 2010 US Census was 3,804, but was estimated to have decreased marginally (0.1%) to 3,798 in 2014 according to the US Census Bureau's Five-Year American Community Survey Estimates. Plainwell's population peaked in 1990 (4,057) and, according to estimates by the West Michigan Regional planning Commission at the time, was projected to continue on a growth curve well beyond 2020. To date, that anticipated growth rate has not been realized.

In 2010, the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission projected Plainwell's population to decrease to 3,788 by 2020, 3,780 by 2025 and 3,772 by 2030. However, these numbers are based on historic trends and do not consider major redevelopment efforts and mixed use development downtown.

Plainwell is a well-educated community; nearly 92 percent of the population have graduated from high school and another 19.4 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher. There is an established correlation between education and income levels; the greater the level of educational attainment, the higher the income. However, surrounding communities (Gun Plain Charter Township, Alamo Township and Cooper Township) all have a higher percentage of graduates and their income levels outpace those in Plainwell.

Plainwell's schools enjoy a reputation for educational quality, which combined with other factors helps attract families with children to the community. Family households with children below age 18 make up 55 percent of those households in Plainwell. This is higher than for the entire state (47 percent) and consequently Plainwell is viewed as a quality place to raise a family.

Even with a relatively well-educated population though, median household income in Plainwell has not kept pace with the economy, affecting the community broadly. In 1999, Plainwell's median household income was $45,625; by 2014 it had decreased to an estimated $41,417. In other words, real household incomes in Plainwell have not only failed to grow, but have actually declined (far below that which is necessary to keep pace with inflationary factors affecting the overall economy). This is especially troubling as the economy in the state of Michigan has begun to rebound, incomes have not returned to pre-recession levels. A decline in median family income is a harbinger of tough decisions to come for the



community regarding municipal services and programs, economic development, and capital expenditures. However, the expectation is that redevelopment efforts will spur new growth, opportunities, and increase the City's tax base to help fund capital expenditures.

Table 1 shows how the population, by age group, has changed since 2000. Like many communities, Plainwell is aging as the baby boomer generation enters retirement as seen by the age cohorts of 50 to 64 increasing from 2000 to 2010. This has implications for the kinds of housing that may be desired by residents wishing to remain in the community for their entire cycle of life, community services, transportation, retailing, recreation and overall development patterns. As **Table 1** indicates, there has also been a decline in young people during this period generally mirroring the state population. This would indicate the importance of job opportunities, both local and regional, and affordable housing for families that find Plainwell's school system particularly attractive. In addition, there has been a slight decline of residents in certain age brackets over 65. While not significant, it still may indicate the importance of housing choices to serve this aging population.

Planning Values

People

- Plainwell is a "hometown" where residents hope to grow up, raise families, and retire.
- Plainwell is a well-educated, stable and family-oriented community.

The Economy

Although detailed economic assessments of the broader community and downtown were not undertaken, certain indicators can help provide direction as to what opportunities may be. These, however, must be viewed within the context of critical trends that impact commercial and residential activity:

Commercial

- Commercial development, retail in particular, is going through a major transition and will continue to do so at a rapid pace in the foreseeable future.
- Technology has opened up new ways of marketing and making purchases, particularly in communities composed of families with school age children; one of Plainwell's characteristics. Over the past few years internet shopping has continued to see double digit growth, while traditional "bricks and mortar" shopping, where a patron physically goes to the store, has seen either stable sales and revenue volumes, or declines. Internet purchases can now be made from operations situated anywhere in the world, including Plainwell.
- Increases in things like energy and utility costs, food items, insurance, and vehicle operations, will funnel more and more family income dollars toward basic necessities. Unless these increases are offset by equivalent rises in household incomes families will have less money available for discretionary purchases.
- Credit markets have tightened and are likely to be tighter in the future than in the past. Households that formerly financed spending on an anticipated rise in future income or premised on housing appreciation are less likely to be able to do so in the future. Declines in retirement fund values (public or private pensions or personal accounts) have resulted in substantial declines in household assets. Once again, these factors will likely impact discretionary spending well into the future.
- Some new "brick and mortar" opportunities are emerging. Operations like Apple, that formerly sold their products via third parties, the internet or catalogues, are now moving to sell via their own stores. Major "big boxes" (Wal-Mart, Target, Walgreens and others) are reaching for new markets and are

locating in smaller communities using vastly reduced store plans. Some of these are seeking space in Michigan and more will in the future.

Housing

- The average cost of new housing is likely to be lower in the future than in the past half-decade due to construction costs and income constraints. The development industry will accomplish this by decreasing home sizes and making interiors more efficient. These, along with other modifications will likely result in greater long-term affordability through energy efficiency and diminished heating and cooling costs.
- While much of Plainwell's housing stock is affordable, affordability will increasingly be important to all households, whether they be first time homebuyers or "empty nesters."
- There is substantial latent demand for senior housing that cannot be addressed at this time since the fiscal assets associated with existing homes are used to purchase new units and it is currently difficult to sell existing homes in many communities. Furthermore, there is an increasing pattern of seniors moving to walkable, urban centers as they wish to downsize and drive less.

Plainwell is a City of neighborhoods that include a broad range of residences, from historic mansions, to 1950s ranch homes, to modern tract houses. Generally, residential and commercial/industrial neighborhoods have been well integrated and have coexisted peacefully.

Issues related to housing were identified as very important to stakeholders and citizens. Most often mentioned was the poor upkeep and appearance of some rental homes. Renter-occupied housing units make up 43% percent of all occupied housing units within the City, which is considerably higher than the statewide percentage (29%), and yet higher than Allegan County (18%). Despite the City's high number of rental units, the vacancy rate remains low at 9% which is comparatively lower than State and County figures (each just over 15%).

Other concerns were over the lack of quality starter housing (especially important for younger adults), the lack of quality higher density residential (that may be especially appealing to that age group), and housing choices for an aging population that wishes to remain in Plainwell. Very little new housing has been developed in the City in the last two decades (Table 2) exacerbating the issue around quality and choice of housing.

Table 2

Age of Housing

Built	Percent
1939 or earlier	35.5%
1940 to 1949	5.9%
1950 to 1959	12.7%
1960 to 1969	10.2%
1970 to 1979	17.9%
1980 to 1989	8.8%
1990 to 1999	7.1%
2000 to 2009	1.9%
2010 or later	0.0%

American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimate

Table 3

Type of Housing	
Type	**Percent**
1-unit detached	66.6%
1-unit attached	1.9%
2 units	4.5%
3 to 4 units	7.5%
5 to 9 units	6.7%
10 to 19 units	9.9%
20 or more units	2.3%
Mobile home	0.6%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.0%

American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimate

The predominant form of housing is detached single family residential (**Table 3**). Over two-thirds of all housing units within the City are one-unit homes. While this is slightly lower than state and county figures, diversity of housing options are still limited for those seeking walkable neighborhoods and those who have diverse lifestyles and incomes.

Employment

Similar so many smaller communities across the state, Plainwell's leading employment sector with 22.4% of the City's population working in educational services, health care, and social assistance (**Table 4**). Manufacturing remains an integral aspect of Plainwell's economy as 19.1% of the population work in this sector. While the business park is approaching build-out and has been reasonably stable and successful, business activity nevertheless will continue to be in transition. Some operations may not continue into the future while others will grow and prosper. To create sustainable economic development a recruitment strategy for new businesses should focus on the following:

- The area's natural or economic resources.
- Synergy with existing production and inputs, in terms of either equipment or materials.
- Existing operators in the county and nearby areas who are now involved with R&D or other branches of the same parent company that are involved with R&D.
- Research or the development of a product that would not negatively impact the environment.
- R&D activity related to emerging sectors or markets throughout the country and/or world.
- Either or both a reasonable likelihood of interest in funding or current funding.

Based on these guidelines, the Borgess-Pipp

Table 4

Employment by Sector (age 16+)	
Sector	**Percent**
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.0%
Construction	5.7%
Manufacturing	19.1%
Wholesale trade	3.2%
Retail trade	13.5%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	2.5%
Information	0.6%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	3.4%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste services	10.5%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	22.4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	10.5%
Other services, except public administration	4.6%
Public administration	4.5%

American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimate

Table 5

Area Wide Business Opportunities
Water and Sewer Line and Related Structures Construction
Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction
Framing Contractors
Masonry Contractors
Siding Contractors
Electrical Contractors
Plumbing and HVAC Contractors
Finish Carpentry Contractors
Wood Container and Pallet Manufacturing
Metal Coating, Engraving (except Jewelry and Silverware) and Allied Services
Testing Laboratories
Food Service Contractors

Developed by The Chesapeake Group, Inc., 2009

Hospital represents a potential catalyst, as well as a linkage to general Kalamazoo regional activity, including pharmaceutical R&D. In addition, the community's abundant water resources, that help define its character, are also critical to potential economic activity, particularly R&D. Most research today revolves around natural resources that are being looked at for a host of purposes. These include climate change, human and animal bio-medical opportunities, relationships between birds and animals and human cognitive skills, invasive species, and alternative energy. Since the Plainwell Mill site consumes quite a bit of the waterfront, its redevelopment for a mix of uses and activities in existing or new structures could include this type of research and be linked to major national and international corporate interests in the region.

Table 6

Area Wide Retail Opportunities
Furniture Stores
Household Appliance Stores
Computer & Software Stores
Bowling Centers
Full-Service Restaurants
Limited-Service Restaurants

Developed by The Chesapeake Group, Inc., 2009

Table 5 identifies additional economic activities for which gaps have been identified through other associated analyses in this general area. The focus of that work has been broad based and includes surrounding jurisdictions and counties. It is not necessarily specific to Plainwell; therefore, some businesses that have been identified as opportunities may already exist in Plainwell, or in one of the neighboring communities. These businesses would be suitable for locating within the City's industrial park where expansion options should be assessed.

Opportunities

Plainwell may be in a position to take advantage of certain trends. Beyond boundary adjustments there is not much opportunity for substantial new development within City limits, yet there is opportunity, particularly in downtown, for reinvestment and appropriate character redevelopment. It is noted that:

- With households at both ends of the spectrum (those having children, as well as a growing number of seniors) retail and related activities trend toward educational and recreational opportunities that may be appropriate niche markets for downtown Plainwell. This could also include more national downtown retail operations with new model plans that are smaller than conventional suburban stores.

Table 7

Area Wide Office/Service Opportunities
Offices of Lawyers
Offices of Certified Public Accountants
Testing Laboratories
Custom Computer Programming Services
Computer Systems Design Services
Sports and Recreation Instruction
Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)
Offices of Dentists
Offices of Chiropractors
Offices of Optometrists
Offices of Physical, Occupational & Speech Therapists and Audiologists
Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities
Child Day Care Services
Fitness and Recreational Sports Centers
Bowling Centers

Developed by The Chesapeake Group, Inc., 2009

- Affordable food service establishments that are family and senior oriented should be viable in the downtown at present and in the future.
- Studies performed for other communities in either or both Allegan and neighboring Barry County indicate that there is likely to be a gap associated with certain the types of retail operations in the general area **(see Table 6**).
- There are likely to be substantially

Table 8: Estimated Retail Goods and Related Services Sales and Supportable Space, in Square Feet, Generated by Non-Plainwell Allegan County and Barry County Residents

Category	2010 Est. Sales	2010 Est. Space
Food	$165,012,000	308,169
Eat/Drink	124,898,000	312,245
General Merchandise	342,635,000	1,117,644
Furniture	29,325,000	92,084
Transportation	252,988,000	736,161
Drugstore	87,064,000	174,128
Apparel	40,113,000	124,820
Hardware	143,588,000	610,388
Vehicle Service	166,379,000	405,047
Miscellaneous	167,443,000	646,716
TOTAL	$1,519,445,000	4,527,402

Developed by The Chesapeake Group, Inc., 2009

changing and growing needs for certain types of commercial activities even based on current population demographics. Other area studies (**see Table 7**) indicate that there are likely gaps in the vicinity for the certain types of office and related services. These could be located either in the downtown or elsewhere, but would benefit varied age groups and downtown vitality if located there.

Demand Analysis

The success of retail and related service activities, whether located in the downtown, or in Plainwell's other commercial areas, is strongly influenced by dollars that flow from residents in surrounding communities and visitors. In all probability, this has always been the case.

Based on average household incomes, and the estimated population and number ofhouseholds in Plainwell, total retail sales associated with Plainwell residents are estimated to be roughly $33.6 million in 2010. Based on productivity levels associated with numerous types of businesses, (in other words the level of sales necessary to pay for operations and provide a return on investment), this translates to roughly 100,000 square feet of supportable retail space (see **Table 8)**. This figure is estimated to be below that which currently exists. However, total retail sales are not entirely associated with expenditures just in Plainwell, since residents also make purchases near work, while on vacation, in other communities, etc. Therefore, to thrive, downtown and Plainwell's existing retail base must draw from beyond just Plainwell and attract customers from surrounding areas.

Given Plainwell's location in the southeastern corner of Allegan County, it is most likely these additional sales have come and will continue to come from neighboring communities that include parts of Allegan

Table 9: Estimated Retail Goods and Related Services Sales and Supportable Space, in Square Feet, Generated by Kalamazoo County Residents

Category	2010 Est. Sales	2010 Est. Space
Food	$245,493,000	458,472
Eat/Drink	185,815,000	464,538
General Merchandise	509,748,000	1,662,749
Furniture	43,628,000	136,997
Transportation	376,377,000	1,095,206
Drugstore	129,528,000	259,056
Apparel	59,678,000	185,702
Hardware	213,620,000	908,093
Vehicle Service	247,527,000	602,600
Miscellaneous	249,110,000	962,142
TOTAL	$2,260,524,000	6,735,555

Developed by The Chesapeake Group, Inc., 2009

and Barry Counties, as well as Kalamazoo County.

Residents of Allegan County (excluding Plainwell) and Barry County are collectively expected to generate about $1.5 billion in retail sales in 2010. This is sufficient to support about 4.5 million square feet of space (see **Table 8)**. Based on current trends, no increases in demand for the foreseeable future are probable unless household incomes rise substantially or substantial numbers of new housing units are built. Furthermore, this supportable space is likely to be located throughout **many** communities, including more affluent areas along the lakeshore in Allegan County, other incorporated municipalities in the county and their downtowns, and in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, which are economically and socially linked with Plainwell. The demand for retail space generated by Kalamazoo County is much greater than that for both Allegan and Barry Counties combined (see **Table 9)**. The residents of Kalamazoo County can support about 6.7 million square feet of space in 2010. Some of the sales associated with this supportable space will be exported to Plainwell and elsewhere, just as sales from Plainwell's residents are exported to other locations. In order to maintain the large amounts of commercial development along US 131/M-89, Plainwell and its neighboring communities must continue to be net importers of sales for the foreseeable future.

This combined demand, consisting of roughly 11.3 million square feet of space from non-Plainwell residents, helps account for the current commercial patterns along M-89/US 131 that pass through Plainwell on the west and the current levels of space. With many already built shopping alternatives located in Plainwell and throughout the surrounding three counties and in other nearby communities that are economically linked, such as Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo, public demand has essentially been met at this time.

While Plainwell and its neighbors have already been able to attract many of the kinds of businesses for which area-wide opportunities have been identified, based on current and foreseeable demand and the potential to capture sales dollars, it is highly unlikely that there will be substantial retail growth requiring increases in commercial land in Plainwell. Factoring in economic conditions, that likelihood is further diminished. Therefore, much of that which can be defined as a likely development opportunity can and should be situated in the downtown.

Planning Values

The Economy

- A strong, attractive, and vital downtown is essential to maintain Plainwell's small town atmosphere.
- Job opportunities are important for long term community health.
- Good schools and strong neighborhoods are important ingredients to maintain and attract residents and businesses.
- Redevelopment of the Plainwell Mill is a critical part of Plainwell's renaissance.
- Transportation enhancements must relieve congestion yet be responsive to community character.
- Maintaining Plainwell as a community with deep roots, quality neighborhoods, good schools and parks, a vital downtown and attractive community entrances is economic development.

Community Facilities

Parks and Trails

The City of Plainwell has seven public parks ranging in size from a small roadside pull-offs of less than an acre to over 30 acres. Overall park space encompasses 85 acres of land and 7.3% of the City's land use.

Hicks Park is the oldest park in the City and contains several large, mature deciduous trees as well as the historic Soule Fountain. Hicks Park connects to Fannie Pell Park by way of a Riverwalk trail, which passes underneath M-89 and contains a large band shell for outdoor performances. Fannie Pell Park is located adjacent to the

former mill site at the confluence of the Millrace and Kalamazoo River.

The Riverwalk continues to Sherwood Park located on the eastern bank of the Kalamazoo River. The adjacent land uses are very compatible with this community park. These land uses include an ice cream shop to the north, the public library to the south of Bridge Street and a neighborhood to the east. The park seems to be a favorite of many City residents due to its advantageous location.

Thurl Cook Park and Darrow Park are two additional community facilities providing a scenic view and access to the river. Thurl Cook has considerable adjacent undeveloped open space that may be suitable for future park expansion. Kenyon Park is the largest of the City's parks (over 30 acres) located near the City's industrial park. The park contains several amenities such as baseball, softball, and soccer fields.

While not owned by the City, a long, linear Consumers Energy right-of-way runs through the City adjacent to Thurl Cook Park. The right-of-way has been identified as a potential route for a multi-use, non-motorized trail. This Interurban Trail would connect the cities of Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo. A planning effort to commence in 2016 will determine a most viable trail route and engineering specifications.

Water

Plainwell's water system currently serves 1,352 units located within the City's corporate boundaries as well as adjacent neighborhoods located in Gun Plain Township adjacent to the border with the City. The City has a standing agreement with Gun Plain Charter Township to service those homes along the border indefinitely. Recently the City bonded funds for the new water tower. The bond will mature in 2019 at which point the City will be relieved of significant debt service funds to use toward additional community improvements.

Sewer

The City's sanitary sewer system services five municipalities under a 'Wastewater Treatment Service Agreement': Gun Plain Township, Prairieville Township (which has a 425 agreement with Gun Plain Twp.), Martin Township, the Village of Martin (which has a 425 agreement with Martin Township), and Otsego Township. In Gun Plain Township, the City provides service to several businesses including Meijer near the M-89/US-131 interchange, various residential developments adjacent to the City's boundary, and the golf course residential development at Lake Doster. Representatives from the six communities meet quarterly in a joint sewer meeting. The agreement (while not an authority), guarantees capacity to the listed communities and outlines surcharges to users based on volume.

In 2013, the City was awarded a $1 million grant from the State of Michigan's revolving loan fund that went toward a total $4 million upgrade to the sanitary sewer system. The system now operates using moving bed biofilm reactor (MBBR) technology. MBBR processes improve reliability, simplify operation, and require less space than traditional wastewater treatment systems.

Conclusion

Plainwell is a strong community with many positive assets and a clear home town atmosphere. Redevelopment of the mill site will be yet another reason to attract people to visit and live in the City.

Plans for the future of the community must preserve these positive elements and draw upon them where change is needed. The planning values that are expressed in this plan, both explicit and implicit, provide a strong foundation for future land use decisions.

Based on stakeholder interviews, public surveys and public workshop events, key community issues and opportunities were identified and then translated into planning values. These values, which are described in Chapter Two, are focused on a series of topics that were discussed with the broader public during a community forum.

In turn, specific policies and actions were developed from public input that reflect these values and help provide structure for the Master Plan. These policies and actions can also guide the community when making decisions about Plainwell's future. Community policies and actions are dynamic and subject to change; therefore, regular review by the Planning Commission ensures that they remain current and valid, reflecting existing trends and circumstances.

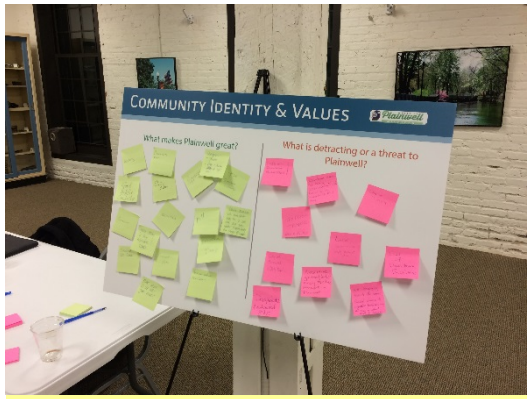
Public Involvement

A key master plan process goal was to engage the public; permitting as many voices as possible to be heard. A series of techniques were employed so this could be realized including community stakeholder interviews, a community survey, and a community forum.

In 2009, community stakeholders were interviewed using a consistent set of questions about Plainwell, which triggered responses about community concerns, opportunities for change and individual visions for Plainwell's future. The responses were then used to help craft questions for a community survey that was available both electronically and by mail. A public forum followed the survey to allow residents the opportunity to provide additional input. The forum was educational and informative with key findings, trends and land use concepts described for specific areas. These included community gateways, neighborhoods, trails and open space, downtown, and employment areas.

Public Survey

In late 2015, the public involvement process ramped up once again in preparation for the Master Plan update. Once again, a public survey was implemented to glean attitudes and insights from residents in the community. The survey used for this Master Plan update was largely developed from the previous 2009 public input survey with a few alterations to reflect changing conditions in the City over time. The survey was made available online and via submitted hardcopies. The City advertised the survey on its website and Facebook page to encourage a wide audience to participate. Complete results of the two surveys may be found in the Appendix. Plainwell residents largely feel Plainwell affords a high quality of life and is a great place to raise a family. Residents expressed they were very



Chapter 3: Public Input & Visioning

satisfied with City services, primarily public safety, snow control, leaf/limb removal, the parks and recreation system, and the library system; residents stated they were least satisfied with road maintenance. The survey showed Plainwell residents are generally satisfied with the US-131/M-89 interchange; however, its appearance, landscaping and character could be improved beyond its existing state. Downtown Plainwell remains a point of pride for the City as a strong majority of residents are satisfied with the downtown's appearance, quality and variety of businesses, availability of parking, and community event space. If new businesses were to come into downtown, residents suggested they wish to see more specialty businesses such as furniture or clothing stores, coffee shops, or health and fitness facilities.

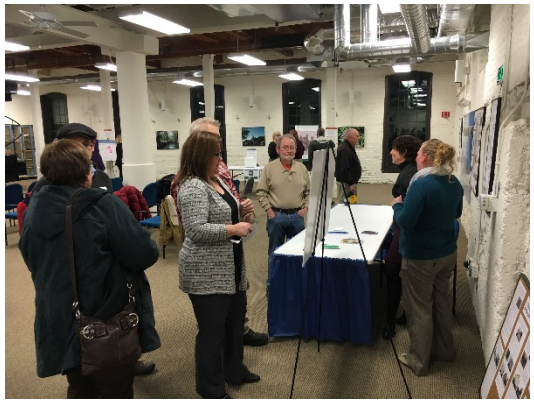
Top priorities for the future according to Plainwell residents were to expand the Riverwalk, develop a location for a Farmers' Market, extend bike and non-motorized facilities, expand housing opportunities for senior citizens and elderly populations and redevelop the former paper mill site. Plainwell residents still feel a rental inspection ordinance should be enacted and have observed positive changes since the improvement of code enforcement throughout the City.

Results of the survey input were made available on the City's website.

Public Workshop

A publicly advertised and well-attended workshop followed the dissemination of the public survey. The workshop was organized around four major topic areas: policies, community values, transportation, and land use and development. Each of these topic areas included an interactive station which included maps with various land use exercises, comment card prompts, and informal conversations between public officials and community members. While more quantitative data was received from the community survey, the workshop was used primarily to solicit qualitative data during this process and afforded residents the opportunity to weigh in and voice their opinions and recommendations. Approximately 27 community members participated in the workshop and results were made available to the public via the City's website. Below is a summary of the feedback received from the workshop:

- Most residents believe Plainwell affords a high quality of life and is a great place to raise children.
- Most important policies from the previous master plan include: supporting downtown and existing commercial areas, expanding the riverwalks, and preserving and enhancing a strong and diversified retail base.



- Things which make Plainwell great: downtown; public safety; riverwalks, trails, and parks; the redeveloped mill; and job opportunities in the industrial park.
- Some concerns and opportunities for the City: improving and eliminating gaps in the sidewalk network, improving regional trail connections, lack of bike lanes, and traffic and congestion at the M-89/US 131 interchange.

Feedback from the public workshop and the tabulated survey results were used to help craft specific policies and actions.

Plainwell's future will in large part depend on its ability to build on the character of its downtown and unique and charming neighborhoods, its setting as the Island City, and its attractive waterfront. To be successful, it will be important for Plainwell to maximize its assets and distinguish itself from many other communities in the Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids metropolitan region.

Future Land Use and Character

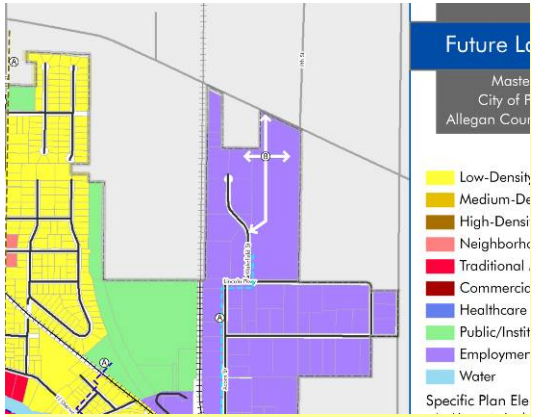
Map 3 shows how land uses in Plainwell should develop and evolve and highlights specific elements and subareas that are detailed in this chapter. It is important to note that while density will continue to play a role in land use designations the character of uses and their ability to fit the context of their surroundings will be almost equally, if not more important. Therefore, the future land use designations reflect a nexus between various character areas of the City and planned land use. Any new development and redevelopment should refer to both the desired uses in each district as well as the character of the area into which it is going.

These character areas are also the foundation for future zoning and development regulations that could be implemented for specific areas in Plainwell. These could include older residential neighborhoods, mixed use areas, and the downtown. Development regulations, such as form-based codes, that are based on the character or form of a particular neighborhood can direct and control future land uses so they are much more responsive, the results more predictable, and the fit with the context actually works.

Residential

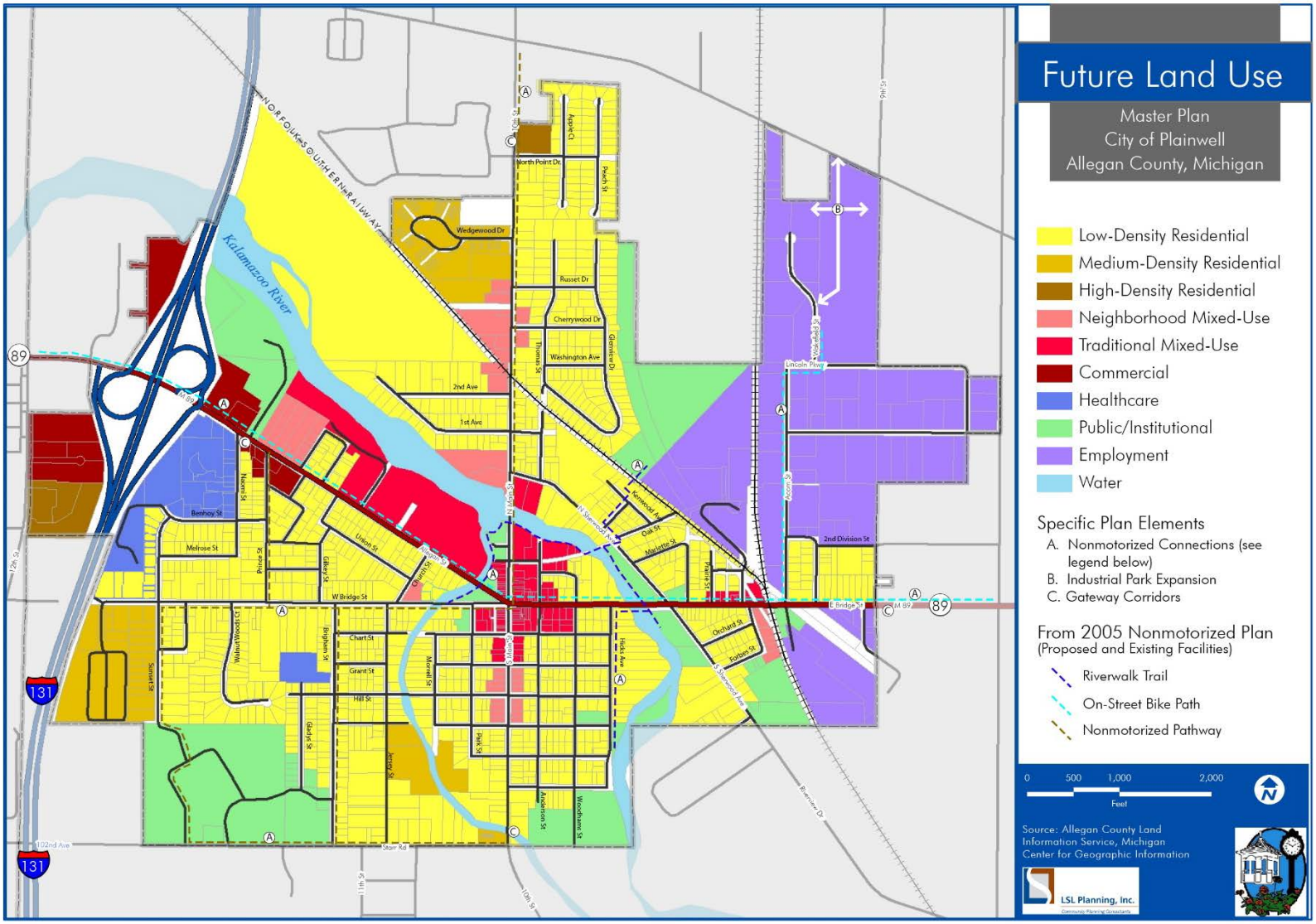
There are three categories of residential land uses:

- Low-Density Residential, with single-family homes on moderately sized lots;
- Medium-Density Residential, that may include a mix of single-family, two-family and limited scale multiple-family units on smaller lots; and
- High Density Residential, characterized by multiple-family residential uses (apartments, senior facilities, etc.) on modestly sized lots.



Chapter 4: Plainwell Tomorrow

Map 3: Future Land Use



Low-Density Residential

Low-Density Residential areas primarily reflect existing residential neighborhood patterns with the exception of a large parcel north of Second Avenue between the Kalamazoo River and the Norfolk-Southern railway corridor. While currently undeveloped, the property provides future opportunities for a low-density, traditionally designed neighborhood with small blocks defined by interconnected streets and sidewalks, garages that do not dominate the streetscape and a focus on creating a quality environment that encourages walking and includes small parks and linked open spaces. Densities in this category range from 2.5 to 4 units per acre and new development should consider the densities of neighboring properties and the average density of the character area in which the development is located.

Medium-Density Residential

Medium-Density Residential is planned in two locations; 1) the Pinecrest Mobile Village near Pinecrest Drive and neighboring properties, and 2) the Wedgewood Condominium development on the west side of North Main Street and adjacent properties. Medium-Density Residential development provides another housing option for seniors and young families and more affordable housing for middle-income families. The Future Land Use map identifies expansion areas for this use beyond existing Medium-Density Residential areas.

Future development, at densities of 4 to 6 units per acre, should be appropriate to the style and existing development patterns within each respective Residential Character Area. Uses include small lot single-family development, single-family detached and attached homes, and two family dwellings. Multiple-family developments should incorporate innovative site planning techniques such as clustering, interconnected open space, and pedestrian linkages. Development design and pattern should closely resemble that of Plainwell's single-family neighborhoods. Consistent front setbacks, rear or side yard garages, building orientation to the street, and a grid street pattern are elements that should be reflected in future development. Development that is consistent and aligns with the previously described Character Areas will help maintain the City's sense of community, quality of life, and strong neighborhoods.

High-Density Residential

Areas west of US-131, near 12th Street, are planned for High-Density Residential and currently contain several multiple-family apartment buildings. The proximity of this area to shopping, employment, and transportation is an important consideration and, therefore, suggests future development at a density of 6 to 12 units per acre.

Uses could include multiple-family apartments or condominiums, two-family attached housing, or townhouses. Similar to Medium-Density Residential, the pattern of High-Density Residential development and design should align with the Character Areas described previously and compliment Plainwell's single-family neighborhoods in regards to site design and architectural character.

Medium-Density Residential examples.

Commercial and Mixed Use

Development within each of the following categories should reflect not only the planned land use in each category but the character of the area (described previously) in which the development is located.

Neighborhood Mixed-Use

Neighborhood Mixed-Use is planned for four areas; 1) North Main Street between Second Avenue and Russet Drive, 2) along the North and South Main Street and East and West Bridge Street corridors adjacent to downtown, 3) along M-89 between Fairlane and Michigan Avenue, and 4) between Roberts Street and the railroad tracks south of M-89.

Neighborhood Mixed-Use accommodates a range of compatible residential and business uses in support of strong pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods. Examples of appropriate non-residential uses include personal services, small convenience or grocery stores, small take-out restaurants or diners, and small-scale offices with less than five employees. To preserve the integrity of Plainwell's character the focus should be on reusing and redeveloping existing structures whenever possible. Any new development should be compatible with the surrounding character and scale, and be in harmony and integrate with surrounding properties. The Neighborhood Mixed-Use designation differs from other mixed-use areas in that the intent is to provide small-scale commercial uses that support healthy neighborhoods. Neighborhood Mixed-Use areas are small pockets within existing residential areas and the character and feel of any commercial or retail development should complement these neighborhoods. This designation allows a comprehensive approach to development and encourages mixed land uses, shared vehicular access and parking, and pedestrian amenities such as enhanced streetscapes and other public spaces. Architecture should reflect traditional forms and character focus on making public spaces memorable, and should orient to the street, much like in the downtown.

Neighborhood Mixed-Use example.

Traditional Mixed-Use

Downtown Plainwell and the former Plainwell Paper Mill site are included in the Traditional Mixed-Use area. Because Downtown, including Main and Bridge Streets and the surrounding business area, are so different from other commercial districts in the City they require special consideration. Subarea Plans for both the Mill Site and Downtown are discussed later.

Traditional Mixed-Use is also planned for a small area north of M-89 between Prairie Street and the railroad tracks on the east side of the Plainwell. Over time, this area has developed as a small niche mixed-use

Examples of enhanced pedestrian crossings.

area including retail, residential, and office uses. Mixed-use is encouraged given the area's unique character, its location on a major thoroughfare, and the special land uses. However, it is planned for smaller-scale commercial establishments that would not compete with, but compliment downtown Plainwell.

While Neighborhood Mixed-Use (described previously) is focused on integrating small-scale commercial establishments with existing high quality residential neighborhoods, Traditional Mixed-Use areas are focused on mixing residential uses in traditionally commercially-oriented areas. Examples of residential uses include loft style apartments or condominiums above downtown businesses and townhouses. Residential development should integrate with the more urban development pattern found in downtown Plainwell. A wide range of commercial uses are planned for areas designated as Traditional Mixed-Use. Examples of uses include retail, restaurants, offices, personal and professional services, and government and civic uses, among others.

Commercial

The businesses currently located on both sides of the M-89/US-131 interchange are designed to serve highway travelers. They include restaurants, a hotel, gas stations, car dealerships, and convenience stores along with other highway-oriented commercial establishments. Unfortunately, the resulting image is the opposite of what Plainwell is and can be in the future.

Because downtown should remain as the community's business, commercial, and retail heart, areas planned for future commercial or continued highway-oriented commercial should be limited in scope. Any potential expansion should be carefully analyzed based on a more than adequate area-wide supply of commercial land and weighed against potential economic impacts.

Because the interchange area is such an important "gateway" and community entrance, the visitor's realm should be a welcoming place that clearly expresses Plainwell's positive values and pulls people into the community. Unfortunately, its current character fails to do that.

Therefore, Plainwell should adopt site and building design standards as part of the zoning ordinance to help ensure future development and redevelopment in this quadrant reflects a positive community image. Residents and visitors should feel that they have entered a special place, rather than a typical highway interchange. By embellishing the gateway with high quality design features, such as enhanced landscaping, public art, a well-designed highway bridge that fits its context, and "welcome" and wayfinding signs, Plainwell's image can be substantially upgraded . A subarea plan for the M-89 corridor between US-131 and Downtown is discussed later in more detail.

Commercial example.

Healthcare

The area currently anchored by the Borgess-Pipp Hospital is envisioned as a healthcare cluster that includes multiple medical, health, and related housing land uses. Development opportunities should be explored for medical office, research and testing, expanded hospital facilities and services, medical education, and supporting land uses that include residential and retire-

ment housing. Due to the interrelated nature of these uses safe and connected sidewalks and paths, and clearly defined streets, drives and landscaped parking lots should be part of any plans for redevelopment.

Public/Institutional

Included are institutional uses such as public schools, government buildings, and public parks. Because of their nature, these areas are not expected to change over time. Public and institutional uses should be identified and the site planning and design of surrounding development or redevelopment should consider these areas.

Industrial Park Expansion

Expanding the employment area into Kenyon Park would permit a street extension that could enhance truck and commercial access to Miller Road. An improved connection would help provide an alternate link to US-131and may relieve some downtown and M-89 traffic.

Currently, exit 50, the US-131/106th Avenue interchange, is incomplete and does not permit southbound access to and northbound access from US-131. A full interchange would provide a better link with US-131 and may reduce some of the traffic pressure on M-89. No matter what, a better connection to Miller Road would encourage northbound trucks to avoid downtown and nearby residential areas.

Gateway Corridors

Plainwell has four key gateways; 1) M-89 at US-131, 2) M-89 at Florence Street, 3) North Main Street at North Point Drive, and 4) South Main Street at the Mill Race. These gateways and associated street corridors should reflect Plainwell's unique character. They should have a common theme that provides a unified look and feel and that visitors and residents can positively associate with Plainwell. Improvements should support the community as a special place and include enhanced and uniform signs that are free of clutter and that are at an appropriate scale based on location and traffic speeds, quality night-lighting, directional and way-finding signs, and street trees, and landscaping with a splash of color. Because some gateways are constrained due to limited space, easements or land acquisition may be necessary and should be explored.

Employment Centers

The businesses in Plainwell's thriving industrial park, located on the City's east side, provide many employment opportunities for local and area residents. While the industrial park is near capacity, future expansion includes growth into Kenyon Park and redeveloping the area south of M-89 between the railroad tracks and City limits to the east.

Because of the changing nature of employment-based land uses, future growth should accommodate a wide variety of potential activities such as office, research and development, laboratories, light industrial and manufacturing, and service commercial to offer well-paying jobs.

The key will be to retain current businesses and to expand opportunities to attract new users. A growing trend in business park design is to better integrate employment areas with the rest of the community. To do that certain enhancements should be explored, such as making sure property maintenance is addressed in a timely way; providing inter-connecting sidewalks and trails that link nearby places to eat and businesses; improving streetscapes; inter-connecting key roads; and exploring changes to development regulations to provide a certain degree of flexibility for such things as lot sizes and uses. Finally, supporting green efforts such as allowing for on-site alternative energy generation, coordinated recycling, innovative stormwater management practices, and incentives for LEED building certification and construction practices could attract new users to the industrial park.

Non-Motorized Connections

A non-motorized plan was prepared in 2005 that identified existing and proposed on-street bicycle paths, extensions to the Riverwalk Trail, and non-motorized pathways. Existing connections include an on-

street bicycle path along Prince Street between M-89 and West Bridge Street, and the Riverwalk Trail following the Mill Race north from West Bridge Street to the south bank of the Kalamazoo River and then across the river to North Sherman Avenue. Bike lanes were recently added to North and South Main Street following the reconstruction of M-89 in 2013. From Starr Road to Grant Street and Bannister Street to First Avenue, the roadway contains standard, four-foot wide bike lanes. First Avenue to Wedgewood Drive contains buffered bike lanes, and Grant Street to Bannister Street contains sharrows.

Several non-motorized links are also proposed that expand current trail connections to parks and recreational areas, schools, downtown Plainwell, and the M-89 corridor. To help encourage residents and visitors alike to venture into and explore Plainwell and beyond, additional inter-connected bicycle lanes, trails, and pathways throughout the broader community should be explored. Plainwell should work with surrounding municipalities to interconnect regional non-motorized trails that provide opportunities for a wide variety of recreational and transportation options.

Special attention should be paid to pedestrian access and links to the Plainwell Community Schools complex. The City should work with Gunplain Township to provide a more pedestrian friendly environment and safer crossings near the intersection of 12th Street and 102nd Avenue providing students with safer routes to and from schools.

M-89 Corridor Plan

Map 4 highlights specific recommendations for the M-89 corridor between US-131 and downtown Plainwell.

Non-Motorized

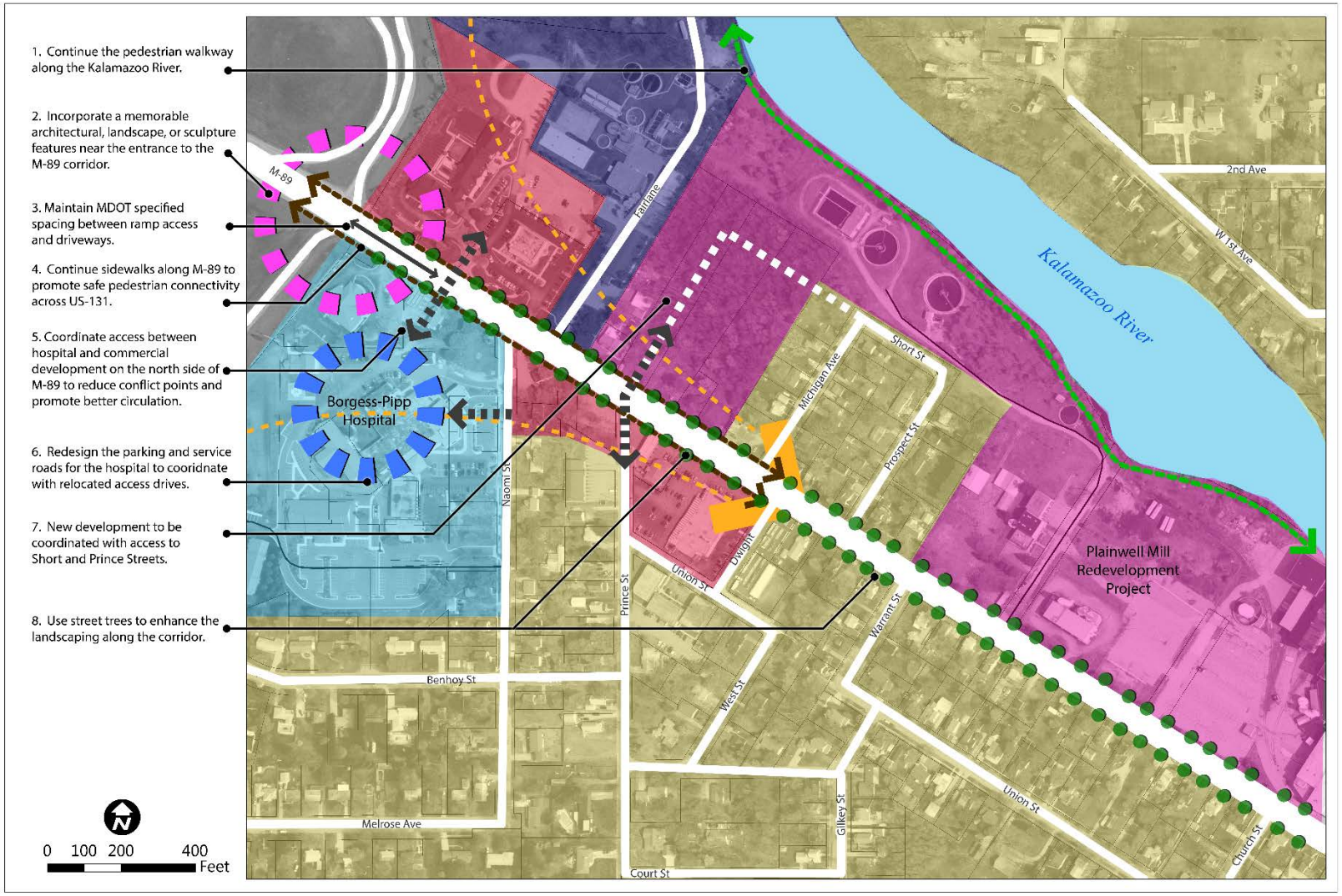
Pedestrian walkways support alternate ways of getting around Plainwell as well as providing recreational opportunities and public access to the City's natural resources. They also contribute to the community's quality of life.

In particular, the Kalamazoo River and Mill Race add to Plainwell's unique character, and while a river walk is already established along the Kalamazoo River near downtown, it should be expanded and continued along both banks and extend further south toward Bridge St.

Sidewalks along M-89 stretching from downtown to the US-131 interchange were included in the recent road reconstruction of M-89 in 2014. The recent inclusion of these pedestrian facilities helps provide increased accessibility to the former mill site slated for mixed-use redevelopment (discussed in further detail later in this chapter). Providing comfortable, safe connections to and from the former Paper Mill redevelopment site will enhance quality of life for future residents living within the development as well as residents living within close proximity. Planned commercial and residential uses located on the former Paper Mill site fronting M-89 would benefit the greatest from non-motorized connections allowing enhanced accessibility to these future destinations.

The installation of sidewalks along M-89 helps to complete a major gap in Plainwell's sidewalk and non-motorized transportation system. This more complete network now allows accessibility to business and residences along M-89 and ultimately downtown Plainwell help further facilitate redevelopment of key sites in the downtown.

Map 4: M-89 Corridor Subarea Plan



US-131/M-89 Gateway

Currently, the entrance into Plainwell from US-131 is not a welcoming experience for visitors or residents. This gateway should announce an arrival that reflects the City's unique character.

The aim should be to develop distinctive and memorable architecture, landscapes, and public art. In addition, a unified streetscape and development pattern along the corridor will help tie things together. While more detailed design is required, guidelines should be prepared that describe the desired development pattern – addressing site and building layout and design, site access, architectural character, building facades, materials, as well as a unified landscape theme. Streetscape elements include consistent light fixtures and poles, signs (such as street, way-finding and banners), landscape treatments at intersections, street furniture in appropriate locations, and street trees. In order to continue the sense of entry the entire length of the M-89 corridor should be made greener. Alternate ideas have been developed that include a boulevard to help slow traffic and the other is to expand tree planting within the existing parkway along the corridor, providing a more pedestrian friendly environment while giving visitors a sense of entry into a special place. Consistency coupled with high quality, high value development will enhance not only the gateway into Plainwell but the broader community as well.

Community gateway examples.

Access Management

Control of the location and spacing of driveways or access points along M-89 will improve safety and help preserve the roadway's ability to carry traffic. Access management guidelines have two functions: to protect the public investment in the roadway by minimizing congestion and crash potential, and to allow property owners reasonable access to their properties. The goal of access management is to facilitate traffic operations and improve public safety along major roads. Access management looks at the following factors:

- Number of Access Points: Because the number of driveways allowed along major roads will affect traffic flow, ease of driving and crash potential, the number of driveways should be limited. Alternative access should be provided from side streets or driveway connections wherever possible.
- Sight Distance: Proper sight distance needs to be maintained at driveways and intersections to ensure vehicles can safely enter or exit the traffic stream.
- Driveway Spacing: Driveways need to be adequately spaced from intersections and other driveways to help reduce conflicting turning movements.
- Interconnection: Whenever possible, drives between adjacent uses should be interconnected so that travel from one site to an adjacent or nearby site does not require re-entering the main traffic stream.

Access management concerns on M-89 include:

- Spacing between the US-131 ramp access and driveways on M-89; and
- Cross-street access between Borgess-Pipp Hospital and commercial development on the north side of M-89.
- Curb cut spacing on M-89 east of Naomi.

Examples of poor access management. From top: driveway spacing, parking up to pavement, poor driveway definition.

Downtown Plainwell Plan

Like so many other towns, downtown is Plainwell's heart and soul and maintaining it as a thriving and vibrant place is a critical part of maintaining a healthy community.

Use and Development

Downtown should continue as one of Plainwell's two major commercial nodes (the other being near the M-89/US-131 interchange) and the focus of economic development and business attraction efforts should be to retain and enhance downtown and its businesses. Rather than expanding its geography, attention should instead focus on continued infill development, redevelopment (e.g., Harding's Market), and revitalization projects, streetscape and landscaping enhancements, and continued support for building façade improvements.

Downtown activities should include a mix of retail, residential, public, and entertainment land uses. In key downtown settings, such as a main shopping street, priority should be given to retail sales and services on the ground floor because they generate foot traffic and turnover; a key aspect of maintaining a healthy retail environment. This is especially important near the juncture of Bridge/Main and Allegan Streets where the goal should be a critical mass of retail businesses that make downtown Plainwell an even more vibrant destination.

While offices and residential uses should be located on the upper floors of downtown multi-story buildings, much will depend on the market and the ability for Plainwell to absorb expanded retailing opportunities. Nevertheless, first floor office uses should be avoided on Main Street, Bridge Street and Allegan Street, whenever possible. Due consideration should also be given to second story and loft apartments that can help accommodate a higher residential population in and adjacent to the downtown. While Plainwell has significant residential neighborhoods within walking distance of the downtown, more can be done to encourage new housing options.

Because parking will undoubtedly remain located behind many downtown buildings, rear store entrances will have to be handled carefully. Many will require enhancements to allow pleasing, safe, and efficient access to and from parked cars. However, they must not be allowed to overwhelm or dominate the true front door, which must orient to and remain located along the street and public sidewalks.

Downtown development character. From top; mixed-use residential and retail, pedestrian friendly streetscape, infill development.

Map 5: Downtown Subarea Plan

1. Continue the pedestrian walkway along the Kalamazoo River and Mill Race.

2. Continue the pattern of traditional downtown development north to the Kalamazoo River

3. Create a sense of entry to the downtown by creating a boulevard with green median.

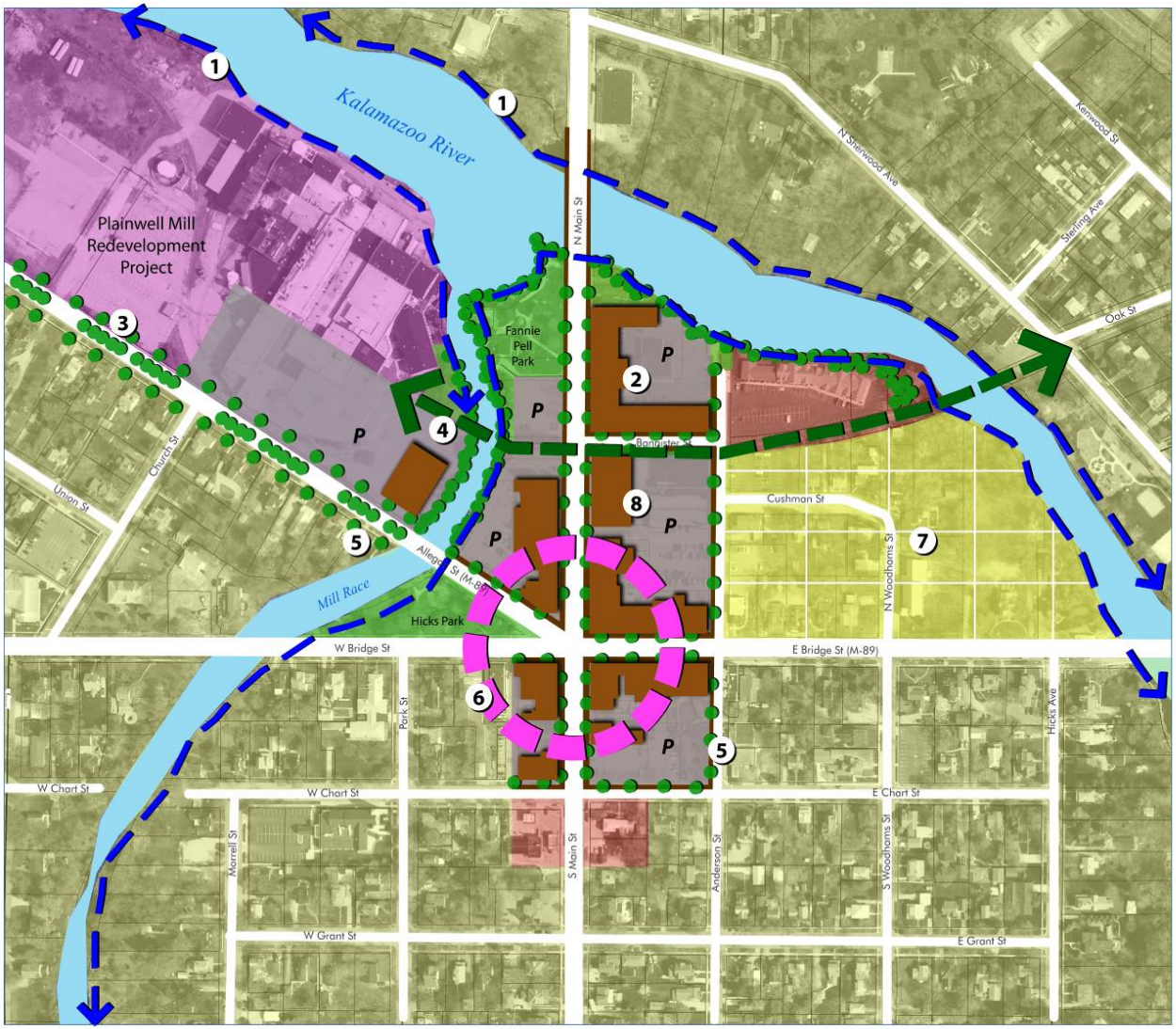
4. Reinforce the pedestrian walkway through downtown linking the Mill Project with the east side of the Kalamazoo River.

5. Utilize street trees to enhance the landscaping of downtown and through streets.

6. Implement the design changes proposed for the intersection of M-89, Main, and Bridge Street.

7. Reinforce the single-family residential neighborhood between downtown and the Kalamazoo River.

8. Commercial/retail infill/redevelopment potential incorporating enhanced access to Main Street utilizing streetscaping and open space design principles.



Government and civic land uses, such as City hall and a post office can also help support downtown, since they attract people running errands and carrying out personal business. Currently, among the key downtown civic destinations are Plainwell's three parks: Hicks Park, Fannie Pell Park, and Riverwalk Park. Therefore, the recommendations and improvements in the 2016-2021 Community Recreation Plan should be implemented to strengthen these parks and the recreational opportunities they provide in and around the downtown for City residents and visitors alike.

View of east side of N. Main Street looking south

M-89/Main Street Intersection after Bridge Street cut off, looking west

Development Character

When new development, infill development, or redevelopment occurs, it should complement existing development patterns. Building façades should be located near the sidewalk at the front of a lot to maintain a consistent urban edge. Buildings on corner lots are among the most important in a downtown because they help define the intersection of two streets and, therefore, must attractively define both edges. Parking lots should be located to the side or rear of a building, behind a line that extends across the façade, and not interfere with the natural flow of pedestrian traffic. When new buildings are to be wider than existing ones, generally 50 feet or more, façades should be divided into smaller bays to maintain a rhythm and scale of storefront patterns. Buildings should also have a consistent height, generally two to three stories. However, single story buildings must also be tall enough to help enclose the public realm that contains streets and sidewalks. This can be accomplished by establishing minimum floor to ceiling heights (fourteen to sixteen feet) at the ground level and requiring a rooftop parapet for buildings with flat roofs to enclose mechanical equipment and to add height. Generally, single story buildings should be at least eighteen to twenty-four feet tall. In all cases, the goal for new construction must be to maintain downtown's traditional main street feel.

The former Harding's Market is a wonderful downtown opportunity waiting to happen. The former food store site is a prime location for infill redevelopment that continues a traditional pattern of downtown buildings, similar to those along North Main Street. While the parking lot and the orientation of the building may currently be out of character with the rest of downtown it is nevertheless an important site that should be explored in greater detail. Whatever the ultimate solution may be, the orientation must be outward to greet and better connect with its surroundings. The large parking lot, centered on the block, is also a key downtown parking reservoir and offers opportunities for shared use. When consider-

ing redevelopment, uses that serve to attract people downtown must be emphasized. Options include continued retailing, public uses such as relocating the library to the heart of Plainwell and recreation/community activities such as a community center or a sports and exercise facility, like a YMCA.

The area just east of downtown, between East Bridge Street and the Kalamazoo River and east of North Anderson Street (including Cushman Street and North Woodhams Street), has evolved over the years into a mix of residential, commercial, and office uses but without a clearly defined direction for the future. Given the potential for infill along Main Street and the redevelopment of the former paper mill, the continued encroachment of commercial uses into residential neighborhoods should be avoided. This accomplishes nothing but to dilute downtown, weakens attempts to redevelop buildings and sites and limits opportunities for planned infill. In addition, it has the potential to harm the very residential neighborhoods that are viewed important to Plainwell's long-term health. Therefore, this neighborhood should transition back to residential uses, similar to the neighborhoods currently surrounding downtown. Traditional residential development in this area will help strengthen existing, established neighborhoods and will afford an opportunity to increase near-downtown residents. Such a change will also help concentrate commercial and retail development to the downtown and prevent scattered commercial along M-89.

Walkability and Connectivity

While the majority of downtown buildings are structurally sound and their arrangement promotes good downtown walking patterns, more can be done to improve the environment. Opportunities for community development projects include enhancements to public parking and signage, downtown streetscapes and landscaping, and expanding the system of riverfront walkways and open space. The focus of these should be on place-making, or the creation of attractive, exciting and memorable public spaces. These should be designed to encourage public gatherings, events and celebrations without overlooking individual comforts such as well-maintained walking surfaces, benches that do not interfere with foot traffic and facilitate people sitting and enjoying their stay in the downtown, lighting that enhances safety yet does not overpower the setting and event spaces that interconnect visually and physically with the rest of the community. Encouraging social interaction in public places can be not only a tool for building social capital but also enhances the main street feel of the downtown.

Form Based Code

A form-based code is a land development

regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code and could best implement the recommendations of this plan. A form-based district could be created in the downtown that allows for an appropriate mix of uses (business, office and residential), defines the desired character to create a cohesive and unified image, determines the desired location and boundaries, and incorporates a variety of incentives to entice developers to contribute to the realization of that vision.

A new form-based zoning district could

help to ensure future development within these areas is more traditional in design to meet the intent of the master plan. The existing "preferred" character of commercial buildings and dwellings can be incorporated into the code or new building typologies can be developed. Zoning requirements could include:

- Drawing commercial buildings to right-of-way (ROW).
- Requiring buildings to have a minimum frontage width along the front building line.
- Prohibiting parking in front of principal buildings.
- Requiring a minimum percentage of windows and doors on facades to require traditional "storefronts."
- Requiring minimum and maximum building heights (two to three stories).
- Providing a vertical mix of uses with ground-floor retail, or service uses and upper-floor service, or residential uses.

Redevelopment

Former Plainwell Paper Mill Site

In 2006, the City acquired the 36-acres that was formerly home to the Plainwell Paper Mill and has held several town meetings to develop a community vision and plan for the site. Map 6 shows the concept plan for the site that includes the following.

- The plan preserves and adaptively re-uses the historically significant original mill buildings. These structures have been deemed important to the cultural heritage and unique character of the community. A mixed-use approach including residential, commercial, office, and special event space, as well as a re-located City hall is planned for these structures
- The Riverwalk Trail is proposed to continue along the portions of the site bordering the Kalamazoo River and Mill Race.
- Public access to the Kalamazoo River is enhanced by developing four new parks/facilities:
  - Boat Launch Point Park (at the terminus of an extended North Prince Street);
  - Waterfront Plaza (located near the middle of the development);
  - Central Park (located among the reused historic buildings on the east end of the development); and
  - Mill Race Point Park (located adjacent to the former railroad bridge crossing the Mill Race from the Mill Site to Downtown).
- New residential includes attached, owner-occupied housing that enhances and supports Plainwell's current pattern of strong neighborhoods.

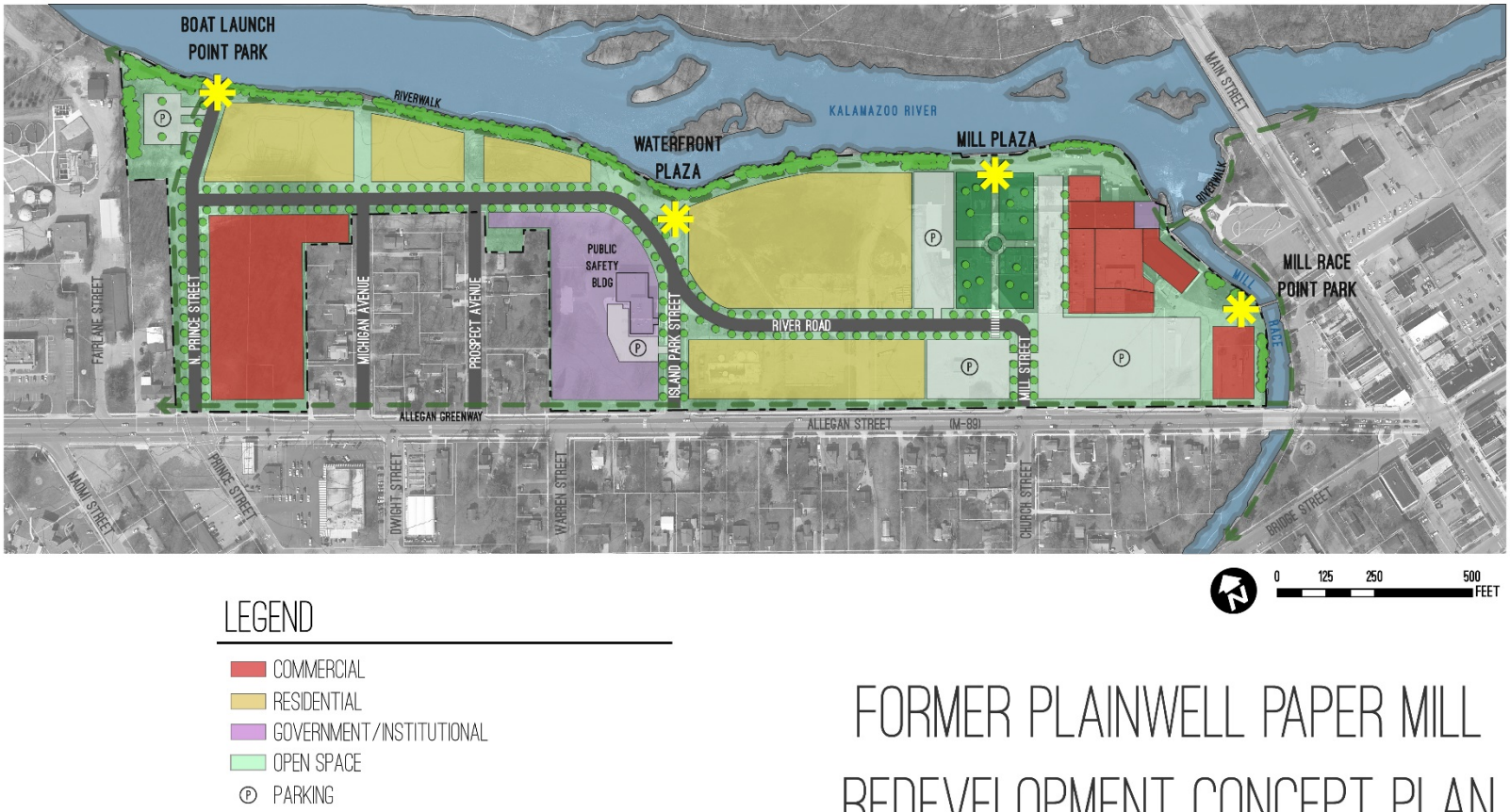
Major redevelopment sites: former Plainwell Paper (west) and Harding's Market (east)

- Retail and commercial that serves adjacent neighborhoods, the community and visitors and is complementary to and supports more intense commercial development in the downtown and near the US-131 interchange.
- Street trees, street furniture, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other amenities along all newly constructed streets, as well as those bordering the site, in order to create a pedestrian-friendly environment and sense of place.

Former Harding's Market Site

The former Harding's Market site, which sits at the southwest corner of Bannister St. and Anderson St., is currently being marketed by the City for redevelopment. A preferred redevelopment scenario would include retail and provide jobs for the local employment base.

Map 6: Former Plainwell Paper Mill Site Subarea Plan



LEGEND

- COMMERCIAL
- RESIDENTIAL
- GOVERNMENT/INSTITUTIONAL
- OPEN SPACE
- PARKING

FORMER PLAINWELL PAPER MILL REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

2016 PLAINWELL MASTER PLAN
FEBRUARY 2016

Riverfront Planning, Access and Ecotourism

One of Plainwell's greatest assets is its linear waterfrontage along the millrace and Kalamazoo River. These riverfronts provide scenic views, recreational opportunities and improve property values. The City should explore increasing access to the river and millrace through boat and kayak launches, parks and passive recreational space such as platforms for fishing. Moreover, there is an opportunity for the City to improve its protection from potential floods by creating natural flood protection through green infrastructure such as terraced flood walls and vegetated berms which integrate recreation facilities, enhance flood protection and improve ecology. Plainwell may also maximize upon its riverfront assets by further integrating its successful Riverwalk and outdoor event space with retail development.

Capital Improvements

City officials and departments must embrace the plan, applying its recommendations to help shape annual budgets and the design of capital improvements. For example, the City's department of public works can support implementation through infrastructure improvements, streets, and storm systems designed consistent with plan policies and recommendations, or the planning and building department through site plan review. The capital improvement plan (CIP) must interrelate and generally be consistent with the goals and objectives of the master plan. The list of planned projects in the capital improvement plan should be compared against the general project discussion and goals of the existing master plan.

Diagram of "missing middle" housing types

Housing

Like many other communities, Plainwell is growing older and its demography is transforming due in part to changing family size and makeup. Nuclear families are no longer the norm; therefore, housing options must accommodate a variety of family types, income levels and lifestyles.

The housing needs of special groups, like the elderly, must also be an important part of Plainwell's commitment to provide appropriate housing choices for all of its residents. Viable senior housing options that include remaining at home as long as possible, to special facilities, such as senior independent living, are especially important to residents who want to stay in the neighborhoods they are most familiar with and be near family and friends. Plainwell also affords a high-quality, walkable environment ideal for those who can no longer drive or simply no longer wish to do so.

Rental housing for lower income residents or supportive housing must be integrated with support services, and its design and construction should consider both long-term durability and security. Options for the younger sector of the population are just as important. Smaller families and couples may desire alternatives to single-family detached, owner-occupied housing, such as townhomes, flats, and apartments above storefronts.

This concept of providing housing for a variety of family types, income levels, ages,

ability levels, and lifestyles is colloquially referred to as "missing middle housing." The 'missing middle' in this instance are housing types which fall between the low density of detached single-family residential homes and higher-density, mid-rise apartment complexes. Duplexes, courtyard apartments, bungalow courts, townhomes, and multi-plex structures provide a more rich housing choice for people of all backgrounds and future residents of Plainwell.

Low Impact Development

LID is considered by many to be an effective tool that can be incorporated into local zoning and development regulations that may minimize the impact of stormwater runoff. According to the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, LID is:

[T]he cornerstone of stormwater management with the goal of mimicking a site's pre-settlement hydrology by using design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source.

Stormwater runoff is a major source of pollution and results in the degradation to water resources, increase in the magnitude and frequency of floods, reductions in fish and other aquatic species diversity, increased in streambank erosion, and decreases in infiltration into the groundwater. The review of the zoning ordinance indicates that there are no stormwater regulations or standards for design. In the absence of a stormwater ordinance, a "greening" the zoning ordinance with Low Impact Development ("LID") practices is recommended. Solutions to ameliorate deleterious effects of unmanaged stormwater should be explored.

In an effort to strive toward LID, consideration of a number of "non-structural" best management practices (BMPs) which require developers to make reasonable efforts to design with sensitivity to the environment is recommended. Nonstructural BMPs are "stormwater runoff treatment techniques that use natural measures to reduce pollution levels that do not involve the construction or installation of devices (e.g., management actions)." They are less technical in nature and can be reviewed by the Planning Commission and staff, as opposed to structural design for storage and treatment of stormwater runoff.

Regulatory Environment and Training

To ensure the greater predictability of new development accomplishing the goals and recommendations of the Master Plan, a throughout technical review of the City's zoning codes should be conducted to determine if the current development regulations in place today match those goals and recommendations. Additionally, an ongoing training program for city and planning commissions. Ongoing training is essential due to turnover on boards and commissions, as well as new elected officials. There should be a budget, tracking system, internal and external opportunity notices and community involvement.

A master plan is only useful as long as it is implemented and consulted when making land use decisions. This chapter outlines policies and actions for implementing the master plan. A policy is a clear statement of how the City intends to conduct its services, actions or business and provides a set of guiding principles to help with decision-making. An action is the specific method in which policies are carried out.

Policies

1. Natural Features

To preserve and protect the community's unique riverfront setting, its waterways and woodlots, Plainwell seeks to:

1.1. Expand the Riverwalk to increase accessibility and draw users to Plainwell's unique riverfront assets.

1.2. Enhance water quality and improve the ecological health of environmentally sensitive areas.

1.3. Protect and preserve trees in parks, along riverfronts, and adjacent to public streets and roadways.

2. Transportation

To enhance transportation options and to provide safe and efficient routes into and from the community, Plainwell seeks to:

2.1. Alleviate traffic congestion, particularly along M-89 between Downtown and US-131, wherever possible, to help facilitate safe and efficient travel.

2.2. Implore sound access management techniques particularly on major roadways which may benefit most from fewer and more properly spaced driveways and intersections.

2.3. Enhance area-wide access through regional non-motorized trail connections, sidewalk connections and improved highway interchange design.

2.4. Enhance gateways and corridors to improve the "front door" image of the City.

2.5. Employ a Complete Streets approach to planning for roadway design to accommodate all users and ability levels through interconnected sidewalks, streets, bike lanes, and trails.

3. Land Use

To preserve and protect the unique character of its downtown and neighborhoods, Plainwell seeks to:

3.1. Support downtown and existing

Chapter 5: Implementation

commercial areas and do not encourage additional commercial development outside of areas of the City which currently have established commercial development.

3.2. Limit commercial zoning in the City to avoid over-saturating the market, negatively affecting the competitiveness of existing commercial areas, and attracting undesirable businesses into the City.

3.3. Enhance access to the river and provide greater opportunities for boating, kayaking, and community events.

3.4. Keep and concentrate civic uses and government functions downtown.

3.10 Respect community character by imploring context sensitive street design solutions and encouraging preservation and rehabilitation of older, historic structures.

3.11 Provide more diverse housing options to make Plainwell a desirable place for all age groups, lifestyles, and income levels.

4. People

To promote itself as a vital community and a place in which people can comfortably live, raise families and grow old, Plainwell seeks to:

4.1. Enhance the quality of life of Plainwell residents.

4.2. Use the following Smart Growth Principles to evaluate future development:

a. create a range of housing opportunities and choices;

b. create walkable neighborhoods;

c. encourage community and stakeholder collaboration;

d. foster a distinctive, attractive community with a strong sense of place;

e. make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective;

f. mix land uses;

g. preserve open space, natural beauty and critical environmental areas;

h. provide a variety of transportation choices;

i. strengthen the community by directing growth to already developed areas;

j. take advantage of compact building and neighborhood design; and

k. provide opportunities for more year round recreation.

5. The Economy

To help raise median household incomes and provide job opportunities for its residents, Plainwell seeks to:

5.1. Support employment areas by diligently enforcing development codes and maintenance standards.

5.2. Preserve and enhance a strong and diversified retail base by:

a. focusing Plainwell's retail mix on meeting the needs of residents while also attracting patrons from surrounding communities;

b. continuing to support economic development initiatives associated with the mill redevelopment;

c. strengthening and enhancing locally-owned downtown businesses;

d. focusing more suburban style, auto-oriented commerce near US-131;

e. adopting policies that serve to attract "new economy" workers, such as flexible and affordable housing choices, promoting home occupations, extending wireless and broadband service and improving cell phone service throughout the community; and

f. maintaining Plainwell's unique

character and appeal by promoting the programs and amenities already in place that make it a charming and special place.

6. Residential Neighborhoods

To preserve, protect and enhance its residential neighborhoods, Plainwell seeks to:

6.1. Support the quality and character of its neighborhoods by continuing to vigorously enforce residential building and maintenance codes.

6.2. Support opportunities for "lifecycle" housing, including independent living units, assisted living, and continual care.

7. Non-residential Areas

To enhance the character of its unique downtown, commercial corridors and waterfront, and to provide future opportunities for employment, Plainwell will:

7.1. Support the quality and character of its commercial and employment areas by continuing to vigorously enforce building and maintenance codes and building on programs that encourage building renovation and improvements.

Project Priorities

The actions are listed with a "priority number" as follows:

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

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

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

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

Implementation Matrix

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies					
Action	*Responsibility*	*Timing*	*Priority*	*Funding*	*Status*
1. Review zoning ordinance processes and procedures to see if it inhibits master plan implementation; make necessary changes.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Within 1 year	1		On-going
2. Adopt new zoning requirements that: ▪ Implements the plan, including establishes new mixed-use and form-based districts for the downtown and surrounding commercial areas. ▪ Creates flexible regulations for the industrial park and revised commercial design standards and appropriate density changes that reflect desired community character. ▪ Protects those features in residential neighborhoods that make them special places and requires new development to follow suit. ▪ Support varied housing options that are compatible with neighborhood character.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Within 1 year	1		On-going (as need arises)

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies					
Action	**Responsibility**	**Timing**	**Priority**	**Funding**	**Status**
3. Prepare an economic development plan that: ▪ Identifies potential employers and lists requirements for each category. ▪ Is done in conjunction with public schools, establishing a program to provide necessary public infrastructure and public services (such as education and training) to secure jobs. ▪ Promotes development and creates a business climate to attract positive economic development and maintains competitiveness.	Staff, Planning Commission, School Board, City Council	As needed	2		In progress
4. Review and revise master plan in response to changing needs and priorities. Ensure consistency with Master Plan.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Annually and as needed	2		In progress (Update process underway; changing needs and priorities to be addressed)
5. Update Capital Improvements Plan to prioritize plan elements, projects and identify funding options. Review the annual capital improvement plan against the goals and objectives of the Master Plan to ensure compatibility.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Within 1 year and annually	1		In progress
6. Develop and implement a rental housing inspection program.	Staff, City Council	Within 1 year	2		In progress
7. Complete, fund, and implement a streetscape program for gateways.	Staff, City Council	1 – 3 years	2	A, D, E, L	In progress
8. Complete, fund and implement a sign plan for wayfinding.	Staff, City Council, DDA	1 – 5 years	3	E, L	Incomplete; funding unavailable at this time

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies					
Action	**Responsibility**	**Timing**	**Priority**	**Funding**	**Status**
9. Develop and implement a plan to expand trails, the Riverwalk, enhance access and create a public gathering space along the Kalamazoo River.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, Mill Developer	1 – 5 years	1	A, D, E, J, L	Attending meetings as part of the West Michigan Trailways. Added bike lanes on N & S Main St.
10. Update DDA plan - prepare a more detailed plan for the downtown based on plan recommendations, including: ▪ design and configuration of downtown streets, ▪ streetscape improvements, ▪ façade enhancements, ▪ concepts for specific development sites, ▪ more detailed market assessment and recommendations, ▪ incentives to encourage building and site improvements.	Staff, DDA, Chamber of Commerce, City Council	1 – 2 years	2	M	In progress

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies					
Action	**Responsibility**	**Timing**	**Priority**	**Funding**	**Status**
11. Implement low-impact design and green infrastructure development practices by conducting the following: ▪ Create LID requirements for site plan review. ▪ Undertake a campaign to educate the community about current water quality issues and environmentally friendly practices. ▪ Determine a comprehensive strategy for monitoring water quality and a plan for implementing water quality improvements. ▪ Provide incentives for waterfront property owners to create vegetative buffers, rain gardens, and other low-impact solutions to address the quality of stormwater runoff. ▪ Implement policies for ecologically sensitive design and maintenance practices for all public facilities, parks, and utility systems.	Staff, City Council, Planning Commission, County and State Agencies	1 – 5 years	2		On-going; implemented well-head protection ordinance
12. Assess and update zoning ordinance to allow "missing middle" housing types and allow affordable housing choices at either end of the market; for the young and for empty nesters.	Staff, City Council, Planning Commission, Area Senior Advocacy Agencies	1 – 5 years	2	F	On-going

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies					
Action	**Responsibility**	**Timing**	**Priority**	**Funding**	**Status**
13. Update zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to require new development to inter-connect with existing streets, sidewalks, and other infrastructure.	Staff, Planning Commission via Site Plan Standards and Review, City Council	1 – 2 years	1		On-going
14. Update zoning code to prepare and implement access management measures that control the number, location, and design of access points along all major road corridors.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies	1 – 5 years	2		No progress
15. Undertake a study that explores another road connection from the industrial park north to Miller Road.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies	1-3 years	3		In progress
16. In cooperation with surrounding jurisdictions prepare and implement a plan for an interconnected, non-motorized trail/bike path system. Plan, design, and implement a regional trail from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids traversing through Plainwell using the former interurban line and consider connections across US-131, to schools and parks, and to other key destinations like downtown and the industrial park.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, Neighboring Communities, State and County Agencies	1-5 years	3	E, J, L	Committee with surrounding jurisdictions is formed and a plan is being worked on. Bike facilities have been added to N. & S. Main St.

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies					
Action	**Responsibility**	**Timing**	**Priority**	**Funding**	**Status**
17. Evaluate current travel patterns, volumes and street widths relative to their land use context. Develop a new street classification policy that employs traffic calming measures and also considers "road diets" to reduce street widths, while maintaining safe and acceptable traffic volumes. Implement context sensitive street design solutions.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies	1-3 years	1		LSL: Recommend removing this action
18. Convert the former Paper Mill and site to mixed development that includes employment based land uses.	Staff, City Council	Within 1 year	1	A, B, C, D, E, F, I, J, K, L, M	In-progress. Notes: Paper mill site houses City hall and an environmental engineering company. Some of the property is now for sale.
19. Conduct annual review of the master plan to determine progress of completing actions.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council	Annual			
20. Develop and implement streetscape master plans to "green" community entrances; include exploring a boulevard on M-89 between US-131 and the downtown.	Staff, Planning Commission, City Council, State and County Agencies				
21. Work with business owners to cross promote businesses and attractions in the community (e.g., provide coupons for other businesses, promotional material for attractions, etc.)					

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies					
Action	**Responsibility**	**Timing**	**Priority**	**Funding**	**Status**
22. Employ CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Principles) when evaluating new development.					LSL: Recommend removing this action item.
23. Develop a location for a Farmers Market					In Progress
24. Adopt site and building design standards as part of the zoning ordinance to help ensure future development and redevelopment near the M-89/US-131 interchange reflects a positive community image.					

Description of Funding Sources

A. Downtown Urban Revitalization 2.0 Entitlement Grant Program 2009

Issued by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), this program may be available to Plainwell and provides funding for downtown public infrastructure, façade improvements, and signature building projects. This one-time allocation requires a 50/50 local cash match and funds are available to individual qualifying communities in any dollar increment between $25,000 and $100,000. The total amount available in connection with this program is $400,000. Projects with an emphasis on promoting density, walkability, and sustainability are viewed favorably. Preference is given for projects that create jobs and that leverage multiple sources of public and private funding. The local match requirement, however, must be a cash match from the community and other state and/or local grant dollars cannot be used for this purpose. While the 2009 deadline for this program has passed, its availability for 2010 and beyond should be explored with the MEDC. All questions regarding the program should be directed to:

Michigan Economic Development Corporation
300 North Washington Square, 2nd Floor
Lansing, Michigan 48913

B. Façade Improvement Project

Grants are available for communities that seek to target areas of traditional downtowns for improvements that will have a significant positive impact. The Downtown Façade Program is structured to provide commercial/mixed-use building façade improvements to sustain and minimize deterioration of downtowns. This program is based on the premise that the exterior improvements will stimulate additional private investment in the buildings and the surrounding area, attract, and increase the number of customers, thereby resulting in additional downtown economic opportunities. Proposals with multiple buildings are accepted and are encouraged. The request must identify whether the proposed project is located within a Downtown Development Authority, a Principal Shopping District, a Business Improvement Zone, a Corridor Improvement Authority, or a Historic District. (Note: the project is not required to be located in a development district.)

C. Signature Building Project

Grants are available for communities seeking to acquire vacant, partially vacant, or substantially underused buildings located in downtowns for rehabilitation into a commercial/mixed use building that will hopefully result in job creation. This program enables a community to secure a building that is a focal point within the downtown for commercial rehabilitation purposes that will make a significant contribution to the overall downtown area. If the project is located within a Downtown Development Authority, a Principal Shopping District, a Business Improvement Zone, a Corridor Improvement Authority, or a Historic District, it should be identified as such. (Note: the project is not required to be located in a development district.)

D. Downtown Infrastructure

Grants are available to provide public infrastructure improvements that directly support private redevelopment projects in traditional downtowns. Public infrastructure includes items such as parking facilities, streetscape, public water or sanitary sewer lines and related facilities, streets, roads, bridges, and public utilities. The request must identify whether the proposed project is located within a Downtown Development Authority, a Principal Shopping District, a Business Improvement Zone, a Corridor Improvement Authority, or a Historic District. (Note: the project is not required to be located in a development district.)

E. Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program

The Michigan Department of Transportation's program funds non-traditional road projects (outside the traditional curb and gutter) such as streetscapes, non-motorized paths, and historical restoration of transportation facilities. Among its primary goals

is to support Michigan's entitlement communities for high-priority urban revitalization projects and, therefore, M-89/Main Street appear to be candidates. Any ACT 51 agencies (Cities, Villages, and Counties), MDOT, MDNR, Native American Tribes, and other Federal Agencies are eligible for this program and it accepts applications year-round. The program holds Selection Advisory Committee meetings four to eight times per year to determine which applications will be recommended for selection. A minimum 20% local match is required, but over-matching is encouraged and is a factor in determining which applications will be selected. The average match is 32% and only cash matches or real estate donated to the project, such as a right-of-way (ROW), is accepted. Unfortunately, the program will not fund burying utilities except in association with new streetlights for a streetscape project.

Further information about the program is available at www.michigan.gov/tea for the online application and instructions, or by calling (517) 335-1069.

F. Michigan State Housing Development Authority

MSHDA offers a variety of loan products for low to moderate income homebuyers. All of the following products are 30-year, fixed-rate mortgages, allow the use of gift funds, and may be formally assumed (subject to approval).

- Conventional 95% to 97% loan to value
- Federal Housing Administration (FHA)
- United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

G. Individual Development Accounts

Recognizing the need to support families in their exit from poverty, this program encourages the accumulation of wealth and assets. IDAs are matched savings accounts designed to help low-income and low-wealth families accumulate a few thousand dollars for high return investments, including homeownership. Individuals must meet IDA program acceptance criteria, complete a financial management course and training related to their asset goal, and save money toward their future dream over a period of between six to thirty-six months. Once they have completed the program, their savings of up to $1,000 is matched by the Michigan IDA Partnership (MIDAP) at a ratio of 3:1 for a home purchase. Program highlights include:

- Zero-interest, non-amortizing loan with no monthly payments.
- Maximum assistance is $7,500.
- Available with MSHDA's FHA, Rural Development or 97 percent Conventional first mortgage.
- Funds may be used for down payment, closing costs, prepaid/escrow expenses and a home inspection performed by a licensed home inspector.
- The loan is due upon sale or transfer of the property or if the first mortgage is refinanced or paid in full.

H. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The HOME Program provides formula grants to states and localities that communities use, often in partnership with local nonprofit groups to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership for low-income people. The incomes of households receiving HUD assistance must not exceed 80 percent of the area median. Eligible activities include site acquisition or improvement.

I. Commercial Rehabilitation Act

Public Act 210 of 2005 encourages the rehabilitation of commercial property that is 15 years old or older by abating the taxes on new investment. Commercial property is defined as a qualified facility primarily used in the operation of a commercial business. Certain residential improvements are also eligible for abatement, but land and personal property are not. The abatement process is similar to PA 146, the Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act. The City must first hold a hearing to establish a Commercial Rehabilitation District and the county board of commissioners and all real property owners in the proposed district must

be notified of the hearing. The district must be at least three acres in size unless it is located in a downtown or business area or contains a qualified retail food establishment.

J. Michigan Department of Natural Resources Land and Water Conservation Fund

May be available for certain park, recreation and open space enhancement projects; specific criteria include:

Program Objectives: The objective is to provide grants to local units of government and to the state to develop land for outdoor recreation.

Criteria: Applications are evaluated using four criteria: project need, applicant history, site and project quality, and alignment with the state's recreation plan. In 2009, the fourth criterion is determined to be primarily trails, community outdoor recreation, green technology in outdoor recreation, universal access and coordination and cooperation among recreation providers.

Applicant Eligibility: Any unit of government, including Native American tribes, school districts, or any combination of units in which authority is legally constituted to provide recreation. Local units of government, school districts, and local authorities must have a DNR-approved community five-year recreation plan to be eligible.

K. United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Housing & Community Facilities Programs

Designed to develop essential community facilities for public use in rural areas Community Facility Programs can make and guarantee loans for essential community facilities in rural areas and towns with a population up to 20,000. Loans and guarantees are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments. Facilities include schools, libraries, childcare, hospitals, medical clinics, assisted living facilities, fire and rescue stations, police stations, community centers, public buildings and transportation. Community Programs utilizes three flexible financial tools to achieve this goal: the Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program, the Community Facilities Direct Loan Program, and the Community Facilities Grant Program.

L. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Opportunities in the Economic Stimulus Package

The level of potential assistance through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is significant and will depend on the type of program or project envisioned and coordination with other government agencies. The types of projects typically funded include "bricks and mortar" funding for a variety of state and municipal projects, transportation enhancements, rural development, education, economic development, Corporation for National and Community Service, and job training and employment services.

M. Grants from private foundations

Zoning Analysis

The land use categories described in Chapter 4 and on Map 3: Future Land Use relate closely to Plainwell's zoning districts. The following table describes the relationship between future land use and zoning districts.

Future Land Use Plan Designation	Corresponding Zoning Districts
Low-Density Residential	R-1A and R-1B Single Family Residence District and R-1C Single and Two Family Residence District, with minimum lot areas of 12,000 sq. ft., 9,800 sq. ft., and 7,200 sq. ft. respectively. The intent of these districts is to encourage the construction of and the continued use of land for single-family dwellings and to prohibit other uses that would substantially interfere with the development or continuation of single family dwellings, and in the R-1C District, of two-family dwellings. However, Plainwell should consider implementing new regulations for certain neighborhoods that can better protect and enhance existing and desired neighborhood character; defining such things as architectural form, building and garage placement and maximum home, lot and block sizes.
Medium-Density Residential	R-1A Single Family Residence District and RMH Residential Mobile Home District. The latter is designed for those who prefer mobile home living. This is a future land use density designation that corresponds to existing land uses in these two districts.
High-Density Residential	R-2 Multiple-Family Residence District is designed primarily for duplexes, multiple-family dwellings including two or three-story apartments, townhouses, row houses, and dwelling groups. This designation applies to existing high density residential development to the west of US-131.

Future Land Use Plan Designation	Corresponding Zoning Districts
Neighborhood Mixed Use	While there is no directly corresponding district this land use designation does encompass portions of the SB Service Business and the CS Community Service Districts. Both of these are envisioned as transitional districts that have little potential negative impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. A new form-based district may best implement this designation.
Commercial	The C-2 General Commercial District best corresponds to this category and is intended to provide businesses and services usually found in major shopping centers and business areas at the juncture of major streets. Because of their prominent locations, more detailed design standards should be developed for these areas that include both building and site design requirements. A new form-based district may best implement this designation.
Healthcare	There is no category that directly corresponds to this designation. Rather it is envisioned as an expansion of CS Community Service District which allows most, if not all of the uses envisioned for this land use designation.
Public Institutional	There is no category that corresponds to this designation.
Employment	M-1 Restricted Manufacturing District and M-2 General Manufacturing District. Due to the changing nature of employment land uses it may be advisable to evaluate the need for two different classifications. Consolidating all employment areas into a single district, with some desirable, but generally "heavier" uses listed as special land uses. Such an approach would be more efficient and could better implement the recommendations of this Plan.

Conclusion

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

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Act 110 of the Michigan Public Acts of 2006) requires Plainwell's Zoning Ordinance to be "based on a plan to promote the public health, safety and welfare, to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability, to limit the improper use of land, to conserve natural resources and energy, to meet the needs of the state's residents for food, fiber and other natural resources, places of residence…and other uses of land." Since the zoning map is a part of the Zoning Ordinance, changes to zoning boundaries should be in conformance with the Master Plan.

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

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

If future development decisions take these factors into account, and if the Plan is reviewed on a regular basis and updated when necessary, then Plainwell can be assured that development will reflect the desires of its citizens, reflected through the adopted Master Plan.

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

Appendix A: 2009 Community Survey Results

1. Do you live within the City of Plainwell?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	**91.1%**	**278**
No	8.9%	27
	answered question	**305**
	skipped question	**51**

2. Please rate the following related to the City of Plainwell as a whole.

	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Response Count
Plainwell as a place to live	17.8% (62)	**78.7% (274)**	0.3% (1)	2.6% (9)	0.6% (2)	348
Plainwell as a place to raise children	17.0% (59)	**76.4% (266)**	4.0% (14)	2.0% (7)	0.6% (2)	348
Plainwell as a place to work	5.2% (18)	**64.3% (223)**	17.6% (61)	6.3% (22)	6.6% (23)	347
City of Plainwell services	8.7% (30)	**82.9% (287)**	3.2% (11)	4.3% (15)	0.9% (3)	346
The overall quality of life in Plainwell	13.3% (46)	**82.7% (286)**	0.3% (1)	3.2% (11)	0.6% (2)	346
					answered question	**348**
					skipped question	**8**

3. Please rate the following related to downtown Plainwell.						
	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Response Count
Overall appearance of downtown	2.9% (10)	**82.8% (284)**	0.3% (1)	12.0% (41)	2.0% (7)	343
Cleanliness of downtown	8.5% (29)	**85.4% (293)**	0.6% (2)	4.4% (15)	1.2% (4)	343
Variety and quality of downtown businesses	1.5% (5)	**67.0% (227)**	1.5% (5)	22.4% (76)	7.7% (26)	339
Quality and character of downtown buildings	3.8% (13)	**75.4% (258)**	1.8% (6)	17.3% (59)	1.8% (6)	342
Availability and convenience of downtown parking	6.4% (22)	**76.7% (263)**	2.0% (7)	12.5% (43)	2.3% (8)	343
Convenient and consistent store hours	2.0% (7)	**73.2% (251)**	5.8% (20)	14.0% (48)	5.0% (17)	343
Place for public events in downtown (concerts, festivals, etc.)	8.8% (30)	**80.4% (275)**	1.5% (5)	8.2% (28)	1.2% (4)	342
					answered question	**344**
					skipped question	**12**

4. What types of businesses are needed in downtown Plainwell, (select all that apply)?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Restaurants	20.0%	67
Services (i.e. dry cleaners, pharmacy, flower shop, etc.)	20.0%	67
Grocery Store	13.4%	45
Gift/Specialty Shops (bakery, women's/children's clothing, outdoor, etc.)	**75.8%**	**254**
Convenience Stores	8.1%	27
Youth/Young Adult Oriented Businesses	15.2%	51
Other (please specify)	20.0%	67
	answered question	**335**
	skipped question	**21**

5. Please rate the following related to the M-89 and US-131 interchange area in Plainwell.						
	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Response Count
Overall appearance of the interchange area	0.9% (3)	13.6% (46)	1.8% (6)	22.1% (75)	**61.7% (209)**	339
Perception of Plainwell upon exiting US-131/entering on M-89	0.0% (0)	10.3% (35)	1.2% (4)	28.2% (96)	**60.3% (205)**	340
Quality of businesses and land uses near the interchange	0.6% (2)	10.9% (37)	4.1% (14)	23.3% (79)	**61.1% (207)**	339
Quality of landscaping and trees in and around the interchange	0.6% (2)	8.8% (30)	1.2% (4)	20.6% (70)	**68.7% (233)**	339
Character and quality of existing signs near the interchange	0.9% (3)	12.1% (41)	3.5% (12)	23.5% (80)	**60.0% (204)**	340
The appearance of businesses near the interchange	0.9% (3)	12.9% (44)	2.1% (7)	23.8% (81)	**60.3% (205)**	340
	answered question					**340**
	skipped question					**16**

6. Please rate the following related to the environment and recreation in Plainwell.						
	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Response Count
Overall quality of the natural environment in Plainwell	6.8% (23)	**85.2% (288)**	1.2% (4)	5.9% (20)	0.9% (3)	338
Recreational opportunities in Plainwell	4.1% (14)	**77.2% (261)**	1.5% (5)	12.7% (43)	4.4% (15)	338
Water quality of the Kalamazoo River through Plainwell	1.2% (4)	**71.9% (243)**	7.1% (24)	14.5% (49)	5.3% (18)	338
Quality and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities	11.0% (37)	**80.4% (271)**	1.5% (5)	6.5% (22)	0.6% (2)	337
Cleanliness of parks and recreational facilities	12.2% (41)	**81.6% (275)**	1.8% (6)	4.5% (15)	0.0% (0)	337
	answered question					**338**
	skipped question					**18**

7. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Response Count
The river walk should be expanded.	20.8% (70)	**66.2% (223)**	7.4% (25)	3.6% (12)	2.1% (7)	337
Plainwell needs more parks and open space.	5.9% (20)	**68.0% (230)**	10.7% (36)	13.6% (46)	1.8% (6)	338
More winter activities (swim center, ice skating, etc.) are needed.	13.4% (45)	**76.6% (258)**	6.2% (21)	3.0% (10)	0.9% (3)	337
The City needs more recreational opportunities/facilities.	10.1% (34)	**72.8% (246)**	10.4% (35)	6.2% (21)	0.6% (2)	338
There are adequate recreational opportunities for children and young adults.	0.9% (3)	**68.6% (232)**	11.5% (39)	16.0% (54)	3.0% (10)	338
The City should provide more access to and recreational opportunities on the Kalamazoo River.	12.1% (41)	**73.7% (249)**	8.3% (28)	5.3% (18)	0.6% (2)	338
	answered question					**339**
	skipped question					**17**

8. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Response Count
More industrial employers are needed in Plainwell.	14.6% (49)	**73.5% (247)**	6.8% (23)	4.8% (16)	0.3% (1)	336
More service oriented businesses are needed in Plainwell, (repair, supply, wholesale, etc.).	9.2% (31)	**77.7% (262)**	8.3% (28)	4.2% (14)	0.6% (2)	337
More retail stores are needed in Plainwell.	11.3% (38)	**76.1% (255)**	7.5% (25)	4.8% (16)	0.3% (1)	335
The existing industrial park is attractive.	2.7% (9)	**77.1% (259)**	11.6% (39)	8.0% (27)	0.6% (2)	336
The City is doing a good job keeping and attracting employers in Plainwell.	1.5% (5)	**65.8% (221)**	19.9% (67)	9.5% (32)	3.3% (11)	336
The existing industrial park needs to be expanded.	4.5% (15)	**68.5% (230)**	18.5% (62)	8.3% (28)	0.3% (1)	336
The City should provide incentives, such as grants or loans, for homes and business owners to improve their properties.	14.3% (48)	**75.9% (255)**	5.1% (17)	3.9% (13)	0.9% (3)	336
					answered question	**337**
					skipped question	**19**

9. Please rate each of the following related to schools and education in Plainwell.						
	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Response Count
Quality of education	9.5% (32)	**81.5% (274)**	4.8% (16)	3.0% (10)	1.2% (4)	336
Condition of schools and other educational facilities	9.5% (32)	**81.6% (275)**	3.9% (13)	3.0% (10)	2.1% (7)	337
Level of interaction between the community and the schools	5.0% (17)	19.3% (65)	7.7% (26)	11.9% (40)	**56.1% (189)**	337
Safe walking and bike routes to and from school	4.5% (15)	**72.6% (244)**	8.0% (27)	10.7% (36)	4.2% (14)	336
					answered question	**337**
					skipped question	**19**

10. Please rate each of the following related to housing and neighborhoods in Plainwell.						
	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Response Count
Upkeep of homes and maintenance of yards	1.8% (6)	**78.9% (265)**	1.8% (6)	16.4% (55)	1.2% (4)	336
Enforcement of maintenance and zoning codes by the City	1.2% (4)	12.5% (42)	15.4% (52)	8.9% (30)	**62.0% (209)**	337
Variety of available housing choices and options	3.0% (10)	**79.9% (267)**	8.7% (29)	7.2% (24)	1.2% (4)	334
Overall apperence and maintenance of streets, sidewalks, and public spaces	3.3% (11)	**81.8% (274)**	0.6% (2)	10.4% (35)	3.9% (13)	335
	answered question					**337**
	skipped question					**19**

11. Should Plainwell have more, about the same, or fewer of the following housing types?					
	More	About the Same	Fewer	No Opinion	Response Count
Single family homes	13.2% (44)	**81.7% (273)**	0.6% (2)	4.5% (15)	334
Mobile home communities	0.0% (0)	12.5% (42)	**83.3% (280)**	4.2% (14)	336
Affordable housing for middle income families	18.6% (62)	**76.0% (254)**	3.0% (10)	2.4% (8)	334
Multiple family apartment units	2.7% (9)	18.5% (62)	**73.2% (246)**	5.7% (19)	336
Multiple family condominium units	11.0% (37)	**72.3% (243)**	9.8% (33)	6.8% (23)	336
Housing options for senior citizens and the elderly	20.5% (69)	**70.6% (238)**	4.2% (14)	4.7% (16)	337
				answered question	**337**
				skipped question	**19**

12. Should Plainwell require an annual inspection of rental properties to make sure they comply with all codes?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		**91.3%**	**306**
No		3.0%	10
No Opinion		5.7%	19
	answered question		**335**
	skipped question		**21**

13. I would support a single, City-contracted waste hauler instead of contracting with my own if it results in reducing truck traffic and is cheaper.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Agree	31.5%	107
Disagree	**62.9%**	**214**
No Opinion	5.6%	19
	answered question	**340**
	skipped question	**16**

14. Should Plainwell more aggressively enforce maintenance codes (junk cars, tall grass, etc.)?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	**88.4%**	**297**
No	5.1%	17
No Opinion	6.5%	22
	answered question	**336**
	skipped question	**20**

15. Please rate each of the following related to motorized and non-motorized transportation in Plainwell.						
	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Response Count
Quality and condition of streets	0.9% (3)	**72.7% (245)**	1.2% (4)	20.2% (68)	5.0% (17)	337
Quality and condition of sidewalks	0.9% (3)	**74.1% (249)**	1.2% (4)	17.6% (59)	6.3% (21)	336
Ease of traveling by automobile	3.9% (13)	**80.7% (271)**	0.9% (3)	8.9% (30)	5.7% (19)	336
Ease of traveling by bicycle	1.8% (6)	**72.1% (243)**	9.8% (33)	11.3% (38)	5.0% (17)	337
Ease of walking/jogging/running	3.6% (12)	**78.9% (265)**	3.9% (13)	11.0% (37)	2.7% (9)	336
Degree to which sidewalks, pathways, and walking trails are interconnected	1.8% (6)	**76.5% (257)**	6.3% (21)	11.3% (38)	4.2% (14)	336
Traffic flow on major streets	1.2% (4)	**73.9% (249)**	1.2% (4)	11.0% (37)	12.8% (43)	337
					answered question	**337**
					skipped question	**19**

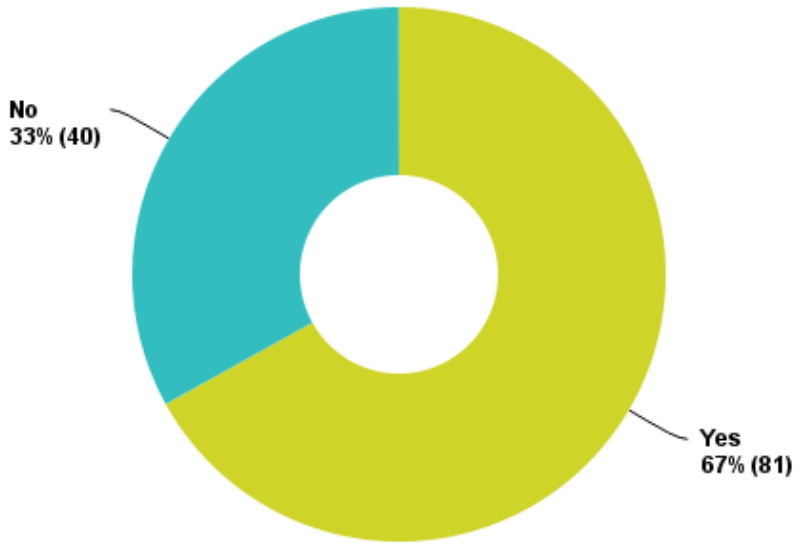
16. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements related to a sense of community and quality of life.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Response Count
There is a strong sense of community in Plainwell.	7.7% (26)	**82.7% (278)**	5.4% (18)	3.6% (12)	0.6% (2)	336
Plainwell provides a safe, healthy, and positive environment in which to raise a family.	9.6% (32)	**85.7% (287)**	3.0% (10)	1.8% (6)	0.0% (0)	335
The small town atmosphere of Plainwell is important to me.	22.9% (77)	**73.5% (247)**	2.4% (8)	0.3% (1)	0.9% (3)	336
There are many opportunities to become involved in community matters and volunteer activities.	9.8% (33)	**79.8% (268)**	6.3% (21)	3.9% (13)	0.3% (1)	336
There are many opportunities to attend and participate in cultural events and activities in Plainwell.	6.5% (22)	**81.0% (272)**	4.2% (14)	6.8% (23)	1.5% (5)	336
Aging residents should have a variety of housing options and choices made available to them.	10.1% (34)	**82.4% (277)**	6.8% (23)	0.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	336
I am concerned about crime and safety in Plainwell.	**57.6% (193)**	19.7% (66)	8.4% (28)	12.8% (43)	1.5% (5)	335
Teenagers and young adults need more activities and opportunities to become involved in the community.	11.3% (38)	**80.1% (269)**	6.0% (20)	2.4% (8)	0.3% (1)	336
					answered question	**336**
					skipped question	**20**

Appendix B: 2016 Community Survey Results

Q1: Do you live within the City of Plainwell?

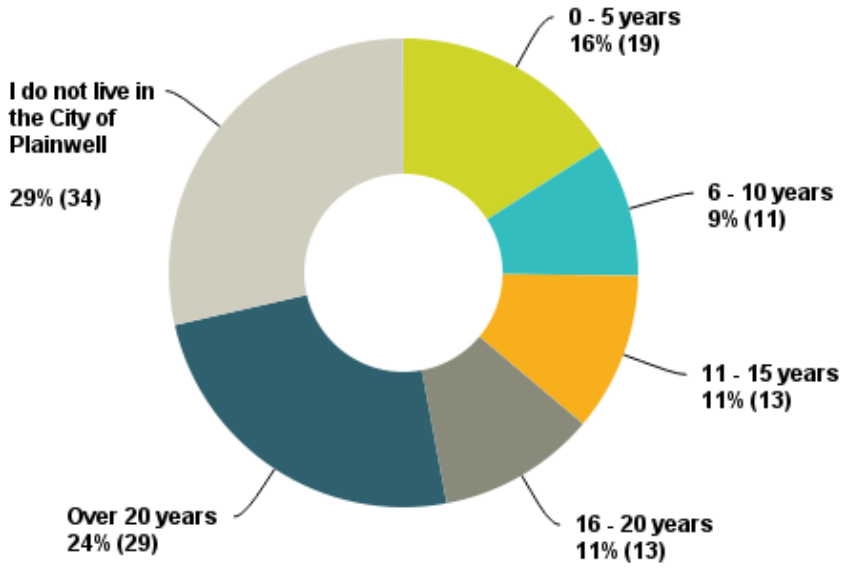
Answered: 121 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	67%	81
No	33%	40
Total		121

Q2: How long have you lived in the City limits of Plainwell?

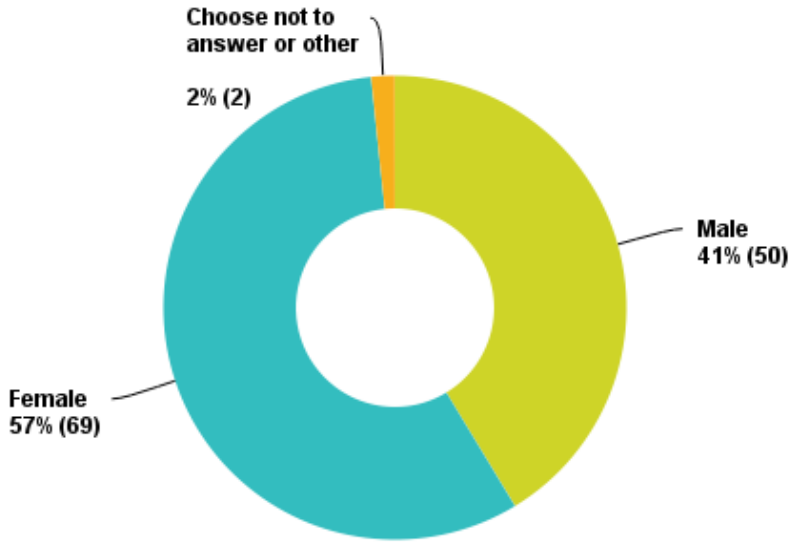
Answered: 119 Skipped: 5



Answer Choices	Responses	
0 - 5 years	16%	19
6 - 10 years	9%	11
11 - 15 years	11%	13
16 - 20 years	11%	13
Over 20 years	24%	29
I do not live in the City of Plainwell	29%	34
Total		**119**

Q3: Gender

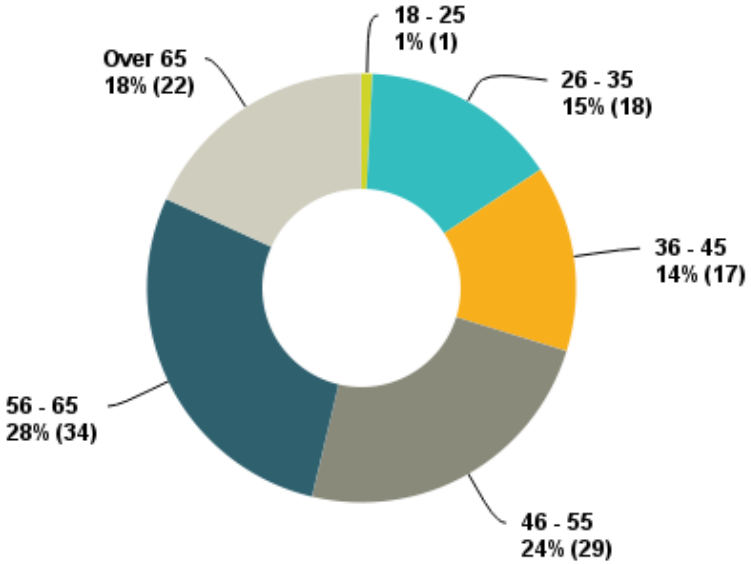
Answered: 121 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	41%	50
Female	57%	69
Choose not to answer or other	2%	2
Total		**121**

Q4: Age

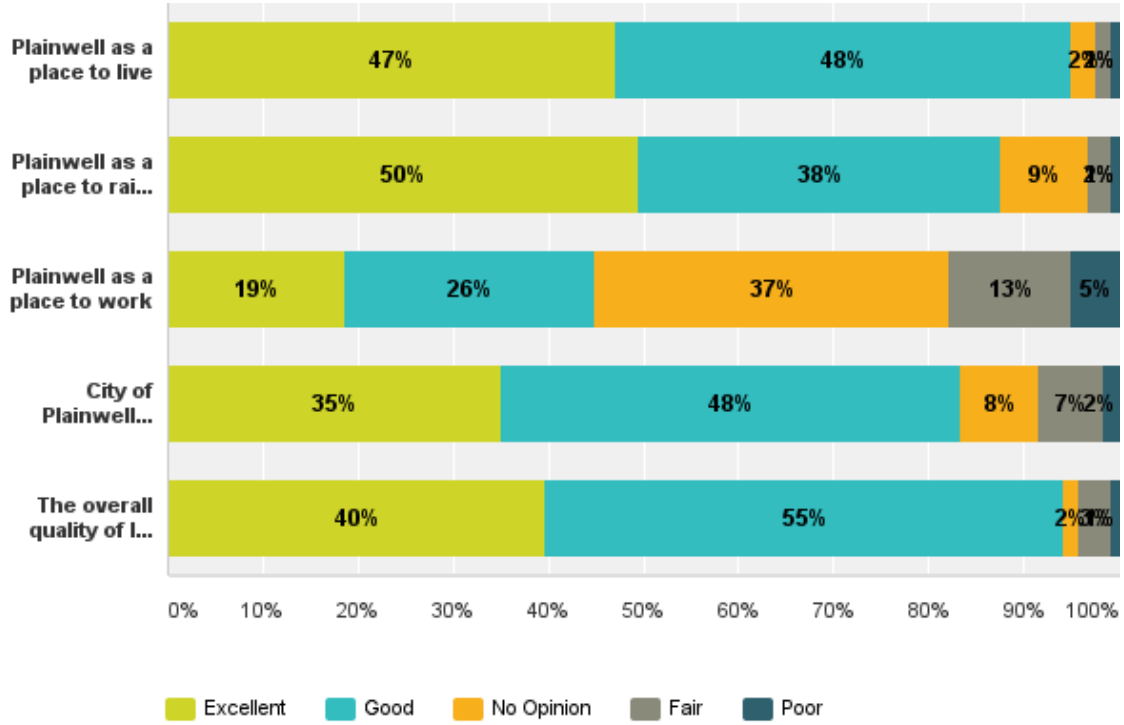
Answered: 121 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses	
18 - 25	1%	1
26 - 35	15%	18
36 - 45	14%	17
46 - 55	24%	29
56 - 65	28%	34
Over 65	18%	22
Total		**121**

Q5: Please rate the following related to the City of Plainwell as a whole.

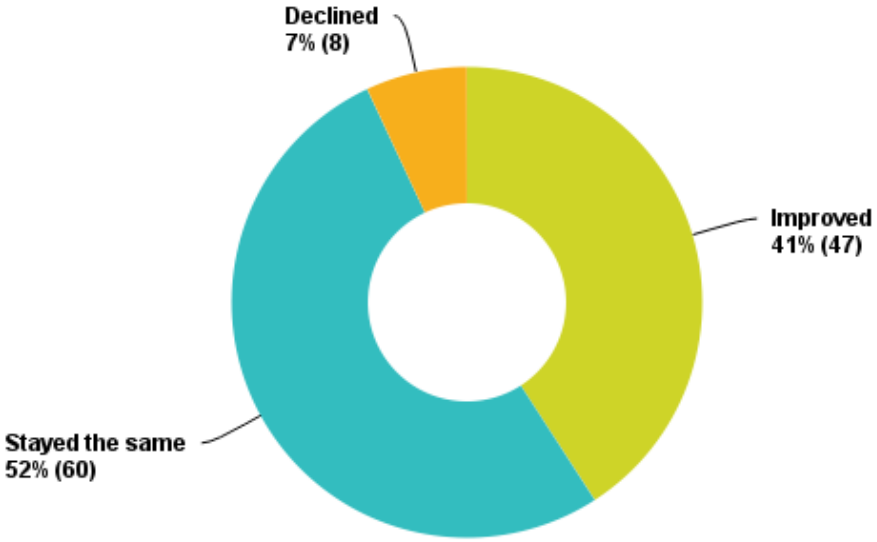
Answered: 121 Skipped: 3



	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Total
Plainwell as a place to live	**47%** 57	**48%** 58	**2%** 3	**2%** 2	**1%** 1	121
Plainwell as a place to raise children	**50%** 60	**38%** 46	**9%** 11	**2%** 3	**1%** 1	121
Plainwell as a place to work	**19%** 22	**26%** 31	**37%** 44	**13%** 15	**5%** 6	118
City of Plainwell services	**35%** 42	**48%** 58	**8%** 10	**7%** 8	**2%** 2	120
The overall quality of life in Plainwell	**40%** 48	**55%** 66	**2%** 2	**3%** 4	**1%** 1	121

Q6: Over the past five years, do you believe the quality of life in Plainwell has:

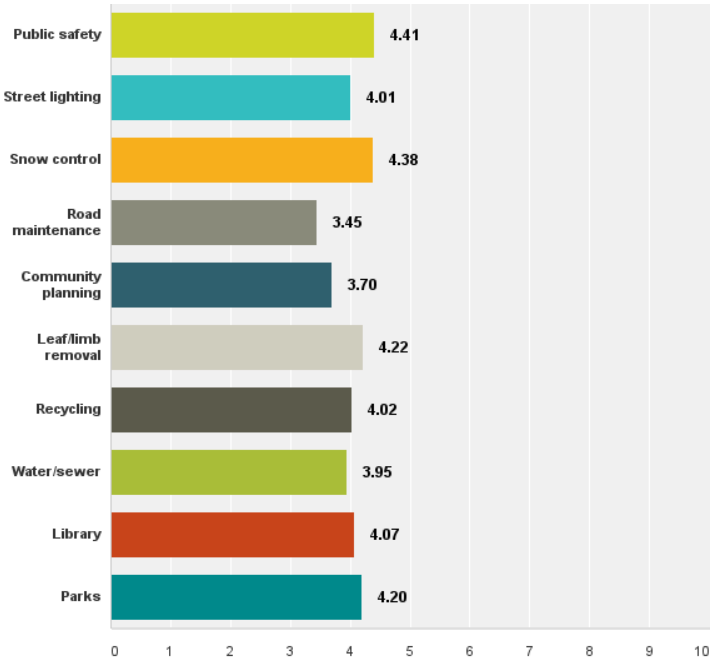
Answered: 115 Skipped: 9



Answer Choices	Responses	
Improved	41%	47
Stayed the same	52%	60
Declined	7%	8
Total		115

Q7: Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following services:

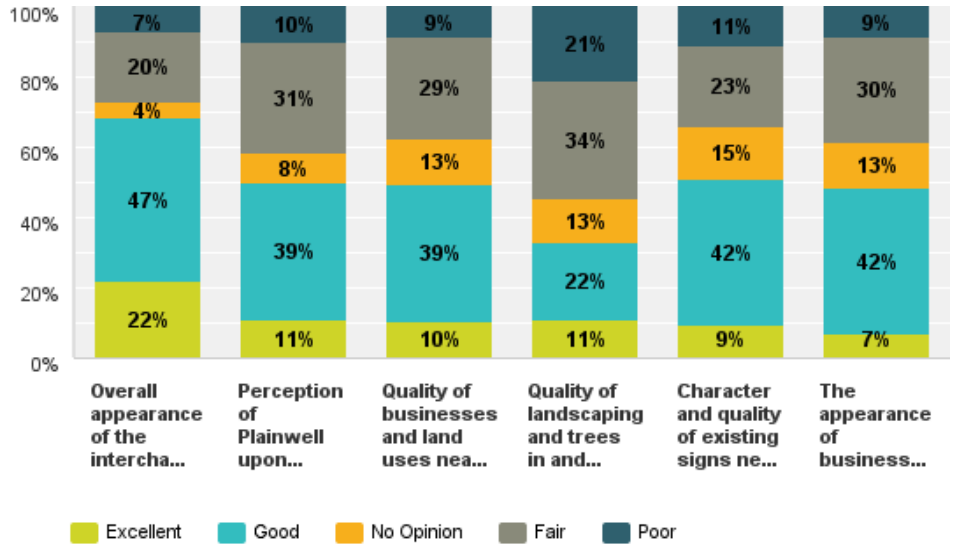
Answered: 120 Skipped: 4



	Not satisfied	Somewhat unsatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat satisfied	Completely satisfied	Total	Weighted Average
Public safety	1.67% 2	0.83% 1	12.50% 15	25.00% 30	60.00% 72	120	4.41
Street lighting	2.52% 3	10.08% 12	11.76% 14	35.29% 42	40.34% 48	119	4.01
Snow control	0.83% 1	5.00% 6	8.33% 10	26.67% 32	59.17% 71	120	4.38
Road maintenance	8.33% 10	18.33% 22	14.17% 17	38.33% 46	20.83% 25	120	3.45
Community planning	1.69% 2	9.32% 11	28.81% 34	37.29% 44	22.88% 27	118	3.70
Leaf/limb removal	0.85% 1	2.54% 3	22.03% 26	22.88% 27	51.69% 61	118	4.22
Recycling	4.24% 5	10.17% 12	19.49% 23	11.86% 14	54.24% 64	118	4.02
Water/sewer	2.54% 3	6.78% 8	24.58% 29	25.42% 30	40.68% 48	118	3.95
Library	3.36% 4	8.40% 10	12.61% 15	29.41% 35	46.22% 55	119	4.07
Parks	1.67% 2	5.83% 7	11.67% 14	32.50% 39	48.33% 58	120	4.20

Q8: Please rate the following related to the M-89 and US-131 interchange area in Plainwell.

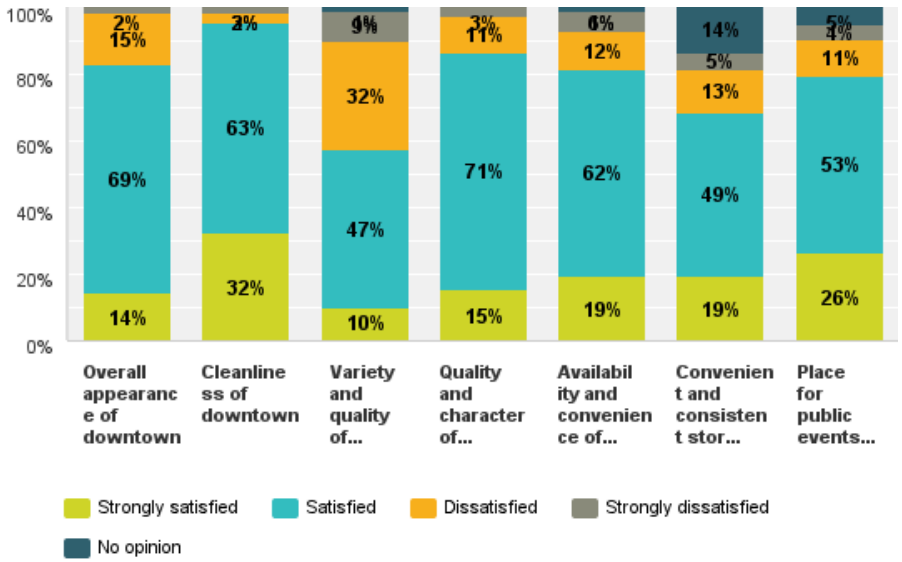
Answered: 119 Skipped: 5



	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Total
Overall appearance of the interchange area	**22%** 26	**47%** 55	**4%** 5	**20%** 24	**7%** 8	118
Perception of Plainwell upon exiting US-131/entering on M-89	**11%** 13	**39%** 46	**8%** 10	**31%** 37	**10%** 12	118
Quality of businesses and land uses near the interchange	**10%** 12	**39%** 46	**13%** 15	**29%** 34	**9%** 10	117
Quality of landscaping and trees in and around the interchange	**11%** 13	**22%** 26	**13%** 15	**34%** 40	**21%** 25	119
Character and quality of existing signs near the interchange	**9%** 11	**42%** 49	**15%** 18	**23%** 27	**11%** 13	118
The appearance of businesses near the interchange	**7%** 8	**42%** 49	**13%** 15	**30%** 35	**9%** 10	117

Q9: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspects of Plainwell?

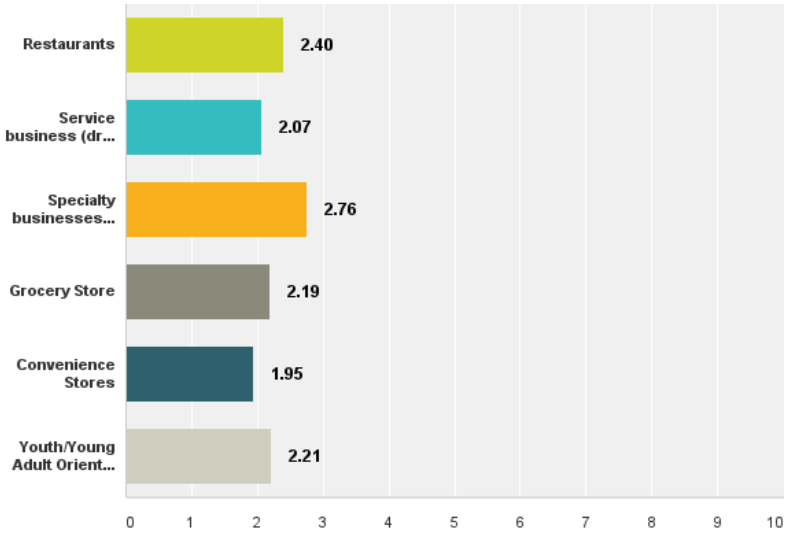
Answered: 118 Skipped: 6



	Strongly satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Strongly dissatisfied	No opinion	Total
Overall appearance of downtown	**14%** 17	**69%** 81	**15%** 18	**2%** 2	**0%** 0	118
Cleanliness of downtown	**32%** 38	**63%** 74	**3%** 3	**2%** 2	**0%** 0	117
Variety and quality of downtown businesses	**10%** 12	**47%** 56	**32%** 38	**9%** 11	**1%** 1	118
Quality and character of downtown buildings	**15%** 18	**71%** 84	**11%** 13	**3%** 3	**0%** 0	118
Availability and convenience of downtown parking	**19%** 23	**62%** 73	**12%** 14	**6%** 7	**1%** 1	118
Convenient and consistent store hours	**19%** 23	**49%** 58	**13%** 15	**5%** 6	**14%** 16	118
Place for public events in downtown (festivals, concerts, movies)	**26%** 31	**53%** 63	**11%** 13	**4%** 5	**5%** 6	118

Q10: Which of the following businesses would you like to see more of in Plainwell or keep at the same level?

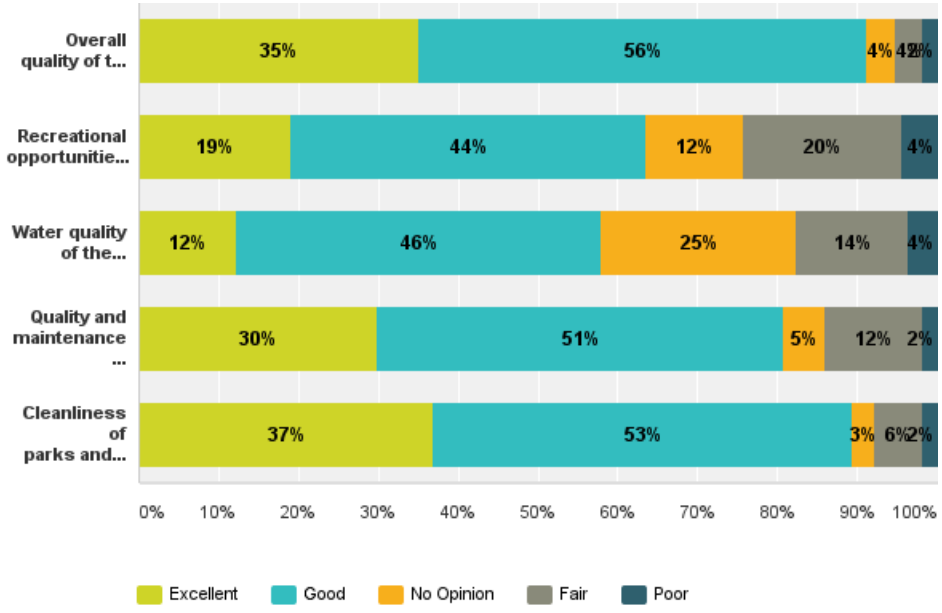
Answered: 118 Skipped: 6



	More	Same	No Opinion	Total	Weighted Average
Restaurants	**46.23%** 49	**47.17%** 50	**6.60%** 7	106	2.40
Service business (dry cleaners, auto repairs, insurance, financial advisers etc.)	**21.82%** 24	**63.64%** 70	**14.55%** 16	110	2.07
Specialty businesses (furniture, clothing, jewelry, gifts, bakery, coffee, sporting goods, health and fitness facilities etc.)	**81.36%** 96	**13.56%** 16	**5.08%** 6	118	2.76
Grocery Store	**25.44%** 29	**68.42%** 78	**6.14%** 7	114	2.19
Convenience Stores	**7.89%** 9	**78.95%** 90	**13.16%** 15	114	1.95
Youth/Young Adult Oriented Businesses	**43.22%** 51	**34.75%** 41	**22.03%** 26	118	2.21

Q11: Please rate the following as they relate to environment and recreation in Plainwell.

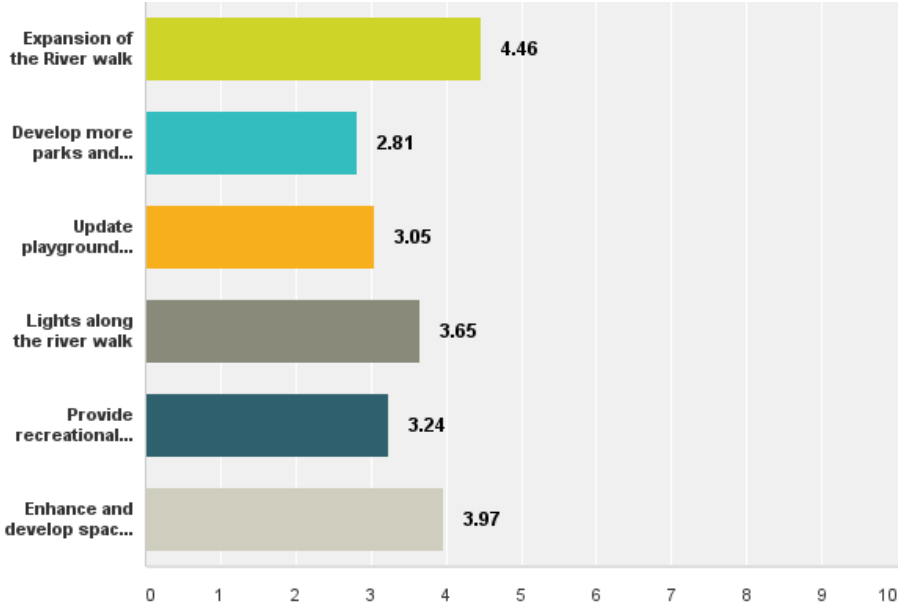
Answered: 115 Skipped: 9



	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Total
Overall quality of the natural environment in Plainwell	**35%** 40	**56%** 64	**4%** 4	**4%** 4	**2%** 2	114
Recreational opportunities in Plainwell	**19%** 22	**44%** 51	**12%** 14	**20%** 23	**4%** 5	115
Water quality of the Kalamazoo River through Plainwell	**12%** 14	**46%** 52	**25%** 28	**14%** 16	**4%** 4	114
Quality and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities	**30%** 34	**51%** 58	**5%** 6	**12%** 14	**2%** 2	114
Cleanliness of parks and recreational facilities	**37%** 42	**53%** 60	**3%** 3	**6%** 7	**2%** 2	114

Q12: Prioritize the following statements:

Answered: 111 Skipped: 13

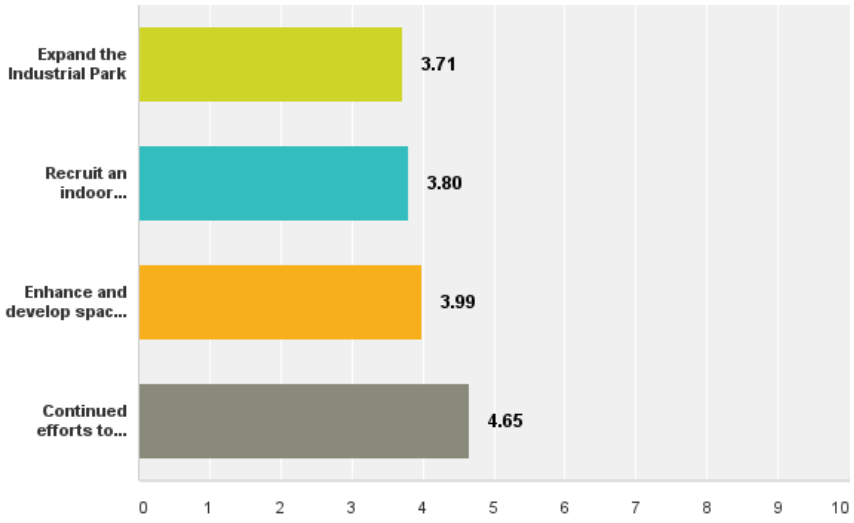


	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Score
Expansion of the River walk	**31.68%** 32	**25.74%** 26	**16.83%** 17	**13.86%** 14	**5.94%** 6	**5.94%** 6	101	4.46
Develop more parks and open/green space	**4.85%** 5	**11.65%** 12	**16.50%** 17	**20.39%** 21	**19.42%** 20	**27.18%** 28	103	2.81
Update playground equipment in the parks	**11.21%** 12	**12.15%** 13	**14.95%** 16	**15.89%** 17	**23.36%** 25	**22.43%** 24	107	3.05
Lights along the river walk	**14.15%** 15	**20.75%** 22	**18.87%** 20	**17.92%** 19	**18.87%** 20	**9.43%** 10	106	3.65
Provide recreational opportunities for the River	**7.41%** 8	**19.44%** 21	**19.44%** 21	**16.67%** 18	**17.59%** 19	**19.44%** 21	108	3.24
Enhance and develop space for the Farmers' Market and other event venues	**32.73%** 36	**11.82%** 13	**15.45%** 17	**13.64%** 15	**12.73%** 14	**13.64%** 15	110	3.97

Q13: Please rank how important or unimportant you think each of the following objectives are:

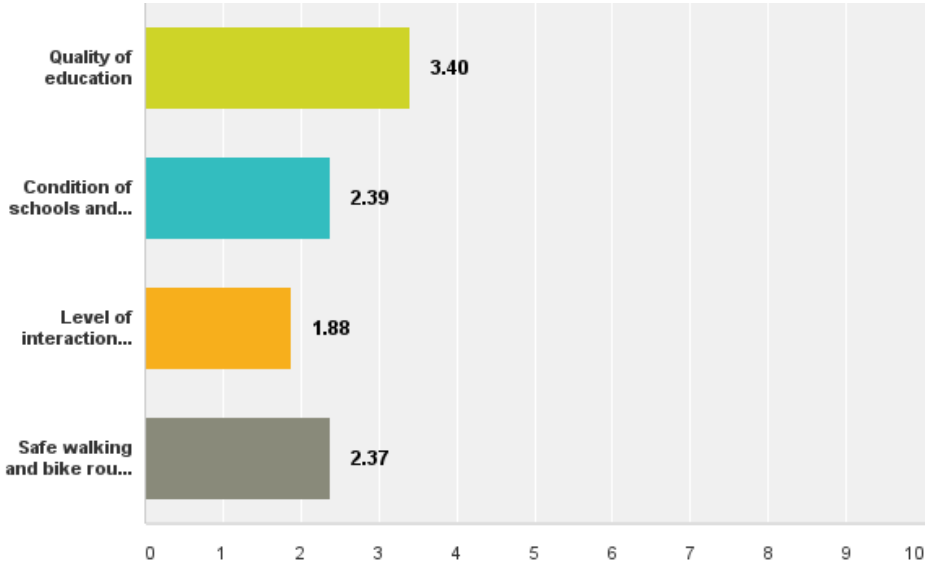
Answered: 114 Skipped: 10

	Very Important	Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Total	Weighted Average
Expand the Industrial Park	**18.58%** 21	**46.02%** 52	**27.43%** 31	**3.54%** 4	**4.42%** 5	113	3.71
Recruit an indoor Recreation Facility – YMCA, Fitness Center, Health & wellness, etc.	**34.51%** 39	**30.97%** 35	**19.47%** 22	**9.73%** 11	**5.31%** 6	113	3.80
Enhance and develop space for the Framers' Market and other event venues	**31.86%** 36	**52.21%** 59	**5.31%** 6	**4.42%** 5	**6.19%** 7	113	3.99
Continued efforts to develop the former Plainwell Paper Mill site	**75.22%** 85	**19.47%** 22	**2.65%** 3	**0.00%** 0	**2.65%** 3	113	4.65



Q14: Please rank each of the following related to schools and education in Plainwell

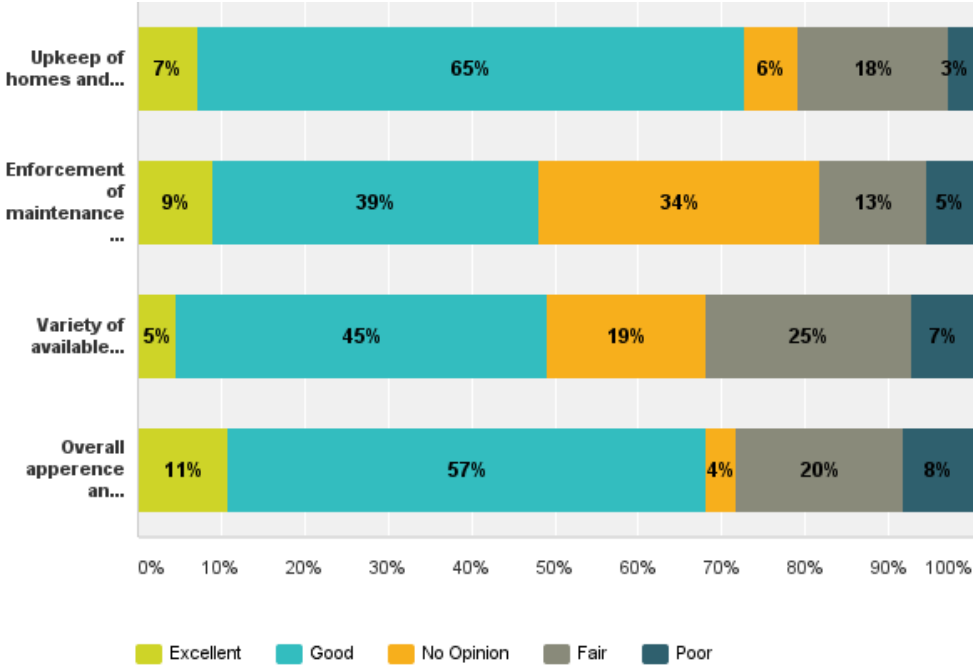
Answered: 101 Skipped: 23



	1	2	3	4	Total	Score
Quality of education	**62.37%** 58	**19.35%** 18	**13.98%** 13	**4.30%** 4	93	3.40
Condition of schools and other educational facilities	**11.58%** 11	**40.00%** 38	**24.21%** 23	**24.21%** 23	95	2.39
Level of interaction between the community and the schools	**7.29%** 7	**16.67%** 16	**32.29%** 31	**43.75%** 42	96	1.88
Safe walking and bike routes to and from school	**20.20%** 20	**23.23%** 23	**30.30%** 30	**26.26%** 26	99	2.37

Q15: Please rate each of the following related to housing and neighborhoods in Plainwell.

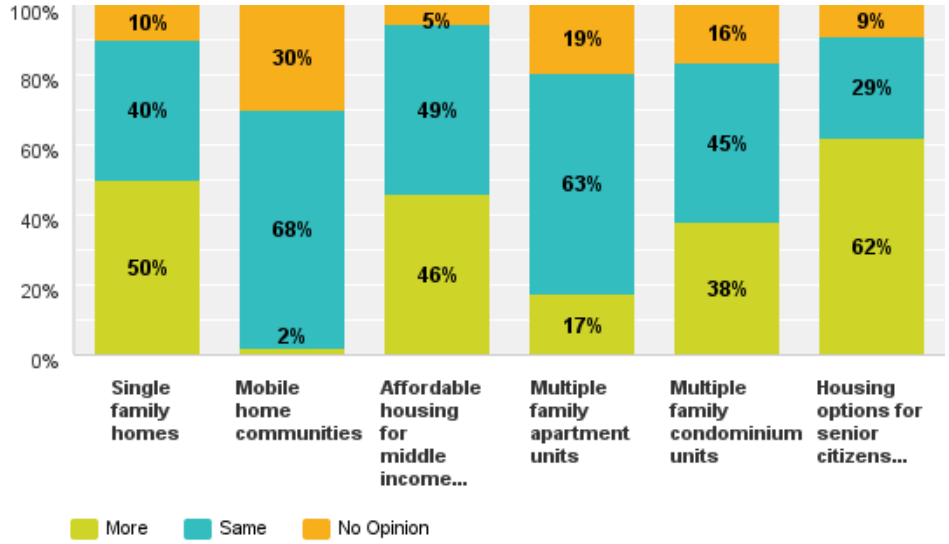
Answered: 111 Skipped: 13



	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Total
Upkeep of homes and maintenance of yards	**7%** 8	**65%** 72	**6%** 7	**18%** 20	**3%** 3	110
Enforcement of maintenance and zoning codes by the City	**9%** 10	**39%** 43	**34%** 37	**13%** 14	**5%** 6	110
Variety of available housing choices and options (apartments, condos, single family, etc.)	**5%** 5	**45%** 49	**19%** 21	**25%** 27	**7%** 8	110
Overall apperence and maintenance of streets, sidewalks, and public spaces	**11%** 12	**57%** 63	**4%** 4	**20%** 22	**8%** 9	110

Q16: Should Plainwell have more or about the same the following housing types?

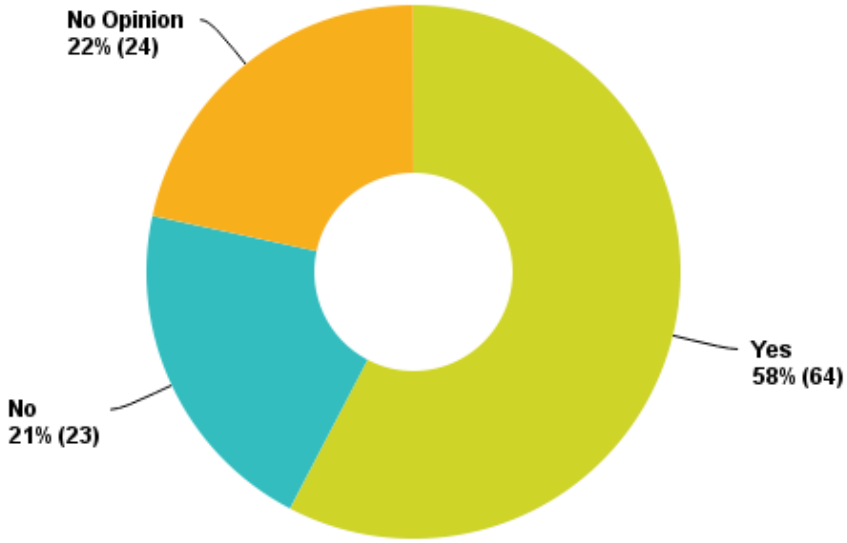
Answered: 112 Skipped: 12



	More	Same	No Opinion	Total
Single family homes	**50%** 55	**40%** 44	**10%** 11	110
Mobile home communities	**2%** 2	**68%** 75	**30%** 33	110
Affordable housing for middle income families	**46%** 51	**49%** 54	**5%** 6	111
Multiple family apartment units	**17%** 19	**63%** 69	**19%** 21	109
Multiple family condominium units	**38%** 42	**45%** 50	**16%** 18	110
Housing options for senior citizens and the elderly	**62%** 68	**29%** 32	**9%** 10	110

Q17: Should Plainwell consider a rental properties inspection ordinance?

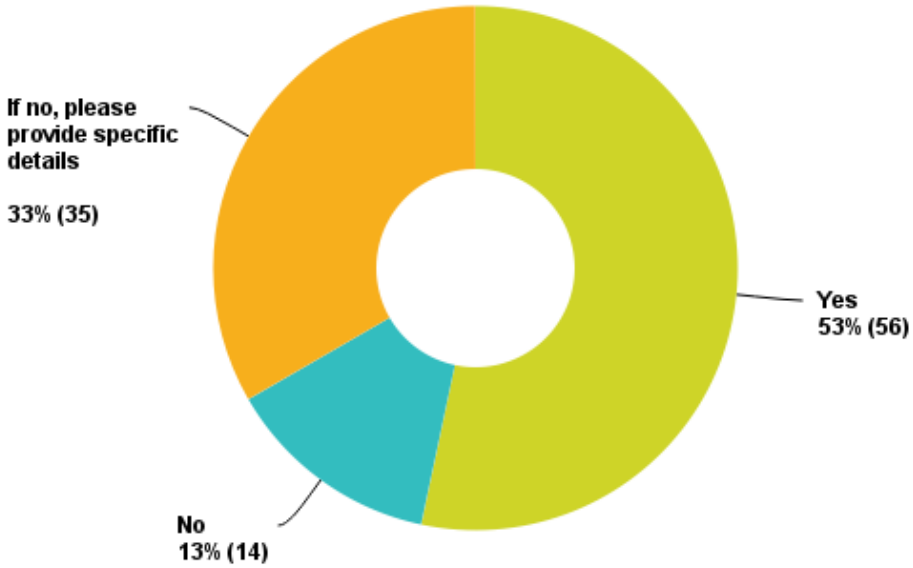
Answered: 111 Skipped: 13



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	58%	64
No	21%	23
No Opinion	22%	24
Total		**111**

Q18: Over the past several years, Plainwell has put more effort into improvement of code enforcement, have you seen a change for the better?

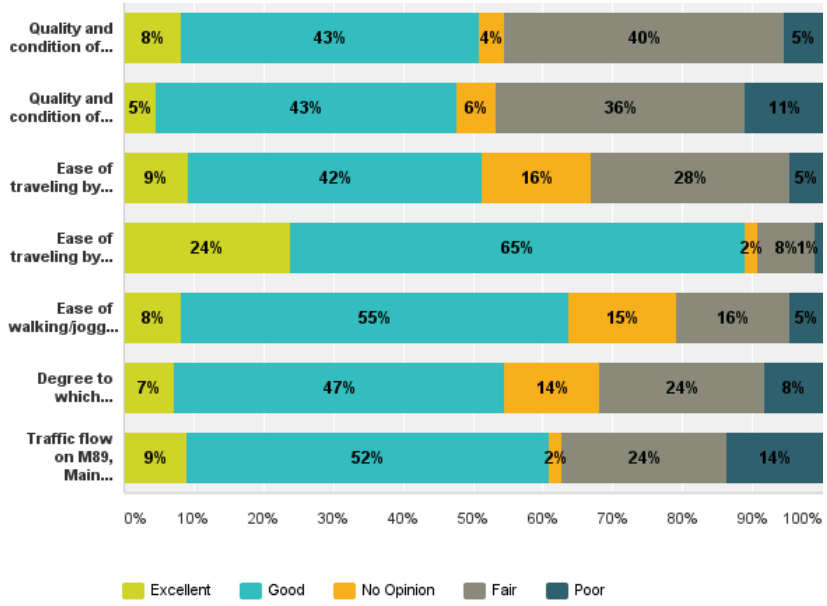
Answered: 105 Skipped: 19



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	53%	56
No	13%	14
If no, please provide specific details	33%	35
Total		**105**

Q19: Please rate each of the following as they relate to motorized and non-motorized transportation in Plainwell.

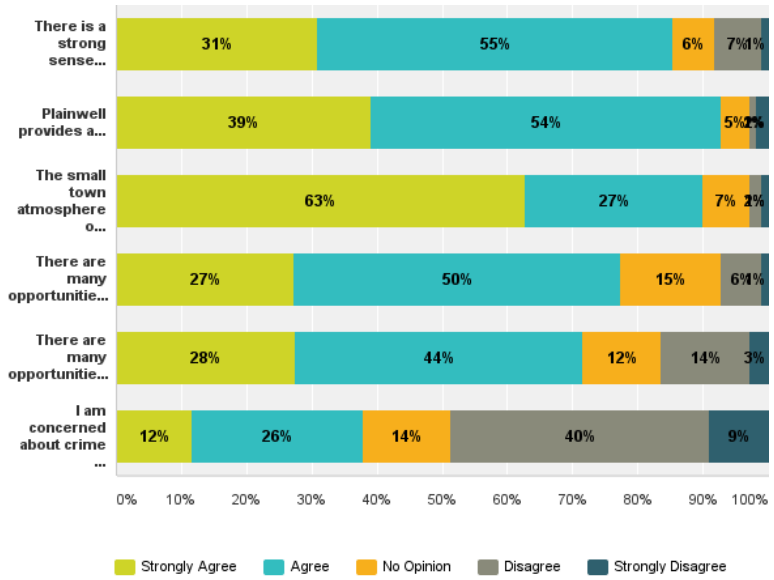
Answered: 110 Skipped: 14



	Excellent	Good	No Opinion	Fair	Poor	Total
Quality and condition of streets	8% 9	43% 47	4% 4	40% 44	5% 6	110
Quality and condition of sidewalks	5% 5	43% 47	6% 6	36% 39	11% 12	109
Ease of traveling by bicycle	9% 10	42% 46	16% 17	28% 31	5% 5	109
Ease of traveling by car	24% 26	65% 71	2% 2	8% 9	1% 1	109
Ease of walking/jogging/running	8% 9	55% 61	15% 17	16% 18	5% 5	110
Degree to which sidewalks, pathways, and walking trails are interconnected	7% 8	47% 52	14% 15	24% 26	8% 9	110
Traffic flow on M89, Main St. and Bridge St.	9% 10	52% 57	2% 2	24% 26	14% 15	110

Q20: Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements related to a sense of community and quality of life.

Answered: 111 Skipped: 13



	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
There is a strong sense of community in Plainwell.	**31%** 34	**55%** 60	**6%** 7	**7%** 8	**1%** 1	110
Plainwell provides a safe, healthy, and positive environment in which to raise a family.	**39%** 43	**54%** 59	**5%** 5	**1%** 1	**2%** 2	110
The small town atmosphere of Plainwell is important to me.	**63%** 69	**27%** 30	**7%** 8	**2%** 2	**1%** 1	110
There are many opportunities to become involved in community matters and volunteer activities.	**27%** 30	**50%** 55	**15%** 17	**6%** 7	**1%** 1	110
There are many opportunities to attend and participate in cultural events and activities in Plainwell.	**28%** 30	**44%** 48	**12%** 13	**14%** 15	**3%** 3	109
I am concerned about crime and safety in Plainwell.	**12%** 13	**26%** 29	**14%** 15	**40%** 44	**9%** 10	111

Appendix C: Completed Action Plan Items from Previous Plans

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies: Completed Items since 2011	
Action	***Status***
1. Complete, fund, and implement a streetscape program for downtown.	Downtown streetscape completed with N & S Main Street Project 2011.
2. Implement policies to encourage community cleanup efforts and provide incentives to clean up and improve property.	Façade grants and revolving loan funding for businesses and an Allegan County 0% interest loans for residential properties.
3. Work with the Plainwell School District and area youth organizations to create a "youth cabinet," to advise Plainwell on policies affecting area youth.	Create a seat on our committees for a youth, start with Parks & trees; promotion committee; Look at a youth council.
4. Aggressively market Plainwell's restaurants, businesses, and waterfront as a unique destination between Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids.	Created the Otsego Plainwell Area Chamber of Commerce whose purpose is to market area businesses.
5. Develop and implement policies that serve to protect existing trees, woodlots and street trees in Plainwell.	Have a Street Tree Ordinance # 201
6. Continue and build on programs that encourage building renovation and improvements.	Façade grants and revolving loan funding for businesses and an Allegan County 0% interest loans for residential properties
7. Prepare and implement a plan that addresses congestion and yet is sensitive to the context of the M-89 corridor and at the M-89/Main/Bridge intersection.	Complete. Notes: Major intersection project called out in 2009 plan completed.

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies: Completed Items since 2011	
Action	***Status***
8. Continue to market and expand Plainwell's current industrial park.	Industrial Park is currently full

RESOLUTION # 10-10

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION
CITY OF PLAINWELL MASTER PLAN
PLAINWELL CITY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the Plainwell City Council adopted the Plainwell Master Plan on February 22, 2010, according to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33, Public Acts of Michigan 2008, as amended, which is the City's master plan, and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act provides for a City Planning Commission to prepare and recommend adoption of a master plan for the physical development of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City of Plainwell Planning Commission has prepared a Master Plan for the City of Plainwell, in compliance with Act 33 of 2008, as amended; and,

WHEREAS, The Plainwell City Council has passed a resolution asserting the City Council's right to adopt the Master Plan and all elements of and updates to that Plan, as allowed by Act 33 of 2008, as amended; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Plainwell distributed the draft Master Plan to the county planning commission, the planning commissions of the contiguous municipal units of government, and all other relevant agencies for review and comment in compliance with Act 33 of 2008, as amended; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Plainwell Planning Commission held a properly noticed public hearing on the draft Master Plan on February 17, 2010, in accordance with the requirements of Act 33 of 2008, as amended, and other applicable State statues; and,

provide oral and written comments on the draft Master Plan, which the Planning Commission has taken into consideration; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Plainwell Planning Commission has adopted a motion by a majority vote of its membership recommending adoption of the Master Plan to the City Council;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Plainwell City Council does hereby adopt the City of Plainwell Master Plan, to be dated as adopted this 22nd day of February 2010.

CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION:

Offered by:	Fuller
Supported by:	Steele
Yeas:	Keeler, Overhuel & Brooks
Nays:	None
Absent:	None

Resolution Declared Adopted By:

Richard Brooks, Mayor

Noreen A. Farmer, City Clerk

Date of Adoption: February 22, 2010