



FERNDALE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

2007 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Overview.....	1
---------------	---

Development Concept Plan

Overview.....	1
Vision Statement 2012.....	2
Main Street Approach.....	3

Downtown Overview

Overview of Downtown Ferndale.....	4
Current Market Conditions	
Trade Area.....	5
Demographic Comparison.....	6
Spending Behaviors.....	7
Lifestyle Segment.....	8
S.W.O.T Analysis/ Market Approach.....	9
Future Demographics	
Requested Stores and Recommended Tenants.....	10
Recommended Tenant Mix.....	11

Strategic Plan

Committee Goals, Objectives, and Tasks.....	12
Prioritized Implementation Strategy and Timeline.....	13

Land Use Plan

DDA Boundaries.....	14
Overall Schematic Plan.....	14
Upper Story Development and Mix Use.....	15



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Specific Area Plans

West Troy Street.....	16
East Vester Street.....	18
East Nine Mile Road.....	20
West Nine Mile from Livernois to Pinecrest.....	22
West Nine Mile from Woodward to Livernois.....	24
Woodward Avenue.....	26
Withington Parking Lot.....	28

Walkability and Design Concepts

Vehicular Gateways and Roads	
Woodward & Nine Mile Gateway Improvement.....	30
Nine & Livernois Roundabout.....	31
Nine and Paxton Gateway.....	34
Pedestrian Gateways	
Pedestrian Alleys.....	33
Back-Door Alleys.....	33
Green and Public Spaces	
Schiffer Park.....	34
Art in Public Spaces.....	35
Creation of Farmers Market.....	36
Walkability Study	
Observations.....	37
Recommendations.....	38



INTRODUCTION

Overview

History of Downtown Ferndale:

Ferndale began as a bedroom community for Detroit workers about the time of World War I, with most of its growth in housing from 1920-1945. Before World War II there were trolley lines that ran in the median strip of Woodward Avenue from downtown Detroit out to Pontiac. This helped the northern suburbs of Detroit grow as bedroom communities as workers could just hop on the trolley to shop or work in Detroit.

Ferndale's downtown shopping area, Nine Mile Road, featured many busy, popular stores in the 1940s to 1960s, including: A & P Supermarket, Farmer Jack's Supermarket, Federal Department Store, Cunningham's Drugs,

Bakery, F & M Drugs (the first store in the chain), Frank's Crafts, Sanders Bakery, Western Auto, Radio City Music Hall, Kresge's, Woolworth's and Neisner "dime stores".

Until the 1970s, Ferndale was a typical American suburban community. Soon after, the city saw a steady decline that lasted until the early 1990s, mostly due to the onslaught of malls and economic decline. The city has recently experienced a dramatic revival of its downtown through the progressive policies implemented during the last ten years. Today Ferndale is known as "Fabulous Ferndale" for its progressive urban ways.

What is a DDA?

The downtown area of Ferndale, like the downtowns of many mature communities, has experienced many changes during the past decades. Although downtown Ferndale is a center of activity for the city, the past decades have modified population and development trends. In order to handle the changes, legislation created the Downtown Development Authority Act which gives communities the ability restore, revitalize, and maintain its downtown district.

On July 14, 1980, the Ferndale City Council adopted an ordinance that created the Ferndale Downtown Authority (DDA). The DDA helps to prevent the deterioration in business districts, encourage preservation, promote growth, create development plans, and authorize the use of tax increment financing (TIF).

What is a Downtown Development Plan?

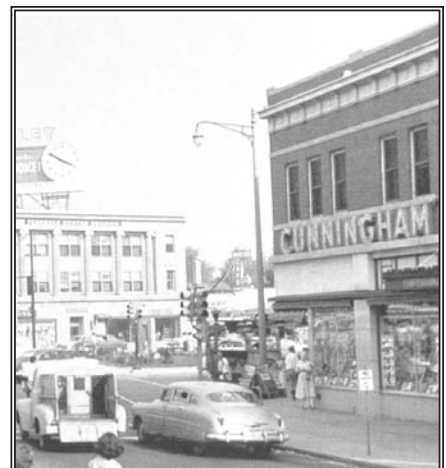
A Downtown Development Plan is a useful tool that the DDA can use to accomplish growth and development in the downtown. The Development Plan provides vital information about Downtown Ferndale and outlines critical areas that the DDA and its board members must address.

Why Develop a Plan?

The DDA has an enormous task list that it must accomplish to better improve the Downtown. By creating a Downtown Development Plan the DDA can assess what their goals and needs are. By keeping a Development Plan, the DDA will always have a "manual" that they can refer to.

The Stakeholders Involved:

Businesses in the DDA
Business Owners
City of Ferndale
City Council
Customers in the Downtown
Downtown Development Authority
DDA Board and Committees
Planning and Zoning Commission
Property Owners





DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONCEPT

Vision Statement 2012

In the year 2012 and beyond, Downtown Ferndale will be a vibrant and diverse business, shopping and entertainment district with an attractive and pleasing environment reflecting an eclectic, small-town charm, urban activity center and the vitality of an economy that serves a broad trade area including local residents, Metro Detroiters, out-of-state visitors and international visitors.



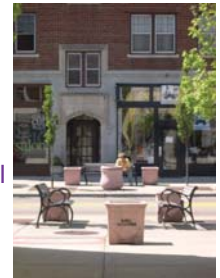
Aesthetically, Downtown Ferndale's distinguished architecture will be maintained, enhanced, and rehabilitated for current and new uses. Storefronts and facades will also be rehabilitated with designs that reflect the diversity

and quality of the businesses. New uses will not just be confined to the storefront level, but Downtown Ferndale will also encourage development of upper stories for residential and office uses. There will be additional open space, or a public plaza or gathering space, with pedestrian links into the surrounding neighborhoods and accessible mass transit facilities; and an enhanced streetscape, with new landscaping, additional trees and lighting, street furniture, and public amenities that will attract pedestrians and neighborhood activities to the district. The public realm will also be routinely maintained, and shoppers and visitors will feel secure with low crime. Pedestrian and traffic improvements will be made to Woodward Avenue so as to encourage pedestrians to visit both ends of Nine Mile Road, as well as the Woodward Avenue corridor. There will be opportunities for new commercial and mixed-use developments in and around Downtown Ferndale occurring at sites that will strengthen the pedestrian orientation of the district and will be designed within the context of the existing architecture. Parking will be accessible and expanded to meet the demands of the market perhaps through the construction of structured or decked parking facilities.



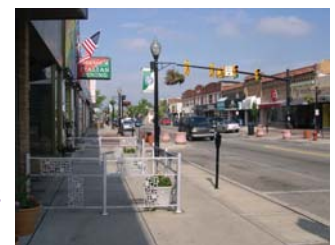
Downtown Ferndale will support a mixture of uses from small independent specialty stores, restaurants,

expanded entertainment venues and mediums, and residences to enterprises that reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the community. There will be a balance of independent business owners, regional and national stores to maintain the growth of the downtown, but Downtown Ferndale will continue to focus on entrepreneurs, which will maintain the diversity and urban qualities of the downtown.



Downtown Ferndale will have a comprehensive program of promotions and social activities that enhance the quality of life for all people, whether children or adults. Promotional and social activity efforts will be achieved by a strong partnership between the retailers, property owners, the Ferndale DDA and other community organizations and entities. Promotions will range from regular traffic-building events, including Downtown Ferndale Thursdays on the Nine and Downtown Ferndale Winter Tale to group advertising in multiple and various mediums to special festivals that celebrate music, the holidays, and the community's ethnic, cultural and lifestyle diversity.

Downtown Ferndale has a vast number of strengths and assets in the year 2012. These strengths will translate into specific values that the Ferndale community will hold as important for guiding principles in future revitalization and development. The residents value the uniqueness and diversity in Downtown Ferndale's existing architecture, uses, stores and festivals; the strong and active community institutions such as the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority; and the tremendous commitment on the part of all stakeholders and neighborhood residents to better shape Ferndale's future. Ferndale will also continue to support its Main Street Program with a large number of volunteers participating from all segments of the neighborhood and Metro Detroit area. The program Executive Director, assisted by appropriate staff support, will help direct and manage the program. The Main Street program will have developed strong partnerships with the City of Ferndale, Ferndale Chamber of Commerce, Woodward Avenue Action Association and other community-based organizations to accomplish the revitalization of Downtown Ferndale.





DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONCEPT

Main Street Approach

In 2000, Oakland County established a partnership with the National Trust Main Street Center and created Main Street Oakland County. The National Trust was created to help with commercial district revitalization, an innovative methodology that combines historic preservation with economic development to restore prosperity and vitality to downtowns and neighborhood business districts.

Since 2001, the City of Ferndale and the Ferndale DDA have participated under Main Street Oakland County in an effort to restore its downtown. Using the Main Street Approach, Ferndale hopes to return the community to self-reliance, encourage local empowerment, and rebuild the traditional commercial districts based on its unique assets: distinctive architecture, a pedestrian-friendly environment, personal service, local ownership, and a sense of community.

Eight Guiding Principles

Comprehensive: No single focus - lavish public improvements, name-brand business recruitment, or endless promotional events - can revitalize Main Street. For successful, sustainable, long-term revitalization, a comprehensive approach, including activity in each of Main Street's Four Points, is essential.

Incremental: Successful revitalization programs begin with basic, simple activities that demonstrate that "new things are happening" in the commercial district. Main Street is able to tackle increasingly complex problems and more ambitious projects. This incremental change leads to much longer-lasting and dramatic positive change in the Main Street area.

Self-help: Local leaders must have the will and desire to mobilize local resources and talent. Only local leadership can produce long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.

Partnerships: Both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the district and must work together to achieve common goals of Main Street's revitalization.

Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets: Business districts must capitalize on the assets that make them unique. Every district has unique qualities like distinctive buildings and human scale that give people a sense of belonging. These local assets must serve as the foundation for all aspects of the revitalization program.

Quality: Emphasize quality in every aspect of the revitalization program. This applies to all elements of the process - from storefront designs to promotional campaigns to educational programs.

Change: Change means engaging in better business practices, altering ways of thinking, and improving the physical appearance of the commercial district. A carefully planned Main Street program will help shift public perceptions and practices to support and sustain the revitalization process. To succeed, Main Street must show visible results that can only come from completing projects. Frequent, visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is under way and succeeding.

Implementation: Frequent, visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is under way and succeeding. Small projects at the beginning of the program pave the way for larger ones as the revitalization effort matures, and that constant revitalization activity creates confidence in the Main Street program and ever-greater levels of participation.

Main Street Four-Point Approach

Organization
Promotion
Design
Economic Restructuring

<http://www.mainstreet.org>



DOWNTOWN OVERVIEW

Overview of Downtown Ferndale

A look at Ferndale:

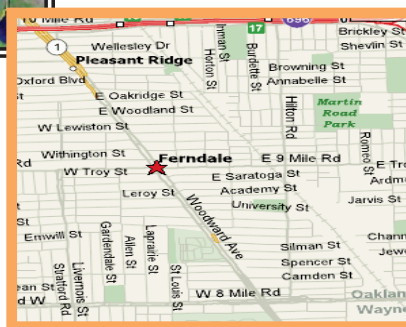
Downtown Ferndale is a growing and prosperous downtown centrally located in southeast Michigan. It is a small, friendly, and unique urban environment that is well known for its vibrant nightlife featuring some of the best dining and entertainment in Metro-Detroit, as well as its hip, electric and one-of-a-kind retail stores.



West Nine Mile, Ferndale, MI

Ferndale's "Main Street" encompasses Woodward and Nine Mile, making it ideal for access to local highways. Ferndale is notably quoted as being "20 minutes from anywhere in Metro-Detroit". Professional and service businesses find Downtown Ferndale as a great location for their business and employees because of the great quality of life Ferndale provides.

The Ferndale DDA area is 19 blocks long, from Paxton to Pinecrest along Nine Mile, two blocks north and south of Nine Mile along Woodward Avenue, Troy Street from Woodward to Allen and Vester Street from Woodward to Bermuda. The DDA was established in 1980 to help prevent the future deterioration of the downtown. By the turn of the century, the DDA began to see a turn-around in the downtown economy. By 2005, Downtown Ferndale was well-known as an up and coming community having the largest improvements within a five-year period. With all the success Ferndale is experiencing, it is important to be critical of the market conditions of the downtown and make plans for the future of its economy.



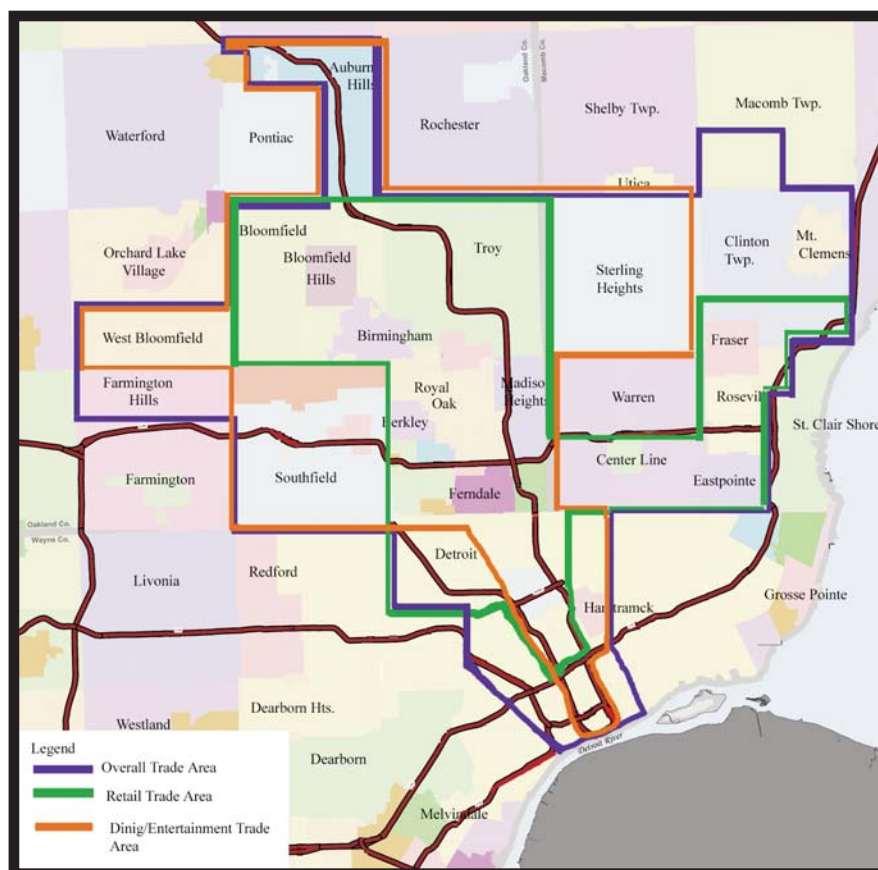
Sidewalk near Western Market, located in Ferndale, MI



Current Market Conditions

The following information was collected through a series of studies commissioned by the Ferndale DDA and includes the trade area that the downtown serves, the demographics of the community, and the demographics of the consumers in Downtown Ferndale.

The study determined where Downtown Ferndale's primary consumers are located and what distances they would be willing to travel. The graph to the right shows the results of the study.



Dining and Entertainment Trade Area
226 Square Miles

General Characteristics of Trade Area (Target Audiences)

Shopping and Browsing: 44.2%
Dining and Entertainment: 27.3%
Work: 11.2%
Services: 5.2%
Live Downtown: 4.3%

Male: 56.2%
Female: 43.8%

Weekday Daytime: 41.3
Weekend Daytime: 37.4
Weekday Evenings: 32.8
Weekend Evenings: 31.4

City of Ferndale: \$49,143



DOWNTOWN OVERVIEW

Current Market Conditions



Secondary Audiences and Behaviors:

This describes Downtown Ferndale visitors that are more likely to be occasional consumers.

Regional Visitors:

Metro Detroit Area
Ann Arbor
St. Claire Shores
Grosse Pointe
Windsor
Holly/ Oxford

Out of State Visitors:

Illinois
Indiana
Ohio
Ontario

Out of Region Visitors:

Lansing
Grand Rapids
Bay City
Traverse City
Kalamazoo

Demographic Comparison:

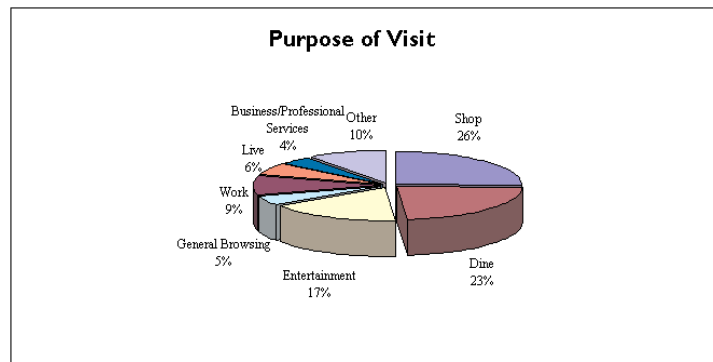
	Downtown Consumers	Overall Trade Area	Retail Trade Area	Dining/Entertainment Trade Area
2005 Population:	348 respondents	1,247,044	696,915	791,103
2000 Households:	*	563,504	426,702	467,243
2000 Median Household Income:	45,000	\$45,062	\$39,664	\$61,926
2000 Ethnicity:				
Caucasian	73%	77.3%	78.2%	76.3%
African American	22%	9.6%	7.5%	11.1%
Asian/Pacific	3%	*	*	*
American Indian	0%	*	*	*
Hispanic	2%	*	*	*
2000 Median Age:	29.5	37.7	37.2	37.8
2000 College Graduates:	*	24.6%	23.5%	28.4%



DOWNTOWN OVERVIEW

Current Market Conditions

Purpose of the Visit to the Downtown:



Ferndale patrons named Shopping and Browsing as their primary reasons for visiting Downtown Ferndale at a combined 31%, followed by Dining at 23%, and Entertainment at 17%. Responses varied greatly depending on the time of day. Patrons surveyed between 11am and 2pm were much more likely to be Shopping and Dining, while nearly all who responded with Entertainment were surveyed between 9pm and midnight.

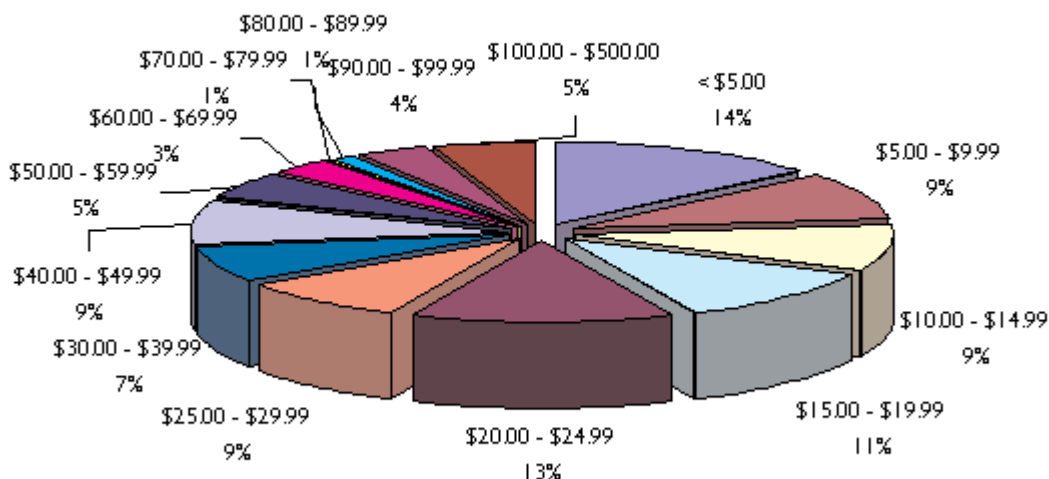
Money Spent in the Downtown:

The average amount of money spent by survey respondents was \$38.96. The amount of money spent by Ferndale patrons is fairly evenly distributed across the categories. Less than \$5 was cited most often at 14% followed closely by \$20.00-\$24.99 at 13%.

Top Spending Patterns:

Under \$5	14%
\$20.00-\$24.99	13%
\$15.00-\$19.99	11%
\$5.00-\$9.99	9%
\$10.00-\$14.99	9%
\$25.00-\$29.99	9%
Under \$30	65%

Amount Spent During Visit





DOWNTOWN OVERVIEW

Current Market Conditions

Lifestyles:

In Strategic Edge's study of Ferndale, they included a lifestyle segment analysis by employing an analytical tool called ACORN segmentation. Looking at consumer's lifestyles is a useful tool in understanding a neighborhood. By understanding the demographic characteristics, lifestyle, behaviors, and buying patterns of prospective shoppers; Ferndale can capitalize on its economic base.

Lifestyle Segment

Urban Professional Couples	15.0%
Hard Times	11.4%
Working Class Families	10.0%
Other	63.6%

Classification Breakdown

"Urban Professional Couples" are older than the U.S. overall (35.5 years), with a median age of 37.8 years. They have above-average indexes for each adult age group from 25-29 years and older and below-average indexes for the age group 20-24 years and younger. They are predominantly married-couple families, with few or no children, but the mix also includes single-person and shared households, the results of high divorce rates through the 1980's.

"Working Class Families" are approximately 90 percent black and 75 percent family. Although slightly older than people in the U.S. overall, many households have grade-school age children or teenagers. Their median age is 36.8 years.

"Hard Times" is a population of extremes; the very young and the elderly. The dependency ratio of young (<15 years) and old (< 65 years) is much higher than the U.S. ratio. Although nearly one-third of the households are occupied by singles, many are single-parent or multigenerational, shared households. Their median age of 34.4 years is comparable to the U.S. figure. The vast majority of the population is black.



DOWNTOWN OVERVIEW

Current Market Conditions

S.W.O.T Analysis

The Strategic Edge has analyzed the tenant mix in light of a competitive framework, other Michigan downtowns, consumer research (intercept and telephone surveys) results, fieldwork, trade area, population, demographic "lifestyles", and expenditure potential characteristics. These analysis have resulted in an understanding of the Ferndale DDA's strengths, weakness, threats, and opportunities for improvement.

Market Approach and Strategy:

The number one priority for Downtown Ferndale is that it must maintain and strengthen the market niches that already exist. There are opportunities for a wide range of retailers in Downtown Ferndale. Even with the niche players and large-scale retailers like Old Navy Outlet, there should be more clothing. This includes shoes and accessories such as jewelry and handbags. Gift shops incorporating cards (edgy) would round out the current offerings in the category. Shops carrying products that are "green," environmentally sensitive, would be attractive to the market segment interested in ecology and the environment. Selected home furnishing stores that would complement current home furnishing stores could be added to the downtown.

Bars/restaurants usually attract more people, thus influencing the other businesses in the immediate area; fortunately, Downtown Ferndale already has a strong position in this category. There is, however, opportunity for additional entertainment venues. Also, more ethnically diverse restaurants (Mexican, Middle Eastern, Southern/Soul Food) to complement the existing ones would be beneficial to Downtown Ferndale. An art gallery that featured local artists may attract more art enthusiasts to the downtown. The art gallery could also incorporate local emerging musicians, to complement the musical instrument niche.

STRENGTHS

- *Geographically large trade area.
- *Sizeable population base, estimated at nearly 550,000 people.
- *Various established niches and downtown anchors. In addition, the city has established an identity as a gay-friendly community.
- *Strategic location on Woodward Avenue.
- *Diverse clientele in terms of ethnicity, income, and age.
- *High trade area expenditure potential for retail and restaurants - \$3.8 billion.
- *There is an established critical mass of retail space with a large number of establishments - 132.
- *The telephone interviews indicated positive perceptions of the downtown's safety, friendliness, pedestrian experience, overall opportunities, and attractiveness.
- *Low Vacancy Rate
- *Ample, accessible parking particularly in metered lots.

OPPORTUNITIES

- *There is a growing attractiveness of an urban environment and experience. Ferndale benefits as an already "hip place".
- *Ferndale may continue to benefit from Royal Oak spillover.
- *Significant opportunity exists to further exploit niches.
- *The perception of retail quality is higher than the perception of retail variety.
- *Very positive perception from interviewees - "up & coming" - 43%; "it's growing" - 35%.

WEAKNESSES

- *Somewhat dichotomous lifestyles in trade area - urban professional/upscale persons vs. working class, social security dependent, hard times.
- *Lack of financing to:
 - acquire property;
 - increase marketing or branding of downtown;
 - and make substantial physical improvements solely.

THREATS

- *The challenge is to maintain its niche as Detroit creates some similar appeals. Will Detroit patrons quit coming to Ferndale?
- *The challenge of meeting the needs of emerging "creative class" while also meeting everyday more mundane needs of trade area residents.
- *Gateways at Eight Mile Shopping Mall could decrease downtown shopping traffic and potentially threaten business mix, retention and recruitment.
- *Economic conditions and variances.



DOWNTOWN OVERVIEW

Future Demographics

Comparison to Other Downtowns:

The objective of this analysis was to compare Downtown Ferndale's Main Street retail mix to other downtowns to identify areas of potential opportunity. The Downtown is well developed in personal services and food/liquor, services/restaurants but deficient in shopping goods and other retail compared to the average of the other seventeen downtowns in the area.

	Percent of Establishments	
	<i>Downtown Ferndale</i>	<i>Seventeen Downtown Average</i>
<i>Shopping Goods</i>	30.3%	39.6%
<i>Personal Services</i>	22.0%	14.0%
<i>Other Retail</i>	7.5%	15.0%
<i>Food/Liquor & Services/Restaurant</i>	27.3%	20.6%

Requested Stores:

In the 2005 survey conducted, downtown consumers were asked to identify which type of business they would like to see open in Downtown Ferndale. 26% of those surveyed would like more entertainment venues. Clothing/ Accessory stores, particularly men's clothing, came in second with 24%. Gift/Specialty stores were mentioned 16%, and of these respondents, a bakery and a bookstore were cited most often.

Recommended Tenants:

When Strategic Edge conducted its research they looked at what types of additional space could be added to the downtown. The firm separated their recommendations into five categories:

Clothing and Accessories
Decorative Home Furnishings
Gifts/Cards/Art
Ethnic Restaurants
Entertainment

Most Requested Stores by Type:

Entertainment Venues	26%
Clothing & Accessories	24%
Gift/Specialty	16%
Restaurants/Cafes	15%
Grocery & Convenience	8%
Home Furnishings	5%
Media Stores	4%
Personal Services	2%

On the following page is a detailed chart that compares the existing space distribution to the recommended space distribution, as outlined by Strategic Edge.



DOWNTOWN OVERVIEW

Future Demographics

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL SPACE USAGE BY CATEGORY (assumes utilization of existing vacant space)

Category	Square Feet
Clothing & Accessory Stores (including jewelry & shoes)	8,000
Decorative Home Furnishings Stores	5,000
Gift/Cards/Art Stores	12,000
Ethnic Restaurants	15,000
Entertainment Venues	15,000
Total	55,000

The following table compares the existing space distribution to the recommended space distribution.

RECOMMENDED TENANT MIX

NAICS Code	NAICS Description	Existing Square Footage		Recommended Square Footage	
		Sq. Ft.	%	Sq. Ft.	%
442	Furniture & Home Furnishings	42,859	10.3%	47,859	10.2%
443	Electronics & Appliance Stores	10,585	2.6%	10,585	2.3%
445	Food & Beverage Stores	71,784	17.3%	71,784	15.3%
446	Health & Personal Care Stores	32,725	7.9%	32,725	7.0%
448	Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	34,525	8.3%	42,525	9.1%
451	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music	22,420	5.4%	22,420	4.8%
452	General Merchandise Stores	15,156	3.7%	15,156	3.2%
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	12,897	3.1%	24,897	5.3%
532	Rental & Leasing Services	7,850	1.9%	7,850	1.7%
722	Food Services & Drinking Places	101,476	24.5%	116,476	24.8%
811	Repair & Maintenance	3,713	0.9%	3,713	0.8%
812	Personal & Laundry Services	53,762	13.0%	53,762	11.4%
Entertainment		5,000	1.2%	20,000	4.3%
Total		414,752	100.0%	469,752	100.0%

Sources: *The Strategic Edge, Inc.*
Ferndale DDA.

The addition of spaces in the selected categories would result in a more well-rounded tenant mix, which capitalizes on the existing niches in Ferndale.



STRATEGIC PLAN

Committee Goals, Objectives, and Tasks

Within the Ferndale DDA there are a series of committees who are dedicated to the improvement of Downtown Ferndale. These committees consist of Organization, Promotion, Economic Restructuring, and Design. Bellow is brief lists of what the committees hope to accomplish.

Economic Restructuring

- Expand the cultural diversity in the downtown.
- Assist entrepreneurs and potential businesses that meet our market demand with business start-up.
- Assist current businesses with expanding and improving their businesses.
- Strengthen current businesses through education, financial assistance, and business assistance.
- Focus property development based on the market analysis and downtown development plan.
- Stay in tune with market conditions by updating the market analysis every four years.
- Diversify the business mix to include and increase in retail, professional office space, and housing.

Design

- Make public improvements incrementally as needed.
- Assist property owners and tenants with building improvements through financing, education, incentives, technical assistance, and code reform.
- Maintain and improve the physical appearance of the downtown through landscaping and maintenance.
- Improve pedestrian safety across Woodward.
- Create a prominent entrance to the downtown, as well as recognition leading up to the district.
- Incorporate elements of art into the streetscape, building design and community.

Organization

- Address parking needs through comprehensive planning.
- Expand the DDA boundaries to meet public perceptions and needs of the area
- Retain quality staff.
- Provide consumers, businesses, property-owners, and volunteers with excellent consumer service, awareness, and accessibility.
- Review and revise the development plan every 5 years.
- Follow and utilize the Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization.
- Maintain National Main Street and Main Street Oakland County status.
- Strengthen volunteerism of the DDA.
- Provide assistance thorough communication and strategic planning.
- Build awareness of the Ferndale DDA.
- Increase and diversify funding through the PSD, sponsorships, and grants.
- Improve public advocacy of businesses in the downtown.
- Maintain relationships with the city, county, state, and national organizations and government.

Promotions

- Create and strengthen public relations with community members.
- Further develop marketing plans to increase awareness of the downtown.
- Improve the bottom-line of businesses and foot-traffic through retail promotions
- Assist and streamline existing events whether they are DDA based or other various organizations.



STRATEGIC PLAN

Prioritized Implementation Strategy and Timeline

The chart bellow plots strategic investments designed to improve the downtown based with a timeline for completion and a rough estimate of the cost for such projects. The categories include:

Time:

- Short Term: Projects that can be completed in under one year
- Medium Term: Projects that will take anywhere from 2-5 years to complete
- Long Term: Projects that will take more then six years to complete

Budget:

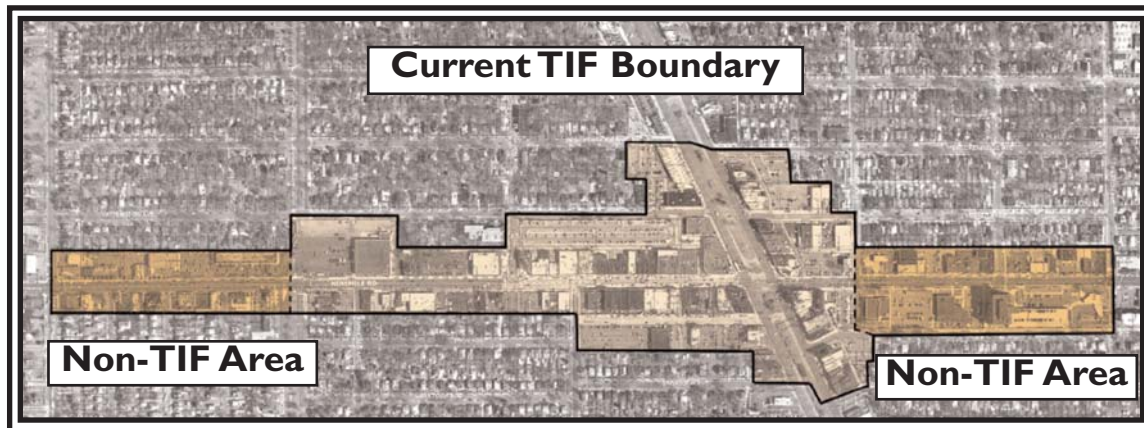
- Low Cost: Projects that cost up to \$5,000 to complete
- Medium Cost: Projects that cost between \$5,000 and \$25,000 to complete
- High Cost: Projects that cost more than \$25,000 to complete

	Low Cost	Medium Cost	High Cost
Short Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Code enforcement •Address vacant buildings •Locate possible grants to support businesses •DDA expansion & PSD implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Biking Facilities •Minor Façade improvements •Sidewalk repairs •Assist and streamline with existing events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Creation of more pocket parks throughout the downtown
Medium Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Website maintenance and expansion •Annual event coordination •Strengthen Volunteerism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Public art installations •Kiosks/Wayfinding •Larger trees with higher canopies •Improve pedestrian safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Wireless Internet throughout the downtown •Convert back alleys into pedestrian walkways •Correct Livernois Intersection •Increase density and height of buildings •Create prominent entrances to the downtown
Long Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Create and strengthen public relations with community members •Encourage and create more 500 square foot retail spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Minor advances of transportation along Woodward •Improved links between Woodward communities •Parking coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Connection to region-wide mass transit •Underground relocation of overhead utilities •Installment of parking structures •Integrate rowed townhouses and live-work spaces to fringes of the Central Business District •Creation of a Civic Center



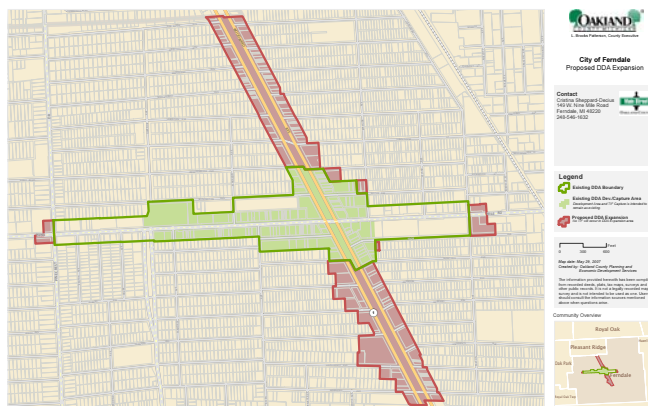
LAND USE PLAN

DDA Boundaries



Tax Increment Financing:

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) allows local government to bank the additional revenues generated in a specific area - in this case, it is additional property tax revenues. The revenues are generated by establishing a baseline for property values, which the DDA created in 1981. When property values rise, the increment is collected and used by the DDA. The TIF is the Development Authorities main source of revenues for operation. In addition, the DDA can only provide assistance to those businesses that fall within the TIF Boundary. The money goes into a special fund that can be used for infrastructure, new business development in the target zone and what the TIF Plan details. In addition, the DDA assesses a 2 mill levy for the TIF area, which continues to roll back each year due to Headlee and Proposal A. The map above outlines where the DDA's boundaries and TIF boundaries occur, which are smaller than the entire DDA and has caused areas of concern with business and property owners due to continuity of projects and improvements throughout the entire DDA. The map below indicates where the DDA proposes expanding its boundary and a PSD would include the entire area, both current and future. At the current time, a TIF expansion has met some resistance from the City of Ferndale, therefore, a PSD is the next viable option for meeting the needs for the current non-TIF area and new expansion area. A PSD is a funding mechanism that the DDA can utilize in order to accomplish the goals of its community and provide more services to its businesses. This expansion would allow for the DDA to bring new services to the current DDA businesses while providing much needed resources and improvements to the areas of expansion. At the same time, it is recommended to remove the 2 mill levy.



Boundaries on Woodward are recommended to expand to Oakridge on the northend, Marshall on the southend, including the all four corner properties of each ending block; and on Nine Mile include the eastern corner properties at Paxton and western corner properties at Pinecrest. It is also recommended to include the public parking lots so that PSD funding can potentially assist with parking deck improvements in the future.

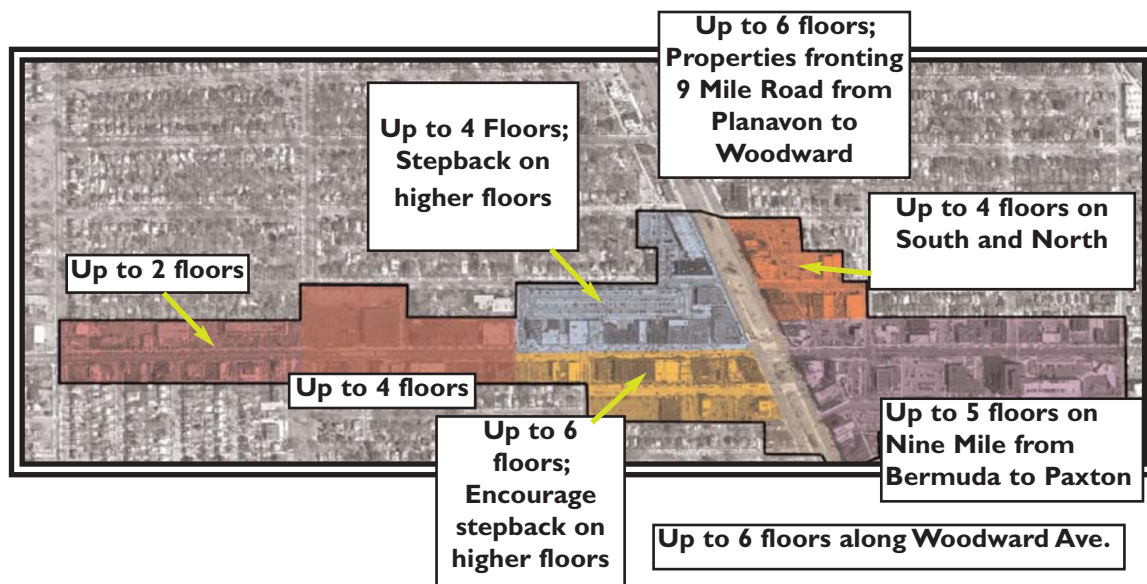


Downtown Development Plan Ferndale DDA

A PSD is a funding mechanism that can be used to fund a variety of services in a defined geographic area within a municipality. The Ferndale PSD would be created to collect funds from all property owners/business owners within the boundaries of the current DDA area, as well as a new expansion area included in the map attached. The PSD would then in essence assess itself to fund and promote Downtown Ferndale. A PSD allows the DDA to equitably raise the necessary funds to adequately promote and improve business in Ferndale. Through collective buying power, the PSD can afford to concentrate efforts on branding and promoting our downtown and its businesses, resulting in increased foot traffic. The end result will of course be an increase in property values and store sales. Additionally, improved services will free-up the business owner and employees to focus on their core business. By offering the services of the PSD to all member merchants, Ferndale will present itself as a cohesive destination, rather than a hodge-podge of businesses. This may be as simple as all sidewalks being free of snow in the winter, unifying banners hanging from the light poles, directional signage throughout downtown, or all merchants displaying a special Ferndale logo on the door. Because everyone in the PSD would be making financial contributions to the PSD budget, the burden would be shared in a more equitable fashion. All benefiting merchants would be contributing to the available funds.

When the boundaries are expanded, it is recommended that the DDA amend this plan to include projects, programs and services that will impact the expansion areas. Also, it has been suggested by the County Treasurer that if a new TIF area were to be created to provide for a specific project, such as a streetscape project, that the County is more amenable to one-time project based TIF's instead of endless TIFs.

Recommended Height Schematic Plan





LAND USE PLAN

Upper Story Development and Mixed Use

Upper Story Development:

Great downtowns fill cities with life. A city is healthy if it has a vital downtown full of public activity. One way to increase the vitality of a city is to make the area denser. Most areas within the DDA boundary are built out to their surface boundaries, leaving upper story development as one of the few viable options.

Mixed Uses:

By putting uses in close proximity to one another, alternatives to driving, such as walking or biking, once again become viable. Mixed land use also provides a more diverse and sizable population and commercial base for supporting viable public transit. It can enhance the vitality and perceived security of an area by increasing the number and attitude of people on the street. It helps streets, public spaces, and pedestrian-oriented retail become places where people meet, attracting pedestrians back onto the street and helping to revitalize community life.

Public Spaces:

Whether it is a park, plaza, or square; public spaces have the ability to draw a community together. When creating a public space it is important to include attractions for all ages. There should be areas for socializing, eating, reading, playing games, and interacting with art. This way all residents have another reason to further enjoy Ferndale's downtown.

The image located on the right is an example of a downtown that has upper story development, mixed use spaces, and a public gathering area.

Recommended Upper Story Allowance

Woodward Avenue	6 Floors
West Nine Mile Woodward to Planavon	6 Floors
West Nine Mile Planavon to Livernois	4 Floors
West Nine Mile Livernois to Pinecrest	2 Floors
East Nine Mile Bermuda to Paxton	5 Floors
Troy Street & Vester Street	4 Floors





SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

West Troy Street

Current Conditions:

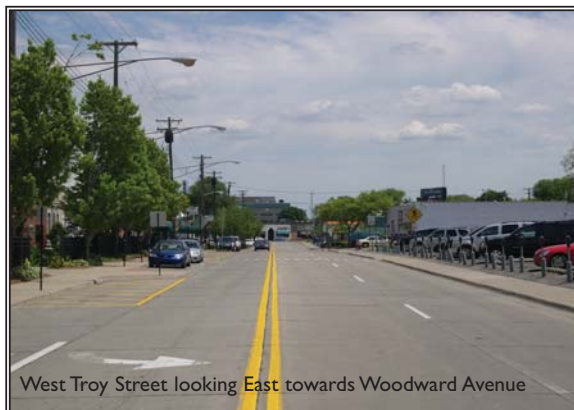
West Troy Street is a very unique sector in the Downtown. Troy is located less than a block south of Nine Mile. This close proximity to Nine Mile has caused a peculiar circumstance; the back of stores from Nine Mile become “the new store fronts” for Troy Street and face other store fronts located on the south side of the street. This creates a problem when businesses fail to maintain the backs of their buildings. Aesthetically unappealing buildings deter people from visiting this block. Additionally, a large amount of surface lots exist and fill up on the weekends, but not mid-week.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the entire length of the block be redeveloped into mixed-use spaces that have commercial uses on the main floor, upper floor residential and office spaces, and parking decks to accommodate the future need for parking spaces throughout the Downtown. Residential space would be recommended considering Troy Street’s close proximity to surrounding neighborhoods. Amenities should be made to the pedestrian environment, including streetscape improvements that are consistent with Nine Mile. Also, new Developments should be built-out to property line, and a reduction in surface parking lots will help the flow of pedestrian traffic.

Significant Observations

- The road was narrowed on the north side to allow for on street parking and includes exceptional landscaping, but is lacking on the south side.
- There is some tree lineage that creates a good border between the buildings and street on the north side
- There are gaps where large surface lot parking takes up space



West Troy Street looking East towards Woodward Avenue



West Troy Street looking West towards Allen Street



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

West Troy Street



Vision for West Troy Street:

The possibilities for Troy Street are endless. Troy Street can capitalize on its close location to neighborhoods and Nine Mile. The street can become a trendy, happening area that has continued retail off on Nine Mile. In addition, apartments and lofts located on Troy will compliment the surrounding residential zoning. Businesses on the north side of Troy will be encouraged to make the backs of their buildings match their storefronts and eventually this side of Troy Street can be built out to the property lines.

Surface Parking will be replaced by Mixed Use spaces that provide deck parking, retail, commercial, and residential spaces. Other additional parking will be added by narrowing Troy Street on the south side and adding on street parking. The south side of Troy will also be given appropriate streetscape elements that include; antique light poles, landscaping and flowers, wide sidewalks, and safe crosswalks.

General

- Enhance pedestrian alleys with arched gateways and special paving.
- Build up commercial properties along Nine Mile for mixed uses.
- Density land uses.
- Build out new structures to lot lines along the street.
- Create public green space at the corner of Allen and Nine Mile.
- Bury electrical lines.
- Conduct a site specific master plan for Troy Street Parking Lot development.

Reduce Surface Parking

- Convert existing public parking into mixed use with public deck parking
- Increase available parking through a parking deck
- Promote 1st floor commercial with residential and offices spaces above
- Neighboring parcels on Troy Street could be assembled to optimize the mixed use development.

Road Improvements

- Narrow Troy Street to two lanes.
- Keep current turn lanes on Troy Street at Allen and Woodward.
- Add parallel parking bays on the south side of the street.
- Hanging Baskets
- Benches
- Lighting
- Trees



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

East Vester Street

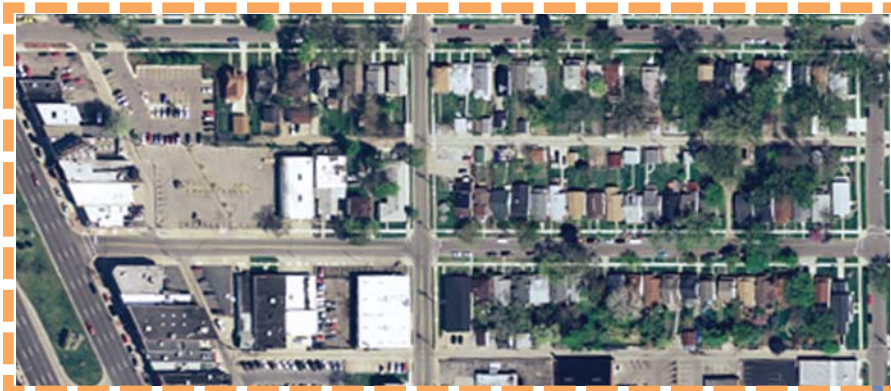
Current Conditions:

Vester Street is another area of the downtown that is underutilized. There are large gaps between the few developments that are located on Vester. Currently there is a large surface lot, which is privately owned, this inefficiency of parking creates problems for business owners. Individual private lots become filled by people unwilling to pay to park in the paid surface lot. Aside from the parking concerns, the alley behind the Woodward businesses is in poor condition. This area is used to service the businesses and is another location for private parking. Additionally, there is an apartment complex just outside of the DDA boundary at the Northwest corner of Bermuda and Vester. Because of the apartment's location, it could easily be rehabilitated into condos or townhouses.

Current business uses include auto and glass repair and light industrial. The zoning is C-5 Non-Manufacturing Commercial Business, but is still inappropriate for a downtown setting. A better zoning classification would be something like Neighborhood Business or Mix Use Residential, given Vester Street's close proximity to homes.

Significant Observations

- Landscaping is nonexistent
- Area doesn't appear as part of the Downtown due to low densities
- Sidewalks are in poor condition
- Close proximity to residential
- Lacks people and activity
- Power lines are aesthetically unappealing



East Vester Street looking East towards Bermuda



Alley behind Como's looking North towards Vester Street



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

East Vester Street



Short Term Changes

- Add on-street parking to Vester Street
- Add unifying streetscape elements
- Make sidewalk repairs
- Beautify the alleys with greenery, murals and pedestrian-friendly details
- Address parking by creating more appropriate or better delineated parking for the alleys

- Change current zoning ordinance to a more appropriate use

Long Term Goals

- Densify uses
- Build Properties to the lot line
- Conceal power lines
- Encourage the development of mixed use spaces with residential, live-work spaces, and/or condominiums and townhouses given Vester's close proximity to neighborhoods.
- Reconfigure parking that includes more appropriate locations, types of parking and deck.
- Combine public lot and private for a parking deck.

Vision & Recommendations for East Vester Street:

Like Troy Street, East Vester Street has an abundant amount of potential. Given Vester's close proximity to homes, this area would make a wonderful transition area that contained certain types of live/work spaces, condominiums, lofts, apartments, or mixed use spaces. The street's buildings would be built out to property lines and proper sidewalks that are safe for pedestrians would be installed. Necessary streetscape details would be incorporated on Vester to match the rest of the Downtown.

Parking concerns would be addressed by creating on street parking and reconfiguring inefficient surface lots. Service alleys would be revamped to support pedestrian travel and delivery trucks. Additionally, power lines that currently run through the alley and across Vester would be buried to create a more aesthetically appealing atmosphere.



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

East Nine Mile Road

Current Conditions:

East Nine Mile, which is denser than Vester Street, is still not at its full capacity. This side of Nine Mile is known for hosting the City of Ferndale's government buildings. There is a lovely historical church located at the corner of Bermuda that has ample green space. There is also the historic library building that is being updated into office space.

Despite all the charm, East Nine Mile has a number of problems. There is a lack of economic growth and pedestrian travel on this side of Woodward Avenue; reasons include an ambiguous entry into the downtown, excessive and inefficient surface parking lots, and incompatible zoning restrictions. In addition, building setbacks along the road are inappropriate for a downtown setting. Moreover, some streetscape elements that can be currently found on West Nine Mile are absent on the east side.

Significant Observations

- Surface parking lots near Woodward fill up quickly, while the lots further east are underutilized
- Crossing Nine Mile to get to the courthouse from the parking lot is dangerous
- Character of the government buildings are outdated and not positioned in an effective manner
- Continuity of buildings is broken up by excessive surface parking



East Nine Mile near Bermuda

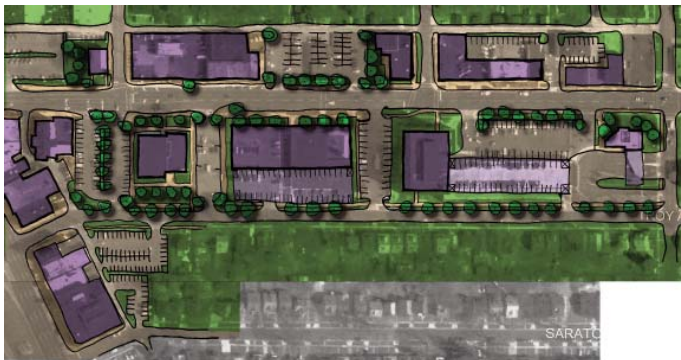


East Nine Mile near Bermuda



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

East Nine Mile Road



Short Term Goals

- Promote first floor commercial with mixed uses above including office and residential uses
- Create Gateway at Paxton
- Add missing streetscape elements

Long Term Goals

- Reconfigure surface parking lots
- Build out new structures to lot lines
- Increase vehicular and pedestrian circulation to create more downtown vitality
- Develop Civic Center complex

Vision & Recommendations for East Nine Mile Road:

Downtown Ferndale has an expansive boundary line that runs from Pinecrest to Paxton; knowing this, the DDA has spent a considerable amount of time determining the future development of East Nine Mile. Developing this section of Nine Mile into a mirrored image of West Nine Mile would be impractical given the total distance of the DDA Boundary. Instead, the DDA will embrace this part of Nine Mile as a governmental niche and expand it into a civic center that includes a town hall complex and central meeting area. A master planning session is needed for the Civic Center concept that includes all stakeholders of the community.

In addition, there will also be room for commercial use on the main floor and that also provides office and residential space above. These uses will nicely compliment the newly created lofts located on East Nine Mile.



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

West Nine Mile Road from Livernois to Pinecrest

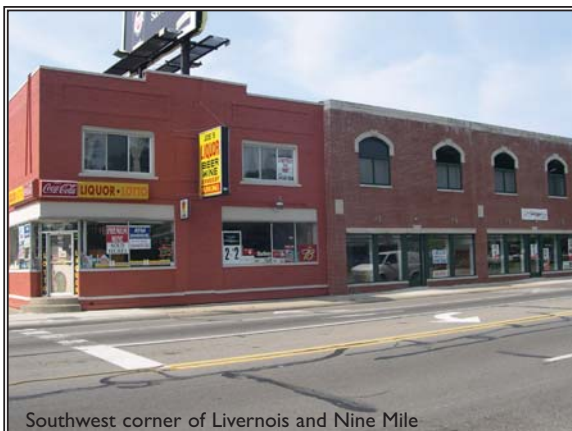
Current Conditions:

This planning report previously explained how the DDA operates through the use of a TIF. The TIF captures the future tax benefits of real estate improvements in a designated area to pay the present cost of those improvements. Even though this section of Nine Mile is part of the DDA Boundary, it is not currently financed under the TIF. This explains why the character of Nine Mile is abruptly ended at Livernois.

Due to the fact that the DDA can not currently use any of their funds to improve this area, the street lacks all character and elements of the rest of the Downtown. There are larger proportions of retail chain stores between Livernois and Pinecrest than what is found in any other part of the downtown. Low densities in the area creates massive private parking lots which act as a segregation to the rest of the Downtown. The other concern about Nine Mile between Livernois and Pinecrest is its visual discontinuity. The street lacks walkable sidewalks, antiqued light poles, flowers, DDA wayfinding signs and narrowed streets.

Significant Observations

- There is an excessive amount of parking, especially on private lots
- No on-street parking is currently present
- Low densities and strip mall clash with existing character of the downtown
- Missing streetscape elements
- Sidewalks are inadequate for pedestrian travel due to obtrusions in the sidewalk



Southwest corner of Livernois and Nine Mile



Southwest corner of Livernois and Nine Mile looking West



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

West Nine Mile Road from Livernois to Pinecrest



Vision & Recommendations for West Nine Mile between Livernois & Pinecrest:

The refreshing aspect to this section of West Nine Mile is there is an endless amount of possibilities. Once the DDA expands the DDA and implements the PSD and secures money for future investments, West Nine Mile Street will really prosper.

Short term investments will dramatically change the face of Nine Mile. A top priority will be narrowing this section of Nine Mile. By narrowing the road, on-street parking and wider sidewalks will be feasible. Antique light poles that can be found throughout the downtown will be added to visually connect the area. Attention to landscaping and public art will also be incorporated between Livernois and Pinecrest.

It is essential the DDA adopt an intricate plan of future growth for Nine Mile. Considerations for the plan should include structuring buildings to the lot line to reduce surface parking. The plan should also address long-term substantial projects.

Short Term Changes

- Add streetscape elements, such as benches, planters, pedestrian-scale lightpoles, banners, hanging baskets and bike racks.
- Narrow Nine Mile to a 3-lane road.
- Create On-street Parking
- Improve condition of the sidewalks, widen sidewalks and remove cobra-head light poles.
- Establish a TIF for streetscape project.
- Encourage property owners to maintain landscaped areas and make building facade improvements.

Long Term Goals

- Increase the density and use of Nine Mile between Livernois and Pinecrest
- Reduce surface parking lots and big box stores
- Encourage property development to use zero-lot line to front Nine Mile.
- Transition the area to become a place for mid-to-upscale residential uses, such as townhomes, lofts and live-work spaces.



Downtown Development Plan Ferndale DDA

When we look at Downtown Ferndale from a pedestrian viewpoint, it becomes apparent that we shouldn't allow condensed retail to resonate from Woodward to Pinecrest. Instead, the farthest end of Nine Mile near Pinecrest would be served well as a location for possible rowed townhouses. Closer to Livernois, mixed use space that includes commercial and residential could merge with the lofts. This way we are continuing the vibrancy of life in the downtown by creating more places for people to live in the downtown without creating a retail node that is a mile long.

It is also suggested to create a secondary district that caters to a certain niche, such as arts, design and/or neighborhood services.

Once the DDA expands its boundaries to the western corners of West Nine Mile and Pinecrest, a gateway improvement plan is recommended.



The intersection at Livernois and West Nine Mile has severe pedestrian safety issues and is confusing to motorists, as well as cumbersome. Light cycles are slow, and given the volume of traffic, a round-about is recommended for this intersection. A round-about design is discussed further in this document in Vehicular & Pedestrian Gateways, page 31.



Example of narrowing street, creating zero-lot line building developments, on-street parking, consolidating parking and landscape improvements.



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

West Nine Mile Road from Woodward to Livernois

Current Conditions:

West Nine Mile Road from Woodward Avenue to Livernois is funky, fresh, and distinctive. The quaint shopping area embraces many new urbanism qualities while retaining a vintage charm. The roads have been narrowed to create on-street parking that is utilized daily and fresco spaces dot the sidewalks. During the summer months, the large hanging baskets dominate the streetscape along with flower boxes and trees.

With all the success that West Nine Mile has had, parking has become an issue. Weekend use is especially problematic because of Ferndale's large number of restaurants and bars. High demand lots become filled very quickly while other large lots like Save-a-Lot will remain nearly empty. The 2006 Parking Study addresses these concerns.

Significant Observations:

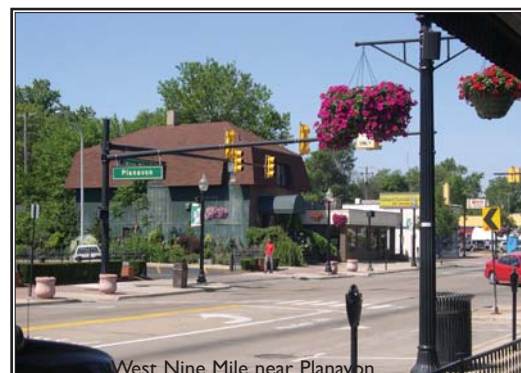
- Inefficient parking
- Lack of professional type businesses
- Area could support more trees and benches
- Efficient pedestrian crosswalks across Nine Mile
- Very low vacancy rate
- Sidewalks are stained and spotted



West Nine Mile



West Nine Mile looking West



West Nine Mile near Planavon



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

West Nine Mile Road from Woodward to Livernois



Illustration by Parks Owens

Short Term Changes

- Create consistent theme of benches, newspaper stands and trash receptacles that are evenly distributed
- Increase greenery
- Create clean sidewalk program to insure clean pedestrian friendly environment

Long Term Goals

- Retain independently owned businesses by providing more 1000 square foot spaces for affordability
- Increase building heights while retaining Ferndale's character
- Expand the types of uses for West Nine Mile up to Livernois
- Address and correct inefficient parking



Illustration by Parks Owens

Vision & Recommendations for West Nine Mile Road:

In the future it will be important for West Nine Mile Road to retain its character. With the high occupancy rates, Ferndale must remain conscious of rent prices. Part of Ferndale's charm is its independent boutiques. Creating smaller square foot spaces for rent will insure that independently owned shops will be able to stay in Ferndale.

Another key to Ferndale's success is expanding its professional sector. Increasing the amount of business people in Downtown Ferndale will boost the economy by having more daytime shopping and dining patrons. This influx of people will be handled by increasing building heights to accommodate offices. But at the same time, Downtown Ferndale does not want to lose character; therefore ordinances and an historic designation will be important. In addition to making the downtown more dense, West Nine Mile will continue to bloom with more art displays, public seating, and increased greenery.



SPECIFIC AREA

Woodward Avenue

Current Conditions:

The avenue has been the main artery of Detroit's transportation network since the incorporation of the modern plan of the city in 1805, and it therefore holds considerable cultural significance. Many historical sites are located along Woodward Avenue, and the road was designated a Michigan Heritage Route by the Michigan Department of Transportation-Design Division in July 1999 and as a National Scenic Byway by the FHWA National Scenic Byways Program on June 13, 2002. Woodward Avenue has its significance in Ferndale because it runs directly through the downtown.

For many years Woodward Avenue was viewed as a factor that hindered the growth of Downtown Ferndale. The street's massive size and traffic flow disconnected people on opposite ends of Nine Mile. Today, Woodward Avenue can be viewed as an influential part of the Downtown. Thanks to the Woodward Avenue Median Project, crossing the historical byway has become safer and more enjoyable. With future plans to expand mass transit along the corridor; Woodward Avenue will act as a link that brings new visitors to the downtown.

Significant Observations

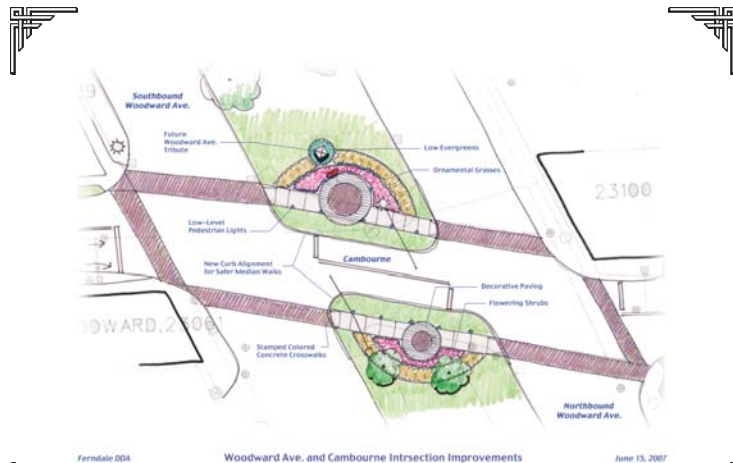
- Woodward Avenue is a vital lifeline that connects Ferndale to the surrounding areas
- Difficult to cross as a pedestrian
- Cars rarely travel 35mph on Woodward Avenue
- High traffic volumes and speed can be intimidating to pedestrians
- Significant changes made to Woodward must be approved by MDOT





SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

Woodward Avenue



Short Term Changes

- Businesses are encouraged, not penalized, for having fresco spaces along Woodward to attract pedestrians.
- Traffic calming techniques are utilized to make crossing Woodward safe for pedestrians.
- Incorporate Woodward Avenue Design Framework Plan ideas such as M-I markings, the Tribute, streetscape and landscape improvements.
- Improve building facades outside of core downtown area.

Long Term Goals

- An elaborate Gateway is created to span across Woodward Avenue to signify the entrance to the Downtown.
- Sophisticated mass transit systems will be placed along Woodward to connect the suburban communities to Detroit. Transit Oriented Design (TOD) needs to be incorporated into the plans.
- Densities along Woodward Avenue will increase up to six stories high.

Vision & Recommendations for Woodward Avenue:

Woodward Avenue in the future will be a historical byway that invites growth and activity; rather than hinder it. The right hand lane on southbound Woodward will narrow back to its original dimensions to allow for more on-street parking. Visual gateways and pavement markings will make drivers conscious that they are entering a downtown. Other traffic calming devices such as flashing radar signs will be added to slow the speed of traffic and make crossing Woodward Avenue safer. Shuttle buses that run between the Woodward Downtowns, such as Royal Oak, Berkley, Birmingham, and Bloomfield Hills will be in full operation to connect the surrounding communities. Visual drama and aesthetic impact will be added to The Woodward Corridors by increasing the building heights to reach six stories high. This striking change will give Ferndale the downtown feel it is trying to obtain.



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

Withington Parking Lot

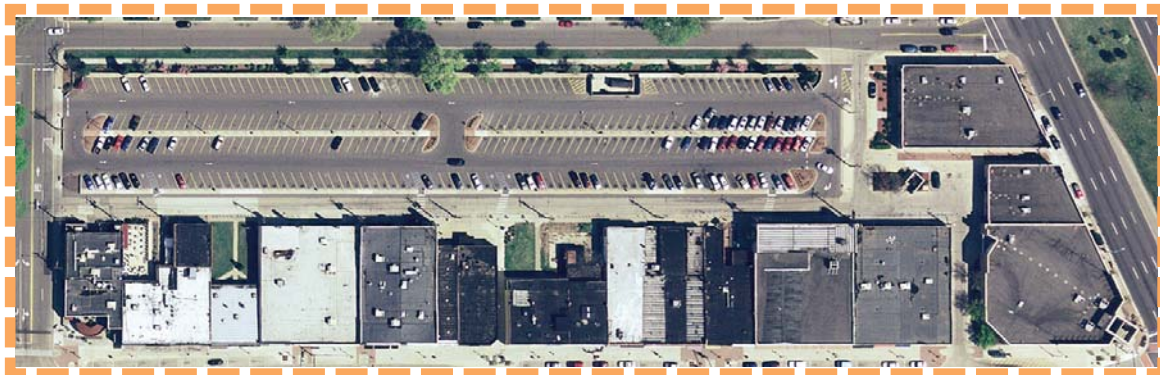
Current Conditions:

Withington Parking Lot is located between West Nine Mile Road and Withington Street. It is an expansive parking lot that expands from Woodward Avenue to Planavon Street. The long and narrow surface lot provides needed parking to the downtown, but its strategic placement makes the space a better fit for expanded uses. Also, the parking lot entrances located on the east sides of the lot are confusing to motorists and have become dangerous intersections.

A service alley runs the length of the parking lot along the back of the retail spaces. This area has become an eye sore due to the deteriorating conditions of the buildings and pavement. Unsightly power lines also meander through the parking lot creating an aesthetically unappealing atmosphere.

Significant Observations

- Much needed streetscape elements and on-street meter parking was added to Withington Street
- Entering and exiting the parking lot from Withington can be confusing
- Vehicles entering the parking lot from Nine Mile interfere with pedestrian travel and is dangerous
- The long dimensions of the parking lot hinder the flow of vehicular travel
- The service alley is not well defined nor maintained



Withington Parking lot facing East



Withington Parking lot service alley facing East



SPECIFIC AREA PLANS

Withington Parking Lot



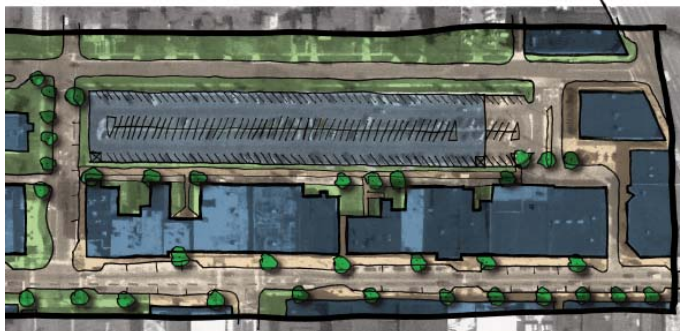
Short Term Changes

- Clean up façades along the service alley
- Create a more defined alley with brick pavers that can be used for both service trucks and pedestrians
- Eliminate confusing entrances to the parking lot
- Add more greenery to break up the vastness of the surface lot



Long Term Goals

- Use area to increase density of the downtown
- Location for a full scale parking structure, possible mixed-use space
- Utilize part of the area and north running alley from Nine Mile into Withington parking lot as a public space
- Bury electrical lines



Vision & Recommendations for Withington Parking Lot:

Withington Parking Lot has an enormous amount of potential due to its “clean slate”. There are a number of options for short term changes to the parking lot. Closing off the entrance from Nine Mile will calm confusion on the East end of the parking lot. Defining the alley and encouraging backdoor façade treatments will dramatically help the look of the parking lot. Added greenery to the parking lot will visually breakup the long lines of the surface parking lot and reduces the amount of heat that is absorbed from the pavement. Eliminating the overhead power lines will also give the area a cleaner feel.

There are many large scale renovations that can take place on this lot. The area is positioned close to Woodward Avenue making it an ideal place for a full-scale parking structure. Additionally, its close proximity to Nine Mile would make it a good for lofts and apartment spaces. The amount of square feet that the surface lot consumes makes it possible to create some sort of parking structure with potential mixed use space and still have room to build a public park at the west end of the property near Planavon. The green space can be used for community functions and provide a quaint



WALKABILITY AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

Vehicular Gateways and Roads

Woodward & Nine Mile Gateway Improvement

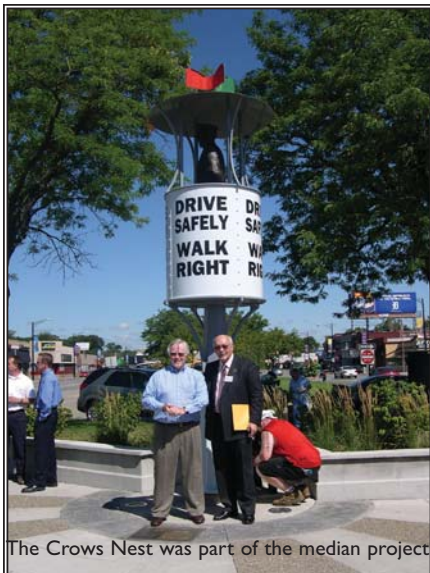
The Ferndale Downtown Development Authority made physical improvements to the median and the traffic system at the intersection of Woodward and Nine Mile in 2005. The improvements consists of a landscaped planter wall on the north and south sides of the median, illuminated pin-mounted lettering for “Downtown Ferndale” on the south wall, and vegetation for all seasons and conditions consistent with a heavily traveled road (i.e.: salt, drought). To educate people on the history of Ferndale and create character; historical elements were installed to signify the intersection’s history and included an art rendering of the Crows Nest. Historical plaques in the ground indicate the four corners’ building history. The median is also a center of information because of the Chamber of Commerce’s community bulletin sign. However, this sign is unsafe, falling apart and labor intensive the way it is formatted now. This sign should be updated to one that has modern technology such as a LCD display and is artistically designed.

To improve safety at the intersection, the curb line was narrowed fitting the appropriate lanes of traffic on Nine Mile, and the brick paver crosswalks that were crumbling apart were replaced with stamped concrete. Parking bays were also added to the northwest corner of Woodward and Nine Mile to reduce the width of Woodward and second block south of Troy Street on the west side. Additional improvements include: countdown pedestrian signals, grade level lighting across the median, benches, special paving to slow traffic, and the relocation of the rotary signs.

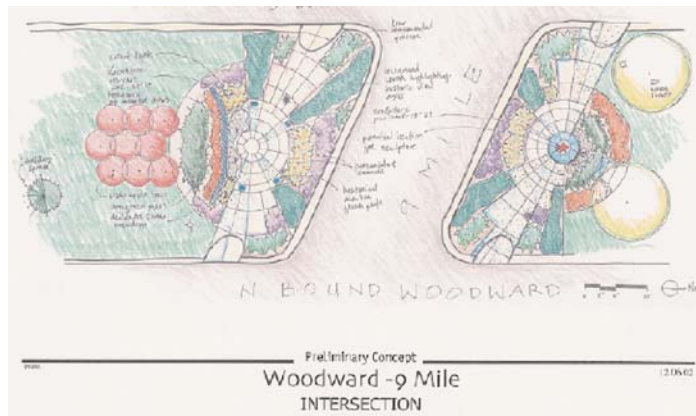
Long Term Goal

The community bulletin sign is in severe disrepair and needs to be replaced, and it is recommended that the Chamber of Commerce invest in a new electronic sign, which would also improve the

efficiency of staff and DPW time.



The Crows Nest was part of the median project





WALKABILITY AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

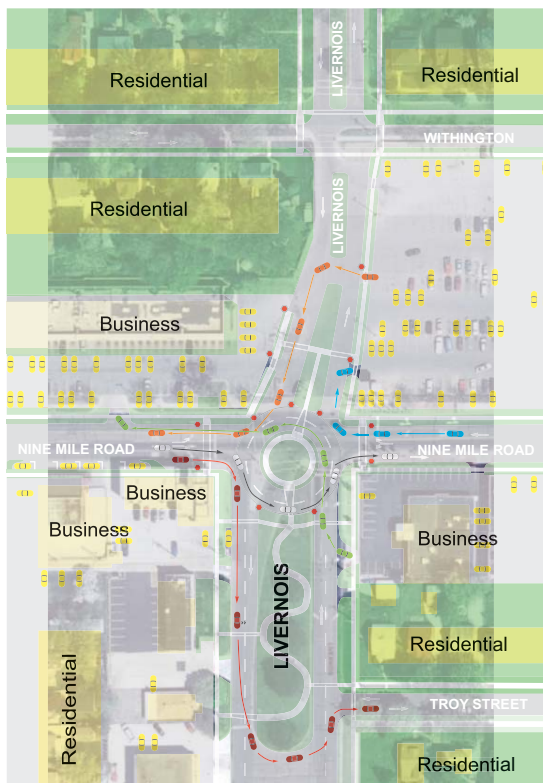
Vehicular Gateways and Roads

Nine & Livernois Roundabout:

The intersection of Livernois and Nine Mile has a unique set of circumstances. North Bound Livernois Street has been blocked off and become part of the parking lot for Ferndale Foods. South Bound Livernois has a wide median of grass to separate the north and south bound lanes. Nine Mile Road east of Livernois Street was narrowed to accommodate on-street parking while the west side is still composed of two lanes in each direction. This unusual set of circumstances has made the intersection problematic, especially for pedestrians, in recent years as growth to the downtown increases.



Intersection efficiency at Livernois and West Nine Mile can be increased by a roundabout because it will permit a continual stream of traffic to flow through the intersection, whereas a signalized intersection requires traffic to stop completely in one direction. A roundabout would also enhance the safety of this intersection by reducing the number of conflict points that occur in a typical intersection. Additionally, the aesthetics of the intersection would be greatly enhanced by adding landscaping to the center of the roundabout. Meandering sidewalks could run through the median on Livernois and connect to the roundabout crosswalks for pedestrians.



Safety Considerations

- Vehicles approach and travel through roundabouts at lower speeds
- Roundabouts significantly reduce the number of vehicle conflict points in the intersection
- Drivers have fewer opportunities to cross paths with other cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians



WALKABILITY AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

Vehicular Gateways and Roads

Gateways for Nine Mile & Paxton and Nine Mile & Pinecrest:

When traveling from the East or the West, Paxton and Pinecrest Roads becomes the “Front Door” to Downtown Ferndale. Currently the intersections lack any significance. Creating a gateway at the intersection of Paxton and Nine Mile and Pinecrest and Nine Mile will establish a strong sense of uniqueness and showcase the urban vitality that Ferndale comprises. Gateways are a wonderful tool in creating a sense of place for a downtown and it recognizes the importance of welcoming its residents, workers, and visitors. Constructing an appropriate gateway that embodies Ferndale’s artistic urban atmosphere and reflects the downtown’s rich sense of history, will truly make a powerful statement of arrival to people entering the downtown. Most importantly, it will define where the downtown begins and ends.



Gateway Possibilities

A downtown gateway can be many things that include:

- Arch that runs across the road
- Sculpture
- Public art
- Pedestrian bridge
- Public space

Understanding the Purpose of a Gateway

The objective of a gateway is to alert the person that they are entering a downtown area.

The gateway should create a sense of place

Should add to the unique character of the Downtown,



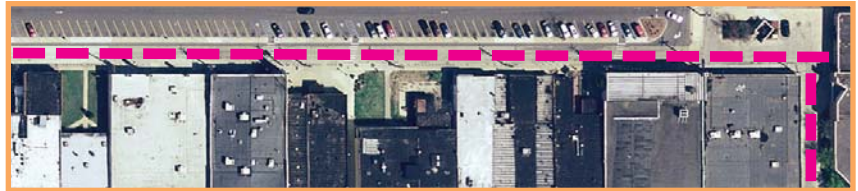


WALKABILITY AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

Pedestrian Gateways

Pedestrian and Backdoor Allies

Downtown Ferndale takes pride in its unique character of buildings, which is why Ferndale is committed to making the businesses and buildings the main focus of the design. The parking lots should be secondary to the buildings. Parking lots for Nine Mile store fronts are located along Withington and Troy Streets. As a result, occasional gaps were created so pedestrians could access the parking lots through the use of alleys. These alleys are brightly lit at night and are enhanced with hanging flower baskets. Further treatment can be made to these alleys by incorporating art, archways, signage and kiosks to help direct customers to stores.



Possible Pedestrian and Backdoor Allies

- The service alley located along the south side of Withington Parking Lot (Picture located above) -----
- Service Allies located behind restaurants along Woodward Avenue (picture located to the left) -----
- Small Alley located along the south side of Nine Mile (Picture located below) -----



Example of Pedestrian Alley located in Ferndale

Additional pedestrian alleys could be easily added to the downtown to encourage pedestrian travel and reduce the traffic congestion. These areas would be considered Backdoor Allies because they would connect the patron to the back entrance of buildings.

Service Allies are located behind the businesses on the North and South sides of Nine Mile up to Livernois and behind Woodward Avenue. Current services alleys, like those located behind the storefronts on Woodward, could be cleaned up with special brick paving, adequate lighting, and buffering apparatuses for dumpsters. Simple maintenance and changes to these areas will dramatically increase the pedestrian volume within Downtown Ferndale.

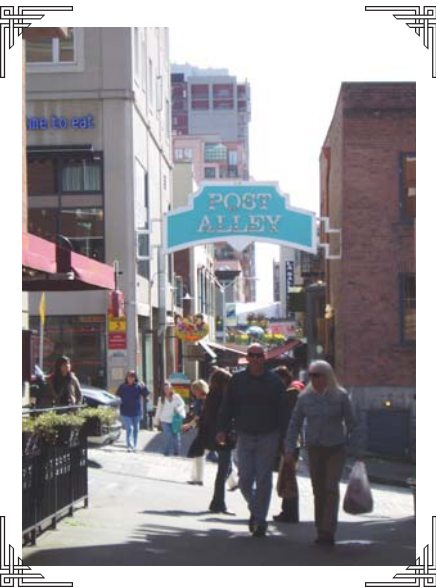


WALKABILITY AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

Pedestrian Gateways



To the left is a photo of a public alley off of Nine Mile west of Old Navy. It is recommended to close this alley for pedestrian use only and create a pedestrian meeting space incorporated with art. Prior to developing a design plan for the alley, the DDA is developing a site plan for a public parking deck concept in the Withington Parking Lot in order to determine how the alley will connect with the service alley behind the businesses on the north side of Nine Mile. The DDA plans to improve the Withington alley by emulating the streetscape found on Nine Mile including lightpoles, landscaping and varied paving features. A clearly define curb for the sidewalk is needed for pedestrian safety.



The photo on the left is an example of a pedestrian alley in Seattle, WA. Here you see an archway that clearly indicates the alley is meant for public use and can be seen from a distance. Outdoor cafes come off of the alley which creates a feel of safety and appeals to visitors sight line to draw them further down the alley. The photo on the right is an example of public art incorporated into a pedestrian alley/green space area.





WALKABILITY AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

Green and Public Spaces

Schiffer Park

Schiffer Park is a .13 acre mini-park located at the intersection of Nine Mile Road and Planavon. The Park is considered an Urban Plaza with benches, tress, and a fountain. This area adds to the downtown by providing a space for people to gather. Ways to improve this area are by adding moveable seating or an element that entertains or delights consumers, such as a fountain or art.



Observations

There is a lack of green space in Downtown Ferndale, and this has been a complaint for many years. The desire of the community is to have a public meeting space that softens the feel of urban living by including grass areas, trees and vegetation. Green spaces provide a place for people to reflect on the world, meet with friends or enjoy family life. They can also provide a place for festivals, outdoor concerts in the summer or wedding and commitment ceremonies.



Recommendations for Future Locations:

- Future infill developments, such as Troy Street;
- The Civic Center concept on East Nine Mile;
- Withington Parking Lot in conjunction with a new parking deck;
- Alley west of Old Navy, northside of Nine Mile.
- Southeast corner of Nine Mile and Allen (currently private parking lot that should be converted to green space or outdoor cafe with a potential new tenant) shown here in the photos below;



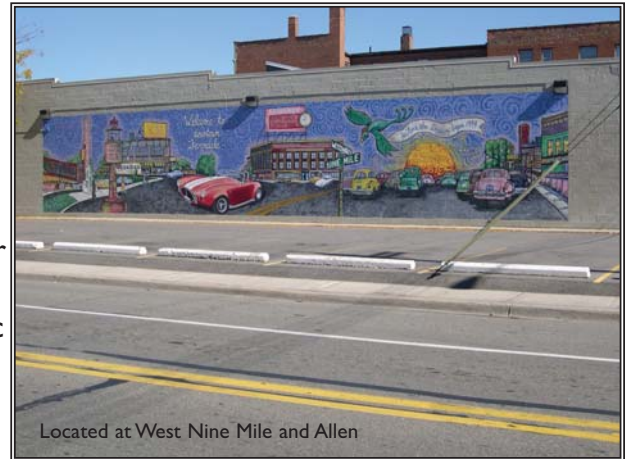


WALKABILITY AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

Green and Public Spaces

Art in Public Spaces

Public art should contribute to city life and people's use and enjoyment of public places. Public art is most effective when it is incorporated, as a design strategy, into the planning of public spaces and act as a catalyst for generating activity. For example, lighting a public place at night or providing a focal point for arts-related economic activity will benefit the community in many ways.



Located at West Nine Mile and Allen

Ferndale hopes to add to their growing collection of public art in the Downtown. As of 2005 Ferndale had added two wall murals to West Nine Mile with the intention of changing one of them bi-yearly. Via Nove and Paramount Bank have also contributed to public art by incorporating sculptures into their front façade or by showcasing artwork.



Located at West Nine Mile and Planavon

An Art in Public Spaces Plan was conducted in 2006, and the DDA should refer to this document for further ideas and implementation strategies should be developed from that plan with the City of Ferndale.

A commission has been created by the City, and collaboration amongst the DDA's Design Committee and the City's Arts and Design Commissions is necessary.



Located at 344 W. Nine Mile

Art that also serves a function, such as these old fashion swing seats, allows the consumer to engage with the art.



Art built into the concrete tells a story of a community, points people in directions or provides a source of amusement along their walking path.



WALKABILITY AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

Green and Public Spaces

Creation of a Farmers Market

Recent research conducted by the Project for Public Spaces concluded that the number of farmers markets in the United States has increased dramatically from some 1,755 markets in 1994 to over 3,700 in 2004. Also, over three million consumers shop at these markets, where an estimated 30,000 small farmers and food entrepreneurs earn a partial or full living selling their local products. The USDA has projected roughly \$1 billion in consumer spending in urban, suburban and rural community's farmers markets.

Farmers markets have the ability to renew downtowns and neighborhoods by acting as an anchor for local businesses. They encourage spin-off development and enhance real estate values. Additionally, dollars are kept in the neighborhood. Farmers markets also bring diverse groups of people together by creating a gathering space. They can act as a public active space by bringing life to an underused area. This can also reduce crimes and perceived security. Because of a markets low start up cost, the project is good for providing economic opportunity. Most importantly, markets promote public health. It increases access to fresh, affordable food and can also support community gardens or urban agricultural projects.



Example of a Farmers Market in the Midwest.
provided by pps.org

Benefits of Farmers Markets

Renewal of Downtown

Unite Diverse Groups

Area for Active Public Space

Viable Economic Opportunity

Promotion of Public Health



Example of a Farmers Market in the Midwest.
provided by pps.org



WALKABILITY AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

Green and Public Spaces

Potential Sites for a Farmers' Market

A feasibility study should be conducted to determine potential sites, vision, viability, site plan and alternative uses. Potential areas could include converting public surface parking lots similar to that of Ann Arbor's Kerry Street Farmers' Market where car ports were installed and used for the market vendors on market days. The Ferndale Collision site could potentially be converted into a farmer and craft market, and to fulfill financial obligations, an alternative use plan should expand upon other forms of revenue generating sources such as a community theater or E-bay auction site.



Recommendations

A Market Master will be needed to establish a Farmers' Market. It is recommended that the DDA work with existing retailers, such as Western Market to fulfill this need and organize the market concepts so it does not negatively impact the local fruit and meat markets. The potential for introducing locally grown foods and products or a co-op could be a way to engage the local community, as well as managing the site. Funding through the State of Michigan is available, as well as sources for farmers and vendors. Furthermore, a Farmers Market can not only focus on produce, but also incorporate art and crafts, which will have a greater potential for success by diversifying the product line.



WALKABILITY AND DESIGN CONCEPTS

Walkability Study

Observations

A feasibility study should be conducted to determine potential sites, vision, viability, site plan and alternative uses. Potential areas could include converting public surface parking lots similar to that of Ann Arbor's market where car ports were installed and used for the market vendors on market days. The Ferndale Collision site could potentially be converted into a farmer and craft market, and to fulfill financial obligations, an alternative use plan should expand upon other forms of revenue generating sources such as a community theater or E-bay auction site.