CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at 7:00 pm Garfield Township Hall 3848 Veterans Drive Traverse City, MI 49684 Ph: (231) 941-1620

AGENDA

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Call meeting to order
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll call of Board Members

1. Public Comment

Public Comment Guidelines:

Any person shall be permitted to address a meeting of The Planning Commission, which is required to be open to the public under the provision of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, as amended. (MCLA 15.261, et.seq.) Public Comment shall be carried out in accordance with the following Commission Rules and Procedures: a.) any person wishing to address the Commission is requested to state his or her name and address. b.) No person shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same matter, excluding time needed to answer Commissioner's questions. Where constrained by available time the Chairperson may limit the amount of time each person will be allowed to speak to (3) minutes. 1.) The Chairperson may at his or her own discretion, extend the amount of time any person is allowed to speak. 2.) Whenever a Group wishes to address a Committee, the Chairperson may require that the Group designate a spokesperson; the Chairperson shall control the amount of time the spokesperson shall be allowed to speak when constrained by available time. Note: If you are here for a Public Hearing, please hold your comments until that Public Hearing time.

2. Review and Approval of the Agenda – Conflict of Interest

3. Minutes – April 10, 2024

4. Correspondence

5. Reports

- a. Township Board
- b. Planning Commissioners
 - i. Zoning Board of Appeals
 - ii. Parks and Recreation Commission
 - iii. Joint Planning Commission
- c. Staff Report
 - i. Master Plan Announcement
 - ii. Recap of 2024 National Planning Conference

- 6. <u>Unfinished Business</u>
- 7. New Business
 - a. Master Plan Update Potential Implementation Projects
- 8. Public Comment
- 9. Other Business
- 10. Items for Next Agenda May 8, 2024
- 11. Adjournment

Joe Robertson, Secretary Garfield Township Planning Commission 3848 Veterans Drive Traverse City, MI 49684

The Garfield Township Board will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities upon the provision of reasonable advance notice to the Garfield Township Board. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Garfield Township Board by writing or calling Lanie McManus, Clerk, Ph: (231) 941-1620.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING April 10, 2024

<u>Call Meeting to Order:</u> Chair McManus called the April 10, 2024 Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00pm at the Garfield Township Hall.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

Roll Call of Commission Members:

Present: Molly Agostinelli, Pat Cline, Joe Robertson, John Racine, Chris DeGood, Robert Fudge and Joe McManus,

Staff Present: Planning Director John Sych and Deputy Planning Director Steve Hannon

1. Public Comment (7:01)

None

2. Review and Approval of the Agenda – Conflict of Interest (7:01)

Fudge moved and Agostinelli seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

Yeas: Fudge, Agostinelli, Cline, Racine, Robertson, DeGood, McManus

Nays: None

3. Minutes (7:01)

a. March 27, 2024 Joint Meeting with Township Board

Agostinelli moved and Cline seconded to approve the March 27, 2024 Joint Meeting minutes as amended

Yeas: Agostinelli, Cline, DeGood, Fudge, Robertson, Racine, McManus Nays: None

4. Correspondence (7:02)

Sych noted that correspondence included a letter from the Watershed Center regarding agenda item 7a and an invitation from Networks Northwest for a community engagement session.

5. Reports (7:02)

Township Board Report

Agostinelli stated that there were 27 applicants for the building official position.

Planning Commissioners

i. Zoning Board of Appeals

Fudge reported that a front yard setback was tabled for lack of information.

ii. Parks and Recreation Commission

Hannon stated Parks Commissions discussed the steps necessary for an ADA accessible trail grant at the Commons Natural Area.

iii. Joint Planning Commission

Racine said that there was no meeting.

Staff Report

i. PD 2024-23 – Planning Department Monthly Report – April 2024 (7:05)

Sych stated that the monthly report was included in packets. Hannon added a non-motorized trail plan was being reviewed in conjunction with the Networks Northwest group. Planning staff are attending the National Planning Conference in Minneapolis.

6. <u>Unfinished Business</u>

a. PD 2024-24 - 3066 North Garfield Special Use Permit - Findings of Fact (7:07)

The applicant requests approval of a Special Use Permit for a commercial district housing development at 3066 North Garfield Road. The development application proposes a 20-unit apartment building. The parcel is 1.21 acres and is zoned C-G Commercial. Commercial district housing developments are permitted via Special Use Permit in the C-G General Commercial district. Since the plan was first reviewed by the Planning Commission on October 11, 2023, an attached gym room has been provided with the proposed apartment building. Commissioners asked questions pertaining to the Duell Road intersection with Garfield Road and triple paned windows to protect the residents from noise. Applicant Sean McCardel stated that some windows were eliminated from the building plans to help with noise mitigation. Co-Applicant Joe Locricchio also discussed the windows. He stated that they did take measures to address the glass to provide as much as they can do to mitigate noise with the glass.

Agostinelli moved and Cline seconded THAT the Findings of Fact for application SUP-2023-08, as presented in Planning Department Report 2024-24 and being made a part of this motion, BE ADOPTED.

Yeas: Agostinelli, Cline, DeGood, Fudge, Racine, Robertson, McManus Nays: None

Agostinelli moved and Robertson seconded MOTION THAT applications SUP-2023-08 BE APPROVED, subject to the following conditions (1-6 as indicated in Planning Department Report 2024-24):

- 1. Final engineering review and approval by the Township Engineer is required including all infrastructure and stormwater.
- 2. All final reviews from agencies with jurisdiction shall be provided prior to a Land Use Permit being issued.
- 3. All proposed landscaping and site amenities shall be installed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
- 4. The applicant shall provide two (2) full-size plan sets, one (1) 11x17" plan set, and one electronic copy of the full application (in PDF format) with all updates as required by any conditions of this approval and indicating compliance with all provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

 5. The applicant shall record promptly the amended Report and Decision Order (RDO) and any amendment to such order with the Grand Traverse County Register of Deeds in the chain of title for each parcel or portion thereof to which the RDO pertains. A copy of each recorded document shall be filed with the Director of Planning within thirty (30) days of final approval by the Township or approval shall be considered to have expired.

 6. The applicant is to provide additional sound deadening materials on the for the windows on the south facing units subject to building department review.

Yeas: Agostinelli, Robertson, DeGood, Cline, Fudge, Racine, McManus Navs: None

7. New Business

a. PD 2024-25 – Gauthier Site – Conceptual Review (7:33)

The applicant, Will Bartlett, is seeking feedback on a proposed multi-family dwelling project at 2105 N US 31 South, on the west side of US 31 at McRae Hill Road, across from Hartman Road. The site is owned by the Gauthier Trust and is about 18 acres, though the applicant notes there are only about 6 acres of upland buildable area running through the middle of the site. The applicant proposes a 154-unit apartment project featuring a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartments, with an average unit size of about 675 square feet. The resulting density would be 8.5 units per acre. The site has a Future Land Use designation of Agricultural /Rural Land but was rezoned to R-3 based on a review which started in fall 2021 and led to the rezoning of the property in April 2022. The applicant has presented a project concept to the Township Board including a discussion on the potential of using Brownfield tax increment financing (TIF), via the Grand Traverse County Brownfield Authority, for a portion of the financing on the project. Bartlett stated that this project would cater to work force housing and they are going through the Brownfield process with the county. Commissioners asked questions pertaining to the wetlands and building placements, and the stormwater management plan. Bob Verschaeve, engineer from Gosling Czubak. addressed buildings one and two and stated that they will be slightly below grade. Commissioners were overall positive about the development and agreed that it was a good fit for the parcel.

8. Public Comment (7:58)

None

9. Other Business (7:58)

None

10. <u>Items for Next Agenda – April 24, 2024 (</u>7:58)

a. Master Plan Update – Potential Implementation Projects

11. Adjournment

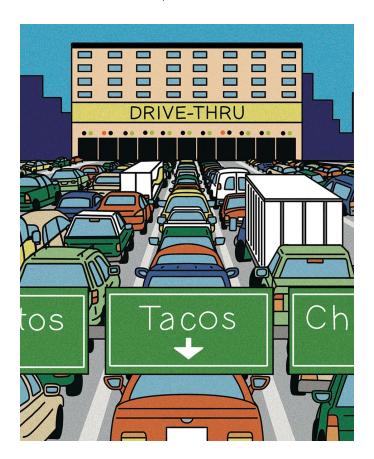
Fudge moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm.

Joe Robertson, Secretary Garfield Township Planning Commission 3848 Veterans Drive Traverse City, MI 49684 CULTURE

Mega drive-throughs explain everything wrong with American cities

They're great for the fast food industry — but not so great for us.

By Marina Bolotnikova | Updated Apr 9, 2024, 9:06am EDT



Melanie Lambrick for Vox

 ${\it Marina Bolotnikova}$ is a deputy editor for Vox's Future Perfect section. Before joining Vox, she reported on factory farming for national outlets including the Guardian, the Intercept, and elsewhere.

Just outside St. Louis, in the inner-ring suburb of University City, there's a little neighborhood often **called** the region's unofficial Chinatown. Growing up in the area, it was one of my favorite places to be; reflective of the city's diversity and vitality, it opened up the world to me. This past December, when I went home for the holidays, I discovered that what was once a **beloved strip** of **immigrant- and minority-owned businesses** there — a Korean grocery, a pho shop, a Jamaican joint with vegetarian options, a Black-owned barber shop — had been bulldozed and **replaced** by a double-lane drive-through Chick-fil-A.



Part of the strip of small businesses in University City's Jeffrey
Plaza that were torn down to build a new development. | Aubrey
Byron for Vox



The new Chick-fil-A. | Aubrey Byron for Vox

Across the street, another strip was torn down to make way for a Raising Cane's and a Chipotle, both also equipped with drive-throughs.

This part of town was never exactly the height of urban design; it had long been sprawly, caroriented, and not great for walking. But the redevelopment gave it another character entirely. Before, the businesses there were destinations you could walk to if you wanted. Now, an enormous concrete retaining wall was built outside the Chick-fil-A, closing it off from sidewalk access like a fortress to fast food capitalism. The place had become so hostile to anyone outside a car that no one was going to get in there on foot. It was not a destination, but a place meant to be driven through — which is to say, no place at all.

Although this particular city block had sentimental value to me, there's nothing unique about what happened to it; it's a pattern taking place across the country. Post-Covid, drive-throughs are proliferating among traditional fast food restaurants (Burger King, Taco Bell, KFC) as well as more upmarket brands not traditionally associated with that way of doing business, like **Chipotle**, **Shake**Shack, and Sweetgreen. Dining rooms are out and two-, three-, and even four-



A Chick-fil-A drive-through in University City, Missouri. | Aubrey Byron for Vox

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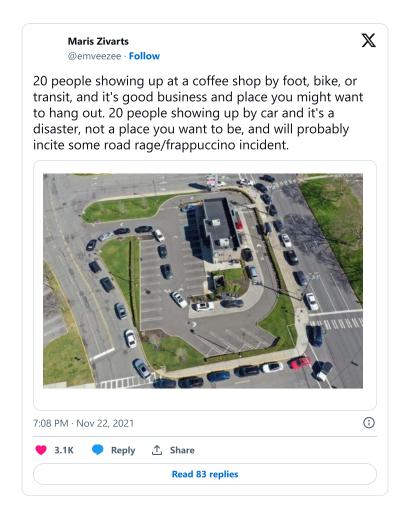
"Drive-throughs have been around a long time," **Charles Marohn**, a former traffic engineer and well-known critic of America's car-dependent urban planning, told me. Today, he said, "they're becoming bigger and more obnoxious."

That trend conflicts with a key objective that **US cities are increasingly prioritizing**: creating a safer, cleaner, walkable, livable urban environment that's less dependent on cars. St. Louis and its suburbs, for example, in recent years have been building out bike lanes and **walking and biking paths**, including a segment that **runs** right up to the site of the new fried chicken and Chipotle drive-throughs. Where, exactly, are the people walking or biking that path supposed to go when they arrive at a development designed to be navigated only by car?

Drive-throughs, perhaps more than any other single building style, work against these livability goals. They worsen traffic congestion and **release** climate-warming **air pollution** from cars idling in line. They force cities to devote more land to asphalt, contributing to costly and unproductive sprawl. And they increase the chances of collisions with pedestrians and

cyclists —in a country that already has one of the **highest car crash death rates** among peer countries — because they require cuts in the sidewalk to accommodate cars going in and out.

"Every time you have a curb cut, you're creating an additional vehicle-pedestrian conflict point," Minneapolis planning director Meg McMahan told Vox. "So there's very real impacts to pedestrian safety."



On top of everything that's already suboptimal about what urban planners call the American built environment, "the drive-through just kicks you in the nuts," Marohn said. "It's like, we're going to actually add the added bonus that you can't walk here at all because it's really dangerous. ... That's what the drive-through does: It magnifies the negativity."

Why the fast food industry loves drive-throughs

Drive-throughs have long made up a large volume of fast food businesses' sales, but when **Covid-19** caused dine-in options to shut down, even more Americans flocked to them. "A brand like McDonald's or Wendy's, they generally have like 70 percent of business flow through the drive-through. And then it became 90, then it was 95," Danny Klein, editorial director of QSR, a trade magazine covering the quick-service restaurant industry, told me. "You had this wave of consumers go to the drive-through and be introduced to it, and it's just held as a bit of a habit that hasn't gone away." In 2022, drive-throughs **accounted** for about 75 percent of fast food restaurants' revenue, Vox's Whizy Kim **reported** last year.

For the drive-through haters, this highlights an uncomfortable truth: Drive-throughs are widespread and growing because tons of people use them. In a society that's already built around driving everywhere, there's some logic to this. They're fast and convenient, and they can have a certain **Americana charm**. The National Restaurant Association **reports** that half of Americans use them at least once a week. I occasionally use a drive-through pharmacy

because it's so easy to do when I'm already en route to the grocery store; I've used drive-throughs to get tested for Covid multiple times (including one occasion, also in St. Louis, when I tried to walk up to a drive-through window and was refused service).

In the quick-service food sector, drive-throughs are now practically a requirement for staying competitive, and more businesses are adopting them. Chipotle started experimenting with drive-throughs, which it calls "Chipotlanes," in 2018 and has been **aggressively expanding** them post-pandemic. The company is on track to open its 1,000th Chipotlane this year (out of its 3,400-some locations), according to an emailed statement attributed to chief brand officer Chris Brandt.

Chipotle just reported one of its best quarters ever, Klein told me, managing to increase its guest count, which is rare in the fast food industry. "Part of that is the accessibility that they've opened up across the country with these Chipotlanes," Klein said.

Chipotlanes are digital-only, meaning that rather than ordering food on arrival, customers place orders online ahead of time and just arrive to pick them up, allowing the line to move much more quickly than at conventional drive-throughs (and, Brandt said, helping avoid traffic pile-ups). It's like a take-out order, except you pick it up in your car. This drive-through system also makes business run more smoothly from Chioptle's perspective; orders are filled on a separate assembly line where staff can "quickly and efficiently execute online orders without disrupting throughput on the front line," Brandt said.

The rise of online order-ahead systems helps explain why drive-throughs have become even more popular in recent years: It's made it even faster and more frictionless to pick up food. Some brands that have long offered traditional drive-throughs, **like Chick-fil-A** and **Taco Bell**, are adding dedicated lanes for mobile orders made in advance — part of what's causing mega drive-throughification.

For chain restaurants, it's easy to see why these developments look like progress: They make fast food consumption in car-dependent regions more efficient. But that efficiency is achieved at a heavy cost to people and communities.

The hidden costs of drive-throughs

One way of looking at the economics of a drive-through is that it derives its value from sucking value out of everything else.

Drive-throughs consign land that could otherwise be put to more productive use to be slabs of asphalt for car lanes. Many US municipalities have parking minimums, so building a drive-through on top of the legally mandated number of parking spots means "you have to essentially double the amount of space that's dedicated to vehicles," McMahan, the Minneapolis planning director, told me — and that's just for drive-throughs with a single lane.

Because drive-throughs wrap around a restaurant, they usually only work with businesses housed in detached standalone buildings — rather than stores lined up together along a strip — wasting even more land. They depend on road infrastructure that's **expensive** for cities to maintain, and they're **notorious for** backing up onto streets, stalling traffic, and **creating hazards** for other road users.

"If you put a drive-through on a good street ... you're wrecking the walkability of that street, you're wrecking the financial productivity of that street, you're wrecking that street as a place," Marohn said. And it's no coincidence, he added, that drive-throughs are almost invariably linked with large fast food chains that siphon wealth out of local economies. "The types of businesses that do well in a drive-through environment are the types that mine capital from a community."







A bus stop outside Chick-fil-A. | Aubrey Byron for Vox

For small businesses without massive amounts of capital to invest, drive-throughs generally don't make economic sense, Klein explained. "You're competing with the Starbucks of the world if you're trying to get that kind of lot [that can accommodate a drive-through]. Most smaller brands aren't even willing to attempt that," he said. The technology to make drive-throughs work is also costly, like speaker boxes and headsets. "If you're someone like Chipotle, it's just a different game of money. They're really not worried about that upfront cost to the degree that a smaller brand would be."

When I asked urban planner **Joe Minicozzi** what he thought about drive-throughs, he told me I was asking the wrong question. "What about them?" he said. "They suck." And he's right: Drive-throughs are not single-handedly responsible for the design choices that have made much of the US so dependent on cars, **to the detriment** of our safety, our **quality of life**, and the planet. If we got rid of all drive-throughs tomorrow, American communities would still be defined by sprawl, **perilous roads**, and **massive parking lots**.

The more fundamental problem, as Minicozzi sees it, is the system that allows and even encourages developers and big business to waste so much precious land on economically unproductive sprawl, ultimately forcing the public to pay for it in the form of road maintenance. "Why are we just trashing big chunks of our city as economic wastelands?" he said.

Still, if you're looking for a totem of America's "heinous land uses," as the urban planning YouTuber Ray Delahanty **put it**, drive-throughs are not a bad choice. "They're really significant design drivers," McMahan said, requiring cities to build in a way that's highly car-centric to accommodate drive-through traffic.

It adds up to an urban landscape that is, almost paradoxically, vast yet dominated by placelessness. Americans spend much of their days traversing **non-places** — settings for the

movement and storage of cars rather than for humans to linger — making social connection "exhaustingly difficult," as Muizz Akhtar **put it** in Vox, and contributing to our **loneliness epidemic**.

"A good part of any day in Los Angeles is spent driving, alone, through streets devoid of meaning to the driver," Joan Didion **wrote** in 1989 of the consistently temperate region that somehow represents the apotheosis of car dependence and **drive-throughs**. "Such tranced hours are, for many people who live in Los Angeles, the dead center of being there."

Cities are increasingly wary of drive-throughs

In 2019, Minneapolis **became** the most high-profile US city to ban construction of new drive-throughs, as part of its plan to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050. "We knew based on studies that had been done nationwide that there are higher rates of air pollution in places where vehicles are idling," McMahan said. Residents had long complained about drive-through lines spilling out onto city roads, she added, and they were more broadly at odds with the city's livability goals.

Before the city banned new drive-throughs (and **parking minimums**, which were eliminated two years later), McMahan said, "probably 50 percent of the time that we spent on a site was spent figuring out how vehicles were going to get in, be stored, and get out. And now we spend zero percent of our time thinking about that. ... That means that time gets to be allocated to things like good-quality design and creating a better urban fabric."

Atlanta recently **prohibited** new drive-throughs near its BeltLine, a system of walking and cycling trails, as a pedestrian safety measure. Some smaller cities and suburban communities, like Orchard Park, New York, have also **banned** them; in San Luis Obispo, California, they've **been illegal** for more than 40 years. Other **cities** are **weighing** drive-through **bans** and partial bans — a question that may become more urgent as drive-throughs expand their reach. Last year, the National Restaurant Association **reported** on local drive-through bans as a "developing issue."

But big city restrictions may not end up mattering much, Klein told me, because the fast food industry sees its future in regions that are friendlier to the drive-through style of development. "They all want to go to the suburbs now," he said. "That's where I think you'll see the very, very vast majority of their growth going forward."

That's consistent with what Brandt of Chipotle told me about the company's expansion plans. "Small towns have been a major focus of our growth strategy over the last few years," he wrote. "Chipotlanes allow us to enter these markets with a familiar and convenient access point for suburban families."

This leaves suburban communities that are in the fast food industry's crosshairs, like University City, with hard choices to make about what they want their future to look like. The city's 2013 **Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan** had set a goal of making "University City the St. Louis region's premier walk-able and bike-able city by creating a community with universal accessibility and transportation alternatives that enable residents, no matter their age or ability, to walk and bike to their destinations."

This is hard to reconcile with a development pattern that's tearing down local businesses to build fast food drive-throughs. Individual businesses will always come and go — and that in itself isn't a problem — but city leaders have a duty to think deeply about what kinds of places they want to foster.

Reached for comment, Bwayne Smotherson, a University City council member who represents the ward where the new development opened, pointed to the economic benefits he believes it will have for the community (the city **committed \$70 million** in tax increment financing to subsidize the project). He added that he wasn't familiar with the environmental concerns with drivethroughs but that he considers the development accessible to pedestrians and cyclists.

"The wall is simply a design and function feature and not at all a barrier," Smotherson wrote in an email, referring to the retaining walls in front of Chick-fil-A and Costco. It's technically true that pedestrians can access the businesses if they're very determined — but that really stretches the definition of walkable.



The new Market at Olive development will eventually be a larger, sprawling complex. | Aubrey Byron for Vox

Drive-throughs are wildly popular in the US, Marohn said, because Americans are already traveling through environments where it feels unnatural and unpleasant to be outside a car; the drive-through just represents the logical culmination of building places for cars rather than for humans. The University City local businesses had already been hemmed in by such non-places that didn't help them realize their potential, making them vulnerable to replacement.

A genuine alternative, Marohn said, would go a lot deeper than ditching drive-throughs. It would mean creating places where no one would think to miss them — places where people actually want to be.

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7a.

Master Plan Implementation Potential Projects

Garfield Township Planning Commission Study Session – April 24, 2024

1

Master Plan Implementation

• Two new FLUM designations covering 13 areas of the Township

Mixed-Use Neighborhood	Mixed-Use Center		
Brookside Commons	Cherryland Center		
Cedar Run Campus	Barlow Park		
Green Hill	Garfield Center		
McRae Hill Base	Rennie Plains		
Rennie Hill / Veterans Drive	Logan's Landing		
M-72 / West Bay	Ashland Park		
	Copper Ridge		

Master Plan Implementation – C-P district

- Much of the C-P district currently covers 2 of the 13 mixed use areas
 - Cherryland Center
 - Grand Traverse Mall (Garfield Center)
- Reform C-P district into a new zoning district: Mixed-Use Center
- Rezone the base zoning of the Meijer (PUD) site to C-G or C-H
- Potential future inclusion of Grand Traverse Crossings in this district



Master Plan Implementation – C-O district

- Much of the C-O district currently covers 4 of the 13 mixed use areas in the Master Plan
 - Rennie Hill / Veterans Drive, Cedar Run Campus, McRae Hill Base, and M-72 / West Bay
- Potentially reform C-O district into a new zoning district: Mixed-Use Neighborhood (or Corridor)
- Allow for offices, multi-family, potentially some low-volume retail



Master Plan Implementation – C-L district

- Parts of Green Hill are zoned C-L
- Other C-L areas in the Township
 - Parts of Veterans Drive, Hammond and Garfield, Barlow Street, West Front Street, and Cass Road
- Potential: allow residential uses to mix with low volume retail, restaurants, and/or other uses

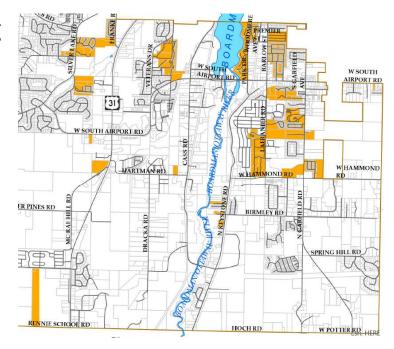


Other Mixed-Use FLUM Designations

- Barlow Park, Rennie Plains
 - Evaluate how areas develop before determining districts
- Brookside Commons, Copper Ridge, Ashland Park
 - All part of existing PUDs (keep within PUDs for now)
- Logan's Landing
 - Anticipate using PUD process because of need for flexibility in design

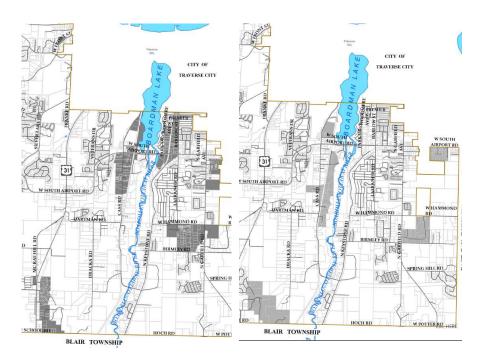
Master Plan Implementation – R-3 district

- Currently any multi-family housing development (3+ dwelling units) require a Special Use Permit
- Potential updates
 - Define new housing types
 - Allow triplex (3 dwelling units), quadplex (4 dwelling units), or more housing types by right in R-3
 - Change density calculation to dwelling units per acre



Master Plan Implementation – I-G and I-L

- Full names of the I-G and I-L districts include "Mixed-Use Industrial Business"
- Clarify uses permitted in industrial areas
- Rename districts now that Master Plan has identified specific mixed-use areas



Miscellaneous Zoning Updates

Lighting

 In response to new technology, provide new standards for accent lighting on building, LED lighting, photometric plan requirements, internal building lighting (i.e., new U-Haul building), etc.

Drive-through businesses

• Consider requiring a drive-through design analysis. Also, consider removing the 60-foot setback requirement to allow for improved site design and function.

Food trucks

 In instances where a primary use could benefit from a food truck, allow for a specific onsite location to accommodate a food truck as an accessory use.

Pedestrian circulation and Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

- Update requirements for sidewalks.
- Other zoning issues?