AGENDA

May 5, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.
Hannah Community Center, Room 211
819 Abbot Road

1) OPENING
   A) Roll Call
   B) Approval of Agends

2) MAP: CORE DOWNTOWN

3) MAP: DELTA TRIANGLE

4) ADJOURNMENT
MEMORANDUM

TO: Steering Committee Members

FROM: Darcy C. Schmitt, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Timothy R. Schmitt, AICP, Community Development Analyst
Lori Mullins, Community Development Administrator

DATE: April 29, 2014

SUBJECT: Urban Form and Transportation, Infrastructure, and Environmental Sustainability

On May 5, 2014, the Steering Committees will finalize their recommendations for the Downtown Core and the Delta Triangle area before taking a summer break from the Comprehensive Plan update.

During the summer months and early fall, Staff will work with the Planning Commission to summarize all of the work of the five Steering Committees and prepare for a joint meeting in the fall. This meeting will give all the Steering Committee members an opportunity to provide final comments on this portion of the plan update before it is presented to the public in October.

After the October public input meeting on the first portion of the update the Steering Committees will begin regular meetings again to complete the plan update. At that time, Staff will provide you with an updated timeline with more detailed task descriptions for each Steering Committee. Meanwhile the attached timeline delineates the general expected timeline for completion and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.
CORE DOWNTOWN AND CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD: Area bound by Burcham Road, Abbot Road, Grand River Avenue, and Hagadorn Road.

Consider design solutions to improve the living environment in areas where owner-occupied and rental housing are mixed.

Consider having nodes that are retail centers, rather than requiring continuous retail.

New parking structures should be made less prominent by wrapping three sides of the structure in residential or commercial uses and placing the entrance to the structure off a north south street rather than the main east west street fronts.

Parking structures should be designed to blend into the architecture and minimize pedestrian vehicle conflicts.

The Grove Street Garage appears less dominant in the downtown since the 8-story mixed-use (The Residences and Hopcat) building was constructed.

Are the City’s parking requirements too high; specifically, in close proximity to campus and downtown?

Generally surface parking lots are underutilized land and should be limited in the Core Downtown.

Utilize alleys behind properties on the north side of Grand River Avenue between Collingwood and Hagadorn Roads to create parking access for the redevelopment of these properties. Remove curb cuts and front yard parking by providing street parking and rear yard parking accessed off the alley. This will improve the Grand River Avenue frontage for pedestrian use.

The City needs to continue to evaluate the value of adding street parking for short term parking along Grand River Avenue to slow traffic and make the City a more walkable Community. The evaluation should include consideration for any potential pedestrian crossing problems being created by the street parking. Where appropriate, as redevelopment occurs in this area buildings should be adjusted to allow for street parking.

There is no legal or safe bicycle crossing Grand River at Collingwood, this should be addressed.

The downtown needs to be expanded beyond its current linear delineation.

We value the pedestrian feel of the Ann Street Plaza and consideration should be made to create more of a pedestrian feel along Albert Street in proximity to the Plaza through various methods such as street design that can be easily closed off to vehicle traffic on weekends or for special events.
As higher density mixed-used developments are considered closer to Grand River Avenue it is important that it does not create an unwelcoming environment or block the Strathmore Neighborhoods to the north from connecting to the campus.

Orchard and Durand Street area should be developed more as an extension of the Strathmore Neighborhood. The configuration of density was a desire to preserve the Strathmore neighborhood as a desirable location for MSU affiliated professionals to live and have easy access to campus. We should not create a commercial wall that blocks the campus from their neighborhood, but rather maintain an area as residential close to Grand River and Campus.

The alleys should be pedestrians and vehicle friendly. The alley design and signage should be used to prevent pedestrian/vehicle conflicts.

What can we learn from the residents that live in areas of different demographic groups? What makes the housing arrangements work or not work well?

The single-family residential neighborhoods have developed over time into many variations of owner-to renter occupied homes through years of changing regulations and not necessarily market outcome.

What is a normal number of times a resident should utilize their downtown to maintain a good mix of businesses? Is East Lansing much different than other communities of the same size and character. The increase in Parking Structure use leads us to believe that the most recent development in the downtown has drawn business to the downtown.

Restaurants in the downtown, are they destinations or neighborhood service type restaurants?

Dumpsters in the alleys downtown create less appealing pedestrian routes other than routes from parking to businesses. Preserve alleys for deliveries and connecting people to parking structures off south/north side streets rather than Grand River Avenue and Albert.

The three foot setback that is created along streets/sidewalks to allow footings to be built without encroaching into the right-of-way creates an awkward space that is hard to maintain.

Fenestration is important along Grand River Avenue to create a pedestrian friendly environment, specifically in the areas that are currently in the B-2 district. Window fenestration meaning: the arrangement, proportioning, and design of windows and doors in a building in a way that there is a clear and unobstructed view in an out of the structure.

Bailey Community Center: redeveloped or repurpose as condos and small scale retail on the first floor. Enhance the park area for year round use multiple community uses.

Make transitions to different uses or intensities at mid-block and not along streets.

Notes and Comments from the Combined Transportation, Infrastructure, and Urban Form Steering Committees: March 31, 2014
An overview of the Urban Design Guidelines was provided and steering committees were asked to review the information available on the website at www.cityofeastlansing/planning and provide feedback on the different ideas and options shown.

**CORE DOWNTOWN AND CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD:** Area bound by Burcham Road, Abbot Road, Grand River Avenue, and Hagadorn Road.

Bicycle use in the alleys can be dangerous at street crossings. The use of signage or other cautionary markings should be made at these locations.

The East Village District was originally designed for a massive redevelopment rather than smaller incremental development. The code should be reviewed to eliminate obstacles to incremental development.

Bicycle crossings should be provided at the intersections of Grand River Avenue and Collingwood, Stoddard, Bogue, and Abbot. There are a number of examples shown in the Non-motorized Transportation Plan that should be considered. Each intersection will likely warrant a different treatment.

The two design concepts presented for BRT are not likely to negatively affect bicycle or pedestrian crossings.

Parking ratios are an issue for redevelopment. The cost of parking impacts the ability to redevelop and also impacts the ability to accommodate uses that are going to support a pedestrian friendly downtown. As vehicle “use” trends can be confirmed or more clearly defined, there will be more potential to accommodate development with less parking in the future. Currently parking ratios are driven by business expectations set by the developer or financing institutions and also by residents that are not convinced that a reduction will not create parking overflow into the neighborhoods.

As we work toward balancing the parking in the core downtown, make sure there is sufficient convenient parking for those with mobility concerns.

Desirable destinations will attract people to the core downtown regardless of the perceived parking constraints.

In the core downtown building height can be supported more on the north side of Albert than on the south side because of the potential for shadowing the plaza. Buildings on the south side of Albert could have more height if the buildings were stepped back far enough to avoid shadowing the street. The city may want to develop a shadow study to determine how the buildings should be designed to prevent shadowing the street and plaza.

The Grand River Avenue in the core downtown should have a **minimum** four story height requirement. However, have the option to propose as shorter height with special approval from Council.

The buildings at key vistas such as the corner of Grand River Avenue and Michigan Avenue can have a profound effect on the aesthetic quality of the downtown. Consider the potential vistas
where iconic buildings are desirable. The terminus of Michigan Avenue at Grand River Avenue is the vista terminus for traffic moving west on Grand River Avenue.

Rickshaws and closed circuit trolleys were discussed as a way to get people from parking that may be further out of the core downtown. However, there seemed to be doubt that people would be willing to use them.

Buildings have the ability to reflect sound such as music from outdoor concerts. Areas that are intended to be used for concerts should provide screening such as landscaping or a screen wall to prevent the sound reflection.

How many residents do we want to increase by? What size buildings do we need to support the population we desire?

There is a benefit to support growth in the core downtown where the infrastructure can support the population without taking away green space. Otherwise, there is more pressure to develop greenfields.

We already have assets that are a draw to living in the downtown area. The University is a huge asset to the City across the street from downtown. Even without BRT, the city has a great bus system.

Hotel and conference space needed to complement the needs of the F-RIB.

There is a market for rental properties for nonstudents.

Use the census data to develop scenarios for housing growth projections and show examples of how that growth would translate into higher density housing in urban neighborhoods.
MEMORANDUM

TO: Steering Committee Members

FROM: Darcy C. Schmitt, Planning and Zoning Administrator

DATE: April 30, 2014

SUBJECT: Downtown Parking Information

At the last Steering Committee meeting, members asked multiple questions about the downtown parking system and statistics associated with it. The question was a timely one, as the Parking Department was preparing for their Spring counts, at which time they do detailed analysis of the entire system over the course of a week. This study is done in April typically, to try and avoid harsh winter weather, but also be prepared during a time when the students are still in town.

There are a total of 27 'parking lots' in the core downtown, with 2,744 parking spaces available. This includes on-street parking on some streets and any off-street parking spaces. The lots are analyzed on a daily basis, 12 times a day. This gives an exceptionally broad cross section of the utilization of our parking system. There is a large amount of data in the report to process, but some of the highlights are:

- The peak utilization occurred on Friday at 12:30, where 58% of all parking spaces were being used in the downtown. At that time, a number of parking lots, especially the on-street parking areas, were well above 75% occupied.
- The lowest utilization occurred on Saturday morning at 8:00, where only 17% of the spaces were being used.
- Overall, utilization has been steadily growing over the years by several percentage points. In Spring of 2014, even at 8:00AM, when most businesses are not open yet, the system was still experiencing nearly 1/3 utilization.
- Parking increased on a daily basis across the board, except for Saturday, which was markedly lower than it was in 2013.

Staff would be happy to share specifics with the Steering Committee on any parking lot in the downtown that the Committee would like to talk about. The summary page comparing 2013 to 2014 is attached to this memo, but the detailed information is available.
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KEY URBAN FORM GOALS OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 2: To have a diversified and growing tax base and economy.

Objective 2-1: Increase the attraction and vitality of the downtown.

  Action 2-1.1: Provide incentives to support commercial adaptive reuse or redevelopment of properties in the core downtown specifically where new sewer and water infrastructure has been constructed.

  Action 2-1.2: Create active streets through the promotion of art, plazas and outdoor seating in the core downtown.

  Action 2-1.3: Continue to improve the City’s “Wayfinding” system which includes uniform signage with clear directional information for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

  Action 2-1.4: Encourage alternative parking options.

  Action 2-1.5: Continue to collaborate with downtown property owners to recruit a broader diversity of retail including, but not limited to urban grocery, soft goods, and higher quality restaurants.

  Action 2-1.6: Implement design guidelines for the downtown that include enhancements to both the public and private portions of the streetscape.

  Action 2-1.7: Work with the Capital Area Transit Authority to maintain downtown access, greenspace, and median alignment during Bus Rapid Transit design and development.

Objective 2-3: Support the development of Mixed-Use Neighborhood Service Districts to provide basic retail services for the convenience of residents.

  Action 2-3.2: Institute a minimum building height in commercial districts to prevent strip center development and encourage the redevelopment of existing commercial areas to include mixed-use, multiple-story buildings.

Objective 2-4: Encourage continued growth where appropriate.

  Action 2-4.1: Revise land use policies for the area along Lake Lansing Road to improve upon existing land uses patterns.
**Action 2-4.2:** Market opportunities for the redevelopment and revitalization of underutilized commercial properties.

**Action 2-4.3:** Promote the redevelopment of the commercial properties at the intersection of Harrison and Michigan Avenues into a new and more efficient neighborhood commercial area.

**Action 2-4.4:** Promote collaboration with the City of Lansing to improve properties along West Michigan Avenue with innovative redevelopment.

**Action 2-4.5:** Provide economic incentives to support the implementation of the East Village Master Plan

GOAL 3: To have land use patterns with higher density providing better community self-sufficiency and quality of life.

**Objective 3-1:** Develop land use policies which foster the integration rather than segregation of land use.

**Action 3-1.1:** Develop a hybrid form-based code to allow for mixed-use development with an emphasis on the design of the public realm.

**Action 3-1.2:** Develop land use policies that allow for redevelopment and revitalization within the existing neighborhood fabric.

GOAL 4: To have quality community assets.

**Objective 4-2:** Provide public access to the Red Cedar River.

**Action 4-2.1:** Seek resources to implement a riverfront park.

**Action 4-2.2:** Work with Michigan State University and other governmental jurisdictions to improve public access to the Red Cedar River.

GOAL 5: To have a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system.

**Objective 5-2:** Improve nonmotorized transportation opportunities.

**Action 5-2.1:** Minimize pedestrian vs. vehicle conflict through innovative road designs.

**Action 2-1.2:** Create active streets through the promotion of art, plazas and outdoor seating in the core downtown.
**Action 2-1.6:** Implement design guidelines for the downtown that include enhancements to both the public and private portions of the streetscape.

**Action 3-1.1:** Develop a hybrid form-based code to allow for mixed-use development with an emphasis on the design of the public realm.

**Action 1-5.1:** Develop a streetscape improvement program targeted at major streets.

**WHAT TOPICS ARE MISSING**

Planning for transit stops  
Public space (landscaping) to provide areas for sun and shade  
Redevelopment density (should we increase and if so where)
KEY TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS
OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 1: To have strong neighborhoods which are diverse, attractive, and safe.

Objective 1-3: Enhance the safety of neighborhoods.

   Action 1-3.1: Pursue funding options to eliminate gaps in neighborhood street lighting.

   Action 1-3.2: Develop a best practices manual for neighborhood traffic calming.

   Action 1-3.6: Finalize and implement the American’s with Disabilities Act transition plan for the entire City.

GOAL 4: To have quality community assets.

Objective 4-1: Improve the use of public facilities and resources to meet the needs of a growing community.

   Action 4-1.2: Regularly update the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plan to manage and improve public recreation facilities.

   Action 4-1.3: Expand curbside recycling program to allow cardboard and boxboard.

   Action 4-1.4: Study the possibility of creating a public recycling (composting?) facility for food waste.

   Action 4-1.6: Turn portions of Albert Avenue, near the redeveloped Ann Street plaza, into a pedestrian only street for certain times or events.

Objective 4-3: Enhance the City’s natural features through the creation and preservation of programs and policies that guide development.

   Action 4-3.1: Protect and enhance high quality wetlands facing development pressure.

   Action 4-3.4: Develop a program to create rain gardens in the area between the sidewalk and the street, where space allows.
**Action 4-3.5:** Plant and maintain a diversity of native vegetation.

**Action 4-3.6:** Eradicate invasive plant species on City properties.

**GOAL 5: To have a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system.**

**Objective 5-1:** Enhance the City’s street network.

**Action 5-1.1:** Minimize vehicle vs. vehicle conflict using traffic calming tools where traffic studies and other community objectives support their use.

**Action 5-1.2:** Minimize pedestrian vs. vehicle conflict through innovative road designs.

**Action 5-1.3:** Pursue engineering and design studies to extend State Road from Chandler Road to Webster Road.

**Action 5-1.4:** Pursue engineering and design studies to extend Coleman Road from West Road to Wood Street.

**Action 5-1.5:** Implement traffic calming measures on Burcham Drive to enhance non-motorized v. vehicle safety.

**Objective 5-2:** Improve alternative transportation opportunities.

**Action 5-2.1:** Collaborate with Regional Transportation Organizations to evaluate transportation routes based on population movement.

**Action 5-2.2:** Connect the River Trail and the Northern Tier Trail to the surrounding regional trails.

**Action 5-2.3:** Convert the Department of Agriculture property off Kalamazoo Street to a non-motorized pathway to allow pedestrian and bike access north/south without going onto Harrison Road.

**Action 5-2.4:** Assist the East Lansing Public School System in the implementation of safe routes to schools.

**Action 5-2.5:** Improve Collingwood Drive to create a safe access point for bikers going to or from MSU's campus.
**Action 5-2.6**: Implement alternative fuel usage in City vehicles in partnership with MSU to utilize existing facilities on campus.

**Action 5-2.7**: Expand electric car charging opportunities in the City.

**Action 5-2.8**: Incorporate moped and motorcycle parking in all City parking structures and lots.

**Items that need additional discussion**

**Action 4-1.1**: Integrate alternative and/or additional uses in underutilized public facilities. (Should this be struck in favor of specifics?)

**Action 4-3.2**: Maintain use of the Tree Inventory for successful management of the City’s urban forest. (Need better language)

**Action 4-3.3**: Procure conservation easements to mitigate the impact of concentrated development. (needs further discussion/specifics)

**Action 5-2.6**: (Bike racks)

**Action 5-2.7**: (Prevent Bikes on sidewalks and cars in bike lanes)
- Bike Highways/divided bike lanes from roadway
- Conversion/Implementation of three-way and four-way vehicular stops in neighborhoods
- Getting landlords to buy into energy efficiency (This is a huge toughie)
- P.A.C.E. funding for alternative energy? Other funding sources? (Tough/should the City be involved)
- Stormwater Utility feasibility
- Reforestation/Street tree replacement
- Bike lane map/education
- Parking system education
1. Re-purpose the covered walkway of the parking ramp
2. Reconstruct Bailey Community Center for Residential use

Nonmotorized access improvements:
1. Redesign the intersections to function as a pedestrian plaza on the weekends and other special occasions
2. Acquire additional right of way to extend the median out to Hagadorn and provide appropriate bicycle crossing
3. Provide appropriate bicycle crossing
4. Provide appropriate bicycle crossing
5. Provide appropriate bicycle crossing

A welcoming urban environment has:
(Urban Form)
- well defined gathering spaces with sun and shade
- buildings of varying height and architectural style with windows on the street
- wide sidewalks to accommodate plazas and outdoor seating for diners
- activities/entertainment that supports vibrancy and sense of place
- a balance of landscape and hardscape

An undesirable urban environment has or is:
(Urban Form)
- automobile dominated with large parking areas
- unattractive architecture building facade
- lack of green space
- uniform buildings
- poorly maintained public spaces
- feels unsafe because it is dark and not pedestrian friendly

Barriers to Non-Motorized Transportation are:
(Urban Form)
- motorized v. non-motorized conflicts
- autocentric mentality
- lack of safe routes
- lack of promotion or education

As this area redevelops:
- buildings should be a minimum of 2 stories high and a maximum of 4 stories high
- curb cuts should be eliminated or minimized and parking should be at the rear of the property and be accessed from the alley off residential to create a more pedestrian friendly streetfront
- buildings should be built to the front "build-to-line" to create a cohesive streetscape similar to the area between Collingwood and Abbot along Grand River Avenue. However, flexibility should be given to allow for outdoor seating and greenspace.

Marketed to primarily non-student