

MASTER PLAN 2023



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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

The purpose of a Master Plan is to serve as a living document to guide the city's future development based on community needs and desires over the next 20 years. The plan records the condition of public facilities and community assets; while incorporating community input on improving the quality of life for all residents. In addition to community input, the plan reviews various sources on demographics, housing, and economic data, and considers the feasibility of the community's desires.

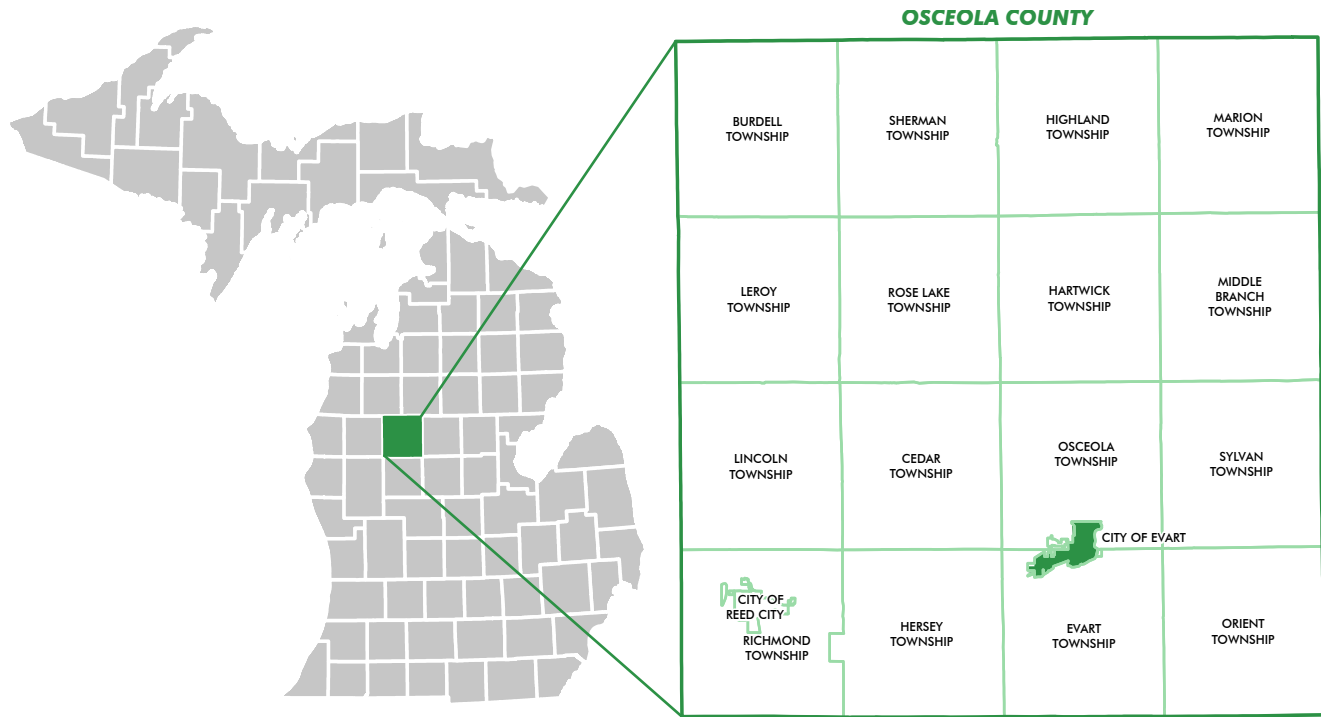
A Master Plan is comprehensive in scope but provides more specific actions and site locations for implementing the community's goals.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Evart is in the southern portion of Osceola County and along with Reed City, is one of only two cities incorporated in the county. These two cities are connected via US-10 and the Pere Marquette trail, a recreational trail converted from the former Ludington Division of the Pere Marquette railway line. This historic, but now abandoned railway line connected the Cities of Saginaw and Ludington and the section of this former line between Midland and Baldwin and beginning in 1991 it has been converted into a rail-to-trails project in the years since.

Evart is serviced by US-10, which runs east to west through the County and connects Bay City on Lake Huron to Ludington on Lake Michigan and is one of Michigan's primary northern east-west corridors.

Map 1. Location of Evart



Evart is just eighty miles north of Grand Rapids and seventy-five miles south of Traverse City. The City is located nearby the Huron-Manistee National Forest, a nearly 1-million-acre federal forest that contains endless outdoor recreation opportunities.

Before the 2023 Master Plan Update the previous Master Plan (2017) was developed with resources granted by the State of Michigan’s Rising Tide Program in 2017. Before the 2017 Plan, the last county-wide land use plan was completed in 2002, in which Evart was a constituent community. Rural counties often have joint master plans developed for all incorporated, chartered, and civil regions county-wide by their representative regional planning authority. The City of Evart is an incorporated county subdivision of Osceola County and, as part of the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission, the Commission has developed other planning documents on its behalf. One example is the Osceola County Hazard Mitigation Plan of 2016 which lists projects that would mitigate future hazards such as flooding, fires, drought, and severe weather incidents. In 2017, as another

component of the Rising Tides initiative, the City of Evart had an Economic Development Strategy created that tailored regional and local strategies for development and defined strategic planning priorities as well as identifying key sites for local economic development projects, also known as redevelopment-ready sites.

CLIMATE

Michigan’s seasonal climate has a large influence not only on citizens’ lifestyles but on agriculture, recreation, housing style, and amenities. On average, Evart receives about 33 inches of rainfall annually, with the highest precipitation in June. The winters are cold and receive about 67 inches of snow on average. The summers are long, lasting well into September, with an average temperature of 70 – 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

EVART'S HISTORY: THE BEGINNING

In the 1800s, Osceola County was known as "The Land of Green Gold" because of the plentiful supply of uncut timber. From the middle to the end of the 1800s, Osceola County was home to a large lumbering industry, and the Village of Evart was located at the heart of this lumbering boom. In 1850 Delos Blodgett and James Stimson traveled up the Muskegon River as far as Doc and Tom Creek (just below the Muskegon River Bridge on M-66). They were the first two people of European descent in this area. They looked over the beaver meadows, cut hay for the coming winter, and walked back to Muskegon. Delos Blodgett and James Kennedy selected the village site. Kennedy built the first sawmill in Evart Township.

The City of Evart was named in honor of the first soldier who settled in the area, Perry Oliver Everts. Perry O. Everts (Evert's name was misspelled when applying for the original plat, and that misspelling was allowed to stand) enlisted in the Union Army on July 24, 1861, in LaGrange County, Indiana, and fought in the Civil War. After the war, he returned to Michigan, where he had been born in 1843, and purchased eighty acres where the City of Evart now stands.

At the settlement's organizational meeting in 1870, settlement members wanted to name the township (Evart Township) after the earliest settler, who was also a Civil War veteran. John Smith was this settler, but Smith was overlooked because his name was considered too common. Therefore, the Evart Township's name originated from the Township's second known settler Frank Perry Everts.

Lumber Baron Delos A. Blodgett officially platted the settlement in 1872, the same year it was formally organized as a village. The Village of Evart was a staging point for sorting timber during the winter months waiting for the Spring thaw and subsequent floods to be driven down the Muskegon River towards the lumbering mills.

The first child of European descent born in Evart Township was Mary Elizabeth Smith on August 4, 1868. By 1870, there were 29 families in Evart

Township. Right after the land was platted in 1871, the four lots on the corner of Seventh and Main Streets were bought by Messrs. Trowbridge and Parashall. Here is where Mr. Barlow Davis and his brother built the Evart House Hotel, which contained 36 rooms and 50 beds, it opened for travelers that year.

RECENT ECONOMIC HISTORY

Dairy Industry:

The dairy industry was one of the largest employers in the City from the mid-20th Century until very recently. Northland Dairy started constructing a new plant on River Street in April 1948. In October 1966, Liberty Dairy, a division of Dean Foods, moved to Evart from Big Rapids. The plant expanded several times and employed as many as 200 people. The dairy company closed in 2013, leaving a site for redevelopment on the Muskegon River and excess wastewater capacity to allow employers to expand or locate in Evart. This vacant site has been recently purchased by Ventra Evart, LLC.

Manufacturing:

Manufacturing has been an economic driver for the City of Evart throughout the City's modern era and these plants are still operating in the same locations that they were in the early 1950s. One such example is the large manufacturing plant located West of downtown on US-10. When ground-breaking for Evart Products took place in 1953, the Detroit newspapers described it as "American Motors' hush-hush plant, somewhere in Michigan." But Evart was satisfied that the plant, which initially employed 25 people, eventually became Osceola County's largest employer with over 1,200 employees. This plant is now owned and operated by Ventra Evart, LLC, which manufactures molded plastic parts for the automotive industry.

Drinking Water and Bottling:

The City of Evart lies above a large and very pristine aquifer that has had pumping rights sold to third-party corporate bottlers who bottle the water and retail it. Initially it was contracted to Nestle Waters North America, but Blue Triton Brands, purchased

the bottling rights and assets from Nestle Waters North America in the last few years. Evert is a groundwater-rich community that relies heavily on revenue from selling water. A 10-year extension signed with Nestle in 2015, before the Blue Triton Brands purchase, would require the City of Evert to sell them water at the municipal rate, and exclusively access two of the City's groundwater wells only supplying the bottling facility throughout the term of the contract.

Despite these developments, Evert's recent economic history has seen hard times. Evert's manufacturing history, like many Michigan cities, is largely tied to industry. As such instances of economic stress, such as poverty or unemployment, may increase during economic depressions or corporate layoffs or closures. However, the community remains engaged and active in exploring comprehensive ways to expand its economic future.

EVART'S VISION

During the planning process, residents participated by sharing their vision for Evert. Residents expressed interest in Evert to become a destination for tourists, outdoorsman, and shoppers. Their vision describes crowded sidewalks, a downtown with a variety of restaurants, retail, and entertainment options, and a vibrant riverwalk along the banks of the Muskegon River. A desire for increasing opportunities for community socializing on evenings and weekends was popular feedback from community members.

Strong and active collaboration between the many entities that are working to revitalize the City of Evert was described as a way the City could evolve more efficiently. Some of these local stakeholders are the Evert Downtown Development Authority (DDA), local governments, religious organizations, schools, and other civic groups. In addition to the aforementioned contributors, the City of Evert has been working with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation by participating in Michigan Main Street, which assists communities with revitalizing and preserving their historic downtown corridors.

The result of productive collaboration would lead to a one-stop shop for city services and healthcare. Residents want an Evert with little or no poverty and opportunity for all, a community where people pitch in to help the community and each other. They understand that to improve their quality of life, they must be willing to go beyond the status quo to achieve positive results. The City is committed to achieve this vision by embracing new community, economic, housing, and planning policies that will guide its future growth and development.



DEMOGRAPHICS

This section describes the people of Evart and its demographic trends over time. Understanding the current demographic makeup and potential changes is essential to plan the needs of the community over the next twenty years. In addition to reviewing Evart's data, this section compares Evart to its neighbors, Evart and Osceola Townships, the County, and the State of Michigan to see commonalities or how they differ.

The figures in this section have been taken from the following sources in this preferred order:

1. 2020 US Census. The decennial census is the gold standard for demographic data. It measures 100% of the population and offers comparable data points at regular intervals throughout most of the United States' developed history. However, available data is limited to population and housing information, especially for small communities, and the ten-year interval between data points means it is rarely "fresh."
2. 2017 - 2021 5-Year American Community Survey. The ACS program replaced the "long form" Census questions beginning in 2000. The ACS asks the same types of detailed questions about social, economic, and housing conditions the census long form did, but on a consistent rolling basis instead of once per decade like the decennial census. The statistical validity of the ACS depends on sampling. In larger communities (those with populations of 65,000 or more), it is possible to gain a valid sample within twelve months, which the ACS calls a "one-year estimate." For mid-size communities (population 20,000-65,000), it takes 36 months of data collection to achieve a valid sample size, and for communities smaller than 20,000 it takes

60 months. This system exposes the statistical tradeoff between the reliability gained by increasing sample size and the accuracy that is sacrificed in the time it takes to do so.

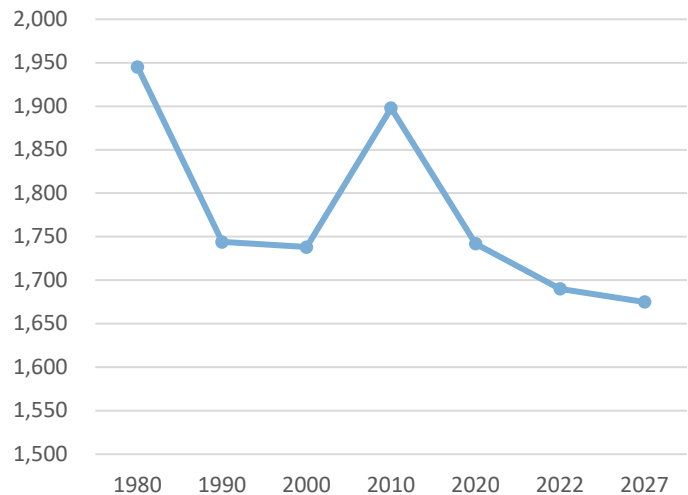
- 3. Esri Business Analyst. This proprietary software presents privately-generated market research data. In addition, it estimates Census and ACS data for geographic configurations other than Census-defined tracts, blocks, and places.

Also, it is important to note that the term “Hispanic” is considered an ethnicity, not a race, and therefore may be double-counted where total race percentages exceed 100 percent.

POPULATION TRENDS

Evart’s population hit one of its peaks around 1980, with about 1,945 residents, and reported population loss in the 1990 and 2000 census counts. The 2010 census showed the first population growth in twenty years, with a modest increase of about 165 people. However, when compared to neighboring communities, Evart’s current population trend since 2010 represents a larger trend of population decline within the region. Evart Township saw its largest growth between 1970 - 2010, growing by approximately 155%, and Osceola Township experienced a 73% growth during the same period. However, since 2010 Evart’s population has been shrinking. As of 2020, Evart’s population was 1,742 people, down from 1,898 in 2010, this is an 8.2% decrease over the last decade (U.S Census, Decennial Census, 2020).

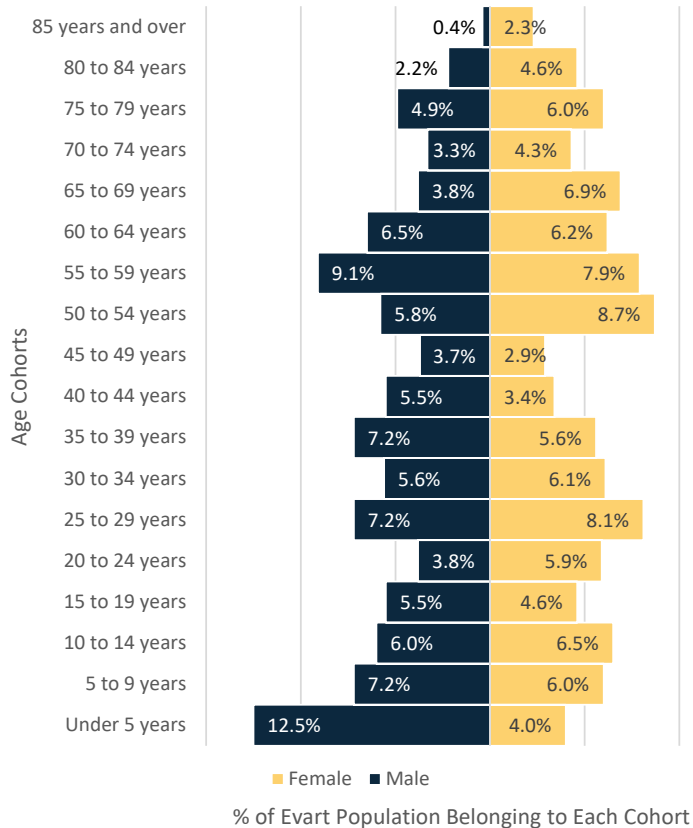
Figure 1. Evart Population Trends



AGE AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION

The City of Evart has a median age of 39.2, a slight decrease from 2010 when the median age was 40.8. When compared to the County (44.3) and State (39.8), the City’s median age is lower than both. (U.S Census, Decennial Census, 2020). It is worth noting that there are two common trends in Michigan. First, many small communities around the state are seeing decreases in the overall population as their citizens age. Second, it is common for young people to leave temporarily for college and early professional career building because of the perception that there is more opportunity elsewhere. A decreasing median age indicates an increase in younger people in the community. In Evart’s population pyramid, there appears to be a growing young population in the city, explaining the decreasing median age of the community.

Figure 2. Evart Population Pyramid



Roughly breaking down some major age group categories in the City of Evart may help explain the pyramid. School-aged children (Under 19 years of age) make up about a quarter (26%) of all residents in the City. Those that are college-aged or just getting started in their careers (20 to 30 years old) makeup about 12.5% of the population. Approximately one out of every five people (20%) are in their prime family-raising years (30 - 49 years old) and a little over one out of every four people (27.5%) are late career or empty nesters (50 - 69 years old). Finally, about 14% of the population are retirees or the elderly (70 years or older). Roughly three out of every five people (60%) are working aged (20 - 69 years old). This provides a simple breakdown of the City. For every five residents, one is in elementary, middle, or high school; one is retired or elderly; and three are working-aged, possibly in college, or have children in the house.

Figure 3. Income in Evart and Osceola County

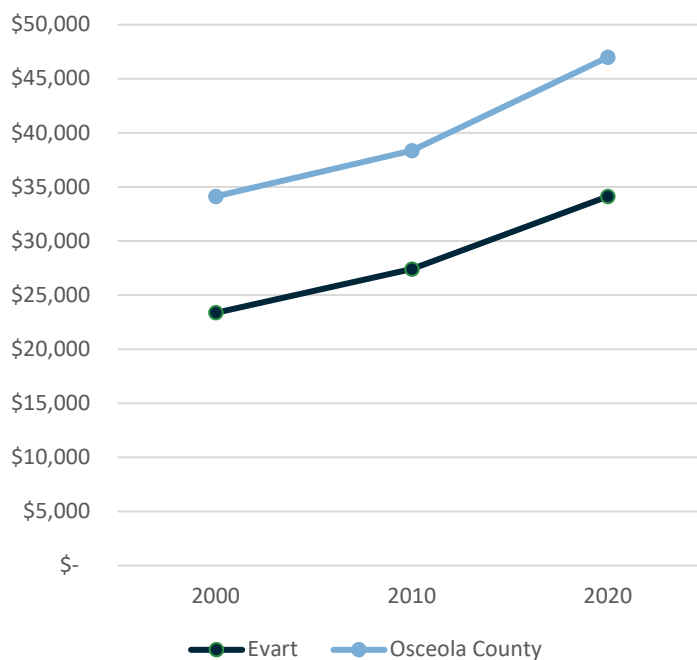
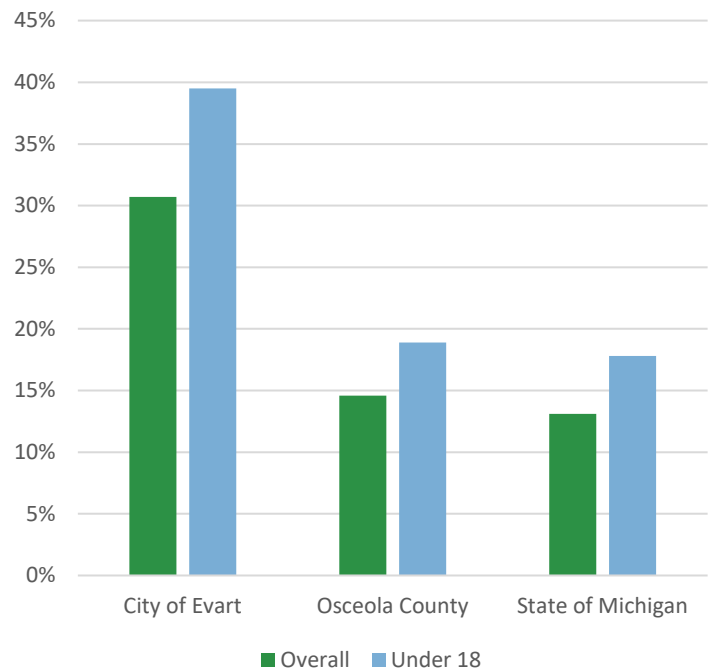


Figure 4. Poverty Level in Evart and Osceola County



INCOME AND POVERTY

The City of Evart's median household income (MHI) levels in 2010 were less than half of the state of Michigan's, \$20,100 to \$49,087, respectively. Between 2010 and 2020, however, the gap between the City and the State shrank, when Evart's MHI increased to \$34,107, and the State of Michigan's increased to \$59,234. Evart's median income remains below the state average (U.S Census, Decennial Census, 2020).

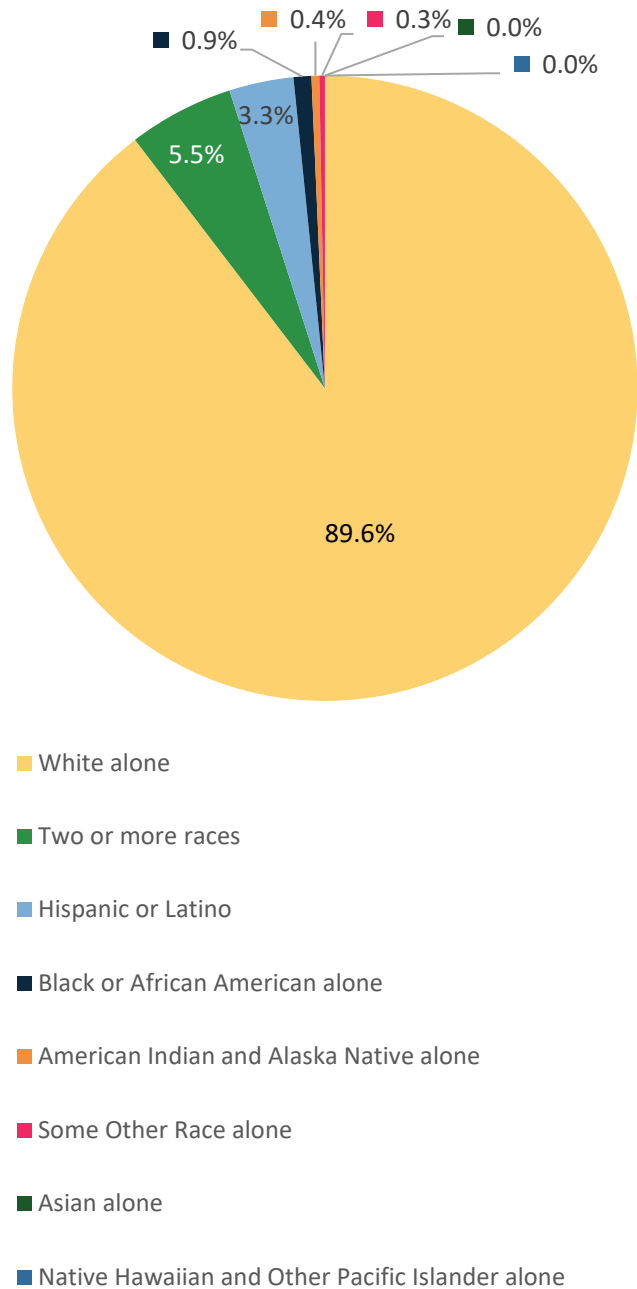
Poverty in Evart remains an issue, with 30.7% of the population remaining below the poverty line. The rate for people under eighteen is higher, at 39.5%. This marks a decrease from 2010, when the rates of poverty among the entire community were 36.5%, and 58.9% for those under eighteen. In 2021, Osceola County had a poverty rate of 14.6% overall and 18.9% for those under eighteen. This is comparable to the State of Michigan averages of 13.1% and 17.8%, respectively. (ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2021).

PEOPLE

Evart is not a very racially or ethnically diverse community. About 90% of the community identified as white, non-Hispanic during the 2020 Decennial Census. The community is trending towards greater diversity however, in 2010 approximately 97% of the population identified as white, non-Hispanic. The largest ethnic minority group is those identifying as Hispanic/Latino(a). This ethnic group made up about 3.3% of the City’s population, which is a decrease from 2010 when those identifying as Hispanic/Latino(a) made up approximately 4% of the population. Residents identifying as Black or African American make up approximately 0.9% of the population, and those identifying as American Indian or Alaska Natives made up approximately 0.4% of the residential population. Residents that identified as some other race not categorized in the census made up 0.3% of the population, and no resident identified as Asian or Hawaiian/Pacific Islander in the City of Evart. Those residents that identified as having two or more racially or ethnically diverse backgrounds accounted for 5.5% of the City’s overall population. (U.S Census, Decennial Census, 2020).

This region of the State has a very low propensity for new residents relocating from outside the United States when compared to larger metropolitan centers such as Detroit, Grand Rapids, or Lansing. The City of Evart, its neighboring Townships, and the County have a high percentage of native-born citizens. The native-born population is approaching 100% in Evart. This is not unusual for the State of Michigan, overall, the native-born population is about 92% (ACS 5-Year, 2021), primarily due to the population loss of the State’s larger metropolitan areas that had contained new employment opportunities for new residents.

Figure 5. Evart Racial Composition



COMMUTING

Michigan is a car-dependent state. Evart is no different. In 2010, 85% percent of workers commuted alone to work by car. This figure is decreasing and as of 2021, approximately 70% of workers commute alone by car. A large change over the last decade was that in 2010, 3.8% (58 people) lived and work in Evart. This number has jumped dramatically to 57.2% (305 people) of residents living and working in Evart which may correlate to the decrease in commuting patterns. The second most common way to commute is to carpool, approximately 11.8% of the City's residents carpool daily (ACS 5-Year, 2021). Carpooling in the City of Evart is lower than in the townships. In Evart Township, 15.8% of workers carpool, along with 14.4% in Osceola Township. Additionally, over 50% of Evart's workers commute 14 minutes or less, which could make a carpooling program easier to facilitate amongst workers.

A combined 14.8% of workers either walk or bike to work. Transit options are used sparsely, according to census data, only 1.3% of residents use public transportation regularly. This service is provided by the Mecosta Osceola Transit Authority (MOTA) which is a demand response and route deviation service provider. It should be noted that 1.8% of residents work from home, an increasingly popular option for workers since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, 8.7% of people in Evart without access to a vehicle could benefit from a carpool program. While transportation infrastructure is costly, facilitating ride-share or carpooling efforts doesn't have to be.

HEALTH STATISTICS

Evart and Osceola County residents live close to many recreational opportunities which is why Osceola County ranks higher statistically for healthy living (50-75%) than more than half of the counties located in the State of Michigan. Based on the Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings compiled in 2023, Osceola County is ranked 42nd of the eighty-two counties in Michigan for overall health, which is based on the length and quality of life of residents. Osceola County falls in the lower second quartile (25-50%) for medical health factors, a score for health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment (see Table for more detail). The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program is a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. The study's health outcome analyses represent how healthy a county is which factors how long people live and how healthy people feel while alive. Healthy factors that may influence the overall health of a county are measured by health behaviors, clinical care, and social, economic, and environmental factors.

Availability and affordability of health insurance is a major indicator measuring the overall health of a community. The percentage of medically uninsured residents in the City of Evart peaked in 2012 (22.1%) but has rebounded since. According to the 2021 American Community Survey, approximately 6.3% of the City of Evart's population is uninsured. When compared to the County (9.1%, 2020) and State (5.4%, 2020), the City is slightly behind the State percentage but well ahead of Osceola County overall. However, if observing only those residents that are unemployed, 21.7% do not have any form of health insurance, either public or private. When broken down by different demographics, the uninsured rate in Evart is highest for those under fifty-four, particularly people under twenty-five, and those earning \$49,999 or less annually were also at higher risk.

A portion of the uninsured who worked part or full-time have employers that do not provide these benefits to their employees. This evidence places employees in a difficult position where they may have to choose between larger take-home income or the necessity to pay for healthcare out of pocket. A large portion of people in this situation choose to forgo the health insurance option for more disposable income to pay for other household expenses. This also provides evidence that unemployed persons are better protected through governmental insurance benefits, such as Medicaid, than trying to pay for it at their own cost or avoiding it altogether.

Table 1. Osceola County Health Rankings

HEALTH VARIABLE	RANKING
Health Outcomes	53
Length of Life	48
Quality of Life	56
Health Factors	70
Health Behaviors	73
Clinical Care	60
Social and Economic Factors	51
Physical Environmental	56

Source: 2016 County Health Rankings



EXISTING LAND USE

NATURAL FEATURES

WATERWAYS

The Muskegon River is a major natural asset to the community and its residents. It is not surprising that it was referenced to so often during community engagement that residents would love to see improvements or additions to the parks and riverfront citywide. The river provides outstanding recreational opportunities such as canoeing, kayaking, and fishing. The Muskegon River has a 100-year floodplain that overlaps with land uses classified as public and industrial along its banks. Parks are excellent land use choices along rivers because naturally during the winter thaw or as storms intensify, these properties are at a higher risk of flooding. The potential for damage or

economic impact is greatly mitigated if the land is used as public parks rather than if this property was otherwise used for residential or commercial purposes.

Twin Creek runs north and south through Evart and is a tributary for the Muskegon River. Twin Creek has its own floodplain in addition to the floodplain created by the Muskegon River. While smaller in size and capacity, Twin Creek does meander through many residential and commercial areas in the City, and therefore carries a greater risk of being located nearby potentially vulnerable property. With meteorological evidence showing Michigan's climatic events trending to a fewer number of precipitation events seasonally, but those events that do occur producing a greater volume

of precipitation volume causing catastrophic flash flooding it is critical to know which properties could be affected during a flooding event. Thompson Creek is located along the far southwest area of the City limits and runs primarily behind the airport industrial park or near the City airport itself.



WETLANDS AND SOILS

Due to its proximity to the Muskegon River, Evart contains and lies adjacent primarily to freshwater shrub wetlands, as classified by the US Fish & Wildlife Services National Wetlands Inventory and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). The City of Evart contains approximately three acres of freshwater emergent wetlands and about 264 acres of forested freshwater wetlands. These types of wetlands are typically forested and floods only a portion of the year, typically during the growing season and may appear dry at other times of the year, but the ground is wet below the surface. These wetlands are home to a vast ecosystem containing important vegetations and animals such as frogs, salamanders, owls, raccoons, and shrews to name just a few amongst hundreds of others. Wetlands hold more wildlife many times over than any other type of habitat in Michigan.

The State of Michigan has lost nearly 70% of its natural wetlands since the mid-1800s and the remaining wetlands must be protected because of their crucial, but silent role they play in cities and townships by controlling flooding and filtering water and soil contamination that humans generate. Simply put, the more wetlands that are located around a municipality the less money a city, township, or county must spend in constructing flood prevention infrastructure. These benefits are only beginning to be recognized for their fiscal benefits they provide to a community. The importance they play to both people, property, existing infrastructure, in addition to wildlife, the state and federal governments enacted legislation, chiefly through the Natural Resources and Environmental Protect Act of 1994, requiring the preservation of or responsible management of wetlands.

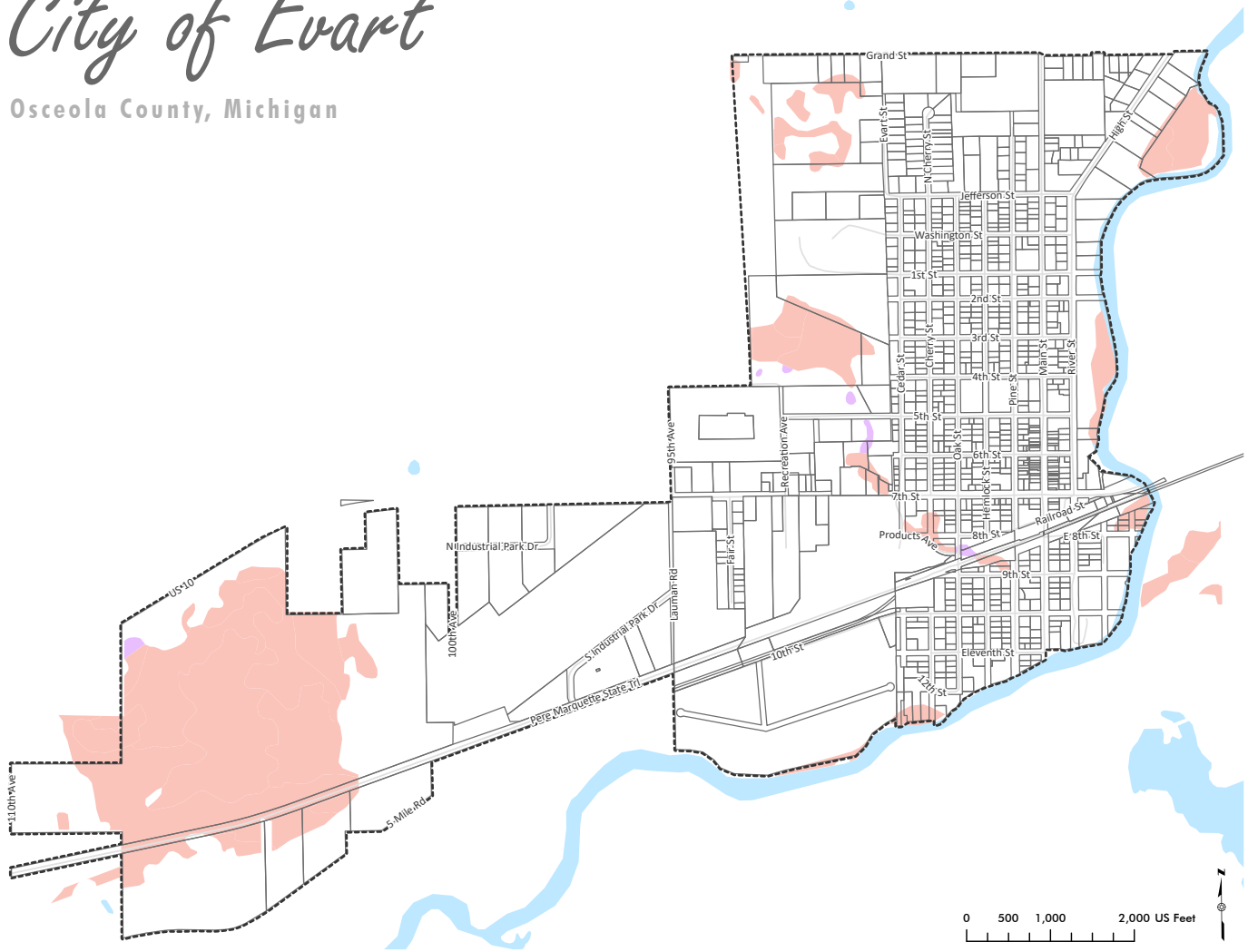
Soil ratings for building limitations are a good reference to consider when adopting land use policy. Most soil in Evart are classified as spodosols which are a relatively unique type of soil. Only 4% of the glacier-free world contains this soil but it is commonly found throughout northern Michigan. Spodosols are not conducive to agricultural uses without soil additives boosting productivity. As such, natural lime and other additives have been implemented in many farming locations throughout these regions of Michigan containing this soil group to increase value and yield. Due to its low natural fertility, low clay content, negligible run-off rates, and limited ability to store water, this soil does not limit development and is conducive to land use policies reflecting this fact.

The areas with soil ratings that limit development are largely classified as entisols and histosols—soils that are typically found in active floodplains or areas of extreme wetness as seen in Evart along the Muskegon River and Twin Creek. For this reason, these soils present drainage problems and are not stable for new construction, which is why they lie closely to wetlands. Luckily, these soils are superb at holding water and have low run-off rates. Water retention and low run-off rates help to prevent the dispersal of contaminants to surrounding bodies of water (local rivers or creeks). In Evart, there are no soil types with very high run-off rates.




Map 2. Natural Features

City of Ewart

Osceola County, Michigan



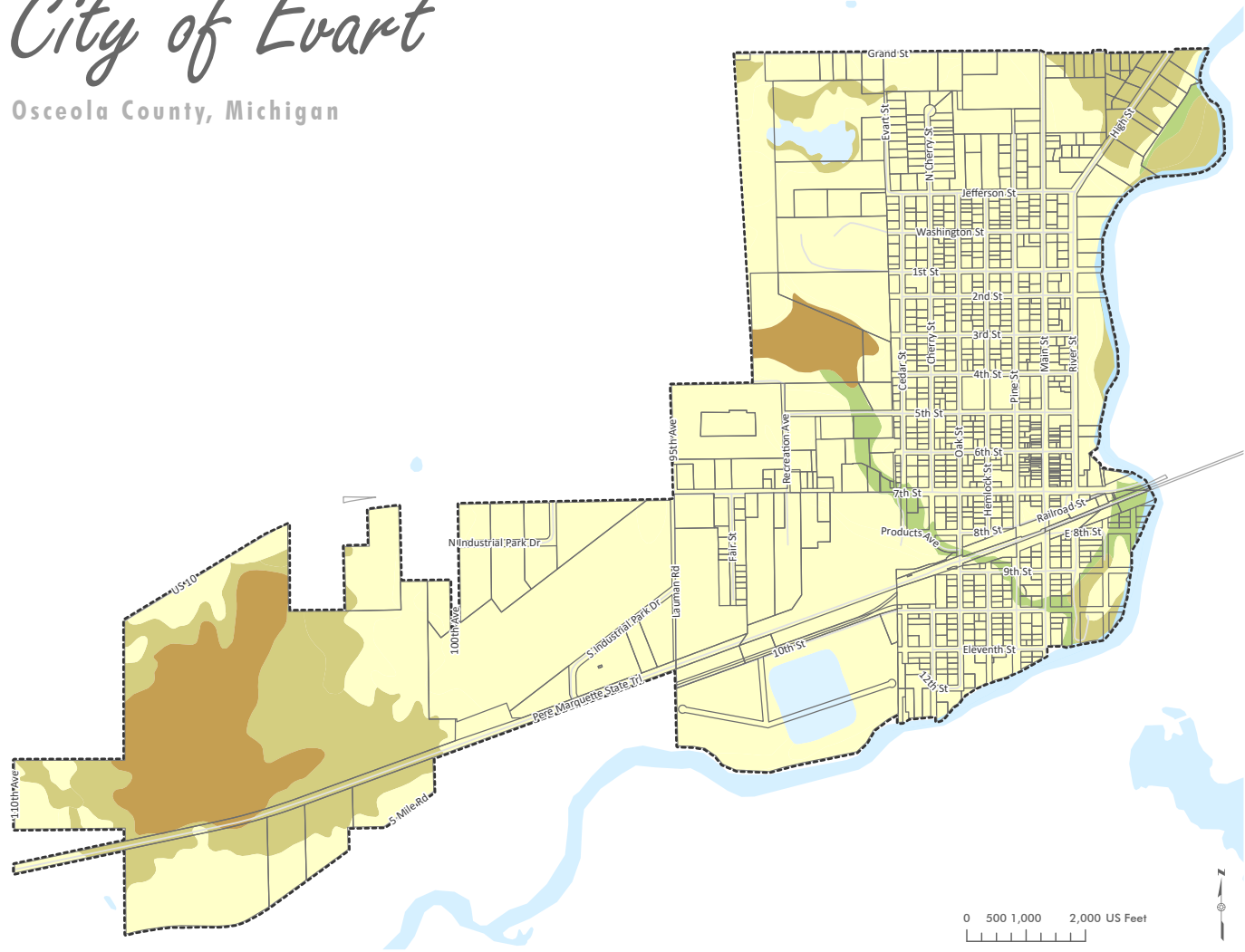
Wetlands

-  Freshwater Emergent Wetland
 Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
 Water Bodies


Map 3. Soil Classifications

City of Evart

Osceola County, Michigan



Soil Classification

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Spodosols |  Mollisols |
|  Entisols |  Bodies of Water |
|  Histosols | |



Atrative public spaces complement a Central Business District's goals

LAND USE TYPOLOGY

Most of the data discussed comes from the Existing Land Use Distribution table based on fieldwork and digital mapping software conducted by the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission. The table has the commonly used and understood land use categories whereas the Existing Land Use Map features tax assessor data that uses pre-determined property classifications mandated by state law.

PUBLIC OR QUASI-PUBLIC/ INSTITUTIONAL

There are two designated categories of public uses: public and quasi-public. The largest land use in the city of Evart is dedicated to public use. This category includes the following land uses:

- Evart Municipal Airport/surrounding vacant land; and
- Parks; and
- Schools; and
- Places of worship; and
- Government buildings; the
- City of Evart wastewater treatment and storage facilities.

Together, they account for over 50% of land coverage (51.1%). These land uses are clustered along the river, west of 95th Avenue, and scattered on the northern part of the city.

Table 2. Existing Land Use Distribution

LAND USE CATEGORY	ACREAGE	%
Residential	402.5	26.9
Single-Family	386.3	24.6
Multi-Family	28.1	1.9
Mobile Homes	6.1	0.1
Public	765.8	51.1
Business	204.9	13.7
Central Business District	23.0	1.5
Commercial	48.4	3.2
Industrial	133.5	8.9
Vacant	125.3	8.4
TOTAL	1,498.5	100.0

Source: West Michigan Regional Planning Commission



Putting a “pocket park” in the downtown providing public space where a building once stood is an excellent way to reuse space

RESIDENTIAL

There are three residential categories and combined are the next largest land use category which covers almost 37.7% of total land.

More specifically, single-family residential is the largest residential land use covering 368.3 acres or almost 27% of all the land in the City. This category includes:

- Detached single-unit homes; or
- Duplexes; or
- Mobile homes (outside of a mobile home park)

In the land use analysis, single-family housing is not differentiated by density because most of the homes are on similarly sized lots. There is a huge drop in land coverage between single-family and multi-family units. Defined as three units or more per structure, multi-family units take up less land but also account for less than 2% of the total available housing stock in the City of Evart.

BUSINESS

The business land use category has three designations:

- Central Business District (CBD)
- Commercial
- Industrial

The CBD stretches along Main Street between 5th and 7th Street. Following the traditional land use patterns of CBDs, Evart contains mixed-used developments such as commercial or retail on the ground floor, and residential above. Unlike other commercial centers, the CBD is distinguished by historic storefronts and attractive public spaces. The General Commercial category, in contrast, has buildings with a larger footprint that also cater to a regional audience. For this reason, they are generally located along US-10 and provide convenience shopping and are easily recognized by their auto-oriented design containing off-street parking lots which are less evident in a traditional downtown that relies more heavily upon on-street parking and storefront browsing opportunities. Industrial land uses account for almost 5.2% of the City's total land and are clustered largely around major corridors such as the North River Street and US-10 (7th Street).

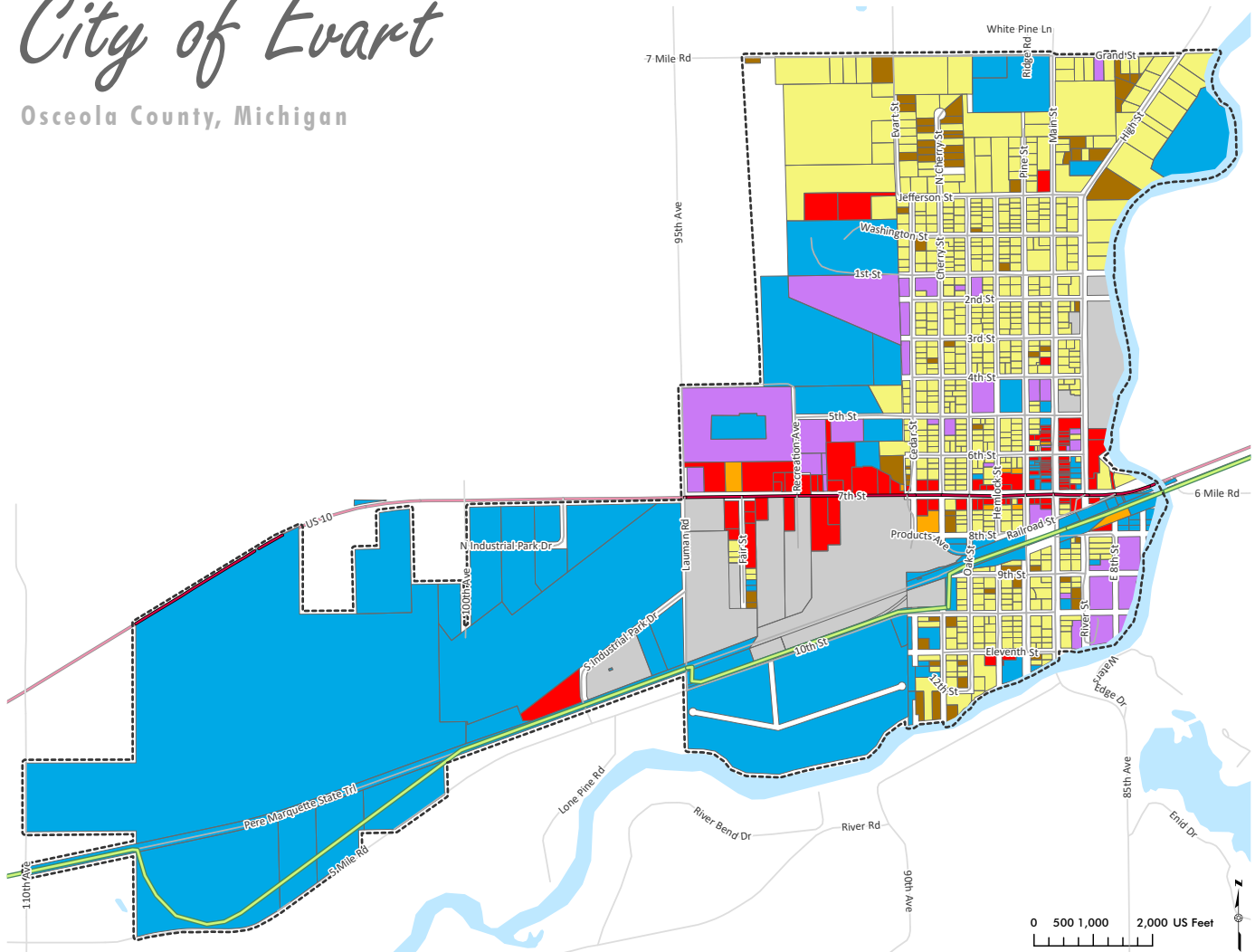
VACANT

Over 8% of the land in Evart is vacant. Most of the 125.3 acres of vacant land are found in the northern part of the City in residential areas. Commercial vacancy also exists in scattered buildings bordering the CBD, and along the US-10 corridor.

Map 4. Existing Land Use

City of Evart

Osceola County, Michigan



Existing Land Use

■ Commercial Improved	■ Residential Vacant
■ Commercial Vacant	■ Federal Exempt
■ Industrial Improved	■ City Owned
■ Residential Improved	

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HOUSING

HOUSING ASSESSMENT

Traditionally, a single-family home is defined as a dwelling unit that is either detached or attached. A detached single-family home is often constructed individually on a platted lot or site condominium lot. An attached single-family home is, for example, a duplex, triplex, or quad and may also be located on a platted lot or site condominium lot. Often these attached units appear to be one house externally. However, what distinguishes an attached single-family from a multi-family is typically each dwelling unit contains a separate entrance for those occupants' exclusive use. The third form of residential development is a multi-family building. Traditionally a multi-family building contains three or more units that all share the same exterior entrances to a larger building. Dwelling units are individual

units in which families live. So, each of these building typologies can contain at least one and up to many separate dwelling units.

During the housing study that was produced in 2017, research was conducted analyzing every residential structure in the City of Evart. No interior assessment was conducted on the condition of the dwelling units individually. The rest of the data presented in this section is from the 2021 ACS 5-Year Community Survey and is used to supplement observations made from this prior fieldwork.

Assessment of the housing conditions was based on the amount and severity of damage visible to the exterior of the structure on major building features. The scoring system is based primarily on assessing the quality of the structure; therefore, structural

damage such as missing windows or a building that has a crumbling foundation will lower the score more so than flaking paint, for example. The types of repairs are categorized as major, minor, or little concern, and the building’s final score depends on the summation of the observed and recorded major and minor repair scores. Using the checklist shown, the team ranked homes on a scale of 0-3 and walked the entire City to visit each building.

Using an ArcGIS collector application allowed for immediate data collection and compilation. As an online mapping platform, it allows for the collection of a variety of features and saves the information directly to the cloud for easy accessibility and update. For example, during fieldwork, the user can place a point and label it as a point of interest for a community center, and then take a photo and attach it to that location. These maps can also be shared, and the data manipulated or expressed as desired with a wide range of options. This method allows for more precise data collection and a reliable reference for policy and decision-making.

In Evart, features collected included housing quality and inventory, points of interest, and photos that were spatially linked to their location. With this type of comprehensive housing data, it becomes clear if there is any clustering.

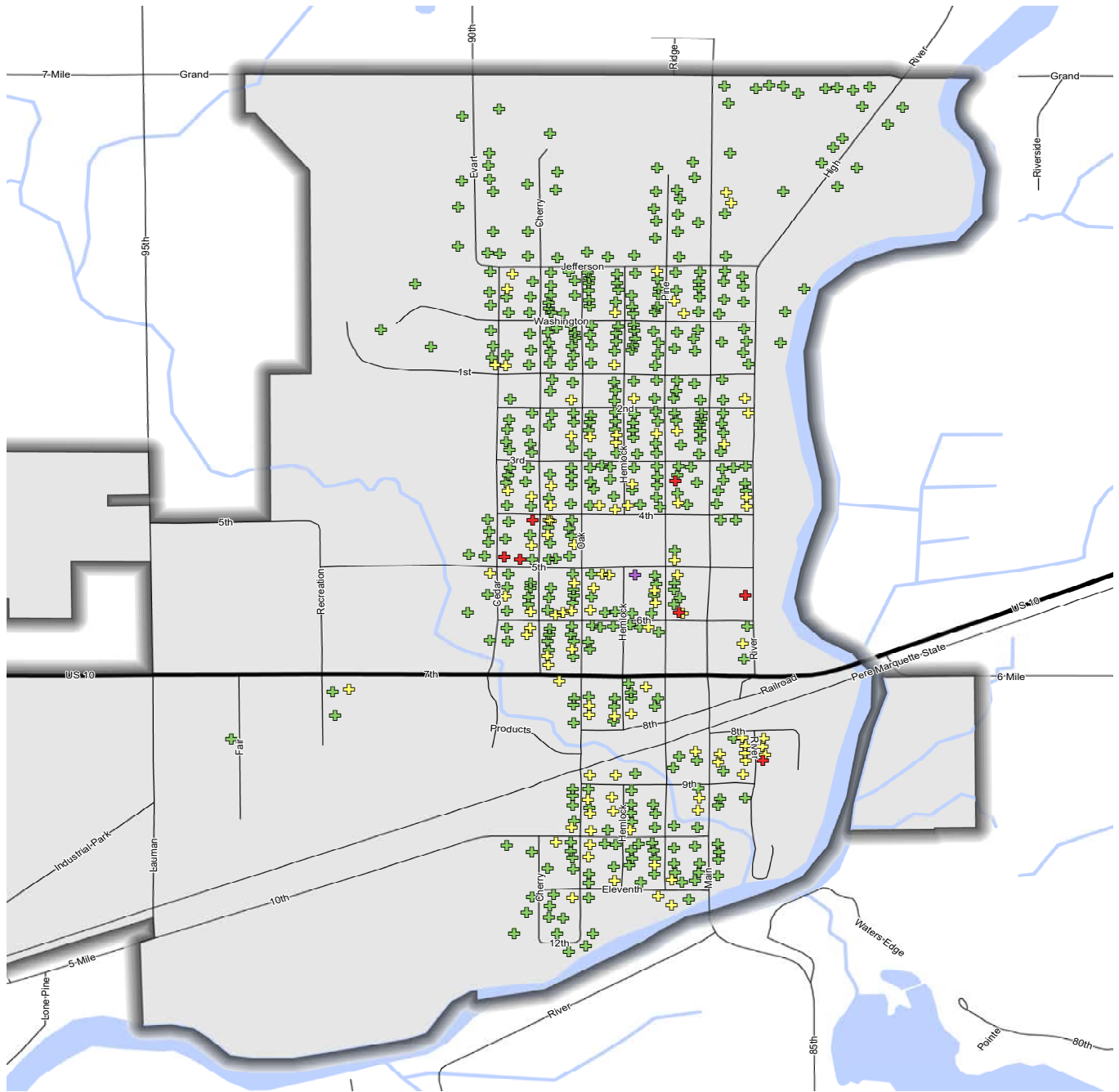
Table 3: Housing Assessment Scoring

SCORE	DESCRIPTION
0 (Demolition)	House is not structurally sound
1 (Poor)	Needs two or more major repairs
2 (Fair)	Needs three or more minor repairs, but no more than one major repair
3 (Good)	Needs two or fewer minor repairs

Table 4. Housing Checklist Example

HOUSING FEATURE	TYPE OF REPAIR NEEDED		
	MAJOR	MINOR	NOTES
Building frame/ structure	The building is not straight; leans or tilts	Building is not leaning; but foundation is in need of minor repairs or is missing material	
Roof/chimney/ gutters	A lot of deterioration, missing material, holes in roof, or sagging roof	Minor deterioration, improper roof repair, some mortar missing from chimney, gutters in need of repair	Some roof shingles are loose
Windows/doors	Windows missing, doors missing or rotted	Window frames need replacing or paint is peeling	
Siding/paint	Building missing many bricks, wood siding is rotted	Some peeling or cracking paint	Paint is chipping
Porch	Significant deterioration; steps missing, porch sagging, supports holding up porch are rotted	Separation of the porch from the building, paint needed	
SCORE: 3 (Good)			

Map 5. Housing Conditions in Evart



CITY OF EVART MASTER PLAN Housing Conditions

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library

- City Boundary
- State Roads
- All Roads
- Railroads
- Rivers / Streams
- Lakes / Ponds

- General Conditions:**
- 1 Poor Quality
 - 2 Average Quality
 - 3 Great Quality
 - Vacant

FINDINGS

In general, Evart has a widely varying housing stock. The homes were overwhelmingly ranked “good.” Only seven structures were ranked poorly out of 530 total housing structures with little consequential patterns emerging. 419 homes were classified as good, and ninety-nine houses classified as fair. Most importantly there are no areas of significant housing concern, perhaps with the one exception being the block enclosed by W. 4th and W. 5th, between N. Cedar Street and N. Cherry Street where a few homes remain in poor condition, this block contained roughly half of the poor homes overall. Since the housing study was published in 2017, one of these homes had been condemned and demolished.

While there is some variety in the housing typology, Evart overwhelmingly consists of detached single-family homes. About 98% or 519 of the housing structures recorded were detached. Because single-family homes dominate the housing market in Evart, there is little noticeable difference across the neighborhoods in that respect. A spatial analysis visually highlights this housing pattern.

From this map, it is also evident that multi-family units follow the zoning map designations and are confined to the northern periphery of the City. Mobile homes are also designated to one zone; however, this zoning district refers to a mobile home park. Where mobile homes are not clustered, they are considered single-family homes and therefore are permitted throughout most of Evart’s residential areas.

MULTI-FAMILY TYPOLOGY

Multi-family housing in Evart ranges from attached single-family units to apartment buildings with over twenty units. Structures with 5 to 9 units and those containing twenty or more units saw increases over the last several years, single-family detached homes saw slight increases. Small attached units structures with 2 to 4 units (duplexes, triplexes, or quads) lost more than the other housing category. Also, noteworthy, is that multi-family is primarily located in the City of Evart as demonstrated by the little to non-existence of multi-family units located in the neighboring Townships. The ACS data reports no

new multi-family housing construction since 2010 in Evart which suggests that structures with more units are likely conversions from single-family homes or re-purposed commercial or industrial structures.

HOUSING AGE

Around 46% of the homes in Evart were built prior to 1960. Another 24.5% of the City’s homes were built between 1960-1979, which makes sense considering that was during a large population boom. It is possible with an older housing stock that interior features may be in poor condition that could not be assessed but are negatively affecting residents’ quality of life. According to the 2021 ACS Census, there are no homes in Evart that lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities, but since the margin of error is 1.7%, some homes in Evart may not have a complete kitchen.

HOME VALUES

Home values in the City of Evart have increased from \$76,700 to \$82,800 between 2010 and 2021, an increase in median home value of 7.9%. Yet, nearly three out of every four (74.9%) homes were valued below \$99,999. Therefore, affordability may not be as great an issue as the valuation pressures of some west Michigan housing markets.

TENURE

Housing tenure has not changed considerably since 2010. The occupancy rate for Evart is 83.7% with over half of all units owner-occupied (57%) and under half renter-occupied (43%). Given the lower median household income, the prevalence of a large percentage of renter-occupied units is unsurprising.

Evart and Osceola Townships have a greater rate of homeownership, 94% and 93.2% respectively, but they also have about double the Median Household Income of residents located in the City of Evart. Evart’s median gross rent sits slightly below the average of the Townships at \$628 per month, when compared to Evart Township at \$858 per month and Osceola Township at \$481 per month.

Another barrier to homeownership is the extent of the cost-burdened renters' experience. The cost burden is defined by the percentage of household income spent on gross rent. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines the existence of housing cost burden if the percentage of gross household income spent on rent and/or mortgages exceed 30%. In Evart, 54.6% of renters spend more than 30% of their income on rent, while about 34% of homeowners spend more than 30% of their income on their mortgage. This means that a larger group of the lower-income and financially burdened populations residing in the City of Evart are in a precarious financial situation when it comes to housing.

VACANCY

Amongst all housing units, about 16.3% are vacant. This is about 129 structures. The overall vacancy rate in Evart is much lower than in the Townships and the County as a whole. For instance, Evart's vacancy rate is about half of Osceola County's (31.8%). While 16.3% is not a low vacancy rate for a city like Evart, it is a positive sign that Evart's housing market remains more occupied than the neighboring communities.

HOUSEHOLD TYPE

The household composition is changing. The fastest-growing household type is the "nonfamily" category which refers to friends, strangers, or unmarried couples cohabiting. Over one-third of Evart's residents fall into this category, and is the fastest-growing category nationwide. On average, the household size is 2.37 persons per household in Evart compared to 2.58 for the county. The smaller household size may be due to Evart's smaller proportion of households married with children, and the larger portion of non-family households.



Example of good housing stock

Table 5. Units in Structure

TYPE OF UNIT	CITY OF EVART		EVART TOWNSHIP		OSCEOLA TOWNSHIP		OSCEOLA COUNTY		MICHIGAN
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	%
1 unit (detached)	481	62.1	787	77.5	431	77.5	10,050	73.9	7.2
2 units	25	2.3	0	0	0	0	148	1.1	2.6
3-4 units	68	8.8	0	0	0	0	140	1.0	2.6
5-9 units	75	9.7	0	0	0	0	210	1.5	4.2
10-19 units	17	2.2	0	0	0	0	30	0.2	3.6
20+ units	81	10.5	0	0	0	0	194	1.4	5.0
Mobile home, trailer, other	23	3.0	224	22.1	122	21.9	2,708	19.9	5.4
Total units	774	100	1,015	100	556	100	13,596	100	100

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010-2014



Example of fair housing stock

TARGET MARKET ANALYSIS (TMA)

A residential TMA seeks to answer two primary questions: Who is moving to Evart, and what type of housing format do they want? In the spring of 2017, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), conducted a mini-TMA that focused primarily on the first question. First, the study creates an extended market area using the Census Bureau's On-the-Map program. This program geolocates employers' and people's homes to show where residents commute to work. This is known as a commute shed.

Within Evart's commute shed there are approximately 8,800 households. The basis for this analysis assumes that employment is one of the largest considerations for moving into a community. It is unlikely that everyone who finds a job in Evart will want to move there, but this model assumes that Evart could draw 50-80% of households in the market area. MSHDA also used a geographically based demographic clustering system that identifies 60 groups of people with similar characteristics. These clusters are defined by the level of education, income, and occupation, among others. Two major groups within the market area account for 8,400 or 95% of the households. The first group is generally older, has a high school education, and works



Example of poor housing stock

Table 6. Value of Owner-Occupied Housing

VALUE	CITY OF EVART (%)	EVART TOWNSHIP (%)	OSCEOLA TOWNSHIP (%)	OSCEOLA COUNTY (%)	MICHIGAN (%)
Less than \$50,000	481	62.1	787	77.5	431
\$50,000 - \$99,000	25	2.3	0	0	0
\$100,000 - \$149,999	68	8.8	0	0	0
\$150,000 - \$199,999	75	9.7	0	0	0
\$200,000 - \$299,000	17	2.2	0	0	0
\$300,000 or more	81	10.5	0	0	0
Median value	23	3.0	224	22.1	122

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2017-2021

blue-collar jobs (earning \$15,000-\$60,000 per year) in rural settings. They are typically homeowners looking for smaller homes with 0-2 bedrooms. In terms of housing preferences, this group tends towards mobile homes and/or single-family development built after 1970. Their rental range is below \$800 per month or a monthly mortgage that is below \$1,000.

The smaller group which accounts for only 600 of the 8,400, are generally about 40 years old, have a bachelor's degree, and are either in the skilled trades or in management (earning \$50,000-\$199,000 per year). They are also largely homeowners looking for medium-sized homes with 3-4 bedrooms. This group is generally looking for single-family dwellings built after 1970 with a rental range between \$1,000 - \$2,000. With a mortgage, they can afford a range of \$1,000-\$3,000 per month.

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

This information is a valuable insight for the City of Evart when considering what type of housing to seek out for development. While the mini-TMA did not address the question of which type of housing is needed to accommodate people moving into Evart, a lack of housing formats on the spectrum between single-family detached and high-rise apartments is commonly found statewide.

The homes listed below are a part of "missing middle" housing, a reference to the range of housing stock that falls between the two extremes of single-family detached homes, and large apartment blocks or complexes. These housing types can be smaller-scale multi-unit structures. Some of the different housing formats include:

- Duplexes
- Triplexes
- Fourplexes
- Subdivided homes
- Accessory dwelling units
- Studios
- Bungalow courtyards
- Lofts/condos

The importance of not only the amount, but the type, size, tenure options, and location of housing units has been brought to the forefront in the aftermath of the housing crisis. Only recently has housing construction picked up, but Evart's housing market has not experienced that change.



Example of Missing Middle Housing

Figure 6. Missing Middle Housing Examples



Having a variety of housing types can have several benefits. In a city with a lower median household income, missing middle housing provides a better range of affordable and attainable options. Small housing format options support different phases of life. For example, seniors who want to downsize or individuals who live alone often choose different housing options as their needs change. This enables residents to age in place. Another benefit is that it may help attract millennials or young families who cannot yet afford homeownership, but need somewhere to live while they save. Lastly, varying housing types provides architectural interest to a neighborhood. All these benefits reflect the vision of Evart's stakeholders.

SURVEY RESULTS

The City of Evart conducted an online survey to collect the public's input on housing conditions and possible solutions to alleviate the community's concerns. Between November 16th- December 15th, 104 people participated in the survey. Many respondents were homeowners within the city limits (54.5%), which corresponds well to the 48% of homeowners within Evart. The remaining 45.5% are either renters or homeowners from a nearby community.

RENTAL MARKET AND BLIGHT CONTROL

When asked if respondents feel that the housing options are attractive to prospective renters, almost three-fourths said no (74.1%). Respondents were allowed to provide comments, of which many reiterated the sentiment that "the housing is not maintained well by the landlords," that they have fallen into "disrepair" and that what is available is "poor quality with a high price." Landlords are referred to as slumlords. There was lack of significant positive impressions expressed about the attractiveness of the rental market. The next question asked if residents were willing to volunteer their time to help those in need of blight correction. Almost 63% responded "no".

Moreover, the majority (54.2%) of respondents also reported that the Evart Police Department does not enforce blight ordinances accordingly. The Evart Police Department focuses on code enforcement mainly during the summer months.

COMMUNICATION

Half of the survey participants stated that social media is the most effective way to communicate with the community. The second most common response was to post information on the City billing statements with almost one-third preferring a physical notice (32.1%). The City of Evart does maintain a Facebook page with has 2,200 followers.

GRANT PROGRAMS FOR HOME REPAIR

The overwhelming majority of respondents favor developing grant programs for those in need of home repair (84.2%). The comments section provided more insight into the community's concerns. Some of their concerns revolved around the high visibility of blighted properties on Main Street or near the City's gateways. However, there was still a lot of discussion about removing trash from people's yards to help mitigate blight instead of specific examples of how to repair the homes.



OUR COMMUNITY

This section reviews the community economy, assets, and public services. Evart's economy, like the rest of the nation's, has changed over the last few decades. A shift from producing goods to producing knowledge through a college-educated workforce has important implications for local economic development strategies. Because growing industries are less land-intensive, providing cheap land in the form of tax abatements is no longer the carrot it once was to attract business. Jobs are following talent now, and strategies to draw in the industry are based on creating a place that fosters and retains talent so that business will follow. The following section discusses what businesses are already in Evart and how they fare, in addition to vital community assets and public services.

ECONOMY & INDUSTRY

Employment by sector is an easy method of following economic strength or vulnerability. Evart's downtown represents the most dense employment population with between 79 and 122 jobs. The employment sectors with the greatest number of employed residents in Evart are the Services with 291 (45.5%) employed residents, Manufacturing having 161 (25.9%) employed residents, and Retail with 78 employed residents (12.8%).

The job concentration dissipates as it moves outward to the City's edges. However, as of 2022, more people were employed outside of this area. There are a total of 665 civilians in the labor force in the City of Evart, however, only 620 are employed.

The median household income in the City of Evart in 2021 was \$34,107. However, nearly one-third of the employed in the City earn less than \$25,000 per year (32.0%). The average commute is 14.1 minutes, a decrease from 18.4 minutes in 2017.

Another method to measure the local economic strength of a downtown is through retail gap and leakage market analysis. Esri Business Analysis compiles privately-generated market research data and Census data for geographies other than census-defined tracts, blocks, and places. It is a useful tool to determine retail potential within calculated distance or drive times from a specific location. ESRI uses retail sales and retail potential to determine which industries have a surplus. Within a 5-minute radius, retail sectors that are performing well in terms of sales are:

- Automotive Parts & Accessories
- Hardware Stores
- Pharmacies & Drug Stores
- General Merchandise Stores
- Limited Service Restaurants (Fast Food, Pizzerias, Cafe's, etc.)

These represent what is termed as a market surplus. A market surplus is represented by a negative dollar amount in a gap analysis because there is a higher supply or availability locally than what the actual local demand for that particular service sector is. Or, it is stating that more customers from outside the trade area are spending money inside the trade area.

RETAIL LEAKAGE

Within a 5-minute drive from Evart, a retail leakage is apparent. However, when zooming out further, it is clear that there are no major shopping centers even within a 30-minute drive. The data indicates that 100% of purchases from the following retailers occur outside of Evart city limits and are happening from further than a 15-minute drive away:

- Recreational Vehicle Dealers
- Window Treatment Stores and Home Centers
- Lawn and Garden Supply Stores
- Specialty Food Stores

Amongst the top three losing industries, Evart is foregoing approximately \$8.3 million annually. Other "leaky" industries include:

- New Car Dealers (\$4.0 million)
- Home Centers (\$1.0 million)
- Warehouses Clubs and Supercenters (\$3.0 million)
- Home Furnishing Stores (\$306 thousand)

When all leakages are added together, they represent approximately \$13.2 million lost per year.

Expanding the radius to a 30-minute drive does not improve the retail situation. The leakages continue to grow while surpluses shrink. This provides some evidence that Evart could become the retail and commercial hub for the area. When the radii around Evart expand and do not encompass a thriving retail center, then Evart is positioned to tap into unrealized revenue. Within a 30-minute drive from Evart live about 54,917 people with a projected median household income of \$56,382 by 2027.

Initially, it is easy to assume that these retail options do not exist because there is a lack of demand. ESRI Business Analyst compiles consumer data that indicates otherwise. The data indicates that 46.7% of adults bought men's clothing within the last 12 months, in addition to 43.9% purchasing women's apparel. Over one-quarter of adults purchased a paperback, and almost one in five (17.1%) bought a hardback book. Many of these purchases were made in industries that are currently absent in Evart.

Equally important to the spending habits are the resident's values and attitudes about spending. More than half (53.4%) claim that buying American products is important to them and 35.6% of residents are likely to buy a brand that supports a charity. In Evart, price is not the only factor to consider, and this type of data is helpful to share with businesses considering moving to Evart.

BARRIERS

Statewide, a common and seemingly contradictory issue has been identified regarding the economic plight of PRT communities. From the worker's perspective, there are no jobs, and from employers expanding their operations, there are not enough qualified workers to fill the positions. This problem of not being able to match workers to job opportunities within a given geography is called labor mismatch, and the consequences are steep. When workers and employers cannot connect, unemployment and underemployment rise, labor force participation shrinks, and poverty becomes more prevalent. The factors that contribute to this mismatch are complicated and intertwined but there is a role for both the public and private sector in alleviating the heartache many families in Michigan face.

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

Public facilities range from visible public amenities such as parks and schools to equally important "hidden" facilities such as wastewater treatment facilities. The importance of facilities and services

should not be underestimated. The quality of the education system, services, and infrastructure provided influences household and business decision-making in choosing where to settle. This section briefly describes the City's existing public facilities.

EVART PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Evart Public School system consists of three separate facilities, all located in the City of Evart. It is the third largest district, by enrollment, in Osceola County - behind Reed City and Pine River. In 2022-23, the district had 871 students and 48 teachers.

Evart High School (grades 9-12), located at 6221 95th Avenue, had a student body of 283 students. Evart Middle School (grades 5-8), located at 321 N. Hemlock, had a student body of 258. Evart Elementary (grades k-4), located at 515 N. Cedar, had 311 students. In addition to the Elementary School, the Middle School, and the High School, there is the Administration Office, located within the Middle School; and the bus garage located at 378 N. Pine. There is also an online school program.

Evart Public Schools are also offering an adult education program held in the middle school. The program consists of two 16-week semesters where students take a "Test of Basic Education (TABE)" skills test at the beginning and end of the course that focuses on reading, grammar, and math.

The curriculum is aligned with both the Development Agency and the Office of Adult Education State Standards. The courses are offered after regular school hours to provide more flexibility for adult students. The TABE is an assessment that scores a student's performance to understand better where to place students afterward, for example, a GED class or into a technical school. For those who wish to obtain the GED, the Adult Learning Center in Evart helps with that type of instruction as well as career training, networking, and continuing education credits.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The largest labor mismatch comes from middle-skilled jobs. Over the past few decades, manufacturing's decline has had devastating effects on Michigan's economy. With a rebounding economy, manufacturing and construction have seen an uptick in activity, but are hindered by an untrained workforce. Middle-skilled jobs refer to jobs that require more than a high school degree but not necessarily a bachelor's degree, typically an associate's degree or some technical training. In 2019, 53% of jobs were middle-skilled, but only 44% of workers were trained for these jobs.

CITY HALL

Ewart's City Hall is located at 200 South Main Street. It houses the administrative offices of the City and is the primary space for public meetings. Staff within City Hall includes the City Manager, Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor, DDA Director, and the Director of the Department of Public Works.

PUBLIC WORKS

The Department of Public Works is housed just west of the city. The Department is staffed by six people and provides a variety of services including maintaining the City's streets, water system, wastewater system, parks, and other public facilities.

FIRE SERVICES

The Ewart Area Fire Department is located in the northwest corner of 6th Street and River Street. The Department serves the surround townships of Ewart, Osceola, and Orient, in addition to servicing the City of Ewart. The Department maintains a full time Chief and five members.

POLICE SERVICES

The City of Ewart Police Department provides services within the City of Ewart. There are four officers. The Department currently provides 24-hour service but does occasionally rely on the County Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police

for assistance. The Department is housed at 137 River Street, just south of 6th Street.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

Osceola County Emergency Management Service provides service within the City of Ewart, as well as the rest of Osceola County. Six ambulances operate within the County; including one in Ewart. The Ewart Area Fire Department offers support as part of the Medical First Response program.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

The Wastewater Treatment facility is located south of 10th Street and west of Cedar Street.

The wastewater treatment plant can treat 500,000 gallons of water per day; however, at present, the facility treats only a fraction of its capacity due to the loss of Liberty Dairy in 2013. The system provides service to most developed areas of the city except for several buildings located on West 5th Street, North Pine Street, North Main Street, and High Street (which are served by individual septic systems). Several manufactured homes on Fair Street use a communal septic system. The need for additional capacity depends primarily on the status of several of the businesses in Ewart that are the largest users of the system. The City needs to communicate with these larger users regularly to determine future needs since funding and implementing improvements is a lengthy process.

WATER

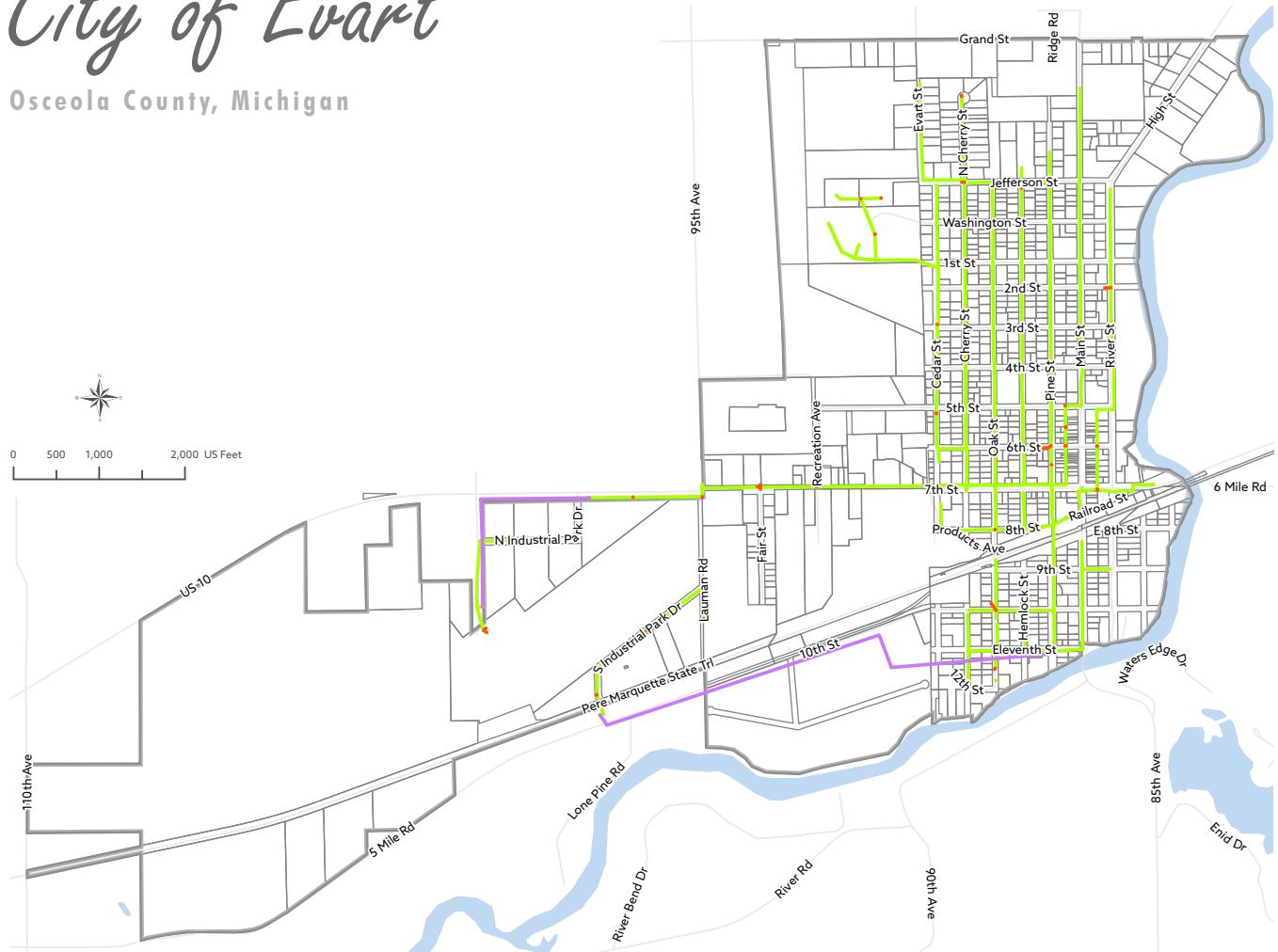
Public water service within the city follows a similar geographic pattern as the public sanitary system and is available to almost the entire developed area of the city. The city obtains its water from two well fields located on 5th Street near Waterworks Park and on the west side of the City near US-10. The wells are currently pumping at 33% of capacity. The only residences not served in this capacity are located on 7 Mile Road and High Street.

Although the City is not actively planning for additional expansion, the preference for looping water mains may create a long-range water plan that

Map 6. Evart Sanitary Sewer System

City of Evart

Osceola County, Michigan



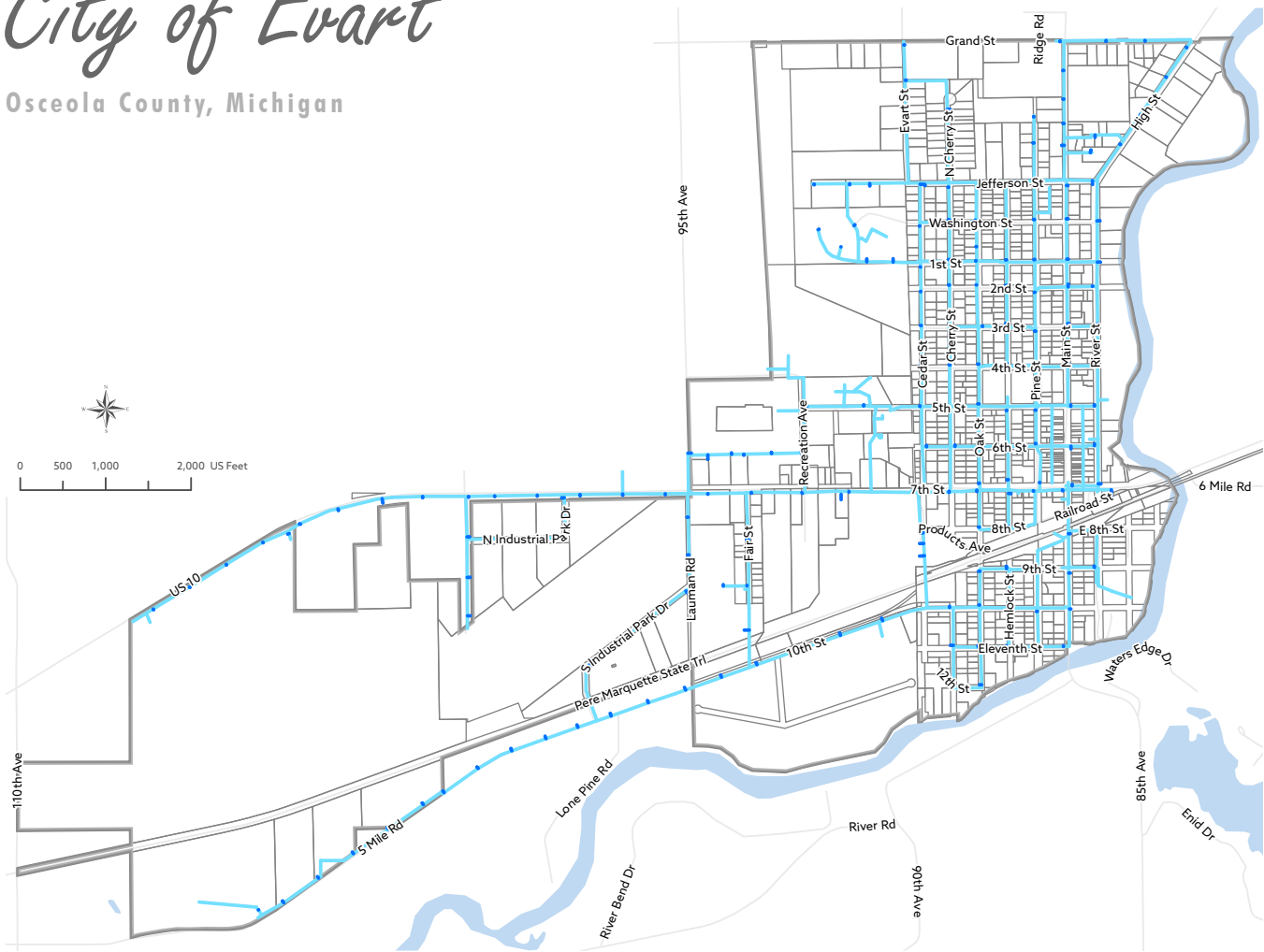
Legend

- Sanitary Sewer System Pressurized Main
- Sanitary Sewer System Lateral Line
- Sanitary Sewer System Gravity Main
- City of Evart





Map 7. Evart Municipal Water System

City of Evart

Osceola County, Michigan



Legend

-  Evart Water Distribution System Lateral Line
-  Evart Water Distribution System Main Line
-  City of Evart
-  Parcels

involves the expansion of water mains south along 95th Avenue to connect the water mains adjacent to 7 Mile Road and US-10. It is also possible that the water main situated along 5th Street will be extended to 95th Avenue at the same time.

Additionally, large-scale future development (industry) occurring within the western portion of the City will create a need to extend the City's water mains along 5 Mile Road, 110th Avenue, and US-10 to create a service loop.

The City has two water towers with a combined capacity of 800,000 gallons.

JOB GROWTH

With a historically accurate track record, the University of Michigan Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics estimates there have been almost 42,000 jobs created in 2017 and another 50,000 jobs in 2018. However, this job growth rate projection falls short of reaching residents who often remain chronically unemployed. In 2016, according to the Current Population Survey, there were 237,600 unemployed workers in Michigan— a figure that does not include discouraged workers, or those who have stopped actively looking for work because they believe there are no jobs available. In 2016, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated the discouraged workers to be around 18,300 in Michigan. This leaves a gap of over 163,000 jobless Michiganders. That is to say, that job growth in itself is not a comprehensive indicator to describe a person's economic opportunity. Regardless of the type of occupation, there is some truth to the statement that "there are no jobs." The poverty status of families in Evart increased between 2010 to 2015, from 14.1% to 39.1%, respectively, despite 5 years of job growth. Job growth has either not reached vulnerable populations yet, or worse, even as workers become employed, they continue to live in poverty. In either case, job growth alone has not improved the quality of life of a considerable number of families in Evart.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation plays a major role in job accessibility. In 2015, Michigan Works! for Region 9 interviewed

400 former job-seekers. Almost half (48%) of the interviewees reported that transportation is a problem for finding and keeping a job; those with reliable access to a vehicle are more likely to be employed. Transportation by automobile is most households' second largest expense (up to \$15,000 per year), leaving those in poverty without a reliable way to connect to employment. Furthermore, in Region 9, 56% of workers with cars cannot necessarily afford repairs. The need for improved transportation networks is affirmed by the high demand for transportation services requested through other MiWorks! Agencies, 76-92% of all requests are for transportation assistance. If this happens where there are arguably some of the best transportation networks in Michigan, imagine the impact on rural areas! Evart does not have a reliable transportation system. The dial-a-ride service is unaffordable at \$8 for a round-trip and does not run frequently enough to accommodate workers with unconventional shift times.

HOUSING

Many communities are dealing with the complicated relationship surrounding housing values, vacancy rates, changing tenure status, and how this affects a city's prospects for attracting and retaining talent. Some MiWorks! representatives working on the ground with employers also report that when companies find qualified candidates, a lack of available housing options prevents him/her from living within the community. This is due in large part not only to a housing shortage post-recession but also to a lack of housing options. Housing formats that lie along the spectrum between single-family detached homes and large apartment complexes are missing.

In Evart, the median housing value dropped by over \$10,000 between 2010-2015, the overall vacancy rate increased by 4%, and in 2015 renter-occupied units became the dominant tenure type at 54.5%. Since 2015, housing value has increased to \$78,908, a 2.7% increase, the vacancy rate has increased to 9.4% and the number of rental units increased to 11% of the total housing units available.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

The City of Evart received a Stormwater, Asset Management, and Wastewater (SAW) grant from the Department of Environmental Quality. Due to frequent flooding, the Stormwater Management Plan is tasked with identifying necessary repairs to reduce flooding events and to improve the quality of stormwater runoff. The plan was completed in 2019. A rain garden helps to clean polluted stormwater runoff.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure is one way to manage stormwater runoff that relies on mimicking natural filtration processes as opposed to using grey or manmade infrastructure to protect water quality. Rain gardens are an example of how to filter water that is contaminated after running along hard surfaces before it reaches a body of water. This rain garden located between City Hall and the Muskegon River showcases native wildflowers with deep roots that can channel, clean, and absorb water before it enters the river. In addition, there are twelve mini rain gardens planted in the pedestrian bulb-outs downtown.

AIR SERVICE

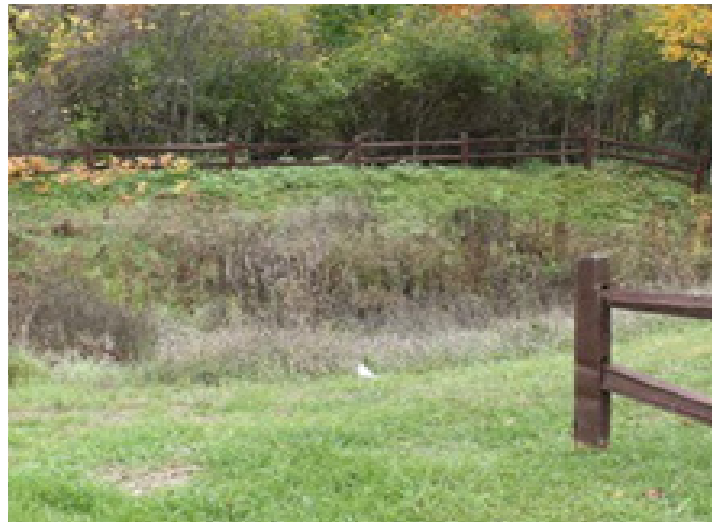
The Evart Municipal Airport is located on the City's west side and provides services to private users. The single runway provides up to 4,100 feet of landing space and includes modern lighting equipment. A new terminal building is located at the airport, and in 2014-2015, Evart built a snow removal equipment building to house a snow plow.

TRANSIT

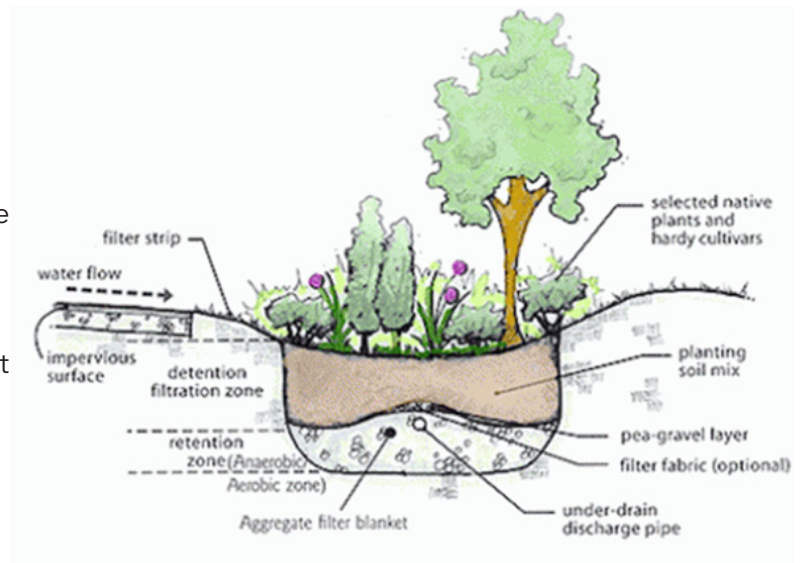
The Mecosta/Osceola Area Transit Authority (MOTA) has traditionally been an on-demand "dial-a-ride" public transportation system based in Big Rapids, but operating in both Mecosta and Osceola counties. Within the last year, MOTA is now operating a Daily service from two dedicated locations in the City.

There is no passenger or freight rail service in Evart.

Examples of Green Infrastructure



Stormwater Movement Through a Garden



www.terralandscape.com/rain-gardens-filter-pollutants-recharge-groundwater

PARKS AND RECREATION

The city of Evart maintains almost 133 acres of public park space among the following parks:

- **Riverside Park** - This park is located in the southeastern corner of the city, along the Muskegon River. This park offers many facilities including beach volleyball courts, shuffleboard courts, a splash pad, a basketball court, baseball fields, pavilions, and campsites. The land on the other side of the Muskegon River designated for park expansion has become Riverside East Park.
- **Guyton Memorial Park** - This park, is located in the City's downtown and is dedicated to the memory of Joseph W. Guyton.
- **Waterworks Park** - This park is located along 5th Street on the west side of the City. The park is largely open space but does contain a shelter and picnic table.
- **City Square** - This park is north of the Downtown and includes basketball courts, a volleyball court, and playground equipment.



Playground at Riverside West Park



Pavillion at Riverside Park

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)

The City of Evart completed a Capital Improvement Plan in 2017-2022. A CIP systematically documents the quality and potential longevity of the city's infrastructure. Looking out 5-6 years in the future, the CIP takes the recently conducted inventory and budgets the cost of updating infrastructure on an annual basis. The CIP includes the list of capital projects and equipment, the department responsible for maintaining the capital improvement, its useful life span, its priority ranking, and the total projected cost over the predetermined time. Within the next 5 years, the City of Evart has a total projected budget of almost \$12.3 million.

The largest portion of the total amount comes from the Department of Public Works (DPW)

totaling \$10.9million. The DPW projected needs and associated costs cover several improvements for street reconstruction and overlays, storm drain replacements, water pipes, etc.

Other major improvements are spread across the Police Department, Administration, Equipment, and Parks and Recreation. Despite the high overall cost, many of these improvements are necessary. For example, the city must maintain its structures which include new City Hall renovations and upkeep (\$250,000), and a new patrol vehicle for the Police Department (\$35,000). Anything that is a lower priority is pushed back to be financed in subsequent years.

COMMUNITY ASSETS

As a part of the community engagement session, residents identified Evart's assets. An asset can be defined as any place, event, organization, partnership, person, or thing that residents find of value. Identifying assets is a way to develop pride in all that a community has to offer; it also allows residents to see where there are gaps. The map "Community Assets" divides the assets into three categories: natural features, community features, and events. This is an important distinction because these assets can be tied to a physical location. An exhaustive list of community assets can be found in the Community Engagement chapter.



CORRIDORS

Networks and connectivity are the cornerstones of modern society. Our economy, and increasingly our social lives, depend on how well cities are both physically and virtually linked to other markets. Either via physical or online networks, corridors are a building block to connectivity. Still, road corridors are the most common type of connector in an auto-dominated state.

ROADS

Evart is part of a major transportation system. US-10, for the most part, is a two-lane roadway except where passing lanes exist or in communities such as Evart. It passes directly through the City in an east-west direction and links Evart to US-131, a limited access expressway, which is located about ten miles west of the city. US-131 is West Michigan's primary

north-south highway and links Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, and other southern points Cadillac and other locations to the north. M-66 is located about six miles east of Evart and is primarily a two-lane roadway linking communities such as Ionia to the south to communities such as Kalkaska to the north. There are two river crossings (bridges) in the City of Evart: US-10 and South Main Street.

Responsibility for the maintenance of these roads falls on the City of Evart, the Osceola County Road Commission, and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). According to the Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council, in 2017-2018, Evart owned 15.7 miles of lane. 73.3% of roads managed by the City are in poor condition, 26.7% are fair, and 0% are in good condition. Based on historical data, it is forecasted that by 2021, 48% of roads will be in poor condition statewide.

In 2017-2022, the majority of Evart's transportation expenditures went to road construction, resurfacing, and maintenance.

AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC (AADT)

Examining the National Functional Classification (NFC) ratings for roadways provides insight into local road variation and funding eligibility. This rating system was developed by the Federal Highway Administration in the 1960s and is used to classify streets by traffic counts and use. Local and unclassified roads are not eligible for federal funding, which can be found primarily in the Evart residential areas. The "Road Classifications" map shows that road repairs on approximately 87.5% of roads within Evart would require other funding sources. The remaining 12.5% could be eligible for federal funding.

Aside from US-10, there are only two other types of roads. The principal arterial is US-10 and depending on the segment of the highway, it sees varying daily average traffic counts, ranging from 4,800-6,600; the highest count is found in the prime commercial corridor in Evart, the shopping hub. Major collector roads connect local roads to arterials and run primarily north to south in Evart. On the north side of the city, they run along Main St and 95th Avenue, and on the southern part of the city they run along South River Road and 85th Avenue. A major US-10 renovation will kick-off in 2026, improving the entire corridor in town. River, Jefferson, and S. Main Streets are also vital streets in the community.

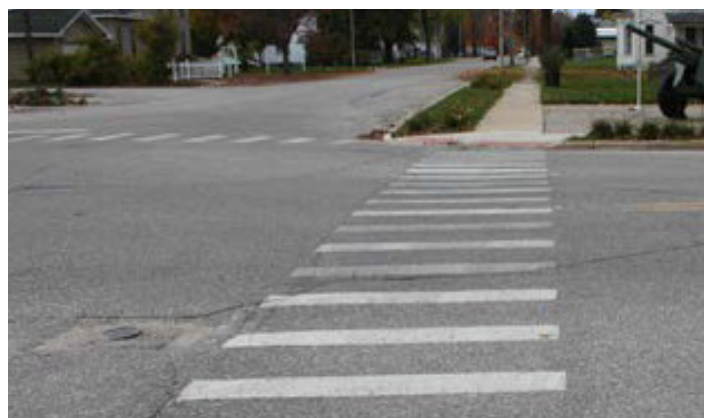
NONMOTORIZED FEATURES

Nonmotorized features broadly refer to any piece of infrastructure that facilitate transit by foot, bicycle, or wheelchair. These features are part of a larger movement known as Complete Streets.

Simply put, Complete Streets are designed for everyone, not just vehicles. Historically, the US has funneled transportation spending to highway construction and expansion for a more "efficient throughput" of vehicles. More recently, there has

been pushback by organizations such as Smart Growth America that streets should be designed for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transit users of all ages and abilities. Instead of only measuring a successful road by vehicular mobility, Complete Streets look at design elements, safety, and convenience for all users. In 2010, Complete Streets legislation passed in Michigan that requires MDOT to consider multi-modal features with new road construction.

Elements of Complete Streets differ by community, but common characteristics are sidewalks, bike lanes, racks, frequent and safe crossings, median islands, curb extensions, or elements that enhance the experience of using a street to encourage multi-modal transit. The idea is to reduce reliance on automobiles and to shift the bias from mobility to accessibility.



Crosswalks improve pedestrian safety



A landscaped bulb-out shortens the distance a pedestrian has to cross the street, making the trip safer and more enjoyable



Lighting promotes walking because it makes pedestrians feel safer

EVART'S COMPLETE STREET ELEMENTS

SIDEWALKS AND STREETScape DESIGN

A complete sidewalk network has several benefits. When pedestrians have a separate path to walk, they are safer and therefore are more likely to travel by foot. If the design could encourage residents to walk instead of driving, then the entire community would benefit from cleaner air, improved human health, and longer-lasting road infrastructure.

In addition to a complete sidewalk network, other features can enhance the pedestrian experience to encourage people to walk:

- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Amenities

These features are found amply in the downtown. Historic lampposts light the street, crosswalks guide pedestrians safely across roads, and landscaped bulb-outs reduce the distance a pedestrian must walk to cross the street. Minor aesthetic upgrades such as bulb-outs are two-fold. First, by narrowing the street width, cars naturally reduce their speed making it safer for pedestrians. Additionally, landscaped bulb-outs add beauty and make the trip on foot more pleasant.

However, as one travels outside of the downtown area, noticeable amenities are missing:

- Benches
- Street lights
- Crosswalks

The map "Sidewalk Gap Analysis" shows that only 6th Street and 7th Street (between Cedar & Oak) have sidewalks on both sides. Moving away from those streets in any direction, the sidewalk network begins to break down. North of 7th Street, the streets that run north and south are generally more



A landscaped bulb-out is seen in the background, the textured sloped curb cut is designed for blind pedestrians and wheel chairs

complete than those running east to west. Starting from 5th Street and moving north, the sidewalk network begins to break down in both directions. Between Jefferson and 5th Streets, there are 36 blocks; 22 of those streets have sidewalks on both sides, 28 streets have sidewalks on only one side, and two streets (2nd Street and Oak Street), the sidewalk stops mid-block.

Moving north of 1st Street, Washington, and Jefferson Streets do not have any sidewalks. This would make it difficult for residents to walk downtown. The sidewalk network also breaks down south of 10th Street, leaving West 11th Street and South Cherry Street with no sidewalks at all. Midway through the block on Hemlock, Pine, Oak, and Main Streets, the sidewalk ends forcing the pedestrian to walk in the street along cars or on private property. Both of these options are dangerous and non-trivial. This is particularly dangerous on the stretch of US-10, West of Oak Street, which has no sidewalks but fast-moving traffic and many destinations pedestrians may want to reach.

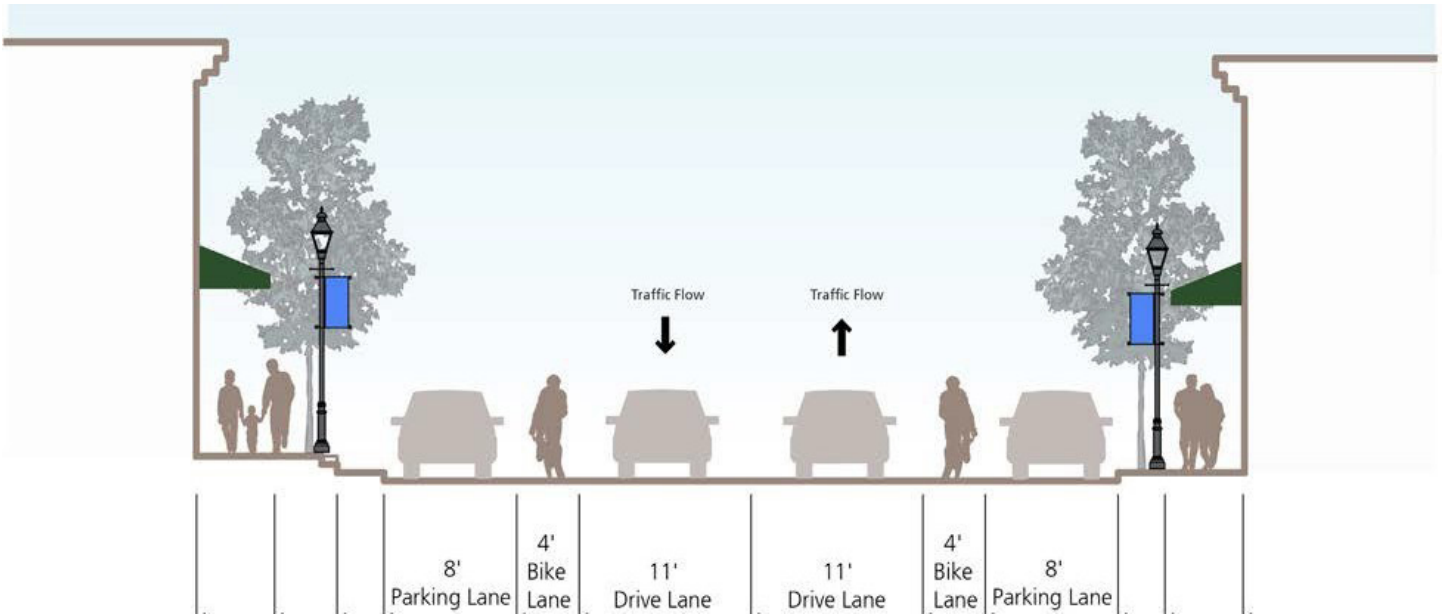
MOBILITY

Moving people and goods efficiently between places.

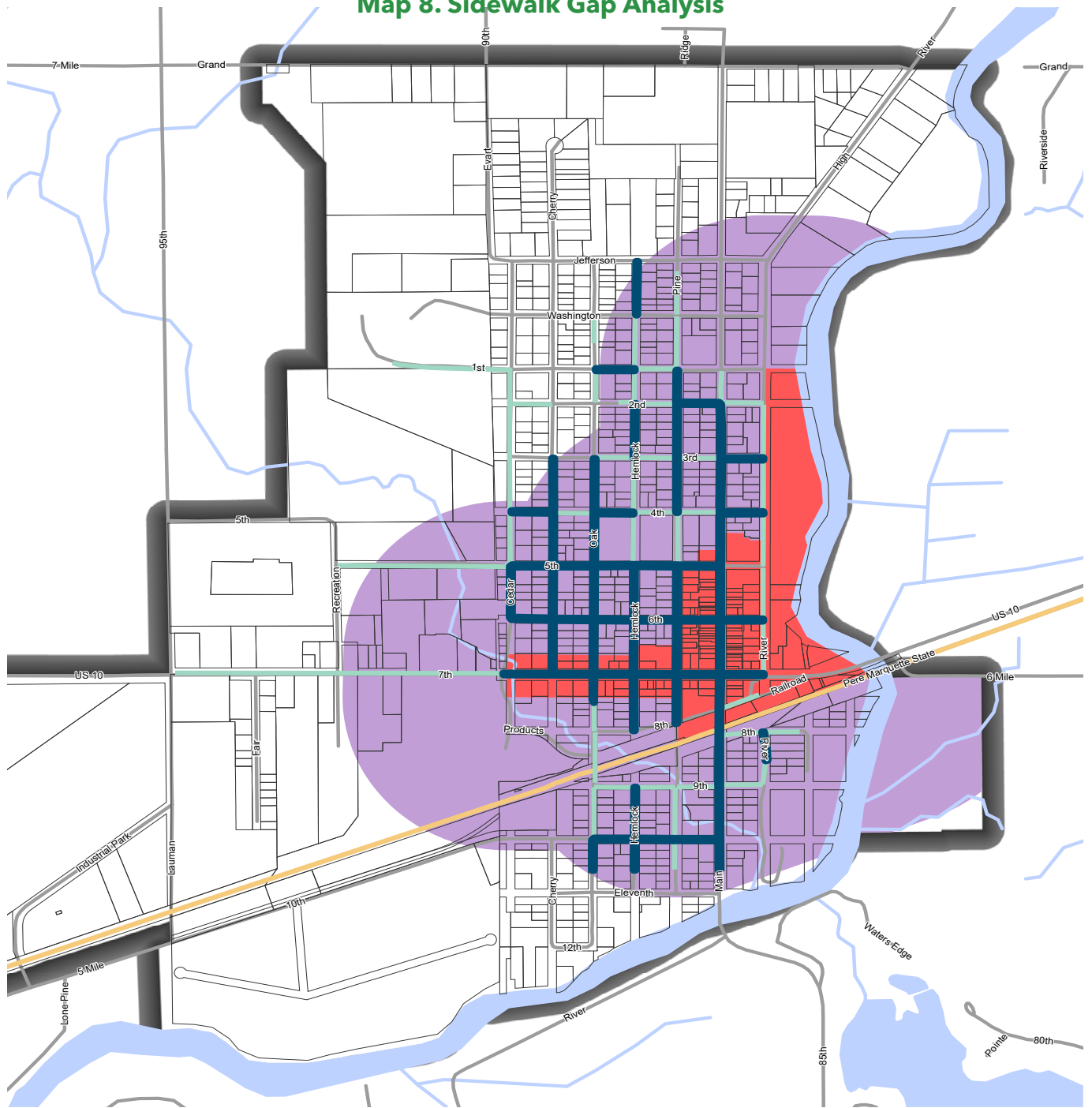
ACCESSIBILITY

The ease with which something can be reached or obtained.

Figure 7. A Cross-Section Example of a Complete Street



Map 8. Sidewalk Gap Analysis



CITY OF EVART MASTER PLAN

Sidewalk Gap Analysis

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, City of Evart

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| City Boundary | DDA District |
| State Roads | 1/4 Mile Walking Distance |
| All Roads | No Sidewalks |
| Railroads | Sidewalks on One Side of Roadway |
| Rivers / Streams | Sidewalks on Both Sides of Roadway |
| Lakes / Ponds | Pere Marquette Trail |



BICYCLE AMENITIES

Currently, in Evart, there are no bike lanes, except for the Pere Marquette Trail (discussed later). Bicyclists must share a lane with cars, putting them in a precarious situation. Evart's newer developments have shown support for bicyclists by adding bike racks in downtown locations such as Cant Hook Park on Main Street. To successfully encourage this mode of transportation, there must be a network built similar to sidewalks and roads.

ELECTRIC CHARGING STATIONS

There is one electric charging station in Evart, located on South Main Street. The station was funded by a Community Development Block Grant that was also used to rehab sidewalks and add bulb-outs downtown.

RAILS TO TRAILS

The Pere Marquette Rail Trail is a former train line converted to a paved nonmotorized trail. It is 30 miles in length and runs east to west from Midland to Baldwin, Michigan. The trail runs through Evart, just south of the downtown near the City Hall.

The segment between Clare and Midland is one of the most popular trails in Michigan and provides a tranquil setting for walking. As a community asset and a public good, it is important to know where and how residents and visitors access the river.

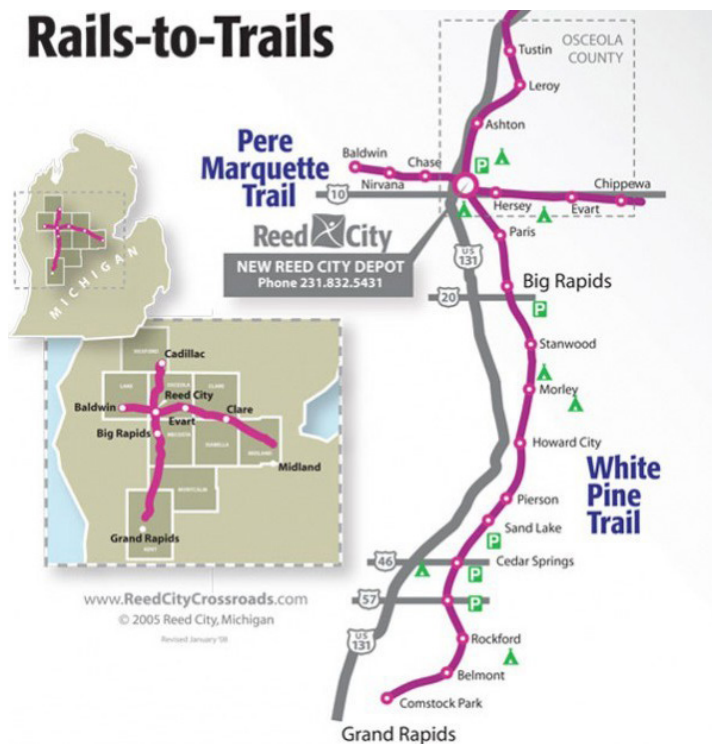
MUSKEGON RIVER

The Muskegon River is also an important corridor to Evart because of its natural and recreational value. The river provides fishing, canoeing, and kayaking. There are two public easements to the river: Riverside Park West and Riverside Park East.

There is a boat launch at Riverside Park West and the city has recently completed the installation of a handicap ramp to the launch so the disabled have easier access to the river.



Charging station located near City Hall





DISTRICTS

DOWNTOWN

Downtowns are the governmental and cultural center of a city. On top of that, it is typically a large employment hub for private and public sector jobs and a place that attracts visitors to events and entertainment options. This is also usually where multi-modal forms of transit converge, and where pedestrians are given higher priority than in other neighborhoods. Here, pedestrians help spur economic growth and to encourage commercial revitalization and historic preservation. They work in collaboration with the city but are in charge of programming and boosting the downtown's image. While Evart does not currently provide multi-modal transportation to draw people downtown, however, most neighborhoods are within walking distance (1/4 mile) of Main Street.

SHOPPING HUB

Evart's shopping hub is primarily located on 7th Street, a car-oriented commercial corridor. Shopping hubs accommodate commuters, those looking to make big purchases of items, or who want to compare prices. The layout is usually characterized by larger building footprints surrounded by parking lots, and are not within proximity to residential neighborhoods. A shopping hub differs from downtown in a couple of ways. The downtown is meant to provide a multi-faceted experience of dining, shopping, and entertainment, providing purpose to Evart residents and those passing through. For example, 7th Street hosts auto repair shops, a bank, a real estate agent office, a party store, a car wash, grocery store, and a few local eateries.

PLACEMAKING

Placemaking is an approach to creating desirable places where people want to live, not just tolerate living. Many tangible features help to create a sense of place (discussed below), and when they are fully employed, communities can emerge as thriving places with amenities, opportunities, and a mix of different lifestyles.

A part of placemaking is taking pride in civic spaces, and understanding that how these spaces are designed influences how the public can access and interact within these spaces. The public realm is what distinguishes cities from one another and gives its built environment a recognizable identity. The spaces residents experience often— roads, sidewalks, parks, plazas— must not only be highly regarded and well implemented, but they should also be well coordinated with private development for a high-quality experience for all users.

PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS

Placemaking elements, or the lack of them, can be supported in the zoning ordinance. The zoning ordinance is a set of local land use laws that govern the use and form of development. Below are some examples of regulations that build a place.

BUILD-TO-LINES (ZERO FRONT YARD SETBACK)

Build-to lines are a tool for creating a uniform building distance that a building must be from the front property line. If buildings frame a street, then the build-to-line explains how a building interfaces with the public realm. The emphasis is on how the building relates to the streetscape in a way that is agreeable to pedestrians. Evart's downtown adheres to a "build-to-line" model as evidenced in the photo below.

OPEN STORE FRONTS

Open storefronts are another design feature that makes an environment more inviting. A successful open storefront has transparency or an adequate

amount of windows for residents to window shop, and feel safe on the street. Other elements are listed in the drawing below from New York City's storefront design guidelines. It is striking how similar their ideal



Downtown Evart's uniform build-to-line

storefront matches a historic building in downtown Evart. While not all of these design features are necessary, when combined they provide a more interesting and pleasing atmosphere to passersby.

This building from 1874 exhibits architectural detail with cornices near the roof line and arched, decorative window frames. The sign sports a simple design that is well-placed and legible.

The building could be more transparent with clearer windows on the first floor so that passersby could see into the building to view a display. The building facade could also be enhanced with an awning



Placemaking Elements



Two older buildings with architectural detail next to a newer, less ornate building detracts from the overall design and feel of downtown

to protect or shade customers from the elements. Awnings also add embellishment to a building and contribute to the street's ambiance. Building lighting is also missing but this could be reconciled if the city provides lampposts on the right-of-way in front of the building. Evart's storefront facades do not have facade lines on the street, sometimes known as a "street wall." Build-to lines are a specific consistently maintain architectural detail. Some facades have little dimension or noteworthy features while others feature ornate and historic attributes. While variety in building facades can have aesthetic appeal, wildly different facades suffer from a total lack of cohesion. Uniform lighting and cohesive facades contribute to an attractive streetscape.

GROUND FLOOR SIGNAGE STANDARDS

Signage has an impactful influence on shoppers. Guidelines are necessary for a cohesive "look" for downtown while still permitting variety. Signs are meant to advertise for a company, but also be compatible with the architectural style and scale

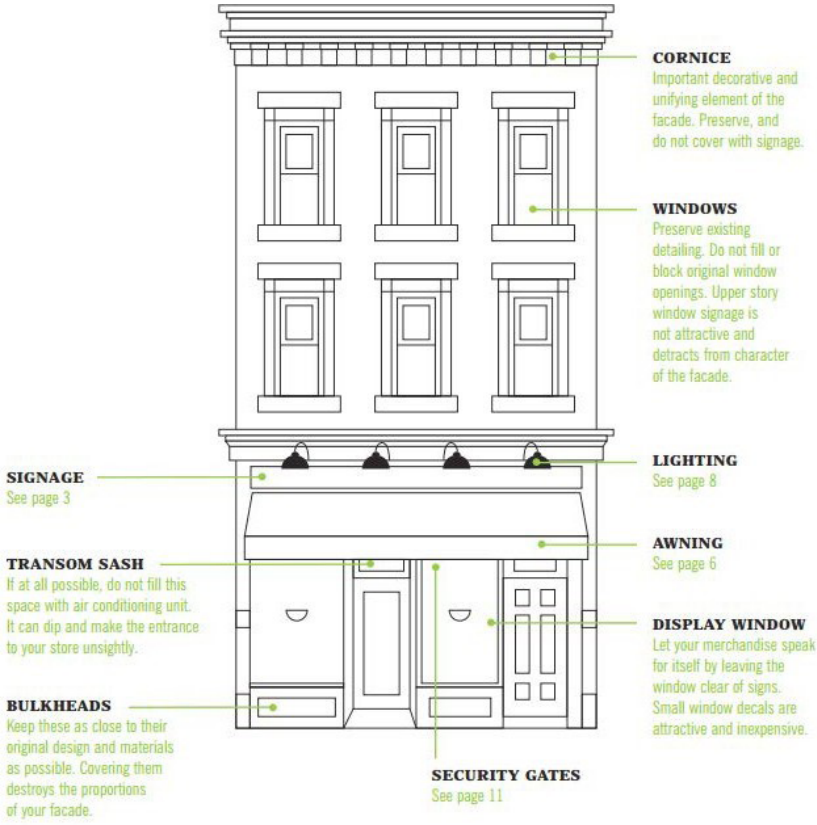
of the building. Standards may address legibility, placement, colors, materials, and illumination. Ground floor signage is permitted in downtown Evart but signs are people-centered and evaluate density, housing types, road types, proximity to other neighborhoods, and the function they serve for the community, all of which when combined, impact a resident's quality of life. The following typologies also consider centers, edges, and corridors that bound neighborhoods and reside within them. As demographics and development change the landscape of a city, the typologies should be updated to reflect that change. Evart's neighborhoods are largely transected by Main Street and US-10, creating the largest nexus in the city.

NEIGHBORHOOD TYPOLOGIES

A typology is an attempt to categorize the various attributes of a complicated subject into coherent groups. Neighborhood typologies are the building



These are two examples of how multiple buildings in Evart meet key elements for creating a safe and inviting place



block for cities because they are rectangular blocks with sidewalks on both sides. The setbacks vary by community but generally allow for a modest front yard, ranging between 6 and 18 feet.

These areas can be a transition between downtown living and spacious residential areas. More specifically in Evart, larger historic homes reside on North Main Street.

TRADITIONAL URBAN

The majority of Evart's neighborhoods fall into this category. Traditional urban residential refers to higher density (than suburban residential), single-family, usually detached homes. The street network is usually a grid, forming located at various heights, some of which are in windows, above the windows, on an awning, or above the awning. This results in visual discontinuity and could minimize the overall effect of keeping people there. Traditional urban residential mainly serves families or independent seniors, and as such has a variety of amenities that cater to them like neighborhood schools, places of worship, parks, and/or community centers.

While parts of these neighborhoods are close enough to walk downtown or to shopping hubs, most of these residents will choose to drive.

Some neighborhoods in Evart that meet this description are bounded by:

- Jefferson Street (north), North Cedar Street (west), North River Street (east), and 5th Street (south)
- Pere Marquette Trail (north), Cherry Street (west), Muskegon River (south), and River Street (east).

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

Suburban residential neighborhoods are low-density residential areas. Some ways of achieving spaciousness are with ample setbacks and side lots that can be up to 24 feet. Due to the amount of land required, these areas are usually located on



Example of a historic home on Main Street in Traditional Residential

the periphery of a jurisdiction's boundary and are therefore car-dependent. The street patterns in these neighborhoods may have a grid, but curvilinear roads and cul-de-sacs are also common.

There is less commonly a complete sidewalk network; this is the case in Evart's suburban neighborhood. The neighborhood in Evart that meets this typology is loosely bounded by the Muskegon River on the east, 7 Mile Road on the north, Evart Street on the west, and Jefferson Street on the south.

MOBILE HOME PARK

While the mobile home park only comprises 0.4% of the total land area in Evart, or 6.1 acres, it is a well-defined neighborhood. While the other typologies do not specify a particular housing type, a mobile



Example of Suburban Residential

home park does. All of the homes are pre-fabricated and can be either permanently attached to a site or mobile. Density varies but due to their narrow shape tend to be denser than suburban or traditional residential. Historically, mobile home parks are zoned to smaller, peripheral areas of a city. This is the case in Evart where the mobile home zone is located on Fair Street, on the western part of the city, and does not abut any other residential zones.

VILLAGE HUB

The Village Hub typology does not currently exist in Evart. This neighborhood is an “all-in-one hub” that offers a variety of housing types, and nearby retail and entertainment. This type of neighborhood still maintains a small-town feel but has the convenience of more urban living. It consists of higher-density residential located next to downtown or commercial or mixed-use development, making it the most walkable of the neighborhoods.

While not available yet, Evart’s current development patterns do not preclude the city from moving towards a village hub typology. Both Millennials and Baby Boomers are demanding denser development located near a mix of land uses to be less reliant on cars for daily errands and socializing.

CENTERS AND EDGES

A neighborhood center is based on a sense of place rather than geography. It can be an anchor institution, a landmark, or a frequently visited and

adored location that serves its members in some way—a place to congregate socially or conduct community matters, or both!

Where possible, the “Neighborhood Typologies” map identifies a center for each neighborhood.

1. Downtown: Gazebo
2. Traditional Residential North: Evart Middle School
3. Traditional Residential South: City Hall

As seen from the map, the suburban residential and shopping hub typologies do not have centers. Secondly, Evart City Hall occupies the edge of downtown and the southern traditional residential neighborhood.



Downtown Gazebo



Evart Middle School

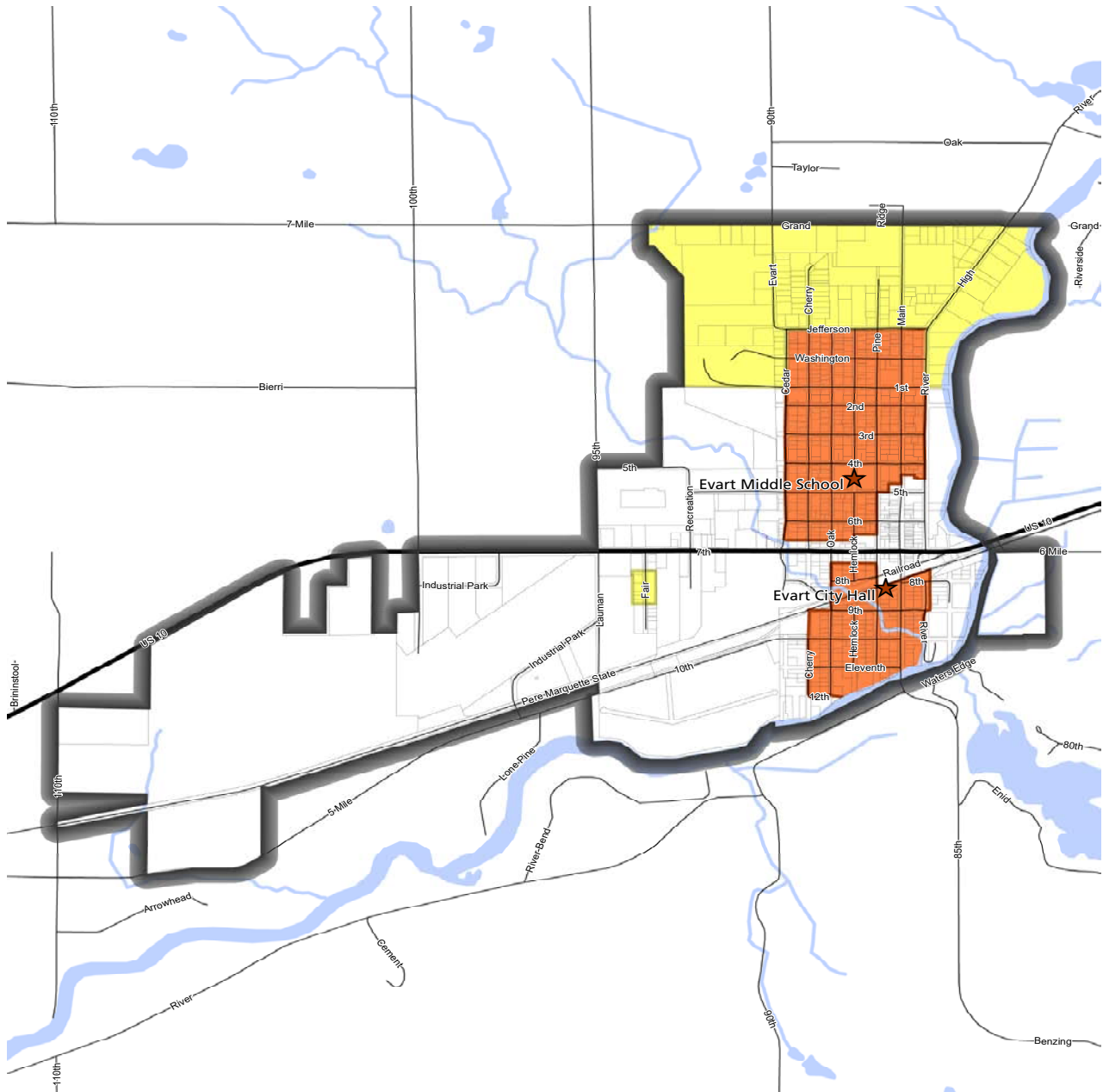


City Hall and Park



Village Hub Example, Downtown PawPaw, Michigan

Map 9. Neighborhood Typologies



CITY OF EVART MASTER PLAN

Neighborhood Typologies

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, EUP, ESRI Basemap

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| City Boundary | Parcels |
| State Roads | Traditional Urban |
| All Roads | Suburban Residential |
| Railroads | Traditional Urban Edge |
| Neighborhood Centers | Suburban Residential Edge |



TRANSPORTATION TYPOLOGIES

Transportation typologies are categories with loose definitions for describing the various options a person has as driver, cyclist, or pedestrian. Understanding the criteria for each transportation typology assists cities in pairing them with the corresponding neighborhood and/or district to maximize all users' experience.

Transportation typologies are based on the following criteria:

- its physical conditions
- how it accommodates its users
- the surrounding land uses
- the development intensity

These typologies differ from the National Functional Classifications because they assess how a road is viewed by users besides drivers. These typologies are not exact but describe different options for how roads can suit users' needs over time.

MAIN STREET

North Main Street is the principal street that runs through the downtown. Main Street should serve as many users as possible and offer an attractive ambiance. Speed limits are slower to make pedestrians more comfortable during their downtown experience.

Example:

- Main Street to 5th Avenue



Downtown and Main Street, Evart

URBAN CENTER STREETS

Urban center streets are also a part of the downtown and are designed to support intense development. They also usually accommodate multi-modal transit, provide access to mixed-use development, and serve most of the parking and trucking needs of downtown.

Examples:

- 6th Street
- River Street

COMMERCIAL ARTERIALS

Commercial arterials prioritize vehicular mobility between residential neighborhoods.

Vehicular mobility is usually measured by the flow of traffic and speed limits, and is, therefore, less pedestrian-oriented. This type of corridor contains retail stores with a large footprint or retail closer to the right-of-way.

Example:

- 7th Street



Shopping up and Commercial Arterial,
along 7th Street (US-10)

INDUSTRIAL

Mobility is highly valued on industrial streets. Speed limits are often higher than on similarly-sized streets, and there is no on-street parking. Development differs on industrial streets because buildings have larger setbacks and larger footprints than commercial or residential streets. There is also ample parking to accommodate employees and larger vehicles such as semi-trucks.

Examples:

- 95th Avenue
- 100th Avenue
- North Industrial Park Drive
- North River Street

NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTORS

Neighborhood connectors provide access to neighborhood commercial properties and multi-family housing. They may also serve as residential collectors, but mobility is still second to access.

Examples:

- Oak Street
- Hemlock Street

RESIDENTIAL

A residential street provides access to individual residential properties for motorized vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. They carry traffic that has a destination or an origin in a residential neighborhood. They may also offer on-street parking.

Examples:

- Cedar Street
- Cherry Street

NONMOTORIZED

Nonmotorized paths are separate from the vehicular right-of-way. While separate, they are usually located adjacent to high-volume traffic roads.

Examples:

- Pere Marquette Trail
- Sidewalks



Traditional Urban and Residential Street

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

This Master Plan contains two components, a 2017 Public Open House and an additional public survey that was performed in 2022 as a component of the Plan update process. The overall idea of the community assessment is to identify assets, projects, goals, and areas for development. The community assessment is intended to empower communities by giving them the tools to plan for the future in the manner of their choosing. The process is locally organized and consists of multiple listening sessions in which everyone in the community has a chance to voice their opinion.

STRUCTURE

The public open house was held on January 24th, 2017 with about 13 attendees representing a broad cross-section of Evart residents. This meeting was open to all members of the community. At the evening meeting, residents expressed their vision for Evart's future and identified short-term projects and volunteers to execute them. Detailed responses are listed below.

In October of 2022, valuing the information that was gathered from the Master Plan rewrite in 2017, but desiring information that is a little fresher, the City of Evart Planning Commission issued an online opinion survey to gather public opinion regarding land use and planning in the City. The survey was organized into three sections: background questions, land use questions, and general opinion questions.

A total of 123 responses were received for this online survey. Resulting in a rate of return of approximately 9.1% (based on the City's 2020 population of 1,354 of all persons over the age of 15). It should be noted that due to the sample size, sample population, and other limitations present in online surveys generally, results should not be interpreted with a purely scientific mindset; however, results of the survey provide valuable perspectives of the community's opinions regarding relevant land use and planning issues in the City. The survey was successful in that it resulted in objective, quantifiable information from a larger group of people compared to prior participation forms of public input (i.e., the 2017 Community Open House) in the most recent Master Plan.

The survey is one of several tools that will help the City of Evart Planning Commission set land use planning policy, prioritize projects, and make decisions over the next five or more years. Independently of the survey, in 2017, the Michigan Rural Council (MRC) met with two other groups of stakeholders to conduct a modified SWOT analysis which stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. With these groups, MRC asked them to identify Evart's challenges and strengths, groups that are already working to improve Evart, and City officials and employees found the top problem areas fell into two broad categories: quality of housing and loss of jobs.

Of mention, however, was the complaint heard from several members that even when there are jobs available, people from town do not have a strong work ethic and cannot necessarily be counted on for sustained employment. They mentioned that after a short training period, some employees do not come back after receiving their first paycheck.

Members bemoaned the fact that the city does not have the "tools" to require landlords to bring their properties up to code. And there is no financial incentive for landlords to do it themselves. Due to existing poverty, landlords can only charge minimum rents and are not upgrading their properties willingly if they cannot increase their rents as a result.

They mentioned that several landlords own large numbers of low-quality rental units and these landlords are not in favor of investing the money to bring these units up to code; which makes it more difficult to sell a rental registration ordinance to the council.

As they listed all the groups that are working to improve the community, they proudly mentioned the Federation of Women's group that brings more than 1,000 people to town to celebrate law enforcement and other emergency personnel for National Night Out. It is a very festive, free event that brings families to Evart each year to enjoy food, games, and prizes.

DATA ENTRY AND MANAGEMENT

The second group was made up of business owners, community economic developers, and churches. Their top concerns/ echoed those expressed in the first group: low-quality housing and lack of jobs. The following quote sums up much of the discussion: "The average income of the families is \$19,000, so most families cannot afford to buy (and fix up) a house. Because there's such a demand for housing and no housing code, there are many homes in very poor conditions. High demand and low-quality supply."

Members of the group feel that losing Liberty Dairy and other manufacturing jobs dealt a crushing blow to Evart. Although they are not taking it lying down; there are new business owners in the downtown who are eager to update their properties and are passionate about bringing the downtown back. They just need some additional tools. The Friends of Evart are fast-tracking an Evart Promise program to support Evart school kids with college scholarships.

EXPRESSED VISION

During the planning process, residents participated by sharing their vision for Evart. Residents want Evart to be known as a destination in Michigan. The vision describes crowded sidewalks downtown with a variety of restaurants, retail, and entertainment options, including a vibrant riverwalk. There is a desire for increased opportunities for socializing on evenings and weekends.

The community also wants to see strong, active collaboration across the many entities that are working to revitalize Evart. Examples of these local contributors are the Evart Downtown Development Authority (DDA), local governments, churches, schools, and other civic organizations. In addition to the aforementioned contributors, the City of Evart has been working with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation by participating in Michigan Main Street, which assists communities with revitalizing and preserving their historic downtown corridors.

The result of productive collaboration would lead to a one-stop shop for city services and healthcare. The residents want an Evart with little or no poverty and opportunity for all, a community where people pitch in to help the community and each other.

The residents understand that to improve their quality of life, they must be willing to go beyond the status quo to achieve positive results. The City will achieve this vision by embracing new community, economic, housing, and planning policies that will guide its future growth and development.

SWOT ANALYSIS

As a part of the planning process, a SWOT was conducted with the community to determine the City's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Initially conducted, as part of the 2017 Master Plan, the session began with the participants representing the DDA, LDFA, and City Council.

Participants first started by brainstorming and documenting all of their SWOT examples before prioritizing them. Each participant was given twelve stickers of which they placed 3 for each SWOT category. The stickers were weighted so that each participant could rank his/ her top 3 priorities for each category.

In 2023, as part of the Master Plan Update participants went through two workshops working to review the existing SWOT analysis. The 2017 Master Plan contained a detailed list, with which the Planning Commission agreed that these items are all still valid in 2022-23. So, the strengths identified by

the community during the 2017 open houses have been left in this update.

In addition to the 2017 list, in March and April of 2023, the Planning Commission hosted two workshops, and one workshop specifically was developed to review the 2017 strengths and weaknesses and opportunities or threats in the community. Many of the strengths and weaknesses identified were similar and have not changed significantly. However, the workshops did generate a list of additional opportunities and threats that were seen impacting the community today. These items are listed in the corresponding subsection.

TOP STRENGTHS

By far, the most significant strength identified with 19 votes was the existing industry. This is logical given the strengths were discussed among the business community. At 12 votes, the second highest vote was good leadership, specifically that the leadership is growth-minded.

There was a three-way tie with 8 votes each between the County Fairground and its related events, the river, and improving school quality including the Evart Promise and Champions of Evart.

TOP WEAKNESSES

The most voted upon weakness was a lack of communication and coordination with 25 votes. Luckily, in this day and age, there are several low-cost, high-impact forms of communication. This is the first step to addressing the type and frequency of communication methods desired by the involved parties.

Next, issues of high poverty and low incomes were mentioned and received 20 votes. Lastly, a lack of nightlife including entertainment options within the city held significant weight as 18 people voted it as a top weakness. There is likely a correlation between low incomes and a lack of nightlife considering entertainment purchases require ample discretionary income.

TOP OPPORTUNITIES

Going hand in hand with the weaknesses identified, the participants believe that the biggest opportunity for improving the downtown is better communication. Receiving 26 votes, it is clear that current methods are ineffective. The next most popular opportunity is becoming certified as a Redevelopment Ready Community by MEDC. With this certification comes state funding that can help address the lagging development within Evart. More specifically, the Liberty Dairy site is seen as an opportunity to return a vacant site to a community asset. This is an example of how a streamlined development process and certification can assist in bringing the building back to life.

The March 27th Master Plan Workshop identified several opportunities that have been identified as potential opportunities for the City of Evart, the list includes:

- MEDC working with business owners through a pilot community program.
- The City of Evart Housing Commission has grown significantly and is making new strides. The City has recently hired a new, highly experienced director who is dedicated to making new improvements and identifying middle housing options for public investment opportunities.
- The farmers market is strong and is growing significantly, attracting many out-of-town shoppers regularly.
- Through discussion in schools, it has been identified that the young people of Evart do want to remain in the City into adulthood and make a home here. But attainable housing options and jobs are limited and it is difficult for young people just out of school to be able to start a new life in Evart.
- There is a need for design standards for the downtown and because the core downtown is relatively intact from a historical building perspective, it is important to develop design standards to keep historic features consistent and guide new development to consistent design along the corridor.

- Evart is a small, quaint community, and this is what many people are seeking.
- There is a strong need for a marina sales and supply retailer in the City. There is a demand for this and the closest available options are in Clare, Cadillac, or Big Rapids.
- Developing ground-floor residential options in the CBD district in mixed-use buildings.

TOP THREATS

There is a tie for first place between poor housing quality (stated as “city housing doesn’t show well”) and the nearby larger cities: Big Rapids, Clare, and Cadillac. Both threats received 21 votes, and are common threats to small towns with high poverty rates. The perception is that there is more opportunity in larger cities, and these could be possible cities where millennials are headed.

The quality of the housing stock is likely in poor condition because people living in poverty do not have the means to fix up their homes, and landlords do not see any financial advantages to fixing up their properties if it does not attract higher-paying households. The third highest votes went to declining tax revenue due to tax cuts from assessed properties losing value. This becomes a hard cycle to break and is at the heart of many other issues mentioned. Without the resources, a city cannot enforce blight standards, proactively seek out development and create programs to retain students or attract new business.



TABLE 7. GROUP ONE FEEDBACK

PROBLEMS/CHALLENGES	STRENGTHS/ASSETS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging infrastructure and housing • Blight, have a blight ordinance and use the local police department to enforce blight tickets in summer months. • Don't have a landlord-tenant ordinance • in place; close to 50% of rentals in the community and desperately need enforcement • Would like to see consistent, effective code enforcement for homeowner and rental property • Lost Dean Dairy processing plant and site have been vacant for 3 years • Property taxes are too high at 14.58 mils • The work ethic of some townsfolk is not solid • Struggle to keep the kids vested • The city's water and sewer systems are controlled by the City Council. Until the state steps up, we cannot do anything to attract people • Sue Devries has to move between MEDC staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muskegon River • Many lakes-beauty, recreation, many snowbirds • Service town to the adjoining townships • One of the most industrialized areas in Michigan. The industry draws in people from as far as Port Huron • Rails to Trails. The nicest stretch of trail • Recreation in general, in the winter the Rail Trail is used for snowmobiles; in the summer it's used by cyclists • Parks/campgrounds • Industrial Park and airport • Unique events (Musical Hour, Dulcimer Funfest) • Bell Tire's owner has a large grow facility, which can be converted to marijuana if laws change • Friends of Evart are considering redeveloping Dean's facility

WHO IS DOING WHAT IN EVART?	IF YOU WERE GOING TO DO ONE THING IN EVART, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends of Evart started from the LDFA. May be announcing an Evart promise for scholarships.• Have many churches – the council of ministers used to meet regularly, and housing rehab could be a great thing to work on.• Have Lion’s Club• The Federation of Women’s group works on National Night Out and brings more than 1,000 people to bring out law enforcement, fire, etc. for two hours. All free, food, backpacks, etc.• Fair Board• Chamber of Commerce• School board and superintendent• Mid-Michigan CAA gave \$82,000 for homeowner repair but only 2 people applied• Osceola County Habitat is building a home• Police enforce code compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve the Evart public schools –the quality of schools• Add jobs• Increase the graduation rate – it is currently at about 60% -- would like to see it closer to 80%• Build a new city hall and senior center• Start a façade grant program• Create a long-term capital plan and figure out how to fund things• Expand our industrial park• Improve our downtown• Improve our schools• Improve infrastructure

TABLE 8. GROUP TWO FEEDBACK

PROBLEMS/CHALLENGES	STRENGTHS/ASSETS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor pathways and access to the downtown. Need a trail off the Rails to Trail that leads to the downtown. • Need more restaurants • Need a more developed community garden where everyone participates and benefits • Need better infrastructure -have water that puddles downtown and freezes and leaks into the buildings. • Need a better and more up-to-date library with better staffing • Lost the Dairy • Once had more jobs than people. With the loss of Evert Products and Dairy, schools, etc., lost sustainable jobs • The rental vs homeowner rate is skewed. Council members are slum lords and need a rental ordinance • People brought in for low-income housing have brought everyone down • Brought in students with emotional impairment or learning issues to help with tax dollars, but the schools didn't have the resources and capacity to help with them. • See a need to teach other people about the strength • The average income of the families (\$19,000) with 1515 people, so most families can't afford to buy a house. • Many of the available houses are substandard. Because there's such a demand for housing and no housing code, there are many homes in very poor conditions. High demand and low-quality supply. • Landlords don't fix up their rental properties because they know they won't be able to increase the rent to pay for improvements, and they know there is a market for inexpensive rentals despite what shape they are in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community - everyone in the community supports events and each other. Hard to get volunteers but there's always support • People - the quality of people and their interpersonal skills and hearts are great. • Are the renters as much of a part of the community as the homeowners? Minister responded most of the people with whom they interact are not renters but are engaged. • Renters stay in the community although not necessarily in the same property. The church attracts people from the region as a whole. • River and the bike trail • Many homes turned into rentals because the jobs left. • Can buy real estate at an incredible price - especially on a lake (Note that this is the region) • Many summer activities -fishing, mushroom hunting, bicycling, music events (dulcimer festival), county fair, DDA has a great music program in the summer; people know that Evert exists. • Need help with the structures downtown; working with AI (DDA) on grant programs including façade programs and CDBG and rental rehab pending. • Property owners are vested and want to rehab their properties. • 14 new businesses have started in the last few years • The community is supporting the downtown • High walkability • Increase in community involvement • High number of industrial jobs, and a great opportunity with tourism and small business. Can quickly start other endeavors while waiting for manufacturing to come in. • Spring Hill Camp

WHO IS DOING WHAT IN EVART?	IF YOU WERE GOING TO DO ONE THING IN EVART, WHAT WOULD IT BE?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has a leadership/mentor program – that will get the pastors involved. • DDA is working on a Main Street program application –already an Associate level • Chamber does Easter egg drop from a helicopter and throws live turkeys, also does many different events, but has a hard time getting people to sign up to volunteer, but people love the events. Don't have a paid chamber director and people don't want to sign up to be the new president. • Churches are collectively trying to invest in people's lives –have Feeding America trucks and plan for 200 and get 70, food pantry, do mentors in the schools, clothing program (but closing) • Have a Council on Aging meals program but have to call before 1 pm the day before to set up a pick-up • LDFA board started pulling people together and developed an entrepreneurship class and created in-district programs. The group is called Friends of Evart. They invite different groups to speak. Working to keep people up-to-date on different topics including industry. Working on an airshow for 2018 • Thought it would be beneficial to become a promising city (similar to the Kalamazoo Promise program) destination and are working on creating a board and starting to fundraise and create a local and private program. • Middle school started a Business Professionals of America program and placed in the Nationals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Evart public schools –the quality of schools • Add jobs • Increase the graduation rate – it is currently at about 60% -- would like to see it closer to 80% • Build a new city hall and senior center • Start a façade grant program • Create a long-term capital plan and figure out how to fund things • Expand our industrial park • Improve our downtown • Improve our schools • Improve infrastructure

TABLE 9. COMMUNITY INPUT

VISION	ASSETS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger people taking care of older people • More of a “community” with all organizations and people working together toward a shared vision • Crowded sidewalks downtown • Skilled and motivated workforce with good paying jobs • Teachers competing for jobs here-a school system that attracts great teachers • Buildings and storefront filled • One stop shop for city services: DDA/Fire/City staff • Own one stop shop for healthcare/substance abuse services • Poverty eliminated or drastically reduced, better quality of life for all • Become a destination in Michigan • Evening and weekend activities, more opportunity for socialization for people of all ages community center, restaurants, bowling alley, extended hours for main street businesses • Expanded library hours • More bars and restaurants • Vibrant riverfront • Riverwalk like San Antonio • More collaboration with stakeholders and administrators and townships and city; regionalism • Kids more excited about school • Remove dams and create great fishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riverside Park • Lakes/Plenty of water • Year-round camping/ natural recreation area • Summer events • Rails to trails • Timber beast triathlon • Fishing/hunting • Easy access to/from cities • Dulcimer festival • An abundance of historic sites • Long history and historic buildings • Not a large city • Potential Evart Historical Museum • Families with generational roots • Summer concert series • Farmer’s market • Many cultural opportunities • Osceola leadership summit • Industrial base • New shops downtown • Transportation infrastructure/ US 10/ Osceola transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime location • Dairy riverfront • Quaintness/safe community • Walkability • Wastewater capacity • Low cost of living • River and parks • Four seasons • Grocery store • 2 manufacturing plants • US 10/Central location • Airport • Potential locations downtown • Fairgrounds • Police • Fireworks • Schools • Ice rink • Civic groups/active chamber and DDA • Dance studio • Play center downtown • Scott - a promoter • Park space • Civic groups

PROJECTS	VOLUNTEERS
1. Riverside Park camping promotion and development (possibly add cabins and other amenities)	
2. Identification and designation of historic sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Elliott • Nolan Van Order
3. City Hall/ community center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BJ Foster • Dan Elliot
4. Dairy property redevelopment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amanda Joyce • Dan Joyce • John Joyce • Steve Petosky • Scott McDonald • Dan Elliot • Nolan Van Order
5. Business incubator and/or co-working space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Joyce
6. Volunteer Recognition Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Joyce • BJ Foster • Deb Booker • Amanda Joyce
7. Multi-use indoor amphitheater/auditorium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott McDonald
8. Dog park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott McDonald • Nolan Van Order

At the March 27, 2023 workshop, participants identified many new threats in addition to the ones identified in the 2017 Open House. Many of these threats were more related to public perception of the City. However, good information was garnered from this workshop and these threats are listed below.

- The process change is a difficult one for the community to accept.
- The administrative characteristics of the City governmental system are often complained about; however, the City has initiated change and new procedural actions since the last Master Plan was adopted. The residents are often unaware of this and have not identified these changes to date.
- Residents do not patronize the local shops and restaurants. They complain that there are not enough local businesses in the City, yet business owners are folding because not enough people are shopping or dining at the businesses or restaurants that are here and provide them with the things they want.
- It is agreed by all that the city needs more housing; however, the availability of real estate land is too scarce to provide sufficient space to build new or develop infill.
- The appearance of many of the downtown buildings is in poor shape. There are business owners and property owners that are investing in fixing their buildings up, but the majority don't care to do so.

HOUSING AND WORKFORCE STRATEGIES

On June 14th, 2017 a group of stakeholders convened to discuss Evart's two largest topics: housing and workforce development. During this meeting, stakeholders divided into groups to answer three questions:

- What is your vision of a successful housing market and a successful workforce?
- What resources or services already exist to help achieve this vision?
- What resources or services are missing to keep

Evart from achieving its vision?

After compiling this information, the stakeholders met again a month later on July 13th to discuss what actions can be taken to achieve their vision. Action steps were created as a group, and then each stakeholder was given three different colored stickers to vote for their top three actions for both housing and workforce strategies. In the Implementation Tables, there is a number in parenthesis that represents the number of votes that action received. The number of votes corresponds to the priority level: the more votes received, the higher the priority.

LOW-INCOME PERSPECTIVE

At the July 13th, 2017 meeting, two low-income residents attended the meeting with a representative list of advantages and challenges to living in Evart. They mentioned that many low-income residents do not feel comfortable attending public meetings and instead, they convened independently to compile their thoughts on how to address common problems to improve their quality of life as Evart residents. Possible solutions that were not already in the Action Plan were added to reflect their concerns and work towards problem-solving.

ADVANTAGES

Walkability

Most Evart businesses and resources are within walking distance for able-bodied residents, lack of sidewalks in some areas (southside of US 10) is a challenge for families.

Computer/Internet access

The library, is a wonderful resource for people without other access, though hours and confidentiality can be problematic.

Healthcare providers/ pharmacists

Specifically, those that accept low-income insurance plans or offer a sliding payment scale help people receive the care they need.

Farmer's Market

Evart's farmer's market participates in Double Up Dollars to provide individuals and families access to fresh produce that might otherwise be too expensive.

Sense of community

Within the low-income population, people are starting to take care of each other and share limited resources such as transportation.

GED Program Availability

It is a big plus to have both an online and traditional classroom format provided locally for the GED program.

CHALLENGES

Transportation

Jobs, access to benefits, most healthcare providers, the ability to bargain shop for groceries, etc. all depend on reliable, affordable transportation. Evart residents dealing with the challenges of low income are often without personal transportation.

Job Stability

Many residents receiving benefits want to work but are afraid to take part-time positions. If those positions either end or do not turn into full-time jobs, the household loses its benefits without the ability to make up the difference in income. This can take months to sort out and most low-income families do not have that kind of safety net.

Housing

There is limited housing for individuals or couples without children and the qualifications (income, credit) for that housing can be an obstacle. Some of the available rental units in Evart are unsuitable, but their low-income occupants lack the resources to move. Some landlords may be unaware of, or unwilling, to address the issues.

Us vs. Them Thinking

Low-income residents continue to feel 'outside' the larger Evart community. One expression of this divide is the hesitation to attend meetings that are designed to garner input from the entire community.

Effective Communication

Many residents are unaware of the resources available for them to access in Osceola County



SOLUTIONS

- Small town Uber transportation type system.
- Bring the resources to the residents, instead of the other way around. A brick-and-mortar (or mobile) facility that could house agencies like Michigan Works! Salvation Army, DHHS, etc. so these important resources are locally available, at least part of the time.
- Communicate to residents which resources are available and where they are available. Provide a summary of the resources offered by each agency. Internet and local paper
- Use the local newspaper, The Voice, in combination with other media to reach all residents more effectively.
- Continue to support and increase programs and events that foster community relationship-building. The summer concert series, Christmas in a Small Town, and the Higher Ground Family Learning Center are just a few examples of local initiatives that welcome all Evart residents. Nothing demolishes "us vs. them" thinking faster than knowing 'them' as humanbeings.
- Establish a Rental Inspection Program that protects both landlords and renters.
- Diverse paths to home ownership- incentivize those willing to work to improve sub-par homes available for purchase.



ACTION PLAN

Housing

ACTION PLAN STRUCTURE

The actions listed to address housing quality are based primarily on the survey conducted in the City of Evart where many residents criticized the quality of rental housing. Because few properties were found to be in poor condition during the housing assessment, residents are likely referring to the interior conditions or, as frequently stated in their responses, the level of trash in front yards.

Table 10. Action Plan Strategies

TOPIC	GOAL	ACTION	PRIORITY
Major category	Broad desired outcome	Necessary task to accomplish goals	Actions ranked by community

REQUIRED RESOURCES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	EVALUATION MEASURES
What types of resources are needed for each action item	The entity in charge of overseeing the action	Desired time frame for implementation	Measures for evaluating the level of success after implementation of an action

CODE ENFORCEMENT

The police enforce blight year-round, although it is harder to see certain infractions in the winter months. However, over 60% of survey respondents stated they are willing to volunteer their time to help those in need of blight correction. The City has expanded this request and is now incorporating the City Manager and Department of Public Works Director to fulfill these concerns and enforcement requests.

RENTAL INSPECTION PROGRAM

A rental Inspection survey was also conducted as a way to gauge the usefulness and feasibility of implementing a rental inspection program in Evart. Due to concerns by renters that the housing quality is substandard, a survey was sent out to city and village managers throughout the state. With 23 total respondents, over half of the cities reported having a rental inspection program (52.2%). For those cities which responded that they do not have a program, the most common reason for deciding against it was landlord resistance (37.5%). However, other barriers reported in the comment section were that they were unsure of the cost and benefits of the program, the level of intrusiveness, and the expense of enforcement. However, when asked later how landlords responded to a rental inspection program, the most common response was "other." In the comments section, City Managers noted that landlords had a mixed response to inspections but that their views softened over time.

Almost one-third of landlords had little response at all. The results also showed that there is precedent for rental inspection programs over eleven years and that in general employees of the local government administer and perform the inspections. The increments for conducting inspections vary between annually (20%), every other year (20%), 3-5 years (40%), and others wrote that it depends on the landlord's performance. Rental inspections also vary by cost ranging between \$10-\$150 with an average cost of \$68.50. These fees offset the cost to run the program for 60% of the communities. There was mention of creative pricing that for example, offered bulk pricing to landlords with several properties and costs tied to performance.

When asked what percentage of rental inspections result in a citation to the landlord per year, half of the respondents said that less than 10% of inspections result in a citation. This is reassuring news that indicates if the landlord is held financially accountable for the quality of the housing, then it results in fewer instances of breaking building code. An overwhelming 90% stated that rental inspections were a viable tool for neighborhood revitalization and that the program has grown in success over time. Although 50% claim there has been no noticeable change to property values of inspection properties, 20% have seen a moderate increase in property values. Moreover, participants say that in addition to being a neighborhood revitalization tool, it has been used as a tool to gauge the standard of living, and health and safety improvements. The survey reveals that if done with landlord buy-in and a creative cost structure, rental inspections benefit renters as well as the entire neighborhood.

As of 2022, the City has worked diligently to develop a rental inspection program and it is proposed to launch by the end of 2022. This will address many of the concerns related here.

USDA Grants and Loans

SINGLE FAMILY ASSISTANCE (SEC. 502 DIRECT LOAN PROGRAM)

USDA sponsors two programs for rural development that can be of help to Evart homeowners.

The Single-Family Housing Direct Home Loans are a subsidy for a low 70% of them in place for very low-income residents to ensure that they live in safe and decent housing. These funds can be used to build, repair, renovate, or relocate a home in a rural area. In Osceola County, a household of 4 or fewer earning less than \$45,400 is eligible for payment assistance. The amount of money loaned to a homeowner depends on income, debts, and assets.

The Single-Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program provides a 90% loan note guarantee to approved lenders as a way of reducing their risk. The



Single-family homes are increasingly turning into rental units

program, therefore, assists lenders in providing low- and moderate-income household loans so they can build or rehabilitate a home. The income eligibility is the same as the Single-Family Housing Direct Home Loans program.

MULTIFAMILY ASSISTANCE

Similarly, to the Single-Family Assistance provided by the USDA, Multi-family funds are available. The Multi-family Housing Loan Guarantee provides qualified private-sector lenders funds to lend to borrowers who wish to increase the supply of low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The funds can be used for new construction, improvement, or purchase of multi-family rental units. The rent for the units is capped at 30% of 115% of the area's median income. Complexes must have at least five units, but can also include detached, semi-detached, or rowhouses.

The Multi-family Housing Direct Loans provides financing for qualified applicants who cannot find loans through a traditional bank. This program provides competitive rates so that the applicants can build or restore affordable units and still may make a return on their investment. The funds can be used for construction, improvement, and purchase of housing. This program is primarily geared towards housing low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled.

MSHDA

MSHDA has a program called Property Improvement Program where homeowners with equity in their home, an annual household income of up to \$105,700, and a credit score of at least 620 can access low-interest loans to improve their homes. The home must be the borrower's primary residence, either a single-family or manufactured home, located in Michigan.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG)

The CDBG program is administered by HUD and provides communities with wide-ranging resources to address specific community needs. At a state level, CDBG funds funnel through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and are distributed to help improve the economic and community circumstances of places under 50,000 people.

One program is called Low Moderate Income (LMI) Housing Rental Rehabilitation. An LMI household is one where the household income is equal to or less than the Section 8 low-income limits according to HUD. In Osceola County, the median household income is \$48,200, and the Section 8 income limits are derived from this number, and cannot exceed it. For a 4-person household, \$43,500 is considered low income, \$27,100 is very low, and \$24,250 is

considered extremely low income.

The funds for this program are directed toward rental units that need moderate or substantial rehabilitation. Upon completion, 51% of occupants must be low or moderate-income.

Redevelopment Opportunity

TRAIL TOWN

A Trail Town is a destination along a long-distance trail. Trail Towns are linked and serve both its residents and trail users. They feature amenities that suit a variety of different users. More developed areas have business amenities that support day-trippers such as a bike shop or a restaurant.

Evart is positioned in an opportune location to become a Trail Town. The old Flint & Pere Marquette Railway has been converted into a recreational trail. Evart sits along a large network of trails. The White Pine Trail runs for 92 miles as far North as Cadillac down to Grand Rapids. Evart lies along the eastern portion of the Pere Marquette trail that runs east to west from Chippewa to Baldwin at 55 miles in length and is one of the most widely used trails in Michigan. These two trails intersect in Reed City. These trails are tourist attractions that offer an array of recreational opportunities such as walking, bicycling, views of local flora and fauna, and proximity to rivers and lakes for fishing, canoeing, kayaking, and swimming.

However, the trail is not well linked to Evart's downtown, nor is there any business along the trail to meet the trail user's needs. Evart could be missing out on a huge tourist market. The Allegany Trail Alliance has outlined the basic elements of a Trail Town Strategy:

- Entice trail users to get off the trail and into your town
- Welcome trail users to your town with readily available information about the community

"A Trail Town is an active, attractive, and interesting place with accessible spaces, hosting a variety of activities and promoting social interaction and a strong sense of place."

-Allegany Trail Alliance

- Make a strong and safe connection between the town and the trail
- Educate local businesses on the economic benefits of meeting trail tourist's needs
- Recruit new businesses or expand existing ones to fill gaps in the goods and services needed by trail users
- Promote the "trail-friendly" character of the town
- Work with neighboring communities to promote the entire trail

Making investments that link the trail to town has shown to be economically worthwhile. These benefits are two-fold. First, it provides an opportunity to build up a new industry. In Michigan, outdoor recreation generates \$187 billion in consumer spending. Nationally, it is the third largest sector in annual consumer spending. It's also responsible for 194,000 direct jobs and \$5.5 billion in wages and salaries in Michigan. 63% of Michiganders participate in outdoor recreation each year. Secondly, 52% of college graduates in a 2011 survey conducted by Michigan College Foundation, stated that they value public parks, trails, recreation areas, and farmer's markets as the third most desirable community asset. Placemaking is a strategy to retain millennials.

Workforce

Workforce goals strive to accomplish two major tasks: workforce training and recruiting higher-quality jobs. To teach the next generation how to work in a variety of professions, the action strategies focus on requiring students to volunteer to learn new skills, how to behave in a professional context, and to network. MichiganWorks! has a youth program in place that Evart has used to place young adults, ages 16-24 in jobs. This program finds students who want to work and connects them with local employers. The economic benefits of meeting trail tourists' needs. It is recommended to expand this program so that more Evart residents are exposed to basic computer skills. Recruiting higher-quality jobs is an ambitious goal that many rural communities share. Stakeholders identified health care and child care as vital for retaining local employees. While no authority can require employers to offer these benefits, it is worthwhile to begin this conversation with them and to find resources for employees in the meantime.

One recommendation is to open discussions with employers about offering child care on-site. Perhaps the company cannot afford to give everyone a raise but can support a few qualified childcare providers. Moreover, concerns were expressed about workers quitting their jobs to keep their public benefits and healthcare. Stakeholders from the healthcare industry explained that there are options for workers who are worried about how their insurance coverage may change with employment. It is recommended that sessions are held by healthcare providers to explain the programs available to low-income residents.

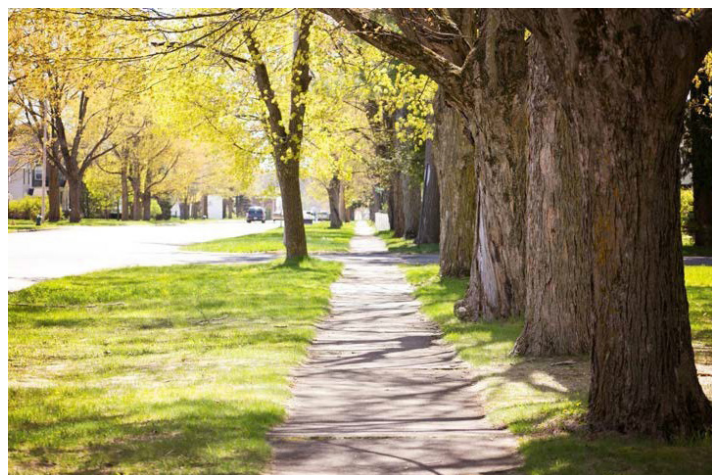
CIRCULATION

As recommended by low-income residents, an effort should be made to work with MOTA to continue to expand its service. MOTA has expanded routes but may still be a reliable service for those who do not have cars. Another possible consideration is to create a local version of a ride-share program that can take residents to and from important appointments and run errands.

COMMUNICATION

As demographics and technology change, a city must re-evaluate its outreach methods. Two goals under this theme address how Evart can improve communication with non-residents, such as potential business owners, and its residents. Improving communication with outsiders is a matter of changing marketing tactics to spread the new branding, using varied media sources, and expanding tours to a wider audience.

To improve communication with its residents, the city should consider attending more events and group meetings that take place in the community. Being present in already established events outside of City Hall shows the community the City's dedication and provides additional outlets for information exchange. Social media outlets have been utilized heavily and have improved communication with community members. One valuable lesson learned from the stakeholder meetings is that the local newspapers serve an important role in communicating to community members who do not have a smart device or consistent access to the Internet. The circulation, communication, and redevelopment goals were not voted on by community members or stakeholders but rather reviewed by the Planning Commission.



This is an example of a trail that could be used to link the rail trail to downtown

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Table 11. Action Plan Example

REDEVELOPMENT GOALS	ACTION	PRIORITY	REQUIRED RESOURCES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Take a proactive, city-led approach to redevelopment	Inventory potential redevelopment sites according to the Redevelopment Ready criteria.	High	Time, staff	Building Department	1-3 years	Valuable data gained on these properties
	Prioritize sites that serve the immediate needs of residents, i.e. housing, a community center.	High	Time, resident support	City, DDA, LDFA	1 year	Interest in the property
	Create an online directory with the redevelopment site’s basic information to market to developers.	High	Time, staff	City, DDA, LDFA	1-3 years	# of hits on the website, # calls about the properties
	Apply to Osceola County and/or the State of Michigan for funding to clean up brownfield sites.	Medium	Time, expertise	City, Osceola County, DEQ	1 year	Reduction in number of brownfields
	Continue to follow the RRC best practices.	High	Time	City, DDA	Ongoing	Development process is shorter; desired development is coming to Evert
	Leverage Evert's position on Rails to Trail to attract seasonal and tourist- based industry.	Low	Time	City, Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing	Increase in visitors, business sales, business openings

Table 12. Housing Goals

HOUSING GOALS	ACTION	PRIORITY	REQUIRED RESOURCES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Improve the housing quality so that both occupants and neighbors feel they are living in a safe, healthy, and attractive neighborhood	Conduct a full Target Market Analysis to see which type of housing formats are desired (8).	Low	Time, money	City, MSHDA	1 year	Valuable information gain from the process
	Consider a rental inspection program that offers advantages to high performance such as reduced fees or free online advertisement (11).	Medium	Time, money, expertise	City	1-3 years	Fewer complaints, higher housing quality
	Expand code enforcement to a year-round service (27).	High	Money, staff	City of Evart, Police Department	1-3 years	Reduction in number of blighted properties
	Compile a list of home repair services and send out to residents with the water bill (12) PIP DHHS State emergency fund USDA home repair loans MEDC	Medium	Time, expertise	City, MSHDA, Habitat for Humanity, DHHS, USDA	1 year	Improved housing quality
	Expand educational programs to basic home repair and maintenance, and diverse loan options (19).	High	Staff, time, space	Higher ground, Chemical Bank	1 year	Attendance in class
	Develop a list to list all homes in the City that are structurally unsound and unsafe. (2023 Update)	Low	Staff, time	City	1-3 years	User satisfaction with the authority
	Update the blight ordinance to include a provision for how to stack metal materials neatly on a residential yard (13).	High	Time	City, Police Department	1-3 years	Reduction in number of yards with visible stacks of metal materials
	Collaborate to apply for grants to expand refuse take-away services; promote services in the local newspaper (11).	Medium	Time, staff	Townships, Habitat for Humanity	1-2 years	Decrease in the presence of refuse in yards
	Plan a meeting between the city and landlords to discuss how to market rental properties (8).	Low	Time	City, landlords	1 year	# Landlords that participate at the meeting
Expand the variety of housing options to ensure that all ages, income levels, and types of disability can find adequate housing	Apply for funding for second floor rental rehabilitation (19).	High	Time, staff	City, MEDC	1-3 years	Second floor occupancy
	Update zoning ordinance to permit mixed-used and missing middle housing development in more areas throughout the city (5).	Low	Time	City	<1 year	# Parcels dedicated to mixed-use and missing middle housing
	Contact small-scale developers using MSHDA's approved list and invite them to tour sites identified for housing and mixed-use development (13).	Medium	Time	City, MSHDA, MEDC	1 year	# Tours given to developers
	Increase housing accessibility for disabled residents (11).	Medium	Time, expertise, money	USDA, MSHDA, MEDC, local churches	2-3 years	# Disabled persons with accessibility features

Table 13. Workforce Goals

WORKFORCE GOALS	ACTION	PRIORITY	REQUIRED RESOURCES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Train this generation's workforce for jobs at every skill-level	Find volunteers to expand the frequency of the city's courses on Microsoft suite. Consider expanding to other software programs (5).	Low	Time, space	City, School District, DDA	1 year	# Classes offered and attended
	Require High School students to volunteer for 40 hours per year (10).	Medium	Time	School District	1 year	# Projects completed by students
	Promote youth work programs through MichiganWorks! (21)	High	Time	DDA, Michigan Works!, Chamber of Commerce	1 year	# Youth enrolled in the program
	Lobby for (Salvation Army, MiWorks Job Fairs) services to visit Evart regularly (26).	High	Time, staff	City, Osceola County	Ongoing	Increase in services locating in Evart
	Provide regularly scheduled networking opportunities outside of job fairs for the workforce to meet employers , such as National Night Out(13).	Medium	Time, space	Higher Ground	Ongoing	# Attendees
	Plan an Ideas Summit where community members can convene to pitch business ideas and gauge interest in their good or service (14).	Medium	Time, space, staff	DDA, Chamber of Commerce	1-3 years	# Attendees
	Provide co-worker communal space for rent (4).	Low	Money, expertise	Developers, LDFA	3-5 years	# Users
Recruit and expand high-paying jobs with benefits	Consider a community benefits agreement that negotiates with employers ways that companies can contribute to Evart (6).	Low	Expertise, time, staff	City, LDFA	1 year	Quality of benefits received from employers
	Educate residents on healthcare options that do not receive benefits through their employer (18).	High	Time, space, staff	DHHS, Higher Ground	<1 year	# Attendees, drop in the uninsured rate
	Consider permitting medical marijuana facilities (5).	Low	Time, expertise, staff	City Attorney	3-5 years	Support from the community
	Speak with employers to find the biggest barriers to offering child-care onsite (17).	Medium	Time	City, Employers, Michiganworks!	1 year	Increased awareness of barriers to work
	Partner with local companies to develop Employee Resource Networks (22).	High	Time, staff	DDA, LDFA	1-3 years	# Employers in the program

Table 14. Circulation Goals

CIRCULATION GOALS	ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Create a nonmotorized network that is safe for all users.	Fill in the sidewalk gaps, prioritizing areas where vulnerable populations frequent, such as children and the elderly.	High	City, MDOT	3-5 years	User satisfaction, reduction in number of pedestrian-vehicular incidents
	Install crosswalks at every intersection.	Medium	MDOT	1-3 years	Reduction in number of pedestrian-vehicular incidents
	Update sidewalk zoning to include universal design language.	Low	City	1 year	Improvement to sidewalk accessibility
	Create a bicycle network with the appropriate infrastructure and amenities.	Medium	MDOT	5+ years	# Users
Expand accessibility of motorized options to low-income residents	Increase the number of MOTA routes.	Medium	MOTA, Osecola County	1-3 years	# Users who can ride as a result of more routes
	Consider a small-town ride share service like Uber or Lyft.	High	DDA, residents	1-3 years	# Users and drivers that participate

Table 15. Communication Goals

COMMUNICATION GOALS	ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	EVALUATION MEASURES
Increase awareness of Evert as a place of economic opportunity	Expand the media outlets used to radio, travel magazines, regional newspapers, and social media.	Medium	DDA, City	1 year	Increase in number of outlets used
Improve two-way communication with residents about their vision for the city.	Set up kiosks at city events to disseminate current information and listen to resident’s feedback.	High	City	<1 year	# Visitors over time
	Plan an annual meeting with High School students for community engagement.	Medium	City, School District	1-2 years	Level of student engagement
	Use social media consistently to share information with the residents.	Medium	City, DDA	1 year	# Followers, likes
	Consistently post any city news or updates in the local newspaper.	High	City, DDA	<1 year	Increased awareness of city events among readers



FUTURE LAND USE & ZONING PLAN

Future Land Use

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008 requires the inclusion of a future land use map and zoning plan in the master plan. The future land use map and districts identify a generalized, preferred organization of future land uses for the City of Evart. It is a general framework intended to guide land use and policy decisions within the City over the next 15-20 years. It guides the development of a Zoning Plan, and ultimately the Zoning Ordinance. A table summarizing the future land use districts can be found on the following page.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The following summarizes key changes to the new Future Land Use Map. Generally, the residential zones on the periphery of the city remain

untouched. The commercial corridor on 7th Street remains the same, and the central business district is slightly expanded to include parcels along the river.

The Future Land Use Map creates a mixed-use district around the perimeter of the downtown. Mixed-used development typically features retail and/or services on the ground floor and residential space above, although many variations are possible. A mix of uses serves many purposes: a gradual transition from downtown to surrounding neighborhoods, more density near commercial enterprises to help boost local business, provide another type of housing for the elderly, single-households, and young professionals, and contribute to walkable downtown. This zone is also expanded to the non-motorized trail to help draw more trail users into Evart.

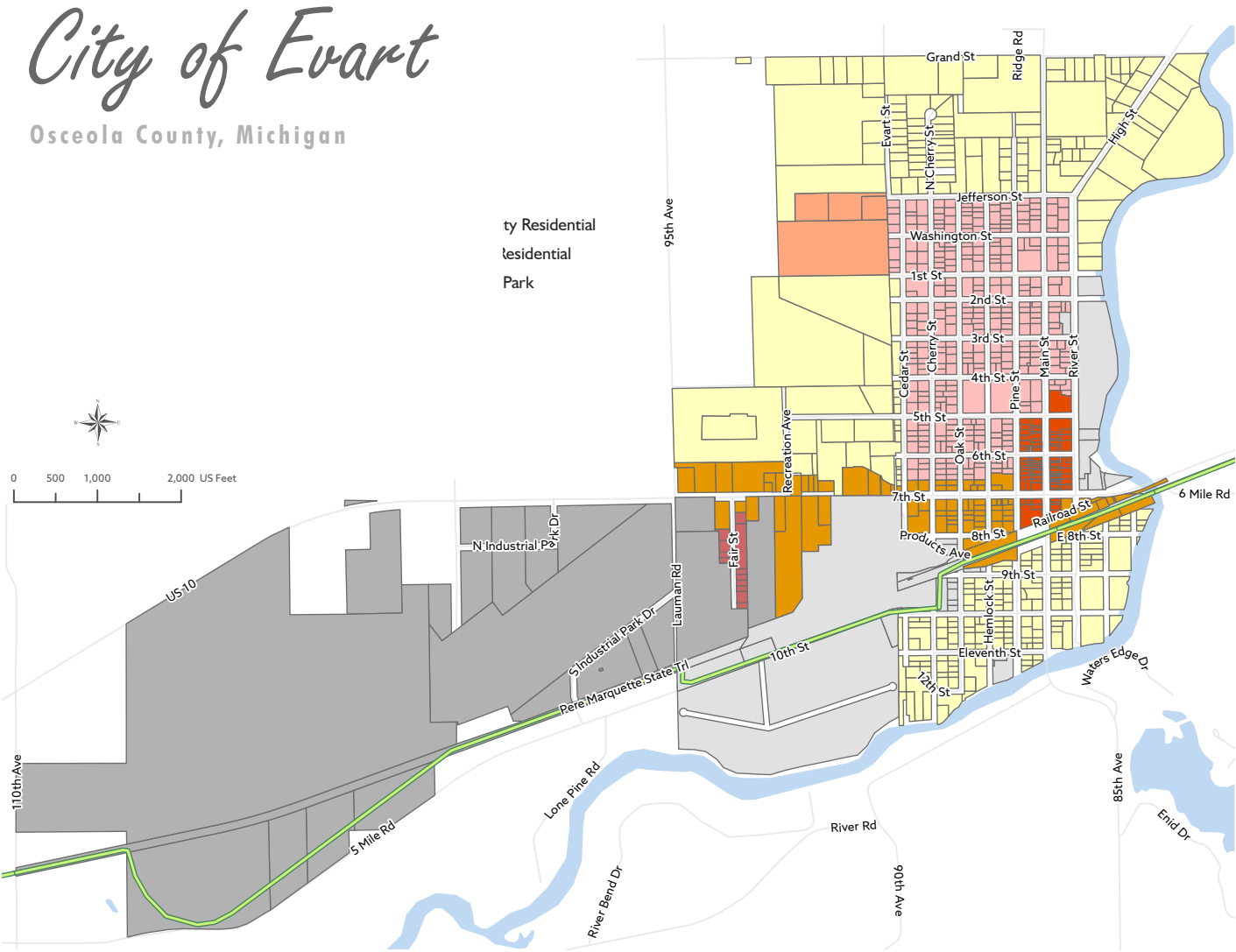
Current Zoning Uses

Before discussing how the current zoning ordinance can be improved, it is helpful to begin by summarizing the existing zoning districts. Studying what is permitted in each zone informs where and how potential changes could be applied. Because zoning is a local law, it is a tool with powerful effects on land use planning.

Table 16. Current Zoning Districts

DISTRICT	USES (GENERAL)	MINIMUM SETBACKS	MAXIMUM HEIGHT	LOT SIZE (MINIMUM)
R-1 Low-Density Residential	Single-family dwellings	Front: 25 ft Rear: 20 ft Side: 10 ft	25 ft	10,200 sq ft
R-2 Medium-Density Residential	A single-family and two-family dwelling	Front: 20 ft Rear: 10 ft Side: 5-10 ft	25 ft	8,500 sq ft One-family dwelling 10,200 sq ft Two-family dwelling
R-3 High-Density Residential	Single-family, two-family dwelling, and multiple-family	Front: 20-30 ft Rear: 10-20 ft Side: 5-20 ft	25 feet, 30 ft for multi-family dwelling	6,200 sq ft One-family dwelling 10,200 sq ft Two-family and multiple family dwelling
R-4 Mobile Home Park	Mobile and manufactured homes	As set forth by the State Mobile Home Commission, Act 419		20 acres for a new park, or 10 acres for an expansion
C-1 Central Business District	Office, Services, Retail	Front: 0 ft Rear: 10 ft Side: 0.5 ft	42 feet	N/A
C-2 General Business District	Services, Restaurants	Front: N/A Rear: 10 ft Side: 25 ft	42 feet	N/A
I-1 Light Industrial	Manufacturing, Warehousing	Front- 25 ft Rear- 20 ft Side-20 ft	42 feet	N/A
1-2 General Industrial	Airport, Manufacturing, Services	Front: 30 ft Rear: 30 ft Side: 30 ft	42 feet	N/A

Map 11. Zoning



Legend

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| C-1: Central Business | R-2: Medium Density Residential |
| C-2: General Business | R-3: High Density Residential |
| I-1: Light Industrial | R-4: Mobile Home Park |
| I-2: General Industrial | Trails |
| R-1: Low Density Residential | |

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Residential 1 - The Low-Density Residential District is established to provide areas of low density residential development. Desired development includes single-family dwellings. **Residential 2** - The R-2 District is established to provide areas of medium density. Regulations include uses permitted in the R-1 District plus residential dwellings with two-family housing units.

Residential 3 - The R-3 District is established to provide areas of higher residential density. This District provides for more concentrated single-family development and the inclusion of multiple-family housing.

Residential 4 - The R-4 District is exclusively designed for mobile home parks. This District recognizes that mobile homes are one option for creating affordable residential options.

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Commercial 1 - The C-1 District is meant to provide retail and service establishments that meet the daily needs of residents. This District is the major commercial hub for the city. Desirable developments have minimal impact on the surrounding neighborhoods.

Commercial 2 - The C-2 District differs from the C-1 District in two ways. This District is designed to appeal to vehicular passers-by. The commercial uses here are also higher-intensity and diverse land uses.

INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

Industrial 1 - The L-1 District provides space for the light industry which does not permit excessive noise, odor, smoke, emissions, etc. Because the uses here are considered "light," they can become buffers between more intense industrial and residential zones.

Industrial 2 - The L-2 District is intended for heavier industrial processes, but also allows for businesses and services such as the airport. Still, excessive noise, odor, smoke, emissions, etc. is not permitted.

OVERLAY DISTRICTS

An overlay district is a special zoning district that is superimposed over base zone(s). The overlay district may share boundaries with the zones it "covers" or add a layer of incentives or specific regulations to the development or protection of resources.

AIRPORT OVERLAY

The Airport Overlay District provides an additional layer of development review for the area in and surrounding the Evert Municipal Airport. This overlay district is consistent with the Evert Municipal Airport Layout Plan, as approved by the Michigan Department of Transportation in April 2017. All new development proposals should be compatible with airport uses and in compliance with the Evert Municipal Airport Layout, as approved.

WELLHEAD PROTECTION OVERLAY

The intent of the wellhead protection area (WHPA) is to protect the public water supply wells from contaminating land uses with the delineated recharge areas. The WHPA is defined as the surface and subsurface areas surrounding a well or water field that supplies the public water system, through which contaminants are reasonably likely to reach the water or field within 10 years. The WHPA boundaries are shown on the "Zoning" map. In this overlay district, the City of Evert will consider mitigating land uses that can significantly contaminate the water supply including, but not limited to, manufacturing and industrial facilities, agricultural operations, septic systems, registered storage tanks, and hazardous waste.

Zoning Plan

According to Section 2(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), the Master Plan shall include a Zoning Plan depicting the various zoning districts and their use, as well as standards for height, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises. The Zoning Plan serves as the basis for the Zoning Ordinance.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE MASTER PLAN

As a key component of the Master Plan, the Zoning Plan is based on the recommendations of the Master Plan and is intended to identify areas where existing zoning is inconsistent with the objectives and strategies of the Master Plan and to guide the development of the Zoning Ordinance. The City of Evart operates by a traditional single-use-based zoning ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance is the primary implementation tool for future development in Evart. The Zoning Ordinance was written concurrently with the Master Plan and included major updates that align with planning best practices.

Summary of Zoning Plan's Suggested Changes

RESIDENTIAL

Several changes are recommended to the residential zones. The R-1 Zone, Low-Density Residential, covers all of the housing within the core of the city. However, the existing housing pattern follows more closely with Medium Density Residential, R-2. To reflect its current density the City of Evart may want to convert the majority of the housing from R-1 to R-2. Moreover, the City may consider rezoning portions of the residential areas in the core of the city to multi-family to facilitate higher-density developments surrounding the downtown district. Both of these modifications are to help increase the supply of housing in Evart.

Table 17. Zoning Plan

DISTRICT	INTENT	USES	COMPATIBLE ZONING DISTRICT
Suburban Residential	The Suburban Residential District intends to provide for single-family homes in residential neighborhoods.	The primary use is single-family residential. Other complementary uses are very limited to parks and churches.	R-1 Low-Density Residential District and R-2 Medium-Density Residential District
Traditional urban Residential	The Traditional Urban Residential District intends to provide primarily single-family homes in residential neighborhoods that sit on smaller lots in closer proximity to neighborhood amenities.	The primary use is single-family residential. Other complementary uses such as cemeteries, churches, schools, and parks would be permitted.	R-3 High-Density Residential District
Mobile Home Park	The Mobile Home District intends to provide an exclusive, affordable place for mobile and manufactured housing in proximity to public infrastructure, goods, and services.	Appropriate uses include mobile and manufactured housing	R-4 Mobile Home Park District
Mixed-Use	This new district would be to provide an opportunity for neighborhood services located within walking and biking distance of residences while retaining the primary land use as residential.	Developments may include a mix of housing types, including multiple-family units, and limited neighborhood services.	C-1 Central Business District and C-2 General Business District
Downtown	The Downtown District intends to provide an exclusive district that serves as a central convening place for business and leisure, in a pedestrian-oriented and historic setting.	This district should include an appropriate mixture of commercial, office, residential, entertainment, institutional, and public uses.	C-1 Central Business District
Airport	The Airport District intends to provide an exclusive district for airport-related uses.	The uses for this district would include operation, maintenance, logistics, and transportation relating to the airport.	I-1 Light Industrial District and Airport Overlay
Local Commercial	The Commercial District intends to provide for general retail and commercial uses with pedestrian-oriented nodes compatible with surrounding residential areas that also serve passers-by on the highway.	This district can accommodate a mix of businesses, such as restaurants, larger grocery stores, and more convenient-style shopping destinations such as chain stores.	C-2 General Business District
Public/ Institutional	The Public/Institutional District intends to provide services to residents through publicly owned properties.	The uses for this district are publicly owned by the city, county, state, or federal land and/or structure which include schools, parks, government buildings, Rails to Trails, the fairgrounds, etc.	All Zoning Districts
Recreation/ Conservation	The Recreation/Conservation District intends to identify and protect parkland, open space, conservation areas, and environmentally sensitive areas. This includes land not currently owned by the City identified for land acquisition or future recreation easements.	Appropriate uses include City, County, and State parkland, privately-owned forested areas, passive recreational areas, and open space.	All Zoning Districts
Light Industrial	The Light Industrial District intends to provide an exclusive area for light industrial uses dependent on transportation to and from the site.	Appropriate uses include small and medium plants that involve manufacturing, stamping, and machine operations that do not produce noxious emissions, noises, or vibrations.	I-1 Light Industrial District
Wellhead Overlay	The Wellhead Protection Overlay District intends to protect the groundwater drinking supply for City residents and to ensure that site plans located within the protected area are given added scrutiny when considering development approvals.	Appropriate uses include developments that protect the water supply. Sources of contamination include septic tanks, improperly capped abandoned wells, and underground storage tanks.	Wellhead Overlay



REDEVELOPMENT

From a land-use planning perspective as well as an economic development perspective, it is important to take stock of the areas in the community that are ripe for redevelopment. This section provides an overview of the redevelopment opportunities in Evart as well as some of the strategies the City is using and plans to use to attract redevelopment. Evart fosters a supportive redevelopment culture and offers ample space for such ventures.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) encourages communities to take a proactive approach to identifying and preparing properties to be redeveloped. A key element of the MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Communities Program is to identify redevelopment-ready sites and strategies associated with each site. Evart has several sites

that could be redeveloped. These sites include vacant buildings for sale, vacant land, a site with space available for rent, or publicly owned land. The "Redevelopment Ready Sites" map shows vacant residential, commercial, and industrial sites.

For any potential redevelopment opportunities, it is important to collect basic data on the sites such as square footage, lot size, years vacant, available infrastructure, nearby amenities, and building characteristics. With this data, the city can approach developers and work to guide development that aligns with the city's vision.

CENTRAL BUSINESS

There is one publicly owned building located in the "Central Business" district near the corner of 6th and River Street. The property sits adjacent to the

Police Department and is a modest vacant home that has the flexibility to become a variety of different commercial enterprises given that it falls in the CBD.

INDUSTRIAL

There are nine properties in the “General Industrial” zone in Evart Air Industrial Park. All 47 acres of these parcels are owned by the City, surround the Evart Municipal Airport, and can be redeveloped. It is a Michigan Certified Industrial Park meaning that it meets requirements on grading, utilities, access to a highway, and site plan review by the local government. The parcels are level and clear, and have wireless-broadband, and are hooked up to municipal sanitary sewer, water, and stormwater.

These parcels are adjoining and sit along US-10. The other two parcels are located on the opposite of the airport’s tarmac, about the Pere Marquette Trail.

PRIORITY SITES

First, it is up to the community to determine what type of development it would like to see, and from there determine its development priorities. Those priorities should be the guiding framework for pursuing and/ or approving new development. However, it is best to start with what is under the city’s control. Property that is already owned by the city can reduce the timeline for converting land into productive use, and help to spur private investment where development is lagging. Despite the community’s financial situation, a publicly held building provides greater impetus than an absentee property owner.

Evart Air Industrial Park



parcels along US-10



parcels on the southern side of the tarmac



parcels along US-10

WORKING WITH PROPERTY OWNERS

Next, a city should develop relationships with private property owners who are interested in disposing of their property and willing to work in alignment with the city's redevelopment goals.

Second, upon reaching out to property owners, there are several questions to consider in addition to the community's priorities. Below is a list of some data points a city should explore if it wants to remain proactive in the development process:

- Does the owner want to sell?
- Does the property have financial restrictions (back taxes, liens) that prevent the site's redevelopment? Are governmental incentives available to assist the property owner, or to bring a new owner to the table?
- Is there data on the environmental conditions of the site?
- Have market studies been conducted that inform how this property could successfully be developed?

VACANT SITES

In the meantime, while vacant parcels remain without structures and awaiting redevelopment, there are several temporary ways to use the site to enrich the neighborhood. Depending on the amount of space, zoning, and input from residents this space could be converted into the following uses:

- Dog park
- Community Garden
- An outdoor art gallery
- Outdoor movie theater
- Small obstacle course
- Food truck circle
- Pop-up events

All of these uses require minimal setup and take-down and are good ways to occupy a space so that it becomes an asset as opposed to an eyesore.

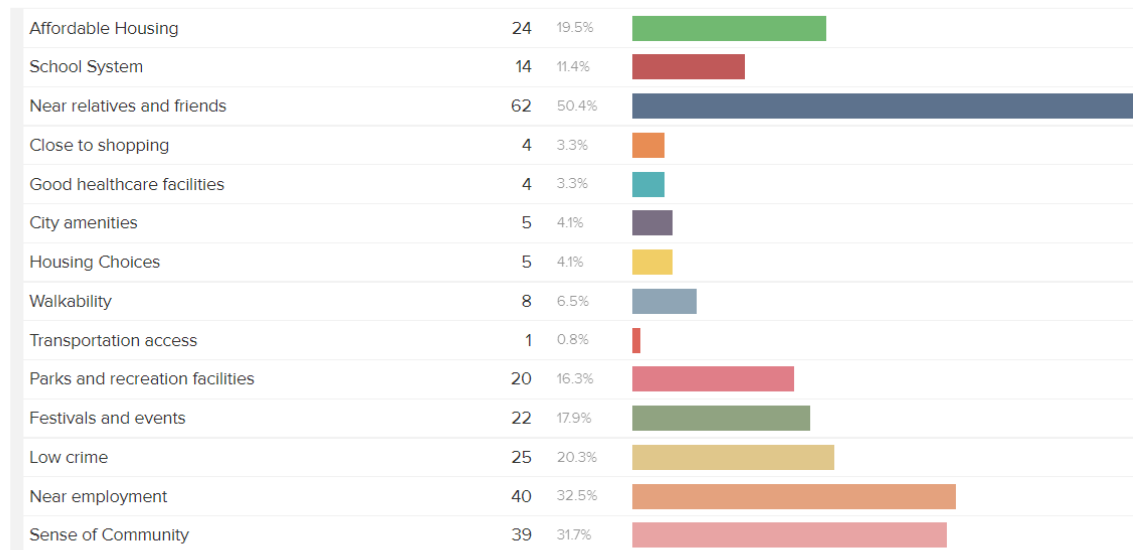
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APPENDIX

Question 1 — Multiple Choice



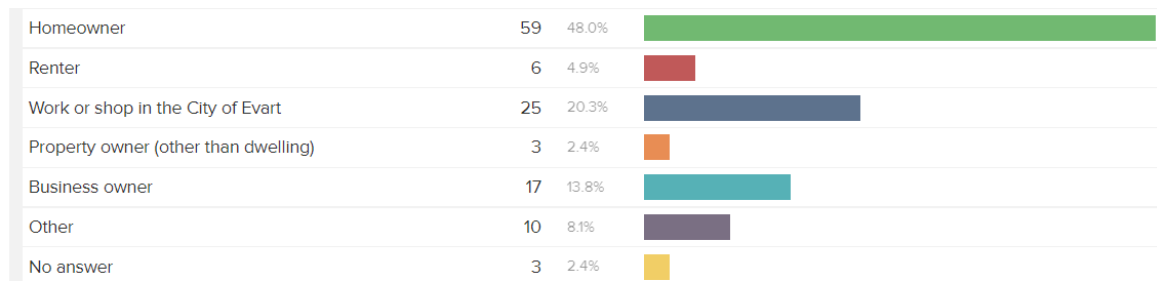
What are the three most important reasons you or your family choose to live in the City of Evert?



Question 2 — Multiple Choice



Which of the following best describes your current status within the City of Evert?



Sample of text responses for choice **Other**, showing up to 5:

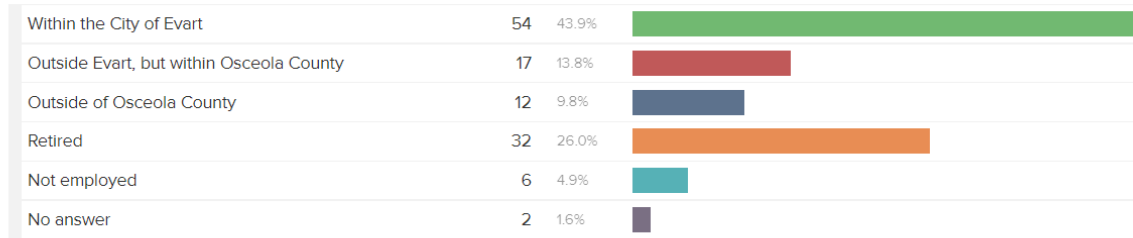
[Review all responses →](#)

1	Work
2	Sears resident
3	Do not live in City
4	Here for events in community
5	Retired

Question 3 — Multiple Choice



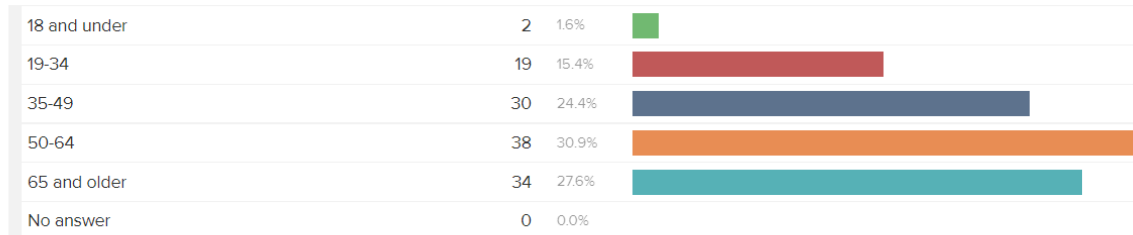
Where is your primary employment location?



Question 4 — Multiple Choice



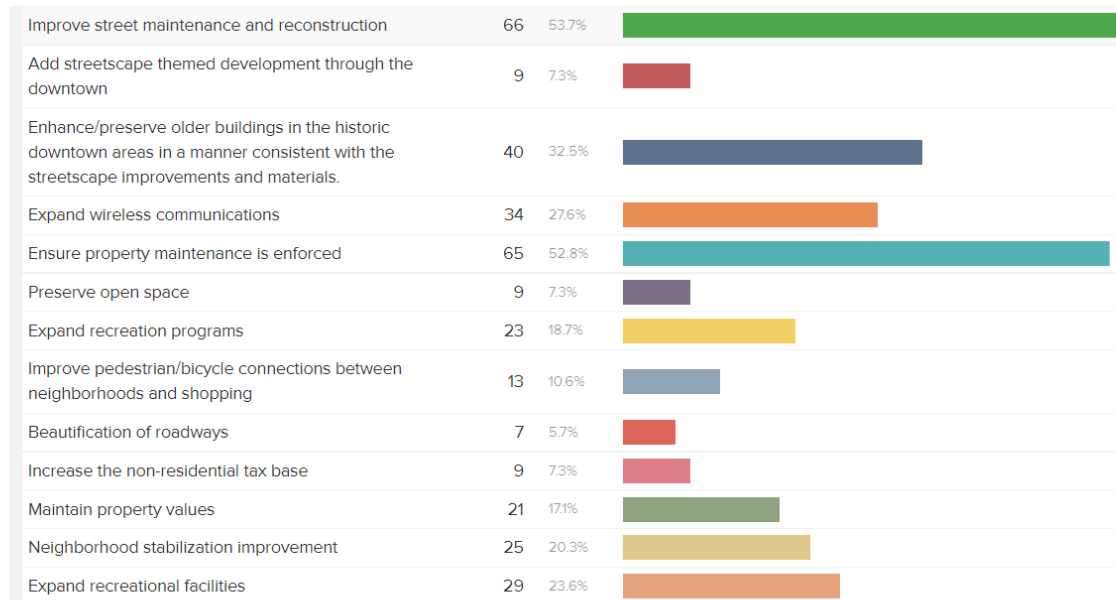
What age range do you fall within?



Question 5 — Multiple Choice



From the list below, what do you think are the highest priority issues that need to be addressed by the City?
(Please choose 3)



Question 6 — Text Field

Are there any particular streets, neighborhoods, business districts, buildings, parks or other features (natural or man made) in the City that standout in your mind as being especially ATTRACTIVE or c...

[Review all responses →](#)

Showing a preview selection of up to 5 responses:

1	Behind the factories both in town and on the outskirts of town
2	The Depot. Community events
3	The signs coming in are a great way to welcome people.
4	The flower beds that are on the end of the parking spots
5	Main street has a ton of potential, however the city needs to focus on attracting businesses other than second hand stores to populate the district again, however administrative decisions / policies are not attractive or encouraging for development or establishing a lasting business that fosters growth. I can honestly say in 30 years, I have watched town go high speed in Reverse.

Are there any particular streets, neighborhoods, business districts, buildings, parks or other features (natural or man made) in the City that standout in your mind as being especially ATTRACTIVE or create a "good feeling" to the community? If so describe.

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 107.77.194.XXX	Behind the factories both in town and on the outskirts of town	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.34.XXX	The Depot. Community events	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.123.XXX	The signs coming in are a great way to welcome people.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.43.XXX	The flower beds that are on the end of the parking spots	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.122.XXX	Main street has a ton of potential, however the city needs to focus on attracting businesses other than second hand stores to populate the district again, however administrative decisions / policies are not attractive or encouraging for development or establishing a lasting business that fosters growth. I can honestly say in 30 years, I have watched town go high speed in Reverse.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.205.XXX	Our parks are beautiful! They need to be kept up to date because people want to camp and camping brings people to our town to spend money. You have to spend money to make money!	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 75.133.247.XXX	This town sucks!!!	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	Riverside west park. Splash pad and playground area.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 35.150.169.XXX	Depo, West river side park and camp ground.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 75.40.240.XXX	better upkeep to some homes, make the owners clean up, paint up	Respondent Report	Delete

Are there any particular streets, neighborhoods, business districts, buildings, parks or other features (natural or man made) in the City that stand out in your mind as being especially ATTRACTIVE or create a "good feeling" to the community? If so describe.

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 138.43.61.XXX	Muskegon River, Riverside Park,	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 162.72.17.XXX	Enforce the Blight Law. Some of the properties in Ewart, look like slums. This makes Ewart look bad.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.29.XXX	No	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	Riverside park	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 129.222.1.XXX	splash pad park	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.240.152.XXX	I love the flowers planted in front of the buildings	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 107.122.241.XXX	Old RR bridge Library	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 108.195.139.XXX	Water works park was a great chance to bring back to older feature. To bad that Riverside has not been cared for and that it is offensive to sportsmen that would fish and stay there	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.205.XXX	Guyton Park, the farmers market and Riverside East park	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Ewart farmers market	Respondent Report	Delete

Are there any particular streets, neighborhoods, business districts, buildings, parks or other features (natural or man made) in the City that stand out in your mind as being especially ATTRACTIVE or create a "good feeling" to the community? If so describe.

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	The Depot and the wooden train the kids play on.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.47.XXX	Main Street needs help!!! Buildings are vacant and ran down. Main Street speaks volumes for a town and its community.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Riverside park East and West, along with the old railroad truss, are attractive to residents and visitors. Continued financial investment in the campground could enhance outside interest in seasonal passes.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 24.236.145.XXX	Park near the fair grounds.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 104.28.76.XXX	Cant Hook Park is a great example. This pocket park is attractive and frankly doesn't get the attention it deserves. Also, Guyton Park and the memorials there are important and should be maintained and improved. The bump out gardens with the work of the garden club are always a beautiful addition every summer.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.240.148.XXX	Bike path, farmers market,depot, fair grounds.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.51.XXX	Please make it a violation to have old cars and junk in your yard! Get more business' in the area so community has great places to support, get a brewery/restaurant in town, create places that bring outsiders to Evart like Clair did! Get rid of the pot! Love the parks and paths!	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.29.XXX	No not really	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Muskegon River, Twin Creek, Riverside Park (east and west), Depot, Rail Trail, school buildings/facilities/sports fields/playgrounds are very well maintained, fairgrounds	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.201.XXX	Twin Creek (beautification opportunity)	Respondent Report	Delete

Are there any particular streets, neighborhoods, business districts, buildings, parks or other features (natural or man made) in the City that stand out in your mind as being especially ATTRACTIVE or create a "good feeling" to the community? If so describe.

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 173.225.200.XXX	Main street	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.45.XXX	The Evert sign as you drive in to town on US 10.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.54.XXX	Ball fields	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Na	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 71.241.141.XXX	Most of them	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.7.XXX	I've allways enjoyed the parks and would like to go back to the sticker program for Evert Residents with the exception of the Water Park. However as yearly sticker should be available for the Water Park. Admission to walk in the parks shouldn't be charged. A small fee could be charged to use the Pavillions. Also I'd like to see campers at Riverside west again.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 96.36.29.XXX	The bump out gardens on Main Street and the area around the depot	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 71.13.55.XXX	Riverside Park West	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.22.XXX	Being a downtown business owner, I would have to say downtown Main St stands out in my mind. The business owners have done a great job of maintaining their properties without doing a lot of updating or changing the outside historical look. This includes the home owners as you travel on down Main St. It has a feeling that makes you want to take a walk and enjoy the trip back in time.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.225.42.XXX	The lights on the bridge. The mural.	Respondent Report	Delete

Are there any particular streets, neighborhoods, business districts, buildings, parks or other features (natural or man made) in the City that stand out in your mind as being especially ATTRACTIVE or create a "good feeling" to the community? If so describe.

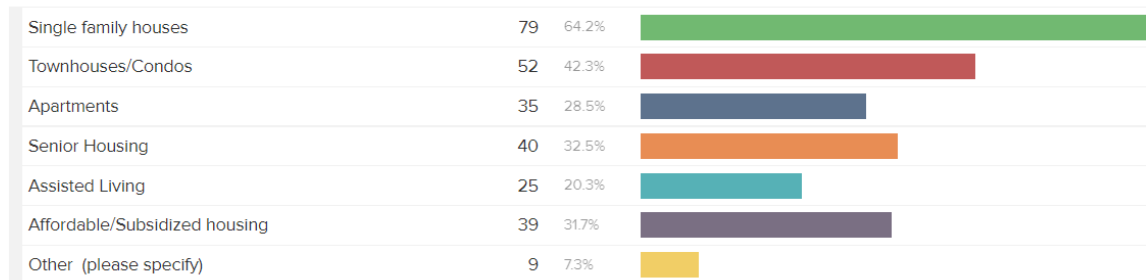
Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 47.225.42.XXX	The lights on the railroad bridge	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 97.112.29.XXX	Depot activities	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.123.XXX	Love the lights on the railroad bridge, hate the flower beds in downtown, would love to see all the (old fashioned) street posts repaired, I think the splash pad is a HUGE success.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.192.73.XXX	Main St, along downtown. I love all the improvements that have been done, with the bump outs, the bike racks, painting the depot/train, and the improvements owners have made to their businesses.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 97.91.53.XXX	The Depot	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 3.129.11.XXX	The whole DDA area	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	Train bridge lights, guyton park, athletic facilities	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.39.XXX	Riverside west Park	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.59.XXX	Bump out gardens on Main Street, CantHook Park, Guyton Park, Depot, Spray Park, Seeing residence and commercial buildings being maintained or upgraded, ie, Northon Shire repainting of front, Juneberry Cottage facade, Carwash new roof, Cedar and 5th street house, Cedar and 6th street house residing etc	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.58.XXX	I am saddened at the deterioration of the campground at Riverside West, and the lack of maintenance for the amenities there. It is still the best feature of the town, and I would like to see it brought back up to snuff and then maintained.	Respondent Report	Delete

Are there any particular streets, neighborhoods, business districts, buildings, parks or other features (natural or man made) in the City that stand out in your mind as being especially ATTRACTIVE or create a "good feeling" to the community? If so describe.

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 174.81.223.XXX	Art decal by light	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.205.XXX	What stands out is the property owners that have junk and junk cars. Porches with trash. They should be made to clean up houses or lots. Makes the town look trashy.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.60.XXX	The jeweler store on main next to post office is so beautiful just needs to be remodeled or tore down.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.20.XXX	The river park is very nice and usable for the community.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.20.XXX	Guyton Park	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	Riverside West is a treasure that should be renovated then meticulously maintained.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.37.XXX	Depot	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.30.XXX	The mural on the side of the downtown building along US 10.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Depot, Main Street, Main Street Shopping (needs businesses)	Respondent Report	Delete



What type of new housing would you like to see in the City in the future? (Check all that apply)



Sample of text responses for choice **Other (please specify)**, showing up to 5:

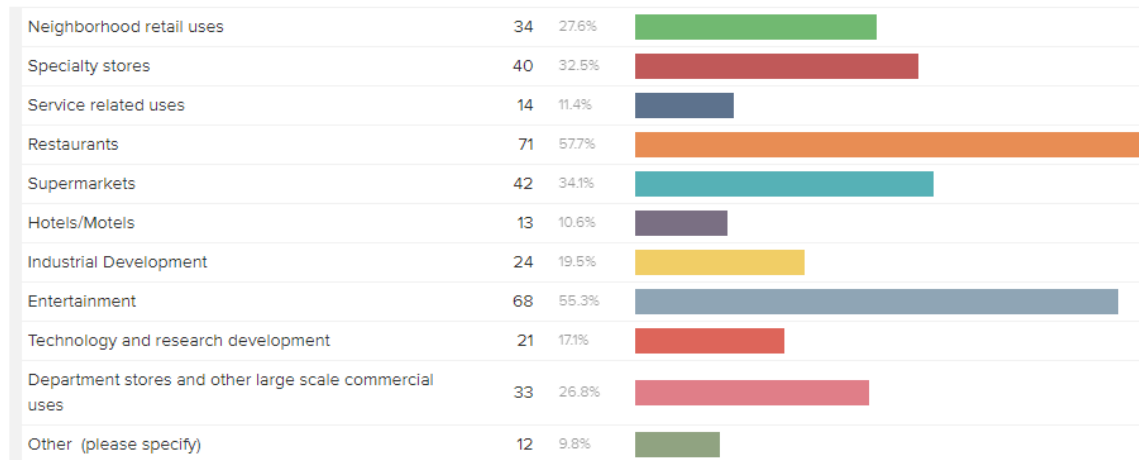
[Review all responses →](#)

- 1 Affordable housing is very important
- 2 Promote affordable ownership over more renters that support decisions and policies that only effectively cost the home owners.
- 3 Homeowners not renters
- 4 We need housing for our residents. We have a high number of homeless people.
- 5 Middle class homes

Question 8 — Multiple Choice



Which types of non-residential development would you like to see in the City in the future? (Check all that apply)



Sample of text responses for choice **Other (please specify)**, showing up to 5:

[Review all responses →](#)

1	Parks
2	Another Grocery option would be nice, but someone made a deal prohibiting it, and screwed the citizens...
3	Meat market.
4	Theaters
5	Music played over speakers on main Street like Clark does in downtown



How would you rate the City of Evart's identity?

Roadway landscape

Excellent (1)	2	1.6%	
Very Good (2)	11	8.9%	
Good (3)	43	35.0%	
Fair (4)	48	39.0%	
Poor (5)	18	14.6%	
No answer	1	0.8%	

Open space

Excellent (1)	3	2.4%	
Very Good (2)	17	13.8%	
Good (3)	54	43.9%	
Fair (4)	40	32.5%	
Poor (5)	9	7.3%	
No answer	0	0.0%	

Streams / Rivers

Excellent (1)	30	24.4%	
Very Good (2)	41	33.3%	
Good (3)	38	30.9%	
Fair (4)	9	7.3%	
Poor (5)	5	4.1%	
No answer	0	0.0%	

Directional signage to community facilities

Excellent (1)	6	4.9%	
Very Good (2)	16	13.0%	
Good (3)	46	37.4%	
Fair (4)	38	30.9%	
Poor (5)	17	13.8%	
No answer	0	0.0%	

Statistics	Responses	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum	Quartiles
Roadway landscape	122	3.566	4	0.905	1	5	3, 4, 4
Open space	123	3.285	3	0.879	1	5	3, 3, 4
Streams / Rivers	123	2.333	2	1.049	1	5	2, 2, 3
Directional signage to community facilities	123	3.358	3	1.029	1	5	3, 3, 4

Question 10 — Text Field

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Evert focus on in the next five years?

Review all responses →

Showing a preview selection of up to 5 responses:

1	The issues with the homeless population
2	Evert farm market
3	Loving community feeling
4	Updating the parks
5	Bringing jobs to the area and housing for lower income, other than the apartments.

Below is a list of all responses by each respondent to the selected question. You may browse through these responses or delete the respondent entirely.

Next (10) ➔

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Evert focus on in the next five years?

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 107.77.194.XXX	The issues with the homeless population	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.240.146.XXX	Evert farm market	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	Loving community feeling	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.123.XXX	Updating the parks	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.123.XXX	Bringing jobs to the area and housing for lower income, other than the apartments.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.59.XXX	increase parking on main street, dislike the canned fancy weed patches.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.43.XXX	Keep it small town beautiful Upgrade main street with small town charm	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.43.XXX	Building a sidewalk from the laundromat which also needs to be finished since people go out of town to do laundry said walk from laundromat to McDonald's so the people the do have to walk home don't have to walk threw deep snow wet grass or on the edge of u s 10 in the possibility of getting hit by a car..we need another source of grocery store instead of the one family owned or friends of that the prices or so exspensive another store not only bring more jobs but an option to the people.we need an option for a diff fast food instead of McDonald's or subway something like a taco bell Kentucky fried chicken colliers another choice, we also we benefit from something like habitat for humanity this is a low income town that both the people and the business would benifit	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.122.XXX	eliminating corrupt officials/employees	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.205.XXX	Get rid of the run down buildings or make the owners take care of them. Nobody wants to live or work in a city that doesn't want to take care of the things they already have.	Respondent Report	Delete

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Evert focus on in the next five years?

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 75.133.247.XXX	Eliminate Eric Schmidt!!!	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	Updates to downtown area that entice new businesses to open filling the vacant store fronts.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 35.150.169.XXX	Side walks.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 75.40.240.XXX	get rid of the present City Council, NO marijuana or drug facilities, and entice more factories to come to Evert and more sit down to eat restaurants, family oriented.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 138.43.61.XXX	Employment, clean up residential areas,	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.225.42.XXX	Year round community recreation.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 162.72.17.XXX	Improve side walks, make home owners responsible for their properties,better housing, fix the streets.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.240.128.XXX	Incentivice employers who offer decent living wages.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.50.94.XXX	I would love for family fun events / festivities! We are always driving to other small towns for their events they are doing!	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.29.XXX	Housing. There isn't decent housing for people who may want to move here.	Respondent Report	Delete

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Evert focus on in the next five years?

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 97.91.52.XXX	More police in Evert in duty 24 hours	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Fix the damn roads	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	Bringing visitors in from other towns to shop, stay and eat. Housing too. Too many people traveling from other cities to work local.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 129.222.1.XXX	our roads need alot of work	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.247.209.XXX	Lowering the Water bill, affordable housing,in town Taxes lowered or at least do something that Helps out the Tax payers! That doesn't include Beautification or raises too Evert officials! Maybe community swimming pool, better amusement rides when the fair is in town,Maybe a YMCA	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.240.152.XXX	The main road at the river has an old falling down building. Our guests that come through all comment about this eyesore.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.54.XXX	Roads in town and houses within the city limits being kept up or at least maintained lawn care	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.240.144.XXX	Revamp downtown for more businesses	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 107122.241.XXX	Blight and cleaning up what we already have	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 107134.100.XXX	Promoting tourism.	Respondent Report	Delete

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Ewart focus on in the next five years?

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 174.247.209.XXX	Improve roads. Lower water rates, and enforce blight laws. Some places need to be torn down.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 108.195.139.XXX	Enforcement of its zoning and roadway laws make the community safer for children and older person	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Improve/update appearance/facade of all buildings located downtown.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.193.XXX	Clean up the downtown buildings on Main Street and along u.s. 10 . The old laundry matt on u.s. 10 is an eyesore and so is the building on the river just as you go over the bridge is falling down and is the 1st thing you see pulling in to ewart .(just passed the moose and over the bridge. The person who owns that place should be fined and made to clean that up.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.205.XXX	Cleaning up the vacant buildings downtown and maintaining the current operational businesses appearances. The city needs a facelift in order to attract new business interests.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	A new farmers market venue	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	More homes/apartments for people to rent.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.47.XXX	Bring the life back to ewart. No one cares what it looks like if there's nothing to do. Idle hands do the devils work. We have ALOT of families and a great younger generation with NOTHING to do aside from go to the local watering holes and weed shop. Shame on ewart for forgetting about its community members, you know the ones that make this a community.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Renegotiation of the next contract with Ice Mountain. Nestle waters should NOT be paying the same price for water as residents. Water pumped from here is sold at a near 1000% markup. We can do better than that. Not talking about price gouging them here. Just be reasonable already. Threats of leaving to pump elsewhere would be made, but if the price is right call there bluff. Relocation of operations is gonna cost them more than a moderate price hike which they'll simply pass along to the consumer anyways.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 71.81.110.XXX	Insisting on the renovation of Main Street buildings that have been allowed to significantly deteriorate.	Respondent Report	Delete

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Evert focus on in the next five years?

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 24.236.145.XXX	Lure businesses to Evert so that we have a vibrant downtown.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 104.28.76.XXX	Roadway maintenance, downtown rehabilitation and revitalization, and neighborhood improvement.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.240.148.XXX	Festivals, breweries, use and fix up old buildings in downtown. So much potential wasted. Very depressing now! Reed city and Clare have way better feel.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.51.XXX	Growth!	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.205.XXX	Fix the roads! Get land owners to fix up old buildings so new business will come in	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.123.XXX	Attracting more employers and more housing	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.11.XXX	Streetscape downtown, improve roads/sidewalks	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.33.XXX	Air filter	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.8.XXX	Better enforcement of rules, and better protection of city. For example there's a home on north cedar who let's their German shepherd just run wild all over into others yards etc. Enforce the city rules	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.29.XXX	Caring about so many people living in poverty and struggling with addiction.	Respondent Report	Delete

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Evert focus on in the next five years?

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 107.122.245.XXX	Less poverty	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.34.XXX	Enforce upkeep of homes. Evert is getting to look like a slum city!!!	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Roads and infrastructure improvements that have a long term vision and funding plan in place. It's hard especially with ever rising material costs and manpower constraints, but whatever can be done in spite of those limitations would be an improvement.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.201.XXX	Beautification of creek, river areas through trail and park development and enhancement.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.46.XXX	Street improvements	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.122.XXX	Recreation	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.200.XXX	We need more businesses so that people can shop here.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.45.XXX	Cleaning up the slum houses. Couches on the porch, shingles falling off of the roof, and homes that are literally falling apart. There must be a code? The houses next to the middle school are embarrassing. All of the visiting teams see the homes surrounding the MS . Some of them need some maintenance . Good luck everyone!	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	If continued spending on law enforcement they should do more and apply the law equally.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.46.XXX	Housing for people working in Evert	Respondent Report	Delete

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Evert focus on in the next five years?

Respondent **Answer**

Unknown 69.36.54.XXX	Housing and recreation.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Clean up of run down residential	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.7.XXX	Improving the streets,getting Riverside camping without homeless people causing problems,continued economic growth and expanded Farmers Market,maybe on friday or hoiddays.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 96.36.29.XXX	Clean up the drug problem and improve the sense of pride.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 71.13.55.XXX	Housing! Housing! Housing! Housing! Housing! Maintain what we have and build more, and also support that with affordable shopping for necessities.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 71.13.55.XXX	Housing!	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.35.125.XXX	Housing and more stores open in downtown	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.22.XXX	A focus on anything related to helping downtown businesses including signage and activities or events to bring in more people and small businesses. There has been very little done downtown in my opinion. Most events are held elsewhere other than the Halloween Bash. Are you aware that the Fourth of July parade even skipped the downtown area? Even the 150 year celebration had very little planned for the downtown area. Many of the business owners helped with the banners. I know parking is an issue so maybe that needs to be a focus. It doesn't stop other small cities from planning downtown events. Making street maintenance a priority would help with downtown traffic as well. Some of the side streets used for parking or travel are the worst.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.35.125.XXX	Opening their minds to different cultures & welcoming low income (ethnic) people a lot better than I Evert does now. Make us feel welcome	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.225.42.XXX	The meth problem. Run down buildings on main Street. Trashed houses.	Respondent Report	Delete

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Evert focus on in the next five years?

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 47.225.42.XXX	The dilapidated buildings on Main Street.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 107.141.250.XXX	Another grocery store	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 97.112.29.XXX	Getting affordable and good Wi-Fi access.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.123.XXX	Enforce speed limit on Highway 10. Slow traffic down further out of town, and put in more traffic lights to maintain speed limit	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 76.220.210.XXX	Better options for medical care. An urgent care facility is needed. Emergency facilities are too far away. Beautifying downtown. It looks so run down right now.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.192.73.XXX	I would love to see less rentals, and more home ownership. I would also love to see some more business development, with a greater variety of stores/restaurants available	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 97.91.53.XXX	Building owners upgrading downtown buildings	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 3.129.11.XXX	Clean up the blight. The one next to the river has been being torn down for months. Why so long? The lot on S Main st with the camper where there is trash! Mandate lawn mowing. Clean the weeds from the sidewalks and streets. The sidewalks on US 10 are overgrown with weeds. Simple solution, roundup.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	Blight of business buildings/property and residential homes/property.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.39.XXX	Parks	Respondent Report	Delete

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Evert focus on in the next five years?

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 69.36.59.XXX	Improvement and maintenance of Downtown and along US 10 buildings. Strategic business development. Water and Sewer lines upgrade. Roads resurfaced with sidewalks along them citywide. Landlord/Tenant inspection agreement to ensure buildings are up to code	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.58.XXX	Clean this place up! It's frustrating to those of us that maintain our properties to have to look at the ridiculous amount of blight in Evert. Too many rentals in this town owned by too many slum lords. Stop talking about fixing it and FIX IT.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.26.XXX	Business	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.81.223.XXX	Housing	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 173.225.205.XXX	Bringing more industrial business.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 172.58.60.XXX	Building its history back and building more of a community and actually listening to what the people of the town want.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.247.209.XXX	Drain system in the west side park so that the grass isn't always flooded	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.35.89.XXX	Retail and service businesses on US 10. Sidewalks walk ability	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.20.XXX	My wife and I play cards on our front porch on Main St. We hear cars and motorcycles rave up engines and race around town. Dogs bark non-stop on Main St. without regard for the barking dog ordinance. The ordinance for high grass or weeds is not enforced much either. We need to follow up on these things and patrol to catch those racing around town. I use to be a Police Auxiliaryman and know how we use to catch speeders and etc.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.20.XXX	Enforcing the blight law. The money made in fines alone could support having an officer solely for the purpose of enforcing the law.	Respondent Report	Delete

What is the number one thing you would like to see the City of Evert focus on in the next five years?

Respondent	Answer		
Unknown 69.36.63.XXX	Blight.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 174.211.37.XXX	Motivate and enforce blight rules. You do not have to be rich to obey guide lines. # the vehicles parked in your yard, driveway, street in front of house,mowing lawn, picking up garbage in your yard. The city is an eye sore!	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 47.224.30.XXX	Removing blight and the drug image.	Respondent Report	Delete
Unknown 69.36.62.XXX	Enforce ordinances we already have would make a big change. It's difficult to find two well maintained homes in a row. Even when new home owner moves in they fail to maintain or improve their property due to their neighbor won't or doesn't have to. Vehicles parked in front yards, campers in front yards, (some being lived in), dogs chained to front porches or sometimes allowed to roam. It's difficult and sometimes stressful trying to take a walk or bike in the central part of the residential neighborhoods. A new plan isn't really necessary, we just need to follow through on the plans and focuses that have set over the last ten years. If you revisit the old plans you will see that much hasn't changed for the better...	Respondent Report	Delete