

City of Lathrup Village  
Oakland County, Michigan



**COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN**

JUNE 2009

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City of Lathrup Village  
Oakland County, Michigan

## COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN

June 2009

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[ B L A N K P A G E ]

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*The City of Lathrup Village is a historic, culturally and racially diverse community of higher-income professionals in south Oakland County. The residents are community-focused and protective of the character and unique architectural heritage of their city.*

## Population Trends

As reported in the 2000 Census, the population of the City of Lathrup Village was 4,236. The 2000 figures show a slight decrease of 2.2% in population from 1990 Census, which reported a population of 4,329. Concurrently, the City of Southfield grew by 3.3 %, from 75,745 in 1990 to 78,332 in 2000. The nearby community of Berkley witnessed a population decrease from 16,960 to 15,531 during this same time period.

Like many older communities in the State of Michigan, Lathrup Village has seen a population decrease over the last decade. This population decrease is due to the continued out-migration of residents from the region's inner-ring or first tier suburbs to newer suburbs and to surrounding exurban development.

Table 1.1 Comparison of Population Trends

|                 | y e a r |        |        |        |        |        |
|-----------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                 | 1960    | 1970   | 1980   | 1990   | 2000   | 2030   |
| Lathrup Village | 3,556   | 4,676  | 4,639  | 4,329  | 4,236  | 3,863  |
| Berkley         | 23,275  | 22,618 | 18,637 | 16,690 | 15,531 | 13,552 |
| Southfield      | 31,501  | 69,285 | 75,568 | 75,728 | 78,296 | 73,397 |

Source: U.S. Census - 2000 and I-696 Study: Vilican&Leman



## our community

Trends in Southeast Michigan indicate that most areas that experienced growth from 1980 to 2000 did so due to population shifts rather than sizable increases in the number of live births. This is probably true for the City and the southeastern part of the county as a whole.

From 1960 to 2000, Detroit and other large cities experienced significant drops in population as residents moved to the suburbs. Detroit's population, which was estimated at 2 million in 1952, decreased by over a million people by 1990, and continued to decrease in 2000. The figures show that Lathrup Village also decreased its share of the County's population. The County's population grew from 1,083,582 in 1990 to 1,194,156 in 2000, retaining its position as the second most populist county in the state. Lathrup Village's share of the population decreased from approximately 4/10 of 1% of the County's population to 3.5/10 of 1%.

It is expected that Lathrup Village's population will decrease from the SEMCOG December 2006 estimate of 4,092 to 3,863 in 2030. This represents a decline of 5.5% or 100 people per decade. This compares with a decline of 93 from 1990 to 2000 and 310 from 1990 to 1980.

As the population continues to decrease within the City and in other suburban communities, there will be more challenges for adaptive reuse of commercial development to prevent continued fragmentation of the commercial fabric. This impact on land use can already be seen in the amount of vacant commercial space along Southfield Road. Although the original layout for the City contemplated a traditional village center, it never materialized. The lack of a focal retail and civic area and the challenge that Southfield Road poses for pedestrians complicates the use of this corridor for a community-based village center.

Table 1.2 Ethnic Composition: 2000

|   |       |      |
|---|-------|------|
| Total Population                                    | 4,236 | 100% |
| One Race  | 4,165 | 98%  |
| <i>White</i>  | 2,026 | 48%  |
| <i>Black or African American</i>                    | 2,134 | 50%  |
| <i>American Indian &amp; Alaska Native</i>          | -     | 0%   |
| <i>Asian</i>  | -     | 0%   |
| <i>Native Hawaiian &amp; Other Pacific Islander</i> | -     | 0%   |
| <i>Other race</i>                                   | 5     | 0%   |
| Two or More Races                                   | 71    | 2%   |

## Housing Construction Trends

According to the SEMCOG profile, there were 1,647 housing units (one-family attached, one-family detached, and multi-unit apartments) in Lathrup Village in 2000. In 1990, this figure was 1,619. This minimal growth was primarily due to an increase in one-family attached units from 34 (2%) in 1990 to 59 (4%) in 2000.

SEMCOG provides forecasting of households throughout the region. According to SEMCOG, between the years 2000 and 2030, the City will add only nine new households. The minimal increase in new housing stock is due to the fact that the City reached its capacity development some time ago, and is built out.

The table below indicates the City has had one residential building permit for the last two years. The average since the mid 1990s has been approximately one per year. Again, this data is reflective of a mature and built-out community.

Table 1.3 Lathrup Village Building Permits

|                              | <i>average</i> |         |      |      |
|------------------------------|----------------|---------|------|------|
|                              | 1995-99        | 2000-04 | 2005 | 2006 |
| Single Family Detached Condo | 3              | 1       | 0    | 1    |
| Townhouse Attached Condo     | 0              | 5       | 0    | 0    |
| Two-Family Duplex            | 0              | 0       | 0    | 0    |
| Multi-Family Apartments      | 1              | 0       | 0    | 0    |
| New Units                    | 4              | 6       | 0    | 1    |

Source: City Building Permit Data

## Age Distribution

The average number of people per household has been declining in the U.S. in recent decades. This trend is also apparent in Lathrup Village and surrounding areas. In 1970, the average household size was 3.34 people. According to the U.S. Census, this figure dropped to 2.84 by 1980 and to 2.53 by 1990. In 2000, this trend continued with the average household size declining to 2.4 people.

The City has tracked above the national average with a household size of 2.75 in 1990 and 2.6 in 2000. SEMCOG estimates the current household size at 2.49. By 2030, SEMCOG estimates household size at 2.36. One result of the shrinking household size is that new home construction does not impact services and utilities at the same level. For example, where one new home generally accounted for 1.7 children this figure has declined to one child (or less). The declining household size has been caused by many factors including higher divorce rates, fewer extended families, higher life expectancy, independent living, more single-headed households and smaller family sizes.

The largest age group in the City is people from 35 to 64. This age group increased in number and in its overall percentage of the community's population in 1990. The City has a large, mature population. In 2000, only 16% of its residents were between 18 and 34. This is a decrease from 21% in 1990, though SEMCOG estimates this will increase to 19% in 2030.

Detroit metropolitan area. In the future, the population will decline, it will slightly age, and the number of households will remain relatively constant. Because many residents work outside of the municipality, the City could position itself as a quality, convenient, historic and walkable residential community within the greater context of the metro area.

Because it is built-out with very limited opportunities for new residential development, the underutilized office and retail spaces along Southfield Road could be viewed as potential sites for urban mid-rise, mixed-use residential development. This public policy would ensure that mature residents have housing opportunities within the City once they decide to sell their larger homes, and that newer residents have access to a culturally diverse community with a high quality of life.

## Implications for Public Policy

The demographic forecast for Lathrup Village is comparable with surrounding first and second tier suburbs within the

Table 1.4 Population by Age

| Age Group | y e a r      |      |              |      |              |      |
|-----------|--------------|------|--------------|------|--------------|------|
|           | 1990         |      | 2000         |      | 2030         |      |
|           | #            | %    | #            | %    | #            | %    |
| 0 - 4     | 295          | 7%   | 238          | 6%   | 297          | 8%   |
| 5 - 17    | 725          | 17%  | 804          | 19%  | 656          | 17%  |
| 18 - 34   | 907          | 21%  | 661          | 16%  | 729          | 19%  |
| 35 - 64   | 1,779        | 41%  | 2,018        | 48%  | 1,543        | 40%  |
| 65+       | 623          | 14%  | 515          | 12%  | 638          | 17%  |
|           | <b>4,329</b> | 100% | <b>4,236</b> | 100% | <b>3,863</b> | 100% |

Source: U.S. Census and SEMCOG Small Area Forecast



*A Lathrup Village Residential Home*

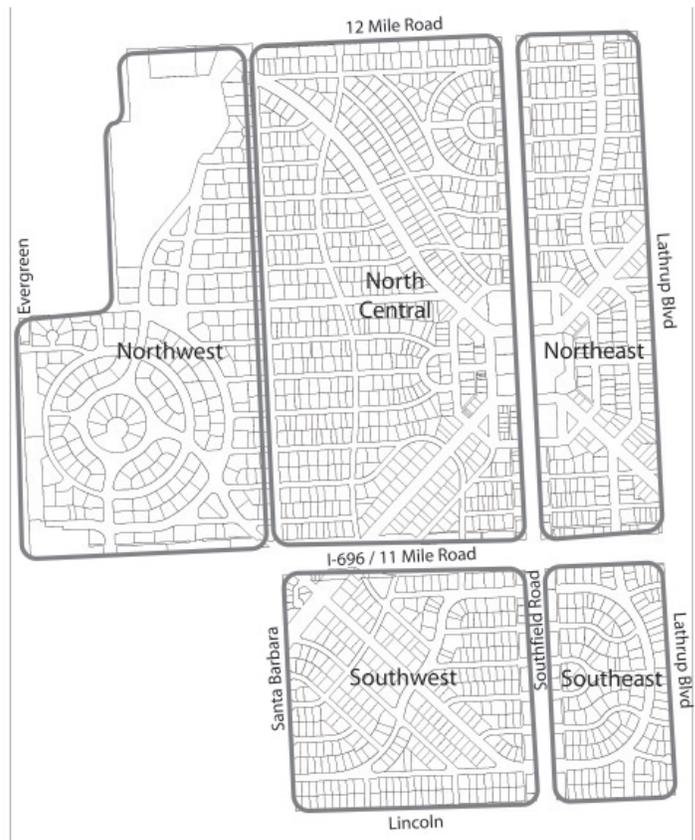
*The greatest asset the City of Lathrup Village has are its established and historic residential neighborhoods. The quality and continued viability of these neighborhoods are important because they comprise approximately 70% of the City’s tax base. As a result, the economic viability of the neighborhoods will have a direct bearing on the overall fiscal health of the community. The City of Lathrup Village is a small community located in the intermediate ring of suburban communities that surround most of the City of Detroit. While itself a suburban community, Lathrup Village has been adversely impacted by sprawl. Major roads and highways divide the residential areas in Lathrup Village. The additional roadways through the community have created increased cut-through traffic, as well as the need for more buffering areas or traffic-calming techniques to shield residents from the negative aspects related to non-neighborhood traffic. Compounding the physical separation between neighborhoods, 11 Mile Road was selected as the location of Interstate 696, which effectively bisected the community and isolated southern and northern neighborhoods from one another.*

## Neighborhood Profile

Lathrup Village is composed of five residential areas which reflect the historic development character of the city. The areas include the Northwest Area, North Central Area, Northeast Area, Southwest Area, and Southeast Area.

The Northwest residential area is bordered by the City limits and Twelve Mile Road to the north, Eleven Mile Road to the south, Santa Barbara Drive on the east, and by City limits and Evergreen Road to the west. The “House-in-the-Woods,” owned by Louise Lathrup Kelley, was built in the center of the neighborhood in the 1920s. This home is an exception in the neighborhood, as most houses appear to be built after this house was constructed. Southfield-Lathrup Senior High School constitutes the only large recreational area for residents in this neighborhood. For the most part, housing is well-maintained in this neighborhood with an occasional home having minor maintenance deficiencies.

The Northeast residential area is located between 11 and 12 Mile Roads, east of Southfield Road. Much of the core of older brick homes, located around Annie Lathrup School, was built to Louise Lathrup Kelley’s architectural standards. Newer homes about this older core, to the north and south. While the area is generally in good condition, the age of many of these brick homes necessitate increased maintenance costs.



The Southwest residential area is located south of Eleven Mile Road between Southfield Road and the Santa Barbara Drive right-of-way, and Lincoln Drive to the south. While many homes in the northern portion of the neighborhood were constructed according to the older Lathrup Village architectural standards, some of the newest homes in the community are located in the southern part of this neighborhood. Older homes in the area show evidence of needing minor repairs, but homes in general are observed to be in good condition.

The North Central residential area is bordered by Santa Barbara Drive on the west, Southfield Road on the east, Twelve Mile Road to the north, and Eleven Mile Road to the south. Many of the older brick homes are larger than other areas in the city and have a consistent style of architecture. Overall, the homes in this area are in good condition.

The Southeast residential area is located east of Southfield Road and south of Eleven Mile Road to Lincoln Avenue. It is one of the newer areas in Lathrup Village, with contemporary homes typically two stories high. The newer homes boast brick on the first floor, with aluminum or wood siding on the second floor, as well as mature landscaping.

## Housing Trends

Because the City has developed over an extended time frame, the neighborhoods display considerable diversity of housing size, lot size, age, and architectural form. Lathrup Village has an impressive range of housing types. The majority of the housing is in the form of single-family dwellings on residential lots within subdivisions. According to the SEMCOG profile, there were 1,544 single-family detached dwellings (93%), 59 one-family attached (4%), and 44 multi-unit apartments (3%). These figures from the 2000 Census are similar to the 1990 Census, except for a slight increase in the one-family attached category.

The above statistics indicate that Lathrup Village has a phenomenal rate of owner occupancy of housing stock. Both the 1990 and 2000 Census indicate no mobile homes. The consistency of housing units by structure type reflects a community that has been fully developed in residential use. The number of residential building permits further echoes this. The annual average from 1995-1999 was four residential building permits; the average for the period 2000-2004 was six, while there were none in 2005 and one in 2006.

As shown below, the City of Lathrup Village's household size continues to decrease.

**Table 2.1 Housing Profile**

|                 | y e a r |       |       |       |
|-----------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
|                 | 1990    | 2000  | 2006  | 2030  |
| Households      | 1,577   | 1,621 | 1,631 | 1,630 |
| Household Units | 1,619   | 1,647 | 1,679 | NA    |
| Household Size  | 2.75    | 2.60  | 2.49  | 2.36  |

*Source: U.S. Census and SEMCOG (2006 and 2030)*

This reflects both the end of the baby boom and the increase in divorce and single parenting, which accelerated through the 1970s. In 1965, the Southeast Michigan region had an average of 3.41 people per household. This decreased nearly one full person to 2.61 in 1995. The average household for the region is predicted to drop even further to 2.42 in 2025. SEMCOG predicts that by 2015, most baby boomers will no longer have children living at home. Other factors that contribute to the decreasing household size within the region and the City include: couples marrying at a later age, increased number of adults living alone, and improved health, which correlates to people living longer.

Table 2.1 also shows an increasing number of households in the City, from 1990 until 2006. SEMCOG, however shows a decrease in total population from 4,329 in 1990 to 4,092 in 2006. How can there be an increase in households with a decrease in population? The best explanation is a changing composition of households. Most likely, the City has seen a significant increase in the number of households without children. SEMCOG predicts this trend will continue for the next 30 years, as baby boomers become empty nesters and age beyond childbearing years, flattening the birth rate. Table 2.2 further verifies this by showing over 75% of all the households in the City consisted of three or less people.

Table 2.2 Households by Number of Occupants

|                            | Number | Percent |
|----------------------------|--------|---------|
| 1 Person                   | 347    | 21%     |
| 2 Persons                  | 569    | 35%     |
| 3 Persons                  | 318    | 20%     |
| 4 Persons                  | 256    | 16%     |
| 5 Persons                  | 94     | 6%      |
| 6 Persons                  | 16     | 1%      |
| 7 or More Persons          | 23     | 1%      |
| <i>Source: U.S. Census</i> | 2.60   |         |

The summary of housing facilities, values and rents in table 2.3 below indicates not only a community that has an above average housing stock, but one that does not have any households that are in extremely poor condition. All the units in the City have at least one bedroom, while over 90% have three or more. In addition, all have telephones, while 98% have access to a vehicle. Finally, none lack complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.

Table 2.3 Housing Facilities and Median Values

|                                    | Number  |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Average Rooms per Unit             | 7.3     |
| Percent of Units                   |         |
| <i>With No Bedroom</i>             | 0%      |
| <i>With 3 or More Bedrooms</i>     | 91%     |
| Lack Complete Kitchen Facilities   | 0%      |
| Lack Complete Plumbing Facilities  | 0%      |
| Percent of Units                   |         |
| <i>With Telephones</i>             | 100%    |
| <i>With Vehicle Available</i>      | 98%     |
| Median Value of Owned Homes (1999) | 187,000 |
| Median Gross Rent (1999)           | 1,158   |

*Source: U.S. Census*

## Housing Tenure

The total number of housing units in Lathrup Village increased from 1,619 to 1,647 units between the 1990 and 2000 Census. However, during this period, the total number of vacant units decreased, from 42 to 26. This shows that the community has shown positive absorption in its residential properties.

## Housing Value

Another important aspect of housing is its affordability. The median housing value for the City increased from \$131,766 in 1990 to \$187,000 by 2000. Given the increase in housing tenure (i.e., the owner occupancy rate), combined with decreasing vacancies, and the overall increase in housing value, suggests that Lathrup Village has been a solid residential market over the last decade. Since 2004, changes in the Michigan economy have led to declining housing prices in most municipalities including Lathrup Village.

## Age of Housing Stock

The age of housing units in Lathrup Village can be used as an indicator of the quality of the buildings. The median age in Lathrup Village is 50. The majority of homes in the community (90%) were built before 1980, meaning that at least 90% of the homes are almost 30 years old. As the age of homes increase, their maintenance costs also rise sharply. Given this reality, the City should develop home repair programs to maintain the condition of these dwellings.

## Current Residential Land Use

The largest land use within Lathrup Village is single-family residential, which occupies 80% of the land area of the community. This is followed by commercial (8%), and institutional (7%). This land use pattern has remained constant from 1990-2000.

Like many older communities in Michigan, the City has seen a population decrease over the last decade. This population decrease is due to the continued out-migration of residents from Detroit and its surrounding suburbs to new communities on the urban fringe. Trends in Southeast Michigan indicate that most areas that experienced growth from 1980 to 2000 did so due to population shifts rather than sizeable increases in the number of live births. This is true for Oakland County as a whole and thus, its population increases are most likely related to migration from the older suburbs surrounding the City of Detroit. From 1960 to 2000, Detroit and other large cities experienced tremendous drops in population as residents moved to the suburbs. From 1960 to 2000 Detroit's population decreased by over a million people. The figures also show that the

## our community

City of Lathrup Village decreased its share of the County population from 1/2 of 1 percent in 1960 to 3/10 of one percent in 2000. Meanwhile, the County increased its share of the region’s population to 24.7% in 2000. During this same period, minority households as a percentage of total housing stock continued to increase in the City as more affluent Black families migrated from the Detroit. In 1990, black households comprised 21.5% of the housing stock, and in 2000 this percentage increased to 49.8%.

The population of Lathrup Village is declining slightly, and is predicted to decline further in 2030, to 3,863. Age demographic forecasts for year 2030 show that the City will have a stable and reliable workforce in the 35 and 64 age cohort. Impact on City services for seniors should be minimal as the population ages at a steady rate, from 12% in 2000 to 17% in 2030. A bigger challenge is providing the right type of housing options. In addition, if the City attracts a number of younger residents in the family forming age group in the future, enrollment in local schools could actually increase somewhat in the coming years.

The challenges of the region and State will have major implications for the City. Limited growth, a shifting age structure (baby boomers will be 60-79 years old in 2025), and continued sprawl make redevelopment in inner-ring suburbs more difficult. The aging population of baby boomers will want different housing types such as condominiums and retirement centers, as well as age-appropriate cultural and recreational opportunities. Additionally, growth both in population and households will crowd schools in outlying areas while smaller households in the inner-ring suburbs such as Lathrup Village will continue to empty out. These challenges also present opportunities for the City. Southfield Road has experienced retail difficulties, and creative development options exist. These include:

- the potential for condominium development,
- implementation of the new mixed use development standards, and
- planned unit development (PUD) zoning for select parcels on Southfield Road.

These development tools allow flexibility, for both the developer and City, while providing the type of development options that are presently lacking. Infill development is a likely option due to the build out of the community and the age of the housing stock.

Another opportunity for the City is to market itself as a “community of choice” by providing a comprehensive package of public services, a viable commercial district, great parks and trail systems, as well as traditional and walkable single-family neighborhoods.

## Existing Residential Area Plan Map

The map on the accompanying page depicts the boundaries of the five residential areas and their respective residential lot sizes. Note that the residential area boundaries observe the nonresidential frontages along Twelve Mile Road, Southfield Road, portions of Evergreen Road and the I-696 corridor. The residential area boundaries, therefore, do not extend fully to these road rights-of-way but to the rear property lines of commercial properties adjoining these roads. However, the current segmentation of the residential neighborhoods is an impact resulting from the use of Southfield Road and 11 Mile Road as state and regional highways. The original development layout for Lathrup Village called for the Village center as a node for civic, social and retail activity and not as a divided business district as it currently functions.

Table 2.4 Allocation of Residential Lots by Size and Type

|  | Acres  | Number<br>Lots |
|--|--------|----------------|
| Single Family<br>(1 to 2.5 acres)        | 3.05   | 2              |
| Single Family<br>(14,000 to 43,599 sqft) | 320.21 | 750            |
| Single Family<br>(8,000 to 13,999 sqft)  | 183.54 | 713            |
| Single Family<br>(Less than 8,000 sqft)  | 18.21  | 110            |
| Multiple Family                          | 12.25  | 10             |



## Lathrup Village Historic District

A component of the Residential Plan is the recognition of the historic character and development history of the community. The Lathrup Village Historic District was formally recognized and approved by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior on March 16, 1998. The Lathrup Village Historic District was based on a Multiple Resource Nomination application submitted to the State of Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (MHAL). The historic district, which is illustrated on the adjacent map, includes 1,081 contributing properties and 132 non-contributing properties. (The contributing parcels are denoted in color on the adjacent map.)

According to the information submitted with the Multiple Resource Nomination the historic district is predominantly residential in character and comprises the majority of the City. Louise Lathrup developed Lathrup Townsite as a planned community between the years 1924 and 1963. In 1953, Lathrup Townsite was incorporated as the City of Lathrup Village. Predominant architectural styles within the district include late 19th and 20th century Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Mission/Spanish-architecture.

The physical layout of the City mirrors many of the older village and city plans developed during the Garden City Movement. The plan is based on a radial pattern, which focuses on the village center at the confluence of Southfield Road and California Drive. California Drive is an octagon so it has two intersections with Southfield Road at either end of the village center. Major streets emanate from the center, which gives Lathrup Village its historic character and appeal.

In 1929, a plan was advanced for the development of Sunset Boulevard as a major regional arterial road to connect the City of Pontiac with the City of Detroit. Part of that arterial road ran through the Lathrup Townsite as shown on the adjacent map. The regional connector was never implemented. However, Sunset Boulevard remains an important connector through Lathrup Village, connecting the North Central and Northwest areas of the city.

Two predominant buildings were constructed in the town core area -the Annie Lathrup School and the Town Hall. The Town Hall, a colonial revival structure, was home to the Lathrup real estate business. The Town Hall was eventually demolished in the 1990's as part of a commercial development project.

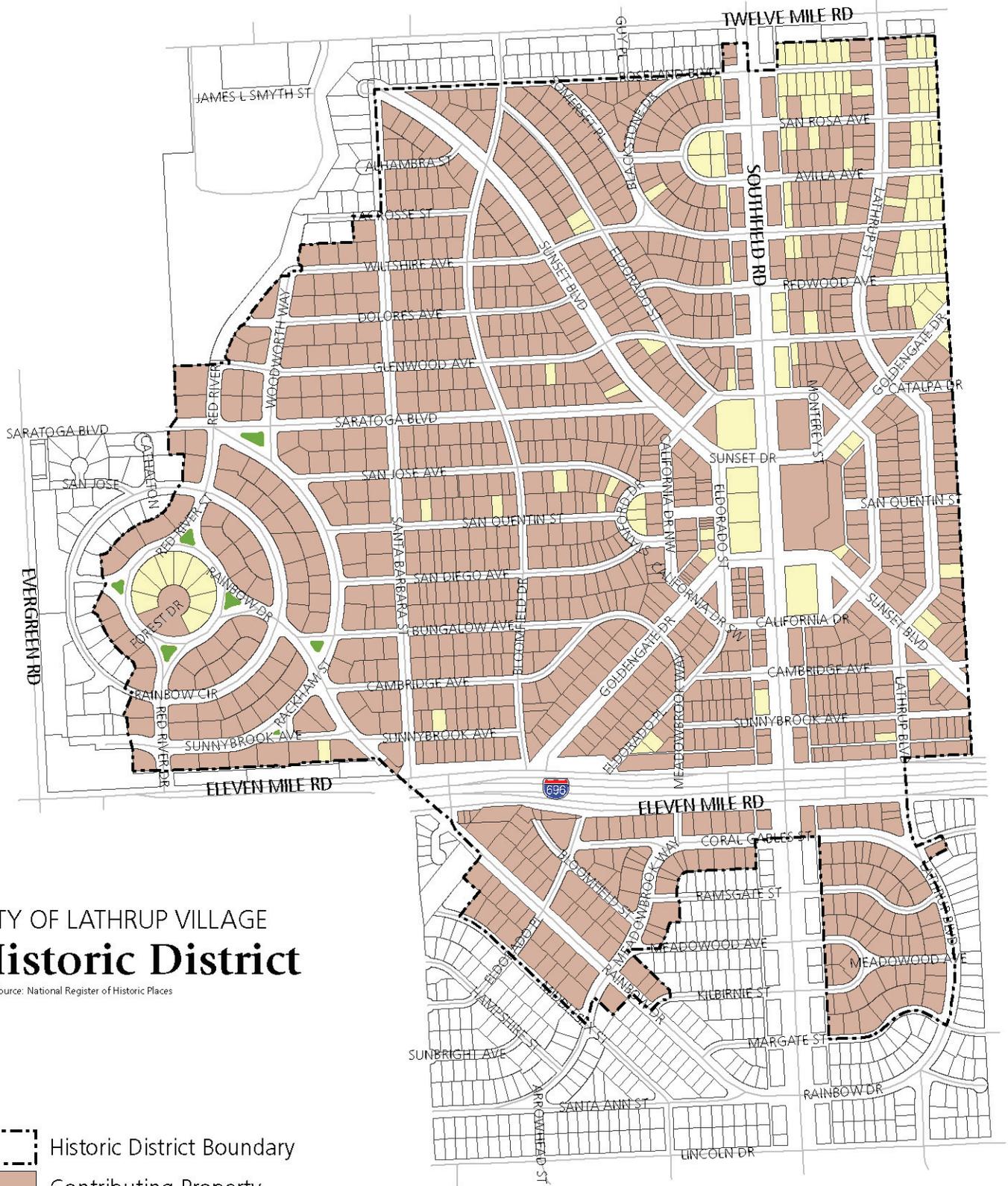
The size and composition of Lathrup Village Historic District forms the framework for the community and needs to be woven into the community master plan.



*1929 Plan for the Sunset Boulevard regional arterial road to connect Detroit and Pontiac. Note the connection along Sunset Boulevard through Lathrup Village.*



*Former Town Hall Building on Southfield Road*



CITY OF LATHRUP VILLAGE  
**Historic District**

Data Source: National Register of Historic Places

-  Historic District Boundary
-  Contributing Property
-  Non-contributing Property

 1 inch equals 1,000 feet



*Southfield Road and the I-696 Expressway and Service Drive*

*As illustrated in the Residential Area plan, Lathrup Village, while a suburban community itself, has been adversely impacted by sprawl. Major roads and highways delineate residential areas, increasing cut-through traffic and the need for additional buffering areas and traffic-calming techniques to screen and protect residential areas. In addition, Southfield Road and I-696 fragment the community into four zones.*

*Issues raised at the January 2007 Visioning Workshop related to transportation included mass transit, pedestrian and bike travel, the idea of a pedestrian bridge across Southfield, and the potential of a boulevard.*

*Lathrup Village has developed around a framework of existing roads and streets in a grid and radial pattern reflecting principles of the Garden City movement. Bounded on the north by 12 Mile Road, to the west by Evergreen, to the south by Lincoln Drive and to the east by Lathrup Boulevard, Lathrup Village is a traditional pre-WW II community embedded within a metropolitan area.*

## **Transportation Network**

Eleven Mile Road was selected as the site for I-696, which is also known as the Walter P. Ruether freeway, named for a prominent figure in early automotive labor union activity. Approximately three miles north of Detroit, I-696 has 6-8 lanes for most of its length and is a major commuter route linking second and third tier Detroit suburbs between I-275/I-96, I-75 and I-94. The I-696 project was not without opposition. Lathrup Village, Pleasant Ridge, and the Detroit Zoo filed lawsuits in an attempt to stop construction of the freeway. The freeway essentially divided neighborhoods and bifurcated communities, just as it did in Lathrup Village.

The construction of the freeway was disputed in 1970 and gained federal attention as one of the "Major Interstate System Route Controversy in Urban Areas" as a highly contested freeway. Prior to 1967, Michigan law required the approval of local communities for highway design and location. The State was unable to obtain approval of any alternate location for I-696 by the eight communities involved, and an arbitration law was passed in 1967 to settle interstate highway disputes. The arbitration board selected a location from one of several proposed by the highway department. Two of the communities, Lathrup Village and Pleasant Ridge, contested the constitutionality of the arbitration board. The State Supreme Court heard the case and found the board to be constitutional. The I-696 Freeway was constructed and opened in segments during the 1980s.

## **Existing Street and Road Inventory**

The first step in evaluating the road and street transportation network is to establish the different classifications of roads throughout the community. In order to accurately assess the road network, the function and usage of specific roads must be evaluated. To assess the function of Lathrup Village's roads, the National Functional Classification System (NFC) is utilized. NFC is also used to determine those public roads and streets eligible to receive federal funding for improvements and maintenance, and is an element of the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) coordinated through SEMCOG.

The hierarchy of the street network includes local roads, collector roads, and arterial roads, which work together to move vehicles through local neighborhoods to regional centers. The NFC system is not the same classification used under the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Act 51 program which uses the terms "local" and "major" streets.

## Local Roads

The functions performed on local roads can be of residential or non-residential nature. In Lathrup Village, the majority of the roads are classified as local roads and are components of the residential areas.

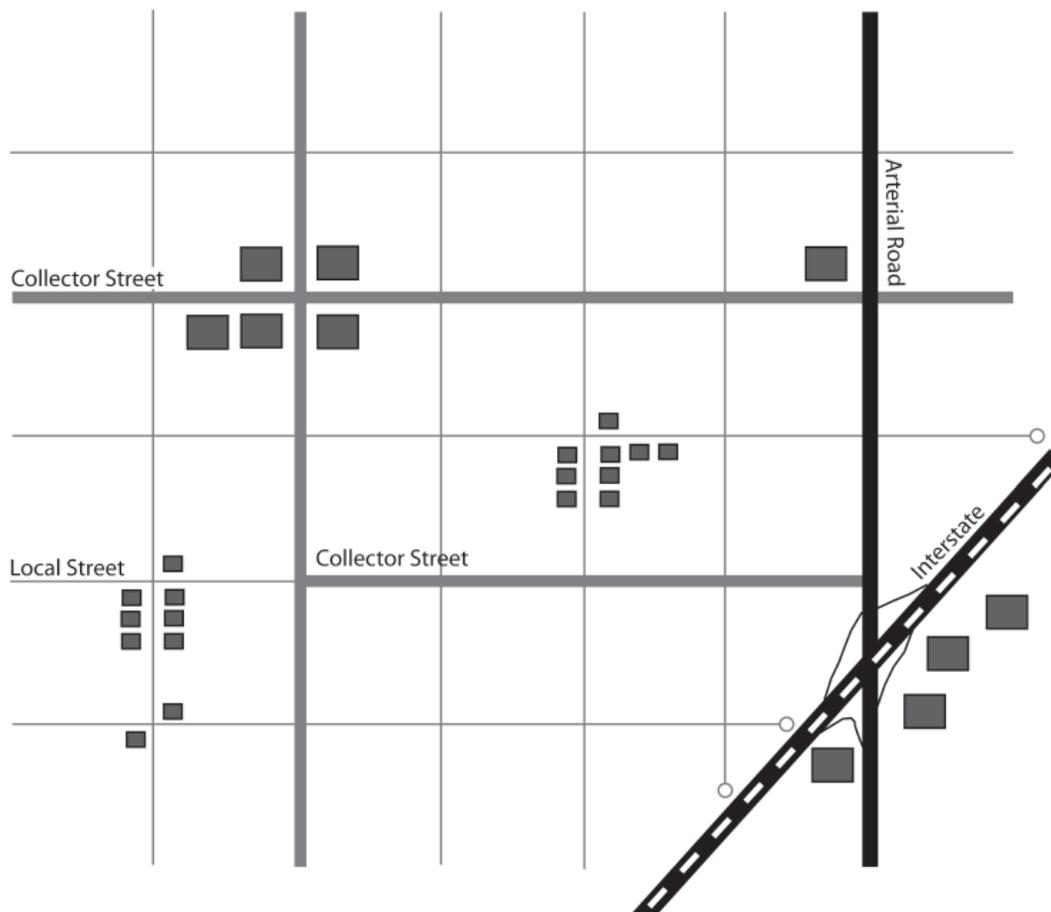
A local road is intended to carry local traffic only and to provide direct access to abutting property within the interior of residential and non-residential areas. Local roads are developed in a manner which discourages usage for through traffic by providing little access to areas outside those which are directly served. Limiting the intensity and range of traffic helps maintain low speeds and neighborhood safety. Primarily providing access to property, local roads in Lathrup Village are characteristic of most residential streets with adjacent sidewalks, trees and low speed limits.

## Collector Roads

Collector roads perform the function of collecting local traffic from local roads and directing this traffic to outlying destinations and roads which are designed to handle greater traffic volumes. Additionally, collector roads draw traffic from the larger thoroughfares and distribute this traffic onto the local street network. More specifically, the collector roads act as the connection between residential and non-residential areas.

In Lathrup Village, the NFC collector roads are the 11 Mile Road Service Drive and Lincoln Drive. Major (Act 51) streets which function in a similar manner to collector streets include Bloomfield Drive, Goldengate Drive, Lathrup Boulevard, Lincoln Drive, Rainbow Drive, Santa Barbara, Saratoga Boulevard, and Sunset Boulevard.

Graphic 3.1 National Functional Classification



The National Functional Classification (NFC) network and how roads relate to each other.

## Minor Arterial Roads

Minor arterial roads support the next level of transportation and direct traffic along significant transit routes in a community. Minor arterials observe significant daily traffic and serve as the connection to outlying areas in the community. While supporting both residential and nonresidential areas, they offer more non-stop travel along significant roadways, often at higher speeds. Access to minor arterials is spread across all other classifications of roadways, therefore serving all areas of the community. Similar in function to principal arterials, they carry trips of shorter distances and to lesser traffic generators. Eleven Mile and Evergreen are considered minor arterial roads within Lathrup Village.

## Principal Arterial Roads

Principal arterial roads are primary roads or highways that function as the transit network supporting large volumes of traffic. Commuter traffic and commercial activities are located along principal arterials, are intended to collect local traffic from minor arterials and transport it through and beyond the community. Therefore, principal arterials carry both local and through traffic. I-696, Southfield Road and Twelve Mile are the principal arterials within the City of Lathrup Village.

## Transportation Concerns

Lathrup Village has developed street and road networks that facilitate efficient local traffic flow throughout the community. Analysis of these networks combined with insight from community participants has revealed some critical concerns and challenges:

### Southfield Road

- Incompatibility with pedestrian traffic
- Excessive curb cuts
- Pedestrians not comfortable using sidewalks due speed and proximity of traffic
- Impacts of road becoming a boulevard
- Safer crossing for pedestrians

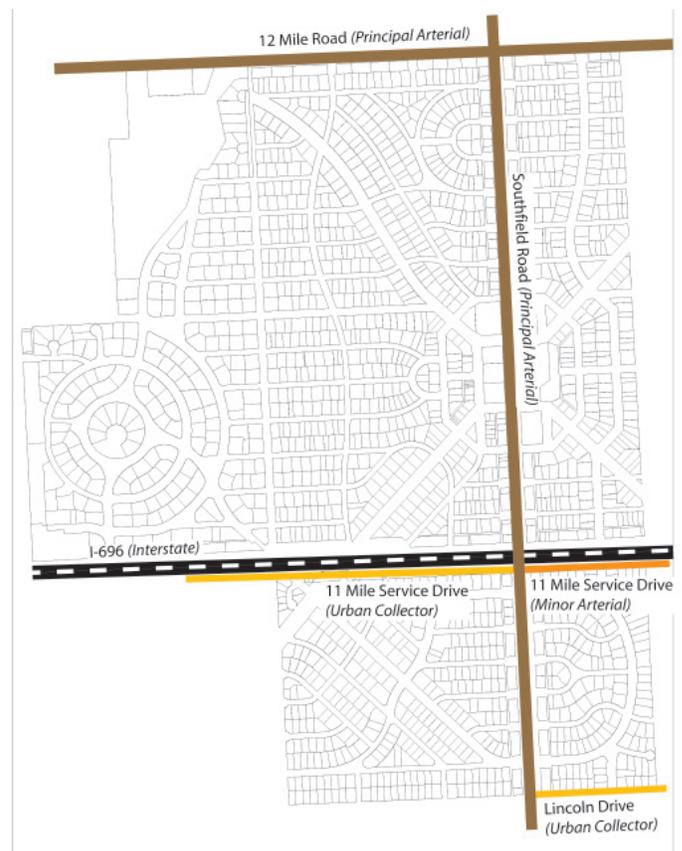
### Local Streets and Collectors

- Cut-through traffic to access I-696

Having a safe, well designed, efficient transportation system for both vehicles and pedestrians is the overall goal of any transportation plan.

Norman Bel Geddes, the visionary behind the U.S. Interstate system stated in 1939 that “motorways must not be allowed to infringe upon the city.” When interstates provide access to the City, they should take the shape of avenues and boulevards. In exchange, the City does not allow itself to grow along the highway. The results of these rules can be seen in many of the cities in Western Europe that have retained their pedestrian-friendly quality whose highways offer endless views of the uninterrupted countryside. However, highways planners, and engineers did exactly the opposite in the United States. Highways have been routed directly through the centers of our cities, as in Lathrup Village, eviscerating entire neighborhoods and dividing communities. The construction of I-696, although providing east-west access linking I-94, I-75, and I-96, continued the practice of dividing and fragmenting communities.

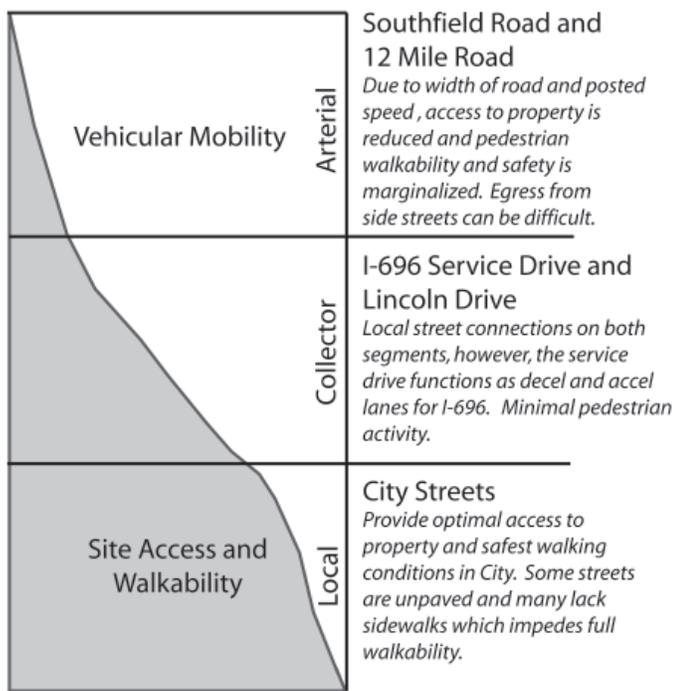
Graphic 3.2 Lathrup Village National Functional Classification



City of Lathrup Village - NFC Road Classification

The road classification system reflects the relationship between mobility and access. As local streets empty into collector streets, which in turn funnel traffic into the arterial network, the number of vehicles and the speed of these vehicles increases. Conversely, as the traffic system moves through the hierarchy from local, to collector, to arterial, vehicular mobility increases and site accessibility and walkability decreases. The pedestrian environment often associated with a residential neighborhood turns into a vehicular environment reflected by Southfield Road. The graphic illustration depicts the relationship between type of street (local, collector, arterial) and the relationship between mobility and access. Unfortunately for Lathrup Village, Southfield Road functions at principal arterial level, which significantly reduces pedestrian activity and creates a physical barrier fragmenting the community. In addition, due to the road's classification and functionality as a regional arterial, the speed limit creates an unfavorable atmosphere for a pedestrian-oriented business district preferred by residents.

Graphic 3.3 Mobility and Access



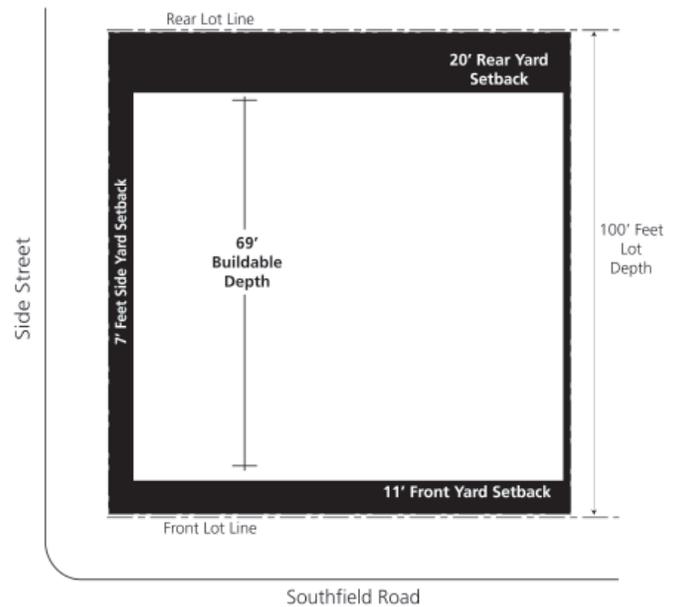
The Oakland County Road Commission is in the design phase of reconstructing Southfield Road as a boulevard incorporating in several locations the "Michigan Left" turn lane. The width of the boulevard median will range between 40 feet between intersections and 60 feet at the intersections and will look similar to portions of the Woodward Avenue median. How this reconfiguration will benefit the Lathrup Village business district along Southfield Road is undetermined at this time. A complication arising

from the planned project is the removal of off-street frontage parking located in the right-of-way. Several businesses and office buildings will have their parking removed and subsequently reduced by the project. These areas include:

- Sunnybrook to California (east side)
- California to Glenwood (west side)
- Wiltshire to Roseland (east and west sides)

The configuration of the frontage lots along Southfield Road were determined when the City was platted 80 years ago when regional traffic was non-existent. The commercial lots are approximately 100-feet deep, and when reduced by front and rear yard setbacks result in a buildable depth of 69 feet. This dimension is too restrictive to allow a building with ample off-street parking. The dichotomy of this situation is that the commercial lots located along a regional arterial cannot fully benefit from the location.

Graphic 3.4 Southfield Road Commercial Lot Layout



Although the Southfield Road right-of-way is uniform in width through the City the use of right-of-way is different north and south of I-696. The portion of Southfield Road north of I-696 is mostly built-out with structures and off-street parking lots, and some locations have the traditional lawn panel (the area between the right-of-way line and curb) filled with stone rather than grass and trees. Southfield Road south of I-696 has a defined grass right-of-way and a more uniform and consistent look, however, this area also has higher vacancies than the north segment.

Southfield Road, with or without a boulevard, will be a major obstacle to overcome for the revitalization of the business district and connectivity between east and west neighborhoods. However, the proposed boulevard will improve the image of the Southfield Road corridor by “softening” the amount of pavement with an extensive landscaped median.

Southfield Road ROW is roughly 160’ in width accommodating five lanes of traffic with sporadic acceleration and deceleration lanes at key intersections. The design of the proposed improvements will result in a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour, which is conducive for a rural (township) corridor but not practical for an urban business district. As discussed previously, the proposed cross-section for the boulevard will necessitate the removal of off-street parking currently located within the right-of-way. Graphic 3.5 illustrates this condition and associated impact.

On the right are examples of boulevard (median) roadway configurations. Graphic 3.6 is the boulevard through downtown Ferndale that provides on-street parallel parking with a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour. Graphic 3.7 is Jackson Road in Scio Township, which has a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour. Both examples have a median but function entirely differently. The Ferndale median with parallel parking and a lower speed limit is more pedestrian friendly than the Jackson Road median.

Taming the traffic and softening the public realm along Southfield Road has to be done in order to revitalize and invigorate the business district.

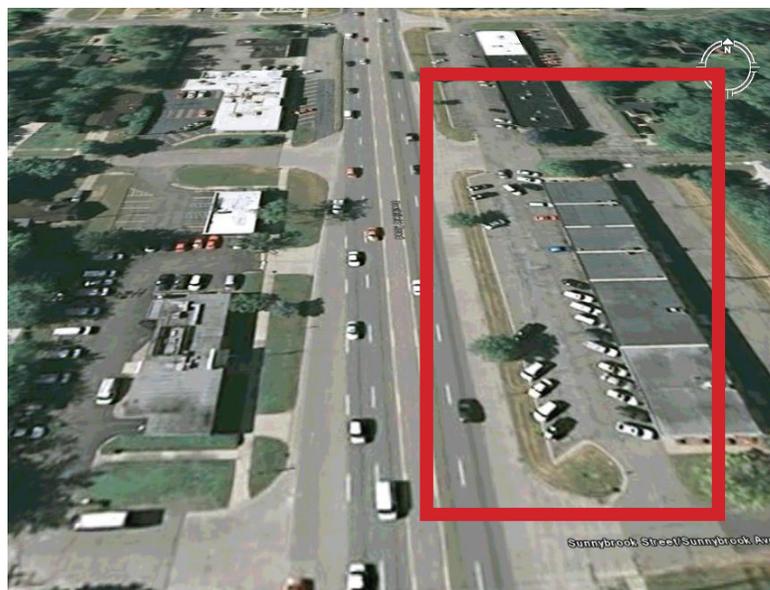
Graphic 3.6 Woodward Avenue - Ferndale



Graphic 3.7 Jackson Road - Scio Township



Graphic 3.5 Off-Street Frontage Parking



*Off-street frontage parking situated within the Southfield Road right-of-way. A portion, if not all, of the parking will be reduced as part of the boulevard project.*

## *our community*

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Examples of Homes Built in 1926 and 1927 in Lathrup Village



The Elmherst



The Emil Lorch



The Dream



The Artist

*Photos: Courtesy of the Lathrup Village Historical Society Website (Archive Page)*

*In 1980, Lathrup Village officials adopted a new Master Land Use Plan for the community entitled “The Lathrup Village Plan.” The 70-page document included only a brief overview of existing land use at the time. In January 2002, the Michigan Legislature adopted Act 265, the Village and Municipal Planning Act, which amended Act 285, the Michigan Municipal Planning Act of 1931. Section 6(4) in Act 265 states that a municipal Master Plan may project 20 years or more into the future. Section 8a(2), however, states that at least every five years after adoption of its Master Plan, the municipality shall review the Plan and determine whether to amend its Plan or to prepare and adopt a new Master Plan. Since the current Master Plan is nearly 27 years old, City Officials determined that, rather than simply amend the plan, it was time to prepare a new Master Land Use Plan.*

## History of “The Lathrup Village Plan”

During the life of the current plan, City officials have endeavored to implement its land use recommendations and have used the land use recommendations of the Plan to help guide their decisions on requests to rezone land in the City. They have utilized the land use guidelines of the Plan in developing the City’s current zoning standards, and in the review of site plans for new development in the community.

“The Lathrup Village Plan” has endured over the years because it was a well-conceived plan. According to information provided in the 1980 Master Plan, during the period between 1966 and 1980, a total of 327 new residential building permits were issued in the City. This represents approximately 22 percent of the total number of homes in the community. The 1980 Master Plan did not indicate how many of the 327 new residential building permits were for single-family detached dwelling units and how many were for multiple-family dwelling units. It is assumed that most were probably issued for single-family detached dwellings due to the number of platted single family homes in the community.

Intense commercial growth and development also occurred during the same time period. According to the 1980 Master Plan, the City issued 51 commercial building permits. The figure represented nearly 80 percent of the commercial building inventory in the community. Most of the commercial development took place along both sides

of Southfield Road, and along the south side of Twelve Mile Road.

Table 4.1 portrays the distribution of land use in the City by acres, by the percent each shares of the developed land in the community, and by what percent each land use occupies of the total land area of the City. As the table reveals, there is practically no vacant land area left within the community. There may be vacant buildings, but not vacant land.

Unfortunately, a similar table of information does not exist in the 1980 Plan, so a comparison of land use types and their share of the total land area of the community could not be made. If such a comparison could be made, it would likely show that the greatest change in land use type would be in the category of public rights-of-way. The 1980 Plan was produced prior to development of the I-696 expressway through the City.

The intent of an existing land use study is to provide current information on existing land use in the City. The information will enable City officials to more accurately evaluate future land use trends in the community. The knowledge will also facilitate the development of a new Master Land Use Plan

that will more effectively represent current and future land use development, and particularly, potential redevelopment trends. The existing land use data was collected in the first week of February 2007.

Preparation of this study commenced with a review of similar data contained in the City's 1980 Master Land Use Plan. Due to the fact that only two brief pages in the 1980 report were devoted to existing land use, it is possible that this is the first in-depth review of existing land use in the City.

An electronic copy of existing land use for the City was obtained from the Oakland County Department of Planning and Economic Services. This mapped data was the basis for creating the more detailed map of existing land use that appears at the conclusion of this report. The Oakland County Department of Planning and Economic Services data was necessarily generalized because it was being carried out countywide. For this study, a more detailed inventory of existing land use was desired.

To obtain the level of detail desired for this study, a field survey of land use along all of the residential streets in the City was conducted. Land use data was recorded on worksheets in the field. A similar survey of the nonresidential frontage was conducted along the Southfield Road frontage, along the I-696 Service Drive, and the Twelve Mile Road frontage. In some instances, portions of the Southfield Road frontage was walked, and existing land use data recorded on the worksheets. Every type of land use encountered in the field was recorded on the worksheets and assigned to a specific land use category. Each land use category was assigned a specific color representation that became an electronic layer overlaying the Oakland County electronic lot line base map of the community.

As each land use type was recorded, the land area involving the use was also recorded in acres. The sum of the individual land use acres were then added together to provide an overall acreage total to each specific land use category. The totals of each land use category were then added together to determine the total number of developed acres in the City and the total number of acres in the City. The percent each land use type and each land use category shares of the total developed land, and the total land area of the community was then determined. Because the City is nearly fully developed, as expected, there was little difference between the total number of developed acres and the total number of acres. All of this information is portrayed in Table 4.1 and on the Map of Existing Land Use on page 25.

## Existing Land Use Categories

Five basic categories of existing land use developed for this study include residential, commercial, public/quasi-public, vacant, and right-of-way. Within each of the five categories, a total of 20 individual subcategories are identified. Though most of the land use categories are self-explanatory, a brief description of the three primary land development categories is provided below.

### Residential

This land use category contains five subcategories. Four of the five subcategories involve single-family detached homes. The differences between these four land use categories are the size of the lots on which the homes exist. Lot size relates directly to dwelling density. Dwelling density also relates, for the most part, to the minimum lot area and lot width requirements established in the City's zoning ordinance by single-family residential zoning districts. The R-1 through R-4 land use subcategories listed under the Residential Land Use Category, relate to the R-1 through R-4 Single Family Residential Zoning Districts in the City's Zoning Code. The lot area data for each zoning district depicted in the Residential Land Use Category was part of the electronic data provided by the Oakland County Department of Planning and Economic Services. The single multiple family residential subcategory depicts the number of acres devoted to multiple family residential housing.

### Commercial

This nonresidential land use category includes seven subcategories, all dealing with various types of commercial land use. Office land use was categorized as a nonresidential use and placed in the commercial category. Two of the seven subcategories include vacant commercial land use and vacant office land use. Unlike the residential subcategories, the other five commercial subcategories relate solely to different types of commercial land use and not to a specific commercial zoning classification (district). Some of the commercial subcategories warrant a brief description of their particular use:

- Retail: Commercial uses that are not medical, automotive, or personal service-oriented uses, including clothing, appliance, grocery, or perishable goods stores, as well as restaurants and the like
- Automotive: Automotive and automotive-related land use, such as gas stations and stores selling automotive related parts, as well as automotive service facilities

- Personal Service. Outlets that provide personal services, such as barber and beauty shops

It should be further noted that the vacant office and vacant commercial subcategories include the land they occupy and not just the building where vacant floor area was evident during the survey. For the purposes of this study, in those instances where a building was partly vacant and partly occupied, if it could be determined in the field that more of the building was occupied than vacant, the building and its land area were categorized as occupied. If it was determined that less than half the building was occupied at the time of the field survey, its land area was categorized as vacant. With respect to the nonresidential land use frontage along Southfield Road in the City, a more detailed breakdown of occupied versus vacant building floor area may be forthcoming in the Southfield Road frontage study element of the City's Master Land Use Plan project.

### **Public/Quasi-Public**

This category represents a variety of public-owned property such as school property, Lathrup Village City Hall on Southfield Road, the City's Department of Public Services facility which is located on the south side of Twelve Mile Road near the northwest corner of the community and the underground storm water retention basin and pumping station building, and a nearby microwave cell tower located in the southwest portion of the city.

## **Existing Land Use Evaluation**

Table 4.1 represents the various land use categories and subcategories, and the number of acres each comprises of the developed and total land area of the City. Figures representing the percent each land use category and subcategory represents of the developed and total land area of the City are also provided. The percent each subcategory shares of its land use category is also provided. As noted in the previous section, the City is, for all intent and purposes, a fully developed Community. The difference, therefore, between the total developed area of the City, and the total land area of the City, as noted in Table 4.1, was less than 1.0 percent (0.87%).

The City contains 968 acres of land, which amounts to approximately 1.5 square miles of land area. As is the case with most developed cities, land devoted to single-family homes consumes the most significant portion of the land area within the City. Some 537 acres consist of single-family homes. Single-family homes make up just under 56 (55.97) percent of the developed land area of the community. The residential category is composed mostly of homes on 14,000 to 43,559 square foot lots. Nearly 60 (59.60) percent of the residential land in the City of Lathrup Village consists of these homes. Dwelling density in this subcategory would range from 3.1 dwellings per acre down to 1.0 dwelling per acre.

Multiple dwelling buildings in the City occupy just over 12 (12.25) acres of the developed land in the community. This amounts to just over 2 (2.28) percent of the residential land in the City. Nearly all of the multiple dwelling-oriented land use in the City is located along the north side of the I-696 Service Drive, west of Southfield Road, and along Evergreen Road north of I-696. None of the existing multiple family dwelling developments in the City appear to be common hall apartment buildings. Most appear to be townhouse or garden-type apartments, each with its own private entrance. Many also appear to have attached garages. Multiple-family land use can, and does, serve as a viable dwelling alternative to single-family detached homes. Multiple dwelling developments can also serve as a desirable land use transition between more intense uses such as major thoroughfares or nonresidential zoning districts and single-family residential neighborhoods.

The second largest land use category in the City is land occupied by transportation uses. All land in this category consists of road rights-of-way. All of the road rights-of-way that we are aware of in the community are public rights-of-

## ***our community***

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way. As such, they also could have been represented as a public land use and placed in the public & quasi-public land use category. Public rights-of-way were given their own category because of the large amount of land area they cover in the community.

All road rights-of-way in the City, including the I-696 right-of-way, cover 320.70 acres, which is over 33 percent (33.41%) of the City's developed land. Add in the third largest land use category, which is public and quasi-public land, and the combined figures total nearly 380 (379.78) acres. The two categories combined amount to nearly 40 percent of the developed land area in the City. It is a potentially sobering realization that very nearly 40 percent of the developed land in the City returns little or no revenue to the City. It is non-taxable property, yet requires continuous maintenance at significant cost to the community. The two most significant contributors to the overall number of acres in these two land use categories are, as noted, land in public rights-of-way, and land involving the buildings and campus of Southfield-Lathrup High School.

There are eight subcategories identified under the public and quasi public land use category. With the exception of utilities all subcategories are self-explanatory. During the fieldwork that identified and categorized land uses, two sites in the community were considered to be utilities. One of the sites included the underground storm water storage basin and its related pumping facility. The second utility was the nearby microwave cell tower and its related infrastructure. Both sites are located near the southwest corner of the City.

Since there is no industrial land use in the City there is no industrial land use category in Table 4.1. The only land use in the community that could be considered as having an industrial orientation would be the City's Department of Public Services facility, which out of necessity has some limited outdoor storage area but because it is publicly owned is classified as public / quasi public.



*City Hall - a Public / Quasi Public Land Use*

Table 4.1 Existing Land Use by Acres City of Lathrup Village 2007

| <b>Residential</b>                   | <b>Acres</b>  | <b>Percent of City<br/>Developed</b> | <b>% Total</b> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| R1- Single Family 1 to 2.5 acre lots | 3.05          | 1%                                   |                |
| R2 - 14,000 to 43,559 sq. ft. lots   | 320.21        | 60%                                  |                |
| R3 - 8,000 to 13,999 sq. ft. lots    | 183.53        | 34%                                  |                |
| R4 - Less than 8,000 sq. ft. lots    | 18.21         | 3%                                   |                |
| M - Multiple Family                  | 12.25         | 2%                                   |                |
|                                      |               | 100%                                 |                |
| <b>Total:</b>                        | <b>537.25</b> | <b>56%</b>                           | <b>55%</b>     |
| <b>Commercial</b>                    |               |                                      |                |
| C1- General Office                   | 16.88         | 39%                                  |                |
| C2 - Medical Office                  | 2.77          | 6%                                   |                |
| C3 - Retail                          | 10.71         | 25%                                  |                |
| C4 - Automotive                      | 0.30          | 1%                                   |                |
| C5 - Personal Service                | 6.21          | 14%                                  |                |
| V2C - Vacant Commercial              | 2.64          | 6%                                   |                |
| V2O - Vacant Office                  | 3.39          | 8%                                   |                |
|                                      |               | 100%                                 |                |
| <b>Total:</b>                        | <b>42.9</b>   | <b>4%</b>                            | <b>4%</b>      |
| <b>Public / Quasi-Public</b>         |               |                                      |                |
| High School                          | 42.13         | 71%                                  |                |
| DPW                                  | 1.30          | 2%                                   |                |
| City Hall                            | 1.76          | 3%                                   |                |
| Church (P4)                          | 1.76          | 3%                                   |                |
| Private School(P5)                   | 4.08          | 7%                                   |                |
| Post Office (P7)                     | 0.24          | 0%                                   |                |
| Parks                                | 3.94          | 7%                                   |                |
| Utilities                            | 3.87          | 7%                                   |                |
|                                      |               | 100%                                 |                |
| <b>Total:</b>                        | <b>59.08</b>  | <b>6%</b>                            | <b>6%</b>      |
| Rights-Of-Way (Includes I-696)       | 320.7         | 33%                                  | 33%            |
| <b>Total Developed Acres</b>         | <b>959.93</b> | <b>100%</b>                          | <b>99%</b>     |
| Vacant Land                          | 8.41          |                                      | 1%             |
| <b>Total Acres</b>                   | <b>968.34</b> |                                      | <b>100%</b>    |

The fourth land use category includes all land in the city devoted to office and retail commercial land use. This land use category involves just under 43 (42.9) acres of land, which amounts to 4.47 percent of the developed land in the community. Commercial-oriented land use in the City is tied exclusively to land fronting on both sides of Southfield Road through the entire community, along the south side of nearly all of the Twelve Mile Road frontage in the City, along portions of the North I-696 Freeway frontage road, and at the northeast corner of the North I-696 Service Drive and Evergreen Road. The heaviest concentration of office land use is at the northeast corner of the North I-696 Service Drive and Evergreen Road, and along the south side of Twelve Mile Road. Office land use is also prevalent along both sides of Southfield Road, but is interspersed with other commercial oriented land use along the corridor frontage. The greatest concentration of commercial-oriented land use is along both sides of Southfield Road.

The commercial land use category includes seven subcategories. The largest of these categories involves general office and medical office land use. Combined these two subcategories consume just under 20 acres of road frontage and make up nearly 50 percent of all of the commercial-oriented land in the community. Two of the subcategories in the commercial land use category involve only a few acres in the overall commercial category, yet they are potentially worrisome acres. They are the acres involved in vacant commercial and vacant office land use. Combined, the two subcategories total 6.03 acres, which amounts to 14 (14.04) percent of the commercial-oriented land area in the community. A check of the map of existing land use in this report shows that all of the vacant land is along the Southfield Road frontage in the City, with most of the vacant sites located on both sides of the road south of the I-696 Freeway.

When the survey of existing land use was conducted in the field, it was often difficult to determine if all of a building was vacant, or only parts of it. For the purposes of this study, if it was estimated that more than half the building was occupied, it was recorded as occupied. Likewise if more than half of the building was estimated to be vacant, it was recorded as vacant. Whichever land use status was determined at the time of the field survey; the entire property was either recorded as occupied or vacant.

This method of land use designation was applied uniformly to all land uses in all of the land use categories with one exception. In other words, whatever land use title was assigned to the principal use on the property; the entire property was so identified. It is the entire property, not the building or buildings on the property, that the acreage figures in Table 4.1 and the color patterns on the Map

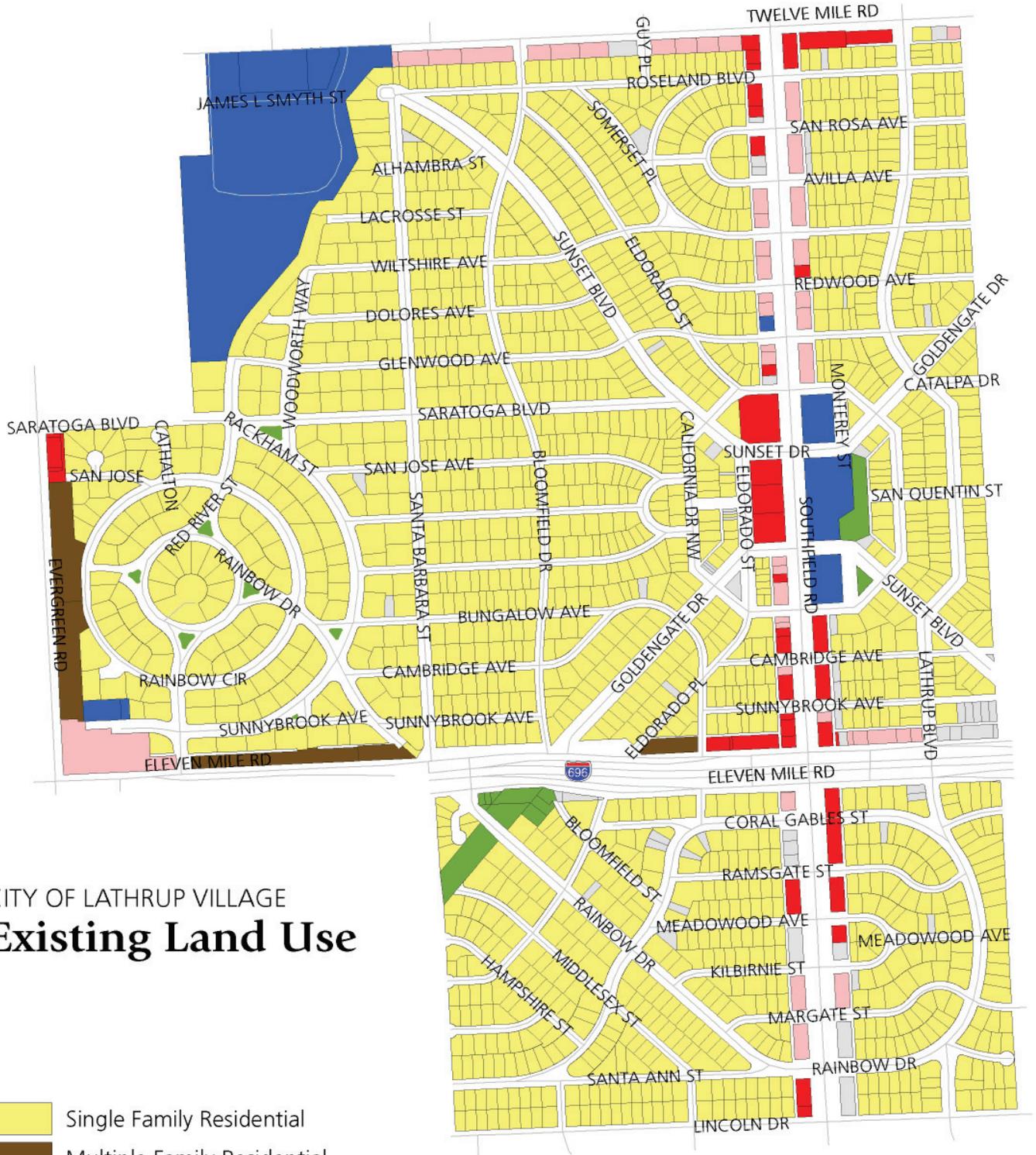
of Existing Land Use represent. The one exception is the Vacant Category.

The Vacant Category lists three types of vacancies. Of the three subcategories, two involve what were estimated to be vacant buildings, as described in the preceding paragraph. The vacant lot subcategory included vacant land on which there was no development. As noted previously in this report and verified on the Map of Existing Land Use, the City is nearly fully developed. Under 9 (8.41) acres remain as vacant land in the City. Vacant land amounts to less than one (0.87%) percent of all of the land in the community.

## **Land Use and Zoning Comparison**

A well-conceived and well-planned community will be one in which the map of current zoning districts mirror the land use recommendations of the Master Plan. From a planning point of view, it appears that the City of Lathrup Village is in this enviable position. The various zoning districts, and there are ten (10) such districts, are depicted on the zoning map on the accompanying page.

By comparing the location of the City's various zoning districts with the existing land use distribution depicted on the Map of Existing Land Use, one can see how closely they compare to each other. Few municipalities can claim this type of success over the years in maintaining such a close relationship between zoning and land use. Because the information provided on both maps is so close by comparison, it was not necessary to compute the number of acres each zoning district comprises of the total land area of the City. The area of these districts will be very close to the various land use types depicted on the map of Existing Land Use and the percentages of the total land area of the City, as provided in Table 4.1.



CITY OF LATHRUP VILLAGE  
**Existing Land Use**

- Single Family Residential
- Multiple Family Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Park or Open Space
- Vacant

1 inch equals 1,000



*A Lathrup Village Home*

*Community participation brings vitality to a Master Plan. When the residents come together to provide a guiding vision for the path they want their community to take, they provide a framework for creating their community the way they want it to be. The Master Plan becomes a unique and individual road map that enables the community to achieve its specific visions identified through the community participation activities.*

*The community vision, as a framework, can guide community leaders and residents toward developing a unique and vibrant community. The City of Lathrup Village understands the importance of this and provided residents an opportunity on Saturday, January 20, 2007 to take part in the development of its Master Plan. Participant input, ideas, and goals have been compiled and analyzed to develop a list of themes and strategies to help guide future development and redevelopment of the City.*

## Visioning Workshop

Residents were asked to take part in a series of exercises that would allow for the development of ideas and goals for the City. The visioning session began by seating participants randomly at tables in groups of six to eight persons. An introduction and welcome was given by the Mayor, followed by an explanation of the importance of community involvement in the master planning process.

The workshop began by having participants brainstorm the things they like and dislike the most about the City. These topics were then compiled and voted upon by table members. The next exercise was to identify events, trends, and developments that have occurred in the community relating to zoning districts, traffic, transportation, municipal services, and community impact. This exercise allowed the visioning participants to discuss a wide variety of key planning subjects that relate directly to the master planning process. The last brainstorming session of the morning was the discussion of a preferred future for the City. This session allowed participants to share their ideas for the community and identify a variety of goals and objectives for the City.



These goals and expectations for the City were recorded and voted upon by the discussion groups. Ideas with the greatest consensus from each table were compiled by table leaders to create a master list that would be voted on by everyone participating in the workshop. Each table then had one person present their ideas to the rest of the groups. Following the presentation of those items that had the highest consensus of each group, a list of those highest collective priorities was created for all group participants to vote on. The session was adjourned after all participants had voted on the compiled list of goals.

## Assets and Challenges

### Assets

Residents clearly view the location of their community as its greatest attribute. Following this observation, residents feel that curb appeal in their community ranks high. Residents of the City feel a sense of community and appreciate diversity within their community. Another item appreciated by participants was City services. The group could not say enough about the quality of the services provided by the community. Highly regarded assets include:

- Central location (proximity)
- Curb appeal (housing)
- Sense of community
- Diversity
- City services ( trash pickup, snow removal)

### Challenges

Taxes brought the highest level of dislike. Discussion of taxes included tax base and public schools. Secondly, participants stated a strong dislike for the “outdated” business district and the poor mix of businesses located within the City. The community has a strong concern about the perception of the public schools, feeling as though the City is perceived as not having “quality” public schools. Four elements tied as the fifth strongest dislike. Those four include a lack of cohesion in the business district along Southfield Road, code enforcement, traffic, and finally the Southfield Road streetscape. Challenges noted include:

- Taxes
- Outdated business district
- Available businesses / mix (lack thereof)
- Perception of schools (quality)
- No cohesion in business district
- Code enforcement
- Traffic
- Southfield Road streetscape



*Assets - Housing and Neighborhoods*



*Challenge - Southfield Road and 12 Mile Road Intersection*

## Events, Developments, and Trends

Participants were asked to identify trends in the City as they relate to four different categories. Those categories were zoning, traffic, public services, and community impact. The number before each event, development, or trend indicates the ranking offered within the group. Comments underlined were rated very high and in many instances were two to five times higher than the next comment.

### Zoning

- 1 Need to update Zoning Ordinance
- 2 Code enforcement
- 3 Provide adequate parking
- 4 Site / frontage redevelopment on Southfield
- 5 Zoning map
- 6 Better parks

### Traffic

- 1 Vehicle traffic
- 2 Pedestrian traffic
- 3 Road improvements
- 4 Other modes of transportation
- 5 Parking

### Public Services

- 1 Public services a locational advantage
- 2 Public safety
- 3 Business-oriented services

### Community Impact

- 1 Southfield Road improvements
- 2 Taxes
- 3 Living environment
- 4 Business environment
- 5 Municipal services

Participants appreciate their community, the ambience of the neighborhoods and the level of public services offered by the City. But at the same time, they are also very cognizant of the tax base needed to support those services. Further, Southfield Road, which is a regional arterial accommodating high volumes of traffic, has become a physical barrier bifurcating the community and reducing the ability to walk within the City. Southfield Road is in the early stages of commercial decline which is in need of redevelopment, and residents look at an older zoning ordinance as a reason why the corridor is not a vibrant commercial district.



*Example of Existing Building Maintenance Deficiency*

## The Preferred Future

The next to final exercise of the visioning workshop involved looking into the future and describing the as it appears in 2017. The participants were again asked to brainstorm and collect any ideas or dreams they may have for the City as it develops in the future and to list them in the present tense. At the end of this exercise participants were able to vote for three ideas or images they hoped would occur in the City. After voting had taken place, a leader from each group presented the top items from their preferred future to the entire group.

The list of priorities totaled for all groups included 88 topics. In general, these topics tended to reinforce those items identified in the previous exercises. The five highest priorities for a Preferred Future for the City include (according to the participants of this workshop) the following items:

### 1. Expansion of the Village Center Concept

The participants envision a village center with improved businesses and better commercial varieties such as ice cream shops/parlors and specialty shops. Participants desire an increase in mixed land uses; multiple story buildings with a live/work environment, or where residential use comprises the stories above the commercial/business uses within the village center area. Residents are able to walk "downtown" to a vibrant center to shop for various items, get a cup of coffee, or eat at a high quality restaurant. The City has become a destination rather than a place to merely pass through

### 2. Business Improvements Through Architecture

Improved buildings with attractive and complimentary architecture identify the City as an individual community that offers a high quality of life. The buildings are well cared for and landscapes are maintained. Gaudy signs have been removed and architecture is more traditional and unifying. Parking areas for business are improved with more landscaping. Curb appeal improves the City's image, and attracts new business and residents.

### 3. Walkable Community

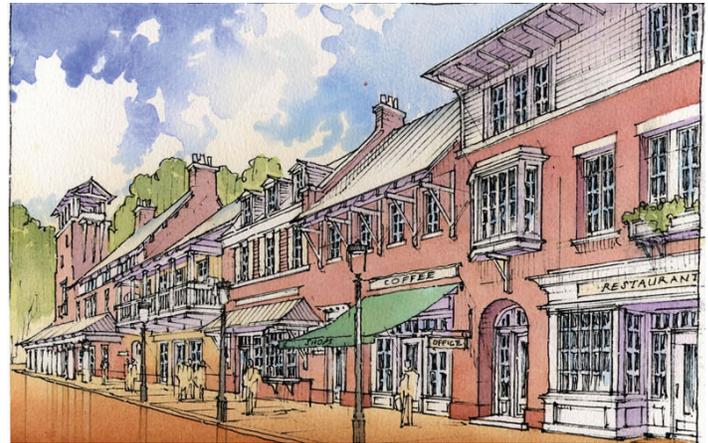
The City has become a walkable community. Bridges cross Southfield Road, connecting both sides of the road and providing safe access to all. Paths for bicycles and rollerblading are connected throughout residential areas, and connecting to parks and recreational facilities. These new paths are active with joggers, walkers, and other non-motorized/pedestrian users.

### 4. The "Lathrup Promise"

The City has a reputation for very high quality K-12 schools attracting new families. There is 100% involvement. Schools are better quality and taxes go down. The community delivers the "Lathrup Promise" to the children of those families that choose to live here. MEAP scores are higher and parents feel good about their children attending schools here.

### 5. Improved Entrances

Improvements on Southfield Boulevard as well as landscaping and updated architecture add to a unique image for Lathrup Village. Distinct "Gateways" are created using landscape architecture and architectural techniques and structures. These gateway areas reinforce the idea of Lathrup Village being a destination for shopping and doing business.



## Collective Prioritization and Voting

The visioning facilitator compiled a list of these priority items during the presentations. The collective list combined items that were repeated from tables. The result was a list of items representing the group's preferred vision for Lathrup Village in 2017. That list was then posted on the wall. The final exercise of the Visioning Workshop involved voting on the collective list. Participants were asked to vote on the three items they would like most to see in the City by the year 2017.

It is clear from reviewing the results of the City visioning workshops that the participants have a clear image in mind for the future. There was repeatedly a strong consensus on a number of key issues; this consensus helped direct the City into developing a Master Plan that will guide growth and produce an outcome that is supported by its residents. The identification of current trends lends support to previous planning efforts and City policy; however, it is clear that new and innovative changes in the planning of the City are strongly desired. Pinpointing the trends also helps the City to build upon and improve those areas of the community that residents often utilize and enjoy.

Table 5.1 Collective Group Prioritization of the Preferred Future

|           | <b>Collective Priorities</b>  | <b># Of Votes</b> |
|-----------|---|-------------------|
| <b>1</b>  | Expansion of City Center Concept. Concentration of multi-uses central in the community -- connected walk and bikeways | 30                |
| <b>2</b>  | Business Improvements through cohesive architecture   | 26                |
| <b>3</b>  | Walkable community - able to walk to various destinations for daily goods & Services                                  | 19                |
| <b>4</b>  | Providing the "Lathrup Promise" to the K-12 Schools - improved schools public   | 18                |
| <b>5</b>  | Improved entrances to Lathrup Village, distinct 'gateways'; you know you are in Lathrup Village                       | 11                |
| <b>6</b>  | Community programs & development "Art in the Park", festivals, block parties, etc.                                    | 8                 |
| <b>7</b>  | Viable neighborhood; safe, diverse, nighttime walking; good property values   | 8                 |
| <b>8</b>  | Tunnel under City Center to make the Center "walking"/"village" oriented  | 7                 |
| <b>9</b>  | Greater variety/quality of commercial enterprise. 12 Mile & Southfield Blvd.  | 6                 |
| <b>10</b> | Major recreation - tennis/swim area (Grosse Pointe Model). Walk or ride bike to parks.                                | 4                 |
| <b>11</b> | Pedestrian bridges over Southfield -- linking the two sides of the City   | 4                 |
| <b>12</b> | Non-motorized transportation connections and greenway   | 1                 |
| <b>13</b> | New improved boulevard with new name, landscaping, pedestrian friendly, new businesses.                               | 0                 |
| <b>14</b> | Public transportation connections   | 0                 |

Graphic 6.1 The "Village center" Concept



Digital Source: Urban Advantage



Lathrup Village also possesses the Garden City concept of designing on a human scale. Louise wanted all the homes to have a cohesive look while being elegant and sophisticated; therefore, quality brick, stone, or masonry exteriors were required on all of the original homes.

Today Garden City concepts and other design elements incorporated in the Lathrup Village physical layout are being incorporated in new urbanism and traditional neighborhood developments (TND's) around the United States. While Lathrup Village was founded on Garden City Movement ideals, surrounding communities followed different land development patterns giving Lathrup Village its uniqueness. As a result, the community Master Plan should not detract from the original vision but instead support the principles embodied in the founder's plan for the community.

An extrapolation of these principles would advance the following community-building principles for this Master Plan, including:

- Creating a definable and pedestrian-oriented village center, which incorporates civic, retail office, and residential uses.
- Higher-density development within the village center.
- A transition from individualized commercial properties along Southfield Road to consolidated and mixed-use developments.
- A walkable village center easily connected to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Reducing the physical barriers caused by Southfield Road and I-696.
- Using architectural design to define place.
- Creating walkable neighborhoods by paving streets and installing sidewalks.
- Creating public open spaces and parks within each neighborhood unit of the City.

The underpinning principles of the Garden City Movement and other city development strategies advanced and implemented since the 1800's have been based on having a strong community core surrounded by viable neighborhoods. In theory, a weak community core results in economically weak neighborhoods and a strong community core creates economically viable neighborhoods. In some respect, the communities of Detroit, Pontiac, and Lincoln Park are examples of the former condition and the cities of Birmingham, Royal Oak, and Ferndale are examples of the latter.

However, in Lathrup Village, the residential neighborhoods have remained more viable than the commercial corridor, which does not reflect the character of the Lathrup Village community. For the residential neighborhoods to remain economically viable in the future, it will be necessary to improve the quality and character of the commercial core. Because the local tax structure in Lathrup Village relies on the residential sector to contribute the majority of local government revenues, it would be advantageous to shift this burden to the non-residential sector by creating an environment that encourages reinvestment and redevelopment in the commercial corridor.



*Aerial Photograph of Lathrup Village - Note the Street Layout Radiating from the Village center.*

## Master Plan

The Master Plan is a key deliverable, as it represents an amalgamation of all the research and strategies that have been developed throughout the planning process. Following priorities defined by residents, the Planning Commission, and City Council, the Master Plan presents a strategy to promote redevelopment and reinvestment in the Southfield and 12 Mile Road corridors, while preserving resources and characteristics that make this community unique. The planning objectives used in the creation of this Master Plan include:

- Creation of a defined Village center bounded by California Drive
- Reorganizing commercial land uses to create a Village center concept
- Introduction of mixed-uses along Southfield Road to encourage a variety of land uses, activities, and redevelopment options
- A long-range opportunity to create walkable neighborhoods leveraging the historic qualities of the residential buildings and street network patterned after the Garden City Movement
- Incorporation of access management techniques, such as consolidated drives, along Southfield Road
- Efficient use of existing infrastructure, development, and transportation patterns
- Enhancement of parks and open spaces

## Reasons behind the Master Plan

The development of the master plan is based on community expectations and priorities grounded in professional planning practices.

- Recognition by the community that proactive planning is preferred over reactive planning.
- Decision to create a village center instead of accepting suburban strip commercial development.
- Reorganize commercial development along major traffic corridors by creating defined and compact commercial nodes.
- The need to create a walkable and integrated network of pathways and trails.
- Maintain strong and economically stabilized neighborhoods.
- Create a sense of place and community for the City.
- Improve the taxable valuation base of the City.

## Residential Land Use

Residential land uses account for the largest land use category in the Master Plan. This land use has been broken into two distinct categories: Single-Family Residential and Multiple-Family Residential. Each category of residential land use is differentiated by its location, permitted density, and relationship to other land uses.

### *Single Family Residential*

The category represents approximately 56% of the City land area and consists of single-family homes on individual lots. The size of the lots varies in the City with larger lots located north of I-696 and west of Southfield Road and the smaller lots sprinkled around the California Drive. This master plan does not recommend any change to the existing residential land use pattern but suggests that a property maintenance program be used to manage blight and ensure that buildings are properly repaired.



### *Multiple-Family Residential*

The Master Plan has limited areas designated for multiple-family uses. Properties along 11 Mile Road (I-696 Service Drive) between Meadowbrook Way and Red River Drive, and on Evergreen Road are designated multiple family. The Master Plan recommends no increase or decrease in this land use category.

## Commercial Uses

Lathrup Village has an established commercial area comprised of a mixture of retail, office, and personal service uses developed as a suburban strip business district. Along Southfield Road, the City appears to be experiencing a change in use orientation with some vacant buildings and underutilized buildings. Twelve Mile Road, like Southfield Road, also consists of a mixture of business and office uses with a few vacancies.

Existing commercial areas are largely automobile-oriented with many of the buildings surrounded by asphalt, unbroken by landscape plantings. Although there are sidewalks along commercial frontages, the average pedestrian is reluctant to use them. The scale of the low-rise building coupled with the wide expanse of the road rights-of-way creates an unappealing atmosphere for pedestrians, further anchoring the corridor as vehicular-oriented.

During the futuring session held in January 2007, residents and business owners expressed interest in a more cohesive-looking business district and expanding the City Hall/village center area, perhaps with an ice cream parlor and places for people to convene, making Lathrup Village a destination. Among other issues and concerns revealed during the visioning session were:

- A strong dislike for the “outdated” business district
- The limited mix of businesses located within the City
- The lack of cohesion of the business district along Southfield Road
- The poor appearance of the Southfield Road streetscape

The previous Lathrup Village Plan enumerated specific recommendations for commercial areas. Among these were:

- Adopting a commercial maintenance code to regulate development, which would be tied to an annual licensing procedure calling for periodic inspection of commercial buildings.
- Encouraging existing stores to improve the appearance of their facades, redesign signs and provide additional landscaping.
- Avoiding an over concentration of any one type of commercial use.
- Reducing the number of driveways providing access to commercial uses.

Residents also made comments regarding vehicular traffic in relation to speeds, the impact of I-696, slowing down traffic on residential streets, and more visible signage. Pedestrians want safer crossings, improved sidewalks, and walking paths. Residents would also like to see better public transportation and bike paths.

As it relates to business and commercial activities, many residents articulated a desire to have more coordinated business and Downtown Development Authority (DDA) involvement and perhaps the creation of a wireless City. It was the opinion of participants that community businesses need to promote themselves better, revamp parking, enhance the corridor frontage, and improve appearance.

An Urban Land Institute publication entitled “Place Making: Developing Town Centers, Main Streets and Urban Villages” notes that “closely related to the quest for community is the growing appreciation of how town centers, main streets and urban villages can “put communities on the map” and establish a strong identity.” “Urban place making” is an effort “via the effective programming and design of a mix of uses, within a pedestrian environment” that is no longer “simply a dream of urban designers and city planners, but a marketable development concept that is increasingly being embraced by both the public and private sectors”.

### The Commercial Streetscape

It has already been determined that pedestrians feel unsafe in commercial areas in Lathrup Village. Too much traffic, too many driveways located too closely together - all with nothing to break up the space-creates an unwelcoming area for pedestrians.

Architectural design standards for buildings also contribute to the sense of place with elements such as height, the extent of attached or detached structures, the spacing between the building and the street, the proportion of doorways, windows, porches, etc, materials, finishes and textures as well as landscaping. If we think of a building as part of a street, the street becomes an integral part of the civic space, a policy that seems to be desired by Lathrup Village residents.

Among other desired streetscape elements include:

- Addition of unique, pedestrian-scaled streetlights that can help in defining the notion of a commercial center
- Uniformity in public realm design (lights, landscaping, signage)
- Landscaping that makes the area more inviting
- Wider, more safely traveled sidewalks designed with a sufficient road buffer

### Other Suggested Initiatives

- Develop a program of coordinated signage for businesses that front commercial corridors will move Lathrup Village toward the “cohesive looking businesses district” that was envisioned by members of the community. Note that creativity does not need to be discouraged in signage, as every sign should not be the same. Reasonable restrictions on size and placement can be implemented.
- Make allowances in the Zoning Ordinance for the potential of residential or office uses adjacent to, and/or above commercial uses. While retail is obviously the key element, residential and office uses, such as apartments, lofts, live/work units and personal service businesses can support the retail establishments and reorient the area to pedestrians rather than the automobile.
- Reconsider parking requirements and look to locate parking behind the buildings, maintaining emphasis on the businesses and the atmosphere.
- Look to establish connections from parking lot to parking lot off of the main street to eliminate curb cuts and the visual disorganization they promote.
- Identify areas along the corridor, which have high redevelopment potential for more intense mixed-use development.

### Current Trends in Commercial Corridors

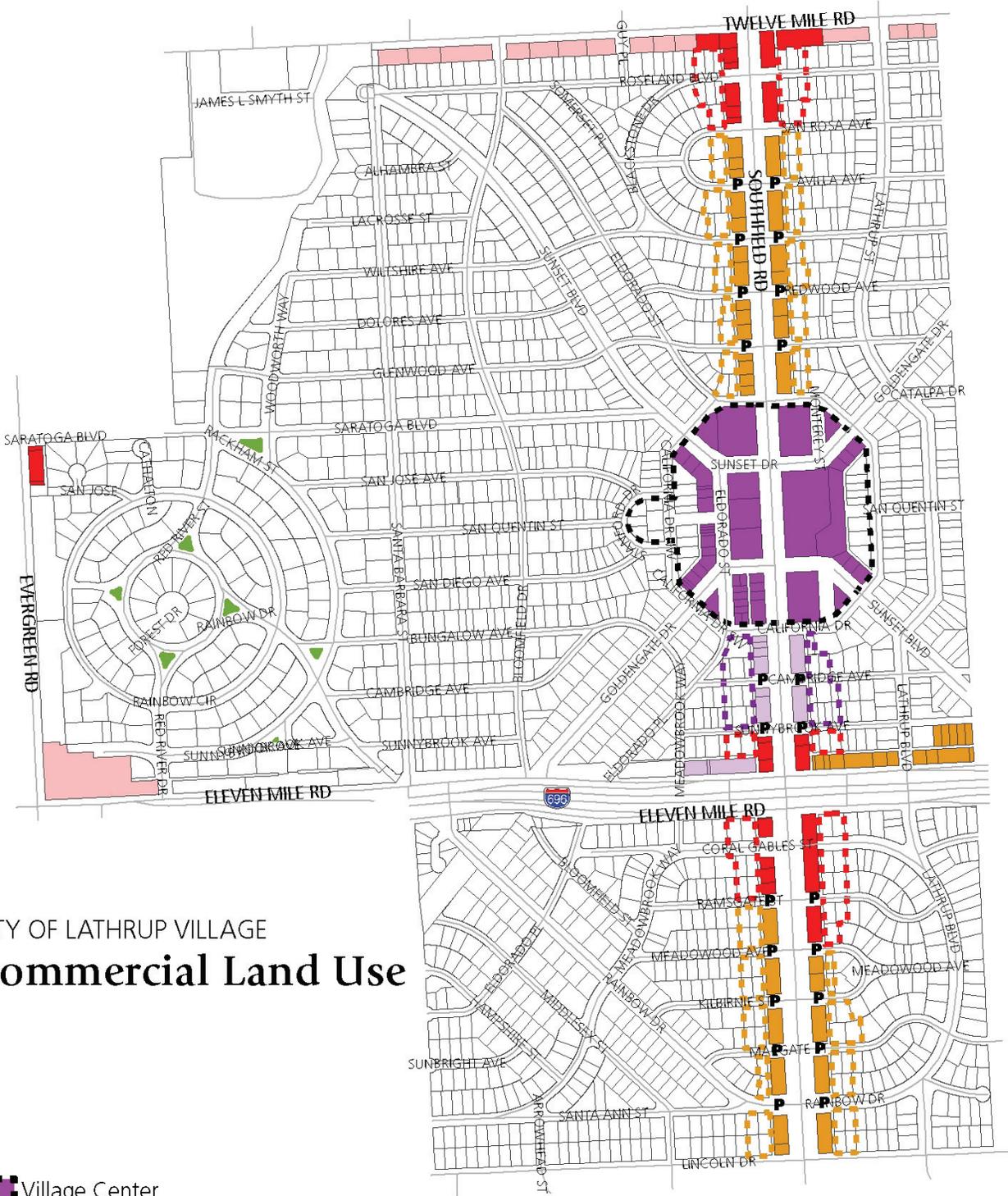
Present-day corridor commercial districts are looking to avoid strip development characteristics of their 1950’s and 1960’s predecessors. Southfield Road resembles these older commercial corridors where lots were platted more along residential standards and individually developed for stand-alone commercial or office businesses or aggregated into larger parcels for wider but shallow depth commercial development. Many times the parcels are not dimensionally sufficient to accommodate today’s commercial uses, which need suitable off-street parking. In addition, the past pattern of development was focused on vehicular accessibility resulting in numerous curb cuts, site-specific parking lots, minimal connectivity between adjacent properties and virtually no pedestrian amenities. The development of retail centers (malls, large regional shopping centers, and lifestyle centers) further hastened the decline of commercial corridors resulting in fewer traditional retail uses and more “errand-oriented” commercial uses, as well as, increased vacancies. The same trend has influenced the professional office market where tenants congregate in office centers and larger multi-tenant office buildings, which offer various support services and larger parking facilities versus stand-alone professional office buildings. Most of the major linear urban corridors, like Southfield Road, in the Detroit metropolitan area are in some stage of decline or transformation.

The economic obsolescence of commercial corridors is not confined to Michigan. In response to a nationwide decline in the quality and condition of urban commercial corridors the Urban Land Institute authored a publication entitled, “Ten Principles for Reinventing America’s Suburban Strips.” Although some of the suggested principles may not apply to the Southfield Corridor there are some that deserve consideration. The principles include:

1. Ignite leadership and nurture partnership
2. Anticipate evolution
3. Know the market
4. Prune back retail zoned land
5. Establish nodes of development
6. Tame the traffic
7. Create the place
8. Diversify the character
9. Eradicate the ugliness
10. Put your money and regulations where your policy is.



*Plymouth Road corridor streetscape in the City of Livonia*



CITY OF LATHRUP VILLAGE  
**Commercial Land Use**

-  Village Center
-  Office
-  Commercial - Pedestrian
-  Commercial - Vehicular
-  Commercial - Vehicular: Expansion Zone
-  Mixed Use
-  Mixed Use Residential Component Expansion Zone
-  Parking and Gateway

 1 inch = 1,000 feet

### Southfield Road Reorganization

Recommendations for land use programming along Southfield Road call for the aggregation of commercial (retail) uses into nodes, which is a dramatic change since the last master plan. The function of the nodes is to concentrate commercial activity in defined locations in lieu of encouraging it to sprawl along Southfield Road. The cornerstone of this strategy is the village center, which consists of all of the land bounded by the eight segments of California Drive, except those residential parcels fronting on California Drive. The village center would become the definable downtown for the City and would have the depth and dimensions to accommodate a planned commercial, civic, and mixed-use center. The area of the village center extends back from Southfield Road adjoining the residential neighborhoods making it walkable for residents. Modifications to the proposed boulevard project, such as providing on-street parallel parking, lower speed limit (35 MPH), and possible road depression ( 7 feet below grade) would further increase opportunities for a more pedestrian-friendly business district.

The commercial nodes identified in the future land use map include:

- Southfield Road and 12 Mile Road
- Southfield Road and 11 Mile Road (south side of I-696)
- Village center (bounded by California Drive)

Due to the complexities associated with the development of the village center it is recommended that this area be managed through a planned unit development. This will ensure that the proposed uses, architecture, parking, and placement of structures are completed as a unified development.

Those segments of Southfield Road between the nodes are identified as “corridor” and encourage the introduction of mixed-use developments. The number of vacancies and presence of functionally obsolete buildings warrants this change in land use. These developments would include

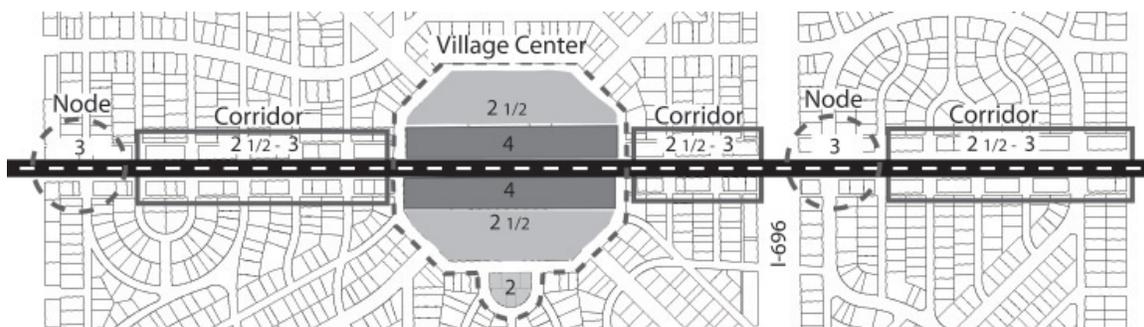
ground-floor retail or office space, upper-story office or residential space, and townhomes. Property owners would have the flexibility to mix uses responding to changing economic and market conditions. Corridor segments include:

- San Rosa Avenue to California Drive
- California Drive to 11 Mile Road
- Ramsgate to Lincoln Drive

In addition to the organization and intensity of uses along Southfield Road, the master plan recommends an increase in building height to accommodate the mix of uses. The corridor segments would have a height allowance of 2 1/2 stories and the nodes would have a height allowance of 3 stories. The village center is divided into two height zones. The first zone, along Southfield Road, would have a height allowance of 4 stories (unless increased through the planned unit development process) and back portion adjoining the residential neighborhoods with a height allowance of 2 to 2 1/2 stories. The illustrations below indicate the location of these height allowances.

A broader concern confronting the Southfield Road corridor is the speed and configuration of the proposed boulevard. A posted speed limit of 45 MPH infers that 15% of the traffic will exceed 50 MPH; a speed limit more comparable with rural highways. To effectively reposition the corridor as a business district the City must lobby and prevail on having the speed limit on Southfield Road reduced to 35 MPH. Further, due to the width of the right-of-way the application of on-street parking within protected bays should be sought within the village center area. Lastly, traffic signals should be installed at north and south California Drive (each end of the village center district) to create sufficient gaps in the traffic for safe pedestrian crossings. With these measures the long-term viability of the business district is more likely.

Graphic 6.3 Corridor Reorganization



Recommended Reorganization of Uses and Height Allowance along the Corridor



*Example: Application of Mixed-Use Development and Height Allowance on a Corridor*  
Digital Source: Urban Advantage

### Commercial Parking

Two factors affect commercial off-street parking in Lathrup Village: the proposed boulevard and the City zoning ordinance. Currently there are 1,397 parking spaces along Southfield Road between 11 Mile and 12 Mile Road. The installation of the boulevard without any parking improvements on the affected properties will result in a net loss of 333 parking spaces. If new parking lots are installed in other locations on the affected lots the net loss is estimated at 45.

The City's Zoning Ordinance requires off-street parking to be determined on a "gross" basis which means that parking spaces are provided for areas such as, utility closets, hallways, restrooms, mechanical rooms, and storage rooms. Many ordinances base parking on "useable" area that results in a reduction of off-street parking. In addition, the City's parking standards are excessive. For example, the following minimum parking spaces are required:

- Business offices (1 space per 200 gross square feet) or 5 spaces per 1,000 square feet
- Retail (1 space per 150 gross square feet) or 6.6 spaces per 1,000 square feet
- Restaurants (1 space per 50 square feet) or 10 spaces per 1,000 square feet

These ratios are excessive and result in over-parking, more impervious surface and stormwater, and increased heat island effect. A typical large scale merchandiser, such as Meijer or Wal-Mart, will strive to get 5 spaces per 1,000 square feet of useable floor area. Enclosed malls average

out at 4.5 spaces per 1,000, and traditional downtowns operate at 2.5 to 3 per 1,000 square feet. The parking ratios in the ordinance are in need of review and revision.

Due to the restrictive depth of the commercial lots, off-street parking can be a challenge. An option for consideration is the development of side street municipal parking in the area between the Southfield Road right-of-way and the alley which tends to have a wider right-of-way than the residential street. The photo in the lower left corner shows the location for these municipal parking lots and the illustration below depicts how they work. This treatment would be similar to the street-end parking lot developed on Roseland Boulevard with the exception that the street would not be closed to traffic.

Graphic 6.5 Potential Side Street Parking Concept



Graphic 6.4 Side Street Parking Locations



Source: Aerial from Google Earth

## Village Center

The village center is the cornerstone of the master plan and the redevelopment of Southfield Road. It is a departure from how land use was previously developed along Southfield Road because it promotes the concentration and mixture of related uses.

The village center encompasses all of the segments of the California Drive octagon and, as a result, establishes a potential building footprint for a planned retail and mixed-use development similar to a "lifestyle" center but more urban because of the height allowance. The final configuration of Southfield Road will dictate the size and development footprint of the city.

- Boulevard - Southfield Road is configured as a boulevard then the village center would be developed parallel with the road very similar to how it currently operates.
- Boulevard with On-Street Parking - Southfield Road has a median but on-street parking is allowed within the limits of the village center area. Traffic lights are installed at north and south segments of California Drive.
- Depressed - Southfield Road between north and south California Drive is depressed approximately 6-7 feet below grade and gives a development the opportunity to span Southfield Road with a table top deck elevated 7-8 feet above normal grade. This deck would be used as a building platform, as well as, a pedestrian access linking the east and west neighborhoods.
- Separated Through Traffic - Instead of a 40-60 foot median, Southfield Road would be reconstructed to separate through traffic from local (Lathrup Village) traffic using smaller medians to create local roads on the extreme edge of the right of way. The local street edges are treated as streetscape with pedestrian features and new buildings are developed to the front yard line similar to a traditional downtown.

Posted speed limits will need to be reduced and traffic signals installed to create opportunities for pedestrian access. Without these modifications the business district will function as commercial corridor and not as a community business center. In addition, access management techniques need to be addressed which limit the number of curb cuts and more importantly increase the likelihood of shared drives and cross connections between parking lots. The City will need to partner with the Oakland County Road Commission in order to influence the final design and posted speed limits along Southfield Road.

### Suggested Land Uses:

- Residential - Along Southfield Road
  - Upper-Story Lofts and Apartments (new buildings)
- Residential - Perimeter of California Drive
  - Single-Family Detached
  - Townhomes (attached)
  - Townhomes - Live/Work (attached)
- Office
  - Insurance and Real Estate
  - Design Services(Architects, Engineers, Graphic, etc.)
  - Interior Design Studios
  - Internet Web Design Firms
  - Attorneys
- Commercial
  - Apparel Stores
  - Art Galleries
  - Bookstore
  - Bridal Shops
  - Camera and Photo Stores
  - Card & Greeting Shops
  - Coffee Shop / Internet Cafe
  - Flower Shops
  - Gift Stores
  - Interior Design Stores
  - Kitchen Accessory Stores
  - Movie Theaters
  - Shoe Stores
  - Restaurant (no drive thru)

### Suggested Design and Development Components:

To create a compact and unique business district for the City, the following design and development components are suggested:

- New development should be managed through a planned unit development approach which gives the developer flexibility on the building and parking program and the City some control over design and site integration with adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Unless waived as part of a planned unit development building heights along Southfield Road should be increased to 4 stories within the city core area.
- Development along the perimeter of California Drive should be increased to 2 1/2 stories.
- Site improvements (lighting, landscaping, and signage) should be complimentary for public and private areas.  
The City/DDA will need to work with property owners to replace parking lost as a result of the boulevard project.



*Photos: Levis Commons, Perrysburg, Ohio.  
A planned mixed-use development with retail, residential, and offices.*

## Mixed Use

This land use category will provide some added flexibility to property owners who are looking to redevelop or construct new uses along Southfield Road. Due to the dimensional conditions of frontage lots along Southfield Road many of the currently buildings either cannot provide sufficient parking or fail to meet current building standards required by professional offices or retail businesses. The mixed-use category encourages a variety of uses such as residential townhomes, upper-story residential, office, and lower trip-generation retail businesses.

### Suggested Land Uses:

#### Residential

- Townhomes (attached)
- Townhomes - Live/Work (attached)
- Upper Story Lofts and Apartments (new buildings)

#### Office

- Insurance and Real Estate
- Design Services (Architects, Engineers, Graphic, etc.)
- Interior Design Studios
- Internet Web Design Firms
- Attorneys

#### Commercial

- Printing and Copy Centers
- Bridal Shops
- Card and Gift Shops
- Formal Wear
- Flower Shops
- Jewelry Stores
- Travel Agencies

Uses within this land use category are also able to share off-street parking depending on the mix of land uses and peak rates for parking use. Residential units typically require evening and weekend parking and office and retail use need daytime parking. This variance in peak parking demands can beneficially used to smooth out the parking spaced needed to support the development.

The Future Land Use map notes areas behind the Southfield frontage as "Mixed Use Residential Component Expansion Zones." These zones would accommodate the expansion of only attached residential structures or other uses deemed compatible to the existing neighborhood. The expansion zone must encompass the entire distance between streets, not just on a lot-to-lot basis. Parking would be internalized in the development and screened from adjacent single family residences. Graphic 6.6 illustrates this concept.

Graphic 6.6 Residential Component Expansion Zone



Controlling the pattern of commercial development is a critical step toward eliminating the sprawling tendencies of many suburban commercial corridors. The desire to change how the Southfield Road commercial district functions was advanced by the residents during the community visioning session. In order to differentiate the different types of commercial development recommended in the plan, this land use was broken into two sub-categories: Commercial - Pedestrian and Commercial - Vehicular.

## Commercial - Pedestrian

This commercial-pedestrian land use category would accommodate uses which do not generate a constant flow of traffic on the site for business.

### Suggested Land Uses:

#### Office

- Insurance and Real Estate
- Design Services (Architects, Engineers, Graphic, etc.)
- Interior Design Studios
- Internet Web Design Firms
- Attorneys

#### Commercial

- Apparel Stores
- Art Galleries
- Bookstore
- Bridal Shops
- Camera and Photo Stores
- Card & Greeting Shops
- Coffee Shop / Internet Cafe
- Flower Shops
- Gift Stores
- Interior Design Stores
- Restaurant (no drive thru)

## Commercial - Vehicular

The intent of the Commercial - Vehicular category is to serve transient customers creating higher trip generation to the commercial site. These areas are located along Southfield Road at the intersections of 11 Mile Road and 12 Mile Road. The uses envisioned within this land use class would include retail; restaurant; service businesses, such as banks, professional offices; and gas stations.

### Suggested Land Uses:

#### Office

- Medical and Dental
- Veterinarian (no outdoor kennels)

#### Commercial

- Banks and ATMs
- Child Care and Nurseries
- Drugstores
- Exercise and Lifestyle Centers
- Gasoline Stations
- Hardware Stores
- Pet Shops
- Produce / Fruit / Meat Store (< 15,000 square feet)
- Restaurant (dine-in and drive-thru)
- Wireless Sales and Service

## Office

This land use category is reserved exclusively for professional office use. These areas are located along 12 Mile Road where professional offices are currently located and at the northeast corner of 11 Mile Road and Evergreen Road.

### Suggested Land Uses:

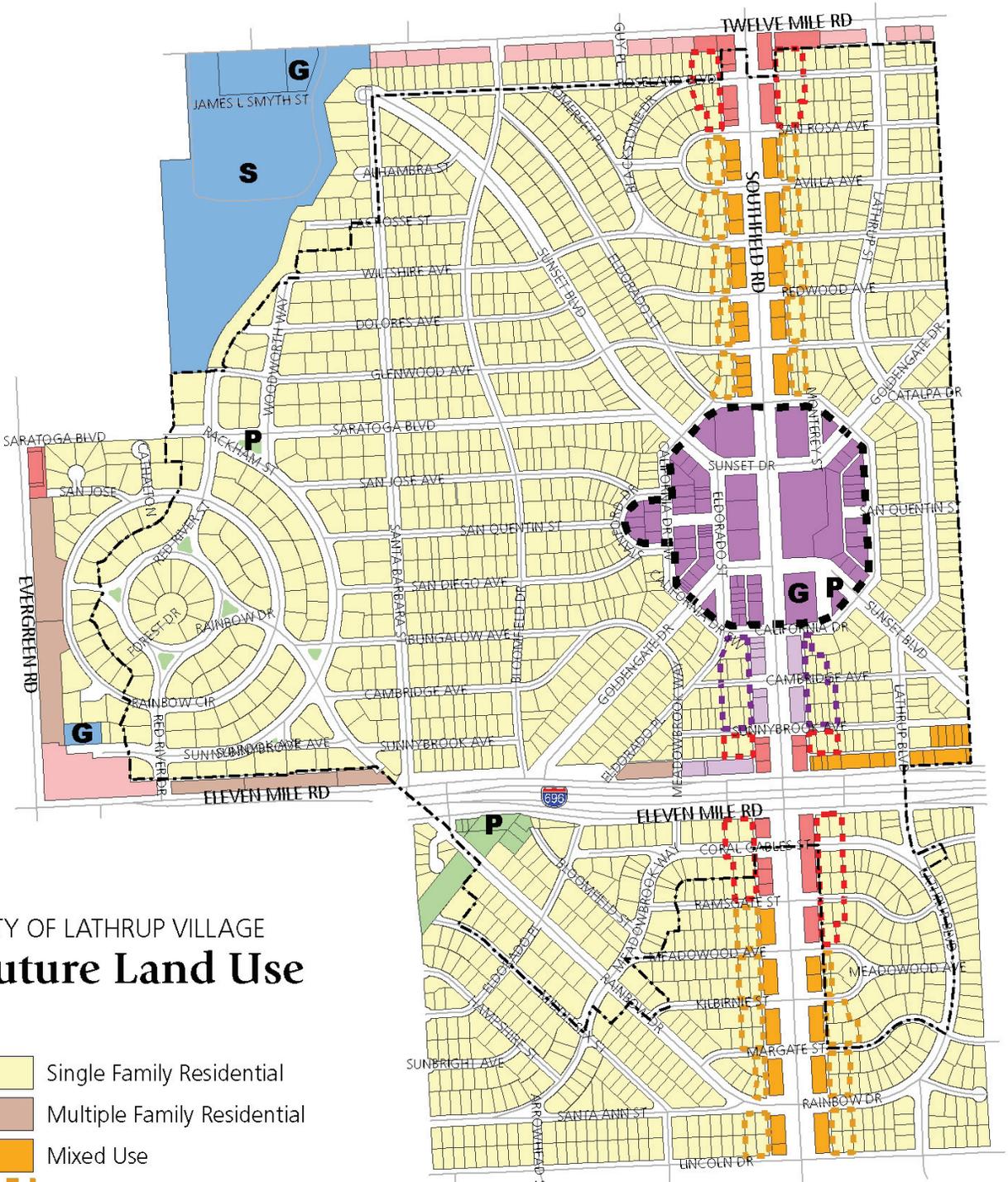
- Attorney
- Design Services (Architects, Engineers, Graphic, etc.)
- Insurance and Real Estate
- Interior Design Studios
- Internet Web Design Firms
- Medical and Dental

## Institutional

Schools, churches, and public facilities are regarded as institutional land uses, and therefore are spread throughout the City in order to provide services to a wide range of residents.

## Open Space

These areas accommodate existing public parks, publicly owned open space, and open areas formed by converging rights-of-way. Open space areas within residential developments are classified under the appropriate residential land use category.



CITY OF LATHRUP VILLAGE  
**Future Land Use**

- Single Family Residential
- Multiple Family Residential
- Mixed Use
- Mixed Use Residential Component Expansion Zone
- Commercial - Pedestrian
- Commercial - Pedestrian: Expansion Zone
- Commercial - Vehicular
- Commercial - Vehicular: Expansion Zone
- Office
- Village Center
- Institutional
- Open Space

1 inch = 1,000 feet

- G Government Property
- P Park
- S School
- Historic District Boundary

*The information presented in the plan is based on the characteristics of an older, historic community with a desire to reinvent its corridor commercial area. The implementation strategy focuses on initiatives and strategies associated with older and redeveloping communities. In some locations of the city, planning and zoning reviews may be the sole tool for the city to use to guide appropriate development. In other areas, redevelopment tools such as the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), land banking, and establishing code enforcement programs may be needed to encourage new reinvestment. A significant initiative of the Master Plan is the reorganization of how commercial land is used along Southfield Road and how this commercial area becomes a component of the City. The outcome of the 2008 Community Master Plan is to revisit and embrace the vision advanced when the City was originally planned in 1923.*

## **Strategies and Initiatives**

### **Walkability**

Walkability applications include a variety of techniques including, appropriate dimensions for walkways and sidewalks, the width of roadway cross-sections, availability of pedestrian crossings, provisions for curb ramps, and travel speeds on major and local streets. In existing neighborhoods, a walkability survey could be done in conjunction with a sidewalk inspection program. And based on the results modifications could be made as part of the sidewalk replacement program. Similarly, as streets are repaved or reconstructed, a review of the street geometrics could be evaluated against applicable street design and traffic calming standards published by the Federal Highway Administration. In new developments, it is recommended that walkability standards be applied at the outset of development design and that these be incorporated into review approvals conducted by the planning commission.

### **Integrate Sidewalks**

Residential neighborhoods should have sidewalks. In addition, the city should undertake a program to install sidewalks in areas where they do not exist or in locations where sidewalks are not connected. In many instances, this type of program can be funded through special assessment districts or annual capital improvement program. Typically, a long-term plan is prepared for sidewalk replacement and installation of new sidewalks and is implemented over an annual cycle and construction season.

### **New Urbanism Concepts**

The introduction of the village center as a retail, civic, mixed-use, and activity focal point for the City is supported by Smart Growth and New Urbanism tenets. These elements include higher density developments, provisions for mixed uses, street design based on AASHTO guidelines, and architectural review standards. In some situations the use of a "Pattern Book," which regulates land and building design should be required as part of the city approval process.

### **Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety**

Traffic calming and pedestrian safety are factored in to a walkability program. However, this has to be a primary initiative for the Southfield Road corridor. In order to reconnect the City and encourage the development of the village center, Southfield Road needs to be safe and walkable. Local efforts to influence the final design of the proposed boulevard should include on-street parking, lower speed limit, and traffic signalization at the California Drive intersections.

# our program

Table 7.1 Current Zoning Matrix of Class and Uses

|  | Article 8<br>Transitional<br>Professional<br><b>TP</b> | Article 9<br>Regulated<br>Business<br><b>RB</b> | Article 9A<br>Regulated<br>Business<br><b>RB1</b> | Article 10<br>Public<br>Service<br><b>PS</b> | Article 11<br>Commercial<br><b>C</b> | Article 11A<br>Commercial<br><b>C1</b> |
|--|--|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Class I - Low Density</b>                       | P  | P   | P   | SU   | P                                    | P                                      |
| <i>Federal, State and City Offices</i>             |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Professional and Business Offices</i>           |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Residential (R-1)</i>                           |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <b>Class II - Low Density (Non-Office)</b>         | SU   | P   | P   | SU   | P                                    | P                                      |
| <i>Bath and Bed, Bridal Shops, Card and Candle</i> |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Carpet, Copy Stores, Flower, Formal Wear,</i>   |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Jewelry, Shoe Stores, Sporting Goods,</i>       |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Tailor, Ticket and Travel Agencies</i>          |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <b>Class III - Moderate Intensity</b>              |  | SU  | SU  |  | P                                    | P                                      |
| <i>Art Supply, Auto Accessory, Barber and</i>      |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Beauty Shops, Churches, Furniture, Hobby,</i>   |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Household Appliance, Funeral Homes,</i>         |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Nursery Schools, Out-Patient Medical,</i>       |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Paint and Wallpaper, Personal Storage,</i>      |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Banks (Small), Bakeries (&lt;3,400 sqft)</i>    |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Wireless Outlets</i>                            |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <b>Class IV - High Intensity</b>                   |  |   |   |  | SU                                   | P                                      |
| <i>Animal Grooming, Assembly Halls,</i>            |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Boat Sales, Department Stores, Drug Stores,</i> |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Hardware Stores, Garden Supply, Vet,</i>        |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Auto and Other Vehicle Sales</i>                |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <b>Class V -</b>                                   |  |   |   |  |                                      | SU                                     |
| <i>Fast Food, Gasoline, Massage Parlors,</i>       |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |
| <i>Pawnshops, Porno Shops, Bars</i>                |  |   |   |  |                                      |  |

## Limitations

|                                    |                  |        |                    |              |       |              |
|------------------------------------|------------------|--------|--------------------|--------------|-------|--------------|
| Buildable Area                     | 5,000            | 33,000 | 15,000             | RB -District | 5,000 | 10,000       |
| Story                              | One or Two       | Two    | One or Two         | RB -District | Two   | Two          |
| Minimum Floor Area                 | 1,250 or 900/400 | 1,250  | 1,250 or 1,000/500 | RB -District | 1,250 | 1,500        |
| Maximum Height - Stories           | 2                | 2      | 2                  | RB -District | 2     | 2            |
| Maximum Height - Feet              | 30               | 30     | 30                 | RB -District | 30    | 30           |
| Rear Yard Setback                  | 20               | 40     | 30                 | 40           | 0     | 20 / 50 ('R) |
| Rear Yard Setback abutting R1 / R2 |                  | 75     |                    | 75           | 20    |              |

## Zoning Ordinance Revisions

The City of Lathrup Village Zoning Ordinance (adopted February 8, 1982) is in need of selective revision to comply with the adoption of PA 110 of 2006, the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. In addition, the Commercial districts (Articles 8, 9, 9A, 10, 11, 11A, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24) are in need of refinement in order to implement the changes recommended in the future land use map. Table 7.1 shows how the current commercial zoning districts are regulated by district and use class. It is recommended that each commercial and office district be written to highlight permitted uses, special approval uses, and dimensional requirements in one articles.

In addition, the Off-Street Parking regulations (Article 12) should be revised to reflect parking space requirements based on useable square footage with a minimum and maximum range.

Lastly, the application of an overlay district called the Village Center Overlay District should be evaluated for inclusion in the zoning code to regulate the development of this area.

## Mixed Use Development

The term mixed-use refers to a zoning district, which allows a variety of uses. The popularity of mixed-use development has grown with the "Smart Growth" movement. It has been found that appropriately designed mixed-use developments create better living environments and have substantial fiscal and economic benefits for a community. Embodied in the concept of mixed-use is higher density, land use variety, public spaces, and pedestrian-oriented retail. Mixed-use development can be promoted through the use of a planned unit development ordinance or the city can create a specific zoning district, or zoning overlay district to accomplish this planning objective.

## Pave Residential Streets

There are several neighborhoods in the city that have unpaved streets. As part of a long-term redevelopment strategy the master plan is recommending that all unpaved streets in the city be paved. Due to fiscal limitations in the use of general funds residents could approve a voted general obligation bond to finance the installation of paved streets. Several communities, including Pleasant Ridge and Essexville have instituted this type of program with great success.

## Concentrated Code Enforcement

Concentrated code enforcement is a locally designed building inspection program targeted at specific neighborhoods which have a high incidence of blight and housing maintenance problems. The program is initiated by sending a notice to property owners within designated neighborhoods notifying them of the inspection schedule. Only the exterior of structures and lots are part of the inspection program; there are no internal inspections. The code used to inspect the exterior of the building is often the existing building maintenance code. Once property owners are notified of violations they are normally given 60 to 90 days to make the necessary repairs or face fines and penalties.

## Land Banking

Depending on the funding capabilities of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), serious attention should be given to acquiring real estate along Southfield Road and land banking these acquisitions for new development. This technique allows the Downtown Development Authority to assist in the development process, quicken the pace of redevelopment and control the type and intensity of development. Examples of DDA real estate acquisition and development assistance include the Maywood Townhome project in Pleasant Ridge (Oakland County) and the Monument Park Mixed-Use Building in Dexter (Washtenaw County).



*Monument Park Building, Dexter Michigan  
An example of DDA Land Banking (acquisition), demolition of former structures, and development assistance through tax credits.*

## Mass Transit

Lathrup Village is not part of the SMART regional bus system, and as a result there are no stops along Southfield Road within the city limits. Recent increases in gas prices, a greater concern over global warming, and the awareness of decreasing non-renewable resources is elevating the discussion of regional mass transportation. Bus, intra-metropolitan light rail networks, and regional rail connections are now being evaluated as future solutions. Because Lathrup Village is predominately a residential community, these options should be seriously considered as an element of sound community building. Depending on the rate of growth and acceptance of these alternative methods of transportation, decisions on where to reside may be influenced on the availability of options.

## Recommended Action Program

The recommended Action Program is an outline of near-term programs needed to effectively implement the community Master Plan. They are focused and results-oriented.

Although several entities will be involved in various aspects of a project or program the Action Program identifies the lead party most likely to shoulder the responsibility for overseeing the process. Funding for projects will come from a variety of sources, including local capital improvement funds, general fund allocations, tax increment financing through the DDA, and state and federal funding programs.



*Example of Urban Commercial Corridor: note height and density, setbacks, on-street parking and pedestrian-scale lighting.*

## Action Program

|          |   |  |
|----------|---|--|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Design Plan for Southfield Road</b>  | <b>Responsible Party: City / DDA</b>                           |
|          | The proposed boulevard project should be designed with local input through the preparation of an design plan. The plan would suggest corridor enhancements, on-street parking areas, pedestrian crossings, traffic signalization, corridor lighting, and geometric changes to the roadway. The City should view the proposed project as a local capital improvement project to effectuate the redevelopment of Southfield Road instead of a regional transportation project. The design plan should extend the entire length of Southfield Road.  |  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Zoning Ordinance Revisions</b>   | <b>Responsible Party: Planning Commission</b>                  |
|          | The ability to facilitate change along Southfield Road will be predicated on revisions to the Zoning Code. The commercial districts, parking, and special provisions (i.e. overlay district) need to be reworked to accommodate suggested height dimensions and land uses.  |  |
| <b>3</b> | <b>The Village Center</b>   | <b>Responsible Party: Downtown Development Authority (DDA)</b> |
|          | Redevelopment of property bounded by California Drive will require a close working relationship between the City and private property owners. Fortunately, there are not that many property owners within this area which enhances the likelihood of success. However, advancement of the concept will require a proactive approach from the community.   |  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Development Plan and TIF Plan</b>  | <b>Responsible Party: Downtown Development Authority (DDA)</b> |
|          | Amend the Downtown Development Authority Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan to reflect the proposed improvements recommended for Southfield Road and the redevelopment of the Village Center.  |  |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Land Banking</b>   | <b>Responsible Party: Downtown Development Authority (DDA)</b> |
|          | If financially feasible the DDA should selectively acquire property along Southfield Road for redevelopment. Acquisition priorities would include blighted and vacant buildings, obsolete buildings, and properties considered "strategic" due to location and proximity to the proposed Village Center.  |  |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Community Walkability Study</b>  | <b>Responsible Party: City</b>                                 |
|          | Conduct a walkability study of the entire City to determine locations for sidewalk connections to institutional, community and business activities and evaluate options for pedestrian crossings, future mass transit stops, and ADA access.  |  |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Joint Pathway with Southfield</b>  | <b>Responsible Party: City</b>                                 |
|          | In an effort to create a more walkable community and provide additional recreational opportunities, connections should be established to the trailways program that exist in nearby communities.  |  |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Mass Transit</b>   | <b>Responsible Party: City</b>                                 |
|          | The recent price increase in gasoline is causing individuals and communities to evaluate their energy conservation strategies. Communities along the Woodward Avenue corridor are discussing light rail as a future option to connect their residents with employment, entertainment, and shopping venues in other communities. This plan is suggesting Lathrup Village financial participation in SMART as a first step to provide mass transit options to residents. Further, discussions with other Southfield Road communities should take place to evaluate other mass transit alternatives. |  |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Tree Preservation and Protection</b>   | <b>Responsible Party: City</b>                                 |
|          | Evaluate the need to create a tree preservation, protection and replacement ordinance in the City. The principal asset of the City are the historic residential neighborhoods with their wooded lots and tree-lined streets. A tree preservation, protection and replacement ordinance would manage this resource, require the timely replacement of trees, and determine the reasonableness and replacement of trees slated for removal.   |  |