

A scenic view of a lake at dusk. A wooden bridge with railings spans across the water on the left side. The sky is a mix of purple and pink, and the water reflects the colors. Trees and buildings are visible in the background. The foreground shows a grassy bank with some rocks.

VILLAGE OF PAW PAW MASTER PLAN 2026

DRAFT – May 7, 2026

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Village Council

Roman Plaszczak – President
Douglas Craddock – President Pro Term
Holly Hamilton –Trustee
Steve Richardson –Trustee
David McQueen –Trustee
Donne Rohr –Trustee
Nicolas Martinez - Trustee

Planning Commission

Nicolas Martinez – Council Representative
Kathy Larson – Chairperson
Jeff Brown
Dave Bogen
Mike Pioch
Kip Kerby
Emilly Hickmott

Prepared with the assistance of:



235 East Main Street, Suite 105
Northville, MI 48167
(248) 596-0920
mcka.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

01. PLAN PURPOSE	1
What is a Master Plan?	1
Relationship to Zoning	3
Previous planning efforts	3
Creating the Master Plan	5
Public Participation	6
Key Findings and Planning Issues	6
02. COMMUNITY PROFILE	7
Historical overview	7
Demographics	8
03. Housing Analysis	15
Purpose	15
Summary of Analyses	15
Scope and Limitations	16
Data Sources	16
Cohort-Component Population Projection	16
Comparison Geographies	17
Overall Supply-Demand Analysis	19
Current Housing Demand	20
Projected Study Area Housing Demand	22
Supply-Demand Gap	23
Economics	25
Physical Characteristics	27
04. Future Land Use	47
Assets and Opportunities	47
Goals and Strategies	50
Future Land use Designations	57
05. Future Transportation	63
Transportation System Context	63
Transportation/Access	64
Complete Streets and the Walkable Communities Initiative	67
Future Transportation	68

06. Implementation.....73

Keeping the Plan Up-To-date74
Implementation Matrix76

Appendix 83

Economic Development Strategy 83
Downtown Shopping District 84
Market Opportunities 85
Strengthening and Expanding Downtown Retail 89

List of Maps

Map 1: Existing Land Use 28
Map 2: Wetlands 33
Map 3: Prime Farmland 34
Map 4: Future Land Use 56
Map 5: Road Network 66



01. PLAN PURPOSE

The 2025 Village of Paw Paw Master Plan is built on an understanding of the past and the present, and the community's desires for the future. The process to prepare the Plan begins with an understanding of existing community conditions, such as demographics, housing, the economy, transportation, and land usage. The Master Plan reflects the desires of Paw Paw citizens for the future development of their community.

WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

Every community has a responsibility to look beyond day-to-day issues and focus on the long-range implications of their land use and zoning decisions. Similarly, the community must have a document that provides guidance for land use and development by considering a wide range of possible futures. For the Village of Paw Paw, this long-range view is provided through the Master Plan.

Village leaders and residents are interested in encouraging quality new growth by promoting the things that make Paw Paw unique. At the same time, they are also interested in preserving the community's small-town character.

In truth, no community can solve every problem or answer all of the contrasting concerns about land development. But advocates for both development and preservation have common goals; each want "better planning." Decision makers, then, are tasked with balancing the interests of landowners wishing to develop their properties with maintaining the features that attracted people to the community in the first place.

Those "quality of life" features – small town atmosphere, friendly neighbors, the wine industry, regionally-known restaurants, lakes, natural features, and schools—are what make Paw Paw unique. A successful Master Plan must consider these elements, along with protection of the environment, and takes steps that will ensure that development "fits" in the area.



The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) gives municipalities the authority to adopt a Master Plan to "address land use and infrastructure issues and may project 20 years or more into the future." This Plan is a look into the next 20 or more years, based on the desires of the citizens of Paw Paw for the use of land within the Village.

One of the most important functions of the Plan is to provide a solid foundation for future land use decisions. The recommendations presented in the text and shown graphically will provide a legal basis for zoning and other land use controls utilized by the Village.

RELATIONSHIP TO ZONING

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act states that the "zoning ordinance shall be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare, (and) to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability..." The Master Plan is the long-range planning document upon which planning and zoning decisions are based, including creating and amending the Village Zoning Ordinance. Although the Master Plan is a policy document and does not have the force of law, it is the basis of the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.

The Master Plan is the document that lays out the Village's future, while the Zoning Ordinance provides the day-to-day regulations for land use. Therefore, the land use designations on the Future Land Use Map may not directly correlate with the zoning districts or existing uses. However, the Master Plan reflects the community's long-range desires for land development, so as land uses and market demands change, it is expected that future rezoning's will be made to conform to the Master Plan.

Chapter 3 contains a "zoning plan" that describes how the land use designations on the Future Land Use Map correlate to the zoning districts on the Zoning Map. The zoning plan can be used as a guide to determine how the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to implement the recommendations of this Master Plan.

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

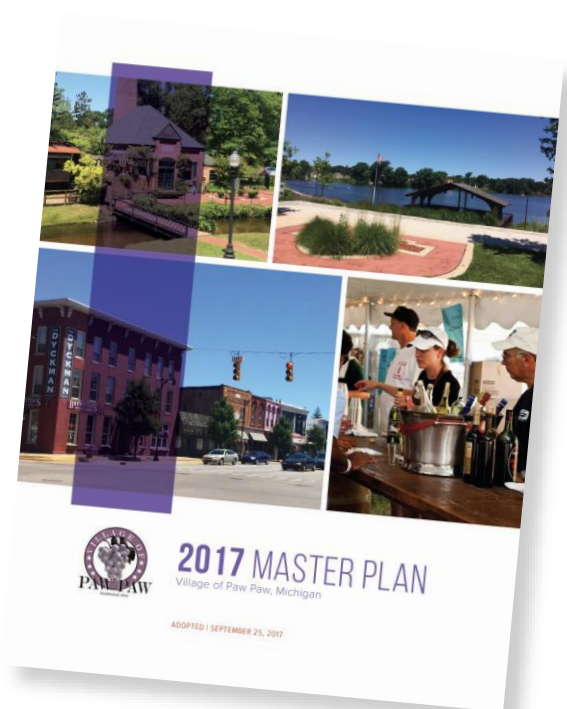
Village Master Plans

The Village last adopted a master plan in 2017, which provided an overall framework for planning and development within the Village. This was an update to a previous plan, adopted in 2010.

The analysis of strengths and weaknesses in the 2017 Plan mirrors many of the strengths, weak-nesses, opportunities and threats identified during the development of this Plan.

The 2017 Future Land Use Map generally reflected existing land uses and to a degree some of its recommendations have been completed. This includes the Downtown streetscape improvements, but many remain.

The 2010 Plan was amended after land south of I-94 was annexed in 1999. The annexed area along M-40 was designated as commercial and the existing manufactured housing developments as low to medium density residential. The majority of the property, west of County Road 665 was designated industrial. Development has been slow in that district with the exception of the Bronson Lakeview Outpatient Center, built in 2005 and a Walmart Super Center, which opened in July 2014.



Other Plans & Analysis

In 2022, the Village updated its Parks and Recreation Plan, outlining goals, objectives, and action items for enhancing local parks. The plan serves as a strategic guide for improving park and recreation facilities, informed by current demographic trends and community input.

In 2016, the Southwest Michigan Prosperity Region 8 prepared a Target Market Analysis for Van Buren County. The study involved rigorous data analysis and modeling and is based on immigration into the Village of Paw Paw and Van Buren County. Results are based on internal migration within these places, movership rates by tenure and lifestyle cluster, and housing preferences among target market households.

In 2008, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission completed the Paw Paw River Watershed Management Plan. This plan encompasses the entire 5,818-acre watershed, from its source at the far western edge of Kalamazoo County, to its terminus joining the St. Joseph River, just north of where the St. Joseph empties into Lake Michigan. In Paw Paw, the East and West branches of the Paw Paw River join to form the South Branch, just above the bridge at Michigan Avenue, at the southern end of Maple Lake.

The Watershed Management Plan is an ambitious and detailed study of the watershed and the impact of development on water quality and habitat. It designates the Paw Paw area as a High Priority Urban Management Area. The plan recommends best management practices for stormwater and road maintenance, a county-wide ban on the use of phosphorus, and adopting local storm-water ordinances. The plan is an excellent guide to implement best management practices near waterfronts and should be utilized to ensure that water quality improves.

In addition to the above, Van Buren County has a farmland preservation ordinance outlined in the county's master plan. Both Antwerp and Paw Paw townships, adjacent to the Village of Paw Paw, are participants in the county plan and have farmland preservation strategies in their master plans. Regional planning efforts between these entities could help further township farmland preservation goals and village redevelopment and infrastructure improvement goals.

The Village of Paw Paw participated in a Red Arrow Corridor planning process by the Anderson Economics Consulting Group, with a concluding report dated 2001. While report data may be out of date, the conclusions and strategies for regional marketing and economic development participation with other Van Buren County Red Arrow Corridor communities may still be pertinent and worth periodic review. The report can be found online at: <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cdnr/redarrowcatreport.pdf>

Western Michigan University's Planning Studio Class completed an analysis on a Waterfront Overlay District within the Village of Paw Paw. The student-led project was defined as follows: Develop a Waterfront Overlay District for the Maple Lake/Briggs Pond area, including the branches of the Paw Paw River, within the Village of Paw Paw.

CREATING THE MASTER PLAN

The 2025 Master Plan was a collaborative effort between the Village staff and the citizens of Paw Paw. In 2024, the Planning Commission hired a planning consultant to assist them in preparing a Master Plan update and a steering committee composed of Village officials, business owners and citizens was formed to help guide the process. This committee met twice to discuss the goals and objectives as well as the action plan items for the community,

The public had an opportunity to participate in the process to determine the values important to them. An online survey provided the opportunity for people in the Village to participate in the creation of the Master Plan. Participants identified weaknesses, assets, and preferences related to Village land uses.

These public engagement techniques were used to identify the planning issues that effect the community. Village staff was consulted to provide critical feedback throughout the course of drafting the Master Plan, as well as to review draft materials. When the draft was completed, it was provided to the staff for review and comments.

After review by the Village staff, the Master Plan draft was then submitted to the Planning Commission, to begin the adoption process required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. The draft plan was reviewed by the Village Council and then released for review by the surrounding townships and the Van Buren County Planning Commission. After completing the mandated 63-day review period, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on _____ and the plan was adopted by the Village Council on _____ The resolution of adoption is copied on the inside back cover of this document, in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

During the creation of this Master Plan, it was important to engage the public in order to understand the strengths, weaknesses, and goals of the community. To create a framework for public participation, a goal and priorities survey of the Planning Commission and Steering Committee, public online survey was conducted to help identify issues and opportunities that are important for residents and stakeholders in order to facilitate positive change.

Public Online Survey

The online survey was open to the public from February to May 2025. The multi-question survey asked residents and business owners to comment on the overall positive and negative aspects of living in Paw Paw, opportunities for improvement, housing, transportation and economic development goals in the Village.

93 responses were collected and then analyzed. Approximately 27% of respondents were 45-54 years old, and more than 54% were from those living in the Village. Moreover, 39% of the respondents were from individuals who had lived in Paw Paw for more than 20 years. Those who did not live in the Village were residents in surrounding communities.

Survey responses indicated close access to state highways and major thoroughfares, the balance between urban and rural landscapes, close proximity to beaches and Lake Michigan, downtown, and good schools as the most positive aspects of living in Paw Paw. More business and entertainment opportunities, more affordable housing options, more bike trails and paths, more available housing types, more sidewalks and a Village-wide connected sidewalk system, more or improved parks, and more programs for youths and teens were listed as areas needing improvement.

KEY FINDINGS AND PLANNING ISSUES

As a result of the public's involvement in the planning process, several key issues were identified.

- » **Downtown** – increasing business and entertainment opportunities, making the area pedestrian and bicyclist friendly, providing community spaces, improving streetscapes with items like public art and bicycle facilities, and increasing marketing and tourism opportunities.
- » **Business** – improving business and industrial opportunities, utilize vacant sites.
- » **Housing** – attracting a greater variety of affordable housing, such as single-family homes, new urbanist homes, ADUs, townhouses, apartments, and mixed-uses.
- » **Transportation** – adding opportunities for non-motorized transportation by implementing sidewalks in key locations.
- » **Parks and Recreation**– adding trails and paths for bicyclists and pedestrians as well as increasing and improving parks spaces.
- » **Community Building** – creating more opportunities for children and adults such as programming and events.

These planning issues are the foundation of the planning principles outlined in the next chapter.



02. COMMUNITY PROFILE

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Paw Paw was settled in 1828 and named for the pawpaw trees that once grew along the Paw Paw River. Today, pawpaw trees are less common in the area, due to the clearing of forests. The Village of Paw Paw has a beautiful setting and bountiful natural resources, primarily water and soils. Just as with much of southwest Michigan, the area has an ideal climate for fruit production. This was recognized by early settlers to Van Buren County and the Village.

Peter Gremps platted the Village of Paw Paw and founded the community's first store, mill, and public house. A tavern in the Village, founded in 1834 by Daniel Dodge, was one of the principal stopping places along the Territorial Road between Chicago and Detroit (what is now Red Arrow High-way/Michigan Avenue). In 1840 the Van Buren County seat was relocated from neighboring Lawrence to Paw Paw. At the turn of the century, when South Haven became the largest community in Van Buren County, an attempt was made to wrest the county seat away from Paw Paw. After several votes and many protests, the county seat remained in Paw Paw and still does to this day.

Paw Paw is known for its wineries, its beautiful lakefront, and quality schools. The Village Hall is located in the former County Court House, which was relocated to Michigan Avenue. This building is one of four listed on the National Register of Historic Places; the others are the Van Buren County Courthouse, the Carnegie Library (now the Carnegie Center) and the waterworks building (now the site of the Warner's Winery/Kevin's Restaurant).



Village Hall, 1920's

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1: Surrounding Community Comparison - Population

Geography	2000	2010	2014	2023	Change 2000 - 2010	Change 2000 - 2014	Change 2000 - 2023
Village of Paw Paw	3,363	3,534	3,494	3,277	5.08%	3.90%	-2.46%
Village of Lawton	1,859	1,900	1,698	2,056	2.21%	-8.66%	11.60%
Village of Mattawan	2,536	1,997	2,075	2,615	-21.25%	-18.18%	3.81%
Antwerp Township	10,813	12,182	12,121	13,639	12.66%	12.10%	23.31%
Paw Paw Township	7,091	7,041	6,979	6,886	-0.71%	-1.58%	-2.94%
Van Buren County	76,263	76,258	75,569	75,681	-0.01%	-0.91%	-0.77%
State of Michigan	9,938,444	9,883,706	9,889,024	10,051,595	-0.55%	-0.50%	1.14%

Source: US Census 2000, 2010; 2014, 2023 American Community Survey

Table 2: Analogous Community Comparison - Population

Geography	2000	2010	2014	2023	Change 2000 - 2010	Change 2000 - 2014	Change 2000 - 2023
Village of Paw Paw	3,363	3,534	3,494	3,277	5.08%	3.90%	-2.46%
Otsego	3,933	3,956	3,798	4,079	0.58%	-3.43%	3.84%
Plainwell	3,933	3,804	3,798	3,764	-3.28%	-3.43%	-4.45%
Portland	3,789	3,883	3,899	3,821	2.48%	2.90%	0.82%
Wayland	3,939	4,079	4,082	4,430	3.55%	3.63%	12.03%
Whitehall	2,884	2,706	2,694	2,974	-6.17%	-6.59%	3.34%

Source: US Census 2000, 2010; 2014, 2023 American Community Survey

Population

According to the most recent United States Census estimates for 2023, the Village of Paw Paw has a population of 3,277. Between 2000 and 2010, the Village experienced a period of growth, gaining 5.08 percent in ten years. However, estimates for the years since 2010 indicate a population decline (1.13 percent). This is not unusual to Paw Paw, as throughout the State of Michigan, difficult economic times and out migration have resulted in a population slowdown or decline in many communities. Paw Paw is a well-established community in western Michigan, and much will depend on the economy, enhancements that build on the community's character and assets, and the demand for redevelopment in order to continue its strength and prominence in the region.

To help identify its unique characteristics, Paw Paw was compared to five West Michigan communities. These communities all share similar population (2023 estimate) and rate of population change (2000-2023) and all are located just off an interstate highway. These data show how Paw Paw compares demographically to communities with similar attributes. Comparison data for the surrounding townships, nearby villages, Van Buren County and the State of Michigan are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Age Breakdown

The median age of Paw Paw residents decreased between 2000 and 2023 from 36.3 to 35.4. This is significantly lower than the change in median age for neighboring communities, Van Buren County and the State of Michigan as a whole. Communities surrounding Paw Paw, as well as the selected communities, are generally experiencing a greater increase in the median age as seen in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3: Median Age – Surrounding Community Comparison

Geography	2000	2023	Change 2000 - 2023
Village of Paw Paw	36.3	35.4	-2.48%
Village of Lawton	36.9	40.0	8.40%
Village of Mattawan	32.9	35.8	8.81%
Antwerp Township	35.1	38.7	10.26%
Paw Paw Township	37.6	36.7	-2.39%
Van Buren County	36.6	42.8	16.94%
State of Michigan	35.5	40.5	14.08%

Source: US Census 2000, 2023

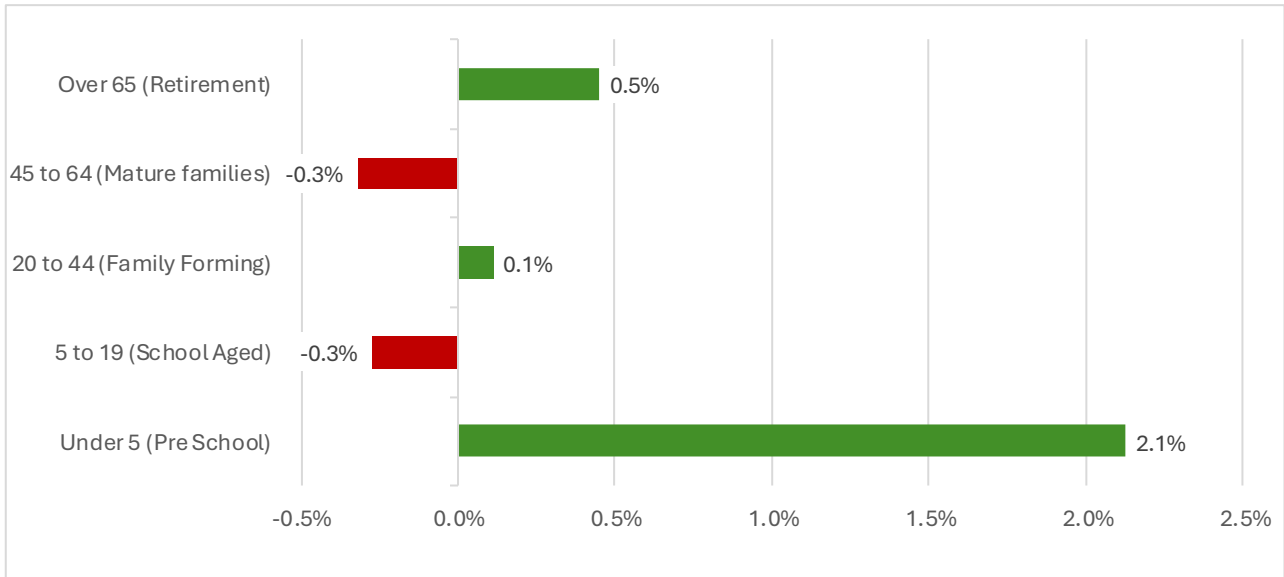
Table 4: Median Age – Analogous Community Comparison -

Geography	2000	2023	Change 2000 - 2023
Village of Paw Paw	36.3	35.4	-2.48%
Otsego	34.1	39.3	15.25%
Plainwell	36.2	39.9	10.22%
Portland	33.5	39.4	17.61%
Wayland	30.7	34.2	11.40%
Whitehall	40.0	35.5	-11.25%

Source: US Census 2000, 2023

While Paw Paw is aging, between 2010 and 2023 the group with the highest growth rate was under 5 years, followed by those over 65 years old. **Figure 1** shows the change in the percentage of the total population for each age group during that period. In 2010, the under 5 age group comprised 3.2 percent of the population but in 2023 this same age group increased its share to 10 percent, an increase of 2.1 percent. With these findings, the Village should aim to provide a range of housing options to cater to families.

Figure 1. Percent Change in Age Group, Share of Total Population 2010-2023



Census and population trends for the US and Michigan indicate that approximately 12 percent of the population is 65 and older. In Van Buren County there are 14,663 persons over age 65, accounting for nearly 20 percent of the population. The trend of a growing senior population presents Paw Paw with an opportunity to develop middle- and higher-end senior independent and continuing care housing such as townhouses, condominiums and resident care housing.

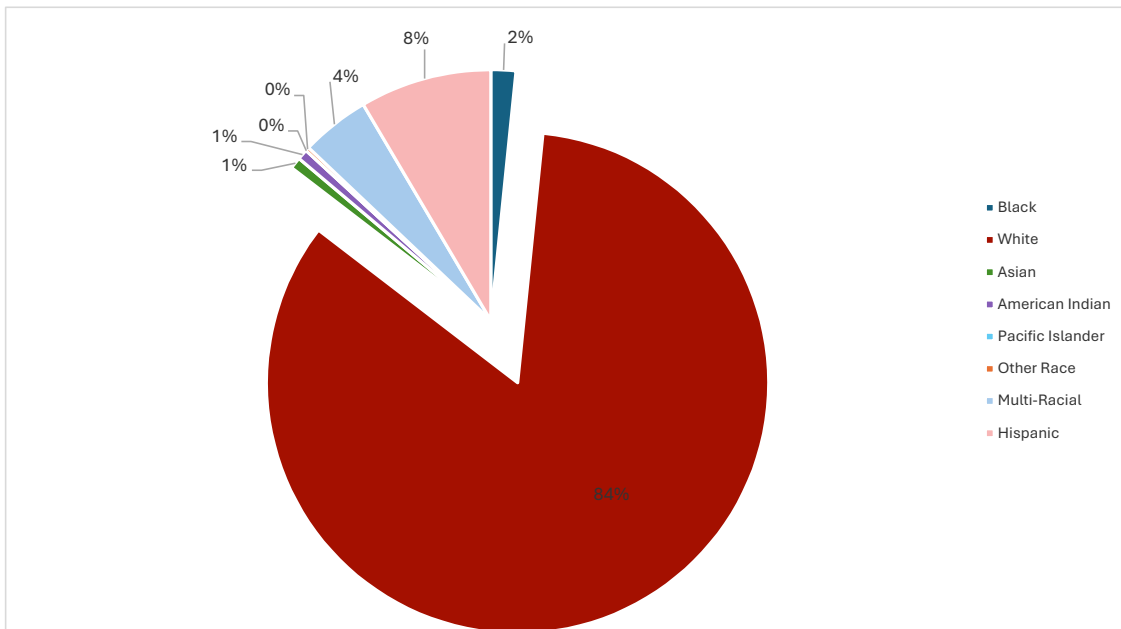
There is a slight increase in residents aged 20 to 44, the "family forming" age category. This age group is typically comprised of young, educated professionals and working families with children that will support local school districts. While all age groups are important to a community, the 20 to 44 age group is generally seen as an indicator for vitality and economic health. Its increase is significant because it represents the prime years for family formation, which explains the increase in school-aged children.

The importance of maintaining solid single-family residential neighborhoods, or in creating new ones, cannot be overlooked. Yet, as the Village's population ages, the need for broader housing choices in-creases. Land use relationships that consider both an aging population and younger families should be a priority in coming years.

Racial Composition

The racial composition experienced some changes between one group and another, however, the percentage of minority residents in Paw Paw remained fairly unchanged from 2010 to 2020. The majority of residents are white. Figure 2 details the way in which Paw Paw residents identify themselves based upon race.

Figure 2. Racial Composition, 2020



Source: US Census 2010, 2020

The Village of Paw Paw experienced an increase in the percentage of persons of Black and White origin between 2010 and 2020.

Household Characteristics

Between 2010 and 2023 the number of households in Paw Paw decreased by 8 percent. This is consistent with the 2.46 percent decrease in population during the same period. The average household size increased by 0.34 persons during the same period. This differs from comparable communities and the national trends. More people are remaining single, and families tend to have fewer children. The average household size in the Village has increased, suggesting that families are typically increasing in size in the community.

The age of housing can sometimes influence the need for code enforcement and general neighborhood quality. The median year of housing structures built in Paw Paw is 1966. This is consistent with several surrounding communities; however, several have experienced surges in new housing and have newer housing stock (see **Table 5**). An aging housing stock can result in a decline of property maintenance and upkeep. Recognizing this issue and promoting a policy of property maintenance enforcement will aid in maintaining and rehabilitating strong, single-family neighborhoods.

Table 5: Age of Housing – Surrounding Community Comparison

Geography	Median Year Structure Built (2023)	Median Owner-Occupied Home Value (2023)*
Village of Paw Paw	1966	\$149,507
Village of Lawton	1972	\$178,602
Village of Mattawan	1992	\$208,864
Antwerp Township	1980	\$242,631
Paw Paw Township	1976	\$186,778
Van Buren County	1976	\$240,932
State of Michigan	1972	\$272,044

Source: US Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2023) *2025 Dollars

The median value in 2023 for owner-occupied homes in Paw Paw was \$149,507 (adjusted for inflation). This is well below average for the surrounding communities, as well as Van Buren County (\$240,932) and the State of Michigan (\$272,044). This helps reinforce the need to focus on maintaining strong single-family neighborhoods, reinvesting in ones that need help, and enforcing property up-keep and zoning regulations.

There has been an increase in single-family construction occurring in Paw Paw. The average cost per building as also increased. In 2023, only one new single-family home was constructed at \$237,741. In 2025, five new single-family homes were constructed at an average cost of \$352,205. This is an increase per unit cost of 48%.

Table 6. Reported Building Permits by Year

Building Type	Buildings	Units	Total Cost	Avg. Cost per Building
2025				
Single Family	5	5	\$1,761,025	\$352,205
2024				
Single Family	1	1	\$185,550	\$185,550
2023				
Single Family	1	1	\$237,741	\$237,741

Source: US Census Building Permit Database

Employment

The Village of Paw Paw is the Van Buren County seat, and county government provides good paying jobs while supporting local businesses in diverse professions like finance, insurance, real estate, legal and related industries. The Village has also benefited from proximity to the larger cities of Portage and Kalamazoo.

Paw Paw residents have a fairly diverse employment base that ranges from white- to blue-collar jobs. Nineteen percent of Paw Paw residents work in the manufacturing sector. The Refresco plant west of the Village most likely employs the bulk of that percentage.

Retail trade is the top sector in the Village at 23 percent, followed by manufacturing, professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services. Paw Paw's education, health, and social services sector has the fourth highest number of employees at 11 percent (See Figure 3).

Bronson/Lakeview Community Hospital and Bronson Hospital Outpatient Center both contribute to that large percentage.

Paw Paw's arts, entertainment and recreation sector also has a large number of employees. This is due to the expansion of the tourism market in Paw Paw, specifically wine tasting and production. The Village's popularity is expected to continue to grow with more and more tourists visiting each year.



03. HOUSING ANALYSIS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to examine the demand for housing units in Van Buren County, with particular focus on the Village of Paw Paw, in order to inform the processes of creating the Village's 2025 Master Plan Update. This study includes a detailed analysis of housing market data from the US Census, the Village's building permit records, and other ESRI Business Analyst. The conclusions of this study are designed to initiate policy discussions with Village officials and stakeholders, so that the resulting Master Plan can more effectively address the needs of Paw Paw and its neighborhoods.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSES

This study features several areas of analysis:

- » Analysis of the underlying demographic trends that impact the housing market, including population projections
- » Analysis of the overall supply and demand for housing, including a breakdown of For Sale vs For Rent units
- » Comparison of the housing market in Paw Paw to the housing market in Van Buren County as a whole

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This report is based on estimates, assumptions, and other information developed from market research, and our knowledge of the industry. Sources of information and the basis of estimates are stated in the report.

The conclusions of this report rely on standards set by national organizations and data derived from outside market research organizations. Additionally, they are based on the assumptions stated in this report. The conclusions and supporting data in this report are subject to change based on evolving market conditions. This report is intended to quantify the housing market for municipal planning purposes and is not intended to be used as a financial projection.

DATA SOURCES

Data for this report comes from the following sources, which are cited where appropriate:

- » US Census:
 - 2010 Decennial Headcount
 - 2020 Decennial Headcount (used when 2023 ACS data is unavailable)
 - 2023 American Community Survey
- » ESRI Business Analyst

COHORT-COMPONENT POPULATION PROJECTION

In order to project the senior population in the future, McKenna used a Cohort-Component Population Projection. Cohort-Component Population Projections are developed using the following methodology.

The population is divided into ten-year age cohorts, using US Census data. At each ten-year interval, individual age cohorts are moved up the ladder. For instance, the group that was 30-40 years old in 2010 became the 40-50-year-olds in 2020, less those who die during that time frame based on the mortality rate for their age group. For the 81+ age cohort, the number not projected to die during the ten-year period in question was carried over to the next decade. In order to calculate the number of people aged 0-10, the population of women of childbearing age was calculated and a 10-year birthrate per thousand (from the Michigan Department of Community Health) applied to give the number of births.

To account for migration, the population projection also includes a net migration factor. The net migration factor for Van Buren County was calculated by running a Cohort-Component Analysis from 2010 to 2020 and comparing the results to the actual 2020 population data.

COMPARISON GEOGRAPHIES

Population Trend

The Table below shows the total population in the Village of Paw Paw, and the overall County, for the years 2010 and 2020 (the decennial headcounts, and the inputs into the Cohort-Component Analysis. The Paw Paw and Van Buren areas have grown at similar rates.

The Village has experienced a more significant decrease in population compared to the County's decrease.

Table 7. Population Trend

	2010	2020	Population Change
Village of Paw Paw	3,534	3,362	-4.87%
Van Buren County	76,258	75,587	-0.88%

Source: US Census

Age Breakdown

The age breakdown of an area indicates varying needs of a community, such as schools and school enrollment, parks, housing options, community services, entertainment options, and more. The Table below describes the age group breakdown of the comparison geographies based on the 2020 Census.

The Paw Paw area has similar population age structure to the County as a whole; the differences are not substantial enough to indicate radically different housing markets.

Table 8: Age, 2020

	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+
Village of Paw Paw	10.80%	12.50%	14%	13.20%	11.40%	13.10%	12.70%	7.90%	4.50%
Van Buren County	12.10%	13.30%	10.20%	11.70%	11.50%	13.90%	14.70%	8.50%	3.90%

Source: US Census

Net Migration Rate

The net migration factor was calculated by running a Cohort-Component Analysis from 2010 to 2020 and comparing the results to the actual 2020 population data. Additional population in 2020 beyond the prediction in the model indicates a positive net migration rate, which a smaller population indicates a negative net migration rate. This analysis was only conducted for Van Buren County, to avoid "statistical noise" from residents moving from the Paw Paw to other parts of the County. Those residents are still in the housing market and could very easily move back into new housing in Paw Paw and, therefore, should not be removed from the analysis.

The net migration rate for Van Buren County from 2010 to 2020 was -8.38%. The population projection uses that rate as part of the projection, for all comparison geographies.

Population Projection

Based on the Cohort-Component Analysis, including the net migration rates, the populations of the comparison geographies are projected out to 2040 in the table below.

Table 9: Population Projection

	2020	2030	2040	Population Change 2020-2040
Village of Paw Paw	3,362	3,335	3,185	-5.26%
Van Buren County	75,587	74,205	69,897	-7.53%

Source: McKenna Calculation

Population change is expected to decrease between the years 2020 and 2040 and at a slightly slower rate than that of the County.

OVERALL SUPPLY-DEMAND ANALYSIS

Introduction/Summary

The purpose of this market study is to determine the types of housing that are in demand for the Village of Paw Paw and the surrounding County in order to inform the ongoing Master Plan process. The demand and supply for housing within Van Buren County is analyzed, and the differences between demand and supply are analyzed to establish conclusions about the type, tenure, and price of housing that will be needed in Paw Paw in the coming decades. These conclusions will then be used to determine the best course of action in each of the targeted areas.

Demand

Demand is calculated by determining the number of households in the study area that are pre-disposed to own or rent, then calculating the affordable price of housing for households based on income. The first step is to take the population in the study area broken down into age cohorts (available from the US Census Bureau) and then determine the number of households headed by a member of each age cohort using national headship rates. Once the number of households in each age group is determined, they are further broken down into "owners" and "renters", based once again on national patterns of housing tenure by age. This breakdown provides the total number of rental and homestead properties demanded in the study area.

Supply

Supply is calculated by determining the number of housing units rented/for rent and owned/for sale in each of the price categories determined by the demand analysis. The analysis uses the overall number of units in the study area and their tenure, as found in the US Census.

Supply-Demand "Gap"

Having determined the supply and demand in the study area, the two are compared in order to show whether there is a market "gap". First, the overall numbers of units supplied and demanded are analyzed, and then the number in each price point is compared (for both ownership and rental). The gap analysis points to the areas of the market that are saturated and the areas with latent demand.

CURRENT HOUSING DEMAND

Headship and Homeownership Rates

The headship rate is the number of households in each age group divided by the population in that age group. By definition, a household resides in a dwelling unit under its control. Using the data in Table 4 we can calculate the propensity of the population in each age cohort to 1) form a household based on the headship rate, and 2) own or rent a dwelling unit. Notably, roommates or a romantic couple living together are considered "co-heads" of a household, and only one person is counted as the "head" for the purposes of the headship rate.

Headship rate data is provided by the National Association of Home Builders, based on their analysis of US Census estimates from the American Community Survey. National data is used for headship and homeownership, because it is more readily available, and more reliable, than Census estimates for Van Buren County. The assumption, for the purposes of this analysis, is that Van Buren County's headship and homeownership rates are roughly similar to the nation at large.

Table 4: Homeownership and Headship Rates

	Headship Rate (United States)	Homeownership Rate (United States)
20-29	39.2%	37.3%
30-39	54.3%	64.5%
40-49	56.7%	70.3%
50-59	58.5%	76.3%
60-69	63.6%	78.7%
70-79	64.4%	70.4%
80+	54.1%	60.3%

Source: U.S. Census, National Association of Home Builders

Age Cohorts: The number of people living in a geographic area that fall within a given age range. Data Source: US Census Bureau

² *Headship Rates: The percentage of people in a given age cohort that are considered the heads of their households. Data Source: US Census Bureau*

³ *Housing Tenure: Tenure is a description of whether housing is owned or rented. Data Source: US Census Bureau*

⁴ *Market "Gap": The difference between demand and supply for a given product in a given market area. A gap could indicate excess demand or excess supply.*

Estimated Housing Demand

The table above shows the number of households headed by each age group and then breaks down those households into owners and renters. The table shows that the **total housing demand** for the Village of Paw Paw is **1,045 ownership units and 380 rental units**.

Note: The total number of households does not exactly match the Census estimate for total households in the Village due to rounding of the headship rates.

Table 10: Estimated Homeowner/Renter Demand by Age Group, Village of Paw Paw, 2020

Age Group	Adult Population	Households	Homeowners	Renters
20-29	470	184	81	103
30-39	444	241	165	76
40-49	385	218	165	54
50-59	440	257	206	52
60-69	425	270	225	45
70-79	267	172	144	28
80+	151	82	59	23
Total	3,362	1,425	1,045 (73.33%)	380 (26.67%)

Source: US Census Bureau, McKenna Calculations

Table 11: Estimated Homeowner/Renter Demand by Age Group, Van Buren County, 2020

Age Group	Adult Population	Households	Homeowners	Renters
20-29	7,730	3,030	1,337	1,693
30-39	8,839	4,800	3,293	1,506
40-49	8,712	4,940	3,725	1,215
50-59	10,562	6,179	4,941	1,238
60-69	11,115	7,069	5,891	1,178
70-79	6,409	4,127	3,456	671
80+	2,964	1,604	1,158	446
Total	75,587	31,748	23,802 (74.97%)	7,946 (25.03%)

Source: US Census Bureau, McKenna Calculations

PROJECTED STUDY AREA HOUSING DEMAND

Using the cohort-component analysis population projection described in Section 1.E, the number of housing units demanded has been projected out to 2030 and 2040.

Table 12: Projected Homeownership Demand

	2020	2030	2040	Demand Change 2020-2040
Village of Paw Paw	1,045	1,025	936	-109
Van Buren County	23,802	22,897	20,674	-3,128

Source: McKenna Calculation

Table 13: Projected Rental Demand

	2020	2030	2040	Demand Change 2020-2040
Village of Paw Paw	380	362	324	-56
Van Buren County	7,946	7,946	7,365	-581

Source: McKenna Calculation

Table 14: Projected Total Demand

	2020	2030	2040	Demand Change 2020-2040
Village of Paw Paw	1,425	1,387	1,260	-165
Van Buren County	31,748	30,843	28,039	-3,706

Source: McKenna Calculation

The projection anticipates a decrease in the number of households in both the Village of Paw Paw and Van Buren County between 2020 and 2040, with accompanying decrease in demand for housing units. The ratio of demand for homeownership versus rentals will stay approximately the same.

SUPPLY-DEMAND GAP

Overall, there are 29,510 housing units in Van Buren County, according to Census estimates. Estimated housing demand is 31,748 housing units, meaning there is an undersupply County-wide. However, demand is projected to decrease by 12% before 2040, creating an oversupply.

The Village of Paw Paw also currently has an undersupply of housing that will change to an over-supply, with 1,551 housing units compared to an estimated demand for 1,425. Like the County, Paw Paw will experience a decrease in demand before 2040.

Table 15: Housing Supply, 2020

	Owned	Rentals	Total
Village of Paw Paw	739	812	1,551
Van Buren County	22,950	6,560	29,510

Source: US Census

Table 16: Supply-Demand Gap, Homeownership

	Needed in 2020	% Change by 2030	% Change from 2030-2040	Total % Change in Units
Village of Paw Paw	1,045	-2%	-9%	-11%
Van Buren County	23,802	-4%	-10%	-14%

Source: McKenna Calculation

Table 17: Supply-Demand Gap, Rental

	Needed in 2020	% Change by 2030	% Change from 2030-2040	Total % Change in Units
Village of Paw Paw	280	-5%	-10%	-15%
Van Buren County	7,946	0%	-7%	-7%

Source: McKenna Calculation

Table 18: Supply-Demand Gap, Total

	Needed in 2020	% Change by 2030	% Change from 2030-2040	Total % Change in Units
Village of Paw Paw	1,425	-3%	-9%	-12%
Van Buren County	31,748	-3%	-9%	-12%

Source: McKenna Calculation

The Village of Paw Paw had an undersupply of housing in 2020 with around 1,045 new housing units needed in the Village. However, projections indicate a decline in future housing demand, suggesting that new housing construction may not be necessary moving forward. Similarly, Van Buren County is expected to experience an overall housing oversupply.

When current and projected supply is compared to anticipated demand, both the Village of Paw Paw and Van Buren County appear to have adequate housing stock to support future needs.

It should be noted that this data comes from Census Bureau's American Community Survey 5-year Estimates. According to Village documents, there are a total of 965 single unit homes and 468 multiple unit homes of which:

	Units
100 % PRE (Principal Residence Exemption)	785
0% PRE	180
Apartments with no subsidized rents	69
Apartments with 20% Low income rent	101 regular rent 24 assisted rent
Apartments with low income rents	274

ECONOMICS

Regional Context

With over 45,000 vehicles (MDOT TCDS, 2023) traveling through Paw Paw on I-94 each day, the interstate makes the Village accessible from major population centers in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, as well as metropolitan Chicago.

Regional Economic Influences

Paw Paw's economy benefits from its geographic location within Michigan's fruit and wine country. Major employers are fruit juice processing and packaging companies including Refresco, Sunberry, and St. Julian Winery. Other notable employers in Paw Paw include: Van Buren County (County Government) and Bronson Hospital (Healthcare).

Job Creation

Harloff Manufacturing recently expanded and relocated its operations of Trine Corporation in the Bronx, New York to Van Buren County. The expansion created 38 new jobs. Farms LLC announced an expansion of its Paw Paw packing plant that the company reports will create 55 new jobs. Paw Paw is within commuting distance of Kalamazoo, Portage and Mattawan, and job creation in those communities positively impacts local residents.

Investment Opportunities

Paw Paw's downtown contains several blocks of one-, two-, and three-story buildings fronting Michigan Avenue. These properties would be well suited for mixed-use development projects, with street-front retail on the first floor, and upper-level flats, or lofts.



Tourism

Tourism represents a significant economic engine for Paw Paw and the State. Over 330,000 jobs, with income of \$15,431.10 million, were sustained by the traveler economy in Michigan in 2023. Traveler-supported employment represents 5.7% of all employment in the state. Travel in Michigan generated nearly \$35 million in state and local taxes in 2023.

Tourism experienced a significant decline during the COVID-19 Pandemic; however, the industry has seen a steady increase since 2020. Michigan hosted 128.3 million visitors in 2023; the majority of visits were day trips (58%).

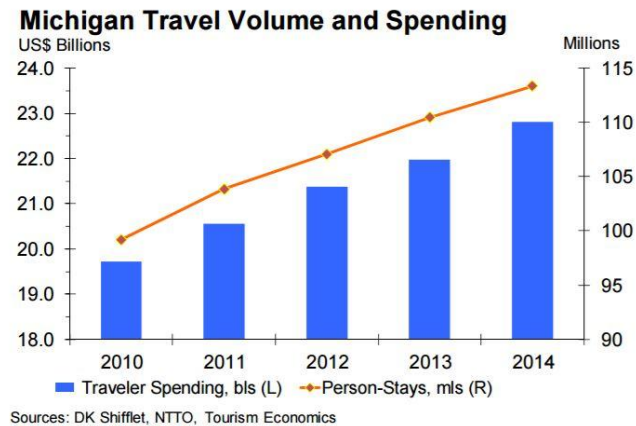
Southwest Michigan remains an important tourism destination for travelers from the Midwest and beyond.

Keys to the region's draw include:

- » The proximity of Southwestern Michigan to major population centers in the Midwest.
- » Attractive natural environments, including many lakes, waterfront, forest and trails for recreation.

The Paw Paw area and Van Buren County is home to many important regional tourism destinations, such as wineries, resorts, lakes and auto racing, among others. In addition, there are over 3,000 homes held for seasonal or vacation use within 30 minutes of Paw Paw. Van Buren County receives a significant number of seasonal visitors with its many vacation homes/cottages. Camping is another spending category that appears strong relative to the State average.

The Michigan Wine Industry is of particular importance in the Southwest part of the state., located in Paw Paw, is one of many vineyards and wineries in Southwest Michigan.



St. Julian Winery

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Land Use

Map 1 shows existing land uses in the Village. Commercial land uses have developed along the Village's two main corridors: M-40/Kalamazoo Street and Red Arrow Highway/Michigan Avenue. The high visibility and easy access of Red Arrow Highway/Michigan Avenue and the proximity of I-94 have fueled an expansion of commercial uses outward from the downtown to the Village boundaries.

Map 1: Existing Land Use

Downtown

Downtown Paw Paw, located on Michigan Avenue, is a mix of retail, office, and civic uses, along with some upper story residential dwellings. The downtown is located approximately one mile north of the I-94 interchange. Maple Lake is a prominent near-downtown resource and provides an attractive backdrop for events and celebrations.

The Downtown area contains many attractive buildings and exudes a classic village atmosphere. The many restaurants and the movie theater keep the district vital and active into the evening.

Downtown has several key destination businesses and attractions that are a draw for people and shoppers. Parking is ample both along the street and in Village-owned lots behind and adjacent to stores, shops and restaurants.



This parking is convenient because many businesses have developed very attractive rear building entrances. Therefore, customers parking in the lots behind Michigan Avenue are easily able to identify and enter shops through the rear for added convenience.

While convenience is important, on-street building entrances should remain as visible, convenient, and attractive. Michigan Avenue should be viewed as the prime market street and any attempts to close or down-grade storefront entrances should be discouraged. These entrances help define and reinforce the public sidewalk space that makes downtown special, creating a very positive and exciting retail and dining/entertainment experience. These characteristics help set down-town apart from the "suburban" retail developments that boast easy access and parking in their large street-front surface lots.

However, the Downtown faces challenges. There are empty storefronts, and some facades need to be improved or restored. Pedestrian mobility is affected by an additional 6-inch step up from the curb level, resulting in difficulties for those with disabilities. In addition, areas with long curb cuts or expanses of parking areas adjacent to sidewalks discourage pedestrian activity.

Kalamazoo Street Corridor and Other Business Areas

The M-40/Kalamazoo Street corridor is defined by the I-94 interchange. Highway oriented commercial uses have developed from I-94 north along M-40 to just south of the downtown. Uses include fast food, automotive services, and light industrial. Ampey Avenue branches off from Kalamazoo Street and provides access to several highway-oriented uses.

While this is a successful corridor, some buildings need to be updated. Pedestrian mobility is also limited, as there are few safe locations to cross the street. Sidewalks are discontinuous and for much of the corridor are located along the curb, directly next to traffic.

There are also commercial areas beginning in the townships at the east and west entrances to the community on Red Arrow Highway/Michigan Avenue. These areas are classic "road into town" neighborhoods, consisting mostly of automobile-oriented uses and services and a variety of retail establishments.

In 2016, the Village of Paw Paw annexed three parcels along Red Arrow Highway/East Michigan Avenue. The expansion of Paw Paw's boundaries was approved to ease jurisdictional boundaries for future property development. The indoor athletic complex has been developed and is open for business in conjunction with the outdoor ballfields.

Residential

Most residential developments are located adjacent to downtown to the north, south, and east. These neighborhoods are characterized by older homes on small lots and many share property lines with commercial and industrial uses. This has raised issues of compatibility, transitions and property maintenance, especially for those neighborhoods abutting heavy commercial areas. A mixture of older, cottage-style homes, as well as new lakefront homes, can be found on the shores of Maple Lake. Once a regional vacation retreat, Maple Lake spawned many small cottages which have since been converted to year-round homes.

Newer, subdivision-style residential development is located on the north side of Michigan Avenue, west of Maple Lake. This area developed as the Village began to grow and expand. The middle and elementary schools are located in these neighborhoods (Paw Paw High School is located two miles east of the Village, on Red Arrow Highway in Antwerp Township). Also within these neighborhoods is Bronson-Lakeview Hospital, which is on the west side of Maple Lake and is a major area employer.



One of Paw Paw's fine older homes



Industrial

Industrial land uses are located west of Kalamazoo Street near Factory Street and Industrial Avenue. Due to challenging economic times and other factors, several industries have left, leaving vacant buildings and land with a potential for redevelopment. The Refresco bottling plant, one of the largest in the state, is located west of the Village in Paw Paw Township. While located outside Paw Paw, it nevertheless plays a major role as an employer, and its related truck traffic is an important issue because the main access to the plant from I-94 is through the Village and downtown.

South of I-94

In 1999, the Village annexed approximately 387 acres south of I-94, between the interstate and 60th Street. Much of this land is vacant, although there is a manufactured (mobile) home community that is accessed from South LaGrave Avenue and a manufactured (modular) home subdivision just west of M-40. A farm and home store is also located on M-40. A Walmart Superstore was opened in 2014. To the west, Bronson Hospital, a major landholder in this area, has constructed an Outpatient Center, which provides offices for primary care physicians, labs, and re-habilitation facilities. Most of this land is located in a wetland.

Village Assets

Paw Paw celebrates several unique assets that are not common to similar sized communities. These include seven family-owned restaurants, some with a regional draw, that are popular with residents and visitors alike. As the county seat, the local economy is bolstered by relatively secure government activities and employment. The Village also has its own hospital and movie theater.

The most important assets are the Village's location to I-94 and access to Maple Lake, Briggs Pond and the Paw Paw River. The connection to the interstate allows visitors to frequent the Village, while the proximity to the waterfront keeps the Village centered as a community for families and neighborhoods. This dichotomy will need constant attention to ensure that the needs of travelers on I-94 can be met without negatively impacting the community who want to preserve the family-centered neighborhoods that had attracted them to Paw Paw.

The Downtown District is the heart of the Village. Located centrally at the intersection of Kalamazoo St and Red Arrow Hwy/Michigan Avenue, downtown Paw Paw is a walkable, pedestrian-friendly corridor with neighborhood servicing retail businesses and restaurants.

In addition, as the focus of the wine industry in Van Buren County, Paw Paw is a destination for tourists and wine enthusiasts. These are qualities that should be emphasized and built upon as the Village continues to grow and develop.

Paw Paw schools have a reputation for excellence. This is an attraction for housing and economic development. Both the Middle School and the Lower/ Upper Elementary schools are located in the Village (the high school is approximately two miles east of the Village, in Antwerp Township). The student population and related traffic impact the Village. The schools are also a significant employer. For the next 10 years, the school district has adequate land for growth. Additionally, Lutheran and Catholic elementary schools are located in the Village.

Natural Features

Paw Paw is fortunate to be located at the confluence of the east and west branches of the Paw Paw River that feed the 172-acre Maple Lake. Built by the Village in 1907, the reservoir was built to provide power and flood control; however, the dam no longer generates electricity. The lake provides many recreational opportunities, including fishing, boating and kayaking, and the marshy lowlands surrounding the river and lake offer a natural habitat for a wide variety of woodland and wetland creatures.

Map 2 shows the Village's wetlands along the east and west branches of the Paw Paw River, as well as some low area wetlands, are mostly found to the south. **Map 3** shows areas designated as prime farmland within the Village. These areas should be preserved to ensure the Village's natural features are protected.

The Village of Paw Paw has a multitude of wetland areas within its boundaries. According to the National Wetlands Inventory, a majority of the existing wetlands in the Township are classified as "Palustrine Wetlands," which include all nontidal wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergent, emergent mosses or lichens. Some of the most common names for the Palustrine System include marsh, swamp, pond, bog, prairie, and fen. Wetlands are important environmental resources that support groundwater recharge.

Because the Village of Paw Paw is rural in character, much of the existing land cover consists of either rural land, or natural woodlands. The Village's larger forested areas are located on the northern, eastern, and southern edges of the Village.

The Village has large areas of prime farmland and farmland of local importance that contribute to the economy, character, and identity of the community. The preservation of agricultural land can provide environmental, aesthetic, recreational and historic benefits to the community. Open farmland also assists in the replenishment and maintenance of groundwater supplies.

Cluster zoning is a zoning method in which development density is determined for an entire specified area. Also known as conservation-oriented development, cluster zoning allows for the total number of structures in a given piece of land to be clustered or concentrated more densely onto one or more portions of the land. Developments in cluster-zoned areas often incorporate open, common areas for use by community members and/or the wider public.

Map 2: Wetlands

Map 3: Prime Farmland

Topography

Paw Paw's topography is relatively flat with minor slope variations near the rivers and Maple Lake. The area south of I-94 between County Road 665 and M-40 is the highest elevation and the area north of Maple Lake on the southwest corner of 51st Avenue and M-40 is the lowest.



Water Features

The East and West branches of the Paw Paw River flow north into the Village and join near the south end of Maple Lake at Michigan Avenue to form the South Branch. The river flows north from the Maple Lake dam to the main stream of the Paw Paw River in Waverly Township. With the confluence of two river branches and a lake impoundment within its borders, the Village plays a critical role in addressing Paw Paw River watershed issues.

Water quality in Maple Lake has become an issue because of sediment loading and storm water runoff that brings chemicals and nutrients into Maple Lake from the Gates Drain (Briggs Pond) and the West Michigan

Avenue/Red Arrow Highway storm drainage system. This has resulted in arsenic contamination and a shallower, warmer lake leading to excessive weed growth.

The Village has commissioned studies and management plans to explore sediment and nutrient loading options. The Village also continues to work with the County Drain Commissioner's office and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality regarding watershed issues, to implement water quality programs as well as improve the fishery.

Upstream from Maple Lake is Briggs Pond, a small impoundment of the West Branch just above its confluence with the East Branch. It is fed by a significant wetland that separates the southeast from the southwest portions of the Village. This pond is also impacted by sediment and agricultural run-off, as well as by the industrial brownfields just to the south.

The Village has approximately 418 acres of wetlands, as defined by the National Wetlands Inventory. These areas are important habitats for a diverse array of plants and animals that are key to watershed health. Wetlands also contribute to the beauty of the area.



Kayak ramp on Maple Lake

Environmental Sustainability & Green Infrastructure

The most widely accepted definition of sustainability is “meeting today’s needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Urban development should be guided by a sustainable planning and management vision that promotes interconnected green space, a multi-modal transportation system, and mixed-use development. The path towards sustainability is rooted in three pillars: Economic Development, Social Progress, and Environmental Responsibility.

There is no straight forward path towards becoming a sustainable community. The most challenging elements that may come from the community that would most benefit from incorporating sustainable practices. Communicating the importance of these ‘invisible problems’ and educating the public on the merits of new policies and procedures may not be the easiest task. Incorporating sustainable development practices will have long-term benefits that will outweigh short-term challenges.



Figure 3. Sustainability Pillars

Sustainable Design

Communities with sustainable land use create an obvious balance of environmental preservation, commerce and livability. The following are elements of design that should be implemented to foster a sustainable community.

Open Space. Communities should contain an ample supply of open green spaces designed to encourage consistent active and passive use.

Sustainable Water Sources. The current and long-term availability of water should be treated as the vital starting point of any land use decision. Community planning must include the provision and protection of local water supply. The waterfront is an essential asset to the Village and the PCA Map shows that the shoreline has a delicate ecosystem that should be protected during periods of construction or redevelopment.

Renewable Energy. The Village of Paw Paw is looking at how to upgrade and implement new alternative energy resources to serve the community. Densely populated urban areas are unlikely to be the best sites for large-scale renewable energy generation. Solar power systems derive clean, zero-emission, pure energy from the sun, and installation of solar panels helps combat greenhouse gas emissions and reduces collective dependence on fossil fuels. A 2015 study by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology concluded, solar energy holds the best potential for meeting the planet's long-term energy needs.

Walkability & Connectivity. Communities should be pedestrian-oriented, with daily needs situated within easy and enjoyable walking distance of each other. To promote this access, residential, commercial, recreational, and civic uses should be connected by both public and private transportation options. The Future Transportation Map includes future connections to regional trails that would promote walkability and connectivity to other communities and to the County.

Integration of Diverse Community Features. Community planning should integrate a variety of residential, commercial, recreational, and civic facilities essential to the daily life of residents of differing demographic profiles.

Strong Sense of Place. The design of geographic spaces and structures should reflect and celebrate what is unique about a community's people, culture and history. The Issues and Opportunities Map focuses on the downtown district, commercial gateways, and the waterfront to enhance and promote the strong sense of place within Paw Paw and its connection to the region.



Figure 4. Focus on environmental sustainability promotes community wellness

Green Building. The built environment has a vast impact on the natural environment, human health, and the economy. The practice of creating and using healthy and more resource-efficient models of construction, renovation, operation, maintenance, and demolition can maximize economic and environmental performance of the structures. Green construction methods can be integrated into buildings at any stage, from design and construction to renovation and deconstruction. The most significant benefits can be obtained if the design and construction team takes an integrated approach from the earliest stages of a building project. Potential benefits of green building can include:

- » Enhance and protect biodiversity and ecosystems
- » Improve air and water quality
- » Conserve and restore natural resources
- » Reduce operating costs
- » Heighten aesthetic qualities
- » Minimize strain on local infrastructure
- » Improve overall quality of life

A focus on land use planning and building design to protect the natural environment are two significant steps toward a sustainable community. To preserve Maple Lake and the East and West Branches of the Paw Paw River as community assets as well as a source of water for the region, this Plan recommends that the Paw Paw River Watershed Management Plan be implemented as it applies to the Village of Paw Paw. In addition, this Plan recommends that the Village explore zoning tools to protect the watershed and the lake. These include waterfront setbacks, vegetative buffers (including incentives to create buffers on properties without them) and low impact design requirements. In addition, education of waterfront homeowners on shoreline protection techniques is recommended.

Implementing green infrastructure techniques will be an integral component towards sustainability because they can help communities protect the environment and human health while providing other social and economic benefits.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure, often referred to as Low-Impact Development (LID), uses vegetation, soils and natural processes to manage storm water and create healthier urban environments. Green infrastructure can range in scale from site design approaches such as rain gardens and green roofs to regional planning approaches such as conservation of large tracts of open land. In conjunction with gray infrastructure, interconnected networks of green infrastructure can enhance community resiliency by increasing water supplies, reducing flooding, combatting urban heat island effect, and improving water quality.

Green infrastructure is an approach to water management that protects, restores or mimics the natural water cycle. Green infrastructure is effective, economical, and enhances the community's safety and quality of life. It means planting trees, restoring wetlands and managing stormwater runoff that will erode the soil and natural resources and overburden that municipal water system.

Managing stormwater focuses on flood prevention. The term "100-year flood" is used to simplify the definition of a flood that statistically has a 1-percent chance of occurring in a given year. Likewise, the term "100-year storm" is used to define a rainfall event that statistically has this same 1-percent chance of

occurring. Due to changes in global temperatures, the rate and intensity of average rainfall and storms has increased. In 1979, rainfall would need to reach 3.64" in 24 hours to be classified as a 100-year storm. Over 30 years of observations, the 100-year storm rainfall was recalculated to 5.11" in a 24-hour period in 2014. The increase in storm intensity is directly related to climate change.

Green infrastructure can range in scale from site design approaches such as rain gardens and green roofs to regional planning approaches such as conservation of large tracts of open land. In conjunction with gray infrastructure, interconnected networks of green infrastructure can enhance community resiliency by increasing water supplies, reducing flooding, combatting urban heat island effect, and improving water quality.

Green infrastructure can not only improve water quality by better managing storm water – some-times even at a lower cost than conventional alternatives – but also can attract investment; help revive distressed neighborhoods; encourage redevelopment; provide recreational opportunities; and help achieve other social, economic, public health, and environmental goals.

Chemical constituents of roadway runoff are highly variable; the Federal Highway Administration identified runoff pollutants and their respective sources.

Pollutants	Source
Particulates	Pavement wear, vehicles, atmospheric deposition, maintenance activities
Nitrogen, Phosphorus	Atmospheric deposition and fertilizer application
Lead	Leaded gasoline from auto exhausts and the wear
Zinc	Tire wear, motor oil and grease
Iron	Auto body rust, steel highway structures such as bridges and guardrails, and moving engine parts
Copper	Metal plating, bearing and bushing wear, moving engine parts, brake lining wear, fungicides and insecticides
Cadmium	Tire wear and insecticide application
Chromium	Metal plating, moving engine parts, and brake lining wear
Nickel	Diesel fuel and gasoline, lubricating oil, metal plating, bushing wear, brake lining wear, and asphalt paving
Manganese	Moving engine parts
Cyanide	Anti-caking compounds used to keep deicing salts granular
Sodium, Calcium Chloride	Deicing salts
Sulphates	Roadway beds, fuel, and deicing salts

Source: FHWA Stormwater Best Management Practices in an Ultra-Urban Setting

Compared to other land uses and impervious surfaces, roadway runoff tends to have higher levels of sediment, metals, salts, and deicing materials. These pollutants impact local water resources, and any green infrastructure design should reduce these pollutant loadings.

Often the biggest challenge to implementing green infrastructure is funding. The most appropriate techniques in a given location will depend on goals, budget, and other context-specific factors, but green infrastructure can be designed to work in nearly all areas.

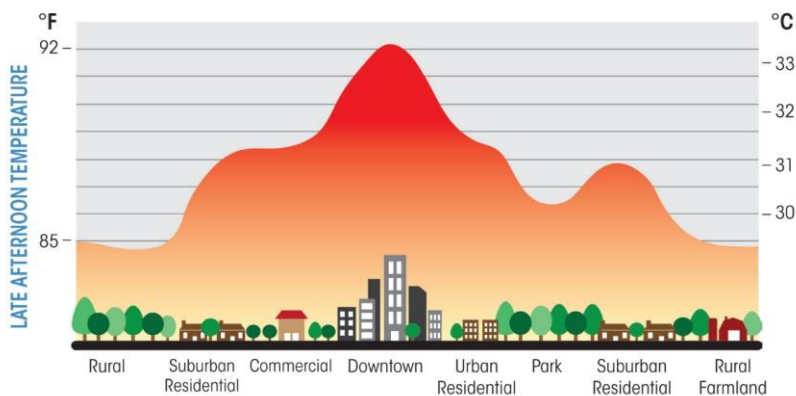
Manages Flood Risk. High intensity storms have become more intense and frequent over the past 30 years. This trend is expected to continue as global temperatures continue to rise. Green infrastructure can help manage both localized and riverine floods by absorbing rainfall, preventing water from overwhelming pipe networks and pooling in streets and basements.

Builds Resiliency to Drought. Fragile local water supplies are being stressed by decreased precipitation associated with climate change in some areas of the country. When a storm even occurs, rain falling on roofs, parking lots, streets, and other hard surfaces runs directly into city storm drains or water bodies. Communities are losing valuable water that could be used or stored for use when it is needed most. Green infrastructure can help replenish groundwater reserves, relieving stress on local water supplies and reducing the need to import potable water.

Reduces the Urban Heat Island Effect

Urban heat islands occur when cities replace natural land cover with dense concentrations of pavement, buildings, and other surfaces that absorb and retain heat. This effect increases energy costs, air pollution, and heat-related illness and mortality. Climate change will likely lead to more frequent, more severe, and longer heat waves during summer months. Trees, green roofs, and vegetation can help reduce urban heat island effects by shading building surfaces, deflecting solar radiation, and releasing moisture into the atmosphere.

Figure 5. The Urban Heat island effect on the built environment



Lowers Building Energy Demands

Trees and vegetative cover can lower ambient air temperature in urban areas through shading, windbreak, and evapotranspiration. The result is lower demand for the energy needed to provide air conditioning in summer months. Green roofs can greatly reduce the amount of energy needed to keep the temperature of a building comfortable year-round by insulating against extensive heat loss in the winter and heat absorption in the summer.

Permeable Pavement

Permeable pavement allows for the movement of storm water through the surface. In addition to reducing runoff, this effectively traps suspended solids and filters pollutants from the water. Can be used on driveways, low-traffic roads, fire lanes and emergency access roads, parking areas (especially over-flow parking and those associated with office buildings, shopping centers and recreational facilities), sidewalks, road shoulders, vehicle crossovers on divided highways, boat launching ramps, pool decks and patios. Unlike standard concrete or asphalt, permeable pavement can be installed in a variety of patterns and colors to allow for aesthetic appeal.



Rain Gardens

Rain gardens are a planted depression that allows rainwater runoff from impervious urban areas like roofs, driveways, walkways, parking lots and compacted lawn areas, the opportunity to be absorbed into the ground. The gardens will capture rainwater before it pollutes local rivers or lakes. Further, water will not go to municipal pipes, which will prevent flooding and overburden on an aging infrastructure.

The gardenscapes will include deep-rooted plants that are native to the region to ensure growth. Native plants are sturdy and colorful to attract insects to their nectar and bees to their seeds. The flowers and plants will help to contribute to the survival of bees, butterflies and local and migrating birds. Rain gardens also help to eliminate pests, such as mosquitoes. The removal of standing water reduces mosquito breeding areas.



Rain Barrels/Cisterns

The roof water management devices provide retention storage volume in above or underground storage tanks. Applicable to residential, commercial, and industrial sites, rain barrels and cisterns manage rooftop water runoff. Rainwater harvesting is a simple way to conserve water and protect the environment.

Rain barrels and cisterns both provide an opportunity for water conservation and the possibility of reducing water utility costs. Typically, cisterns are larger than rain barrels, with some having the capacity to store 10,000 gallons of water.



Green Roofs

A green roof is a roof of a building that is partially or completely covered with vegetation. They are an effective strategy for beautifying the built environment and have become the easiest identifiable symbol of the green building movement. In the past decade, the green roof concept has taken off, in part due to research that showed how green roofs could help reduce the amount of storm water runoff, thereby reducing flooding. In summer months, green roofs can retain 70-90% of precipitation that falls on them; in winter, green roofs retain 25-40%.



By making flora a part of urban roofs, there is improved air quality, energy efficiency, noise reduction, fire retardation and moderation of urban heat island effect. The creation of these amenity spaces can be used for community garden (local food production or co-ops), commercial space (display areas and restaurant terraces), and recreational space (lawn bowling and children's playgrounds). Furthermore, the aesthetic improvement can be a marketing incentive for those interested in the multiple benefits offered by green roofs.

Living walls or green walls provide similar community benefits to air quality, reduction of urban heat island effect, marketing potential, and aesthetic stimulation.

Urban Tree Canopy

Urban tree canopy (UTC) is the coverage of leaves, branches, and stems of trees when viewed from above. Trees reduce and slow stormwater by intercepting precipitation in their leaves and branches, thereby protecting water quality. Many cities have set tree canopy goals to restore some of the benefits of trees that were lost when areas were being developed.

Trees improve air quality, reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide, combat urban heat island effect, and contribute to the overall beautification of a community. Additionally, trees provide privacy, wildlife habitat, sense of place, and psychological and spiritual well-being.



Wetland Protection

Wetland protection is the largest scale green infrastructure technique. The water quality and flooding impacts of urban stormwater can be addressed by protecting open spaces and sensitive natural areas within and adjacent to a community while providing recreational opportunities for residents.



Conclusion

Paw Paw is a desirable place to live, with historic village charm, unique and beautiful natural assets, and a claim as one of the premier wine growing and processing areas in the Midwest. Implementing sustainable design and green infrastructure techniques would set the Village apart as a leading sustainable community in the region. Protecting the assets of the Village, encouraging green future land use and multi-modal transportation development will appeal to new residents and business owners.

The Village should prepare and implement a Sustainability Plan framed by overall policies for more sustainable Village operation that will be implemented through specific goals and actions. The Plan should:

- » **Prepare a Sustainability Plan.** To maximize energy efficiency, waste reduction and resource conservation, and long-term fiscal health, the Village should prepare and implement a Sustainability Plan framed by overall policies for more sustainable city operations and implemented through specific goals and actions. Preparation of the plan would involve collaboration among Village departments to identify ways in which day-to-day operations, facilities and equipment can be improved to save money and energy and reduce waste while maintaining and potentially improving operational efficiency and the effectiveness in the services the Village provides to the community.

A Sustainable Committee or similar advisory body should be created that includes Village officials and staff, business leaders and residents.

- » **Incorporating green design in Village facilities.** By incorporating green design methods in the construction of new facilities, such as those promoted by the US Green Building Council's LEED rating system, the Village can reduce emissions from city buildings and reap the benefits of energy and water efficiency. The LEED rating system promotes a variety.
- » **Protect, preserve, and restore natural resources.** The sustainability plan will encourage the integration of natural features such as woodlands, wetlands and topography into site development as aesthetic and functional amenities. The conservation of natural resources and the restoration of the aquatic ecosystem will contribute to the Village's identity.





04. FUTURE LAND USE

An analysis of opportunities is vital to the success of a community's future development and long-range planning goals. Issues may include such factors as a large concentration of undeveloped land, or areas and uses that are becoming obsolete. However, these issues also present opportunities for new development of business or even alternative home styles. This analysis is represented on the Issues and Opportunities Map.

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The location of Paw Paw along a major highway and its proximity and connection to Maple Lake and the Paw Paw River make the Village unique in terms of its existing assets and future opportunities. Map 3 shows community opportunities that would enhance and contribute to the character of the Village while encouraging growth and development.

Downtown Core

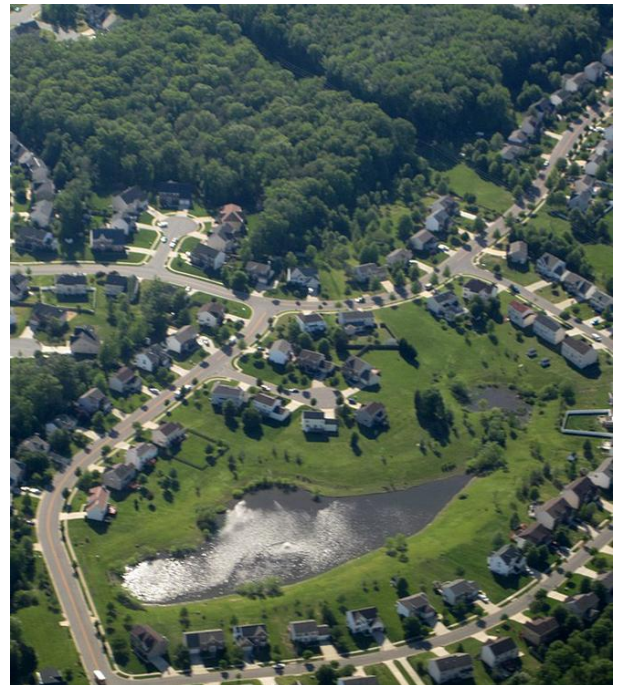
The downtown area is the focal point of the Village. The walkable and pedestrian friendly sidewalks and streetscapes encourage residents and visitors to leisurely stroll, shop, and dine. Continuing streetscape designs through the corridor gateways and providing wayfinding signs will encourage pedestrians to frequent shops and areas of the Village that they might overlook. Increased foot traffic in the downtown will add to the sense of place and community that Paw Paw residents identify as the most vital asset to the Village. Increasing the variety of housing in the downtown, with upper floor apartments / flats, will draw attention from those who would choose to live in a bustling community without the maintenance required from living in a single-family detached structure.

Waterfront and Walkable Residential

There are several areas in the Village where more expensive homes (as compared to existing housing within the Village) could be built. Lakefront homes typically bring a premium and are often sought by those with higher incomes. Current lakefront land values also suggest higher priced construction. The area on the west side of Maple Lake is a prime development area for such higher-end housing.

Currently, this area is developed with single family homes, mostly on large lots. Some of these could potentially be divided to provide high-end single family home sites with lake access and views. This development should, however, follow low impact design standards, be clustered and provide open space. This will maintain and preserve as much as the existing woodlands as possible and provide a natural buffer between developed areas and the lake. This open-space approach will help to preserve water quality by providing a filter between development-related runoff and the lake.

The photo to the right shows an example of a lakefront cluster development. This concept could also be extended to allow mixed density developments, allowing townhomes or smaller, garden-style apartment buildings with lake views.



Clustered Lakefront Development

Example

Gateway & Highway Commercial

Businesses located along the highway need to be tailored to attract those individuals who are traveling from one place to the next. It is necessary to draw those individuals from the interstate by enticing them through the Village gateways. The gateway is meant to be an indicator that they are about to enter a special place. It is an opportunity to continue the streetscape that is attractive in the downtown core and to promote what is special about Paw Paw. Incorporating Village-specific identifiers, such as grapevines or wine glasses, will encourage visitors to frequent one of the wineries for which Paw Paw is regionally known.

Potential Development Sites

The Village Revitalization Area is identified as a potential development site. The former industrial properties are ideal for residential development, as well as outdoor activities that are specific to the Paw Paw River and Maple Lake.

A few existing natural wooded areas have been recognized as potential development areas. The areas south of I-94 are disconnected from the rest of the Village. These larger sites should be reserved for Village anchors that will attract residents and visitors from other communities. Natural areas which have been selected for future development should follow sound planning principles. Several acres of land have been identified as a wetland and have a Medium – High PCA score from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. These future projects should follow sustainable development and LID techniques in order to protect and preserve the natural environment.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The above assets and opportunities inspire particular goals and strategies that can be implemented through the Future Land Use Plan.

A **goal** is a general statement of a desired outcome. To be effective, a goal must be realistic and achievable. The goals take the broad statements of the vision and focus them into specific outcomes, enabling us to paint a picture of the future as the residents of Paw Paw would like to see it.

A **strategy** is a more specific action that leads to the outcomes proposed by the goals. Strategies are the starting point for implementation and provide a basis for the recommendations of the Future Land Use Plan. Each goal is followed by a set of strategies.

A Unique Small Town Atmosphere

Goal 1 – Continue to support and encourage the growth and development of Downtown Paw Paw

Strategies:

- a) Encourage Downtown reinvestment by emphasizing its historic character and providing incentives to rehabilitate historic buildings.
- b) Promote Downtown businesses through local organizations, such as the Downtown Development Authority and the Chamber of Commerce, and marketing initiatives.
- c) Improve the pedestrian atmosphere and safety by implementing additional safety features across Kalamazoo Avenue and Michigan Avenue. Explore opportunities for limiting downtown truck traffic.
- d) Encourage mixed uses, including upper floor dwellings, in and near the Downtown.
- e) Continue to invest in parking improvements to support Downtown businesses and residents. The Village and Downtown Development Authority should work together to evaluate possible improvements to downtown parking.
- f) Provide incentives to bring in new businesses and entertainment options.
- g) Seek opportunities for public gathering and community spaces.
- h) Improve streetscapes with public art, bicycle facilities, and other amenities.
- i) Support growth of commercial businesses in the community.

Goal 2 – Promote safe and efficient transportation for both motorized and non-motorized users within and through the community.

Strategies:

- a) Provide marked pedestrian crossings at key locations (with signalization, if needed).
- b) Improve traffic movements in and near Bronson-Lakeview Hospital and the schools near Hazen Street, particularly during peak traffic hours.
- c) Enhance community gateway entrances to inform the public that they are entering a special place.
- d) Continue to implement "complete streets" (www.completestreets.org) concepts, which plan and allow for motorized and non-motorized traffic on all streets.
- e) Improve the safety of the Kalamazoo Corridor through the use of pedestrian signals, sidewalks, pedestrian amenities and more.
- f) Seek out locations where additional sidewalks should be installed.
- g) Inventory the current parking to identify areas to be improved as well as locations for additional parking.

Goal 3 – Maintain the high-quality and unique character of Paw Paw

Strategies:

- a) Create a marketing plan to advertise Paw Paw's restaurants, wineries and lodging as a unique destination between Chicago and Detroit.
- b) Work with Van Buren County to beautify the area around the Courthouse and County Administration Building. Activate the green space by the County Building with a farmer's market facility that can hold events and double as covered parking.
- c) Continue to promote Paw Paw's heritage through events such as the Wine Festival. These events should be marketed to a larger, regional audience.
- d) Enhance community gateways to promote placemaking.
- e) Facilitate cooperation between agencies like the DDA, the Chamber of Commerce, the School District, and the Township.
- f) Consider the creation of a sustainability committee.

A Beautiful Natural Environment

Goal 4 - Recognize and promote Maple Lake as a community asset by providing recreational opportunities that take advantage of the natural environment.

Strategies:

- a) Create a long-term plan for lake improvements, including funding and capital equipment needs.
- b) Seek opportunities to expand or enhance the vista around the lake. Develop a list of potential properties to implement parks around the lake.
- c) Maintain open space along the lake front.
- d) Preserve and maintain the Maple Lake dams working with EGLE and the DNR.
- e) Seek opportunities to host events on Maple Island.
- f) Plan for non-motorized paths along the Paw Paw River branches and Maple Lake and street corridors that will connect parks, schools and business areas. Coordinate with the Township to seek opportunities to install a non-motorized pathway around Maple Lake.
- g) Plan for ecologically sensitive public access to the Briggs Pond area, such as a boardwalk into the marsh. Work with the School District and other educational institutions and environmental groups to provide education on wetlands and environmental protection.
- h) Coordinate with the Maple Lake Improvement committee and the Maple Lake Association on needed protective measures for the lake and possible youth activities such as learning to swim, kayak, and boater education.

Goal 5 - Protect the water quality in Maple Lake and the Paw Paw River watershed.

Strategies:

- a) Widely distribute the Paw Paw River Watershed Study and implement the recommendations of the study that apply to the Village.
- b) Determine a comprehensive strategy for monitoring water quality and a plan for implementing water quality improvements. Work with the Maple Lake Improvement committee, the Maple Lake Association, the Two Rivers Coalition, and the Van Buren Conservation District.
- c) To prevent nutrient loading from adjacent lawns, enforce current regulations that prohibit phosphorus-based fertilizers and other potential contaminants.
- d) Educate waterfront homeowners about environmentally friendly practices, including shoreline protection. This can also be education of keeping geese off of the shoreline, a benefit of maintaining vegetation at the shoreline.

- e) Provide zoning and financial incentives for waterfront owners to create vegetative buffers, rain gardens, and other low-impact solutions.
- f) Work cooperatively with upstream landowners and communities to protect and enhance water quality and existing wetlands.
- g) Implement low impact development standards in new developments and redevelopments, especially in areas in close proximity to surface water bodies such as wetlands, the branches of the Paw Paw River, Briggs Pond and Maple Lake. Implement the well head protection ordinance.

A Diverse Business Community

Goal 6 –Promote Kalamazoo Avenue and other business corridors.

Strategies:

- a) Identify and use public spaces to establish gateway entrances which draw traffic in and extend streetscape improvements to these gateways.
- b) Work with business owners to cross promote businesses and attractions in the community.
- c) Make the Kalamazoo Avenue corridor more attractive, with streetscape improvements and landscaping. Work with the DDA to provide education about and façade improvement incentives.
- d) Extend streetscape improvements to the east and west commercial entries into the Village on Michigan Avenue/Red Arrow Highway.
- e) Develop a multi-year plan to address utilities in the corridors to beautify the area and maintain the safety of current services.
- f) Work with MDOT and the DDA to establish an access management plan for the road to enhance the safety of the area and provide for community input to the 2030 MDOT lead redevelopment of the road.

Goal 7 – Diversify the economic base of the Village.

Strategies:

- a) Provide incentives to promote the adaptive reuse of old and vacant structures by new businesses.
- b) Build on the base of the niche hospitality market for Paw Paw with incentives.
- c) Promote Paw Paw's location between Chicago and Detroit as a premier location for "new economy" businesses.

Goal 8 – Encourage travelers to explore beyond the Kalamazoo Corridor and the wineries.

Strategies:

- a) Create a unified streetscape that is similar to the Downtown streetscape, with unified street furniture, signs, streetlamps, public art, bicycle facilities, and other amenities to provide a visual and "atmospheric" connection to the Downtown area.
- b) Identify current activities to energize the area like geo-cache projects, mini-murals, or scavenger hunts.

A Commitment to Progress

Goal 9 – Clean up and redevelop the industrial area.

Strategies:

- a) Work with the County wide Brownfield Authority to seek and acquire funds for brownfield redevelopment, including costs of assessment, demolition and new development.
- b) Consider alternate locations for industrial development, such as along the planned truck bypass.

Goal 10 – Provide activities and recreational opportunities for Paw Paw's youth.

Strategies:

- a) Create a multi-jurisdiction "youth council" who will regularly advise the community's legislative bodies on the needs and concerns of area youth.
- b) Develop a list of appropriate youth-oriented activities —pickleball, disc golf, ice skating, playgrounds etc.
- c) Seek funding opportunities such as grants and volunteer donations to implement activities and programming.
- d) Create a Youth Leadership Academy, which trains area youth in local government and issues and encourages further involvement in local issues.
- e) Work with the youth to promote the festivals thru internet options.
- f) Improve and maintain existing facilities.
- g) Conduct a survey of the youth for other options for activities and training opportunities.
- h) Explore opportunities to create partnerships with the Performance Field House.

Goal 11 – Promote residential development and maintain homes and businesses to provide safe neighborhoods and a high quality of life.

Strategies:

- a) Maintain a strong property maintenance program and continue consistent enforcement. Provide incentives to clean up and improve property (such as a subsidized paint program and regular community clean-up days). Utilize MSHDA-CDBG funds to accomplish these strategic goals.
- b) Educate the public about property maintenance.
- c) Maintain values of existing single-family and multiple-family homes and neighborhoods
- d) Demolish abandoned, dilapidated, and unsafe homes.

Goal 12 – Expand the Village's housing stock to accommodate and attract residents during all stages of life.

Strategies:

- a) Identify locations for constructing higher-priced market rate homes, condominiums, townhouses, etc. to make the community attractive to entrepreneurs and upper management employees as well as seniors and other retirees.
- b) Promote housing styles serving residents throughout the life cycle, including independent living units, assisted living and continuing care facilities, and identify appropriate locations. Consider the walkability of the area for aging residents.
- c) Encourage development of Missing Middle housing types to appeal to future market potential.
- d) Analyze present and future housing needs based on Census data and best-available demographic analyses and projections.
- e) Investigate opportunities for where public utilities can be reasonably extended to plan for traditional subdivision densities and attached housing units.
- f) Encourage the creative development of new residential areas when and where appropriate through the use of planned unit developments (PUD's).
- g) Create a high-quality, higher density residential development.

Map 4: Future Land Use

FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Map 5 shows how land uses in Paw Paw (identified in the map legend) should develop and highlights specific elements and subareas that are described later in this chapter.

LDR, Low Density Residential

This designation consists of single-family dwellings with a base density of three dwelling units per acre or less and generally results in lots that are 10,000 square feet or greater. Properties within this designation are north of Drew Street in the northern half of the Village and the Lake Boulevard area in the southern half. Also included is the neighborhood of older homes on the east side of Maple Lake.

The public frequently commented that the Village needed new residential development, particularly affordable housing. In addition, the large, vacant or mostly vacant areas along South LaGrave Street, south of the East Branch of the Paw Paw River, are also appropriate locations for LDR development. The existing wooded areas in this neighborhood would be attractive for large lot, custom homes.

MDR, Medium Density Residential

MDR consists of single- and two-family dwellings on smaller lots, mostly located in older neighborhoods. It generally reflects existing land use patterns with a base density of 3.5 to 6 dwelling units per acre and lot sizes between 6,000 and 8,700 square feet.

The majority of the Village's current residentially developed area is designated MDR and encompasses the neighborhoods surrounding the Village Center. These areas were mostly developed in the early part of the 20th century. The neighborhoods on the west side of Maple Lake, although newer, were also developed at MDR densities. This designation may also be appropriate for independent living units for senior citizens who remain active but no longer desire the maintenance responsibilities of single-family detached dwellings.

HDR, High Density Residential

The High-Density Residential designation consists of multiple family dwellings (three or more units per building). Generally, development within this designation will be apartment complexes, condominium apartments, townhouse complexes and senior housing (independent/ assisted living and continual care), ranging in density from seven to twelve dwelling units per acre. The HDR designation reflects both existing multiple family development and land planned for additional high density residential projects.

MHC, Manufactured Housing Community

MHC includes two existing manufactured housing communities in the southern part of the Village. One manufactured (mobile) housing community, accessed from South LaGrave Street, has land on which to expand; whereas the modular home development on Becky Boulevard is accessed from CR 665 and has numerous building sites available. It is expected that these developments will meet the demand for manufactured housing during the life of this Plan.

MXD, Mixed Density

Areas close to Downtown are designated MXD, Mixed Density. This designation recognizes that there are older, large homes near the Downtown that have been divided into two or more apartments, while others remain as single family. This designation recognizes the usefulness of duplex and multiple family dwellings near employment areas such as the Downtown but also encourages the preservation of single-family homes near the center of the Village.

Further division of existing homes into apartments should be carefully reviewed by the Planning Commission and Village Council as special land uses. When a division is permitted, it should be conditioned upon maintaining the single-family character of the building and locating parking in the side or rear. Special criteria and regulations should be developed to address these conditions.

DC, Downtown Core

This designation encompasses Downtown Paw Paw. Because Downtown is different from the other commercial areas in the Village, it requires special consideration. This area includes the traditional Michigan Avenue downtown as well as the surrounding business areas.

HC, Highway Commercial

At the south entrance to the Village, at Kalamazoo Street and Ampey Avenue, there is a collection of businesses that are clearly oriented towards serving I-94 travelers. Uses include restaurants, motels, gas stations and convenience stores. This designation is extended to south of I-94, to include the Walmart Supercenter.

Development south of I-94 should be sensitive to the environmental natural resources in the area, specifically, natural vegetation and wildlife.

GC, Gateway Commercial

GC consists of three transitional commercial areas: Kalamazoo Street north of Commercial Street, and the east / west entrances to the Village along Red Arrow Highway/Michigan Avenue. This designation should be characterized by restaurants, businesses that support tourism, and specialty shops that are unique to Paw Paw.

This district should present an attractive entrance to the Village and include streetscape improvements such as lighting and "welcome" signs announcing that motorists have entered a new and special place. To provide continuity and connections between the corridors and the Village center these elements should be compatible to those employed in the Downtown.

These areas are considered a "gateway" between the highway commercial and the downtown district. Site design and building standards should be considered to ensure that future developments reflect the transition towards the downtown district.

RO, Research / Office

Areas designated RO are appropriate for offices, research facilities and light commercial uses. Retail buildings should be limited to no more than 10,000 square feet of gross floor area. Other facilities, such as corporate offices or research laboratories, can be larger, but should be designed to a higher quality standard.

This designation is shown along I-94, on both the north and south sides of the free-way, and M-40 across from the Walmart Supercenter. The areas fronting the freeway are especially appropriate, since office and research facilities are attracted towards freeway frontage.

Site and building design is very important and should project an upscale image. For this reason, plain metal buildings should be prohibited, and a new zoning district or overlay should be created that addresses site design and architectural and landscaping requirements.

The RO designation often provides a transition between intensive, non-residential uses and less intensive uses, such as residential. Therefore, zoning of these areas should be sensitive to transitional boundaries and should include requirements for buffers and landscaping.

P, Public

This designation includes institutional uses such as hospitals/clinics, public schools, and government buildings. Public parks are also included. Because of their nature they are not expected to change over time. Their public use should be recognized, and buffers or other appropriate transitions should be implemented on private property as those sites develop.

The current Bronson/Lakeview Hospital campus on Hazen Street is also within this designation. Although Bronson owns land south of I-94 and has already begun developing it, Bronson has indicated to the Village that they intend to expand the facility on Hazen Street. However, in the event that Bronson changes its plans, possible scenarios for redeveloping the current hospital site will be discussed in greater detail later in this report.

The area along Maple Lake at the northeast corner of Michigan Avenue and Hazen Street should become open space as existing properties are sold or become inactive.

LI, Light Industrial

The existing industrial area north of I-94 is proposed to remain as light industrial. This designation encourages small, non-polluting industries. However, the Plan proposes a limit of all industrial uses to be centralized in this area away from the Kalamazoo Street corridor.

MU, Mixed Use Overlay

In general, in order to preserve Village character, mixed-use developments should be clustered in hamlet areas such as the Mixed Density district and the area within the Mixed Use Overlay. Typical land uses in these areas include retail stores, personal services, offices, medical clinics, and restaurants. Residential uses may be incorporated into mixed use developments, to create a walkable area. Schools, civic buildings, parks, and churches should also be encouraged.

The Mixed Use Overlay district includes the area from Commercial St to the public land to the west, and the railroad north to Lily St. The Village Revitalization Subarea Plan sets forth a vision of 'unique mixed-use

commercial and residential development.' Re-development of this area will be used to connect the cultural, recreational and natural resources within the area and throughout the Village.

This area includes several brownfield sites including properties known as the former Duo-Tang, Paw Paw Plating, and Production Rubber Products. Other vacant properties in the area include the former Paw Paw Press, an old basket factory, and a former bait and tackle company.

Zoning Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) requires the Master Plan to include a Zoning Plan, which "include(s) an explanation of how the land use categories on the land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map." Table 10 summarizes the land use designations and identifies related zoning districts as outlined in the Paw Paw Zoning Ordinance, as well as providing recommendations to implement the Master Plan through the regulations of the Zoning Ordinance.

Table 19: Zoning Plan

Future Land Use Plan Designation	Corresponding Zoning Districts
LDR Low Density Residential	R-1 Single Family Residence District, with a minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet. The intent of the R-1 District is to "preserve those areas which have developed strictly as single family detached units on separate lots." To implement the Plan recommendations to provide for more high-end housing, the Village may wish to create a new district with a larger minimum lot area (at least 20,000 square feet, perhaps as large as 1 acre).
MDR Medium Density Residential	R-2, Single Family Residential, with a minimum lot area of 8,700 square feet. The character of this district is "mainly urban, single-family home of earlier construction on single lots." This district also permits two-family dwellings. This district encompasses most of the Village.
HDR High Density Residential	RM Multiple Family Residential. This district is intended to allow for multiple family development at a density of 8 to 14 dwelling units per acre, slightly higher than the 7-12 du/a recommended for the HDR land use designation. The Village should consider limiting the number of dwelling units in a building to ensure that new developments are at a scale that is appropriate to the small-town character of the Village.
MHC Manufactured Home Community	RMH Residential Mobile Home District. The requirements of this district, combined with the rules of the Michigan Manufactured Housing Commission, are adequate to allow for reasonable expansion of the two existing communities without adverse impacts on neighboring properties.
P Public	There is no corresponding district to this designation. However, parks, schools and government buildings are either permitted or special land uses in all of the single-family residential districts.
DC Downtown Core	CBD Central Business District. This district allows for uses that are consistent with the recommendations of the Downtown Core and the Subarea Plan. Mixed use structures are allowed by right.
GC Gateway Commercial	B-2 General Business District. This district encompasses most of the business areas in the Village outside of downtown. The ordinance also contains a B-1 Local Business District, but it appears that only one property in the Village is within this district. The B-1 District is the only one that allows adult businesses (as a special land use). Typically,

Future Land Use Plan Designation	Corresponding Zoning Districts
	these uses are restricted to industrial areas that are buffered from residential neighborhoods. The Village should consider amending the ordinance to place adult uses in the General Industrial district.
HC Highway Commercial	Also, B-2, General Business District. The uses in this designation are located near the main gateways of the Village. In order to implement the plan, the Village should consider creating a separate zoning district or an overlay district for this area, to ensure that the gateway to the Village reflects its unique character.
RO Research / Office	This designation encompasses several zoning districts, including B-2 General Commercial, R-O Restricted Office, and I-1, Light Industrial. Since properties within this designation could be in any one of these zoning districts, the Village may wish to consider an overlay district for certain areas, to ensure that the recommendations of the Plan are implemented.
LI Light Industrial	I-1 Light Industrial and I-2 General Industrial. There are no truly “heavy” industrial uses in the Village, so there may be no need for two classifications. Consolidating all industrial areas into a single district, with some desirable, but generally considered “heavy” uses listed as special land uses, would be more efficient and would better implement the recommendations of this Plan.
MXD Mixed Density	There is no corresponding district. The MXD area mostly encompasses areas in the R-2 Single Family district, but some properties are in other districts. The implementation of this designation is best accomplished with an overlay district that would set specific mixed density requirements while maintaining the general requirements of the underlying district.
Districts Not Designated	There is no land use designation corresponding to the P Parking District. The purpose of the P District is to provide for parking in adjacent commercial or industrial districts while maintaining a buffer between those districts and nearby residential districts. However, this can be achieved through other means. Since there are few properties within the P District, the Village should consider whether this district is truly necessary.

Where right-of-way permits, implementing a 10-foot landscape separation in residential areas is desired.

Adopt design requirements in the zoning ordinance for new developments where appropriate, including traditional downtown, accessory dwelling unit, missing middle housing, commercial development and office/employment areas.



05.

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CONTEXT

The Village of Paw Paw is located in east-central Van Buren County at the intersection of Interstate 94 and M-40, approximately 20 miles west of downtown Kalamazoo. The Village is situated between Antwerp Township to the east and Paw Paw Township to the west. Located within Southwest Michigan's wine and fruit producing region, Paw Paw has established itself as a destination for wine tasting and outdoor recreation, with Maple Lake providing waterfront opportunities for Village residents and visitors. With easy access to I-94 and situated approximately 2 hours from both Chicago and Detroit, the Village has traditionally been an attractive setting for industries that heavily depend on transportation.

Paw Paw employs workers in local industry, but many also commute to Kalamazoo and surrounding areas. Retail and service businesses have expanded in the community to support both visitors and Village residents. Since a great deal of the developable land has already been built upon and much of the remaining vacant land is affected by limitations imposed by wetlands, drainage patterns and topography, redevelopment will play an important role in the community's future.

The Village of Paw Paw is a full-service municipality, providing wastewater, water, and electrical utilities. The Village provides both water and sewer to nearly all properties located in the Village as well as sewer to a few properties in Paw Paw Township. In addition, the Village has its own streets and parks departments, which maintain over 100 acres of public lands and more than 30 miles of major and local streets. Besides its own police department, Paw Paw is also home to the Van Buren County Sheriff's Department and a State Police command post. The Village is a member of a five-unit fire department with four surrounding townships.

The Village government has kept up to date with technology and is meeting new economy needs by providing fiber optic broadband service to each property. As the county seat, much of the land downtown is dedicated to the county courthouse, county administration and government services. At the time of this

Plan, the Village appoints a Planning Commission, a Parks and Recreation Committee, a Historical Commission, a Downtown Development Authority, a Revolving Loan Committee, and a Cable TV Board.

TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS

The Village is well served by Interstate 94, linking the community to Kalamazoo, Benton Harbor and eventually Chicago. The major north-south route (M-40/Kalamazoo Street) connects to Allegan and Holland and through Lawton to Indiana. The Village is bisected by Michigan Avenue, part of the Red Arrow Highway, which was once the main east-west route in this portion of Southwest Michigan.

Paw Paw was historically served by the West Michigan Railroad, a short line traveling west to Hartford, where freight cars are transferred to the CSX main line. Since the closing of the Duo Tang plant, however, there has been no freight service to Paw Paw. Passenger rail is available nearby in Kalamazoo via the Blue Water and Wolverine Amtrak lines, west to Chicago or east to Detroit/Pontiac and Port Huron. The nearest passenger airports are in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids.

One way to evaluate the street system is to determine how well each street serves its purpose. Streets are classified in two ways: [1] a national ranking system called "Functional Classification" and [2] Act 51 of 1951 by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

Functional Classification

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed the National Functional Classification (NFC) to classify all highways, streets, and roads per their function. This system has been in place since the 1960s and is recognized as the official road classification system by the FHWA. The following paragraphs list each category in the NFC.

- » **Principal Arterials:** Principal arterials are the prominent road type in NFC hierarchy and are generally known as highways and freeways. They provide high speed uninterrupted travel with limited access or restricted access to regionally important urban areas and amenities such as airports.
- » **Minor Arterials:** Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials but they generally carry less traffic and connect to smaller urban centers.
- » **Major Collectors:** Major collector roads are important travel corridors and provide service to arterial roads and often connect major population and employment centers.
- » **Minor Collectors:** Minor collectors often collect traffic from local roads and private property and provide connections to more developed areas.
- » **Local Roads:** Local roads primarily provide access to property and include residential streets.

Map 6 shows the functional classifications of Village streets. Also shown are available traffic counts at key locations.

Map 5: Road Network

COMPLETE STREETS AND THE WALKABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

This chapter considers the complete networks of roadways, pedestrian ways, and bicycle ways which encompass all the modes of transportation used in Paw Paw. Examination of traffic volumes, access points, pedestrian circulation, and conditions of the street network is an integral part of the Master Plan. The importance of making Paw Paw safer to walk and bike was a highlighted priority in the public engagement process.

The Paw Paw Walkable Community Initiative is the local complete streets policy and establishes that Paw Paw will have a safe and convenient network of connected streets, sidewalks, and pathways to allow safe passage for vehicles, residents, and visitors of all ages and abilities. This policy requires Paw Paw Streets to be designed to be safe and accessible for walking, biking, and driving.



Protecting Vulnerable Users

Mode Hierarchy is a process of establishing a priority for each mode of transportation within the right-of-way. This planning tool can be used to evaluate decisions that affect how each mode is designed within the right-of-way.

The Village adopts a Mode Hierarchy policy for the downtown area of Pedestrian > Bicycle > Vehicle > Bus / Truck or Pedestrian > Vehicle > Bicycle > Bus / Truck to more closely align with community values but establish the downtown as a walking district.

MODE HIERARCHY

PEDESTRIAN > BICYCLE > AUTOMOBILE > TRANSIT
Protect Vulnerable Users. Design Complete Networks.



PEDESTRIAN > AUTOMOBILE > BICYCLE > TRANSIT



FUTURE TRANSPORTATION

The Future Transportation Map sets forth recommendations for the development of public right-of-way in a manner consistent with and supportive of recommendations for Future Land Use. The Future Transportation Map maintains the existing, functional classification and designations, as well as signal locations. The recommendations focus on intersection improvements, gateway creation, and improvements for more complete streets with pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The network is designed to link Paw Paw's most important community facilities, like Downtown and Maple Lake, and establish easy to navigate connections for people to walk and bike in their neighborhoods and around the Village.

Sidewalk Network

Paw Paw embraces walkability as a primary goal for the transportation system. The Village's sidewalk system is not comprehensive. There are portions of the Village that lack links in the residential sidewalk network and additional sidewalks are needed to complete the pedestrian pathway system.

This plan recommends a full build out of the sidewalk network in all areas of the Village. Residential sidewalks should be a minimum of 5 feet wide and have a minimum of 5 feet of landscape separation from the roadway. Where right-of-way permits a 10-foot landscape separation in residential areas is desired.

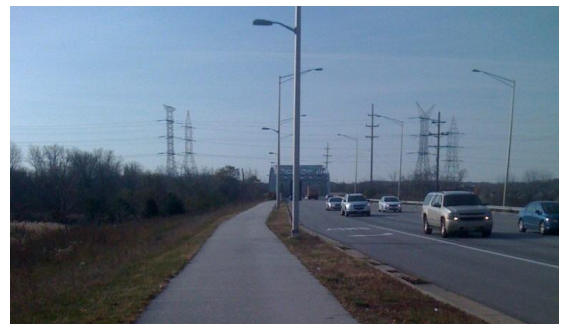
Bicycle Network

Improvements to the bicycle network in Inkster are intended to support residents' health and access to important local destinations. With bicycle network improvements, more Paw Paw residents will be able to make safe, short trips, to parks, schools, and even downtown entertainment and shopping, all without getting in the car. Bicycle network improvements are recommended based on the need for separation from vehicle traffic, existing signal locations to cross major roadways, and alignment with desirable community destinations, like schools, parks, public facilities, and commercial areas.

Many of Paw Paw's neighborhood streets are comfortable to bike on now and could be improved with simple signs. Some corridors can serve as more prominent system links with on-street pavement markings like conventional bike lanes and marked shared lanes. Most people don't feel comfortable biking with heavy traffic; on these corridors, complete separation is desirable. This plan recommends designing a bike network that connects residents to downtown and Maple Lake. A system of shared use paths, on street bike lanes, marked shared lanes and routes will loop residents around Maple Lake and help make downtown Paw Paw a safer and more habitable public space. The following types of bike facilities are recommended:

Shared Use Paths.

Shared use paths are paved concrete or asphalt paths wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists. They are typically a minimum of 10 feet wide with 2 feet of clearance on either side of the path. Shared use paths offer cyclists a safe place to bike off-street when there is no space for a bike lane, or it is unsafe to bike on the street.



Conventional Bike Lanes.

Bike lanes create a dedicated space for cyclists on a roadway. They are appropriate on streets with moderate to heavy traffic. Bike lanes are indicated by on-street markings, which can be supplemented with signage. Bike lanes reinforce proper roadway etiquette, raise the visibility of bicyclists, and help both bicyclists and drivers behave predictably when sharing road space. For safe cycling, bike lanes should be 4 feet to 6 feet wide.



Marked Shared Lanes or Sharrow.

Marked shared lanes use a double chevron and bicycle marking, or "sharrow," in a lane intended for the joint use of motorized and bicycle traffic. Chevron symbols direct bicyclists to ride in the safest location within the lane, outside of the door zone of parked cars and areas where debris is likely to collect. Generally, marked shared lanes are a low-cost treatment suitable for lightly travelled collectors and arterial roads.



Signed Bike Routes.

Bike route signs raise all users' awareness and acceptance of cycling. They make all residents aware of the most bike-friendly routes in their communities. Bike route signs are appropriate for any roadway that provides an essential link in a bicycle system, and can offer important, affordable motorist education and traffic calming. "Bike Route" signs should be implemented with a system of wayfinding signs that provide directions to specific destinations. These types of bikeway signs provide useful information and directions for cyclists, drivers and pedestrians alike.



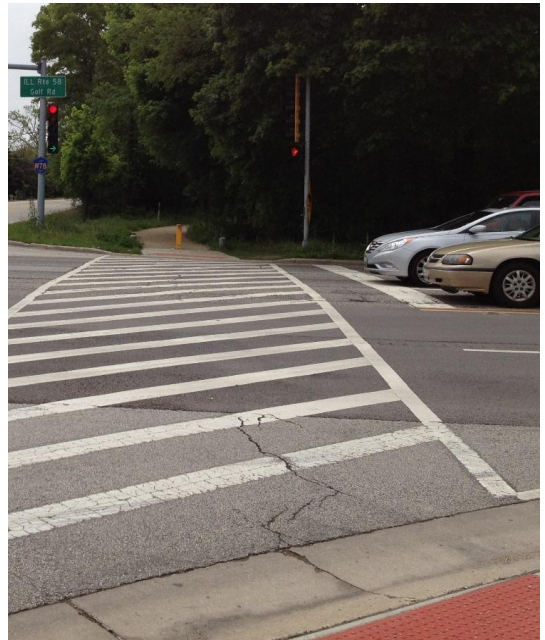
Intersection Treatments and Traffic Calming

In addition to modifications to the roadway configuration and multimodal network alignment, intersection modifications can improve the overall safety, walkability, and identity of Inkster. Intersection treatments like curb extensions, textures, pavement markings, crosswalks, eliminating free-flow right turn lanes, tightening corner curb radii, and installing pedestrian refuge islands can improve traffic management and safety at intersections. The following treatments are recommended.

Pedestrian Crossing Recommendations

Crosswalks are recommended minimally at all signalized crossings and on the crossing leg parallel to the arterial network. Crosswalks are encouraged for pedestrian safety and there are likely places where further study is needed to determine if mid-block crossings are warranted. Painted crosswalks alert drivers of where to expect people to cross. Crosswalks are typically two white lines across the street, but other designs draw more attention to the crossing and tend not to wear away as quickly. Special paving or colored markings may also be used. Additionally, countdown pedestrian signals are recommended at all signalized crossings. Countdown signals show how much time remains before the traffic signal changes and are designed to reduce the number of pedestrians who start crossing when there is not enough time to complete their crossing safely. Pedestrian crossing signs may also be considered.

In downtown Paw Paw, midblock crossings are recommended to be implemented with Streetscape Enhancements to increase connectivity between the north and south sides of Michigan Avenue.



Downtown Gateway and Village Gateway Intersections

Gateway features are encouraged at Village entrances; however, gateway features should be incorporated at the entrances into the downtown as well. Gateways can be bold statements, such as an improved signed entryway at the I-94 overpass, or can be more simply marked by signs, artwork, and landscaping. Gateway areas are good places to site wayfinding signs and other identity features, such as banners and public art installations. Public art installations along the public right-of-way, such as sculptures and murals, can greatly accentuate the transportation network and improve the value of a place.

Multimodal Crossings

Intersections where the marked bicycle network meets the on-street bicycle network, or crosses Michigan Ave and Kalamazoo Street, should include bicycle-pedestrian crossing signs and wayfinding signs. Additionally, crosswalks for shared use paths should be as wide as the shared use path and marked with trail crossing signs. Bicycle pavement markings should be installed at the intersection and approaches.

06. IMPLEMENTATION

A master plan is only useful as long as it is implemented and consulted when making land use decisions. This chapter outlines actions for implementing the Master Plan.

KEEPING THE PLAN UP-TO-DATE

Change is constant and usually unpredictable, and there may be circumstances that warrant changes to the zoning boundaries that are not consistent with the Master Plan. If and when this occurs, the Master Plan should be updated to conform to the changed circumstances. Because of the time and process required for amending the Plan, such changes should be considered carefully.

The following table contains a series of evaluation factors that may be used to determine if a pro-posed development warrants a change to the land use designation on the Future Land Use Plan map.

Future Land Use Evaluation Factors	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Does the proposed new classification meet the qualifications noted in the appropriate section of the Master Plan?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Are the zoning districts and their uses that may apply to the new classification compatible with and appropriate in the vicinity of the property under consideration?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Have any conditions changed in the area since the Master Plan was adopted that justify this change?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Will there be any community impact that should be considered, such as increased traffic, or others that might create a need for additional services or improvements?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Are there any environmental considerations that may be contrary to the intent of the existing or proposed classification of that land use?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Was the property improperly classified when the plan was adopted or amended? Are the qualities of the property (or area) different than those that are described in the plan?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Will there be any adverse effects on adjacent properties as a result of the proposed land use change?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	What impacts will result on the public health, safety, and welfare?

Conclusion

Although this plan is a comprehensive guide for land use planning over the next 20 years, there is no way to predict what changes may occur that are not contemplated. Therefore, decisions related to development should be considered carefully in light of the recommendations of the Master Plan.

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Act 110 of the Michigan Public Acts of 2006) requires the Village's Zoning Ordinance to be "based on a plan to promote the public health, safety and welfare, to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability, to limit the improper use of land, to conserve natural resources and energy, to meet the needs of the state's residents for food, fiber and other natural resources, places of residence...and other uses of land." Since the zoning map is a part of the Zoning Ordinance, changes to zoning boundaries should be in conformance with the Master Plan. If future development decisions take these factors into account, and if the Plan is reviewed on a regular basis and updated, when necessary, then Paw Paw can be assured that development will reflect the desires of its citizens, reflected through the adopted Master Plan.

Project Priorities

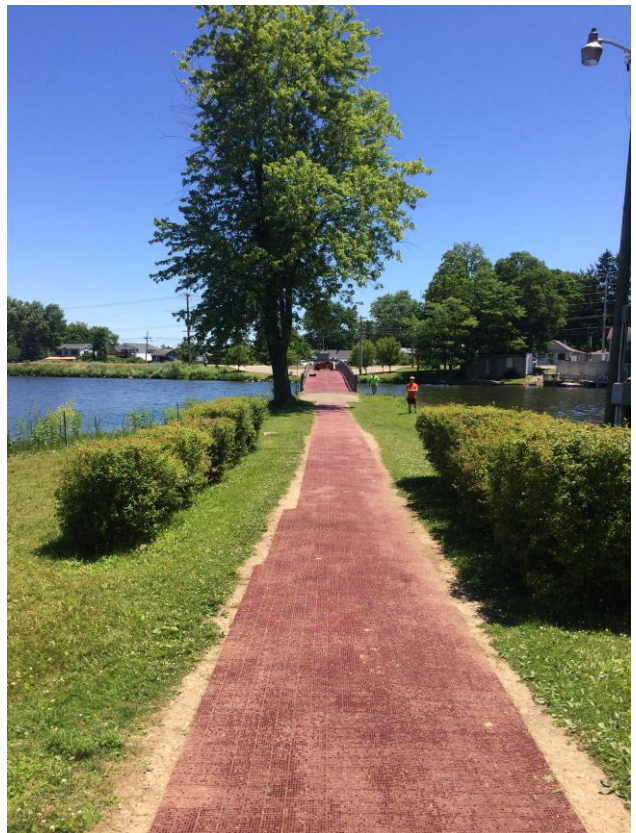
The actions are listed with a "priority number" as follows:

Priority 1 projects are those that should be given immediate and concentrated effort. These are the first projects that should be commenced after this Master Plan has been adopted. Any preliminary steps that must be taken to implement the action (such as seeking funding, changes in local ordinances, etc.) should be commenced immediately. Those Priority 1 projects that have a longer time horizon should be revisited on an as-needed basis and should be incorporated into other applicable long-term planning programs, such as a capital improvements plan.

Priority 2 projects are those that are necessary to implement the plan, but either depend upon commencement or completion of Priority 1 projects, or do not have the same immediacy of Priority 1 projects. Once commenced, however, these projects should be considered important and should be pursued until completion.

Priority 3 projects are those that implement elements of this plan but are not urgent and can be delayed for a longer period of time. These projects are more susceptible to budgetary constraints.

Some projects within the matrix do not have a specified timing period because they are based on less predictable factors such as land availability, etc. The timing for these projects is explained within the matrix.



IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

RESPONSIBILITY	
S	Staff
PC	Planning Commission
VC	Village Council
SAA	Area Senior Advocacy Agencies
BH	Bronson Hospital
COC	Chamber of Commerce
PPS	Paw Paw Schools
YO	Area Youth Organizations
SSA	Area Senior Services Agencies
BO	Business Owners
YC	Youth Cabinet
REC	Recreation Committee
MLA	Maple Lake Association
MDOT	Michigan Department of Transportation
VB	Van Buren County
CVB	Convention Visitors Bureau
PS	Public Safety & Public Services
LT	Lawrence Township
SWMI	SW Michigan Planning Commission,
CTY	County and state agencies
CD	Conservation District
DC	Drain Commission
FMB	Farmers Market Board
EGLE	Environmental Great Lakes and Energy
2 RC	2 Rivers Coalition

Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
Review the Zoning Ordinance to determine if any existing regulations inhibit implementation of this plan and make changes as necessary.	S / PC / VC	Within 1 year	1
Incorporate Zoning Plan recommendations into the Zoning Ordinance.	S / PC / VC	1 year	1
Develop a six-year Capital Improvements Plan to prioritize projects and Village funding.	S / PC / VC	Within 1 year and annually	1
Work with Bronson-Lakeview Hospital and the Paw Paw School District to provide Transportation Demand Management and stagger shifts to spread out traffic over a longer period of time.	S / VC COC / PPS / BH	Within 1 year	1
Work with the Paw Paw School District and area youth organizations to create a "youth cabinet," who will advise the Village on policies affecting area youth.	S / VC / PPS / YO	Within 1 year	1
Implement the recommendations of the Paw Paw River Watershed Study and implement the Waterfront Overlay District.	S / PC / VC SWMI / CTY	1 – 5 years	1
Ensure new development is public transit friendly. Work with Van Buren Public Transit to install signs and amenities for stopping points.	S / VC / PC <i>via Site Plan standards and review</i>	1 – 2 years	1
Complete and implement Sustainability Plan.	S / VC	1 – 2 years	1
Implement the recommendations of this Plan to promote sustainable development practices, green infrastructure, and low impact development techniques to protect and preserve Village natural features.	S / VC / DDA	1 – 2 years	1
Review and initiate amendments to the Zoning Map in order to implement this plan.	S / PC / VC	As needed	2
Review and revise the Master Plan in response to changing needs and priorities.	S / PC / VC	Annually and as needed	2
Create, fund and implement a streetscape program for the Village.	S / VC	1 – 3 years	2
Continue to implement nonmotorized recommendations. Create a downtown design plan for Michigan Avenue and Kalamazoo.	S / PC / VC	1 – 5 years	2
Promote opportunities for "lifecycle" housing, including independent living units, assisted living and continual care.	S / PC / VC /SAA	1 – 5 years	2
Educate property owners about property maintenance.	S / VC	Within 1 year	3
Work with the Chamber and the Downtown Development Authority Implement a business attraction and retention program; align with "Uncork Paw Paw" efforts.	S / DDA, VC COC	1 – 2 years	3
Work to expand senior services to the Paw Paw area.	S / VC / SSA	1 – 3 years	3
Work with the School District and other educational institutions and environmental groups to provide education on wetlands and environmental protection.	S / VC /PPS	1 – 3 years	3

Land Acquisition and Development

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
Promote green building practices in new construction or redevelopment.	S / VC	1 – 3 years	1
Provide economic incentives to bring in new businesses and entertainment options as well as revitalize and reuse existing vacant buildings.	S / VC	Ongoing	1
Promote Downtown businesses through local organizations, such as the Downtown Development Authority and the Chamber of Commerce, and marketing initiatives.	S / PC / DDA / CVB	Ongoing	1
Work with business owners to create a marketing plan that promotes local business and Paw Paw as a destination.	S / COC / BO	Ongoing	1
Identify, acquire, and develop sites for modern recreational uses.	S / VC / PPS / YO / YC	1 – 3 years and when land is available	2
Emphasize the historic character of the Downtown through events and festivals.	S / REC / DDA, COC / VB	1-3 years	2
Seek potential sites for a weekend Farmer’s market that can double as public gathering and community spaces, and parking.	S / VC / FMB	1 year	1
Seek and acquire funds for brownfield redevelopment, including costs of assessment, demolition and new development.	S / VC / VB	1 – 2 years	2
Acquire properties on the north and west side of the Maple Lake Bridge to create a new open space corridor.	VC / PC	When available	3
Acquire land along Maple Lake for public access, if land currently occupied by Bronson-Lakeview Hospital becomes available.	S / PC / REC VC	If land becomes available	3
Consider new locations for industrial development.	S / VC / PC	1 – 2 years	2

Environment and Sustainability

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
Develop a list of potential properties to implement parks around the lakes and ponds.	S / PC REC	Ongoing	2
Create a maintenance plan to preserve and maintain the Maple Lake dams.	S / VC / EGLE	Ongoing	1
Coordinate with the Township to seek opportunities to install a non-motorized pathway around Maple Lake and a boardwalk around Briggs Pond.	S / PC / REC / LT	Ongoing	1
Determine a comprehensive strategy for monitoring water quality and a plan for implementing water quality improvements.	S / REC / MLA	1 – 3 years	2
To prevent nutrient loading from adjacent lawns, enforce current regulations that prohibit phosphorus-based fertilizers and other potential contaminants.	S / PC/ REC / CD	Ongoing	2
Provide zoning and financial incentives for waterfront owners to create vegetative buffers, rain gardens, and other low-impact solutions.	S / PC/ REC / VC / 2 RC	Ongoing	2
Implement low impact development standards in new developments and redevelopments.	S / VC / PC	1 – 2 years	2
Educate waterfront homeowners about environmentally friendly practices, including shoreline protection.	S / PC / REC / MLA	Ongoing	3
Work cooperatively with upstream landowners and communities to protect and enhance water quality and existing wetlands.	S / REC / CD / DC	Ongoing	3

Transportation Corridors			
Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
Seek funding opportunities to develop and implement a downtown design strategy.	S / PC / VC	1 – 2 years	1
Inventory the current pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to develop safety and connectivity improvements.	S / PC / VC / REC	Ongoing	1
Design a bike network that connects residents to the Downtown and Maple Lake.	S/PC / REC	1 – 3 years	3
Implement additional safety features on Michigan Avenue and Kalamazoo Street in the village area to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety using pedestrian signals, sidewalks, pedestrian amenities and more.	MDOT / S VC / PS	1 – 3 years	1
Work with the Public Services Department to improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodation and crossing opportunities in the Village.	S / VC	3 – 5 years	2
Develop and implement a streetscape improvement plan for Downtown and Kalamazoo Street.	S / VC	4 – 6 years	2
Improve pedestrian safety downtown through consolidating drives and street walls on Michigan Avenue.	S / VC	1 – 5 years	2
Continue to invest in parking improvements and additions to support Downtown businesses and residents.	S / VC DDA / CVB	1 – 3 years	1
Improve streetscapes with public art, bicycle facilities, and other amenities.	S / VC REC / PPS	1 – 3 years	2
Extend utilities across I-94 to better connect neighborhoods with business areas.	S / VC	3 – 5 years	2
Improve traffic movements in and near Bronson-Lakeview Hospital and the schools near Hazen Street, particularly during peak traffic hours.	S / VC PS	3 – 5 years	2
Seek out locations where additional sidewalks should be installed.	S / PC VC / PS	Ongoing	2
Acquire right-of-way and funding to create the Kalamazoo/LaGrave Street Connector.	S / VC	3 – 5 years	3
Implement the trail connections recommendations of this Plan and a future Pathways Plan.	S / PC / VC	4 – 10 years	3
Extend streetscape improvements to the east and west commercial entries into the Village on Michigan Avenue/Red Arrow Highway.	MDOT / S VC	1 – 3 years	3
Seek opportunities to build a bridge across the river on Ampey Road.	S / VC	5-10 years	2
Enhance community gateways to promote placemaking.	S / VC DDA / PS	Ongoing	3

Transportation Corridors

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
Continue to implement “complete streets” (www.completestreets.org) concepts, which plan and allow for motorized and non-motorized traffic on all streets.	S / VC / PC	Ongoing	2

Housing

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
Promote housing styles serving residents throughout the life cycle, including independent living units, assisted living and continuing care facilities, and identify appropriate locations.	S / VC / PC	1 – 3 years	1
Encourage development of Missing Middle housing types, including ADUs, to appeal to future market potential.	S / VC / PC	1 – 3 years	1
Encourage mixed uses, including upper floor dwellings, in and near the Downtown.	S / VC / PC	Ongoing	2
Adopt a strong residential property maintenance program and ensure consistent enforcement.	S / VC / PC	Ongoing	2
Provide incentives to clean up and improve property (such as a subsidized paint program and regular community clean-up days).	S / VC / PC	Ongoing	2
Demolish abandoned, dilapidated, and unsafe homes.	S / VC	Ongoing	2
Investigate locations where public utilities can be extended to plan for traditional subdivisions.	S / VC / PS	1 – 2 years	2
Encourage the creative development of new residential areas when and where appropriate through the use of zoning districts or planned unit developments (PUD’s).	S / VC / PC	1 – 3	2
Identify locations for constructing higher-priced market rate homes, condominiums, townhouses, etc. to make the community attractive to entrepreneurs and upper management employees as well as seniors and other retirees.	S / VC / PC	1 – 2 years	1

Programming and Events

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Priority
Seek funding opportunities such as grants and volunteer donations to implement activities and programming.	S / PC / REC	Ongoing	1
Improve and maintain existing public facilities.	S / PC / REC	Ongoing	1
Develop a list of appropriate youth-oriented activities – pickleball, disc golf, ice skating, etc.	S / REC	1 year	2

APPENDIX

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Regional Context

Paw Paw is located in the southwest of Lower Michigan, along the Interstate 94 corridor between Benton Harbor and Kalamazoo. Paw Paw is a small but relatively stable market. I-94 along a major transportation corridor linking Chicago and southwest Michigan to Kalamazoo and areas east to Detroit. The metropolitan areas of Grand Rapids, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo and South Bend are all located within a 50-mile radius.

Within the Village itself, the 2010 Census reported 3,534 persons in 1,499 households. American Community Survey 2014 estimates 3,494 persons in 1,281 households. There are a significant number of households with a short drive of Paw Paw. Current year estimates suggest that over 123,000 households live within a 30-minute drive of the Village. Approximately 35,000 vehicles per day travel on I-94. Paw Paw's adjacency to the Interstate makes it accessible from many major population centers in Michigan and northern Indiana.



Regional Economic Influences

In 2009 and 2010, the economy in the United States was facing economic pressures from a number of different directions. Business activity slowed dramatically, consumer spending slowed, the credit markets tightened, and consumer confidence was at historic lows. In recent years, the economy has begun to improve. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, unemployment rates have decreased statewide from 14.9 percent in June 2009 to 5.4 percent in April 2015. Paw Paw has been harder hit by the downturn economy than surrounding communities and it is taking longer to rebound.

Manufacturing— particularly big-ticket items such as automobiles— suffered a hard hit as the troubles in the financial and capital markets precipitated steep declines in consumer spending. Michigan and its sizable manufacturing economy have been experiencing a significant economic downturn.

Health care has been a bright spot for job growth that has particular bearing on Paw Paw. Lakeview Hospital—located in Paw Paw—has contributed to job growth with the construction and grand opening of Bronson Lakeview Outpatient Center in 2005.

DOWNTOWN SHOPPING DISTRICT

The business district along Michigan Avenue is very well situated along two well-traveled corridors, with many important retail tenants that draw customer traffic into Downtown Paw Paw.

Parking is available both along the street in designated lots behind and adjacent to merchants. One point of particular strength is the manner in which retailers have embraced the rear parking lots through development of very attractive rear entrances. Customers parking in the lots behind Michigan Avenue are easily able to identify and enter shops through rear doors. Efforts should be made to make front entrances equally attractive.

Parking availability in downtown creates a very positive and convenient retail experience and makes the downtown better able to compete with more auto convenience retail developments near the I-94 interchange.

There is a compelling collection of dining option in and around Downtown. This collection of restaurants provides an important regional draw for residents, tourists and vacationers throughout the year.

The synergy between the wineries and restaurants deserves promotional focus. Paw Paw is already a niche for both winery tourism and "experience dining" and the two should be jointly marketed to generate additional customer visits to both

Downtown Retail Circulation

The retail / business environment on "Main Street" Paw Paw is very attractive and welcoming. Wide sidewalks and on-street amenities serve to encourage customers to circulate around the many businesses operating on Michigan and Kalamazoo. However, the sidewalks take a second step up from the street level, with a six-inch curb. This limits pedestrian mobility.

Because the downtown business environment function is dependent upon pedestrian access, the physical environment must prioritize safe and attractive access for pedestrians. Vehicular movements should be controlled to provide good visibility, easy and safe crossings for the pedestrian.

Driveways and open areas along sidewalks adjacent to parking lots discourage walking. Access management techniques, landscaping, and street walls along parking areas can help to restore pedestrian vitality.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

The 2010 Master Plan asserted that the Downtown Business District has an opportunity to focus on a number of distinct market segments and identified such districts.

Residents provide the largest and most consistent support for downtown businesses. In addition, important other markets are served as well such as tourists and visitors to Paw Paw, summer res-idents and vacationers, and travelers along the Interstate.

Residents

Consumers living in or around Paw Paw provide the primary market for its goods and services. The needs of these consumers vary from daily sustenance shopping, service and dining to periodic entertainment and recreation.

The Paw Paw Downtown Development Authority (DDA) already encourages residents to "buy local" through its "Shop Smart, Shop Local" campaign. This sentiment is important, since the livelihood of the Downtown is dependent upon the local residents as its primary source of business.

Efforts should be made to continually update the product offerings and merchandising to address the needs of local consumers. Opportunities exist for expansions in the retail mix, and strategic recruitment should be a priority to expand the array of goods and services available.

The DDA can also lead retail infill through creation of a retail incubator program. Such programs can encourage retail infill through mentoring, business financing, training, planning and marketing strategy. This relatively new capability under the State DDA law (adopted in March 2008) could be an important tool for downtown retail infill.

As previously mentioned, a comprehensive system of signage and wayfinding along with improvements to the pedestrian thoroughfare would help set apart the Downtown as a welcoming and pleasant shopping area. This will help residents to see their community as a special place as well as help to "show off" the local community to outsiders.

Marketing outreach should rely on word of mouth, as well as advertising in local newspapers. Providing incentives such as discounts and coupons can be powerful promotional tools. Finally, retailers should strive

to exceed expectations on service, quality and the entire customer experience when given the opportunity to meet the needs of the local consumer.

Tourist & Wine Enthusiasts

Tourists and visitors to Paw Paw from outside the area looking for a day of shopping or a meal represent an important market force for Paw Paw's economy. The dining, wining and specialty shopping available in town should jointly market the experience of Paw Paw as a destination for Wining, Dining, Shopping and Fun.

Advertising effectiveness rises with the number of exposures a consumer gets. Increasing the exposures is costly and therefore sharing in the cost of a consolidated marketing message can be beneficial for all businesses. Therefore, businesses along Kalamazoo Street that are oriented to overnight visitors and day travelers, as well as the wineries and restaurants, should work together with the DDA to promote the entire community.

Summer Residents / Vacationers

There are over 3,000 summer homes within 30 minutes of Paw Paw. This is a growing market and could provide an important, albeit seasonal, source of economic activity.

Vacationers and summer residents should be drawn into Paw Paw for its restaurants, shopping and entertainment. Live music could be used to increase the appeal of the Paw Paw destination.

Movies at the Strand, live theater with the Paw Paw Village Players or outdoor theater should be marketed widely to summer residents. Outdoor movies in the park might also attract visitors downtown and spark other evening shopping activity.

Children's programs should be encouraged to attract families to Paw Paw in the summer for educational and arts activities. For example, a "Scavenger Hunt" could be an interesting marketing ploy to encourage exploration of the district, with special promotional incentives for visiting businesses in Paw Paw.

Outdoor family events are popular in every community. Summer activities in the park are great for families of all ages. Concerts and movies in the park offer options for adults to get together, while having appropriate entertainment for the children.



IT'S WINE O'CLOCK

WINE TASTING
WINERY TOURS
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
GRAPE STOMPING
BICYCLE TOUR
5K RUN/WALK
FIREWORKS OVER MAPLE LAKE
FESTIVAL PARADE
KIDS' STOMP LAND
CLASSIC CAR SHOW
MARKETPLACE GOODS
ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR
KAYAK RACES
HOLE-IN-ONE CONTEST
AND SO MUCH MORE!

WINE AND HARVEST FESTIVAL
PAW PAW, MICHIGAN

SEPT. 5-7 2025

FOR INFORMATION:
Call (269) 655-1111

SCAN

- GENERAL INFORMATION
- ACTIVITY REGISTRATION
- SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
- SPONSOR OPPORTUNITIES
- VOLUNTEER POSSIBILITIES

Visit www.wineandharvestfestival.com



Recreational boats, canoes, or paddleboat rentals would be good way to link the activities along Michigan to the beautiful lakefront. Promoting the branches of the Paw Paw River as a kayak trail (providing portage facilities where necessary) may also bring new tourists to the area.

Marketing activities should be focused on reaching a wider audience. Travelers to the southwest part of Michigan frequently come from neighboring states. Advertising should appear in state travel guides and web sites, travel brochure displays along interstates and at welcome centers. A summer circular and web site could announce events and make vacationers aware of Paw Paw activities.

Highway Travelers

The Interstate provides a high number of travelers heading east and west that support businesses near the exits.

Convenience is king for these consumers, and the automobile (and truck) will be the method of access.

Sales of gasoline, fast food and other convenience items certainly benefit directly from these travelers. It is important to note that once these travelers exit the freeway, an opportunity exists to draw them into Downtown. Gateways, signs and wayfinding to draw customers from the Interstate north along Kalamazoo Street should set the tone for the 'branding' of Paw Paw and encourage exploration of the village.

There is a distinct opportunity to announce Paw Paw along the Interstate. Certainly, exit signs and other Michigan DOT signage is possible. Additionally, traditional outdoor / billboard advertising can be effective in making travelers aware of Paw Paw's offerings. Attractive signage on the interstate overpass is also a possible means of announcing Paw Paw as a unique destination along I-94.

Retail Spending – Supply and Demand

Opportunities for leasing additional retail space periodically present themselves to communities. Today, Paw Paw has a few available retail spaces available for lease downtown.

Unlike a shopping mall where leasing decisions are centralized, a "Main Street" community such as Paw Paw is often left to a reactive response to the leasing choices of property owners.

By following a more thoughtful, strategic approach to leasing by following the needs of the consumer, the property owner benefits by filling up vacant space with tenants more likely to succeed. Furthermore, such pragmatic leasing best serves the community by filling undermet consumer needs.

Because consumer shopping patterns tend toward large scale 'category killer' big box retail such as Walmart, Target and Barnes and Noble (to name a few), downtown and village retail must seek appropriate tenants wishing to offer a more locally serving and enhanced retail experience.

Specialty retail in an around a "Main Street" district offers consumers and alternative experience to strip malls and other automobile-centric shopping (i.e., park-shop-park-shop). Shopping downtown can be both convenient and explorative (i.e., park, shop, walk, shop, etc.).

The merchants that thrive in this environment offer superior customer service, a unique product mix and personal touch to the retail experience that larger retail operations cannot offer.

Retail Opportunities for Expansion

Apparel is a category that appears to be underserved locally. Certainly, some purchases of fashion goods will continue to go to malls in the region, but there is opportunity to expand apparel retail space by approximately 20,000 square feet. Care should be taken to program the merchandising of this apparel retail to address both the needs of local consumers but to also attract shopping from tourists and summer residents.

Additional retail opportunities include:

- » Furniture (10,000 square feet)
- » Sporting Goods, Hobby, Music (17,000 square feet)
- » Books (6,000 square feet)
- » General Merchandise (44,000 square feet)

There are available retail spaces in the downtown which could accommodate small infill retail tenants.

While there is a noted demand for fast food restaurants within the 10-minute drive radius of downtown, there are a sufficient amount of chain establishments along I-94. Fast food businesses allow for travelers and visitors to stop in a city for a brief moment and then carry on their travels. This will not allow them to visit and enjoy Paw Paw. It is not recommended to encourage further development of fast-food chain restaurants within the Village.

STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING DOWNTOWN RETAIL

The 2010 Master Plan recognized six tactics in order to accomplish Village goals of strengthening and expanding the downtown retail businesses.

Tactic 1: Retain and Strengthen Merchants

The most important aspect of a downtown retail strategy is the systematic attention to protecting the interests and position of existing anchor merchants. Closing businesses has a severely detrimental effect on the vitality of downtown business districts. Furthermore, recruiting new businesses is time consuming and costly.

Identifying 'at risk' businesses involves careful attention to subtle clues, such as:

- » Poor Merchandising / Store Presentation
- » Hit and Miss Hours
- » Temporary Signs
- » Constant Sales
- » Consistent Complaints

Challenges for downtown merchants are many and diverse. One in four small retail businesses fail. Lack of experience, under-capitalization and lack of succession planning in family businesses are frequently cited as reasons for failure. A clear understanding of customer needs and retail merchandising helps strengthen the merchants chances for long-term viability.

Tactic 2: Merchant Associations

Shopping malls speak with a coordinated marketing message, a strategically designed environment and central control and decision-making. Such controls are not directly possible in Downtown Business Districts, where multiple merchants and business owners operate in relative isolation.

The DDA should form a specific Merchant's Association to encourage collective cooperation by coordinating the district's activities – much like a manager oversees a mall. This association would hopefully include all downtown merchants and would focus on the business of retail management and recruitment for Downtown Paw Paw. The DDA may want to hire a part-time manager to handle these duties.

A well-organized Merchant's Group can reach beyond a simple calendar of monthly meetings to delegate certain responsibilities for tenant recruitment, merchandising strategy training, business development (accounting, human resources), etc.

Because it would be a voluntary organization, a Merchant's Association must be carefully organized around the idea of raising the overall success of the district. The DDA can play an important oversight and funding role for the Merchant's Association. Each business's future profits are, in many ways, tied to the overall success of the district. Therefore, by extension, their fortunes are tied to their neighbor retailers. Seeing each other as associates working together to create a cohesive customer experience in Downtown – rather than merely competitors – allows for more cooperative actions toward overall sustainability.

Potential Merchant Association Activities:

- » Cross Promotions
- » Shared Advertising
- » Coordinated Maintenance
- » Mentoring / Training
- » Strategic Recruitment
- » Signage / Wayfinding
- » Shared Parking

Tactic 3: Generate Trial Visits through Special Events

Special events are more than opportunities to offer the community a 'get-together' – they are key chances for the downtown business district to show off its wares and take advantage of increased customer traffic. Such events provide businesses with key marketing opportunities to expose new customers to their merchandise and the downtown shopping experience.

Existing festivals and other events should be coordinated with the downtown retailers to get the best exposure for merchants and the biggest economic impact on the community. Whenever possible, stores should be open during the special event and customers should be able to easily access the downtown shopping district while the event is underway. Bringing merchandise, refreshments and other special promotions outside the store to the storefront, sidewalk or other prominent position allows merchants to leverage this influx of customers for maximum exposure.

Certainly, special events present some challenges. Parking and access are made more difficult with the higher volume of traffic. The physical location(s) of the special events sometimes cannot allow all merchants equal exposure to the crowds. If the needs of the merchants are considered and communication is open and interactive in the planning stages, special events downtown can become powerful promotional opportunities and economic engines for Downtown.

Tactic 4: Market Ready Spaces

While the Paw Paw downtown retail district competes with other retail destinations for customers, it is important to consider that it also competes for *tenants*.

Retailers require sufficient unencumbered shop space, high ceilings, service access and ample parking. The size and physical configuration of leasable retail space in "Downtown Main Street" frequently cannot meet all of these demands. To counter this, the downtown and the village should look for opportunities to do the following:

- » **Create larger spaces** – combine smaller broken up spaces into larger leasable footprints.
- » **Provide for unencumbered shop space and headroom** – retail benefits from good internal sight lines, sufficient head room for lighting and an open feel. Combining and removing support columns (where possible) allows for more flexible shop configurations.

- » **Provide convenient back of shop access and storage** – Deliveries, office operations and storage needs must also be accommodated.
- » **Parking** – provide for parking that is easily accessed, safe, well lit and centrally located. Provide incentives and regulations, if necessary, to keep daily office worker and employee parking away from the prime customer spaces.

Tactic 5: Critical Mass

Assembling a significant quantity of retail and restaurant destinations in close proximity creates a sense of retail mass and builds awareness of the district. Downtown Paw Paw is fortunate in that it already supports many different retail merchants and dining opportunities, including some key anchor destinations such as the Hallmark Store and the hardware store. Continuing to build on this collection will be important to insuring the continued success of downtown retail.

Where possible, merchants should be located close to one another and convenient to parking. Distractions that deter natural shopper exploration and circulation among merchants should be avoided where possible. These include first floor office uses, empty stores, vacant lots causing gaps in the street wall, numerous curb cuts and open parking areas along sidewalks and similar impediments detract from the consumer experience. Therefore, special effort should be made to fill empty retail locations with new merchants as vacancy and turnover occurs.

Tactic 6: Strategic Recruitment

Much like a mall manager, the Downtown must actively seek out new retail tenants. This outreach effort involves identification of specific retail gaps in the marketplace. The exhibit on the previous page suggests a number of categories of consumer spending that appear to have unmet local demand. These can serve as a starting point to frame potential targets.

In general, there are three categories of downtown retailers:

- » National Chains
- » Regional Stores
- » Local Independents

The site selection criteria of each differs, but will always depend on access to customers so local demographics, economics and traffic visibility are key.

Being a smaller town removed from a major metropolitan area, Paw Paw cannot offer potential retail tenants a densely populated suburban destination. It can, however, leverage its access to Interstate traffic and strong tourism with a stable local population .

National chains prefer larger retail stores along major traffic thoroughfares and intersections. Paw Paw has such sites nearer the Interstate, so it is unlikely that they would pass up the exposure that the Interstate provides. For downtown retail, however, regional stores and locally run independants provide the best chance of infill expansion.

The process of identifying targets for recruitment involves an interactive discussion about merchants from adjacent markets or concepts from similar communities. There is no 'one-stop' resource for such tenant recruitment (as there is with national chains).

Assigning responsibility to someone within the downtown – either within the Village or the Merchant's Association— to actively recruit for Paw Paw is critical. There must be a voice for marketing the Downtown Retail District. Once identified, this Downtown Business District Manager can assemble a list of potential retail categories to seek out and potential merchants to contact.

Franchise operators offer an important market for recruitment, as many national retailers have franchise programs that empower local owners to leverage the brand and merchandising power of the national chain in a locally-serving location. To encourage this, collateral materials must be produced to summarize the characteristics that make Paw Paw unique as well as the key retail metrics merchants use to inform their site selection – household counts by radii, demographics, traffic and tourism. Regional meetings, such as the International Council on Shopping Centers (ICSC) provide opportunities for Paw Paw's merchant association or manager to interact with larger regional and national retail merchants. More locally, the experience of local leadership and community leaders can help to identify merchants 'doing well' in other markets. Leaders can then seek out these merchants to suggest that they open an additional location in Paw Paw.

DDA Development Strategy

Certainly, the above financial model shows the potential for such a development to be led by the private sector. If, for instance, the current owner(s) of the site would redevelop, the land cost could be reduced by the amount of equity they hold. This would improve the return from the project.

Should the current owner(s) be uninterested in development, a private developer could be solicited from the community or beyond through the issuance of a request for development proposal. The DDA could take a position as the developer in partnerships with the current owners as a joint venture to develop the site. If the DDA must act alone, it has the authority to acquire the site for redevelopment.

Primarily, the redevelopment strategy should focus on identification of tenant(s) for the new development and work backward through development economics and incentives. The potential development could house multiple tenants or be designed around one particular use.

Potential Tenants Strategies:

Multiple User Scenario

- » First Floor Retail – Restaurant – Deli/Coffee – Books – Apparel – Sporting Goods – Toys/Games
- » Upper Floor Professional Office or Apartments
- » First Floor Medical Office / Clinic

Single User Scenarios

- » Community Center
- » Education Facility

The DDA has the legal mandate to take an active role in the participation of a redevelopment of the supermarket site and to issue bonds based on tax increment financing (TIF) revenues to offset public

improvements to the site such as streets, parking and utility costs. A number of other development tools are available depending on the uses considered for the site:¹

- » If the property were to be considered for public use (such as a Community Center) a **Local Development Financing Authority** (LDFA) can facilitate public projects to encourage local development, to prevent conditions of unemployment and to promote growth. (1986 PA 281, MCL 125.2151)
- » If environmental conditions prohibit redevelopment, a **Brownfield Redevelopment Authority** (BRA) may be created to clean up the sites, thus allowing the property to revert to productive economic use. (1996 PA 381, MCL 125.2651)
- » An **Economic Development Corporation** (EDC) may be created to issue bonds and otherwise facilitate the development of industrial or not-for-profit enterprises. (1974 PA 338, MCL 125.1601)
- » A **Principal Shopping District** (PSD) may be created to levy special assessments for the development or redevelopment of a principal shopping to support retail activities in the area. (1961 PA120, MCL 125.981)
- » A **Business Improvement District** (BID) may be created to develop a more successful and profitable business climate in a defined area, and to collect revenues, levy special assessments and issue bonds to pay for its activities. (1961 PA 120 of, MCL 125.981)

Other DDAs in Michigan have developed a number of programs to facilitate Downtown Redevelopment. Examples include:

- » The **Building Reuse Incentives Program** is designed to reduce the incidence of vacancy in older downtown buildings, by providing financial assistance to property owners to overcome the unique and challenging barriers associated with reusing older buildings. Assistance may only be used to improve barrier free access, improve fire suppression systems, improve fire-rated stair towers, upgrade utilities, or for facade improvements.
- » **Streetscape Improvement Grants** are available to eligible property owners to cover a portion of the cost of streetscape improvements adjacent to the property. The program is designed to improve the appearance and usability of sidewalks and pedestrian ways, and to improve the safety of downtown by improving walking surfaces that have deteriorated.
- » **Public Act 198 - Industrial Tax Abatement** offers 50% of real and personal property tax abatement for up to twelve (12) years for qualified new construction and equipment.
- » **Public Act 328- New Personal Property Tax Abatement** offers a 100% tax abatement on all new personal property for up to nine (9) years for qualified businesses and personal property.

⁷ Michigan Municipal League, Economic Development Tools, March 2002.

