



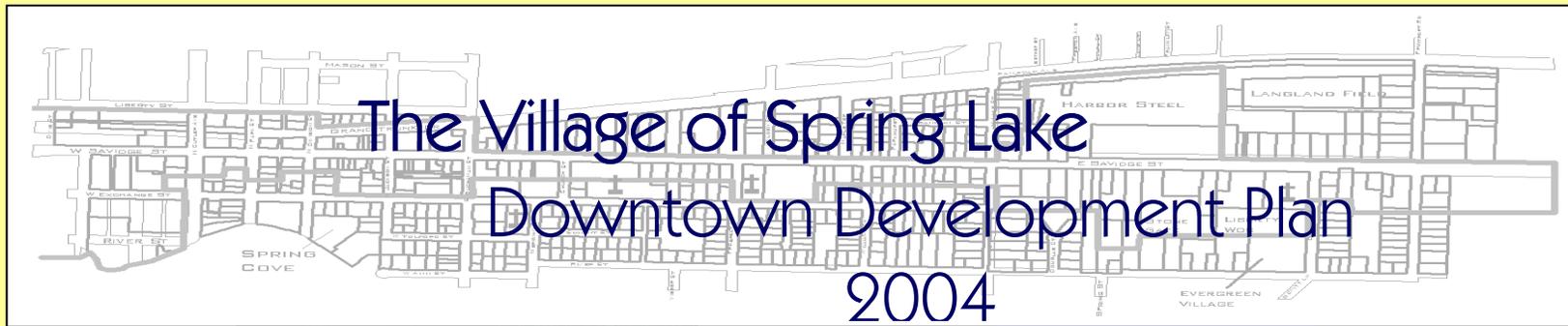
Waterfront



Streetscape



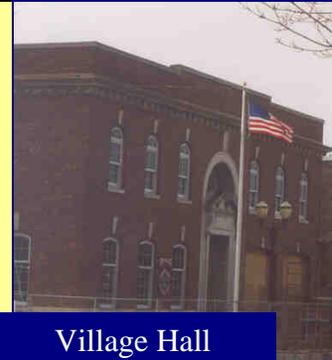
Trails



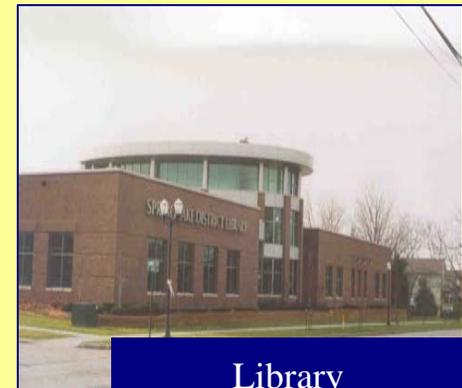
West End of M-104



Central M-104



Village Hall and Police Depts.



Library

VILLAGE OF SPRING LAKE MASTER PLAN

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Overview

This Plan is part of the City's Master Land Use Plan. It is a subarea plan that focuses on the M-104 corridor (Savidge Street) and the Village of Spring Lake's downtown (see Map 1). The purpose of this section of the plan is to provide an overview of the community setting as it pertains to economic development and market potential for the business district. This plan is also concerned with auto and pedestrian circulation on and around M-104.

Community Context



Aerial view of Spring Lake Village

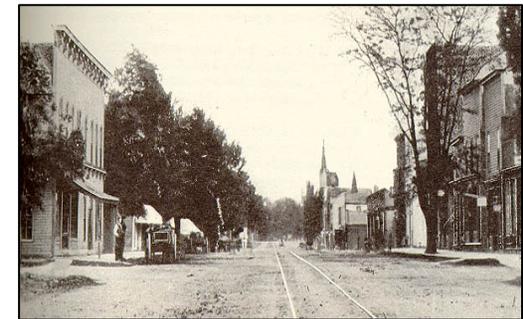
The Village has a great setting and location. It is surrounded on three sides by water. Spring Lake lies to the north, and the Grand River and Lloyd's Bayou wrap around the southern border. Overall, the community has 4.5 miles of waterfront.

Because the Village is in close proximity to Lake Michigan, it is a good port for recreational boating. M-104 connects with both US 31, at the

western terminus of downtown, and with I-96, a few miles east of downtown. The Village is part of the Ferrysburg, Grand Haven, and Spring Lake "Tri-cities" urban area. US 31 conveniently connects the Village to several communities along the Lake Michigan shoreline and I-96 provides an easy commute to the Grand Rapids Metro area.

Historical Perspective

The Spring Lake area has an impressive history and has seen a great deal of economic evolution. As with many Michigan communities, lumbering played a role in the Village's history.



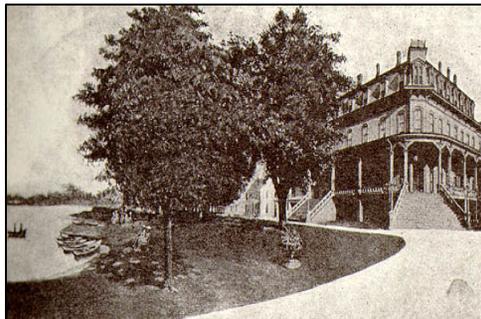
State Street looking east - after 1902



Steamer "W. H. Barrett."

At the peak of the lumbering era of the late 1800s, six saw mills operated

in the Village limits with specialty mills and kilns as subsidiary businesses. Lumbering was by no means the only industry in the Village; brick making, ice making, nationally marketed mineral water, passenger ferries, resort centers, and boat building were also part of Spring Lake's economic



Spring Lake House, later destroyed by fire

base. Barrett Boating Center, still a large facility in the Village, began in 1887 as the Spring Lake Boat Company, which built yachts and rowboats. The Spring Lake House (c. 1871) was a 150-room summer hotel that touted healing mineral springs and hosted hundreds of summer visitors.

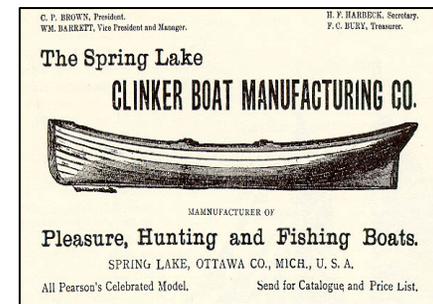
Even flypaper has a place in the Village's history. The Spring Lake Yacht Club and the Spring Lake Trailer Park were originally owned by the Thum



Henry Zuidema delivering ice in Grand Haven for the Spring Lake Ice Company.

Family (c. 1916), who made their fortune manufacturing flypaper. Both waterfront properties were later turned over to the Village by Hugo Thum's estate. Today, these waterfront properties remain an important public focal point for the Village.

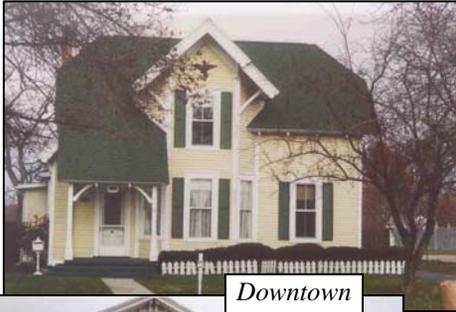
A series of fires destroyed much of early Spring Lake Village, including the Spring Lake House. Despite the devastation, the Village rebuilt and transformed itself. As in the past, the Village continues to evolve to meet changing times while keeping in touch with the past that gives it so much character.



Boat manufacturer advertisement

Study Area Housing

While much of the single family housing stock in the Village is older than in outlying areas, the quality of the housing stock is excellent.



*Downtown
Homes*



Neighborhoods in the study area are well maintained. A visitor can sense the pride that residents have for their property and their community. This cannot be underestimated. Although unspoken, it is a powerful message of community self-worth and economic health.

Fine historic homes, built after the Civil War, grace the Village streets and are an important part of the fabric of history found throughout the community. Home styles range from modest bungalows and ranch style homes to more elaborate Tudor, Queen Ann, and Victorian homes.

The bulk of the Village's housing stock is single-family detached homes (67.4%). The remaining units (about 410 units) are multi-family. This is a significantly different housing mix than was

presented in the Village's 1987 Land Use Plan, where the 1980 Census reported that 85% off all housing units were single-family. The more diverse mix of housing types is due to the development of several condominium projects in the Village. About 20% of all Village housing units have been built since 1980 and about 55% of all housing units were built before 1940. Of the 1,098 housing units in the Village, 6.3% or about 69 units are classified for seasonal, recreational or occasional use.



Condominiums

Demographic Profile

The population analysis presented in the Village's Master Plan is also from the 1980 Census. The following update was gleaned from 2000 Census data. As Spring Lake Village considers its economic development goals, the characteristics

of the population (a market niche for Spring Lake merchants) should be kept in mind.

In the 2000 Census, the Village population was 2,514 individuals, down about 21% since the 1970 Census when the population was 3,034. Between 1990 and the year 2000, the Village population remained stable, declining slightly (by 23 individuals). In that same timeframe, Ottawa County's population jumped by 27%, increasing by 50,546 persons. In fact, the county is one of the fastest growing counties in the state and development in Spring Lake Village continues to be influenced by that fact.

The Village population decline is likely attributable to national trends of smaller households and more single-person households. For example, in 1970, the average household size in the Village was 3.2 persons per household. By the year 2000, average household size had decreased to 2.16 persons. Also, like the rest of the nation, the Village population is aging as baby-boomers (the large number of people born after WWII) are reaching the post-family stages of their lives (i.e., their children are raised and out of the home). The median age of the Village at the 2000 Census was 44 years of age, quite a bit higher than the state average of 35.5 years of age. Additionally,

26.5 % of the Village population was 65 years or older, over double the state figure of 12.3%.

Of the 1,098 households in the Village in 2000, just over half (50.5%) were married-couple households and 39.3% were non-family households (i.e., single-person households or unrelated persons living together). The remaining 10.2% of households were single-parent. These figures are all fairly close to state averages.

The percentage of home ownership in the Village (75.1%) is somewhat lower than the County average of 80.7%. Housing values are also lower, likely because the housing stock, on average, is older. The average value of an owner occupied unit in the Village in the year 2000 was \$106,800 (note that condominiums are owner-occupied). Comparatively, the county average value of an owner-occupied housing unit was \$133,000.

In the year 2000, the median income for all Michigan households was \$31,020. The Village's median household income was higher than the State figure at \$37,889 but lower than the County average of \$52,347.

Nearly one-third of the Village population has a bachelor's degree or higher (31.5%) which is

significantly higher than the State average of 21.8%. The top three industries in which Village workers are employed are manufacturing (25.7% of the labor force); educational, health and social services (20.2% of the labor force); and retail trade (11.4% of the labor force). The top three occupations of Village residents include: management, professional and related occupations (39%); sales and office occupations (24.6%); and production, transportation and material moving occupations (17.7%).

Land Use

For the purposes of this plan, the focal point of economic development efforts is the M-104 corridor. The M-104 corridor in the Village has four distinct segments (see Map2):



North side of M-104, west of Division St.

1. The westernmost area (Segment I, on Map 3), from School Street to Division Street, is dominated by businesses that are auto-oriented. In this three-block area there are three gas stations and three fast food restaurants (two with drive-through

windows). Two buildings have several service-oriented office suites (insurance, realty, investment counselor, etc.). A sporting goods shop, pool and spa shop, and video store are the other retail businesses in this segment.

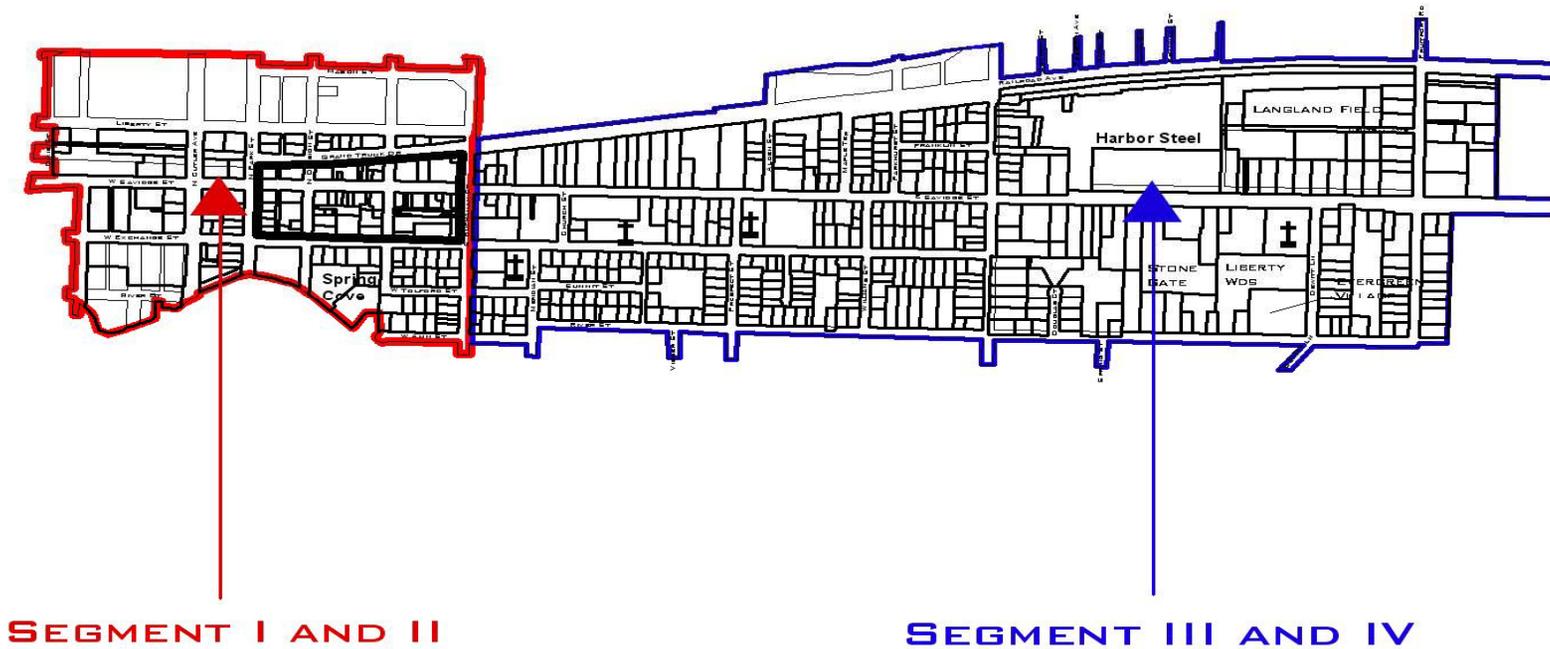
Observations: This area does not invite a long stay by visitors since most of the retail facilities are convenience oriented. The area is not pedestrian friendly because of the distance between establishments, the amount of pavement devoted to parking and driveways, and the number of driveways.

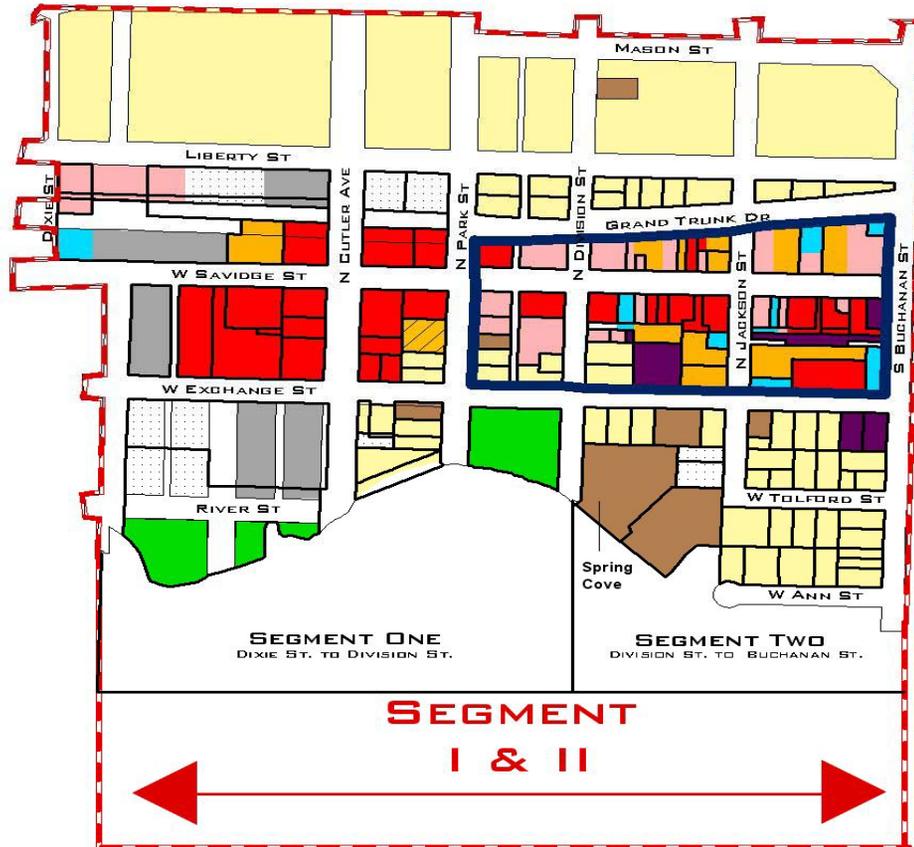
2. The downtown (Segment II, Map 3), between Division Street and Buchanan Street, is dominated by small scale, main street type businesses on smaller lots.



South side of M-104, between Division and Buchanan Streets

**MAP 2
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN
VILLAGE OF SPRING LAKE
SEGMENT IDENTIFICATION MAP**





MAP 3
VILLAGE OF SPRING LAKE
EXISTING LAND USE
SEGMENT I & II

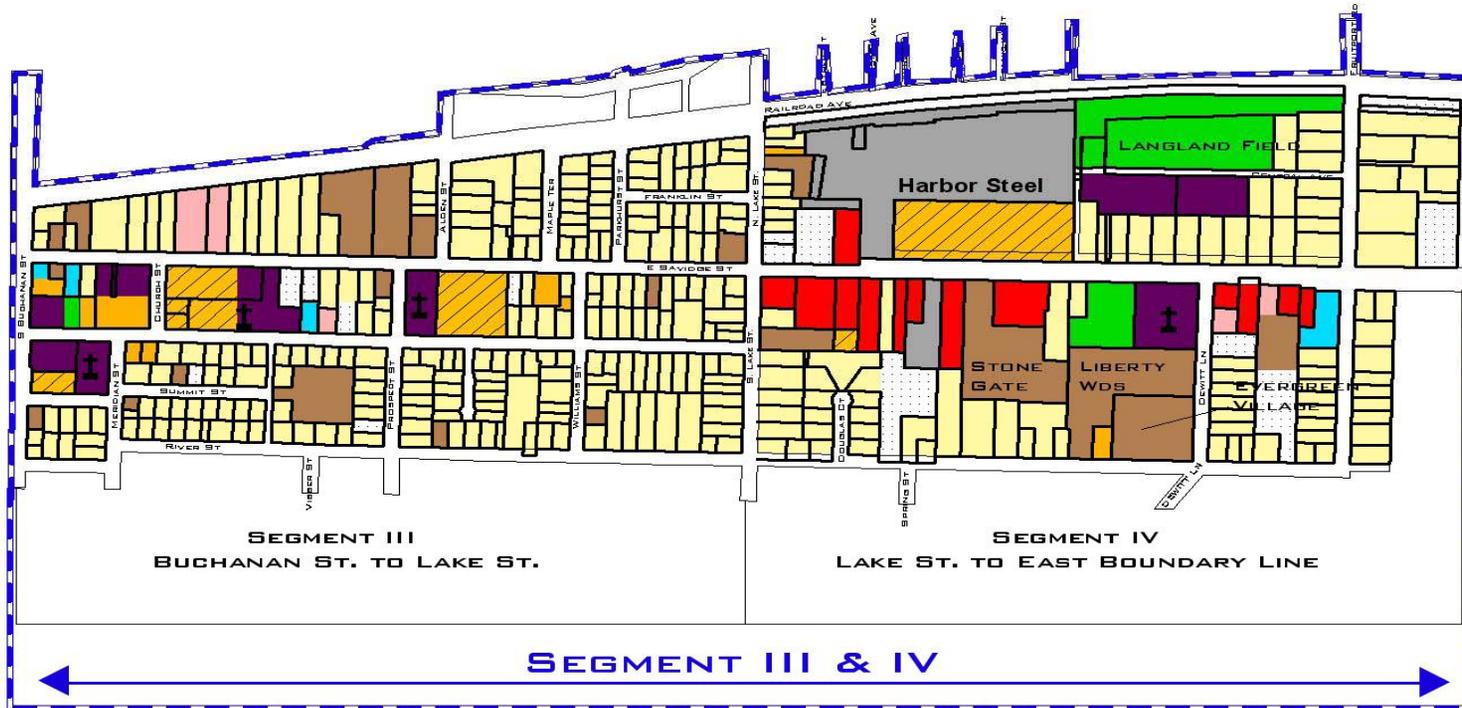
- LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
 - MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
 - OFFICE
 - RETAIL COMMERCIAL
 - SERVICE COMMERCIAL
 - INDUSTRIAL/WAREHOUSE
 - PUBLIC PARKING AREAS
 - PRIVATE PARKING AREAS
 - PARKS
 - PUBLIC-QUASI PUBLIC
 - VACANT PROPERTIES
 - DOWNTOWN CORE BOUNDARY






SOURCE: LSL LAND SURVEY 2003
 BASE MAP INFORMATION: OTTAWA COUNTY GIS
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MAP 4
VILLAGE OF SPRING LAKE
EXISTING LAND USE
SEGMENT III & IV



LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	 PUBLIC PARKING AREAS
 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	 PRIVATE PARKING AREAS
 OFFICE	 PARKS
 RETAIL COMMERCIAL	 PUBLIC-QUASI PUBLIC
 SERVICE COMMERCIAL	 VACANT PROPERTIES
 INDUSTRIAL/WAREHOUSE	



SOURCE: LSL LAND SURVEY 2003
 BASE MAP INFORMATION: OTTAWA COUNTY GIS

Observations: There are several service-oriented businesses in this area; these and office uses actually outnumber retail entities. If the Village wants to become a stronger retail hub, either new downtown retail space needs to be developed, or existing areas need to gain more retail uses.

3. The institutional and residential area (Segment III, Map 4) between Buchanan Street and Lake Avenue is dominated by public and church uses, along with residential development.

Observations: This area serves as an attractive transition between downtown commercial uses and surrounding neighborhoods.

City Hall, the library, Spring Lake Township facilities, the Post Office, Barber School Community Building and churches bring activity into the downtown. Several attractive homes line M-104 between Church Street and Lake Avenue. Most of the homes in this area are single-family although a few have been converted to apartments. A small percentage of structures need maintenance attention but the vast majority of residential uses are well maintained.



Single-family homes on the north side of M-104



Village Library (right)



Barber School (above)



Christ Community Church

4. The eastern most area (Segment IV, Map 4), between Lake Avenue and Fruitport Road, has a difficult character to define because of the mix of uses. This segment has several vacant, blighted businesses, a large industrial use, condominiums, homes that have been converted to businesses, a strip mall, and gas station.

Observations: This area has some attractive elements; the church and associated park on Dewitt Lane are a nice focal point for this segment. The industrial use at first glance looks much like a school and is an attractive facility. Some new investment has occurred in this area, which will help the transition to a more attractive business area. Several narrow lots on the south side of M104 have homes with businesses that need rehabilitation. Narrow lots could pose access and parking problems, but the lots are deep, so parking could be provided at



Vacant storefront on the northeast corner of North Lake Avenue and M-104

the rear of the lots. Land assembly opportunities should be considered for this area. For example, on the northeast corner of the intersection of Lake Avenue and M104, there are currently two vacant commercial buildings that could be assembled for one development. In the future, if a strip commercial facility is considered for this site, the building should be situated at the front of the property with parking in the rear. When parking is to the rear of buildings, it shifts the focus to the structure and business within it instead of the pavement in front of the structure. It is also much more appealing aesthetically.



New commercial development in Holt, Michigan (left in photo), which blends with old “main street” styles.

Along the entire M-104 corridor, residential development dominates land use and accounts for

145 acres of the 240-acre study area, or about 60% of the total land area. Public and institutional lands are the second highest users of land at 24 acres (10% of the land area). Industrial uses are the third largest user of land comprising about 18 acres of the study area. Commercial, office and service uses combined amount to 22 acres. Larger public and private parking areas, as mapped on the existing land use map, account for 17 acres. See also Table I.

Table I
Existing Land Use Calculations
For the Study Area

Existing Land Use Calculations	Number of Acres	% of Total
Single Family Residential	120	50%
Multi-Family Residential	25	10%
Office	3	1%
Retail Commercial	13	6%
Service Commercial	6	3%
Industrial/Warehouse	18	8%
Public Parking Areas	6	2%
Private Parking Areas	11	4%
Parks	12	5%
Public/Quasi-Public	12	5%
Vacant Properties	14	6%
Total Acres	240 Acres	100%

As mentioned earlier, in the core downtown, service businesses outnumber retail shopping businesses and much of the retail is convenience-oriented (i.e., quick stop/one-stop). If the Village wants to attract more activity, more non-convenience retail uses should be promoted.

Transportation and Circulation

The Corridor

M-104 traverses the Village and provides both significant opportunities and challenges. Traffic counts reflect that thousands of vehicles travel through the downtown on a daily basis (see Table II). These travelers represent a significant market and the numbers grow during the tourist season. On the other hand, traffic also congests the downtown, making it difficult for customers to get in and out of business areas. For a pedestrian the amount of traffic can be imposing which detracts from the shopping or entertainment experiences.

Exchange Street, which is parallel and one block south of the M-104 corridor, could be used to siphon off local automobile traffic. Further, the area between School Street and Buchanan Street could also function as a secondary tier of business

activity. Measures should be taken, however, to slow and calm traffic along Exchange Street, especially since it is likely to experience more pedestrian traffic than M-104.

Table II presents historic traffic counts for M-104. There has been fluctuation in counts since 1992. Interestingly, the counts in the downtown segment generally declined in a 10-year period. This may be due to residents and other travelers finding alternative routes through town.

Table II – Historic Traffic Counts

Corridor	1992	1997	2002
M-104, near the eastern Village limits	20,000	16,100	17,300
M-104, downtown	25,000	28,700	19,800
US 31, north of the Ferrysburg exit	31,000	40,200	36,100
US 31, just south of M-104	52,000	60,200	59,500

Source: Michigan Department of Transportation, Annual Average 24-hour traffic count maps.

Access and Pedestrian Orientation

The number and frequency of driveways can congest a travel route. To alleviate traffic conflicts, access drives are often relocated, combined, or eliminated. Various segments of M-104 have very different characteristics in terms of

property access. As examples, in the two blocks between Division Street and Buchanan Street there are six driveways on the north side of M-104, and none on the south side. The south side of the street is a more traditional main street where the buildings front close to the street and share walls with neighboring structures. Parking is in the rear and access is from side streets rather than directly from M-104. A continuous block of buildings with no driveways creates a more comfortable feeling for pedestrians than areas with parking and driveways in front of buildings.

Core Business Area Parking

Parking is often of concern in business districts. In the business area between Park and Church Streets there are 560 parking spaces, 195 of which are on the north side of M-104 and 365 of which are on the south side of M-104. Christ Community Church, just east of Church Street, has an additional 188 parking spaces that could be available for other community functions when church is not in session. Rather than institutional and business uses creating more surface parking (sometimes at the expense of single-family homes and the neighborhood fabric) alternatives such as joint parking agreements, additional on-

street parking and reduced parking standards should be investigated. If additional parking is created, alternatives to surface lots should be considered because surface parking consumes limited development area and is counter to creating a pedestrian friendly downtown. While a parking ramp does not fit the scale of the Village, a one level parking deck behind retail uses may be appropriate at some point in the future.

Community Design

Spring Lake Clock tower



Spring Lake Village has the challenge of having its historic main street as a busy transportation route. Vehicles dominate the

corridor, yet to function as a true main street, people have to be comfortable traversing the business areas on foot. High traffic volumes, loud truck traffic and many businesses that are auto-oriented work against pedestrian oriented goals. These challenges, however, are not insurmountable. The Village has already taken measures to beautify the downtown and bring it to a more pedestrian scale by defining cross

walks, providing street trees, and developing a Village focal point across from the Village hall. Additional design elements can be provided to further enhance the image and pedestrian orientation of the downtown (e.g. street furniture, kiosks, and marked pedestrian travel routes).

When several businesses are concentrated in one area, it is often called a “street wall” because walkers can stroll and window shop, and there are no conflicts with cars because there are no driveways. On the north side of M-104, buildings are still situated close to the road, but parking tends to be next to businesses, which breaks up the “street wall.” West of Division Street along M-



Example of a “street wall” (Duluth, Minnesota)

104 to School Street, there are 17 driveways and most of the parking is situated at the front of structures. This segment of the downtown is an auto-oriented design and does not invite pedestrian activity. To the extent feasible, driveways should be consolidated and gaps in the street wall filled with new development.

The downtown business area meshes fairly well with its adjacent neighborhoods. Some design improvements, however, could be implemented. For example, parking lots are not well screened from homes and pedestrian links from businesses to public spaces are not well defined.



Unscreened parking lot adjacent to residential area.

Market Analysis

As part of the planning process to create this plan, a detailed market analysis was conducted for the Village by The Chesapeake Group of Baltimore Maryland. The market study assessed several trends, through three potential market areas associated with Spring Lake. These included:

1. The primary market area, composed of residents living in Spring Lake.
2. The secondary market area, composed of residents living in other nearby communities.
3. The tertiary market, composed of others living in the greater regional area, including Grand Rapids.

The study conservatively concluded that Spring Lake Village could support 70 to 100 additional housing units, 35,000 square feet of additional office space, and approximately 64,000 square feet of retail and related services space. In terms of capturing the local market, the penetration level (i.e., how much of the market is reached) for the residents of Spring Lake Village was fairly

high, estimated at about 78%. The level in the secondary area is significantly less at present. The level is even lower for the tertiary or regional market as would be anticipated. However, while market penetration levels may be low, the size of the secondary and tertiary markets are much larger than the primary market.

The study also indicated that synergism is a critical factor in the success of commercial activity. Synergism involves the sharing of patronage between businesses. For example, someone visiting a fabric shop may also decide to visit the pharmacy for some toiletries because it is convenient, even though the primary destination for the trip was the fabric store. A critical mass of shopping opportunities is also important because several establishments in close proximity to one another have higher drawing power than isolated establishments.

A survey of the market reflected that households which frequent the Village of Spring Lake's commercial sector do so for a variety of reasons. About one-half (48%) visit the area to shop, about one-third (31%) to consume food and beverages, and 39% go

to obtain government services. Note: these figures will change as the dynamic and mix of businesses in the area change.

In an effort to improve the business areas, regional households familiar with the Village of Spring Lake were asked to identify what they liked most about the area. Their responses, in order of preference, are listed below:

1. Small town and quiet atmosphere
2. Quaintness of area
3. Cleanliness
4. Convenient location
5. Friendly people
6. Quality of the businesses
7. Various "public" facilities (bank, post office, library)

On the negative side, people indicated that a lack of variety or shopping options and having to cross the bridge were the primary reasons they did not visit the area with more frequency.

When asked to suggest changes that would increase their level of comfort or frequency of visits to Spring Lake, respondents offered the following, again in order of preference:

1. More commercial activity including new restaurants, grocery stores, novelty shops, and entertainment facilities
2. Divert the heavy traffic
3. Make downtown streets wider
4. Improve the downtown merchant business area.
5. Update building facades
6. Make buildings more aesthetically appealing.

During the planning process, market study highpoints were kept in mind. The citizen task force also developed the following premises:

1. The vision for the downtown is long-term, 20 or more years.
2. Establish phases for downtown improvements.
3. Improvements can occur in increments.
4. One-way streets are not a preferred choice.
5. Some form of traffic calming for Exchange Street is needed, which can also be used as an attractive downtown entry feature.
6. The downtown should be a "destination oriented" location for purposes of:

- a) Retail, offices, cafes/restaurants, etc.
- b) Public gatherings/enjoyment should be an integral part of the downtown.

7. Exchange Street is changing. It is important to guide those changes for the enrichment of the community as a whole.

The following section of objectives and strategies were born from keeping in mind the market study, community input, and the design concepts that have guided the planning effort behind this document.

Plan Goals and Strategies

A healthy downtown economy depends on many variables including:

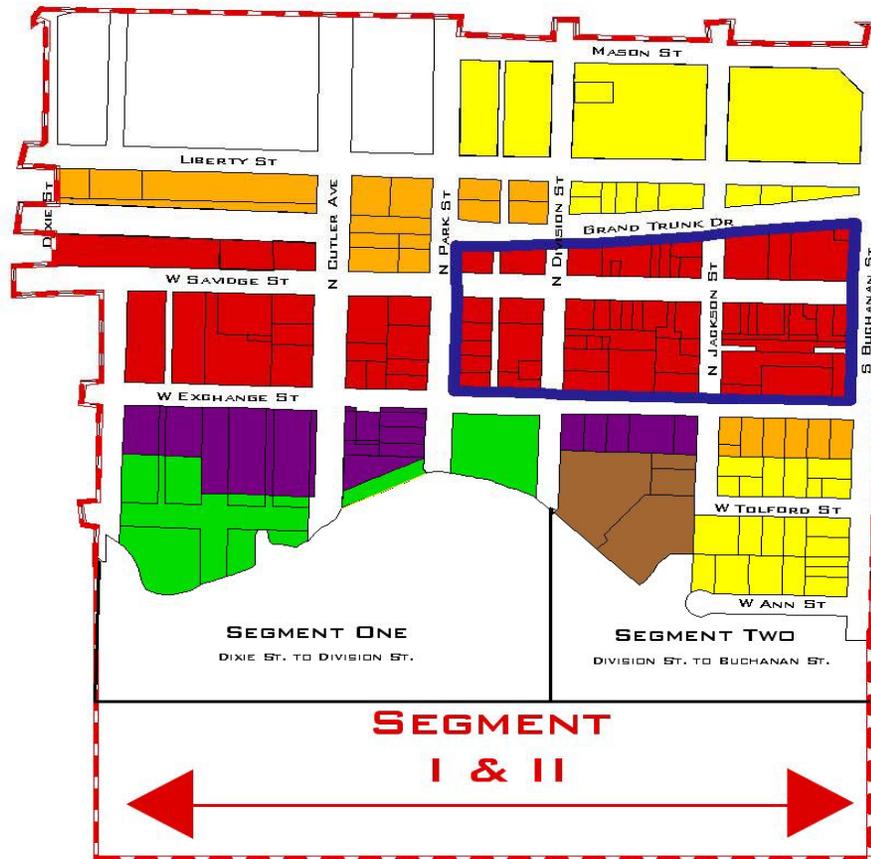
- Providing a good mix of retail uses that meets the area market demand.
- Having a safe and pleasant environment that pedestrians can travel.
- Providing a physically attractive area that is pedestrian oriented and free of blight.
- Lacing business areas with links among public space and neighborhoods to improve community fabric.

This section of the plan outlines objectives and strategies for economic development, transportation, design and land use after considering public input, the market study, and sound planning principals. While each category is outlined individually, the goals and strategies are still interdependent. In fact, many of the presented objectives and strategies could appear in several categories.

Land Use

Maps 5 and 6 depict future land use for the study area. Map 7 focuses on the core downtown by developing Exchange Street to both function as an alternative travel route and an expanded mixed use and retail area. Map IV presents the entire study area and strives to keep east-end retail business areas west of Fruitport Road and south of M-104. A small contained area on the northeast corner of Lake Street and M-104 is also earmarked for commercial uses. From Lake Street to Buchanan Street, land use is targeted to remain residential and institutional, with some small office areas. West of Buchanan Street represents a greater mix of land use with retail being concentrated around M-104 and Exchange Street. The area north of the retail uses along M-104 is targeted for residential and office uses. It is the intent

MAP 5
VILLAGE OF SPRING LAKE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN
FUTURE LAND USE
SEGMENT I AND II



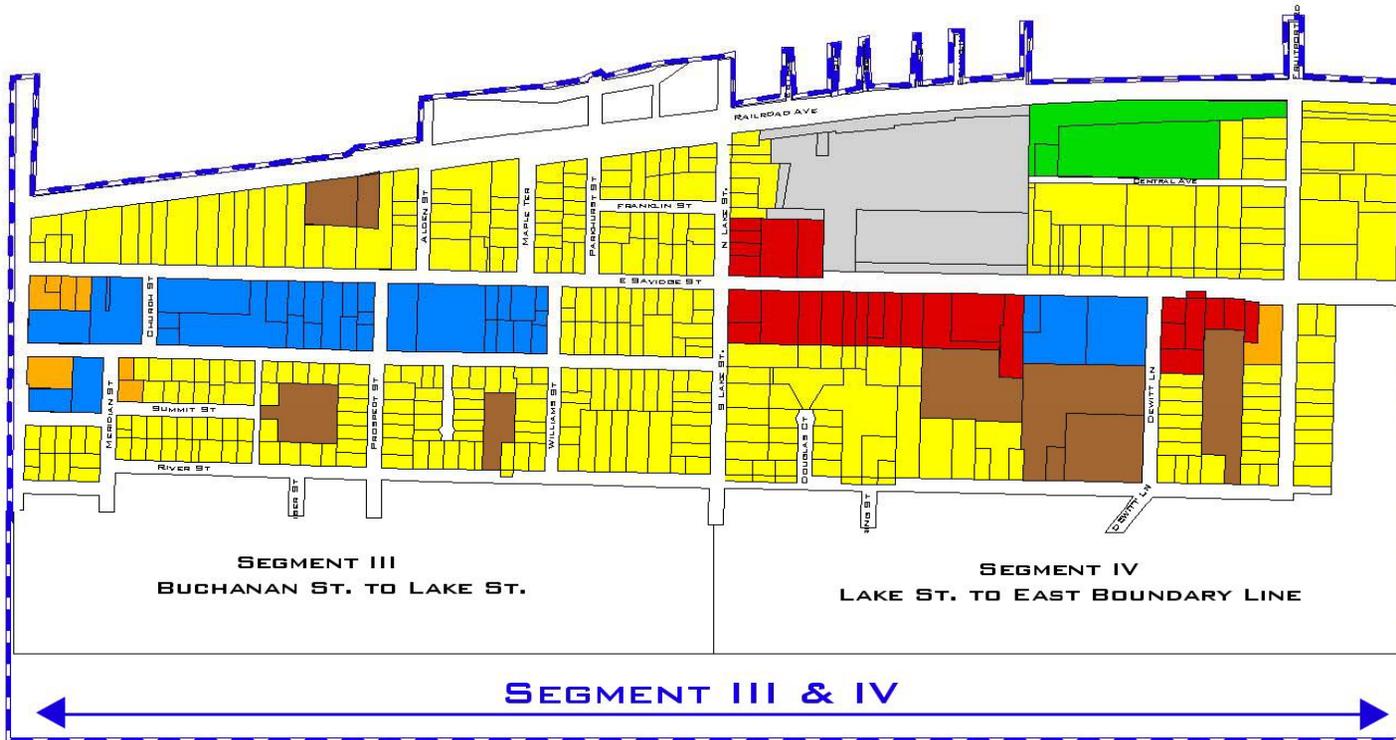
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MIXED USE
[RESIDENTIAL/OFFICE/RETAIL]
- MULTI-FAMILY
- OFFICE
- COMMERCIAL
- PUBLIC LAND
- DOWNTOWN CORE BOUNDARY






SOURCE: LSL LAND SURVEY 2003
 BASE MAP INFORMATION: OTTAWA COUNTY GIS
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**MAP 6
VILLAGE OF SPRING LAKE
FUTURE LAND USE
SEGMENT III & IV**



LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	INDUSTRIAL
MULTI-FAMILY	PUBLIC LAND
OFFICE	INSTITUTIONAL
COMMERCIAL	

200 0 200 Feet

SOURCE: LSL LAND SURVEY, 2003
BASE MAP INFORMATION: OTTAWA COUNTY GIS

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PRELIMINARY LAYOUT
FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

- LEGEND**
-  PROPOSED ROAD SECTION
 -  EXISTING TRAFFIC SIGNAL
 -  ALTERNATIVE FUTURE TRAFFIC SIGNAL LOCATIONS


MAP 7
CONCEPTUAL DOWNTOWN
CIRCULATION PLAN
 VILLAGE OF SPRING LAKE NO SCALE

that in areas west of Buchanan Street, second floor residential uses (with first floor office uses) and second floor office uses (with first floor retail uses) would be promoted. Mixed uses are proposed for areas adjacent to existing public land, so long as waterfront views are retained.

Objective: Create synergy and vibrancy in community business areas.

Objective: Promote traditional mixed use development (office, retail and residential) in the core downtown (between Park and Church Streets).

Objective: Protect sensitive environmental amenities and natural features.

Strategies:

1. Reduce the number of auto-dependent uses from the core downtown and orient them to another appropriate district (e.g., create a highway service district).
2. Evaluate Zoning Ordinance language to ensure that the zoning districts adequately differentiate auto-dependent uses from core downtown uses.
3. Relocate industrial uses between the Grand River and M-104, west of Park Street.
4. Limit office and personal service uses in the core business area to create a critical mass of retail activity.
5. Consider requiring first floor retail and permitting offices only on the second floor in the core downtown business district.
6. Consider permitting taller structures in the Central Business District (up to three stories, or 45 feet).

Design



Grand view by Tanglefoot Park

Objective: Create a “small-town,” well designed, pedestrian-oriented environment where people like to linger.

Objective: Develop stronger ties between the downtown and the waterfront.

Strategies:

1. Update and amend the Zoning Ordinance to support the development of a pedestrian-oriented downtown and to discourage strip commercial development design:

- a. Adopt building design criteria as part of the general provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.
- b. Develop a design guidebook (for example like the Ann Arbor model) and differentiate between the historic core and the remainder of the M-104 corridor.
- c. Enact a minimum height requirement in the core downtown on M-104 and Exchange Street to maintain the main-street mass of larger buildings, rather than the suburban model of one-story, strip commercial development.



National Main Street with design standards



Sheet metal façade that would not meet National Main Street design standards.

- d. Enact a “build-to” line along the core downtown along Exchange Street and M-104 to promote a focus on structures and not parking lots.
- e. Develop minimum design standards for structures, differentiating between the core downtown and other business areas. Include the standards in the zoning ordinance.
- f. Enact a maximum setback for buildings along M-104 and Exchange Street for areas outside the core downtown.
- g. Enact access management regulations that, among other things, require shared drives and/or rear and side access wherever possible.
- h. Modify sign regulations to permit only wall or perpendicular bracket signs in the core downtown.
- i. Develop an exception for monument signs if structures have a front setback of more than twenty feet.
- j. Prohibit electronic message boards in the core business district.



Bike Rack

- k. Require that Exchange Street businesses face and front Exchange Street.
2. Augment the current streetscapes and downtown spaces with:
- a. A kiosk with maps, community information, and special events.



Informational kiosk (left)

Public drinking fountain (below)





Outdoor café seating,

- b. Small scale, Village-oriented sculpture.
- c. Strategically placed benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and other street furniture.
- d. A spray park near the bike path somewhere between Park and Buchanan Streets or near Tanglefoot Park.
- e. A downtown gathering area, like outdoor seating, a small amphitheater, and/or perennial gardens.
- f. Marked pathways through the downtown that guide pedestrians through loops of specialty shopping, cultural amenities, water features and the waterfront.



Public sculpture



Annual flowers dress up a site

- g. More elaborately designed cross walks, particularly along M-104 and Exchange Street. Crosswalks could include LED lights on the pavement, pedestrian cones, or other emphasizing measures.



M-104 entry point, west of town

- h. More street trees (including lower-growing ornamentals) and low-level colorful landscaping (e.g., perennial and annual flower beds).
- i. Outdoor and roof seating to support cafes and pubs.



Grand River – Tanglefoot Park

- j. Consider carrying design elements and themes from the core downtown throughout the Village (e.g., lighting way-finding signs, decorative treatments, etc.).
3. Maintain and create views of the water in the downtown.
4. Collaborate with area churches and businesses to better mask large expanses of parking, particularly near residential areas.
5. Link the new specialty area to existing downtown retail through design elements like signs, pedestrian connections and shared parking.
6. Improve the image of the Village's entry points.
7. Provide a design element that better defines the end of the auto-oriented zone from the traditional main street, or pedestrian oriented zone.
8. Provide pedestrian links from commercial areas to public land on the Grand River.
9. Develop a design guidebook to facilitate better building design.
10. Accentuate the historic character of the community and document that history (e.g., on plaques) in public spaces throughout the community.
11. Accentuate the Women's Christian Temperance Union Fountain and the story behind it.



Rear entries to storefronts in Holt, Michigan (see also Page 7)

12. Improve pedestrian alleyways between M-104 and the back of main street store fronts. Provide more color, better lighting, benches and plantings in these areas to make them more inviting.

Economic Development

Objective: Make business areas a unique destination by developing a healthy mix of public gathering places and specialty shops.

Objective: Generate a “critical mass” of retail activity which creates an excitement and synergy that enhances the drawing power of retail activities.

Strategies:

1. Expand the Core downtown along Exchange Street to create a critical mass of retail activity that augments existing businesses.
2. Create a secondary commercial tier on the north side of Exchange Street to complement existing business areas. Locate this new area away from existing single-family housing and near waterfront vistas.
3. Actively reutilize vacant buildings (particularly on the east end of M-104), which may include acquisition and land assembly.
4. Develop an active recruitment and local business development program to fill vacant market niches.
5. Update and coordinate marketing materials.

6. Develop a support system for existing business retention and expansion efforts.
7. Investigate joint purchase of services to unify businesses and enhance consistent business presentation along the corridor. (e.g., group bids and purchase of signs, paving services, marketing materials, etc.).
8. Infill gaps in the street wall of the downtown by sandwiching buildings in which recreate the traditional Main Street, particularly on the North side of M-104 and along Jackson Street.
9. Sell parking lots that could be better used as building sites, as long as parking is replaced.
10. Permit second-story apartments or lofts as an accessory use in the core downtown.
11. Rezone areas of the downtown to facilitate future land use goals.
12. Develop display space for area artists to show their work.
13. Produce a condensed brochure outlining the Village's interesting history and distribute them in shops, City Hall, the library, etc.

Transportation and Access

Objective: Enhance traffic flow and safety along Savidge Street (M-104).

Objective: Improve north/south traffic movement across M-104.

Strategies:

1. Incorporate traffic calming measures on Exchange Street, from School Street to Church Street including small roundabouts and limited boulevards.



Example of a roundabout



Example of a boulevard

2. Vacate/sell Cutler Avenue, south of Exchange Street (and retain a 50-foot strip immediately adjacent to the water to link Mill Park with Tanglefoot Park), only if it is for a well-designed, mixed-use that complements the waterfront.
3. Consider implementation of M-104 access management recommendations found in the Michigan Department of Transportation corridor study.
4. Increase on-street parking along Exchange Street and appropriately mark the pavement for it.

5. Help facilitate the exploration of a second crossing over the Grand River that connects Robbins Road in Grand Haven Township to 148th Street.
6. Develop sidewalks along Exchange from School Street to Buchanan Street.
7. Mark sidewalks and other walkways (e.g., with simple lines or symbols) to draw visitors through the downtown. Markings could be color-coded depending on the motive. For example, links to the waterfront could be blue; links among interesting shops could be yellow, etc.
8. Develop and mark a walking trail among the Village's historic sites. Provide markers for the Village's historic homes.
9. Adopt a truck route map and ordinance to limit truck traffic to M-104.
10. Work with Michigan Department of Transportation on M-104 to move the Jackson Street traffic signal to Cutler Avenue and add a signal at Buchanan.



Sample interpretive plaque (Toledo, Ohio)



Alley off of M-104, east of Park Street

11. Close the M-104 curb cut and beautify the unimproved alley off of M-104, just east of Park Street.



Unpaved parking lot adjacent to M-104

Public Facilities

Objective: Create a backdrop of community amenities in public spaces to enhance downtown activities and private sector economic development efforts.

Strategies:

1. Relocate the recreational vehicle camping park in order to increase public access to the waterfront. For the new location, consider one of the following:
 - a. North of the boat launch by School Street
 - b. Property west of the middle school property
 - c. East of Village Cove
2. Develop a series of consistently designed “way-finding” signs, stationed throughout the downtown, to direct travelers to downtown amenities, parking, shopping areas and public spaces.



Sample way-finding map



Mill Point Park

3. Develop public restrooms close to the core downtown.
4. Build marina slips (some of them transient) on public land near the downtown.
5. Keep Mill Point Park properly dredged for continued use as a boat launch.
6. Develop a barrier-free fishing pier on public land near the downtown.



Non-motorized trail

7. Post dispensers of dog clean-up bags along walking trails.
8. Finish the boardwalk between the current RV park and Mill Point Park.
9. Finish the Lakeside trail extension from Cutler Avenue to the Spring Lake Condominiums.
10. Create a fifty (50) foot minimum strip of public land between Mill Point Park and Tanglefoot Park on the Grand River shoreline.

Community Activities

Objective: Promote activities and infrastructure that generate pedestrian traffic in Village business areas.

Strategies:

1. Develop pedestrian paths to the waterfront from residential and business areas.
2. Develop an interactive focal point to draw people off from M-104 to enjoy the Village (like a spray park). Local craft displays, contained bonfires and music could be a part of warm and cold weather activities.
3. Promote activities in public spaces (especially near the water) such as music, family reunions, buggy rides, a bonfire pit food vendors, art fair, farmer's market, carnival, etc., which generate activity downtown.



Spray Park (Boulder, Colorado)

4. Investigate promoting low-impact water sports that are better suited to inland waters than “the big lake”, like kayak or canoe races, paddle boats, model boat racing, etc. Designate safe zones for such sports and promote them.
5. Sponsor winter-oriented festivals (i.e., ice sculpting or a Christmas art fair) to generate activity downtown.
6. Develop a farmer’s market downtown. Potential locations include:
 - a. The vacant property west of the public library parking lot.
 - b. One of several church parking lots (perhaps a low rental rate to assist with church expenses).
 - c. Along the green space of the Lakeside trail.
 - d. North of Mill Park.
 - e. South of the Municipal Services Building.
 - f. At the terminus of Park and Division Streets, around the current RV park.

Housing

Objective: Enhance, diversify and maintain the Village housing stock

Strategies:

1. Develop programs to help with housing maintenance and upkeep including:
 - a. Obtaining or developing educational pieces for basic home maintenance needs.
 - b. Identifying skillful people who can help residents with minor home repairs.

- c. Investigating the development of a tool loaning program.
2. Promote accessory apartments above office or retail space in multi-story buildings.
3. Promote new housing development through infill.
4. Protect existing housing stock from demolition and encroachment for parking lots.

Property Maintenance

Objective: Prevent blight.

Strategies:

1. Work with property owners to spearhead property maintenance programs.
2. Develop a recognition program for businesses that have made an extra effort to improve the appearance of their property.



*Examples of
blight in Spring
Lake Village*



Collaborations

Objective: Utilize fiscal and human resources efficiently to accomplish the goals of this plan.

Strategies:

1. Investigate the potential of developing a parking deck (not multi-level ramp) to provide more parking without consuming structures and creating more pavement downtown.
2. Develop a more formal network among the Chamber of Commerce, DDA and corridor business owners to implement marketing, property improvement, and other plan strategies.
3. Work with local garden clubs or other civic groups to develop and maintain formal gardens, promote sponsorships and competitions among volunteer groups.



One level parking deck in Lansing, Michigan. Side view (left) is about 8 feet high and looks much like a screening wall but atop is parking and a few feet below the grates is another level of parking. Side view (top) shows scale better. Note the white parked car on top of the deck in the upper left corner of the photo.

Finance

Objective: Budget and generate adequate funds to finance the strategies of this plan.

Strategies:

1. Develop a downtown capital improvements plan.
2. Consider instituting a principal shopping district to generate funds for downtown improvements.
3. Search for appropriate grants to help finance key projects.

Action Plan

Since every community has limited resources, it is important to prioritize objectives so human and fiscal resources can be used to effectively implement this plan. Over the short term (1-3 years) the following strategies were viewed as the most important to tackle first. Once these priorities are addressed, the plan should be evaluated to select additional tasks for implementation.

1. Develop a Design Guidebook to serve as an educational piece to promote good design.
2. Draft a zoning amendment that provides design criteria as part of the site plan review process.
3. Devise a typical street and façade profile for the Exchange Street corridor to guide the character of new development.

Appendix A

M-104 Corridor Land Uses

East End – North Side



East End – South Side



West End – North Side



West End – North Side (Continued)



West End – South Side



West End – South Side (Continued)

