



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – ADOPTED APRIL 9, 2012
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN CLASSIFICATIONS

	Purpose	Typical Location / location criteria	Typical Uses	Typical Densities / building heights	Placemaking characteristics
Open Space – Dedicated Park	Publicly-owned land that has been dedicated to park and recreation use and cannot be sold without voter approval.	Not applicable	Open space, recreational facilities, community gardens, natural area protection and interpretation.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Open Space – Quasi-Public / Utility	Land used as utility and rail corridors.	Not applicable	Utility and rail corridors.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Low-Density Residential	To provide an environment for low-density, single-family detached dwellings.	Predominantly those single-family neighborhoods developed after World War II with larger block and lot sizes and lower development densities than in the pre-World War II neighborhoods that are located closer to the downtown area.	Single-family detached homes.	Six dwelling units per acre or less; 1- to 2-story building heights.	Building heights, lot widths and front yard setbacks vary, but are largely consistent within individual neighborhoods. Attached garages and two-car driveways are common.
Medium-Low-Density Residential	To provide an environment for medium-low-density single-family detached; single-family attached (townhomes); and two-family dwelling units.	Predominantly those single-family neighborhoods located closer to the downtown area and developed prior to World War II with smaller block and lot sizes and higher average densities than in post-World War II neighborhoods.	Single-family detached, single-family attached (townhomes) and two-family homes. Granny Flats, or apartments above a garage or building that is not the principle structure, may be permitted in two+ family zoning districts under certain conditions.	Six to ten dwelling units per acre; 2-story minimum and 3-story maximum building heights.	Front yard setbacks are generally consistent and shallower than in post-World War II neighborhoods located farther from downtown. Garages are usually detached and located to the rear of the principal structure; driveways are often one-car wide.
Medium-Density Residential – Urban	To protect existing single- and multi-family dwelling units in downtown’s edge zone.	Downtown edge zone.	Single-family detached, single-family attached, two-family homes and multi-family buildings. Granny Flats, or apartments above a garage or building that is not the principle structure, may be permitted in two+ family zoning districts under certain conditions.	Ten to twenty dwelling units per acre; minimum height of 2 stories and maximum height of 3 stories.	For new development; consistent, shallow front yard setbacks should be required: buildings should be parallel to and facing the street; parking should be located to the rear; building entries with porches or stoops should be oriented to the street. Minimum percent transparency and vertical orientation for windows should be considered for facades visible from the street.
Medium-Density Residential – Suburban	To provide an environment for multi-family dwelling units in a more suburban format (on larger parcels and served by surface parking).	Already existing on the edges of the city. NOTE: For future development, the location of medium and higher-density residential in more urban, mixed-use areas and along corridors served by transit is encouraged (see below).	Multi-family apartment complexes; mobile home parks when approved as a special use. Conditional uses include schools, churches and residential care facilities.	Ten to twenty dwelling units per acre; 2- to 3-story building heights.	Large blocks and curvilinear street patterns are common. In the future, a street pattern that extends (and elaborates) the existing street grid is recommended, as well as the location of buildings (and building entries) to face the street (and public spaces) with parking located to the rear.
Residential Corridor	To allow medium-density residential development in a variety of urban formats, rather than a conversion of residential to commercial use, along certain high-traffic streets that also serve as transit routes or are within easy walking distance (¼ mile).	Located on or within walking distance of an existing transit route currently developed for low-density or medium-low-density residential use where some commercial uses have also been developed, indicating pressure to transition from residential to commercial use.	Townhomes, stacked flats, multi-family apartments and lofts.	Twenty to fifty dwelling units per acre; 2- to 3-story building heights.	Buildings (and building entries) should be located to face the street with relatively shallow landscaped setbacks (10-20 feet); parking should be located to the rear accessed by a service alley; and context-sensitive architectural design should be utilized.



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Downtown Mixed-Use Center: Core	<p>To maintain and enhance the vitality of downtown as a regional destination by encouraging a mix of uses; reinforcing the compact, walkable character of the core area; emphasizing the quality and visual interest of architecture; carefully managing parking; and maintaining the presence of older, often historic buildings.</p>	<p>The area located within an approximate 5-minute walk (¼ mile) of the intersection of Allegan Street and Grand Avenue.</p>	<p>Offices, institutions, retail, personal services, entertainment, hotel and residential. Ground floor retail uses and residential should be encouraged. High rise office and residential towers with large surface parking lots and limited street frontage, and automobile-oriented uses should not be permitted.</p>	<p>Minimum height of 2 stories. For Washington Square between Michigan Avenue and St. Joseph Street the maximum building height should be 6 stories to maintain the intimate pedestrian character of this corridor. The remaining parts of this district do not have a height limitation. Base density/height and bonuses for residential, mixed-income housing, ground floor retail, open space and other desired development features will need to be determined. Residential densities should range between 60-100 dwelling units per acre.</p>	<p>Buildings should be located at the sidewalk edge with a nearly continuous street facade and a clearly defined primary entrance oriented to the street. Minimum ground floor transparency (windows and doors) should be established. Ground floor retail storefronts are encouraged. Building base and top should be articulated. Façade articulation into vertical units replicating traditional downtown building widths (e.g., at 30-foot intervals) should be considered. Materials standards should be considered. Surface parking is discouraged with deck parking underground, on-site above the ground floor and/or in the interior of the block, or in publicly-owned structures (funded in part by payments in lieu of parking). Parking ratio maximums should be considered.</p>
Downtown Mixed-Use Center: Edge	<p>To support the downtown area by allowing a mix of uses and to enhance the quality of the pedestrian environment; maintain the presence of older, often historic buildings; and provide for a transition in building height and use intensity to near-downtown neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Located between the downtown core and I-496 on the south, Old Town on the north and near-downtown neighborhoods on the east and west.</p>	<p>Office, institutions, entertainment, live-work and residential. Retail and personal services as an accessory use should be located in the same building as a primary use. Automobile-oriented uses and light industrial are permitted with special approval. High rise office and residential towers with large surface parking lots and limited street frontage should not be permitted.</p>	<p>Base density/height and bonuses for residential, mixed-income housing, ground floor retail, open space and other desired development features will need to be determined. Minimum 2 stories; up to 10 stories should be considered with height overlay zones and bonuses for desired development features. Residential densities of 20-100 dwelling units/acre depending on sub-area location and existing development context Refer to the descriptions of the sub areas found starting on page 52 as a reference to density and character.</p>	<p>Buildings should maintain a consistent setback and nearly continuous street facade to frame the street, with a clearly-defined primary entrance oriented to the street. Surface parking should be located on the interior of the block where possible and should be well landscaped and screened in all cases. Parking ratio maximums should be considered. Building base and top should be articulated. Façade articulation into vertical components should be considered. Minimum transparency (windows and doors) requirements should be established. Transitional features requirements (architectural elements and building massing height step backs) to mitigate potential conflicts between higher intensity uses and residential uses should be considered. Historic preservation of valuable existing buildings, and residentially-scaled and detailed new architecture should be encouraged in areas where older residential structures remain and on neighborhood edges.</p>



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Community Mixed-Use Center	To encourage the transformation of large commercial concentrations into mixed-use districts.	Major commercial centers located on high ridership transit routes/major thoroughfares (Frondor and Logan Center area and Jolly Road and South Cedar Street intersection).	Offices, institutions, live-work, retail, personal services, entertainment, hotel and residential. Ground floor retail uses are encouraged in the mixed-use center core. Larger footprint retail and office uses are allowed, but should be part of an overall plan that includes other scale uses and the integration of place making principles noted below. R&D and selected light industrial is permitted with special approval.	Base density/height and bonuses for residential, mixed-income housing, ground floor retail, open space and other desired development features will need to be determined. Building heights of 4-6 stories (25-60 dwelling units per acre) transitioning to 2-3 stories (6 -20 dwelling units per acre) and a more residential emphasis on neighborhood edges.	As Community Mixed Use Centers are redeveloped they should move from the existing suburban development patterns to a more urban character. The internal street pattern should be encouraged to create a typically urban grid of streets and small to moderate size blocks. Buildings should be located to frame the street with parking located to the rear. Shared and deck parking should be encouraged. Primary building entrances should be oriented to the street. Retail should be clustered to create a shopping core with ground floor retail storefronts; a minimum transparency requirement should be considered. Residentially-scaled and detailed structures should be encouraged on neighborhood edges.
District Mixed-Use Center	To support the mixed-use character and pedestrian scale of the existing Old Town, East Michigan Avenue and REO Town districts, and to encourage the consolidation of retail and commercial uses in walkable, mixed-use centers located at key intersections along high ridership transit routes and within walking distance of neighborhoods.	At key intersections on high ridership transit routes such as South Cedar Street (spaced at least ½ mile apart), and at existing mixed use centers including Old Town, East Michigan Avenue, and Reo Town. Locations illustrated are conceptual; other locations will be considered. Public assistance and investments should be targeted at these locations (and in downtown and community mixed-use centers) to encourage the consolidation and clustering of retail uses in walkable cores.	Retail, personal services, office, live-work and residential. Automobile-oriented uses should not be permitted.	Building heights of 2 stories minimum; 5 stories maximum with incentives. Residential densities of 10-25 units per acre should be permitted; higher residential densities of 25-50 dwelling units per acre should be permitted on key transit routes (e.g., South Cedar Street, East Michigan Avenue) and with incentives.	Buildings should be located to frame the street with parking located to the rear. Shared parking should be encouraged. Reductions in required parking should be offered as an incentive. Primary building entrances should be oriented to the street. Retail should be clustered to create a shopping core with ground floor retail storefronts. Residentially-scaled and detailed structures should be encouraged on neighborhood edges.
Neighborhood Mixed-Use Center	To encourage the location of convenience retail and services within walking distance of neighborhoods.	On major streets at key intersections.	Retail, personal services, office, live-work and residential. Automobile-oriented uses not permitted.	Building heights of 2-3 stories. Residential is anticipated as upper story use (10-25 dwelling units/acre).	Buildings should be located to frame the street with parking located to the rear. Shared parking should be encouraged. Primary building entrances should be oriented to the street. Buildings should be designed to allow ground floor retail and residential and/or office above.
Urban Mixed-Use Corridor	To encourage the redevelopment of strip commercial corridors between cores to create a transit-supportive mix of uses, with a clear pedestrian orientation.	Segments of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, South Cedar Street and Pennsylvania Avenue north of Jolly Road; East Michigan Avenue from downtown to the city limits; and North Grand River Avenue to the east and west of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.	Retail and personal services, medium-density residential in an urban format (see Residential Corridor), office, live-work, R&D and selected light industrial with special approval. Smaller-scale automobile-oriented uses may be acceptable when appropriate architecture and screening are used, and driveway curb cuts can be located and designed to maintain a clear pedestrian orientation.	Twenty to sixty dwelling units per acre (townhomes, stacked flats, multi-family apartments and lofts); 2-4 stories in height.	Buildings (and building entries) should be located to face the street; shallow landscaped setbacks (0-15 feet) should be permitted. Parking should be located to the rear; reductions in required parking (and parking maximums) should be considered. Shared driveways and cross-access easements along the rear property line should be encouraged. Storefront design should be required for retail and service uses. Minimum transparency requirements should be established. Façade articulation into vertical units should be considered. Context-sensitive architectural design should be utilized.



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Suburban Commercial	To allow for general retail and commercial use, including large footprint and automobile-oriented uses, in a suburban development format that also encourages a mix of uses and accommodates pedestrians, cyclists and transit users.	Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, South Cedar Street and Pennsylvania Avenue south of Jolly Road; the Edgewood commercial area; North Grand River at Capital City Boulevard and west; and North East Street.	General and convenience retail uses; medium-density residential in a suburban format (see Medium-Density Residential, above); office; and light industrial with special approval.	Ten to twenty dwelling units per acre and 2-3 stories for residential; 1- 3 stories for non-residential.	Buildings located close to the street (with parking located to the side and rear) should be encouraged at major intersections; otherwise, parking should be permitted between buildings and the street. Buildings should be oriented toward the street with a clearly-defined primary entry. Landscaped setbacks should be required to screen parking from the street. Interior parking lot landscaping should be required to provide pedestrian access routes, define vehicular circulation patterns and provide for tree planting and storm water management. Shared driveways and connections between parking lots on adjacent parcels should be encouraged to limit driveway curb cuts. Sidewalks should be required.
Institutional	To allow for the development of public and private institutions.	Abutting an arterial, suburban or activity corridor. Locations served by transit are preferred.	Hospitals, institutions of higher education.	Building heights of 60 feet; can be higher with special approval when located a similar distance from a residential district.	Buildings should be located to frame the street with parking located to the rear (or interior of the block) whenever possible. Transportation demand management programs and reduced parking requirements should be considered. Primary building entries should be oriented to the street. Minimum transparency requirements for facades visible from the street should be considered. The stepping down of building heights to residential edges should be encouraged. Landscaped setbacks similar to those for residential structures should be required on residential streets.
Research & Development (R&D)	To allow for technology-based business, including testing and limited assembly and production, in a high quality environment.	As a research park (Michigan State University Corporate Research Park) and/or as a reuse of industrial sites close to urban neighborhoods (GM Verlinden site; Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard between I-496 and the Grand River, and at Mount Hope Road and South Washington Avenue).	Technology-based research and development including office space, labs and limited assembly and production space.	Building heights of 3 stories and/or 45 feet; high bay space should be permitted.	Internal street and block pattern should be created extending the surrounding street grid. Buildings should be located to frame the street with parking located to the rear. Consistently dimensioned landscaped front yard setbacks (10-20 feet) should be required. Primary building entrances should be oriented to the street. For facades visible from the street and/or adjacent to residential, articulation into smaller architectural increments and minimum transparency should be required. Higher quality building materials than in industrial classifications (e.g., no DriVit or metal siding) should be required.



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Light Industrial	To provide an environment for commercial services, sales, warehousing/wholesaling, and manufacturing when located within an enclosed structure. No outdoor storage of materials or equipment other than sales displays should be permitted.	Within easy access of rail, air and highway transportation without traveling neighborhood streets. Clustering of uses in a business park environment served by an internal street system is preferred.	A broad range of uses/activities that are enclosed within a structure from kennels and self-storage facilities to plumbing, heating and electrical contractors, to commercial bakeries and laundries, to warehousing and wholesaling, to the manufacturing and processing of food, pharmaceutical, cosmetics/toiletries and similar products.	Building heights of 60 feet; can be higher with special approval and when located a similar distance from a residential district.	Landscaped front yard setbacks should be required; consistent front yard setbacks are preferred. Minimum 40-foot setback with landscaped buffering should be required from a residential district. Parking should be located to the side or rear with the exception of limited customer/visitor parking near the building entrance. Parking lot screening from the street and/or residential districts should be required; interior parking lot landscaping and storm water management should be required.
General Industrial	To provide an environment for industrial facilities that are larger in scale and require outdoor materials or equipment storage.	GM riverfront site, Midway Industrial Park, and along the rail line north and east of Old Town. Within easy access of rail, air and highway transportation without traveling neighborhood streets.	Power plants, automobile component manufacturing and assembly; scrap processing/recycling; and outdoor storage of equipment or materials. Light industrial uses should also be permitted.	Building heights of 60 feet; can be higher with special approval and when located a similar distance from a residential district.	Landscaped front yard setbacks should be required; consistent front yard setbacks are preferred. Minimum 40-foot setback with landscaped buffering should be required from a residential district. Parking should be located to the side or rear with the exception of limited customer/visitor parking near the building entrance. Parking lot screening from the street and/or residential districts should be required; interior parking lot landscaping and storm water management should be required. Materials and equipment storage should be located to the side or rear of buildings and screened from public streets and residential districts.