CITY OF IONIA

City Council

Daniel A. Balice, Mayor
Gordon Kelley  Kim Patrick  Jeff Winters  Troy Waterman
Tim Lee  Tom Millard  John R. Milewski, II  Janice Gustafson

Planning Commission

Boomer Hoppough, Chairperson
Dave Cook  Ted Paton
Mark Jennings  Tim Lee
Judy Swartz  Mike Donaldson

City Staff

Jason Eppler, City Manager/Community Development Director

Master Plan Adopted
October 9, 2019

Prepared with the assistance of
MainStreet Planning Company
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Maps by Progressive AE
Graphics by Kray Freestone
Steele Street Corridor Concept Plan by RJM Design, Inc.
Lafayette/East Washington Sub Area Plan by Wade Trim, Inc.
CITY OF IONIA

Verification of Adoption by the Planning Commission

I hereby certify that the 2019 Master Plan for the City of Ionia was duly adopted by the City of Ionia Planning Commission at its Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, October 9, 2019 at City Hall.

Ally Cook, City Clerk
A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY OF IONIA PLANNING COMMISSION ADOPTING THE CITY OF IONIA 2019 MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of Ionia has determined that it is necessary to update the City's 2012 Master Plan and that a new master plan is needed to guide the future development of the City; and,

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, being Act 33 of 2008, as amended, establishes the standards by which an updated master plan must be prepared; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has been charged with the responsibility to prepare the new master plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission conducted a Public Hearing on the proposed updated master plan at its October 9, 2019 regular meeting in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Enabling Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Ionia Planning Commission does hereby adopt the City of Ionia 2019 Master Plan.

Resolved this 9th day of October, 2019, upon a motion by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Commissioner Donaldson.

YES: Cook, Donaldson, Lee, Paton and Swartz
NO: None
ABSENT: Hoppough, Jennings
ABSTAINING: None

Jason Hippler, Recording Secretary
Date: October 10, 2019
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION
- Authority to Create the Plan 1
- Use of the Plan 1
- Preparation of the Plan 3

## CHAPTER 1 COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION
- Location 4
- Water Resources and Topography 4
- Government & Services 4
- Public Safety 5
- Public Utilities 5
- Public Works 6
- Parks and Recreation 6
- Finance 6
- Public Transportation 6
- Social and Economic Characteristics 10
  - Population 10
  - Housing 14
  - Income and Employment 18

## CHAPTER 2 GOALS & ACTION PLAN
- Residential Land Use 23
- Commercial Land Use 24
- Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Component 29
- Economic Development 35
- Steele Street Corridor Plan 38
- Industrial Land Use 38
- Recreational Land Use 39
- Transportation and Pedestrian Analysis 40

## CHAPTER 3 PLANNING ANALYSIS
- Land Use Changes Since 2012 43
- Existing Land and Influences 45

## CHAPTER 4 FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING PLAN
- Future Land Use Categories 48
- Steele Street Corridor Plan 50
- Low Density Residential 53
- Medium Density Residential 54
- High Density Residential 54
Multi Family Low Density Residential 56
Multi Family High Density Residential 56
Attached Urban Housing 57
Office 59
Central Business District 59
General Commercial 61
East Main Preservation 63
Health Services District 64
Industrial 65
Lafayette/East Washington Sub-Area Plan 66
Public/Institutional 68
Floodplain 68
Complete Streets Analysis & Recommendations 70

CHAPTER 5 IMPLEMENTATION 75
Zoning 75
Rezoning Evaluation Factors 76
Zoning Plan 77
Zoning Ordinance Recommendations 77
Planning Commission Work Program 79
Planning Commission Education 79
Revisions to the Plan 80

Tables
Table 1 Population of City of Ionia, Ionia County, State of Michigan, and Surrounding Townships 1990-2016 12
Table 2 Housing and Households by Type, City of Ionia, 2016 16
Table 3 Change in Number and Percentage of Owner Occupied and Renter Occupied Dwelling Units, 2010-2016 17
Table 4 Value of Owner-Occupied Units, City of Ionia, 2016 18
Table 5 Employment, City of Ionia and Ionia County, 2016 20
Table 6 Income, City of Ionia and Ionia County, 2016 20
Table 7 Occupations by Civilian Employed Population, 16 Years and Over, City of Ionia 21

Figures
Figure 1 Population by Age, City of Ionia, 2016 12
Figure 2 Age Group Comparison, City of Ionia, 2010 and 2016 13
Figure 3 Percentage of Millennials (20-34), City of Ionia, 2016 13
Figure 4 Median Age of Population-State of Michigan, Ionia County, and City of Ionia, 2016 14
Figure 5 Distribution of Housing Units, City of Ionia, 2016 17
Charts
Organizational Chart, City of Ionia 8

Appendix A
Results of Citizen Survey

Maps
Voting Wards, City of Ionia 7
Wellhead Protection Area, City of Ionia 9
Downtown Development Authority (DDA) District Map, City of Ionia
Lafayette/East Washington Sub-Area Concept Plan
Floodplain Map
Zoning Map
Steele Street Corridor Plan
Future Land Use Maps
INTRODUCTION

AUTHORITY TO CREATE THE PLAN

The City of Ionia Master Plan has been prepared by the Planning Commission under the provisions of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended. The Planning Act authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt a plan for the following purposes:

- To promote the public health, safety, and general welfare;
- To encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability;
- To avoid overcrowding of the land by buildings and people;
- To lessen congestion on public streets;
- To facilitate a transportation system, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, recreation and other public improvements; and,
- To consider the character and suitability of land for particular uses.

Although the Master Plan has no regulatory power, it states specific land development and preservation goals. These goals are intended to guide both the Planning Commission and the City Council in making both day-to-day and long-range land use decisions.

This Master Plan has been developed based on several factors: the existing natural and cultural resources of the City; current land use trends; the need for different types of land use including commercial, industrial, institutional and residential land uses; the desired community character as expressed through work sessions with the Planning Commission; and a community-wide survey.

State law requires that each community review its Master Plan every five years, and determine whether the plan should be amended or a new plan adopted. The City of Ionia has chosen to adopt a new Master Plan, which addresses land use policy for a minimum of the next five years. The 2019 Master Plan replaces the Master Plan adopted in 2012.

USE OF THE PLAN

The Master Plan serves as a tool for decision making by providing information and rationale for land use decisions. The Master Plan does not contain a specific time frame or timetable for the development of the City as recommended on the Future Land Use Map. Development takes place as land owners seek rezoning and as developers request approval of plans for residential, commercial, institutional and industrial projects in response to market demands.
The Master Plan does not dictate the timing of development but rather the Plan sets forth recommendations for what type of land uses may be established in the City; the best locations for these land uses; and the conditions under which they may best be established. However, the 2019 Master Plan does seek to establish priorities in implementing strategies that may serve to spark investment and revitalization for certain locations within the City.

In particular, the Plan will assist local officials in the following:

- **Review of rezonings and special use permits.** Applications for rezonings and special use permits should be evaluated not only in terms of specific ordinance standards but also in terms of how well the proposed action will be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.

- **Review of public improvement projects.** All future public improvement projects, including the construction of new facilities, utilities, or buildings, must first be reviewed by the Planning Commission for consistency with the Master Plan, according to PA 33 of 2008. In particular, any public improvement project must be reviewed to see whether it is consistent with the planned future land use pattern in the City. Public improvement projects include roads, public safety facilities, parks and recreation facilities, utilities, and any other public space, building, or structure.

- **Review of plats and site condominiums.** Site condominium development and traditional land divisions have a profound impact upon the character of a community and future public service needs. The Master Plan provides policies to assist the Planning Commission with decisions as to location and design of subdivisions, and the adequacy of public services to meet the increase in demand placed upon the community by the land use intensity of site condominiums and platted subdivisions. Policies for the subdivision or condominium development of land apply not only to residential land use, but to commercial and industrial land uses as well.

- **Maintaining community character while managing growth.** Each community has a vision for its future, and a sense for the desired character. However, growth is inevitable in a thriving community. The Master Plan, more than any other document, provides direction for City officials in managing growth while retaining the desired community character, and providing the best quality of life possible for current and future residents.
• **Providing a legal framework for zoning actions.** The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act requires that zoning regulations be “based upon a plan” (MCL 125.3203). A City’s zoning actions and regulations are generally viewed favorably by the courts provided that such actions and regulations are not deemed to be “arbitrary and capricious.” By providing adequate support for zoning decisions, the Master Plan therefore serves as the rationale for the zoning ordinances and helps to protect zoning decisions made by the Planning Commission, the City Council, and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

• **Providing consistency of process.** This Plan is a very strong and visible statement by City officials and residents regarding the intended future character of the community and strategies to assure that character. As a formal and tangible document, this Plan instills a sense of stability and direction for City officials, activities, and residents, and helps assure that each application for development is reviewed according to the same set of criteria.

**PREPARATION OF THE MASTER PLAN**

The City of Ionia Master Plan was last revised in 2012. The preparation of the 2019 Master Plan has been done in compliance with PA 33 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, as amended which requires that a community review its Master Plan every five years. The rate of development has increased since preparation of the 2012 Plan, reflecting an improvement in economic conditions across the State following the recession of 2007-2009. The City continues to focus upon pro-active and creative approaches to land use planning which will serve to enable and encourage revitalization of the City’s downtown core and other important areas.

The Master Plan process began in late 2017. An on-line community survey was launched in April of 2018, and was available on the City’s web site. The survey served a dual purpose by including questions relative to the update of the City’s Five-Year Community Parks and Recreation Plan. A total of 223 persons responded to the survey. Results of the survey are contained in Appendix A.

Planning Commissioners continued preparing the Plan at their regular meetings throughout 2018 and 2019. A work session was held with the City Council to present and discuss the Draft Plan on April 9, 2019. The City Council approved distribution of the Draft Plan, which was then made available to adjoining communities and Ionia County for their comment in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

The Planning Commission adopted the Plan on October 9, 2019 following a public hearing.
CHAPTER 1

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

LOCATION

The City of Ionia is located in central Ionia County, Michigan and serves as County Seat. The City adjoins Ionia Township, Easton Township, Berlin Township, and Orange Township. State of Michigan Highway M-21 runs east and west through the City, while State of Michigan Highway M-66 runs north and south through the City. Interstate Expressway I-96 is located approximately six and one-half miles south of the City. The Grand Rapids metropolitan area lies approximately 30 miles to the west, and the Lansing metropolitan area lies approximately 32 miles to the southeast.

WATER RESOURCES AND TOPOGRAPHY

The Grand River flows along the southern boundary of the City, while Prairie Creek runs along much of the eastern boundary of the City. The broad floodplain of the Grand River varies from 2000 to 4000 feet in width, with elevations of 620 to 645 feet. The terrain within the City rises rapidly to the north reaching elevations of 800 to 820 feet. The remaining lands in the northern portion of the City are characterized by a rolling landscape.

GOVERNMENT AND SERVICES

The City of Ionia follows the Council/Manager form of government. The City Council is comprised of a Mayor and eight council members. The Mayor serves a term of four years as the Chief Executive Officer of the City and is elected by the electorate on an at-large basis. Two Council members are elected from each of the City’s four wards on a partisan basis for four-year terms. (See Voting Wards map on page 7.) The City Council serves as the legislative body of the City and is responsible for approving the annual fiscal year budget. The City Council is also responsible for appointing the City Manager, City Assessor, City Attorney, and City Treasurer. The City Clerk is elected by the electorate on an at-large basis with a term of four years, and is responsible for the City election workers, keeping of the City records, and administering various business applications and licensing.
The City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer of the City. The City Manager has the authority to appoint, direct, and supervise all administrative officers of the City and is also responsible for the preparation of the annual City budget and capital improvement plan. The administrative officers of the City include the: Community Development Director, Finance Director, Parks and Recreation Director, Public Safety Director, Public Utilities Director, Public Works Director, and Public Transportation Director. In addition to conducting these tasks, the City Manager also prepares reports for and provides staff support to the City Council on matters of the City.

The City of Ionia employs a staff of approximately 50 full-time and 50 part-time employees.

The City of Ionia Organizational Chart is shown on page 8.

Public Safety

The Public Safety Department provides the community with a safe and secure environment through the enforcement of laws, fire suppression, emergency response, and public safety education. Public Safety officers are cross trained as police officers, firefighters, and EMS first responders. The Department currently has 15 full-time cross trained Public Safety officers. The City has 10 paid- on-call firefighters. Police services are provided to the City and to Ionia Township through a contract for part-time services. Fire services and emergency response have been contracted with Easton and Ionia Townships for several decades.

Public Utilities

The Public Utilities Department oversees water supply, water distribution, and wastewater treatment operations. The water source for the City is groundwater. The City has nine wells, each of which is over one hundred feet in depth, drawing from a glacial drift aquifer of the Pleistocene age. The City water operation has a capacity of 4.1 million gallons per day with a Fiscal Year 2016-2017 usage of 1.68 million gallons per day. The wastewater treatment plant has a daily capacity of 4 million gallons with a Fiscal Year 2016-2017 usage of 2.03 million gallons per day.
The City actively participates in a Wellhead Protection Program to help protect its water supply from contamination that may compromise the health and safety of water customers. The Wellhead Protection Area map is shown on page 9.

Public Works

The Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance of over 26 miles of streets; the maintenance of the 70-mile water distribution system; and the 50-mile sewer collection system. The Department also maintains over 800 decorative turn-of-the-century streetlights and helps decorate the City during seasonal promotions. All solid waste programs, including yard waste collection and street sweeping, are handled by the Department, in addition to parks and cemetery maintenance.

Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Department oversees thirteen City parks, the Fred Thwaites Grand River Trail, softball fields, and the Armory Community Center with a gymnasium and two conference rooms. The Department offers a variety of parks and recreation opportunities for residents and guests of the community. The Department provides a comprehensive system of year-round recreation and leisure services designed to meet the needs of the community, and provides programming for health and fitness, as well as personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Finance

The Finance Department oversees the budgets for all City funds which total over $19,000,000. The Department processes accounts payables, payroll, water/sewer/waste billing and collects income and property taxes, and responds to residents’ inquiries.

Public Transportation

The Dial-a-Ride Department provides public transportation services within the City and on a limited basis in the surrounding townships. Dial-A-Ride operates as an “on-demand” service, by means of a fleet of busses, most of which are equipped with handicap accessible lifts.
Wellhead Protection Area, City of Ionia.

Source: Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Population

According to the US Census Bureau 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, the population of the City of Ionia is 11,384 persons. This represents a population loss of ten persons as compared to the year 2000 population of 11,394 persons. In 2018, 4,913 persons were residents of the Michigan Department of Corrections facilities located within the City limits and within areas of the City with PA 425 agreements. Therefore, approximately 6,481 persons are residents outside correctional facilities.

For the same time period, Ionia Township experienced a loss of one person, while Orange Township experienced a greater loss of 63 persons, which, due to the small population of Orange Township, resulted in a 6.28% loss. Berlin Township showed an increase of 314 persons, which is a 14.84% increase. Easton Township grew slightly with an increase of 16 persons. Ionia County as a whole had a small increase of 159 persons, which is a 0.25% increase. The State of Michigan experienced a small increase of 16,931 persons, or 0.17%.

Overall, the population of the City of Ionia and the surrounding area is neither growing nor declining significantly, with the exception of Berlin Township which has shown the most growth over the five-year period.

The population changes of the City, surrounding townships, from the year 1990 through 2016 are illustrated in Table 1.

The 2012-2016 US Census Estimates did not report institutionalized persons living in group quarters. While group quarters as defined by the US Census Bureau includes nursing homes, residential treatment homes, correctional facilities, and other group living arrangements, the majority of residents in group quarters in the City can be attributed to persons in the correctional facilities.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of the population by age. The number of persons under five years has increased slightly from 5.1% in 2010 to 5.6% in the 2012-2016 US Census Bureau Estimates. While this figure does not represent a significant increase in young residents, it does not show a decline. Persons ages 5-19 years, also considered school age years, have shown a similar slight increase from 14.3% in 2010 to 14.5%.

The largest age group in the City is the 20 to 44 years age group which makes up 48.1% of the total population. This is somewhat of a decrease from 52.4% in 2010. These figures are much greater than most cities the size of Ionia due to the population of the correctional facilities.

The 45-64 years age group has increased slightly from 21.8% to 23.4%. This trend shows some aging of the population, but also an increase in those persons still in their working years.
Persons of the traditional retirement age group of 65 to 84 years have increased somewhat from 5.4% to 7.2%. Again, this trend shows an aging of the population common in Michigan for cities of the age and size of the City of Ionia. Those residents over the age of 85 comprise 1.3% of the population, which is essentially the same as the 2010 figure of 1.0%. Figure 2 compares changes in age groups from the year 2010 to 2016.

According to the 2012-2016 US Census Bureau Estimates, the median age of persons in the City is 34.4 years compared to 32.3 years in the 2010 US Census figures. (Median age was reported at 26.5 years by the year 2000 US Census figures.) As with other demographics, the ages of the population are influenced by the presence of those in correctional facilities, as well as an aging population located outside of correctional facilities. Ionia County also experienced in increase in median age of persons from 37.0 years in 2010 to 38.2 years in the 2012-2016 Estimates. The year 2000 US Census reported the County’s median age at 32.9 years. Median Ages of The State of Michigan, Ionia County, and the City of Ionia are compared in Figure 4.

Figure 3 shows the number of millennials in the City; millennials typically are the age group from 18-34 years, born in the years 1982-2000. These persons are now approximately 18-36 years of age. Millennials often seek a location conducive to their lifestyle, while seeking job opportunities. The data available shows persons ages 20-34 years in the City. The percentage of millennials in the City is 31.8%, or approximately 3,620 persons. This number includes those persons of that age group who are in correctional facilities. Attracting and retaining millennials is typically valued as it is an indicator of a vibrant community and a thriving economy.
Table 1: Population of City of Ionia, Ionia County, State of Michigan, and Surrounding Townships 1990-2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>Change (Number)</th>
<th>Change (Percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Ionia</td>
<td>5,935</td>
<td>10,569</td>
<td>11,394*</td>
<td>11,384**</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-0.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ionia Township</td>
<td>3,153</td>
<td>3,669</td>
<td>3,779</td>
<td>3,778</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange Township</td>
<td>1,047</td>
<td>1,040</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>-62</td>
<td>-6.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin Township</td>
<td>3,610</td>
<td>2,787</td>
<td>2,116</td>
<td>2,430</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>14.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easton Township</td>
<td>5,384</td>
<td>2,835</td>
<td>3,082</td>
<td>3,098</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ionia County</td>
<td>57,024</td>
<td>61,518</td>
<td>63,905</td>
<td>64,064</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>9,295,297</td>
<td>9,938,444</td>
<td>9,883,640</td>
<td>9,900,571</td>
<td>16,931</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 1990, 2000, 2010; Decennial Census; 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Includes 5,230 persons in group quarters. The actual 2010 City population is 6,164 persons.

**Includes 4,913 persons in correctional facilities. The actual 2016 City population is approximately 6,471 persons.

Figure 1: Population by Age, City of Ionia, 2016

Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Figure 2: Age Group Comparison, City of Ionia, 2010 and 2016

Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 3: Percentage of Millennials (20-34), City of Ionia, 2016

Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Figure 4: Median Age of Population-State of Michigan, Ionia County, and City of Ionia, 2016

Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing
Table 2 shows Housing and Households by Type for the City of Ionia. The total number of housing units in the City increased by 403 units since 2010, for a total of 3,178 housing units (both occupied and vacant). The total occupied housing units increased by 434, a much greater increase in occupied housing units than the decade between 2000 and 2010. This is due to the decrease in vacant housing units from 347 in the year 2010 to 316 in the year 2016; and the increase of both owner occupied and renter occupied housing.

Renter-occupied housing increased by 177 units while owner-occupied housing units increased by 204 units from 2010 to 2016. While the 2012 Master Plan did not report numbers of detached and attached housing units, the increase in occupied dwelling units is due to the construction of not only detached single family housing, but may also be due to the construction of attached dwelling units, or the conversion of dwelling units to two or more units in a structure.

The ratio of owner occupied dwellings to owner occupied dwellings is 54.6% to 45.4% of all occupied units as illustrated in Table 3. This is compared to the 2010 ratio of 53.8% to 46.2% of all occupied units. The percentage of owner occupied dwellings has slightly increased, while the percentage of renter occupied dwellings has slightly decreased. One of the goals of the 2012 Master Plan was to increase the percentage of owner occupied dwellings in the City, to enhance neighborhood character and maintain or increase property values. While the percentage of
ownership dwelling units has increased only slightly (.8%), the trend also indicates a stabilizing of the ratio of owner occupied to renter occupied dwelling units.

Figure 5 illustrates Owner Occupied Dwelling Units, Renter Occupied Dwelling Units, and Vacant Housing Units as a percentage of the total number of dwelling units in the City.

According to the 2016 US Census Estimates, family households make up the majority of the total households in the City with 1,5843 housing units or 64.4% of all housing units. Of those family households, married couple families totaled 1,016 or 55.1% of all family households (and 35.5% of all households), down from the 2010 percentage of 68.75%. While not recorded for the 2012 Master Plan, the current number of households with female heads and no spouse present is 507 or 27.5% of family households (and 17.7% of all households). Households with a male head and no spouse present is 17.45 of all family households (and 11.2% of all households). Taken together, single parent (or guardian) households comprise 44.9% of family households, and 29.7% of all households in the City.

Non-family households, those made up of single persons and unrelated persons residing at the same address, total 1,018 or 35.6% of all households compared to 908 non-family households in 2010 or 37.4%. While the number of non-family households has decreased, the percentage of non-family households has increased somewhat.

In 2010, the average household size was 2.53 persons per household, while the average family size was 3.12 persons per household. The 2016 US Census Estimates reports average household size for both owner occupied and renter occupied housing. These figures are 2.76 and 2.68 persons per household respectively. If one assumes that most family households reside in owner occupied housing, then the average family size has decreased by .36 persons.
## Table 2: Housing and Households by Type, City of Ionia, 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing/Household Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Housing Units (Occupied or Unoccupied)</td>
<td>3178</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Housing Units (includes seasonal, recreational, occasional)</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupied Housing Units</td>
<td>2862</td>
<td>90.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– 1-unit detached</td>
<td>1852</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– 1-unit attached</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– 2 or more unit structures</td>
<td>1219</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Mobile Home</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied Housing Units</td>
<td>1564</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied Housing Units</td>
<td>1298</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Households</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married-couple Family Households</td>
<td>1016</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– With own Children &lt; 18</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Heads w/no Spouse Present</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– With own Children &lt; 18</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Heads w/no Spouse Present</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– With own Children &lt; 18</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Types with Children Under 18 Years</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Family Households</td>
<td>1018</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– One Person (Living Alone)</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Size (owner-occupied)</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Size (renter-occupied)</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
Table 3: Change in Number and Percentage of Owner Occupied and Renter Occupied Dwelling Units (Percentage is based on Occupied Dwelling Units).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Occupied Housing Units</td>
<td>2,428</td>
<td>2,862</td>
<td>+434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied Units</td>
<td>1,307</td>
<td>1,564</td>
<td>+257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied Units</td>
<td>1,121</td>
<td>1,298</td>
<td>+177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Owner Occupied</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
<td>+0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Renter Occupied</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
<td>-0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2010, Decennial Census; 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; MainStreet Planning Company

Figure 5: Distribution of Housing Units, City of Ionia, 2016

Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
The majority of owner-occupied housing units in the City are valued within the $50,000 to $99,999 range which is 43.7% of those units for which value was determined. Housing units ranging from $100,000 to $149,999 have the second largest share with 25.6%. Together, houses ranging from $50,000 to $149,999 make up 69.3% of the total owner-occupied housing units, whereas in 2012 this range of housing values comprised 87.5%.

A significant difference in the housing values for the year 2016 estimates compared to the 2012 US Census data, is the housing valued at less than $50,000 has increased from 2.1% of the sampled units in 2012 to 19.1% of the sampled units in 2016.

The median (middle) value of housing units in the City is $82,500, while the median value County-wide is $113,100.

**Table 4: Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units*, City of Ionia, 2016.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $50,000</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 - $99,999</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 - $149,999</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 - $199,999</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000 - $299,999</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300,000 - $499,999</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500,000 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Value of Housing Units (City of Ionia)</td>
<td>$82,500</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Value of Housing Units (Ionia County)</td>
<td>$113,100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Income and Employment

Tables 5 and 6 summarize employment in the City and compare it to the same set of data for Ionia County. According to the 5-Year Estimates of the American Community Survey from 2012-2016, the City of Ionia has an unemployment rate of 6.1%, compared to the Ionia County rate of 4.7%. As of December 2017, the United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics reported the national unemployment rate at 4.1%, and the State of Michigan unemployment rate at 4.7%. The City’s rate of unemployment has increased since data was reported in 2010, from 3.5% to 6.1%; while Ionia County as a whole showed a minor decrease, from 4.8% in 2010 to 4.7% in late 2017. The rise in the unemployment rate in the City may be attributed to job losses due to closure of correctional facilities.
The median household income, the average (mean) household income, and the average family income of the City are all significantly less than the same data sets of the County, as was the case in 2010.

The City also experiences a higher level of families with poverty status compared to Ionia County. Families with poverty status in the City has increased significantly since data was reported in the 2012 Master Plan. The rate in 2010 was 23.9% while the rate for 2016 is 30.6%. Individual people with poverty status is 33.1%. Explanations for these differences may be due to a variety of reasons. Older, incorporated areas tend to have a higher percentage of older and retired citizens, who may be living on fixed or reduced incomes; the US Census data for ages in Ionia is skewed due to the presence of correctional facilities, and the ages of residents outside correctional facilities may show a larger percentage of persons of retirement age. Also, the population of persons in the correctional facilities along with their friends and families residing in the area may contribute to the lower income in the City. In addition, older cities tend to have lower incomes than suburban areas where higher income earners have located; the County-wide data reflects these suburban areas.

Table 7 shows employment by occupation, industry, and class of worker. Regarding occupations, numbers of jobs in all categories have increased since data was reported for the 2012 Master Plan (2005-2009 US Census Bureau Estimates). The percentage of jobs in each category has not changed significantly, with one exception: the number and percentage of jobs in the Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations (previously called the Construction, extraction, maintenance and repair occupations) has increased from 192 jobs at 5.8% of the total, to 337 jobs at 11.2% of the total. This change likely is the result of an economy significantly improved from the time at which the data was presented for the 2012 Plan, a time period which reflected the Michigan recession.

Employment by industry shows most industry sectors occupying the same percentage of jobs with some notable exceptions. Construction jobs showed a decrease from 6.1% of the total to 2.0%. Other decreases are in the Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing sector (9.0% to 4.7%); and the Public administration sector (11.0% to 4.4%).

Employment gains by industry include Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services (2.4% to 7.2%); Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (7.5% to 11.0%); and Other services except public administration (3.4% to 6.6%).

Reasons for changed in employment by industry likely reflect loss of jobs at correctional facilities; lack of recovery (or lag time in data reporting) from the recession regarding new construction; slow recovery of the real estate market; increases in the health services sector due to the Sparrow Hospital facility; some increases in the food services market and other services that provide for the day to day needs of residents and non-resident employees alike.
Regarding class of worker, private wage and salary workers remain the highest percentage of workers, and although this category has dropped slightly in actual numbers, it has increased as a percentage of all workers from 77.8% to 84.9% since the 2012 Master Plan was adopted. Government workers have been reduced significantly in both numbers and percentage approximately by one-half, since the 2012 Plan. This classification has been reduced from 552 jobs to 248 jobs, and from 16.5% of all jobs to 8.25. This reduction is likely due to reduction in jobs at the Michigan Correctional Facilities.

The percentage of Self-employed and Unpaid family workers remains substantially the same as in the 2012 Master Plan.

Table 5: Employment, City of Ionia and Ionia County, 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>City of Ionia</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Ionia County</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population 16 Years and Over</td>
<td>9,677</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50,905</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,605</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
<td>29,649</td>
<td>58.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- In Labor Force</td>
<td>3,015</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>27,224</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Employed</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>2,417</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 6: Income, City of Ionia and Ionia County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>City of Ionia</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Ionia County</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$31,744</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$50,037</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Household Income</td>
<td>$40,558</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$59,667</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Family Income</td>
<td>$39,986</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$58,335</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Family Income</td>
<td>$46,391</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$67,976</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families with Poverty Status</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with Poverty Status</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Occupations by Civilian Employed Population, 16 Years and Over, City of Ionia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management, business, science, and arts occupations</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service occupations</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and office occupations</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production, transportation, and material moving occupations</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and warehousing, and utilities</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational services, and health care and social assistance</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services, except public administration</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class of Worker</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private wage and salary workers</td>
<td>2,561</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government workers</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid family workers</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over</strong></td>
<td>3,015</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER 2
GOALS & ACTION PLAN

The 2019 Master Plan retains some of the Goals and Action statements adopted as part of the 2012 Plan while proposing new ones based on the results of the community survey and input from the Planning Commission and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The goals and actions are intended to be realistic, yet in some cases visionary. In anticipation of the City of Ionia pursuing Redevelopment Ready Communities Certification® through the State of Michigan, Action Agents are named for each action step following each goal, or in some cases for groups of Action Steps. Organizations are named as Action Agents rather than specific individuals.

Goals are grouped by major land use categories:

- Residential
- Commercial
- Downtown Development Component as recommended by the Downtown Development Authority (DDA).
- Economic Development
- Steele Street Corridor
- Industrial
- Recreational
- Transportation

A separate category of Goals called Economic Development is included in the Master Plan; this category in included in anticipation of the City of Ionia pursuing Redevelopment Ready Communities Certification®. Economic Development Goals and Actions are linked to future land use policies where appropriate.
Residential Land Use

Goal 1: Maintain and improve the quality of existing neighborhoods. Promote, preserve, and improve the living environment of the residential areas of the City and provide a variety of living choices to serve the needs of various age groups and life stages.

Actions:

1. Continue to enforce existing housing code regulations and determine revisions necessary to City codes and ordinances that will improve the ability of the City to require the desirable appearance and maintenance of all residential structures and lots, and the size, appearance and structural integrity of accessory buildings.

   **Action Agent:** Code Enforcement Officials; Planning Commission

2. Maintain and increase the percentage of owner occupied dwellings to renter occupied dwellings, which in 2016 was 54.6% to 45.4%, in order to promote residential stability and property values. Compare areas planned and zoned for multi-family land use to land planned or zoned for detached and attached single-family dwellings; consider rezoning vacant areas zoned for multi-family use to single-family use.

   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council

3. Maintain a program of street improvements and maintenance; sidewalk requirements and maintenance; streetlight requirements and maintenance; and neighborhood park improvements and maintenance to ensure a safe and desirable quality of life in City neighborhoods.

   **Action Agent:** Department of Public Works; Department of Parks and Recreation

4. Identify parcels or neighborhoods where “Missing Middle” housing may be a compatible and desirable use for development and redevelopment. Missing Middle Housing is defined as a form of Attached Urban Housing which may include duplexes, fourplexes, and multiplexes of a small scale as well as bungalow courts, townhouse, and carriage houses. This type of housing may appeal to those beginning a career, young families,
and those of retirement age. Attached Urban Housing is intended to be compatible with single family neighborhoods, and to be primarily ownership dwelling units. Develop ordinance language and a review process which will help insure compatibility with existing single-family neighborhoods.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council

5. Review and amend the requirements of the B-2 Community Business District (downtown) to permit the conversion of existing buildings to condominium ownership units and rental units, to increase the number of downtown residents.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council

6. Identify locations along the Lincoln Avenue (M-21) corridor from Dexter Street to the City limits which may be suitable for Attached Urban Housing.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission

7. Monitor the need for senior housing/assisted living communities based upon availability of facilities and waiting lists; work to attract developers of these types of communities. Determine availability of parcels suitable for this type of development.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; Ionia County Commission on Aging

8. Recognize the importance of historic structures in the City and support local historic preservation efforts.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; Ionia County Historical Society

**Commercial Land Use**

**Goal 1:** Create a vibrant, active downtown which retains its historical architectural character while being responsive to contemporary trends in amenities and services.

**Actions:**

1. Review the regulations of the B-2 Community Business District to determine whether certain uses should be added to the district to reflect current trends such as breweries and distilleries with food service and retail sales; options for food service and retail
sales; conversion of existing buildings to high-tech industries such as software development; and other uses as may be identified.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; Downtown Development Authority

2. Review and amend the requirements of the B-2 Community Business District (downtown) to permit a variety of housing options and price options, both rental and ownership, to increase the vitality of the downtown. Options may include the conversion of existing buildings as well as construction of new Attached Urban Housing.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; Downtown Development Authority

3. Create a more contemporary feel in the downtown area through the creation of a central plaza for special events; gathering spaces; outdoor cafes; coffee shops; and other food service establishments that will cater to both downtown workers and visitors to the City. Consider exploring a site for an outdoor amphitheater. Increase connectivity in the downtown area through improved cellular service and public Wi-Fi service; conduct feasibility studies to determine cost and providers.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; Downtown Development Authority; Parks and Recreation Department

4. Continue and increase beautification of the downtown area through street trees, landscaping, and public art.

**Action Agent:** Department of Public Works; Planning Commission; City Council; Downtown Development Authority; local arts organizations.
5. Provide public restrooms in the downtown.

**Action Agent:** Department of Public Works; Planning Commission; City Council; Downtown Development Authority

6. Continue to review needs for parking for day to day business and also special events.

**Action Agent:** Department of Public Works; Planning Commission; City Council; Downtown Development Authority

7. Review procedures for code enforcement in the downtown area, in particular with regard to building maintenance, vacant buildings, and storage of refuse.

**Action Agent:** Code Enforcement Officials
Goal 2: Maintain and enhance the appearance and function of the Lincoln Avenue (M-21) corridor.

**Actions:**

1. Plan for additional commercial and office uses along the Lincoln Avenue Corridor in select locations; rezone areas only as development proposals occur; draft landscaping and sign regulations that enhance the appearance of the corridor.
   
   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council

2. Adopt design standards, such as driveway placement standards and connected parking areas, that improve access to businesses and safety along the corridor.
   
   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

3. Plan for Attached Urban Housing in select locations along the corridor; adopt regulatory standards that ensure that Attached Urban Housing will be compatible with existing single-family neighborhoods along and behind the corridor.
   
   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council

4. Maintain the current appearance and function of the Lincoln Avenue corridor through code enforcement, and through site plan review as existing businesses expand or redevelop.
   
   **Action Agent:** Code Enforcement Officials; Planning Commission

Goal 3: Continue efforts to improve the appearance and function of the M-66 and Dexter Street Corridor within the City limits by addressing vehicle access, landscaping, street furniture, signs, and turning movements.

**Actions:**

1. Review the regulations of the B-1 Neighborhood Business District and the B-3 General Business District, including all applicable regulations that impact site plan review, to determine if such regulations result in the desired function and appearance of the M-66 and Dexter Street Corridors.
   
   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)
2. Establish communication with the Ionia Free Fair Board regarding needs for access, development plans, and needs for marketing of events at the Free Fair grounds.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; Downtown Development Authority; Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT); Ionia Free Fair Board

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**Goal 4:** Establish communication with Sparrow Hospital officials and cooperate with them in meeting their expansion needs which may develop.

**Actions:**

1. Work with Orange Township to evaluate the possibility of establishing a Health Services District adjacent to the current Sparrow Hospital facility, the purpose of which is to attract and retain quality medical and health related businesses.

**Action Agent:** Orange Township officials; Planning Commission; City Council; Sparrow Hospital Administrative Officials; Health Care and Wellness Professionals
Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Component

The City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is governed by a 9-member Board of Directors. The DDA was established by the City Council in 1981. The DDA is currently supported financially by a Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) which includes all of the parcels of land included in the DDA District and a 2-mill property tax levy which is applied to all properties located in the DDA District. Revenues received by the DDA are used to finance improvements and fund programs which improve the business climate within the DDA District.

The goals and actions listed were approved by the DDA at its August 15, 2018 meeting. The goals are based on the results of the community survey administered as part of the Master Plan update process; projects identified in the DDA Tax Increment Financing and Development Plan adopted by the DDA; and recommendations of the DDA Board.

GOAL 1: Façade Improvement/Building Rehabilitation

Improve the appearance of buildings in the DDA District through continued revitalization efforts. Such efforts will help preserve the architectural character of historic structures and encourage additional retail and residential development within the district.

Actions:

1. Continue the Downtown Façade Program by identifying sources of funding for façade/building improvement projects (i.e. façade improvement grant funds, low-interest loans, etc.).

   **Action Agent:** Local Business Community; DDA Board; Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC); Local Lending Institutions
2. Establish design guidelines for the DDA District which will identify appropriate materials, signage, etc. for use in improvement/development projects. Incorporate these guidelines as part of a greater unified design scheme for the DDA District. Require adherence to these guidelines for façade improvements and other development-related incentives provided by the DDA.

**Action Agent:** Historic Architectural Consultant; Local Business Community; DDA Board; Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC); Third Party Grant Administrator

3. Identify façade/building improvement projects for the DDA district.

**Action Agent:** Historic Architectural Consultant; Local Business Community; DDA Board

4. Identify architectural styles that will complement the existing character of the downtown area. Consider contemporary styles that may blend with existing historic architecture. Require that improvements to downtown structures be reviewed by an architectural committee comprised of interested businesspersons and members of the DDA Board. Consider requiring review by the architectural committee for structures in the DDA district prior to a building permit being issued for the project; recommendations may be advisory only or may be a condition of receiving a building permit.

**Action Agent:** Local Business Community; DDA Board; Code Enforcement Officials
GOAL 2: Gateway Site Development

Complete the construction of the Gateway Park project on the vacant property owned by the DDA at the northeast corner of Main Street and Dexter Street.

Actions:

1. Determine potential sources of funding for the Gateway Park project, including: local granting agencies, DDA funds, and private sponsorships or donations.

2. Create and implement a timeline for site development.

Action Agent: Department of Parks and Recreation; DDA Board; Planning Commission

GOAL 3: Residential Development

Identify and implement initiatives to aid in the rehabilitation and development of residential units within the DDA district.

Actions:

1. Develop and implement a residential rental rehabilitation program.

   Action Agent: DDA Board; City Council; Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA); Third Party Grant Administrator

2. Identify and pursue additional initiatives available to rehabilitate residential units within the downtown. Communicate information about such programs and initiatives to current and potential property owners in the DDA district.

   Action Agent: DDA Board; City Council
3. Develop a comprehensive plan for the development of additional residential units in the DDA district. The plan should include potential development sites and examples of contemporary architecture which will complement the historic character of the DDA district, as identified in Goal 1 of this section.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; DDA Board; City Council

4. Identify parcels in the downtown area where “Missing Middle” housing (Attached Urban Housing) may be a compatible and desirable use for development and redevelopment. Attached Urban Housing which may include duplexes, fourplexes, and multiplexes of a small scale as well as bungalow courts, townhouse, and carriage houses. Develop ordinance language and a review process which will help insure compatibility with existing land uses.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; DDA Board; City Council

5. Review and amend the requirements of the B-2 Community Business District (downtown) to permit the conversion of existing buildings to condominium ownership units and rental units, including street-level dwelling units, to increase the number of downtown residents.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council

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**GOAL 4:** Undertake marketing efforts to inform users of the Fred Meijer Grand River Rail Trail of the businesses, services and attractions within the community.

**Actions:**

1. Develop signs and brochures which can be placed at a trail head kiosk.

**Action Agent:** Local Business Community; DDA Board; Department of Parks and Recreation; Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce
GOAL 5: Steele Street Corridor Re-Development

Coordinate the Tax Increment Financing and Development Plan with a plan for the long-term redevelopment of the Steele Street corridor which includes commercial and residential development and recreational opportunities.

Actions:

1. Work with the Planning Commission on its implementation of the sub-area plan for the Steele Street corridor as property acquisition and re-development opportunities arise.

Action Agent: Planning Commission, DDA Board; City Council

GOAL 6: Construct Public Restrooms Downtown

Actions:

1. Identify location(s) for public restrooms within the DDA District, secure funding for design and construction. Coordinate with plans to locate a central gathering plaza and amphitheater in the downtown area.

Action Agent: Planning Commission, DDA Board; City Council

GOAL 7: Ionia Theatre Preservation & Improvements

Actions:

1. Allocate adequate funding for the preservation of the DDA owned Theatre. Provide funding for ongoing maintenance, seating upgrades, and stage improvements as identified.

Action Agent: DDA Board; Ionia Theater Administration and Staff
GOAL 8: Downtown Area Development

Plan for an implement land use and development policies that support and expand upon the key strengths of the downtown area.

**Actions:**

1. Plan for activities and spaces in the downtown area that will support restaurants and food service opportunities patronized by both residents and visitors to Ionia.

   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; DDA Board; Local Business Community

2. Preserve the governmental and functions that contribute to the vitality of the downtown area; support plans for expansion of these uses where appropriate, including plans for adequate parking and pedestrian access.

   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; DDA Board; Ionia County, City of Ionia; US Postal Service

3. Provide a central gathering location in or near the downtown such as a plaza for special events, festivals, and leisure-time gathering which will contribute to the vitality of the downtown and assist in retention of businesses; increase the types of special events to appeal to a broad range of residents and visitors to Ionia.

   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; DDA Board; Local Business Community.

4. Enhance both pedestrian access and biking facilities in the downtown to preserve the opportunity to explore the downtown area for both residents and visitors to Ionia.

   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; DDA Board; City Council; Michigan Department of Transportation.

5. Plan for continued recreational activities in or near the downtown, utilizing existing facilities such as the Armory, the Fred Thwaites Grand River Trail, the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail, and City playgrounds, while planning for new recreational facilities in the Steele Street Corridor Area or other locations as identified.

   **Action Agent:** City of Ionia Parks and Recreation Commission; Planning Commission; DDA Board; City Council.

6. Analyze opportunities for public parking in the downtown area; identify parking issues which may occur during existing or expanded special events; prepare a public information program utilizing the City of Ionia web site and DDA web site informing
the public of parking opportunities, in order to help clarify whether parking issues exist or if the perception of parking issues exists.

**Action Agent:** DDA Board; City Council; Planning Commission; Public Safety.

7. Research the expense and logistics of providing free Wi-Fi in the downtown area.

**Action Agent:** DDA Board; City Council; Local Business Community.

GOAL 9: Ionia Community Library New Construction in the Steele Street Corridor

**Actions:**

8. Continue to support the activities of the new Ionia Community Library as a vital component of the downtown. Coordinate where possible to enhance both the library’s activities and the activities of the DDA.

**Action Agent:** DDA Board; Ionia Community Library Board

Economic Development

GOAL 1: Business Recruitment/Retention

Lead efforts to retain businesses in the DDA District and outside the DDA boundaries, while simultaneously recruiting new businesses.

**Actions:**

1. Work with current businesses to identify their needs, assist in their growth, and, when necessary, their continued expansion within the DDA district and in other locations throughout the City.

2. Regularly assess and develop business recruitment and retention materials. Maintain a regular campaign to recruit new businesses to the area and increase the usage of space in the downtown district. Include information about available properties, incentives, and various business resources.
3. Determine the need for a business incubator program to provide opportunities for new business start-ups in the downtown; consider a special millage grant program as a funding source.

4. Continually identify incentives and funding sources available, and communicate the information to current and potential businesses.

5. Maintain a list of available properties within the downtown and in other areas in the City; make this list available on the DDA web page and the City of Ionia web site.

6. Continue the pop-up shops program through the DDA, offering short-term leases, business plans, marketing support, and accounting support.

7. Offer education to the local business community annually regarding grant funding opportunities, business plans, accounting programs, marketing, and promotion development.

8. Work with the Ionia County Economic Alliance (IECA) and the Right Place, Inc. to attract and retain business and industry to the City of Ionia.

**Action Agent:** DDA Board; Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce; Local Business Community; Michigan Small Business Development Center; the Right Place, Inc.; Ionia County Economic Alliance (ICEA); Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

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**GOAL 2: Business Marketing**

**Publicize information about the downtown, the DDA and Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce mission and current projects, and information about commercial and industrial areas and opportunities within the City.**

**Actions:**

1. Develop a comprehensive marketing plan for the DDA district, focusing on events, businesses, and its unique, distinct, and historic character. Assist existing businesses with their own marketing efforts, as part of a coordinated marketing strategy for the DDA district.

2. The DDA and the Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce will continue to cooperate to market the area through special events, festivals, and fundraisers in order to promote the area as a business friendly and vibrant community.
3. Create and publish a downtown guide and distribute throughout the region.

4. Maintain a directory of businesses located within the downtown and in other locations in the City of Ionia; include a list of industrial businesses as well; publish on DDA web site, Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce web site, City of Ionia web site, and organizational newsletters that either mailed, emailed, or published on web sites.

5. Maintain regular communication with the local media about current DDA and Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce events, projects, and educational activities as part of an effort to make the community and business owners more aware of the mission of both organizations. Purchase advertisement campaigns where applicable. Utilize DDA, Chamber of Commerce, and City of Ionia newsletters, publications, web sites and web pages for regular updates of events, projects, and educational activities.

Action Agent: DDA Board; Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce; Local Business Community; Michigan Small Business Development Center.

GOAL 3: Downtown Events

Increase the number of events taking place in the DDA district in order to support local businesses.

Actions:

1. Continue assisting with coordinating events taking place in the downtown, including: the Ionia Farmers’ Market, Autumn Celebration, Free Fair parade, Main Street Electric Christmas Parade, Independence Day Fireworks, and other events. Add new events to complement the existing schedule, including those that are family friendly.

2. Provide a central gathering location in or near the downtown such as a plaza for special events, festivals, and leisure-time gathering which will contribute to the vitality of the downtown and assist in retention of businesses; increase the types of special events to appeal to a broad range of residents and visitors to Ionia.

3. Continue current cooperative efforts with the Ionia Free Fair Association.

Action Agent: DDA Board; Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce; Free Fair Board; Local Business Community; Planning Commission.
Steele Street Corridor Plan

GOAL 1: Steele Street Corridor Re-Development

Establish a plan for the long-term redevelopment of the Steele Street corridor which includes commercial and residential development; and recreational opportunities.

Actions:

1. Implement the amended Steele Street Corridor Plan development and redevelopment, as property acquisition and re-development opportunities arise.

   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; Parks and Recreation Commission; DDA Board; Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce; Local Business Community.

Industrial Land Use

GOAL 1: Maintain the existing industrial land uses in the City; market and promote existing sites and consider new sites in the downtown area; provide a range of opportunities within lands zoned for industrial land use to reflect current market trends.

Actions:

1. Review permitted uses and uses allowed by special land use in the I-1 Light Industrial District to determine if additional uses and mixes of uses may be proposed as amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. Consider non-conventional uses of industrial space such as breweries with sale and service of products and food items; exercise facilities; day care; event spaces; and other uses as may be identified.

   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council

2. Consider rezoning lands with suitable structures, particularly historic structures, in the downtown to L-1 Light Industrial, or add permitted uses to the B-2 Community Business District, to promote technology-based research and development land uses; pursue financing to lease, purchase, or re-habilitate sites that are particularly attractive to start-up businesses.

   **Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; DDA Board; Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce; Local Business Community.
3. Identify infrastructure such as broadband necessary to support technological industries; work to develop a strategic plan to attract and retain technological sector industries.

**Action Agent:** DDA Board; Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce; City Council; Local Business Community.

4. Identify infrastructure necessary to support the health care industries; work to develop a strategic plan to attract and retain health care sector industries and support industries.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; DDA Board; Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce; Health Care Community; City Council.

### Recreational Land Use

**GOAL 1:** Continue to maintain and improve City of Ionia recreational facilities and parks; plan for future recreational facilities to serve the current needs and desires of the City of Ionia residents and visitors.

**Actions:**

1. Coordinate the goals of the Five-Year Community Parks and Recreation Plan with land use planning decisions and City funding priorities. The Planning Commission must review and approve any proposed public recreation improvements as required by PA 33 of 2008, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act as amended.

   **Action Agent:** Parks and Recreation Commission; Parks and Recreation staff; Planning Commission; City Council.

2. Identify parcels which may be suitable for future park and recreation development; provide grant funding and matching funds to acquire and develop recreational facilities.

   **Action Agent:** Parks and Recreation Commission; Parks and Recreation staff; Planning Commission; City Council.
3. Integrate the recreation goals of the Steele Street Corridor Plan with the overall vision for Steele Street.

**Action Agent:** Parks and Recreation Commission; Parks and Recreation staff; Planning Commission; City Council.

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**Transportation and Pedestrian Circulation**

**GOAL 1:** Provide for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and other users of the streets, sidewalks, and trails in the City of Ionia.

**Actions:**

1. Maintain a schedule of street maintenance and resurfacing.

2. Implement the policies of the Sidewalk Master Plan and the Sidewalk System Priorities Policy:

   - Maintain the existing sidewalk network on an annual basis pursuant to General City Policy No. 4-002;
   - Where gaps in the sidewalk system are identified, coordinate construction of sidewalks in conjunction with routine street maintenance;
   - Install a sidewalk on at least one side of every street currently void of a sidewalk;
• During reconstruction of the City’s street and utilities systems, where a sidewalk exists on only one side of a street, conduct an engineering analysis to determine if a sidewalk should be placed on both sides of the street.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; Department of Public Works

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**GOAL 2:** Continue to implement traffic calming measures or pedestrian safety measures in those areas where driver and/or pedestrian safety is of concern in order to make the City a walkable, pedestrian friendly community.

**Actions:**

1. Develop a list of priority areas where traffic calming measures and/or pedestrian safety devices would be of value. In particular, those areas of concern are where all local streets intersect with M-21 and M-66.

2. Develop alternative designs for traffic calming and pedestrian safety devices in priority locations; develop a time-line and funding source for selected alternatives.

3. Continue to review the recommendations from the Dan Burden study and prepare a list of priority actions to implement these recommendations.

4. Continue to monitor sidewalk conditions and enforce the City Sidewalk Ordinance.

5. Provide clearly marked walkways between parking areas and downtown businesses and services.

**Action Agent:** Planning Commission; City Council; Department of Public Works

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**GOAL 3:** Analyze streets to determine which would be good candidates for incorporating the design concepts of “Complete Streets” as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

**Actions:**

1. Specifically analyze the following streets for incorporation of the design principles of Complete Streets:

   • Washington Street between Dexter Street and Rich Street;
• Steele Street between Adams Street and Dexter Street, including consideration of a “road diet”;
• West Main Street between the Adams Street extension and the west City limits.
• Other street segments as identified in the Complete Streets Analysis section of this Master Plan.

Action Agent: Planning Commission; City Council; Department of Public Works
CHAPTER 3
PLANNING ANALYSIS

MAJOR CHANGES SINCE 2012
This chapter describes the major changes which have occurred since the 2012 Master Plan was completed as well as existing land use within the City. Issues and trends which could influence the preparation of the Future Land Use Plan are analyzed as well.

Development in the City has increased since 2012, as compared to the significant reduction in development due to the nationwide recession which began in 2007 and continued through 2011. Changes since 2012 include:

- The relocation of Sparrow Hospital from Lafayette and Morse Streets to a location on the east side of M-66, south of the Ionia County Airport; this relocation was facilitated by a PA 425 agreement with Orange Township.
- Prepare land use alternatives for the former Sparrow Hospital site and amend the 2012 Master Plan to include the recommended concept plan.
- The construction of a new multi-unit commercial building on the site of the former Burger King restaurant on the northeast corner of S. Dexter and W. Adam Streets.
- The construction of the non-motorized bridge over M-66 (S. Dexter Street) as a component of the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail. A trail head park at the southeast corner of Dexter Street (M-66) and Adams Street was constructed in 2019.
- The Planning Commission approved a site plan submitted by Ionia County to improve facilities, including demolition of the former jail, removal of the Friend of the Court building, an addition to the Court House, and expansion of the parking lot serving the Court House.

Other major actions completed by the City since 2012 which may influence development include:

- Completion of reconstruction projects on the following streets which, in each case, involved the Planning Commission offering recommendations for improving the linkage/eliminating gas in the sidewalk network in these areas of the City, consistent with the Planning Commission's Sidewalk System Priorities Policy:

  2013:  Johnson Street - Lafayette Street to M-21
          Lafayette Street - Morse Street to Lovell Street
          Lovell Street
          Lytle Street - Townsend Street east to end
          Stevenson Street – Lafayette Street to M-21
          Townsend Street
2014: Division Street – M-21 to East Fargo Street  
    East Fargo Street – Union Street to Division Street  
    Rich Street – M-21 to East Fargo Street  

2015: East Fargo Street – Division Street to Jefferson Street  
    Jackson Street – M-21 to East Fargo Street  
    Jefferson Street – M-21 to north City limit  

2016: Bliss Street  
    Cyrus Street  
    Pleasant Alley  
    West Lytle Street  

2017: East Washington Street – Kidd Street to Jefferson Street  
    Hackett Street – Harter Street to State Street  
    Harter Street  
    Library Street  
    Taylor Court  

- Ordinance No. 528 amended the City of Ionia sign regulations to comply with the US Supreme Court decision in Reed v. Gilbert.  
- A wayfinding signage plan was prepared for directional location signs to major City assets, and at major gateways into the City.  
- Options were assessed for traffic calming on Washington Street in the vicinity of Union Street and the Court House.  
- Parcels on the north side of Lincoln Street west of Cyrus Street and north of Center Street were rezoned from RM-1 Multiple Family Residential to R-1 One Family Residential.  
- The R-1, R-2, and R-3 One-Family Residential Districts were amended to eliminate two-family dwellings permitted as special land uses.  
- Lands located on the north side of the Grand River and south of Railroad Street were rezoned from I-1 Light Industrial to R-1 One-Family Residential District to reflect the recommendations of the 2012 Master Plan.  
- The City adopted regulations permitting and regulating medical marihuana facilities based on the State of Michigan Medical Marijuana Facilities Licensing Act (PA 281 of 2016, MCL 333.27101 et seq. as amended).
EXISTING LAND USE AND INFLUENCES
The City of Ionia is a classic, mid-size city in Michigan, with the original portions of the City designed with a grid street pattern; the presence of a central downtown commercial district; and cohesive neighborhoods on small, platted lots. Larger lots with a more suburban street pattern, which were developed later in the City’s history, are located in the northern and northeastern portions of the City. Neighborhood parks are located throughout the City.

The land use pattern substantially adheres to the land uses allowed in the various zoning districts permitted by the City of Ionia Zoning Ordinance. The City Zoning Map is contained in the Maps Section.

Single Family Land Use
Single family neighborhoods are the predominant land use in the City, occupying most of the lands north of Railroad Street.

Multiple Family Land Use
Multiple-family uses are located in a variety of locations primarily in the northern and northeastern portions of the City. These uses include market rate apartments; apartments and attached units administered by the Ionia Housing Commission; attached units which may be either owner (condominium) or renter occupied; and one health care facility for both short-term rehabilitation and long-term residential care. Three multi-family developments are located beyond the City’s municipal boundary and receive City utilities and services via a PA 425 agreement. Two of these developments are located on the east side of M-66 surrounded by Ionia Township; and a third is located west of the City, on the north side of Yeoman Street, surrounded by Easton Township.

Commercial Land Use
Commercial land uses are concentrated in several areas. The downtown Main Street area (central business district) includes a mix of retail, service, institutional, governmental, and residential land uses. The State Street and Dexter Street corridors include a variety of general commercial uses that historically developed by virtue of frontage and access on State of Michigan Highway M-66. Lincoln Avenue, which is State of Michigan highway M-21, includes a number of general commercial uses. Adams Street includes a number of commercial uses, large parking areas serving commercial uses on both Adams Street and Main Street, and a number of governmental uses.

The Steele Street Corridor includes a concentration of commercial uses along with industrial land uses; this corridor is discussed in detail in following sections of the Master Plan.

Many commercial uses have developed along the M-66 corridor south of the Grand River in both Ionia and Berlin Townships. Some turnover has occurred, including some “big box” national retail stores. National chain restaurants and smaller service businesses remain active.
on the corridor. Businesses along this portion of M-66 will continue to serve both local residents, and those traveling through the Ionia area.

**Industrial Land Use**

Industrial land uses are located in several areas of the City. One is the Orchard View Industrial Park, located at the northern boundary of the City. The park contains a mix of manufacturing, industrial, governmental, and non-profit uses. The largest concentration of industrial land use is located in the southeast area of the City; uses here include industrial and manufacturing uses. Additional industrial land uses are located in the vicinity of the Jefferson Street and Railroad Street intersection; in the Steele Street Corridor area; and on the south side of Main Street, west of Adams Street.

**Ionia Free Fair Grounds**

The Ionia Free Fair Grounds are a predominant land use located adjacent to the north side of the Grand River, on the west side of M-66. The Free Fair Grounds, consisting of 160 acres, are a landmark facility in the City with a significant history. The Fair Grounds and Riverside Park properties are owned by the City of Ionia, but operated by the Ionia Free Fair Association, a non-profit organization.

**State of Michigan Correctional Facilities**

Included within the City boundaries are four correctional facilities operated by the Michigan Department of Corrections: Michigan Reformatory, Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility, Ionia Maximum Correctional Facility, and the Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility. The Michigan Reformatory had been closed, but was reopened when the Riverside Correctional Facility, also in Ionia, closed in November 2007. These facilities serve as a source of revenue to the City from income taxes on prison employees, State revenue sharing, and water and sewer service fees.

The Michigan Department of Corrections Facilities are facilitated through a PA 425 agreement between the City of Ionia and Easton Township.

**Parks and Recreation**

Parks and Recreation land use is discussed in detail along with plans for future parks and recreation improvements in the 2019-2024 Five-Year Community Parks and Recreation Plan, recently adopted by the City of Ionia.

**Adjacent Communities**

The adjoining Townships of Ionia, Easton and Berlin do not have zoning; development within abutting Township land may impact land use and development within the City.
Neighboring Orange Township adopted zoning in the year 2000. The northern boundary of Orange Township coincides with the northern boundary of the Ionia County Airport. As previously stated, an Act 425 parcel within Orange Township, about one-half mile south of Tuttle Road, is the site of the new Sparrow Hospital. Commercial zoning is in place to the south of the Airport according to the Orange Township Zoning Map.
CHAPTER 4
FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING PLAN

This section contains the recommendations, strategies, and policies which will guide the development of the City for at least the next five years, and potentially longer. The Future Land Use Plan establishes the pattern of land use desired by the community, but that pattern must be re-evaluated every five years according to the State of Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008 as amended.

The Goals and Action Plan presented in the Chapter 3, the conclusions resulting from the Community Survey, as well as principals of sound land use planning are the foundation upon which the Future Land Use Plan is based.

The 2012 Future Land Use Plan included the proposed re-development of the Steele Street Corridor; an updated Steele Street Corridor Plan is included in the 2019 Future Land Use Plan. Goals and Actions adopted in the 2012 Future Land Use Plan were reviewed, and in some cases carried over into the 2019 Plan.

Of note is that no schedule exists to implement the recommendations contained in this Plan. The timing of a particular land use is dependent upon a number of factors such as availability of public utilities, provisions for adequate roadways, effect on public services, environmental impact and the demand for a particular land use versus the available land zoned for this use. Those, plus other factors such as neighborhood character, must be considered when reviewing a request for rezoning a particular parcel of land.

The Michigan Planning enabling Act of 2008 charges a Planning Commissions to include “any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the Commission’s judgment, bear relation to the planning of the municipality.” The City of Ionia Master Plan does not include planning for areas outside its boundaries, with the exception that the Future Land Use Map reflects those areas already under a PA 425 Agreement with surrounding communities. The Master Plan text includes a category called Health Services District, which recommends cooperating with Orange Township in planning for any future health related facilities and industries. The text also states that the City will cooperate with surrounding communities if future industrial or residential development is desired. The City of Ionia maintains a desire to cooperate with adjacent municipalities to coordinate planning along common boundaries for the benefit of each municipality.

Future Land Use Categories
The City of Ionia 2019 Master Plan recommends a number of different Future Land Use Categories. The following descriptions explain the type of land uses, the intensity of that land use, and the recommended locations for proposed uses. Policies and rationale guiding the establishment of those uses are provided. Each Future Land Use category includes a Zoning...
Plan, which is the primary implementation step for carrying out the recommendations of the Plan.

The future land use recommended for an area may be the same as the existing zoning for that area, while in some cases the future land use recommended is different from the existing zoning. Future Land Use categories may or may not correspond to zoning districts existing in the City; in some cases, a new zoning district is recommended as an implementation strategy.

The Future Land Use Map does not change the existing zoning in an area. A property owner or the City will need to apply for a rezoning at some point in the future if the future land use category is different from the existing zoning. Meanwhile, a property owner must use the property as it is currently zoned.

Future Land Use categories recommended for the City of Ionia 2019 Master Plan are as follows:

- Steele Street Corridor Plan
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Multi-Family Low Density Residential
- Multi-Family High Density Residential
- Attached Urban Housing
- Office
- Central Business District
- General Commercial
- East Main Preservation
- Health Services District
- Industrial
- Lafayette/East Washington Sub-Area Plan
- Public/Institutional
The initial plan for the Steele Street Corridor was created as part of the 2012 update to the City of Ionia Future Land Use Plan and the City of Ionia Five-Year Community Parks and Recreation Plan. Following the adoption of those plans, further research showed that the 100-year flood plain was in a location that differed from that designated on the 2012 Steele Street Corridor Plan, as well as on the Future Land Use Plan Map and the Zoning Map.

The Steele Street Corridor Plan developed as part of the 2019 City of Ionia Master Plan reflects the accurate location of the 100-year flood plain as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as the current desires of the City of Ionia citizens in regard to future land use along the corridor. A Steele Street Corridor Plan is included as an adopted part of the City of Ionia 2019 Master Plan, and is found in the map section of the Master Plan. Following are the Development Principles which will guide the future land use along the Steele Street Corridor.

Development in the Steele Street Corridor is dependent upon cut and fill activities which will be professionally engineered to preserve the integrity of the floodplain and floodway; professional wetlands determinations may also be required in some cases.

Implementation of the Steele Street Corridor Plan will be implemented through the drafting of a Steele Street Corridor Planned Unit Development amendment to the Zoning Ordinance which will permit the uses envisioned by the Plan, and design of those uses.

**DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES FOR THE STEELE STREET CORRIDOR**

**Introduction**
The following development principles for the Steele Street Corridor area are intended to implement the goals of the Steele Street Corridor Plan that has been adopted as a component of the 2019 City of Ionia Master Plan. The design principles are intended to promote a vision for the area that is a culmination of extensive citizen and public official input; however, the principles are also intended to allow a degree of flexibility to accommodate market trends and alternative development proposals.

Uses within the Steele Street Corridor area are intended to complement the existing central business district of Ionia; signs as well as bicycle and pedestrian connections will permit residents and visitors to easily navigate the entire Steele Street Corridor area as well as the existing downtown.
Trail Connections/Loops/Off-Road Safety
The Corridor will have bicycle/pedestrian connections to both the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Trail and the Fred Thwaites Grand River Trail. Development proposals will include off-road easements for trail construction, or actual construction of links to the two existing trails. Trail design will ensure a continuous loop through the Steele Street Corridor area to provide a manageable distance for all types of trail users. Additionally, trails are planned for the west side of Dexter Street, which will connect to that trail system planned for the Steele Street Corridor area.

Complete Streets for On-Road Cyclists and Pedestrians
Streets within the Steele Street Corridor area will be recommended for complete street redesign; to accommodate both the casual cyclists and the serious cyclist who can then make a connection to off-road trails within the Steele Street area. Complete Street design also includes provisions for pedestrians including all users who may need accommodations for disabilities.

Natural Areas Trails
Within the Steele Street Corridor, several large natural areas remain. These areas are primarily located within that area of the 100-year floodplain. These areas are ideal for additional nature trails that will connect with the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Trail and the Fred Thwaites Grand River Trail, as well as the Ionia Free Fair grounds. Trails through remaining natural areas can enhance opportunities for residential uses planned for the area. Any redevelopment in areas planned for nature trails should include trail easements or actual trail construction. Trails and a boardwalk are planned for the existing pond/wetland area.

Plaza/Special Event Gathering Area
The plan for the Steele Street area includes the proposed location for a flexible plaza/special events gathering area at the northern terminus of Steele Street at Washington Street, in the location of a former industrial use that has since been demolished. The plaza is recommended in this location with the intent of enhancing activities in the existing downtown area, and to provide a flexible multi-use space for a variety of activities that will contribute to the vibrancy of the downtown. An alternative location for a multi-use plaza is shown on the Plan just east of the new Trailhead Park. This location will provide greater visibility of the plaza from M-66 and for users of the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail. The location of a multi-use plaza is yet to be decided, as well as exact design specifications.

Expansion of Indoor Recreation Opportunities
The location of a former commercial use, which has been demolished, has been proposed as an indoor, multi-use recreation facility. The facility has been identified as a high priority of the Parks and Recreation Department in order to expand programs for both youth and adults. Currently, the Ionia Armory Community Center provides indoor recreation space, and is functioning at capacity. The design of the facility will include adequate parking and clear pedestrian connections to both the existing downtown and to any other planned development such as playing fields and residential units.
Outdoor Recreation Athletic Fields
The proposed plan includes lighted t-ball/softball/flag football fields. The presence of outdoor recreation facilities will bring families and spectators into both the Steele Street area and the existing downtown area.

Play Areas/Family Friendly
Additional play equipment is planned to be visible from planned athletic fields so parents or guardians can participate in events while observing children or other family members. A sand volleyball and picnic area are also planned.

Residential/Silo Residential
The silo structures are proposed to be developed as unique residential units. Additional residential uses are planned near the silo residential use.

Dog Park
In response to citizen requests, a dog park is planned for the Steele Street area, to be located in an area near recreational uses.

Community Library as Gateway to City
The new Ionia Community Library is proposed to be located at the southeast corner of Steele Street and Adams Street, functioning as a gateway structure that will welcome both residents and visitors, and make a statement as to the vitality present in the area.

Commercial
Commercial land uses are planned for that area currently used as a parking area located on the west side of Steele Street; additional commercial land uses may occur in other locations as shown on the Steele Street Corridor Plan.

Traffic Circle and Gateway Park
A traffic circle and gateway park are proposed at the southern terminus of Steele Street with Dexter Street (M-66). The construction of the traffic circle will be determined upon further engineering review and traffic studies.
An area planned for LDR is located at the far northeastern portion of the City in an area currently zoned R-2. Areas of LDR may also be best suited outside of the current City boundaries in areas of adjacent townships that abut vacant land or larger lots in the City.

**Zoning Plan for Low Density Residential Land Use**

Low Density Residential Land Use will be implemented by the R-3 One-Family Residential Zoning District. This Future Land Use classification calls for single family detached houses at a maximum density of 2.64 dwelling units per acre. The R-3 One- Family Residential Zoning District requires a minimum lot size of 16,500 square feet and 100 feet of lot width. Currently, no lands within the City are zoned R-3.

The minimum lot size in this zoning district is intended to be served by public sewer and water; in the case where lots are developed without public sewer water, the Master Plan recommends a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet and 132 feet of width. This requirement is not currently within the City of Ionia Zoning Ordinance, and would require an amendment.

Larger lots developed without water and sewer may be developed under the City’s Land Division Ordinance; LDR areas served by sewer and water should be designed in a traditional City neighborhood fashion with sidewalks, street trees, street lights and areas set aside for neighborhood recreation. This may be done either under the City’s Subdivision Regulations; the City’s Subdivision Open Space Plan zoning regulations which would permit a reduction of lot sizes in exchange for provisions of open space; or the requirements of the Open Space Neighborhoods zoning regulations, which provide for a slight increase in density in exchange for providing village green areas, walking trails or preservation of natural site features for use by residents of the neighborhood.

Additional land uses are permitted in the R-3 One-Family Residential zoning district by right and with special land use approval. Uses by right include agricultural uses on parcels of at least five acres; private schools (public schools do not need to be specifically permitted, nor do many other public uses); open space neighborhoods, child and adult day care homes with six or fewer children or adults; and state licensed adult foster care family homes with six or fewer adults.

Uses permitted by special land use include churches; private schools; utility and public service uses; private non-commercial recreation uses; golf courses; housing for the elderly, retired persons, assisted care facilities, and nursing homes; bed and breakfast uses; child and adult day care homes with more than six but fewer than 12 children or adults; neighborhood service stores subject to certain conditions; foster care group homes for seven or more individual; and child care centers which may be preschools. The Implementation section of the Master Plan recommends deleting Section 1248.02 (b), and permitting funeral homes with special land use approval in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Districts.
The Plan recognizes the existing areas in the City developed as Medium Density Residential land use, which are primarily on the north side of Lincoln Avenue (M-21), and additional areas east of S. Jefferson Street and south of Lincoln Avenue. These areas are served, and are intended to be served, by public water and sanitary sewer. Traditional city amenities such as sidewalks, street trees and playgrounds, are recommended to be provided for this type of residential environment.

The Plan recommends areas for MDR that currently remain vacant; one of those areas is located in the northern portion of the City north of the terminus of Ridgewood Drive, to the east of City owned property in the vicinity of the City Well Fields. Another area is located in the southern portion of the City as part of the Austin Pines PUD, and would be subject to the requirements of the PUD ordinance. Several larger lots remain within the City that are planned for MDR use and that may be suitable for further subdivision. Areas outside the City boundaries adjacent to the City may be suitable for MDR development, to continue the traditional fabric of the City. Significant MDR development exists in those areas of both Easton and Ionia Townships adjacent to the City.

**Zoning Plan for Medium Density Residential Land Use**

This MDR land use classification will be implemented by the R-2, One-Family Residential zoning district. This category would permit single family detached houses as the predominant use with minimum lot sizes of 12,000 square feet and 80 feet of width. This results in a density of 3.63 dwelling units per acre.

As with the LDR land use category, land planned for MDR land use may be developed either under the City’s Subdivision Regulations; the City’s Subdivision Open Space Plan zoning regulations; or the Open Space Neighborhood regulations.

Uses permitted by right and by special land use are those permitted in the R-3 zoning district as described in the preceding section.

**HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL HDR**

Much of the City on the south of Lincoln Avenue (M-21) has been developed for High Density Residential Land Use under the R-1 zoning category; this area contains much of the original residential parts of the City. Significant areas are also zoned R-2 Residential and R-T Two-Family Residential. Public water and sanitary sewer are necessary to support this type of development along with other City amenities such as sidewalks, street trees, and playgrounds.
The Plan recognizes these existing single-family high density areas on the Future Land Use Map.

Some remaining larger parcels within the City may be appropriate for HDR land use; additionally, new areas outside the City boundaries may be appropriate for HDR development, and should be served by public water and sanitary sewer. As with the LDR and MDR land use categories, land planned for HDR land use may be developed either under the City’s Subdivision Regulations; the City’s Subdivision Open Space Plan zoning regulations; or the Open Space Neighborhood regulations.

**Zoning Plan for High Density Residential Land Use**

The HDR land use category will be implemented by the R-1, One-Family Residential Zoning District, and the RT, Two Family Residential District.

The R-1 District requires a minimum lot size of 8,000 square feet with 65 feet of lot width. This is equivalent to a density of 5.44 dwelling units per acre. Uses permitted by right and by special land use in the R-1 District are those permitted in the R-2 and R-3 zoning districts as described in the preceding section.

This Master Plan category includes the older existing parts of the City currently zoned RT, Two- Family Residential. This zoning district currently allows all uses by right and by special land use that are permitted in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 zoning districts; in addition, the R-T District allows two-family dwellings by special land use.

The R-T District allows a minimum lot size of 4000 sq. ft. with 35 feet of lot width per dwelling unit; however, a two-family dwelling unit shall be located on a lot which contains 8,000 square feet and 65 feet of lot width.

The 2012 Master Plan included a recommendation that the R-T zoning district be repealed and that parcels zoned R-T be rezoned to R-1 One-Family Residential District. Upon further analysis, a recommendation was made to retain the R-T District as it is one of two zoning districts within the City that permits duplexes.

A conflict exists in the zoning ordinance, since the Schedule of Regulations (Appendix I) requires 4,000 square feet per dwelling unit and 65 feet of lot width in the R-T District, while Section 1250.02 requires that all single-family dwellings in the R-T District comply with the requirements for single family dwellings in the R-1 One-Family Residential District, which requires a minimum lot size of 8,000 square feet and a lot width of 65 feet for single family dwellings. The more restrictive requirement shall always apply in a zoning ordinance; thus, within the R-T zoning district, any new lot must have 8,000 square feet and 65 feet of lot width; but single family dwellings may still be built on existing lots of 4,000 square feet with 35 feet of lot width. This conflict in the zoning ordinance should be removed through an amendment to the Schedule of Regulations.
Additionally, Section 1274.09, which are specific regulations for two-family dwellings, contains a regulation in 1274.09 (a) which references a two-family dwelling which may be a conversion of a single family dwelling. Regulations which permit the conversion of single family homes to two-family dwellings have been specifically repealed from the R-T District, and by reference have been repealed from the R-1, R-2, R-3 zoning districts. This section of the ordinance should be amended to reflect that the conversion of single family dwellings to two-family dwellings is not permitted in any case.
The RM-1 District permits all uses allowed in the R-T District, with the exception of single family dwellings. The R-T District permits, by reference, all uses allowed by right and by special land use in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 zoning districts. Therefore, the range of uses permitted in all other residential zoning districts are permitted in the RM-1 District, with the exception of single family dwellings.

The Plan includes a recommendation carried over from the 2012 Master Plan that elderly housing and assisted living facilities be permitted in this zone as a matter of right, rather than by special land use as is currently required.

All uses permitted in the RM-1 District require public water and sanitary sewer; and many of the uses permitted, particularly those with multi-family characteristics, need to be located where they can be adequately served by minor or arterial or collector City streets with minimal impact on nearby single family neighborhoods.

ATTACHED URBAN HOUSING

The concept of Attached Urban Housing was supported by the Citizen Survey by approximately 50% of respondents. The purpose of AUH land use is to provide a residential option that may appeal to two key demographics, both Millennials and those in their later years. This housing type is one which consists of attached housing that may include duplexes, fourplexes, multiplexes of a small scale, bungalow courts, townhouses, and carriage houses. These types of dwellings may be available at a price point lower than detached single family dwellings, and may be developed as rental units or ownership condominium units. The demographics seeking this type of housing are interested in a vibrant community, with walkability and cultural amenities nearby, at a cost commensurate with incomes.

The term “Missing Middle” is used to describe this housing style, because it represents the middle portion of a land use typology known as the Transect. The Transect includes the full range of housing types in communities, from rural single family detached homes to high density apartments.

Missing Middle housing types are intended to be compatible with single family neighborhoods, and can provide opportunities for infill development that is otherwise not suitable for high density apartments, and also may not be attractive for new single family detached dwellings. Missing Middle housing may also provide a transition from a single family neighborhood to a commercial corridor. The intent is that Missing Middle housing can be developed in small areas consisting of just a few lots, and that these types of dwellings do not add significant density to a neighborhood.
A key element of Missing Middle housing is that it provides or complements walkability, and is best located near services and amenities that are available in a traditional City such as Ionia. Another key element is that parking needs are not more than one space per unit since on-street parking is typically available. In addition, the design of Missing Middle type units is required to blend with existing architecture in single family neighborhoods.

Specific areas on the Future Land Use Map have not been identified for Attached Urban Housing as this type of land use may be appropriate in a variety of locations including the central business district. Areas may be identified for AUH land use where vacant or underutilized parcels may exist, where commercial land use is no longer viable, or where single family use is no longer viable, such as on the edges of the central business district.

Rezoning to Attached Urban Housing would only be approved if the specific standards as established by the City are met. These standards would include the impact the proposed housing would have on the surrounding neighborhood, architectural features, available parking, and density proposed.

**Zoning Plan for Attached Urban Housing Land Use**
Implementation of the Attached Urban Housing land use category will require the drafting of regulations for a new zoning district. The district is recommended to be the Attached Urban Housing Planned Unit Development District or AUH-PUD, and any developments proposed will require an application for a rezoning. The reasons for recommending approval of this type of land use as a PUD rezoning are as follows:

- The AUH-PUD will contain standards regarding architecture and compatibility with surrounding land use. However, since Attached Urban Housing is recommended for a number of locations, flexibility is desirable when determining number of units, setbacks, parking, lighting, pedestrian access, and other site design attributes to ensure that the development fits in to the existing or desired neighborhood fabric. PUDs permit a Planning Commission to apply flexibility when reviewing and recommending regulations that will apply to a proposed development.

- A rezoning to AUH-PUD requires that the applicant submit a PUD site plan with the application for a rezoning. This will help assure neighbors and citizens that the approval of the rezoning includes an approved site plan, which will establish the number of units allowed on the site, as well as the site attributes such as architecture, setbacks, landscaping, lighting, parking, pedestrian access, signs, and other features which will impact neighborhood character.
This category recommends primarily professional office uses as well as uses compatible with office uses. Such uses can serve as transitions between retail and residential land uses, or between a traffic corridor and residential land uses. Offices may also be an appropriate land use on a heavily traveled street as compared to retail or service uses as an office may generate fewer turning movements.

The area recommended for Office land use consists of the following: a parcel located on the south side of East Washington Street, west of Park Street, which consists of an office use and is zoned Office; a parcel zoned Office located on the north side of West Main Street, just west of the commercial uses that front on Dexter Street; and that area zoned Office at the southwest corner of Morse Street and Lafayette Street, the location of a use which was part of the former Ionia Sparrow Hospital.

**Zoning Plan for Office Land Use**
A relatively small amount of land zoned Office exists in the City of Ionia. This may be due to the fact that many of the permitted uses in the Office District are also permitted uses in the B-1, B-2, and B-3 business districts.

Additional areas in the City may be suitable for Office land use, and will be analyzed for appropriateness if requests for rezoning to Office occur. Implementation of the Office land use category will be implemented by the Office District, which permits all generally recognized professional office uses. The district also permits medical clinics; funeral homes; financial institutions; research laboratories; radio and television studios; cultural facilities; studios for the study of the arts; child day care centers; vocational schools; and religious institutions. Uses permitted by special land use approval include financial establishments with drive-through or drive-up windows; gathering halls and clubs; and hospitals.

This Future Land Use category encompasses the downtown area of Ionia. The CBD is the older established retail and service portion of the City in contrast to the commercial development along North and South Dexter Streets and along portions of Lincoln Avenue (M-21). Both retail and office uses are permitted in this category subject to the specific regulations of the B-2 Zoning District.
The CBD encompasses a significant portion of the City’s Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Development Area. A map of the DDA area may be found in the Maps Section. Specific action plan steps for that area are set forth in Chapter 3 of this Master Plan.

The area planned for CBD land use primarily consists of that area zoned B-2 Community Business District, with additional areas zoned B-3 General Business District. A significant area of the CBD is zoned PUD-2, and is developed as a religious institutional use.

**Zoning Plan for Central Business District Land Use**

CBD land use will be implemented primarily by the B-2 Community Business zoning district. The B-2 District permits all principal uses permitted in the B-1 Neighborhood Business District. These uses include, among others, a range of retail uses; personal service uses; professional offices and services; hospitals; nursing homes; and governmental buildings.

Additional uses permitted in the B-2 District include showrooms and workshops of a range of service providers; private clubs and halls; restaurants without drive-through service; hotels and motels; theaters; and private schools. Residential apartments on the second and third floors of commercial establishments are permitted.

Uses permitted with special land use approval include open air business; indoor recreation facilities; automobile service centers when part of a larger planned shopping center; assisted living and nursing homes; and child care centers.

Areas zoned B-3 General Business District permit any retail or service establishment permitted in the B-1 and B-2 zoning districts as principal permitted uses, and uses permitted by special land use as principal uses by right in the B-3 District. Some additional uses are permitted in the B-3 District, such as car washes and automobile sales. Several additional uses are permitted with special land use approval, such as outdoor sales and rentals of vehicles and house trailers (mobile homes); and businesses with drive-ins among others.

The regulations of the B-2 District should be reviewed to determine if additional uses may be permitted that reflect the Goals and Actions of the Master Plan. Uses may be added such as breweries and distilleries with food service and retail sales; and conversion of existing buildings to high-tech industries such as software development. Expanded housing options may include conversion of existing buildings for both rental and ownership dwelling units; and the construction of new Attached Urban Housing.

The CBD includes a portion of the Steele Street Corridor Plan. The Corridor Plan includes recommendations that will implement the Goals and Actions of the Master Plan, which include the goal that a more contemporary feel in the downtown area be accomplished through the creation of a central plaza for special events; gathering spaces; outdoor cafes; coffee shops; food trucks; and other food service establishments that will cater to both downtown workers and visitors to the City. A space for concerts may be included; and possibly an amphitheater. The
This Future Land Use category includes those areas of commercial development along North State Street (M-66); North and South Dexter Street (M-66); Lincoln Avenue (M-21); the south side of Adams Street west of Hudson Street; the south side of Main Street east and west of the Adams Street intersection; that area served by Swartz Court east of M-66; and that area accessed by Heartland Boulevard east of M-66, which is currently vacant.

These areas are currently primarily zoned B-1, Neighborhood Business District or B-3, General Business District. The Plan, however, combines these two areas into one General Commercial land use category, as they are very similar in their regulations with the exception that the B-3 category would permit some additional uses such as car washes and automobile sales as principal uses by right. Businesses with drive-ins are permitted with special land use approval in the B-3 District, as are open air businesses uses allowing the sales and rentals of vehicles and house trailers (mobile homes) which generally need more exposure to passing traffic.

Several viable residential land uses remain on both sides of Dexter Street (M-66) between Washington Street and Lincoln Avenue (M-21). Although theses residential uses may continue for the foreseeable future, the fact that all properties with frontage on Dexter Street in this location are zoned B-1, B-2, or B-3 indicates that the long-term future of these properties may be commercial. However, any development or redevelopment in this area should recognize that compatibility with existing residential uses is of importance.

A dual future land use designation of both General Commercial and Industrial is recommended for two areas:

One area is located on the east side of South Steele Street, north and just south of Nash Boulevard. This area is planned for both types of uses due to its proximity to general commercial land uses to the west across South Steele Street; the presence of existing industrial land uses along the east side of South Steele Street; and the presence of uses along the east side of South Steele Street of a commercial character, some of which are zoned I-1 Light Industrial. The area may be seen as one of transition between the commercial land uses to

Regulations for permitting food trucks in the downtown area should be reviewed and amended if necessary.
the south and west, and existing industrial land uses. The area is served by excellent access as well as adequate utilities, supporting both commercial or industrial land uses. The area consists of parcels currently zoned L-1 Light Industrial, which would require a rezoning to B-1 Neighborhood Business District, or B-3 General Business District in order to be used for commercial land uses.

Another area is the location of the Orchard View Industrial Park located in the northern portion of the City served by Apple Tree Drive. The industrial park, although zoned L-1 Light Industrial, contains uses which are of a commercial/office character such as Ionia County Central Dispatch, and a behavioral health and wellness clinic. Several industrial land uses exist in the industrial park as well. The area is one that may be suitable for both the industrial types of uses permitted in the industrial park, and certain commercial land uses that are compatible with some types of industrial land uses. The area is served by excellent access as well as adequate utilities, supporting both commercial or industrial land uses. The area consists of parcels currently zoned L-1 Light Industrial, which would require a rezoning to B-1 Neighborhood Business District, or B-3 General Business District in order to be used for commercial land uses.

**Zoning Plan for General Commercial Land Use**

General Commercial land use will be implemented primarily by the B-1 Neighborhood Business District and the B-3 General Business District. Uses permitted as principal uses by right and with special land use approval are discussed in the preceding sections which discuss the zoning plan for the Central Business District, and the analysis of General Commercial land use.

As recommended for the B-2 zoning district, both the B-1 and B-3 zoning districts should be reviewed to determine if uses that reflect current market trends may be permitted by these districts. One consideration is to permit residential uses on second and third levels of commercial uses in the B-1 and B-3 districts, to encourage mixed use development similar to that permitted in the CBD.

New or redeveloped commercial development within this category, especially for those properties with frontage along M-66 or M-21, need to be carefully reviewed for access control, landscaping, lighting, and signs. In all locations, pedestrian and bicycle access between uses should also be considered when reviewing new or redeveloped sites.

**Lincoln Street (M-21) Corridor**

The commercial land use Goals and Actions for the City of Ionia include specific focus on the Lincoln Avenue (M-21) corridor. These goals include planning for new or redeveloped commercial and office uses along the corridor in select locations, and rezoning areas only as development proposals occur. In addition, the appearance, function, and safety of the corridor should be ensured through design standards which address driveway placement, connected parking areas, landscaping, signs, and architectural considerations. Existing site plan review
The East Main Preservation Zoning District was established by the City Council in 2002 and applies to both sides of East Main Street between Library Street and Jackson Street. This area contains many large houses of historic and architectural distinction which contribute greatly to the character and identity of the City. The historical and architectural viability of such houses can be threatened by high maintenance costs or conversion to multi-family or non-residential uses if proper review standards are not provided.

The intent of this district is to allow for such houses to be used for a variety of purposes which are deemed to be compatible with the area in order to encourage their continued maintenance and appearance as residential structures thereby preserving the historic and architectural character of East Main Street. The Future Land Use Map recognizes the area devoted to this Zoning District, as well as an area zoned B-1 Neighborhood Business District, occupied by the John C. Blanchard House museum.

**Zoning Plan for East Main Preservation Land Use**

As stated, the East Main Preservation Land Use category is implemented by the East Main Preservation Zoning District (RHD). The district permits only single-family dwellings as a principal use by right; all other uses are permitted only with special land use approval. These uses include two-family dwellings; and a range of office, service, and retail uses; public and cultural institutional uses; studios of instruction in the arts; uses that contain both a dwelling unit and a non-residential use; and bed and breakfast establishments.

Design and review standards of the East Main Preservation District are intended to insure compatibility with the existing character of historic buildings in the area; the district permits flexibility of setbacks and parking requirements in order to achieve the intent of the district. Landscaping, sign and lighting regulations are designed to insure the intent of the district.

standards will be reviewed to assess whether standards should be amended to add additional design standards that would apply to the Lincoln Avenue corridor.

An additional goal for the Lincoln Avenue corridor is to plan for Attached Urban Housing in select locations along the corridor, and adopt regulatory standards that would ensure compatibility with existing adjacent neighborhoods. Attached Urban Housing is discussed completely in a preceding section of the Master Plan.
The intent of a Health Services District is to promote and expand the health services industry in the City of Ionia area by providing a setting in which the physical design and supporting amenities are attractive to the health services business sector. The Goals and Actions for Commercial Land Use include addressing the possibility of a Health Services District.

The Health Services District is recommended for that area adjacent to the Sparrow Hospital facility located within Orange Township, served by the City of Ionia public water and sewer. The hospital site, although under a PA 425 agreement between the City of Ionia and Orange Township, is under Orange Township authority for zoning and development review. Any development in this area must be done with the cooperation with Orange Township. This cooperation may be beneficial to both the City of Ionia and Orange Township, as the purpose of the Health Services District is to attract and retain quality medical and health related business.

Zoning Plan for Health Services District Land Use
The Health Services land use category is recommended to be implemented through drafting of a new zoning district. This district would contain regulations specific to a dynamic health district; amenities would be open to the public as well as patients and visitors. Examples of health services districts exist in Michigan, and may serve as templates when planning a similar district in Orange Township.

A Health Services District may be permitted as a Planned Unit Development (PUD), or could be simply another zoning district with some flexibility in development design. An advantage to development as a PUD is that coordination among uses in regard to elements such as access, architecture, site layout, and landscaping is more easily achievable. An advantage to development as a zoning district (which is not a PUD) is that smaller parcels or parcels with existing structures could become part of the overall Health Services area by going through the site plan review process rather than the PUD process, although a rezoning to the Health Services District would be required before the site plan is submitted.

Uses permitted in a Health Services District may be of a broad range, and may include uses such as: hospitals; diagnostic and treatment centers; day surgery centers; urgent care facilities; medical and dental offices; laboratories; ambulance services; assisted living and skilled nursing homes; educational facilities and conference centers; residential uses to serve the needs of employees and others; health clubs; private recreational facilities for employees and patients; retail establishments; restaurants; psychiatric and substance abuse centers; heliports; and other uses either by right or by special land use that complement and enhance the health care industry.
The Industrial Land Use category recognizes those existing industrial land use areas in the City and lands zoned industrial, with a significant portion of those lands located in the eastern portion of the City. Other areas of the City include lands zoned for industrial uses, including significant areas existing within the Orchard View Industrial Park in the northern portion of the City; and south of the Steele Street Corridor Plan area on the east side of South Steele Street.

No additional areas for industrial land are shown on the Future Land Use Map within the City boundaries as of the date of adoption of this Master Plan. However, the Goals and Actions for the Master Plan recommend that, within the downtown area, certain structures may be appropriate for the location of technology-based research and development land uses. These uses, which may attract start-up businesses, are often appropriate in historic buildings, and result in an investment in rehabilitating an existing structure. Additionally, the location of these businesses in the downtown adds vitality as employees may take advantage of the goods and services in the downtown.

Outside the City, areas to the south of the City just north of the Ionia County Airport in Orange Township in the vicinity of Sprague Road extended may be suitable for future industrial use; this area is planned for industrial land use in the Orange Township Master Plan.

This area south of the City is suitable for industrial land use due to adequate access from M-66, proximity to I-96, the fact that utilities exist nearby and can be easily extended to the site, and the nearness of the Ionia County airport.

The area in Easton Township on the west side of M-66 opposite the Orchard View Industrial Park may be suitable for future industrial land use due to highway access, availability of utilities and compatibility with adjacent land uses in the City of Ionia. Cooperation with Easton Township will be required if industrial land use is proposed for this property.

A dual future land use designation of both General Commercial and Industrial is recommended for two areas:

One area is located on the east side of South Steele Street, north and just south of Nash Boulevard. This area is planned for both types of uses due to its proximity to general commercial land uses to the west across South Steele Street; the presence of existing industrial land uses along the east side of South Steele Street; and the presence of uses along the east side of South Steele Street of a commercial character, some of which are zoned I-1 Light Industrial. The area may be seen as one of transition between the commercial land uses to the south and west, and existing industrial land uses. The area is served by excellent access as well as adequate utilities, supporting both commercial or industrial land uses. The area
consists of parcels currently zoned L-1 Light Industrial, which would require a rezoning to B-1 Neighborhood Business District, or B-3 General Business District in order to be used for commercial land uses.

Another area is the location of the Orchard View Industrial Park located in the northern portion of the City served by Apple Tree Drive. The industrial park, although zoned L-1 Light Industrial, contains uses which are of a commercial/office character such as Ionia County Central Dispatch, and a behavioral health and wellness clinic. Several industrial land uses exist in the industrial park as well. The area is one that may be suitable for both the industrial types of uses permitted in the industrial park, and certain commercial land uses that are compatible with some types of industrial land uses. The area is served by excellent access as well as adequate utilities, supporting both commercial or industrial land uses. The area consists of parcels currently zoned L-1 Light Industrial, which would require a rezoning to B-1 Neighborhood Business District, or B-3 General Business District in order to be used for commercial land uses.

Zoning Plan for Industrial Land Use
The Industrial Land Use category will be implemented by the I-1 Light Industrial District. This district permits a wide range of industrial land uses including: research and design; manufacturing, compounding, processing, and assembling; warehousing and wholesale establishments; laboratories; central dry cleaning; storage of builders’ and contractors’ supplies; and similar uses as principal uses by right. Uses permitted with special land use approval include auto engine and body repair; lumber and planing mills; metal plating, buffering and polishing; and retail uses which have an industrial character due to outdoor storage or activities.

Permitted uses and uses allowed by special land use in the I-1 Light Industrial District should be reviewed to determine if additional uses and mixes of uses may be proposed as amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. The City may consider non-conventional uses of industrial space such as breweries and distilleries with sale and service of products and food items; exercise facilities; day care as accessory to the principle use; churches; special event spaces; and other uses as may be identified.

The City may wish to consider rezoning parcels in the downtown to L-1 Light Industrial, or add permitted uses to the B-2 Community Business District, to promote technology-based research and development land uses.

The Lafayette/East Washington Sub-Area Plan was adopted as an amendment to the City of Ionia Master Plan in 2015. The location of the district is at the site of the former Sparrow
Hospital and associated facilities on E. Washington Street. The Lafayette/East Washington Sub-Area Plan included in the Master Plan reflects the input of City residents gathered at a workshop held in June of 2015.

The concept plan developed for the area, included in the Maps Section of the Master Plan, illustrates the preferred future of the site, which consists of single-family dwellings, attached dwellings as town houses; and the former Balice Clinic remaining on the site as a use yet to be determined. The site is surrounded by single family houses, so future uses must be compatible with the existing character of the neighborhood including the design of future buildings on the site.

In order to ensure the building and land was not used for commercial purposes after the cessation of the hospital operations, the City rezoned the property to the R-1, One Family Residential zoning district in April of 2015. The portion of the property containing the Balice Clinic was rezoned from B-1 to the Office zoning district so it would remain a conforming use but could not be utilized for commercial purposes.

**Zoning Plan for the Lafayette/East Washington Sub-Area Plan**
A planned unit development may be an appropriate method to develop the site as this provides the City with a solid means to ensure compatibility of a future project with the neighborhood. Specific elements of the Sub-Area Plan are as follows:

- Detached single family dwellings are recommended for the area west of the former Balice Clinic and between Lafayette and East Washington on the land previously occupied by the hospital building itself. The existing R-1 zoning of the property requires a minimum lot size of 8,000 sq. ft. with 65 feet of width which is compatible with the lot sizes of the surrounding single-family neighborhood.

- Attached dwelling units such as townhouses and housing specifically for senior citizens are recommended for the previous hospital parking lot on the south side of East Washington as follows:
  - Buildings should be no more than two stories in height as viewed from East Washington with no more than eight attached units per building. Density should not exceed 10 dwelling units per acre;
  - Buildings should be arranged so a view of the City from this overlook area is not blocked for those persons driving or walking along East Washington Street. This view was highly rated by those attending the workshop. A public viewing area while not required by this Plan would serve as a very beneficial amenity for residents of the neighborhood.
  - The Zoning Ordinance does not have a district which specifically permits townhouses although the RM, Multiple Family Residential Zoning District does permit multi-family
dwellings. The Plan recommends that the RM zoning district language be amended to permit townhouses in accordance with the recommendations of the Plan noted above. This portion of the property could also be developed as a Planned Unit Development following the recommendations for townhouses noted above.

- Single family detached dwellings are also an acceptable land use for the parking lot area under the R-1 requirements.

- The parking lot was constructed on fill and while it has remained stable over the years for parking lot use, the strength of the soil should be verified to determine if it is suitable to support buildings.

- The former Balice Clinic portion of the property, including any required parking, which is zoned for office use is recommended to continue as it has proven to be a compatible land use for this neighborhood.

**PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL**

This Future Land Use category recognizes those lands and facilities that are owned or operated by a government agency or are supported by public funds and include government buildings, libraries, public schools, and parks. The Ionia Fairgrounds is included in this category as well as the State of Michigan correctional facilities. Land owned by the Mid-Michigan Land Conservancy, although a non-profit organization, is also shown as Public/Institutional.

Public and institutional uses may be sold and redeveloped; and may be converted to private uses. A rezoning may be required to develop a private use on the property. If such a request comes before the Planning Commission, the Commissioners should consider adjacent land uses in the area in order to ensure compatibility and protect neighborhood character as well.

**FLOODPLAIN**

This classification illustrates the approximate limits of the 100-year flood plain of the Grand River as it flows through the City, based upon data provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Development within this area can only proceed if construction can meet the requirements of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the City of Ionia Flood Plain Overlay District. The 100-year flood plain extends as far north in the city as W. Main Street and encompasses several different zoning districts. The Flood Plain Overlay
District would overlay and exert control over these underlying zones.

In 2013, the City consulted with the engineering firm of Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber to conduct a floodplain study of the Grand River through the City, in an area extending from just west of the Free Fair grounds, to just east of Cleveland Street. One of the purposes of the study was to more carefully examine the impacts of the floodplain in the Steele Street Corridor area. The detailed study consisted of a hydraulic model which included numerous cross sections, existing structures, and topography at one-foot intervals. The study resulted in the limits of the 100-year flood plain which differ somewhat from the 100-year flood plain as established by FEMA. Any development in the area of the floodplain study should consider the limits of the floodplain as established by this detailed study.

A map of the floodplain area as determined by the Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber study, as compared to the 100-year floodplain as established by FEMA in 2015, is included in the Maps Section of the Master Plan.

**Zoning Plan for the Flood Plain Land Use Category**

The Flood Plain Land Use Category is implemented through the Flood Plain Overlay District. This district is required in order for the City of Ionia to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. The boundaries of the Flood Plain Overlay Zone include all lands designated in the flood insurance study prepared for the City of Ionia by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In addition to all requirements of the underlying zoning district, any development in the Flood Plain Overlay District must comply with the floodplain management requirements of the State Construction Code and the Michigan Building Code, as enforced by Ionia County and the City of Ionia.
COMPLETE STREETS ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Legal Basis for Complete Streets Analysis
In August of 2010, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008 as amended, was amended to require that local master plans include consideration of additional elements related to transportation. These elements include safe and efficient movement of people and goods by not only motor vehicles but also by bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users including persons with disabilities. Additionally, the amended Act defines street as “a street, avenue, boulevard, highway, road, lane, alley, viaduct, or other public way intended for use by motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users.”

In December of 2010, PA 33 was further amended to require that local master plans also take into consideration the location, character, and extent of public transit routes and public transportation facilities in the preparation of the master plan, and to coordinate with public transportation agencies in the planning process.
In the City of Ionia, the following analysis was done of existing transportation facilities, and recommendations were developed to insure adequate transportation for all users.

Existing Conditions and Policies
Most residential areas of the City are served by sidewalks with accessible curb ramps. Some areas of the City, such as newer residential areas, are not served by sidewalks. In some locations, a sidewalk occurs on one side of the street. Where sidewalks do occur, accessible curb ramps are present. Sidewalks with curb ramps are present throughout the central business district.

In 2009, the City of Ionia completed a Sidewalk Master Plan for the City; in addition, the City of maintains a Sidewalk System Priorities Policy. This policy, which is referenced in the Transportation and Pedestrian Circulation Goals and Actions section of this Master Plan, provides for sidewalk maintenance on an annual basis; identification of gaps in the sidewalk system; coordination of construction of sidewalks in conjunction with routine street maintenance; installation of sidewalks on at least one side of every street currently void of a sidewalk; and during reconstruction of streets and utilities on streets where a sidewalk exists on only one side of the street, to conduct an engineering analysis to determine if a sidewalk should be placed on both sides of the street.

Striped bicycle lanes within street travel lanes are present on both sides of Lincoln Street (M-21) east of North Dexter Street in most locations along the roadway. However, these striped lanes do not include a cycling logo. Some areas without striped lanes exist along Lincoln Street, such as between North Jackson Street and North Jefferson Street. West of North Dexter street, striped lanes do not exist.
The City of Ionia includes the Fred Thwaites Grand River Trail, which is a recreational trail serving the southern portion of the City just north of the Grand River. The Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail extends from east to west through the southern portion of the City; and is a component of a larger regional trail system. Both trails are designed to be accessible to all users. The trails are planned to be linked in the future.

Main Street within the City, extending from Dexter Street (M-66) to Stevenson Place, is composed of brick pavers. Landscaped bump-outs occur in several locations within the central business district. On-street parking is designated with contrasting brick pavers within the central business district. The brick street with landscaped bump-outs is visually pleasing and enhances the historic nature of the central business district, but will likely preclude the addition of bicycle lanes within street travel lanes. However, the potential exists for some streets in the downtown business districts to be designated as “sharrow” lanes with symbols.

Within the central business district, accessible parking spaces are located in parking areas behind businesses, since the majority of businesses maintain accessible entrances in the rear.

Extremes in terrain exist within the City; some locations which might be ideal for striped bicycle lanes within street travel lanes, such as Union Street which runs adjacent to the Ionia Middle School, may be too steep to be considered a safe bicycle route.
Steele Street is a three-lane street running primarily north and south from Dexter Street just north of the bridge over the Grand River, to Washington Street, just north of the central business district. Sidewalks occur on one side of the street, and on both sides closer to the central business district. Steele Street intersects with the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail, and contains a link to the Fred Thwaites Grand River Trail roughly at the southern terminus of Nash Boulevard. The Steele Street Corridor Plan has been developed to address future land use and transportation along the corridor, and is included as part of this Master Plan.

Dexter Street (M-66) is a three lane State of Michigan highway which, due to high traffic volumes, does not lend itself to consideration for bicycle lanes in travel lanes. Off-street non-motorized trails proposed as part of the Steele Street Corridor Plan (discussed in this Master Plan in a following section) address off-street travel along the Dexter Street corridor. With a few minor exceptions, sidewalks exist on both sides of Dexter Street from north of the Grand River to Lincoln Street (M-21).

Public Transportation
The City of Ionia provides Dial-A-Ride (I-DART), a shared, demand-response public transportation service that provides transportation for access to community events, education, employment, enhanced mobility for independent living, recreation, and retail services. Transportation for students is also available. Discounted rates are offered to persons with disabilities as well as senior citizens. Free rides are offered for attendants assisting persons with disabilities.

I-DART operates a fleet of nine service vehicles, seven of which are equipped with wheelchair lifts and comply with all related ADA Policy. I-DART is funded through state and federal transportation programs; a millage; as well as local and fare-box revenues; and operates in accordance with Title VI. The I-DART service area includes all areas located inside the City of Ionia limits, as well as portions of Berlin, Ionia, Easton, and Orange Townships. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 6:30 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. and Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

The Ionia County Commission on Aging Medical Transportation Services are available for a modest fee to senior citizens age 60 and up, and to persons with a disability under the age of 60. Transportation is provided to medical appointments, Senior Center activities, and for errands. Wheelchair accessible vans are available.

Recommendations for Complete Streets
Recommendations to assist the City of Ionia in moving toward the goal of increased use of transportation facilities for all users are as follows:

1. The Steele Street Corridor Plan, adopted as part of this Master Plan, includes non-motorized trails that connect to the Fred Thwaites Grand River Trail and will connect to the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail. The trails are part of a greater plan to increase both recreational and commercial activity in the Steele Street area as well as in...
the central business district. While Dexter Street (M-66) is not suitable for bike lanes in the travel lands of the street, a non-motorized trail is planned running parallel to Dexter Street on the west side of the street. As part of the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail, a bridge has been constructed over Dexter Street near the location of the trail head. The trails will be designed for all users. Touring cyclists as well as local users will be easily routed throughout the Steele Street area as well as into the downtown.

2. Steele Street itself is a three-lane street containing a left turn lane that is not essential to the level of traffic currently using the street. Sufficient right-of-way exists on Steele Street to provide, through a “road diet”, with bicycle lanes in street travel lanes to provide serious cyclists a route through the Steele Street area while also serving as a link between the Fred Thwaites Grand River Trail and the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail. It is recommended that the bike lane begin north of Nash Boulevard. Further analysis would be needed to determine the actual feasibility of the bike lane and the “road diet”.

An off-road non-motorized pathway running parallel to Steele Street may be included as well in the design for Steele Street, in order to accommodate families and other users who prefer not to bike in the roadway.

3. Bicycle lanes within the street travel lanes are recommended in two other key locations:

   a. The first is within Steele Street north of the planned Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail in order to bring cyclists into the central business district. (The extension of the Steele Street off-road non-motorized trail here is not practical due to the planned commercial structures with traditional urban setbacks.)

   b. The second key location is where the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail intersects Hudson Street. This location provides a magnificent north vista to the Ionia County Courthouse. It is an ideal location for trail users to be routed into the central business district while enjoying the view of one the most historic structures in the entire City.

   Attention should be paid in both of these key locations to ensure that sidewalk conditions are such that all users can access the central business district along both Steele Street and Hudson Street from the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail.

4. Specifically analyze the following streets for incorporation of the design principles of Complete Streets:
   a. Washington Street between Dexter Street and Rich Street;
   b. Steele Street between Adams Street and Dexter Street, including consideration of a “road diet”;
c. West Main Street between the Adams Street extension and the west City limits to serve the residential and commercial uses that exist along these street segments.
d. Other street segments as identified.

5. Connections of parks and important community facilities via bike lanes within street travel lanes may be impractical due to extremes in terrain in some locations. In those portions of the City where terrain is not an issue, local streets are such that traffic volumes are low, and bicycle travel between destinations such as neighborhood parks is already feasible. The use of the “sharrow” symbol may be appropriate in some locations to alert drivers that bicycles share the travel lane.

Bicycle lanes may be appropriate along other streets in the central business district and residential neighborhoods and should be identified for practicality in view of available right-of-way. The City may wish to identify local streets where bicycle lanes within travel lanes may be provided in the future in order to provide a network of bicycle lanes within the City.

6. Sidewalks in most locations are designed for all users, and in most cases include curb ramps. Recommendations for further improvements regarding ADA accessibility to neighborhood parks is detailed in the City of Ionia 2019 Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan. Recommendations for sidewalk extension and repair are found in the Sidewalk Study of 2009 prepared for the City of Ionia by Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr, & Huber, Inc., engineering consultants for the City. This study categorizes sidewalk improvement projects in terms of higher and lower priority, focusing on linking important community facilities such as schools, City parks, cultural/institutional uses, medical uses, and non-motorized paths. The study places an emphasis on ADA accessibility of all sidewalks.

7. Incorporate sections of the Dan Burden 2006 Walkable Community Audit that pertain to Complete Streets. Specifically, this includes additional crossing relief islands on Adams Street to enhance pedestrian safety; and high emphasis on bar crossings for crosswalks in the downtown area where feasible.

8. Consider measures to reduce traffic speeds in the 700-900 blocks of West Main Street.
CHAPTER 5
IMPLEMENTATION

In order for the Master Plan to serve as an effective guide for the continued development of the City, it must be implemented. Primary responsibility for implementing the Plan rests with the Planning Commission, the City Council, and the City staff. This is done through a number of methods. These include ordinances, policies, and administrative procedures.

The Master Plan itself has no legal authority to regulate development in order to implement the recommendations of the Plan. This implementation must come from the decisions of the Council and Planning Commission to provide needed public improvements and to administer and establish regulatory measures relative to the use of the land.

The private sector, which includes individual land owners as well as developers, is also involved in fulfilling the recommendations of the Master Plan by the actual physical development of land and through the rezoning of land. The authority for this, however, comes from the City. Cooperation and coordination among individuals, private developers, and public agencies is, therefore, important in successful implementation of the Master Plan.

ZONING

Zoning represents a legal means for the City to regulate private property to achieve orderly land use relationships. It is the process most commonly used to implement community Master Plans. The zoning ordinance consists of an official zoning map and zoning ordinance text.

The official zoning map divides the community into different zones or districts within which certain uses are permitted and others are not. The zoning ordinance text notes the uses which are permitted and establishes regulations to control densities, height, bulk, setback, lot sizes, and accessory uses.

The zoning ordinance also sets forth procedures for site plan review, special land uses, and sign regulations. These measures permit the City to control the quality as well as the type of development. The zoning ordinance includes other procedures such as public notification and the amendment process, which ensure that the zoning process is conducted lawfully.

The Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006 as amended, requires that zoning be based on a plan. A Master Plan provides the basis for the range and spatial location of zoning districts. The zoning ordinance, in turn, is the primary plan implementation tool.

Local control of land use, as provided for by zoning, is an accepted legal practice. The principles on which zoning is based include the need to:
• balance the interests of all landowners and residents with the rights of individual landowners;
• help provide a long-term vision for the community;
• protect the environment;
• ensure development is adequately served by roads and utilities;
• achieve the quality of life desired by residents;
• provide fair and consistent review of development needs; and,
• protect the public health, safety and welfare.

In considering a request to rezone property the Planning Commission and City Council should evaluate the request according to the following factors:

**REZONING EVALUATION FACTORS**

• Does the proposed new classification meet the qualifications noted in the appropriate portion of the Future Land Use chapter?

• Are the uses allowed in the requested district appropriate for the proposed location or can the uses be designed to fit the proposed location without a negative impact on the nearby land uses?

• Have any conditions changed in the area since the Plan was adopted which might justify this change?

• Will there be any community impacts which should be considered, such as increased traffic, or others which might create a need for additional services or improvements?

• Are there any potential environmental considerations which will be contrary to the intent of the existing or proposed classification of land use?

• Will there be any adverse effects on adjacent properties as a result of the proposed land use change?

• Will granting the rezoning request likely lead to significant changes contained in the Master Plan for the area where the rezoning is requested?

• Could this use be accommodated in some other location or in the proposed location by some other zoning measure such as a special land use or a planned unit development?
ZONING PLAN

The 2008 Planning Enabling Act requires that a Master Plan contain a zoning plan which outlines the development requirements for the various zoning districts and an explanation of how the future land use categories relate to the districts on the zoning map. Regarding this latter requirement the Future Land Use Categories in Chapter 4 describe how each of these categories relates to the various zoning districts in the City. A Zoning Map is contained in the Appendix of this Plan and the development requirements for each zone are set forth in the City of Ionia Zoning Ordinance which is available from the City and through the City of Ionia web page.

ZONING ORDINANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Following is a list of recommended amendments to the City of Ionia Zoning Ordinance which may be initiated by the City in order to implement the recommendations of the Master Plan, or to update and clarify certain requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Chapter 3 of the Master Plan sets forth goals and actions which serve to guide the future development of Ionia. Some of the specific implementation recommendations of this chapter are a result of these goals; several of these recommendations are carried over from the 2012 Master Plan.

Other recommendations are found within the text of the zoning plan which follows each future land use category; some of those recommendations may be repeated in the following section.

1. Amend Section See 1248.02 (b) to delete the reference to the Funeral Home and One-Family Residential District; and to permit funeral homes as a special land use in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 One-Family Residential Districts.

2. Analyze the development requirements of the City’s Subdivision Regulations; the Subdivision Open Space Plan zoning regulations; and the Open Space Neighborhood regulations. Determine if the Subdivision Open Space Plan remains a practical option for subdivision or site condominium development, or whether this section may be deleted.

3. A conflict exists in the zoning ordinance where the Schedule of Regulations (Appendix I) requires 4,000 square feet per dwelling unit and 65 feet of lot width in the R-T District, while Section 1250.02 requires that all single-family dwellings in the R-T District comply with the requirements for single family dwellings in the R-1 One-Family Residential District, which requires a minimum lot size of 8,000 square feet and a lot width of 65 feet for single family dwellings. The more restrictive requirement shall apply in a zoning ordinance; thus, within the R-T zoning district, any new lot must have 8,000 square feet and 65 feet of lot width; but single family dwellings may still be built on existing lots of 4,000 square feet with 35 feet of lot width. This conflict
in the Zoning Ordinance should be removed through an amendment to the Schedule of Regulations.

4. Section 1274.09, which are specific regulations for two-family dwellings, contains a regulation in 1274.09 (a) which references a two-family dwelling which may be a conversion of a single family dwelling. Regulations which permit the conversion of single family homes to two-family dwellings have been specifically repealed from the R- T District, and by reference have been repealed from the R-1, R-2, R-3 zoning districts. This section of the ordinance should be amended to reflect that the conversion of single family dwellings to two-family dwellings is not permitted in any case.

5. Amend the RM-1 Multiple-Family Residential District to permit elderly housing and assisted living facilities in this zone as a use by of right, rather than by special land use as is currently required.

6. The regulations of the B-1, B-2, and B-3 Districts should be reviewed to determine if additional uses may be permitted that reflect the Goals and Actions of the Master Plan. Uses may be added such as breweries and distilleries with food service and retail sales; and conversion of existing buildings to high-tech industries such as software development; and expanded housing options which may include conversion of existing buildings for both rental and ownership dwelling units.

7. Amend the setback requirements of the B-2 Zone (CBD) to require new buildings to have a zero setback or perhaps a maximum setback in order to preserve the historical building setback environment in the downtown area, especially along Main Street.

8. Review permitted uses and uses allowed by special land use in the I-1 Light Industrial District to determine if additional uses and mixes of uses may be proposed as amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. The City may consider non-conventional uses of industrial space such as breweries and distilleries with sale and service of products and food items; exercise facilities; day care as accessory to the principle use; churches; special event spaces; and other uses as may be identified.

9. Consider rezoning parcels in the downtown to L-1 Light Industrial, or add permitted uses to the B-2 Community Business District, to promote technology-based research and development land uses.

10. The Zoning Ordinance should be amended to rezone those properties that were the subject of the Ionia Springs PUD to another zoning district; and to delete Chapter 1267 Ionia Springs Planned Unit Development District from the Zoning Ordinance.
11. Amend Section 1240.04 of the Zoning Ordinance to require that lands which are transferred into the City, either through annexation or a PA 425 agreement, shall be classified as the lowest density, most restrictive zoning district adopted by the City.

12. Prepare new zoning regulations for the Steele Street Corridor District described in Chapter 3 and then rezone those parcels which are recommended for this District on the Future Land Use Plan.

13. Begin implementing the Steele Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan by preparing detailed plans for the re-development of Steele Street with a variety of recreational, entertainment and complementary retail and service uses.

14. Determine if the Zoning Ordinance contains adequate regulations to carry out the intent of the Lafayette/East Washington Sub-Area Plan; amend the Zoning Ordinance if necessary.

15. Prepare regulations for the Attached Urban Housing Planned Unit Development District (AUH-PUD) to permit this type of housing as a residential option in suitable locations.

16. Prepare regulations for a Health Services District if desired, in cooperation with Orange Township.

**PLANNING COMMISSION WORK PROGRAM**

The Plan recommends that the Planning Commission prepare an annual work program in the beginning of each year. This work program would set forth the tasks of goals which the Planning Commission determines to accomplish for the upcoming year. This will allow the Commission to stay focused on important tasks, in order to develop and implement goals and strategies identified within this Plan.

**PLANNING EDUCATION**

The Planning Commissioners should be kept informed of planning seminars to learn how to better carry out their duties and responsibilities as Planning Commissioners. These seminars are regularly sponsored by the Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) and the Michigan Municipal League (MML) and are a valuable resource for Planning Commissions. There are also several planning publications which are useful information tools for Planning Commissions. The main publications are Planning and Zoning News and Michigan Planner Magazine.

The Michigan Citizen Planner Program which is administered by the Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service is also an important education program for Planning Commissioners.
REVISIONS TO THE MASTER PLAN
The Planning Enabling Act of 2008 requires all Planning Commissions to review their Master Plans every five years and determine whether to amend the plan or adopt a new plan. This review allows the Commission to be responsive to new growth trends and current citizen attitudes.

As growth occurs over the years, the Plan’s goals, land use information, population projections, and other pertinent data may then be reviewed and revised as necessary, so that the Plan may continue to serve as a valid guide to the growth of the City.
Appendix A
Q1 You are a:

Answered: 223  Skipped: 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident or property owner of the City of Ionia</td>
<td>74.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a resident or property owner of the City of Ionia</td>
<td>25.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q2 Age of respondent:

Answered: 223  Skipped: 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>34.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>25.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>34.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>5.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q3 Attached Urban Housing is a style of housing that may include duplexes, fourplexes, and multiplexes of a small scale, as well as bungalow courts, townhouses, and carriage houses. This type of housing may be developed at price points that appeal to those beginning a career, young families, and those of retirement age, and may be developed as ownership units as well as rental units. Attached Urban Housing is intended to bring vitality to downtown areas, and is also compatible with single family neighborhoods. In general, do you favor zoning regulations which allow a wider range of uses in the downtown area, such as:

(Choose all that you favor)

Answered: 203    Skipped: 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current trends such as breweries and distilleries, with options for food service and retail sales; conversion of existing buildings to high-tech industries such as software development; and similar trends which enhance the vitality of downtown areas</td>
<td>81.77% 166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversion of existing buildings to condominium (ownership) and rental dwelling units to increase the number of downtown residents</td>
<td>55.67% 113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attached Urban Housing which may include a variety of dwelling unit designs on a smaller scale, as described above</td>
<td>48.77% 99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 203
Q4 The M-21 (Lincoln Avenue) corridor from Dexter Street eastward to the City limits is shown on the following map. The Master Plan will address land use along this corridor to a depth of approximately one block, as illustrated by the shaded area. Please check the answer that best fits your opinion of the future of land use along this corridor: (Choose one) *Please note this is required to answer at least one.

**Answered: 200  Skipped: 24**

![Graph showing responses]

**ANSWER CHOICES**

- More commercial and office uses should be planned along Lincoln Avenue, with landscaping and sign regulations that enhance the appearance of the corridor, and with design standards that improve access to businesses. **36.00%** 72
- Do not increase commercial and office uses along Lincoln Avenue; plan instead for Attached Urban Housing of a style that is compatible with existing single-family neighborhoods, as described in Question 3. **34.50%** 69
- The appearance and function of the Lincoln Avenue corridor is primarily acceptable the way it is. **29.50%** 59

**TOTAL**

200

4 / 17
Q5 The Michigan Medical Marihuana Facilities Licensing Act of 2016 enables municipalities to permit medical marihuana provisioning centers. A “provisioning center” permits the distribution of medical marihuana or infused-marihuana products from a licensed grower for use by registered patients or caregivers. A provisioning center operates much as a retail store. Which course of action do you believe is best for the City regarding provisioning centers? (choose one)

**Answer choices**

- With proper regulations, provisioning centers should be allowed in any business zoning district in the City. 54.41% 111
- With proper regulations, provisioning centers should be allowed in any business zoning district EXCEPT the central business district (Main Street). 13.73% 28
- With proper regulations, provisioning centers should be allowed in any business zoning district EXCEPT the business districts located on State Highways (M-21/M-66) in the City. 5.88% 12
- The City should not permit provisioning centers. 25.98% 53

**Total** 204
Q6 The ratio of owner-occupied dwellings to non-owner-occupied dwellings (rental units) in the City of Ionia is currently 55% owner occupied to 45% renter occupied. In your opinion, this ratio is: (Choose one)

Answered: 195  Skipped: 29

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not enough owner-occupied dwelling units as a percentage of all dwelling units</td>
<td>51.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough rental units as a percentage of all dwelling units</td>
<td>16.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ratio is just right as it is</td>
<td>31.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q7 Of the following, which would you be willing to support with additional property tax millage? (Choose all that apply) *Please note this is required to answer at least one.

Answered: 181  Skipped: 43

**ANSWER CHOICES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City grants to new/start-up businesses downtown</td>
<td>50.28% 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve/replace buildings on the grounds of the Ionia Free Fair</td>
<td>41.99% 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautification such as street trees, landscaping, and public art</td>
<td>48.07% 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and recreation programs and facilities</td>
<td>61.33% 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A senior citizen gathering venue with available technology such as wi-fi access</td>
<td>29.28% 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Respondents: 181</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q8 What are the most pressing issues facing the City today? (Choose no more than three). *Please note this is required to answer at least one.

Answered: 205  Skipped: 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vacant commercial buildings</td>
<td>69.27% 142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of housing in the Central Business District, such as Attached Urban Housing, and attached condominiums or rental dwelling units in converted buildings, that provide a range of price options, and bring vitality to the downtown area.</td>
<td>11.22% 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of housing options in all locations, such as Attached Urban Housing, attached condominiums or rental dwelling units, that provide a range of price options.</td>
<td>21.95% 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of owner-occupied to renter occupied dwellings in the city, which is currently 55% owner occupied to 45% renter occupied.</td>
<td>20.49% 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A vibrant vision for the city that will attract and retain the younger generation</td>
<td>50.73% 104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation of historic houses</td>
<td>20.00% 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>19.02% 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of code enforcement</td>
<td>13.66% 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracting high wage earners</td>
<td>28.29% 58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 205

8 / 17
Q9 Which of the following are the reasons that you visit downtown Ionia? (Choose the five reasons you most frequently visit the downtown area)

Answered: 205  Skipped: 19

**Answer Choices**

- Shopping: 23.90% 49 responses
- Restaurants: 66.34% 136 responses
- Entertainment: 27.32% 56 responses
- Services (financial, insurance, fitness, salons, etc.): 30.24% 62 responses
- Government business (City Hall, Post Office, County business, dog license, etc.): 51.22% 105 responses
- I am employed at a downtown establishment: 12.20% 25 responses
- Special events (movies, concerts, festivals, farmers market, etc.): 47.80% 98 responses
- Recreation (trails; playgrounds; pickle-ball; programs at the Armory; activities on the Grand River such as canoeing, kayaking, and fishing, etc.): 33.66% 69 responses
- Attend a church service or a religious activity: 14.63% 30 responses
- I enjoy walking, biking, or driving through the downtown, to enjoy the aesthetics such as the historic buildings, and other inviting elements of a traditional small town: 38.54% 79 responses
Total Respondents: 205
Q10 Which of the following are the primary reasons you do not visit downtown Ionia? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 185  Skipped: 39

**Answer Choices**

- Lack of business choices (restaurants, shopping, services) 76.22% 141
- Parking issues 28.65% 53
- Safety 3.24% 6
- Business hours 35.68% 66
- Lack of special events or programs that interest me 45.41% 84
- Concerns with mobility such as access for those with disabilities or mobility challenges 4.86% 9
- Lack of public restrooms 29.73% 55

Total Respondents: 185

**Responses**

1. **A Okay** 4/11/2018 3:36 PM

2. Little reason to go to downtown; blighted, empty area; not welcoming; access roads into city do NOT draw people in; blight everywhere; windows of stores are dirty, cluttered, poor condition; look up to boarded up windows!!!!!, display "trash"; not welcoming for visitors; nothing offered to shop for; no regular business hours; if one has a choice to shop here, or Lowell...........where would YOU go to shop, eat, or spend your dollars; physical condition of downtown buildings seriously deteriorated..........no code enforcement; Registered Historic District..........have State resources been utilized; conditions have been the same for decades, and continue getting worse...........why would anything be different........the City's reputation has been years in the making 4/10/2018 7:59 AM
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City of Ionia</th>
<th>SurveyMonkey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Would like to see more restaurants and entertainment options downtown. This would include indoor and outdoor options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Don't go Downtown often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dirty &amp; shitty roads all over town.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Disrespectful Punks riding bikes and skateboards on sidewalks even though posted not to do so. It's the who's who of low-life wondering around town. Don't want to be associated with that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A church is buying up most of a block. I don't believe this is the downtown development I want.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The very few small shops that are open downtown have horrible hours. I realize these stores will never fully be able to keep up with the large 24/7 stores but we are a society that now expects stores to be open Sundays and Mondays. These businesses really seem to be hurting themselves. Also, vacant after vacant buildings doesn't look very inviting to people as well as derelict looking buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The entire downtown area is run down buildings and houses. They look terrible. Also, we might have more businesses if the City lowers the rent on some of these vacant spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nothing to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>we need a restaurant that has buffet like the grand rapids area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Splash pad in the downtown area would be wonderful for all ages! New playgrounds too. Maybe all of that in the old Kmart lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>No money to spend, poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Poor cell reception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Our family visits downtown Ionia regularly during the warmer months, as well as for special events during winter (Christmas Parade, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The cult church that stole the west end of downtown Ionia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Lack of WiFi downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>None of the above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Too much has been allowed to pass into religious control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Look to Hastings as a fine example of what can be done in a small town. Art, sculpture, large selection of excellent restaurants, breweries, distilleries, a vibrant feeling.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q11 What does the downtown need most? (Choose no more than three)

Answered: 205  Skipped: 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More off-street parking lots (attractive, well-lit)</td>
<td>27.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More landscaping (street trees, flowers)</td>
<td>19.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A more contemporary feel (outdoor cafes, coffee shops, plazas for special events, gathering spaces)</td>
<td>70.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public restrooms</td>
<td>36.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing options such as Attached Urban Housing, that bring vitality to the downtown area</td>
<td>19.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to free Wi-Fi</td>
<td>38.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change; I like it the way it is now</td>
<td>7.32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 205
Q12 Which facilities NOT CURRENTLY available should be priorities of the Parks and Recreation Department? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 187  Skipped: 37

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New/replaced playground equipment</td>
<td>36.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor concert/band shell</td>
<td>44.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog park</td>
<td>47.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary field house for indoor football, gymnastics, basketball, soccer, fitness, volleyball, and with an indoor track</td>
<td>46.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real or artificial ice for both competitive hockey and recreational skating</td>
<td>39.04%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 187
Q13 Which programs not currently offered by the Parks and Recreation Department are you or your family most likely to use? (Choose no more than three)

Answered: 197  Skipped: 27

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult kickball</td>
<td>19.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult volleyball</td>
<td>28.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking classes</td>
<td>58.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music classes</td>
<td>38.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth tennis</td>
<td>20.30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 197
Q14 Would you favor replacing the existing wooden play structure at McConnell Park/Fun Forest – (located between East Washington and East Main Streets) with new, updated play equipment, designed to be safe and accessible for all users?

Answered: 182  Skipped: 42

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>58.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>41.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q15 Which types of senior citizen programs are you most likely to use if offered by the Parks and Recreation Department? (Choose all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exercise classes at a variety of challenge levels; yoga, or tai chi classes</td>
<td>57.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer skills classes</td>
<td>24.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day trips to points of interest and special events</td>
<td>52.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special speakers on a variety of topics</td>
<td>21.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational programs which focus on topics in the arts, health, personal finance, travel, leisure pursuits, history, and more.</td>
<td>35.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card and board games</td>
<td>33.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and crafts</td>
<td>37.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dances and dance classes</td>
<td>28.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support services and resources for seniors</td>
<td>45.12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 164
Maps
City of Ionia

Sparrow Hospital Redevelopment
Option 3

Single Family
Houses and
Attached
Townhouses

- Hospital Razed
- Extend Pearl Street
- All new parcels have a minimum lot size of:
  - 65 ft wide
  - 8,000 sq ft

New
Parcels

Existing Parking Lot

New Parking Lot

New Single Family Houses and Lots

New Single Family Houses and Lots

Private Drive

Viewing Area

Townhouses & Attached Condominiums

New Parcels

City of Ionia

325 East Washington Street

734.272.2800
City of Ionia, Michigan
Steele Street Corridor Plan
October 2018

Adopted as Part of the 2019 City of Ionia Master Plan on October 9, 2019.

1. Grand River Bridge
2. Possible Roundabout at Enhanced City Gateway
3. Ionia Gateway Park
4. Steele Street Road-Diet Improvements including Dedicated Bike Lanes
5. Enhanced Intersection
6. Ionia Fairgrounds Enhanced Entrance
7. Fred Thwaites Grand River Trail Connection
8. Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail
9. Small and Large Dog Parks
10. Pond with Boardwalk & Preserved Natural Areas
11. Youth Soccer Fields
12. Multi-Use Fields
13. Lighted Softball Fields
14. Recreation Plaza with Restroom Building, Storage Space & Playground
15. Sand Volleyball & Picnic Area
16. Multi-Use Recreation Building
17. Commercial Buildings
18. Silo Residential
19. Multi-Family Residential
20. Pedestrian Bridge (Built 2015)
21. Trailhead Park (Built 2019)
22. Proposed City of Ionia Library
23. Flexible Small Event Public Space
24. Multi-Use Plaza & Lawn
25. Enhanced Pedestrian Corridor
26. Potential Future Development

SCALE: 1" = 150'-0"

CORRIDOR PLAN KEY

The 100 Year Floodplain and the Floodway are based on data provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).