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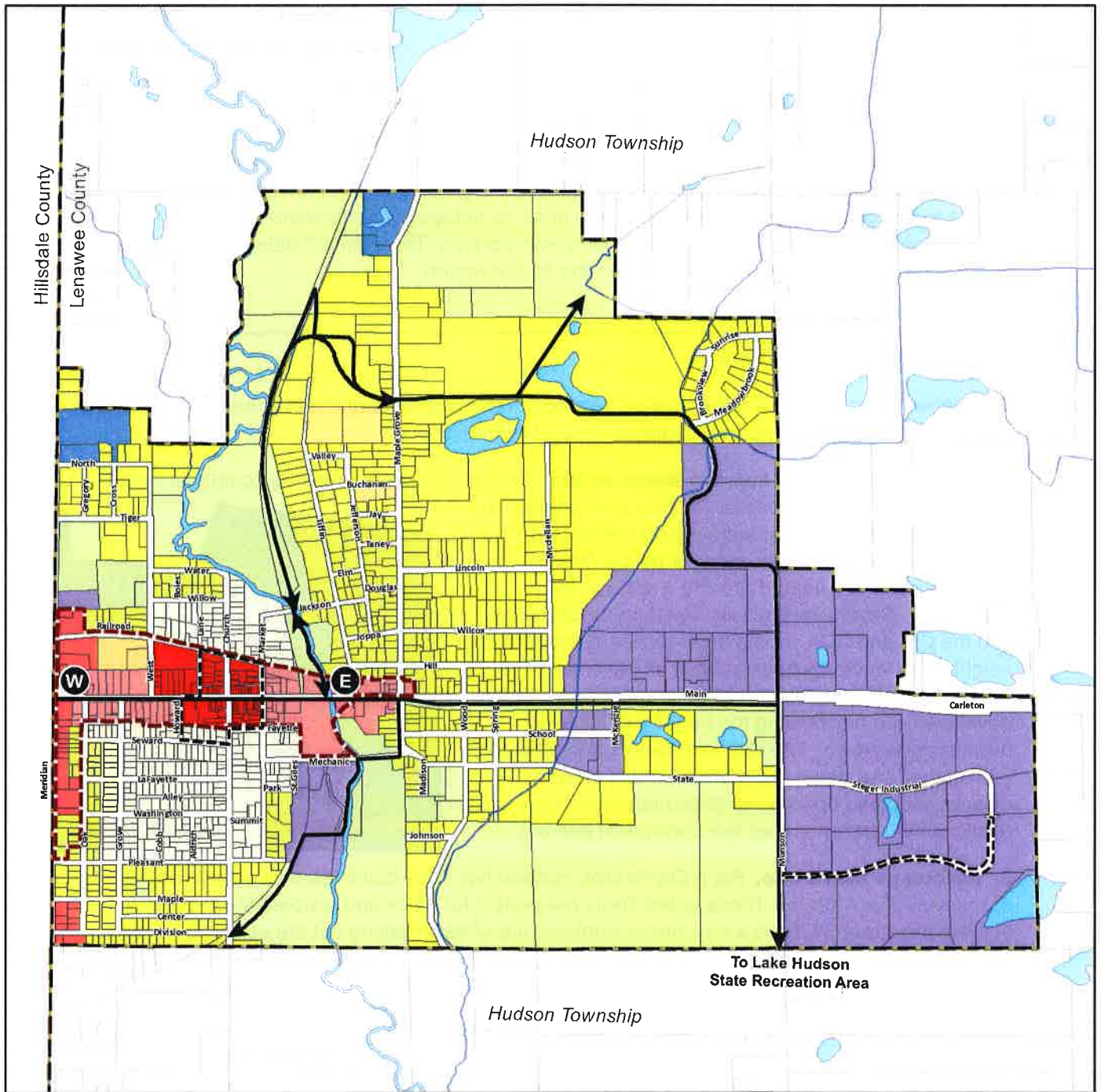
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Future Land Use

City of Hudson, Michigan

Future Land Use

- Historic In-Town Residential
- Large Lot Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Downtown Core

- Highway Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Agriculture, Open Space & Parks

- Trail
- Historic District
- DDA Boundary
- Municipal Boundary

E W See Gateway Improvements Section in The Hudson Plan

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Source: Lenawee County GIS, 2010
Data Source: McKenna Associates, 9/10

Downtown Plan

Downtown Hudson, with its historic architecture, walkable surrounding neighborhood, numerous institutions, and position on a regional thoroughfare, has great potential. However, it has been unable to live up to that potential in recent decades, as vacancy, poor stewardship, and increased competition have severely limited its prosperity and vibrancy. This Plan will detail some ways to return downtown Hudson to a prominent center for the region.

Downtown Plan Tenets

The following concepts are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility:

1. Reduce Vacancy and Improve Business Mix. Just as vibrancy and activity contribute to the success of any given business, vacancy and neglect can easily lead to the failure of surrounding businesses. Streetscape improvements, outdoor patios, façade rejuvenations have helped provide a spark to the Downtown. Several businesses have begun operation and the City and DDA should be proactive in encouraging neighboring landlords to piggyback on the small successes. Work should continue on marketing downtown and highlighting the benefits of initiating business downtown. The City and owners alike should be touting the “downtown experience,” which includes eclectic shopping options, neighborhood services, quality relationships, and amenities like convenient parking.



2. Encourage Mixed Use. For a City its size, Hudson has large buildings in its downtown – some as many as 3 or 4 stories. These upper floors are perfect for office and residential uses that would activate the street 24 hours a day. Some landlords are already renting out the upper floors, while others leave them vacant or use them for storage. The City and DDA can promote mixed use through incentives, but also by simply encouraging it in the Zoning Code (see Chapter 6). The Code should make redevelopment of existing assets easier to accomplish than developing on the periphery of the City.

3. Capitalize on Historic Assets. One of downtown Hudson’s great strengths is its historic architecture. The DDA’s façade improvement plan is helping to change this, and the guidelines for historic renovation will help property owners with the decision on how to proceed with a renovation. A specific downtown code for all new storefronts being renovated would help improve the look of downtown, as well as its attractiveness to the pedestrian. The DDA should encourage an owner of a renovated property to give public voice to his positive experiences about redevelopment in the City. Similarly, an open house to showcase the results of downtown redevelopment could serve as a catalyst for additional positive change downtown.

4. Enliven Side Streets. Another of Hudson’s strengths is that its downtown is a district with several uses and a network of walkable streets, rather than a single commercial corridor. Main

Street is clearly the primary street, but the focus should include adjacent streets, as well. Railroad Street, with its public uses, Church Street with its retail, Market Street with its institutions, and Seward, Fayette, and Lane Streets with their historic housing should not be ignored.

“Mini-festivals” could bring attention to the side streets, with themed streetscapes and signage pointing pedestrians to explore slightly outside of Main Street. For example, on Railroad Street, the municipal uses could each put on an open house on the same day, highlighting things like fire safety around the home, programming facilitated by City administration, and public safety (bicycle clinic, for example).

Additionally, signage, streetscape, and pedestrian improvements which share designs with Main Street would bring these streets more fully into the envelope of “downtown” to enliven the entire district.

5. Use the Market House as an Anchor. The presence of the regional shopping center, including the Market House, on the edge of downtown Hudson has simultaneously been an asset to the City and an impediment for the downtown. The shopping center attracts customers from around the region, as well as travelers on US-127, but also pulls customers and businesses away from the downtown core. In order to remedy this, the downtown and the Market House need be better connected by pedestrian improvements, signage, and marketing.



Further expansion of the Veterans Memorial, such as an expanded public plaza, fountain, or amphitheater in the southeast corner of the Market House parking lot could turn the corner into a tangible connection point between the downtown and the shopping center.

Downtown Design Guidelines

It is inevitable that changes to structures in the downtown area will occur over time. However, it is absolutely essential that these changes do not further damage the historic building fabric and character of the downtown. Restoration of already-degraded storefronts and preservation of intact storefronts will improve the overall character of the downtown, strengthen its position as a regional destination, and strengthen its value to the community.

The historic buildings in the downtown area were constructed according to a common architectural tradition. While the style of each building may be unique, there are commonalities that all of the historic downtown buildings share. These common design elements are rooted in a centuries-old tradition of village/town building. Such centuries-old traditions develop over time in response to the needs of human activity. Recent “improvements” have destroyed the original building design in many cases, and Hudson's most important implementation task is restoring these altered buildings to their original design.

Hudson's most important task is to restore altered buildings to their original design.

Any building renovation or alteration, no matter the planned use, must retain the overall design integrity of the historic building by protecting or restoring the original features, design elements, and materials.

This section provides recommendations for basic design standards that will help restore the historic quality of Hudson's downtown, no matter what the particular architectural style of the building.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The following general standards are to be applied to rehabilitation projects, taking into account economic and technical feasibility:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

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10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Maintain the Downtown Building Design Tradition. The layout, location, and proportion of major building elements and architectural detailing are important elements in traditional downtown building design. In the centuries-old “main street” building design tradition, building elements follow a very rigid set of rules, while architectural detailing is where individual buildings can display their own unique character and flair.

So long as all buildings comply with a simple set of building element design standards, downtown Hudson’s historic character will be preserved. The specific architectural details may vary drastically, which is acceptable. When a building has a strong architectural character, this character should be preserved. However, it is not the intent of these design guidelines to dictate architectural style – only to ensure that the vernacular of main street building design of major elements is adhered to.

The basic main street building façade consists of three major elements, which can appear in various shapes, sizes, and styles:

1. A decorative cornice that caps the building
2. The upper masonry façade with regularly spaced windows
3. The storefront with an entrance and large window displays



Downtown Design Standards. All downtown buildings, whether old or new, historic or not, must comply with the following building element standards:

1. Transparent Storefront Area.
 - a. The traditional storefront is composed almost entirely of windows. The large glass area serves to display the goods the business has to sell, as well as allow natural light deep into the store to minimize the need for artificial light sources. Note that instead of a transom, this storefront has clerestory windows above the door level to create a very tall first floor appearance.
 - b. If a glass storefront is not appropriate for a business or use, consider the use of window treatments as a solution.
 - c. Do not allow storefront areas to be covered over with opaque materials (wood, brick, etc.).



Figure 3.1. A storefront with a high degree of transparency

2. Building Entrances.
 - a. Entrances should be maintained or restored in their traditional location and configuration. If the original entry is gone, the new entry should be designed and placed considering traditional design themes and its relationship to the overall building façade and symmetry.
 - b. Recessed entrances prevent doors from swinging open onto the sidewalk and are encouraged.
 - c. Unfinished anodized metal, bright aluminum, stainless steel and residential grade doors are not acceptable. Recommended materials for doors include metal with black anodized or painted finish, or painted or varnished wood.

3. Transom or Clerestory Windows and Sign Bands.
 - a. The use of a clear glass transom or clerestory windows over doors, and a sign band that is distinguished by alternate building materials or design features are traditional decorative elements and should be retained or restored. These elements serve to “cap” the storefront and provide a transition between the storefront and upper stories.



Figure 3.2. Transom windows above the storefront display windows.

- b. If possible, transom and sign bands should be aligned on adjacent buildings to maintain a clear line across the block face.
 - c. If interior ceilings have been dropped due to past renovations, the ceiling should be raised back to its original height to clear the transom window and maintain historical dimensions.
4. Awnings and Canopies.

- a. Awnings and canopies are acceptable additions to buildings, provided that they fit the storefront opening and the building's proportion and do not obscure or damage important architectural details.
- b. The top edge of the awning should align with the top of the transom or with the framing that separates the transom from the main display window.
- c. All awnings should be designed so that they are not an enclosed structure, but rather are open underneath.
- d. Canvas or other fabric awnings are preferred, although metal awnings may be appropriate if they are designed as an integral part of the building and do not appear as tacked-on additions. No canopy may be integrally-lighted.



Figure 3.3. An awning and a canopy that meet the design standards

5. Vertical Windows on Upper Stories.
- a. Upper story windows should retain their original openings, and should have a vertical orientation.
 - b. If upper story windows have been bricked over or otherwise altered from their original status, they should be restored to their original design.
 - c. Repair of existing windows is preferred, but if repair is not feasible replacement windows must match the existing windows as closely as possible.
6. Building Materials.
- a. Original materials should serve as the primary guide for what is acceptable to use in renovations or restorations.
 - b. Original materials or features must not be concealed, and if they have been concealed by past renovations they should be restored.
 - c. Generally, brick and masonry were the primary materials used in downtown Hudson, and should be so in the future.

- d. Supplemental materials should, to the greatest extent possible, be natural materials such as wood.
- e. Avoid the use of materials that are not visually compatible with the original façade such as shiny metals, plastic panels, vinyl windows, or vinyl doors.
- f. All glass must be non-reflective.

Do This:

1. Consistent quality maintenance of original building features
2. Upper story windows with vertical aspect and historically accurate maintenance
3. Use the sign band
4. Maintain transom windows
5. Recessed entry with historically consistent doors
6. Incorporate lots of glass into a transparent storefront



Don't Do This:

1. Poorly maintain or restore original building features and streetfront
2. Inaccurately proportion the building entrance and door with improper materials
3. Minimize transparency of the storefront with non-transparent glass block windows or similar
4. Hide the original storefront with a brick addition
5. Abandon the use of the sign band

