

**THE CITY OF MILAN DOWNTOWN  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Introduction

The City of Milan Downtown Development Authority (hereafter DDA), together with the Parks and Recreation Department and the Historic District Committee, have conducted several studies and contracted with professional planners to develop a strategy for the preservation, improvement and rehabilitation of the Milan downtown development district, to promote economic growth in the district and to help preserve historic structures. As a result, the following DDA Development Plan is adopted.

**DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**a. Designation of Boundaries of the Development Area in Relation to the Boundaries of the Authority District and any Other Development Areas Within the Authority District.**

The boundaries of the Development Area are the same boundaries as the Milan Downtown Development District, as established by the City of Milan Ordinance 83-8, adopted on October 24, 1983. There are no other development districts within the authority district.

**b. Designation of Boundaries of the Development Area in Relation to Highways, Streets, or Otherwise.**

The approximate boundaries of the DDA District and the Development Area are Church Street on the west, First Street and Hurd Street on the North, Gay Street on the East and the SaliQe River and Ford Lake on the south. All streets and Ford Lake are public and under the jurisdiction of the City of Milan.

**c. Location and Extent of Existing Streets and Other Public Facilities Within the Development Area and the Location, Character, and Extent of the Categories of Public and Private Land Uses, Existing and Proposed for the Development Area.**

(1) The Development District includes dedicated street rights-of-way all under the jurisdiction of the City of Milan, a United States Postal service "Post Office", a historic "Old Fire Barn," Wilson Park, portions of Ford Lake (all under the jurisdiction of the City of Milan), the current Milan Area Fire Department and public parking lots on Main, Ferman and Wabash Streets.

(2) Private land used in the Development Area includes:

(a) Residential- including single family housing, multi-family housing structures and second floor apartments.

(b) Commercial- Within the Development Area are several commercial businesses along Main, Wabash and Tolan Streets. The downtown business area reflects a traditional pattern of zero lot line buildings with on-street parking and off street public parking lots. The downtown is more pedestrian oriented than fringe commercial land areas.

(c) Industrial- There are no industrial businesses in the Downtown Development District.

(d) Transportation- There is no public transportation or railroads located in the Downtown Development District.

(e) Recreation- There is a commercial tai-kwon-do business, and a commercial dance studio located within the Downtown Development District, and a public park with baseball, basketball and picnic areas within the District.

(f) The legal description of the Development Area is as follows: Land in the City of Milan, Washtenaw and Monroe Counties, Michigan, to wit:

Commencing at the southwest corner of Lot 47 of Assessor's Plat of the Village of Milan, Monroe County; thence northwesterly parallel with West Main Street to a point which would intersect with a southwesterly continuation of the easterly line of Lot 13 of Supervisor's Plat Number 3 of the Village of Milan, Washtenaw County; thence northeasterly along said eastern line continuation to the northerly line of West Main Street; thence southeasterly along the south line of Lots 4, 5, 6 & 7 of Thomas Bramans Plat to the West line of Lot 3; thence northeasterly along west line of Lot 3 to the northwest corner; thence southeasterly along the north lot line of Lot 3 and continuing southeasterly to the southwest corner of Lot 22 of Supervisors Plat #4; thence northeasterly along the west line of said Lot 22 to the center of First Street; thence southeasterly to the Center of Tolan Street; thence northeasterly to the Center of Hurd Street; thence southeasterly in the center of Hurd Street to a point which would intersect with a northerly continuation of the east line of Lot 70; thence southerly along the east line of Lots 70 and 69 to the center of Gay Street; thence southeasterly and southwesterly along the center of Gay Street to a point which would intersect with a westerly continuation of the north line of Lot 61; thence east to the northeast corner; thence south 66.4 feet; thence west 66 feet; thence south to the center of County Street; thence easterly along the centerline of County Street to a point which would intersect with a northeasterly continuation of the east line of Lot 2 of the Assessors Plat of the Village of Milan, now City, Monroe County; thence southwesterly along the east line of Lot 2 to the center line of East Main Street; thence northwesterly to a point which would intersect with a northeasterly continuation of the westerly line of Lot 39; thence southwesterly to the southwest corner of Lot 39; thence southeasterly to the southeast corner of Lot 39; thence southwesterly 12.12 feet; thence southeasterly 24.96 feet; thence southwesterly 120 feet; thence southeasterly 58 feet to the west line of Lot 37; thence southwesterly along the westerly line of Lot 37 to the southwest corner; thence northwesterly to the place of beginning.

d. Description of Improvements to be made in the Development Area, Description of any Repairs and Alterations Necessary to make those Improvements, and an Estimate of the Time Required for Completion of the Improvements.

Following is a list of the improvements intended to be made to the Development area, their approximate costs and approximate time for completion. Appendixes are attached to the Development Plan to explain these intended improvements.

- (1) Gateway and Way-finding Signage Plan (Appendix A)
  - (a) Gateway Signs Cost: \$4,000
  - (b) Way-finding Signs Cost: \$3,600Estimated time of completion: Three (3) years
  
- (2) Dumpster Coralling Plan (Appendix B)

Creation of four (4) Dumpster corrals; installation of concrete pads and decorative brick block walls, installation of gates

Approximate Costs: \$36,000  
Time for completion: Five (5) years
  
- (3) Downtown Crosswalk Development (Appendix C)
  - (a) Approximate Cost: \$25,000
  - (b) Time for completion: Five (5) years
  
- (4) Parkside Mixed Use and Parking Lot Development (Appendix D)
  - (a) Approximate Costs: \$745,000
  - (b) Time for completion: Ten (10) years
  
- (5) Five Year Plan of Work (Appendix E)
  
- (6) Non-economic development strategies.
  - (a) Encourage non-motorized connections to adjacent amenities (Appendix F)
  - (b) Preserve and promote historic character (Appendix G)
  - (c) Capitalize on automotive heritage (Appendix H)
  - (d) Divert truck traffic from Main Street (Appendix I)
  - (e) Infill and redevelopment (Appendix J)

e. The Location, Extent, Character, and Estimated Costs of the Improvements

See subparagraph d above.

f. Statement of Construction or Stages of Construction Planned

The stages of construction planned for the improvements provided in subparagraph d and the time required for completion have yet to be determined, pending availability of financing.

g. Description of any Parts of the Development Area to be Left as Open Space and the Use Contemplated for the Space.

Except for the expansion and development of land between Wabash St. and Parkside Place as a parking lot, no other open space is contemplated in the Development area.

h. Description of Any Portions of the Development Area Which the Authority Desires to Sell, Donate, Exchange, or Lease to or from the Municipality and the Proposed Terms.

There is no present intention to sell, donate, exchange or lease any property in the Development area.

i. Description of Desired Zoning Changed and Changes in Streets, Street Levels, Intersections, and Utilities.

No zoning changes are required for the Development area.

j. Estimate of Cost of Development, Statement of Proposed Method of Financing the Development, and the Ability of the Authority to Arrange the Financing.

As previously stated, it is proposed having a Development Plan costing approximately \$813,600. It is anticipated that funding would include one or more of the following sources:

- ., (1) Downtown Development Authority millage.
- (2) Grants from state and federal appropriations.
- (3) Gifts
- (4) Tax Increment Finance Capital Revenues
- (5) Bonding
- (6) Municipal General Funds

The ability to obtain the necessary funding is dependent on the decision making of the Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors and by ordinances and resolutions by the Milan City Council.

k. Designation of the Person or Persons, Natural or Corporate, to Whom all or a Portion of the Development is to be Leased, Sold, or Conveyed and for Whose Benefit the Project is Being Undertaken.

There is no intention to lease, purchase or conveying property within the Development District.

l. Procedures for Bidding for the Leasing, Purchasing, or Conveying of all or a portion of the Development upon its Completion

There is no intention to lease, purchase or condemn property within the Development District.

m. Estimate of Number of Persons Residing in the Development Area and the Number of Families and Individuals to be Displaced.

There are approximately 95 persons residing in the Development area and none are to be displaced by this Development Plan.

n. Plan for Establishing Priority for the Relocation of Persons Displaced

There are no persons being displaced in the Development Area by this Development Plan.

o. Provision for the Costs of Relocating Persons Displaced

There are no persons being displaced in the Development Area by this Development Plan.

p. Plan for Compliance with Act No. 227 of the Public Acts of 1972, being sections 213.321 to 213.332 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

There being no relocation of persons, there is no need to comply with Act 227 of the Public Acts of 1972.

q. Other Material which the Authority Considers Pertinent.

All improvements to the Development area need to be first approved by the Milan Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors and the Milan City Council.

Adopted by the City of Milan Downtown Development Authority July 20, 2009

## Appendix A:

### Downtown Gateway and Way-finding Signage Plan

Develop and implement a signage scheme for identifying the Milan Downtown Commercial District as distinct from the rest of the City. Develop and implement this signage scheme for directing automotive and pedestrian traffic in the downtown. This project requires coordination with Milan Beautification Commission's overall signage scheme and includes identifying gateways to downtown, way-finding to particular amenities (parking, parks, library, post office citizens center, municipal campus, museums, US 23 ramps, etc.)

*The benefits to downtown include:*

- Create a Milan downtown "Branding" scheme for promotions and marketing
- Enhance the pedestrian experience in downtown
- Enhance the driving experience in downtown
- Enhance the commercial market in downtown
- Improve the downtown streetscape

There are three levels of signage needed to serve as both markers for entering the downtown and providing direction within the downtown to critical destinations: Municipal Campus, Library, Schools and Parks.

#### Directional Signs

Downtown signage directs traffic to the library and City Municipal Complex. Directional signage to parking is inconsistent.

#### Way-finding

Flow to downtown is directed by small directional signage throughout Milan. This signage will direct visitors and new residents to the downtown district. Milan is viewed as the city center for residents in the surrounding townships. This is a factor that the downtown could stress, in light of the steady increase in resident population within the city and surrounding area.

A well-designed way-finding system will facilitate movement of people to downtown. A way-finding system would provide consistent and attractive signage that would welcome flow into downtown. Provide direction, identification, information and regulation signs in an attractive manner that reflects the area's architecture and history.

Attractive, consistent signs demonstrate a sense of pride in the community and create a positive, unified downtown image. A comprehensive way-finding program will reduce visitor and customer stress and aid new residents as they orient themselves to local businesses and services.

**The framework plan demonstrates how a three-tiered way-finding program might operate.**

1. Welcome signs
  - a. Placed at the city limits and major gateways to downtown.
2. Directional signage
  - a. Guides people to various city sites. Signs are strategically placed with succinct and clear information.
3. Identification signage
  - a. Located at each destination identified in the directional signage system. In order to be most effective, the way-finding signage should be simple to locate, easy to read and clear in its instructions.

## Wayfinding Projects

### Gateway Signs

- One-sided Cast Aluminum Relief (four signs)
- 36" x 48" (or appropriate for scale)
- Mounted on Two Posts
- Painted
- Content: (Milan Symbol)  
"Welcome to Downtown                      Please watch for pedestrians in our  
crosswalks"

**Cost: \$4500**

### Wayfinding-Main St./Nabash intersection

3 Signs

- Mounted on the traffic signal spars
- Dye-cut Aluminum
- 48" x 30" (or appropriate for scale)
- Painted
- Content: (Milan Symbol) ← - "Municipal Campus", etc.

**Cost: (approx.) \$330 each, total= \$1250**

### Wayfinding-Main (E-W)/Nabash (N-S)/County (E-W)

12 Signs on 6 poles

- Mounted on single standard sign posts
- Dye-cut Aluminum
- 30" x 20" varies (or appropriate for scale)
- Painted
- Content: (Milan Symbol) ← - "Municipal Campus", etc.

**Cost: (approx.) \$150 each, total= \$2400**



## **Appendix 8**

### **Dumpster Corralling Plan**

Develop a dumpster concealment project for commercial property owners in all quadrants of the downtown area. This plan includes the development of language extending the implementation of the same plan for new development in the downtown. This plan will stipulate access by users and by service vehicles in the private and private/public property interfaces downtown with input from effected property owners and rubbish services. This plan includes individual site plan subprojects, contractual agreements between the City and property owners, and special funding for capital improvements for public and private amenities to facilitate the project.

#### **The benefits to downtown include:**

- Improve the health and safety of properties in downtown
- Enhance the pedestrian experience in downtown
- Enhance the commercial market in downtown
- Improve the downtown streetscape
- Facilitate better commercial and personal relations between downtown property owners

## Appendix C

### Downtown Crosswalks Development

Design and implementation of an expanded crosswalk plan in the downtown area to facilitate pedestrian downtown access. Additional crossing zones would provide safer and easier pedestrian downtown access, without additional traffic control devices for automotive traffic.

This design project includes: consideration of legal and liability issues, signage, special paving and marking, lighting. NOTE: Final development of this project may not be feasible without first diverting truck traffic away from downtown.

#### The benefits to downtown include:

- Encourage more pedestrian activity in the downtown area
- Enhance the pedestrian experience in downtown
- Encourage use of off-street parking
- Minimize the random crossing of city thoroughfares

#### Funding

The project qualifies through State of Michigan Act 51 grant funding.

Phase One could focus on marking out new crosswalks and repainting existing crossings.

As pedestrian path changes become apparent, and as resources are available, permanent changes in crosswalks can be added in a series of stages.

**Cost: \$25,000 total for initial phase**

## Appendix D

### Parkside Mixed-Use Farm Market and Parking Lot Development

Develop a permanent farmers market and public parking lot amenity (of 170+ spaces) along E. Main St. between Wabash St. and Park St. behind the commercial buildings and north of the Wilson Park embankment. The project provides a through passage between Wabash and Park Streets and includes power and water access, street lighting, drainage, and hydrant service.

#### The benefits to downtown include:

- A permanent Main St. connection for a seasonal Farmers Market
- Increased parking for general use, park events, and public amenities
- Provides additional commercial frontage to the SE Main St. properties  
Expansion of the Downtown Commercial District
- Opportunities for park/commercial businesses in that sector
- Emergency traffic by-pass of Main St. main intersection
- Enhanced traffic control options for downtown special events  
Enhance the commercial market in downtown
- Enhanced pedestrian access to both Wilson Park and downtown  
Potential mass transit hub  
Improve delivery and service access to the businesses along south east Main

Street

Individual deals may be possible for each property or a single lease/understanding may be preferred. Grant money is available for portions of this project and clearly not available for other parts.

' Cost:	<b>Grant-Eligible Portion:</b>	<b>\$ 360,000</b>
	<b>Non-Eligible Portion:</b>	<b>105,000</b>
	<b>Property Acquisition:</b>	<b>280,000</b>
		<b>\$ 745,000* Total</b>

\*With the current economic climate, this may come in under estimate, Per Building and Zoning Official.

## Appendix E

### DDA 5-Year Plan of Work

#### Year I

- Directional Signage on traffic signal spars [Main @ Wabash] \$1250.00
- Dumpster Corral Scheme Design and Lease agreements \$1000.00
- Crosswalk Marking on E. Main St. \$1000.00
- Parkside Land Acquisition Agreements \$1000.00

#### Year II

- Downtown Street level Signage [Main/VVabash/County] \$2400.00
- Dumpster Corral Scheme Sector 1 implementation \$9000.00
- Crosswalk Marking on W. Main St. \$1000.00
- Parkside Phase 1 [Wabash to Hale] \$80,000.00

#### Year III

- Gateway Signage, Main St. (two signs) \$2250.00
- Dumpster Corral Scheme Sector 2 implementation \$9000.00
- Crosswalk Marking on Wabash St. \$1000.00
- Parkside Phase 2 [Hale to Newman] \$80,000.00

#### Year IV

- Gateway Signage, Wabash and County Sts. (two signs) \$2250.00
- Dumpster Corral Scheme Sector 3 implementation \$9000.00
- Crosswalk Marking on County St. \$1000.00
- Parkside Phase 3, Newman Acquisition \$80,000.00

#### Year V

- Dumpster Corral Scheme Sector 4 implementation \$9000.00
- Crosswalk Marking on First!Church/Ferman/Gay Sts. \$1000.00
- Parkside Final Phase — Completion \$115,000.00

## Appendix F

### Encourage non-motorized connections to adjacent amenities

#### Pedestrian Orientation

Pedestrians enjoy generous sidewalks, benches, parking lot screening, scaled lighting, and attractive window displays in businesses. Improved crosswalks and connections between downtown, the parks and civic center will foster a safe comfortable pedestrian environment.

#### Accessibility

The topography of Milan creates easy pedestrian and non-motorized downtown access. There is one central traffic intersection that is well marked and controlled by crossing devices.

Pedestrian safety and comfort are essential for a secure, lively and active downtown. Active street *life* builds upon itself. The pedestrian experience plays an important role in determining whether people will choose downtown over other competing shopping centers, whether they will enjoy being there and whether they will return.

Amenities including generous sidewalks, clearly marked crosswalks, attractive window displays, benches, open-air cafe seating, public art, landscaping and appropriately scaled lighting. Also included are measures to screen parking lots adjacent to the sidewalk and dumpsters, as well as providing attractive rear entrances. In order to take full advantage of the surrounding amenities to offer in support of the downtown, better connections to the surrounding attractions are needed.

## **Appendix G**

### **Preserve and promote historic character**

The rich City of Milan history contributes to the overall community character. The Milan downtown commercial center has remained much the same for more than a hundred years.

The Ford Village Industry played a major role in Milan's unique past. With its Automotive National Heritage Area (ANHA) designation, the City of Milan is now part of the National Park System and the National Register of Historic Places.

Much of the Milan downtown character has been retained, but, general maintenance, arbitrary improvements and repairs over the years have diminished its impact as a well cared for, important destination. Efforts should concentrate on educating the owners of downtown properties to the value of their historic properties, enabling them to conduct historically valid renovations, and enabling them to proceed with these improvements in the most efficient and cost-effective means possible.

#### **Historic Walking Tour**

Develop a self-guided historic walking tour with the Milan Historical Society to promote Milan and educate residents and visitors. Events provide a venue for people to connect with city amenities and discover how close those assets are to each other, the downtown and the parks.

#### **Historical District Assessment**

The Eastern Michigan University Historical Preservation Department in collaboration with the Milan DDA conducted a detailed architectural assessment on all historic downtown properties in 1992. Each examination considered all external elements of architectural character including those masked, damaged or obliterated from the original character.

#### **Design Guidelines**

Downtown physical improvement efforts include the restoration of buildings, and streetscape improvements in accordance with design guidelines. The DDA created a draft set of design guidelines for building improvements to create a cohesive downtown identity; yet provide for individuality. The DDA draft guidelines should be finalized and adopted by the City.

## Facades

The DDA continues to encourage historical facade restoration through tax credits for historical facade restoration. Programs should require participants to adhere to DDA design guidelines to qualify for funding. This would require the City to develop a design review process.

## Streetscape

While the City has made improvements to the streetscape over the years, a comprehensive design plan for the streetscape elements (including lighting, landscaping, street furniture, crosswalks, public parking lots, etc...) would enable the City success in upgrading the streetscape. This would result in a cohesive downtown district.

## Landscape, Lighting and Street Furniture

Brick pavers were installed along West Main and Wabash streets. The formal entrance to the Wabash Street Parking lot also includes flower beds and trees along the center divider. Decorative, antique-style streetlights throughout the entire downtown area extend into the surrounding approaches and residential zones. Both enameled concrete flower barrels, rubbish bins and decorative benches are strategically placed along Main, Tolan and Wabash streets. Examples of decorative ironwork are located in the south east quarter of the district which could be developed into a complete program throughout the downtown.

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## **Appendix H**

### **Capitalize on Automotive Heritage**

The Milan Ford Village Industry complex provides the community with opportunities to develop attractions and seasonal events. Efforts to provide interpretive learning experiences and occasions which observe this aspect of Milan will foster awareness and tourism. These efforts will further community commitment to Milan historic preservation. Working together, the DDA, Milan Historical Commission, Parks & Recreation, and the City could develop programs that highlight the Milan automotive heritage and develop relationships with the ANHA and regional visitor's bureaus to assist in the promotion of Milan as a destination.

### **Tourism**

The City of Milan as a tourist destination has promise. Features include the Ford Village Industries designation, Ford Lake and the Hack House. The Sanford Road Park includes the model plane air field and equestrian fields. The Milan Dragway, located in London Township has marketing potential for Milan. Developing partnerships with both the Ann Arbor Area Visitors and Monroe County Convention Visitors bureaus could provide cross promotional opportunities and aid with the promotion of Milan's downtown.



## **Appendix I**

### **Divert truck traffic from downtown**

Industrial park can only be accessed from U.S. 23, through downtown Main and Wabash streets. This is also true for any traffic that must get to the west side of town. A major effort should be made to divert heavy truck traffic from downtown to enhance pedestrian-friendly amenities. Efforts are underway to relocate downtown truck travel, enabling the DDA to improve the main streets, relocate electrical lines underground and improve underground utilities.