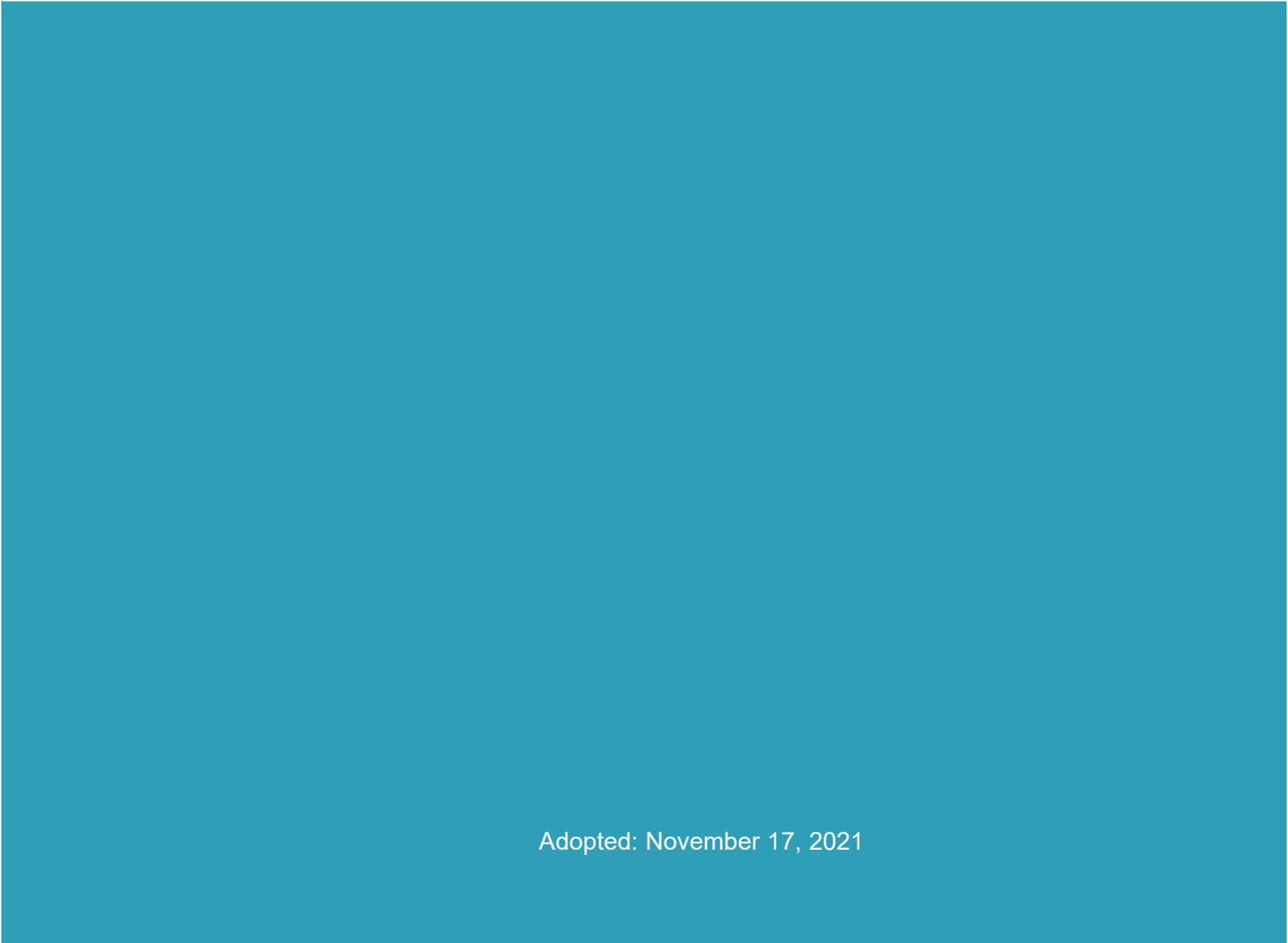




# **2021 MASTER PLAN CITY OF MELVINDALE**



Adopted: November 17, 2021

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### PLANNING COMMISSION

Michael Kollmorgen, Chairman  
Craig Janofski, Secretary  
Suann Scott  
William Louzon  
Diann Rink  
Paul Brown  
Scott Laufenberg  
Renee Marlow

### MELVINDALE DDA

Wheeler Marsee, Mayor  
Imad Khalil  
Justin Pullum  
Janette Decaire  
Ali Elhasan  
Ibrahim Abdulla  
Theresa Kieltyka  
Al Mackey  
Ken Winkles  
Susan Louvet, Staff

### MELVINDALE EDC

Jeannine Ansley  
Carolann Barb  
Dulce Checkler  
Lisa Gardner  
Kevin McIsaac  
Jarrod Ormanian  
Liz Szczepaniak, Administration  
Marvin Yates, Chairman

## STEERING COMMITTEE

**Marvin Yates**, EDC Chair  
**Richard Ortiz**, City Administrator/Finance Director  
**Brad Burns**, Building Official  
**Stacy Bazman**, former mayor

## CONSULTANT TEAM

### SMITHGROUP

Support for this plan was provided by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) Program.



**redevelopment ready**  
communities®

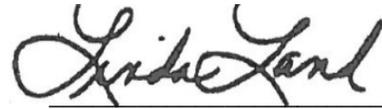
City of Melvindale  
3100 Oakwood Boulevard, Melvindale, MI 48122  
(313) 429-1040 fax 313-383-3993

**Regular Meeting of the Melvindale City Council on Wednesday, November 17, 2021  
at 7:30 p.m.**

Presiding: Mayor Pro Tem Joseph Jackson  
Present Council Members: Jackson, Frederick, Densmore, Cartrette

**21-11-253** Moved by Cartrette and supported by Jackson, to adopt the City of Melvindale Master plan as approved by the Planning Commission resolution PC#21-37.

Passed Unanimously



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Linda Land, City Clerk

*Dated: November 25, 2021*

Cc: *Richard S. Ortiz, City Administrator/Finance Director  
Planning Commission  
EDC Commission  
Master Plan file*

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

A master plan is the official document used to guide the future growth and development of a community. The master plan should serve as a roadmap and foundation for future decision making, as well as the official policy guide for physical development. This master plan is intended to be a usable reference document, easily readable and accessible to all residents.

The intent of the City of Melvindale Master Plan is to:

- Unify the community behind a common vision and set of goals and policies.
- Address the desires and needs of the residents, businesses, and property owners to preserve and enhance relevant qualities of the community and natural aesthetics.
- Provide a land use pattern which will result in a sustainable community with a diversified tax base and to support the desired facilities and services with reasonable tax rates.
- Present an urban framework and future land use map that illustrates how the city desires future development, redevelopment, and other land-based changes to occur.
- Ensure that the city remains a highly desirable community in which to live, work, and visit.
- Provide a legal basis for zoning and other regulations for the type, intensity, and timing of development.
- Address the status and needs of infrastructure, recreational amenities, and public services.

The master plan is intended to take a long-term view of the community, guiding growth and development for the next 20 years and beyond, while providing flexibility to respond to changing conditions, innovations, and new information. Thus, planning is a process that involves the conscious selection of policies relating to land use and development in a community. Through the process of land use planning, it is intended that a community can preserve, promote, protect, and improve the public health, safety, and general welfare. By state law, the master plan must be reviewed every five years.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), Public Act 33 of 2008, requires that the planning commission approve a master plan as a guide for development and review the plan at least once every five years after adoption. The master plan should serve as a roadmap and foundation for future decision making, as well as the official policy guide for community development.

## **REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES**

This master plan update implements the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Redevelopment Ready Communities best practices to create a strong vision for redevelopment in the City of Melvindale.

## A. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MASTER PLAN AND A ZONING ORDINANCE?

The Master Plan is intended to guide land use and zoning decisions. The future land use map should be used in conjunction with the plan goals when reviewing rezoning applications. A Plan is a guide to development, but it is not a legally enforceable document.

Master Plan	Zoning Ordinance
Provides general policies, a guide.	Provides specific regulations, the law.
Describes what should happen in the future, recommends land use for the next 10 to 20 years.	Describes what is and what is not allowed today, based on existing conditions.
Adopted under the Municipal Planning Act, Public Act 285 of 1931, as amended.	Adopted under the Zoning Enabling Act of 2006, as amended.
Includes recommendations that involve other agencies and groups.	Deals only with development-related issues under city control.
Flexible to respond to changing conditions.	Fairly rigid, requires formal amendment to change.

## B. SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

Planning is an iterative process, arriving at a land use and policy document by repeating rounds of analysis and engagement. Each planning effort builds on previous plans.

### MELVINDALE MASTER PLAN (1965)

In 1965, Melvindale developed a master plan that provided the historical backdrop for land use decisions and zoning in the city. However, this plan was not comprehensive in nature and despite the State Law for a review and renewal every five years, there have not been any additional adopted master plans or zoning plans since 1965.

### MSU ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (2018)

In 2018, students at MSU completed an analysis of the City of Melvindale that offered recommendations for city-wide improvements that may spur economic development for the city and the region. While the document did not offer tangible strategies on how Melvindale could leverage the proposed opportunities the analysis did review the existing conditions and demographic information of Melvindale including the community profile:

## C. SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY PROFILE

- Melvindale population is 10,300, and the total population is declining.
- Melvindale has a younger population (median age 33.8 years old) compared to county and state trends.
- Melvindale has seen an increase in the number of residents 25-34 years old.
- Melvindale's high school graduation rate is increasing (95%) and is higher than the county and the state averages.
- Melvindale's housing stock is primarily single family detached (75.2%).
- Most of the residential units were built between 1950-1959.
- Home ownership rates in Melvindale are lower than county and state averages (62.1% Owner, 37.9% Renter).
- Most homes in Melvindale are valued at \$50,000 to \$150,000, with a median value of \$77,000.
- Household incomes (2016) are low (\$36,870 median) and have not kept up with inflation.
- Melvindale's largest industries are manufacturing (21%), Educational, health and social services (12%), Professional services trade (8%).
- Manufacturing fell significantly between 2000 and 2016.
- Melvindale has higher unemployment (9%) than the state but lower than the county.

## D. SUMMARY OF INPUT

Members of the Economic Development Corporation, Downtown Development Authority, and Planning Commission shared input throughout the process, identifying key redevelopment opportunities, reacting to draft concepts, and supporting the process. Input was collected from the public at the Street Fair in July 2018. This plan builds on input and strategies developed during the Economic Development Strategy led by Michigan State University students in 2018.

## MASTER PLAN GOALS

The City of Melvindale is a small town with a strong sense of community. It is a destination and a place to call home. The following goals guide the policies and actions encompassed in the master plan.

- Promote Melvindale as a viable residential community and option for families living and work in Southeast Michigan.
- Encourage and incentivize development that brings new residential and mixed-use development to Melvindale to promote a diverse and active community.
- Provide a safe, convenient, and reliable transportation system that is accessible for all and connects Melvindale to the larger regional area
- Identify, preserve, and enhance the community's character and heritage
- Boost the local economy by attracting local and regional employers to Melvindale
- Identify a clear process for how development happens and remains of high-quality in Melvindale

## E. FRAMEWORK

In addition to a traditional Future Land Use map, the following framework map provides a set of framework elements that depict the types of “places” the city has and speaks to the character of the built environment and key redevelopment opportunities. The framework elements provide a basis for the master plan document.

### NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods are where homes are clustered together along with other small-scale uses that serve the people that live there. Neighborhoods can include a variety of housing types, along with other uses such as schools, churches, parks, and small-scale businesses. Each of the neighborhoods in Melvindale has its own character, influenced by the size, age, and architecture of the buildings, the density of homes, the layout of the streets, as well as the access to parks and public spaces.

*See Chapter 2. Neighborhood Quality*

### DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

Downtown districts are the heart beats of the City – the places where people walk, gather, shop, and meet. In Melvindale, the downtown is located at two intersecting streets: on Allen Road between Oakwood Boulevard and Gough Street, and on Oakwood Boulevard between Robert Street and Prospect Street. Each area has a distinct character, but they are similar in that they were developed with a mix of uses in mind. Downtown Districts are clearly defined by their mix of uses, particularly the integration of residential with ground-floor commercial. The Future Land Use Map should enable more similar development to strengthen the corridor’s density and economic vitality.

*See Chapter 3. Downtown District Plan*

### CORRIDORS

Corridors are the streets that connect the City together, and sometimes divide it. They are the arteries of transportation into, around and through the City and are home to most of the commercial areas. Major corridors in Melvindale, including Allen Road, Oakwood Boulevard, Dix Road, Schafer Road and Outer Drive may require district streetscape interventions to improve the quality and safety of each corridor.

*See Chapter 4. Corridors Plan*



## LAND USE AND REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

### OPEN SPACE

The interweaving framework element is open space. This includes large natural areas, neighborhood parks, and non-motorized trail systems. Open space is an important contributor to quality of life and enhances all the other elements, particularly neighborhoods, centers and districts. Recommendations for open space will relate to each topic.

### INDUSTRIAL

This plan does not anticipate significant changes to Melvindale's employment centers. It is expected the industrial areas of the city will remain as is and continue to be a significant economic driver for the city.

## F. REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) is a certification program supporting community revitalization and the attraction and retention of businesses, entrepreneurs and talent throughout Michigan. RRC promotes communities to be development ready and competitive in today's economy by actively engaging stakeholders and proactively planning for the future—making them more attractive for projects that create places where people want to live, work and invest.

### REDEVELOPMENT READY SITES

Melvindale has very little vacant land available in the city (1.7 percent of the total land as of 2012) and therefore is a community primed for redevelopment. Communities must think strategically about the redevelopment of properties and investments and should be targeted in areas that can catalyze further development around it. This master plan focuses redevelopment efforts in two key areas: corridors and neighborhoods.

- **Neighborhood Redevelopment Opportunities** for neighborhood infill included in *Chapter 2. Neighborhood Quality*.
- **Downtown Redevelopment Opportunities** for commercial/mixed use infill included in *Chapter 3. Downtown District Plan*.
- **Corridor Improvement Opportunities** for streetscape improvements infill included in *Chapter 4. Corridors Plan*.

## G. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

For this plan to serve as an effective tool in guiding new development within the City of Melvindale, it must be implemented. Primarily this responsibility resides with the City Council, Planning Commission and city staff. Following are those steps which should be undertaken to assist in the successful implementation of this Master Plan.

- Capacity building
- Public participation plan
- Capital improvement plan
- DDA plan
- Action plan

*More detailed information on implementation may be found in Chapter 6.*

# CHAPTER 2. NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY

It is important to protect the social and physical aspects of the community that give Melvindale its identity. This chapter focuses on these elements that contribute to quality of life including the local culture and character, community gathering spaces, stable neighborhoods, quality housing stock and diverse housing types, good public services, and well-maintained infrastructure.

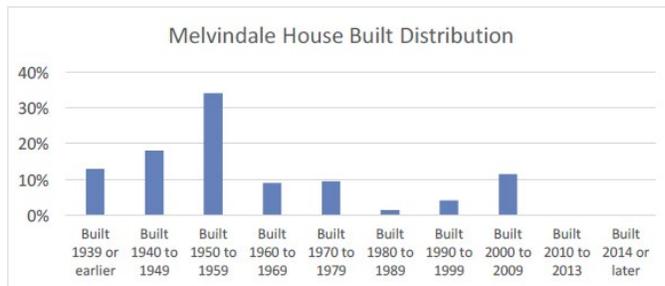
Residents of Melvindale know the city to be a great community to live and raise a family. Residents and leaders also recognize the need for change and growth to enhance local quality of life. Investing in these elements that contribute to quality of life will benefit existing residents as well as provide opportunities to welcome new residents and businesses into the community.

## A. FRAMEWORK

Melvindale is largely a residential community and thus the neighborhoods play a key role in the city’s identity. The neighborhoods also directly impact the other framework elements, including Downtown, Corridors, Districts and Open Space.

Historically, Melvindale was originally formed in the 1920’s as a small agrarian residential town known as Oakwood Heights. In the early 1930s and 1940s, it transitioned into a larger bedroom community to support industrial workers who were employed by the nearby Ford Rouge Plant. Melvindale’s population began to expand during and after WWII, as Detroit and other nearby cities flourished in the post-war industrial boom.

Today, Melvindale remains largely Single-Family Housing, with an aging and outdated housing stock. There have been some recent efforts toward multi-family options, namely the North Pointe Townhomes on Prospect Street but there is limited multi-family or mixed-use residential anywhere else in the city.



Household Characteristics	Number of units	% of Units
<b>Total Households</b>	3899	100%
<b>Units in Structure</b>		
1-unit structures	2932	75.2%
2-or-more-unit structures	947	24.3%
Mobile homes and all other	19	0.5%
<b>Housing Tenure</b>		
Owner-occupied housing units	2421	62.1%
Renter-occupied housing units	1478	37.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates



Melvindale has a neighborhood parks system that currently serves the City. Key recreational destinations include the Melvindale Civic Arena, De Luca Field and Palmer Park. Melvindale is also along the Rouge River, which connects to larger regional greenway systems in the area.



City of Melvindale Parks

## B. ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

Just like any other place, Melvindale has assets to leverage and challenges to overcome. The Melvindale Master Plan Steering Committee and other engaged groups identified key assets and challenges that this Master Plan document seeks to further support or guide through transformation.

### ASSETS

- Melvindale is an old community with young population – lots of young and active families and professionals live here
- Historically and culturally rich – Melvindale has more history than most other Downriver communities
- Economically growing – Housing is affordable and MHI have increased over time
- Very diverse – lots of immigrants in recent years (Mexicans, Italians, Yemeni populations)
- Strong school system – Melvindale is attached to the Allen Park School District which has high student performance
- Great proximity – Melvindale is close to major cities and institutions
  - o Detroit and Dearborn are within a 15-20-minute drive
  - o Close to University of Michigan-Dearborn, Baker College, and Henry Ford College
- Lots of parks in the city
- The downtown area and other residential neighborhoods are very walkable

### CHALLENGES

- Desire for more housing options – Melvindale is predominately single-family housing
- Residential construction costs outweigh home sale prices
- Diverse communities present new communication and education barriers
- Air quality concerns – proximity to heavy industry poses health and environmental concerns
- Lots of fast food chains – limited options for quality food

## C. NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS, POLICIES, ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions help translate the city's assets and challenges into opportunities for strengthening residential neighborhoods and related land uses.

### PROMOTE MELVINDALE AS A VIABLE RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY AND OPTION FOR FAMILIES LIVING AND WORKING IN SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

- Maintain strong residential neighborhoods
  - o Develop an educational code enforcement program to help connect residents to the resources and tools they need to maintain their homes. Prioritize education and awareness over fines.
  - o Identify exterior improvement funds that assist with façade improvements through grants or low-interest loans
- Preserve historic residential character
  - o Host home repair workshops facilitated by local trades persons and historic preservation experts to address common issues such as window repair, damp basements, electrical issues, and abatement of hazardous materials such as lead and asbestos.
- Reduce stormwater issues
  - o Acquire residential properties in flood areas to develop open space area.
  - o Require higher on-site stormwater detention/retention for new development in the City

### ENCOURAGE AND INCENTIVIZE DEVELOPMENT THAT BRINGS NEW RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT TO MELVINDALE TO PROMOTE A DIVERSE AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY

- Expand housing options
  - o Encourage the adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings such as schools, churches, or former warehouse buildings for multi-family residential.
  - o Encourage single-family detached housing on vacant and redevelopment sites, particularly as a transition between residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.
  - o Encourage infill development for vacant or underutilized parcels within neighborhoods and transition area.
  - o Encourage a combination of small sized lots for detached single family dwelling units along with a mixture of attached and multiple family housing types.
  - o Utilize redevelopment ready site process to market potential sites

**Best Practices: Diverse Housing Types** More housing types promotes and allows a variety of alternative housing types beyond the traditional single-family home at appropriate locations. By allowing attached units, the City expands the available housing stock to both young families and seniors, increasing the overall demographic diversity of the City itself. Additionally, neighborhood quality care can be extremely beneficial to the overall residential culture and value. By enforcing neighborhood maintenance, the City preserves the character of residential neighborhoods and reinforces quality standards for existing housing.



## BEST PRACTICE: PLACEMAKING

Various placemaking practices can positively impact the community, including promotion of mixed-uses, preservation of historic character and adaptive reuse, increased walkability and bikability, and enhanced vibrant livability through streetscape, public art, and community gathering spaces. By establishing a cohesive culture that attracts travelers and locals alike, placemaking strategies drive additional economic development and helps to attract and retain residents and businesses. Often, people choose to live in places that offer the amenities, resources, social and professional networks, and opportunities to support thriving lifestyles.

For example, Chicago recently launched its Make Way for People program, supporting innovative placemaking techniques used to retrofit Chicago's streets and cultivate community and culture, seen below.



## D. NEIGHBORHOOD REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### NORTH POINT TOWNHOUSES

Located on Prospect Street in the northern portion of Melvindale, this 20-plus-acre site development offers multi-family rental options to residents. There are vacant parcels on the eastern side of the townhome development that were initially used to continue the development to Wilkerson Circle (East). This site is close to directly next logistics and transportation services

In the near term, the site provides an opportunity for infill residential, or an expansion of the townhomes to fill the entire site. A desirable future use for the site is mid-story multi-family apartment buildings that would be compatible with the existing neighborhood incorporating front porches/stoops, alley access, parking in the rear, and building heights between 2-3 stories. Existing street trees should be preserved, and smaller community-oriented open space should be added.



Continue development of attached residential units

## FORMER PALMER SCHOOL SITE

Located on Palmer Street between Emogene and Grace Street, the Palmer site is a 3-acre vacated public school site. The site has remained vacant for several years and lands next to Palmer Park, a neighborhood open space. The site is just south of a major railroad connection that bifurcates the entire City of Melvindale. The rail line is very active.

In the near term, the site provides an opportunity to expand on neighborhood open space. A desirable future use for the site is detached single-family, low-rise senior living apartment building and cottage homes for downsizing seniors. A key demographic for this site is serving Melvindale's aging population in a secure and manageable living facility. The surrounding neighborhood has architectural charm and walkable scale, but it is somewhat disconnected from downtown. There is an opportunity to connect the site to amenities on Dix Road with direct routes for easy walking and local shopping.



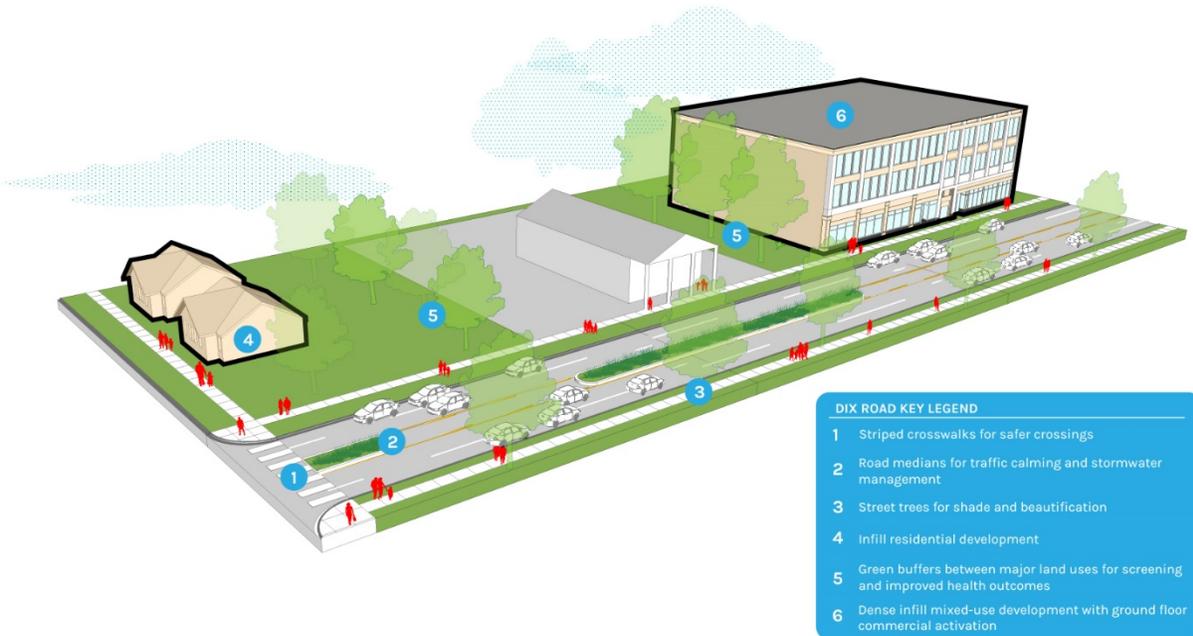
*Traditional neighborhood design (TND) single-family homes with front porches and alleys*



*Cottage or tiny home clusters can provide affordable, scaled-down options with a strong quality of life around a shared greenspace*

## FORMER TRAILER PARK SITE

This 3-acre former trailer park site adjacent to the railroad offers an opportunity to provide a more desirable transition between more intense uses and the residential neighborhood at Dix Road. This site offers an opportunity to strengthen the Dix Road commercial zones by adding residential density and creating a sense of place. A desirable future use for this site is ground-floor retail or commercial space, upper level multi-family residential units, rear and screened parking, and landscape buffers for both the residential and commercial zones that surround the site. This site is currently in development agreement with a private developer, but the City of Melvindale maintains the authority to enforce design criteria that align with the overall Master Plan.



## E. NEIGHBORHOODS CONNECTIVITY STRATEGY

Melvindale's streets are predominately based on a grid pattern, with some suburban curvilinear patterns. These neighborhoods almost universally contain sidewalks and are generally walkable to schools. Because the commercial areas are concentrated along specific corridors, most residents drive to their local destinations. Connectivity is important in establishing a desirable neighborhood for both existing and incoming residents. Establishing a strategy that connects neighborhoods to each other and to other districts within the city promotes a sense of community and reduces the burden of public infrastructure. For Melvindale, a neighborhood connectivity strategy may include:

### PROVIDE A SAFE, CONVENIENT, AND RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT IS ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL AND CONNECTS MELVINDALE TO THE LARGER REGIONAL AREA

- Create, expand, and maintain an integrated system of sidewalks and pathways
  - o Design sidewalks and pathways that connect with existing sidewalks, pathway systems and key destinations, activity and employment centers throughout the city, including Downtown, the Rouge River, schools and parks.
  - o Incorporate pedestrian and landscaping elements along sidewalks and pathways.
  - o Pursue "Bicycle Friendly City" designation from the League of American Bicyclists and implement bike lanes on identified neighborhood streets.
- Improve safety of streets for all users
  - o Incorporate distinctive and clearly marked crosswalks at road crossings that align with existing sidewalks and pathways.
  - o Incorporate curb bump-outs and other traffic calming devices to reduce the distances of pedestrian crossings.
  - o Improve the appearance of key entryways into the community by incorporating landscaping, signage and lighting that compliments the character of the community.
- Enhance walkable neighborhoods
  - o Pursue "Safe Routes to Schools" improvements and federal funding in partnership with the Melvindale Public Schools and the Allen Park Public School System.
  - o Conduct sidewalk assessment study and improve areas that pose tripping and falling hazards within the right-of-way.



*Crosswalks and bump outs make crossing the street easier for pedestrians*

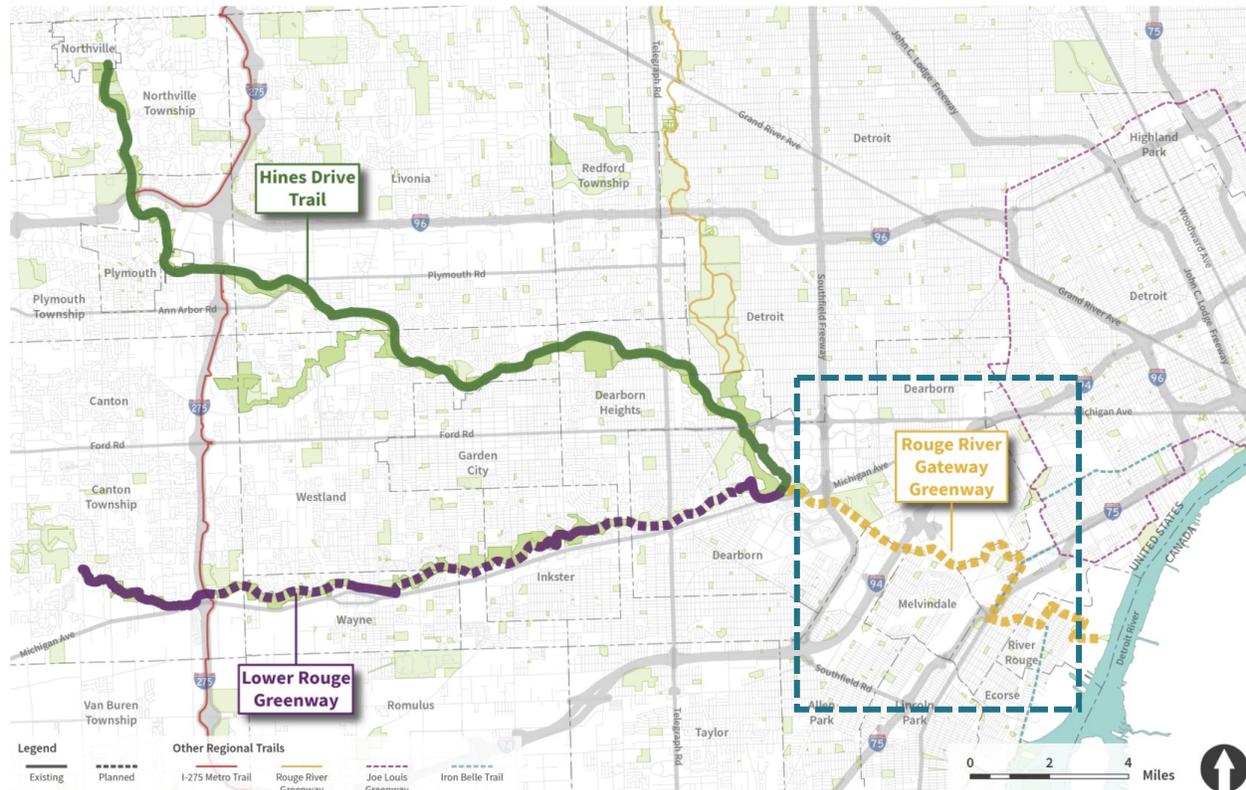


*Gateways with signage and landscaping helps signal entry to the city*

## OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES/TRAIL CONNECTIVITY

Melvindale currently has a strong parks system, so aside from annual repairs and investments, this Master Plan does not provide any recommendations at this time. Every year, the Parks and Recreation Department should review its budget and quality of facilities to determine what improvements need to be made over time.

Relating to Trail Connectivity, it is important for Melvindale to advocate for a River Rouge trail expansion between Melvindale and the Henry Ford Museum Trailhead. This will improve non-motorized connectivity to the region, linking it to larger trails like the Iron Belle Trail.



Source: *Connecting the Rouge, Wayne County Parks*

# CHAPTER 3. DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN

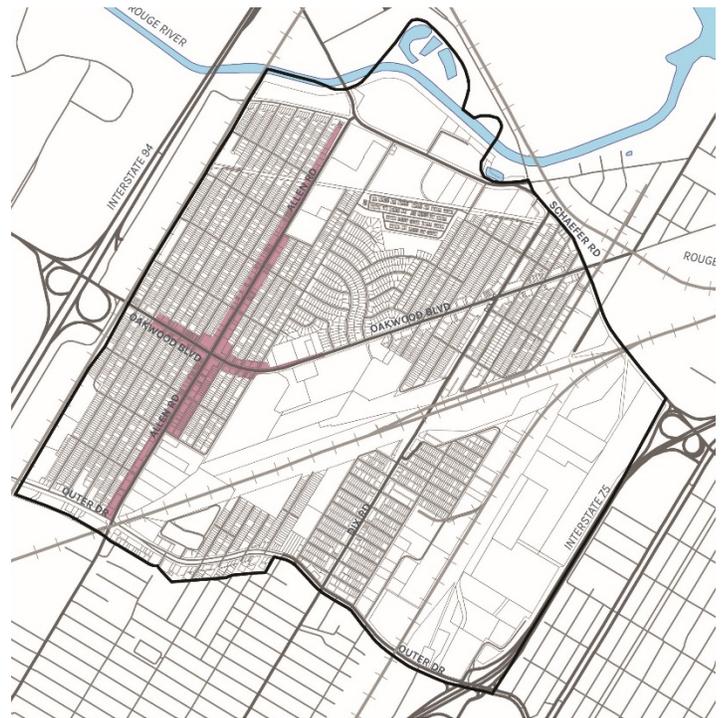
Downtowns function as the social, cultural and economic hubs of a community and the region. As the city's "living room", the downtown district plays an integral role in defining the identity and character of a community.

Throughout its history, Downtown Melvindale was the focal point of activity in the city, a local destination for its diverse residents. Today, the downtown is burdened with fast-food service and national service chains, with local businesses and restaurants peppered in between. While there are some buildings that maintain Melvindale's historic character and quality, the city's downtown area is largely flattened with national brands and large parking lots.

## A. FRAMEWORK

The Melvindale Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has a district that encompasses the commercial center of Melvindale. The district includes Oakwood Boulevard between Prospect Street to Harman Street, and Allen Road between South Dearborn Street to Outer Drive. The DDA was created 1989 and receives its funding as a Tax Increment Financing Authority (TIFA). As a TIFA, the DDA captures tax revenue that exceeds a predetermined amount from the 1989 tax rate.

The DDA's recent improvements include the development of the Oakwood Plaza, Rite Aid Pharmacy, McDonald's Restaurant, parking lot improvements behind the Melvindale Public Library and the decorative street lighting and streetscape improvements throughout the district. As the DDA continues to improve the quality of life for Melvindale residents and create economic opportunities for businesses within the district, this Master Plan will provide development recommendations that will support existing businesses, attract new businesses and promote a downtown character that supports a healthy, sustainable financial growth within the DDA.



## B. ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

### ASSETS

- Large presence of young professionals and highly educated residents
- Some historic buildings ready for new programming (i.e. Slovenia Club)
- Diversity of active businesses, reflective of Melvindale population
- DDA has solid funding to execute development

### CHALLENGES

- Downtown district is not dense – lots of gaps and parking lots between businesses
- Underutilization of square footage – most buildings are single story but can be higher with existing zoning parameters
- Library has recent improvements but not used as desired
- Improvements on sidewalks and crosswalks needed – need Wayne County cooperation
- Limited amenity options within the DDA (i.e. coffee shops, retail, other care)
- No current TIF or DDA Plan
- Missing business and land uses like specialty retailers, a grocery store, housing for young professionals and seniors, and public spaces.

### BEST PRACTICES: DOWNTOWN

A successful downtown includes an entrance/exit gateway, signage, or streetscape that indicates a sense of arrival into the City. Coupled with signage and wayfinding directing individuals to landmarks and public spaces within the City, an identity and sense of place is formed. Locally owned businesses, serving a local market nestled in between public space destinations creates a street dynamic that invites walkability on a pedestrian scale.

The downtown should serve the workforce, bolstering the economy and attracting younger adults by providing amenities for employees who work in the City of Melvindale such as live/work developments like apartment complexes, laundry/dry cleaning services, grocery stores, coffee shops and social gathering spots. Transportation should be accessible within the downtown, putting priority on the pedestrian's walkability and simultaneously improving economic development for businesses engaged in the right-of-way.

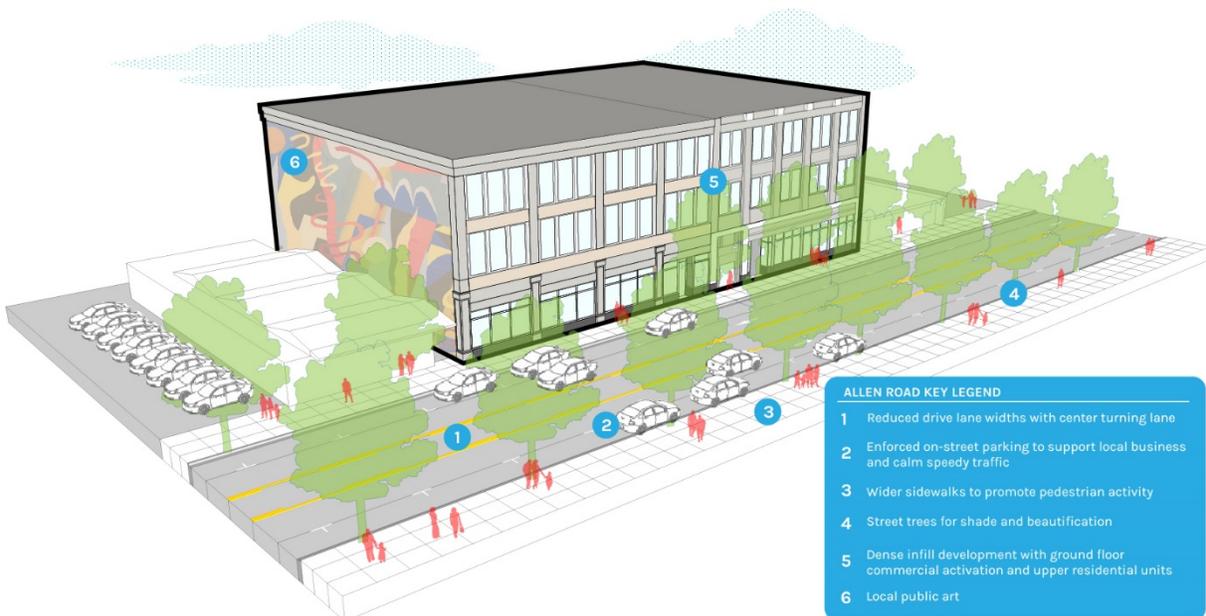


## C. DOWNTOWN DISTRICT 'MAIN STREET' APPROACH

The downtown could benefit from applying Main Street USA's framework to help drive DDA initiatives forward to implement the recommendations in this plan. Michigan Main Street is a companion program to RRC at MEDC and could help guide Melvindale toward greater success in achieving its vision for downtown.

### MAIN STREET FOUR-POINT APPROACH

- Economic Vitality - Strengthens existing economic assets, while also identifying opportunities for new development and growth.
- Design - Leverages unique, historic character to create inviting districts that attract visitors, residents and businesses.
- Organization - Cultivates partnerships and coordinates resources around a shared community vision for downtown.
- Promotion - Communicates the value and vitality of downtown to community members, potential investors and key stakeholders.



### TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIES

- Day Tripper Tourism:
  - o Establish a corridor that draws short-term regional tourism centered around small-town retail, restaurants and cultural activities.
  - o Define the DDA area as a destination within Melvindale that residents and visitors can enjoy and patronize.
- Residential Development Transformation Strategy Development Plan
  - o Downtown Melvindale is widely known for its enthusiastic, welcoming culture that invites and embraces businesses, residents and visitors alike, showcasing a green and thriving environment of beautiful, walkable streets and authentic, unique attractions, residential, shopping, and dining experiences; the small town-downtown with appeal!



## MAIN STREET FOUR POINTS®

### ECONOMIC VITALITY

Economic vitality strengthens the existing economic assets while diversifying the economic base of the Main Street District to support and improve profitability. The goal is to build a strong commercial district that creates a supportive environment for small businesses, entrepreneurs and consumers.

**Examples of economic vitality activities include:** analyzing current market forces, providing a balanced commercial mix, supporting and expanding existing businesses, recruiting new businesses, supporting housing options, developing infill space, and converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property.

### DESIGN

Design capitalizes on and enhances the visual aspects of a Main Street District to create a safe, appealing and inviting atmosphere for people to shop and spend time. The physical elements such as the storefronts and building architecture, streetscape, public art, street furniture, parking areas, and public spaces are used to convey a positive image for the downtown.

**Examples of design actions include:** improving the physical appearance of the Main Street District, quality maintenance practices, historic building rehabilitation and adaptive use, and design review processes.

### ORGANIZATION

A successful Main Street organization builds consensus between the many vested stakeholders throughout a Main Street District to ensure everyone is mobilized and working toward a shared vision for the future of the district. Organizational structure can take many forms depending on community capacity.

**Examples of organization actions include:** fundraising, volunteer recruitment and development, public relations, fostering collaboration between stakeholders, and developing work plans to guide the organization's work.

### PROMOTION

Effective promotion creates a positive image of the Main Street District to instill community pride and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area. Promotions can be used to communicate the unique characteristics of a Main Street District to spark interest in shopping, dining, living or investing in the community.

**Examples of promotion actions include:** marketing an enticing image, social media campaigns, street festivals, parades, and retail or other special events.

## D. GOALS, POLICIES, ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions help translate the city's assets and challenges into opportunities for strengthening the Downtown District and the DDA project areas.

### ENCOURAGE AND INCENTIVIZE DEVELOPMENT THAT BRINGS NEW RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT TO MELVINDALE TO PROMOTE A DIVERSE AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY

- Rezone the downtown area to promote higher-density, mixed-use development
  - o Establish building height minimums and maximums, general character, and developer agreements to streetscapes and rear parking
  - o Amend zoning code to eliminate the additional fast-food and/or big-box national chain retail within the DDA

#### BEST PRACTICES: MIXED-USE

Mixed-use development blends a combination of residential uses or integrates residential and non-residential uses into a cohesive, planned setting that promotes social interaction, adds character to the community, fosters relationships among uses and lessens the need for vehicular trips.

Historically, mixed-use environments were the norm. People lived, worked and shopped within a fairly confined geographic area. As travel options increased and post-World War II suburbanization began, the new mobility offered freedom to live in one place and work, shop and recreate elsewhere. Traffic congestion, social isolation, and sterile development followed.

A desire to reverse this trend and create more opportunity within vibrant communities and neighborhoods has caused many communities to embrace the concept of integrating varied uses, rather than segregating them as has been the practice with traditional zoning. Among the benefits are:

- Greater housing choice
- Reduced travel time and improved convenience
- More efficient use of public services, utilities and infrastructure
- Increased social interaction
- Walkable, bikeable neighborhoods
- Improved community health

More integration of uses is especially desired downtown and the gateway corridors that lead to downtown.

**Mixed-Use Defined.** Varied uses within a defined area or even a single building offers flexibility and synergy. A mixed-use development may be a cohesive project with shared parking, common internal circulation, complementary uses and unifying design, while a mixed-use building may contain varied uses within one structure. Live/work units are a common example in which a commercial use occupies the street level space and a residence is located on the upper level.

## IDENTIFY, PRESERVE, AND ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY'S CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

- Increase lifestyle, entertainment options including festivals and cultural events. Improve publicity and documentation of Melvindale city events to inspire more DDA visitors
- Continue the historic preservation program for downtown's historic structures with program elements to include facade restoration, upper story tenant development, design services, and qualification measures to access state and federal tax credits
- Eliminate under-utilized parking lots within DDA and maximize on-street parking to promote walkability
- Improve the aesthetic appearance of existing downtown parking lots

## BOOST THE LOCAL ECONOMY BY ATTRACTING LOCAL AND REGIONAL EMPLOYERS TO MELVINDALE

- Formalize a Main Street program for downtown management
  - o Expand outreach and education of facade grant opportunities
  - o With the City of Melvindale, define the DDA's role in the RRC initiative; plan and deploy activities accordingly
  - o Identify programs that support local small business to promote local economic growth
- Expand and sustain a model of "coopetition" among Downtown Melvindale businesses, organizations and attractions.
  - o Create day-tripper attraction packages and deals to encourage visitors to patronize Melvindale businesses
  - o Engage business owners in defining "coopetition" and how to measure
  - o Conduct customer service surveys of property owners, businesses and organizations to identify needs for sustainable success
  - o DDA to act as resource for businesses in development/strengthening of networks/network opportunities.

## IDENTIFY A CLEAR PROCESS FOR HOW DEVELOPMENT HAPPENS AND REMAINS OF HIGH-QUALITY IN MELVINDALE

- Proactive capital planning
  - o Continue to annually improve the 6-year capital improvement program planning process.
  - o Seek grant funding opportunities for infrastructure projects.
  - o Review approval process and standards for Planned Unit Development (PUD)
- Building and Design Enforcement
  - o Support a strict code enforcement program of commercial, residential and tenant properties
- Seek local training to prepare Planning Commission on roles and responsibilities related to DDA development

## E. DOWNTOWN DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### HOW ZONING SHAPES REDEVELOPMENT

Zoning regulations shape future redevelopment through the Future Land Use included in this plan. Redevelopment standards may vary, but transformations are generally done through a gradual transition, as zoning is not eminent domain nor a prescription for what has to be built. Instead, zoning is a regulatory framework for development that fits the publicly driven, community vision. The development itself is privately designed and implemented within standards of the zoning ordinance under City review. The City has the power to market its vision to developers and partner with private owners to spur redevelopment. For more on suggested zoning amendments to help achieve this vision, see *Chapter 5: Future Land Use*.

Redevelopment Ready Communities® (RRC) is a certification program supporting community revitalization and the attraction and retention of businesses, entrepreneurs and talent throughout Michigan. RRC promotes communities to be development ready and competitive in today's economy by actively engaging stakeholders and proactively planning for the future—making them more attractive for projects that create places where people want to live, work and invest.

### REDEVELOPMENT EVALUATION CRITERIA

As redevelopment is planned and occurs in the city, it will be critical as opportunities arise to evaluate their potential for redevelopment. The city is encouraged to continually identify redevelopment sites (in addition to those highlighted in this chapter) and package them for marketing and solicitation of developers. In order to prioritize and evaluate the likelihood of redevelopment, the following criteria should be used:

- Size (if there are a number of parcels, the ability to easily assemble)
- Vacant/building (amount of rehabilitation or demolition needed)
- Rebuild/rehab
- Public/private ownership (if private, willing owner)
- Contamination (remediation could be a challenge to redevelopment)
- Potential to spur further redevelopment
- Obstacles to redevelopment
- Parking availability
- Ensure districts do not compete against each other: create distinct identities for downtown, corridors, and industrial districts

### HOW TO ATTRACT DEVELOPERS?

Developers typically look for project locations where the potential for success is fairly certain and risks limited. This means that they are attracted to communities with strong markets where the infrastructure is in place, reasonably priced, quality development sites are available, and the development review process is quick. They also look for opportunities to enter a market right before it “takes off” and capture the heavy demand and associated real estate price or rent increases.

Good developers are usually inundated with requests from municipalities and DDAs to develop in their community, citing the advantages they can offer. Yet only a small percentage of communities provide the information necessary to interest developers. There is specific information they look for that will minimize the amount of time it takes to make a go- no-go decision. For example, is there a market for the type of development being sought by the community? What is the role of the community within the region (i.e. bedroom community, employment destination, transportation hub, etc.)? Are reasonably priced sites available for development of redevelopment? Is necessary

infrastructure in place or will this be needed and add to the cost of the project? How accessible is the development location and how large a market area can they draw from?

These are all vital questions that can be partly answered by the community, making it easier to pique the interest of a developer. Time is money and the less time developers have to commit to looking at a project/community, the more likely they are to dig deeper and hopefully show interest in moving forward. Some of this information might already be available while additional work is needed to gather the remaining data. It is up to the City, DDA, business leaders, and civic associations to work together to assemble developer information and then actively recruit developers and businesses.

### **Why Melvindale?**

Since developers look for strong or emerging markets, Melvindale must prove that it fits into this classification and may have just been overlooked. What are the positives with Melvindale that have created unmet demand for housing, commercial, office or industrial uses? This is information that must be gathered and uncovered to create the “elevator speech” for developers: meaning why invest in Melvindale as opposed to all the other communities that contact you? Also, what has changed in recent years causing the private sector to overlook the City as a place to develop? A one-page handout summarizing this key information will be a good start. After that, a separate sheet can be created for each marketing item like housing, retail, office, hospitality, etc.

### **BEST PRACTICES: PROPERTY INFORMATION PACKAGES**

- Why is this site a good investment?
- Are utilities in place and what capacity can they support?
- What potential incentives, such as opportunity zones might apply?
- What types of investment is the community trying to attract and what demographics support that investment?

### **Understand the Market**

After the Recession, the number of remaining developers Michigan is reduced and those that survived are very busy. As a result, they may not take the time to fully understand the dynamics of the local market and especially not unmet demand. It is therefore up to the community to present valuable information underlining the attributes of the City and why they should do projects here. The City can prepare a fact sheet for different market segments, working with local real estate professionals and companies. For example, some compelling information might be increased housing prices and vacancy rates; potential demand for certain types of housing using the Target Market Analysis; voids in the retail market that could be served by local businesses, etc.

### **Developer Matchmaking**

Once the above information is collected and organized, invite developers to come in and learn about available sites and why they should consider Melvindale for their next project. It would be best to invite them individually and be concise, enthusiastic, and to the point with what you would like them to consider. Be sure to share success stories from other companies and developments so they can see that others have already tested the market. It is equally important to have as much information on-hand regarding property availability, price, rental rates, recent purchase prices, traffic volumes, etc. This will provide a positive impression regarding the recruitment effort and limit the number of items that need follow-up.

### **HELP CLOSE THE GAP**

It is much more difficult to redevelop properties in downtown areas due to increased material and labor costs. This is further compounded by such items as asbestos removal and demolition, infrastructure replacement and underground contamination. These increased costs, along with an unknown demand for retail and office space, leaves developers searching for ways to close the financial “gap” for a proposed project. Combined with a limited number of developers undertaking mixed-use projects in Michigan, the task of attracting new projects can be daunting. This requires a high level of redevelopment expertise and creative financing tools on the part of the City. The following development activities will help put the City in a competitive position for new projects.

### DDA/City Property Acquisition

Property acquisition will be a necessary part of implementing the development projects contained herein, particularly for site development and redevelopment. By purchasing property in an area identified for new development, the DDA or the City will have an added tool to attract developers and build the desired project. For example, to develop new housing, the DDA or City can acquire several of the vacant lots and can contribute them to the project. This will provide an incentive to lower the cost, and minimize the risk, for the developer. Should the first phase be successful, the developer will more than likely undertake construction of additional units without any form of subsidy. The goal is to use tax increment financing to attract developers by minimizing risk, leverage private investment and eventually eliminate the need for financial assistance.

#### Current DDA/City-Owned Properties:

- 18591 Allen Rd (parking)
- 4140 Oakwood Blvd
- 18616 Allen Rd (Slovene Club)

### Gap Funding

Some projects may need financial assistance to kick-start the development. The City may, at its own discretion, commit project-specific future tax increment capture back to private projects for a specified period of time. The goal is to provide funding to close the “gap” that prevents the project from becoming a reality due to financial feasibility. There are many additional incentives that can also be utilized to support “gap” funding.

### Incentives Available to Assist Development

The following programs are a sampling of incentives available to both local communities and developers to assist with redevelopment projects.

- **Business Development Program** – The MiBDP is an incentive program available from the Michigan Strategic Fund, in cooperation with the MEDC. The program is designed to provide grants, loans or other economic assistance to businesses for highly competitive projects in Michigan that create jobs and/or provide investment.
- **PA 198 Industrial Facilities Exemption** – Industrial property tax abatements provide incentives for eligible businesses to make new investments in Michigan. These abatements encourage Michigan manufacturers to build new plants, expand existing plants, renovate aging plants, or add new machinery and equipment. High technology operations are also available for the abatement. Depending on the scope and type of project, real property taxes can be abated up to 50% for a period not to exceed 12 years for new construction. Further, the 6-mil SET may be abated up to 100% with approval from the MEDC.

In the case of a rehabilitation, the current assessed value of the property prior to improvement is frozen. This results in a 100% exemption from property tax on the value of the improvements.

- **Commercial Rehabilitation Abatement** – Encourages the rehabilitation of commercial property by abating the property taxes generated from new investment for a period up to 10 years. Commercial property is qualified facility that includes a building or group of contiguous building of commercial property that is 15 years or older, of which the primary purpose is the operation of a commercial business enterprise or multi-family residential. The CRA freezes the taxable value of the building and exempts the new investment from local taxes.
- **Community Revitalization Program** – The Michigan Community Revitalization Program (MCRP) is an incentive program available from the Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF), in cooperation with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), designed to promote community revitalization that will accelerate private investment in areas of historical disinvestment; contribute to Michigan’s reinvention as a vital, job generating state; foster redevelopment of functionally obsolete or historic properties; reduce blight; and protect the natural resources of this state. The program is designed to provide grants, loans, or other economic assistance for eligible investment projects in Michigan.

- **New Market Tax Credits** - Historically, low-income communities experience a lack of investment, as evidenced by vacant commercial properties, outdated manufacturing facilities, and inadequate access to education and healthcare service providers. The New Market Tax Credit Program (NMTC Program) aims to break this cycle of disinvestment by attracting the private investment necessary to reinvigorate struggling local economies.

The NMTC Program attracts private capital into low-income communities by permitting individual and corporate investors to receive a tax credit against their federal income tax in exchange for making equity investments in specialized financial intermediaries called Community Development Entities (CDEs). The credit totals 39 percent of the original investment amount and is claimed over a period of seven years.

- **Brownfield** - The Brownfield Program uses tax increment financing (TIF) to reimburse brownfield related costs incurred while redeveloping contaminated, functionally obsolete, blighted or historic properties. It is also responsible for managing the Single Business Tax and Michigan Business Tax Brownfield Credit legacy programs (SBT/MBT Brownfield Credits).

The Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) with assistance from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), administers the reimbursement of costs using state school taxes (School Operating and State Education Tax) for nonenvironmental eligible activities that support redevelopment, revitalization and reuse of eligible property. The MEDC also manages amendments to SBT/MBT Brownfield Credit projects approved by MSF. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (EGLE) administers the reimbursement of environmental response costs using state school taxes for environmental activities, and local units of government sometimes use only local taxes to reimburse for eligible activities (i.e., “local-only” plans).

- **Michigan Transportation Economic Development Fund** - The mission of the Transportation Economic Development Fund (TEDF) is to enhance the ability of the state to compete in an international economy, to serve as a catalyst for economic growth of the state, and to improve the quality of life in the state.

The funds are available to state, county, and city road agencies for immediate highway needs relating to a variety of economic development issues.

- **Facade Improvement Program** – The Downtown Development Authority has a façade improvement program which can provide assistance to downtown property owners that may be interested in upgrading their buildings.

## F. DOWNTOWN DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The following sites are illustrated to identify key opportunities to implement this plan's vision over time as sites are redeveloped.

### THE SLOVENE AMERICAN CLUB

Located on Allen Road, north of Gough Street, the Slovenia Club is a historic social club, which hosted social and cultural events for various Eastern European ethnic groups that migrated to Melvindale during the post-war boom. The building is two stories tall, with shared parking with the Melvindale Public Library next door. The City of Melvindale has special interest to return the Slovenia Club to an event hall, with other uses that keep it active throughout the year. The Slovenia Club is a historic building and lands in the center of the DDA Area.

In the near term, the site provides an opportunity for rental event space. A desirable future use for the site is a ground-floor restaurant and historic storefront that sells authentic Slavic foods, with Melvindale mementos for tourists to purchase. The upper floor would still be maintained for rental event space. The on-site parking may be a long-term asset for larger events but presently poses gaps in the streetscape experience. A desired future use for the parking area is a flexible green parking lot, that can operate as either additional parking or outdoor patio space for special events at the Club. In conjunction with on-street parking, the Slovene American Club can meet peak demands without over-parking the site.

Other programs considerations to ensure activation include Property Accessed Clean Energy Program (P.A.C.E) and the Michigan Strategic Fund Business Development Program.

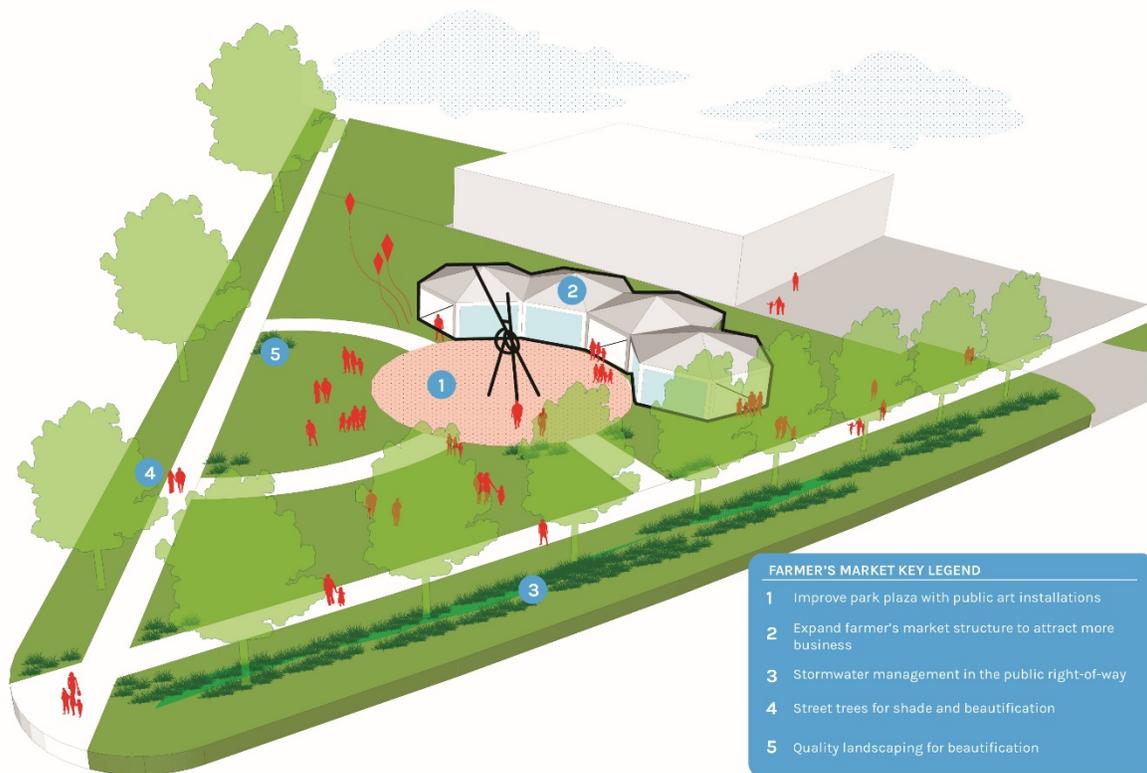


The Slovene Club anchors key redevelopment sites within the heart of Melvindale's "Main Street" - ripe for filling in some of the "missing teeth" of storefronts along this key block

## FARMERS MARKET

The Melvindale Farmers Market is a premiere regular event in Melvindale, with goals to expand similarly to Eastern Market in Detroit. Right now, the Farmer's Market operates seasonally on Oakwood Boulevard, adjacent to a vacant strip mall location. The City of Melvindale has a special interest in this property and is looking to strengthen the Farmer's Market presence.

In the near term, the site provides an opportunity to enhance farmer's market operations by adding a shed that opens open toward the street. Presently, the Farmer's Market is located at Cardinal Park, but the park design competes with the demands and needs of a functional outdoor market. Adding a shed and strategic landscape design for Cardinal Park can support the outdoor market expansions and still keep the park a usable and passive green amenity for Melvindale residents.



MELVINDALE CIVIC CENTER

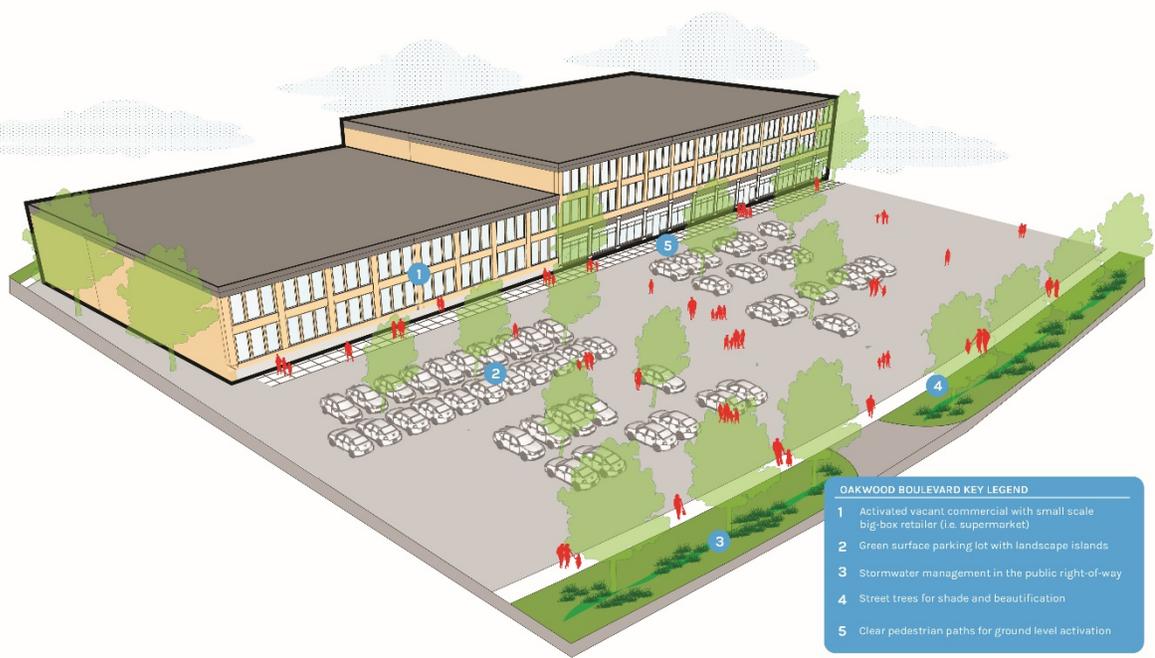
The Melvindale Civic Center is located on South Dearborn Street in the most northern part of Melvindale. The Civic Center operates as a rental event hall, and lands on a larger area of green space just south of the Rouge River. The site is also close to directly next logistics and transportation services. The City of Melvindale has had a difficult time activating this asset.

In the near term, the site provides an opportunity as a recreational facility, particularly for the YMCA. Currently, there is no YMCA that serves Allen Park, Dearborn or Dearborn Heights, and the Melvindale Civic Center presents a wonderful location. The green lot provides parking and green space for outdoor courts and facilities, and unencumbered access to the River Rouge for kayaking.



## DOLLAR TREE SITE

This is a prime redevelopment opportunity to rebuild a mixed-use development in the heart of downtown. If the site is rebuilt, as shown below, the parking lot should be significantly upgraded. Alternatively, to emphasize the downtown character, the building could be sited at the front of the lot with parking on the side and rear.



## VACANT LOTS ALONG ALLEN ROAD AND OAKWOOD BOULEVARD

The City of Melvindale has a special opportunity within its DDA boundary – the DDA owns property on Allen Road and Oakwood Boulevard that can remain in DDA control for parking in the short-term or new development in the future. These sites include:

- 18591 Allen Rd (parking)
- 4140 Oakwood Blvd (parking)
- 18616 Allen Rd (Slovene Club)
- Allen Rd parking lot

Each site provides an opportunity for mixed-use infill development that establishes the desired character for the rest of the DDA corridor. This would establish desired building height and style, while prioritizing on-street and rear parking. The first floor should be activated by retail or restaurant, with residential apartments above. These are prime locations to solicit a developer to build and begins to fill in the “missing teeth” on Allen Road. This may require coordination with other nearby sites for a shared parking strategy.



There are also other unoccupied properties on both Allen Road and Oakwood Boulevard that need to be activated to ensure a healthy and sustainable downtown. In order to assume control and spur existing landowners into action, the City of Melvindale can:

- Coordinate with Downtown Development Authority to assess vacant properties and to create a master plan for this strip to support the vision for redevelopment. Review current taxes and identify unoccupied commercial buildings within the DDA that are delinquent
- Work with property owners to find investment partners or incentives to help support the redevelopment. Connect business owners with building owners to populate and activate vacant storefronts
- Adopt a zoning overlay or form-based code for this area that would provide more specific details on the design of the building exteriors and streetscape elements. Enforce new zoning regulations for landowners passing through Site Plan Approval

The Melvindale Public Library, located on Allen Road, north of Gough Street, was recently upgraded to better serve the Melvindale population, especially incoming non-English speaking residents. The Library shares a parking lot with the Slovene American Club and has a small literary garden in the rear that serve both the Library and the residential community adjacent. The Melvindale Public Library can better be served by additional funding and events that keep the space activated and centralized learning city for the community.

## G. DOWNTOWN DISTRICT CONNECTIVITY STRATEGY

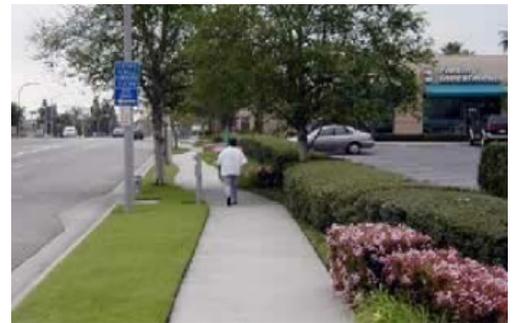
The DDA boundary area should have a defining streetscape that connects the commercial districts streets and establishes a downtown identity. Melvindale is predominately based on a grid pattern, with some suburban curvilinear patterns, but the downtown area maintains traditional grid streets. To encourage walkability and pedestrian safety, the DDA streetscapes must incorporate several changes that will in turn support the existing and future businesses located in the corridors. Establishing this strategy will also create a destination that connects neighborhoods to each other and to other districts within the city.

### PROVIDE A SAFE, CONVENIENT, AND RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT IS ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL AND CONNECTS MELVINDALE TO THE LARGER REGIONAL AREA

- Create, expand, and maintain an integrated system of sidewalks and pathways
  - o Repair the existing sidewalk system to resolve trip hazards, debris and pavement material challenges
  - o Establish an amenity zone that can accommodate public/private seating, trees, bike racks, light poles and utilities, signage, pedestrian and landscaping elements along sidewalks and pathways.
  - o Consider feasibility of protected bike lanes within DDA area and adjacent residential areas to encourage more foot-traffic in the Downtown areas
  - o Coordinate with Wayne County to implement on-street parking, mid-block crossings, improved traffic signals, improved and expanded sidewalks, and general roadway repair on Allen Road
  
- Improve safety of streets for all users
  - o Incorporate distinctive and clearly marked crosswalks at road crossings that align with existing sidewalks and pathways.
  - o Incorporate curb bump-outs and other traffic calming devices to reduce the distances of pedestrian crossings.
  - o Enforce minimum widths and reduce number of driveway curb cuts to promote safety
  - o Conduct a traffic study to support a road diet and on-street parking on Oakwood Boulevard and Allen Road

### IDENTIFY, PRESERVE, AND ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY'S CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

- Improve key gateways into the DDA by inviting local artists to create signage
  - o Allen Road and Outer Drive
  - o Allen Road and Greenfield Road
  - o Oakwood Boulevard and Robert Street
  
- Provide safe, aesthetically pleasing, accessible, unobtrusive and pedestrian-friendly parking areas
  - o Resurface existing parking lots with porous / pervious pavement
  - o Utilize trees, planting islands, and raingardens, as appropriate within surface parking areas, to manage on-site stormwater
  - o Enforce on-site stormwater management for new developers or to offset burden to existing neighbors
  - o Discourage large expansive surface parking areas.
  - o Utilize traffic calming measures within surface parking areas.
  - o Utilize on-street parking where appropriate.
  - o Provide for safe and efficient snow removal and storage.
  - o Place vegetative screening at appropriate locations around parking areas.
  - o Provide for adequate bicycle parking facilities.



*Parking lot screening and landscaping recommendations*

These parking recommendations should also fall into other parking areas outside of the DDA boundary area to establish consistency and reduce the burden of infrastructural maintenance over time.

## H. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The economic development strategy drives investment and growth strategies, and it helps to define the way a community will interact with the local business community. It can guide business attraction and retention, determine which types of projects warrant public incentive support, identify an economic development vision and create an implementation strategy for the completion of projects which will enhance the economy within the community.

Economic development cannot just be about projects and amenities alone, it must be a comprehensive strategy. One that focuses on growing the local tax base, developing the workforce of today and tomorrow, investing in infrastructure that can support the needs of both residents and businesses, creating capacity to support, grow and retain existing businesses within the community and developing a marketing and branding strategy that can help attract new businesses to the community.

*For on economic development, see the 2018 MSU Economic Development Strategy*

## ASSETS

- Large presence of young professionals and highly educated residents
- Proximity to major institutions (University of Michigan-Dearborn, Baker College and Henry Ford College)
- Diversity of active businesses, reflective of Melvindale population

## CHALLENGES

- Not many businesses in the city limits- people commute outside of the city for work
- Perception and lack of marketing assets for major employers
- Limited skills-training for underemployed populations
- Few entertainment venues
- Access to capital for small professional business owners
- Language barriers for new local hires

## BOOST THE LOCAL ECONOMY BY ATTRACTING LOCAL AND REGIONAL EMPLOYERS TO MELVINDALE

Assessing the assets and challenges and reviewing the physical assets the City has to catalyze development, other programmatic elements should be included to ensure that developers and business owners can maintain sustainable and successful endeavors within the DDA boundary. This could include:

- Expand youth training and employment
  - Provide paid opportunities for youth and teens to begin skill building and earning experience in lucrative trades
  - Provide paid opportunities to help beautify the community to enhance the public realm
  - Connect with local universities about satellite programs
- Attract developers to the DDA
  - Improve the development review process by creating a “Guide to Development” that spells out step-by-step means to develop and build successfully in Melvindale
  - Provide accessible information on financing and other state programs that alleviate the financial burdens of development.
  - Identify opportunities with developers to activate unoccupied businesses within the DDA core zones
  - Promote and support a regional approach to economic development that is business-friendly and easily accessible
  - Encourage green technologies and sustainable development practices
- Invest in small business owners
  - Provide paths to ownership and business development with state and federal support
  - Connect small businesses to abandoned businesses within the DDA core zone
  - Encourage home-based businesses, live-work space, mixed uses, and flexible commercial spaces to accommodate the new economy worker and business
  - Identify and invest in programs that promote Melvindale as the best entrepreneurial climate to live, work, learn, and play
  - Engage with immigration services (ESL, legal services, income tax services)
- Promote Tourism
  - Facilitate regular and frequent events in the DDA, including the Farmers Market, and other cultural events
  - Create day-tripper attraction packages and deals to encourage visitors to patronize Melvindale businesses

# CHAPTER 4. CORRIDORS PLAN

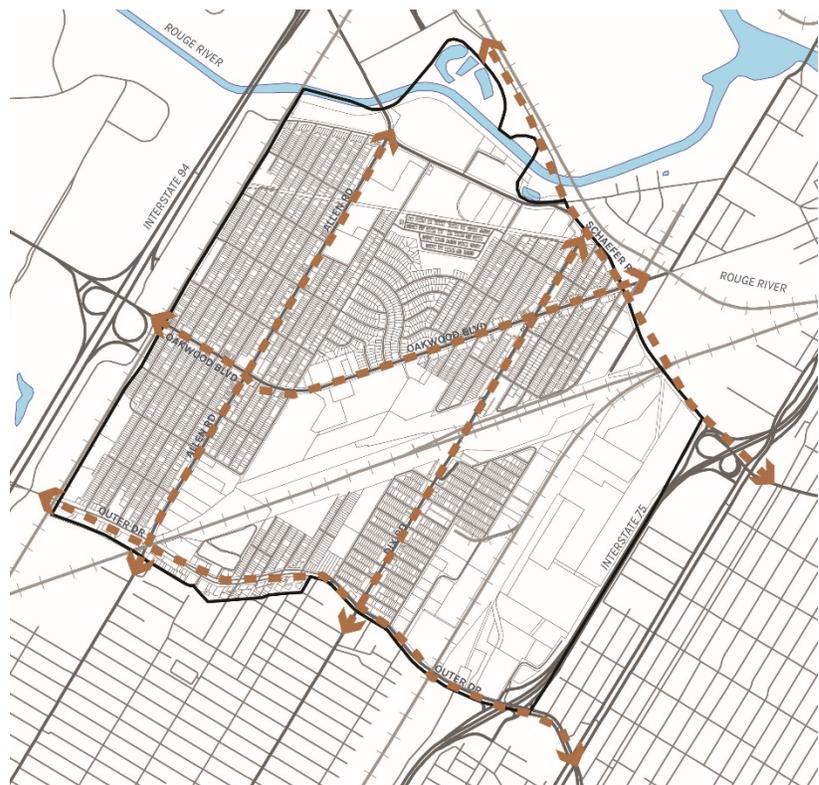
Corridors are the streets that connect the City together, and sometimes divide it. They are the arteries of transportation into, around and through the City and are home to most of the commercial areas. Major corridors in Melvindale, including Allen Road, Oakwood Boulevard, Dix Road, Schafer Road and Outer Drive may require district streetscape interventions to improve the quality and safety of each corridor. Taking cues from the streetscape strategy within the DDA boundary, other streetscapes throughout Melvindale should reflect similar strategies, particularly to promoting walkability and public safety.

Many of the roadways in Melvindale are accessed by large vehicles, namely semi-trucks, predominantly because of the proximity to active industry. Because of this, it is extremely important for the other Melvindale streets to implement and enforce safe pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures.

## A. FRAMEWORK

Allen Road, Oakwood Boulevard, Dix Road, Schafer Road and Outer Drive are each arterial roads in that they continue into other adjacent cities, including Detroit and Dearborn. While operating as local roadways within Melvindale, these streets see significant traffic with drivers avoiding interstates and smaller highways. This places an unfair burden onto the City of Melvindale to maintain roads that are predominately used by regional commuters. This also places an unsafe roadway environment which places more cars on the street than people.

A Corridors plan will provide recommendations on how to improve these roadways that slows down traffic, deters commuter traffic and establishes a public realm that supports Melvindale's neighborhoods and commercial corridors.



## B. ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

Just like any other place, Melvindale has assets to leverage and challenges to overcome. The Melvindale Master Plan Steering Committee and other engaged groups identified key assets and challenges that this Master Plan document seeks to further support or guide through transformation.

## ASSETS

- Great proximity- Melvindale is close to major cities and institutions
  - o Detroit and Dearborn are within a 15-20-minute drive
  - o Close to University of Michigan-Dearborn, Baker College, and Henry Ford College
- Great access to highways
  - o Exits from Interstate 94 and 75
  - o Close to the Detroit Industrial Expressway and Schafer Highway
- SMART bus route 140 has a direct connection to the Dingell Transit Center in Dearborn and Dingell Wildlife Center along the Detroit River.
- SMART also began a new service in a part of Melvindale that is called SMART Flex. It operates much like Uber and Lyft. It is an on-demand service using a mobile app to hail the ride

## CHALLENGES

- Increase commuter traffic around and within Melvindale
- High truck volume through Melvindale
- Air quality concerns – heavy traffic and proximity to heavy industry poses health and environmental concerns

## C. GOALS, POLICIES, ACTIONS

The following goals, policies, and actions help translate the city's assets and challenges into opportunities for strengthening residential neighborhoods and related land uses.

### IDENTIFY, PRESERVE, AND ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY'S CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

- Establish a consistent streetscape identity to strengthen the public realm
  - o Improve existing and build additional sidewalks for adequate widths
  - o Enforce driveway maintenance and appropriate widths
  - o Incorporate distinctive and clearly marked crosswalks at road crossings that align with existing sidewalks and pathways.
  - o Incorporate curb bump-outs and other traffic calming devices to reduce the distances of pedestrian crossings.
  - o Enforce minimum widths and reduce number of driveway curb cuts to promote safety
  - o Establish an amenity zone that can accommodate public/private seating, trees, bike racks, light poles and utilities, signage, pedestrian and landscaping elements along sidewalks and pathways.



## PROVIDE A SAFE, CONVENIENT, AND RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT IS ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL AND CONNECTS MELVINDALE TO THE LARGER REGIONAL AREA

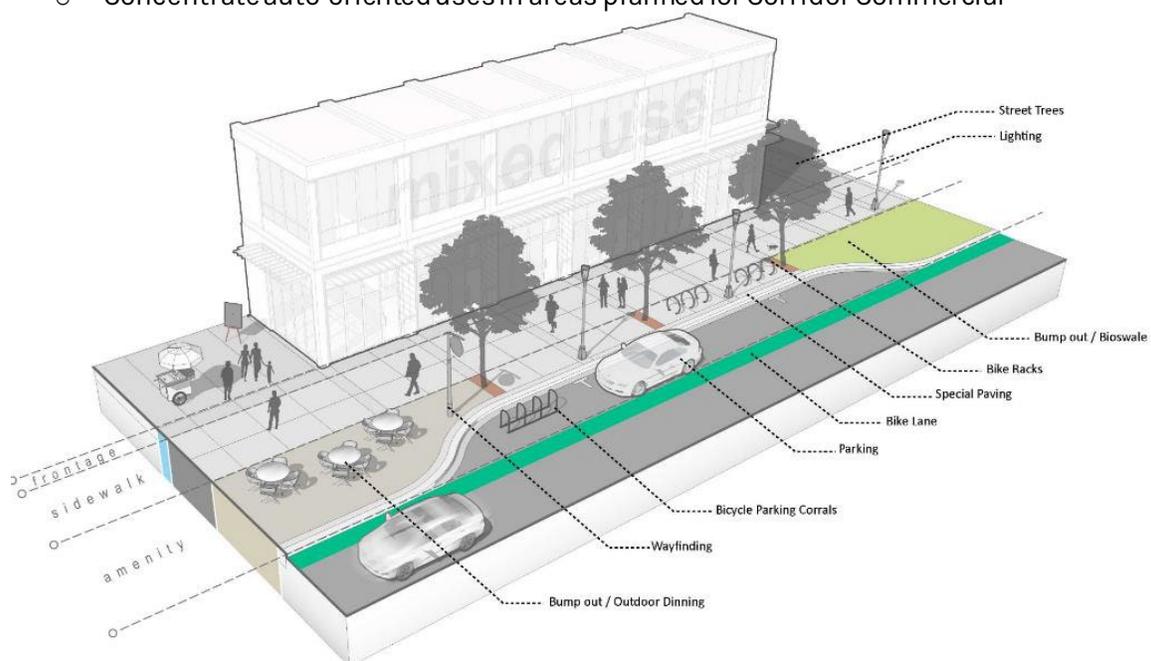
- Create, expand, and maintain an integrated system of sidewalks and pathways
  - o Design sidewalks and pathways that connect with existing sidewalks, pathway systems and key destinations, activity and employment centers throughout the city, including Downtown, the Rouge River, schools and parks.
  - o Incorporate pedestrian and landscaping elements along sidewalks and pathways.
  - o Pursue “Bicycle Friendly City” designation from the League of American Bicyclists and implement bike lanes on identified neighborhood streets.
- Improve safety of streets for all users
  - o Incorporate distinctive and clearly marked crosswalks at road crossings that align with existing sidewalks and pathways.
  - o Incorporate curb bump-outs and other traffic calming devices to reduce the distances of pedestrian crossings.
  - o Improve the appearance of key entryways into the community by incorporating landscaping, signage and lighting that compliments the character of the community.

### BENEFITS OF A NON-MOTORIZED SYSTEM

- Provides connections between homes, schools, parks, public transportation, offices, and retail destinations.
- Improves pedestrian and cyclist safety by reducing potential crashes between motorized and nonmotorized users.
- Encourages walking and bicycling that improves health and fitness
- Provides options to make fewer driving trips, saving money
- Research demonstrates pedestrian and bike-friendly cities have more economic vitality.

## ENCOURAGE AND INCENTIVIZE DEVELOPMENT THAT BRINGS NEW RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT TO MELVINDALE TO PROMOTE A DIVERSE AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY.

- Encourage a mixture of uses along corridors
  - o Amend C-1 and PB-1 zoning to permit residential by right in areas planned for Corridor Mixed-Use
  - o Concentrate auto-oriented uses in areas planned for Corridor Commercial



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# CHAPTER 5. FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use plan and map depicts the preferred, generalized composition of future land uses for the City of Melvindale. The Future Land Use plan is the general framework upon which land use and policy decisions for the village will be guided for the next 20-30 years. The Future Land Use plan was developed after careful consideration of the city's priorities and several dynamic factors, including existing land use, redevelopment opportunities, community services, and future growth.

Land use change should proceed in a manner and timeframe that is consistent with policies on the environment, infrastructure, and other matters. Deviations from the future land use map should be predicated on altered conditions otherwise unforeseen in this document and should be carefully considered to ensure that general consistency is maintained when making decisions on planning and development matters. Decisions that are in direct conflict with the future land use map, or which could undermine the long-term objectives of the community, should be avoided.

## A. FACTORS CONSIDERED

This Future Land Use Map and the Master Plan incorporates input received during the public participation process, acknowledges existing land use patterns, and reflects planning best practices. More specifically, the following factors were taken into consideration in preparing the Future Land Use Map:

**Existing Land Use.** Locations of most existing commercial and industrial developments are appropriate and will continue to serve as the primary business centers. Residential neighborhoods are well established and strong. The community land use patterns have evolved in an orderly manner and will be reinforced, rather than altered in a significant manner.

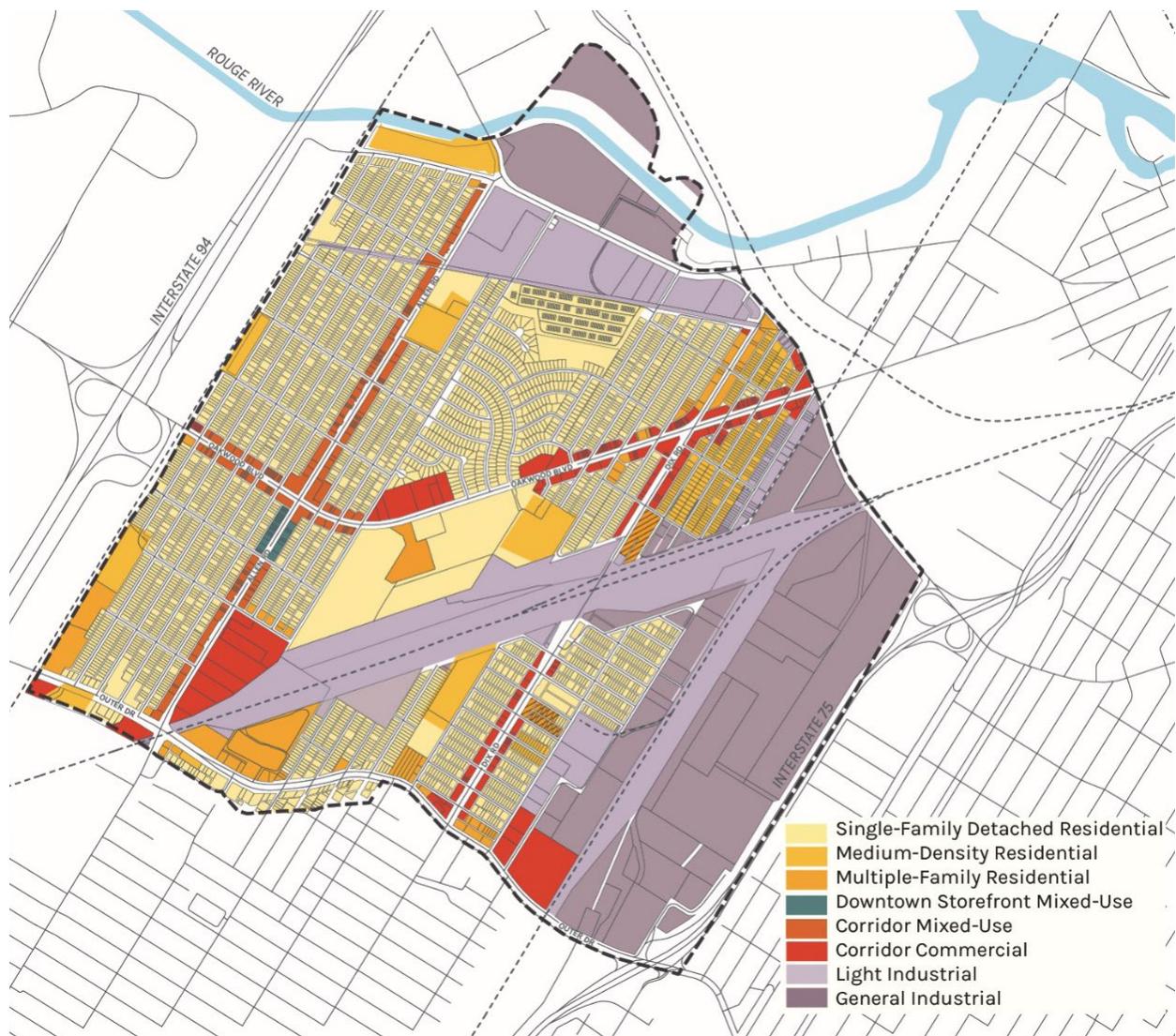
**Existing Zoning.** There is no "vested interest" that guarantees zoning will not change. In fact, changes are suggested by this Master Plan. However, such changes were carefully considered to ensure the general development arrangement remains consistent and landowners will be ensured a reasonable use of their land.

**Relationship of Incompatible Uses.** The Future Land Use Plan provides important guidance in the ongoing effort to reduce or eliminate incompatible land use relationships. Providing a transition between land uses, such as the introduction of office or attached residential between commercial corridors and single-family residential areas, is one approach that can accomplish such a transition. In other cases, natural features or landscaping can help facilitate such a transition. Importantly, the Plan designates general land use patterns for uses considered most appropriate to fulfill the long-term objectives of the community.

**Capacity of Streets, Infrastructure and Facilities/ Services.** Accessibility to and the capacity of the street network help establish the types and intensity of uses that may be served in an area without adversely impacting traffic operations. The availability of community facilities such as schools and recreational facilities affects the areas that are especially attractive for residential development, while police and fire protection also assist with the quality of life provided to all land uses.

**Market Conditions.** The nature of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses are evolving, with aging development types often becoming less desirable or obsolete. This can result in an oversupply of certain types of development, especially commercial. Redevelopment of existing uses is encouraged, and the future land use designations reflect a balance and mixture of uses targeted to key areas.

**Land Use Patterns in the Region.** Land use patterns for the surrounding areas of Wayne County were considered to ensure that the future land use plan is compatible with and compliment those patterns. Most of the surrounding development maintain low-density residential and commercial characters, but places like Dearborn, Detroit and Wyandotte have strong downtown corridors that Melvindale can take cues from.



MELVINDALE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

## B. FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER PLACE TYPES

The following place types are intended to guide future land use and character decisionmaking, particularly in applying the zoning ordinance. See previous chapters where opportunities and strategies for neighborhoods, downtown, and corridors are outlined in more detail.

### **SINGLE FAMILY DETACHED RESIDENTIAL**

**Purpose.** To preserve existing single-family neighborhoods and provide for future detached single-family development within the city. Infill development should follow the established grid pattern and surrounding character, while cluster-type development is encouraged for larger, new residential developments.

**Description.** The Single Family Detached Residential classification is intended to provide for a diversity of single-family homes. These lots are intended to be developed with a maximum density of approximately 6 units per acre, providing for usable yard space in an urban environment. Residential areas should encourage pedestrian connectivity and preservation of natural features such as mature street trees, wetlands, and environmentally sensitive areas.

**Locations.** These uses are planned for all four quadrants of the community surrounding the city center. Single Family Detached Residential is currently and will continue to be the predominant land use classification.

**Appropriate Uses.** Desirable land uses include detached single-family, places of worship, schools, neighborhood parks, and other similar semi-public/public uses. Complementary uses adjacent to this classification include conservation/open space uses, athletic fields, local commercial, day-care facilities, senior/assisted living, and higher density residential.

**Compatible Zoning Districts.** R-1

## MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

**Purpose.** To preserve existing single-family and two-family neighborhoods and provide for future detached single-family and two-family development within the city. Infill development should follow the established grid pattern and surrounding character, while cluster-type development is encouraged for larger, new residential developments.

**Description.** The Single Family Detached Residential classification is intended to provide for a diversity of single-family and two-family homes. These lots are intended to be developed with a maximum density of approximately 10 units per acre, providing for usable yard space in an urban environment. Residential areas should encourage pedestrian connectivity and preservation of natural features such as mature street trees, wetlands, and environmentally sensitive areas.

**Appropriate Uses:** Desirable land uses include detached single-family, places of worship, schools, neighborhood parks, and other similar semi-public/public uses. Complementary uses adjacent to this classification include conservation/open space uses, athletic fields, local commercial, day-care facilities, senior/assisted living, and higher density residential.

**Compatible Zoning Districts.** R-2

## MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

**Purpose.** This land use is designed primarily to permit high rise apartment residential development. Due to the large traffic volumes generated by such development, this district is intended to be located adjoining major streets. For its potential benefits as walk-in trade, it should ideally adjoin shopping concentrations. For the purposes of this chapter a high rise structure shall be any structure four or more stories in height.

**Description** Multi-family housing is intended to provide for a diversity of multi-unit residential units, townhouses, or apartment buildings. These lots are intended to be developed with a maximum density of approximately 25 units per acre, providing for usable yard space in an urban environment. Heights and building character should reflecting surrounding character with improved density. Residential areas should encourage pedestrian connectivity and preservation of natural features such as mature street trees, wetlands, and environmentally sensitive areas.

**Appropriate Uses:** Multiple-family dwellings, including apartments, townhouses and row houses, provided all such dwellings shall have at least one property line abutting a major thoroughfare or have vehicular access to a major thoroughfare through property zoned R-3 or R-4. All ingress and egress shall be directly onto such major thoroughfare. Private schools and educational institutions. Accessory buildings and uses customarily incidental to the above principal permitted uses. Off-street parking in accordance with the requirements of article XVII of this chapter

**Compatible Zoning Districts.** R-3; MHP (indicated with a hatch on the future land use map)

## DOWNTOWN STOREFRONT MIXED-USE

**Purpose:** The Downtown Storefront Mixed-Use district is complementary to the Corridor Mixed-Use district in that it is intended to promote a walkable mixture of uses. The Downtown Storefront is further intended to limit first floor uses to active retail uses, typical of a downtown “Main Street”, to promote a walkable destination for residents and visitors.

**Description.** This area is prioritized for the first phase of concentrated walkable mixed-use in Melvindale. It represents the strongest possibilities for a revitalized downtown based on existing storefronts, uses, and redevelopment possibilities. There should be less flexibility than the Corridor Mixed-Use in terms of uses, design, and parking location to ensure this is a true downtown node. The intent is that once this area is developed in the style of a traditional “Main Street” destination, other areas planned as Corridor Mixed-Use could be further developed to match this desired character.

**Appropriate Uses:** Retail sales and services on first floor, residential and office on upper floors

**New Recommended Zoning District: CBD,** to require buildings built at a 0’ built-to line, no parking in the front yard, required storefront window percentages.

## CORRIDOR MIXED-USE

**Purpose.** The Corridor Mixed-Use district is intended to promote a walkable mixture of uses, providing residential with walkable, local businesses and permitting integration of residential into historically commercial areas.

**Description.** While larger, more intense commercial uses are allowed, there should be a renewed importance placed on smaller to medium-sized parcels for more meaningful, consolidated development projects that create a walkable atmosphere for the pedestrian. Additionally, site and building design should be cohesive to surrounding uses, preserving traditional storefronts where possible and allowing attached housing as an option for second-story flats or live/work buildings. In the future, office, residential mixed-use, and new economy uses built to the front lot line are welcomed in this area. Parking should be limited and located in side or rear yards.

**Appropriate Uses:** Retail, Personal services, restaurants, offices, flats above storefronts, small apartment buildings and townhouses.

**Compatible Zoning Districts. C-1, PB-1**

**Future:** Rewrite C-1 to better fit this description

## CORRIDOR COMMERCIAL

**Purpose.** Corridor commercial is intended to permit a wider range of business and entertainment activities than those permitted in Corridor Mixed-Use. The permitted uses are intended to provide businesses and services usually found in major business areas along major streets or near freeway access ramps. These uses generate large volumes of vehicular traffic, require substantial access for off-street parking and loading, and require detailed planning particularly as to relationships with adjacent residential areas.

**Appropriate Uses:** The Corridor Commercial district is intended to serve a wide assortment of office, residential and commercial uses and more auto-oriented uses than Corridor Mixed-Use. The vision for this district is that of an auto-serving connector between more pedestrian-oriented areas. Auto uses like drive-throughs and parking are allowed, with appropriate screening.

The developments in this district currently exhibit the typical suburban commercial characteristics designed around the automobile. The district creates a transition between heavier, more intense industrial and commercial uses, into the more pedestrian-scaled Corridor Mixed-Use district. The future vision for the district includes improving connections to the surrounding residential areas, as well as employment centers like the DTE Allen Road Service Center, Strong Middle School, and Melvindale High School. The goal is to eventually transform the Corridor Commercial district into a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly connector, supporting both residential and commercial uses and acting as a transitional corridor between nodes.

#### **Compatible Zoning Districts. C-1, C-2**

**Future:** Rewrite C-2 to better fit this description

#### LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

**Purpose.** For the manufacturing, assembly, and processing of goods and materials. Where industrial abuts or faces residential uses, extra buffering should be provided to provide a sensitive transition, limiting the impacts on neighbors. Current facilities should not generate high traffic volumes or unacceptable noise levels or odor.

**Appropriate Uses.** Research and Development, manufacturing, assembly, processing of goods and materials and new technology uses should be targeted for integration into this area.

#### **Compatible Zoning Districts. M-1**

#### GENERAL INDUSTRIAL

**Intent.** Support heavy industrial uses and large-scale employers. Provide adequate infrastructure to allow for efficient truck loading and drop-off access points that avoid disrupting the normal traffic flow of nearby streets. Care should be taken to ensure adequate screening, buffering, setbacks, and design to prevent negative visual and environmental impacts on the public view or on residential, parks and natural areas adjacent to the district. Provide public transportation methods and adequate accessibility points, as industrial districts can experience heavy traffic flow due to its role as a large employment center.

**Appropriate Uses.** Heavy industrial uses and large-scale employers such as auto manufacturing plants, manufacturing, assembly, and the processing of goods and materials.

#### **Compatible Zoning Districts. M-2**

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# CHAPTER 6. IMPLEMENTATION

The Master Plan is intended to serve as a guide for land use and redevelopment of the city for the next 10 to 20 years. Goals, objectives, and actions noted throughout the Plan should be carefully considered during decisions on rezonings, zoning text amendments, other regulations, capital investments for improvements to streets, “complete streets” bikeways/ walkways, utilities, public facilities, land acquisition, and development proposals. Recommendations in this Plan apply to both public land (parks, sites, and right-of-way) and guidance for development and redevelopment of privately-owned property. Some Plan recommendations may involve the need for changes to land use regulations and/or potential new programs. Others may involve partnerships with other municipalities, agencies, organizations, or groups. Since the Plan is a long-range guide, refinements or additional studies may also be appropriate in the future to reflect new information, respond to unanticipated factors or to address changes in city policies.

To that end, this chapter provides a summary of the recommendations described in the previous sections of the plan. It also acts as a quick reference for the city staff, planning commission, and the city council to evaluate its progress toward implementation of the Plan.

## A. IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

Tools to implement the Master Plan generally fall into six categories and some strategies may include more than one:

1. Land use regulations
2. Capital improvement programs, such as streets, village buildings, or other major purchases
3. Property acquisition programs
4. Special Funding Programs (CDBG for example)
5. Programs or additional studies
6. Partnerships, such as working with other organizations on planning, education, funding, or delivery of cost-efficient services.

Each tool has a different purpose toward Plan implementation and may suggest specific immediate changes, long-term policies and others involve ongoing activities.

### 1. LAND USE REGULATIONS

The primary tool for Plan implementation, which includes the Zoning Ordinance and other land use regulations, is summarized below. The village also has several other codes and ordinances to ensure that activities remain compatible with the surrounding area, such as noise, blight and nuisance ordinances.

#### Zoning Regulations

Zoning regulations control the intensity and arrangement of land development through standards on lot size or units per acre, setbacks from property lines, building dimensions and similar minimum requirements. Various site design elements discussed in this Plan are also regulated through site plan review and address landscaping, lighting, driveways, parking and circulation, pedestrian systems and signs. Zoning can also be used to help assure performance in the protection of environmentally sensitive areas such as floodplains, state regulated wetlands, woodlands and wellhead areas.

## Zoning Map

Over time, changes to the zoning map should become more consistent with the land use pattern identified on the Future Land Use Map. In some cases, the village may wish to initiate certain rezonings as part of an overall zoning map amendment. Other changes to the zoning map can be made in response to requests by landowners or developers. In those cases, village officials will need to determine if the time is proper for a change. It is important that the future land use plan be understood as a long-range blueprint: Implementation is expected, but gradually in response to needs, conditions and availability of infrastructure. The Zoning Plan section of this chapter outlines how the Future Land Use Plan relates to current zoning. The Zoning Recommendations later in this chapter contain rezoning guidelines.

## Subdivision, Land Division and Condominium Regulations

Subdivision, land division and condominium regulations control the manner in which property is subdivided in the village and the public improvements required to support the development. The distinctions are not always apparent once a project is built, but the approval procedures are different due to separate state statutes that govern these types of land development approaches in Michigan.

## Public Infrastructure Standards

Public infrastructure refers to the basic facilities and services needed for the functioning of the village such as village streets, water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, among others. Standards to ensure consistency and uniformity have been adopted so that each facility is designed and constructed to support existing and future development.

## 2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) serves as the city's multi-year planning instrument used to identify needs and financing sources for public infrastructure improvements. The City of Melvindale recently completed an annual 6-year CIP that contains recommended capital projects, timing, estimated costs and funding for public infrastructure (streets, bikeways, sidewalks, sanitary sewers, waterlines, storm sewers and drainage) and community facilities (public buildings, fire, police and parks). Capital projects identified help support and promote desired development, and to meet the needs of residents and businesses in the village. The number of projects and project timing are influenced by several factors, in particular, the cost, need for environmental clearance or approval by other agencies, and funds available.

The CIP process precedes the budget process and is used by City Council when developing the annual budget. Recommending approval of the CIP by the Planning Commission does not mean that they grant final approval of all projects contained within the plan. Rather by recommending approval of the CIP, the Planning Commission acknowledges that these projects represent a reasonable interpretation of the upcoming needs for the community and that projects contained in the first year of the plan are suitable for inclusion in the upcoming budget, if funding is available.

Capital Improvement Review Committee includes the city manager, city clerk, finance director, director of public services, director of public safety, DDA director, parks and recreation director, Main Street manager, human resources director, and IT director.

## 3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION PROGRAMS

Like all municipalities, the City of Melvindale has the authority to acquire private property for a public purpose. This may include outright purchase acceptance of land donated by another party or acquisition through eminent domain. In addition to the ability to acquire private property for public infrastructure or facilities such as roads, sewers, public buildings and parks, the city may acquire private property to facilitate redevelopment and to eliminate nonconforming uses or structures.

## 4. FUNDING PROGRAMS

Some of the recommendations may be funded locally, some through outside funds, and many through a combination. The city monitors new federal and state funding programs that may be available to assist in implementation. In addition, foundations and other organizations may provide contributions.

### Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

In addition to traditional sources, the city can raise revenues within a specific geographic area for specific purposes, or to capture the new increment of tax revenues in a specific geographic area for specific purposes. The City of Melvindale has the following authorities:

- **Downtown Development Authority (DDA).** The DDA/OMS is funded primarily through a TIF mechanism which has been in place since 1984. The city's latest TIF Plan is unknown and will likely need to be updated to plan for Melvindale between 2020 and 2025
- **Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA).** Melvindale does not have an established CIA. The group but does not have a dedicated source of income and has no formal plan.

### Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) administers the federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) in Michigan, where regional trail connections and safe routes to school are among the highest priorities for funding. TAP is a competitive grant program that uses federal transportation funds designated by Congress for specific activities that enhance the intermodal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. Projects are selected on a competitive basis for funding in a future fiscal year. Competitiveness is primarily established by project concept and project constructability.

- **Project Concept** - Two types of highly competitive concepts are projects that develop/connect regional trails and projects that make walking/biking routes to school safer.
- **Project Constructability** - Applications are reviewed by a team of technical experts to gauge the ability of the proposed projects to be constructed using all current federal and state standards, constructed on time, and constructed on budget. The items that typically are most important for this review are:
  - o High level of positive public involvement
  - o Reasonable cost estimate (based on similar recent federal aid projects)
  - o Industry design standards used without exceptions
  - o Demonstrated high likelihood of all permits to be secured
  - o Demonstrated high level of coordination with all necessary agencies

## 5. OTHER PROGRAMS

A variety of housing, economic development, informational and other programs may be used by the City to assist with implementation of recommendations in this Plan. Many of these are through state programs as identified in the preceding chapters such as the following:

- Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA)
- Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)
- MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities
- Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Complete Streets Coalition
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)
- Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

## 6. PARTNERSHIPS

While the city can coordinate many of the plan's implementation tasks, responsibility should not solely rest on the government. Instead, the vast array of stakeholders having key roles in either the city or region should all participate. Partnerships with the public and private sector, including Allen Park Public Schools, regional recreation and tourism organizations, the nearby higher education institutions (Henry Ford College), neighboring municipalities, local businesses, and large land owners will also lead to success implementing the plan's initiatives. Partnerships may range from sharing information to funding and shared promotions or services. The spirit of cooperation through alliances and partnerships will be sustained to benefit everyone in the region. City government cannot and should not do it all. Only through public/private collaboration can the plan's vision be realized.

## B. ZONING PLAN

Zoning is a key mechanism for achieving the desired land use pattern and quality of development advocated in the plan. This section provides a useful guide relative to the inconsistencies between current zoning patterns and proposed future land use designations.

Because the Future Land Use Plan is a long-range vision of how land uses should evolve over time, it should not be confused with the City's zoning map, which is a current (short-term) mechanism for regulating development. Therefore, not all properties should be immediately rezoned to correspond with the plan. The Future Land Use Plan is intended to serve as a guide for land use decisions over a longer period (10-20 years).

In addition, the Future Land Use map is generalized. Zoning changes in accordance with the plan should be made gradually and strategically so that change can be managed. The Future Land Use map as well as the plan's goals and strategies should be consulted to judge the merits of a rezoning request.

The plan categories correspond to zoning districts, but there is some generalization. The following table provides a zoning plan indicating how the future land use categories in this Master Plan relate to the zoning districts in the zoning ordinance. In certain instances, more than one zoning district may be applicable to a future land use category.

ZONING PLAN		Future Land Use	Single-Family Detached Residential	Medium Density Residential	Multiple Family Residential	Storefront Mixed Use	Corridor Mixed-Use	Corridor Commercial	Light Industrial	General Industrial
Zoning Districts										
Residential	R-1, One-Family Residential		X							
	R-2, Two-Family Residential			X						
	R-3, Multiple-Family Residential				X					
	MHP, Mobile Home Park				(X)					
Nonresidential	PB-1, Professional Business						X			
	C-1, General Shopping						X			
	C-2, General Comm Business District							X		
	M-1, Light Manufacturing								X	
	M-2, General Manufacturing									X
	NEW: Central Business District					X				

## ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

As one of the primary tools to implement this plan, the zoning ordinance and accompanying map should be amended to align the strategies in this plan with the zoning districts and administrative procedures. The recommendations below should be taken into consideration with a more comprehensive audit of the ordinance during the amendment process.

## RRC REPORT OF FINDINGS RECOMMENDATIONS [2017]

As part of the RRC-certification process, the city should undertake a comprehensive review of the zoning ordinance and ensure it aligns with the master plan goals. The following recommendations were included in RRC's report of findings from August 2017.

- Incorporate placemaking elements in the ordinance
- Consider a form-based code for downtown
- Consider if additional ordinance provisions are needed for the preservation of sensitive historic and environmental features
- Provide development standards to encourage sustainable infrastructure such as rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs, pervious pavement, parking lot landscaping, and preservation of native vegetation/trees
- Provide standards for elements that enhance non-motorized transportation
- Formulate policy or ordinance to compel completion of sidewalk network
- Incorporate additional flexible parking standards in the ordinance

- Review ordinance definitions and update as needed
- Refresh the zoning ordinance graphics to ensure readability and understanding

## C. ACTION PLAN

The implementation tools outlined above are available and should be used to achieve the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. Comprehensive implementation actions have been developed to organize and apply these tools. Under each topic, specific actions, tools, and a timeframe for implementation are identified. The details of the strategies to implement the Master Plan are specified in the table below.

### Timeframe

- Ongoing: annually
- Immediate: 1-2 years
- Short: 3-4 years
- Long: 5+ years

### Responsible Party and Collaborators

- Admin: City Administrator
- CC: City Council
- PC: Planning Commission
- DDA: Downtown Development Authority
- EDC: Economic Development Commission
- P&R: Parks & Rec Steering Committee
- County: Wayne County

### Ease of Implementation

Grade scale of A to F (A being easiest to implement) based on anticipated level of effort and cost

<b>RRC ACTIONS</b>				
<b>#</b>	<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Topic</b>
R.1	6 Impl.	3	Adopt a six-year capital improvements plan (1.1.4)	Plans
R.2	3 Dtown	4	Amend DDA plan with updated project list to reference the recommendations in this plan (1.1.2)	Plans
R.3	6 Implem.	6	Develop a public participation strategy that defines outreach strategies and how the success of these strategies will be evaluated (1.2.1)	Engagement
R.4	6 Implem.	6	Establish a method of tracking outreach efforts and sharing the results of public engagement activities (1.2.3)	Engagement
R.5	3 Dtown	4	Adopt a new CBD zoning district for the Downtown Storefront Mixed-Use future land use category with 0' build to lines and permitting upper floor residential (2.1.2)	Zoning
R.6	5 FLU	2	Amend C-1 and C-2 to permit upper floor residential and attached housing types like townhouses and live/work units (2.1.4)	Zoning
R.7	4 Corridor	3	Add bicycle parking, traffic calming, pedestrian scale lighting or public realm standards to the zoning code (2.1.5)	Zoning
R.8	4 Corridor	4	Add zoning standards for native landscaping, rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs, permeable paving or the preservation of existing trees to the zoning code (2.1.7)	Zoning
R.9	5 FLU	5	Expand permitted uses to allow new-economy-type uses such as breweries, distilleries, film studios, research and development laboratories and arts and culture-related uses (RRC 2.1.3)	Zoning
R.10	6 Impl.	6	Identify stakeholder groups that applicants can contact to receive feedback on proposals. These groups and outreach methods should be included in the city's public participation strategy (3.1.4)	Development Review Process
R.11	6 Impl.	6	Amend the zoning ordinance so that the planning commission has approval authority of permitted-use site plans (3.1.7)	Zoning/ Development Review Process
R.12	6 Impl.	6	Request feedback from customers about how the development review process is working (3.1.9)	Development Review Process
R.13	6 Impl.	6	Annually review the successes and challenges with the site plan review and approval procedure (3.1.9)	Development Review Process
R.14	6 Impl.	6	Annually review the development-related fee schedule to ensure the costs of services are up-to-date (3.2.2)	Development Review Process
R.15	6 Impl.	6	Hold an annual joint meeting with city council, planning commission and DDA, EDC (RRC 4.2.4)	Administration
R.16	6 Impl.	6	Publish an annual report of planning commission activity (RRC 4.2.4)	Administration

## COMPREHENSIVE ACTION PLAN (organized by goal)

<b>GOAL 1:</b> Promote Melvindale as a viable residential community and option for families living and work in Southeast Michigan.							
#	Chapt.	Policy	Actions	Timing	Prime Responsibility	Collab.	Ease of Impl.
1.1	2 Nbhd	Maintain strong residential neighborhoods	1. Develop an educational code enforcement program to help connect residents to the resources and tools they need to maintain their homes. Prioritize education and awareness over fines. 2. Identify exterior improvement funds that assist with facade improvements through grants or low-interest loans	Ongoing	BD	CC	B
1.2	2 Nbhd	Preserve historic residential character	1. Host home repair workshops facilitated by local trades persons and historic preservation experts to address common issues such as window repair, damp basements, electrical issues, and abatement of hazardous materials such as lead and asbestos.	Short-term	BD	Admin	B
1.3	2 Nbhd	Reduce stormwater issues	1. Acquire residential properties in flood areas to develop open space area. 2. Require higher on-site stormwater detention/retention for new development in the City	Immed.	Admin	PW; Water/ Sewer	C

**GOAL 2:** Encourage and incentivize development that brings new residential and mixed-use development to Melvindale to promote a diverse and active community.

#	Chapt.	Policy	Actions	Timing	Prime Respon.	Collab.	Ease of Impl.
2.1	2 Nbhd	Expand housing options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage the adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings such as schools, churches, or former warehouse buildings for multi-family residential.</li> <li>2. Encourage single-family detached housing on vacant and redevelopment sites, particularly as a transition between residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.</li> <li>3. Encourage infill development for vacant or underutilized parcels within neighborhoods and transition area.</li> <li>4. Encourage a combination of small sized lots for detached single family dwelling units along with a mixture of attached and multiple family housing types.</li> </ol>	Long-term	PC	EDC	B
2.2	3 Dtown	Rezone the downtown area to promote higher-density, mixed-use development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish building height minimums and maximums, general character, and developer agreements to streetscapes and rear parking</li> <li>2. Amend zoning code to eliminate future fast-food and/or big-box national chain retail within the DDA</li> <li>3. Eliminate under-utilized parking lots within DDA and maximize on-street parking to promote walkability</li> </ol>	Immed.	PC	CC	A
2.3	4 Corr.	Encourage a mixture of uses along corridors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amend C-1 and PB-1 zoning to permit residential by right in areas planned for Corridor Mixed-Use</li> <li>2. Concentrate auto-oriented uses in areas planned for Corridor Commercial</li> </ol>	Short-term	CC	PC, DDA	A

**GOAL 3: Identify, preserve, and enhance the community’s character and heritage**

#	Chapt.	Policy	Actions	Timing	Prime Respon.	Collab.	Ease of Impl.
3.1	3 Dtown	Increase lifestyle, entertainment options including festivals and cultural events.	1. Improve publicity and documentation of Melvindale city events to inspire more DDA visitors	Short-term	DDA	P&R, County	B
3.2	2 Nbhd	Preserve historic residential character	1. Host home repair workshops facilitated by local trades persons and historic preservation experts to address common issues such as window repair, damp basements, electrical issues, and abatement of hazardous materials such as lead and asbestos.	Short-term	Admin	Housing Comm., County	B
3.3	3 Dtown	Improve key gateways into the DDA by inviting local artists to create signage	1. Allen Road and Outer Drive 2. Allen Road and Greenfield Road 3. Oakwood Boulevard and Robert Street	Immed.	DDA	Local artists; PW	A
3.4	3 Dtown	Provide safe, aesthetically pleasing, accessible, unobtrusive, and pedestrian-friendly parking areas	Amend Zoning: 1. Resurface existing parking lots with porous / pervious pavement 2. Utilize trees, planting islands, and rain gardens, as appropriate within surface parking areas, to manage on-site stormwater 3. Enforce on-site stormwater management for new developers or to offset burden to existing neighbors 4. Discourage large expansive surface parking areas. 5. Utilize traffic calming measures within surface parking areas. 6. Utilize on-street parking where appropriate. 7. Provide for safe and efficient snow removal and storage. 8. Place vegetative screening at appropriate locations around parking areas. 9. Provide for adequate bicycle parking facilities.	Short-term	PC	PW; Water/ Sewer	B
3.5	4 Corr.	Establish a consistent streetscape identity to strengthen the public realm	1. Improve existing and build additional sidewalks for adequate widths 2. Enforce driveway maintenance and appropriate widths 3. Incorporate distinctive and clearly marked crosswalks at road crossings that align with existing sidewalks and pathways. 4. Incorporate curb bump-outs and other traffic calming devices to reduce the distances of pedestrian crossings. 5. Enforce minimum widths and reduce number of driveway curb cuts to promote safety 6. Establish an amenity zone that can accommodate public/private seating, trees, bike racks, light poles and utilities, signage, pedestrian and landscaping elements along sidewalks and pathways.	Ongoing	PC	DDA, CC	C

**GOAL 4:** Provide a safe, convenient, and reliable transportation system that is accessible for all and connects Melvindale to the larger regional area.

#	Chapt.	Policy	Actions	Timing	Prime Respon.	Collab.	Ease of Impl.
4.1	2 Nbhd	Enhance walkable neighborhoods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pursue "Safe Routes to Schools" improvements and federal funding in partnership with the Melvindale Public Schools and the Allen Park Public School System.</li> <li>2. Conduct sidewalk assessment study and improve areas that pose tripping and falling hazards within the right-of-way.</li> </ol>	Immed.	PW	APPS, MPS	A
4.2	4 Corr.	Create, expand, and maintain an integrated system of sidewalks and pathways	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Design sidewalks and pathways that connect with existing sidewalks, pathway systems and key destinations, activity and employment centers throughout the city, including Downtown, the Rouge River, schools and parks.</li> <li>2. Incorporate pedestrian and landscaping elements along sidewalks and pathways.</li> <li>3. Pursue "Bicycle Friendly City" designation from the League of American Bicyclists and implement bike lanes on identified neighborhood streets.</li> </ol>	Ongoing	PW	P & R; DDA	B
4.3	3 Dtown	Create, expand, and maintain an integrated system of sidewalks and pathways	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Repair the existing sidewalk system to resolve trip hazards, debris and pavement material challenges</li> <li>2. Establish an amenity zone that can accommodate public/private seating, trees, bike racks, light poles and utilities, signage, pedestrian and landscaping elements along sidewalks and pathways.</li> <li>3. Consider feasibility of protected bike lanes within DDA area and adjacent residential areas to encourage more foot-traffic in the Downtown areas</li> <li>4. Coordinate with Wayne County to implement on-street parking, mid-block crossings, improved traffic signals, improved and expanded sidewalks, and general roadway repair on Allen Road</li> </ol>	Short-term	PW	DDA	C
4.4	4 Corr.	Improve safety of streets for all users	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Incorporate distinctive and clearly marked crosswalks at road crossings that align with existing sidewalks and pathways.</li> <li>2. Incorporate curb bump-outs and other traffic calming devices to reduce the distances of pedestrian crossings.</li> <li>3. Improve the appearance of key entryways into the community by incorporating landscaping, signage and lighting that compliments the character of the community.</li> </ol>	Short-term	PW	DDA	B
4.5	3 Dtown	Improve safety of streets for all users	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enforce minimum widths and reduce number of driveway curb cuts to promote safety</li> <li>2. Conduct a traffic study to support a road diet and on-street parking on Oakwood Boulevard and Allen Road</li> </ol>	Short-term	PW	County	C

**GOAL 5: Boost the local economy by attracting local and regional employers to Melvindale.**

#	Chapt.	Policy	Actions	Timing	Prime Respon.	Collab.	Ease of Impl.
5.1	3 Dtown	Formalize a Main Street program for downtown management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand outreach and education of façade grant opportunities</li> <li>2. With the City of Melvindale, define the DDA’s role in the RRC initiative; plan and deploy activities accordingly</li> <li>3. Identify programs that support local small business to promote local economic growth</li> </ol>	Short-term	DDA		B
5.2	3 Dtown	Expand and sustain a model of “coopetition” among Downtown Melvindale businesses, organizations and attractions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create day-tripper attraction packages and deals to encourage visitors to patronize Melvindale businesses</li> <li>2. Engage business owners in defining “coopetition” and how to measure</li> <li>3. Conduct customer service surveys of property owners, businesses and organizations to identify needs for sustainable success</li> <li>4. DDA to act as resource for businesses in development/strengthening of networks/network opportunities.</li> </ol>	Short-term	DDA	EDC	A
5.3	3 Dtown	Expand youth training and employment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide paid opportunities for youth and teens to begin skill building and earning experience in lucrative trades</li> <li>2. Provide paid opportunities to help beautify the community to enhance the public realm</li> <li>3. Connect with local universities about satellite programs</li> </ol>	Long-term	EDC	DDA	B
5.4	3 Dtown	Attract developers to the DDA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve the development review process by creating a “Guide to Development” that spells out step-by-step means to develop and build successfully in Melvindale</li> <li>2. Provide accessible information on financing and other state programs that alleviate the financial burdens of development.</li> <li>3. Identify opportunities with developers to activate unoccupied businesses within the DDA core zones</li> <li>4. Promote and support a regional approach to economic development that is business-friendly and easily accessible</li> <li>5. Encourage green technologies and sustainable development practices</li> </ol>	Immed.	DDA	PC; EDC; Admin	B

**GOAL 5: Boost the local economy by attracting local and regional employers to Melvindale.**

#	Chapt.	Policy	Actions	Timing	Prime Respon.	Collab.	Ease of Impl.
5.5	3 Dtown	Invest in small business owners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide paths to ownership and business development with state and federal support</li> <li>2. Connect small businesses to abandoned businesses within the DDA core zone</li> <li>3. Encourage home-based businesses, live-work space, mixed uses, and flexible commercial spaces to accommodate the new economy worker and business</li> <li>4. Identify and invest in programs that promote Melvindale as the best entrepreneurial climate to live, work, learn, and play 5.</li> </ol> Engage with immigration services (ESL, legal services, income tax services)	Short-term	DDA	PC; EDC; Admin	C
5.6	3 Dtown	Promote Tourism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilitate regular and frequent events in the DDA, including the Farmers Market, and other cultural events</li> <li>2. Create day-tripper attraction packages and deals to encourage visitors to patronize Melvindale businesses</li> </ol>	Ongoing	DDA	EDC	B

**GOAL 6:** Identify a clear process for how development happens and remains of high-quality in Melvindale.

#	Chapt.	Policy	Actions	Timing	Prime Respon.	Collab.	Ease of Impl.
6.1	2 Nbhd	Proactive capital planning	1. Continue to annually improve the 6-year capital improvement program planning process. 2. Seek grant funding opportunities for infrastructure projects. 3. Review approval process and standards for Planned Unit Development (PUD)	Ongoing	PC	DDA; PW; Water/ Sewer	C
6.2	3 Dtown	Building and Design Enforcement	1. Support a strict code enforcement program of commercial, residential and tenant properties	Immed.	BD	CC; PC	A
6.3	3 Dtown	Implementation	Seek local training to prepare Planning Commission on roles and responsibilities related to DDA development	Immed.	DDA	PC	A