

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

Regular Meeting

May 14, 2025 at 7:00 PM



- 1) **CALL TO ORDER**
- 2) **ROLL CALL**
- 3) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - Items can be added or deleted from the Agenda by board action.
 - A. Approval of January 8, 2025 Planning Commission Minutes
 - B. Approval of February 20, 2025 Special Planning Commission Minutes
 - C. Approval of March 12, 2025 Planning Commission Minutes
- 4) **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** - Items can be added or deleted from the Agenda by board action.
- 5) **PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS** Persons addressing the board are required to give their name and address for the record when called upon by the Chair. Members of the public shall be limited to speaking for a maximum of five (5) minutes. Comments should address AGENDA ITEM topics. Public Hearing items should be addressed during the PUBLIC HEARING portion of the meeting agenda. Non-Agenda items should be addressed during the PUBLIC COMMENT-NON-AGENDA ITEMS portion of the meeting agenda.
- 6) **PUBLIC HEARINGS & SUBSEQUENT BOARD ACTION**
- 7) **OLD BUSINESS**
- 8) **REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS/NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. Receive the 2025 City of Marshall Master Plan Draft
- 9) **PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS** Persons addressing the board are required to give their name and address for the record when called upon by the Chair. Members of the public shall be limited to speaking for a maximum of five (5) minutes. Comments should address NON-AGENDA ITEM topics. Public Hearing items should be addressed during the PUBLIC HEARING portion of the meeting agenda. Agenda items should be addressed during the PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS portion of the meeting agenda.
- 10) **BOARD REPORTS**
- 11) **ADJOURNMENT**

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

January 8, 2025

Regular Meeting - 7:00 PM

1) CALL TO ORDER

IN A REGULAR SESSION held on Wednesday, January 8, 2025 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 323 West Michigan Ave, Marshall, MI 49068, the Marshall Planning Commission was called to order by Chair McNiff.

2) ROLL CALL

Roll was called:

Present: Chair McNiff, Vice Chair Banfield, Bright, Fitzgerald, Hodo, Stewart

Also Present: Deputy Clerk Cary

Absent: Zuck

3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Items can be added or deleted from the Agenda by board action.

A. Approval of December 11, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Moved by Tim Banfield, supported by Aron Hodo to approve the December 11, 2024, meeting minutes. On a voice vote: **Motion carried.**

4) APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Items can be added or deleted from the Agenda by board action.

Moved by Ian Stewart, supported by Aron Hodo to approve the agenda as presented. On a voice vote: **Motion carried.**

5) PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Persons addressing the board are required to give their name and address for the record when called upon by the Chair. Members of the public shall be limited to speaking for a maximum of five (5) minutes. Comments should address AGENDA ITEM topics. Public Hearing items should be addressed during the PUBLIC HEARING portion of the meeting agenda. Non-Agenda items should be addressed during the PUBLIC COMMENT-NON-AGENDA ITEMS portion of the meeting agenda.

none

6) COMMISSION ORGANIZATION

A. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Moved by Tim Banfield, supported by Tim Fitzgerald to elect Lisa McNiff as Chair of Planning Commission. On a voice vote: **Motion Carried.**

Moved by Lisa McNiff, supported by Tim Fitzgerald to elect Tim Banfield as Vice Chair of Planning Commission. On a voice vote: **Motion Carried.**

B. JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

Chair McNiff appointed Aron Hodo as Joint Planning Commissioner and Carter Bright as an alternate for the Joint Planning Commissioner.

7) PUBLIC HEARINGS & SUBSEQUENT BOARD ACTION

A. 2025 - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

Chair McNiff opened the Public Hearing for the 2025 Capital Improvement Plan at 7:04PM.

"Hearing no public comment, Chair McNiff closed the Public Hearing for the 2025 Capital Improvement Plan at 7:05PM."

Moved by Tim Banfield, supported by Aron Hodo to Approve the 2025-2031 Capital Improvement Plan for the City of Marshall and move it on to City Council. On a voice vote: **Motion Carried.**

Banfield asked why some of the columns are not listed as a priority. Director of Community Development Strange stated that before it goes to City Council staff will go in and add those priority lists that were missed.

Scott Wolfersberger, Mayor of Marshall, stated that prioritization goes to what has been assessed as the largest need, but if the largest need is the most expensive, then they may try to complete projects in the lower categories, so at least some things get accomplished.

8) OLD BUSINESS

none

9) REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS/NEW BUSINESS

A. 1154 WEST MICHIGAN AVE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS - INTRODUCE AND SET PUBLIC HEARING

Moved by Tim Banfield, supported by Aron Hodo to set a Public Hearing for 1154 West Michigan Avenue Site Development Plans for February 12, 2025, at the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. On a voice vote: **Motion Carried.**

Discussion:

Director of Community Development Strange stated that the engineer and the owner of 1154 West Michigan Avenue were here, and that what is in the packet is the preliminary site plan. She stated that there have been some communications about the parking allotment and current numbers are based on what Marriot's recommendation is, but the zoning ordinance for parking allows us to add parking spaces based on meeting room sizes. Her recommendation is that several spots be allocated for future parking addition to limiting the amount of asphalt on site initially and that a note could be added to the property, so if people are complaining about people parking on adjacent properties for hotel business, we can go in and request they implement that additional parking. She further stated there is an island just right outside the site on Michigan Ave, and there is a request by MDOT for this project to pay for the modification of the island to accommodate additional stacking on Michigan Ave. She said that they are planning to implement solar panels to cover up areas in the parking lot.

Fitzgerald asked what does it mean by stacking? Director Strange described that stacking is when cars are waiting in a line, it is the length of area where five or six cars

take up and MDOT is expecting more cars needing to wait to turn into the hotel driveway than what previously has been needed. MDOT is trying to make sure people are not waiting in the driving lane, by transforming it into a turn lane.

Andrew Rossell from AR Engineering stated that the property owner and the solar company are here and happy to answer any questions. We are working on approximately 17,600 square foot footprint Marriot Hotel, with 101 rooms, indoor pool, a little breakfast area that turns into a bar at night, conference rooms and an outdoor patio. There will be 110 parking spaces on site with eleven for future allocated parking. We plan to have solar canopies over parking spaces to provide shade in the summer and shelter from the snow. They have been reviewing the site plan with MDOT and have gone through traffic impact assessments. MDOT wants more stacking in the left turn lane because of their standards. The median island that is there now will be modified. We have been working with the city about the storm water. We have 9,300 cubic feet of underground storm water storage, which is significantly more than what is out there right now.

Banfield asked about how many conference rooms, how big they are, and how many people. Hodo has concerns that if you have a big conference, there will not be enough parking. Rossell answered that the conference or meeting rooms would be used during the day, when about 80% of the rooms are unoccupied, unless they are an extended stay. Chair McNiff stated that we're not talking about ballrooms that would be suitable for weddings or larger conferences.

Savinder Singh stated that the conference rooms are required by the franchise. If there is a meeting, it is normally used during the day when most guests are not in the hotel rooms. The reason for putting the solar in is that we want to make it a green hotel, and it serves a dual purpose. The solar carports will still be aesthetic to match the Marriott.

Banfield stated that the ordinance doesn't include solar roof structures, so they have to be considered structures and meet the setbacks in the ordinance.

Director Strange stated that the staff and Andrew can work to ensure setbacks are met prior to the next Planning Commission meeting or the Planning Commission could give contingent approval at the next meeting. She will confer with the city attorney for the correct interpretation of the current zoning language prior to the next Planning Commission meeting.

Banfield stated that the landscape plan requires a licensed landscape architect and any of the sides with residential zoning needs to be screened. Rossell stated that the plan would be signed and sealed prior to the next planning meeting.

Discussion was brought up about underground storm management. Banfield discussed concerns about maintenance of the underground and that it would require a maintenance agreement with the city. Rossell described how the first row is an isolation row with a manhole for ease of cleaning. Banfield deferred to the city engineer's judgement.

Questions were brought up about charging stations for cars. There are 4 designated spaces in the hotel parking lot. Their location was discussed, and the designer will confirm the final location as part of construction documents.

Discussion confirmed walkability of the site remains as it is on Michigan Ave and that pedestrian traffic from north to south through the site still connects.

/

B. DISCUSS EAST PROSPECT VACATION

Director Strange explained a vacation of the street is the area of the street, and the right of way is turned over from the city to the owners of the properties on either side of the street. Oaklawn has requested a vacation of Prospect Street on the north side of the hospital. They have parking immediately adjacent on the north side and then the emergency room is on the south side. Oaklawn's intent is to make way for the expansion of the emergency department. This action is purely the vacation of the street turning it from public property to private property. There are utilities in the right of way that would need to be dealt with through an easement. She states the City Council is requesting that the planning commission review the vacation and provide their input.

Chair McNiff stated it is pretty clear that it is the city council's domain.

Mayor of Marshall Wolfersberger explained that the planning commission is an advisory board to city council, and they are seeking the commissions input.

Mr. Degraw stated he is here to answer any questions. He is the attorney that has represented the hospital for the last 60 years. He contacted the city on October 4th and asked to vacate the portion of East Mansion Street lying between Madison and High. The street is primarily used by hospital patients, visitors and employees as most people avoid it because of the jog of the street. The purpose of vacating is to make room for the emergency room expansion. The emergency room needs about 11,000 or 12,000 square feet as they are only currently at 8,000 square feet, and there has been an increase in patient volume that they see continuing to grow.

Mr. Degraw discussed the history of Oaklawn Hospital.

The ordinance in the hospital campus overlay district 3.1.16 Section A purpose number three. Expansion of health care and supporting issues within the hospital campus overlay district. The anticipate the increase. As healthcare services and related uses continue to expand, street closures may also be a component of the district subject to city council approval. The hospital campus overlay provides the regulatory framework to permit expansion of health care and supporting uses.

The intent is to push this back off to staff at this point to collect some additional information. Director Strange will coordinate a timeline.

- 10) PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS** Persons addressing the board are required to give their name and address for the record when called upon by the Chair. Members of the public shall be limited to speaking for a maximum of five (5) minutes. Comments should address NON-AGENDA ITEM topics. Public Hearing items should be addressed during the PUBLIC HEARING portion of the meeting agenda. Agenda items should be addressed during the PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS portion of the meeting agenda.

Scott Wolfersberger Mayor of Marshall gave public comment.

11) BOARD REPORTS

Commissioner Stewart stated that the steering committee meeting is tomorrow (January 9th), happy to see that process still continues. The Marshall Area Conservation

Committee meeting was held tonight. We have a tree planting scheduled for April 26th. This will be the first of two for this year. There is a lot of talk about trees, but looking in the long term at things, what we can do to get more trees to build our canopy to keep it healthy and keep it going. Curious through the master plan process and future discussions as a commissioner about what we can do to expand our tree code.

Commissioners Bright, Hodo and Banfield will be gone in February. Commissioner Banfield will also be gone in March.

12) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Brandie Cary
Deputy Clerk

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

February 20, 2025
Special Meeting - 7:00 PM

1) CALL TO ORDER

IN A SPECIAL SESSION held on Thursday, February 20, 2025 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 323 West Michigan Ave, Marshall, MI 49068, the Marshall Planning Commission was called to order by Chair McNiff.

2) ROLL CALL

Roll was called:

Present: Chair Lisa McNiff, Carter Bright, Tim Fitzgerald, Aron Hodo, Ian Stewart, Jim Zuck

Also Present: Director Strange and Deputy Clerk Cary

Absent: Tim Banfield, Karl Sievertsen, Ryan Underhill

3) APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Items can be deleted from the Agenda by board action.

Moved by Aron Hodo, supported by Jim Zuck to amend the agenda to indicate that this is a special meeting and approve the remainder of the agenda. On a voice vote: **Motion Carried**

4) PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS Persons addressing the board are required to give their name and address for the record when called upon by the Chair. Members of the public shall be limited to speaking for a maximum of three (3) minutes. Comments should address AGENDA ITEM topics. Public Hearing items should be addressed during the PUBLIC HEARING portion of the meeting agenda. Non-Agenda items should be addressed during the PUBLIC COMMENT-NON-AGENDA ITEMS portion of the meeting agenda.

Emily Emerson Rich at 616 Union Street gave a summary of existing hotel room quantities and expressed concerns about allowing another hotel to be built in the City of Marshall.

5) PUBLIC HEARINGS & SUBSEQUENT BOARD ACTION

none

6) OLD BUSINESS

none

7) REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS/NEW BUSINESS

A. 1154 WEST MICHIGAN AVE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Moved by Tim Fitzgerald, supported by Aron Hodo to consider and recommend the site plan 1154 W Michigan Ave.

Director Strange discussed the 1154 W Michigan site plan. She stated that there are some contingency items that we don't have necessarily documented as part of the drawing set that should be considered. The fire department questioned the turning radius to get onto the north side of the building. The recommendation is that we require more thorough coordination with the fire department. There was discussion that, if it was necessary, the small stretch of solar panels would be removed from the project to accommodate the fire department's needs. She discussed the placement of the solar

panels along the east side of the property. With that east side being residential, there is a 50-foot setback requirement. The solar panels in the 50-foot setback are being removed to meet requirements. The next recommendation is to allow the panel to extend to face the curb, so that the drip will hit the curb and grass instead of the parking lot. The supports for the panels would still be outside the setback requirements.

Stewart questioned if it was only the island units that would be considered to be removed.

Director Strange explained that the extents of the removed panels are indicated on the last drawing in the packet.

Director Strange discussed some landscape items.

Chair McNiff stated there are a lot of contingencies that she would have preferred to have seen incorporated into the stamped plans.

Jason Raleigh from AR Engineering spoke about the landscape. He stated that there are some labeled shrubs that need new labels, so the shrub will meet the requirements. Some of the trees by the residential area will be replaced with evergreens. The calipers of the trees will be changed as required. The size of the bushes will be changed to give the height at planting, and a final plant count will be given.

Fitzgerald had questions about the solar panels. He questioned the resiliency of the panels. Are they tested for hail and tornado-like hard impacts directly on the top of them? He asked if there are any hazardous materials inside the panels.

Joey Tatar from Solar Mounts stated that there is hail testing that they do in New Mexico. He stated that, normally, when a break happens during the installation process, it doesn't really happen when it's already installed. It would have to be a bowling ball dropped on it from quite high to actually break it. The panels crack through instead of just shattering and falling to the ground.

Chair McNiff questioned the elevations of the solar panels.

Joey Tatar from Solar Mounts discussed that their company builds everything to a 14-foot height minimum. He also discussed snow removal. Since the panels are tilted to the outer edge, there will be no problem with snow removal. The posts are also on the back edges, so there won't be any obstructions to the plow trucks.

Jason Raleigh from AR Engineering stated that a plow company can haul snow off site if needed.

Chair McNiff stated the lighting was an issue discussed at the last meeting, and it looks like you're working on the lighting for those areas where you can't have solar panels.

Jason Raleigh stated that they provided a photometric plan. We have been working with the city and city attorney to navigate through some of those setbacks that go between the solar section and the accessory building section. Where solar panels are being eliminated, the ordinance for minimizing and maintaining the downward directional

lighting and minimal throw will be met.

Chair McNiff asked if a contingent plan would be needed?

Director Strange recommended making it a staff review to require their approach be similar to the front. We want a similar type of lighting across the property to have a consistent look and feel throughout.

Chair McNiff agreed.

Director Strange discussed the storm water plan. She stated that one of the questions that came up at the meeting was that the water at the south end of the lot was making its way all the way to the back retention area. The fall of the piping from the front to the back gets back to the retention area.

Jason Raleigh spoke about storm water management. He stated that they have been working with the city and Spicer Group on how to maintain and design that system. He stated that all the piping is going around from front to the back, and everything is going to be a little bit deeper. The system back there is going to act as a storage area, and then as that system fills up it will start to slowly release.

Spicer Group review should be completed next week and there will need to be some contingencies on this bigger project. We'll make sure there aren't any loose ends from zoning, setbacks, building, and those items. The final details will be completed after Planning Commission approval, otherwise a huge amount of money would be spent redesigning if there were changes.

Stewart wants to make sure Marguerite feels good with the plan. The maintenance of the system has been clear.

Jason Raleigh stated that an agreement with the City would be confirmed with Marguerite for maintenance requirements. Accessible maintenance will make cleaning any sediment from the Isolator row easier. Good soils are on site. We did soil and geotechnical work to verify it.

Chair McNiff commented that the design seems appropriate, but we have no control over MDOT.

Savindor Singh commented that there has been communication with MDOT, a traffic impact assessment was completed and made an initial submittal probably 45 days ago. They came back with some minor comments that are being reviewed.

Jason Raleigh stated that one of the items is the width of the drives. So, the required width will also take care of the Fire Department concerns at the entry. The fire hydrant will be removed from the drawings.

Director Strange stated that the Fire Department doesn't like yard hydrants on private property and both the Fire Department and Water Department confirmed that they prefer to use the hydrants in the right of way. The existing hydrants will work with hose lengths. This was sorted out by the two departments in the last two days, after the packet was completed for consideration.

The Fire Department Connection on the building fitting must meet the City's requirements.

Chair McNiff commented that the Fire Department coordination with the solar panels will need to be a contingency item, and the connection at the FDC will need to be a contingency item.

Jason Raleigh stated that lot coverage meets requirements for all the solar panels. If any are eliminated for fire department coordination, it will just make the lot coverage numbers better for zoning.

Director Strange stated that the utilities coordination contingency should include electrical utility coordination. Just like we are requiring a revised site plan for us to review prior to moving into Construction Documents or submitting for building permits, we would request that they come to us to discuss the electrical utility coordination to confirm we don't have any long lead-time items that the City would need to purchase early in the process.

Jason Raleigh stated that the engineers are working through panel sizing, and they will feed info to Kevin so whatever transformer is needed is available and can be ordered. From a construction standpoint, I think we have time because we don't need electricity on day one.

Director Strange commented that we could call it a desktop review for electrical. They are already doing it on wastewater and water utilities, which are more important to get done for the Planning Commission. We just want to communicate with the design team prior to them getting Construction Documents completed.

Stewart commented that he appreciated that the City is looking at it from this perspective. There are no footcandles noted on the photometric on the west side of the building where there are exits. We need this side of the building to be safe.

Christopher Miller from CPM Construction stated that emergency safety lighting will be pronounced at the doors and will meet minimum light requirements.

Stewart commented that he wasn't sure what the best practice was, but there is no sidewalk connecting the sidewalk along the street to the building. So, guests at the hotel wanting to go to Applebee's or McDonald's have to walk in the driveway, then onto the sidewalk. Or to go get ice cream. Maybe try to stay out of the driveways and connect along the west line in the west parking lot.

Jason Raleigh commented that he didn't see an issue with adding that from a walkability perspective, it's great.

Chair McNiff proposed a friendly amendment to include a contingency for:

- The landscape items including the evergreen trees in lieu of deciduous
- Revise the caliper of the trees from two feet to two-and-a-half feet.
- Review and comply with the zoning ordinance as it relates to the shrub sizes at time of planting

- Work with the Architectural team to provide necessary lighting in the area along the east parking lot where the solar panel system was removed adjacent to the apartment building.
- The lighting in the (removed solar panel) location will comply with the requirements that are laid out in the zoning ordinance.
- There will be final coordination and approval of the water and wastewater utility connection plans with the city and the Spicer Group.
- Approval of the final storm as well as the sanitary services final connection details.
- Final coordination between the Fire Department truck requirements and the solar panels locations.
- Final approval by the fire department regarding the fire hydrant location.
- A desktop review with the City regarding the electrical utility coordination.
- Approval is subject to MDOT approval for the revisions to the access drive.
- Confirmation of the column locations for the solar panels is required to stay beyond the setback. Panels can be in the setback but not beyond the back of the associated curb.
- Revised drawings shall be submitted to staff and a review shall confirm the resolution of the contingency items.

Moved by Tim Fitzgerald, supported by Aron Hodo to amend the motion and approve the site plan for 1154 W Michigan Ave contingent upon:

- The landscape items including the evergreen trees in lieu of deciduous
- Revise the caliper of the trees from two feet to two-and-a-half feet.
- Review and comply with the zoning ordinance as it relates to the shrub sizes at time of planting
- Work with the Architectural team to provide necessary lighting in the area along the east parking lot where the solar panel system was removed adjacent to the apartment building.
- The lighting in the (removed solar panel) location will comply with the requirements that are laid out in the zoning ordinance.
- There will be final coordination and approval of the water and wastewater utility connection plans with the city and the Spicer Group.
- Approval of the final storm as well as the sanitary services final connection details.
- Final coordination between the Fire Department truck requirements and the solar panels locations.
- Final approval by the fire department regarding the fire hydrant location.
- A desktop review with the City regarding the electrical utility coordination.
- Approval is subject to MDOT approval for the revisions to the access drive.
- Confirmation of the column locations for the solar panels is required to stay beyond the setback. Panels can be in the setback but not beyond the back of the associated curb.
- Revised drawings shall be submitted to staff and a review shall confirm the resolution of the contingency items.

On a voice vote: **Motion Carried**

- 8) PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS** Persons addressing the board are required to give their name and address for the record when called upon by the Chair. Members of the public shall be limited to speaking for a maximum of three (3) minutes. Comments should address NON-AGENDA ITEM topics. Public Hearing items should be addressed during the PUBLIC HEARING portion of the meeting agenda. Agenda items should be addressed during the PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS portion of the meeting agenda.

none

9) BOARD REPORTS

Director Strange requested member availability for a joint work session with the City Council in the next two months. The meeting would be held on a Monday prior to a regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

Ian Stewart commented that there is a MACC meeting next Wednesday at the Public Services Building. Time is 6:30, to be confirmed. Tree planting is scheduled for Saturday, April 26th. Excited to be working with the City, MACC and others to enhance our tree canopy. There will be a second tree planting in the fall as well as Canoe the Kazoo and Crazy for the Kazoo.

Fitzgerald stated there are accidents where people are trying to exit the ball fields and cross 4 lanes of traffic to turn left.

Director Strange stated this driving condition is on our radar. Chief Lankard presented an assessment of intersections in town based on incidents and their perspective of hazards. There were a couple of uncontrolled intersections, like a T intersection, where there was nothing to give direction. I know they specifically talked about that turn coming out of the ball field as trying to make that right turn only. I know the sign is not up yet. Maybe they are waiting for spring. But I know that it is on the radar.

McNiff addressed the public: Comments are appreciated, but the scope of our work is limited to looking at a site plan to determine if the use is compliant with the zoning district it's in. That all the building, code regulations, the setbacks, the landscaping, all of that is in accordance with our ordinance. We don't have any control over what is being built other than to make sure it conforms to the ordinance. That's our scope. We are not allowed to exceed it.

Director Strange recommended adjourning.

McNiff stated that additional questions could be fielded after the meeting and called for adjournment.

10) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Brandie Cary
Deputy Clerk

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

March 12, 2025
Regular Meeting - 7:00 PM

1) CALL TO ORDER

IN A REGULAR SESSION held on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 7:21 PM in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 323 West Michigan Ave, Marshall, MI 49068, the Marshall Planning Commission was called to order by Chair McNiff.

2) ROLL CALL

Roll was called:

Present: Chair McNiff, Bright, Stewart, Underhill

Also Present: Director of Community Development Strange and Deputy Clerk Cary

Absent: Banfield, Fitzgerald, Hodo, Sievertsen, Zuck

We do not have a quorum.

3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Items can be added or deleted from the Agenda by board action.

A. Approval of January 8, 2025 Planning Commission Minutes

B. Approval of February 20, 2025 Special Planning Commission Minutes

4) APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Items can be added or deleted from the Agenda by board action.

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6) PUBLIC HEARINGS & SUBSEQUENT BOARD ACTION

7) OLD BUSINESS

8) REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS/NEW BUSINESS

A. 210 WINSTON DRIVE HOTEL - INTRODUCTION

9) PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS Persons addressing the board are required to give their name and address for the record when called upon by the Chair. Members of the public shall be limited to speaking for a maximum of five (3) minutes. Comments should address NON-AGENDA ITEM topics. Public Hearing items should be addressed during the PUBLIC HEARING portion of the meeting agenda. Agenda items should be addressed during the PUBLIC COMMENT-AGENDA ITEMS portion of the meeting agenda.

10) BOARD REPORTS

11) ADJOURNMENT

Due to lack of quorum the meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Brandie Cary
Deputy Clerk



ITEM 8.A

TO: [AGENDA_OFFICIAL_BODY]
FROM: Marcia Strange, Director of Community Development
DATE: May 14, 2025
SUBJECT: Receive the 2025 City of Marshall Master Plan Draft

Tonight the 2025 Master Plan Draft is being presented for receipt by the Planning Commission.

The proposed timeline for approval is as follows:

June 11, Planning Commission sends the draft to City Council and recommend the City Council open a 63 day comment period.

At the same meeting Planning Commission should set the Public hearing for September 10.

June 16, City Council receives the draft and opens the 63-day public comment window (starting the 17)

September 10, Planning Commission holds the public hearing and adopts the plan by resolution

September 15, City Council accepts the resolution to adopt the Master Plan.

This Master Plan addresses land use and infrastructure issues and projects 15-20 years into the future. The Master Planning Committee included members of this Planning Commission and City Council along with other community members working with our planning consultant; Progressive Companies.

As stated in the document, this document guides land use decisions and serves as a blueprint for our community.

The Planning Commission has the option to receive the Master Plan tonight and either:

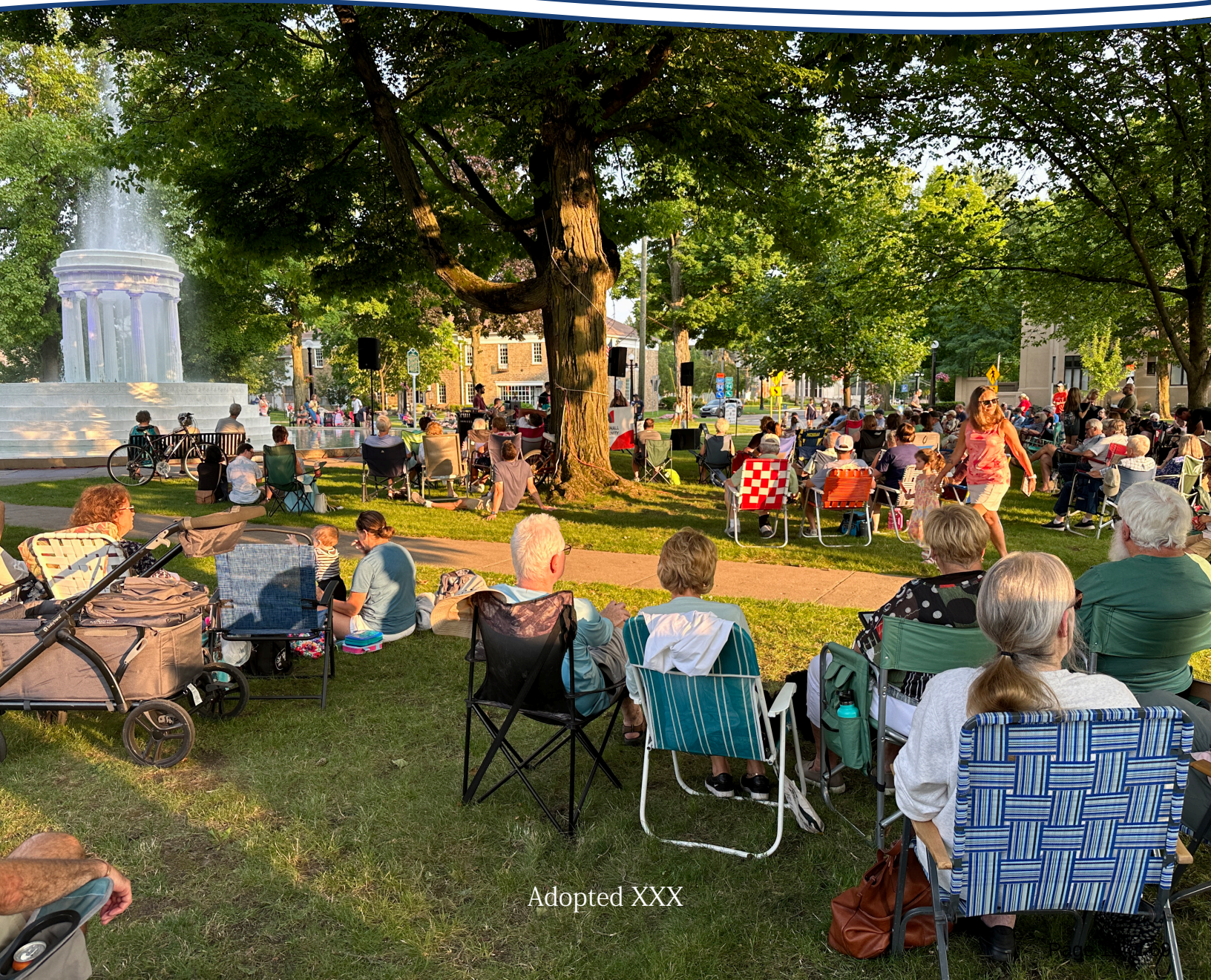
1. Receive the Draft and put it on the Planning Commission agenda for June 11, or
2. Receive the Draft and put it on the Planning Commission agenda for June 11 AND schedule a Special Planning Commission meeting to review the Master Plan prior to the June 11 meeting, or
3. Receive the Draft and send the draft to City Council tonight as-is without further comment at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the Master Plan Draft and add the recommendation to send it to City Council to the Planning Commission agenda for June 11, 2025..



City of Marshall **MASTER PLAN 2025**



Adopted XXX

THANK YOU

A special thanks to:

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Jen Bomba
James Durian
Aron Hodo
Jacob Gates
Alena Guenther
Lucy Hough
Amanda Lanker
Lisa McNiff
Andrew Scribbs
Ian Stewart
Ryan Traver

CITY STAFF

Derek Perry—City Manager
Marguerite Davenport—Director of Public Services
Marcia Strange—Director of Community Development

CITY COUNCIL

Scott Wolfersberger—Mayor
Ryan Underhill—Ward 1
James Hackworth—Ward 2
Jacob Gates—Ward 3
Theresa Chaney Huggett—Ward 4
Andrew Scribbs—Ward 5
Ryan Traver—At-Large

PLANNING COMMISSION

Lisa McNiff—Chair
Tim Banfield—Vice Chair
Carter Bright
Timothy Fitzgerald
Aron Hodo
Karl Sievertsen
Ian Douglas Stewart
Jim Zuck
Ryan Underhill—Ex Officio

PLANNING CONSULTANT



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1 Planning Context and Introduction

History and Regional Context

Established in 1830, Marshall exemplifies a delicate balance between historic preservation and progress. Renowned for its remarkable National Historic Landmark District, Marshall boasts the nation’s largest and best-preserved collections of 19th and 20th century architecture in the small-urban category. Encompassing over 800 structures, the National Historic Landmark District is a living museum showcasing Greek Revival, Gothic, and Victorian designs. This architectural legacy attracts visitors from across the nation and reflects the city’s commitment to preservation.

Marshall rose to prominence in the 19th century due to its strategic location along early transportation routes, including the Michigan Central Railroad and the Territorial Road. As one of the early settled areas in southern Michigan, Marshall became a vital commercial and governmental hub, even being considered as a potential state capital. In the early 20th century, the interurban rail ran through the heart of downtown Marshall, connecting communities from Jackson all the way to Portage.

Marshall also played a significant role in the Underground Railroad, serving as a safe haven for people seeking freedom. Marshall also contributed to the development of Michigan’s public school system. In 1839, it became the site of one of the state’s first organized public school districts under Michigan’s general school laws, setting a precedent for statewide education reform.

Today, Marshall still stands at the crossroads of two major highways (I-69 and I-94) which fuels the town’s prosperity through tourism, job opportunities, and transportation convenience. A community of roughly 6,800 residents, Marshall serves as the County Seat of Calhoun County. The city is about 50 miles south of Lansing and 40 miles east of Kalamazoo.

Visitors and residents appreciate Marshall for its preservation of history, but they also choose Marshall for its high quality of life, walkability, good schools, job opportunities, and its splendid access to nature. Marshall is rich in natural amenities, the North Branch of the Kalamazoo River runs through town, as well as Rice Creek and Talmadge Creek. The City’s parks such as Ketchum Park, Brooks Nature Area, and the Riverwalk attract hikers, bikers, and fishers. The unique natural features and location of Marshall have poised the city to link critical river and trail networks throughout Calhoun County and beyond.



What is a Master Plan?

A master plan is a policy document that guides land use decisions. Required by Michigan State Law – the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008 – the master plan serves as a blueprint for a how a community wants to grow or change. A master plan should address land use issues like housing, neighborhood character, natural features preservation, and commercial development, but also infrastructure, such as roads, bike paths, or utilities.

The Planning Commission and City Council of Marshall will be guided by the master plan as they consider proposals for development. The Master Plan outlines specific goals and how to get there. A master plan typically looks 15 to 20 years into the future and is reassessed every five years to make sure its goals and objectives are still relevant.

How is a master plan different from zoning?

A master plan is a policy guide, while zoning is the law. The zoning ordinance of a community dictates where and how different types of development can or cannot exist. One of the ways to implement the master plan is through making changes to zoning law. For example, to create opportunities for people to age in place while remaining in their community, accessory dwelling units can be added as a permitted use in residential districts.

The history of zoning in the U.S. goes back about 100 years. While zoning and the places it created were shaped by the predominance of the automobile and single-unit detached housing for many years, there is a current trend to return to the form of earlier centuries – allowing for a variety of housing types, mix of units, and prioritizing pedestrian safety over ease of access for the car. Marshall is a testament to the beauty of older forms of development.

Past Planning Efforts

Master Plan (2015)

Many of the throughlines of the 2015 Master Plan continue to be relevant today: maintaining Marshall's historic character, supporting the vibrancy of the downtown, growing the area near Dark Horse Brewery into a "River District," and making West Michigan Avenue safer and more aesthetically pleasing. While several of the objectives have been achieved in the last decade, there is still work to do.

Economic Development Strategic Plan (2016)

Created in fulfillment of the Redevelopment Ready Communities program, this plan outlines goals to steer Marshall toward a proactive economic development strategy and encourage partnership with neighboring communities. Key goals include expanding infrastructure, diversifying housing options, developing "turn key" sites in the Brooks Industrial Park, incentivizing small businesses, and expanding the DDA district. Other strategies proposed include expanding downtown shopping hours and supporting an internship program between schools and local industry. As an implementation action for this Master Plan, a new Economic Development Plan will be created that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the 2025 Master Plan.

Marketing Strategy (2016)

Developed by the Marshall Area Economic Development Alliance (MAEDA), this plan explored ways to grow the number of jobs in Marshall. As of 2014, over two-thirds of Marshall residents worked outside the city and many in-city jobs were filled by non-residents. The analysis selected industries to target based on demographic, economic, and geographic conditions and suitable sites within the city, and provided strategies for attracting them. The Marketing Plan will also be updated as an implementation action of the 2025 Master Plan.

Parks and Recreation Plan (2024)

Adopted in December 2024, the Parks and Recreation Five-Year Master Plan makes Marshall eligible for significant recreation funds from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). In addition to DNR eligibility, the Parks and Recreation Plan outlined the following goals for parks and recreation in Marshall: (1) Maintain and enhance existing parks and facilities, (2) Increase connectivity within and beyond Marshall by closing gaps in the sidewalks, trails, and waterway networks, (3) Market parks and recreation facilities and programming in a way that is more broad and effective, (4) Continue to innovate and provide high quality recreation programming and meet facility and amenity needs throughout the park system, and (5) Improve climate resilience, flood prevention, and health of local natural resources. Several of the priorities and projects in the Parks and Recreation Plan are carried through into the 2025 Master Plan.

Why Plan Now?

One of the biggest changes since the 2015 Master Plan is the ongoing development of the BlueOval Battery Park Michigan (BOBPM). Located on the MAJOR Campus, or the Marshall Area Jobs, Opportunity, and Recreation Campus, the BOBPM is a lithium iron phosphate battery plant owned by Ford Motor Company. The campus will be a business park for large specialized industrial manufacturing and distribution uses. Ford estimates that the plant will create approximately 1,700 jobs, helping to fill the 2,000 jobs lost with the closing of Eaton, State Farm, and other Marshall area employers over the past 30 years. The City of Marshall is estimated to receive more than two million dollars in additional tax revenue annually once the development is operable. In addition to jobs and tax revenue, the Campus will protect 500 acres of green space in a conservation easement for parks and trails. The Marshall Area Economic Development Alliance (MAEDA) and the City of Marshall have been key partners in the development of the MAJOR Campus.



A City and Region Connected by Trails

The MAJOR Campus has been a salient item of discussion in the community. Strong views on both sides echoed throughout the planning process for this master plan, as reflected in the following comments:

"Maintaining the quality and small town feel which is the reason people chose to live here. If I wanted to live near a manufacturing/ mega-site there are dozens of Michigan cities I could live in. We have lived here for nearly 50 years for a reason."

"We had a huge opportunity to make the megasite an amazing state park along the river with canoeing and biking back into town but I think that opportunity has left us."

"BOBPM is an incredible opportunity and anticipating what comes next will be even more important. Learn from everything that has happened over the past 18 months to ensure the community and city services are ready for whatever comes next."

"I hope we capitalize on the new Ford plant with increased shopping and restaurants."

Key concerns include increased traffic, impacts on the environment, infrastructure capacity, and the availability of housing for new residents. Key hopes are that the Campus will create jobs, bring economic investment, boost local businesses, and create needed regional recreational areas.

While the BOBPM and the MAJOR Campus were among the drivers for this Master Plan update, the plan itself is focused on the Marshall Community as a whole. Rather than planning around the new industrial development, this planning process has emphasized how to best integrate the new development, and the challenges and opportunities it brings, within the fabric of the Marshall Community to preserve the high quality of life expected by residents.

This plan has a view that is both pragmatic and hopeful – the plant is a reality and everything should be done to ensure that it is a success. However, defining success is not narrow. Success means that downtown Marshall continues to thrive, that the plant is as clean as possible, that businesses and their employees are active, contributing members of the community, and that existing residents see a benefit from the development. Numerous goals and objectives contained in this plan touch on ways to make the arrival of the MAJOR Campus a success.

PLAN OVERVIEW

The Plan that follows will place Marshall in context, describing the demographic, social, physical, and economic conditions of the community **(Chapter 2)**.

A description of the planning process follows, detailing how the community was engaged to formulate this plan and the high-level findings of these efforts **(Chapter 3)**.

The culmination of the plan is the Vision, Goals, and Objectives giving clear policy directives for the city to achieve over the next 15-20 years **(Chapter 4)**.

Next, a series of place types are proposed to direct land use, design, and infrastructure decisions. The future land use and place types chapter gives direction on use, the design of buildings and streetscapes, and how to change or maintain conditions in each **(Chapter 5)**.

Last is the Implementation Plan, turning the ideas, the goals and objectives into tangible projects to move the needle on priorities for the community, with metrics to track success **(Chapter 6)**.





Community Profile 2

Social Capital

The City of Marshall is a close-knit, engaged community. **While Marshall has many physical, natural, and economic assets, its most meaningful asset is the social connections within the community.** During initial stakeholder interviews, the sheer number of civic and volunteer organizations for a community of less than 10,000 people stood out.

This strong connection between residents, city officials, staff, and nonprofit organizations helps the community maintain strong social bonds that form the fabric of the life in Marshall. The level of civic engagement in Marshall is evidenced by strong arts and cultural programs, local festivals and events that draw upon hundreds of local volunteers, and the strong level of civic engagement on boards and commissions.

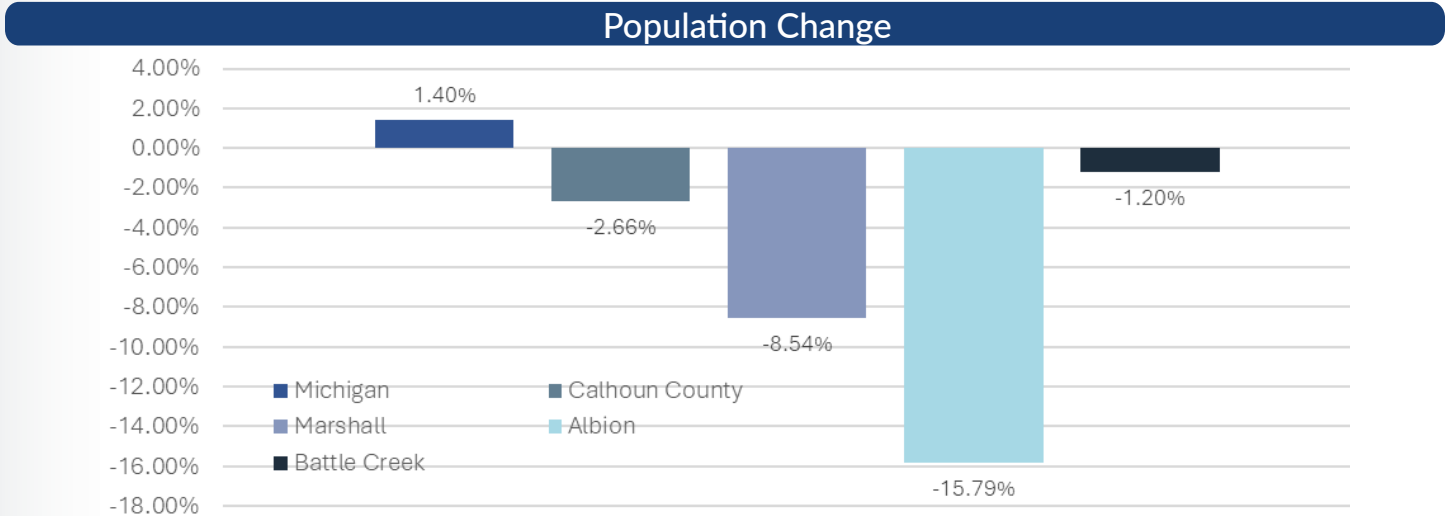


Marshall Civic and Cultural Organizations

- Exchange Club
- Franke Center for the Arts
- Cronin Foundation
- Henry BE Community Foundation
- Heritage Commons
- Marshall Area Economic Development Authority
- Marshall Area Manufacturers Association
- Marshall Business Association
- Marshall BenjaMen
- Marshall Chamber of Commerce
- Marshall Community Foundation
- Marshall Public Schools
- Marshall Downtown Development Authority
- Marshall Historical Society
- Marshall Local Development Finance Authority
- Neighborhood Improvement Authorities
- Parks and Conservation Clubs (Brooks Nature Area, Ketchum & Wilder Creek Conservation Groups, Kalamazoo River Watershed Council)
- Youngish Professionals Network
- Youth Advisory Council of the Marshall Community Foundation

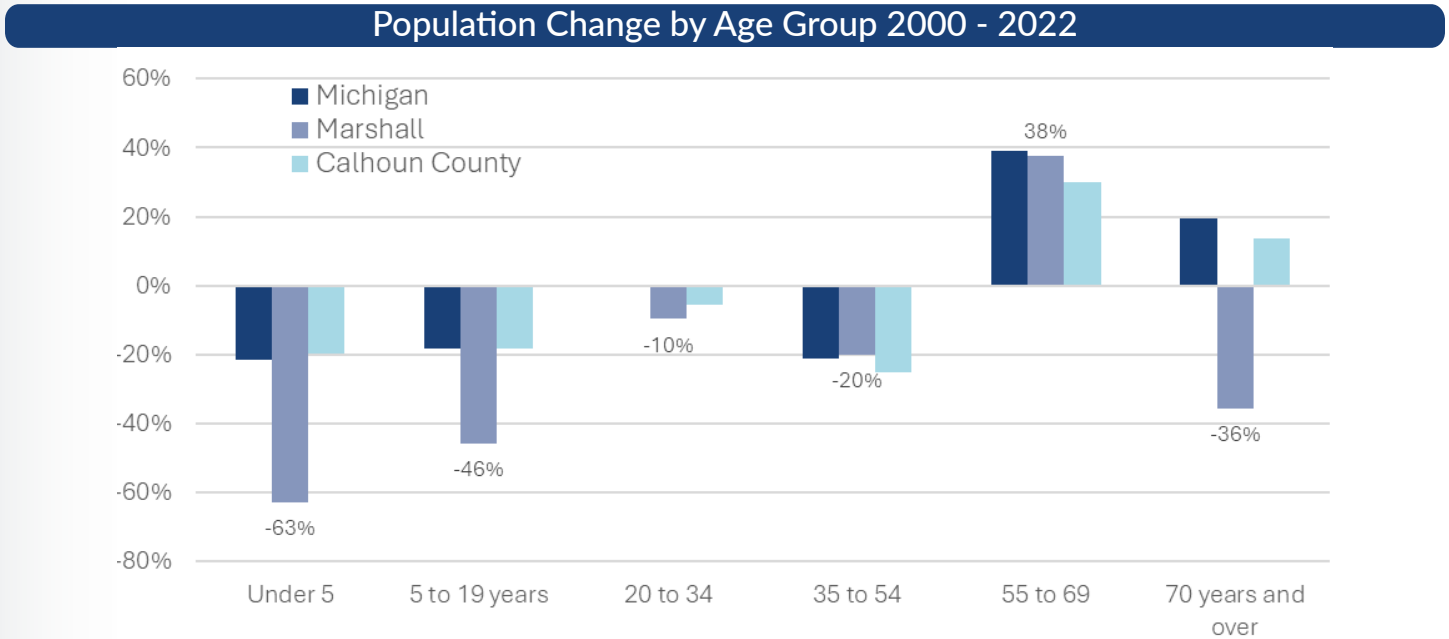
People

Marshall's population has steadily declined since 2000, at a rate greater than that of Calhoun County as a whole and the State of Michigan. **Since 2000, Marshall's population has decreased from 7,459 to 6,822, a loss of 637 people and 8.54 percent of the total population.** However, unlike nearby Albion where population has declined at twice that rate, Marshall does not have any issues with vacancy. For example, the Calhoun County Land Bank, which takes ownership of vacant or unsightly parcels, owns only one property in Marshall, which is identified as a potential redevelopment site in Chapter 6.



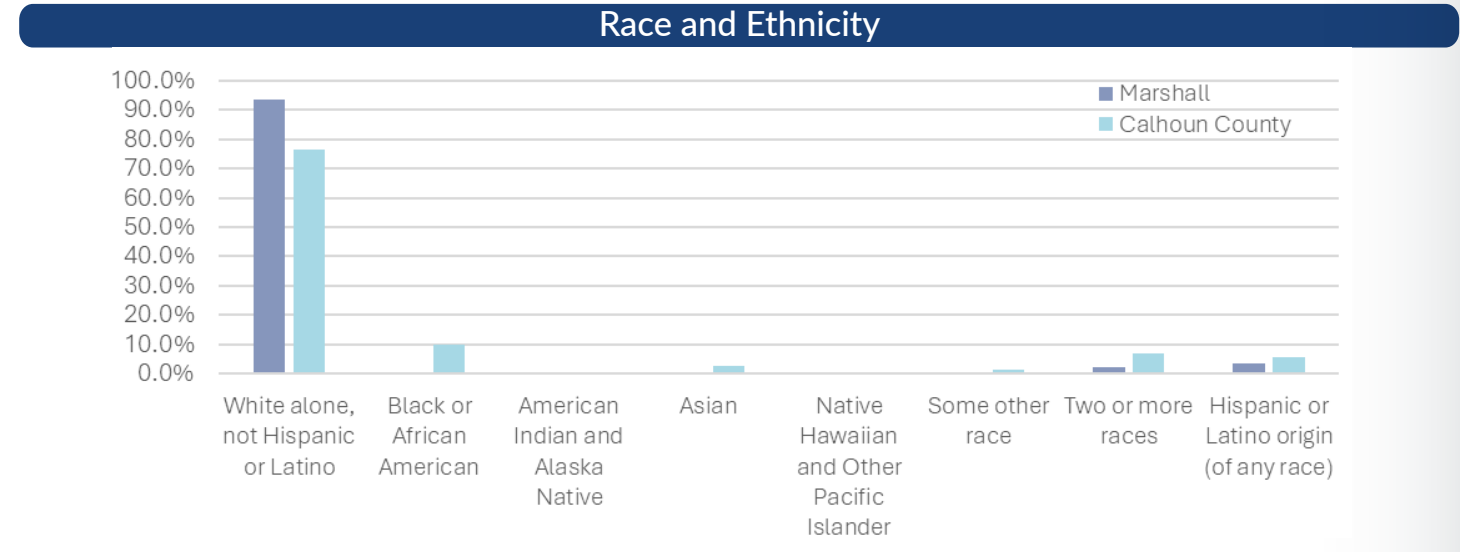
Population Change 2000-2020 (Source: Decennial Census)

Marshall's population has not declined equally across all age groups. As the chart below indicates, **each major age group in Marshall saw a decline between 2000 and 2022, except for people between 55 and 69, which increased as a percentage of the total population by 38 percent.** During this period, the number of children under the age of 5 decreased by 63 percent and the number of people between 5 and 19 decreased by 46 percent. As a consequence of this changing age dynamic, the median age of Marshall's residents increased from 36.4 in 2000 to 45.4 in 2022.



Population Change by Age Group (Source: American Community Survey & Decennial Census)

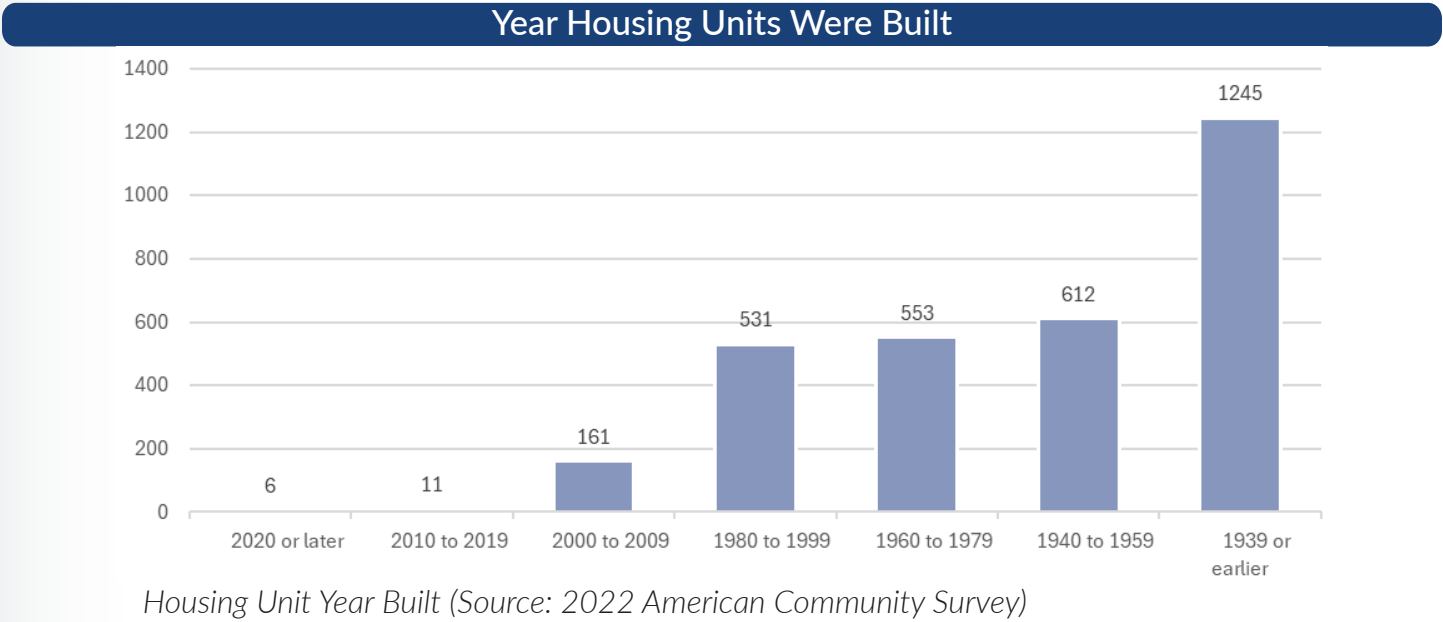
As a community, Marshall is fairly homogeneous with regards to race and ethnicity. Over 93 percent of the community considers themselves White, while the next largest racial or ethnic group is those that consider themselves Hispanic or Latino, at 3.6 percent. In comparison, 76.4 percent of residents in Calhoun County consider themselves White.



Marshall and Calhoun County Race and Ethnicity (Source: 2022 American Community Survey)

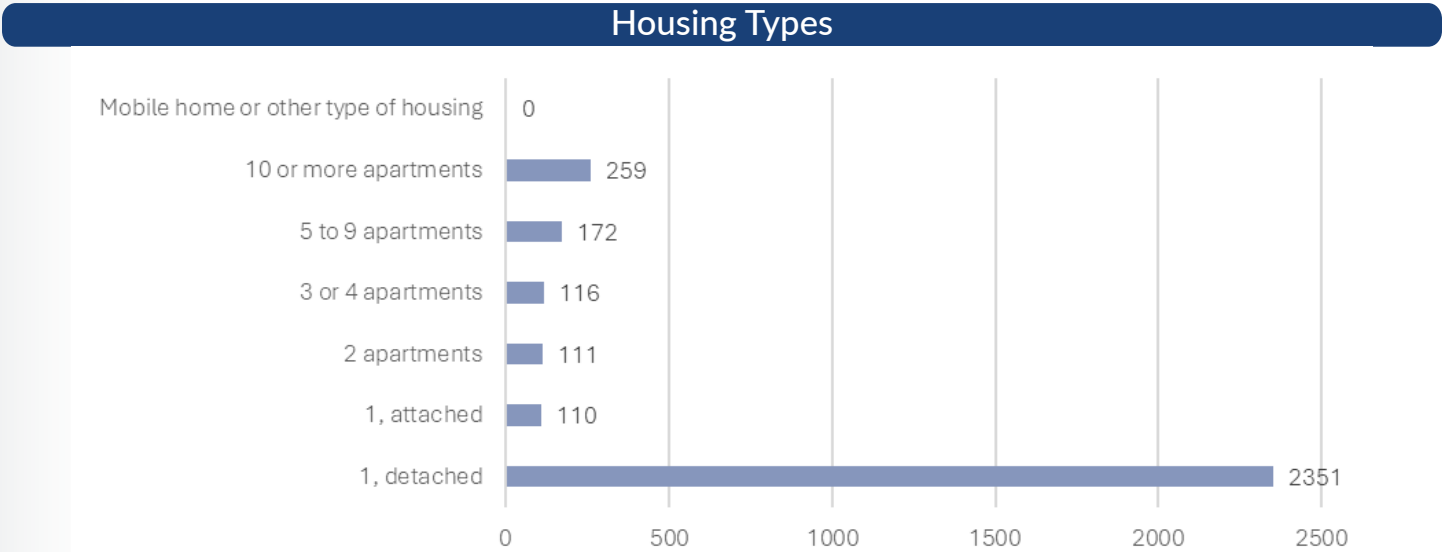
Housing Profile

Among the most significant points of pride in Marshall is the community’s historic architecture and neighborhoods that support a strong sense of place and belonging. However, these historic neighborhoods were all built well over 50 years ago, and **no significant housing has been built in Marshall for 35+ years.**



While Marshall has not been building new housing, the number of people per household has been declining. **In 2000, the average household size in Marshall was 2.95 people, in 2022 the average household size was 2.14.** This is a decrease of 27 percent. In other words, in the year 2000, 100 housing units would have been home to 295 people, in 2022 those same housing units are home to just 214 people.

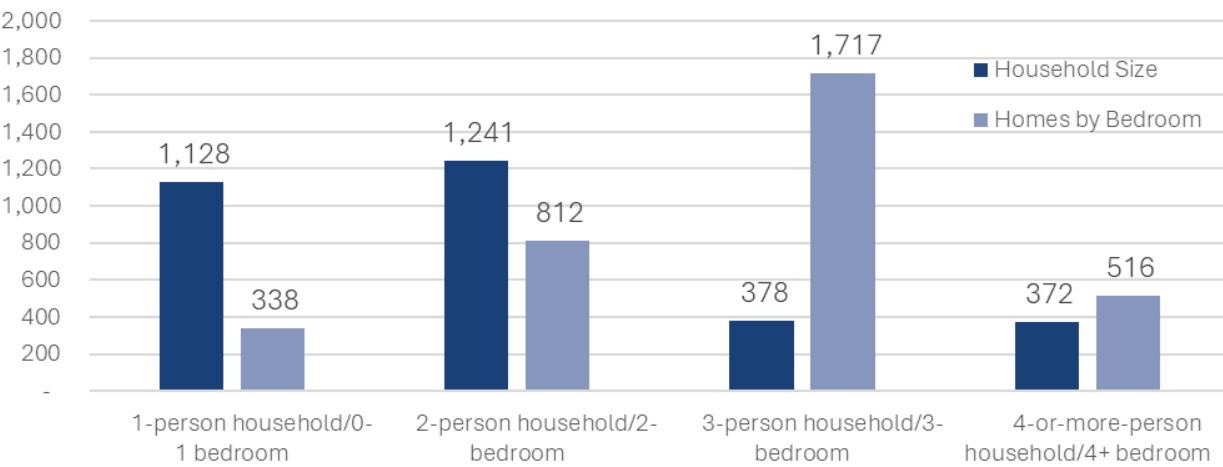
Over 75 percent of all housing units in Marshall are 1-unit, detached houses. These are traditional neighborhood homes that were the predominant type of home built during the time when Marshall was consistently adding new housing units (1940-1980).



Marshall Housing Typology (Source: 2022 American Community Survey)

While this emphasis on single-unit construction served Marshall well for many years, as household dynamics have changed, **the result is a mismatch between the kind of housing that Marshall has to offer, and the households and families that call the community home.** As the chart below demonstrates, Marshall has many more 1-2 person households than it has 1 or 2 bedroom houses. Furthermore, there are many more 3- and 4-bedroom houses than there are 3+ person households.

Household Size Compared to Homes by Number of Bedrooms



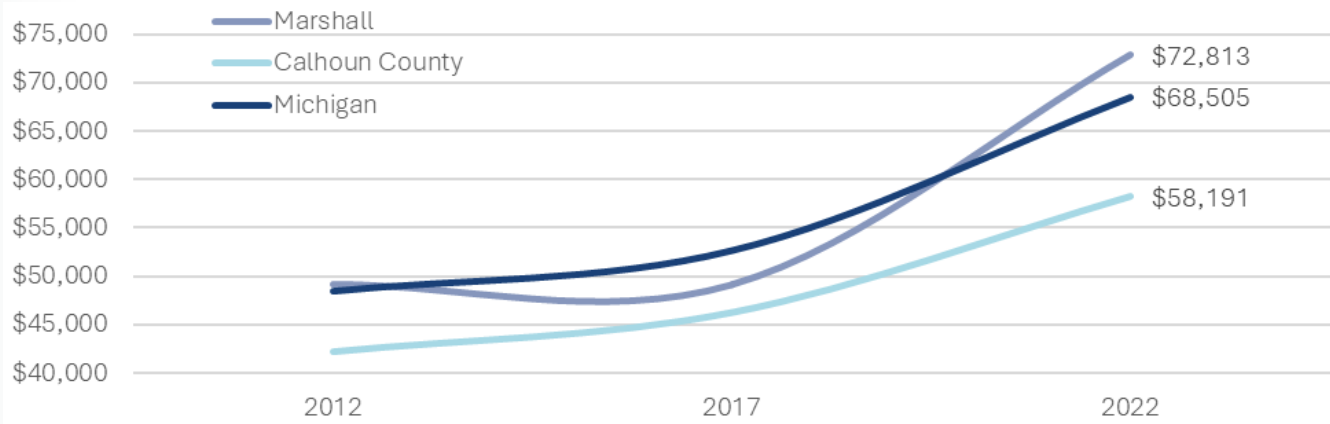
Household Size/Housing Unit Bedrooms (Source: 2022 American Community Survey)

Economic Profile

Marshall as a community is home to relatively high-income households and a significant number of employment opportunities. This dynamic is not likely to change with the opening of the Ford BlueOval Battery Park and further expansion of the MAJOR Campus.

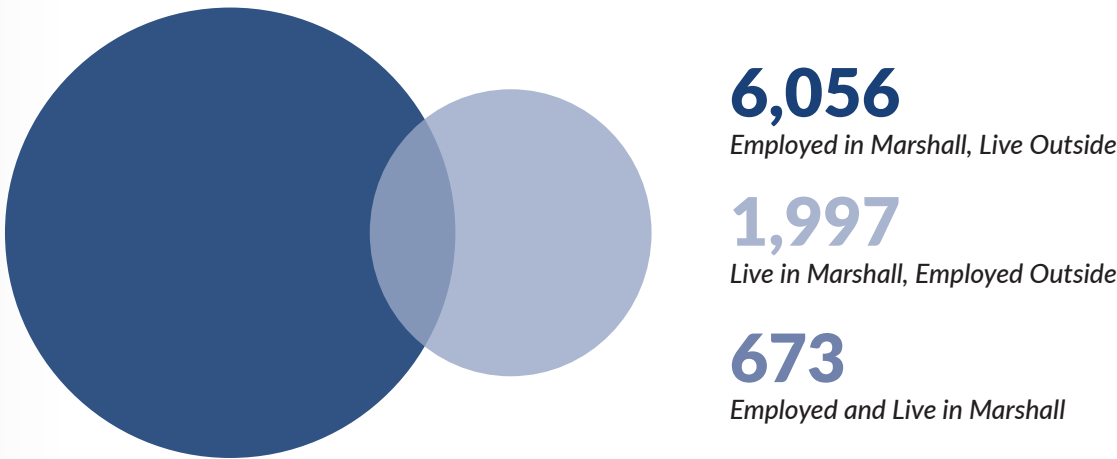
Over the last decade, Marshall’s Median Household Income has steadily risen, from just under \$50,000 in 2012 to nearly \$73,000 in 2022. Marshall’s median household income is now 6 percent higher than the State of Michigan and 25 percent higher than Calhoun County.

Median Household Income

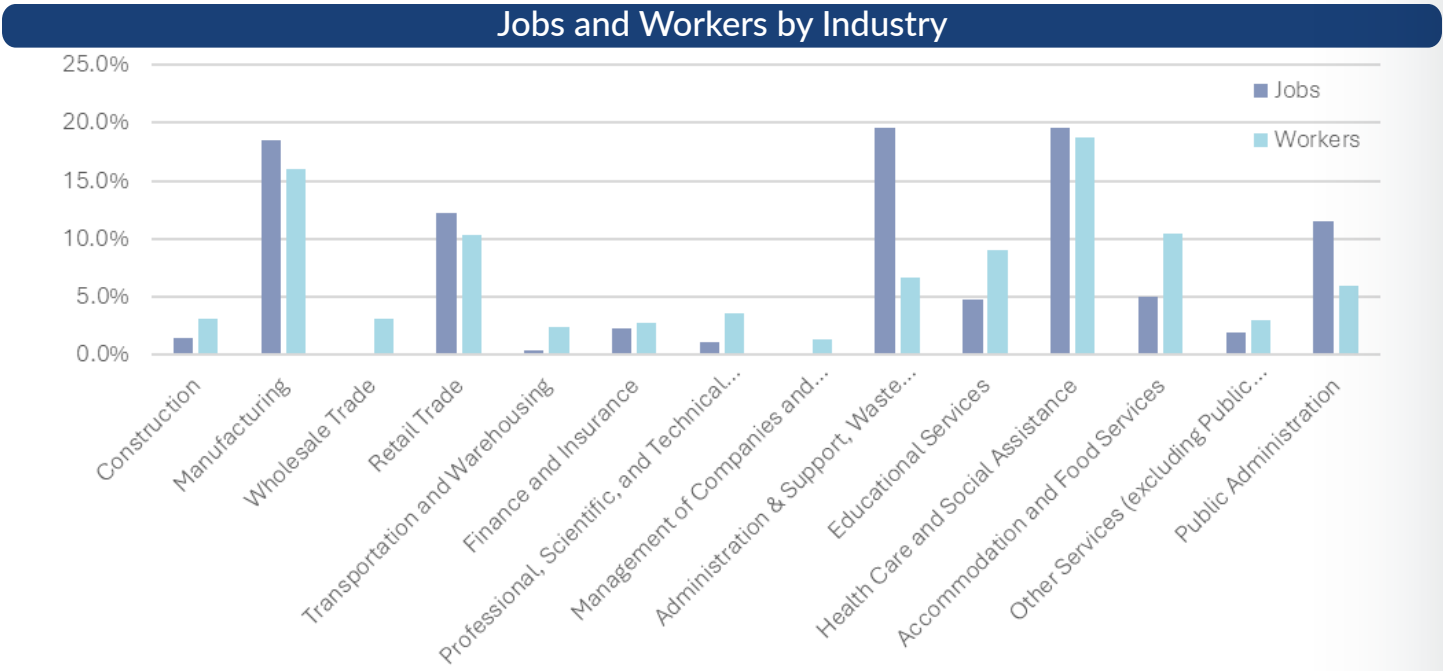


While many in Marshall think of the city as a “bedroom community,” the reality is that many more people come to Marshall for work every day than leave to work somewhere else. As of 2021, 6,056 people commuted into Marshall to work each day, and 1,997 left Marshall to work elsewhere. Finally, 673 people both live and work in Marshall.

Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2021: All Workers



Industries that are located in Marshall or those that employ Marshall residents are similar. **Manufacturing and Health Care both account for over 15 percent of jobs and workers.** However, Administration and Support Services accounts for significantly more jobs in Marshall than residents that work in the industry.



Taxable Value

Fundamentally, for the City of Marshall to continue to offer the services the community desires, it must have the resources to support the costs of those services. The figure below illustrates the taxable value per acre of all the properties within the City of Marshall. The figure illustrates the amount of revenue each property generates relative to how much infrastructure is required to service that property. Large properties at the edge of town require more infrastructure to service them, as roads and pipes must travel a greater distance to service them, as well as to reach the next property. In contrast, smaller properties make more efficient use of services with fewer feet of road and pipes required to service each property. Consequently, examining taxable value of properties per acre, rather than in total provides a glimpse into whether properties are contributing positively toward city finances.

As the figure demonstrates, properties in and around downtown are well above the average value per acre of \$160,736, while large properties on the edge of Marshall are below average in terms of value per acre.

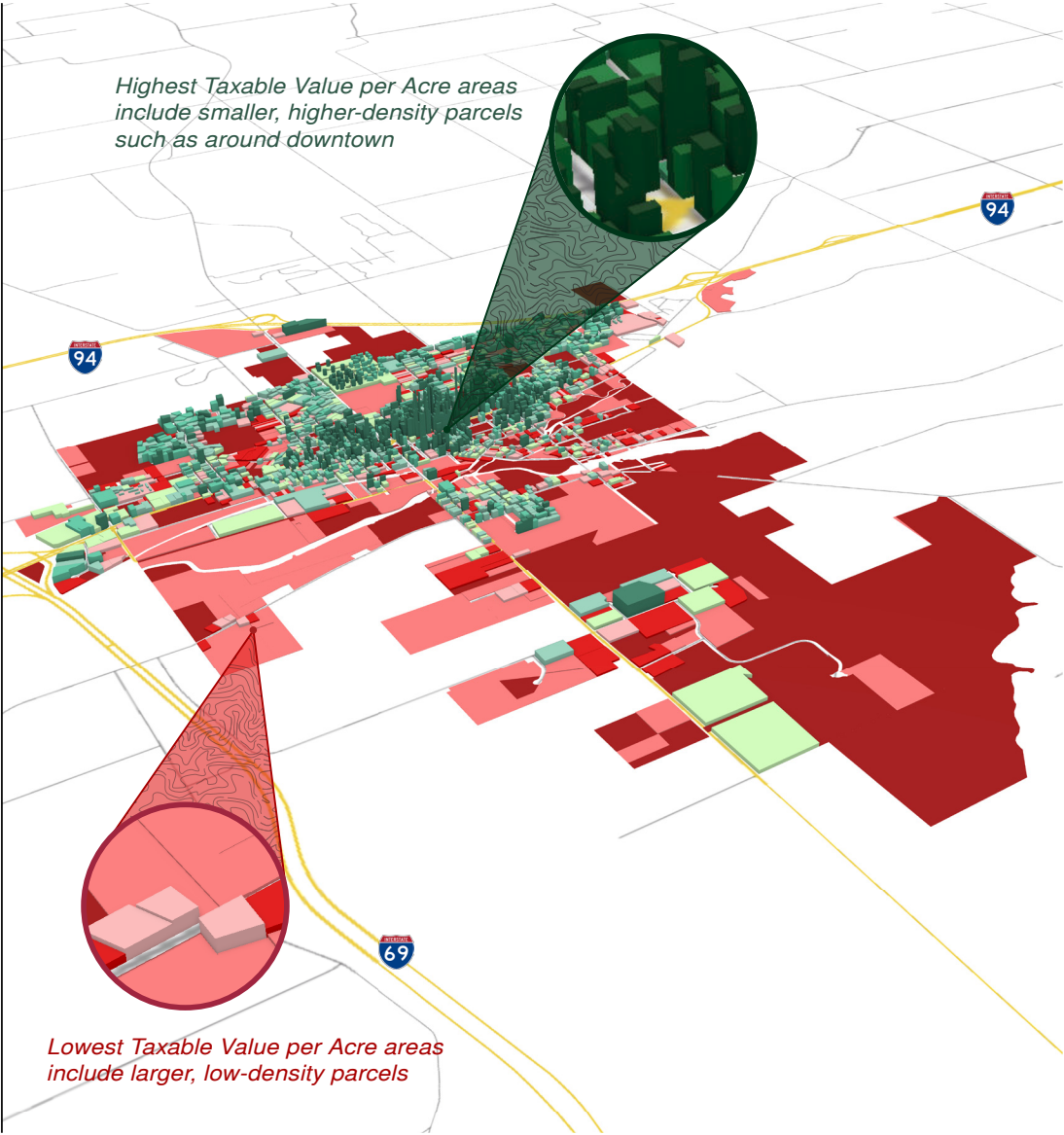
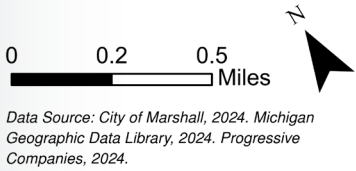
Taxable Value per Acre

City of Marshall, MI

LEGEND

- Under \$999 per Acre
- \$1,000 - \$49,999 per Acre
- \$50,000 - \$99,999 per Acre
- \$100,000 - \$149,999 per Acre
- \$150,000 - \$199,999 per Acre
- \$200,000 - \$299,999 per Acre
- \$300,000 - \$399,999 per Acre
- Over \$400,000 per Acre

Average Parcel Taxable Value = \$160,736

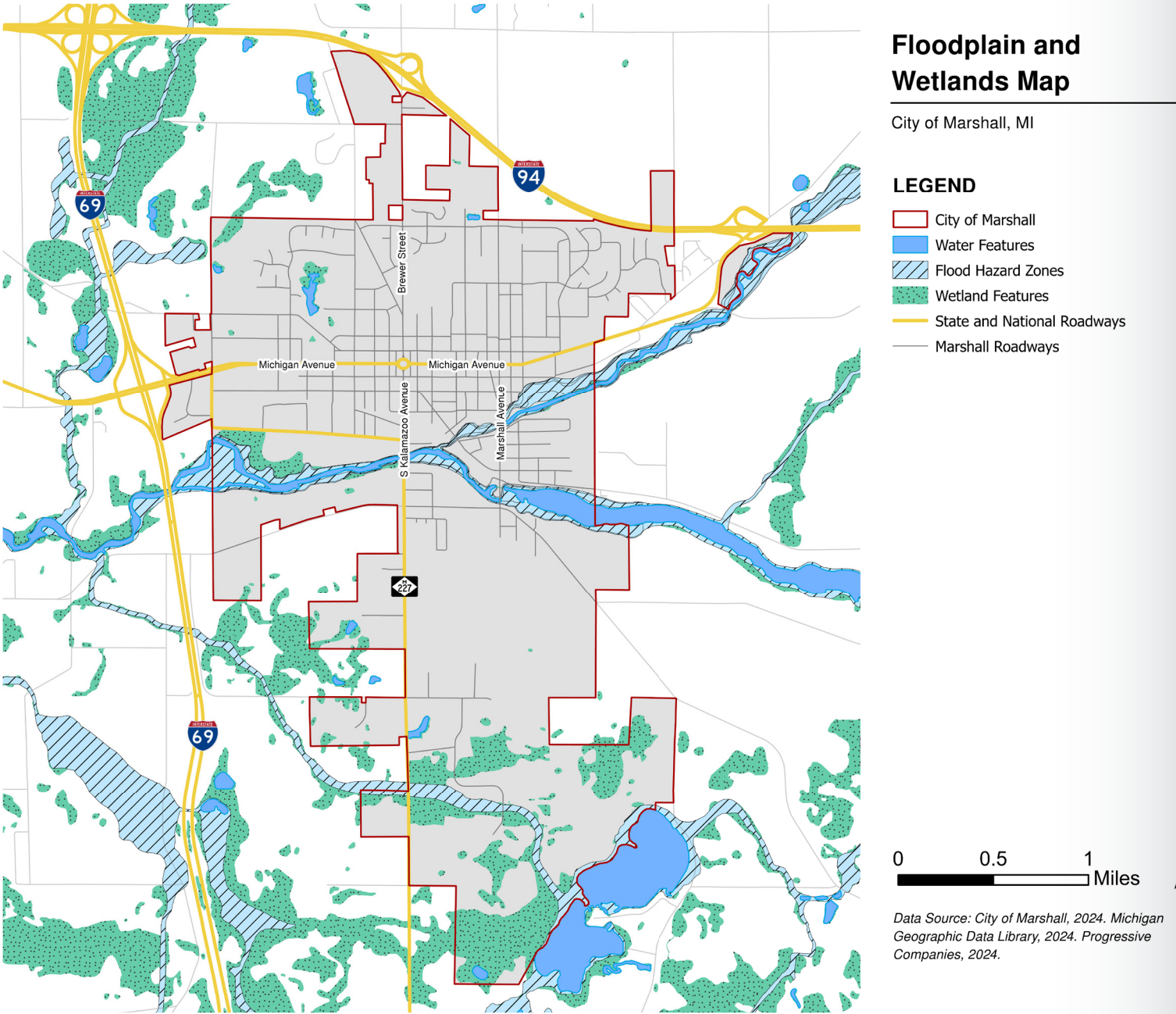


Natural Features

Located in southern Michigan, Marshall’s surrounding environment is characterized by deciduous forests and former oak savannahs converted to agricultural land uses. While Marshall shares rural characteristics with other small cities throughout the state, it does have unique natural features that may influence the City’s future growth and development.

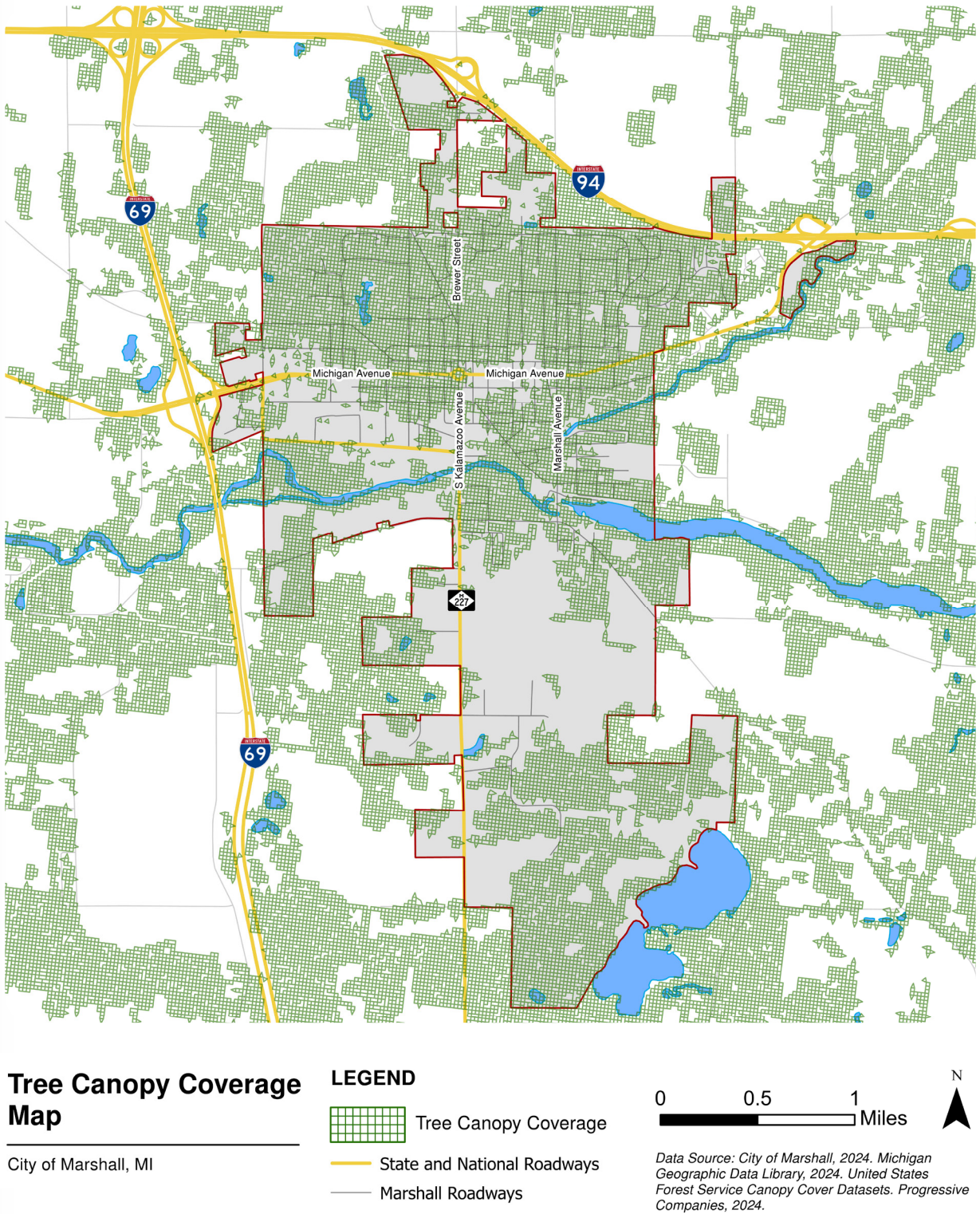
Wetland and Floodplain Areas

Both the North Branch of the Kalamazoo River and Rice Creek pass through the center of the community. Because of this, FEMA has designated Flood Hazard Zones abutting flood-prone portions of these waterways. There are few wetland features within the City of Marshall; the highest concentration of wetlands are in the southern portion of the City near Talmadge Creek and the Brooks Nature Area.



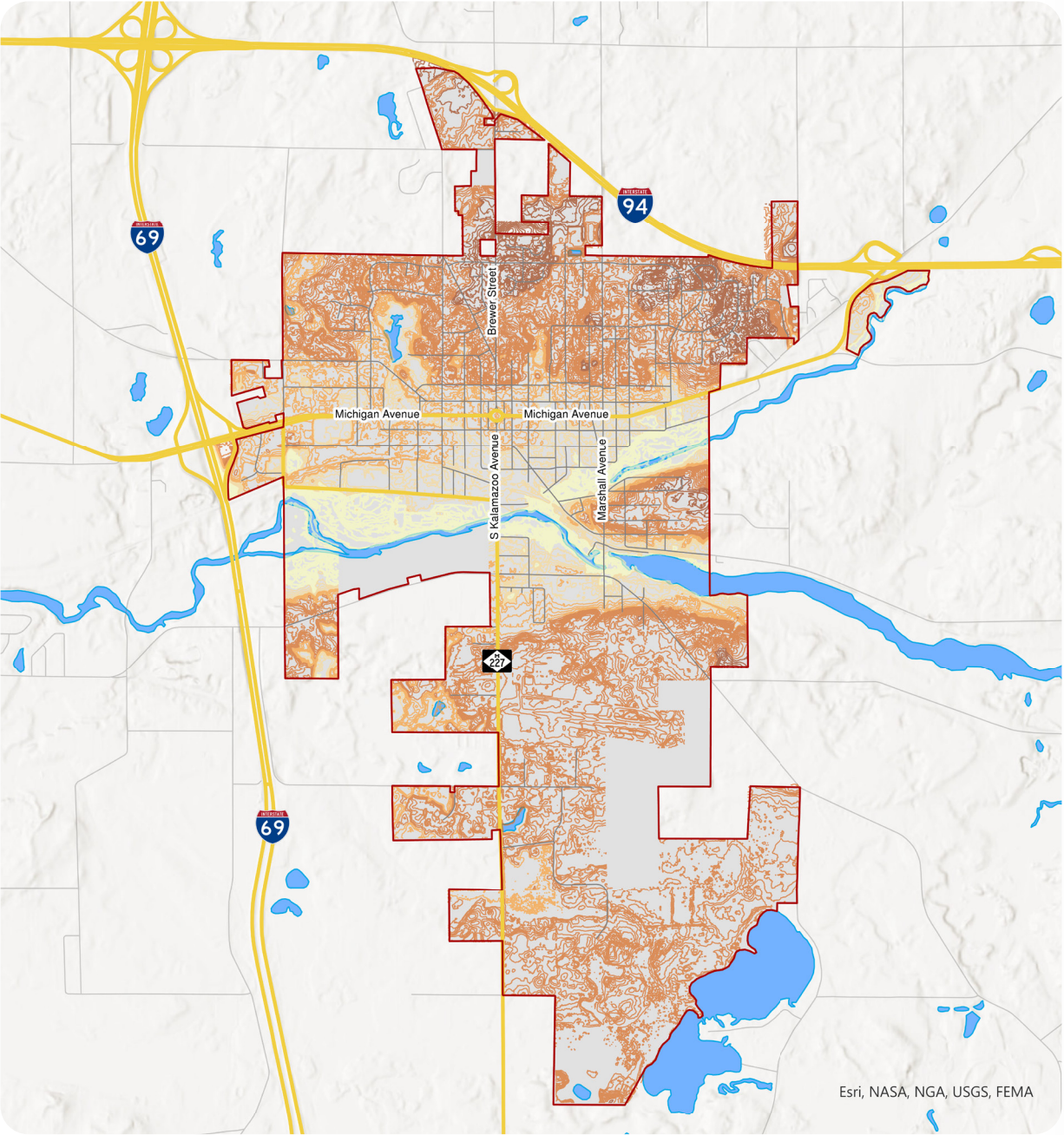
Trees and Canopy Cover

Marshall features an extensive tree canopy, with its tree-lined streets contributing to the community’s sense of place. Much of the city north of the Kalamazoo River features tree coverage while areas around the airport and County Fairgrounds feature the least amount of canopy coverage.



Topography

Characteristic to southern Michigan, Marshall is largely flat while featuring slight topographic changes in select areas. The lowest portions of the community are directly adjacent to the Kalamazoo River and Rice Creek, with elevations increasing further away from these waterways. The highest elevations in Marshall are located in the northern portion of the community – particularly near the high school campus.



Topographic Features Map

City of Marshall, MI

LEGEND

- Under 900 ft
- 900 ft - 910 ft
- 910 ft - 920 ft
- 920 ft - 950 ft
- 950 ft - 1000 ft

0 0.5 1 Miles

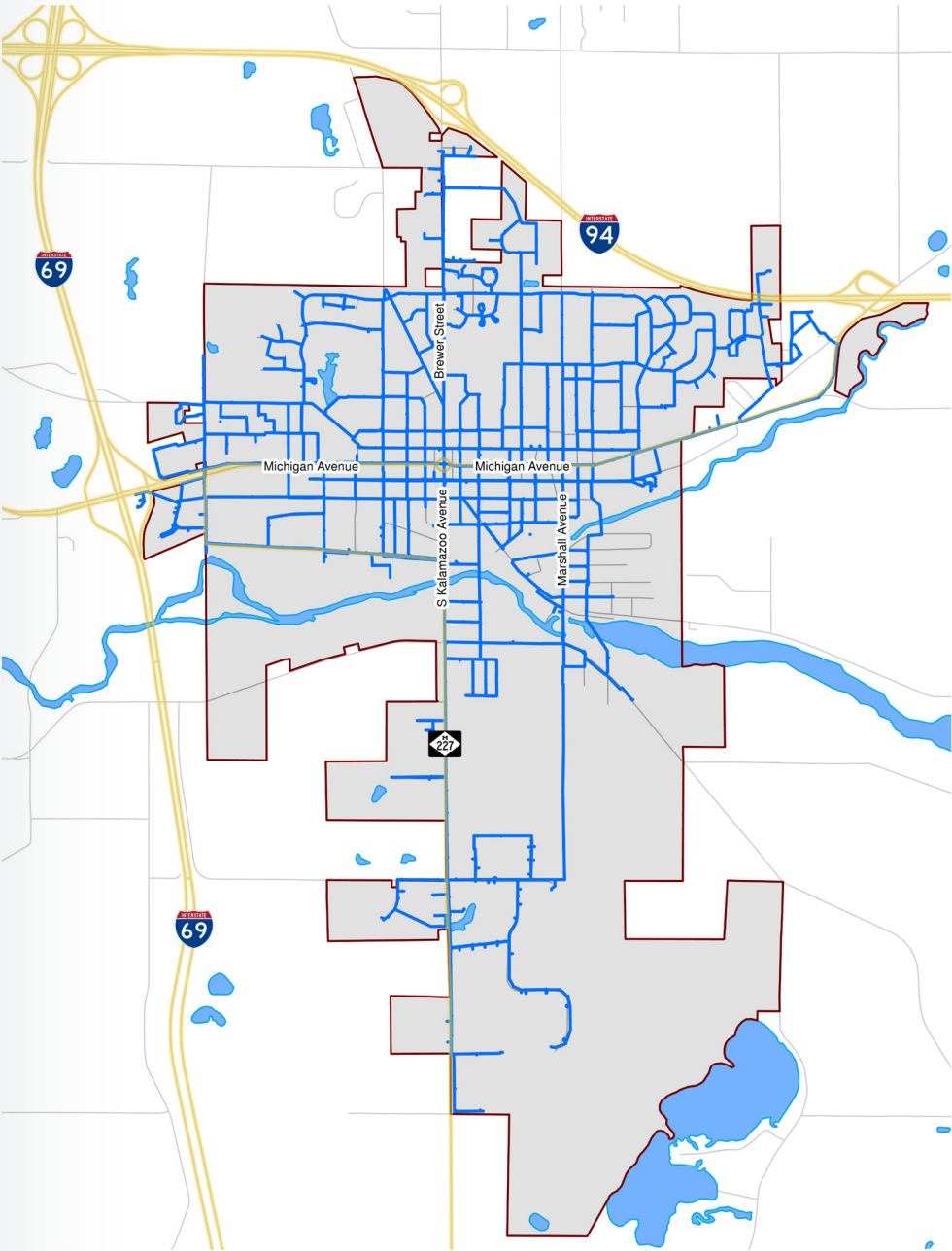
Data Source: City of Marshall, 2024. Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2024. Progressive Companies, 2024.

Infrastructure and Public Facilities

As a small city bounded by interstate highways, a significant railroad corridor, and extensive public amenities within its 6.5 square mile geography, infrastructure plays a key role in its built environment. Important components of Marshall’s infrastructure systems are highlighted in the following sections.

Sewer and Water Infrastructure

The City of Marshall’s sewer and water system features 55 miles of water mains and is fed by four wells accessing the Marshall aquifer over 100 feet beneath the City. The system distributes 1.2 million gallons of water per day which is roughly half of its capacity. The City also features an extensive sanitary sewer network that collects both industrial and domestic household waste and processes it at the City’s wastewater treatment plant located along the Kalamazoo River.



Water Distribution Infrastructure

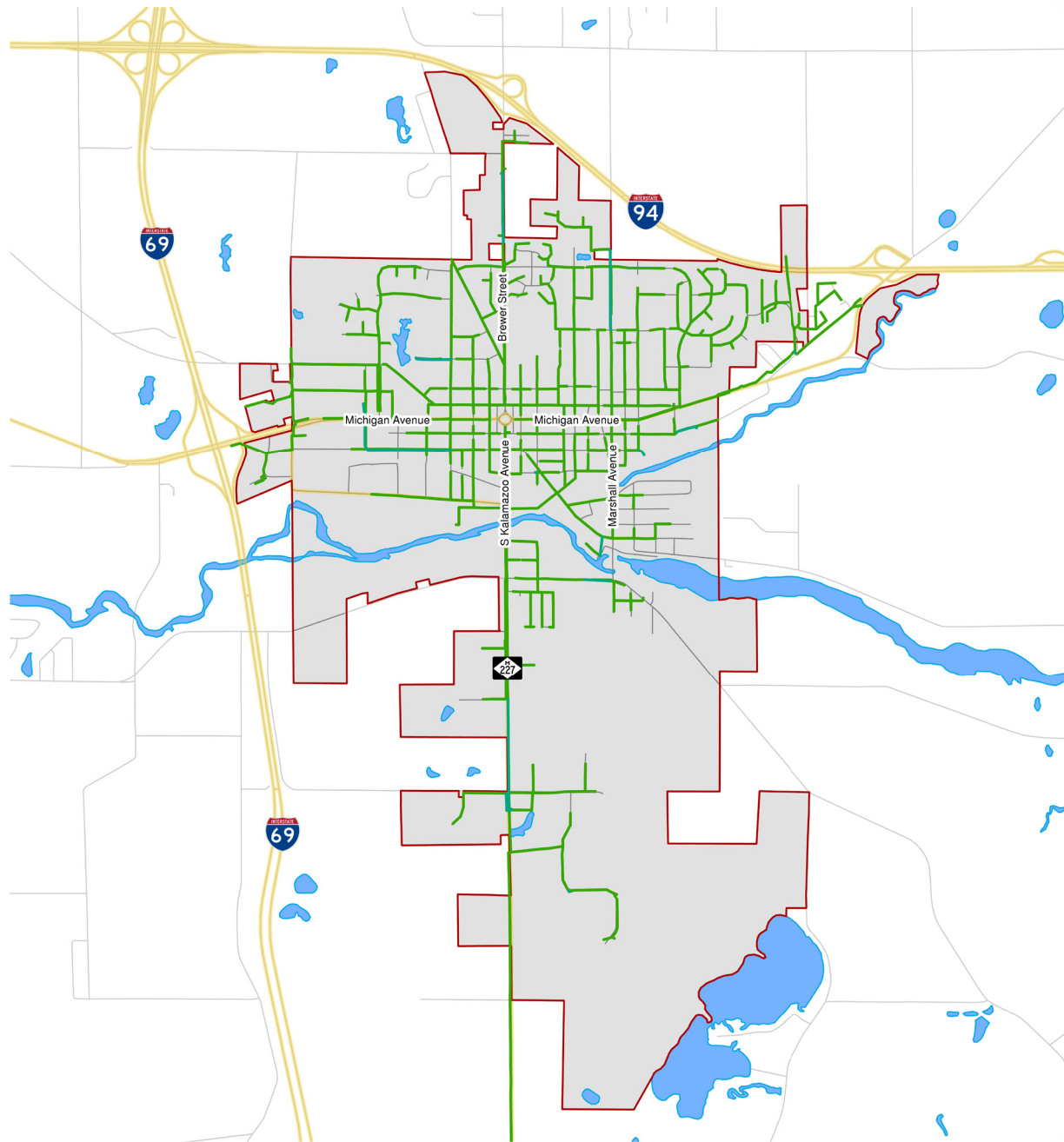
City of Marshall, MI

LEGEND

- City of Marshall
- Water Features
- State and National Roadways
- Marshall Roadways
- Water Distribution Infrastructure

0 0.5 1 Miles

Data Source: City of Marshall, 2024. Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2024. Progressive Companies, 2024.



Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure

City of Marshall, MI

LEGEND

- ▬ City of Marshall
- ▬ Water Features
- ▬ State and National Roadways
- ▬ Marshall Roadways
- ▬ Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure

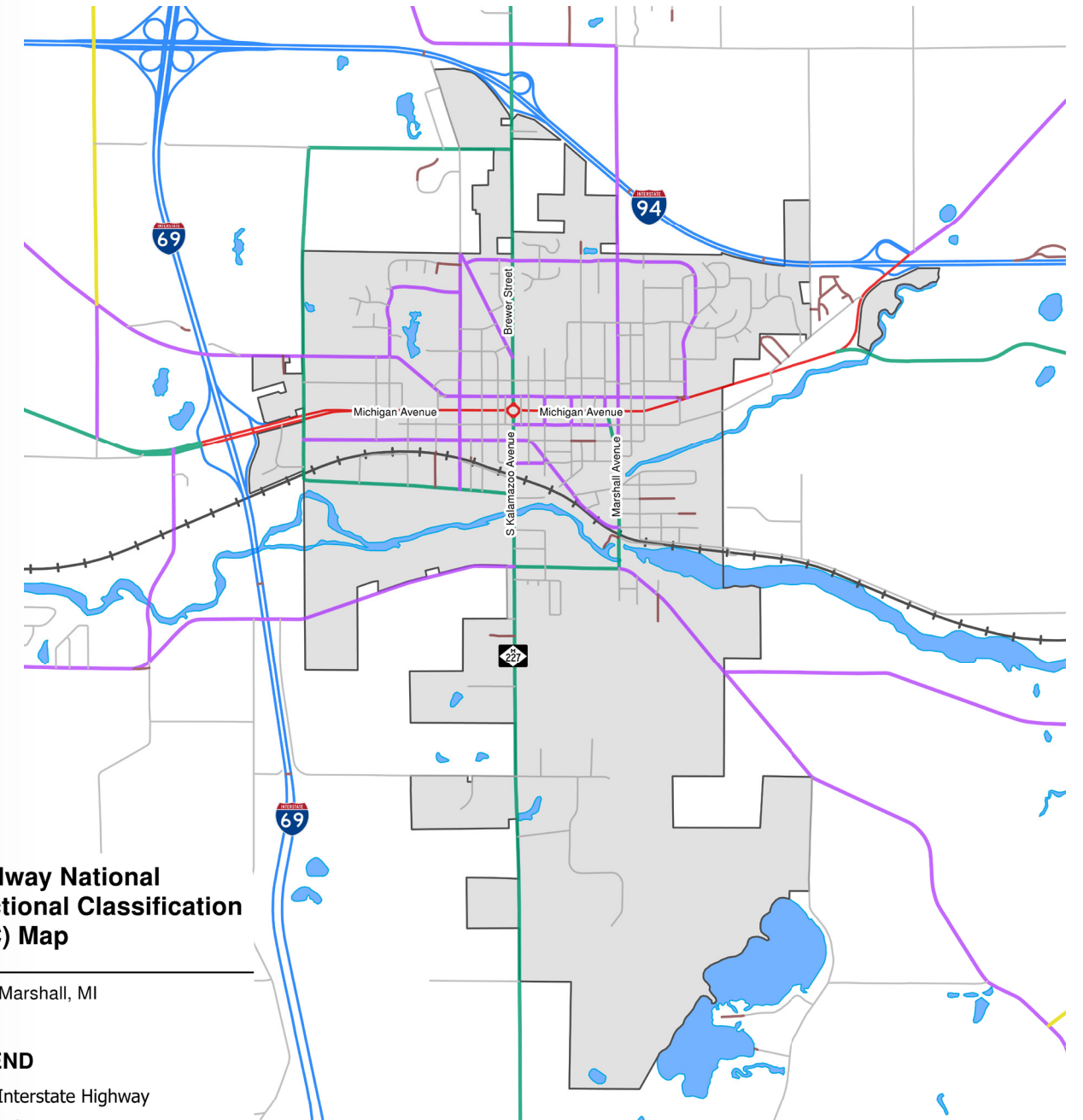
0 0.5 1 Miles

Data Source: City of Marshall, 2024. Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2024. Progressive Companies, 2024.



Street Classifications and Network

With Marshall's location at the crossroads of the state, there are many significant roadways within the area. The National Functional Classification (NFC) system was developed to classify roadways based on characteristics. Recorded traffic volumes also indicate annual average daily traffic (AADT), or the average volume of vehicles traveling on a given road segment each day.



Roadway National Functional Classification (NFC) Map

City of Marshall, MI

LEGEND

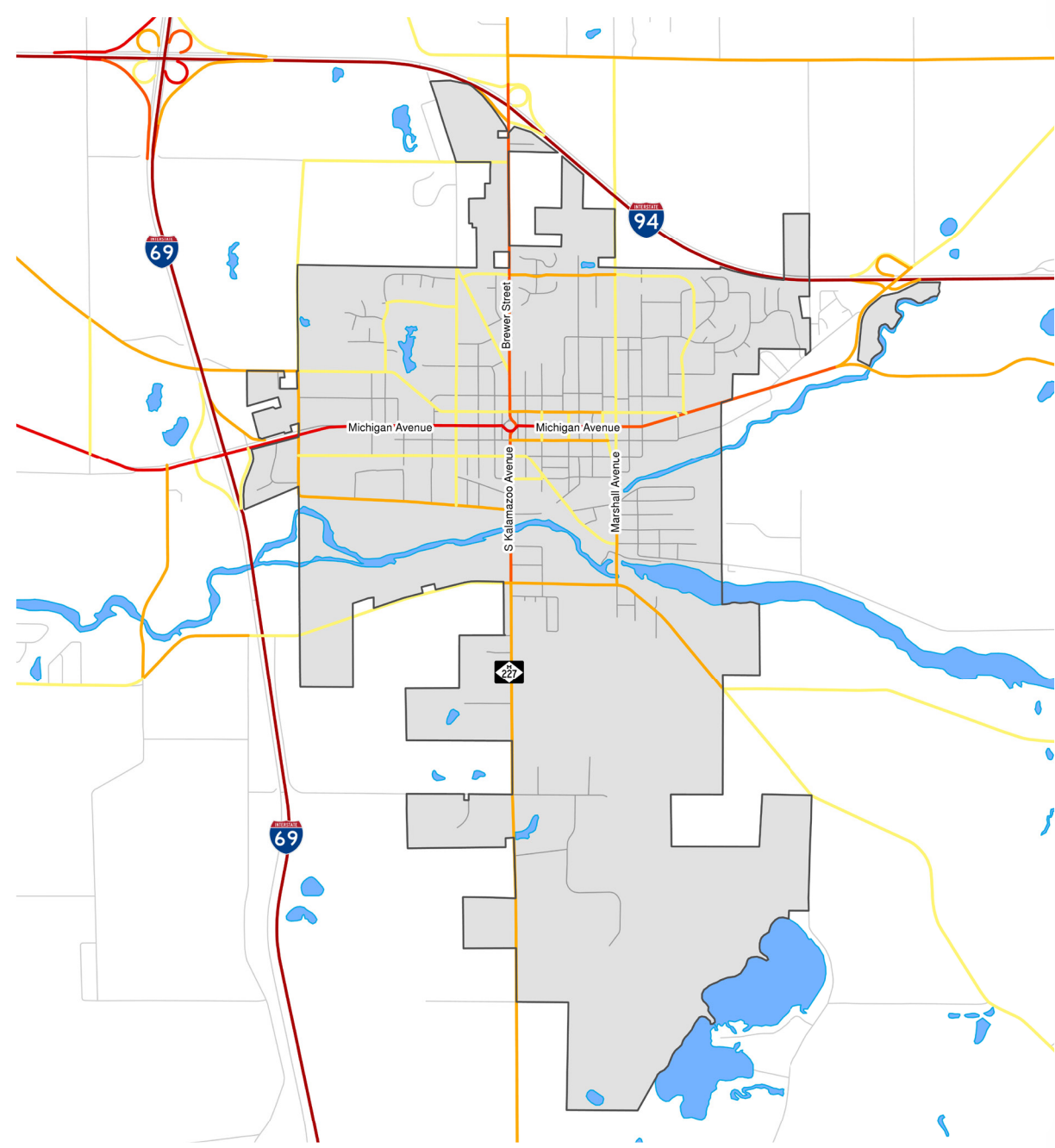
- ▬ Interstate Highway
- ▬ Other Freeway
- ▬ Principal Arterial
- ▬ Minor Arterial
- ▬ Major Collector
- ▬ Minor Collector
- ▬ Local Road
- ▬ Private Road
- ▬ Railroads

0 0.5 1 Miles

Data Source: City of Marshall, 2024. Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2024. Progressive Companies, 2024.



According to the AADT traffic volumes map, the busiest roadways are both I-94 and I-69 – with Michigan Avenue (Business I-94) being the third busiest roadway. Another significant roadway is Brewer Street/Kalamazoo Avenue as it is the primary north/south corridor within the City.



2022 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)

City of Marshall, MI

LEGEND

- Under 1,999 Vehicles Per Day
- 2,000 - 4,999 Vehicles Per Day
- 5,000 - 9,999 Vehicles Per Day
- 10,000 - 19,999 Vehicles Per Day
- 20,000 or More Vehicles Per Day

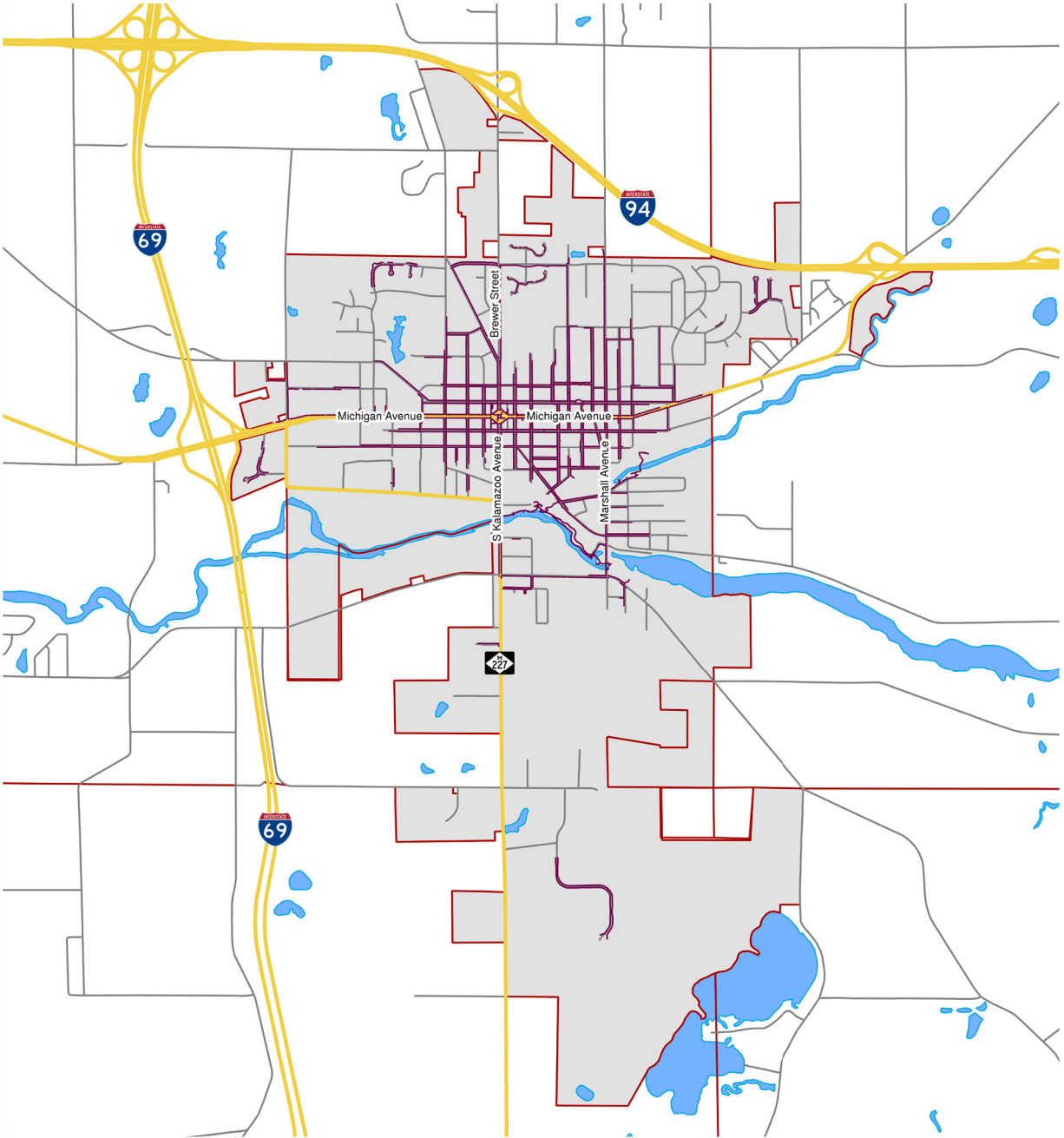
0 2,500 5,000 Feet

Data Source: City of Marshall, 2024. Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2024. Progressive Companies, 2024.



Sidewalk Network

Marshall's sidewalk network is primarily located in the City's downtown and traditional residential areas. Lower-density and more suburban portions of the City feature fewer sidewalk connections. This has implications for the City's overall mobility network, as disconnected sidewalks can discourage people from walking to destinations throughout the City. Plans for filling gaps in the sidewalk network are outlined in Chapter 6.



Sidewalk Network

City of Marshall, MI

LEGEND

- City of Marshall
- Water Features
- State and National Roadways
- Marshall Roadways
- Sidewalks

0 0.5 1 Miles

Data Source: City of Marshall, 2024. Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2024. Progressive Companies, 2024.



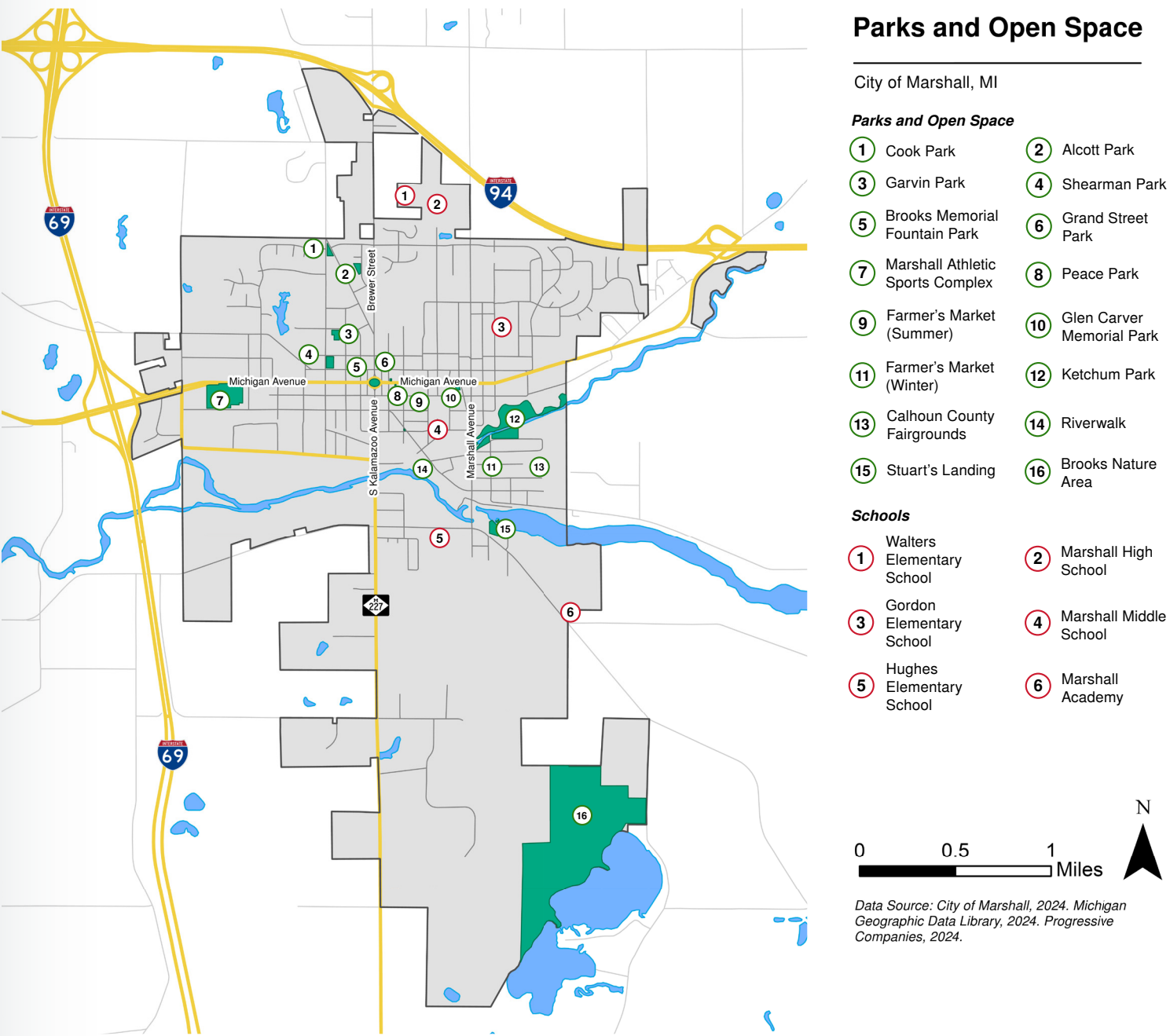
Parks, Schools, and Public Buildings

Marshall features many public land uses, including schools, parks and open spaces, an airport, and administrative office buildings. As the seat of Calhoun County, the County’s administration building is located in downtown Marshall. There are also numerous schools in the area, namely Marshall High School located on the north side as well as three elementary schools located on both sides of the Kalamazoo River. The City’s Middle School is located a block south of downtown Marshall. In addition to the City’s numerous parks, the Oakridge Cemetery and Brooks Field Airport represent other semi-public land uses within the City.



Parks

Marshall is home to 16 public parks as well as six school buildings that provide access to recreational amenities for the community. The 2024 Parks and Recreation Plan provides greater detail about all of the parks in Marshall, along with a complete inventory of parks assets and amenities.





Process and Engagement3

A master plan should marry the wisdom of local experience with planning best practices.

The goals and objectives outlined in this plan were formulated through the input of Marshall citizens, staff, and Steering Committee. The Marshall master planning process had the benefit of combining several planning objectives in one – allowing for a broad scope with many opportunities to get input from the community. The Master Plan, Parks and Recreation Five-Year Plan, Transportation & Mobility Plan, and Economic Development and Marketing Plan were all included in the planning and engagement process.

Summary of Engagement

A variety of engagement methods were used to collect feedback from as many people invested in the Marshall community as possible. This included not only residents, but business owners, employees, students in Marshall Public Schools, and visitors. A combination of in-person and online activities were used, including pop-ups at popular community events such as Fridays at the Fountain and the Marshall Area Farmers Market, as well as Community Open Houses at the Library, City Hall, and Dark Horse Brewery. Meeting people where they are was a critical component of the engagement approach.

Timeline

Engagement for Marshall's community plans took place over about a year, beginning in the spring of 2024 and ending in the summer of 2025 with adoption of the Master Plan.

- April 2024: Project Kick-Off and Pre-planning
- May 2024: Focus Groups
- June 2024: Community Survey Opens
- July-August 2024: Engagement Pop-Ups
- September 2024: Community Survey closes
- October 2024: Open House #1
- February 2025: Open House #2
- February-March 2025: Open House Survey
- Draft Master Plan
- Public Comment Period

- Plan Recommended by Planning Commission
- Plan Adopted by City Council

In total, over 1,600 points of engagement were received - representing almost 20 percent of the Marshall community. The list below shows a breakdown of the types of engagement events held and the representation at each.

Event	Participants
July Pop-Ups	141 people
August Pop-Ups	142 people
Survey #1	1,052 people
Open House #1	54 people
Open House #2	30 people
Survey #2	196 people
TOTAL POINTS OF ENGAGEMENT = 1,615	

Role of Steering Committee

Also critical to the formulation of the Marshall Master Plan was the time and effort of the dedicated group of citizens who served on the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee members were selected to represent a broad spectrum of stakeholders in Marshall - the school board, real estate, historic preservation, economic development, small business owners, arts and culture representatives - as well as members of the Planning Commission, City Council, and Staff. The Steering Committee met every 4-6 weeks throughout the planning process to shape the scope of engagement events, refine data to be presented back to the community, and make sure the process and results were authentic to the Marshall community.

To guide the planning process, the Steering Committee developed five project principles from their understanding of the community and initial public feedback:

PROJECT PRINCIPLES

- 1. Create Safe Connections:** Marshall is a walkable community today, but there are major gaps in networks and areas that do not feel safe. The planning effort must create new safe, comfortable connections for all users between destinations throughout the city.
- 2. Communication, Transparency, and Inclusion:** The planning effort and process must reach into the community and provide opportunities for all residents and stakeholders to participate, taking care to reach those who don't always readily participate, such as kids and teens.
- 3. Balancing History and Growth:** Marshall is known for its history and historic character. This character should be reflected in new development and serve as a catalyst for growth and investment.
- 4. Planning for Future Generations:** Investments envisioned by the planning effort must be sustainable and lead toward long-term prosperity for the community. This includes considering the financial impact of decisions, as well as the long-term cost of maintenance and eventual replacement.
- 5. Points of Pride:** Marshall is home to unique assets that make it a great place to live, work, and visit. The planning effort must emphasize the community's history, downtown character, residential neighborhoods, park system, and the Kalamazoo River as distinguishing features.



Steering Committee member, Amanda Lanker, presenting at the Second Community Open House

Focus Groups

Focus groups were convened in the spring of 2024 on two topics – the economy and mobility/infrastructure. In the economy focus group, small business owners from Marshall were convened to share their firsthand knowledge of owning and operating a business in Marshall. With a uniquely historic downtown that draws visitors from across the state and region - it was important to understand the opportunities and challenges from the perspective of these local leaders. Key insights included:

- Civically engaged community that gets stuff done - a spirit of volunteerism
- People in the community wear many hats
- Downtown Marshall is the lifeblood of community and people want to ensure its vibrancy for decades to come
- 75 percent of visitors to downtown Marshall are not residents; residents need to travel to Battle Creek for some items
- Tourism driven by history
- Marshall is magical at the holidays
- Improved wayfinding signage and promotion of existing events and assets, including parks and trails, is needed
- MAJOR Campus and schools contentious issues
- Need for more housing - for seniors and young families especially
- Transition planning for family-owned businesses needed

In the mobility/infrastructure focus group, the conversation focused on needs for non-motorized transportation, regional trail connections, and public utilities. Key findings included:

- Need to upgrade water infrastructure
- Marshall uniquely situated as public power provider with extra capacity
- Internet access could be improved
- Holistic approach to capital improvements needed

- Need for more non-motorized infrastructure such as bike lanes, non-motorized paths, and sidewalks
- Safety around Brooks Memorial Fountain and on West Michigan needs improvement
- Desire to grow tree canopy and improve natural features protection standards

Input from these conversations with local leaders helped to shape the format of questions put to the community in subsequent engagement efforts.

Community Survey

Engagement kicked off in June of 2024 with an online survey. Aimed to assess strengths, opportunities, and challenges for Marshall, the survey was a useful tool in building awareness of the planning process and capturing baseline information about community aspirations and fears. Almost 700 people completed the survey. Here are a few highlights from the data:

Top five favorite things about Marshall:

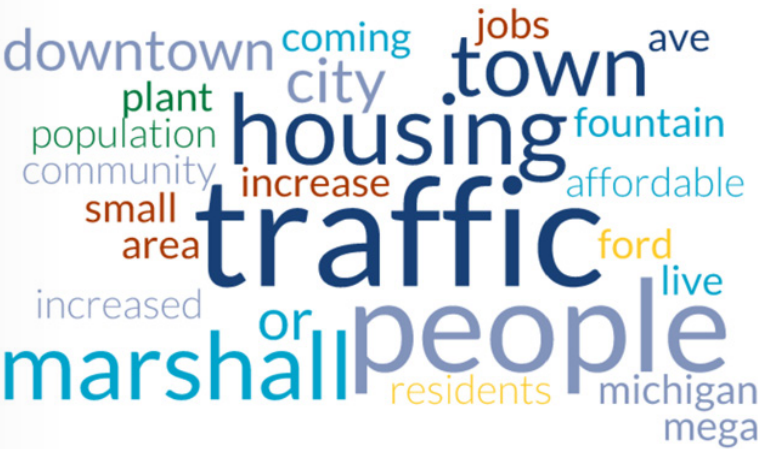
1. Walkable **65%**
2. Safety/low crime **63%**
3. Local restaurants and businesses **60%**
4. Historic character **60%**
5. Family friendly **54%**

What do you think Marshall's greatest opportunities are?



1. Historic character and small-town charm
2. Unique local businesses
3. A balanced approach to growth
4. Enhancing parks, trails, and natural assets (and marketing them!)
5. Maintaining and improving schools to attract young families
6. Leveraging location

What future challenges will Marshall face that we should be planning for now?



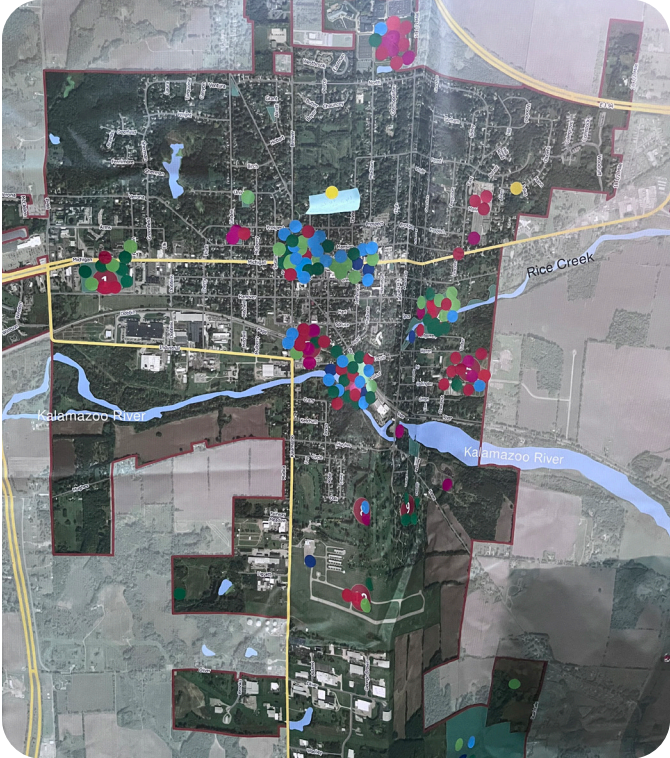
1. Population growth and associated strain on resources such as infrastructure and public services
2. Housing supply and affordability
3. Traffic - increased traffic already begun and fear it will get worse with opening of BlueOval Park
4. Environmental concerns including pollution, climate change, and littering
5. Economic - inflation, high taxes
6. Small businesses - desire to protect downtown businesses and other local businesses
7. Public safety and crime - concerns that as the city grows, crime will grow
8. Community identity and character - managing growth; fear of small-town character changing due to the Blue Oval Plant.

The survey also assessed economic development, mobility and transportation, parks and recreation, and housing. Findings from the survey are embedded into the Master Plan, being critical in formulating the goals, objectives, and future land use scenarios contained in the plan.

Pop-Ups

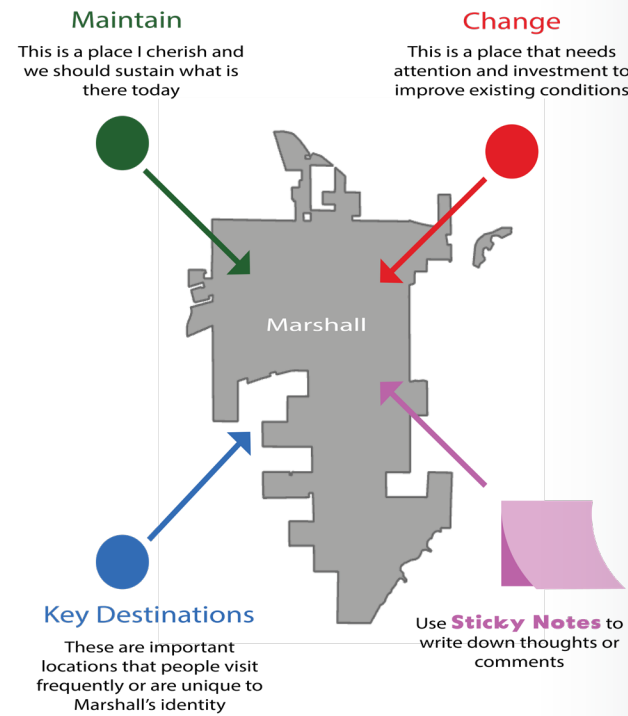
Taking advantage of the warm weather, four pop-up events were held throughout the summer of 2024. In July, the focus of the pop-ups was parks and recreation improvements; in August, the focus turned to transportation, mobility, and streetscape improvements for Michigan Avenue. Setting up tables at "Fridays at the Fountain" concerts and the Marshall Area Farmers Market allowed the team to catch people during an activity they were already planning to attend.

At each pop-up, people were given \$50 in "Marshall Money" to allocate according to the priorities they found most important. In July, Riverwalk enhancements and extension emerged as the top priority, followed by trails and bike paths, and an indoor recreation facility. In August, flexible/public space, dedicated bicycle infrastructure, and pedestrian crosswalks were the top improvements for Michigan Avenue in the downtown. For West Michigan Avenue, landscaped medians, gateway features, and wider sidewalks were the top three improvements.



Help Us Map Out Marshall!

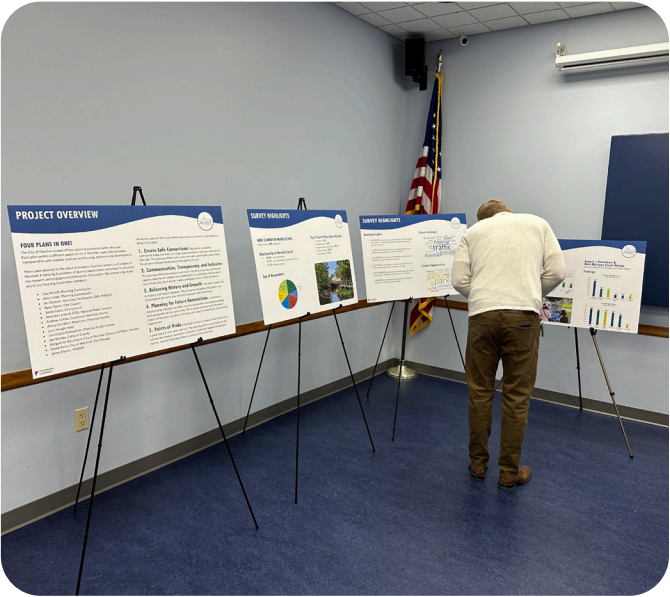
We need your input on conditions in Marshall today. What are places you enjoy, what can be improved, and where are important places and key destinations?



At all pop-ups, there was also a large billboard map where participants could use colored stickers and post its to share what they would maintain or change, as well as tagging the key destinations in Marshall. Overall residents desired to maintain the Brooks Memorial Fountain, the Marshall Riverwalk, Ketchum Park, and the Marshall Athletic Fields along Hanover Street. Residents indicated key opportunities for change as the Marshall High School area, areas along the Riverwalk, Brooks Field Airport, the County Fairgrounds site, and the Brooks Nature Preserve. Key destinations included the Brooks Memorial Fountain, downtown Marshall, and areas along the Riverwalk. With over 100 data points collected at four pop-up events, these provide clarity on the locations residents deem as important to Marshall's future. This exercise created an asset map of Marshall and informed the creation of the future land use map. The map also helped to identify challenges to solve through land use and opportunities to leverage.

Open House 1

Building upon the results of the community survey and pop-up events, a community open house was held in October 2024 to dig deeper into stakeholder opinions on housing and land use. Key findings of the community survey were shared to provide context for the activities. Then, participants were asked to channel their inner real estate developer and invest \$100 in Marshall Money to build housing in Marshall. Four place types were proposed: Downtown, Traditional Neighborhood, Gateway Corridor, and Neighborhood Center. Options for housing types were available for each place type, based on feedback from the survey and pop-up events as well as data on existing conditions in Marshall.



PLACE TYPES & HOUSING

ELEMENTS OF PLACE TYPES

"Place Types" are used to describe specific types of **physical environments** or **development patterns** within a community, considering factors such as land use, density, design, and function. Each Place Type is characterized by a distinct combination of buildings, public spaces, infrastructure, and uses that collectively shape the **character** and **function** of that area.

ELEMENTS MAKE PLACE



Instructions for Open House 1 Real Estate Activity.

HOUSING NEEDS & TYPES

Top 5 Housing Types Desired in Community Survey:

- 1. Single-unit detached – **70.8%**
- 2. Small apartment complexes – **36.4%**
- 3. Townhomes – **35.5%**
- 4. Mixed-used – **32.0%**
- 5. Cottage courts – **29.4%**

Vs. Existing Housing Stock: 3,119 total occupied housing units

- Single-unit detached – **75.4%**
- Townhomes (single-unit attached) – **3.5%**
- Duplexes – **3.6%**
- Small apartment complexes (3-9 units) – **9.2%**
- Apartments with 10+ units – **8.3%**

(**Source: U.S. Census, ACS 5-Year, 2022)

There is a mismatch between the type of housing people say that they want and what exists.

ACTIVITY

You are **real estate developer**; please review the Marshall Place Types on the following boards and fund the housing types you want to see in each of the different Place Types.

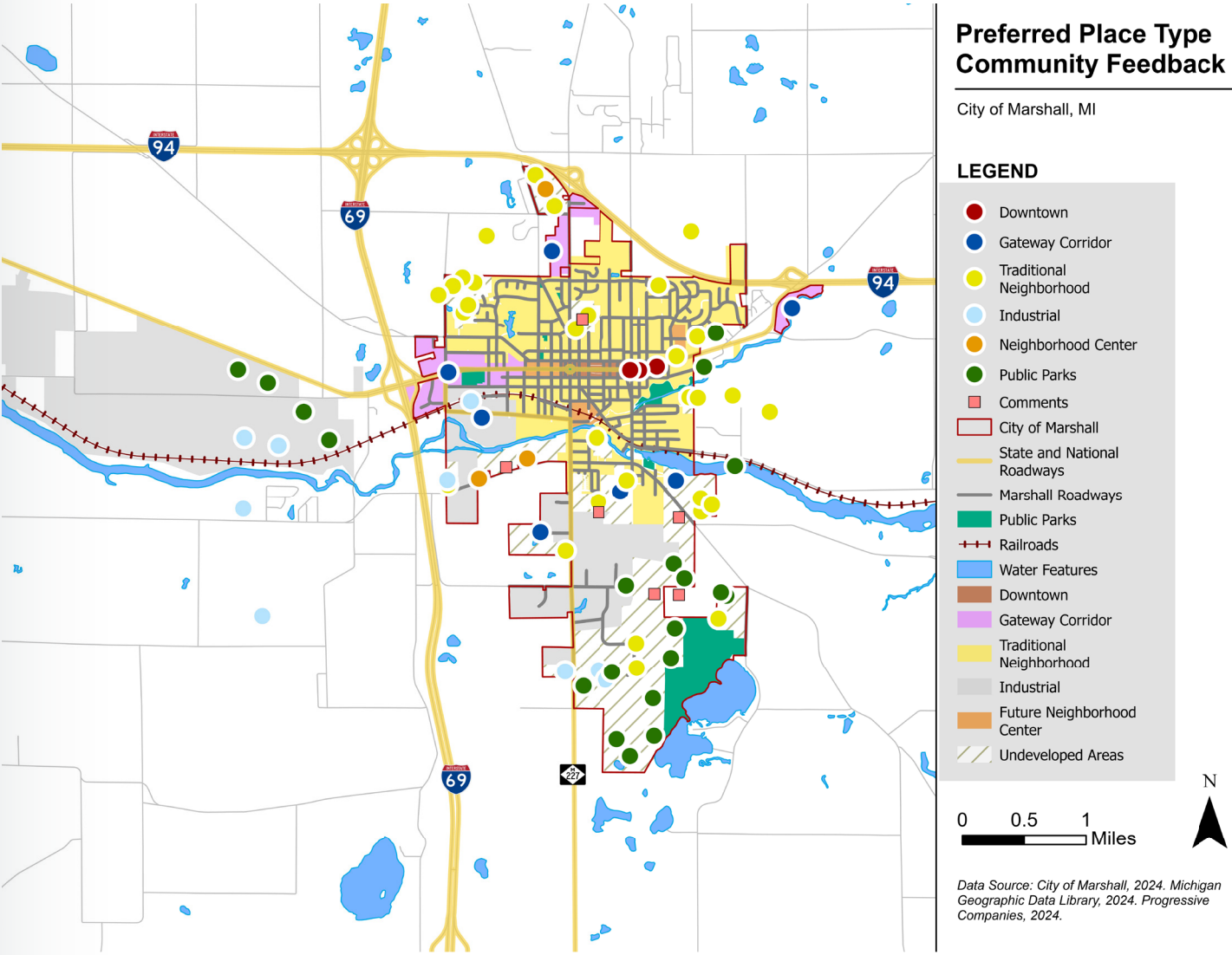
Each person had \$100 to allocate, here are the results:

Place Type	Top Housing Choices
Downtown	1. Mixed Use - \$910 2. Townhomes - \$400 3. Small apartment complexes = \$250 4. Other = \$0
Gateway Corridor	1. Mixed-use = \$540 2. Townhomes = \$180 3. Large apartment complexes = \$90 4. Other = \$20
Neighborhood Center	1. Small apartment complexes = \$440 2. Cottage courts = \$420 3. Mixed-use = \$400 4. Other = \$100
Traditional Neighborhood	1. Other = \$550 (most of these comments called for single-family) 2. Cottage courts = \$480 3. Duplexes = \$390 4. Accessory apartments = \$260



Next, participants were asked to locate the four place types plus industrial and parks/open space on a proposed place type map of Marshall. A green dot meant "I like this place type and its location" while a red dot meant "I do not like this place type and/or its location." For red dots, participants were encouraged to provide feedback clarifying their vote.

Last, participants provided input on key development sites in Marshall, providing guidance on the place type that would be most appropriate for each.



Key findings from the first open house: a strong desire for more single-family housing, support for developing Brooks Industrial Area into housing and open space, and concern about the BlueOval Park.

The housing preferences shown in the first survey and those indicated in the first open house were fairly consistent, as shown in the table below.

	Open House	Survey
1	Mixed-Use	Single-unit detached (70.8%)
2	Cottage Courts	Small apartment complexes (36.4%)
3	Small apartment complexes	Townhomes (35.5%)
4	Single-unit detached	Mixed-Use (32%)
5	Townhomes	Cottage Courts (29.4%)

Open House 2 & 2nd Survey

Between the first open house in October and the second open house in February, all data and community feedback to data was synthesized and used to create a vision statement, goals and objectives, and future land use map for the City of Marshall Master Plan. Data on transportation, mobility, and streetscape improvements were also crunched to create a series of activities for that would help prioritize proposed changes. The evening began with a presentation that gave an overview of the master planning process in Michigan and a summary of the engagement events and feedback received to date. Then, participants received a passport they could complete by providing input on nine activity boards. For participants who preferred to give feedback online, a survey version of the passport was available. This survey was open through the first week of March to allow those who weren't in attendance at the second open house to share their thoughts. Activities at the second open house were as follows:

- Ranking locations for non-motorized pathways, on-street bike facilities, and sidewalks.
- Ranking improvements to Brooks Memorial Fountain Traffic Circle, West Michigan Avenue, and East Michigan Avenue.
- Ranking the vision statement, goals, and objectives.
- Providing feedback on the proposed future land use map.

Between 30 and 40 people attended the second open house and over 150 participated in the event virtually through the online survey. The results have been incorporated into the goals and objectives, future land use map, and non-motorized transportation component of this plan.

Top five goals for the City of Marshall:

1. Maintain public safety and quality of life for Marshall residents.
2. Protect and enhance the historic integrity of Marshall.
3. Protect and invest in the river, parks, and open space, and actively promote their importance to residents and visitors alike.
4. Safeguard the vitality of the downtown business district.
5. Support the continued success of the Marshall Public School District.

Priorities for non-motorized pathways:

1. West Michigan Avenue (Traffic Circle to I-69)
2. Kalamazoo Ave. S.
3. Kalamazoo Ave. N.
4. I-69 to MAJOR Campus Connector

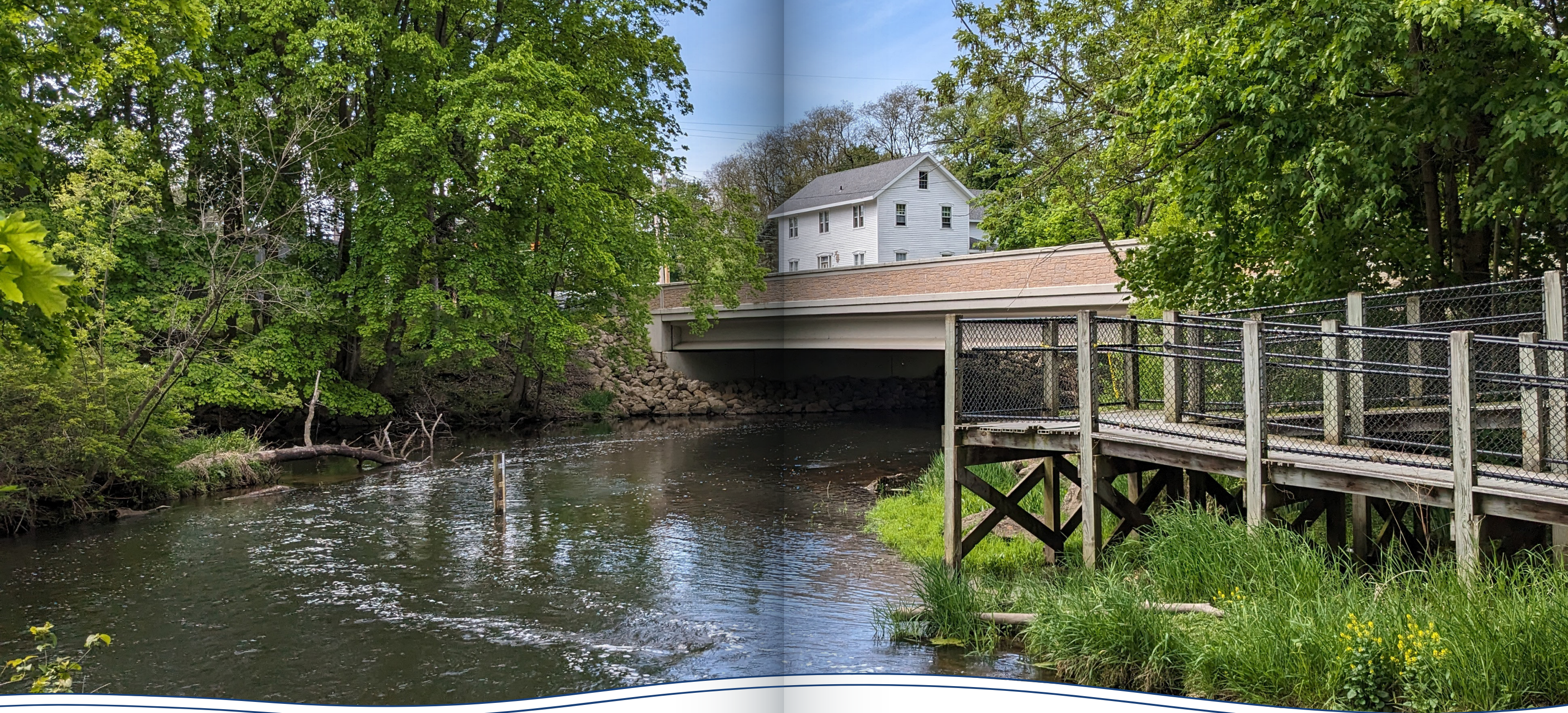
Priorities for East Michigan Avenue:

1. Pedestrian mid-block crossings
2. Flexible space (outdoor dining and/or extended sidewalks)
3. Reduced lanes to 2-3 instead of 3-4
4. Center landscape medians

Bringing It All Together

The surveys, pop-ups, focus groups, and open houses revealed the hopes, fears, aspirations, and preferences of Marshall residents. The vision for Marshall's future over the next 20 years is informed by this input, blended with an analysis of Marshall's existing conditions, and the Steering Committee's Project Principles to guide the way.





Vision, Goals, and Objectives

The Master Plan goals and objectives provide a basis for land use, housing, transportation, and other decisions in the City of Marshall, guiding staff, Planning Commission, and City Council. Drawing on input across public engagement events, local expertise, and planning and zoning best practices – these goals and objectives reflect the current challenges and future aspirations of Marshall.

Four overarching themes emerged from the planning process: history, vibrancy, sustainability, and connectivity.



HISTORIC



VIBRANT



SUSTAINABLE



CONNECTED

Vision Statement

The vision statement encapsulates these four themes into a unifying vision:

The City of Marshall will be a thriving, connected community that invests in balanced growth to honor and protect its history, natural environment, and quality of life.

Goals and Objectives

High level goals were developed corresponding to each of the four themes, with objectives created to help advance each of the goals. The result is a series of 15 objectives that establish a road map for the City of Marshall to achieve its vision for the future. Chapter 6 shares implementation strategies and projects that will help achieve each of these goals and objectives in more detail.

During the second public open house and survey, respondents were asked to assess the importance of each goal. Under each goal that follows, the favorability rating is listed.



Historic

Marshall will maintain and celebrate its history.

Goal H1: Protect and enhance the historic integrity of Marshall.

86.4% “Most Important” or “Important”

- A. Tailor zoning guidelines to encourage development and investment that is consistent with the design and historic character of neighborhoods.
- B. Explore solutions to protect historic buildings and offer educational and other resources to homeowners.
- C. Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to make changes to the Michigan Avenue streetscape through downtown which honors its history while improving its walkability and safety.
- D. Explore the creation of incentives for adaptive reuse of historic buildings.



Goal H2: Celebrate and incorporate Marshall’s history into parks, public spaces, and events.

81.0% “Most Important” or “Important”

- A. Strengthen the City’s partnership with the Marshall Historical Society to promote existing and develop new historical interpretive tours for Marshall’s downtown, neighborhoods, and parks.
- B. Incorporate Marshall’s unique history and stories into branding, marketing, and wayfinding.

The Why:

Boasting one of the biggest National Historic Landmark Districts in the country, Marshall’s historic character is central to its identity. When asked what makes Marshall unique, an overwhelming answer was its historic character. 60% of survey respondents included “historic character” as their favorite thing about Marshall.



Vibrant

Marshall will continue to be a vibrant community.

Goal V1: Safeguard the vitality of the downtown business district.

85.8% "Most Important" or "Important"

- A. Emphasize re-use and investment into existing commercial areas rather than areas where new infrastructure is necessary.
- B. Provide incentives for commercial developments to incorporate pedestrian amenities and public spaces.
- C. Expand the small business façade grants program with an emphasis on mixed-use buildings.
- D. Maintain Redevelopment Ready Communities Certification.
- E. Encourage residential living downtown to support an active street life through zoning incentives and grant programs.
- F. Prioritize street improvements to enhance vitality and pedestrian safety.



The Why:

Energetic, enthusiastic, and full of life or excitement – that’s how Marshall defines vibrancy. Marshall already has that in spades. The downtown district is active with uniquely low vacancy, the city is walkable, and citizens are engaged. The top response for the thing people liked most about Marshall was “walkable” at 65%. Also in the top five was “local restaurants and businesses” at 60%.

The goals in this section were highly ranked in the second community open house and survey.

Goal V2: Establish the River District as a destination for residents and visitors alike.

65.8% "Most Important" or "Important"

- A. Encourage redevelopment of vacant or under-utilized parcels through zoning and public/private partnerships.
- B. Support enhancement of the Riverwalk and connections to regional trails to promote the biking-brewery-Kalamazoo River connection.
- C. Foster a unique identity for the District that supplements downtown and brings something new to the community.

Goal V3: Make gateway corridors safer and more attractive.

72.4% "Most Important" or "Important"

- A. Prioritize methods to reduce crashes and slow traffic.
- B. Add pedestrian crossings to increase safety and accessibility at key intersections, such as along West Michigan Avenue.
- C. Reallocate space in the right-of-way to add pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
- D. Add street trees, landscaping, and other design elements to beautify the corridor.
- E. Implement gateway features that welcome people to the City and convey its unique brand throughout the community.

Goal V4: Raise awareness of arts and culture opportunities in Marshall and invest in their success.

53.3% "Most Important" or "Important"

- A. Encourage cultural expression and placemaking by including art in parks, public spaces, and infrastructure projects.
- B. Incentivize the inclusion of art into private development projects.
- C. Continue to highlight visual and performing arts in Marshall community events as well as tourism initiatives.

Goal V5: Support the continued success of the Marshall Public School District.

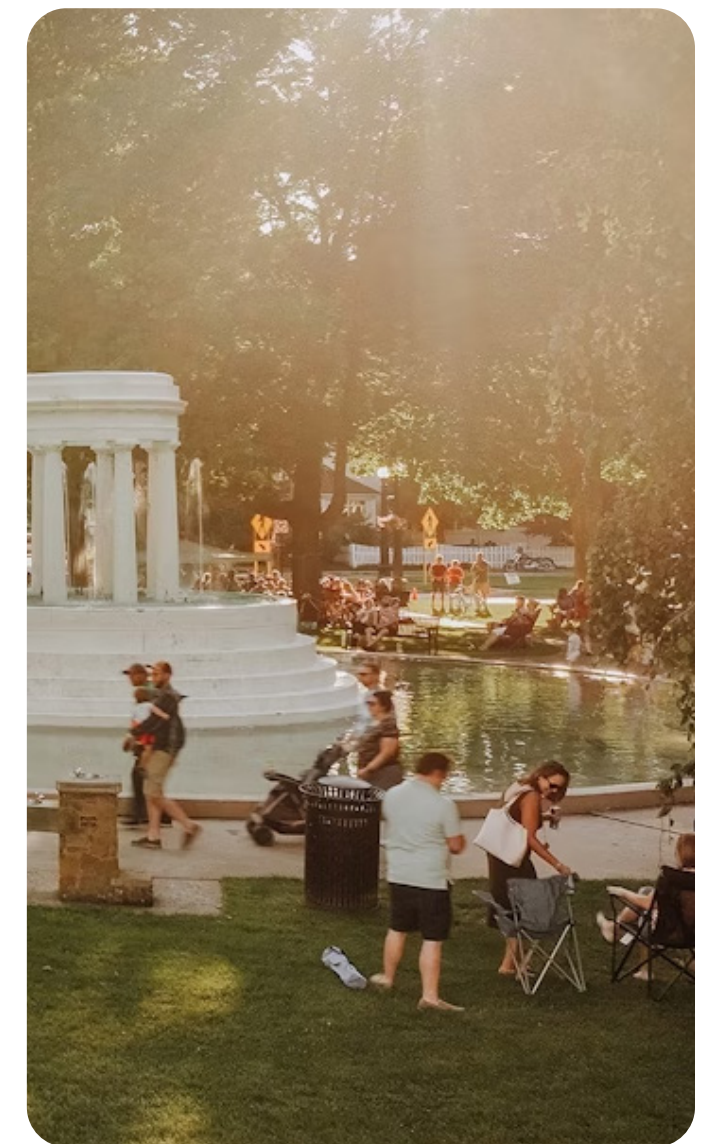
70.7% "Most Important" or "Important"

- A. Actively engage with the Marshall School Board and Leadership to pursue joint projects and programs for mutual benefit.
- B. Support efforts to attract resources and support operating and maintenance costs.

Goal V6: Maintain public safety and quality of life for Marshall residents.

88% "Most Important" or "Important"

- A. Utilize Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) measures to design and improve parks and public spaces, incorporating safety features like lighting and window transparency.
- B. Deliver high-quality municipal services that meet resident, visitor, and stakeholder expectations.





Sustainable

Marshall will be sustainable in its approach to growth and the environment.

Goal S1: Sustain Marshall’s future by expanding housing supply and choice to meet the needs of residents in all stages of life.

74.6% “Most Important” or “Important”

- A. Allow traditional forms of housing in developed neighborhoods to increase housing supply while maintaining character, including expanding options for accessory apartments and three or four-unit residential buildings.
- B. Target key undeveloped areas for mixed-density developments, including single-family, cottage courts, mixed-use, and small apartment buildings.
- C. Incentivize the development of ADA accessible homes and accessory dwelling units to allow residents to age in place or live with multiple generations
- D. Modify zoning standards to cut the cost of development, such as reducing minimums for parking, lot sizes, and setbacks.

The Why:

Protecting the environment and cherished natural features of Marshall was a leading priority in feedback received during the planning process. Goal S2 “Protect and invest in the river, parks, and open space, and actively promote their importance to residents and visitors alike” was the highest rated objective of all fifteen included in this plan.

There is also a connection between housing and sustainability. Housing opportunities for young families will ensure that Marshall Schools continue to have students and funding. Housing options at a variety of price points – possible through allowing smaller homes or types of homes apart from single-unit detached – means workers for Marshall businesses will be able to afford to live in the city.

Today, there is a mismatch between housing preferences and existing housing in the city. Goal S1 will help to align preferences with opportunities.

Goal S2: Protect and invest in the river, parks, and open space, and actively promote their importance to residents and visitors alike.

92.1% “Most Important” or “Important”

- A. Make Marshall a destination for outdoor tourism by leveraging existing recreation and natural resource amenities including the Kalamazoo River, Rice and Talmadge Creeks, parks and open spaces, and regional trails.
- B. Raise awareness of Marshall’s parks and natural features through a range of communication platforms.
- C. Promote the health and wellness of community members through investing in parks and open spaces.

Goal S3: Improve climate resilience, flood prevention, and the health of local natural resources.

79.7% “Most Important” or “Important”

- A. Promote environmental stewardship through planting native species and pollinators, removing invasive species, and hosting river cleanups.
- B. Incentivize the use of green infrastructure in new development and public projects.
- C. Develop zoning standards to promote the protection of and increase in tree canopy and native plantings.

Also Parks & Recreation Master Plan Goal #5!

Goal S4: Continue to develop the Marshall Area as a regional hub for employment.

52.0% “Most Important” or “Important”

- A. Make and maintain wise public investments in infrastructure and services that encourage balanced growth.
- B. Ensure strong connections, both physically and economically, between businesses located in the MAJOR Campus, Brooks Industrial Park, Industrial Avenue, and the entire Marshall Community.
- C. Facilitate partnerships between employers and educators to address workforce needs while providing economic opportunities for young people.





Connected

Marshall will be an even better-connected community.

Goal C1: Foster a safe transportation network that connects people to each other and key destinations in Marshall.

72.8% “Most Important” or “Important”

- A. Explore options to improve pedestrian and traffic safety at Brooks Memorial Fountain.
- B. Fill gaps in the sidewalk network, prioritizing connections to and from schools and parks.
- C. Update the existing Riverwalk route and extend it west of South Kalamazoo Avenue.
- D. Route regional trails through Marshall appropriately, including through the conservation easement to the south of the MAJOR campus.
- E. Designate bike routes throughout Marshall and add signage and infrastructure where needed to ensure safety for bike riders of all abilities.
- F. Continue to actively engage with regional trail and cycling organizations to make Marshall a focal point for trails in southern Michigan.

- G. Develop a Complete Streets policy that requires major new developments and infrastructure projects to appropriately accommodate all modes of transportation, including walking and bicycling.
- H. Implement a well-branded, intuitive wayfinding system to direct visitors to trails, parks, major attractions, and other amenities throughout Marshall.

The Why:

Connected means expanding and strengthening physical connections between places and the relationships between residents, businesses, local organizations, and the City of Marshall. Marshall already has a lot going for it in this regard. “Walkable” was the top thing survey respondents liked about Marshall.

Going by the Walk Score – a system for measuring the walkability of a place – Marshall has a 78, or “Very Walkable.” In comparison, the average Walk Score of the top 65 largest cities in Michigan is only 40 – meaning most errands are car dependent. Marshall’s Bike Score is also high, a 77, or “Very Bikeable.”

Also Parks & Recreation Master Plan Goal #2!

Goal C2: Enhance public communications to ensure that community members are aware of events, development proposals, and other city initiatives that are taking place and provide opportunity to engage and offer feedback.

88.5% “Most Important” or “Important”

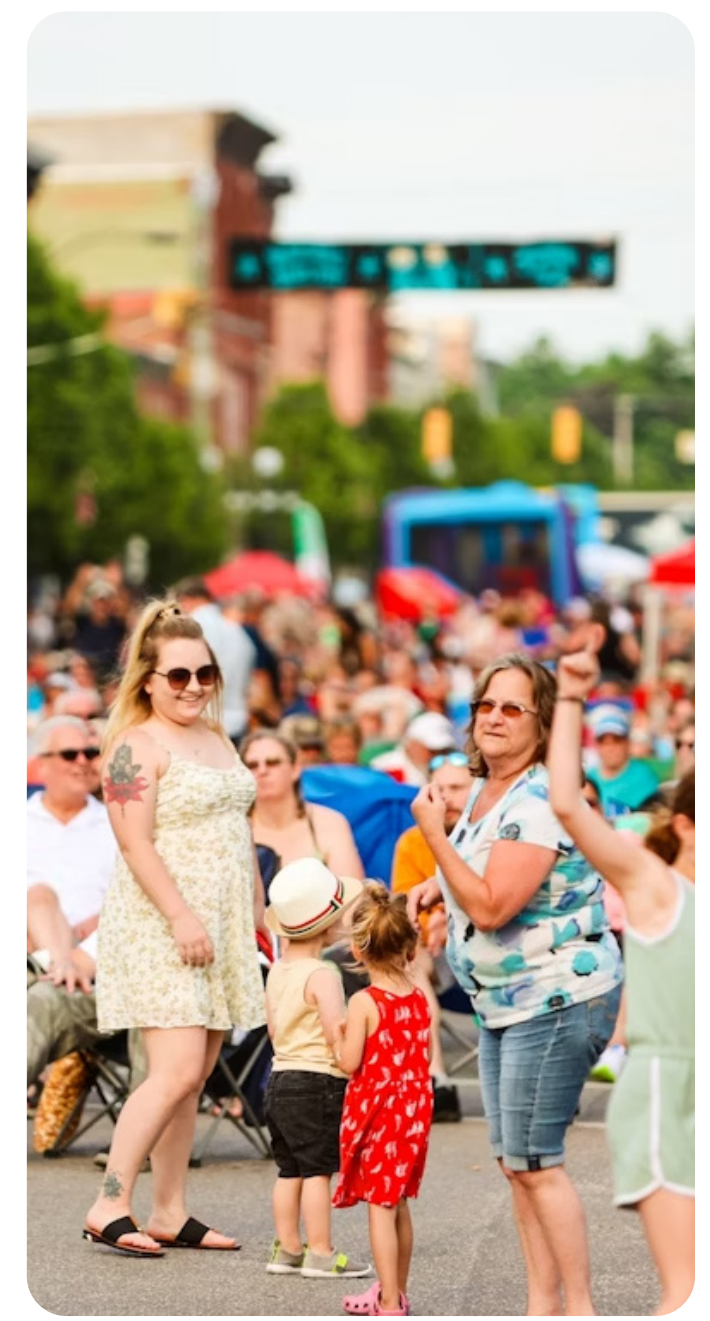
- A. Follow the City’s Public Participation Plan and update it regularly.
- B. Involve the public in the annual review of the Master Plan, including organizations represented in the Master Plan Steering Committee.
- C. Market parks and recreation facilities and community programming more broadly and effectively.

Also Parks & Recreation Master Plan Goal #3!

Goal C3: Maintain Marshall’s identity as a civically engaged and welcoming community.

72.2% “Most Important” or “Important”

- A. Continue to foster collaboration between city staff, elected officials, and local civic organizations through shared events and programs.
- B. Prioritize making Marshall a good place to raise a family.



City of Marshall Community Engagement Plan

The City of Marshall Community Engagement Plan guides public participation in decision making related to land use and development actions in Marshall. The plan provides clear expectations on the proper methods for outreach depending on the type of project, outlines opportunity for public input regarding a particular development, plan, or project, and serves as an accountability tool to ensure the City of Marshall and relevant public agencies are adhering to expectations for public participation in decision making.

The City of Marshall has a culture of civic engagement and pride that is driven by the active role the community plays in decision making. Consequently, the City of Marshall has high expectations for public engagement for any development project, community development-related plan, infrastructure project, or other similar activity that requires formal adoption or approval by a city board or commission. These expectations are as follows:

- Each project will be evaluated on an individual basis to determine appropriate methods of public engagement. This includes consideration of project scope, stakeholders, project limitations, approving body, and points of community impact.
- Information will be made available in a timely manner that is accessible to all interested parties to be involved in decisions at various stages of the review and approval process.
- Citizens will be engaged in a transparent manner, making information easy to access for all interested members of the community with a clear description of how their feedback will be utilized.
- Creativity is strongly encouraged. Opportunities to engage people arise frequently, as do new methods and tools. Constantly exploring new ways to involve a diverse set of community stakeholders in decision-making is vital to the success of the Community Engagement Plan
- Results of community engagement will be tracked and analyzed to the extent feasible, with summaries of feedback received provided back to the public and relevant decision-making bodies.

The full plan is available on the City of Marshall website.





Place Types and Future Land Use

Future Land Use and Character

What is Future Land Use?

The future land use map is a representation of how the City of Marshall will be developed over the next 20 years. The future land use categories provide a rationale for rezoning requests, offering a clear standard for the Planning Commission and City Council to consider. The future of Marshall's neighborhoods is about more than use, however. The built environment – from how far buildings are from the street, to the presence of porches and street trees, to the location parks and public space – shape the identity of and livability of a place. That is why Marshall is planning for both future land use and future character.

How Were Future Land Use & Character Determined?

Future land use was developed by considering numerous factors, including:

- 1. Existing land use
- 2. Existing zoning
- 3. Previous Master Plan (2015) Future Land Use Map
- 4. Analysis of demographic and economic trends
- 5. Identification of redevelopment opportunities
- 6. Input from community engagement
- 7. Review by Steering Committee

There is a direct relationship between the current use of land in Marshall, the regulations the city has adopted for the use of land in its zoning code, and the Future Land Use map that provides a vision for future development. In summary:

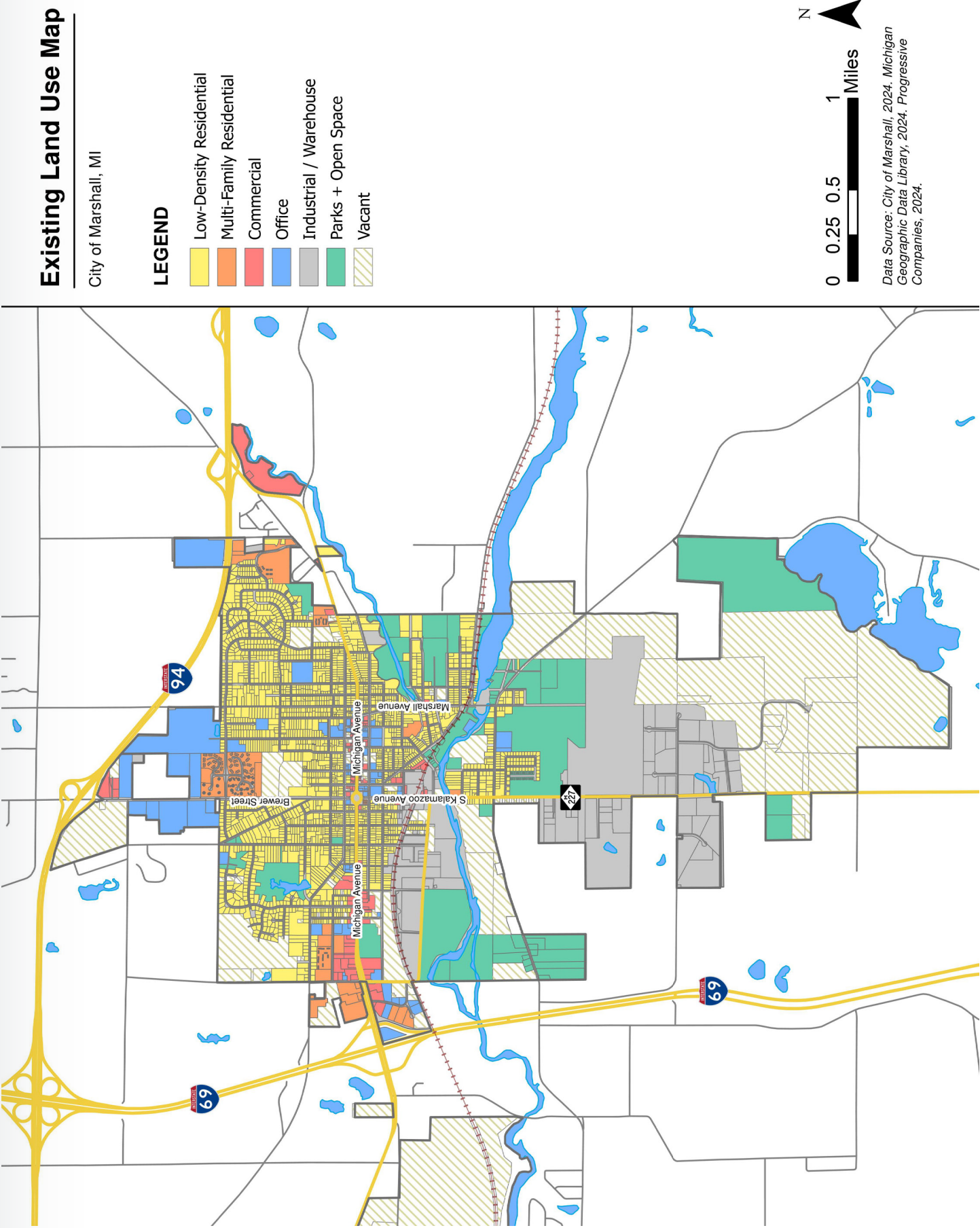


Existing Land Use The use of property today, primarily based on property tax classifications used by the city assessor.

Zoning The current zoning district that applies to each property. The zoning district and use of a property may be similar, but they do not have to be. Zoning indicates the types of uses that are permitted if new development occurs, zoning does not look backward and require changes to existing uses.

Future Land Use The Future Land Use Map provides a vision for Future Land Use and development in Marshall. While zoning regulates development of a property today, Future Land Use indicates the community's vision for development over the next twenty years. Future Land Use also provides a basis for changes to the zoning map.

Existing Land Use Understanding existing land use is a necessary first step before a meaningful exploration of future land use can occur. In the City of Marshall, existing land use is largely broken into seven categories, as shown on the map on the following page.



Low Density Residential

These are neighborhoods in and around downtown and the northern portion of the city. Characterized by single-family detached homes, this category includes both historic homes and newer builds. Lot sizes vary depending on the year of construction, with older homes generally constructed on smaller lots and newer homes constructed on larger lots. Small apartment buildings and missing middle housing (properties with 2-8 units) are found throughout the district as well.

Multi-family Residential

These areas contain multi-family or condominium developments. Often developed using the Planned Unit Development zoning tool, these areas feature developments that have largely been constructed in the last thirty years. Units are largely in two-to-three story buildings surrounded by green space and surface parking or attached garages.

Commercial

Much of Marshall's commercial land use is located along the Michigan Avenue corridor – both the historic downtown and the strip commercial of West Michigan Avenue. Corridors of commercial also exist along S. Kalamazoo Avenue and Monroe Street.

Office

Office in Marshall is often adjacent to commercial and serves as a transition in intensity between commercial and lower density residential. Many office parcels are large and developed with institutional uses such as Oaklawn Hospital or the local Michigan Department of Transportation office.

Industrial & Manufacturing

The areas along Industrial Road and South Kalamazoo Avenue contain most of the historically industrially zoned parcels in Marshall. The MAJOR Campus is the other industrial area in the community.

Parks and Open Space

Marshall is home to a variety of parks and natural areas, including the Brooks Nature Area, Shearman Park, and Ketchum Park. Undeveloped areas surround the Kalamazoo River and its tributaries.

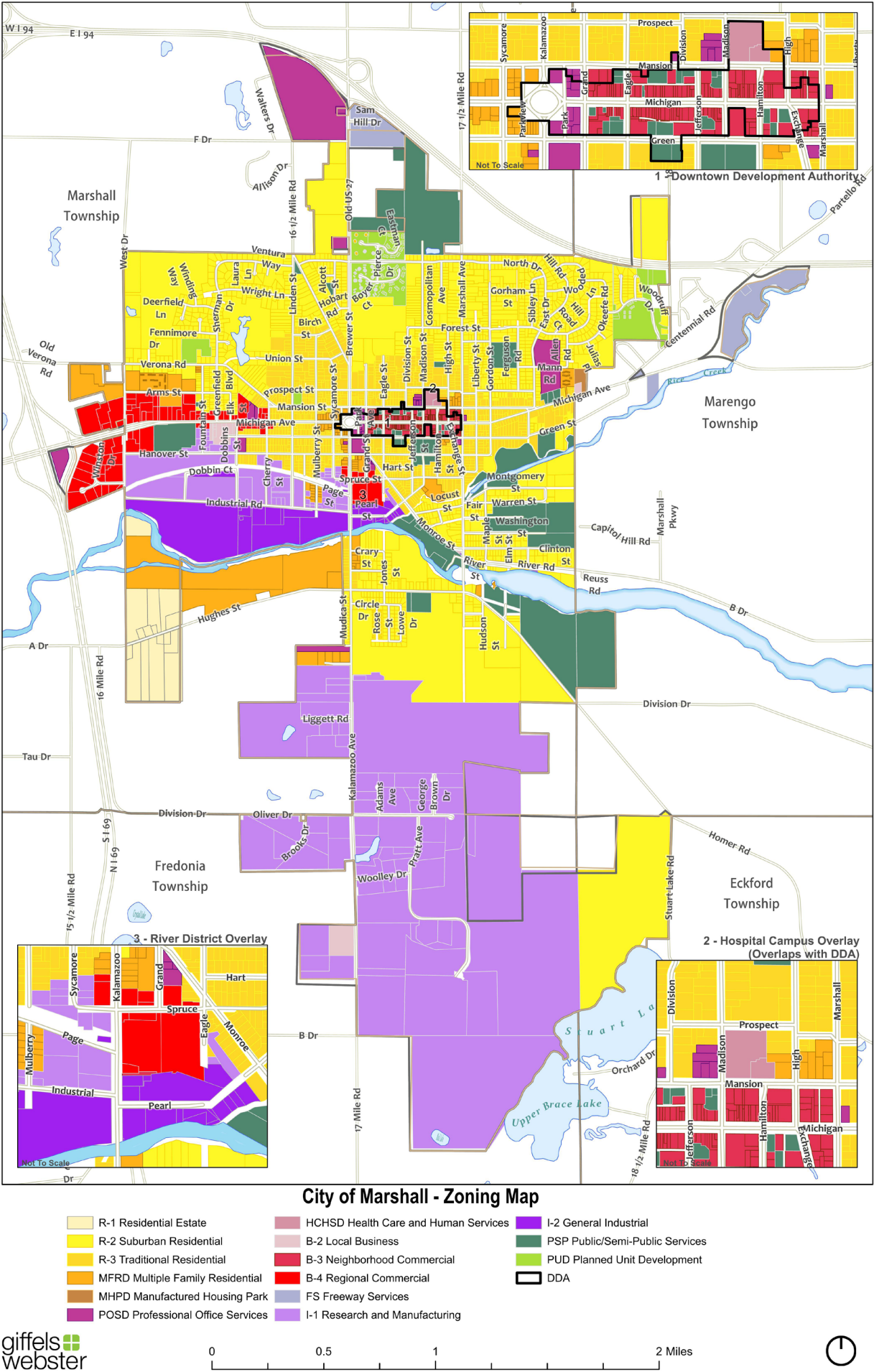
Vacant

Vacant areas indicate land that is not currently developed, or in the case of the MAJOR Campus site, is currently undergoing development.

Zoning

The existing zoning map also plays a role in the creation of the Future Land Use Map.

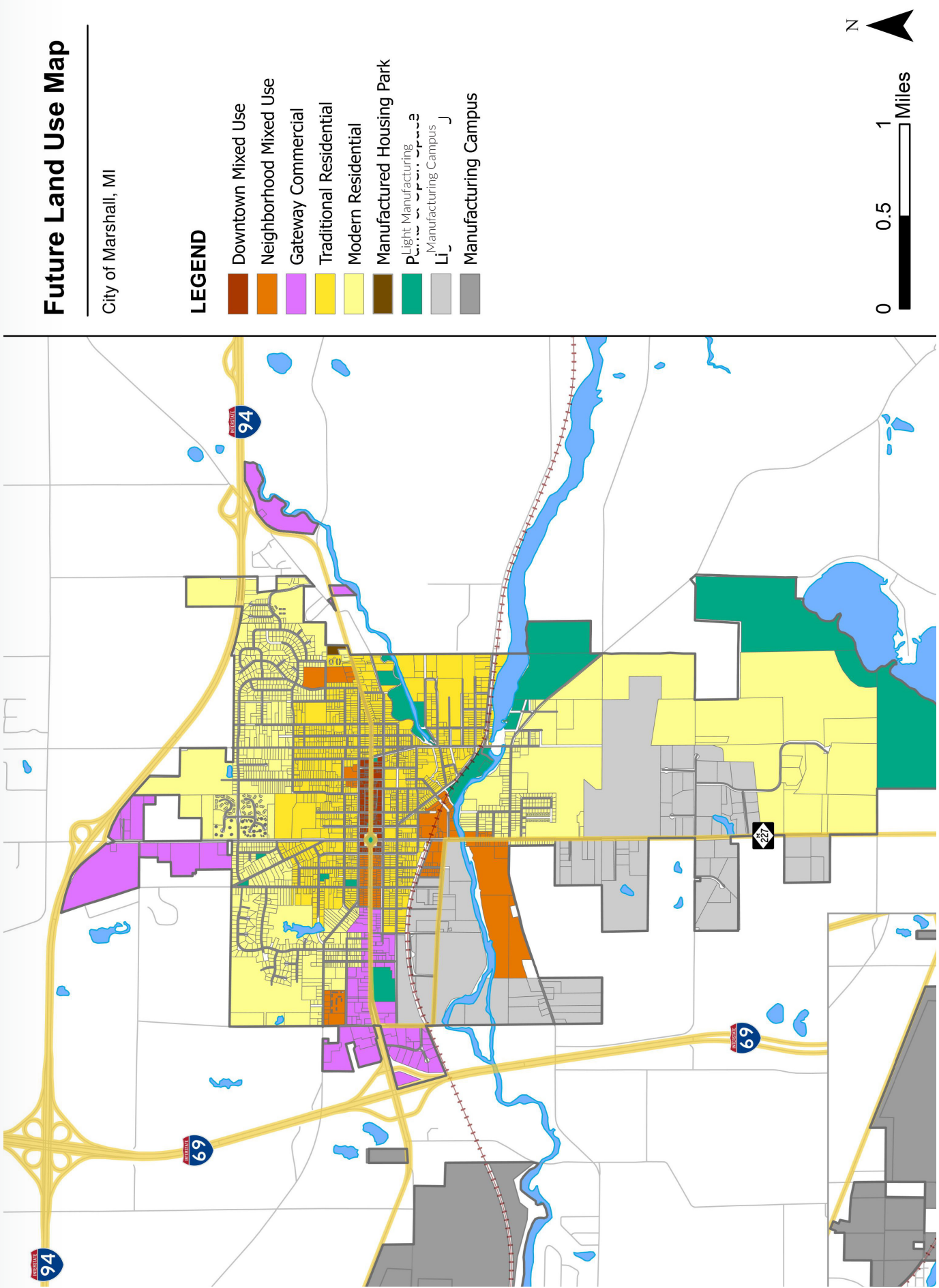
See the Zoning Map on the following page.



Changes to the Future Land Use Map

There are four key changes between existing land use/zoning/former future land use map and the proposed future land use map:

- 1. Fewer Categories:** The 2015 Master Plan has 19 Future Land Use categories – the 2025 Master Plan map has 7.
- 2. Expanded Modern Neighborhood:** Creating options for Brooks Industrial Area to become a new residential neighborhood with connections to Brooks Nature Area.
- 3. Expanded Traditional Neighborhood:** The historic core of Marshall is classified as Traditional Neighborhood, including the area around the Fair Grounds.
- 4. Neighborhood Mixed Use:** Several former land use categories were combined into one that provides for a variety of uses and more flexibility to support creation of walkable places with housing choices.



Place Types



Downtown

The Downtown District is the heart of Marshall’s economic and social life. Uniquely historic in nature, the downtown is characterized by distinct architecture, high pedestrian activity, and a range of commercial and institutional uses. It spans from the Memorial Fountain Traffic Circle to the west to Exchange Street in the east, from Green Street to Mansion Street.

Housing and Neighborhood Amenities

The Downtown features a dynamic mix of uses that serve residents and visitors. Unique museums, galleries, and theater spaces are woven into the fabric of the neighborhood. Residential is incorporated as upper-level apartments above active ground floor uses and small apartments and townhomes front Mansion and Green Streets.

Future Vision:

- Rehabilitation of vacant apartments on upper floors of downtown buildings.
- Continued variety and vitality of locally owned businesses along Michigan Avenue with architecture, signage, and features that maintain the historic integrity of downtown Marshall.

- Continued investment in cherished institutional uses that serve Marshall and beyond, including Oaklawn Hospital, the Marshall District Library, and the Historical Museum.
- Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized buildings on Mansion and Green Streets to provide more residential density and low-intensity commercial or office uses that serve adjacent neighborhoods.
- Redevelopment of parcels not fronting Michigan Avenue may be more varied and less consistent with the architectural character of buildings along Michigan Avenue, but should still blend with the adjacent buildings and neighborhoods.



Streets and Connections

Historic East Michigan Avenue is the backbone of the downtown. Originally used as a trail for the Potawatomi Tribe, the road eventually became the main-east west artery into the Michigan Territory for early settlers. At the turn of the 20th century, rail was run down Michigan Avenue (then known as “State Street”), part of a line that connected Detroit to Kalamazoo.

The grid of the city is virtually intact from the nineteenth century and consists of twelve blocks of varying lengths with occasional green spaces. The Marshall Avenue cross-section is comprised of four travel lanes, two in each direction, with a parking lane on each side of the street. The right of way is approximately 100 feet. Street trees, benches, planters, light posts adorn the street edges and sidewalks. Parking is located on the street or to the rear of buildings in surface lots.

Future Vision:

- Michigan Avenue will transition from a wide-open throughfare that is designed to move cars efficiently through town to a street that supports a vibrant business community and access for pedestrians. This should include, among other things, a rebalancing of the roadway to provide equal emphasis on pedestrians and non-motorized users of the street, as well as beautification that enhances downtown’s visual appeal. Refer to the Transportation Plan in Chapter 6 for additional details.
- Streets running north and south to Michigan Avenue should also encourage a balanced approach to transportation with measures that prioritize people walking and biking to create a pleasant downtown environment.
- Mansion and Green Streets, which run parallel to Michigan Avenue, should provide strong access for bicyclists and opportunities to make easy connections to businesses and activity nodes along Michigan Avenue.

Building and Physical Characteristics

The district consists of two- to four-story mixed-use buildings along Michigan Avenue with scattered institutional, commercial, and residential buildings along Mansion Street and Green Street. Buildings are predominantly historic in nature. Many architectural styles from the 19th and early 20th centuries are represented including Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, Beaux-Arts, and Art Deco. Mixed-use and civic buildings are generally constructed with stone or brick. Buildings have active ground floor uses with high transparency and architectural elements creating a pedestrian scale such as expression lines, recessed entries, and awnings. Historic signage and murals are incorporated into the neighborhood offering further distinctive design elements.

Future Vision:

- Maintenance of historic structures and architectural features that create the context of Downtown.
- Addition of new buildings and renovation that are consistent with the existing form and character, but allow for flexibility in terms of modern building materials and construction methods.
- Addition of wayfinding signage that is consistent with historic architectural character

Parks and Public Spaces

Iconic community gathering spaces and parks include Brooks Memorial Fountain, Carver Park, and pocket parks such as Peace Park and Grand Street Park. Downtown parks are essential to community events and offer places of respite for workers and visitors to the city.

Future Vision:

- Continued improvements for pedestrian safety crossing to and from Brooks Memorial Fountain Park.
- Consistent branded signage at city parks
- Improved wayfinding signage directing visitors and residents to nearby parks and natural amenities.



Traditional Residential

Marshall's Traditional Residential neighborhoods are critical to its identity. These neighborhoods surround the downtown with a mix of lot sizes, housing types, and architectural character. The buildings in these areas were generally constructed prior to 1950, and neighborhoods have sidewalks, large trees, and are within walking distance of downtown, schools, parks, and other amenities.

Housing and Neighborhood Amenities

Existing land uses in Historic neighborhoods are overwhelmingly residential, with most homes owner-occupied single-family homes that are two-stories. Institutional uses like schools and churches are also present, along with public parks and some low-intensity office uses adjacent to downtown Marshall.



Commercial activity within historic neighborhoods is limited to non-profit and institutional uses and some small office uses within two-blocks of Michigan Avenue. Home occupations are permitted if not visible from the street

Future Vision:

- The addition of more housing types that blend with the established neighborhood character, including backyard cottages, duplexes, and triplexes.
- Home-based occupations and uses should remain and are integrated into the neighborhood through high-quality standards for screening and parking that limit impact on adjacent residences.
- Commercial activity continues to be limited to non-profit and institutional uses within neighborhoods, but along Michigan and Kalamazoo Avenues some small neighborhood-based commercial establishments are appropriate that re-purpose former residential buildings or are new construction that provide walkable amenities to residents.



Example of a mixed-use building in a traditional residential neighborhood in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Streets and Connections

Most neighborhood streets have sidewalks and traffic is light with low speed limits. Streets are safe for bicyclists and pedestrians. Major corridors like Kalamazoo Avenue and E. Michigan Avenue have more traffic and are not as bike-friendly. Streets are tree-lined with 10 feet or more of parkway separating the curb from the sidewalk. Sidewalks are relatively narrow and suitable for pedestrians only.

Future Vision:

- All streets will have sidewalks, with bicycle use of streets encouraged with "share the road" signage and traffic calming measures to slow vehicles in problematic areas.
- Major connectors will have wider sidewalks that can accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, strollers, and wheelchairs.
- Streets will be tree-lined, with parkways and green space between the curb and sidewalk.

Building and Physical Characteristics

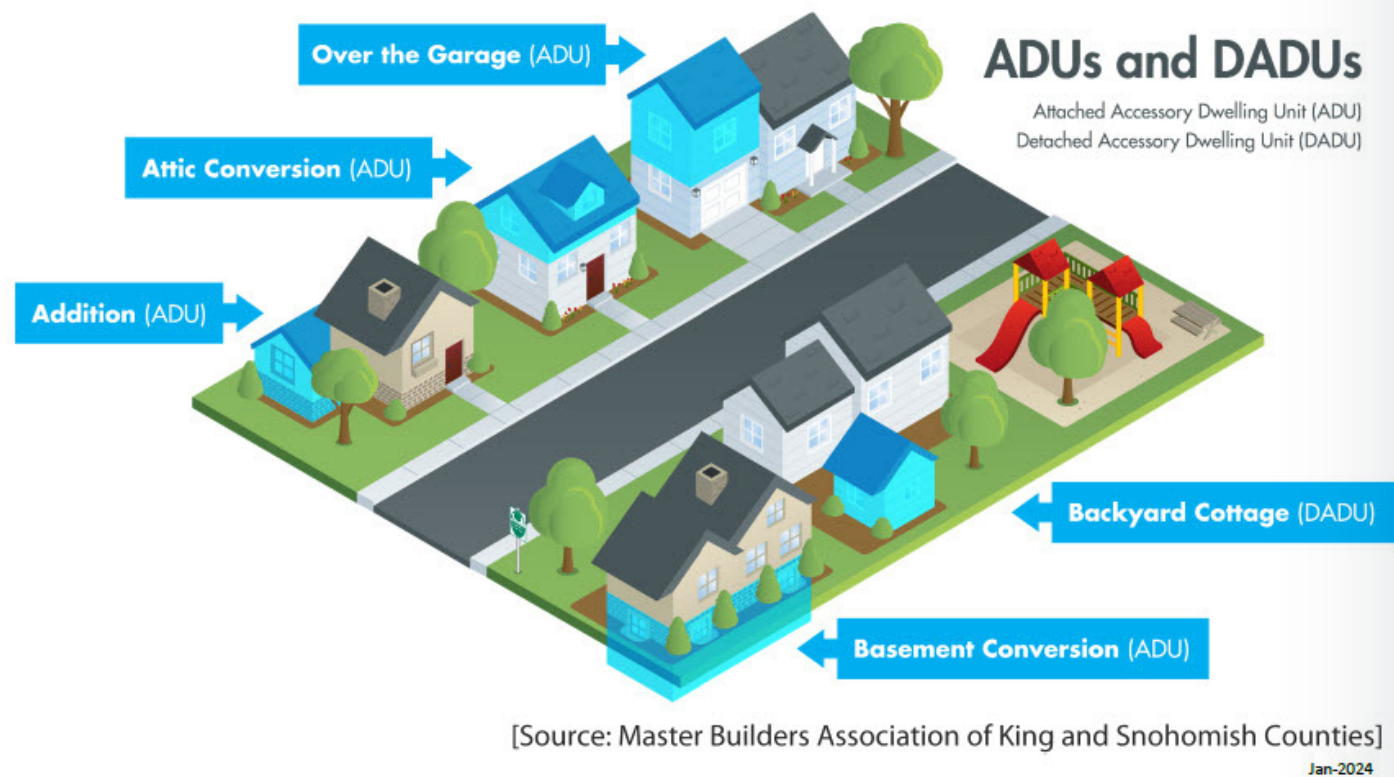
Today, residential lots vary in width, with some less than 40 feet wide, but most between 60 and 70 feet wide, with various depths. The first two blocks north and south of Michigan Avenue, are uniform, then block widths and lot sizes become more varied. Other physical characteristics of the Traditional Residential district include:

- Buildings are set back 20 to 35 feet from the back of sidewalks, with smaller distances closer to Michigan Avenue.
- Most buildings are one or two-stories, with a few three-story historic homes and institutional uses.
- Larger institutional buildings are primarily brick exteriors, with residential homes wood or vinyl siding, brick, or stone.
- Architecture within three blocks north of Michigan Avenue is generally Victorian-style, with pitched roofs, multiple roof lines, and prominent front porches. Nearly all homes within this area are two-story.
- Architecture more than three blocks north of Michigan Avenue, and South of Michigan Avenue is less consistent, with a combination of smaller, single-family homes and more architectural variety. Most houses have prominent front porches and all have pitched roofs.

Future Vision:

- Future development maintains existing neighborhood character, while creating more housing choices and density by expanding the types of housing options present within the neighborhood.





Examples of accessory dwelling units integrating within traditional neighborhoods.



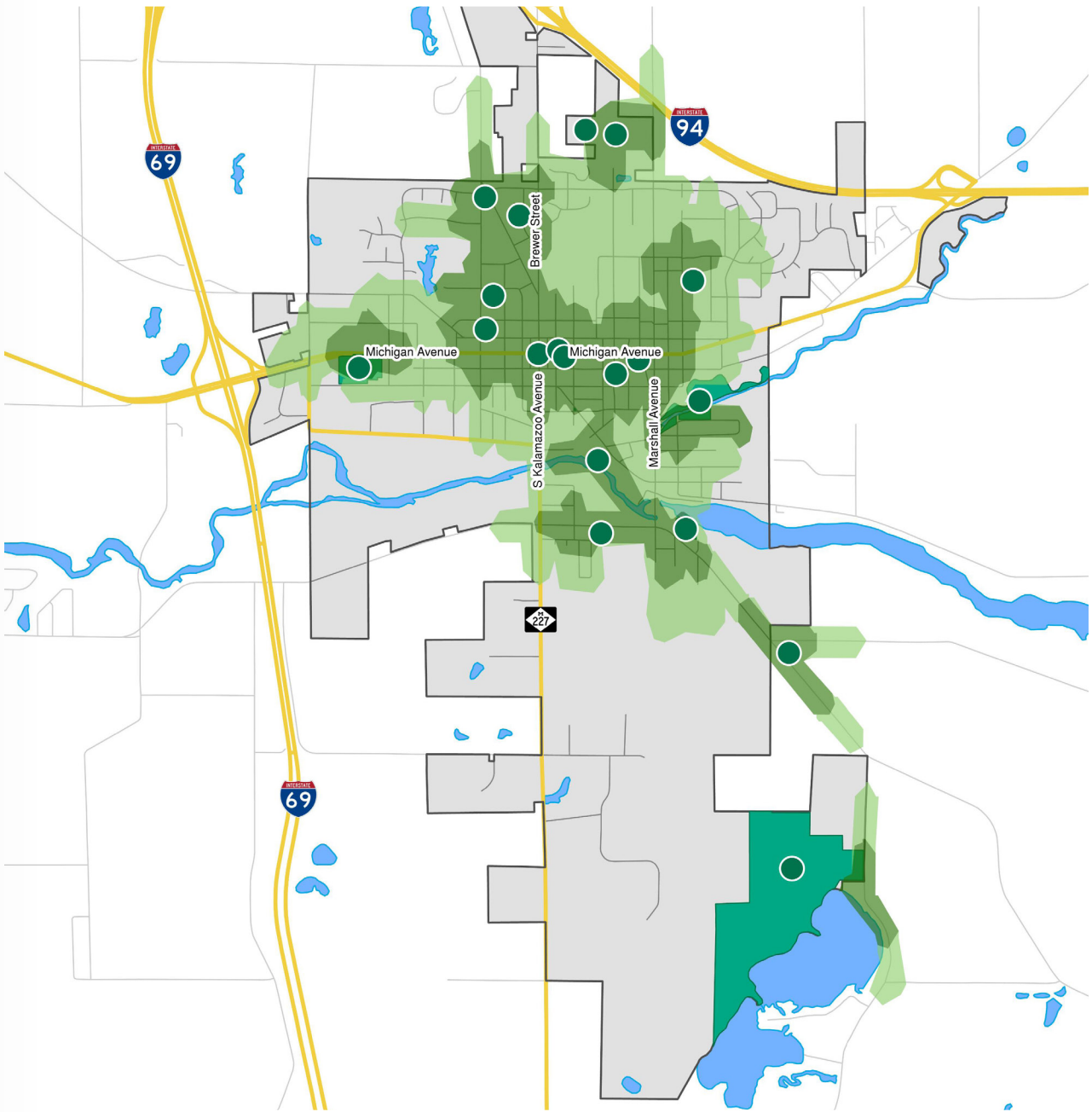
An example of mixed housing types within a traditional residential neighborhood context.

Parks and Public Spaces

Nearly all of the Traditional Residential are within 5-minute walk of a park. However, public spaces within the neighborhoods are limited to parks, schools, and churches.

Future Vision:

- All neighborhoods are within a 5-minute walk of a park or public recreational space like a school playground.
- Parks are well-maintained, with signage, appropriate lighting, and features that make them accessible to people of all ages.



Parks and Open Space 5 - 10 Minute Walkshed

City of Marshall, MI

LEGEND

- Parks + Open Space Location
- Area Within 10-Minute Walk of Park
- Area Within 5-Minute Walk of Park

0 0.5 1 Miles

Data Source: City of Marshall, 2024. Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2024. Progressive Companies, 2024.





Modern Residential

Modern Residential is characterized by suburban-style residential neighborhoods featuring cul-de-sacs and single-unit detached houses set back farther from the street.

Housing and Neighborhood Amenities

Housing in the Modern Residential district is primarily detached single-family residential with some condominium and apartment developments closer to the city limits.

Future Vision:

- Expanded housing choice offering a variety of sizes, types, and price points for residents at all life stages.
- Development of accessory dwelling units and houses on smaller lots in existing neighborhoods.
- On redevelopment parcels and currently vacant space, cottage courts, townhomes, and small apartment complexes should be developed in appropriate locations that blend with existing neighborhood context.
- Conversion of portions of land within Brooks Industrial Park to single-family residential to accommodate Marshall's need for additional housing.

Streets and Connections

Modern Residential neighborhoods are differentiated from Traditional Residential neighborhoods by the predominance of a curvilinear street pattern. The majority of streets do not contain sidewalks and separated bicycle facilities largely do not exist. Parking is provided in street-facing garages, in driveways, and along the street. Neighborhoods are less connected to one another than other areas of the city due to the lack of street connections and absence of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.



Future Vision:

- Addition of sidewalks to make conditions safer and more attractive for people walking, taking their dogs for a stroll, pushing a stroller, or using a wheelchair, with an emphasis on making connections to key destinations like schools and parks.

- On-street bicycle facilities added to connect neighborhoods to parks, schools, and downtown.
- New developments will be constructed with roads and sidewalks that connect to other neighborhoods and the city at large.

Building and Physical Characteristics

Buildings are predominantly detached single-unit homes with attached, street-facing garages. Blocks and lots are larger than in other portions of the city. Homes have deeper front yards and there is more space between dwellings than in Traditional Residential areas. Some condominium and apartments developments exist. Structures are typically no taller than three stories, with most two stories or less. Condominiums and multi-family developments are more recent, many developed in the 1970s-1990s. Common building materials include wood framing, concrete foundations, and vinyl, fiber cement, and brick siding.



Future Vision:

- Architecture will emphasize durability and high-quality building materials.
- Pedestrian-scale design to make neighborhoods more walkable.
- New homes will emphasize relationship to the street with porches and shallower setbacks and deemphasize the prominence of the garage and more closely resemble Traditional Neighborhood character.



Parks and Public Spaces

Neighborhood parks exist but may be farther from homes than in Traditional Residential neighborhoods. Brooks Nature Area and a portion of the Riverwalk are located near to these neighborhoods and connections to those should be enhanced.



Future Vision:

- Trail connections from downtown to Brooks Nature Area.
- Redevelopment of portion of Brooks Industrial Area into parkland adjacent to Brooks Nature Area.
- Riverwalk repair and extension to the west.



Neighborhood Centers

Neighborhood Center is the most varied of the Place Types, with an emphasis on creating opportunities for new developments that support existing neighborhoods while addressing Marshall's need for additional housing choices that reverse the trend of population decline.

Housing and Neighborhood Amenities

There are five areas of Marshall Designated as a Neighborhood Center, the current condition of each is described below.

1. The former State Farm Michigan Site on Michigan Avenue: The area currently includes a vacant office building being utilized as storage by Oaklawn Hospital and a large vacant lot owned by the Calhoun County Land Bank Authority. Single-family homes are located to the West and North, with apartments and condominiums to the East.
2. The River District: The parcels making up the river district are currently vacant or heavily underutilized within a light industrial district. The presence of the Riverwalk, the Kalamazoo River, and Dark Horse Brewery add vibrancy to the area that is in proximity to single-family neighborhoods and apartment buildings south of the Kalamazoo River.

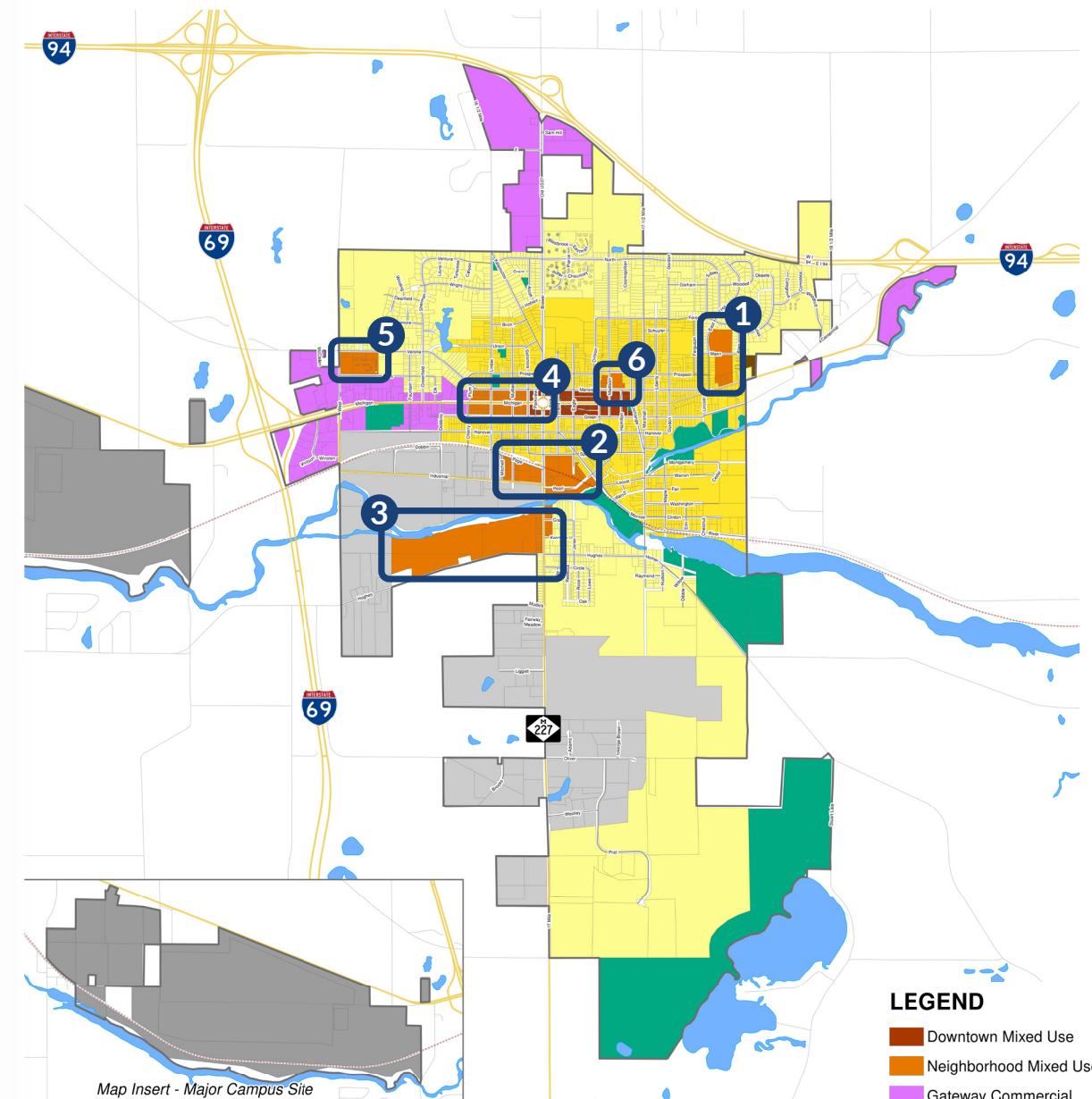
3. Vacant property south of the Kalamazoo River: Currently vacant agricultural land that is under consideration for development of new housing options.
4. One block north and south of Michigan Avenue between the Traffic Circle and Plum Street: A mix of land uses, primarily residential, including single family and duplex houses along with some limited commercial and office uses are currently present. The high speed and heavy traffic on Michigan Avenue makes residential use and development in this area a challenge.
5. The area surrounding Village Green Apartments and Walden Pond Townhomes: These existing more dense housing options are well-established, but disconnected from surrounding businesses and neighborhoods. The area also includes a significant amount of parking and open space.
6. The area surrounding Oaklawn Hospital and associated facilities: With the ever-changing nature of health care and the importance of the hospital to Marshall, use of this area will remain flexible, with an emphasis on effectively transitioning to surrounding neighborhoods and managing the impacts of traffic, noise, and light on surrounding neighborhoods.

Future Vision: While the current state of Neighborhood Mixed Use Center varies, the vision for future development is consistent across each site, with the exception of the Oaklawn Hospital area. For the sites other than Oaklawn Hospital:

- Housing will be added to with an emphasis on housing types that provide more density and reduce the cost of construction and ownership by making efficient use of land.

- Neighborhood centers may include small-scale retail, commercial and office uses that support new housing development within redevelopment sites as well as adjacent neighborhoods.

For the Oaklawn Hospital Site, the future vision is to maintain the current character and use of the site, with an emphasis on blending with the surrounding neighborhood.



Future Land Use Map

City of Marshall, MI

Data Source: City of Marshall, 2024. Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2024. Progressive Companies, 2025.

Streets and Connections

Streets and connections into and through neighborhood centers include major corridors like Michigan Avenue and Kalamazoo Avenue, as well as neighborhood streets that connect through the sites. Most streets currently lack sidewalks or bicycle infrastructure and do not support new development.

Future Vision:

- Streets to and through neighborhood centers will include sidewalks and be friendly for bicyclists with signage or infrastructure depending on the type of street and context (See Non-motorized Transportation Plan in Chapter 6).
- Neighborhood Centers will connect to existing neighborhoods with neighborhood-scale streets with non-motorized transportation infrastructure.
- Trails and pathways will be developed that connect to parks and the existing Riverwalk to provide access to the Kalamazoo River and nearby parks and recreation amenities.



Building and Physical Characteristics

Three of the current neighborhood centers are vacant with no buildings or under-utilized buildings currently present. The area West of the Traffic Circle on Michigan Avenue generally includes Victorian-style homes with front porches that are two stories. Some of these homes are well maintained, while others show signs of disinvestment and deferred maintenance. Buildings within the Village Green and Walden Pond area are traditional apartment buildings that are two or three stories, oriented around parking lots and away from adjacent streets and neighborhoods.

Future Vision:

- New buildings and development will create public spaces that are oriented toward streets, rather than parking lots, to create public spaces that support a neighborhood context similar to Marshall’s Traditional Neighborhoods.
- Garages and vehicle access should be provided from the rear of residential structures wherever possible, emphasizing front porches and community space along streets and public spaces.
- Buildings should not be setback from streets more than necessary to accommodate pedestrian activity and public spaces, with parking located in rear yards and at a minimum behind the front wall of the building.
- Building materials will be high-quality and reflect permanence, emphasizing materials the blend with surrounding neighborhood character.
- Timeless design and high-quality materials, including storefront transparency and concepts that support crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).

Parks and Public Spaces

Neighborhood Centers are either adjacent to the Kalamazoo River or within reasonable proximity to a significant park and recreational assets in Marshall. The connections to these assets, particularly the Kalamazoo River are limited and should be a significant feature of any new development.

Future Vision:

- Create new connections and public access to natural features like the Kalamazoo River and ensure strong pedestrian and bicycle connections to parks and recreational assets like the Athletic Fields at Eaton Park.
- Large developments with many units should include green space within the development to provide a shared resource to the new neighborhood. These spaces may include active recreation features like play structures or exercise loops, or more passive features like walking trails and benches.

Gateway Corridors



Located along Marshall's highest-volume streets, these areas are primarily commercial in nature and serve both local and regional needs. Proximate to highway interchanges, these areas cater to travelers and users who are driving. Gateway Corridors provide the first impression of Marshall to many who travel there.

Housing and Neighborhood Amenities

Land uses in Gateway Corridors include medium- to large-scale retail featuring national and regional chains. Businesses include restaurants, banks, and grocery stores, and auto-oriented uses, including drive-throughs. Supporting office and personal service establishments are found here as well. Uses with some impact to adjacent properties, such as kennels or vets, are appropriate for this district. Hotels, gas stations, and other uses that serve travelers are found in these areas. Vacancy has been higher in these corridors compared to the downtown business district in recent years.

Future Vision:

- Gateway Corridors will be welcoming entrances to the city of Marshall and showcase the city's unique identity.
- Redevelopment of vacant commercial properties including creating pockets or nodes of residential development in the form of apartments, townhomes, or mixed-use development.

- Continued expansion of businesses that serve those beyond the city limits, but with greater emphasis on creating cohesive connections between businesses and properties.
- Chain restaurants, auto-oriented uses, office and personal services will remain.

Streets and Connections

Michigan and Kalamazoo Avenues generally include large blocks with very limited connections between uses. Large, often under-utilized surface parking lots are located in front of buildings with minimal lawns and open spaces separating parking lots from the roadway. Some corridors, such as West Michigan Avenue, have sidewalks on one side of the street, while others, such as North Kalamazoo Avenue, have no sidewalks.

Future Vision:

- Pedestrians and bicyclists will be more thoughtfully considered, with sidewalks and pedestrian crossings provided at key locations.
- Roadways will prioritize safety rather than vehicle speed and access.
- Larger pathways will be added along West Michigan Avenue to accommodate the regional trail system and connect Marshall's downtown with the MAJOR Campus.
- Street trees, benches, and pedestrian-scale lighting will be added to beautify corridors and enhance safety.

- Reduced number of driveways with shared access between adjacent uses to prevent crashes.
- See Chapter 6 for the envisioned cross section for West Michigan Avenue from Dobbins to the Traffic Circle.

Building and Physical Characteristics

Single-story buildings in strip malls or stand-alone facilities with large lots dominate Gateway Corridors. Drive-through uses such as banks and fast-food restaurants are common with parking located in the front of buildings.

Future Vision:

- Pedestrian access included for all buildings and uses, with parking in side and rear yards rather than front yards.
- Building design that is durable and adaptable to multiple uses and users.
- Timeless design and high-quality materials, including increased storefront transparency and elements that support crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).
- Signs that are reasonably sized and scaled appropriately for the corridor, generally ground mounted or on walls of buildings.
- Development of vacant parking lots storefronts driven by changes to the roadway that encourage new investment.



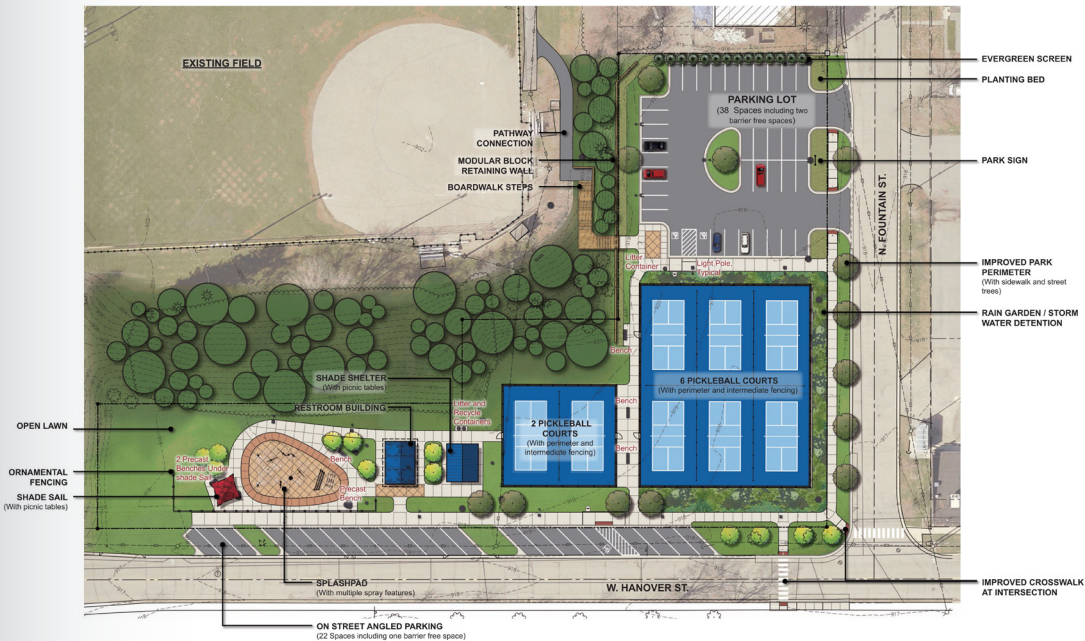
Example of outlot development changing the character of a road similar to West Michigan Avenue. Pictured is Plymouth Road in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Parks and Public Spaces

Parks and public spaces are limited in Gateway Corridors. There is limited green space along North Kalamazoo, with an important community asset in the Marshall Athletics Fields and future splash pad and pickleball courts at Eaton Park.

Future Vision:

- Landscaped entry points
- Small green spaces where context allows.
- Recreational attractions, such as Marshall Athletic Complex and Eaton Park Splash Pad and Pickleball Courts.
- Improved bicycle and pedestrian connections, with safer vehicle access to the Athletic Fields from Michigan Avenue.





Light Manufacturing

Light manufacturing areas are located on South Kalamazoo Avenue south of the Kalamazoo River and in the area around Industrial Drive north of the Kalamazoo



Housing and Neighborhood Amenities

The Light Manufacturing area is appropriate for research, testing, manufacturing, assembly, warehousing, skilled trades, technology-based industries, and other limited industrial uses.

Future Vision:

- Any housing remaining is envisioned to gradually transition from residential use to industrial uses as a nonconforming use based on current zoning.
- Development of flexible spaces suitable for new and innovative industrial land uses with limited potential for creating noise, smoke, odor or other nuisances.

Streets and Connections

Typically located along rail corridors with easy access to the interstates. Streets are focused on moving vehicles and heavy truck traffic. There are limited sidewalks and bicycle connections for employees.

Future Vision:

- Connections to surrounding neighborhoods will be made. This may be via sidewalks if adequate right-of-way is present or trail or pathway connections using vacant land may be appropriate.
- Signage and infrastructure to support bicycle connections should be considered, particularly for Industrial Road, which is currently a regional trail route and has wide lanes in each direction that could accommodate bicycle lanes.



Building and Physical Characteristics

Buildings are generally large in scale and one or two stories. Structures are typically set back far from the street on large parcels, but smaller buildings set closer to the street also exist. Building materials vary according to the time of construction but include brick, steel, concrete, and composite panels.

Future Vision:

- Buildings with frontage on a street that faces a residential or commercial zoning district should be constructed of high-quality materials; metal paneling or siding is discouraged.
- Building faces that are oriented toward other industrial properties should be of high-quality material that provides adaptability for a variety of future uses.
- Adequate landscaping, fencing, and visual screening must be provided to limit negative visual impacts of industrial activity on surrounding residential or commercial uses.
- Landscaping, tree canopy, and green infrastructure should be incorporated into Industrial sites to contribute to stormwater management, air quality control, and the long-term viability of industrial areas.



The DeVine's Flowers building incorporates art and unique customer seating to add visual interest in an industrial setting.

Parks and Public Spaces

Parks and public spaces are not included within existing industrial developments, but in some cases can be close to the Light Manufacturing District, as in the case with the Marshall Athletic Fields and forthcoming Eaton Park.

Future Vision:

- Industrial development should be visually screened from adjacent land uses by landscaping, topography, fencing, and other means.
- Patios, courtyards, walking trails, or other amenities should be provided on site for use by employees.



Employee seating areas at an industrial headquarters in Holland, Michigan.



Manufacturing Campus

The Manufacturing Campus area is composed of the MAJOR Campus site, or the Marshall Area Jobs, Opportunity, and Recreation Campus. The Campus is located between Michigan Avenue and the Kalamazoo River, West of I-69. As the site is under construction, all descriptions to follow comprise the future vision for this future land use category.

Housing and Neighborhood Amenities

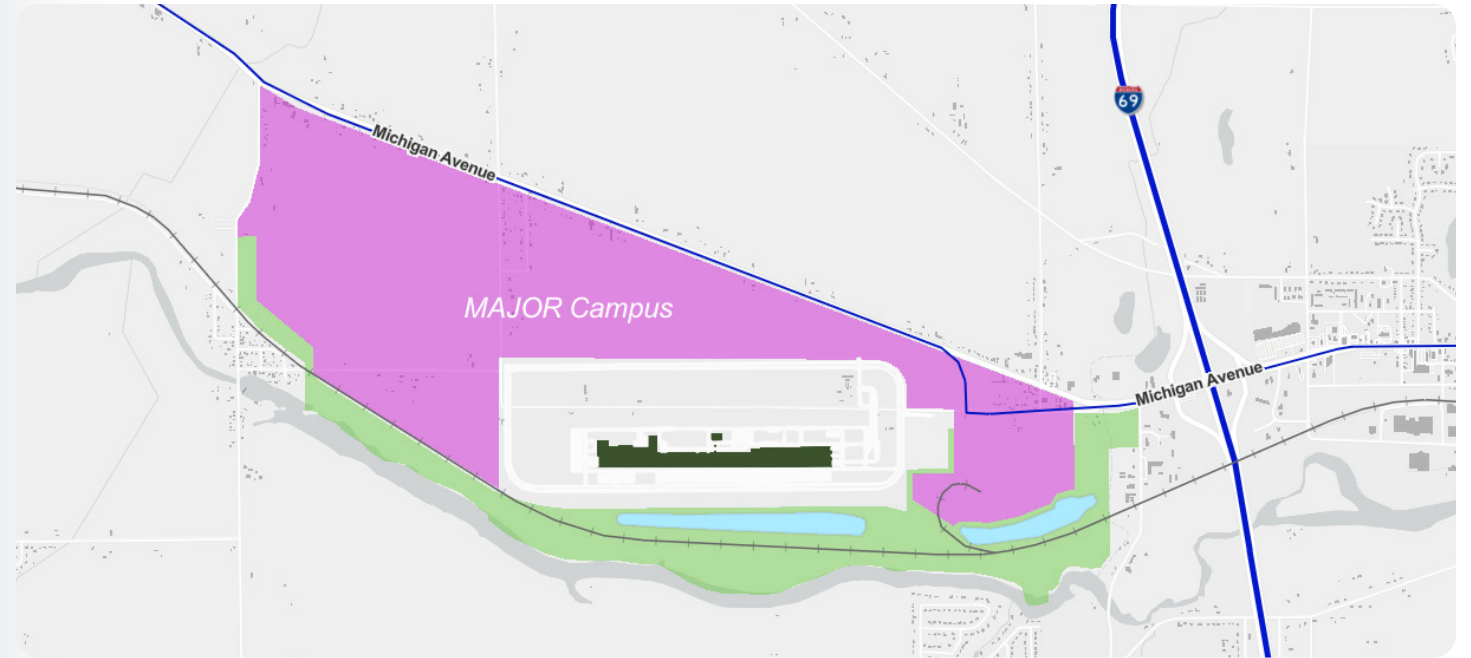
The Manufacturing Campus district is intended to provide a location for larger scale manufacturing, processing, and production operations which may require extensive access to transportation facilities and utilities.

To ensure the viability and vibrancy of Marshall's existing commercial districts, commercial land uses are not encouraged in the Manufacturing Campus District. Residential land uses are not appropriate in any case.

Streets and Connections

Block sizes are large to accommodate the unique scale of uses in the district. Streets are focused on moving vehicles and heavy truck traffic. However, connections to the Marshall community for residents working in the Industrial Campus area must be provided when new developments are added. All uses within the area must provide options for non-motorized transportation for employees.

The proposed Conservation Easement along the Kalamazoo River to the south of the site will include non-motorized pathways that serve as an extension of the Riverwalk and regional trail networks. Signage and infrastructure to support bicycle connections should be considered to ensure speeds are reasonable and there is infrastructure for workers to park or repair bicycles.



Building and Physical Characteristics

Structures will be set back appropriately from the road and other uses to minimize adverse impacts to surrounding land uses. Buildings will be constructed with high quality materials incorporating brick, face brick, stone, or cast stone, in addition to any metal paneling or siding. Buildings with frontage on a street that faces a residential or commercial zoning district should be constructed of high-quality materials and not metal paneling or siding. Building faces that are oriented toward other industrial properties should be of high-quality material that provides adaptability for a variety of future uses.

Adequate landscaping, fencing, and visual screening must be provided to limit negative visual impacts of industrial activity on surrounding residential or commercial uses.

Parks and Public Spaces

Industrial development should be screened via landscaping, topography, fencing, and other means. Landscaping, tree canopy, and green infrastructure should be incorporated into Industrial sites to contribute to stormwater management, air quality control, and the general positive benefit of greenery on human

beings. Patios, courtyards, walking trails, or other amenities should be provided on site for use by employees.

An area of approximately 245 acres to the east and south of this district along the Kalamazoo River is planned to be placed in a conservation easement to be protected against industrial development and preserved for generations. The North Country Trail, Iron Belle Trail, and Lake to Lake Trail are planned to run through this easement, helping to connect Marshall to Battle Creek to the west and Albion to the east.



Trees recently planted at the MAJOR Campus.



Parks and Open Space

The Parks and Open Space district is home to Marshall's plentiful parks, cemeteries, and natural areas. This designation calls for the preservation of these areas for generations to come. Additional recommendations for parks and open spaces in Marshall can be found in the Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Housing and Neighborhood Amenities

The Parks and Open Space designation is limited to open space, city-owned parks and cemeteries, and land adjacent to the Kalamazoo River and its tributaries. The following parks and open spaces exist in the City of Marshall:

- Carver Park
- Brooks Memorial Fountain Park
- Marshall Athletic Fields
- Ketchum Park
- Stuart Landing and Millpond Park
- Brooks Nature Area
- Shearman Park
- Riverwalk
- Alcott Park
- Cook Park
- Garvin Park
- Grand Street Park
- Peace Park
- Oakridge Cemetery



Future Vision:

- Parks, open space, and natural features will be adequately maintained for the continued enjoyment of Marshall residents and visitors.
- Uses that expand recreational uses such as a permanent canoe/kayak livery are appropriate.



Streets and Connections

Many parks and open spaces in Marshall are accessible via walking or biking, but gaps in the sidewalk and trail network exist.

Future Vision:

- Parks and open spaces should be connected by a network of walking and biking trails.
- Connections between parks and neighborhoods, schools, and the downtown should be prioritized.
- Regional trail connections will be supported through coordination with state, local, and national partners.
- Supportive infrastructure such as signage, bike racks, and bike repair stations will be provided.

Building and Physical Characteristics

Buildings are limited to recreational facilities such as bathrooms, pavilions, and concessions buildings. Playground equipment, kayak and boat launches, skate park equipment, picnic tables, and other recreational equipment are appropriate.

Future Vision:

- Structures should be made of high-quality materials.
- Accessibility upgrades to equipment should be made wherever possible.
- Buildings that support recreation programming and community gathering are appropriate.





Implementation6

Introduction

This Chapter focuses on tangible steps the City of Marshall, community stakeholders, and residents can take to implement the Goals and Objectives identified in Chapter 4.

The **Non-motorized Transportation Plan** provides greater detail and guidance for improvements to streetscapes, sidewalks, trails, and bicycle infrastructure throughout Marshall. Two of the implementation projects relate directly to non-motorized transportation.

The **Zoning Plan** clearly states the relationship between the Future Land Use Plan and the city’s current zoning ordinance. This section also identifies a series of recommended zoning updates that implement relevant goals from Chapter 4.

Implementation Projects are actions the City of Marshall can take that emphasize goals and objectives that were identified as a high priority during the final public open house in February 2025. The eight projects address each of the 15 goals identified in Chapter 4. Goals that were identified as the highest priority by the community have more projects proposed that help to implement them.

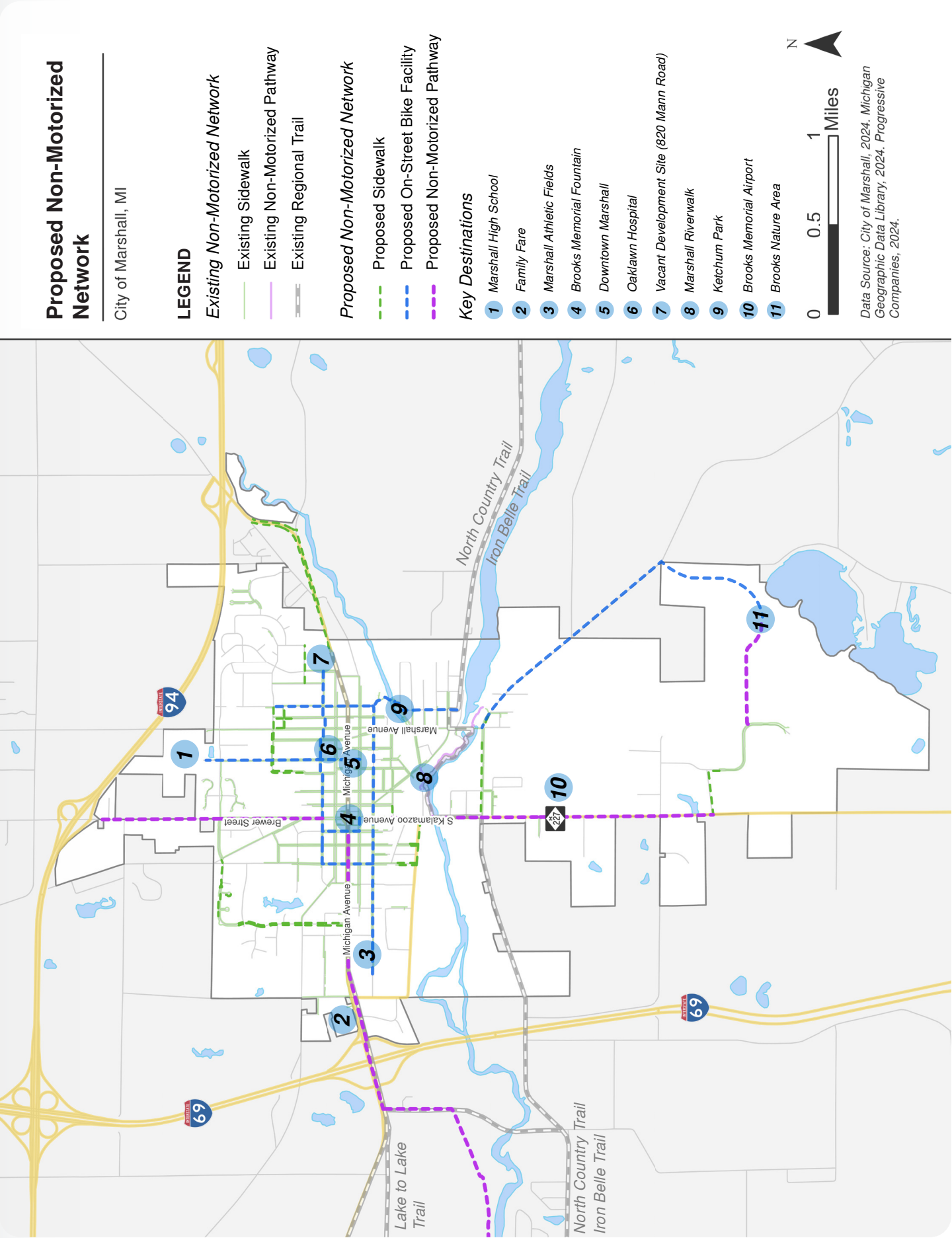
Lastly, a process for **Tracking Progress and Metrics** is provided to ensure the City staff and the Planning Commission can monitor the plan’s progress, recognize successes, and course correct if necessary.



Non-motorized Transportation Plan

Walkability defines Marshall to its residents and visitors. The ability to get around Marshall without a vehicle to experience the community’s local businesses, restaurants, parks, natural areas, and festivals is a feature of the community that was identified throughout the planning process as one of the best things about Marshall. Walkability and bikeability is something that absolutely must be sustained and enhanced by the Master Plan.

Despite Marshall’s recognition as a walkable community, there is room for improvement. There are significant gaps between sidewalks in key areas and the city’s bike network is fairly informal, making the experience of biking less comfortable for less experienced riders. Additionally, Michigan Avenue needs significant non-motorized enhancements as the primary East-West spine running through the City. These needs are all within the context a regional trail network, that runs through Marshall. The Non-motorized Network map illustrates the existing and proposed non-motorized infrastructure in Marshall.



Non-motorized Network Gaps

Key gaps in the non-motorized network are shown in the Non-motorized Network Graphic below.

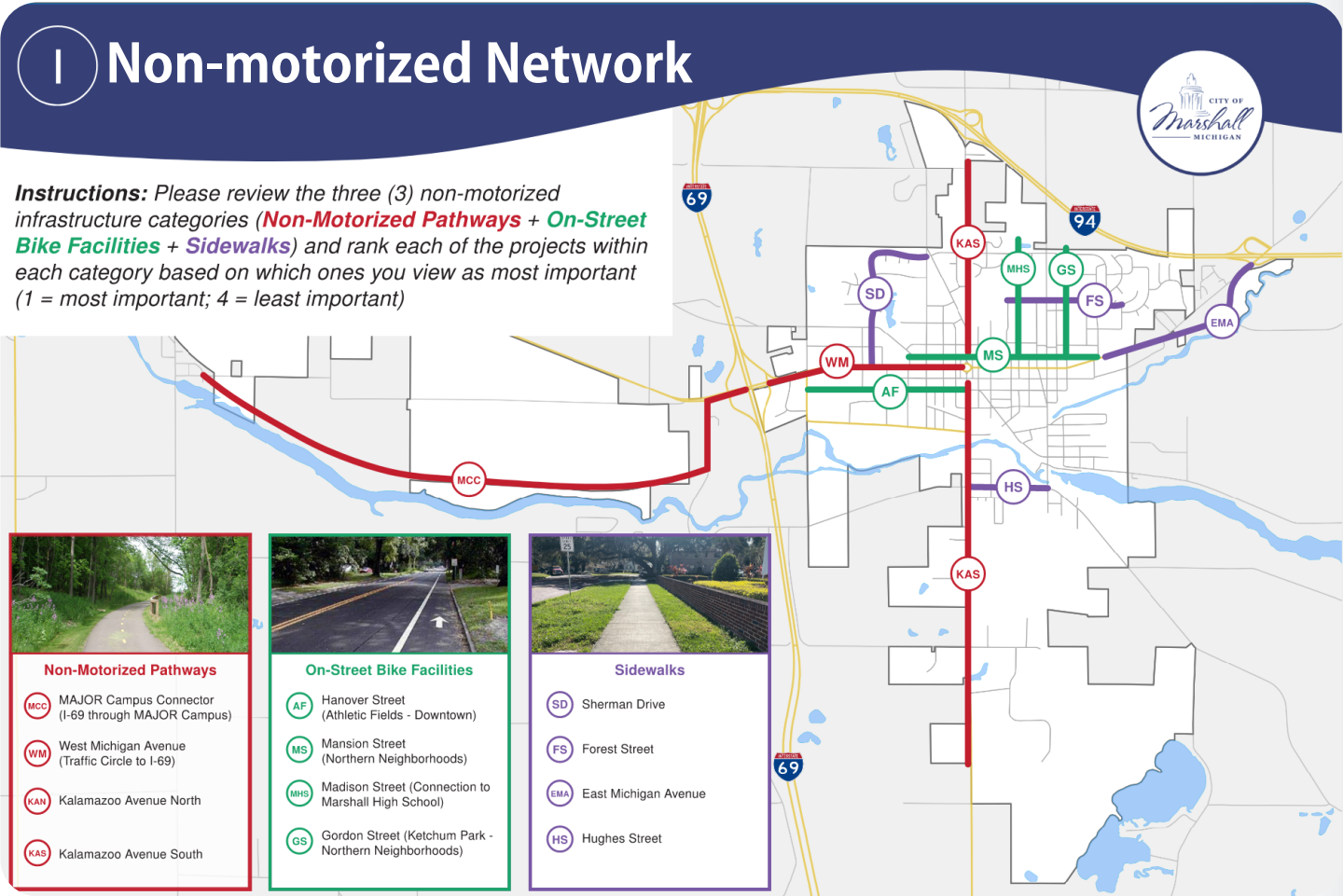




Illustration of Preferred Cross Section of Michigan Avenue through downtown.

The preferred cross section will help to increase pedestrian safety by slowing traffic speeds, widening sidewalks, and adding mid-block crossings so people can safely cross the street at more frequent locations in the corridor.

No Impact on Parades!

Additionally, the preferred cross section will not impact parades and other events on Michigan Avenue. The width of the right-of-way is approximately 100 feet, which includes sidewalks, parking lanes, and travel lanes. The City of Marshall Fire and Police Departments have offered their support for the preferred cross section and are fully confident that parades will be able to operate as they have always done.



West Michigan Avenue

While East Michigan Avenue is the most iconic street in Marshall, West Michigan Avenue serves as the primary gateway into the community, has the highest concentration of commercial activity, and is home to key destinations like the Marshall Athletic Fields.

This section of Michigan Avenue is dangerous, with 60 crashes occurring between 2019 and 2023, including seven crashes that resulted in a severe injury and one fatality. With traffic volumes steadily declining from over 18,000 vehicles per day in the early 2000s to less than 15,000 vehicles per day in 2023 (a decline of 22 percent), Michigan Avenue has more lanes and capacity than it needs. Furthermore, preliminary traffic studies related to the MAJOR Campus site do not project additional traffic volumes East of I-69 that will reverse this overall trend.



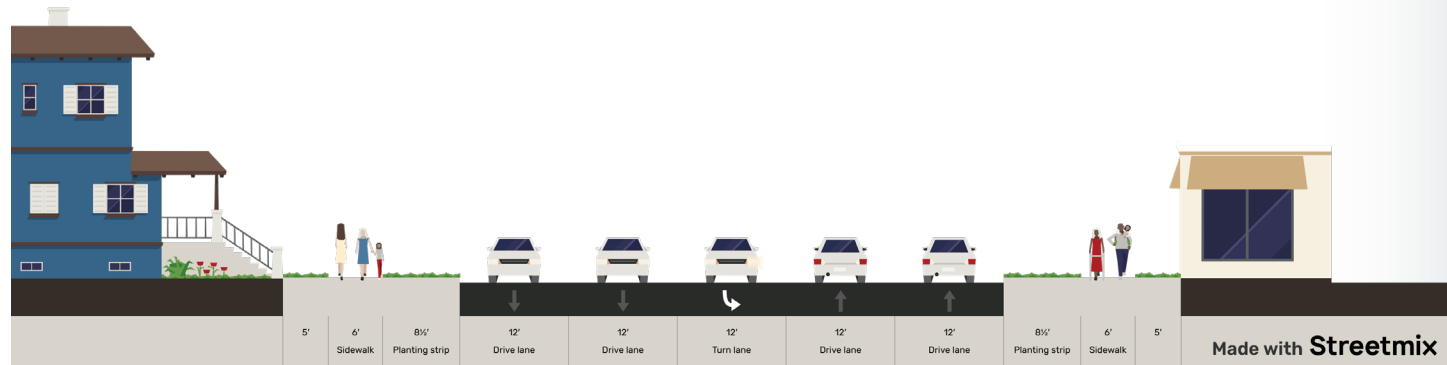
Sidewalk ramp with no crosswalk on West Michigan Ave.

Based on community feedback, as well as traffic volume trends, the overwhelming preference for West Michigan Avenue is to make improvements to the roadway that improve safety for vehicles by reducing crashes and provide better access for pedestrians and bicyclists. The roadway includes many significant destinations for the community, but sidewalks are either nonexistent or in poor condition, and there are no crosswalks at most intersections

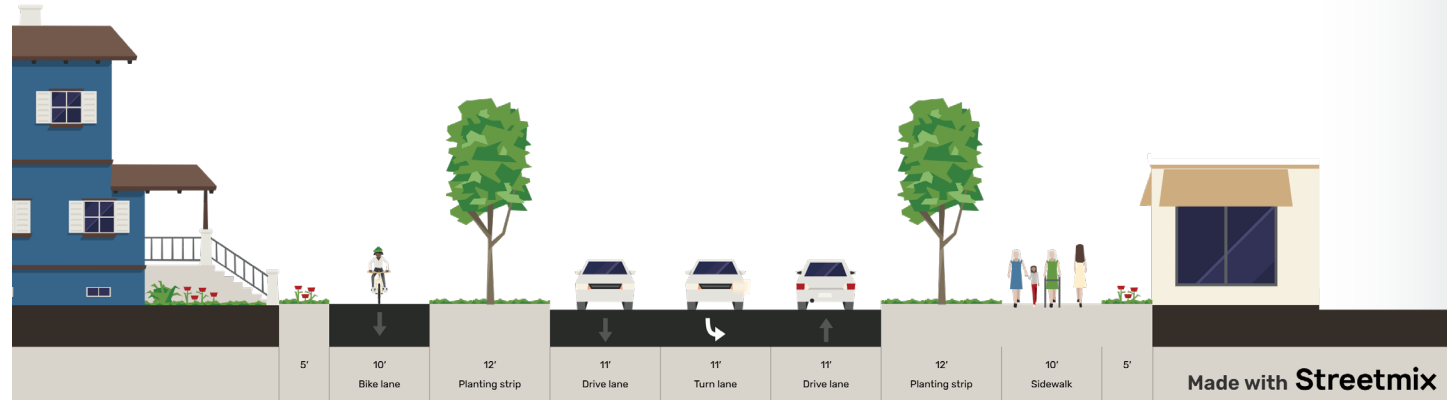


The preferred approach to achieving the community’s goals for safety on West Michigan Avenue, along with supporting redevelopment and investment in the properties along the corridor includes the following (in order of community priority):

1. Adding mid-block pedestrian crossings at key locations.
2. Adding sidewalks on both side of the roadway and providing a non-motorized pathway.
3. Reducing the number of lanes.



Current Cross Section (Dobbins St. to Traffic Circle)



Preferred Cross Section: Dobbins Street to Traffic Circle

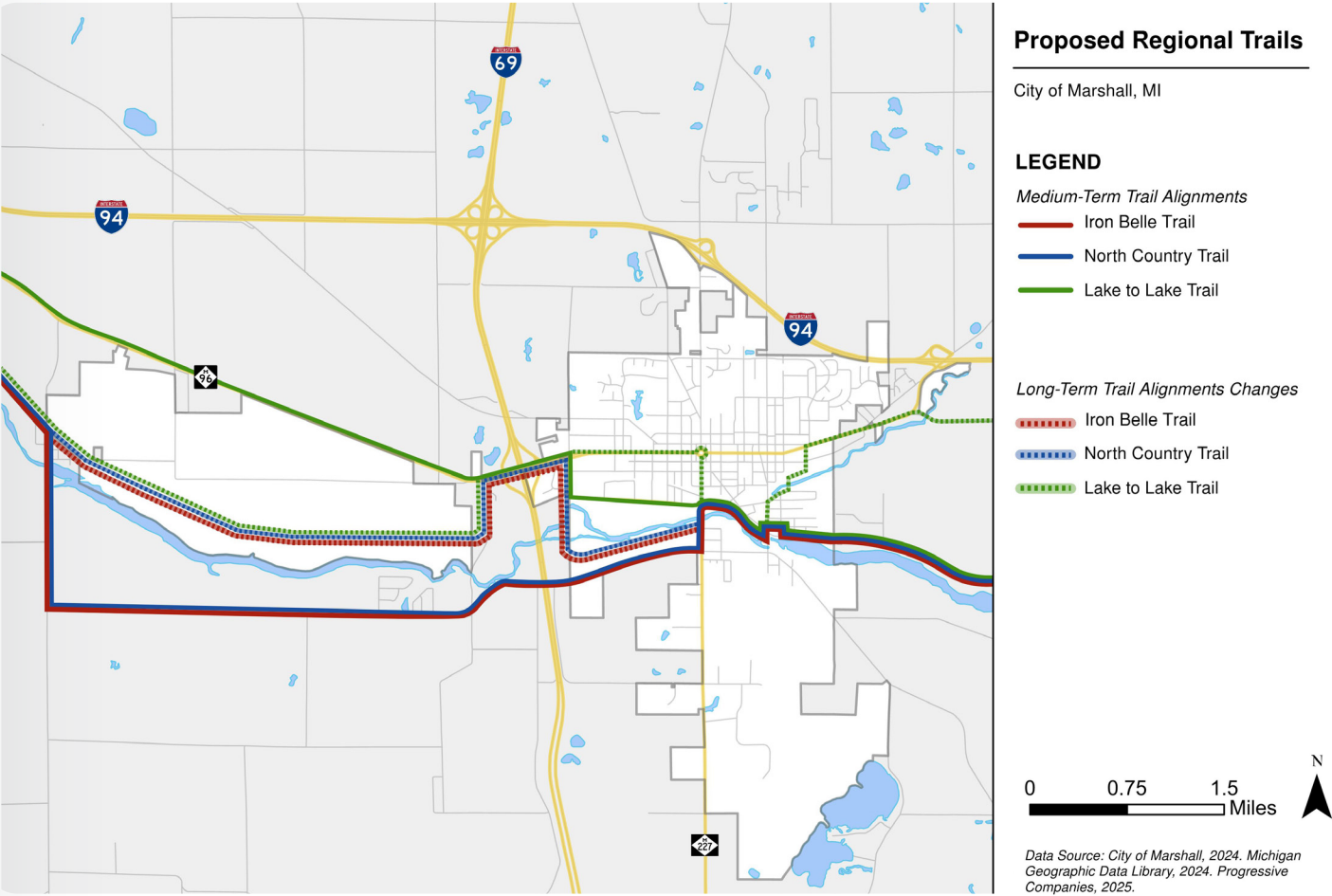
Regional Trail Network

Improvements to Marshall’s sidewalks and bicycle network occur within the context of a regional trail network that runs through Marshall. Three major state and national trails run through the heart of Marshall: the North Country Trail, Iron Belle Trail, and the Great Lake to Lake Trail.

The North Country Trail (NCT) stretches approximately 4,800 miles from Vermont to North Dakota, making it the longest National Scenic Trail in America. Michigan hosts the most North Country National Scenic Trail miles of all eight states at 1,180 miles. The NCT stretches across Calhoun County and routes right through Marshall, running along the Kalamazoo River as part of the Riverwalk. Given the development of the MAJOR Campus, there is opportunity to route the trail further north than originally planned, through the conservation easement running to the south of the MAJOR Campus site.

The Iron Belle Trail is a dual trail being developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Using existing trail networks and new connections, the Iron Belle Trail will extend more than 2,000 miles from the far western tip of the Upper Peninsula to Belle Isle in Detroit. The hiking route crosses through Marshall, south of downtown. Given the development of the MAJOR Campus, there is opportunity to route the trail through the new conservation easement at the south of the Campus. The trail is currently 71 percent complete.

The Great Lake to Lake Trail system is a group of five biking trails that traverse the state of Michigan. Each route connects two of the Great Lakes. Route 1 runs from Port Huron in the east to South Haven in the west and is routed through Marshall. While the trail is routed north of downtown at present, the goal is to route the trail south of the MAJOR Campus, through the conservation easement.



This map above shows the ideal routes of the three trails in the long term. The following improvements are critical to the desired routes:

1. A new crossing of the Kalamazoo River at Ketchum Park will link the Lake to Lake Trail to Marengo Township to the east. Plans for this crossing can be found in the Ketchum Park Master Plan.
2. Extension of the Riverwalk west of Kalamazoo Road, including a new crossing of the Kalamazoo River.
3. New I-69 bridge crossing at Michigan Avenue. MDOT plans for this improvement to include separated facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, making the experience safer and more comfortable for all road users.
4. Addition of a shared-use path along West Michigan Avenue between the Traffic Circle and I-69.
5. Routing of all three trails through the new conservation easement at the south of the MAJOR Campus. The trails could access the Bear Creek Historical Campus that is being proposed by MAEDA, and connect with the Ceresco Kayak Launch to the east.

Zoning Plan

A zoning plan is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. According to the act, a zoning plan must, “include an explanation of how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map.” The table below illustrates how the future land use classifications relate to current zoning

districts. These future land use classifications are based on the “place types” used throughout the planning process. Furthermore, this zoning plan outlines recommendations for amendments to the City of Marshall Zoning Ordinance necessary to implement this Master Plan.

Future Land Use Classification	Current Zoning District(s)
Modern Residential	R-1 Residential Estate R-2 Suburban Residential
Traditional Residential	R-3 Traditional Residential
Manufactured Housing Park District	R-3 Traditional Residential
Neighborhood Mixed Use	MFRD Multiple Family Residential POSD Professional Office Services HCHSD Health Care and Human Services B-2 Local Business
Downtown Mixed Use	B-3 Neighborhood Commercial HCHSD Health Care and Human Services
Gateway Commercial	B-4 Regional Commercial FS Freeway Services POSD Professional Office Services
Light Manufacturing	I-1 Research and Manufacturing I-2 General Industrial
Industrial Manufacturing	I-3 Industrial and Manufacturing Complex
Parks & Open Space	PSP Public/Semi-Public Services PUD Planned Unit Development

Zoning Plan Recommendations

An update to the City of Marshall’s zoning ordinance has the opportunity to advance many of the goals and objectives in this plan. The following recommendations for updates to the zoning ordinance are comprehensive in that they address all goals and objectives of this plan, as well as best practices to support effective administration that encourages redevelopment. However, it is not necessary that all recommendations are implemented simultaneously. This plan has a twenty-year time horizon, and the Planning Commission may find that some recommendations require immediate implementation, while others are appropriate to be phased in over time.

- 1. **Collapse Zoning Districts:** The current zoning code has 17 zone districts, including 7 different types of commercial districts. The number of zoning districts should be reduced to more closely correspond with future land use classifications. While moving from 17 to 9 districts may not be possible immediately, reducing the number of districts will make the code much easier to administer.
- 2. **Revise Zoning Map:** Depending on how zoning districts are collapsed, the zoning map should be revised to reflect those changes as well as direction from the Future Land Use Map. Significant adjustments to the zoning map include:
 - a. Areas identified as Neighborhood Mixed Use in the Future Land Use Map have various zoning districts in the current map.
 - b. The delineation between R-2 and R-3 on the current map occurs mid-block and there is no clear rationale for the change in district. These classifications should generally be made by block and by type of development.

- c. A large portion of Brooks Industrial Park is identified in the Future Land Use Map as being appropriate for residential, rather than commercial development. This rezoning would permit development of new single-family homes within Marshall and make use of the existing infrastructure as well as access to open space in the Brooks Nature Area.

- 4. **Audit the ordinance to support housing choice:** Review the ordinance to identify opportunities to support housing development that provides more choice in terms of housing type and price point. The Michigan Association of Planning’s Zoning Reform Toolkit is an excellent resource, as are other national resources like Strong Town’s Housing Ready Toolkit.
- 5. **Explore design requirements to maintain historic integrity of neighborhoods and downtown:** Marshall’s history is integral to the community’s identity. Being good stewards of the community’s history involves both telling Marshall’s stories, but also considering how buildings and public spaces can communicate that history. However, it was clear that the desire of the Planning Commission is not to adopt overly restrictive design guidelines that add expense, time, and complexity to renovations or new construction.
- 6. **Consider the development of design guidelines for Downtown Marshall:** Ensuring future development or renovations of buildings in Downtown Marshall are supportive to the community’s historic integrity is a priority of this plan. Evaluation of the current B-3 zoning district and development of design guidelines to ensure that any future buildings or developments are consistent with Marshall’s current architectural character is recommended.

7. Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED):

Incorporate CPTED strategies into mixed-use and commercial zoning districts to promote safety and deter crime and littering.

8. Natural features and green infrastructure:

Consider the addition of standards to project natural features and provide for additional green infrastructure in new development projects.

9. Industrial districts: The I-3 zoning district that applies to the MAJOR Campus site includes a great deal of duplication between other elements of the zoning ordinance. If the number of industrial districts is reduced from 3 to 2, these standards should be consistent across as much of the ordinance as possible.

10. Connectivity and Complete Streets:

Ensure that clear standards are present to require pedestrian connections between new development areas and existing non-motorized infrastructure as a means to implement the non-motorized plan.

Priority Redevelopment Sites

The Future Land Use Plan identifies five “Mixed Use Neighborhood Centers” throughout Marshall. These are underdeveloped or vacant areas that present the opportunity to develop new activity centers within the community. These centers are appropriate for a mix of medium-density housing like townhouses and small apartment buildings along with limited commercial uses that serve the surrounding neighborhood. Of the five areas identified in the Master Plan, two have been priority

redevelopment sites in Marshall for many years: The River District and the former State Farm Michigan Site. In addition to these two sites, this plan calls for reconsideration of vacant portions of Brooks Industrial Park as residential development, specifically for single-family homes. The location of this area adjacent to Brooks Nature Area, with existing water and sewer access, makes it extremely attractive.

To explore opportunities for redevelopment of these sites, this section provides “test fits,” or analyses of development of the River District and former State Farm Michigan sites. Potential development of the Brooks Industrial Park site depends upon delineation of wetland areas on the site, which are ongoing as of Spring 2025.

These test fits are not development proposals. Rather they illustrate a vision for redevelopment of the properties consistent with the goals of this Master Plan. Any entity considering redevelopment of these sites will be required to conduct their own site planning and proceed through community engagement consistent with the City of Marshall’s Community Engagement Plan and Marshall’s Code of Ordinances.

Former State Farm Michigan Site

This site is located between Michigan Avenue and Mann Road, bordered by single family homes to the west and apartment buildings to the east. Totalling just over 16 acres, the southern portion of the site is owned by Oaklawn Hospital and the northern portion is owned by the Calhoun County Land Bank Authority.

Two potential concepts for redevelopment of the site are displayed here. Key considerations for development include:

- A mix of housing options are necessary to address gaps in Marshall’s housing supply. This includes single-floor options for seniors and other people that do not want to have stairs, as well as townhomes and cottage court developments that provide opportunities for home ownership to young families.

- Higher-density housing types like small apartment buildings are located on the eastern portion of the site adjacent to existing apartments, while duplexes and cottage courts that are the same height as existing two-story residences are proposed on the western portion of the site.
- Mixed-use buildings with some retail opportunities should be provided along Michigan Avenue to add neighborhood services within walking distance of the proposed housing as well as the existing neighborhood.
- Development should include ample green space and landscaping to match the character of the existing neighborhood and create a visual buffer between any new development and the backyards of existing residences.

- Street connections within the development must be structured in such a way that extends the existing street network and provides connections and ensures any new development is integrated with the existing neighborhood.

While the test fits shown here illustrate the entire development area, it is possible that this site may be developed in phases, which would allow it to blend with the surrounding neighborhood more gradually.



Calhoun County Land Bank Site Today

Oaklawn & Land Bank Site Concept 1

- 86 Total Units
- (12) Side-by-Side Duplexes
 - 24 Units
- (3) Cottage Courts
 - 18 Units
- (4) Courtyard Apartments
 - 24 Units
- (2) Mixed Use Buildings
 - 20 Units
 - Commercial Space: 19,872 SF



Oaklawn & Land Bank Site Concept 2

- 84 Total Units
- (1) Cottage Courts
 - 8 Units
- (24) Townhomes
 - 24 Units
- (12) Fourplexes
 - 48 Units
- (1) Mixed-Use
 - 4 Units
 - Commercial Space: 3,919 SF



River District

This site is between the Kalamazoo River and the railroad tracks, south and east of Dark Horse Brewing Co. and is a total of 4.5 acres. The properties are currently privately owned by Dark Horse Brewing Co. and another private entity. Key considerations for the development concept displayed here include:

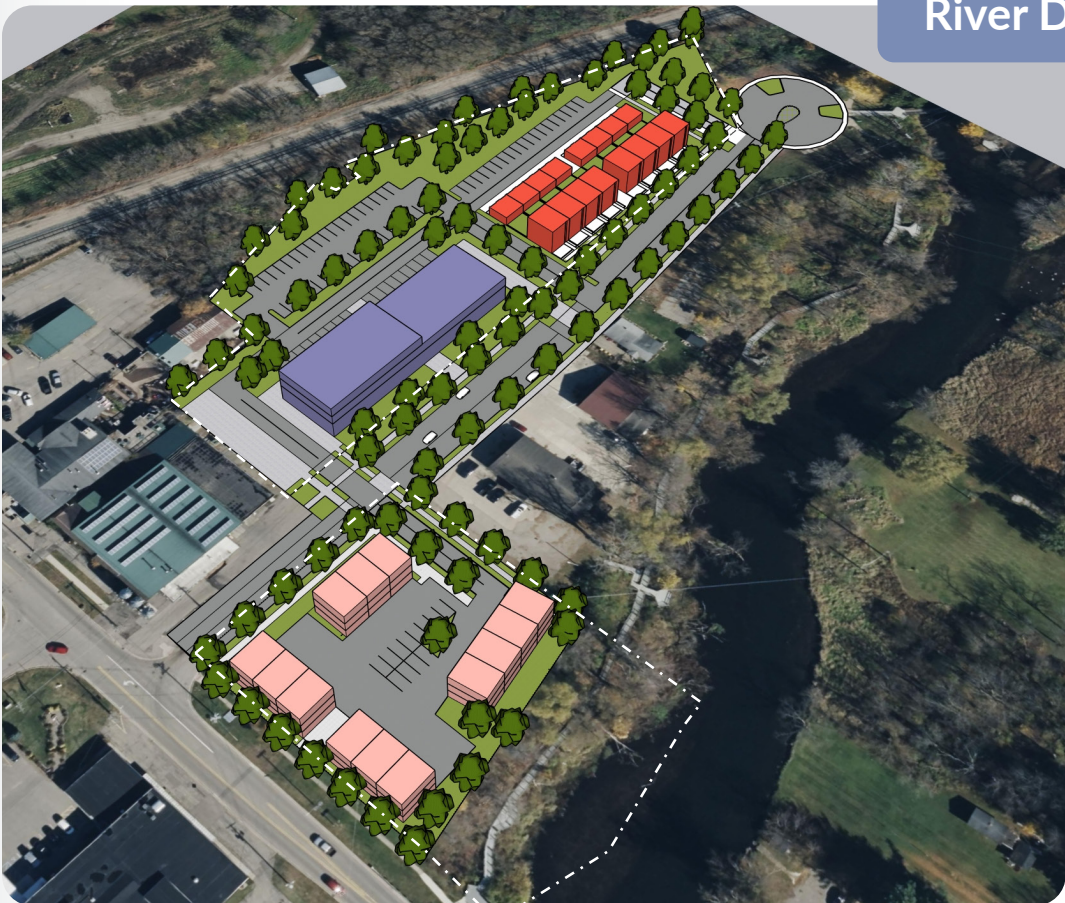
- A mix of medium-density housing will help address gaps in Marshall's housing supply while also adding new residents to this area of town will create the vibrancy necessary for the River District to fulfill the potential identified initially in the 2015 Master Plan. A combination of apartment-style housing and townhomes are envisioned that utilize the area's topography and views of the Kalamazoo River.
- Housing types along the Kalamazoo river and adjacent to the riverwalk should be set back to ensure that they do not negatively impact the experience of people using either.

- A strong north-south pedestrian connection and public space should be developed that builds upon Dark Horse Brewing's existing beer garden and outdoor event space to create vibrant and interesting public amenity spaces.
- Development should effectively connect with the Riverwalk trail head to the east and utilize planned non-motorized connections along Kalamazoo Avenue to provide easy access to downtown as well as the rest of Marshall.
- The intersection of West Pearl Street and Michigan Avenue is somewhat hazardous today, but with new development redesign of the intersection should be considered to align Pearl Street and Industrial Road.

While the test fits shown here illustrate the entire development area, it is possible that this site may be developed in phases, with the parcel adjacent to Kalamazoo Avenue the most obvious first phase of development.

River District Site Concept

- 98 Total Units
- (13) Townhomes with Tuck-Under Parking
 - 13 Units
- (8) Townhomes
 - 8 Units
- (1) Apartment Building
 - 77 Units
 - Commercial Space: 14,625 SF



Implementation Projects

The City of Marshall is a community that accomplishes a great deal with limited staff and resources. Consequently, it is imperative that the projects in which the city chooses to invest time and resources deliver the greatest impact. The following projects have been identified because they address multiple objectives of this plan and also align with the priorities expressed by the community throughout the planning process. It is the responsibility of the City Manager and City Staff to implement this plan, with direction from the City Council.

Planning Commission will track progress on these projects through annual reports to City Council.

During the final community open house and survey, the community was presented with plan goals and objectives and asked to prioritize them according to their level of importance. The table below summarizes the results of the community's feedback, with goals listed in order of the percent of respondents that rated each goal as "Very Important" or "Important".

Abbreviation	Goal	% of "Important" Responses
S2	Protect and invest in the river, parks, and open space, and actively promote their importance to residents and visitors alike.	92%
C2	Enhance public communications to ensure that community members are aware of events, development proposals, and other city initiatives that are taking place and provide opportunity to engage and offer feedback.	88%
V6	Maintain public safety and quality of life for Marshall residents.	88%
H1	Protect and enhance the historic integrity of Marshall.	86%
V1	Safeguard the vitality of the downtown business district.	86%
H2	Celebrate and incorporate Marshall's history into parks, public spaces, and events.	81%
S3	Improve climate resilience, flood prevention, and the health of local natural resources.	80%
S1	Sustain Marshall's future by expanding housing supply and choice to meet the needs of residents in all stages of life.	75%
C1	Foster a safe transportation network that connects people to each other and key destinations in Marshall.	73%
V3	Make gateway corridors safer and more attractive.	72%
C3	Maintain Marshall's identity as a civically engaged and welcoming community.	72%
V5	Support the continued success of the Marshall Public School District.	71%
V2	Establish the River District as a destination for residents and visitors alike.	66%
V4	Raise awareness of arts and culture opportunities in Marshall and invest in their success.	53%
S4	Continue to develop the Marshall Area as a regional hub for employment.	52%



The chart below indicates how each of the following projects addresses an objective listed in this plan. Projects are listed in order of priority, with those addressing the most objectives listed first, and those addressing the fewest objectives listed last.

Generally speaking, the projects that address the most objectives are the highest priority, but depending on available funding and other factors, some lower-priority projects may be pulled forward.

Project	Master Plan Goals														
	H1	H2	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	S1	S2	S3	S4	C1	C2	C3
Update the city's zoning code	●		●	●	●			●	●		●	●	●		
Invest in marketing & communications support		●	●			●				●		●		●	●
Implement the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan	●	●		●				●		●	●		●	●	●
Prioritize non-motorized transportation, accessibility, and environmental stewardship in all city infrastructure projects							●	●			●		●		
Continue to support civic engagement through city support for volunteer and civic organizations		●				●	●	●		●				●	●
Collaborate with MDOT on a plan for redesign of Michigan Avenue			●		●			●	●						
Engage the DDA as a tool to support downtown businesses and Marshall's unique character	●		●			●			●						
Utilize MEDC RRC Sites to attract redevelopment of key sites				●					●					●	

Update the City’s Zoning Code: The City of Marshall’s current zoning code creates many barriers to redevelopment and does not prioritize maintenance of the city’s historic identity in a manner that aligns with the community’s desires. Revisions to the zoning code and map will also open new opportunities for construction of housing that is in high demand. Priorities for the zoning code update are summarized in the Zoning Plan.

- **Estimated Cost:** \$50,000
- **Timeframe:** 1-2 years
- **Responsible Party:** Community Development Department
- **Funding Sources:** MEDC RRC, MSHDA Housing Readiness

Invest in Marketing and Communications: The City of Marshall has heard a clear public desire for more robust and consistent communication between the city and residents. Additionally, there is a strong need for marketing and branding to raise awareness of the city’s assets outside of its historic downtown, particularly parks, recreation, and natural assets. Identifying and committing assets toward a more consistent and deliberate communication and branding effort will pay immediate dividends.

- **Estimated Cost:** \$50,000+
- **Timeframe:** Ongoing
- **Responsible Party:** City Council & City Manager
- **Funding Sources:** Local foundations

Implement the City’s 5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan: Stewardship of Marshall’s natural resources was a clear priority for the public throughout the engagement process, and the Kalamazoo River has been identified as one of the City’s most under-utilized assets. The parks and recreation plan prioritizes maintenance and upgrades to the city’s existing parks and recreation assets, improving connectivity between parks and residential neighborhoods, marketing parks and recreation programs, continued high-quality programming, and climate resilience.

- **Estimated Cost:** The combined annual operating expenses for the parks and recreation departments are approximately \$500,000, which are funded through a combination of local taxes and user fees. The proposed capital expenses in the current capital improvement plan exceed \$20 million, and are funded through a combination of local funds, county funds, and grants from state and philanthropic sources.
- **Timeframe:** 5 years
- **Responsible Party:** City Council, Parks & Recreation Departments, City Manager, Volunteers
- **Funding Sources:** Michigan DNR, Calhoun County, local foundations, sponsorships

Prioritize Non-Motorized Transportation, Accessibility, and Environmental Stewardship in all City Infrastructure Projects: One of Marshall’s greatest assets is its high level of walkability and access for people of all ages, but there are gaps in the system that need to be filled as identified in the Non-motorized Transportation Plan. The best opportunity to fill these gaps is by bundling with other maintenance or infrastructure projects, reducing costs by completing multiple projects simultaneously. Furthermore, given the strong preference for a focus on environmental sustainability due to increasing growth pressure, incorporating a variety of green infrastructure concepts into infrastructure design will help reduce impact and maintenance costs over the long-term.

- **Estimated Cost:** Cost in changes to policy is negligible, costs for specific projects will vary and should be incorporated into the Capital Improvement Plan.
- **Timeframe:** 2 years to establish policies, ongoing implementation
- **Responsible Party:** Public Services
- **Funding Sources:** State of Michigan EGLE & MDOT

Continue to support civic engagement through city support for volunteer and civic organizations: Marshall is an incredibly active and civically engaged community. City staff and officials are represented on a variety of nonprofit, civic, and social organizations that contribute immensely to the community through events and programming. This strong connection between City officials, staff, and the community is critical to Marshall’s ability to tackle big problems while maintaining an environment of civility and respect for others.

- **Estimated Cost:** Negligible, some staff time.
- **Timeframe:** Ongoing
- **Responsible Party:** City Council & City Manager
- **Funding Sources:** N/A

Collaborate with MDOT on a Plan for Redesign of Michigan Avenue: Michigan Avenue is the spine of Marshall, connecting to I-69 and I-94 and bisecting the community’s historic downtown. The roadway is also the primary source of crashes in the community and includes the traffic circle around Brooks Memorial Fountain, Marshall’s most iconic feature. Working collaboratively with MDOT to improve safety, pedestrian and bicycle access, and support a vibrant downtown is a critical component of many of this plan’s goals and objectives. The non-motorized transportation plan provides a general framework and vision for redesign of Michigan Avenue, but there should be a formal agreement between MDOT and the City of Marshall to make those improvements through joint pursuit of resources.

- **Estimated Cost:** To be determined
- **Timeframe:** 1-2 years
- **Responsible Parties:** Public Services, MDOT
- **Funding Sources:** State of Michigan MDOT, USDOT

Engage the DDA, LDFA, and NIAs as a Tool to Support Downtown Businesses and Marshall’s Unique Character: The Marshall Downtown Development Authority (DDA) generates a moderate amount of revenue annually. There is an opportunity to re-engage the DDA by updating its outdated development plan and enabling the organization to re-purpose revenues in more creative ways to encourage development of housing downtown, enhance building facades, and create programs and resources to help ensure that downtown Marshall maintains its local, historic character.

- **Estimated Cost:** \$30,000
- **Timeframe:** 1-2 years
- **Responsible Party:** Downtown Development Authority
- **Funding Sources:** DDA Tax Increment

Maintain MEDC RRC Certification and Utilize the RRC Sites Program: The MEDC RRC sites program provides resources for communities to conduct due diligence and create RFQs for development of critical sites. This Plan identifies two sites – the River District and the former State Farm Michigan site – that hold potential for housing development with a small component of commercial or mixed-use space to serve nearby areas. Developing these sites with a variety of housing options, in addition to permitting new housing development in other areas of the city, will help to address the shortage of available housing as well as the need for more housing options.

- **Estimated Cost:** Staff time only
- **Timeframe:** 1-2 years
- **Responsible Party:** Community Services
- **Funding Sources:** N/A

Tracking Progress

Master Plans by their nature are complex documents that identify a wide range of goals/activities that are inter-related and impact communities in many ways. Consequently, it is critical that progress toward key goals of this plan is measured by staff using available data to inform future decision-making. Over time, as this data is measured, it can be used to set tangible targets for community priorities.

Planning Commission Annual Report

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires Planning Commissions to submit an annual report to the City Council summarizing its activities during the previous year. The City of Marshall has used this report in the past to summarize actions taken on development applications and ordinance recommendations, but has not used it to report on progress of implementing the Master Plan. As a means of tracking implementation of this plan, the report will summarize actions taken by the City that align with each goal of the Master Plan as well as the projects and metrics identified in this Chapter.

Key Metrics to Track Progress

- 1. **Building permits for new housing units:** Marshall has a housing shortage that is contributing to high costs and a stagnating population. To address this issue, more housing units must be built on an annual basis than have been built in previous years.
 - a. **Metric:** Single Family and Multi-Family building permits issued by the City of Marshall.
 - b. **Responsible Party:** Community Development Department

- 2. **Linear feet of non-motorized pathways installed and repaired:** Marshall's walkability is an asset that the community has clearly identified as critical to its continued success. To ensure the community continues to be an easy place to get around, gaps in the sidewalk network need to be filled, biking infrastructure added, and existing facilities maintained.
 - a. **Metric:** Linear feet of non-motorized facilities constructed.
 - b. **Metric:** Linear feet of non-motorized facilities repaired.
 - c. **Metric:** New non-motorized support structures added (e.g., bike repair stations).
 - d. **Responsible Party:** Public Services
- 3. **Park maintenance and improvement projects completed:** Addressing deferred maintenance and devising creative, cost-effective ways to enhance park facilities is a key component in ensuring that park facilities reflect the community's pride in its parks and natural assets.
 - a. **Metric:** Number of park improvements/maintenance projects completed.
 - b. **Responsible Party:** Recreation & Public Services
- 4. **Engagement with events and communication:** More robust and transparent communication, along with a continued vibrant civic life in Marshall are crucial to ensuring the quality of life and sense of community that people in Marshall value is continued.
 - a. **Metric:** Implementation of the City of Marshall's Community Engagement Plan.

- b. **Metric:** Level of engagement with Marshall communications and participation in public events, celebrations, and festivals. Specific metrics should be defined further in the Marketing & Economic Development Plan.
 - c. **Responsible Party:** City Manager with additional marketing or communications support
- 5. **Investments in Historic Properties and Story Telling:** Marshall's history is a significant part of the community's identity, but history is not woven together throughout the community. There are many opportunities to tell the community's history as a way to connect neighborhoods, downtown, parks, and other community destinations that will enhance quality of life for residents while also supporting additional tourism and generating income and interest for local businesses.
 - a. **Metric:** Number of and value of investments in historic properties or buildings within Marshall.
 - b. **Metric:** Number of new storytelling elements introduced either physically or through digital means to help people engage with Marshall's history (e.g., historical wayfinding signage)
 - c. **Responsible Party:** Community Development Department, working with Marshall Historical Society

- 6. **Downtown Vacancy and Utilization:** Marshall's downtown storefronts have an extremely low vacancy rate, but many buildings are under-utilized with vacant upper floors. Continued low vacancy rates for storefronts and increased utilization of buildings will be a strong indicator of this plan's success.
 - a. **Metric:** Vacancy rate for downtown storefronts.
 - b. **Metric:** Utilization/vacancy rate of upper-floor areas in downtown buildings.
 - c. **Responsible Party:** DDA & Community Development Department



