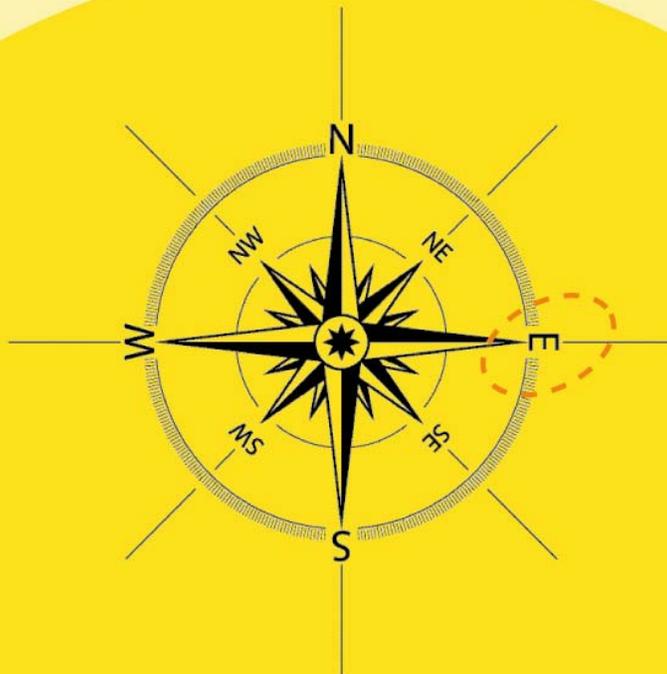


# East Main Street Corridor Plan

Eastside Neighborhood Association

Kalamazoo, MI



October 2008



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Acknowledgements.....	1
Purpose of the Plan.....	3
Current Assumptions.....	7
Existing Plans and Zoning for East Main Street.....	11
Community Input.....	17
Strategic Implementation Plan .....	27

## Tables

1 – Eastside Racial Composition .....	7
2 – Housing Stability.....	8
3 – Housing Vacancy .....	9
4 – Traffic Counts .....	10
5 – Implementation Plan Summary .....	47

## Figures

1 – Eastside Population Percentage .....	7
2 – Eastside Comparison of Income .....	8
3 – Design Guidelines .....	42

## Maps

1 – Location .....	5
2 – Future Land Use (1998).....	13
3 – Zoning (2005) .....	15
4 – Site Conditions from Orientation Workshop .....	19
5 – Photo Montage .....	21
6 – Development Plan .....	29

## Appendix

- #1 Property Ownership & Property Size
- #2 Property Ownership Map
- #3 Comments from Stakeholder Orientation Workshops
- #4 Comments from Visioning Workshops



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The process to prepare this Plan has involved numerous community residents and stakeholders. In addition, the Michigan Local Initiatives Support Corporation provided a grant to fund the conduct of this planning effort. The following individuals have provided key input and their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

### Eastside Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

Frank J. Barrett, President	Magnolia Bodley
Jennette Tarver, Vice President	Eva L. Ozier
Michael Seals, Treasurer	Milton Wells
Doris Jackson, Secretary	Christina Griffin
Sam Brooks	Angela Reynolds
Daniel Juzwiak	Peggy Seals

Patricia Taylor, Executive Director

### Planning Participants

The process to develop this plan included many other participants. While the following list is not exhaustive, it lists the names of many who offered their expertise and opinions about the future of the East Main Street corridor in public meetings and workshops.

Evelyn Lewis	Andrea Augustine
Tahirih Ziegler	Bobby Hopewell
Heidi Slater	Mary Carver
LaQuenta Smith	Hassan Mateen
Lola Pullion	Brian Uridge
Corey Bradley	Robert Burdick
Erica Northup	Michael Skurski
Sonja Dean	Margaret Patton
Heidi Slater	Michael Slater
Chelseá Lewis	Chuck Vliek
Pat Ewert	Christina Griffin
Jermaine Robinson	Bridget Ward
Joe Nichols	Chuck Dahlinoon
Lois Justice	Penny McKellar
Laila Mateen	Guy Harrison
Willie Buchanan	Ida Buchanan
Kara Aubin	



## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

**The purpose of this Plan is to provide a framework for residents to use to revitalize their “main street.”**

East Main Street is a neighborhood connector that links a portion of Kalamazoo Township to downtown Kalamazoo. It runs through hilly topography, small-scale community businesses, and a wooded, urban residential neighborhood. In many respects, East Main Street is the geographic heart of the Eastside neighborhood in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

To Eastside neighborhood residents, East Main Street is a relic of a neighborhood retail gathering place. Many of the iconic establishments have closed or moved out of the community. A few of the buildings are deteriorating. While businesses exist along the corridor, boarded up storefronts without windows tell visitors that the area is unsafe and/or closed for business.

Nevertheless, long-time Eastside residents remember when East Main Street was the great third place,<sup>1</sup> where residents would congregate at a restaurant, a furniture store, a salon, or similar establishment. Today, many new and longtime residents are mobilized to reestablish this sense of community. Many believe that this desire to bring rebirth into the structures along East Main Street and to enhance sense of community and pride as they relate specifically to the corridor will cause interest and investment. The purpose of this Corridor Plan is to provide a framework for the Eastside residents to use in the process to revitalize their “main street.”

The geographic boundaries of this Plan apply to that portion of East Main Street within the City of Kalamazoo, or between Michigan Street and Wallace Street. Map 1 illustrates the Eastside neighborhood in the context of the broader City of Kalamazoo and outlines the project area.

This Plan summarizes key trends and provides an expression of community input. Additionally, the strategies outlined in the final section of this document support the future redevelopment and improvement of the corridor. The primary focus is on implementation, consistent with the overall policy direction provided during citizen input exercises.

<sup>1</sup> In *The Great Good Place* by Ray Oldenburg, the “third place” is a term referring to community building in places separate from the home and workplace.



Insert map 1

back of map 1

**CURRENT ASSUMPTIONS**

**Demographic and Housing Composition Summary**

In any planning effort, it is helpful to present a brief overview of demographic composition. Population, income, and housing statistics can be measures to define the community, and provide a foundation of data that can support conclusions. The data shown on the following pages reflects 2000 United States Census data for the Eastside neighborhood. This data encompasses Block Groups 1-3 in Census Tract 1, Kalamazoo County, Michigan. These Block Groups parallel the boundaries of the Eastside neighborhood.

The United States Census reveals that the City of Kalamazoo had a total population in 2000 of 77,092 people. The Eastside Neighborhood, with 2,610 people, comprised 3% of that population.

**Figure 1. Population Percentage  
Eastside Neighborhood**

**The Eastside neighborhood included 2,610 residents at the 2000 Census.**

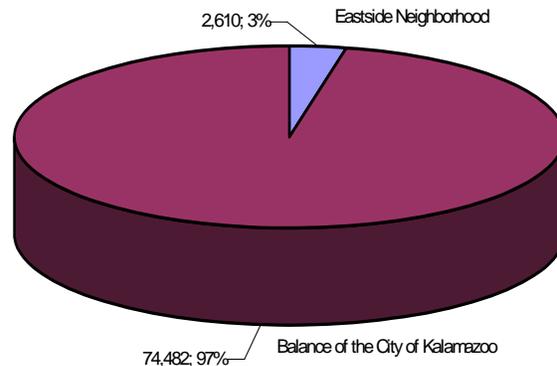


Table 1, below, indicates that a plurality of Eastside residents, or 60%, are Black or African American. White residents make up 29%. This information is not likely to impact land uses or redevelopment along East Main Street, but it illustrates the cherished diversity in the community. It should be noted that the Hispanic population of the neighborhood has perceptibly increased since the 2000 Census and a 2% figure for that segment of the population seems low at the time this Plan was written in 2008.

<b>1. Eastside Neighborhood Racial Composition</b>	
Black or African American alone	60%
White or Caucasian alone	29%
Two or more races	6%
Hispanic or Latino	2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	1%
Some other race alone	1%

Figure 2 compares the entire City of Kalamazoo to the Eastside neighborhood in terms of median family income and median household income. Median family income is typically higher than median household income. Census “families” are generally comprised of two parents with children.<sup>2</sup> The two working adults in this conventional type of family tend to earn more than “households.” As Figure 2 shows, incomes in Eastside are approximately 30% to 40% lower than incomes in the City overall.

**Figure 2. Comparison of Incomes  
Eastside, Kalamazoo**



**54% of the total housing stock in the Eastside neighborhood was made up of owner-occupied dwellings.**

Table 2 shows that 54% of the total housing stock in the Eastside neighborhood was made up of owner-occupied dwellings, compared to 48% in the City overall. As rental tenants typically move in and out more frequently, this suggests a slightly more established and committed population than the broader City of Kalamazoo, which has a significant amount of student housing.<sup>3</sup>

2. Housing Stability		
	Owner-Occupied	Renter Occupied
Eastside	54%	46%
Kalamazoo	48%	52%

Moreover, the 2000 Census reported that 88% of Eastside’s housing units were occupied. This figure may indicate neighborhood instability, a condition where property owners leave homes vacant for extended periods of time. However, the 12% vacancy rate may partially be a result of the current weak housing and rental market.

<sup>2</sup> 44.36% of households have children; the average household size is 2.96 persons

<sup>3</sup> 70.8% of dwelling units are single-family homes; the next largest type of dwelling is duplex or two-unit structures, comprising 7.35% of the housing stock

3. Housing Vacancy		
	Occupied	Vacant
Eastside	88%	12%
Kalamazoo	93%	7%

## Development & Land Use Trends

East Main Street is characterized by a variety of land uses, including churches, a variety of homes, convenience stores, a day care, and barber shops. These uses have generally existed for some time, as the buildings adjacent to East Main Street have not seen much recent redevelopment activity.

One anticipated upcoming change includes the relocation of an existing mosque. The mosque is currently located at the corner of Trimble Street and East Main Street, in a multi-use structure that accommodates the Lil' Dock restaurant and several apartments. The mosque will move across to the north side of East Main Street, as depicted on Map 4, enabling the Lil' Dock restaurant to expand its operations at its current site.

Additional expansions and redevelopment are needed to stabilize East Main Street. A challenge will be to overcome many of the small, shallow parcels along the corridor, because many established developers are comfortable working with sites of 20 acres or more. It can be more difficult to develop smaller properties due to physical constraints and modest economies of scale. Appendix Item #1 is a table summarizing the square footage of individual lots on East Main Street according to the City of Kalamazoo's geographic information system; and also a square footage estimate of building size for commercial buildings. Appendix Item #2 depicts property ownership along the corridor.

## Transportation

**More can be done to help equalize use of East Main Street among motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and playing children.**

Although East Main Street is classified as a minor arterial, it carries motorists who reside outside of the City traveling to downtown Kalamazoo. In addition, a substantial number of pedestrians use the corridor. Even though the street is lined with sidewalks and some street trees, more can be done to help equalize use of East Main Street among motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and playing children. For example, the street sign identifying East Main Street at East Main Street and Michigan Avenue blocks a pedestrian crossing sign. This poor design symbolizes the automobile's priority over the pedestrian.

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) defines "traffic calming" as a combination of primarily physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter motorist behavior, and improve conditions for nonmotorized street users.<sup>4</sup> Traffic calming activities may include striping to clearly define travel lanes; parallel parking space delineation; landscaping and

<sup>4</sup> ITE Journal, July 1997.

street trees in the parkway to help frame the roadway and protect pedestrians from moving traffic; and improved crossing design.

It will be important that future improvements reflect a commitment to a safe and balanced road system that accommodates vehicular traffic while ensuring pedestrian safety and the preservation of neighborhood scale. Roadway treatment and design can help ensure safety for both pedestrians and motorists, while accommodating relatively high traffic volumes at an unhurried, but steady pace.

It is important to note that daily traffic counts along East Main Street have declined, according to the most recent transportation study.<sup>5</sup>

4. Traffic Counts (average vehicles per day)				
		2003	2005	% decline
East Main St	E of Charlotte Ave	7,206	6,109	15%
E Michigan Ave	Between Riverview Dr and East Main	14,397	9,711	32%
Gull Road	W of Riverview	16,066	15,137	6%

**Daily traffic counts along East Main Street have declined.**

The above table shows falling traffic counts between 2003 and 2005 in the vicinity of the Eastside Neighborhood. These declining traffic counts may be reflective of population loss in the City of Kalamazoo. The drop in counts along East Main Street by over 1,000 vehicles per day between 2003 and 2005 may indicate that East Main is competing with more visible thoroughfares, such as Gull Road and Riverview Drive, that may offer a broader range of commercial services to passing motorists.

The 1998 City of Kalamazoo Comprehensive Plan suggests that bus routes and service times be expanded in the Eastside area to improve multi-modal transportation options for City residents. While this is likely an important goal for Eastside residents, Metro Transit indicates that no changes can be made to the schedule until January 2009, when the annual comprehensive operational analysis takes place.<sup>6</sup> Currently, three routes serve the Eastside generally, including East Main, Gull and Comstock. The East Main route travels along East Main Street to the Eastwood Plaza and back downtown, with nine stops in the project area.

<sup>5</sup> Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study; www.katsmpo.org

<sup>6</sup> July 2008 telephone conversation with Tony Gibhan, Senior Operations Supervisor for Metro Transit.

---

## EXISTING PLANS AND ZONING FOR EAST MAIN STREET

In any planning effort, it is appropriate to review the existing planning documents for benchmarking purposes, and to determine whether those policies and objectives expressed in current plans are still relevant. Further, it is helpful to review present zoning regulations in an effort to determine whether or not they are promoting the uses and building forms the neighborhood desires.

### Planning for East Main Street

The 1998 City of Kalamazoo Comprehensive Plan, under “City-Wide Recommendations,” suggests that new development in the Eastside neighborhood should only occur at a pedestrian scale. This would include relatively small residential lots, sidewalks, front porches, effective street lighting and landscaping, preventing speeding traffic, and safe neighborhood access to commercial establishments. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan recognizes that increased access to the Kalamazoo River in the Eastside area may bolster economic development efforts, including walking trails, nature interpretation areas, and other features. Finally, the Plan calls for additional bus routes and expanded evening transit hours to serve the Eastside community. Map 2 shows the future land uses planned for Eastside as of the 1998 Plan.

### Zoning for East Main Street

The bulk of the East Main Street corridor falls within the CC, Community Commercial Zoning District, generally from Horace Street to Wallace Street. This commercial zoning district is described in the City of Kalamazoo Zoning Ordinance as accommodation for “larger community and regional shopping centers that serve a community-wide market area.”

A simple “windshield” analysis of the buildings facing East Main Street will reveal that there are not an overwhelming number of nonconformities. Most structures meet ordinance requirements in terms of minimum required setbacks, height and use. Property owners are generally able to use land in accordance with the City’s zoning regulations.

Map 3 illustrates the various zoning districts that regulate development activity in the Eastside neighborhood.



Insert map 2

back of map 2

insert map 3

back of map 3

---

**COMMUNITY INPUT**
**Stakeholder Orientation Workshops**

**Participants recognize that Kalamazoo's small urban retail stores have generally experienced a reduced customer base and therefore have difficulty surviving.**

The Eastside Neighborhood Association and its consultants facilitated two Stakeholder Orientation Workshops on June 20, 2008. One session was held early in the morning to accommodate business owners and the other was held in the evening to allow residents who worked during the day to participate. Approximately 10 people attended each session and shared their visions for the desired future of the corridor. The primary purpose of the workshops was to provide an opportunity for the public to present opinions on the design, use, and physical fabric of the corridor area as the planning process is underway, rather than after plans and concepts are formalized.

Participants walked the entire corridor during the workshops. Individuals were provided with cameras and instructed to take photographs of opportunity areas and areas that may present a challenge. After each "walking tour," participants gathered to discuss the issues facing the corridor. A summary of the results of the two workshops, including written comments from the public and part of a photo montage produced by workshop participants, are collected in Appendix Item #3 and Map 4 and Map 5.

A consistently important theme evident from these input exercises is the desire to expand the current level of business operations in the neighborhood. Participants recognize that Kalamazoo's small urban retail stores have generally experienced a reduced customer base and therefore have difficulty surviving. Additionally, real or perceived criminal activity can cause business owners to move to a "safer" location. Retail facilities that remain in urban neighborhoods typically are relatively inefficient and have higher prices compared to larger suburban or "big box" stores. Where commercial buildings are poorly maintained, blight can spill over onto residential streets. Eastside stakeholders generally view this as the number one hurdle to achieving a thriving commercial corridor.



Insert map 4

back of map 4

insert map 5

back of map 5

## Visioning Workshops

In addition to the Stakeholder Orientation Workshops, the neighborhood association facilitated a Visioning Workshop on July 22, 2008. Thirteen participants were asked to engage in a visual preference survey, reacting to images that reflect existing or potential development scenarios. Next, participants split into three separate “issue groups,” with each group discussing three of the more critical issues facing East Main Street: Gateways and Streetscape; Safety and Lighting; and Land Use and the Built Environment. Thirty participants attended a second visioning workshop held on August 26, 2008 that followed the same format. A summary of other public comment is collected in Appendix Item #4.

Goals and Vision Statements written by each issue group are presented below:

### **Group 1: Gateways and Streetscape**

**July 22, 2008**

- Goal 1: The gateway (East Main Street and Michigan Avenue) will be a thriving intersection and welcoming entry to Eastside.
- Goal 2: Eastside will connect with the Riverfront development area.
- Goal 3: Incremental improvements will help build community pride, increase property values and address parking in front yards, grilling in front yards, and storage of large items on porches to enhance the look of the residential streetscape.
- Vision Statement: The East Main Street Corridor will be a vital, welcoming community corridor with a positive image identity and unique appearance that will keep pace with the changing economy.

### **Group 2: Safety and Lighting**

**July 22, 2008**

- Goal 1: Residents will take responsibility for their properties; homes and properties will be well-kept and litter-free.
- Goal 2: The number of vacant homes will be reduced.
- Goal 3: Purposeless loitering will be reduced with the introduction of activities for youth.
- Vision Statement: The Eastside neighborhood is a safe, family-oriented community that attracts a diverse population.

**Group 3: Land Use and the Built Environment**

July 22, 2008

- Goal 1: East Main Street will provide for a range of recreational activities which will serve all residents within the neighborhood.
- Goal 2: East Main Street will be home to a wide range of businesses, both homegrown and regional.
- Goal 3: East Main Street will be 100% occupied and well-maintained housing stock will be filled with a diverse population.
- Vision Statement: In the year 2013, East Main Street will have occupied storefronts and a well-maintained and occupied residential housing stock, which will serve as the pride of the community.

**Group 1: Gateways and Streetscape**

August 26, 2008

- Goal 1: East Main Street will be characterized by a consistent and context-sensitive theme.
- Goal 2: East main Street will be pedestrian-friendly.
- Goal 3: Structural gateways will welcome people to the Eastside.
- Vision Statement: By 2013, East Main Street will be a clean and cared-for fully-functioning neighborhood business district with mom-and-pop stores in areas currently used for non-residential purposes. Residents will walk, live, and shop along the well-landscaped corridor.

**Group 2: Safety and Lighting**

August 26, 2008

- Goal 1: East Main Street will be an inviting, well-lit neighborhood.
- Goal 2: East Main Street will be clean, safe and friendly.
- Goal 3: East Main Street will have a mix of residential and commercial uses.
- Vision Statement: In the year 2013, the East Main Street corridor will look like an inviting, well lit, clean, safe, friendly neighborhood with a diverse range of uses.

**Group 3: Land Use and the Built Environment**

**August 26, 2008**

Goal 1: East Main Street will be home to a diverse mix of business that are people-friendly.

Goal 2: East Main Street will be a beautiful and safe corridor that residents are proud to live and work in.

Goal 3: East Main Street will be a safe, walkable corridor attracting both neighborhood residents and regional clients to a range of businesses.

Vision Statement: In the year 2013, East Main Street will be home to a diverse mix of local and regional business providing a safe, friendly, and beautiful environment where the people are friendly and residents are proud to live, work, and shop.



## STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

**Prioritization offers the Neighborhood Association an understanding of which steps should be completed in what order.**

The goals generated at the Visioning Workshops present the Eastside Neighborhood Association with a challenge to achieve the vision statements that are ambitious, yet feasible. Time and treasure must be committed to achieve the visions expressed by residents. Additional cooperation and trust between the Association, businesses, residents, non-governmental organizations and the City will be necessary. Further, the commitment and involvement of local institutions and the leveraging of resources from external organizations will be required to support the capacity of the Neighborhood Association.

The Eastside will also need to recognize, embrace and promote existing competitive advantages that can help to fuel revitalization, such as:<sup>7</sup>

1. Concentrated local market demand reflected in higher population density that compensates for lower income;
2. Relatively heavy pedestrian traffic despite lack of a critical mass of businesses to attract patrons;
3. Centralized location near downtown Kalamazoo's transportation, entertainment, and employment centers; and,
4. A moderate to average wage workforce.

The following narrative furthers the vision and recommends a plan of action to achieve the desires of the neighborhood. The strategies below are nominally presented in rank order. This phasing or prioritization is important because it offers the Neighborhood Association an understanding of which steps should be completed in what order; and it provides a theoretical timeframe to refer back to once something is accomplished. Table 5 is a list summary of the narrative that follows Map 6. Table 5 is provided as an alternative quick reference to the paragraphs on the following pages. Map 6 is a visual representation of the ideal future for East Main Street and can be thought of as a future land use map.

<sup>7</sup> Seidman, Karl F. *Inner City Commercial Revitalization: a Literature Review*.



Insert map 6

Back of map 6

## Business Infill/Rehabilitation

Infill development is the process of redeveloping vacant or under-utilized parcels within existing developed urban areas.<sup>8</sup> Infill development represents the successful completion of the existing neighborhood fabric and creates a healthy mix of uses that provides vitality and convenience for residents. Investors and developers may hesitate to engage in urban infill redevelopment because of several real or perceived risks. In addition, the relative lack of traffic counts compared with other nearby thoroughfares puts East Main Street at a disadvantage, as does the fairly small population base in the Eastside community.

The planning participants indicated a desire to phase commercial improvements along the corridor: initial improvements should be made to the gateway area at Michigan Avenue, followed by improvements near the two existing convenience stores, generally between Phelps Street and Trimble Street. Establishing the first successful retail nucleus will lend momentum to the other and will help form a critical mass that becomes a recognizable destination for goods and services. The following approaches are suggested to encourage commercial infill development along East Main Street:

**The redevelopment and reuse of an existing, blighted building along the corridor will improve the community's image and may enhance public safety.**

1. **Relocate Association Offices.** The Eastside Neighborhood Association should move its offices to one of the two initial target areas – near Michigan Avenue or between Phelps and Trimble Streets. Nonprofit organizations, such as the Association, can contribute to commercial neighborhood revitalization in an urban neighborhood.<sup>9</sup> The redevelopment and reuse of an existing, blighted building along the corridor will improve the community's image and may enhance public safety. These positives can serve as vital generators of private interest and investment.
2. **Explore Development Incentives.** Infill development and improvements to existing buildings can be encouraged by financial incentives for developers and property owners. The Commercial Rehabilitation Act, Public Act 554 of 2006, as amended, offers property owners of reenergized commercial and multifamily buildings in certain districts tax abatement for up to 10 years. The Act essentially freezes a commercial rehabilitation project at its pre-rehabilitation value in designated “commercial rehabilitation districts.” This effectively lowers taxes for property owners and helps the City to become more competitive with townships, which often enjoy a lower tax rate than cities.

Similarly, the Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Tax Abatement, under Public Act 146 of 2000, as amended, targets specific obsolete structures, offering tax breaks on the increased value after improvement.

The Eastside Neighborhood Association should explore the Commercial Rehabilitation Tax Abatement program and the Obsolete Property

<sup>8</sup> Enger, Susan C. 1997. *Infill Development: Strategies for Shaping Livable Neighborhoods*. Report No. 38. Seattle: Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington.

<sup>9</sup> Seidman, Karl F. *Inner City Commercial Revitalization: a Literature Review*.

Rehabilitation Tax Abatement program with the City of Kalamazoo, as an option of offering incentives for increased private investment.<sup>10</sup> The Association’s role can be meeting with City representatives to determine how these incentives can be promoted and further utilized to bring in development.

3. **Encourage New Development.** The Neighborhood Association should contemplate new market tax credits as a potential tool to lure development to the Eastside.<sup>11</sup> The Michigan Magnet Fund (MMF) is a non-profit organization controlled by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Great Lakes Capital Fund, and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority to compete for a federally-allotted share of new market tax credits from the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund. Since 2005, \$60 million has been allotted to ten Michigan projects, exhausting the current tax credit allocation. The MMF is presently applying for an additional allocation of approximately \$100 million. These resources may be available to Michigan investors as soon as December 2008.

The Michigan Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) has received new market tax credits through the National Equity Fund and is willing to work with the Eastside in coordinating use of those tax credits. In addition, the Neighborhood Association can use its non-profit status to secure grant dollars from LISC and other entities to help developers with land acquisition, cleanup and demolition activities, and construction.

If new market tax credits become available in coming months, local developers will have an incentive to build on the Eastside. The Neighborhood Association should partner with the MMF in promulgating materials to local developers that explain the tax credit program.

Every effort should be made to improve the continuity of the nodes suggested on Map 6. These efforts can include working with property owners who would like to sell their property. The Association can help issue Requests for Proposals from developers proactively.

**An “Eastside Business Association” or some other management structure should be formed.**

4. **Establish Management Structure.** The Neighborhood Association should investigate the benefits of establishing a corridor or neighborhood management structure, or work with the Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce and the Minority Business Alliance of Southwest Michigan to create a division focused on distressed City neighborhood business districts. A management structure can be responsible for:
  - ◆ Fostering healthier relationships and improved communications between and among businesses, residents, and City officials;
  - ◆ Implementing and overseeing promotions, sales, and revenue-generating opportunities;

<sup>10</sup> Other incentive packages and programs are available through various Michigan Public Acts. Any work on this effort will require cooperation with the City of Kalamazoo.

<sup>11</sup> New market tax credits allow investors in the MMF to essentially receive a 39% “break” from taxes for up to 30% of a qualified investment for a period of 7 years. This program can help ensure the feasibility of an otherwise risky urban project by providing a lucrative tax incentive.

- ◆ Carrying out marketing activities to attract new businesses to the corridor and aiding in the retention and expansion of existing businesses;
- ◆ Facilitating and marketing forums for networking and education; and,
- ◆ Being the source of information and services accessible to the community.

The Neighborhood Association can work to form a separate non-profit, which promotes local involvement and can provide for a continuing support base. This entity could become the “Eastside Business Association” and can focus on business retention. Given the extent of establishments located on Riverview Drive and Gull Road, including several large institutions, this would likely provide additional needed resources to the area in an organized format. An alternative would be to form a subcommittee of the Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce or Minority Business Alliance, committed to neighborhood management and promotion activities, which would likely be simple to form and would provide a broader voice representing all neighborhood interests.

**A partnership could potentially be formed with the Haworth College of Business at Western Michigan University.**

5. **Business Recruitment Fair.** The Neighborhood Association should facilitate a business recruitment festival, where existing businesses or companies, and prospective business owners, can be matched to property owners with vacant space. A function of this experience can also be to educate participants about the city permitting process. Prior to such an event, it will be important to prepare and distribute a marketing packet summarizing demographics, vehicular and pedestrian traffic counts, details on available space, and positive attributes of the community. The Haworth College of Business at Western Michigan University is a potential resource in this effort, as well as the Kalamazoo Chamber and Michigan Business and Professional Association. The Neighborhood Association should also seek to secure an Americorp member to assist.
6. **Conduct Market Study.** The Neighborhood Association should oversee a professional market study to establish a realistic sense of the Eastside marketplace. This would involve defining a work scope for a practical market study; preparing a request for proposals from qualified firms; securing funding; selecting a consultant; and adjusting this set of implementation strategies based on the study’s findings.

The Haworth College of Business at Western Michigan University could also be a potential resource. Professors could organize a senior practicum where students are engaged in analyzing the market trends on the Eastside that affect local business decisions. In addition, MSHDA promulgates a list of approved market analysts that could be used.

A market study will confirm which new businesses, social services and personal services the neighborhood can support. The study will identify underrepresented business types in the local marketplace so the

The photos below show several properties that could be incorporated into the Brownfield Plan. From top to bottom: 1126 Michigan Ave., 1203 E. Main St., 1628 E. Main St., and 1209/1213 E. Main St.



Neighborhood Association can petition businesses in the region that may serve the community.

7. **Support Brownfield Plan Amendment.** The Association can work with the City Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) in amending the Brownfield Plan to include properties along East Main Street. The Brownfield Redevelopment Authority is intended to help turnaround the City's contaminated, functionally-obsolete, or blighted properties. As such, the BRA engages in redevelopment projects and in over 10 years has helped produce over \$169 million in investment and has helped retain or create over 1,250 jobs. The BRA has an involved application and eligibility process that must be followed. To be considered for a redevelopment effort, the Neighborhood Association should collaborate with the BRA to define a redevelopment project that meets the required criteria and evaluation factors. Properties that may be considered for brownfield status include: 1126, 1129, and 1204 Michigan Avenue; and 1203, 1209, 1213, 1601, 1609, 1616, 1617, 1628, and 1715 East Main Street.
8. **Encourage Land Banking.** The Neighborhood Association can urge the City or the County to establish a land banking program. Land banking is a critical step in the land development process in inner-city neighborhoods characterized by abandonment. Land banking is generally a process that involves acquiring land with the intent to hold on to it until it becomes worth more than the purchase value, or until a developer purchases it. Kalamazoo County may currently be reconsidering establishing a land banking program, which the Neighborhood Association can encourage. Assembling small, separate parcels into larger contiguous segments of land can enrich development potential.<sup>12</sup> This can be especially helpful and more affordable if it is done before specific or intense demand arises.
9. **Assist Start-up Businesses.** The Eastside Neighborhood Association can encourage, create or oversee a program to provide new businesses with assistance. Assistance can include financing and marketing; defining needed economic and business support; identifying service providers; and working with lenders to form attractive business and capital finance approaches. A partnership could potentially be formed with the Haworth College of Business at Western Michigan University, the Small Business Administration and/or the Northside Economic Potential Group. At the very least, the Neighborhood Association should work with the City of Kalamazoo Economic Development Corporation (EDC) in providing small business assistance loans and helping with site selection. The EDC offers many more services to other economic development agencies and private developers to ensure high quality redevelopment.
10. **Encourage Demolition by Neglect.** There may be certain non-residential buildings that could potentially be a danger to the health, safety and welfare of the community. Chapter 9, Article VII of the City of

<sup>12</sup> Enger, Susan C. 1997. *Infill Development: Strategies for Shaping Livable Neighborhoods*. Report No. 38. Seattle: Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington.

Kalamazoo Code of Ordinances authorizes the Dangerous Buildings Board to order restoration or demolition of buildings defined as dangerous. Under the ordinance, if the property owner fails to comply, the Board can order the work completed at the expense of the property owner via foreclosure or court orders. This would help to prevent accidents caused by unsafe buildings and may also help to free up land for development. The Dangerous Buildings Board can therefore continue to be used as a tool where appropriate.

11. **Strengthen Regional Ties.** The Neighborhood Association should work to foster collaboration with regional economic development entities and chambers of commerce, including without limitation, the Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce, the Minority Business Alliance, and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

## Residential Improvements



**Apartments above retail can provide a reliable customer base for business owners.**

Strong urban commercial streets are typically surrounded by dense, high-quality residential neighborhoods. Residential revitalization and population growth attract neighborhood businesses. Moreover, the number of residents and the quality of residential development may partially determine the type of businesses that would locate in a specific area. Residential uses establish a consumer base for potential neighborhood businesses. Condominiums or apartments above commercial uses in mixed-use buildings provide a convenience for residents and increased retailing for the business owner. They also increase density and place more eyes on the street, which can help deter crime.

The typical pattern is for local start-up businesses seeking low-rent space to move in initially, followed by national chain establishments. If the neighborhood is successful, higher-end boutiques may locate in the community. The “best” stores will not move in immediately; but as residential structures are improved and as density increases, so will retailing.

1. **Renovate Existing Homes.** Planning participants expressed an interest in seeing existing homes renovated to preserve the celebrated historic character of portions of the corridor. In addition, participants noted that efforts should focus on “problem” areas first. Map 6 highlights residential areas that may benefit from enhancement.

Several programs exist that can help with renovation, including Building Blocks. The County’s weatherization program and other state and local rehabilitation initiatives are in place or taking shape, and the community has utilized these programs in the past and should continue to do so in the future. The areas shown on Map 6 should especially be targeted. In addition, the Kalamazoo Housing Assistance Repair Program (K-HARP) provides assistance to low income homeowners that have exterior housing code violations. K-HARP should be explored as an option for structures with specific deficiencies related to the City of Kalamazoo Housing Code. Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services (KNHS) also offers several programs pertinent to housing needs, including rehabilitation services,

foreclosure prevention and financial counseling, and homebuyer education. Finally, Residential Opportunities and Housing Resources are two additional programs available to certain homeowners on the Eastside. The Neighborhood Association should partner with these institutions to ensure that all property owners are knowledgeable of available programs.

**The “best” stores will not move in immediately; but as residential structures are improved and as density increases, so will retailing.**

Construction of new infill residential development should also be encouraged where it is context-sensitive and compatible with existing design patterns. Some redevelopment may also be appropriate where the existing housing stock has deteriorated to the extent that restoration and reuse is not feasible. The influx of new residents would boost Eastside’s population and would authenticate the notion that Eastside can support growth and viable businesses. New homes should be varied in type to accommodate a diverse population, including single-family detached dwellings; multiple-family condominiums and townhomes; and second- and third-story apartments above retail uses.

2. **Connect to Park and Bike Trail.** Mayor’s Riverfront Park at 251 Mills Street offers many amenities to park users, including a nature walk. While this recreational facility is technically outside of the official boundaries of the Eastside, the park is adjacent to the Eastside and improvements should be made to strengthen the connection between the two.

For example, a continuous sidewalk could be completed along the north side of Mills Street to ensure that Eastside residents have appropriate and safe access to the park facility. A unique streetscape theme can be applied along the connection between the base of “the hill” and the park to define the path under the overpass.

High-quality parkland can help to improve residential property values and ensures that a neighborhood remains desirable. A clearly marked and safe connection to Mayor’s Riverfront Park can help to boost the image of the Eastside. The Neighborhood Association should work collaboratively with City staff and officials on this step.

3. **Investigate an Expanded Bus Schedule.** The community expressed a need for an expanded bus service, both in terms of current bus routing and scheduling. This idea needs further study, and the Neighborhood Association should work with Metro Transit to formally investigate whether such an expansion is necessary, as part of the next comprehensive operational analysis in January 2009. A complete and responsive transit service will help to ensure that the Eastside remains attractive for a broad population, especially with a heightened awareness of energy costs.
4. **Prevent Foreclosure.** There are many problems associated with both tax and mortgage foreclosed properties and there is a negative direct effect on the neighborhood. The Eastside Neighborhood Association should support any initiatives that are developed by the Kalamazoo Area Foreclosure Partnership to approach and address the foreclosure issue targeted to assist Eastside neighborhood residents avert foreclosure; which may include foreclosure counseling, prevention, emergency funding, land banking or other initiatives.

One problem associated with tax delinquent properties includes the hindrance of reuse efforts. Any municipality in Michigan can utilize the Certification of Abandoned Property for Accelerated Foreclosure Act, Public Act 132 of 1999, as amended, to subject tax-delinquent and abandoned property to a hurried foreclosure timetable. The thought behind this legislation is that stricter standards or the threat of accelerated loss of property may compel owners to move more swiftly and pay back property taxes, or sell to someone that will. Failing that, it allows the City to get control of tax delinquent properties more quickly and reduce potential deterioration. Abandoned buildings can lead to blight, crime and general decay; and this Act seeks to more rapidly return such property to productive use. The Eastside Neighborhood Association can work with the City’s leadership in implementing this tool by recommending certain properties be subject to the accelerated foreclosure process. Abandoned properties are highlighted on Map 6.

## Design Enhancements

East Main Street is the heart and primary identity for the neighborhood. It should serve as a healthy social and economic environment for residents. The commercial portion of the corridor should be a place for the pedestrian, with an active street life, healthy retail, and common space for community gatherings. It should be friendly and charming; a place where people of all ages gather for socializing,



**Infill construction should be consistent with existing or desired building forms.**

shopping, or just to mingle. Ideally, enhancements can be made to ensure that street level activities focus on small-scale restaurants and shopping while the upper stories of buildings provide a diverse range of office space and urban-style housing, accommodating a broad range of residences.

Several improvements need to be achieved to realize this potential. Some improvements will require cooperation of property owners, others will require partnership with the City. Some improvements are not likely to occur without significant funding sources. Each recommended enhancement is important, and implemented together with the infill and residential improvements, will help to reenergize the corridor.

**Each recommended enhancement is important, and implemented together with the infill and residential improvements, will help to reenergize the corridor.**

1. **Foster a Planting Program.** Shrubs and flowering annuals can provide instant beautification to a property or a neighborhood. Low maintenance perennials can be easy to cultivate and are even more striking. As part of the effort to improve the aesthetics of East Main Street, it is recommended that a planting initiative or an “Adopt a Block” program be implemented. The Association can organize an annual gardening competition to encourage businesses, property owners and renters to establish and maintain attractive front yard areas. Enlightening the local media on the event may improve the response from residents and businesses.
2. **Green East Main.** Michigan’s Community Forestry Grant program provides non-profit organizations and local units of government with the opportunity to expand community tree cover. While the Eastside neighborhood already has a substantial urban forest, additional plantings

along East Main Street were called out as a priority during the planning process, especially within the paved areas in front of businesses. Street trees provide shade; help clean the air; and separate pedestrians from traveling vehicles.

The grant program provides resources and technical assistance in connection with maintenance, management plans, and planting activities. Grants of up to \$20,000 may be awarded by the Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The Eastside Neighborhood Association should apply for this grant to help beautify the corridor.

3. **Establish a Streetscape.** Gateways offer an important opportunity to create a positive impression of the Eastside. A dramatic entry experience can be established with public art, pedestrian amenities, landscape features, and signage. Additionally, the “public realm” of the East Main Street corridor, which consists of the right-of-way area, can be enhanced to add interest and support and advance the area’s unique identity and character. As depicted on Map 6, here are several possibilities for improvement:
  - a. **Gateways.** Gateway areas can be enhanced with signage, brick pavers, pedestrian furniture such as benches and refuse containers, and landscape features, including gardens and even fountains. The Transportation Enhancement grant described below can help to fund such improvements.
  - b. **Parking Delineation.** On-street parking is necessary to ensure the success of stop-and-go, high turnover businesses, such as coffee shops, fresh food markets, pastry shops and dry cleaners. Parallel parking spaces along East Main Street should be delineated with paint on the pavement. This ensures proper utilization of parking area, reduces vehicle speed, and reduces the need for more parking spaces. Parking space delineation also fosters a friendly environment for patrons, where parking areas are not confusing. The Neighborhood Association should petition the City to stripe on-street spaces and/or work to acquire a grant to pay for this effort.
  - c. **Pedestrian Furniture.** Benches, bicycle racks, refuse containers and more attractive and comfortable bus stops can be installed along East Main Street to foster a more pedestrian-friendly environment.
  - d. **Sidewalk.** Segments of unattractive or unsafe sidewalk can be replaced to solidify East Main Street as a pedestrian place. Further, brick pavers can be installed in front of commercial buildings to compliment the buildings and to add a sense of historic charm. In front of non-residential buildings, planting strips can be inserted between the sidewalk and curb to provide some green space in an otherwise urban environment.
  - e. **Bulb-outs and Crosswalks.** Crosswalk markings are not visible along East Main Street. Crosswalks are a critically important element in the

**While streetscape improvements are being completed, a neighborhood “brand” or identity can be established.**

pedestrian network because it is a designated part of the vehicular roadway set aside for pedestrian use. Crosswalks help to reduce pedestrian-vehicle conflicts by providing designated pedestrian space, and thus will improve the safety and security of non-motorized travelers.

Curb extensions or bump-outs help to slow traffic, reduce pedestrian crossing distance, and improve the visibility of pedestrians. Neighborhood business districts thrive when motorists slow down and their vehicle passengers have time to look into store fronts.

- f. **Lighting.** Functional and decorative lighting fixtures can be incorporated into the streetscape. Appropriate lighting is necessary to ensure safety for business owners, pedestrians, and motorists. Sufficient illumination also serves the purpose of aiding wayfinding; and may also assist businesses in advertising. Light fixtures should be ornamental, consistent with the historic-like homes in the area.
- g. **Billboard Removal.** Several billboards exist along Michigan Avenue near the gateway area to East Main. Adams Outdoor Advertising is the proprietor. The City of Kalamazoo has an ordinance that caps the number of permitted City billboards at the current number, but allows installation of electronic billboards in exchange for the removal of existing “neighborhood” billboards. The Association should petition the City so that the removal of the Michigan Avenue facilities takes precedence over other neighborhood City billboards.

**Public expenditures  
are often necessary  
prerequisites to  
foster private  
investment.**

While streetscape improvements are being completed, a neighborhood “brand” or identity can be established. This can include banners, decorative details on light fixtures or within new pavement, or consistent planting themes. Generally, pedestrian improvements should initially be concentrated on retailing blocks. Marketing efforts can begin once improvements are achieved, including marketing to consumers and to businesses, as improvements will make the area more attractive to businesses.

4. **Fund the Streetscape.** Neighborhoods with distinctive character, nice-looking streetscapes, and inviting gathering places within walkable proximity to a variety of retail establishments, personal services and cultural opportunities have an enhanced quality. In many instances, the public and private sectors partner to provide this high quality urban experience. In addition, public investment often leads to increased private investment.

A study in Philadelphia revealed that publicly-funded commercial streetscape improvement projects positively affect home values, with an average increase of 28% to the value of homes within a ½ mile. Streetscape projects include the addition of tree plantings, container plantings, pocket parks, parking lot screens, and median plantings.<sup>13</sup> Tangible aesthetic improvement to the appearance of business corridors

<sup>13</sup> Susan Wachter and Kevin Gillen. Public Investment Strategies: How They Matter for Neighborhoods in Philadelphia.

encourages home owners to invest in dwellings, further improving the overall neighborhood. The study concluded that public investment in business corridors results in comprehensive overall improvement to neighborhood quality of life.

Kirkland, Washington, combines planning for high-density and mixed-use with strategic public investments to attract private investment. The city improved the streetscape in several business districts by constructing benches, pedestrian lighting, landscaping, plazas, and public art. These improvements caused people to come to the business corridors, linger, interact with others, and spend money. Residential investment followed.<sup>14</sup>

While it can be politically difficult for a city to spend money on streetscape improvements, public expenditures are often necessary prerequisites to foster private investment. Attractive streetscapes may even be as important as public safety, housing and recreational opportunities, because the resultant social gathering spaces, increased business patronage, and revitalization of adjacent neighborhoods are essential for well-being and quality of life.

Funding sources for all of the improvements in this Plan can seem elusive, but the following are sources that should be investigated initially. Other sources always exist, but are not likely to be endorsed by the City, property owners, or residents due to their complexity, the potential for special tax assessments, or the diversion of tax dollars away from City coffers. The following sources can be divisive, as well, and will require diligence and collaboration with a variety of entities.

- a. **MDOT Enhancement.** The Michigan Department of Transportation Enhancement Program provides grants for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and improvements and landscaping and other beautification within the public right-of-way. A minimum match of 20% is required and the City of Kalamazoo must apply for the grant on behalf of the Neighborhood Association. This grant program can fund street trees; planters; decorative light poles; decorative paving; and design elements that increase pedestrian safety, such as bulb-outs.
- b. **Neighborhood Development Division.** The City of Kalamazoo Neighborhood Development Division participates in several federally-funded grant programs, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The funds can be available to the Eastside for certain public services, site preparation for new construction, certain housing rehabilitation, public street facilities and other public infrastructure. CDBG funds could be used on the Eastside for road resurfacing, parking space striping, and certain public realm landscaping enhancements. Applications are due on November 24, 2008 for the next round of funding for improvements beginning in the June 2009 program year. The Neighborhood

<sup>14</sup> Enger, Susan C. 1997. *Infill Development: Strategies for Shaping Livable Neighborhoods*. Report No. 38. Seattle: Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington

Association should be informed on these opportunities and the application process.

- c. **CIA.** A Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) could be created under Michigan Public Act 280 of 2005, as amended. A CIA is similar to a Downtown Development Authority or other tax increment financing district. A CIA can capture tax increment dollars and use those funds to make improvements within a designated area. The difference between a CIA and other tax increment capturing structures is that a CIA must apply to an older commercial corridor that has experienced disinvestment.

Establishing a CIA for East Main Street would require approval from the City of Kalamazoo, the County and potentially other taxing jurisdictions. Since a CIA would redirect tax dollars from the City to a newly-created entity, the Neighborhood Association must carefully and deliberately facilitate a delicate conversation on the importance of revitalizing East Main Street and spending tax dollars locally.

- d. **BID/BIZ.** A Business Improvement District (BID) or a Business Improvement Zone (BIZ) can be created under Michigan Public Act 120 of 1961.<sup>15</sup> A BID would allow the commercial district along East Main Street to levy special assessments for district improvements, services and maintenance. Future revenues can be pledged to support bonds for improvements, as well. A BIZ is essentially a short-term or temporary version of a BID, enduring for a period of 7 years.

A BID is generally authorized to engage in more activities than a BIZ. A BID can: adjust public pedestrian or vehicular ways; acquire, improve or demolish properties, parking areas and structures; construct and maintain certain facilities that serve the public interest; and promote economic activity in the area through a variety of means. A BIZ can: engage in landscaping activities; improve or construct sidewalks, street medians and lighting; purchase security-related equipment; and promote economic activity through marketing and other similar efforts.<sup>16</sup>

A BID or BIZ can fund necessary improvements; and a BID can provide long-term support to a business association trying to begin a revitalization effort. The City of Kalamazoo establishes either entity and appoints board members. The Neighborhood Association should explore this option with property owners and the City.

5. **Improve Building and Site Design.** Site utilization and building architecture establish the physical character of a community. Some of the existing buildings present a poor design that is not conducive to pedestrian safety or a quality image. Examples can be seen in boarded up storefronts without windows; blocks without adequate sidewalk lighting;

<sup>15</sup> This Act was expanded under PA 49 of 1999, PA 260 of 2001, and PA 209 of 2003 to authorize and regulate Business Improvement Districts and Business Improvement Zones.

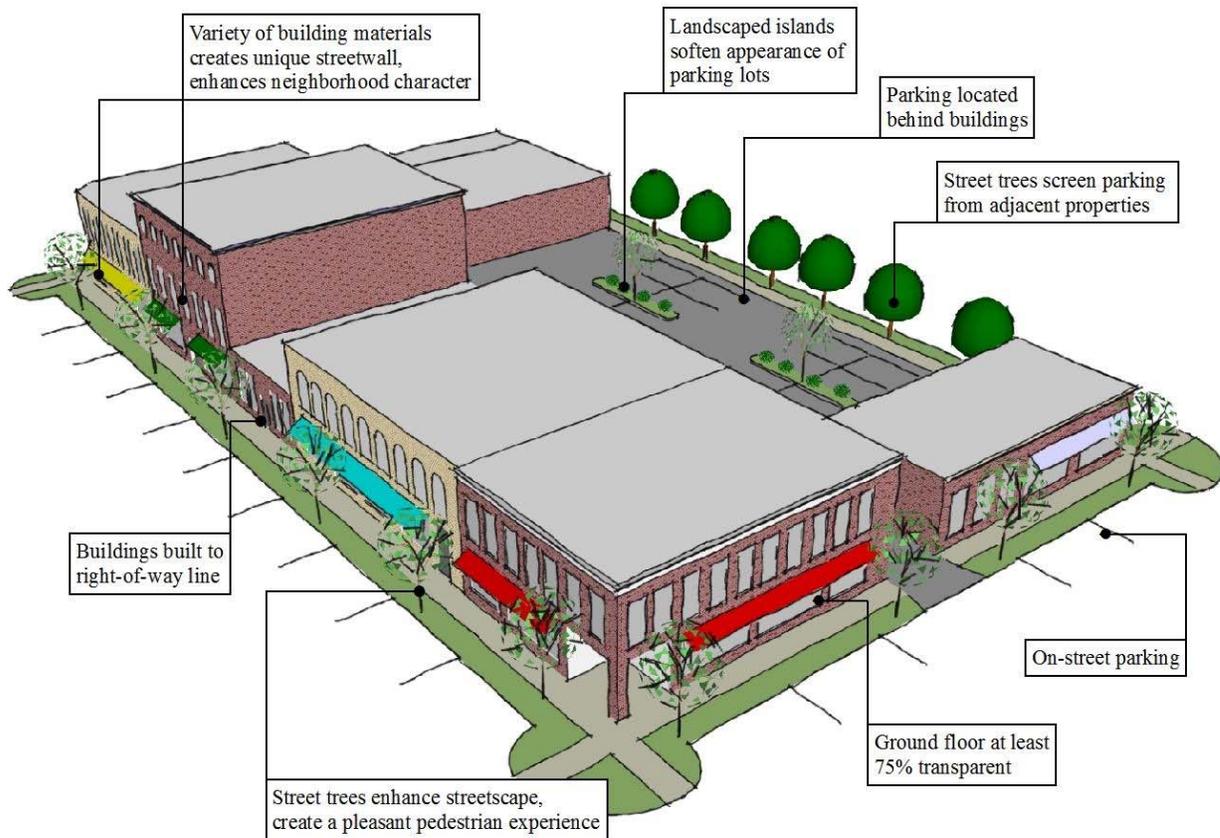
<sup>16</sup> The Act includes the complete listings of eligible activities.

and parking areas that are not screened or framed with landscaping or decorative walls.

Several improvements can be made to the appearance and form of the buildings. Pedestrians will want to see inside of a business from the street. Transparency is imperative: windows help the street look safe, and enable the customer to see if the establishment offers goods and services of interest. Moreover, architecture that deviates from conventional commercial “box” designs (big, blank, windowless walls and flat roofs) will improve the aesthetic quality of the neighborhood. More context-sensitive design will also produce a more visually-cohesive corridor, where commercial buildings complement residences.

The Eastside Neighborhood Association can work with the City of Kalamazoo in amending the City Zoning Ordinance to solidify suggested design requirements. While design requirements can ensure a desired aesthetic, it will be important to not over-regulate. Over-regulation can stifle investment; incentives that encourage the desired aesthetic while promoting flexibility should be used instead.

Figure 3, below, illustrates many of the recommended design attributes that the community expressed as important during citizen input exercises. The Association should encourage the City to incorporate these guidelines into the City’s master plan to build support for corresponding regulations in the City’s zoning ordinance.



**Figure 3. Design Guidelines**

Following are some design guidelines that the Eastside Neighborhood Association should champion:

- ◆ The Zoning Ordinance requires that each use provide adequate parking. In some cases, an excessive number of parking spaces may be required. The ordinance should allow nearby on-street parking to be counted toward some of the parking requirement to free up land area for functional building space.
- ◆ The Zoning Ordinance allows a maximum building height of 65 feet. The community believes that this is too tall, since existing buildings do not exceed 3 stories. This restriction can be lowered to 3 stories, or some other measurement the City finds consistent with existing buildings.
- ◆ Certain building materials, facade treatments, build-to lines, and roof lines should be required that are consistent with the preferred neighborhood commercial pattern. The graphic above demonstrates many of these elements.
- ◆ Primary entrances should be oriented toward the sidewalk and secondary entrances should be located toward the side or rear to accommodate side or rear parking areas.

- ◆ Parking area striping should be required. Currently, many parking spaces in parking lots along East Main Street are not delineated properly. Parking space delineation can foster proper utilization of parking areas. Language can be incorporated into the ordinance requiring parking area striping to be maintained, as well.
  - ◆ A standard urban American retail bay is 30 feet wide by 60 to 90 feet deep.<sup>17</sup> In urban neighborhood districts, these dimensions are ideal because it discourages large, box-like stores and promotes traditional-scale, walkable store fronts.
6. **Increase Artist Opportunities.** Opportunities for public art display should be increased. The Neighborhood Association should sponsor public art competitions as a way to gain community involvement and display locally-generated artwork. Art pieces may from time to time be displayed in public areas or in a gallery. Further, designated walls may be set aside for tagging and alternative painting to help avoid graffiti damage to buildings. Public art enriches the streetscape, adds interest and support's the distinctiveness of the neighborhood.

## Security Upgrading

Crime and perception of crime are often the number one reason that infill development does not occur. Business owners typically do not desire locations where merchandise is thought to be at risk from shoplifting or vandalism. People who live elsewhere are not likely to patronize neighborhood businesses if there is fear of a robbery, or even a more heinous offense. In addition, criminal activities scare residents away, which further erodes the population base that business owners seek. Following are some techniques that should be explored to overcome fear in the community.

**CPTED is planning jargon for a process that involves designing the built environment to help reduce fear.**

1. **Employ Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.** One long-term solution is to rely on architectural and neighborhood design techniques that reduce the opportunity for crime. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is planning jargon for a process that involves designing the built environment to help reduce fear. The purpose is to reduce the number of hiding places for a criminal and to lend an impression that people are always watching.

The Eastside Neighborhood Association should work with the City of Kalamazoo's Planning Division in incorporating some of the following concepts into the site plan review process.<sup>18</sup> The City can consider expanding upon and memorializing the security recommendations into zoning requirements or a more flexible policy document, such as a master plan.

- ◆ Increase clear vision of spaces and activity by installing pedestrian level lighting.

<sup>17</sup> Ten Principles for Rebuilding Neighborhood Retail. Urban Land Institute, 2003

<sup>18</sup> Some of these suggestions come from *Planning and Urban Design Standards*, 2006.

**The corridor can appear welcoming with generous amounts of landscaping and other design features that disguise and soften the effects of defense measures.**

- ◆ Sodium vapor lighting should be avoided; white lighting should be used because it renders true colors and looks less gloomy.
  - ◆ Path and sidewalk designs should avoid blind corners and offer escape route choices.
  - ◆ Building facades facing any public space should include significant window coverage. Public spaces include parking areas, parks, sidewalks and the street.
  - ◆ Trees near a public walkway should have a minimum five-foot under-clearance from the ground.
  - ◆ Only low fences and transparent landscape hedges up to 2.5 feet in height should be used for screening.
  - ◆ Building entrances should be visible from the street.
2. **Increase Defense Measures.** In addition to the design-related suggestions above, the Neighborhood Association could hire security personnel or petition the Police Department to increase officer patrol in the community. The Association could begin a program where business owners are provided with motion detectors and closed circuit TV cameras. Despite the intensive security measures, the corridor can appear welcoming with generous amounts of landscaping, ornamental columns on fences and other design features that disguise and soften the effects of defense measures.
  3. **Celebrate the Community.** The Neighborhood Association should sponsor more events related to the Eastside's cultural heritage and community character. These activities build pride and assist in neighbor recognition, which can often be difficult with renter turnover. A community involvement plan could be written to provide a guide for attracting more resident participation. The plan could establish a recognizable Eastside logo and a consistent newsletter format. In addition, the planning process could include a survey of residents to determine why people participate and what would encourage more participation. Finally, loitering could be discouraged with programs and activities designed for children, youth and young adults. These activities can be housed in the Neighborhood Association building and can include nontraditional events, such as singing contests, art and cooking competitions, beauty pageants and fashion shows, and poetry reading.
  4. **Train Landlords.** The Neighborhood Association can start a landlord training and certification program. Trainees can be taught how to screen applicants; deal with suspected illegal activity; and how to offer properties that are attractive to honest, responsible tenants.



Table 5. Summary of Strategic Implementation Plan

Project or Action	Potential Partner(s)	Objective	Timeframe	Potential Funding Source(s) *
<b>Business Infill/Rehabilitation</b>				
<b>Relocate Association Offices</b>	Realtors, builders, property owners	Improve image, reuse abandoned building, generate interest	9/08 – 9/09	Donations, grants, loans, Association
<b>Explore Development Incentives</b>	City of Kalamazoo, Michigan Economic Development Corporation	Encourage infill with incentives	11/08 – 11/12	n/a
<b>Encourage New Development</b>	Michigan Magnet Fund	Redevelop under-utilized properties	1/09 – 1/12	New Market Tax Credits, grants, loans
<b>Establish Management Structure</b>	Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce, Minority Business Alliance	Form an "Eastside Business Association" for management	11/09 – 11/10	Donations
<b>Conduct Market Study</b>	Consultant, Western Michigan University (WMU)	Confirm business activities the neighborhood can support	11/09 – 11/10	Donations, grants, WMU
<b>Support Brownfield Plan Amendment</b>	Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA)	Define redevelopment projects for East Main Street properties	1/09 – 1/11	BRA, private
<b>Encourage Land Banking</b>	City of Kalamazoo, County of Kalamazoo	Encourage the County to establish a land banking program	1/10 – 10/12	n/a
<b>Assist Start-Up Businesses</b>	Kalamazoo Economic Development Corporation (EDC), WMU, NEPG, Chamber, SBA	Serve as a link between small businesses and the EDC; develop student program to assist start-ups	1/10 – 10/12	EDC, WMU
<b>Encourage Demolition By Neglect</b>	Dangerous Buildings Board	Prevent accidents caused by unsafe buildings and free land for development	Ongoing	n/a
<b>Business Recruitment Fair</b>	Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce, Minority Business Alliance, WMU, businesses	Match businesses with property owners	10/09 – 10/10	n/a
<b>Strengthen Regional Ties</b>	All of the above	Foster collaboration and mobilization to promote stability	Ongoing	n/a

**Table 5. Summary of Strategic Implementation Plan (continued)**

Project or Action	Potential Partner(s)	Objective	Timeframe	Potential Funding Source(s) *
<b>Residential Improvements</b>				
<b>Renovate Existing Homes</b>	Building Blocks, K-HARP, KNHS, Housing Resources, Residential Opportunities	Act as a conduit to keep established residents and attract new families	11/08 – 10/12	n/a
<b>Connect to Park and Bike Trail</b>	City of Kalamazoo	Strengthen visual and pedestrian link between park and neighborhood	10/09 – 10/12	Grants, City
<b>Investigate an Expanded Bus Schedule</b>	Metro Transit	Verify expressed need for additional routes and scheduling	1/09 – 2/09	n/a
<b>Prevent Foreclosure</b>	City of Kalamazoo, Mary Bolkema	Convert property to productive use	1/09 – 10/12	n/a

Table 5. Summary of Strategic Implementation Plan (continued)

Project or Action	Potential Partner(s)	Objective	Timeframe	Potential Funding Source(s) *
<b>Design Enhancements</b>				
<b>Foster a Planting Program</b>	Property owners		10/09 – 10/12	Private
<b>Green East Main</b>	Community Forestry Grant Program	Expand community tree cover, plant street trees	10/10 – 10/12	Grant
<b>Establish a Streetscape</b>	City of Kalamazoo, Michigan Department of Transportation, property owners, Adams Outdoor Advertising	Create positive impression of the Eastside, increase safety, inspire neighborhood pride	10/08 – 10/12	Donations, grants, City, private, tax increment finance structure, assessment district
Gateways				
Parking Delineation				
Pedestrian Furniture				
Sidewalk				
Bulb-outs and Crosswalks				
Lighting				
Billboard Removal				
<b>Fund the Streetscape</b>				
MDOT Enhancement				
Neighborhood Development Division				
CIA				
BID/BIZ				
<b>Improve Building and Site Design</b>	City of Kalamazoo	Memorialize design suggestions into zoning standards	1/09 – 10/10	n/a
<b>Increase Artist Opportunities</b>	Local art institutions, property owners	Attract community involvement, enrich streetscape, support distinctiveness	10/11 – 10/12	Grants, Association

**Table 5. Summary of Strategic Implementation Plan (continued)**

Project or Action	Potential Partner(s)	Objective	Timeframe	Potential Funding Source(s) *
<b>Security Upgrading</b>				
<b>Employ Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design</b>	City of Kalamazoo	Memorialize design suggestions into zoning standards	1/09 – 10/10	n/a
<b>Increase Defense Measures</b>	Property owners, Police Department	Intensify safety measures	10/08 – 10/12	Donations, private, Association funds, City
<b>Celebrate the Community</b>	Local institutions	Instill pride of ownership, discourage loitering, assist in neighbor recognition (2-3 times per year)	spring / fall start 10/10	Donations, Association
<b>Train Landlords</b>	City of Kalamazoo, Building Blocks, K-HARP, KNHS, Housing Resources, Residential Opportunities	Improve living environment	1/10 – 10/12	Donations, grants, Association

\* Most projects are not likely to cost the Association directly, and donations and grants or resources from another entity may be used. Many of these activities are identified with “n/a” in the Potential Funding Sources column. In these instances, the Association’s role may be coordination and encouragement, rather than direct funding.

