



LaPlaisance Corridor Plan

An Addendum to the Monroe Charter Township Master Plan

MONROE CHARTER TOWNSHIP, MONROE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

ADOPTED · MAY 19, 2015

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Monroe Charter Township, Monroe County, Michigan

Adopted May 19, 2015

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*Dedicated to the Memory of W. Lawrence Toburen
Planning Commission Member 1981-2015*

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1. Introduction

LaPlaisance Road Background

LaPlaisance Road began life as a trail in the 18th century from the River Raisin to the mouth of LaPlaisance Creek. Today, it is a winding route that connects several important components of the Greater Monroe Area.

The road begins at a five-way intersection with 6th and Scott Streets, just south of downtown Monroe. It then proceeds almost due south. The layout of the Monroe street grid with streets that are parallel or perpendicular to the River Raisin, forces LaPlaisance to meet most cross streets at a severe angle.

The road passes Gross Quarry Lake. It has grade crossings with several railroads before passing some recreational uses. It services blighted and underperforming retail outlets (this area is the subject of this plan). After an interchange with I-75, LaPlaisance Road enters the Bolles Harbor area, then flows along the shore of Lake Erie until Woodchuck Creek.

At Woodchuck Creek, the road turns abruptly to the west, crossing I-75 again, and then turning back south toward Otter Creek. At Otter Creek, the road turns west once more, running along the north bank of the creek before it finally ends at South Dixie Highway in the small settlement of LaSalle, near LaSalle Township Hall.

This plan covers the stretch of the LaPlaisance Road and its surroundings from the Monroe City Limits through the interchange with I-75. The northern section of the corridor runs along Gross Quarry Lake, a former gravel quarry which has been slowly developed with housing and has been targeted for recreational uses. The southern section, south of the railroad tracks, was developed with large-scale retail outlets several decades ago. The outlet malls were designed with huge road setbacks, to accommodate an expansion of the road as part of the now-cancelled M-50 Connector project.

On the west side of the road, recreational uses such as go-karts, mini-golf, an RV campground, and an 18 hole golf course remain successful. But the outlet malls are in an extreme state of disrepair – almost three quarters of their storefronts are vacant, their parking lots are crumbling, and their facades are shabby and worn. All three are now bank-owned and likely to be demolished.

Purpose of this Plan

Monroe Charter Township decided to undertake this planning process in order to re-imagine what LaPlaisance Road could be. Its incarnation as a regional retail center based on outlet shopping has succumbed to changing trends in shopping patterns. The corridor needs a new vision – one that takes advantage of current economic trends, such as the need for additional industrial space in the I-75 corridor, and cutting edge techniques in planning and redevelopment, such as placemaking and non-motorized transportation facilities. The new LaPlaisance Road will be economically vibrant, open to bicycles and pedestrians, as well as cars, and, most of all, a memorable place that the Township can point to as its signature district.

Relationship to the Master Plan

This document is an addendum to the Township's Master Plan. It was created as part of the Township's 2014 Master Plan Update, which arose out of the *Resilient Monroe* regional planning process. The Future Land Use Map contained in this document is a portion of the Township's overall Future Land Use map, and the implementation action items of this plan tie to those of the overall Master Plan.

When the Township considers requested rezonings within the Plan Area, this plan should be used as a guide, in addition to the Master Plan.

Organization of this Plan

This Corridor Plan analyzes the two facets of the LaPlaisance Corridor – LaPlaisance Road itself and the land uses surrounding it. It inventories the existing conditions of both the road and its surroundings and performs analysis that answers the question, "Where are we today?" This part provides an inventory of current development patterns, infrastructure, community resources, and natural resources.

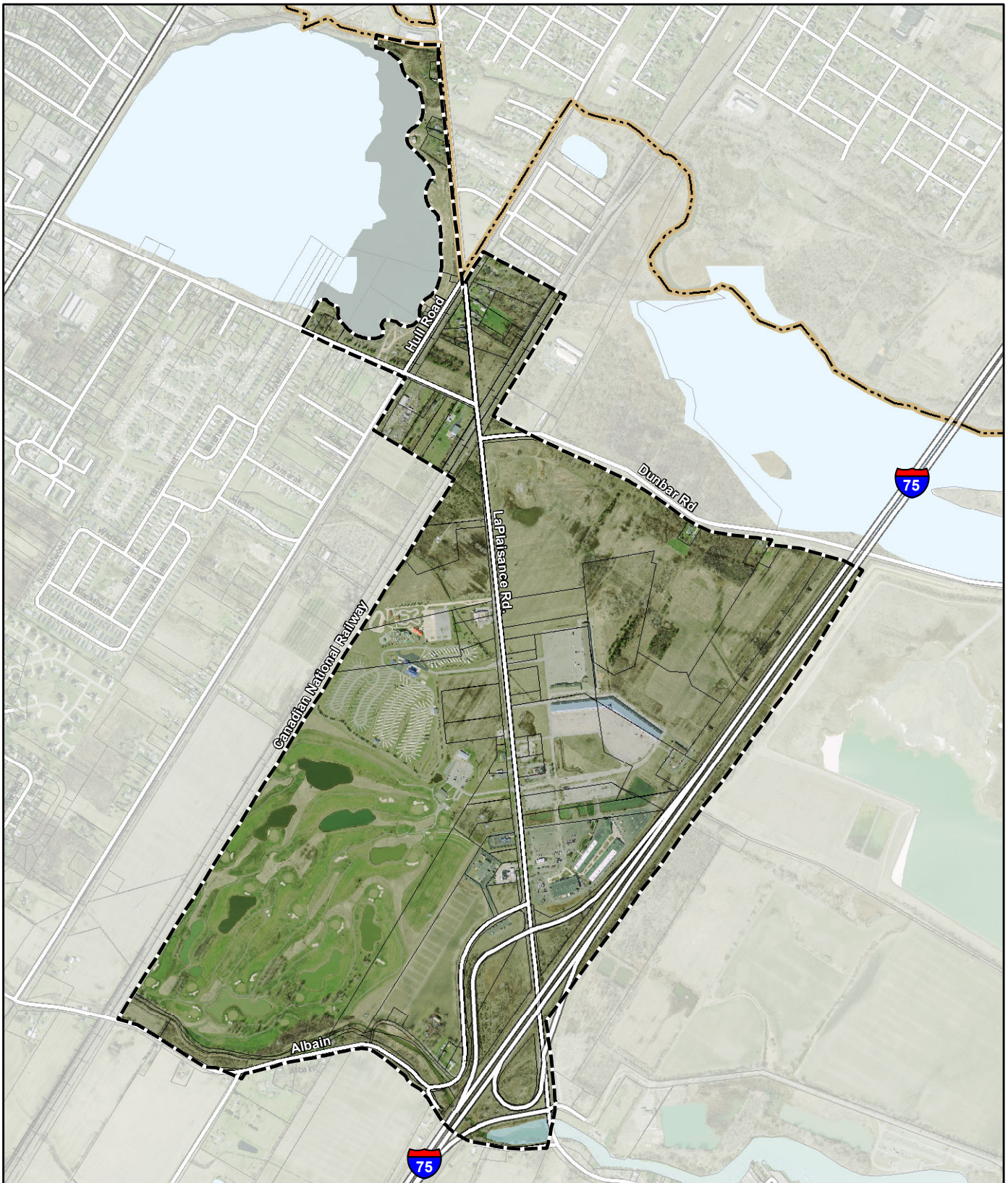
The second part of this Plan includes the Framework Plan that answer the question, "Where do we want to be?" The vision is set forth in the Framework Plan is then used as the basis for recommendations regarding the future of the roadway and the existing and future buildings along it.

The final part of the Corridor Plan is the Implementation Plan that answers the question, "How do we get there?" This part describes the actions and activities for the Township to pursue over the next five to ten years. The goals and objectives of this Plan are ambitious. The complete implementation of this Plan will depend on the resources available. Some objectives cannot be fully implemented without outside resources, such as grants. However, this plan sets forth the full plan that the Township desires to pursue.

Plan Area

The portion of the Township included in this plan is shown on Map 1. The Plan Area is centered on LaPlaisance Road, running from the Township's boundary with the City of Monroe on the north to the I-75 interchange on the south. The western boundary is the railroad tracks from Albain Road to just south of East Dunbar Road and the shore of Gross Quarry Lake from East Dunbar Road to the Township line. The eastern boundary follows I-75 north from LaPlaisance Road to East Dunbar Road, then runs along East Dunbar Road back to the railroad tracks, then north to just south of St. Vincent Street, and from there to the Township line.

This plan area incorporates all the land uses surrounding the LaPlaisance corridor, and includes a wide variety of typologies, including strip malls, recreational facilities, and lakefront single family homes. The existing land uses will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.



September 22, 2014

Map 1 Plan Area

LaPlaisance Road Corridor Plan

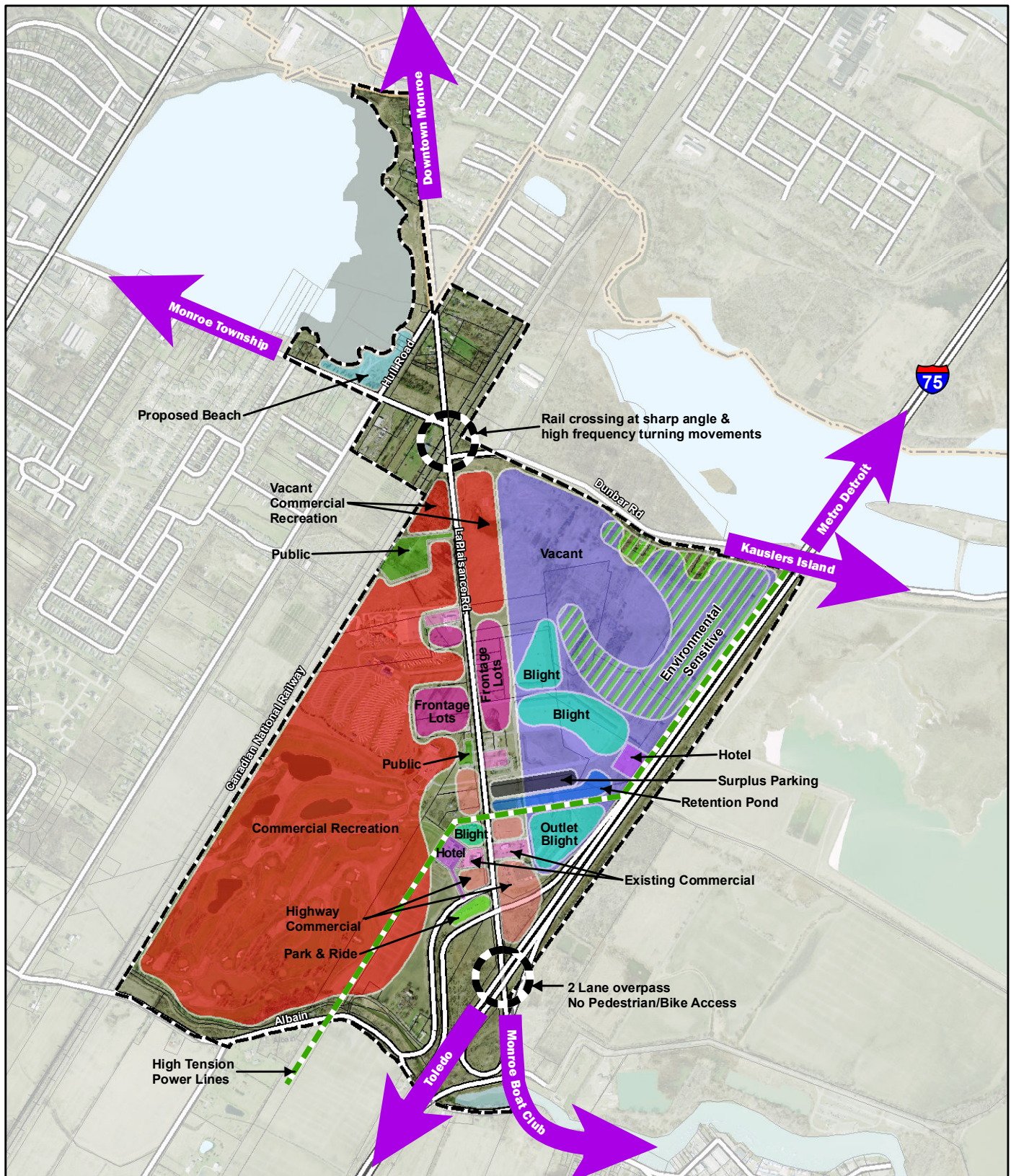
Monroe Charter Township,
Monroe County, Michigan

Base Map Source: Monroe County GIS, 2004,
Aerial Photo: SEMCOG, 2010

FEET 0 500 1,000



1. Introduction



September 22, 2014

Map 2 Issues and Observations

LaPlaisance Road Corridor Plan

Monroe Charter Township,
Monroe County, Michigan

Base Map Source: Monroe County GIS, 2004
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., 2005

FEET 0 500 1,000

1. Introduction

2. Existing Conditions

Issues and Observations

Map 2 shows McKenna's observations of the current conditions of the LaPlaisance Road area. These existing aspects shape how the corridor will function and develop in the future, even with the interventions discussed later in this plan. The Issues and observations map outlines the existing conditions on the corridor that can be accentuated in the corridor redevelopment process. Overall, a logical development framework exists with many strengths that can be carried forward into the future corridor vision. The corridor is characterized by expanses of undeveloped land, recreational activities, anchor highway commercial sites, and being a centrally located on the path between Monroe Township, Downtown Monroe, and I-75. The map highlights the following aspects of the corridor as it currently exists:

FRONTAGE LOTS

The center of the district is characterized by several undeveloped frontage lots. A contiguous group of lots are on the west side of the street but a few lots exist on the east as well. These greenfield lots are far enough away from I-75 that they have not been developed in a manner consistent to highway commercial services. Opportunity exists to transition to another development pattern with low entry costs because minimal demolition or site preparation is required.

HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL

Within ¼ mile of the I-75 exit there is some evidence of highway commercial uses and several potential lots to expand on these types of uses. Fast food restaurants and a gas station anchor this area. These uses provide an important transition and draw traffic from I-75 into the study area and will be key to future development.

EXISTING COMMERCIAL RECREATION

The existing commercial recreation uses include a golf course, RV campground, and a go-cart/entertainment facility. These uses provide a much needed vibrancy to the area and offer a seasonal resident population and local target market for businesses. The commercial recreation uses could be expanded into vacant parcels on the northern end of the study area to bridge and transition into the residential dwellings and proposed beach on the far north extent.



PROPOSED BEACH

As mentioned above, a beach area has been proposed at the corner of Hull Road and East Dunbar Road. A beach at this location would provide a desirable recreation amenity consistent with the enhancement of the commercial recreation uses in the study area. Further, the proposed beach is located on the far north of the area and would anchor the district and be a walkable and bikeable distance from and potential future commercial uses.

2. Existing Conditions

HOTELS

Two existing hotels exist in the study area, which are complementary both to the existing strengths of the commercial recreational uses and the highway commercial uses associated with I-75.

BLIGHTED AND OBSOLETE COMMERCIAL

Three large blighted and obsolete commercial developments characterize the eastern side of LaPlaisance. This area, originally envisioned to be a series of thriving outlet malls, now have high vacancy rates and marginal tenants, including offices and low-rent retail. These buildings are for the most part beyond modernization. Existing tenants could be incorporated into new development.

VACANT AND UNDEVELOPED PARCELS

The remainder of east side of the study area is characterized by an expanse of vacant and undeveloped lots. These lots are open with some natural features. Consolidation of parcels will be a challenge to pursuing a unified development plan; however, a master development plan could support the preservation of natural features help absorb the redevelopment costs associated with the demolition of obsolete structures and provide an opportunity for future development.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

As mentioned above, portions of the east part of the site have natural features that will affect development. The floodplain extends from the eastern edge of the study area into the center and portions of woodlands and potential wetlands intermixed. A retention pond just east of LaPlaisance may need to be reconfigured.

INTERSECTION ISSUES

Two major intersection issues bracket the corridor extents. On the south end, the I-75 overpass is a potential pinch-point for corridor expansion. The existing facility is two lanes and does not appear to be wide enough to support a retrofit for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. On the north end, the railroad runs parallel to Hull road and forms a six way intersection with LaPlaisance and East Dunbar.



Population and Income

Demographic analysis, or study of the characteristics of the population, is a fundamental element of planning. The intent of a demographic analysis is to understand the demographic and economic forces surrounding the development of the LaPlaisance Corridor. For that reason, data has been selected to achieve the specific goal of determining the demand for various land uses in the Plan Area. A more thorough demographic analysis can be found in the Monroe Township Master Plan.

The base unit of geographic analysis is the Plan Area, as described in Chapter 1. The data from this area is compared to either Monroe Township as a whole or areas within a five, ten, and fifteen minute drive of the Monroe Factory Shops (which is the Trade Area used in the retail analysis later in this chapter), or both, depending on the type of analysis being performed.

Most of the data presented comes from the US Census. The most recent data comes from the 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. The American Community Survey is conducted every year and samples a percentage of the community on topics such as population, economics, housing, etc. The 5-year estimates for a given population are considered a reliable source as they represent 60 months of collected data for all geographic areas. However, in some specific cases, the data may contain inaccuracies due to sampling.

POPULATION

The US Census reports that only 72 people live in the plan area currently. However, almost 9,000 live within a 5 minute drive, over 45,000 live within a 10 minute drive, and over 88,000 live within a 15 minute drive. This means that there is a trade area of almost 90,000 people that could patronize businesses in the LaPlaisance Corridor.

According to the 2010 Census, 14,568 people live in Monroe Township as a whole.

Table 2.1: Population

Plan Area	5 Minute Drive	10 Minute Drive	15 Minute Drive	Monroe Township
72	8,932	45,033	88,558	14,568

Source: US Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

INCOME

The median household income in the Plan Area is \$38,146, which is similar to the median income in the 5 Minute Drive Area. The 10 Minute and 15 Minute Drive areas have higher median incomes. The median income in Monroe Township is \$44,342.

Table 2.2: Median Income (2012 US Dollars)

Plan Area	5 Minute Drive	10 Minute Drive	15 Minute Drive	Monroe Township
\$38,146	\$39,524	\$47,967	\$51,743	\$44,342

Source: US Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

2. Existing Conditions

Housing

HOUSING UNITS

There are 31 housing units within the Plan Area. However, within 15 minutes of the LaPlaisance corridor, there are almost 38,000 housing units, 6,116 of which are in Monroe Township.

Table 2.3: Housing Units

Plan Area	5 Minute Drive	10 Minute Drive	15 Minute Drive	Monroe Township
31	3,843	19,865	37,818	6,116

Source: US Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

AGE OF HOUSING

The table below shows the age of housing units existing in the plan area and the Township as a whole. While other areas of the Township have experienced housing growth since World War II, the plan area has not, with only scattered homes being built and most of the development being commercial in nature.

Table 2.4: Age of Housing, 2011

Year Structure Built	Plan Area	Monroe Township
2000 or later	16.1%	17.0%
1990-99	3.2%	15.8%
1980-89	0.0%	9.9%
1970-79	6.5%	21.9%
1960-69	0.0%	8.0%
1950-59	22.6%	11.5%
1940-49	6.5%	6.6%
1939 or earlier	45.2%	9.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

HOUSING TYPE

Most of the housing in the plan area is single family homes, with a few duplexes and attached single family scattered around. There is little dense housing. The Township as a whole has a similar proportion of single family and multiple family housing units, but has a large number of manufactured units, none of which are in the plan area.

Table 2.5: Housing Type, 2011

	Plan Area	Monroe Township
Single Family Detached	64.5%	59.0%
Single Family Attached/Two-Family	25.8%	6.6%
Multiple Family	9.7%	10.5%
Manufactured Unit	0.0%	23.7%
Other	0.0%	0.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

HOUSING TENURE

Housing tenure describes how housing is occupied – by the owner, by a renter, or whether it is vacant. Table 2.6 shows that the majority of dwellings within the plan area, almost 68 percent, are owner-occupied. The Township as a whole has an even higher percentage – 72.6%. Both the plan area and the Township as a whole have low vacancy rates.

Table 2.6: Housing Ownership Status and Tenure, 2011

	Plan Area	Monroe Township
Owner-Occupied	67.7%	72.6%
Renter-Occupied	29.1%	21.5%
Vacant	3.2%	5.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Retail Market Potential

One of the plan area's strengths is Greater Monroe's status as a retail and jobs center for the surrounding region. Much of Monroe County's population comes to the City of Monroe, Monroe Charter Township, and Frenchtown Charter Township to shop on a regular basis.

Even with such a broad base of customers, Greater Monroe faces issues of vacancy in its main retail areas – downtown Monroe, the Telegraph Corridor, the South Dixie Corridor, and the Monroe Mall area. LaPlaisance Road can and should be a major retail district for the region, since it is a key gateway to both downtown Monroe and Bolles Harbor and has easy access to I-75. However, currently it is plagued by vacancy and under-development.

Less vacancy in a commercial area means more vibrancy, which in turn attracts more businesses. The Township strives for this virtuous cycle in all of its commercial areas.

This section analyzes the market for additional commercial space in the LaPlaisance Corridor by conducting a gap analysis. Gap analysis compares the supply of a certain good or service within a community to the demand for that good or service, based on the spending power of residents. If the number is positive, that indicates pent-up demand for a new retail location. If the number is negative, that indicates an oversupply of a certain type of commercial business.

Then, the gap will be converted from a spending power amount (in dollars) to a number of additional square feet of retail space demanded (based on per-square-foot sales for each category of retail). Finally, the number of additional square feet will be compared to the average size of a store in each category to determine the number of new stores demanded.

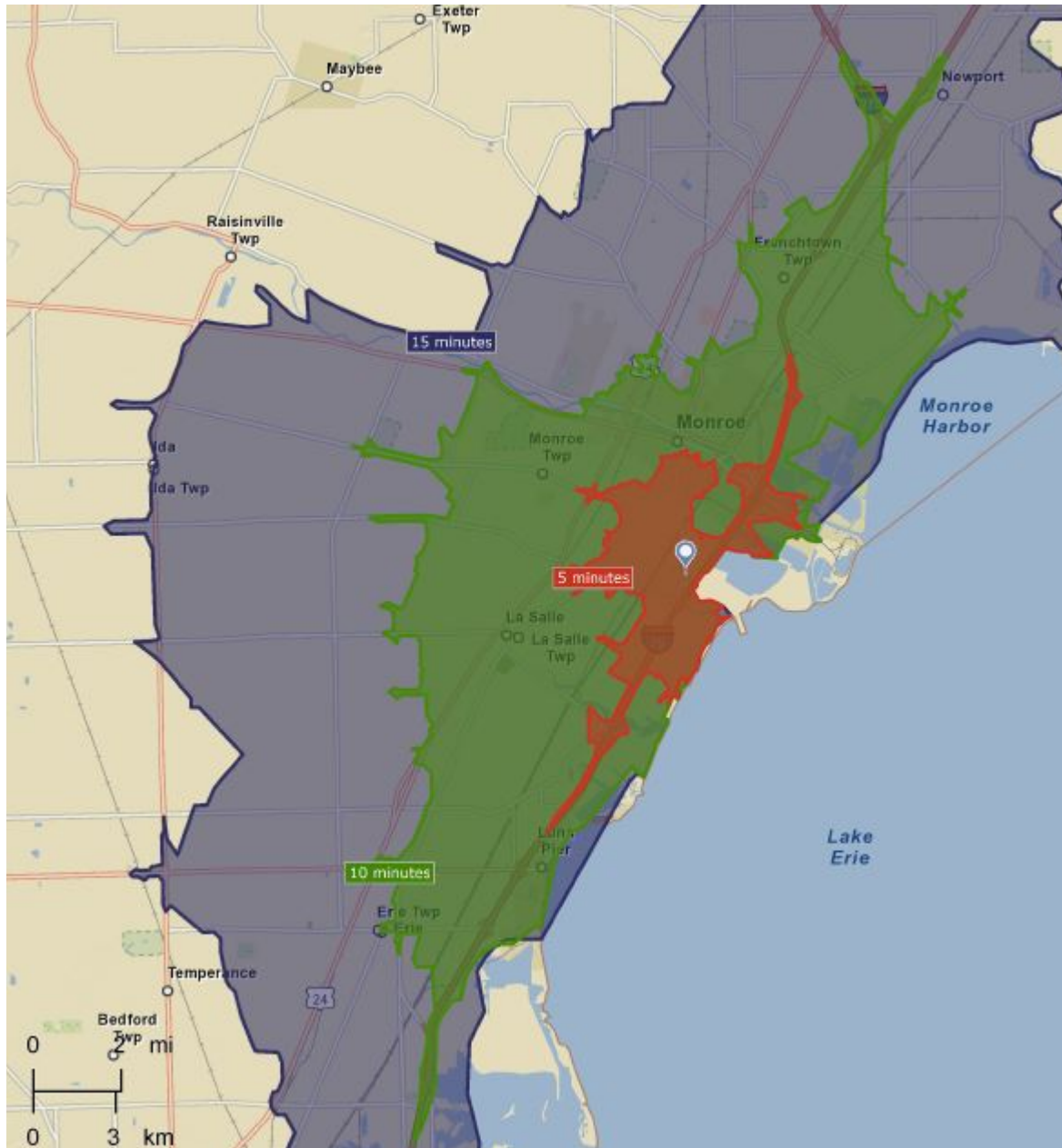
In considering the results of these retail gap calculations for purposes of the Corridor Plan, it is important that the numbers not be viewed as an absolute determinant of the community's future. Retail gap is only one aspect. Local variations in buying preference, buying power, community desires and other local characteristics and assets will greatly impact the future and outcome. The purpose of this analysis is, therefore, to give some insights which can contribute to a balanced approach to future economic development efforts, including "economic gardening," and to create realistic expectations for the types of new retail development the corridor can hope to attract.

TRADE AREA AND EXISTING BUSINESSES

The Greater Monroe area is the commercial center for Monroe County because it has a large retail presence. There is little retail in outlying areas of the County, so shopping, dining, and many services are concentrated in Greater Monroe.

Customers and potential customers for LaPlaisance businesses come approximately from the three "rings" surrounding the corridor. For purposes of analysis, they are measured from the Monroe Factory Shops, which was intended to be the retail anchor of the corridor before its decline. The first ring, within a five minute drive, covers the entire plan area and portions of the City of Monroe, Monroe Township, and LaSalle Township. The second ring, within a 10 minute drive, covers most of Greater Monroe, and reaches up and down I-75 to Newport and Erie. The third ring, within a 15 minute drive, covers all of the Lake Erie shoreline in Monroe County and reaches inland as far as Raisinville and Temperance. The 15 Minute Drive area is considered the complete Trade Area for LaPlaisance Road – i.e. the vast majority of the customers and competing businesses will come from within that area.

Map 3: 5, 10, and 15 Minute Drives From Monroe Factory Shops (the LaPlaisance Corridor Trade Area)



Source: ESRI Business Analyst 2014

2. Existing Conditions

A McKenna Associates windshield survey in May 2014 showed 35 total businesses along the corridor. Of those, only 19 are retail businesses. The district has 85 storefronts and 10 stand-alone commercial buildings/facilities, for a vacancy rate of 63%. There is also a significant amount of vacant land and underused surface parking along the corridor. The high vacancy rate should be seen as an opportunity to redevelop the district with new building typologies, uses, and business types that will bring more customers and vibrancy.

Table 2.7: LaPlaisance Road Business Mix

Category	Number of Businesses
Gas Stations	2
Fast Food	2
Recreation/Tourism	3
Building Materials	1
Clothing	4
Fireworks	1
Used Goods	1
Hunting Equipment	1
Bank ATM	1
Dance Lessons	1
Auction Gallery	1
Screen Printing	1
Church	1
Hotel	2
Medical Office	9
Other Office*	4
Total	35

Source: McKenna Associates Survey, May 2014

*"Other Office" Category includes National Association of Freight Handlers, Monroe County Association of Realtors, Habitat for Humanity, and Roberts Private Security and Investigations.

LARGE-SCALE RETAIL CENTERS

There are three large-scale retail centers on the east side of LaPlaisance between East Dunbar Road and I-75. All three suffer from high vacancy and disinvestment, and are poorly connected to each other and LaPlaisance Road. The three tables below show the businesses in each center, as of May 2014.

Table 2.8: Monroe Factory Shops

Category	Number of Businesses	Business Names
Clothing Stores	3	The Gap Carter's Uniform Outlet
Resale	1	Companion Animals
Hunting Equipment	1	Case XX Knives
Fireworks	1	Motor City Fireworks
Vacant	20	
Total	26	
Vacancy Rate	66%	

Source: McKenna Associates Survey, May 2014

Table 2.9: Horizon Outlet Mall

Category	Number of Businesses	Business Names
Clothing Stores	1	Viva Boutique
Dance School	1	Viva Dance Company
Auction Gallery	1	Monroe Auction Gallery
Screen Printing	1	Jet Screen Printing
House of Worship	1	Vineyard Church
Medical Office	1	Multi-Specialty Group
Vacant	21	
Total	27	
Vacancy Rate	77%	

Source: McKenna Associates Survey, May 2014

2. Existing Conditions

Table 2.10: Harwood Plaza

Category	Number of Businesses	Business Names
Medical Office	8	Family Counseling Gateway Chiropractic Mercy Memorial Family Medicine Prima-care Mental Health Primary Medical Equipment Medical Office Mindful Movement Kathleen Reinhart Pediatrics
Other Office	5	National Freight Handlers Monroe County Association of Realtors Habitat for Humanity Area Agency on Aging Roberts Security and Investigation
Vacant	24	
Total	37	
Vacancy Rate	65%	

Source: McKenna Associates Survey, May 2014

GAP ANALYSIS

Once the trade areas for the community have been identified (in this case, approximately estimated as the 15 minute drive around the Monroe Factory Shops, with sub-areas at 5 and 10 minutes for more detailed analysis), a gap analysis can be performed. This analysis consists of comparing the demand for a particular good to the supply of that good in the trade area and then computing the difference, or “gap” between demand and supply.

A positive gap indicates that there is more demand than supply and that a new store may be necessary to fill a particular need. A negative gap indicates that there is more supply than demand, meaning either that existing stores may be in danger of going out of business or that additional demand is coming from outside the identified trade area.

For the purposes of this analysis, the gap will be expressed as a percentage of demand – i.e. the percentage of demand that is not being met by the existing supply. A negative percentage indicates a negative gap, i.e., a surplus of retail space in that category and no demand for additional stores of that type. Displaying the gap as a percentage allows a quick-glance analysis and easy comparison between categories.

Once the gap is calculated, it is be used to project the demand for new stores in various retail categories. The gap is be divided by the average sales per square foot for each type of retail, and the resulting figure is compared to the approximate size in square feet of an establishment that could open in the LaPlaisance Corridor.

The analysis produces an estimate of the types of new businesses that are most likely to be supported over the next ten years along the corridor.

2. Existing Conditions

Table 2.11 shows the percentage gaps based upon the supply and demand within the trade areas. A positive gap (in green) means that there is unmet demand that could be filled by new businesses. A negative gap (in red) means the market is already oversupplied.

The table shows a huge oversupply in the “Clothing Stores” category. That oversupply is almost completely due to the Gap Outlet at the Monroe Factory Shops. It is likely that store may close, as the mall itself is under consideration for demolition. It is possible that Gap would consider moving the outlet to a new retail development elsewhere in the LaPlaisance Corridor.

Table 2.11: Percentage of Unmet Retail Demand (Full Time Residents)

Category	5 Minute Drive	10 Minute Drive	15 Minute Drive
Automobile Dealers	-564%	-30%	14%
Outer Motor Vehicle Dealers	38%	41%	45%
Auto Parts Stores	37%	-66%	-33%
Furniture Stores	-474%	-5%	33%
Home Furnishings Stores	-412%	-36%	-10%
Electronics and Appliance Stores	100%	83%	84%
Building Materials and Supply Stores	85%	28%	-1%
Lawn and Garden Equipment Stores	56%	33%	21%
Grocery Stores	90%	-26%	-17%
Specialty Food Stores	83%	44%	24%
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores	-107%	-53%	-13%
Health and Personal Care Stores	43%	-8%	15%
Gas Stations	-60%	-5%	-91%
Clothing Stores	-485%	-11%	7%
Shoe Stores	92%	87%	39%
Jewelry and Luggage Stores	-157%	13%	37%
Sporting Goods, Hobby, and Music Stores	68%	97%	17%
Book Stores	89%	72%	25%
Department Stores	78%	75%	-91%
General Merchandise Stores	100%	24%	7%
Florists	-443%	-21%	18%
Office Supply Stores	-76%	-9%	-71%
Used Merchandise Stores	-55%	24%	-7%
Full Service Restaurants	37%	-56%	-29%
Fast Food Restaurants	43%	-7%	-4%
Bars	47%	10%	-1%

Source: ESRI Business Analyst 2014

Table 2.12 shows the percentage gap converted to a demand for additional square footage of retail, the approximate size of a new establishment, and the number of additional stores demanded based on the year-round population of the trade area. These numbers reflect the entire 15-minute drive area, because that is the projected customer-shed for businesses on LaPlaisance Road. It also includes the vast majority of the competition for the potential new businesses.

Table 2.12: Demand for New Stores

Category	Additional Square Footage Demand	Approximate Size of Store	New Stores Demanded
Automobile Dealers	54,896	20,000	2-3
Outer Motor Vehicle Dealers	13,174	15,000	0-1
Auto Parts Stores	0	7,000	0
Furniture Stores	8,534	20,000	0-1
Home Furnishings Stores	0	20,000	0
Electronics and Appliance Stores	45,714	20,000	2-3
Building Materials and Supply Stores	0	30,000	0
Lawn and Garden Equipment Stores	1,964	30,000	0
Grocery Stores	0	30,000	0
Specialty Food Stores	2,867	5,000	0-1
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores	0	10,000	0
Health and Personal Care Stores	21,968	15,000	1-2
Gas Stations	0	20,000	0
Clothing Stores	6,735	10,000	0-1
Shoe Stores	5,842	10,000	0-1
Jewelry and Luggage Stores	2,541	10,000	0-1
Sporting Goods, Hobby, and Music Stores	10,255	15,000	0-1
Book Stores	4,972	10,000	0-1
Department Stores	0	50,000	0
General Merchandise Stores	42,789	20,000	2-3
Florists	929	5,000	0-1
Office Supply Stores	0	10,000	0
Used Merchandise Stores	0	10,000	0
Full Service Restaurants	0	10,000	0
Fast Food Restaurants	0	10,000	0
Bars	0	10,000	0

Source: ESRI Business Analyst 2014

2. Existing Conditions

DEMAND FOR NEW ESTABLISHMENTS

In general, the preceding analysis shows that there is **not a large amount of pent-up demand for additional retail** in the greater Monroe community. New retail development will not come simply out of businesses recognizing unmet demand for their products.

There is unmet demand in many retail categories. Specifically, it appears that the Monroe area could support additional health and personal care stores, general merchandise stores, and electronics stores, as well as several other categories.

CREATING ADDITIONAL DEMAND

Additional demand can be created through aggressive marketing, community events, and recreational improvements that will draw more customers to the Monroe community. The region's transportation linkages and lakefront recreational opportunities bring potential customers into the area every day – and these visitors are not included in the gap analysis. By capitalizing on these advantages, the Monroe area can bring more customers to its businesses. The LaPlaisance Corridor is especially well-positioned, because it serves as the main connection to I-75 from Monroe Township and parts of the City of Monroe.

Additional customers can also be brought to an area through “placemaking.” If the LaPlaisance Corridor looks and feels like any other exit off I-75 between Detroit and Toledo, it will not maximize its commercial potential. However, by re-aligning the zoning and road design for the corridor, the Township could create a **memorable and exciting place** – potentially even a “downtown.” If designed and developed correctly, the LaPlaisance Corridor could become an attraction in and of itself, bringing in not only customers from the local area, boaters on Lake Erie, and travelers on I-75, but also people coming to experience the **vibrancy and excitement of a brand new urban place.**

The planned **industrial park** (see Chapter 3) will also provide customers for new retail along LaPlaisance. With not only workers, but also truck deliveries and pick-ups, the industrial park will attract **thousands of people** to the LaPlaisance area **every workday**. Businesses along the LaPlaisance corridor will benefit from the additional traffic.

Another investment that will bring additional customers to LaPlaisance Road is the **planned bike path** from Downtown Monroe to Bolles Harbor. People will use this path both for recreation and transportation. If businesses along the path are **oriented to take advantage of the cyclists** (with bike parking facilities and front doors along or near the bike path), then they will attract additional customers.

The concept of “economic gardening” focuses on fostering long-term sustainable growth in the community and creating a nurturing environment for entrepreneurs, including relationship-building between local businesses. **The public's growing preference to buy and produce “local” can be an important driver for the Township's economy.** This includes the burgeoning local foods movement, as well as efforts to better facilitate neighborhood and local shopping. The emphasis on local foods is creating opportunities for agri-tourism and small-scale production, distribution, and retail ventures.

Similarly, while Chambers of Commerce have long touted **“shop local” campaigns**, a catchy slogan and a window placard are not enough. Innovative programs designed to increase the level of engagement between local shop owners and customers, such as printing their own local currency, are among the many ways to encourage buying local.

The strategies listed above form the recommendations of this plan and the vision for the corridor.

Analysis Maps

The maps on the following pages show various characteristics of the Plan Area as they exist today. This information helps form the recommendations of the plan by showing the aspects of the area that will be strengthened, reduced, eliminated, or changed as this plan is implemented.

WETLANDS

Map 4 shows the wetlands within the Plan Area. Wetlands are an important part of the natural drainage system. They clean and filter rain water, provide important drainage to prevent flooding, and support a wide variety of wildlife. The State of Michigan requires a permit from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) prior to impacting a recorded wetland, and requires remediation and mitigation to prevent the destruction of wetlands to the extent possible.

Most of the wetlands in the study area along LaPlaisance Creek and Plum Creek are not likely to be heavily developed. There is also a wetland near the existing Horizon Outlet Mall (which is slated to be demolished). This area could be part of the planned future industrial park (see Chapter 3). The design of any development in that part of the plan area must be respectful of the wetland and preserve it to the extent possible.

FLOOD PLAIN

Map 5 shows the flood plain in the plan area, according to the 2014 FEMA map. With Plum Creek, LaPlaisance Creek, Gross Quarry Lake, and Lake Erie all nearby, significant portions of the plan area are under threat of flood in the event of a 100 year or 500 year flood. Much of the flood plain area is on the golf course, but some areas that are developed or planned for development are within the flood plain:

- The hotel and other development along Albain Road west of LaPlaisance Road are under threat of flood, especially in a 500 year storm.
- Many of the lots along Gross Quarry Lake are in the flood plain. Any new homes built along the lake will be required to comply with flood plain regulations and purchase flood insurance.
- The Monroe Factory Shops site is in the 500 year flood plain. The beleaguered outlet mall is proposed to be demolished. That freeway-adjacent site is prime for redevelopment, however, any development will have to mitigate the impacts of the flood plain.
- The eastern corner of the site, near the East Dunbar Road overpass over I-75, is in the 100 year flood plain. As the industrial park planned for this area is designed, it must consider flood plain issues.

The Federal Government, State of Michigan, and Monroe Township Zoning Ordinance all have regulations regarding the flood plain. These standards will have to be met for any development in the areas identified as the flood plain.

EXISTING LAND USE

The Existing Land Use maps shows the uses in the plan area as they currently exist. Much of the land along LaPlaisance Road is vacant, with scattered commercial, residential, and recreational uses. One of the reasons for this planning effort is to give the LaPlaisance Corridor a more coherent identity.

2. Existing Conditions

CURRENT ZONING

The Township Zoning Map current as of March 4, 2010 has also been included for reference. Like the Future Land Use map, it envisions the entire project area as a commercial node. Recommended changes to the zoning are included in Chapter 3.

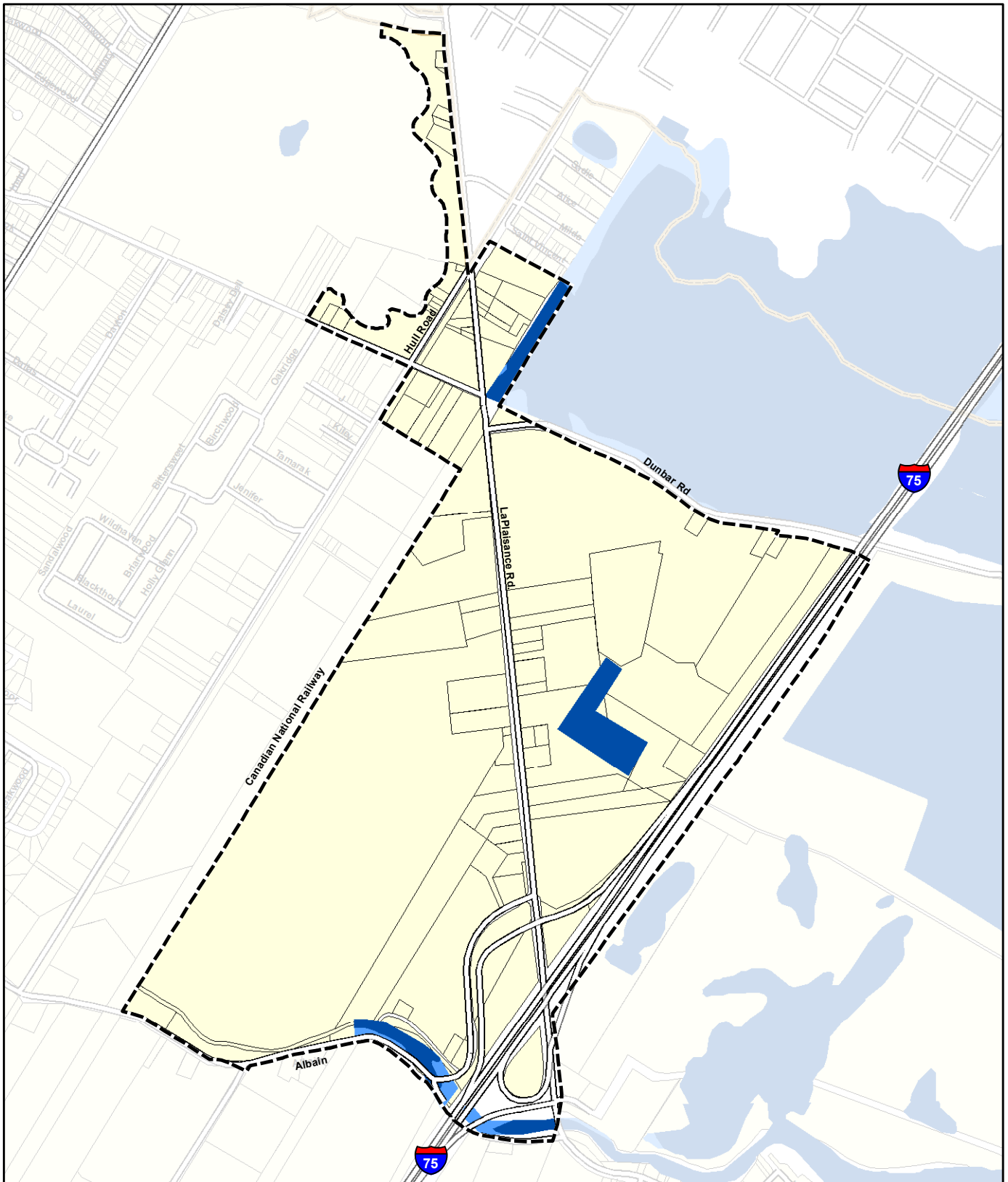
CURRENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Map 8 shows the existing road network in the plan area, along with traffic counts. Observed traffic patterns show that a significant proportion of the cars travelling north on LaPlaisance Road from I-75 turn left at East Dunbar Road. This observation formed the recommendations of this plan regarding the re-alignment of that intersection.

In general, LaPlaisance is a busy corridor with a major interchange with I-75. That makes it attractive to both commercial and industrial development.

There is no public transportation along the LaPlaisance corridor. The nearest bus route (Lake Erie Transit Route 3) crosses LaPlaisance at Jones Ave., well north of the plan area in the City of Monroe.

There are very few sidewalks in the plan area, including none along LaPlaisance. The Master Plan envisions a non-motorized trail along the corridor. This plan supports the implementation of that trail.



September 22, 2014

Map 4 Wetlands

LaPlaisance Road Corridor Plan
Monroe Charter Township,
Monroe County, Michigan

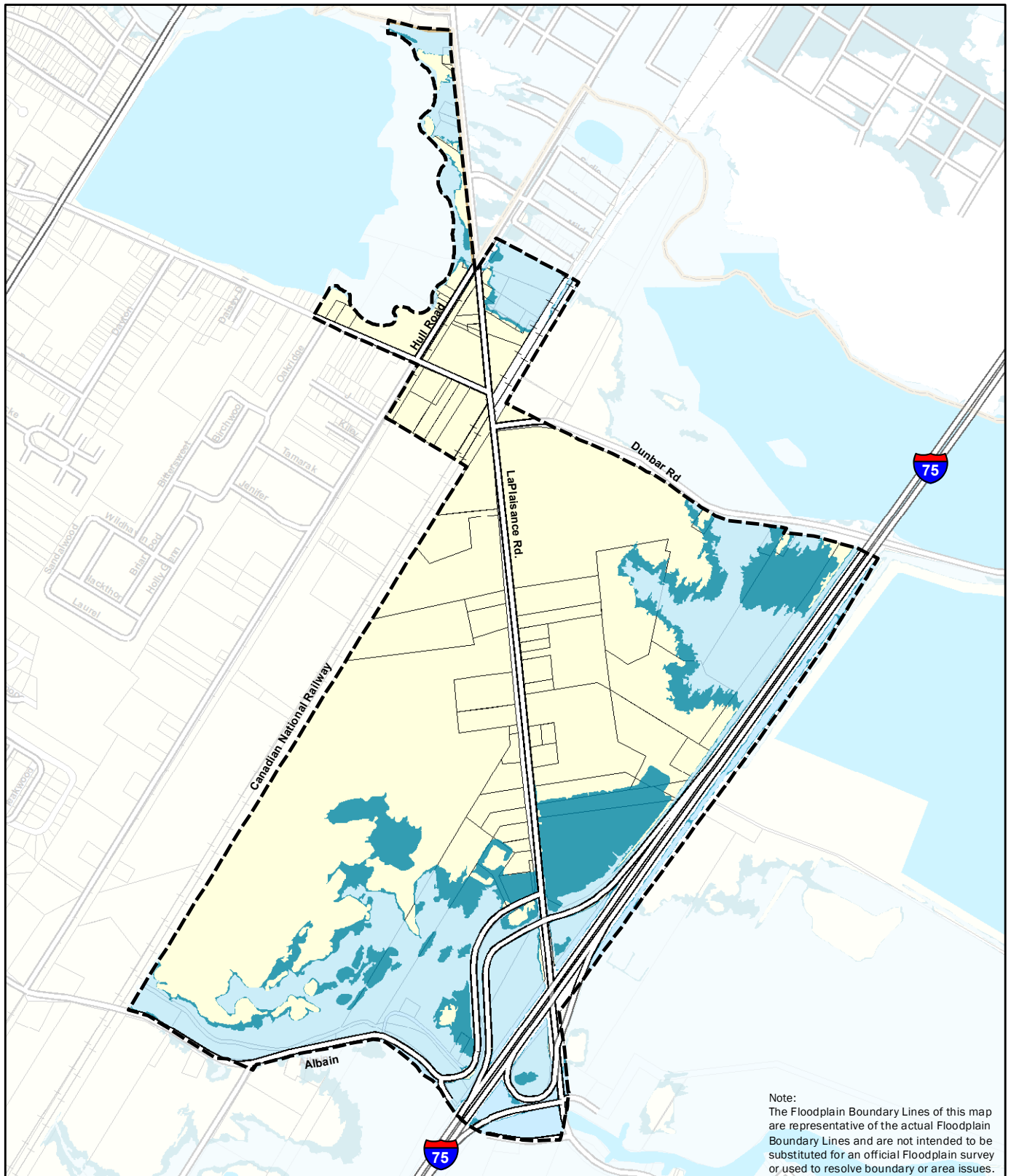
LEGEND

- 1 - Wetlands as identified on
NWI and MIRIS maps
- Lakes/ Rivers
- Plan Area
- Township Boundary

Base Map Source: Monroe County GIS, 2004
Data Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources

FEET 0 500 1,000

2. Existing Conditions



September 22, 2014

Map 5 Floodplain

LaPlaisance Road Corridor Plan
Monroe Charter Township,
Monroe County, Michigan

LEGEND

- 500 Year Floodplain
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Lakes/ Rivers
- Plan Area
- Township Boundary

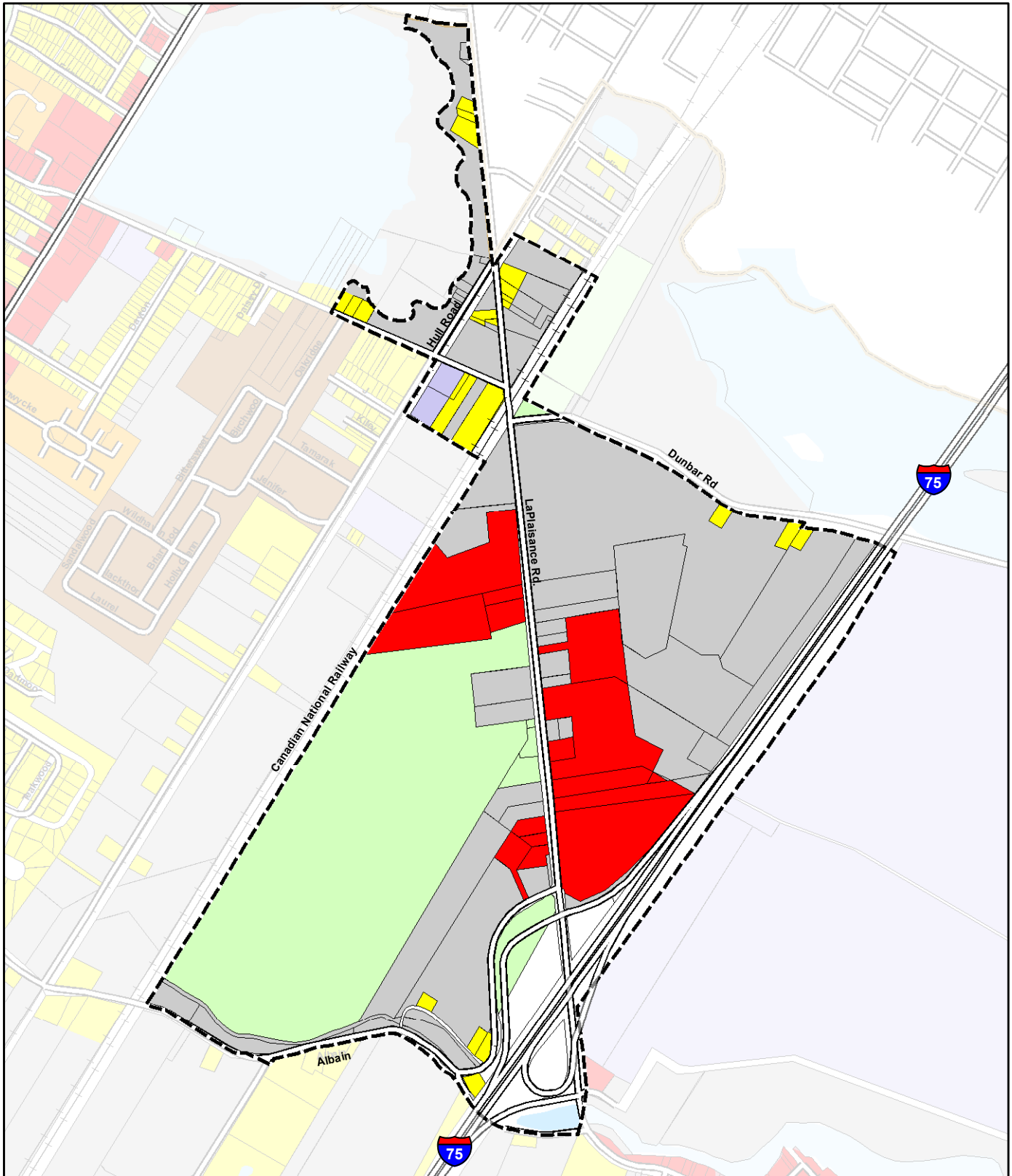
Base Map Source: Monroe County GIS, 2004
Data Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources

FEET 0 500 1,000



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2. Existing Conditions



September 22, 2014

Map 6 Existing Land Use

LaPlaisance Road Corridor Plan
Monroe Charter Township,
Monroe County, Michigan

LEGEND

- Single Family Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/ Semi-Public
- Open and Other
- Plan Area

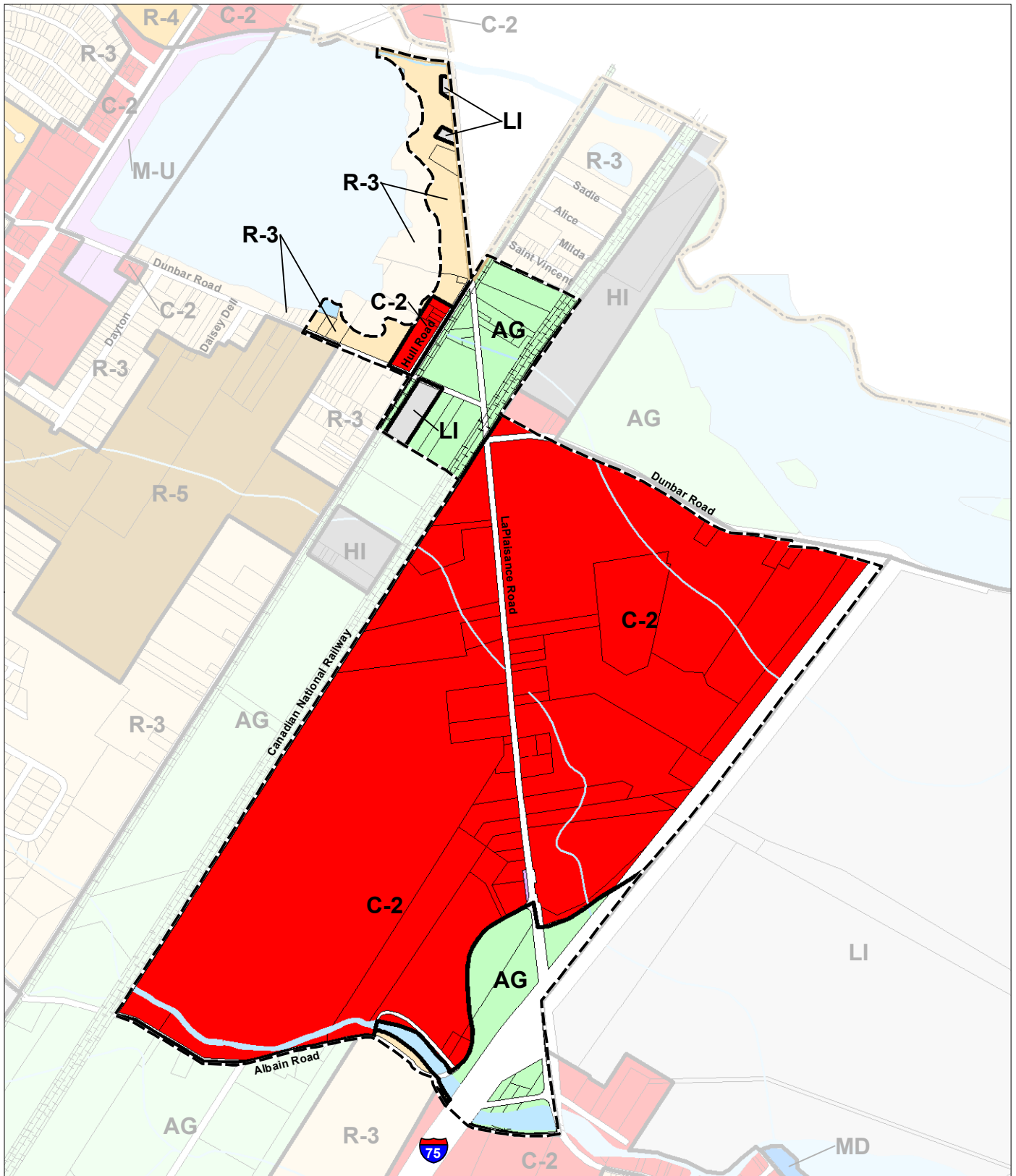
Base Map Source: Monroe County GIS, 2004
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., 2005

FEET 0 500 1,000



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2. Existing Conditions



September 22, 2014

Map 7 Existing Zoning (2014)

LaPlaisance Road Corridor Plan
Monroe Charter Township,
Monroe County, Michigan

LEGEND

AG	Agricultural	M-U	Mixed Use
R-1	Low Density Residential	C-1	Local Commercial
R-2	Medium Density Residential	C-2	General Commercial
R-3	High Density Residential	LI	Light Industrial
R-4	Multiple Family Residential	HI	Heavy Industrial
R-5	Manufactured Housing Park	MD	Marinas
			Plan Area

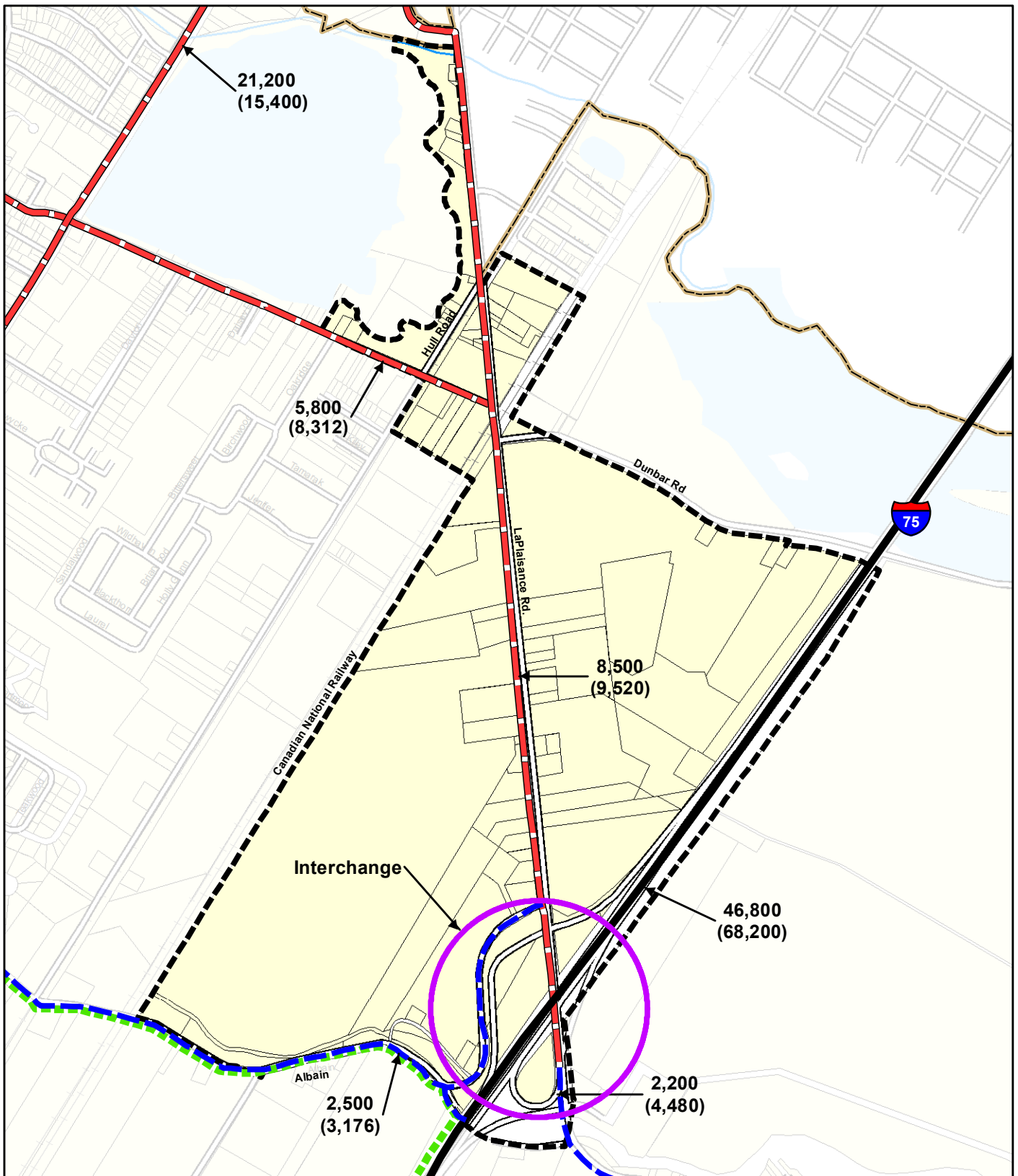
Basemap Source: Monroe County Planning
Data Source: Monroe Charter Township 12/98
Data Subject To Verification In Township Records

FEET 0 500 1,000



McKenna
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2. Existing Conditions



September 22, 2014

Map 8 Transportation Circulation

LaPlaisance Road Corridor Plan
Monroe Charter Township,
Monroe County, Michigan

LEGEND

- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collectors
- Local Streets

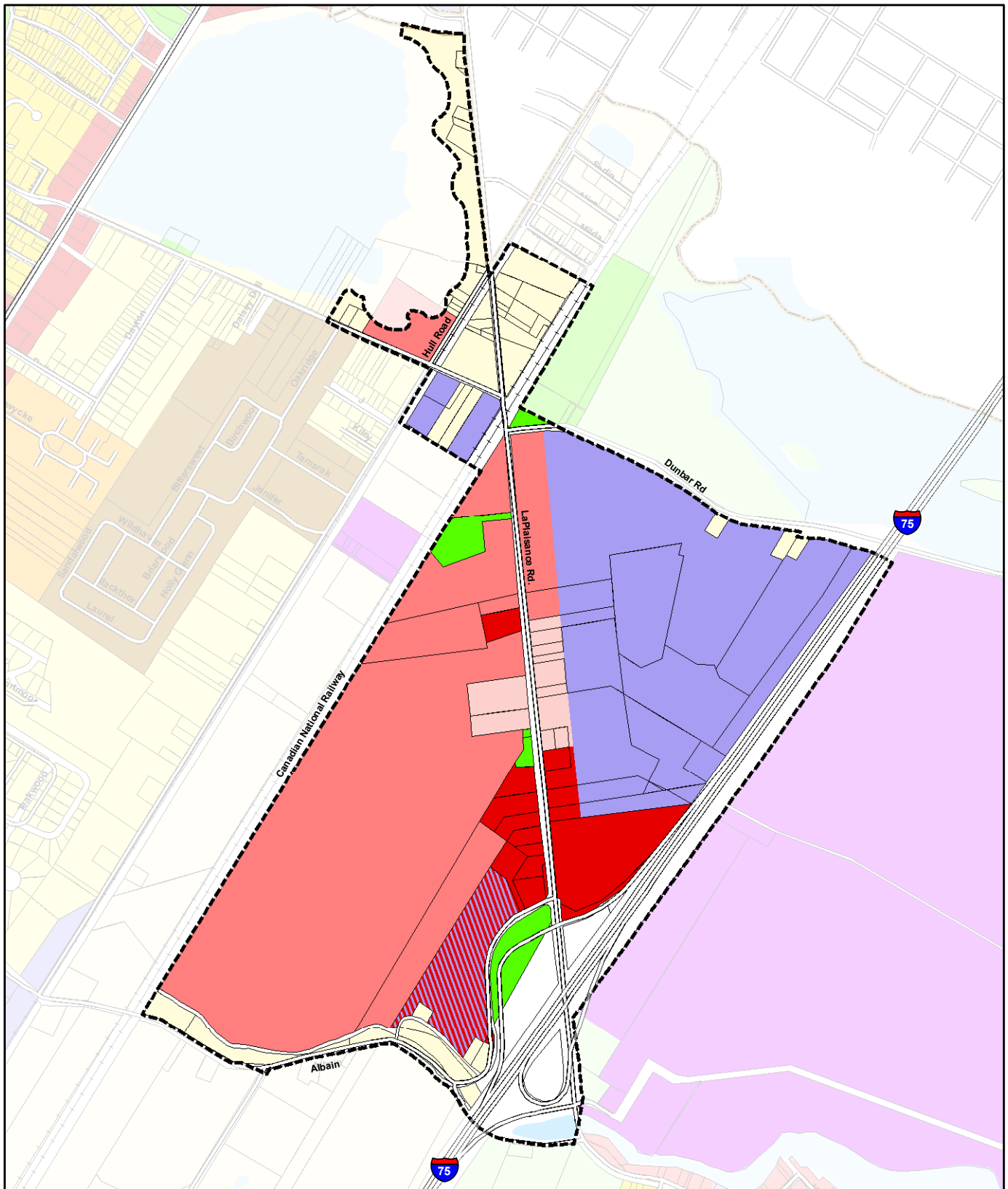
- Urban/ Rural Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Plan Area
- Average Daily Trips - 2012
- Average Daily Trips - (2000)

Base Map Source: Monroe County GIS, 2004
Data Source: SEMCOG, 2014

FEET 0 500 1,000



2. Existing Conditions



January 8, 2015

Map 9 Future Land Use

LaPlaisance Road Corridor Plan
Monroe Charter Township,
Monroe County, Michigan

LEGEND

- Low Density Residential
- Commercial/Office
- Commercial Recreation
- LaPlaisance Core Commercial

- Light Industrial
- Public/ Semi-Public
- Plan Area

Base Map Source: Monroe County GIS, 2004
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., 2005

FEET 0 500 1,000



McKenna
ASSOCIATES

2. Existing Conditions

3. Framework Plan

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Plan (see Map 9) for the LaPlaisance Corridor is a sub-section of the Future Land Use Map for the Township as a whole. Because of the specific challenges and opportunities of the LaPlaisance area, this plan includes additional specifics about the land uses proposed in the Plan Area.

The Master Plan includes 13 Future Land Use categories. Of these, six are represented inside the LaPlaisance Corridor Plan Area. Those categories are as follows:

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (1 DWELLING UNIT/ACRE)

Land in this category is planned for single family residential homes at a density of one per acre. Within the Plan Area, the land categorized as Low Density Residential is generally along the lakefront of Gross Quarry Lake. New homes built in this area should respect the lakefront and be designed to accommodate other natural features of the area, including the flood plain. The lakefront should not be overbuilt with homes, which is why the land is categorized as low density, rather than medium or high density.

Because Gross Quarry Lake is privately owned, homeowners along it do not have riparian rights. Instead, lots split from the parent parcel include 50 feet into the lake, based on the ordinary high water mark. Property owners do not have the ability to prevent others from boating or swimming in the 50 foot area, but are allowed to build docks, boat hoists, and other structures within the area defined as their property. Any construction plans must consider the shoreline and steepness of the drop-off at the wall of this former quarry site.

COMMERCIAL RECREATION

Commercial Recreation promotes development of recreational uses to serve tourists who visit the Township's water resources, especially Lake Erie. Uses in this category include marinas, boat storage, bait shops, restaurants, golf courses, go carts, batting cages, and private beaches, among others. Within the Plan Area, the existing golf course, RV Park, and mini golf/go kart business are all planned to remain, and are therefore classified as Commercial Recreation. In addition, the land proposed for a private beach on Gross Quarry Lake is planned for Commercial Recreation, to promote a new recreational use to allow legal and safe access to the lake.

Further, a stretch of both sides of LaPlaisance Road between East Dunbar Road and the existing recreational amenities are planned for Commercial Recreation. The intent of this area is to encourage additional recreational businesses to locate along the corridor, create a destination and take advantage of the auto and bicycle traffic between downtown Monroe, the planned Gross Quarry Lake Beach, the existing recreational amenities along LaPlaisance, Bolles Harbor, and Lake Erie. Businesses that would support recreational amenities, such as ice cream parlors, equipment rental, fishing supplies, and boat sales should also be encouraged in this area.

The stretch of LaPlaisance Road planned for Commercial Recreation will also serve as a gateway to the LaPlaisance Core Commercial area.

COMMERCIAL/OFFICE

3. Framework Plan

The commercial and office classification is a category for uses that are commercial in nature. This category is broad and includes professional offices, personal services, and retail uses. Examples of uses that are considered service uses include barbershop, beauty salons and specialty shops. Examples of retail uses include drug stores, hardware stores, grocery stores, video rental, dairy products, delicatessens, day care, and shoe repair. Auto-oriented businesses such as gas stations are also encouraged in this classification. Office uses include real estate, medical, and other professional offices.

The land designated for Commercial/Office within the plan area is generally the area adjacent to I-75. This plan envisions new retail uses in that area to serve traffic from I-75, including fast food, gas stations, and hotels. Some of these uses are in place already, although other similar uses have recently closed, including two fast food restaurants. By redeveloping the rest of the plan area as described in this chapter, the demand for freeway service businesses will grow, leading to the redevelopment of the interchange area with new commercial businesses that take advantage of increased traffic flows.

The vacant land along Albain Road west and south of LaPlaisance Road is planned for either Commercial/Office or Light Industrial. Any development on that site must respect the neighboring golf course and nearby residential uses.

PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC

The Public/Semi-Public category includes public and institutional uses. These are planned to remain as they are. Community parks, churches, schools and other land uses owned or used by the public to provide noncommercial, cultural, recreational and social services are included in this category. Any change to a public/semi-public site is planned to revert to the adjacent compatible planned land use; however, they should actively participate in placemaking, such as lighting and landscaping.

The Public/Semi-Public uses within the Plan Area are:

- The MDOT Park and Ride adjacent to I-75.
- The Fire Station and Fire Department Practice Facility.
- The State facility on East Dunbar Road east of LaPlaisance Road.
- The wireless telecommunications facility along LaPlaisance Road south of Dunbar Road.

These uses are planned to stay consistent for the foreseeable future. However, they should actively participate in “placemaking”, such as lighting and landscaping.

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

This classification is intended for development of a modern business/industrial park to accommodate light industries, research office and office warehouse uses, and prototype product development. The businesses that would move into this area would be attracted by quick access to I-75 and other major corridors.

High quality development standards must be emphasized as the industrial park is built, especially where there are nearby residences or environmental challenges such as the flood plain. Loading areas should be located to the side or rear of the buildings. Sides of the buildings visible from I-75 or other major corridors should be designed with high quality building materials such as stone, brick, and other natural materials. Heavy landscaping should be used to improve quality visual environment of the plan area, especially where activities are visible from off-site.

As described in the transportation plan later in this chapter, the planned industrial park is accessed by an extension of Albain Road that runs parallel to I-75 and connects to East Dunbar Road. Another road, running parallel to LaPlaisance, will serve the businesses. Additional internal drives could be built as needed.

The vacant land along Albain Road west and south of LaPlaisance Road is planned for either Commercial/Office or Light Industrial. Any development on that site must respect the neighboring golf course and nearby residential uses.

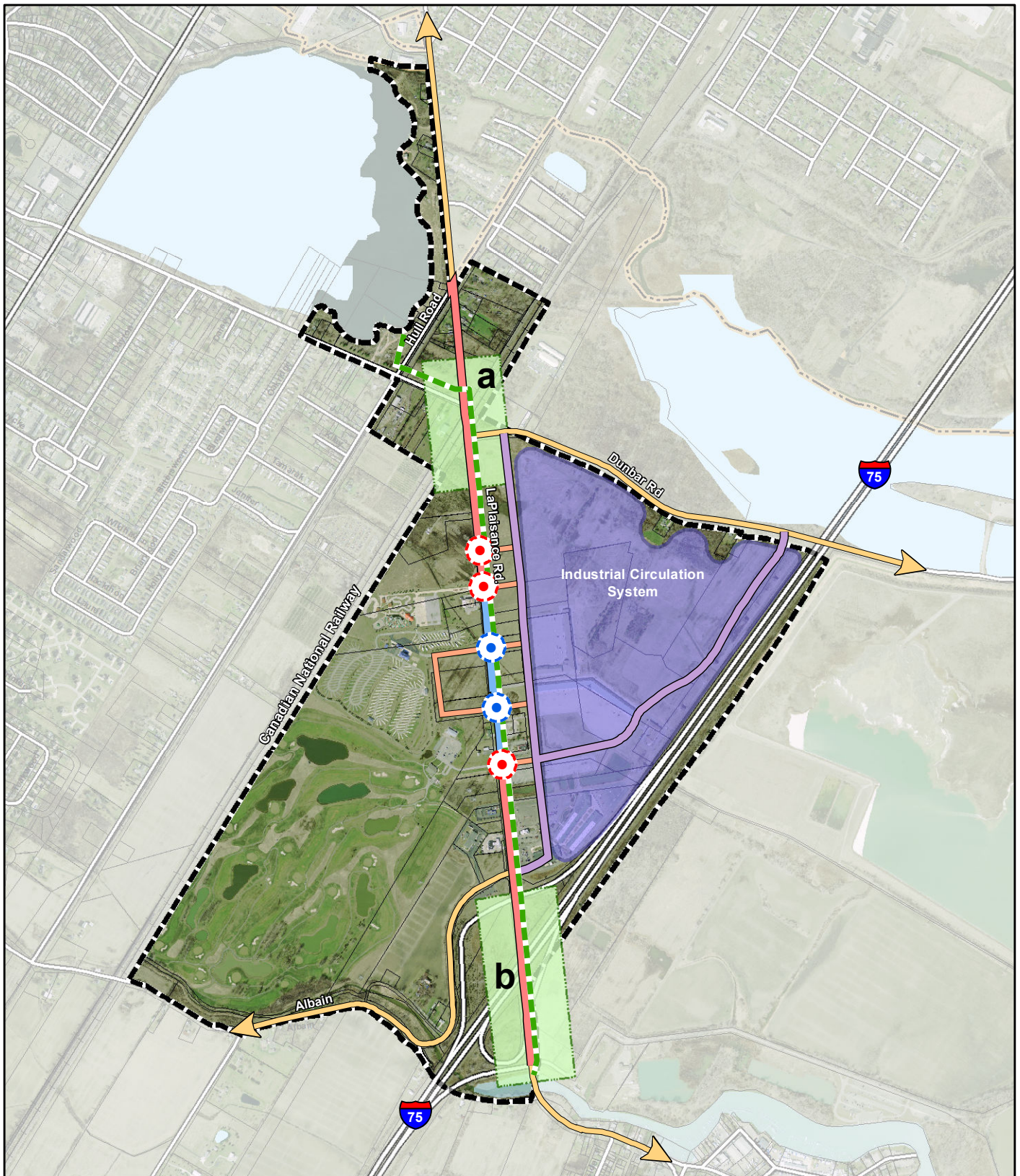
LAPLAISANCE CORE COMMERCIAL

This is a new category introduced as part of the 2014 Master Plan Update in order to facilitate the development of a new commercial center for Monroe Charter Township. Supported by the industrial park, the recreational businesses and amenities, and the I-75 corridor, a new walkable business district will be built along LaPlaisance Road in the area identified on the Future Land Use Map.

This area will be the target of investment in walking and biking improvements, traffic calming measures, placemaking initiatives, a marketing plan, and branding. It is the intent of this plan that the Township through and a newly-created DDA will partner with a developer to build a business district with the following characteristics:

- Mixed-use multi-story retail and office buildings built to the front lot line or close to it.
- New pedestrian walkways, bike path and on-street parking along LaPlaisance.
- Shared parking behind the buildings, to promote parking once and walking to multiple stores.
- Attractive architecture that reflects the character and history of the greater Monroe community creating a memorable place that leaves a lasting impression for visitors.
- Office development in the rear of large lots, to create vibrancy during the day and act as a buffer between the walkable business district and the industrial park or golf course.
- A grid system of cross streets to connect LaPlaisance Road to parking, office uses, the industrial park, and the new parallel road proposed by this plan.
- A wide range of retail and office uses that prohibits auto-oriented uses such as gas stations or auto repair.
- Public art, landscaping, banners, attractive pedestrian-scale street lighting, and other placemaking improvements.

Residential uses are not encouraged within the LaPlaisance Core area, although they could be approved as upper floor apartments above retail. It is the intent that the businesses in this corridor will draw from workers in the industrial park, visitors enjoying the Township's recreational amenities, and residents drawn to the attractive and fun atmosphere that will be created in the Township's new walkable commercial center.



January 5, 2015

Map 10 Future Transportation Plan

LaPlaisance Road Corridor Plan

Monroe Charter Township,
Monroe County, Michigan

LEGEND

- Multiuse Path/Urban Greenway
- Industrial Boulevard
- Commercial Avenue
- Commercial Street
- Core Avenue
- Paved Shoulder

- ⊙ Gateway Features
- ⊙ Roundabout/Traffic Calming
- a Intersection Realignment
- b Bridge Improvements
- Plan Area

Base Map Source: Monroe County GIS, 2004
Data Source: McKenna Associates, Inc., 2005

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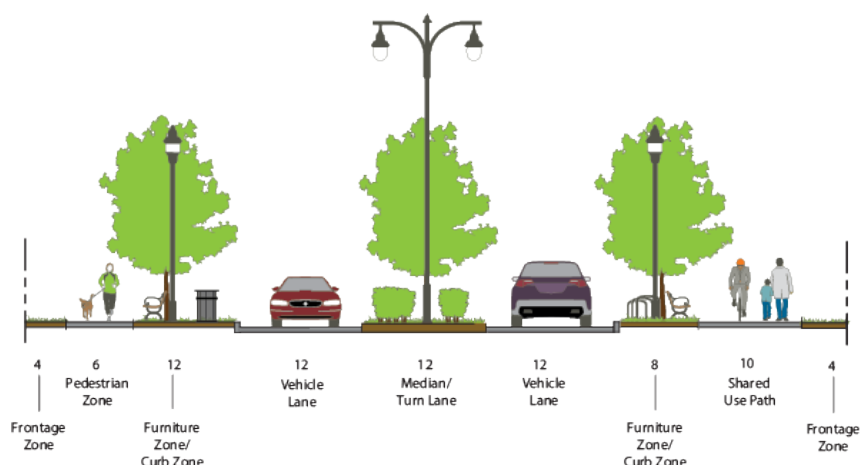
 **McKenna**
ASSOCIATES

Future Transportation

The future transportation plan for the LaPlaisance Road uses a system of street typology to coordinate with contextual transitions of the surrounding land uses. The recommended street typologies shown on Map 10 and described here provide mobility for all modes of transportation, with a new focus on pedestrians, bicyclists, and a parallel industrial routing system to carry truck traffic. These typologies should form the design and engineering process during implementation and ensure the creation of a complete network for the subarea. Designers will recognize the need for greater flexibility in applying design criteria, based on context and the need to create a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. Using street typology and context zone methodology provides justification for variances from standards and produces flexible alternatives for determining geometric design.

COMMERCIAL AVENUE

A commercial avenue is recommended along LaPlaisance Road outside of the core area. Commercial avenues are intended to carry moderate to high vehicular capacity and low to moderate speed, acting as a connector between urban centers. This section of LaPlaisance will include wide pedestrian facility and a shared use path for biking. A landscaped median will be spaced intermittent with locations where turn lanes are needed. Lighting will be consistent with ornamental design features and pedestrian scale. Benches, bike parking and waste receptacles will be placed along the corridor at a minimum of ¼ mile intervals.

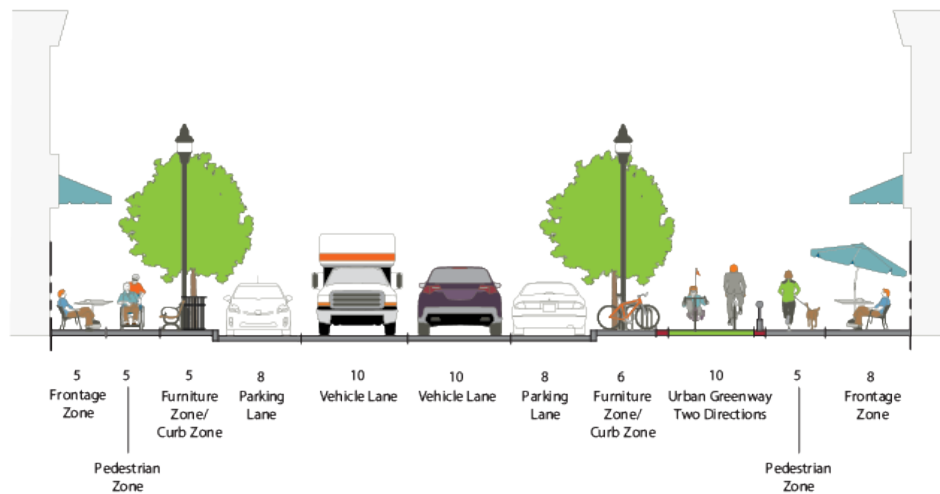


Commercial Avenue = 80

CORE AVENUE

A core avenue is recommended along LaPlaisance Road where the commercial redevelopment is intended to be most intense and in a manner consistent with the form of a traditional downtown. Core Avenues will carry moderate to high vehicular volumes with low speeds, encouraging drivers to stop, park, and shop. This section of LaPlaisance will include wide pedestrian facilities on both sides and a separated urban greenway for biking through the district. On-street parking is a high priority to provide both a separation from the vehicle way, traffic calming, and additional parking capacity. Lighting should be consistent with ornamental design features and pedestrian scale. Benches, bike parking and waste receptacles will be placed along the corridor every 300 to 600 ft. Businesses will be encouraged to provide sidewalk dining

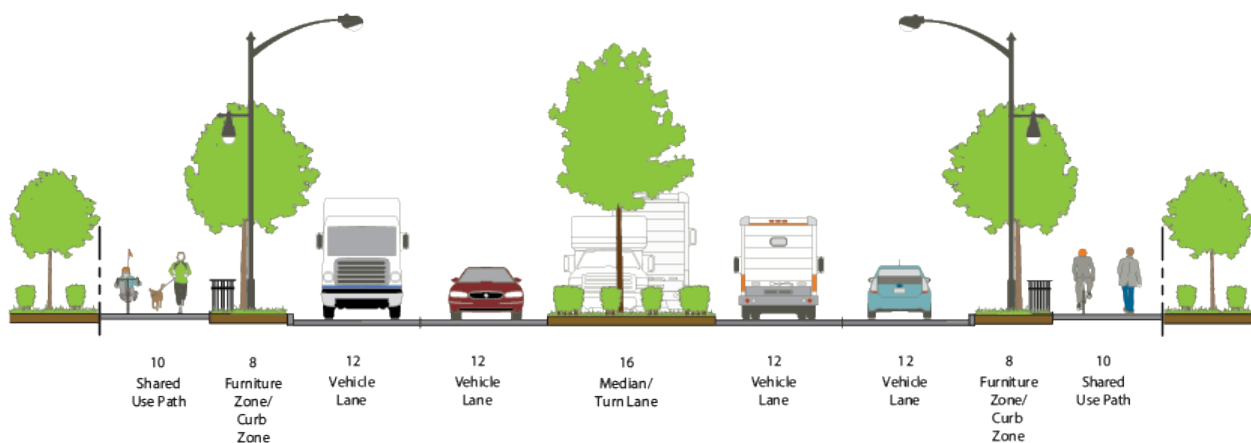
and retail space in front of their establishments. To create the desired street wall, buildings will be required to be a minimum of 2 stories with zero setbacks to front lot lines.



Core Avenue = 80

INDUSTRIAL BOULEVARD

An industrial boulevard is recommended to connect north from LaPlaisance to East Dunbar Road as well as east-west parallel to LaPlaisance to connect to East Dunbar Road on the west. The interior circulation system designed for the industrial area should use the industrial boulevard typology. Industrial Boulevards are intended to carry higher capacity of truck & vehicle traffic at moderate speed. Boulevards commonly are designed with landscaped medians, making them suitable for green infrastructure, like trees, shrubs, and bioswales. The presence of landscaping, as well as ample separation from vehicle ways, make boulevards desirable pedestrian and biking corridors as well. Shared-use paths on both sides of the Boulevard are recommended to encourage walking and biking between the Industrial area and the LaPlaisance shopping area.

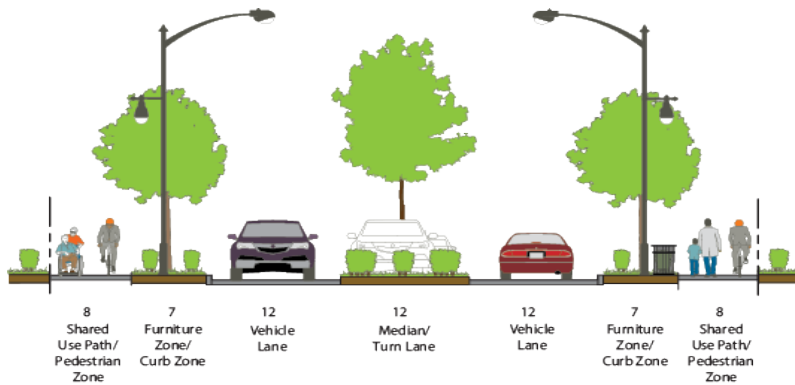


Industrial Boulevard - 100

3. Framework Plan

COMMERCIAL STREET

A Commercial Street typology is recommended for the interior connections between LaPlaisance road and the industrial area. Commercial Streets will be designed for slow speeds, with frequent median areas (pedestrian refuge islands) to facilitate frequent and safe pedestrian crossing. A Commercial Street will include shared use paths on both sides, with vegetation, trees, and pedestrian amenities.



Commercial Street = 66

BIKE FACILITY GUIDELINES

Paved Shoulders

Paved shoulders are recommended for the local street network. Paved shoulders are usually 4 to 5 ft. paved areas adjacent to motor vehicle travel lanes. They provide a safe biking and walking area on streets that cannot accommodate 5 ft. bike lanes, or a sidewalk. Paved shoulders also are a good option for roads where demand for bike lanes is limited.

Shared Use Paths

Shared use paths are recommended to maintain an off-street bicycle connection where walking and biking can be shared: on portions of LaPlaisance Road, within the industrial area, and on the connecting Commercial Streets. Shared use paths are off-street facilities shared by, bicyclists, pedestrians and other recreational users. These paths are a good option for high-speed, or high-volume corridors, as well as truck routes.

Shared-use paths will be at least 8 ft. wide; widths of 12 to 14 ft. are preferred. Paths will be provided on both sides of a street when feasible; if a shared-use path is on one side only, adequate crossing accommodations must be provided to access land uses on the other side of the roadway. Special care will be

taken to design driveway and intersection crossings to reduce potential conflicts. Adequate separation from the curb face can be created by a tree row, shoulder, or parking lane.



Urban Greenways/Cycle Tracks

An urban greenway is a linear park that extends a regional shared-use path or trail into urban/suburban bicycle networks and core districts. They are a form of raised cycle tracks. Urban greenways have unique names and identity features, such as the Indianapolis Cultural Trail and the Minneapolis Midtown greenway. An urban greenway can serve as a transportation link and also can be a destination for recreational bicycling, shopping, entertainment, and tourism.



INTERSECTION DESIGN GUIDELINES

Intersections within the LaPlaisance Road study area will be designed to replicate a traditional urban shopping district. Crossings should have crosswalks and countdown pedestrian signals and the overall design characteristics will focus on crossing safety. Intersections will be designed as small as possible, with tight turning radii and narrow lanes to ensure short crossing distances and reduce turning speeds.



Roundabouts

Roundabouts are recommended for two intersections within the core shopping district. Roundabouts direct users through intersections in a predictable manner at slow speeds. Roundabouts provide simple pedestrian crossings, set a tone of cautious driving, and reduce all crashes by 50% or more compared to traffic signals.

Single-lane roundabouts can process up to 25,000 vehicles per day. Single-lane roundabouts can vary in inscribed circle diameter from 80 to 180 feet.



Mini-Roundabouts

If a traffic study determines that roundabouts on LaPlaisance Road are not feasible, mini-roundabout can be used in combination with a 4-way stop. Mini-roundabouts are a smaller version of the modern roundabout, with a fully mountable center island that can be driven over by emergency vehicles and occasional buses or large trucks, when necessary. These small circular islands can be placed in the center of intersections to calm traffic.

3. Framework Plan

Gateway Features

Gateway features are recommended at intersections on the edge of the LaPlaisance core shopping area. The gateways will be bold statements, such as arched entryways, or may more simply marked by signs and landscaping. These areas are good places to site way finding signs and other identity features, such as banners and public art installations.

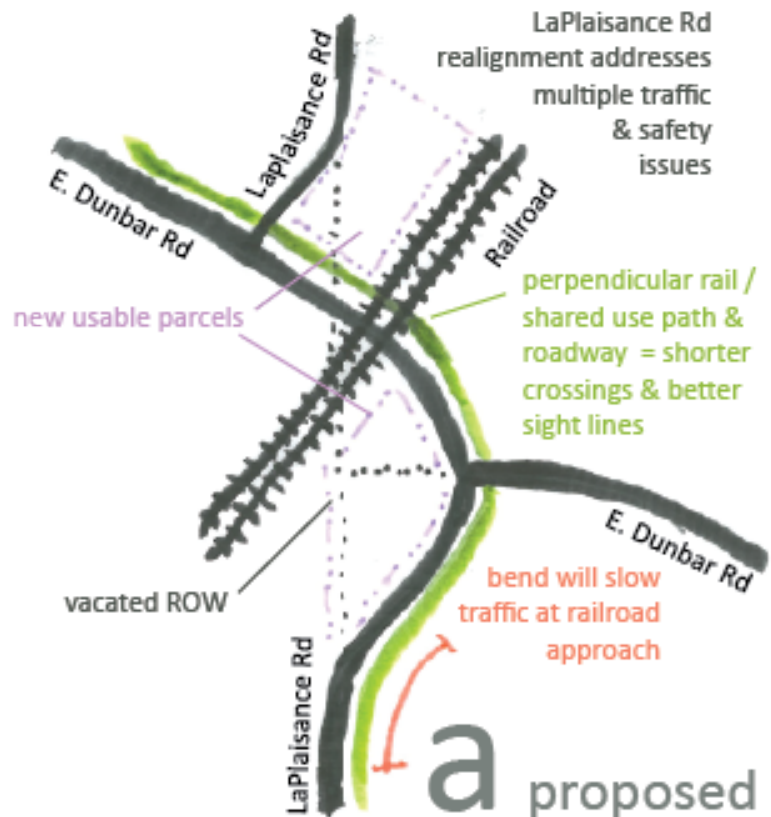
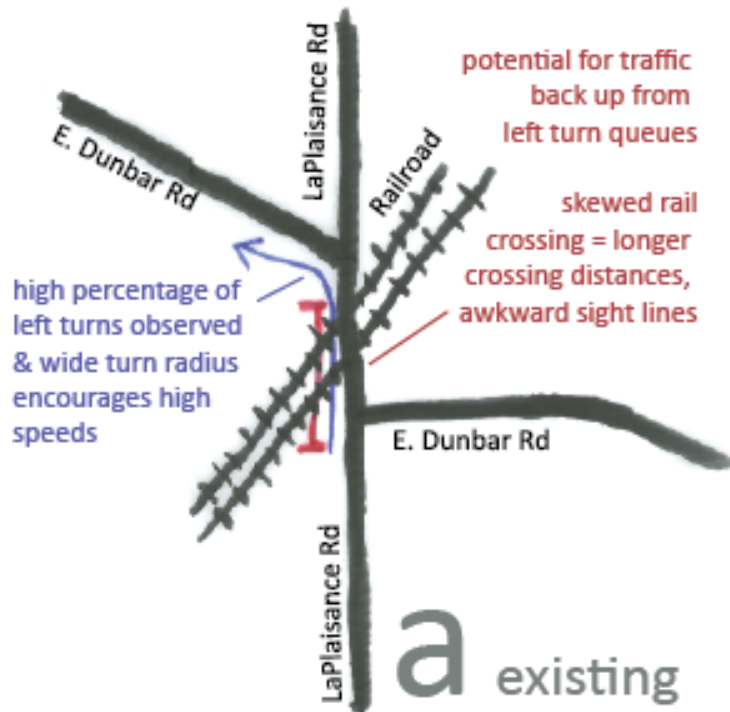
Public Art

Public art installations, such as sculptures and murals, are encouraged in the LaPlaisance core shopping area. Public art can greatly accentuate the transportation network and improve the value of a place. These features should be carefully placed so that they improve the walkability and bikeability of the roadway without creating hazardous obstacles or distracting drivers.



INTERSECTION REALIGNMENT

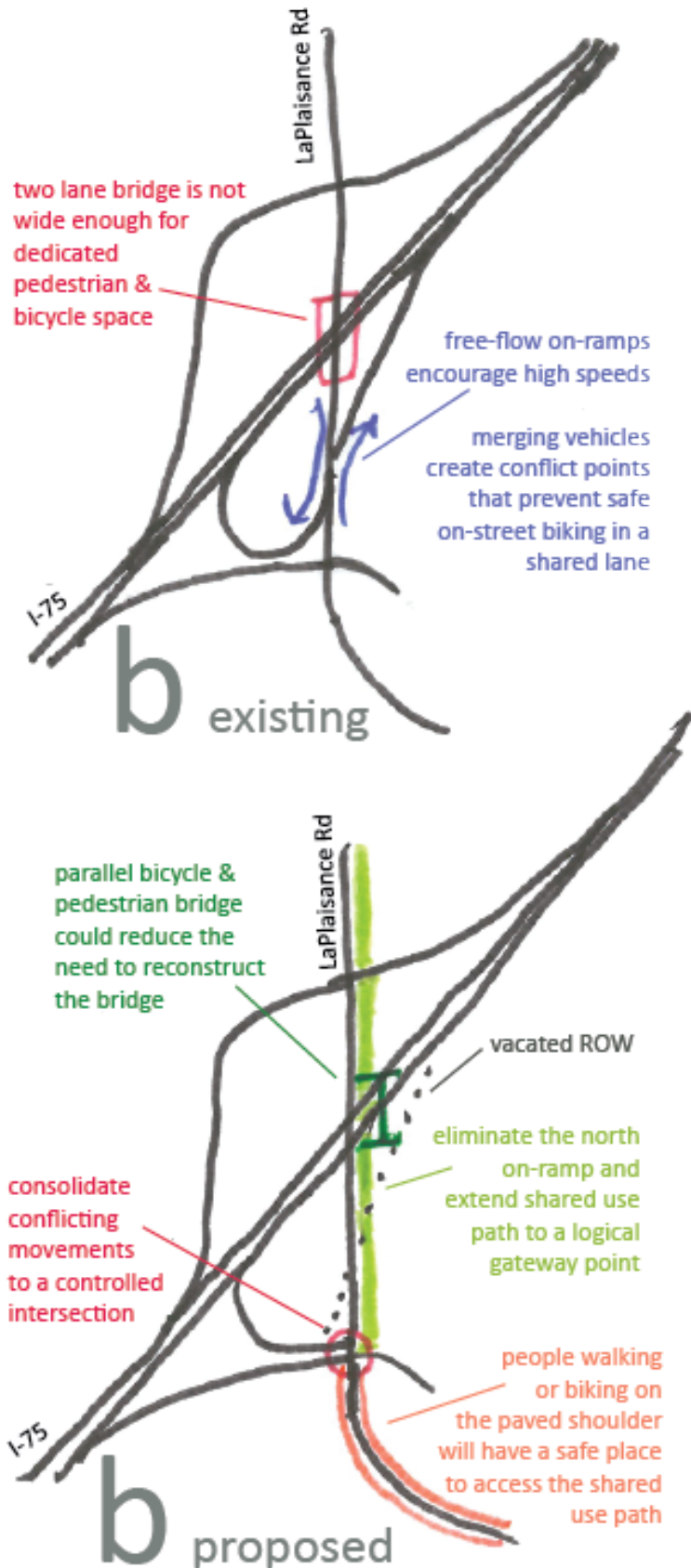
Area A on the Future Transportation Plan map highlights the confluence of the railroad, LaPlaisance Road, and East Dunbar Road. The diagram to the right highlights some of the issues with the existing roadway configuration and presents a potential realignment scenario to resolve some of the design issues. This intersection will require further study during design phases of the corridor plan implementation.



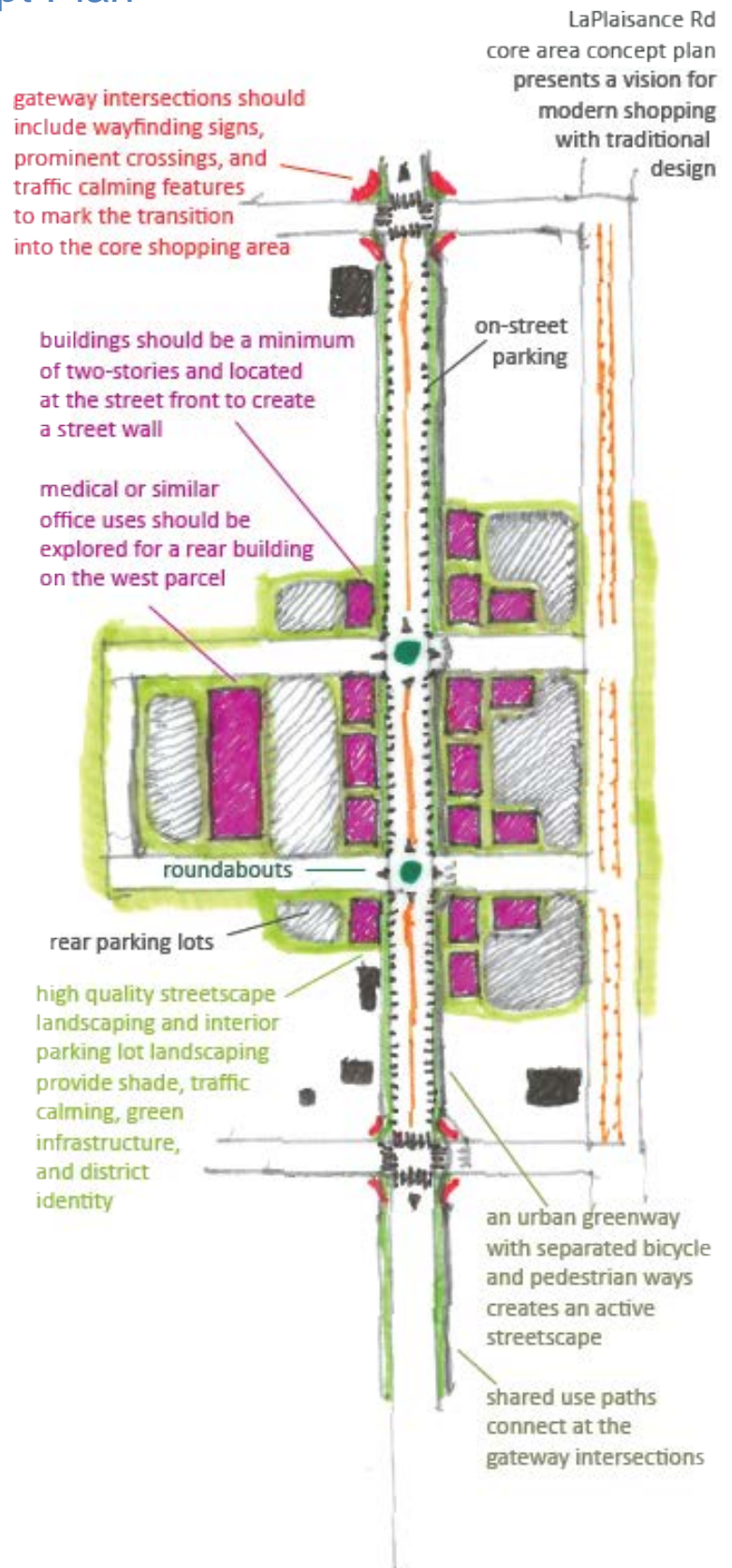
3. Framework Plan

BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

Area B on the Future Transportation Plan map highlights the LaPlaisance Road bridge over I-75. Currently, this is a two lane bridge with limited space for modification without a reconstruction, which would come at a high price. The diagram to the right highlights some of the issues with the existing bridge configuration and presents a solution with a separate, parallel bicycle and pedestrian bridge. Solutions for the bridge redesign will also require further study during design phases of the corridor plan implementation.



LaPlaisance Core Concept Plan



3. Framework Plan

The illustration to the right outlines the framework for the core area of the LaPlaisance Road Corridor Plan. The concept for the core is to create a modern walkable shopping district with traditional design.

The district can be a destination, much like the outlet malls were when originally developed several decades ago. However, shopping is intended to fill the local gaps outlined in the economic analysis. These gaps include department stores, clothing stores, shoe stores, sporting goods stores, specialty food stores, and electronics. The Gap, already located in the district, is a potential anchor tenant, if they relocate from the defunct Monroe Factory Shops. The shopping will complement the seasonal commercial recreation uses in the study area as well as be compatible with the vision to develop a light industrial area to the east.

Buildings are intended to be two to three stories. Current uses indicate that there is a demand for office space, which could be a good use for the upper floors of buildings. Alternatively, building could be designed to have the appearance of two-stories.

One example of a similar concept is the Clay Terrace shopping district in Carmel, Indiana. The shopping district features traditional streetscape and building design, landscaping, rear parking, and roundabouts. Many quality national retailers are located in the development, including Old Navy, Pier 1, The Childrens Place, Express, and Dicks Sporting Goods.



4. Implementation Program

Forming a Downtown Development Authority

In order to implement the recommendations of this Plan, Monroe Charter Township will establish a Downtown Development Authority or other TIF District to oversee the redevelopment of the LaPlaisance Corridor. The following items are necessary requirements to establish a Downtown Development Authority.

WHAT IS TIF?

TIF, or Tax Increment Financing, is a financial tool that has been used around the country to develop and redevelop districts. TIF Districts are created and the money is managed by a governing board. The most popular type of TIF District in Michigan is a Downtown Development Authority (DDA). DDAs can be formed to cover any area, not just traditional downtowns, although a community may only create one DDA. (Other TIF Districts, such as a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA), can be created in addition to the DDA).

Tax Increment Financing produces revenue within the designated district by allowing the TIF authority (DDA, CIA, etc.) to collect taxes that would otherwise go to other jurisdictions – such as the Township or the County. When the TIF District is created, the first year of its existence is considered the “base year.” The property tax revenue from that year is calculated. In subsequent years, if more property taxes are collected, then a pre-determined percentage of the additional amount (which is known as “increment”) is “captured” by the TIF District. The TIF District is required to spend the money that it captures within its boundary. This way, property owners can be assured that a portion of their taxes are going to pay for improvements to their immediate neighborhood.

For example, within a hypothetical TIF District, the property tax revenue for the base year was \$100 for the Township and \$50 for the County, for \$150 of total revenue. The TIF District captures 100% of increased revenue (this is rare, but makes the example less complicated). In the year after the base year, the tax revenue was \$130 for the Township and \$70 for the County. The TIF District would receive \$50 of revenue, the Township would receive \$100, and the County would receive \$50. The intent is for the TIF District to invest that \$50 in ways that continue to increase property values, making it a self-sustaining organization.

PRELIMINARY ORGANIZATION OF THE DDA

The following initial tasks are required to legally create the DDA:

- A Resolution of Intent by the Township Board.
- An Ordinance of Adoption approved by the Township Board.
- Creation of Draft DDA Bylaws, to be approved by the DDA Board when it is first convened.
- A Public Hearing, with notice sent to all properties owners within the proposed DDA/TIF area boundary.

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DDA BOUNDARY DETERMINATION

The Township must define and formalize the limits of the DDA. The determination of a boundary has critical implications in terms of future financing tools and development projects. The boundary marks the area from within which the DDA collects Tax Increment, and it is also the area within which the DDA can legally spend money.

The Existing Conditions data collected for this plan will be useful in determining the boundary for the new DDA. The boundary may match the Plan Area for the LaPlaisance Corridor Plan, or it may not.

The boundary will be finalized after the Public Hearing. Once the boundary is finalized, a legal description of the DDA district boundary and definitive map of the boundary showing main thoroughfares, side streets, and other significant logistic elements of the district must be created.

DETERMINATION OF DECLINE

Under State law, one of the purposes of a DDA or other TIF district must be the “halt a decline in property values.” Therefore, the Township must verify that a number of parcels within the proposed DDA district boundary have declined in value. This will not be difficult, due to the abandonment and likely demolition of the outlet malls.

DDA BOARD

The Township must appoint a DDA Board. The DDA Board should include residents, business owners, property owners, elected officials, and others who have a stake in the redevelopment of the LaPlaisance Corridor. The DDA Board should be made up of a diverse group of perspectives that will ensure good stewardship of the DDA District.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In order for the DDA to use Tax Increment financing, a Development Plan must be prepared and adopted by the DDA and the Township Board. The Development Plan includes the following elements, many of which have already been completed for the LaPlaisance Corridor Plan and are included in this document.

- **Base/Boundary Map.** A base map for the DDA district showing roads, parcels, parks, water, and other important elements, as well as the DDA boundary.
- **Existing Land Use Map.** A map of existing land uses within the DDA district. The data collected for this plan will be useful in creating this map.
- **Population, Housing, and Business Profile.** This data should be included in the Development Plan. Much of the data has already been collected for this document.
- **Opportunities and Constraints.** The Development Plan includes a map of the DDA district’s opportunities and constraints, including problematic properties that should be targeted for improvement or redevelopment. Land uses, physical features, aesthetics, circulation and other features will be considered, along with known community needs, desires, plans and potentials. A similar map is included in this document.
- **Goals and Objectives.** The Development Plan includes a list of Goals and Objectives to serve as the guiding principles for the DDA.

- **Capital Improvement Projects.** A description of existing infrastructure or public improvements to be repaired or altered and an estimate of the time required for completion of these projects is included in the Development Plan.
- **Development Sites.** The Development Plan should have a detailed list, including location and cost, of potential sites poised for rehabilitation or development and time required for completion. Any sites that the DDA intends to purchase or acquire should be included, and the potential buyers for any publically-owned property that will be sold must be listed. There should also be a description of any sites proposed as public or open space. A map of the sites should be included.
- **Zoning Amendments.** The Development Plan includes any required Zoning Amendments to achieve the vision for the DDA. However, this plan identifies proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance, and those will likely be complete prior to the establishment of the DDA.
- **Financing.** For any projects requiring spending by the DDA, the source of financing must be identified in the Development Plan.
- **Displacement.** The Development Plan is required to include a description of any potential displacement that could be caused by new development, especially displacement of residents. The only displacement envisioned by the LaPlaisance Plan is the removal of the outlet malls, which is likely to happen voluntarily by their owners.

TIF PLAN

The TIF Plan estimates the revenues from Tax Increment that will accrue to the DDA over a period of several years. It provides a plan for how the DDA will invest the captured money. The TIF Plan is required to include the following elements:

- **Goals and Objectives.** The Goals and Objectives of the TIF Plan will likely be the same as those for the Development Plan.
- **Base Year.** The TIF Plan will identify the Base Year for the Tax Increment and the amount of property tax revenue generated within the DDA boundary during that year. The same amount of revenue from the district in the Base Year will continue to go to the taxing jurisdictions, including the Township. A percentage of revenue over the Base Year amount (the “tax increment”) will go to the DDA. To maximize revenue, the base year should have the lowest possible initial assessed value. In the case, after the demolition of mall structures.
- **Capture Percentage.** The DDA has the option to collect 100% of the “tax increment.” However, most DDAs do not. The DDA board will need to determine the percentage of increment that will be captured, and include that figure in the TIF Plan.
- **Planned Debt.** If the DDA plans to borrow any money for its projects, then the terms of the debt and the timeline for borrowing and paying it back must be included in the TIF Plan.
- **Estimated Impact.** The DDA must estimate the increase in property values that will be generated by its investment in the district.
- **Estimated Tax Capture.** Based on the Estimated Impact and the Capture Percentage, the DDA

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must estimate the amount of tax capture that it will receive over the years covered by the TIF Plan.

- **Planned Expenditures.** Using the Development Plan as a guide, the DDA must create a list of planned investments, along with an estimated cost for each one.

Recommended Zoning Changes

In order to support the implementation of this plan, the Zoning Map should be amended to match the Future Land Use Map in Chapter 3. Table 4.1 show the Zoning Districts that correspond to the Future Land Use categories within the LaPlaisance Plan Area.

Table 4.1: Recommended Zoning Changes

Future Land Use Designation	Zoning District
Agriculture/Open Space	AG Agricultural
Low Density Residential	R-1 Low Density Residential
Commercial/Office	C-2 General Commercial
Commercial Recreation	C-2 General Commercial/ <i>New Zoning District</i>
LaPlaisance Core Commercial	<i>New Zoning District</i>
Light Industrial	LI Light Industrial
Public/Semi Public	<i>No Zoning District</i>

RECOMMENDED REVISIONS TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE AND MAP

In order to meet the goals of this plan, the following revisions to the Zoning Ordinance and Map are recommended:

- Review the C-2 General Commercial Zoning District for compatibility with the vision for the Commercial Recreation Zoning District. If the C-2 district does not match the vision, create a new zoning district for areas planned for Commercial Recreation.
- Create a new zoning district for the LaPlaisance Core Commercial Future Land Use category.
- Revise the Zoning Map to match the Future Land Use Map, as described in the table above.

Action Plan

The tables on the following pages present a detailed summary of all of the recommended implementation activities, who is responsible for completing the activity, and available funding resources for each activity.

KEY

Priority		Timeframe		Responsibility (Color)	
A	Most Important	1	W/in one year		Project Lead
B	Very Important	2	1-3 years		Key Participant
C	Important	3	3+ years		Contributor
		4	As available		
		5	Ongoing		

RESPONSIBILITY (ABBREVIATION)

MC	Monroe County	PC	Planning Commission
MCT	Monroe Charter Township	HO	Home Owners
BO	Business Owners	FCT	Frenchtown Charter Township
MDOT	Michigan Department of Transportation	SEM	SEMCOG
SM	State of Michigan	DDA	Newly Created DDA Board
TB	Township Board	MCKA	McKenna Associates
COM	City of Monroe	MS	Mannik and Smith
TS	Township Staff	DEV	Developers

FUNDING

Public	Includes public funds from the Township operating budget, County, and State funding. May also include local government bonds and grants.
Private	Includes funds from private sources such as grant monies, corporate funding, or property owners
DDA/TIF	Tax increment financing provided by an authorized body. Please refer to the summary of economic development tools.

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CREATION OF DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY								
PROJECT	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY			FUNDING		
			TOWNSHIP	OTHER GOV'T	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	DDA
Resolution of Intent to Create a TIF District	A	1	TB			●		
Ordinance of Adoption of TIF District	A	1	TB			●		
Drafting of DDA by-laws	A	1	TB		MCKA	●		
Public Hearing, including required notices	A	1	TB TS		MCKA	●		
Creation of DDA Board and selection of members	A	1	TB TS		MCKA BO	●		
Determination of DDA Boundary	A	1	TB		MCKA	●		
Determination of Decline	A	1	TB		MCKA	●		
Development Plan	B	2	TB	DDA	MCKA	●		●
TIF Plan	B	2	TB	DDA	MCKA	●		●

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS								
PROJECT	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY			FUNDING		
			TOWNSHIP	OTHER GOV'T	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	DDA
Phase I - LaPlaisance Corridor Design	A	1	VC VA	MDOT SEM	MCKA MS	●		●
Railroad Intersection Design Study	A	1	VC VA	MDOT SEM	MCKA MS	●		●
I-75 Overpass Design Study	A	1	VC VA PC	MDOT SEM	BO DEV MCKA MS	●	●	
Shared Use Path/Urban Greenway Design	A	1	VA	MDOT SEM	MCKA MS	●		●
Phase II – LaPlaisance Corridor Design	B	2	VC VA	MDOT SEM	MCKA MS	●		●
LaPlaisance Corridor & Path Construction	B	3	VC VA	MDOT SEM	BO DEV MCKA MS	●	●	●
Paved Shoulder Connections	B	3	VC VA PC	MDOT MC	BO DEV MCKA MS	●	●	
Commercial Street Design and Construction	B	3	VC VA PC	MDOT MC	BO DEV MCKA MS	●	●	
Industrial Boulevard Design and Construction	B	3	PC VC	MDOT SEM	BO DEV MCKA MS	●	●	

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DEVELOP THE INDUSTRIAL PARK								
PROJECT	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY			FUNDING		
			TOWNSHIP	OTHER GOV'T	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	DDA
Revise the Zoning Map to reflect the Future Land Use Map in this Plan.	A	1	PC TB		MCKA	•		
Develop agreement with DDA and Private Developers to build infrastructure for industrial park	B	2	PC TB	DDA MC MDOT	BO DEV MCKA MS	•	•	•
Agree on layout and development sites within industrial park	B	2	PC	DDA	BO DEV MCKA MS	•	•	•
Construct industrial park infrastructure	B	3	TB	DDA MC MDOT	BO DEV MS	•	•	•
Complete zoning approvals for development sites within industrial park	B	3	PC TB		BO DEV MCKA MS	•	•	
Construct new industrial businesses in industrial park	B	3	TS		BO DEV		•	

DEVELOP THE LAPLAISANCE COMMERCIAL CORE								
PROJECT	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY			FUNDING		
			TOWNSHIP	OTHER GOV'T	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	DDA
Create a new zoning district for LaPlaisance Core Commercial	A	1	PC TB		MCKA	●		
Revise the Zoning Map to reflect the Future Land Use Map in this Plan.	A	1	PC TB		MCKA	●		
Issue RFP for developers to construct commercial core	B	2	TB	DDA	BO DEV MCKA			●
Develop agreement with DDA and Private Developers to build infrastructure for commercial core	B	2	PC TB	DDA MC MDOT	BO DEV MCKA MS	●	●	●
Agree on layout and development sites within commercial core	B	2	PC	DDA	BO DEV MCKA MS	●	●	●
Construct commercial core infrastructure	B	3	TB	DDA MC MDOT	BO DEV MS	●	●	●
Complete zoning approvals for development sites within commercial core	B	3	PC TB		BO DEV MCKA MS	●	●	
Construct new office and retail buildings in commercial core	B	3	TS		BO DEV		●	

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