



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

Date: May 07, 2014

To: Brian Kischnick, City Manager

From: Mark F. Miller, Director of Economic and Community Development
Brent Savidant, Planning Director
Glenn Lapin, Economic Development Specialist
Maggie Hughes, Management Assistant

Subject: Executive summary of the Real Estate Forum

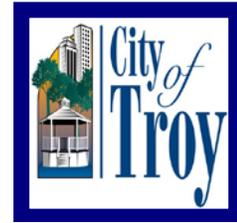
The City of Troy hosted a Real Estate Forum on Tuesday, April 29, 2014 as part of the public engagement process for the Master Plan update.

Over 60 community leaders, business owners, real estate developers, real estate brokers, and interested citizens participated in providing future direction of key economic areas of the city, specifically Maple Road, Big Beaver, North Troy, and Rochester Road.

Using a question and answer format, a panel of real estate experts was invited to share their understanding of current and future market trends, development constraints, and opportunities.

The next steps for the five-year update of the Master Plan include:

1. Create a portal for Master Plan process
2. Hold a subdivision/Neighborhood Association Forum
3. Hold a sub-area forums (Big Beaver, Maple Road, Rochester Road, and North Troy corridors)
4. City Council and Planning Commission joint meeting
5. Public Forum
6. Planning Commission Meetings
7. City Council Meeting



TROY REAL ESTATE FORUM Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

As part of the public engagement process for the master plan update, the City of Troy hosted a Real Estate Forum on Tuesday, April 29 2014 at the Troy Community Center. Over 60 community leaders, business owners, real estate developers, and interested citizens participated in a productive dialogue regarding the future direction of key economic areas of the city, specifically Maple Road, Big Beaver, North Troy, and Rochester Road. This goal was achieved through a small group SWOT (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats) analysis and panel discussion (summary in appendix). During the SWOT exercise, the 60+ participants were presented with target area snapshots and were asked to identify and describe the assets and challenges of these four areas. Participants also offered strategies for reinforcing assets, re-envisioning challenges, and ultimately attracting new development that is right for the corridor and the community. Using a question and answer format, the real estate experts were then invited to share their understandings of current and future market trends and development constraints and opportunities. The panel included:

- Alan Kiriluk , Chairman, Kirco & Troy DDA
- Mark Nickita, President, Archive Design Studio
- Tracy Wick, Broker, Coldwell Banker
- Steve Robinson, Principal, Versa Development
- J.C. Cataldo, Partner, RePlace Development Solutions

KEY FINDINGS

The Mayor, panel members, and participants emphasized the need for collaboration between city departments and community stakeholders, as well as a coordinated vision that is responsive to market demands and focused on quality of life. By building on the unique strengths of each area, activating established nodes and reinforcing new development with pedestrian amenities, transit connections, and a desirable mix of uses those sites that were once viewed as challenges will appear as opportunities for reinvestment.

- Density is key
- Plan should be market driven and forward thinking
- Transportation and pedestrian improvements are important
- Zoning should align with the Master Plan and offer flexibility to encourage the right development at the right time
- North/South corridors provide important connections between the target areas and adjacent communities
- Residential development should attract and accommodate different ages, lifestyles, and income levels
- New developments should be connected
- Strategic, tactical, and creative placemaking strategies can activated node

The following is a summary of observations and recommendations for the four target areas.

MAPLE ROAD

Maple Road provides a great central location with a well-established traffic flow and proximity to residential areas. The Transit Center, Midtown Square, and new MJR theater can serve as anchors for the corridor and should be reinforced by complementary uses including retail, dining, and multifamily residential. Industrial and office spaces offer architecturally unique redevelopment opportunities and could foster a live/work culture if marketed to local startups, small tech companies, or creative design firms with a need for light manufacturing facilities or collaborative work spaces.

Access, connectivity, and convenient parking are major challenges for sites along Maple Road. Strip development and industrial uses are very segregated and there is no connection to the surrounding residential communities and current business sector. While the zoning ordinance provides flexibility through the Sustainable Development Project (SDP) option, the city staff may need to educate potential investors on how to take advantage of this development tool and communicate the overall vision for Maple Road.

Panel Reaction

Right now Big Beaver is the preferred destination for business, so how do we provide similar experiences, amenities, and connectivity on Maple Road? We must find a way to communicate the vision of Maple Road. It's not just about filling up the empty space.

Maple Road is going to need destination oriented uses to attract people. The city needs to deliver a lifestyle for companies and residents to encourage investment.

Recommendations

- Think creatively about attracting companies and investment
- Encourage circulation planning that integrates public transit stops and connects pedestrian nodes to greenway trails and residential sidewalks
- Cluster pedestrian activities through redevelopment of underutilized properties
- Support mixed-use development with strong ties to the Transit Center and transit-oriented development
- Expand SmartZone and establish an overall vision for Maple Road
- Consider transit impact study for I-75 access onto Maple Road

BIG BEAVER

Big Beaver is a premier destination for business, shopping, and entertainment. It is home to the Somerset Collection, Troy City Hall campus, and Troy Community Center, and a number of corporate headquarters. Big Beaver has excellent appeal internationally and provides a major draw for the community. The Big Beaver streetscape improvements give the corridor identity and continue to attract new pedestrian oriented development. In this investment rich environment, challenges such as the vacant Kmart Headquarters and large expanses of surface parking lot are seen as opportunities for development.

Despite improvements, Big Beaver is several hundred feet wide, with heavy traffic and lack of alternative transit, which makes the corridor unfriendly to pedestrians moving between buildings or crossing. More

improvements are necessary to zoning, parking, and building requirements to create more restrict mixed-use development. Sites are large and not well connected.

Panel Reaction

Development is still in the transition phase and can't justify the new construction of vertical mixed use development projects with retail on the first floor and residential above. We've got to get the economics right.

The focus on streetscape and walkability is ongoing. The Troy DDA and Mayor are marketing it as we speak. We're bringing in hotels and restaurant operators. The traffic improvement coalition from the State of Michigan is looking at ways to create safe crossing across Big Beaver.

Recommendations

- Establish pedestrian connections between corporate offices and corridor amenities
- Encourage parking lot infill development and residential mid/high rises
- Provide entertainment for young adults to develop new community lifestyle
- Create environment that fosters the use of public transit along the corridor Big Beaver
- Consider increasing depth of Big Beaver zone in the shallow areas to increase potential developments

NORTH TROY

North Troy is primarily office use with excellent freeway access to I-75 and close proximity to the employee base. Large setbacks and wooded areas provide a desirable campus setting for certain sites. Natural features provide amenity and may help attract mixed-use/multi-family development, if desired by the community. Existing corporate companies may look to build or expand in under-utilized areas.

North Troy lacks an identity and office space is slow to fill resulting in high vacancy. Regional access is good but internal connectivity and pedestrian access is poor. The area is dominated by cars with no alternative mobility options or usable green space. It also lacks entertainment for younger families. Road repair around the area needs to be addressed.

Panel Reaction

Downtown Detroit has been experimenting with pop-ups and initiating corporate programs to get employees out of the office. High quality food trucks provide indirect competition to brick and mortar establishment. Ultimately it's about options and getting people exposed to business.

Right now North Troy is just an employment center. It needs uses and amenities to complement the office uses and to keep people around after 5 pm.

Recommendations

- Establish more convenience uses such as restaurants, retail, and daycare
- Experiment with tactical placemaking, such as food trucks and pedestrian improvements, to provide more amenities to workforce
- Increase flexibility of current zoning to widen development of potential uses
- Encourage more parking structures

- Encourage quality for drainage and green space

ROCHESTER ROAD

Rochester Road offers a convenient economic node close to residential neighborhoods. It is primarily service and retail use. The corridor could be marketed as the “Entrepreneurial Center” for the city as it provides an incubator for small start-up businesses.

Rochester Road has a split personality. The traffic is trying to get through the area as fast as possible, yet the businesses and number of driveways is calling for a slower pace. The area is dominated by shallow, narrow lots with poor access and inconsistent setbacks. Excessive signage and inconsistent façade design result in the perception of visual clutter. New development may require the consolidation of parcels, but there are concerns from the community about increasing building heights where adjacent to residential properties.

Panel Reaction

There needs to be a conscious effort in branding Rochester Road and making it a notable place. Streetscape should not be underestimated. Sidewalk connections and pedestrian access must be accommodated in new developments. In some ways infrastructure can be used to mask the visual clutter and give the corridor a unified image.

Recommendations

- Keep integrity of residential as more commercial frontage is developed
- Reface on retail and create more pedestrian friendly intersections
- Clean corridor/remove and replace obsolete buildings find incentives/funding for redevelopment
- Reduce setback and parking associated with strip malls
- Develop retail and restaurants that reflect the needs of nearby residents
- Encourage senior housing and compatible uses

APPENDICES

- A. List of Attendees
- B. SWOT Comment Card Activity Summation
- C. Real Estate Forum Minutes

Name	Company	Title
Antone, Anthony	Kojaian Management Corp	Vice President, Development
Beltramini, Robin	Local Development Finance Authority	
Brown, Doug	ASTI Environmental	
Buechner, Toby	Troy Gymnastics	Owner
Clarke, Jim	Robertson Homes	President
Confer, Clint	Signature Associates	Industrial Division
Drake, Lynn	Compass Commercial	President
Dubeauclard, Antoine	Media Genesis	President
Edmunds, Donald	Planning Commission	
Ervin III, Frank	Magna	Manager, Government Affairs
Frederick, Brad	Media Genesis	Founder and CEO
Friedman, David (maybe)	Friedman	President and CEO
Gagniuk, David	Friedman	Associate, Brokerage Services
Gell, Jared	Mid-American Real Estate	
Gershenson, Bruce	Gershenson Realty & Investment	
Gitre, Cary	Landus	
Grenville, David	Bank of America	Senior Vice President
He, Jason	Detroit Chinese Business Association	Vice President
Henderson, Dave	City Council	
Henry, Robert	Detroit Medical Center	
Hill, Geoffrey	Newmark Grubb Knight Frank	Senior Managing Director
Hunter, Dan	Oakland County	Manager of Planning and Econ Dev
Keisling, Larry	Downtown Development Authority	
Kincaid, Joel	MJR Theatres	
King, Michael	Flagstar Bank	
Kirk, Michael	Neumann/Smith Architecture	Principal
Koch, Lance	Granite City	Managing Partner
Kornacki, Rosemary	Brownfield Development Authority	
Lasky, Thomas	Forum Group	Principal
Leibovitz, Arie	Ari-el Enterprises, Inc.	President
Leibovitz, Scott	Ari-el Enterprises, Inc.	
Light, Peter	Oakland Mall	General Manager
Loughrin, Rachel	Oakland County	Business Development
Loughrin, Tim	Robertson Homes	Mgr of Land Acquisition and Dev
Magnum, David	Gibbs Planning Group	
Miceli, Tara	Walsh Institute	Director
Michalek, Amy	Meritor, Inc.	Facility Space Planner/Proj Coord
Novak, Suzanne		Resident

Osiecki, Matthew	CBRE	Senior Associate
Pangle, Vince	Strategic Property Services, LLC	
Pawlowski, Kristopher	Signature Associates	Sale Associate
Reddy, Ganesh	Mamta Holdings, LLC	
Redmer, Dennis	MJR Theatres	VP of Operations
Rogers, Ken	Automation Alley	Exec Director, Deputy County Exec
Ruppe Jr, Peter +1	Peter P. Ruppe, Inc.	President
Sanzica, Philip	Planning Commission	
Sherizen, Eugene	Mini Storage	
Slater, Dane	Mayor	
Snyder, Thomas	Strategic Property Services, LLC	VP Business Development
	Local Development Finance Authority	
Spanos, Irene	Planning Commission	
Strat, Thomas	Planning Commission	
Suardini, Josh	Etkin Equities	LEED AP, Vice President
Swanson, Duane	Somerset Inn	Director of Operations
Swartz, Robert	Brownfield Development Authority	
Tagle, John	Planning Commission	
Thomas, Janice	Magna	
Topouzian, Ara	Troy Chamber of Commerce	President/CEO
Vassallo, Joseph	Brownfield Development Authority	
Ziecik, Michael	Forum Group	Principal

TROY REAL ESTATE FORUM
SWOT Comment Card Activity Summation

MAPLE ROAD CORRIDOR

Opportunities

- Exit at I-75 onto Maple Road
- Potential to add to restaurants in Eaton district to create a critical mass of dining destinations
- Good traffic, great central location, proximity to residential base.
- There are many obsolete buildings (that require variances, challenges, costs). Taking these from eye sores to viable buildable sites would help.
- Variety of industrial and residential
- Great traffic, great central location, proximity to residential base
- Oakland Mall is probably functionally obsolete. How do we preserve/redevelop it? Should there be a proactive place in place?
- Already has a cool tech space.
- Redevelop industrial sites currently zoned office.
- More connections for pedestrians, transit, roads. Mixed uses including entertainment to feed off theater.
- More mixed use, more entertainment.
- Variety of industrial and residential, more entertainment to mesh with MJR.
- Try to build on the theater with bars and restaurants in the adjacent area

Challenges

- Intersection at John R/14 Mile has no turn around or way of heading N S E W at that light
- Functionally, parking is mostly in the rear of most of the industrial buildings which is a deterrent. Need to allow additional parking instead of perpendicular parking along the side (in the easements) and in the rear. Mainly, for customers.
- Midtown square needs to improve connections to on-site residents, nearby neighborhoods, and transit center.
- There is too much office/industrial along Maple Road and not enough demand for those uses.
- Lack of available functional industrial building in Troy, no industrial land, older building stock with obsolescence issues.
- Storm water management – create areas for water to go.
- Obsolete building variety of industrial and residential odd, odd use mix.
- There needs to be more clarity for the type of uses permitted on Maple. We have lost an opportunity with a user that got scared off due to the direction given by Planning although the use was a permitted use. But it was a change of prior use in the building. The building has been vacant for 5 years.
- Finding a use for the vacant land just south of Troy Racquet Club

- Ugly road scape, set back from road, odd use mix, no consistent walkability, industrial view
- Strip development and industrial, seems to be two distinct areas east and west
- Need vacant land identified for industrial build to start. Options for front loaded truck well – currently not allowed. Loan fund offer for more uses for renovations.

Strategies

- Enhance public transit points; create stronger, longer connections to local businesses and tie into adjacent neighborhoods (Clawson)
- Make walkable; enhance pedestrian experience
- Clustering pedestrian activities through redevelopment of underutilized properties
- Develop additional transit networks emanating from existing sites and bus routes to include self-guided (Smartphone apps), bicycle, jogging, and running. Trails/tours of surrounding neighborhoods/districts
- Study ways to leverage “transit-oriented development” to emanate from the new intermodal sites. Not easy due to land-locked nature, but core for linkages and compatible uses that can grow around the shopping center to provide vibrant mixed-use community going forward
- Research and Develop small manufacturing but very cutting edge work. Ideal corridor for R and D advanced manufacturing.
- To change the character and increase the likelihood of redevelopment of the Maple Road corridor the zoning along Maple Road needs to contemplate more mixed use with the ability to have commercial and other uses similar to Big Beaver zoning. Would like to see redevelopment of some older sites on Maple to companion the new MJR such a restaurants, coffee, shops, etc.
- Redevelop existing industrial stock with mixed use, residential, etc. to attract younger generation.
- Incentives to redevelop/more redevelopment. Focus on transit center
- Dress it up with green space, transit
- Feed off transit center, potential for high-end airport business park (think Scottsdale Airpark).
- Provide incentives for redevelopment of existing properties.
- Pilot demonstration project to target possibilities for new developments
- Expand SmartZone to encourage more tech development. Add form-based redevelopment between Livernoise and John R. – would allow both residential and some retail.
- It is time to become more restrictive on the uses in this corridor, more specifically on the Maple Road frontage in the Transit Center. It seems as though, given the current economy, it is the time to confine uses to true mixed use developments along this area/corridor consistent with the vision of the future land use plan, i.e. retail, service, low density office, etc. The idea of allowing a permissive approval for almost anything in that corridor seems to conflict with the idea of the true mixed uses for a transit area.

BIG BEAVER CORRIDOR

Opportunities

- Golden Mile, viewed as corporate headquarters. Has great appeal internationally, centrally located in the region. Ideal.
- Somerset collection – regional draw to community
- Great traffic, historic shopping corridor, prominent address, central location.
- Big Beaver is the heart of Troy with great new development.
- Big Beaver is several hundred feet wide and lined with multiple landmark building set far back on their sites and surrounded by parking.
- Troy High School reputation
- At the entrance to the Automation Alley Technology Park, place an electronic digital sign identifying the park. With the traffic count on Big Beaver take advantage of identifying AA.
- Kmart should provide for mid rise life style condos.
- Signage – improve wayfinding
- Kmart Headquarters
- International presence, build on it! Market it as THE international center for the state of Michigan.
- Kmart site
- On Big Beaver at the light on Bellingham, allow vehicles to cross on a red light from Big Beaver onto Bellingham without waiting for a green light. Now there is a sign preventing that.
- Apartment/condo opportunities along Big Beaver.
- Continue mixed-use along corridor with more entertainment.
- Continue to invest in infrastructure.

Challenges

- Heavy traffic, lack of transit, automotive centric.
- How do you make the large parking lots and high rises pedestrian friendly?
- How to envision this as a downtown/walkable corridor?
- Every business “thinks” they need to be on Big Beaver and unsure that needs to be the case. How are we working to help identify business locations and properly assessing proper locations?
- Can the Big Beaver model be duplicated in other areas or is the limitation due to the soon-to-be overdevelopment of this area?
- 50% visibility into the building on the ground floor may not be realistic depending on the occupant. This seems to be workable for retail/office but may not be reasonable for other uses (i.e. a hospital)
- The Big Beaver plan requires “entrances” on the Big Beaver side with the building set a maximum of 10’ back from the property line. If parking is behind the building, who will use these front doors? There are no “unloading passenger lanes” along Big Beaver.

- Educate developers, architects, owners, etc. about district requirements for transparency
- Needs walkability, has the start for it but needs more
- “Eat the elephant” of the former Kmart HQ site by allowing to “eat it in one bite at a time” through some “form-based zoning” promoting “mix-use”.
- Please describe, in detail, how the new pedestrian oriented developments (ex. PNC Center to new retail across the street) is intended to work and keep people safe.
- Too many parking lots, reduce and develop green space or small scale housing.
- Road dominated pattern.
- Mixed-use is great, but it is NOT essential that strip retail be involved in every development

Strategies

- Continue parking lot infill development, bike path to shopping, Kmart site improvement, inject high rise residential above retail on Big Beaver.
- Is the solution to bring in some high rise residential – or low rise residential fronting on Big Beaver?
- Connect the great companies and their work force to each other through the sidewalks.
- Provide entertainment for young adults
- Target age targeted projects to Troy Athens HS vs. Troy HS, which is more desirable for young families, and provide more Troy HS transitions opportunities.
- Encourage pedestrian traffic by slowing down street traffic and adding more cross walks.
- Master Plan should acknowledge potential for east/west mass transit line and cluster development at reasonable nodes
- Develop “nodes of interest” with signage – interpretive stones, areas to pause/sit and canopied buffers to encourage pedestrians to exist in this strongly automotive corridor
- Bus/trolley service up and down Big Beaver to service all the shopping experiences. Cross walks from north to south. Getting east and west under I-75.
- Consider increasing depth of Big Beaver zone in the shallow areas to increase potential developments.
- Encourage alternative forms of transportation – bicycle friendly alternatives
- Youth-oriented development that can incrementally develop to provide a lifestyle.
- Expand SmartZone to encourage more tech development
- Stay the course with Big Beaver district requirements.

NORTH TROY

Opportunities

- Easy on/off of I-75 with close proximity to employee base.
- Great freeway access.
- I-75 access.
- Wooded underdeveloped properties – maintain and do not clear cut for new development.
- Opportunity for mixed-use/multi-family development to increase residential opportunities for nearby workers.
- Strong engineering presence there – it could become the “Automotive Engineering” center for the city.
- Redevelopment opportunity at Long Lake and Crooks, on both the west and the east side of Crooks. The east side of Crooks is under-utilized, and the west side is vacant.
- Any interested corporate companies looking to build, or expand, regarding northwest or northeast Crooks and Long Lake?

Challenges

- Too suburban looking, auto focused. No transportation or walkability and lack of green space.
- Office vacancies slow to fill.
- Suburban office park with no destination except for office workers.
- Lacks an identity, is a mish-mash of companies and industries.
- Mass transportation and retail lacks for high density office buildings.
- Lack of entertainment for younger families.
- Road repair around area needs to be addressed.
- The Met Hotel area and Corporate Drive road is destroyed. Lack of restaurant varieties.
- With an abundant amount of office/corporate buildings, vacancy is still higher than past and needs to be addressed.
- How was “Market Area” (population, etc.) determined? Don’t rush to develop small retail, even though there is room on some developed site, along with the northwest corner of Long Lake and Crooks.

Strategies

- Infill parking lots with mixed use and retail.
- More day care for workers, small scale retail and restaurants for workers.
- Encourage as much convenience use (e.g. restaurants and retail) as the market can bear to make the area more attractive and keep the workers in the area day and night.
- Need destination developments to attract and support workers in area.
- Northeast and northwest corners of Crooks and Long Lake could have walkable mixed-use, all those big parking lots could be retrofitted for green space, add retail along secondary roads.
- Increase flexibility of current zoning to widen development of potential uses.
- Add more age-targeted condominium sites in this area like Chattfield Commons.

- Along Crooks Road need more neighborhood uses to facilitate the residents in the area.
- Encourage more parking structure, rather than huge parking lots, for our corporate clients. What about drainage and green space consideration?
- Break down the scale of this primarily corporate/commercial corridor with some zoning “serendipity” to grow small pockets of service and amenity businesses to provide relief to the clearly automotive corridor and serve workers and citizens.

ROCHESTER ROAD

Opportunities

- Small scale neighborhood services, mixed-use and live-work, townhouse development, redevelopment of obsolete building types.
- This section of Troy I view as the entrepreneurial sector. It has a lot of retail, small start-up businesses, etc. Build upon that corridor as the “Entrepreneurial Center” for the city.
- Traffic strong, proximity to residential, retail.
- Landscaping is very important.
- Protect the adjacent neighborhoods – limit height of building.
- Entrepreneurial center.

Challenges

- Strip mall heavy.
- Rochester Road has a split personality. The traffic is trying to get through the areas as fast as possible, yet the businesses and number of driveways is calling for a slower pace.
- What provisions are you making for non-motor pathways in the corridors?
- Building height next to residential.
- Lack of green space.
- Reduce visual clutter from signage that dominates the road.
- Keeping integrity of residential as we develop more commercial frontage

Strategies

- Reface on retail, select pedestrian friendly intersections.
- Consider “block” or “district” events that take place in the “forecourts” (parking lots) in front of the strip retail centers.
- Clean p corridor/remove and replace obsolete buildings. Incentives/funding for redevelopment.
- Reduce setback and parking.
- Why not repeat Big Beaver success on Rochester Road or incentive for transition zoning.
- Potential for redevelopment with senior housing – to access community center, etc. Update needed to some of the retail avenues. Pedestrian/bike access to corridor.
- Create adequate buffer between residential and business zones.
- Encourage more intense uses on larger parcels, i.e. increased height of buildings.
- Retail and restaurants should reflect needs of nearby residents.

TROY REAL ESTATE FORUM

Minutes

On Tuesday, April 29 2014, the City of Troy hosted the Real Estate Forum at the Troy Community Center with invited community participants, business owners, real estate developers and interested citizens to actively engage in the future direction of key economic areas of the city. It was the goal of the city to present a snapshot of each area illustrating existing conditions and current zoning and then ask the group to reflect on future potential by performing a SWOT (Strength Weakness Opportunities Threats) analysis. A panel of five experts in real estate, development and redevelopment, architecture, and finance then offered their reaction by providing observations of their understanding of current and future market trends and development constraints and realities. The findings of this forum will be utilized by the city in creation of the Master Plan.

OPENING REMARKS

Mayor Slater:

We are here to kickoff planning the Master Plan (MP) and the City of Troy provides an excellent foundation to build off. It is important that we continue to look forward and work collaboratively with City Manager's (CM) staff and the community stakeholders; we have the team assembled right now to be successful.

CM Brian Kischnick:

How do we develop Troy to make it the best community in Michigan? What is your (stakeholders) plan for the future and how can we be partners in making that happen. It is difficult, but we need to develop a blueprint in moving forward that is market driven. MJR Theaters example, recognizing what we do today will have an impact and how we can work together.

Planning Director, Brent Savidant:

A MP creates a roadmap for the development of Troy and is required by State Law with updates every 5 years. The zoning ordinance will follow suit in coordination with the Plan. The original MP was developed in 1965 and has been updated 20 times in the last 40 years with the most recent update occurring in 2008. We did more than focus on land use, we focused on policy with the MP being market

driven. Much of our MP was affected by the economic downturn of 2008, making the next proposal even more important. There are four established focus areas to target in this meeting and in MP 2014.

1. Maple Road corridor
2. Big Beaver corridor
3. North Troy
4. Rochester Road

This includes fringe/transition areas of those regions and the changing demographics within the city.

COMMENT CARD ACTIVITY

Richard Carlisle:

To help facilitate discussion and collect thoughts and ideas, each region was assigned a color and corresponding colored note cards were distributed to attendees. Participants were then asked to think about each region and identify key opportunity sites, major assets, transportation options, future land use, market-direction, city-wide assets, limitations/challenges, recommendations, and any other general thoughts or ideas (SWOT analysis). The following is the summation of this activity sorted into the categories of Opportunities, Challenges, and Strategies.

MAPLE ROAD CORRIDOR

- **Opportunities:** Has well established traffic flow, a great central location, and proximity to the residential area. There is a variety of industrial and residential spaces and the possibility to mesh entertainment (bars, restaurants) experiences with MJR theaters. Changes to zoning in the area could assist in redeveloping obsolete buildings into viable sites.
- **Challenges:** Obsolete buildings and vacant lands have become an eyesore to the area. There is too much office/industrial and not enough demand. Strip development and industrial and very separated and there is no connection for the surrounding residential communities and current business sector. Parking is mostly in the rear of most of the industrial buildings which is a deterrent. Lack of clarity on building uses permitted.
- **Strategies:** Mobility that encapsulates public transit points, walkability, trails (green space), surrounding neighborhoods and an enhanced pedestrian experience and then clustering pedestrian activities through redevelopment of underutilized/vacant properties. Mixed-use development with

strong ties to the Transit Center and transit-oriented development to allow for growth. Expand SmartZone to encourage more technology development, ideal corridor for cutting edge work. Possibility for exit at I-75 onto Maple Road.

BIG BEAVER CORRIDOR

- **Opportunities:** Viewed as corporate headquarters with excellent appeal internationally that could be marketed as THE international center for the state of Michigan. Centrally located with great traffic and a prominent address it is the ideal region in Troy. Big Beaver is the heart of Troy and Somerset Collection is a huge draw for the community. Big Beaver is several hundred feet wide and lined with multiple landmark buildings set far back on their sites and surrounded by parking. Kmart Headquarters provides countless opportunities for entertainment and housing.
- **Challenges:** The heavy traffic and lack of alternative transit to the automotive centric corridor make it unfriendly to pedestrians. How can it be envisioned as a downtown/walkable district with current mobility options that will also keep people safe? Several concerns in regards to zoning, parking, and building requirements (Big Beaver Plan) that restrict mixed-use development. Too many parking lots and road dominated pattern.
- **Strategies:** Connect the great companies and their work force to each other through the sidewalks, slow street traffic, and add more cross walks. Continue parking lot infill development and inject residential mid/high rises. Provide entertainment for young adults to develop new community lifestyle. Master Plan should acknowledge potential for mass transit line or bus/trolley service up and down Big Beaver to service all the shopping experiences. Consider increasing depth of Big Beaver zone in the shallow areas to increase potential developments.

NORTH TROY

- **Opportunities:** Excellent freeway access to I-75 with close proximity to employee base. Wooded underdeveloped properties could be maintained and not clear cut for new development as an opportunity to attract mixed-use/multi-family development to increase residential opportunities for nearby workers. Option for existing corporate companies look to build or expand in under-utilized areas.
- **Challenges:** Suburban office park with no destination except for office workers. Lacks an identity and is often slow to fill resulting in high vacancy. Poor transportation solely auto focused with no

alternative mobility or green space. Lack of entertainment for younger families. Road repair around area needs to be addressed.

- **Strategies:** Encourage as much convenience use (e.g. restaurants, retail, daycare) and destination development as the market can bear to make the area more attractive and keep the workers in the area day and night. Increase flexibility of current zoning to widen development of potential uses. Encourage more parking structure, rather than huge parking lots, for corporate clients. Consideration for drainage and green space.

ROCHESTER ROAD

- **Opportunities:** This section of Troy is viewed as the entrepreneurial sector. It has a lot of retail, small start-up businesses, etc. with close proximity to residential. Build upon that corridor as the “Entrepreneurial Center” for the city.
- **Challenges:** Rochester Road has a split personality. The traffic is trying to get through the areas as fast as possible, yet the businesses and number of driveways is calling for a slower pace. Very strip mall heavy and lack of green space. Concerns about building height next to residential. Signage clutter dominates the road.
- **Strategies:** Keep integrity of residential as more commercial frontage is developed. Reface on retail and create more pedestrian friendly intersections. Clean corridor/remove and replace obsolete buildings find incentives/funding for redevelopment. Reduce setback and parking associated with strip malls and develop retail and restaurants that reflect the needs of nearby residents. Potential for redevelopment with senior housing.

PANEL DISCUSSION

The five expert panel members then reacted to the comments made during the previous activity and answered general questions with their own insight and recommendations.

Panel Members:

JC: J.C. Cataldo, Partner, RePlace Development Solutions

TW: Tracy Wick, Broker, Coldwell Banker

AK: Alan Kiriluk , Chairman, Kirco & Troy DDA

MN: Mark Nickita, President, Archive DS

SR: Steve Robinson, Principal, Versa Development

OPENING COMMENTS

JC: Density. Density wins, mix-use building sitting in a sea of parking. Condense and bring together assets and strengths.

TW: We're looking at a very large geographic area, yet we're talking about large-scale place making. We are going to need to focus and pinpoint to concentrate efforts and create energy for overall future direction. Connect the 900 acres of parkland, recreation benefit for residents.

AK: Strong demographics and leadership but lacks promotion of high quality assets of Troy. Connectivity will be key. Be careful that development isn't just what "we" want, build and design for the future. Transportation is extremely important here. Circulation transit system must connect surrounding communities, companies, shopping districts to bring people together. We need people in our community that want to both live and work here and encourage big investments. We need a coordinated agenda focused on quality of life.

MN: General consensus that the elements for place making (walkability, synergy, mixed use) are there and it is agreed that's where we should move in that direction. Create networks, connectedness, focus on walkability, and a realistic scale.

SR: Big Beaver Rd is the preferred location for tenants. Maple exists in context of BB and they are in competition with each other. How do we create market demand in those areas? Where do we create it?

QUESTIONS

Integrated business uses have had low demand, how can we change that?

AK: Remember the economy we're coming out of. Stay positive. MJR will create traffic, build off that. You have a solid base. You need to deliver a lifestyle for companies and residents to encourage investment.

Industrial vacancies between now and 18 months ago are very different. There are different uses in filling spaces that can be addressed in zoning.

Troy was planned in a very spread out nature (traditional land use planning, single use zones) and younger generations want more centralized access to the city they live in.

How can we strengthen Maple Road in its relationship with Big Beaver?

SR: North South corridors are key for connecting. Generate Coolidge and Big Beaver intersection, lots of mix-use people would like to be there. Retailers want to be on Big Beaver not Maple, so what is it about Big Beaver that people want? Street scape and layout are positives so tie everything together and you will strengthen Maple. I-75 is a huge asset to Big Beaver. Maple is going to need destination orientated uses to attract people because it has a different character than Big Beaver.

MN: Interest in permitted uses of buildings along Maple and eliminating obstacles will encourage this corridor. Express the vision of district and have city advertise that for reinvestment.

The A space (Big Beaver) and the B space (Maple) have different infrastructure and different users and unique looks, accepting that can aid the adaptive reuses. Connection from building to building to building on Maple is the biggest hindrance here, must change. It should be an adjacent asset to Big Beaver, not an enemy of it.

JC: I would not build (high end, loft style) multi-family housing there because it is not a dense area.

TW: Have an investor that is the user of the builder who can utilize it as the home base for where the creative minds come together. Then allow them to start integration. Small scale development could be successful here.

Does North Troy lack an identity and how important is that to the marketability?

AK: It does lack an identity. It is a destination for employees only, what other amenities are there for people in the area? We need to keep people around after 5pm.

TW: I would not market the North Troy area because of the lack of mix-use. Reiterated AK comments. Food trucks would be beneficial here.

MN: Most regions are severely underserved with walkable places. As walkable centers appear, so does development. Places where people live, work, and play are the districts and North Troy could become this if it is zoned and thought of in this manner.

Friedman and Associates: We are attracted to the open spread out space, opportunity to bring in large quantities of people. What the area lacks is restaurants and mass transit. Is a destination right now, doesn't need walkability.

Panel response: Short-term gain, long-term loss.

Food trucks could find a lot of success here and be a huge asset.

How do we design not for what we want, but for what future generations and young people want and for where the market is going?

JC: There are a lot of 59+ that want to enjoy a mixed-use environment. Millennials do not have the investment income to purchase retail. It is great to say you want to develop for that younger generation but they aren't our key demographic. Boomers want to "age in place" meaning; everyone is selling their single-family home because the kids have moved out but they do not want to leave the great city/neighborhood they're in. Current projects are attracting young people, who can't afford them yet, and 60+ that can because they share similar interests. We should also try to integrate senior developments into the community.

AK: Employers do have to have good employees available to them, which will be the younger generation. Good jobs with a good environment and the rest will follow.

There will be a demographic shift with the wealth translating to the Millennials and use the Master Plan as an aggressive process to educate and plan.

Troy High School has a better reputation and families want to go to this area. Capitalize on that by developing for the younger generation in the Athens district.

The aging population is living longer and increasing, and they have assets. The market here is being missed. People want to downsize but there is no product for them, they want to go into something stylish.

More flexibility in the zoning ordinance is necessary to permit this.

Looking at the aerials, there is a huge “concrete jungle”. Where are we going looking forward? How do we get the tools to redevelop?

Flexibility from the city, working towards that with form based code, but we need more of it and economic develop. There needs to be an incentive people for to redevelop the current landscape. Shift industrial sites into something else such as design or tech firms and not just focus on filling up the empty space.

TW: Redeveloped sites will be attractive to that younger generation and if we keep track of who is asking for alternative living and activity space we can drive them towards the market later.

Is there an opportunity to create an identity to the Rochester Road area to bring people to the area?

SR: Create some uniformity with the corridor but ownership is so fractured. Create a better streetscape and identify the hard corners and build off that. How much work would I want to put into this corridor right now because the return on investment just isn't there? This corridor isn't right for my product. How do you make it right over time?

MN: There needs to be a conscious effort in branding this area and making it a notable place. Identity and consolidation is part of this. Streetscape is a huge element of this. Commercial development near sidewalks but without sidewalks access to the front door is a fundamental issue. Not available on Rochester Road and it needs to become embedded in the planning process. If it is worthy of making a priority and where you want to take your efforts, there are ways of getting there.

JC: The community not wanting things cannot be a reason to stop pursuing thing. The city is a business, making it your job to educate the surrounding neighborhoods as to why developing to capacity is a benefit. Huge income opportunities in fully utilizing the land.

What can we do as a city to encourage more vertical mixed-use, retail on the bottom, residential on the top? Can it work on Big Beaver?

MN: Still on an uptick in the economy and you just can't justify new construction. If you have an economic deal, the money will follow. Restaurants are a huge influencer but it will come down to investment.

We talk about walkability, but what are we actually doing to promote it? Big Beaver is not walkable as it stands; it's pretty much an extension of the highway. Focus on streetscape is an important issue.

AK: It is ongoing. The Troy DDA, Mayor, busing system is marketing it as we speak. We're bringing in the hotels and restaurant operators, the traffic improvement coalition from the state of Michigan to create safe crossings across Big Beaver and this applies across the City of Troy. We're also working on transportation link to improve connectivity with Birmingham and the Transit Center.

Mark Miller: Businesses are coming in on Big Beaver and then commenting that their employees need safer ways to walk along the corridor so we understand it as a priority.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mark Miller: This has been fantastic and we appreciate everyone coming out. We will take your comments as community stakeholders and raise what you've said to the public in a second forum and then take all thoughts to our Planning Commission who will use the input directly in the Master Plan. It is our hope that we can continue to partner with this community in the upcoming years.