

TO: The Honorable Mayor and City Council  
Troy, Michigan

FROM: University of Michigan Real Estate Program

SUBJECT: Executive Summary for Troy's Walkable Urbanism Strategic and  
Implementation Plan

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are pleased to offer this summary for the scope of work for the Walkable Urbanism Strategic and Implementation Plan for Troy. Our project will focus on the future multi-modal transit center in southwest corner of Maple Road and Coolidge Highway. This initiative is a direct result of the City of Troy's commitment to promoting itself as a thriving economic and cultural center of southeast Michigan.

This transit center could serve not only as a major anchor in Troy for transit, but also could become the center of a vibrant collection of land uses. A three-phase initiative will identify and develop the ways in which this area can realize its ultimate potential.

**Phase One – Contextual Analysis**  
**Completion Date: Sept. 1, 2007**

Our team's contextual analysis will combine recent efforts (Troy Futures 2020 Report, Big Beaver Corridor Study, etc.) with an in-depth look at the land use patterns, transportation options, fiscal impacts and market potential as they relate to the project. The results will be published in a Briefing Book summarizing the findings of the team's research.

**Areas of Study**

Our research will examine four primary areas:

1. **Land Use:** The purpose of the land use study is to assess current site conditions, as well as the plans, policies, and personalities that have shaped the built environment. The main goals of the land use component will be to:
  - a. Develop and recommend policies necessary for implementation of the ***Walkable Urbanism Strategic & Implementation Plan***.
  - b. Analyze the physical constraints that may impact the implementation of the strategic plan.
  - c. Understand the historic and current forces that have shaped the built environment within the study area.
  - d. Identify opportunities for redevelopment of auto-oriented sites to walkable, transit-oriented sites.
2. **Transportation:** Transportation systems have a profound influence on land use patterns; therefore, comprehensive analyses of these models are necessary to plan a well-integrated multi-modal center. The transportation component will:
  - a. Evaluate transit needs based on potential demand.
  - b. Assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of different transportation options.

- c. Review current conditions of transportation infrastructure as well as initiatives and other programs.
- 3. **Fiscal Analysis:** The goal of a fiscal analysis is to distinguish the public and private funding sources that may impact viability of the various proposals of the strategic plan. This includes:
  - a. Cost-benefit analysis.
  - b. Overview of potential federal and state funding for transit.
  - c. Review of capital budgets affecting the study area.
  - d. Examination of possible TIF financing or other progressive financing methods.
- 4. **Market Research:** While transportation shapes development, the market plays a major role in driving development. To that end, we will research market data to better understand the potential for development opportunities. The objective of a thorough market research analysis is to provide understanding of Troy's current economic status and future economic growth, which will offer valuable insight in developing the proposed concepts. The market study will evaluate:
  - a. Demographic trends
  - b. Spending power
  - c. Supply of existing housing, retail, and office properties

#### Geographic Scale

This analysis will consider not only the transit site and immediate surrounding area, but also a number of “activity nodes” within close proximity that may benefit if connected functionally to the transit center. Therefore, the analysis will examine these four areas at three geographic scales:

- 1. The 3-acre transit site
- 2. The immediate area (approx 1/4 mile radius)
- 3. Neighboring “Activity Nodes” including the Coolidge/Big Beaver Intersection, the Michigan Design Center, and Downtown Birmingham

#### **Phase Two – Strategic & Implementation Plan**

**Completion Date: November 7, 2007**

The data collection and analysis will be used to generate a strategic plan for the Troy community to successfully implement projects and programs to achieve their goals of a more walkable community. The results of Phase Two will be presented at the annual UM/ULI Real Estate Forum, and then used to guide decision-making at the annual UM Design Charrette.

#### **Phase Three – Urban Design Charrette**

**Completion Date: January 2008**

A design “charrette” (multi-day workshop) will produce a physical vision of the strategic plan to provide additional insights and ideas for the area. The charrette will bring together planners, architects, and other practitioners to develop concepts for the sites within the project area.

### Final Product/Deliverables

1. Publish the results of the research and analysis efforts in two formats:
  - a. A briefing book to provide a summary of the comprehensive report
  - b. A final comprehensive report
2. Strategic & Implementation Plan – To be presented at the University of Michigan/ULI Real Estate Forum November 7-8.
3. TCAUP Winter 2008 Charrette Booklet – A summary of the concepts and designs developed by charrette participants.

Our team has sensed the community's strong desire for responsible growth and good placemaking based on the themes of transit and walkable urbanism that repeatedly arose in the previous studies. For example, the Troy Futures Vision 2020 report emphasizes the need for Troy to develop walkable places with access to housing, gathering places, and cultural opportunities.

Our team is anxious to integrate the community's vision, goals, and objectives with our professional and academic training in urban planning and real estate development. We believe the Transit Center is essential to Troy's ability to sustain and grow its economic and social climate; Troy has excellent potential retain and further its status as a major economic center of the Detroit region. We look forward to helping your community in growing its future. We welcome your questions or comments.

### City Council Support:

We request a City Council Liaison for the duration of the project. This will be an important point of contact to share the project's progress with the City Council. The team will provide updates to the liaison through weekly progress reports.

### UM Team Contact Information

Name	Focus Area	Phone	Email
Eric Beckett	Transportation	248-770-7234	ebeckett@umich.edu
Ross Davidson	Land Use	734-474-5815	radarcki@umich.edu
Michelle Elder	Market Research	248-390-7107	chenmm@umich.edu
James McMurray	Fiscal Analysis	801-400-5813	jbmcm@umich.edu
Team Email	General Inquiries		troyteam4@umich.edu

## Team Profile

**Chris B. Leinberger** – Chris B. Leinberger is a Professor of Practice and the Director of the Graduate Real Estate Program at the University of Michigan. He is also a Visiting Fellow at The Brookings Institution in Washington, DC, focusing on research and practices that helping transform traditional and suburban downtowns and other places that provide "walkable urbanity." Chris has written award-winning articles for publications such as the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Urban Land Magazine*, among others, and is the author or has contributed chapters to six books. Most recently, Chris played an instrumental role in a major strategic planning initiative for downtown Detroit. His wife, Lisa, and he live in the DuPont Circle area of Washington, DC, within walking distance of both a Metro station and Brookings.

**Larissa Larsen** – Larissa Larsen is an assistant professor of urban planning at the University of Michigan. Larissa's expertise primarily relates to physical planning, community development, and environmental planning. A prolific writer, lecturer, and practitioner, Larissa brings valuable experience and perspective in her advisory capacity to the student team. She holds a bachelor of applied science and master of landscape architecture from the University of Guelph (Canada) and has her Ph.D. in regional planning from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

**Eric Beckett** – Eric Beckett is a graduate student in Urban Planning at the University of Michigan. Through work experiences in a variety of settings, Eric has developed strong communication and problem solving skills. A native of southeast Michigan, Eric has a thorough understanding of both the problems and opportunities of communities throughout the region. Upon graduating, Eric hopes to work in progressive real estate development. Eric received his BS in Environment from the University of Michigan.

**Ross Davidson** – Ross Davidson is pursuing a dual degree in Urban Design and Urban Planning with a Certificate in Real Estate Development at the University of Michigan. He is a Major in the U.S. Army and has served a variety of assignments in health facility project design, construction, and management worldwide, including Afghanistan and Iraq. Upon graduation, Ross will return to the Army to lead progressive approaches in health facility acquisition and execution. Ross and his wife Kari are looking forward to having their second child this Fall. Ross earned a Bachelor of Architecture from University of Notre Dame in 1996.

**Michelle Elder** – Michelle Elder is a master's student in Urban Planning with a Certificate in Real Estate Development at the University of Michigan. She began her professional career in Architecture, designing residential and commercial projects. However, her interest in providing solutions for clients led to a successful path in Marketing and Advertising, where she planned and implemented promotions for major corporations such as General Motors, DaimlerChrysler, and Procter and Gamble. A native of southeast Michigan, Michelle's family ties to the City of Troy provides a personal connection to this project. Michelle currently lives in Royal Oak with her husband, Andrew and earned a B.S. in Architecture from the University of Michigan.

**James McMurray** – James McMurray is a master's student in Urban Planning with a Certificate in Real Estate Development at the University of Michigan. James is currently working as a research fellow for EDAW's Transit Oriented Development Initiative studying the effects of mass transit on real estate values over time. Before enrolling at Michigan, James worked as a planner in both the public and private sectors. James holds an undergraduate degree in Geography from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. James, his wife Heather (a native of Troy) and their daughter Rebekah currently live in Ann Arbor.