



2011 CITY OF LINDEN MASTER PLAN



ADOPTED: JANUARY 24, 2011

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January 2011

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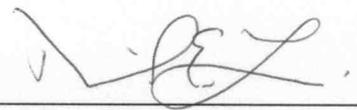
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Certification of Approval

I hereby certify that on January 24, 2011, the City Council of the City of Linden formally approved this updated and amended "City of Linden Master Plan" including the accompanying amended Future Land Use Plan, pursuant to the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008.


Martha Donnelly, Clerk
City of Linden


David Lossing, Mayor
City of Linden

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This document represents the revision and update of the City of Linden Master Plan that was adopted in 2001. Since adoption of the previous Plan, a number of changes have occurred both within the City and the surrounding area. To ensure that development policies reflect current conditions in the City, it is essential that the Master Plan be periodically evaluated and updated.

WHAT IS PLANNING?

Planning is a process which involves the conscious selection of policy choices to guide land use, growth, and development in a community. The Master Plan is the only official City document which sets forth policies to guide future land use in the community.

The City derives its authority for the preparation of the Master Plan from the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended. Section 31 of the Act states:

1. "A Planning Commission shall make and approve a Master Plan as a guide for development within the planning jurisdiction.
2. In the preparation of a Master Plan, a planning commission shall do all of the following, as applicable:
 - a. Make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth within the planning jurisdiction with due regard to its relation to neighboring jurisdictions.
 - b. Consult with representatives of adjacent local units of government in respect to their planning so that conflicts in

master plans and zoning may be avoided.

- c. Cooperate with all departments of the state and federal governments and other public agencies concerned with programs for economic, social, and physical development within the planning jurisdiction and seek the maximum coordination of the local unit of government's programs with these agencies."

HOW IS THE PLAN TO BE USED?

The Plan serves many functions and is to be used a variety of ways:

1. The Plan is a general statement of the City's goals and objectives and provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's desires for the future.
2. The Plan serves as an aid to decision-making. The goals and objectives outlined in the Plan guide the Planning Commission and City Council in their deliberations on zoning, capital improvements and other matters relating to land use and development.

The policy orientation of this Plan provides decision-makers with a framework and basis for decisions while recognizing the dynamic character of the community. The variables upon which the Plan is based will likely change over time. However, adherence to the goals and objectives will provide a stable, long-term basis for decision-making.

3. The Plan provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are based. The Zoning Enabling Act (P. A. 110 of 2006, as amended) requires that the

Zoning Ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare. It is important to note that the Master Plan and accompanying maps do not replace other City ordinances, specifically the Zoning Ordinance and Map. Zoning is only one of the many legal devices used to implement the Master Plan.

4. The Plan attempts to coordinate public improvements and private developments. An outcome of the Plan should be that public investments such as road improvements will be located in areas identified in the Plan as having the greatest benefit to the City and its residents.
5. The Plan is an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers, and adjacent communities a clear indication of the City's direction for the future.

In summation, the City's Master Plan is the only officially adopted document which sets forth an agenda for the achievement of goals and policies for the entire City. It is a long-range statement of general goals and objectives aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the City. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND STUDIES

LOCATION

The Village of Linden was officially incorporated in 1871. The name Linden came from the Linden trees that were dominant in the area. In December 1988, the Village was officially incorporated as a City.

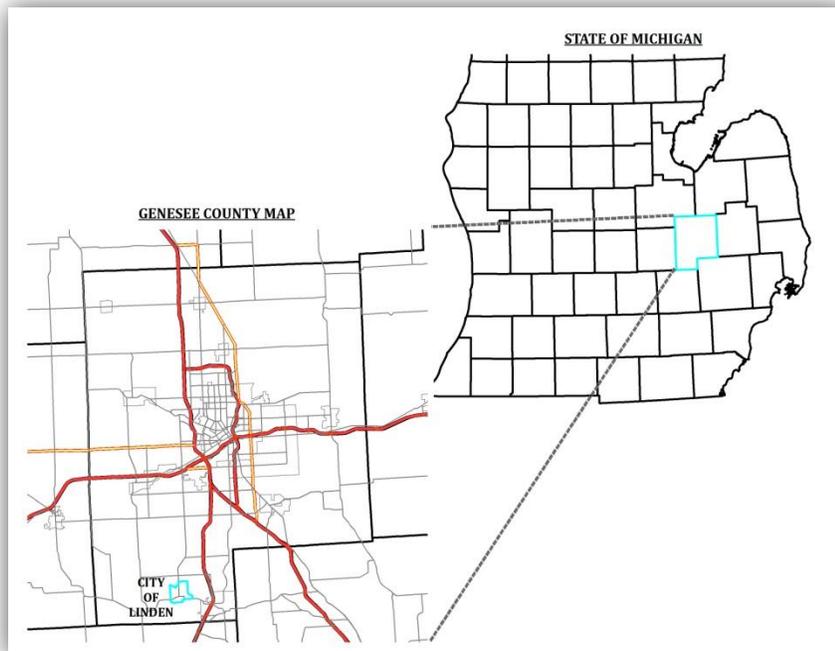
The City of Linden is situated in southwestern Genesee County approximately twenty-two (22) miles southwest of the City of Flint. It is surrounded by Fenton Township while other nearby regional communities include the City of Fenton, Argentine Township, and Tyrone Township in Livingston County. Linden is experiencing growth pressures because it is located so close to these communities and the US-23/I-75 corridors.

The allure of the City of Linden is that it still maintains its small town charm of the past. As the trend to return to traditional small towns grows in the United States, the charm of

Linden's downtown commercial/residential area, along with its high quality of life, will continue to attract people to Linden. Maintaining the character of the City will be an important issue for the future of the community.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The southern tiers of Michigan's counties already were being settled by the beginning of the nineteenth century, but the land between Detroit (to the south) and St. Ignace (to the north) remained a virtually untouched wilderness of woods, swamps and rivers. During the 1820s and 1830s, however, settlers began moving north in search of good farm lands and thick stands of marketable hardwoods and softwoods. The settlers' need for water power generally led the settlers to select town sites along rivers which could be channeled and dammed. Such was the beginning of Linden, located at a convenient bend in the Shiawassee River.



Map 1
Regional Context

Mills were constructed along the Shiawassee in Linden to support the lumber industry. In the 1840s, a fire destroyed many of the original buildings. The grist mill was rebuilt in the 1850s and still stands as the signature landmark of the community. The area around the mill continued to grow. In the 1800s, the primary products being produced in Linden were buggies and barrels. After World War II, the factories in Flint needed workers and Linden quickly became a bedroom community. The mill ceased operations and was eventually converted into a community building, which now houses a local library, museum and City Council Chambers.

HISTORIC DISTRICT

The City has an officially registered Historic District (the Bridge Street/Broad Street Historic District) and has fifty-two (52) registered properties. The State of Michigan has two registered historic sites in the District, the Linden Presbyterian Church and the Linden Mill Building.

The Bridge Street/Broad Street Historic District includes within its boundaries those buildings along the three (3) center blocks of Broad Street and along both Bridge and Main Streets approximately one (1) block north and south of Broad Street. These boundaries follow the historic delineation of Linden’s downtown area.

The Historic Commission meets monthly to discuss and maintain the historic district within the City. The responsibilities of the Commission also include the implementation of State and Federal Historic guidelines.



Map 2
City of Linden Historic District

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

The City of Linden's population has increased steadily since 1990 due to a substantial amount of new housing starts in the City. Between 1990 and 2000, population grew 15.6%, compared to 11.1% between 1980 and 1990. Population increased by 742 people, 296 more people than in the ten years from 1990-2000. Figure 1 below describes the growth that has occurred over the last twenty-five (25) years:

Figure 2 below outlines the number of building permits issued since 1999. Until 2005, the number of building permits has been steady or increasing. However, the number of building permits coincides with the recent downturn in the state's economy. There are still vacant lots available in the City's more recent developments. However, it is likely that the number of building permits will continue to decline or remain steadily low until the state's economy improves.

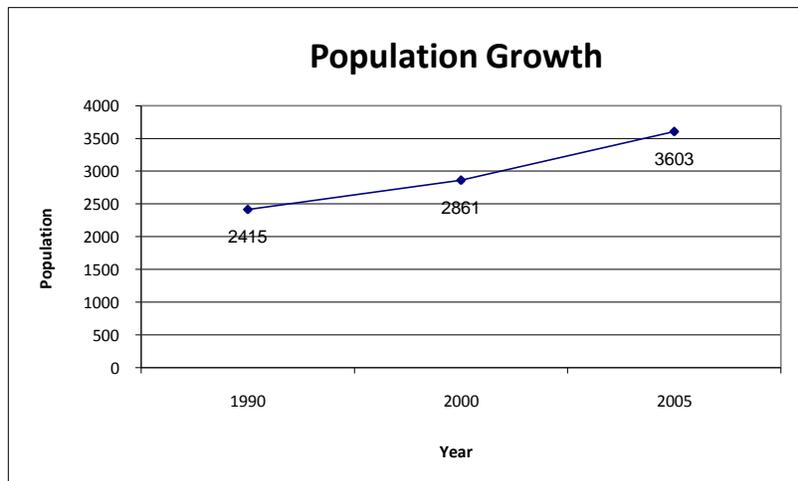


Figure 1
Population Growth

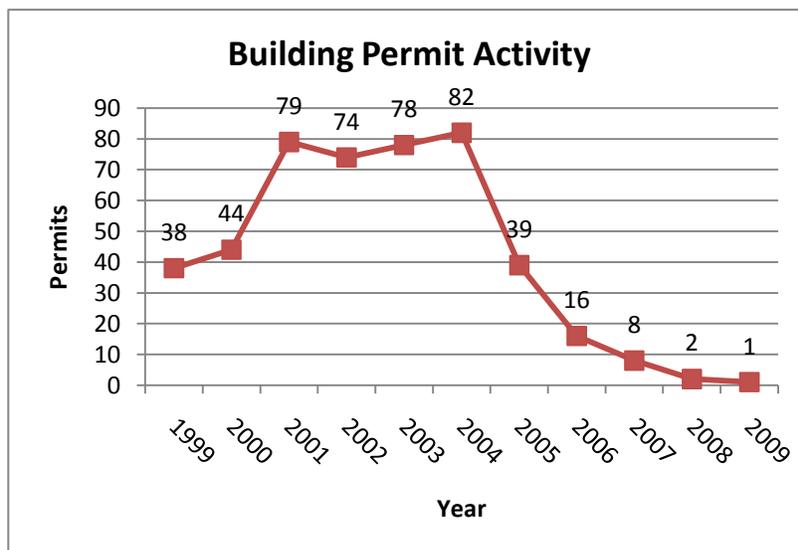


Figure 2
Building Permit Activity

Housing Conditions

Based on the United States Census information in 2000, the City of Linden had a total of 1,226 housing units. This was an increase of 34% from 1990. Of the 1,226 housing units, 949 or 81.5% were owner occupied versus 216 or 18.5% that were rental units. Figure 3 below describes the breakdown of housing units with a comparison of how many units are occupied.

Housing types and styles vary in the City. Close to the downtown, homes were predominantly built prior to 1940. Newer developments have occurred on the outer edges of the City which result in more modern development patterns. The core neighborhoods still maintain the small-town character and charm attributed to Linden.

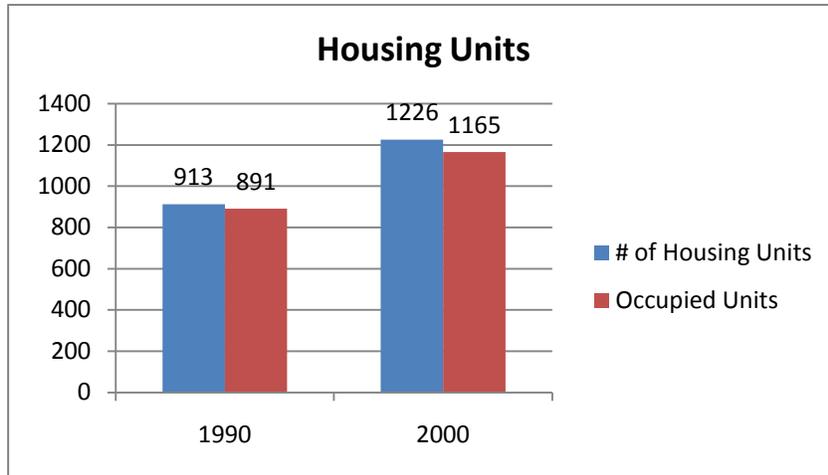


Figure 3
Housing Units

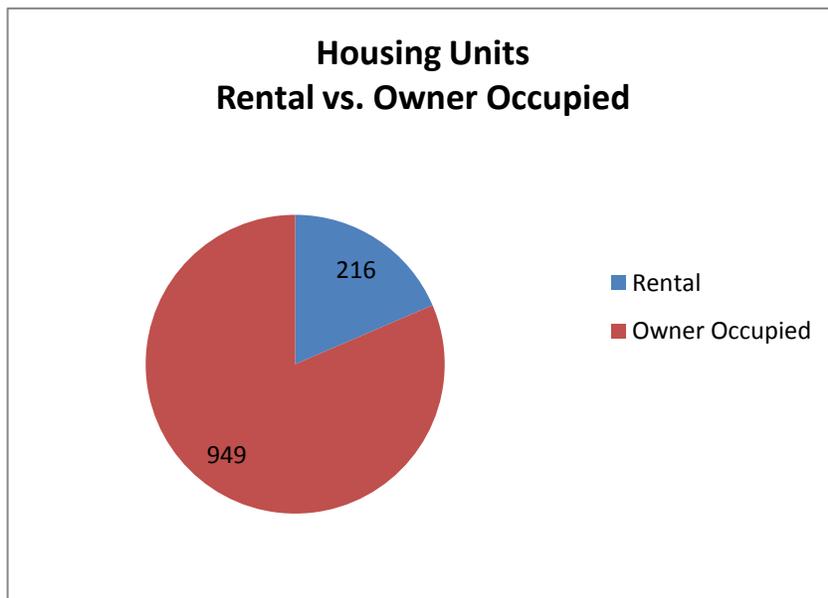


Figure 4
Rental vs. Owner Occupied Housing Units

Economic Characteristics

Traditionally, the unemployment rate in the City of Linden has been low due to many residents working in neighboring communities. However, in recent years, due to the downturn in the State of Michigan’s economy, unemployment has been increasing. The following table indicates employment statistics for people over the age of 16, as reported in 2000:

OCCUPATION	#	%
Managerial & Professional	470	34.5%
Service	145	10.6%
Sales & Office	349	25.6%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	0	0.0%
Construction & Extraction	219	16.1%
Production & Transportation	179	13.1%
TOTAL	1,362	100.0%

Figure 5
Employment Occupations

NATURAL FEATURES

Even though the City of Linden is largely developed, the City contains many valuable natural features that contribute to the character and quality of life for the residents in the City. These areas, as described below, should be considered during the development review process.

Topography

The City of Linden is predominantly flat with elevations ranging from 850 feet to 910 feet above sea level. Elevations increase north of the railroad tracks but not significantly. Vacant parcels that remain in the City do not contain elevation restraints that would discourage future development.

Wetlands and Watercourses

The Shiawassee River and its associated wetlands serve as the predominant water body in the City of Linden. The river is controlled by a dam, which has created the Mill Pond just east of Bridge Street.

Located on the southwestern edge of the City is Byram Lake, which is 132 acres in size. Byram Lake is an all-sports lake with a maximum depth of fifty (50) feet surrounded by residential homes. Swimming is also available through the Genesee County Park located on the east side of the lake. However, the lake does not have public boat access.

The City of Linden has several wetland areas, located primarily in the western and northeastern portions of the City. All of these wetlands are regulated by the State of Michigan. A regulated wetland is defined as any wetland over five (5) acres in size that is connected to a river or other body of water. The City does not currently have a wetlands protection ordinance that further regulates wetlands.

Woodlands and Street Trees

Although Linden is almost fully developed, several areas remain heavily wooded. The Shiawassee River corridor remains in its natural setting with dense vegetation surrounding the river. A large woodland is located just east of Linden Elementary School off of Stan Eaton Drive. This property is owned by the Linden School District.

ROAD NETWORK

In the City of Linden, nearly all of the roads are under the City’s jurisdiction. Therefore, the City is responsible for all maintenance of the road and its right-of-way, which includes utilities, snow clearing and paving. Genesee County has control over two (2) small portions of the road network on Silver Lake Road, from Ripley Road to the eastern City limits, and Ripley Road, from E. Rolston Road to the northern City limits.

Nearly five (5) miles of the road network are classified as major roads. These include Bridge Street, Broad Street, Hickory Street and E. Rolston Road. The major roads are in good condition and were repaved in the late 1990’s. The remaining roads are classified as local

streets. A major construction project was recently completed in the Fall of 2007 known as the Ten Streets Project. All ten (10) streets are located north of the Mill Pond and east of N. Bridge Street. The streets were all repaved and stormwater controls were installed.

There is only one (1) major route for east-west and north-south traffic through the City of Linden. Therefore, circulation and traffic is mainly limited to Bridge Street and Broad Street. As population increases and housing developments continue to be built in neighboring communities, traffic counts will continue to increase and will place an increased burden on these roads.

UTILITIES

The City of Linden operates and maintains the water system in the City. A new water plant was constructed in 2007 and there are currently two (2) water towers. The Department of Public Works has long range plans to construct an additional water tower on the northern portion of the City to provide better water pressure.

The City of Linden is also a member of Sewer District #3 in Genesee County. The sewer district was established by the Genesee County Drain Commission. There are three (3) jurisdictions included in District #3, the City of Linden, City of Fenton and Fenton Township. All of the properties located in the City have sanitary sewer and nearly all have City water service.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The City of Linden has approximately ten (10) acres of City-owned recreational property, including a playground, pavilion, gazebo and an amphitheater located along the Shiawassee River.

In regard to City-owned facilities, the City Hall is located on E. Broad Street in the downtown.

The City Hall contains the City Administration, Police Department and Fire Department. The Public Works Garage is located west of N. Bridge Street, north of the Shiawassee River. The Linden Mill Building houses the library, historical society museum and City Council Chambers.

Linden Community Schools owns property within the City including two (2) schools, ball fields and vacant land. The school district has sold a portion of their remaining land, which is currently being developed as Caratel Senior Living in downtown Linden.

EXISTING LAND USE

A fundamental step in preparing a Master Plan is to analyze existing land use patterns. This analysis not only identifies what and where particular uses have occurred, but also provides insight as to where future development might occur and where conflicts may exist or develop.

The Existing Land Use Map, located on Page 11, presents a generalized picture of existing land uses in the City. A discussion of the land uses corresponding to the map is detailed below.

Single Family Residential

Since Linden residents consider their City to be a bedroom community, the predominant land use in the City is Single Family Residential. The large number of single family homes adds to the diversity in the City. Construction of housing spans over the course of over one hundred (100) years and creates a variety of architecture that adds to the appeal of Linden. The historic homes are located in the downtown area while modern single family homes are being developed in outer areas of the City on formerly vacant land.

Attached Single Family Residential

Although only a small portion of the housing stock, the City has seen a recent increase in the construction of attached single family residential dwellings. These units are

sometimes confused with duplex structures but the key difference is that each unit is independently owned. This type of unit is typically a site condominium and proven attractive to people that desire less yard maintenance than with a single family home.

Two-Family Residential

Two-family residential structures are buildings with two (2) units under single ownership. The duplexes in Linden are generally older structures, are scattered throughout the community, and are intermingled with single family housing.

Multiple Family Residential

Since single family residential is the predominant housing type in the City, only a small portion of the remaining housing stock is multiple family. Multiple family buildings are located near the southern city limits (one of which is federally subsidized), the eastern city limits, and the northern city limits.

Manufactured Housing

The Shiawassee Shores Community, located in the northwest portion of the City, accounts for all two hundred sixty-four (264) units of manufactured homes in a land-lease development in Linden. The community is well maintained and offers an exceptional quality of living for the residents. The homes are placed upon foundations (some upon basements), providing an added benefit to the homes. Additional amenities include a private executive golf course and a pavilion for the residents. The community is not fully developed so more homes will be added.

Public and Semi-Public

Several areas throughout the City are utilized for public use. The historic Linden Mill Building, which houses the local library and museum, is the focal point of the City located on the banks of the Shiawassee River. On the opposite bank, the City has built and maintains a gazebo with an amphitheatre, which hosts the annual summer concert series. Another park, located

off West Broad Street and along the river, includes a playground and a pavilion.

Other public areas include Fairview Cemetery (owned and maintained by the City) and a smaller undeveloped park, Triangle Park, located near the eastern City limits. Recreation facilities are located adjacent to the elementary school in Linden. This area is available to the general public and for the numerous league activities sponsored by local athletic organizations and the Linden School District.

Commercial

Other than the immediate downtown area, commercial districts are located near the western city limits on W. Broad Street and near the northern city limits on N. Bridge Street. These commercial districts are separated from the downtown area by traditional residential neighborhoods. Most of the businesses within the City are small, locally-owned businesses, but a few national franchises have established operations within the City as well.

Office

Low-intensity office uses are found along S. Bridge Street and Main Street. These are primarily medical and dental offices in one-story buildings, located in close proximity to adjacent residential neighborhoods. Although office uses are also found downtown, offices requiring larger amounts of off-street parking are located in the Office Zoning District.

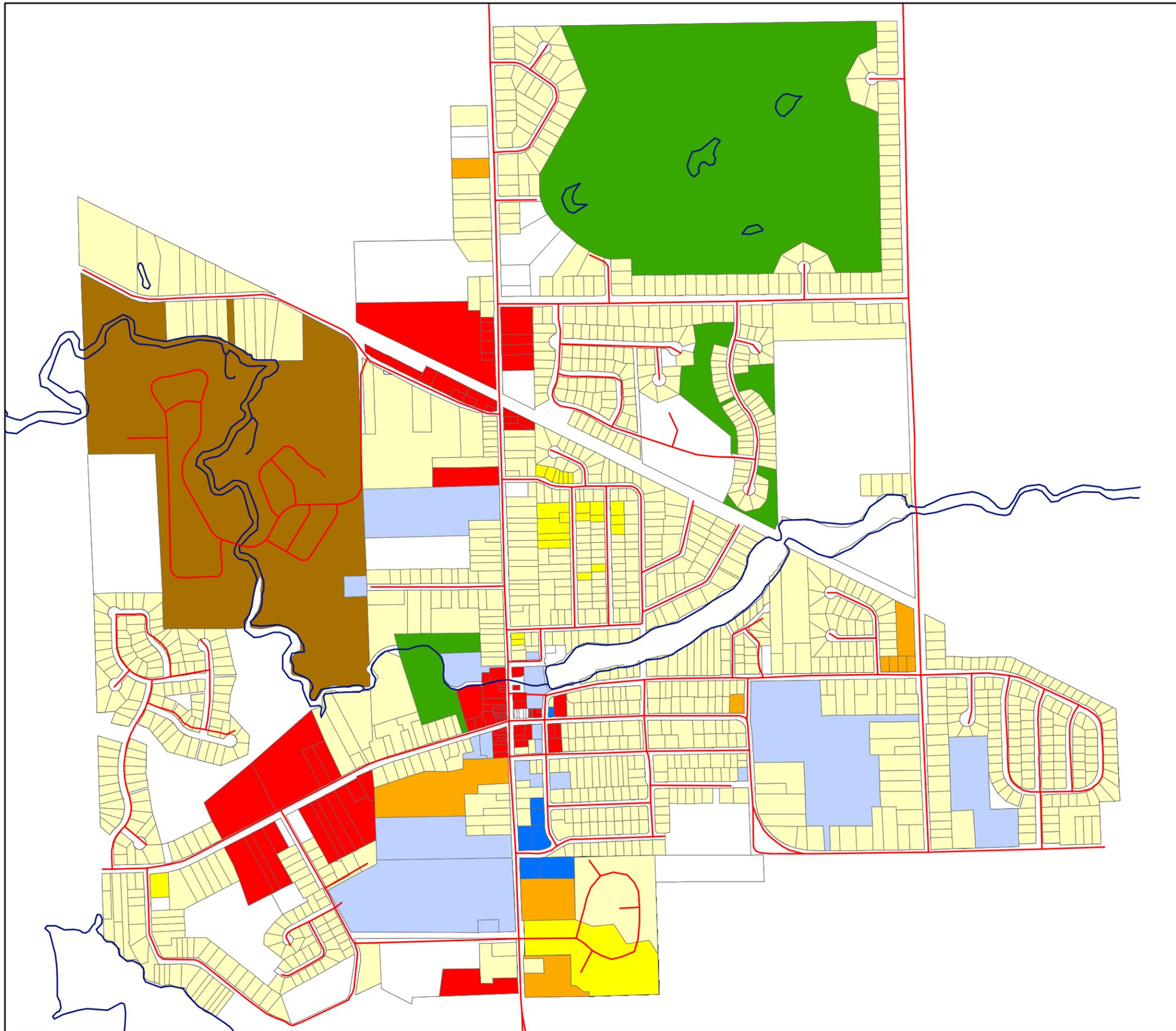
Central Business District

The Central Business District encompasses the historic downtown Linden. This area consists of several small, locally-owned businesses occupying the street level of historic buildings. Some buildings contain second-story residential apartments. City Hall and the Fire Department are also located in the downtown. In 2007, a fire destroyed the historic Union Block building, which encompassed a large percentage of the downtown retail space. This tragedy has opened up a significant parcel of land for new development. On-street parking is provided

along N. Bridge Street, S. Bridge Street and E. Broad Street.

Industrial

Currently, no industrial operations are present in the City, due primarily to the limited availability of suitable land and close proximity to industrial developments in neighboring communities.



CITY OF LINDEN

MASTER PLAN

-  Vacant
-  Single Family Residential
-  Two Family Residential
-  Multiple Family Residential
-  Mobile Homes
-  Office
-  Commercial
-  Public-Semi Public
-  Open Space
-  Industrial

MAP 3
EXISTING LAND USE



0 500 1,000 2,000
Feet



CHAPTER 3: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The guiding principles and objectives of the Master Plan, directed by the Vision statement, establish the desired character, quality, and pattern of development for the physical development of the City. The goals and objectives contained in this chapter direct future decisions on land use regulations, actions, procedures, and programs that will further implement the intent and purpose of the overall plan.

In terms relevant to community planning, goals and objectives provide the Master Plan the philosophical guidance to address the current issues and advance plans into the future. In general, goals and objectives can be defined as follows:

- Goals are overall broad statements that provide a focus for future discussions. Goals are supported by the more specific objectives.
- Objectives are very specific, measurable, action-oriented statements that help achieve the goals. Policy statements provide justification to revise or draft new ordinances or regulations or finance specific capital improvements.

The vision, goals, and objectives, presented, are organized by seven (7) major themes including:

- Community Character
- Design Standards
- Parks and Recreation
- Residential
- Commercial
- Land Use
- Infrastructure

Vision Statement

“We endeavor to maintain the traditional, small-town atmosphere of the community; create a vibrant, active downtown that attracts visitors; develop additional recreation facilities for people of all ages; and improve the overall appearance of the City.”

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Goal

Maintain a sustainable, small-town character that makes Linden unique and a great place to live by encouraging quality development.

Objectives

1. Community groups and residents should be encouraged to work together to maintain well-landscaped yards, parks and other public spaces.
2. Continue activities that encourage corridor planting in the spring season in order to further beautify the City.
3. Develop standards for new and infill construction to ensure compatibility with the historic fabric of Linden.
4. Enact zoning regulations that encourage high quality, mixed-use development adjacent to the downtown area.
5. Encourage the regular maintenance of residential and commercial buildings and sites.



DESIGN STANDARDS

Goal

Establish a design theme that will be utilized to create standards for entrances and roadways, façade renovations of historic buildings, and design of any infill structures within the downtown area.

Objectives

1. Create a common vision for what the appearance of the City of Linden should be and establish appropriate standards.
2. Create a streetscape design theme that builds upon the traditional character of Linden and emphasizes the entryways into the community.
3. Enforce design standards for all restoration projects being undertaken for older homes that have a historic value to the community.



PARKS & RECREATION

Goal

Promote and explore new alternative transportation and recreational opportunities in the City.

Objectives

1. As part of the Southern Lakes Regional Planning Initiative and the proposed Linden Mills National Recreation Area, establish the river and Mill Pond as a viable recreation area.
2. Provide connections between neighborhoods by enhancing the sidewalk network in the City.
3. Encourage the development of neighborhood-scale pocket parks in existing neighborhoods and new developments.
4. Encourage the construction of pedestrian benches and kiosks in order to inform residents of community events.
5. Expand, develop and/or modify existing parks in the City.
6. Utilize the Shiawassee River and regional trail system for recreational opportunities.



RESIDENTIAL

Goal

While maintaining established neighborhoods, provide a variety of high quality housing that will accommodate a diverse population.

Objectives

1. The feasibility of developing new housing opportunities in the downtown area should be explored.
2. Protect the historic residential neighborhoods along Broad Street and Bridge Street from encroachment of commercial and office uses.
3. Encourage the conversion of rental duplex housing structures into owner-occupied units in single family neighborhoods.



COMMERCIAL

Goal

Provide a broad range of commercial facilities that are adequate to serve the population within the City of Linden's market area.

Objectives

1. Through cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, businesses should be encouraged to adapt their hours to match the schedules of people that work during the day.
2. Support the goals outlined in the Blueprints Plan for Linden's downtown by working with businesses to develop a successful marketing strategy.
3. Encourage additional promotional events to attract visitors downtown.
4. Promote outdoor dining and shopping in the downtown.
5. Automobile-oriented businesses should be encouraged to locate in commercial districts with adequate parking, but not in the downtown.



LAND USE

Goal

The City of Linden should provide sound land use policy that is reasonable and fair to residents and business owners.

Objectives

1. Adjacent land uses should be compatible in size and scale in order to prevent potential conflicts.
2. Land uses should transition from most intense to least intense along major thoroughfares in the City, which will create an adequate buffer to protect single family residential neighborhoods.
3. The City should encourage the use of creative land use techniques such as Planned Unit Developments, which will allow for creative site design and planning.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal

Ensure that adequate utilities and roads are in place to accommodate current and future development.

Objective

1. Continue to provide adequate public water and sewer services to residents and plan for future expansion.
2. Ensure that City roads and sidewalks are well-maintained and encourage connectivity.
3. Explore new and innovative stormwater management Best Management Practices in order to encourage their application in new development.
4. Evaluate and correct potential stormwater management issues in the City.



CHAPTER 4: CRITICAL SUBAREAS

While the Future Land Use Plan presents an overall land use development scheme for the entire City, there are three (3) areas that deserve special attention. These areas, all located in the central core of the City, are listed in the following section, along with the relevant issues and recommendations.

Downtown Revitalization

Downtown Linden has faced several challenges in the beginning of the 21st century. The downturn in the State's economy has hit downtown businesses very hard. Most importantly, the loss of the Union Block as a result of fire in 2007 has been devastating. Therefore, it is important to review potential redevelopment and revitalization opportunities that can positively impact downtown Linden.

History/Background

Downtown Linden is focused at the intersection of Broad Street and Bridge Street and the commercial businesses extend approximately one (1) block in each direction. With the exception of the Beacon & Bridge Gas Station on the southeast corner, the buildings are historic in character. A State and National Registered Historic District extends along both Broad Street and Bridge Street and is aimed at maintaining the traditional character of the City.

A variety of businesses are found in downtown Linden, including restaurants, retail, services and professional offices. Some of the buildings have apartment units on the second floor above the retail or office space. On-street parking is provided in front of most of the buildings. Public parking lots are also located in several areas downtown providing easy accessibility to the entire downtown by foot.

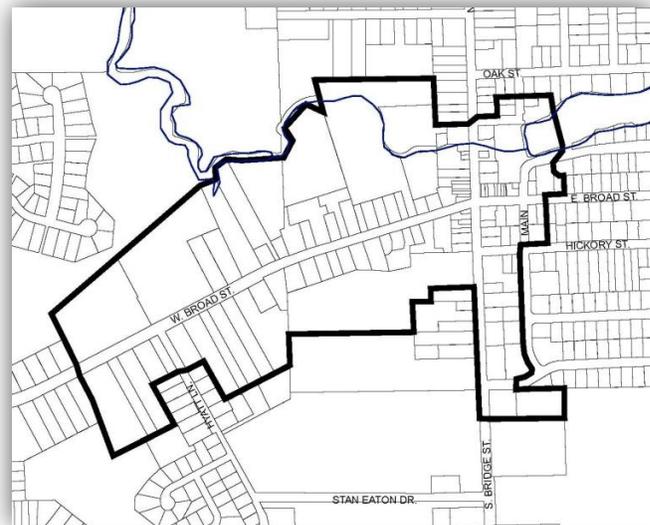
In 2005, as part of the Cool City Initiative, Linden was awarded a grant to develop a

Blueprints Plan for downtown. The document includes the community's vision for downtown as well as the findings of a comprehensive analysis of downtown's commercial markets. The vision and market analysis were used to define a specific economic enhancement strategy for downtown.

In an effort to capitalize on the potential of the downtown, the City of Linden established a Principal Shopping District (PSD) in 2003. A PSD is an economic development tool that manages the promotion of economic activity within the City. The PSD was later dissolved in 2007 in order to initiate creation of a Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

Downtown Development Authority

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA), permitted through Public Act 197 of 1975, is designed to be a catalyst in the development of a community's downtown. The DDA provides for a variety of funding options including Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and the ability to levy a limited millage. Once established, the DDA prepares a development plan and tax increment financing plan approved by the City Council. A tax increment financing plan includes the development plan and details of the tax increment procedure, the amount of bonded



Map 4
DDA Boundary

indebtedness to be incurred and the duration of the program. Upon adoption of the plans, tax increments which occur as a result of improvements within the DDA boundary, accrue to the DDA to be used as outlined in the development plan.

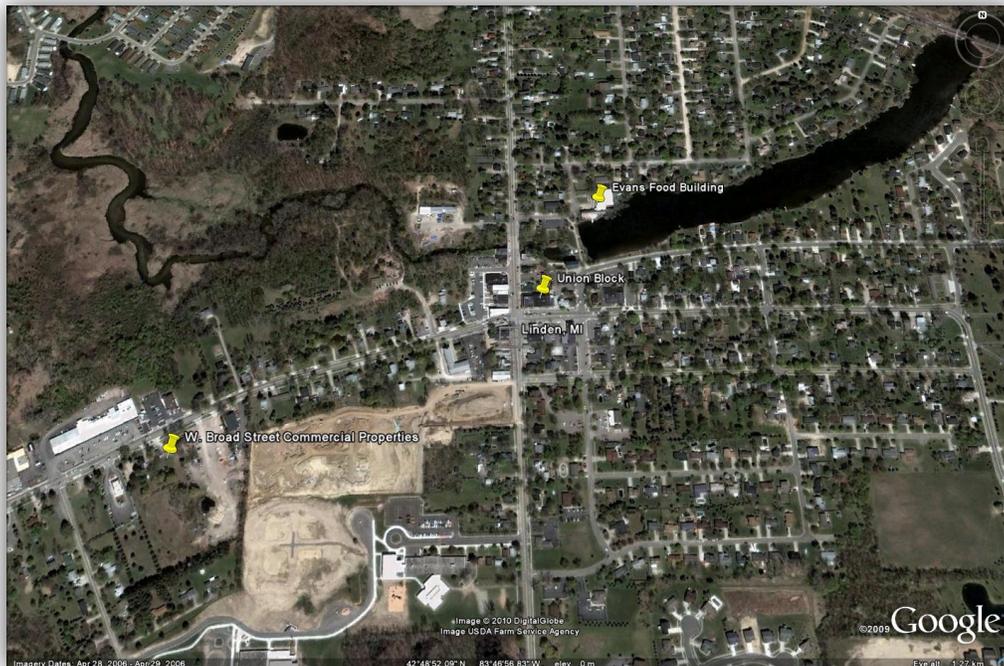
The DDA can capture taxes that would result from the increase in value over a period of time. This capture amount can be used to fund public improvement projects and/or be used to leverage money to fund large-scale projects. In addition to the financing options, a DDA is served by a public board dedicated solely to implementing the plans for the downtown. The board is primarily advisory to the City Council unless the task is to implement a plan/project approved by the City Council.

In December 2007, the City Council authorized the creation of the DDA. The DDA Board members consist of business owners, the Mayor, property owners and other stakeholders in the downtown. At the end of 2007, the DDA Development Plan/Tax Increment Financing Plan was approved by the City Council. The

Plan contained goals and objectives of the district as well as a listing of projects proposed to be completed in the DDA for the next twenty (20) years.

Redevelopment Opportunities

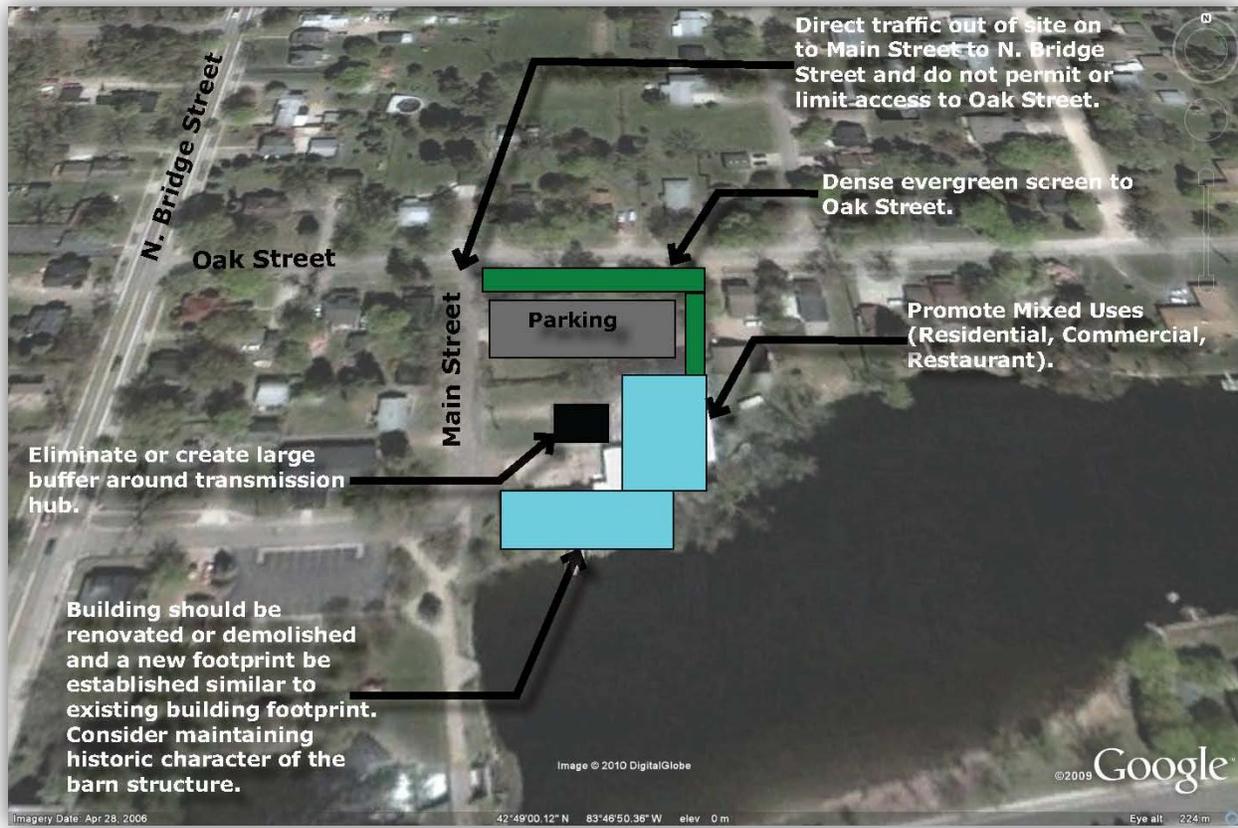
There are three (3) critical areas in the downtown that should be studied in more detail than by reviewing conventional land use. All three (3) areas, the former Evans Food Building, former Union Block and W. Broad Street Commercial Properties, offer unique challenges during redevelopment. The areas are depicted in the image below:



Map 5
Critical Subareas

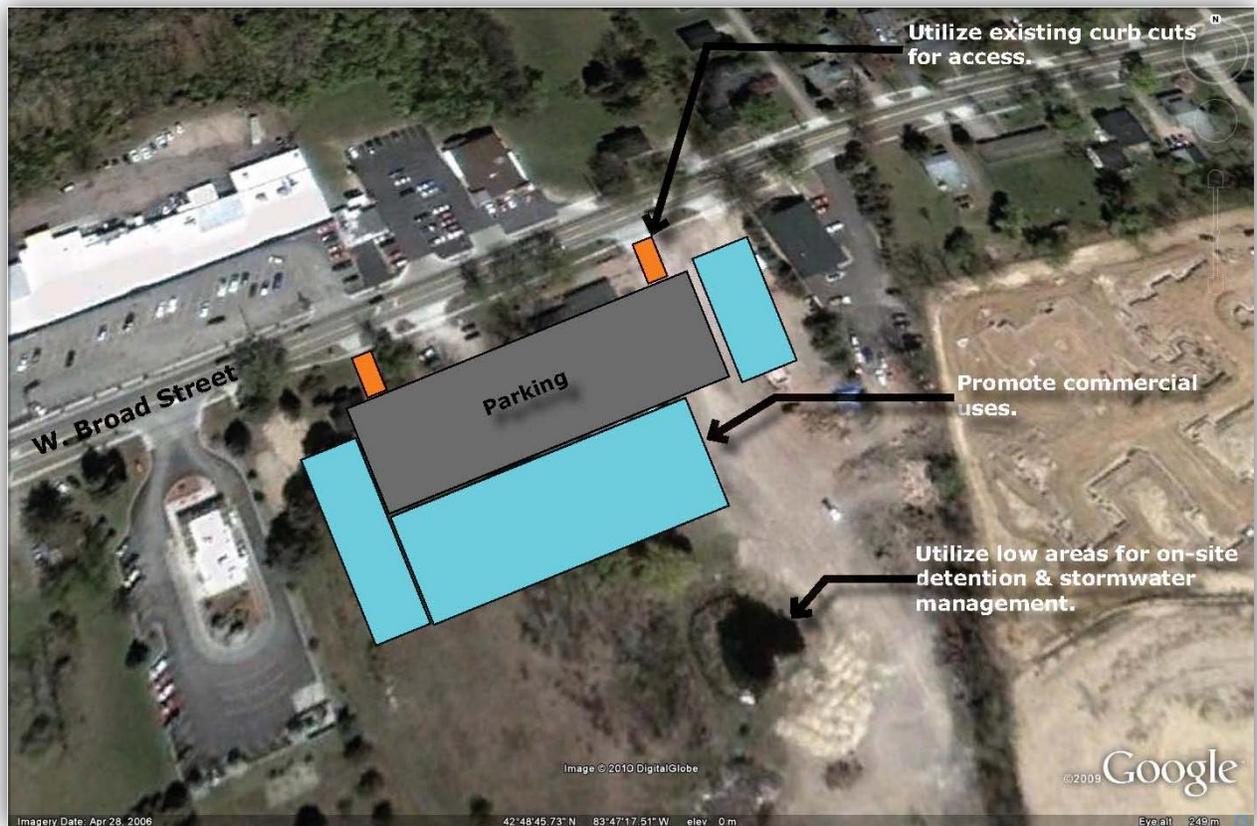
Former Evans Food Building

Located on the north side of the Mill Pond, opposite the Linden Mills Building, this building has been vacant for a number of years and several attempts to redevelop the building have been unsuccessful. A major hurdle of redevelopment is the large electrical substation. Relocation of the substation will be very difficult. However, relocation should be strongly encouraged in order to eliminate the negative safety and visible aspects of the site. Parking is limited north of the Mill Pond and any parking that is part of a redevelopment project should be carefully planned to screen the parking from the residential neighborhood.



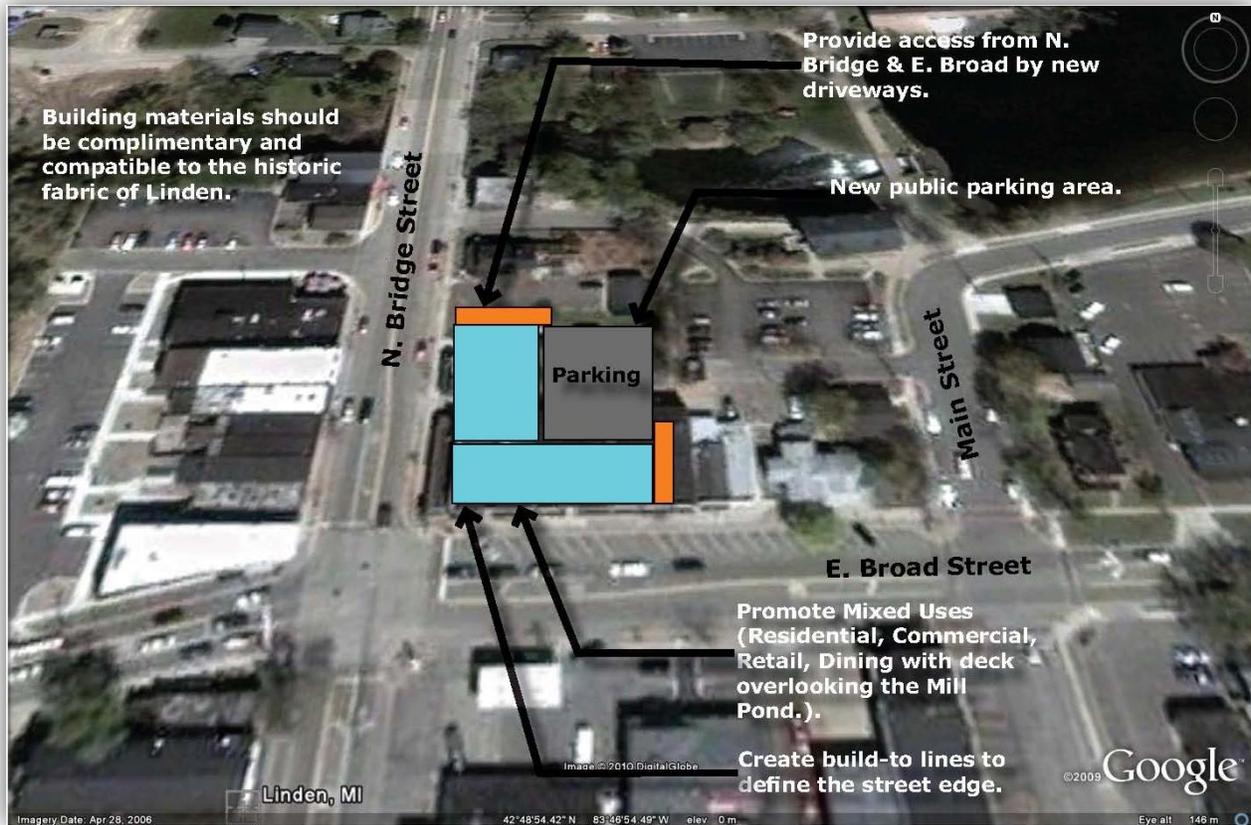
W. Broad Street Commercial Properties

Located on W. Broad Street, west of the historic downtown are several properties zoned General Commercial. The properties are all adjacent to one another and an opportunity exists to combine the properties and redevelop them into a single-cohesive commercial development. A study was completed several years ago by the City that reviewed stormwater issues on the properties. Significant infrastructure improvements will be required as part of redevelopment. It will be likely that the properties will need an underground stormwater management system.



Union Block

In May 2007, the area located on the northeast corner of Broad Street and Bridge Street, known as the Union Block, was destroyed by a fire. The Union Block was considered by many residents as the most prominent building in the City. Following the fire, the Union Block was demolished and now the land is vacant. An opportunity to develop this site poses many challenges for the community and can also be a landmark and focal point in the community.



Overall Recommendations:

- In cooperation with the DDA and Historic District Commission, the Planning Commission should promote the small-town charm and historic character of Downtown Linden.
- Review long-range plans for commercial growth of communities surrounding the City of Linden in order to determine its impact on Downtown.
- The Planning Commission should work cooperatively with the DDA and Historic District Commission on development review projects in the downtown.
- Encourage the DDA to promote and market vacant properties and properties identified for redevelopment in the downtown.

CHAPTER 5: FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan is intended to provide a graphic illustration of the desired land uses in the City of Linden. The Future Land Use Map is based on a consideration of a number of factors, including:

- Availability of Services
- Citizen Input and Opinion
- Community Facilities and Parks
- Community Goals and Objectives
- Compatible Uses
- Existing Land Use
- Existing Plans
- Existing Zoning
- Natural Resource Capability
- Roadway Access and Adequacy

While the City has carefully derived the Future Land Use Plan and Map based on the above factors, there may be conflicts between text in the Master Plan and the Future Land Use Plan Map designation of a property. Where those instances have occurred, the designation on the Map is most critical in reviewing a rezoning request. The following Future Land Use Categories and accompanying map on Page 30 provide a narrative to explain the proposed development patterns illustrated on the Future Land Use Map. Additional detail regarding specific sites or land use concerns is largely referenced in the Chapter 4: Critical Subareas in this document.

Open Space

Areas designated as Open Space are intended for those locations that are to remain undeveloped or for public and recreational use. Spring Meadows Country Club makes up a majority of land in the City designated as Open Space. Also included are the Cemetery and property abutting the Shiawassee River. Newer residential developments in the City, including site condominium projects Chestnut Grove and Saddlebrook Farms have areas that are

dedicated for open space. These areas cannot be developed due to restrictions in their condominium documents.

Single Family Residential

This classification is intended to create a location for single family residential detached housing developed on lots that are between eighty (80) and one hundred (100) feet in width. These lot sizes are typical for much of the single family residential properties in the community and should be maintained to continue the overall appearance of the district. This is also the predominant future land use category in the City.

Most of the remaining undeveloped land in the City is designated as Single Family Residential. The larger properties are found near the southwest corner of Rolston Road and Ripley Road, near Triangle Park, and between Hyatt Lane and Bryum Lake Drive.

Attached Single Family Residential

This land use is intended to establish a location for single family attached housing. The individual lot sizes are smaller and the density is higher than typical single family residential areas in the community. Traditionally, these are duplex structures geared towards older, less mobile residents or empty-nesters. Attached Single Family Residential areas are located along Creekwood Circle, at the southern end of the City.

Historic Residential

The intent of this district is to protect and preserve the integrity of the traditional neighborhood character of the City of Linden. Many intact, historic residential houses in Linden comprise this land use category. These houses are located primarily along Bridge Street, Broad Street and Hickory Street. However, not all of the houses located within the Historic Residential areas of the City are historic homes.

The overall purpose for this district is to maintain the traditional neighborhood character by establishing lot size requirements and design guidelines for future development that may occur in the district. The lots in this district are typically seventy (70) feet wide or less and were platted many years ago as part of the traditional neighborhood.

Properties classified as Historic Residential are predominantly located on N. Bridge Street, East and West Broad Streets. These are the two (2) most heavily traveled roads in the City. Therefore, it is critical to discourage any efforts to extend the downtown or conversion of these homes to office or commercial.

Multiple Family Residential

This land use classification is intended for multiple family developments up to six (6) units per acre. Developments are encouraged to be as complexes. The conversion of single family homes to multiple family units is discouraged. The properties designated as Multiple Family Residential are located on South and North Bridge Streets and on the northwest corner of Ripley Road and Tickner Street.

Manufactured Housing

The intent of the Manufactured Housing land use classification is to provide an additional means of affordable housing in the City of Linden. Currently, the only location in the City with this land use classification is the Shiawassee Shores retirement community located off of West Rolston Road.

Office

This land use classification is intended for low-intensity, single story office uses. Specifically, it is envisioned that professional offices such as medical, dental, financial and personal services would be preferred uses. The Office land use classification is located on South Bridge Street, south of downtown Linden and Main Street.

Mixed Use

The intent of the Mixed Use land use classification is for those areas that exhibit the potential to support more than one land use category and would provide a transition between different land uses. Such uses could include retail, office and residential components or potentially commercial and industrial. Flexibility of uses allows for increased potential for redevelopment of land in the City of Linden.

The former Linden Lumber site, located on N. Bridge Street adjacent to the railroad tracks is identified as Mixed Use on the Future Land Use Map. The mixed use category would allow flexibility for either commercial or light industrial uses for the site. Currently, Linden does not have any areas on the Future Land Use Map as industrial. However, the City would like to explore areas in the future to establish industrial land.

The former Evans Food Building, located on the north side of the Mill Pond, is identified as Mixed Use. This was formerly an industrial site and the future intent is demolition of the building for development of a mixed use building containing retail and possibly restaurant uses. Several unsuccessful attempts to redevelop the property have been made in the past five (5) years.

Central Business District

This district is intended for a mixture of retail, office and service establishments in a traditional downtown setting. The focus of the district is entertainment, specialty retail, small offices and government buildings. Residential uses, on the upper levels of buildings, also are located in the Central Business District. The Central Business District boundary is very similar to the Historic District boundary which requires a level of protection to the character of the downtown.

Automobile-related uses and large-scale commercial uses commonly located in suburban shopping environments are not appropriate for this district. These uses typically require larger

sites to accommodate large structures and their associated parking areas.

Commercial

This district is intended for the widest variety of retail and service businesses. Businesses could range from general retail, automobile service and restaurants to small commercial centers. The uses in this district are not intended to compete with larger commercial development located outside of the City or those retail uses located in the Central Business District. Properties designated as Commercial generally have a large enough property to accommodate parking and a stand-alone structure on the site. Areas designated as Commercial are located on West Broad Street and on North and South Bridge Streets.

The table below outlines the breakdown on Future Land Use categories and their acreages based on the Future Land Use Map. The predominant Future Land Use is Single Family Residential. Due to Spring Meadows Golf Course and other areas of greenspace, Open Space accounts for approximately twenty percent (20%) of the City.

Land Use Category	Acreage	%
Open Space	265.6	19.8%
Single Family Residential	732.7	54.7%
Attached Single Family Residential	15.1	1.1%
Historic Residential	43.0	3.2%
Multiple Family Residential	15.0	1.1%
Manufactured Housing Community	160.5	12.0%
Office	6.2	0.5%
Mixed Use	41.2	3.1%
Central Business	12.6	0.9%
Commercial	46.8	3.5%

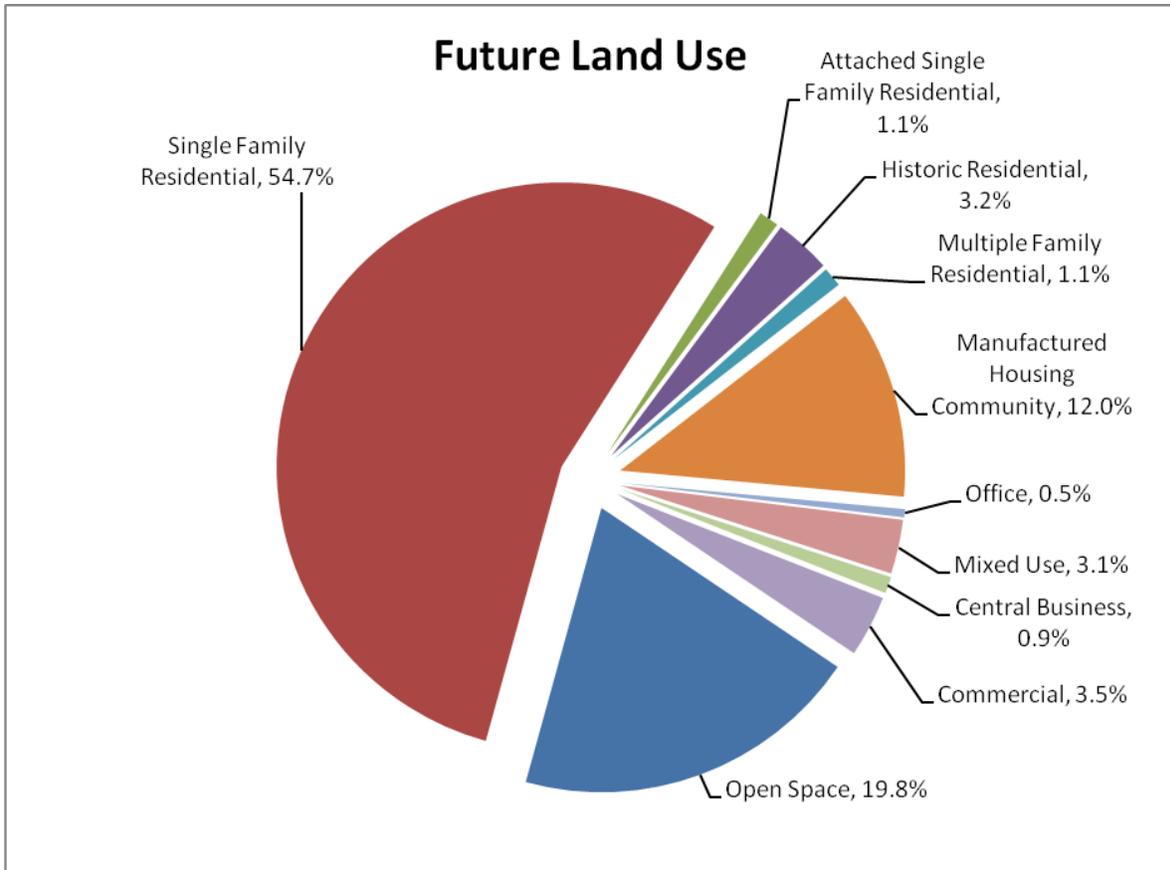
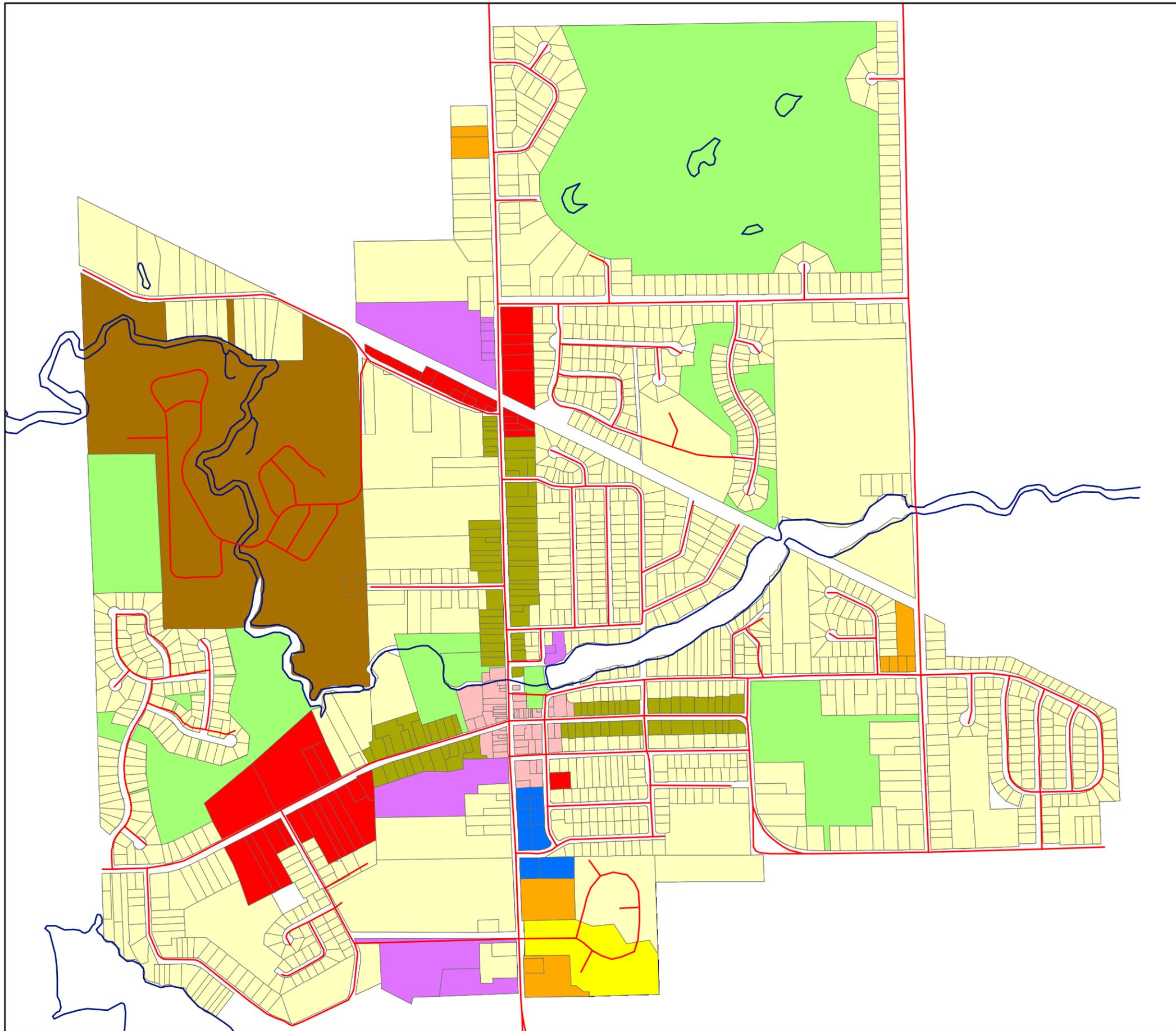


Figure 6
Future Land Use



CITY OF LINDEN

MASTER PLAN

- Open Space
- Single Family Residential
- Attached Single Family Residential
- Historic Residential
- Multiple Family Residential
- Manufactured Housing Community
- Office
- Mixed Use
- Central Business
- Commercial

**MAP 6
FUTURE LAND USE**



0 500 1,000 2,000
Feet



ZONING PLAN

The City of Linden strives to maintain a high quality of life through the preservation of historical character and utilization of natural resources. However, disconnect between the goals of the City and the Zoning Ordinance may occur. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008) bridges this disconnect by requiring a Zoning Plan as part of the Master Plan. The Zoning Ordinance is the primary land use implementation tool available to the City.

Role of the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance

The Master Plan sets forth the vision, goals and objectives for growth and development in the City for the next twenty (20) years. It includes strategies for managing growth and change in land use over this period. The plan is required by State Law to be reviewed at least once every five (5) years.

The Zoning Ordinance regulates the use and development of land. By Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended, it is based on a plan designed to promote public safety and general welfare, as well as several additional items as described in the Act.

Role of the Zoning Plan

The Zoning Plan describes the relationship between future land use categories in the Master Plan and the comparable Zoning Ordinance districts. This Plan is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P. A. 33 of 2008). Not to be confused with the Zoning Ordinance, the Zoning Plan provides generalized recommendations for methods of bringing the Zoning Ordinance in closer relation with the future land use vision. The Zoning Plan compares zoning districts and future land use categories as well as the intent and basic standards that control the height, area, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises in comparable zoning districts. These matters are regulated by specific standards in the Zoning Ordinance.

District Standards

As shown in the table on the following page, the Master Plan sets forth ten (10) future land use categories. The Zoning Ordinance coincidentally has ten (10) zoning districts. The Zoning Ordinance, in large part, describes a segregated land use pattern. The Master Plan uses a more integrated approach to land use categorizing.

The format of the table on the following page is to provide primary locations of respective zoning districts that are impacted the greatest. One future land use category may be listed in multiple zoning districts due to the transition from the segregated to integrated approach.

All of the future land use categories can be associated with a zoning district with the exception of the Open Space and Mixed Use categories. The Mixed Use category is for those areas that exhibit the potential to support more than one land use category and would provide a transition between different land uses. Such uses could include retail, office and residential components or potentially commercial and industrial. Flexibility of uses allows for increased potential for redevelopment of land in the City of Linden. The Open Space areas are intended for those locations that are to remain undeveloped or for public and recreational use. Properties designated as Open Space still have a zoning district attached to them, typically whatever zoning district is assigned to the properties in the perspective development. However, these properties most likely have deed restrictions or Conservation Easements to limit future development rights.

Future Land Use Category	Corresponding Zoning District(s)
Open Space	N/A
Single Family Residential	R-1 Single Family Residential R-2 Single Family Residential
Attached Single Family Residential	R-4 Multiple Family Residential
Historic Residential	R-3 Single Family Residential
Multiple Family Residential	R-4 Multiple Family Residential
Manufactured Housing Community	R-5 Mobile Home Park
Office	LS Local Service
Mixed Use	***
Central Business	CBD Central Business District
Commercial	GC General Commercial
*** Uses in the Mixed Use category should be limited to retail, office, residential and possibly limited industrial components.	

Figure 7
Zoning Plan

IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Linden Master Plan serves as the broad framework within which the City will guide future land use. Implementation of this Plan will require the ongoing efforts of City officials, Planning Commissioners, Zoning Board of Appeals members, neighboring agencies and citizens. The effectiveness of the Plan relies upon the diligence with which its provisions are implemented. Specific strategies available to the City for implementation of the Master Plan include the following:

- Review of City Ordinances:
 - Zoning
 - Subdivision Regulations
 - General Code Ordinances relating to zoning issues.
- Review Historic District Design Standards.
- Development of a more-detailed Capital Improvements Plan.
- Publication of a “Development Guide” information handbook outlining City development policies and guidelines, similar to the “New Business Checklist” developed in 2008.
- Continued cooperative efforts with other City advisory groups such as the Downtown Development Authority and Parks & Recreation Commission as well as adjacent communities, County, State and Federal Agencies, including Southern Lakes Parks & Recreation.

It should be noted that the list of strategies is not ranked in any order. These are the most common and feasible options currently available to the City in implementing this Plan. As new legislation and court action occurs it is entirely feasible that new options will be available while some existing ones will be altered or eliminated.

The Plan was designed to be flexible by being adaptable to changing circumstances without weakening established goals and objectives. The effective implementation of this Plan will require long term cooperation and effort on the part of City officials, staff, developers, landowners and citizens. An informed and involved citizenry is therefore essential to the success of this Plan.