



2023 COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

Village of Vicksburg, Michigan

DRAFT – August 4, 2023

VICKSBURG 2023 MASTER PLAN

VILLAGE OF VICKSBURG, MICHIGAN

Adopted by the Vicksburg Planning Commission on XXXX

Adopted by the Vicksburg Village Council on XXXX

Prepared with the assistance of:



235 E. Main Street, Suite 105

Northville, MI 48167

T: 248.596.0920

F: 248.596.0930

www.mcka.com

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Village Council

Tim Frisbie, Village President

Carl Keller

Denny Olsen

Rick Holmes

Wendy Pheils

Ryan Wagner

Gail Reisterer

Planning Commission

Matt Shankle, Chair

Bill Cox

Don Wertela

Rachel Plankenhorn

Colin Bailey

Rick Holmes

Zach Bishop

Nick Riashi

John Debault

Village administration

Jim Mallery, Village Manager

Christian Wines, Village Clerk

Michelle Morgan, Village Treasurer

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01

PURPOSE & PROCESS

WELCOME

Welcome to the Village of Vicksburg 2023 Master Plan. This Plan reflects a vision for the future of Vicksburg: its downtown, neighborhoods, sense of place and community, transportation, and parks and recreation.

The Vicksburg 2023 Master Plan replaces the previous Master Plan which was adopted in 2015. In many ways, the Village's development pattern is established, functions well, and the Village has many of the amenities that make a community great and are attractive to residents and business owners. This Master Plan is intended to capitalize on what is currently working for the Village, identify areas of improvement, and aspire to create a greater community for its residents and destination for visitors. The 2023 Master Plan is a culmination of resident and stakeholder input that provides a guidance to elected and appointed officials within the Village.

REGIONAL SETTING

The Village of Vicksburg is located in southern Kalamazoo County (as shown in Map 1: Regional Location) and encompasses approximately 3.15 square miles. Vicksburg is surrounded by Schoolcraft Township on the west side and Brady Township on the east side. The largest city within the county, Kalamazoo, is approximately 15 miles north.



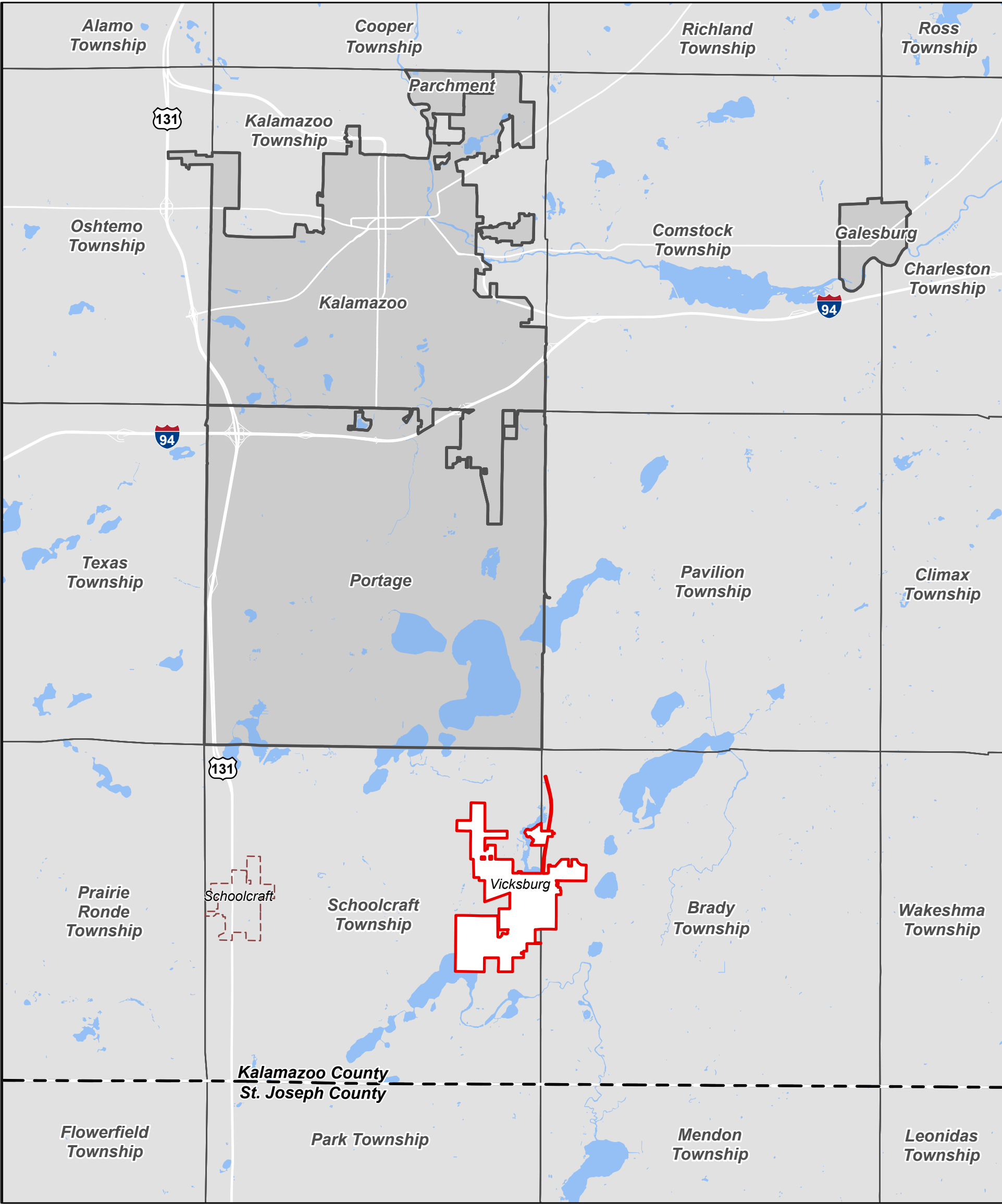
BASIS FOR THE MASTER PLAN

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended) requires villages to plan and zone. The Act requires that the Planning Commission develop and adopt a master plan that, at a minimum, addresses certain elements. This document, then, is the Master Plan that has been developed and adopted by the Village of Vicksburg Planning Commission pursuant to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

The Vicksburg 2023 Master Plan (the Plan) presents the Village's vision for the future. It serves as a policy guide for the community, and informs the decisions of Village officials and administrators, governmental agencies, organizations, and private individuals. It is designed to provide a flexible road map for future development and to ensure that new growth is consistent with the Village's goals and objectives.

This 2023 Master Plan is long range in that it examines past trends and makes projections for the next five to 20 years. This allows the Village to plan ahead and anticipate future needs. It should be noted, however, that projections are most accurate in the short term, and many factors that will shape the future cannot be anticipated. For this reason, every three to five years, a joint meeting between the Village Council, Planning Commission, and Downtown Development Authority (DDA) should be held to review the Plan and make any amendments as necessary.

One of the most important functions of the Plan is to provide a solid foundation for future land use decisions. The recommendations presented in the text and shown graphically will provide a legal basis for zoning and other land use controls utilized by the Village.



Regional Location

Village of Vicksburg, Michigan

November 10, 2022

- LEGEND**
- Village of Vicksburg
 - Village Boundaries
 - City Boundaries
 - Township Boundaries
 - County Boundaries



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Miles

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
Village of Vicksburg, 2022. McKenna 2022.

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ORGANIZATION OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan contains seven sections:

1

PURPOSE & PROCESS

An overview of the Plan and its uses.

2

COMMUNITY SETTING

An in-depth analysis of the current conditions in Vicksburg, including key subjects such as a demographic profile and environmental conditions. Also included is an analysis of the existing land uses.

The 2023 Master Plan sets forth the vision that Village leaders and residents have for the future of Vicksburg, and serves as a guide to achieving that vision.

3

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

This section details the foundational goals and objectives upon which the Plan is founded.

4

CREATING A PLACE

A summary of placemaking concepts and strategies, including the Downtown Development Authority's (DDA) *Downtown Redevelopment + Design Plan* to enhance Vicksburg's downtown core.

5

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Chapter 5 presents an analysis of the transportation network in the Village, including the circulation system and the accessibility and ease of non-motorized travel. Also included are the DDA's and Parks and Recreation Committee's plans for non-motorized pathways within the Village.

6

THE VICKSBURG PLAN

The future land use and character plan will be the guiding force for future development and redevelopment. This chapter presents the way that Vicksburg will be laid out in the future.

7

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The implementation section will answer the "how" of the Master Plan and guide the community along the path to shaping the Vicksburg of the future. Included within this chapter is a series of implementation matrices that the Village can follow based on prioritization, time frames, responsible parties, and funding sources.

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02

COMMUNITY SETTING

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

This chapter presents a narrative of Vicksburg's history and its current conditions with a detailed demographic analysis, including population, housing, and economic conditions. It also maps the existing land use patterns and significant environmental features.

BRIEF HISTORY OF VICKSBURG

In 1829 when Kalamazoo County was first settled, John Vickers, the village's namesake, moved here from Ohio and settled along the Portage Creek. Knowing that there was a large demand in the county for a convenient place to grind corn and wheat into flour, he quickly located a site on the banks of Rocky Creek and built a small temporary grist mill. In 1832, he built a new mill on Portage Creek which became known as Vickers' Mill.

Although the Vicksburg area was considered Indian land until 1835, many early pioneer squatters like Vickers began to settle the area. In 1836 John Vickers contracted to survey the area around his mill and to plat a village to be called Vicksburg. That same year Clark Briggs and John Noyes opened a store. In 1837 a blacksmith shop and hotel moved into town. The grist mill expanded to include a sawmill. A school was also constructed and soon there was a bustling village.



Source: www.vicksburg-michigan.com

Because of technicalities of the land ownership system in the mid-1800s, the Village of Vicksburg actually was named Brady. Since then, the community experimented with names such as Holland and Lincoln. The news was not too popular and in 1871, the County Board of Supervisors agreed with a petition by the residents to incorporate the village under the name of Vicksburg.

John Vickers died on July 1, 1843 too early to see the fruits of his labor and the formal establishment of the village that bears his name.

Vicksburg has experienced significant changes over the past 100 years. The transportation of people and goods had a great deal to do with the Village's history. Vicksburg was first connected to the rails in 1870 via the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad. A year later the Northwestern Grand Trunk laid track through Vicksburg, connecting the village to both Port Huron and Chicago. Despite being a two-track town, Vicksburg remained a small community – at least as permanent residents go. But in the early days of the railroad, travelers often

found themselves far from home and in need of a place to stay the night. In 1880, there were three hotels in town.

Today there are no hotels in Vicksburg, but the railroad is still an influence. The Canadian National Railway system maintains the tracks running through town. Freight trains carrying tons of goods to the nation pass through the community approximately 40 times a day. The Vicksburg Depot Museum occupies the former Grand Trunk rail depot in town and the Vicksburg recreation trail was built on land reclaimed as part of the “rails to trails” program.

Vicksburg also became a destination of choice on a more spiritual level. Beginning in 1884, the “Capital of Spiritualism” hosted a camp meeting every summer at Fraser's Grove where thousands would gather to observe healing rituals, flame readings, and listen to various mediums answer questions on behalf of those long departed. The evenings were filled with more traditional community activities like group suppers, musicals, and dances. Also, the pond created by John Vickers when he dammed the Portage Creek would be covered with colorful lotus lilies in the summer and was a tourist attraction that drew thousands from around the country.

Rail travel also brought hunters and fisherman to the area to take advantage of the unspoiled woodlands, lakes and streams. Many of these travelers came from Chicago so often that it only seemed right to have seasonal homes or cottages in the Vicksburg area. This practice continues today with many Chicagoans spending their summers on Vicksburg area lakes.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Demographic analysis, or the study of the characteristics of a given population, is a fundamental element of master planning. Planning for future growth and development requires consideration of “how much” – how many individuals will need Village services, how much housing is affordable, how many new housing units will be built and other vital signs. It’s critical to understand these existing conditions and past trends in order to appropriately anticipate and plan for the future needs of the community.

The intent of a demographic analysis is to create a descriptive analysis of the community: the population’s age, gender, education status, employment, and similar features. Differences in demographic characteristics may indicate issues or areas in which land use planning and public policies are warranted; may identify strengths or assets that can be further developed or emphasized; or may identify weaknesses or problems that need to be addressed.

COMPARISON COMMUNITIES

For purposes of analysis, where appropriate, comparisons have been made with neighboring communities and Kalamazoo County. The neighboring communities included for comparison purposes are Schoolcraft Township and Brady Township. In many ways, these surrounding communities face similar trends and challenges to those of Vicksburg. It is important to note that figures for both Brady and Schoolcraft Township include a portion of the Village of Vicksburg’s population and associated data.

DATA SOURCES

The majority of the data presented is taken from the 2000, 2010, and 2020 US Census. The most recent data comes from the 2020 American Community Survey, five-year estimates. The American Community Survey is conducted every year and samples a percentage of the community on topics such as population, economics, and housing.

POPULATION

Part of the comprehensive planning process is to analyze population characteristics and trends to gain insight into the Village's future, and to see how these characteristics compare with those of neighboring communities and the County.

Table 1. Population, 1990–2020

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Vicksburg	2,224	2,216	2,320	2,906	3,706
Brady Township*	3,111	3,834	4,263	4,248	4,445
Schoolcraft Township*	3,593	6,728	7,260	8,214	9,183
Kalamazoo County	212,378	223,411	238,603	250,331	261,670
State of Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	10,077,331

Source: U.S. Census: 1980, 1990, 2010, and 2020

*Include a portion of the Village of Vicksburg's population.

The Village of Vicksburg has experienced a striking 28 percent population increase since 2010. In contrast Brady Township, Schoolcraft Township, and Kalamazoo County experienced a 5 percent, 12 percent, and 5 percent increases respectively, as shown in Table 1. This rate of growth is consistent with the growth trend seen from 2000 to 2010. Given that Vicksburg has grown faster than surrounding communities the Village it can be expected that growth will continue in the coming years.

Table 2. Median Age, 2020

	Vicksburg	Brady Township	Schoolcraft Township	Kalamazoo County	State of Michigan
Age	35.4 years	46.6 years	40.0 years	34.5 years	39.8 years

Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

AGE STRUCTURE

Table 2 identifies the median age of the Village and surrounding comparison communities. Vicksburg has a similar median age to Kalamazoo County but it is significantly lower than the surrounding Townships. This is a positive sign given the growing need to attract young professionals and the creative class. The median age indicates that young professionals and family forming populations are concentrating in the Village, in contrast to the more rural, outlying areas. A younger population also indicates a need for outdoor, active recreation opportunities, such as non-motorized pathways.

Table 3. Age Structure, 2020

	Vicksburg	Kalamazoo County
Pre-School (Under 5)	6.4%	6.0%
School Aged (5–19)	21.1%	19.1%
Family Forming (20–44)	40.8%	37.3%
Mature Families (45–64)	20.7%	22.7%
Retirement (65+)	11%	15.0%

Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Vicksburg's age structure is also similar to that of Kalamazoo County. However, it does have a slightly greater number of pre-school and school aged individuals and a lower number of those within the retirement age category. This age structure breakdown is consistent with Vicksburg's younger median age.

Age structure data plays an important role when considering the types of recreation services and facilities Vicksburg should focus on offering its residents. Due to the larger percentage of age structure classifications with children, recreational amenities which focus on children's and family oriented activities are important to maintain and plan for in the community. While much of the recreation needs of these age classifications are provided through the Vicksburg Community School District, it is important to have a variety of activities that are oriented towards the Village's youth, especially during the summer months when schools are not in session.

Additionally, although Vicksburg has a smaller percentage of those in the retirement age classification than the County, planning for the Village's senior population is essential so that facilities and programs are available to meet their needs. This includes pedestrian linkages to key destinations in the Village, passive recreation opportunities, park amenities such as benches, pavilions, lighting, and public restrooms, and ADA accessibility in all designs.

DISABILITIES

In 2020, 12 percent of Vicksburg's civilian population reported having a disability. Approximately 6 percent of youth under 18 reported having a disability while 13.9 percent of the population between 18 and 64 reported having a disability. However, approximately 32 percent of residents over 65 years of age reported a disability. These numbers call attention to the need to design recreational facilities with universal access. Existing facilities should be retrofitted and upgraded when possible and new facilities designed to permit universal access for all.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Table 4 details the level of education attainment in Vicksburg, Kalamazoo County, and the State. Overall, the Village has experienced an increase in educational attainment across all categories. However, both the County and State have higher percentages of individuals who have obtained a bachelor's or advanced degree. It is important to continue to attract and market the community to young professionals and to provide an environment that retains the current creative and highly educated segment of the population.

Table 4. Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years or Older, 2000 - 2020

	Vicksburg		Kalamazoo County		State of Michigan	
	2000	2020	2000	2020	2000	2020
High School Diploma or Higher	85.2%	93.5%	88.6%	94.0%	83.4%	91.2%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	17.9%	19%	31.1%	39.7%	21.8%	29.9%
Graduate or Professional Degree	4.0%	7.8%	12.1%	15.7%	8.1%	11.7%

Source: U.S. Census: 2000 and 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Households include all related and unrelated individuals living in one dwelling unit. Changes in the number of households in a community are an indication of changing demand for housing units, retail and office space, and community services. Tracking the changes in the number of households over time ensures sufficient land is set-aside in appropriate locations to accommodate future growth. Families are defined as a group of two or more people who reside together and are related by birth, marriage, or adoption.

As shown below, the number of households in Vicksburg has increased since 2010. In 2020, this trend continued to 1,337 total households (2020 ACS). Average household size is another indicator of community composition. Nationally, household sizes are shrinking as young singles wait longer to get married and start a family, and life expectancy has increased the senior population.

Table 5. Select Household Characteristics, 2010 and 2020

	Vicksburg (2010)	Vicksburg (2020)	Brady Township	Schoolcraft Township	Kalamazoo County	State of Michigan
Number of Households	1,120	1,337	1,644	3,423	104,278	3,980,408
Average Household Size	2.59	2.56	2.70	2.58	2.45	2.45
Number of Families	773 (69.0 %)	941 (70.3 %)	1,187 (72.2 %)	2,410 (70.4 %)	62,664 (60.0 %)	2,526,437 (63.4 %)

Source: U.S. Census: 2010 and 2020 ACS 5-year estimates.



Additionally, the number of families in the Village has grown at a slightly faster rate (21.7%) than the rate of increase in number of households (19.3%). Again, this signals that the Village should focus on providing services that are directed towards families with children and younger populations.

HOUSING

Understanding housing trends is important since the need for housing, and the development of these structures, has a significant impact on the built landscape. An essential resource, the type and number of dwelling units within Vicksburg reveals much about land use trends and lifestyle preferences of local residents. The ability to project the need for dwelling units, both the amount and type, will assist in determining future land use needs for housing. According to U.S. Census data, there were 1,494 housing units in Vicksburg in 2020. Each housing unit represents one single-family dwelling unit—a house, apartment, etc.

NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS & TENURE

From 2010–2020, Vicksburg experienced a significant increase in the total number of housing units, an increase of 21.2 percent. Within the past several years, new housing units have continually been added to Vicksburg, particularly in the form of contemporary single-family housing in the northwest and southwest sections of the Village. In comparison, Brady Township, Kalamazoo County, and the State of Michigan have experienced very modest increases in the number of housing units while Schoolcraft Township experienced a similar rate of increase to the Village.

Additionally, there are three different types of housing tenure: owner-occupancy, renter-occupancy, and vacancy. Table 6 shows that the majority of the dwellings in Vicksburg were owner-occupied in 2020 and that this number has significantly increased since 1990. The Village has similar proportions of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units to the State of Michigan but more renter-occupied units in comparison to its neighboring communities. Vacancy rates are lower than surrounding townships, the County and the State.

Table 6. Select Housing Unit Characteristics, 1990–2020

	Vicksburg			Brady Township		Schoolcraft Township		Kalamazoo County		State of Michigan	
	1990	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
Total Housing Units	872	1,233	1,494	1,869	1,875	3,246	3,779	110,007	114,021	4,532,233	4,570,173
Owner-Occupied Units	64%	73.5%	78.8%	91.3%	87.6%	78.6%	83.6%	63.9%	67.9%	72.1%	73.4%
Renter-Occupied Units	36%	26.5%	21.1%	8.7%	12.3%	21.4%	16.3%	36.1%	32.0%	27.9%	26.5%
Vacant Units	4.5%	9.2%	4.5%	14.6%	9.1%	7.1%	4.9%	8.5%	6.2%	14.6%	11.5%

Source: U.S. Census: 1990, 2010 and 2020

AGE OF HOUSING STOCK

Table 7 details the age of Vicksburg's existing housing units. Mindful of its historic beginning, a significant number of today's housing units were constructed prior to 1940. Housing construction continued throughout the 1940s to the 2000s at a relatively steady pace. In 2000, the Village experienced a major increase in the number of housing units.

Approximately 48 percent of the housing stock in Vicksburg was constructed prior to 1980, with almost 69 percent of that built prior to 1960. The amount of older housing stock is of particular importance for the Village (new housing is considered less than 30 years old). As housing ages, it requires greater investment of time and money to maintain or improve its condition. Typically, residences that are 30 years old will require substantial maintenance to prevent blight and decline for the broader neighborhood. Older homes also tend to lack features that support handicap accessibility and may not be suitable without significant retrofitting to meet the needs of the senior population. The preservation of historic

homes and the retrofitting of them to provide modern amenities / ADA accessibility is an area the Village will need to respond to in the near future.

Table 7. Age of the Housing Stock, Vicksburg

	Number of Housing Units	Percent of Housing Units
2104 or later	68	5.1%
2010 - 2013	95	7.1%
2000 - 2009	263	19.7%
1980 - 1999	272	20.3%
1960 - 1979	194	14.5%
1940 - 1959	119	8.9%
1939 or Earlier	326	24.4%

Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

HOUSING TYPE

Table 8 represents the types of housing present and their respective percentages in the Village and in the comparison communities. Overall, Vicksburg contains a variety of housing types, especially in multiple family options. Although there is a vast architectural and stylistic variety among Vicksburg's single-family dwelling units, the creation of alternative housing typologies for select demographic populations (especially young professionals and empty nester's seeking contemporary lofts, condominiums, and live / work units) should be a priority in the coming years.

Table 8. Housing Units by Type, 2020

Unit Type	Vicksburg	Brady Township	Schoolcraft Township	Kalamazoo County	State of Michigan
Single Family, Detached	81.6%	95.9%	81.5%	63.9%	72.3%
Single Family, Attached	0.8%	1.2%	1.4%	4.4%	4.6%
Multiple Family, 2-19 Units	15.6%	1.4%	12.6%	18.9%	12.7%
Multiple Family, 20+ Units	2.0%	0.7%	1.3%	9.5%	5.1%
Mobile Home	0.0%	0.8%	3.2%	3.3%	5.3%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

ECONOMY

The fiscal health of the local economy is central to the health of any community, and economic considerations play an important role in planning for future land uses. The type of development that occurs in Vicksburg impacts the Village's revenue streams, the availability of local jobs, and access to goods and services.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The Village's median household income was \$56,450 in 2020 which was a slight decline over the 2012 figure of \$57,976. Incomes in the Village have lagged behind and whereas in 2012 the Village had a higher income than that of the County and State it now has the lowest median income out of the comparison communities.

Table 9. Median Household Income / value of housing units, 2020

	Vicksburg	Brady Township	Schoolcraft Township	Kalamazoo County	State of Michigan
Median Household Income	\$56,450	\$82,013	\$62,306	\$58,836	\$ 59,234
Value of Housing Units					
Owner-occupied unit	\$150,300	\$201,700	\$182,700	\$168,500	\$162,600
Renter-occupied unit	\$ 672	\$908	\$711	\$846	\$892

Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE

Vicksburg has a slightly lower owner-occupied median household value and median gross rent than the comparison communities (except for renter-occupied units in Schoolcraft Township). This indicates that Vicksburg is providing an affordable housing market with options that are financially attractive to young professionals and starter families.

OCCUPATION

Table 10 details which occupations members of the Vicksburg community are employed in, regardless of where they work. Thus, commuters from Vicksburg are included in this analysis, but commuters from other locations coming into the Village are not.

In 2010, the highest occupational sector was education and healthcare. In 2020, the top three occupational sectors were:

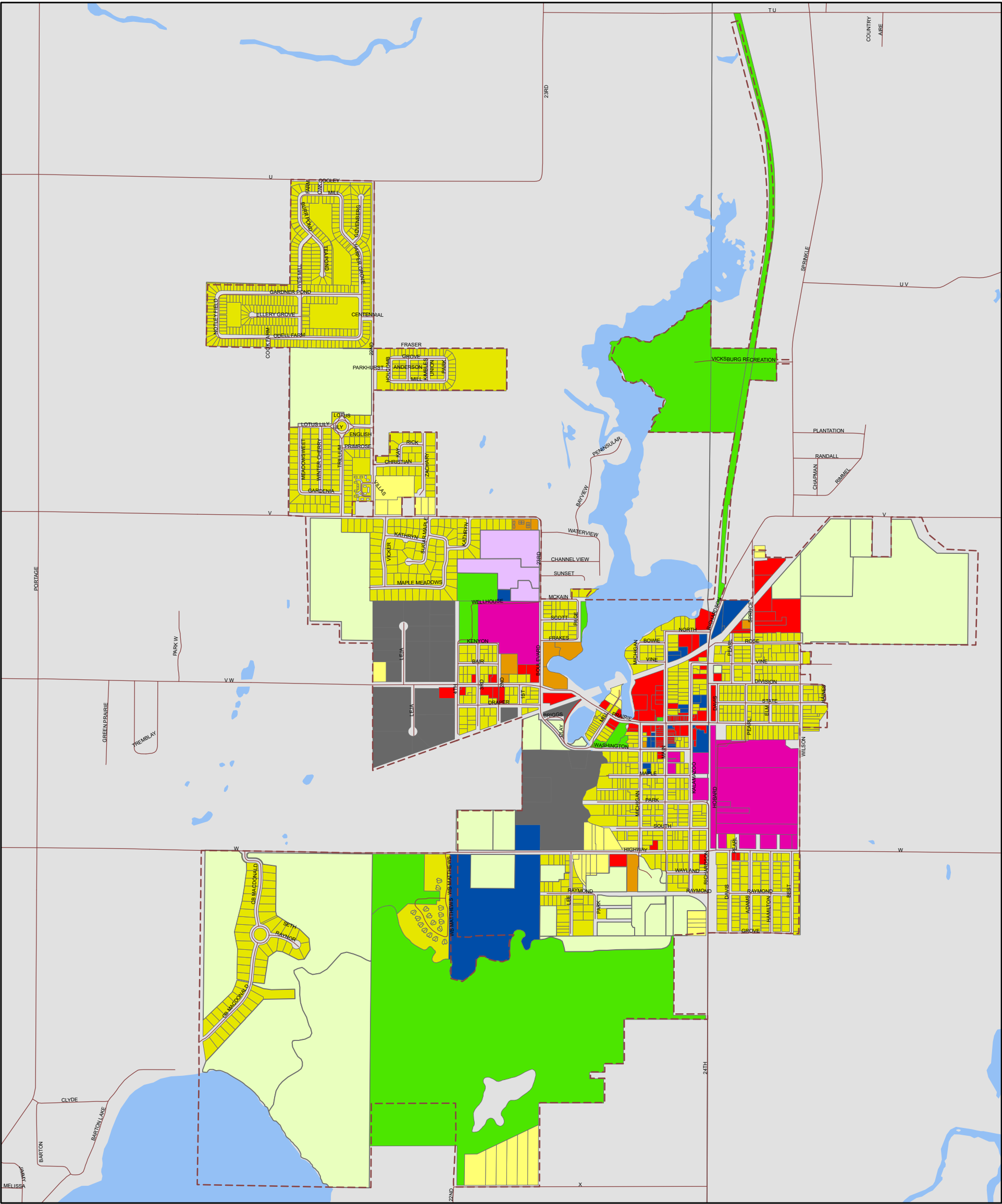
- [1] manufacturing;
- [2] education and healthcare; and
- [3] construction.

This highlights that while Vicksburg is experiencing national trends, like the increase of the “eds and meds” industry, the industries that have historically supported the community, such as manufacturing and construction continue to be mainstays.

Table 10. Employment Sectors for the Employed Population, Vicksburg

Occupation	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry, and Mining	0%
Construction	11.8%
Manufacturing	24.4%
Wholesale Trade	2.2%
Retail Trade	11.1%
Transportation and Utilities	2.9%
Information	0%
Finance and Real Estate	3.0%
Professional and Administrative	8.9%
Education and Healthcare	20.9%
Art, Recreation, and Accommodations	7.6%
Other Services	3.5%
Public Administration	3.3%

Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Existing Land Use

Village of Vicksburg, Michigan

November 10, 2022

LEGEND

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Vacant/Undeveloped | Multiple Family |
| Commercial | Residential |
| Health | Neighborhood Residential |
| General Industrial | Parks & Recreation |
| Education | Water Features |
| Municipal/Civic | Roadways |
| | Village Limits |



0 500 1,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
Village of Vicksburg, 2022. McKenna 2022.



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EXISTING LAND USE

Historically, the surrounding land uses were predominately agricultural but the adjacent Townships of Brady and Schoolcraft have become increasingly developed. Likewise, the Village has seen several new developments in the last decade, in particular contemporary residential neighborhoods, expansion of its industrial center and an expansion of businesses located within the downtown area.

Today, Vicksburg contains a diverse mix of land uses with parks and open spaces occupying a critical component of the land use framework. A description of each land use category is provided below.

RESIDENTIAL

This land use category consists of single family residential structures that are typically associated with larger lots and not part of an interconnected non-motorized system, such as a sidewalk.

NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL

The neighborhood residential category encompasses dwellings that are located on smaller lots or have been constructed as part of a subdivision. Additionally, neighborhood residential is associated with an interconnection of non-motorized pathways (sidewalks) and are generally composed of single family structures. While all single family areas in the Village have the same land use, the character of these areas is defined largely by the age of housing and the size of the lots. In general, there are three classifications of single family structures: historic, traditional, and modern.

- Historic homes contain a variety of architectural styles which provide unique character to neighborhoods. These homes were constructed within the Village prior to 1939.
- Traditional homes are the majority of residences within the Village and range from one to two and a half stories in height and typically have detached or recessed garages.
- Modern homes were constructed after 2000 and are generally characterized by a combination of one and two story structures with attached, front entry garages.



Historic Home



Traditional Home



Modern Home



MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Included in this land use category are those residential buildings that typically have more than four units. In Vicksburg, these are typically apartment buildings, such as: Saw Mill Creek located on W Avenue E; Sunset Cove Apartments located on W. Prairie Street; Prairie Meadows Apartments located on W Prairie Street; Maple Lake Townhomes located on E. V Avenue.

COMMERCIAL

These uses include those parcels used for wholesale, retail, office, entertainment, or services. In Vicksburg, most of the commercial enterprises predominately service the local and surrounding residents of the Village. Most of the commercial footprint within the Village is designed around small scale spaces: a majority of commercial use encompasses less than 5,000 square-feet. The main commercial corridors with the Village are located along West Prairie Street, North & South Main Street, and portions of W Avenue East.

HEALTH

Included in this land use category is Bronson Medical Office Building, which offers a diagnostic lab, family medicine and nutrition.

INDUSTRIAL

This land use designation includes Vicksburg's manufacturing and distribution uses. The main industrial area of the Village is located along the western portion of the Village, and centered along N. Leja Drive and S. Leja Drive. The Village also has additional industrial land located in the northeastern portion of its limits, along the eastern edge of Spruce Street and south of V Avenue.

EDUCATION

This land use category encompasses those parcels of land that are predominately utilized for educational enrichment of residents. Educational facilities include the Vicksburg Community School District campus, and Heart & Hands Learning Center.

MUNICIPAL/CIVIC

The Municipal/Civic uses are comprised of municipal buildings, such as Village Hall, Vicksburg District Library and other municipal owned parcels/lots. These uses are generally intended to provide a public service. In addition, civic uses such as the United States Postal Service are also included within this category.

UNDEVELOPED / OPEN SPACE

This category includes all undeveloped land or vacant land within the Village that is available for preservation or future development into a recreational area, commercial, or residential use.

PUBLIC PARKS & RECREATION

Eight public parks and recreational facilities are located within the Village, including a regional park with non-motorized trails, golf course, and waterfront parkland.

Overall, the Village has a tremendous amount of regional parkland, especially given its 2020 population size of 3,706. A wealth of recreational amenities are also available to Village residents and visitors and often exceeds the amount suggested by MDNR standards. The *2015-2019 Parks and Recreation Plan* aims to maintain existing park and recreation facilities, expand programming opportunities, enhance amenities, and acquire additional lands for the future development of parkland areas.

Oswalt Park

Located in the heart of the downtown core, Oswalt Park was completely redesigned in 2021 & 2022. Oswalt Park now features picnic tables, benches, landscape plantings, increased sidewalk connections and a community fireplace.

Veterans Park

Located at the south end of Sunset Lake, Veterans Park is a triangular-shaped parcel that is currently undeveloped. The location of Veterans Park makes it a popular site for fishing but there is limited access.

Clark Park

This area, formerly known as Tourist Park, is primarily undeveloped but contains a boardwalk with an observation deck, playground equipment, several picnic tables, a portable toilet, and a paved driveway and parking lot. Additionally, a paved pathway extends from the parking lot to the boardwalk, providing uninterrupted access to Prairie Street. The central location of Clark Park and its proximity to Sunset Lake and the downtown core make it an ideal community gathering space and area for active recreation, including open space activities.

Sunset Lake Park

Sunset Lake Park is located on the west side of Sunset Lake at the end of Frakes, Scott, and McKain Streets. It contains 120 feet of beach frontage with boardwalks along the waterfront, a picnic shelter with picnic tables, small playground equipment, and a concrete boat launch. This launch serves small fishing craft and non-motorized recreational craft such as canoes, kayaks, rowboats, and paddleboats.

Vicksburg Community Pavilion Area

The Community Pavilion is owned by the Village and is primarily used by the Farmers Market Association and home to several summer events, including the Lions Club Summer Festival. The shelter was constructed in 2013, is outfitted with electrical power and lighted, and contains picnic tables. A portable toilet and parking lot are also located on the site. The pavilion is rentable for events by the public for a minimal user fee.

The Heritage Garden (a community garden) is also located on the property and maintained by the South County Community Garden Network. A second community garden, the Pantry Garden, is also operated by the Network and located behind the Leja House at the western edge of the Village where individuals can grow fresh produce.

Vicksburg Recreation Area

The Vicksburg Recreation Area is the Village's largest park and is located north of Village between Sprinkle Road and Sunset Lake. The Recreation Area contains open spaces, wooded areas, four small ponds, a large marshy area which surrounds the uplands, and an extensive network of improved trails. An 1.8 mile asphalt trail runs south from the Recreation Area into Vicksburg along an abandoned railroad right-of-way and north 1.4 miles to TU Avenue. An asphalt trail extends west from the parking area to Sunset Lake to a boardwalk overlook.

The Vicksburg Recreation Area is also home to an 18-hole disc golf course, approximately 1,000 feet in length.

The course is utilized by the Kalamazoo / Battle Creek Basket K'Acers disc golf group for league games.

Vicksburg Historic Village

The Vicksburg Historic Village is located between North Richardson Street and the Grand Trunk Railroad. The Village of Vicksburg owns the site and maintains the grounds year-round.

The Historic Village provides residents and visitors with an idea of what the Village might have looked like in the early 20th Century. Construction and additions to the Historic Village are ongoing and the interiors of the structures are maintained by the Vicksburg Historical Society. Current structures include the depot museum, caboose and boxcar, schoolhouse, print shop, gazebo, township hall, garage, farmhouse and barn, and cemetery. A general store / sweet shop is currently under construction. Future planned additions to the Historic Village include a church, additional shops, doctor's office, and town square.

Angels Crossing Golf Club

Angels Crossing Golf Club is an 18-hole public golf course and one of the top highly ranked public access golf courses in Michigan. The scenic course, surrounded by woodlands, lowlands, and rolling prairies, was designed by architect W. Bruce Matthews III, A.S.G.C.A. to capture the area's natural beauty. During winter months, the course is closed but open to the public for winter, non-motorized outdoor activities such as cross-country skiing and walking / snowshoe trails.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

The environmental description of an area is important when planning for a community's recreation facilities. The location, weather, topography, and types of environmental features all influence the types of facilities that can be built or programs that can be implemented. The following sections describe the benefits and challenges associated with Vicksburg's location and existing environmental features.

TOPOGRAPHY

The topography in Vicksburg has relatively little change in the overall elevation: the entire area of the Village has a terrain slope of less than five percent. The steepest slope areas are located predominately along the lakeshore of Sunset Lake and along Portage Creek. Land with slopes of less than five percent are generally considered ideal for recreational development requiring minimal, if any, grading. Local topography should not present an impediment to recreational development.

SOILS

The two primary soil series found in the Village are the Kalamazoo-Schoolcraft and the Kalamazoo-Oshtemo series.

The Kalamazoo-Schoolcraft series is the most common soil type and consists of nearly level to rolling, well drained soils that have a loamy subsoil or a loamy and sandy subsoil. The general slopes found in this series range from 0 to 12 percent.

The Kalamazoo-Oshtemo series is the other major soil type and also consists of nearly level to rolling, well drained soils that have a loamy subsoil or a loamy and sandy subsoil. The general slopes found in this series range from 0 to 12 percent. The soil types found in the Village should not have an impact on future planning considerations.

VEGETATION

The soils in the area are ideal for a variety of plant life. Kalamazoo soils are rated as fair for grain and seed crops; good for grasses and legumes, wild herbaceous plants, hardwood trees, and coniferous plants; and very poor for wetland plants.

WOODLANDS

Given the numerous benefits that woodlands offer the Village, the few areas with significant stands of trees are to be protected from the impacts of development. Woodlands positively contribute to the quality of life for residents, animal habitats, clean air, and the character of the community.

WATER RESOURCES

Open water (lakes and ponds), riparian corridors (rivers, streams, and drains), and a variety of wetland types comprise the Village's drainage network. One of the primary functions of this network is the drainage and collection of runoff of stormwater. Wetlands play a particularly important role in the management of stormwater. When stormwater runoff volume exceeds the capacity of the natural drainage system, the excess collects in the floodplain.

In Vicksburg, the majority of open water, wetland, and floodplain areas are located along Portage Creek and Barton Lake in the southernmost portion of the Village.

The main water feature within Vicksburg is Sunset Lake which remains an important aesthetic and recreational feature of the Village. Sunset Lake, approximately 140 acres, is located within both the Village and Schoolcraft Township. The portion of the lake located in Vicksburg accounts for approximately 40 acres of the lake's surface and is drained by the Portage Creek that runs through Clark Park.

CLIMATE

Vicksburg's climate is ideally suited for a variety of recreational activities due to the full range of seasons experienced in Michigan. For this reason, additional winter-based activities are explored in the action plan.

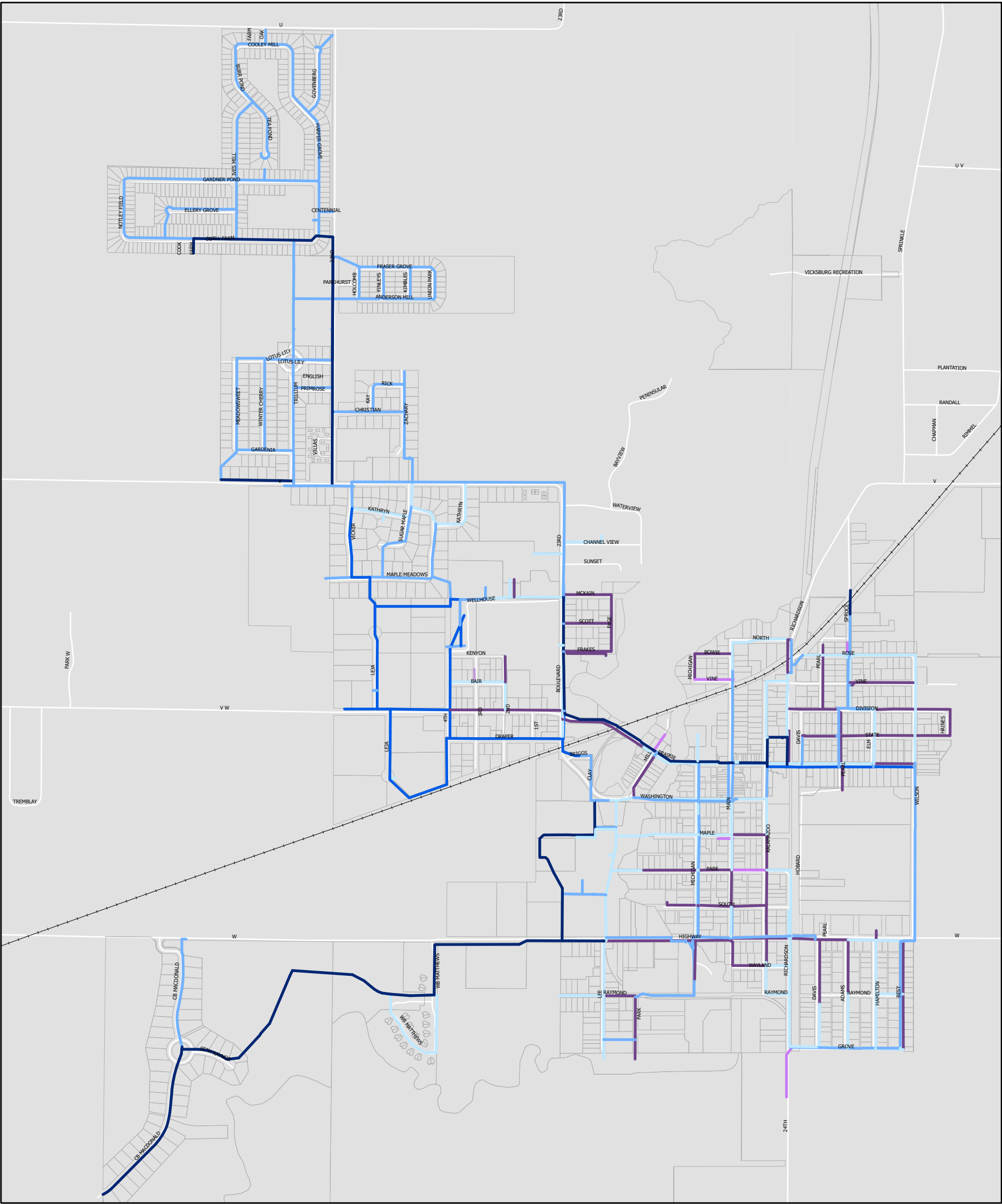
WILDLIFE

Sunset Lake is available for fishing; most fish are bluegill but bass are also present. No wildlife resources are available in the Village but several State game areas are located nearby, including the Gourdneck State Game area (seven miles northwest of Vicksburg) and the Fulton State Game area (12 miles east of the Village).

WATER AND SEWER FACILITIES

The Village of Vicksburg owns and operates its own water distribution and sewer collection system. These systems are managed by the Village's Department of Public Works (DPW).

The water distribution system's primary source is groundwater from several wells located throughout the community. The system has been designed and is capable of servicing the Village's existing residential, commercial, and industrial land areas. The facility also has the capability of being expanded to service additional land area currently outside the Village limits should such area be transferred to the Village. While the DPW manages the wastewater collection system, it is treated at the City of Kalamazoo treatment facility. The facility has the capacity to serve the existing residents of the Village and similar to the water distribution system, can be expanded to serve additional land area outside of the Village's current limits.



Vicksburg Water Service Map

Village of Vicksburg, Michigan

January 02, 2023

LEGEND

Watermain Diameter (Inches)

1

2

4

6

8

10

12

Property Boundary

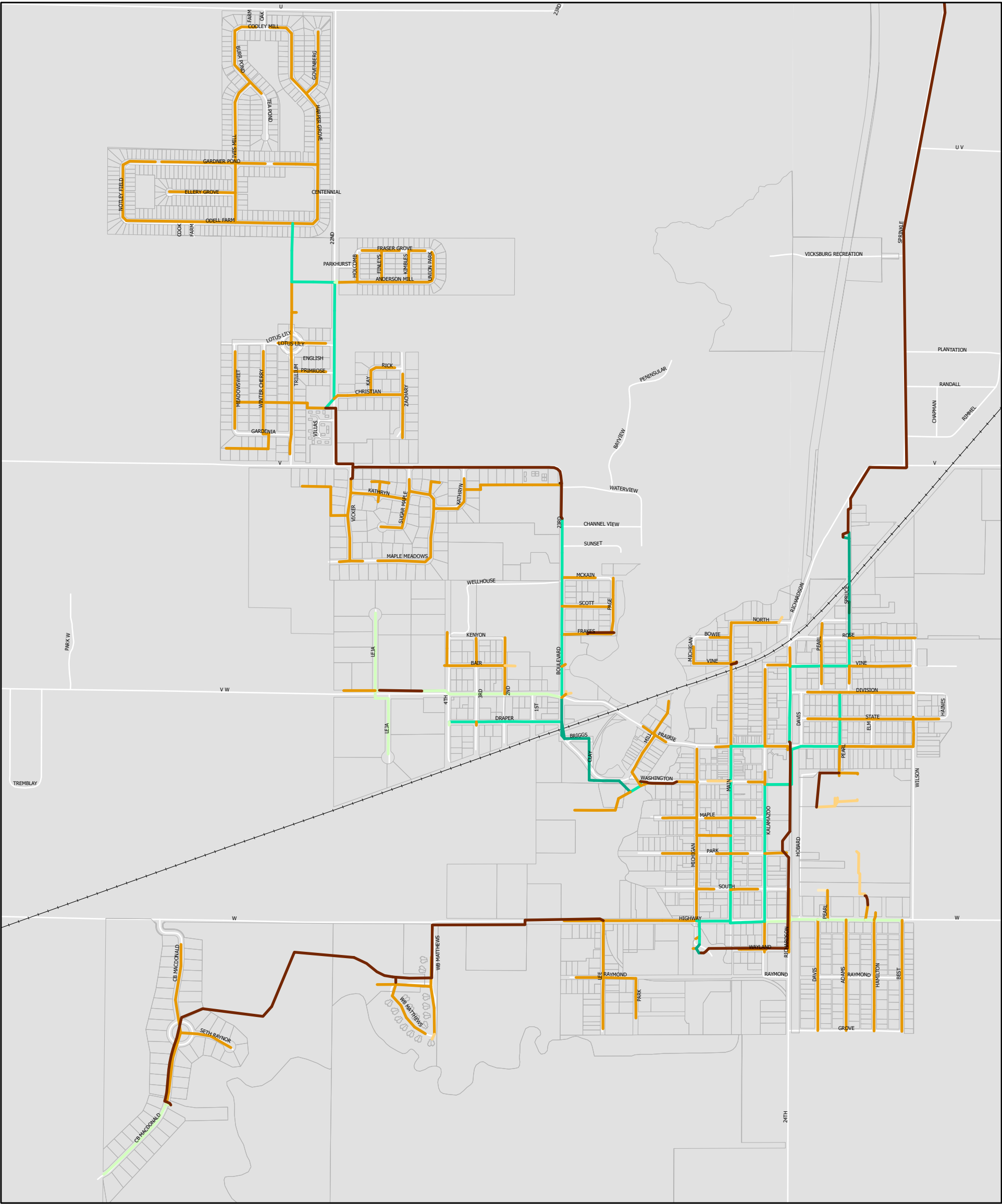
Railroads

05001,000

Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
Data Source: Prien & Newhof. McKenna 2023.

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Vicksburg Sewer Service Map

Village of Vicksburg, Michigan

January 02, 2023

LEGEND

Layer2

Sanitary Sewer Diameter (Inches)

4

6

8

10

12

15

16

Forcemain

Property Boundary

Railroads

All_Roads_(v17a)

Minor_Civil_Divisions_(Cities_%26_Townships)_(v17a)



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
Data Source: Prien & Newhof. McKenna 2023.



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03

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Master Plan is to serve as a guide for Village officials, residents, and landowners in making future land use decisions. As such, an overall vision for the community must first be identified. During the 2022–2023 planning process, a series of public input initiatives were conducted to ensure that the Master Plan reflects the vision of Village residents, representatives, and property owners. This was considered in conjunction with the analysis of the existing conditions and trends present in the community.

VISION STATEMENT

Led by the Village Council, in an effort to formulate a vision statement and to discuss long term strategies for the Village's future growth and development, strategic planning sessions were held in early 2023.

The development of a vision statement is a critical component to the master plan process as it serves as the roadmap for the creation and implementation of the Plan. The vision statement considers how the Village can best serve residents and reflects the community's future policy and goals.

The vision statement for the Village of Vicksburg represents the desires and goals of the community members who participated in the planning process.

*The Village of Vicksburg.
Fostering vibrant growth,
cultivating premier
experiences, and supporting
diverse neighborhoods.*



GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

This chapter of the Master Plan also states the goals, objectives, and strategies for the future development of the Village. These goals and objectives are based on the analysis in the previous sections of the Master Plan, feedback from the multiple public engagement sessions, and the Village of Vicksburg 2023 Strategic Plan.

Goals are general in nature and, as related to community planning, are statements of ideals toward which the Village wishes to strive towards. They represent the ultimate purpose of the Plan and are stated in a way that is both broad and immeasurable. Goals also express a consensus of community direction to public and private agencies, groups, and individuals and are long-range considerations that guide the development of specific objectives and strategies.

Objectives are a means to achieve overall goals of the Master Plan and identify the methods in which goals may be realized. Strategies are the more specific tasks outlined for how the stated objectives will be accomplished and often take the form of more measurable standards.

Together, the following goals, objectives, and strategies provide the foundation of the Master Plan and a framework for future implementation projects. The goals, objectives, and strategies are arranged in distinct themes, as presented on the following pages. It is important to note that the following objectives and strategies are listed without prioritization; Chapter 7: Implementation Program details the prioritization and time frame for potential projects.

GOAL 1 DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING

Vicksburg will continue to be comprised of a dynamic and vibrant mix of housing, businesses, and activities designed to be attractive to a variety of demographic groups.

Objectives	Strategies
Continue to keep current, and attract new residents and businesses, to the community while preserving the Village's small town character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain maximum funding for all projects (water, infrastructure, DPW equipment, etc.). • Continue to grow the economic base by encouraging new housing construction, housing rehabilitation, business expansion and industrial investment.
Enhance positive perceptions of Vicksburg (i.e. public relations, marketing, spokesperson).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve public communications between the Village and residents (i.e. newsletter, social media, etc.).
Review and update the Zoning Ordinance and other development controls to be compatible with the recommendations of this Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target areas of nonconformity in the Village (i.e. multifamily use of single family houses in low density residential districts) as areas to be brought into conformance with the Ordinance. • Create regulations and improve code enforcement to eliminate blighting influences. • Expand the zoning regulations to permit alternative style of housing within the Village.
Review and update the Master Plan at least every five years to address changing conditions, redevelopment opportunities, and the needs of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update the Master Plan every five (5) years to enhance the Vision of the Village of Vicksburg.

GOAL 2 COMMERCIAL

Commercial development in Vicksburg will respect the historic character of the Village, with an emphasis on the reuse and redevelopment of commercial buildings within the downtown.

Objectives	Strategies
Ensure that new and rehabilitated commercial structures represent building mass / design which is compatible with existing traditional and historic structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt design guidelines to ensure that new development and redevelopment is consistent with the Village's historic character. • Provide incentives and other creative planning and economic tools for commercial owners and tenants to upgrade existing commercial sites. • Ensure existing and future land uses at Village entrances have attractive site / building designs that project a positive image. • Incorporate design guidelines into the Site Plan Review process to ensure compatibility with the Village's historic character.
Promote existing businesses and create programs to attract additional businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the creation of a "business development 101 guidebook" to aid new entrepreneurs in potential grant opportunities, development regulations and other applicable Village policies. • Maintain communication with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and Southwest Michigan First to encourage new enterprises to locate within the Village. • Coordinate efforts of the DDA, local business owners, and other related organizations to market the Village businesses, and recruit others.
Develop a variety of retail, cultural, and entertainment uses with appropriate pedestrian and vehicular access while preserving the character of the downtown.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentrate commercial development opportunities in the downtown core and provide for low-intensity commercial opportunities in existing commercial nodes outside the downtown core. • Utilize best management practices requiring use of shared entrances and parking to reduce curb cuts and traffic conflicts.

GOAL 3 INDUSTRIAL

Improve the vitality of existing industrial areas while acknowledging the needs of the changing economy.

Objectives	Strategies
Locate potential industrial uses appropriately and maintain and upgrade existing sites with particular attention to landscaping, buffering, and screening from residential uses and right-of-ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate industrial uses in areas that have the infrastructure (transportation and utilities) required to support such uses. • Shall not intrude on other uses, physically, visually or through other negative external effects. • Update the Village Zoning Ordinance as it relates to conflicting land use screening, buffering requirements, and other site enhancements to reduce the potential negative impacts on adjacent residential dwellings. • Eliminate, or hold to a minimum, potential nuisances and damaging environmental impacts that may be associated with industrial uses.
Promote the development of Vicksburg's existing and future industrial sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain communication and good relationships with existing industrial uses to ensure their continued success and location in the Village. • Coordinate with Southwest Michigan First, Michigan Economic Development Council, and other related agencies (Michigan Film Council for instance) on various industrial opportunities. • Explore the potential of establishing a business improvement district for the industrial area.
Embrace the changing industrial economy and prepare the Village for alternative industries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for the eventual redevelopment or re-use of existing and/or vacant industrial areas by creating regulations that will permit a diverse industrial base, including knowledge based, research, and technology oriented uses. • Promote creative – workshop and artist oriented uses. • Update the Village Zoning Ordinance to permit small scale workshop type uses in commercial districts.

GOAL 4 HOUSING

Maintain the existing residential character within the community while providing diverse housing choices and ensuring that residential redevelopment and new infill development complements and enhances the character of existing neighborhoods.

Objectives	Strategies
Encourage residential developments which are needed by persons of all ages, incomes, and household sizes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage attractive and quality, single-family residential development to occur through infill or redevelopment that is integrated with the surrounding neighborhood. • Explore opportunities to develop senior housing. • Update the Village Zoning Ordinance to allow an increase in housing density within the Residential Districts.
Maintain the historic character, natural features, and sense of community in Vicksburg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve important natural features such as watercourses, wetlands, and wooded areas. • Respect historic resources and historic development patterns, preserving and enhancing them where feasible. • Encourage reinvestment in and restoration of older homes. • Encourage the preservation of the established character of developed single-family residential subdivisions.
Maintain a safe and healthy housing stock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address home maintenance and blight issues within existing neighborhoods through code enforcement, education, and applying to state and federal programs providing funding to address these issues. • Develop comprehensive rental housing standards.
Promote new development or redevelopment that enhances the quality of life for the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenities such as parks, recreation areas / facilities, and open space should be encouraged as necessary to support new residential development. • Update the Village Zoning Ordinance to encourage the use of green technology in residential development.

GOAL 5 RECREATION, CULTURE, & LEISURE

Provide, maintain, expand, and improve the arts, culture, and recreation system to incorporate a broader array of opportunities that will best serve the needs of Vicksburg's residents of all ages.

Objectives	Strategies
Maintain existing community parks and recreation facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair and replace worn out and damaged equipment and amenities as necessary. • Improve barrier-free access to parks and recreation amenities. • Create an "Adopt-A-Park" program for all Village parks. • Update the Parks and Recreation Plan every five years and continue to implement the Plan. • Seek grant funding and other financial assistance to help acquire and develop Village recreational facilities. • Continue to review and expand the maintenance program to keep the parks and facilities aesthetically appealing.
Expand and develop new parks and recreation facilities / programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and expand recreational facilities consistent with the social and demographic needs of the Village. • Develop a comprehensive park identification program to provide consistent, uniform park signage with additional watershed, educational, and wayfinding signage.
Develop facilities for non-motorized transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide bike lane and non-motorized trail connections through the downtown, the Village's recreational facilities, other Village focal points, and tie into the Portage trail system.
Enhance Vicksburg's recreational, cultural, and leisure opportunities by developing additional recreational amenities / cultural exhibits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a public art plan for downtown Vicksburg as well as other public places. • Encourage the active participation of adjoining neighborhoods in the development, operation, and support of new parks, programs, and pathways/sidewalks. • Seek opportunities to share facilities with other public and quasi-public agencies such as the school district, non-profit organizations, and institutions.

GOAL 6 NATURAL FEATURES

Preserve, maintain, and protect significant and sensitive natural features located in the Village, and integrate natural feature preservation into land use decisions.

Objectives	Strategies
Carefully consider methods to preserve natural features for the enjoyment of the current and future residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protect the Village's water bodies, including lakes, rivers, streams and creeks, from degradation and destruction.• Enhance and expand the views to water bodies, woodlands, and wetlands from rights-of-way and non-motorized pathways.
Incorporate and protect natural features into future developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop adequate resources and collaborative partnerships for expert design assistance so that natural features are sensitively incorporated into park design.• Preserve wetlands, watercourses, and woodlands as development occurs by creating a Natural Features Protection Ordinance.• Encourage sustainable and energy-efficient “green” development in accordance with the latest version of the applicable <i>Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design</i> (LEED) standards published by the U.S. Green Building Council.• Enforce a comprehensive stormwater management program to protect the natural environment from effects commonly associated with urbanization, including flash flows (higher peak flows and lower base flows), stream bank erosion, increased stream temperature and pollutant load, reduced bank vegetation, and degraded aquatic wildlife habitat.• Require tree replacement when existing resources are impacted by development.• Revise the Village Zoning Ordinance to include further provisions for the protection of existing natural features.

GOAL 7 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Encourage the preservation and enhancement of historic resources in the Village.

Objectives	Strategies
Investigate a historic designation for Vicksburg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Historical Society to maintain an accurate listing of historic sites and a corresponding map to document important structures, determine the supply of historic resources, and create deeper public awareness of their importance. • Explore the creation of a Historic District Preservation Ordinance for the Village. • Review impacts on identified historic properties when development potential is proposed on or adjacent to the site.
Educate the community on historic preservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Historical Society to increase the awareness and understanding of historic preservation activities.
Protect existing historic structures and promote development which enhances such historic features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop creative planning / economic tools to encourage the reuse of historic resources while preserving the historically significant aspects of the resource. • Encourage investment in historic resources. • Develop design guidelines that reflect the unique character / scale of Vicksburg. • Encourage use of historic styles and features in new building construction.

GOAL 8 COMMUNITY FACILITIES & PUBLIC SAFETY

Provide, maintain, expand, and improve community and public safety facilities.

Objectives	Strategies
Repair, replace, and expand infrastructure in order to properly service the community with advanced, state-of-the-art infrastructure and materials, including the most advanced communications technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate police and fire facilities on an annual basis to determine if modifications or additions are needed to serve the existing population and new development.• Continue to cooperate with surrounding communities and the County to provide public services.• Evaluate service needs of expanding boundaries and the population on an on-going basis to ensure adequate service is provided.• Continue to promote updating fire alarm and /or suppression systems in downtown buildings.• Establish minimum fund balances / percent (i.e. by fund for DPW and other areas).• Create positive revenue streams (i.e. by fund for projects - well, lift station, etc.)
Work collaboratively with other organizations to achieve shared infrastructure goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct a consolidated services analysis (i.e. intergovernmental, transportation center).

GOAL 9 TRANSPORTATION

Encourage an efficient and safe multi-modal transportation network that facilitates economic growth while integrating various modes of transportation to ensure a higher quality of life for community residents.

Objectives	Strategies
Maintain a safe and effective transportation system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a five year transportation capital improvements plan (CIP). • Require transportation infrastructure decisions to support and encourage the land use recommendations of the Master Plan. • Maintain and upgrade the quality of roadways in the Village. • Create a comprehensive plan for the replacement of aging and broken sidewalks and the completion of the sidewalk system along streets where only partial sidewalks exist. • Explore the creation of a cost-sharing sidewalk replacement program to encourage property owner maintenance and replacement of existing pedestrian pathways.
Promote a pedestrian friendly, non-motorized environment throughout the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safe and efficient non-motorized pathway and sidewalk system that provides connectivity, access, and mobility to various land uses, including parks and recreation, civic institutions, commercial, and residential developments. • Adopt a Complete Streets Policy.
Develop better methods to control traffic flow through the Village.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage improvements to the circulation system and traffic controls to better facilitate the flow of automobile traffic. • Require traffic and parking studies for new developments. • Develop a parking model for the downtown core. • Develop standards for various road types – downtown with on street parking, residential streets, rural corridor, commercial corridor, etc. • Explore innovative traffic designs and flexible design standards as an alternative to adding additional lanes or more streets. • Work with County and appropriate agencies on redesign of the truck route through the Village with consideration for the extension of Richardson Street to eliminate the need for a jog in route when traveling north/south. • Discourage the expansion of truck traffic through residential neighborhoods of the Village. • Cooperate with adjacent municipalities with regard to regional transportation systems, challenges, and opportunities.

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04

CREATING A PLACE

Placemaking is the process of creating quality places in which people want to live, work, play, and learn.

(Miplace Partnership Initiative)

PLACEMAKING

Placemaking is the way in which we transform areas in the Village into desirable places to live, work, and visit. This transformation in Vicksburg will be the result of building upon existing community assets, careful planning, and spontaneous evolution. This chapter provides an overview of the components of placemaking in Vicksburg and strategic placemaking strategies for future prosperity.

A place based development strategy is critical to Vicksburg's future. In order to be competitive, it can no longer be "business as usual," especially in terms of land use. The Village must prepare for a new way of conducting business. By making a concerted effort to change the way of doing business, the Village is creating a vision for future prosperity.

NEW WAY OF DOING BUSINESS

Engaging in placemaking requires that the Village improve its economic competitiveness and focus on elements of the “new” economy. In the new economy, economic prosperity relies on the ability to attract / retain the talented workforce. Thus, a critical understanding of the differences between the “new” economy and its rules versus the “old” manufacturing economy is imperative to creating a place in Vicksburg.

The economy is shifting from a labor intensive manufacturing economy to a knowledge based economy, with an emphasis on the talented workforce. The talented workers are knowledge workers, artists and creatives, and entrepreneurs. Such individuals are mobile, select location first and then look for or create a job, and are seeking quality of life places. A quality place must have the following:

- Active living environment (i.e. entertainment, recreation, social interaction, etc.);
- Amenities (i.e. parks, outdoor activities, sports, greenways, waterways, etc.);
- Lifestyle choices (i.e. housing type, cost, density, and transportation options); and
- Business choices (i.e. atmosphere of innovation, market for creativity, high wage jobs, risk taking, etc.).

For communities like Vicksburg, future economic prosperity should be focused on creating a climate known for producing new ideas, enabling productive partnerships, and attracting talent, rather than retail sales and manufactured goods and services.

The following table highlights the differences between the “new” and “old” way of doing business.

Table 11. Comparison of the Old & New Economies

Old	New
A cheap place to do business.	A place rich in talent and ideas.
Attract companies.	Attract the educated, creative class, the talented workforce.
High quality physical environment was a luxury which stood in the way of attracting cost-conscious businesses.	Physical and cultural amenities are key in attracting knowledge workers.
Regions won because they held a fixed, competitive advantage in some resource or skill.	Regions prosper if organizations and individuals have the ability to learn and adapt.
Economic development was government-led.	Economic development led by public-private partnerships among business, government, and the non-profit sector.

Source: Planning and Zoning Center and Land Policy Institute, *Asset-Based Economic Development Strategies for Pontiac, 2007*.



VICKSBURG COMMUNITY ASSETS

The Village has a great deal of potential for placemaking initiatives and is a prime candidate for the redevelopment and revitalization of its downtown core and neighborhoods. Many of the elements that provide the foundation for a quality place (i.e. a place that is interesting, safe, walkable, people-oriented, green, welcoming, comfortable, active, visually attractive, and has good form) already exists in Vicksburg.

Such assets include:

- A centrally located, traditional downtown core with historic buildings, small businesses, and agencies such as the Downtown Development Authority;
- Quality of the school district and facilities;
- A diverse housing stock;
- Wealth of parks and recreational opportunities available within many of the neighborhoods;
- Proximity to healthcare facilities;
- Existing natural features and watersheds, including Sunset Lake; and
- Existing pedestrian and non-motorized network.

These elements are a tremendous advantage that, if capitalized on, can ensure a quality place - a sustainable, walkable, vibrant community for the future.

The overarching goal of this Master Plan is to build upon the existing framework and amenities to create an inclusive, safe, vibrant community that is attractive to residents, business owners, and visitors. This will be accomplished through Chapter 6: The Vicksburg Future Land Use and Character Plan as it guides the use and form of future development and Chapter 7: The Implementation Plan as it prioritize projects the Village can spearhead or foster collaboratively in order to solidify Vicksburg as a quality place.

STRATEGIES FOR CREATING A PLACE

Creating a place in Vicksburg is the primary strategy for a sustainable future for the Village. Implementation of this Plan will result in a high amenity community that attracts the talented workforce. The principles of creating great places are not something new and have been proven to be successful in communities across America. The following *Smart Growth Principles*, as prepared by the Smart Growth Network, are proven to create great places.

The 10 Smart Growth Principles are:

1. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
2. Create walkable neighborhoods.
3. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.
4. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
5. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.
6. Mix land uses.
7. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.
8. Provide a variety of transportation options.
9. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
10. Take advantage of compact building design.

The Village already has the foundation in place for many of these principles. New growth and redevelopment in Vicksburg should occur in accordance with this Master Plan, the DDA Redevelopment and Design Plan, the Parks and Recreation Plan, and the above Smart Growth principles. These place making principles will help frame synergistic opportunities for planning and development efforts in Vicksburg.

05

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of the transportation plan is to provide a circulation plan that provides for the needs of residents and businesses located in the Village. The circulation plan considers both vehicular and non-motorized transportation, and provides recommendations for the future development of the Village's circulation system.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

At its most basic level, a transportation system provides a means of moving people and goods within a geographic area. A transportation system may be made up of multiple modes of transportation, such as roads, railroads, bikeways, airports, and seaports. Mass transit is sometimes available, either via buses or other types of transit that use roads, or light-rail or subway transit that ride on dedicated rails.

The circulation system in Vicksburg currently consists of roads that are almost exclusively dedicated to automobile travel. All roads and streets in the Village are under the jurisdiction of the Village, which is responsible for repairs and maintenance. Village jurisdiction over all roads does provide the community with an advantage, especially in regards to roadway design and non-motorized transit options. With complete jurisdiction, roadways and all rights-of-way can be modified and enhanced much more easily. For instance, curb bump outs, a reduction in the number of vehicle lanes, the addition of bicycle lanes, and expansion to sidewalks can all be accomplished without additional agency approvals.

PRIMARY CIRCULATION PATTERN

Prairie Street and Highway Street are the primary east-west routes in the Village. Both of these routes extend to the west and connect to significant County roads in Schoolcraft Township, Portage, and the US-131. Highway Street also extends to the east into Brady Township. Richardson Street, Main Street, and Boulevard Street are the primary north-south routes in the Village. Due to the natural features and the general geography of the Village, north-south circulation is challenging and often circuitous in the Village.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION

As mentioned previously, US-131 is located five miles west of the Village. This major north-south highway provides access to Indiana and the Indiana toll road to the south as well as Grand Rapids, I-94, and northern Michigan to the north. Interstate 94 is located about nine miles north of the Village and is accessible via US-131 or Sprinkle Road (from Richardson Street and Portage Road). Interstate 94 is a major east-west highway and provides access to Battle Creek and Detroit to the east and Lake Michigan and Chicago to the west.

RAILROAD

Vicksburg is also bisected by a main line of the Canadian National Railway, which continues to be used for freight traffic. This rail line connects Vicksburg to Battle Creek, Lansing, Flint and Port Huron, making Vicksburg a critical component of the freight network.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Metro County Connect is Kalamazoo Metro Transit's shared ride origin-to-destination transit service. Metro County Connect provides this service throughout Kalamazoo County, Monday to Saturday with discounted fares for seniors and persons with disabilities.

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CIRCULATION PLAN

The roads and circulation plan, presented on the previous page, highlights the recommended non-motorized pathway system improvements. Note that the Plan shows the location of planned road and non-motorized pathway improvements. The proposed improvements and guidelines are intended to be general in nature. The exact location of improvements and nature of the specifications will be determined as the improvements are built based on existing conditions in the vicinity and the engineering details of the specific project.

COMPLETE STREETS

“Complete Streets” is the concept that roads should be safe and available for all types of users, not merely automobiles. In many ways, Vicksburg’s streets already have some “complete street” characteristics, including sidewalks, non-motorized pathways, and paved shoulders for biking. However, improvements can be made. The following is a summary of the Complete Street recommendations of this Plan:

- Install wayfinding signage to identify community focal points and areas of recreation, including the Vicksburg Recreation Area, Clark Park, the downtown core, the library, Sunset Lake, and other community amenities.
- Improve existing sidewalks and extend the sidewalk network where missing / in conjunction with new development.
- Improve the road rights-of-way to create pedestrian connections, road circulation, and opportunities for safer non-motorized transit.

TRUCK ROUTE ALIGNMENT

Due to the difficulty of traveling north-south in the Village, the existing truck route has become a potential threat to future economic development efforts, and in fact was identified as such through the public input process. Currently, trucks utilize Prairie St. and Highway St. to travel east-west in the Village. From the north, vehicles travel on Richardson St. to Prairie St., where Richardson ends. The route then jogs over to S. Kalamazoo St. and travels south to Highway St., where it travels back to S. Richardson St.

This shift in the north-south circulation pattern for trucks and the required stops, turns, and travel through downtown results in delays and intersection conflicts. To alleviate these issues, one solution would be to connect the north and south portions of Richardson Street. The land in between these two roads where the shift in the route occurs is mostly owned and used by Vicksburg Public Schools. The most direct connection would travel west of the high school, athletic facilities and middle school parking, and east of the administration building. As they are using the area where such a connection would likely be located for access, parking, and other important uses, it is difficult to imagine this realignment occurring in the near future. However, it is good to be aware of it in the event the school embarks on new construction in the future and creates an opportunity for this to occur.

NON-MOTORIZED PATHWAY SYSTEM

The creation of a linked pedestrian pathway system throughout Vicksburg was identified as a key goal throughout the community input process. The Circulation Plan recommends pedestrian improvements, including non-motorized trails, to provide the framework for a comprehensive pedestrian circulation system throughout the Village. It will act as an initial blueprint, guiding decision makers on important land use, transportation, circulation, and recreation issues for several decades into the future.

While it is the recommendation of this Plan that five-foot wide sidewalks be provided along all roads in the Village, the Circulation Plan also recommends non-motorized pathway improvements. Non-motorized pathways are proposed to connect the local sidewalk system to the existing Village trail system and trails provided or proposed by surrounding communities, along with regional points of interest such as the County Park and area lakes. Non-motorized pathways accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, and should have a minimum width of 6 feet. The pathways can be paved or a compacted aggregate surface.

NON-MOTORIZED PATHWAY CONFIGURATIONS

There are three major configurations for non-motorized pathways as defined by the American Association of State Highway Officials:

- Dedicated pathways separated from vehicle traffic lanes,
- Bicycle lanes that are part of the roadway,
- Shared roadways where motorized and non-motorized users share the same space on the roadway.

Each of the above configurations is appropriate in certain instances, and a non-motorized pathway system can consist of a combination of pathway configurations.

DEDICATED PATHWAY

Description:

A pathway physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or a barrier and located either within a road right-of-way or in an independent right-of-way.

Users:

Dedicated pathways are appropriate for any non-motorized user, including pedestrians, joggers, bicyclists, rollerbladers, etc.

Design:

Dedicated pathways normally accommodate two lanes of travel and should be at least 10 feet wide. Motor vehicle crossing points, including road and driveway crossings, should be kept to a minimum.

BICYCLE LANE

Description:

A portion of the roadway that is designated by striping, signing, and pavement markings for the preferential and exclusive use of bicycles.

Users:

Bicycle lanes are most appropriate for bicyclists, although any non-motorized user can use a bicycle lane in the absence of a sidewalk - if the lane is sufficiently wide to permit a bicycle to pass a pedestrian walking in the lane without encroaching on a motorized vehicle lane.

Design:

Bicycle lanes normally accommodate one way travel in the same direction as adjacent motor vehicle traffic and are typically four or five feet wide. It is important that highly visible demarcations separating motorized and non-motorized traffic be maintained at all times.

SHARED ROADWAY

Description:

A situation where motorized and non-motorized traffic share a street with no special treatment for non-motorized traffic except for signage.

Users:

Appropriate for any non-motorized user, including pedestrians, joggers, bicyclists, rollerbladers, etc.

Design:

Shared roadways are only appropriate on low-volume, low-speed streets such as neighborhood streets. Shared roadways require minimum 12-foot wide travel lanes.



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06

THE VICKSBURG PLAN

THE VICKSBURG FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Vicksburg Future Land Use Plan serves as a guide for the community's vision of the next 10 to 15 years. It is based on an analysis of land use issues facing the Village, existing conditions, demographic and housing statistics, physical constraints and resources, community infrastructure, circulation patterns, and established goals and objectives. Through land use planning and controls, the Village intends to ensure that the historic nature of the community's neighborhoods are protected, that economic development is encouraged, that the parks and open spaces are preserved and enhanced, and that the downtown core becomes a vibrant and exciting destination for residents and visitors.

This Plan constitutes the development policy of the Village, and as Vicksburg grows, the Plan should be updated to address how any expansion / developments have impacted the infrastructure and existing conditions.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER PLAN

A Community Character Plan is a step past land use to identify how different parts of Vicksburg should look and function. The future land use plan identifies appropriate uses for different parts of the community, and will also establish basic use and density requirements. Other important factors which create community character include the look and feel of streets, how buildings look and function, how uses relate to each other, and the overall intensity of uses.

This Community Character Plan recognizes that there are many districts that exist in Vicksburg – the traditional village residential; the more contemporary neighborhoods found to the north and south; the downtown core; and the varying redevelopment areas. Each of these land use areas has a different combination of design, use and density that create the different contexts. The purpose of the Community Character Plan is to identify all of the component parts that add up to create character, not just use and density.

COMPONENTS OF THE COMMUNITY CHARACTER PLAN

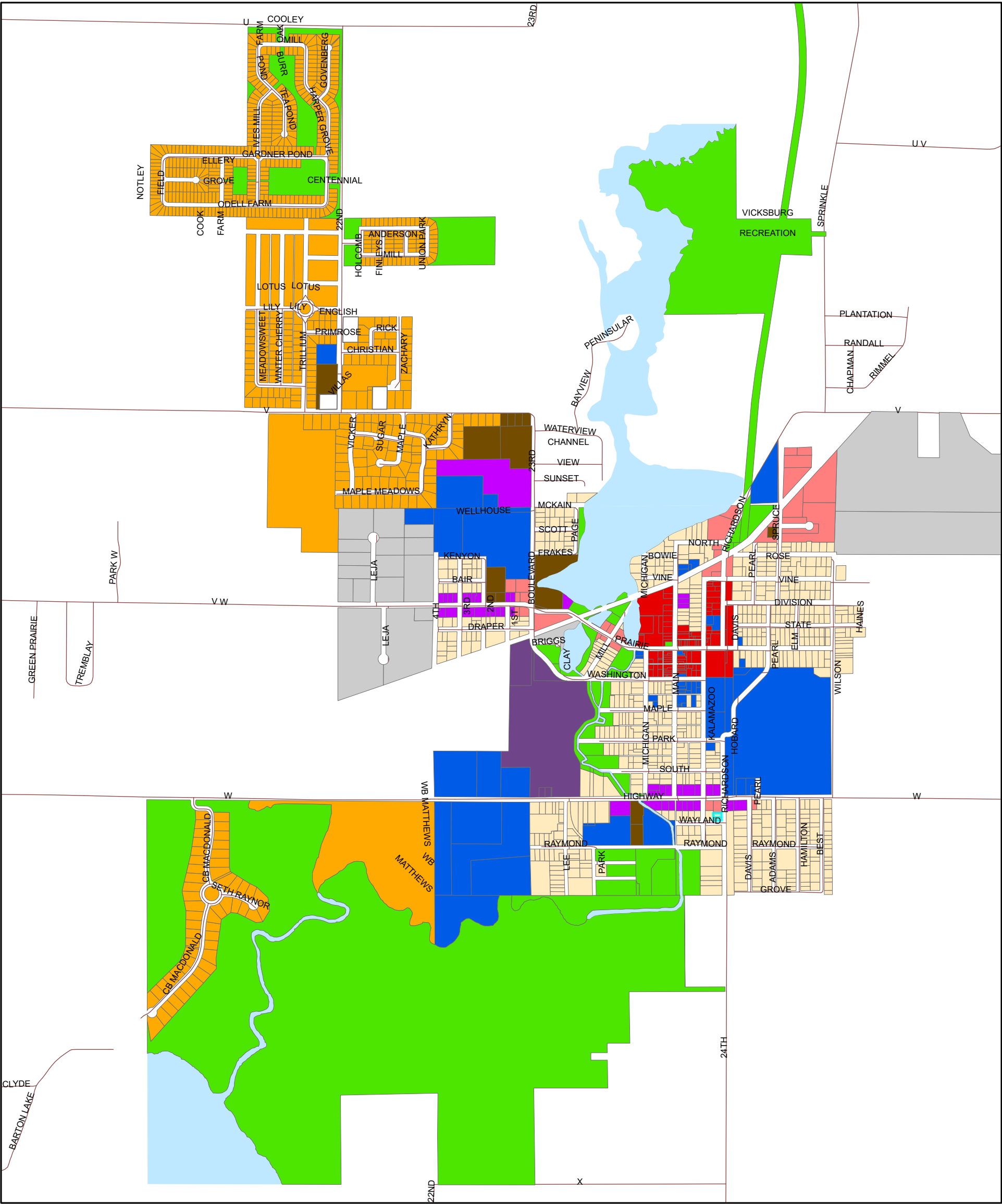
The Plan establishes a number of character and neighborhood areas and then offers recommendations for design, use, and density characteristics for each district. The components include:

- **Land Use.** Land use is still an important component of the Plan. Each future land use area has a recommended range of uses that are appropriate within that district.
- **Building Types.** With few exceptions, land uses always occur within a building. As the design and appearance of the building can have as much of an impact on the character of the community as the use itself, the Plan identifies a number of typical building types that are appropriate for different kinds of uses in each district.
- **Site Design.** Physical design characteristics are the third factor in creating community character. These design characteristics determine how lots are assembled into blocks; how streets look and function; and where supporting development features such as parking, lighting, and landscaping are accommodated on the lot.

FUTURE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

The land use categories are represented on Map 7 and described in this section of the Master Plan. The elected and appointed officials of Vicksburg will be responsible for the interpretation of the intent of the Future Land Use Map and the land use categories.

Each of the following future land use categories is explained in greater detail on the following pages with community character guidelines specifying the ideal uses, buildings, and site designs for each district.



Future Land Use

Village of Vicksburg, Michigan

June 19, 2023 - DRAFT

Legend

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Roadways | Neighborhood Commercial |
| Parcel Boundary | Recreation & Open Space Preservation |
| Contemporary Residential | Public Quasi Public |
| Downtown Core | Village Residential |
| Enterprise Redevelopment | Water |
| Industrial | Mixed Use |
| Multi Family Residential | |



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
Village of Vicksburg, 2022. McKenna 2023.



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VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL



Appropriate Structures

Single Family	X
Multiple Unit Single Family	X
Rowhouse	X
Multiplex	
Live / Work	
Mixed Use	
Office / Retail	
Industrial	
Civic / Institutional	X

Intent / Uses

Village Residential areas reflect the historic character of neighborhoods generally surrounding the Downtown Core which depict a traditional grid layout, an older housing stock, and reduced setbacks. The form of these residential blocks promotes social interaction, walkability, and safety, and should be preserved. Appropriate land uses include detached single family units, multiple unit single family dwellings, schools, churches, municipal, and civic buildings.

Site Design

Small lots are encouraged and setbacks should be even with the smallest setback on the block. The building height should not exceed 2.5 stories.

New dwellings or substantial modifications to structures should be designed with quality materials and conform to the dominant architectural typology of the block. Alternative architectural styles may be appropriate, provided the character of the residential block is enhanced. Front porches / stoops are encouraged and should be allowed to encroach a minimum of six feet into the front yard setback area. Garages should be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the front building wall and located in side or rear yards.

CONTEMPORARY RESIDENTIAL



Appropriate Structures

Single Family	X
Multiple Unit Single Family	
Rowhouse	
Multiplex	
Live / Work	
Mixed Use	
Office / Retail	
Industrial	
Civic / Institutional	X

Intent / Uses

Contemporary Residential areas have the character of more recently developed single family neighborhoods and encompasses the outlying residential areas in the north and south portions of the Village. Lots are larger and feature houses of various styles, many of which are newer construction. Appropriate land uses include detached single family units, schools, churches, municipal, and civic buildings.

Site Design

Small lots are encouraged and setbacks should be consistent with the surrounding character. The building height should not exceed 2.5 stories.

New structures in the Contemporary Residential neighborhood should be designed with quality materials. Garages should be located in the side or rear yard and sites should be designed to protect and preserve existing natural features. Where Contemporary Residential neighborhoods connect to the Village Residential district, they should be designed with additional pedestrian amenities and connectivity.

MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL



Appropriate Structures

Single Family	
Multiple Unit Single Family	X
Rowhouse	X
Multiplex	
Mixed Use	X
Office / Retail	X
Industrial	
Civic / Institutional	X

Intent / Uses

Multiple Family Residential areas permit apartment-style attached dwelling units, the highest residential density in the Village. Appropriate land uses include condominiums, townhouses, rowhouses, multiplex apartment buildings, schools, churches, municipal, and civic buildings.

Site Design

Multifamily buildings should be constructed with high-quality materials and architecturally compatible with their surroundings. Stand alone sites should be designed with attractive entrances and porches that allow residences to experience the street. Complexes should be designed to preserve trees and other natural features. They should also feature amenities and green space, be internally walkable, and logically connect to their surroundings for both vehicles and pedestrians.

Parking lots should be sufficient for residents and visitors but not excessive and located in the rear of the building. They should be well-maintained, landscaped, and designed to be safe for pedestrians, especially children.

MANUFACTURED HOUSING

Intent / Design

Although manufactured housing is not specifically planned in any particular district, it is the policy of this Plan to permit manufactured housing using the following standards:

- Any new or expanded manufactured home park shall be located on or near a major thoroughfare for access to community services and facilities.
- Any new or expanded manufactured home park shall be located to minimize the negative impacts on single family residential development, a vital component of the Village's tax base.
- The Village encourages manufactured home parks to locate near existing manufactured home parks where adequate access, services, screening, and buffering are already provided.
- Any new or expanded manufactured home park shall be located to minimize the impact on environmentally sensitive areas.
- The Village will base its decision to accept manufactured home parks on a fair-share and balanced allocation of affordable housing for the community.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL



Appropriate Structures

Single Family	
Multiple Unit Single Family	X
Rowhouse	X
Multiplex	
Mixed Use	X
Office / Retail	X
Industrial	
Civic / Institutional	X

Intent / Uses

The Neighborhood Commercial includes commercial areas outside of the traditional downtown. Residential and office uses of low density, low-intensity retail uses, and institutional uses are appropriate. Automotive oriented uses such as gas station, auto repair, or drive-through facilities are inappropriate.

Site Design

Buildings should be located close to the street to create the proper sense of enclosure, to slow traffic, and to begin to transition from a rural context to the downtown core. High-quality architecture which complements and enhances existing development and historic structures is encouraged.

Parking should be located in rear or side yards and front yard parking should not exceed a single drive isle with one row of parking and heavily landscaped with a continuous vegetative buffer or decorative knee wall.

DOWNTOWN CORE



Appropriate Structures

Single Family	
Multiple Unit Single Family	
Rowhouse	X
Multiplex	X
Mixed Use	X
Office / Retail	X
Industrial	
Civic / Institutional	X

Intent / Uses

The Downtown Core is intended to preserve the existing downtown and to expand that pattern of compact, traditional, mixed use development along Prairie and Main Street. Commercial businesses intended for this category include service, professional, and retail businesses that encourage foot traffic and do not require large parking lots. Institutional uses, especially those revolving around the arts are strongly encouraged. Residential uses are also permitted, including upper-floor apartments and townhouses.

Site Design

Specific building design standards are included in the DDA's Downtown Development and Design Plan (2014). In general, new and renovated buildings should be designed to reflect the historic character of the district. Densities should be limited to a reasonable number of units by requiring careful, context sensitive design. Setbacks should be minimal on the front and side and along the rear of lots.

Parking should be provided behind establishments in shared parking areas and parking lots should be attractive and environmentally conscious, with high-quality landscaping.

MIXED-USE



Appropriate Structures

Single Family	X
Multiple Unit Single Family	X
Rowhouse	X
Multiplex	X
Mixed Use	X
Office / Retail	X
Industrial	
Civic / Institutional	X

Intent / Uses

Mixed-use areas are intended to serve as a transitional land use in the Village and provide an opportunity for new housing and working environments. A majority of these areas are currently occupied by single family homes that could be converted to non-residential uses, mixed use buildings (such as commercial on the ground floor and residential use above), or more dense configurations of residential uses to accommodate office, service, low-intensity commercial, residential dwelling units, etc.

Site Design

Parking should be located in the rear yard of the site, screened and landscaped, and shared when possible, including access drives.

Buildings should be located close to the street to create the proper sense of enclosure, to help slow traffic, and to begin to transition from the very small setbacks in the Downtown Core to the single family residential neighborhoods. High quality architecture which complements and enhances existing development and historical structures is strongly encouraged. Residential density could range from single family homes to townhomes to condominiums, provided that the buildings maintain the existing or planned scale and character of the area.

ENTERPRISE REDEVELOPMENT



Appropriate Structures

Single Family	
Multiple Unit Single Family	X
Rowhouse	X
Multiplex	X
Mixed Use	X
Office / Retail	X
Industrial	X
Civic / Institutional	X

Intent / Uses

Enterprise Redevelopment envisions planned developments for some of the larger vacant or transitional sites in the Village. This land use designation is intended to permit flexibility in the future use of the property. Appropriate uses, if designed consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan, include clustered residential, office, commercial, lodging, industrial, and recreation.

Site Design

Parking areas should be screened from view, heavily landscaped, shared when possible, and located in the rear of sites or not visible from right-of-ways.

Buildings should be constructed of high-quality materials, complement the surrounding environment, and preserve existing natural features. It is strongly encouraged that uses are clustered in mixed-use buildings with an emphasis on preserving and integrating any existing historic structures on the site. Density bonuses should be permitted if the development provides additional public amenities or incorporates the preservation of the natural environment into the site design.

INDUSTRIAL



Appropriate Structures

Single Family	
Multiple Unit Single Family	
Rowhouse	
Multiplex	
Mixed Use	
Office / Retail	X
Industrial	X
Civic / Institutional	

Intent / Uses

The Industrial district is characterized by operations which are not of sufficient size or scale to negatively impact surrounding non-industrial use areas. Warehousing, manufacturing, research and technology, intensive commercial uses, high-tech office, and similar uses are planned for industrial areas.

Site Design

Buildings should be designed to be long-lasting and support efficient industrial practices. Site should be designed to minimize off-site impacts and to reduce pollution, site contamination, and stormwater to the extent possible.

Sites should be buffered with trees and heavy landscaping to avoid negative impacts on surrounding property. Limited outdoor storage could be permitted, provided such storage is adequately screened from adjacent non-industrial uses and roadways.

Parking lots should be sufficient to support employee parking and truck maneuvering, and well screened, but not excessively large.

PUBLIC / QUASI PUBLIC



Appropriate Structures

Single Family	
Multiple Unit Single Family	
Rowhouse	
Multiplex	
Mixed Use	
Office / Retail	X
Industrial	
Civic / Institutional	X

Intent / Uses

Areas planned for public / quasi public uses are suitable for municipal or government uses such as Village buildings, libraries, museums, schools, cemeteries, and other similar owned and operated uses. Additionally, religious institutions and non-profit organizations are included in this classification.

Site Design

Buildings and sites should be designed as context sensitive in order to enhance surrounding land uses.

As establishments which focus on the public realm, buildings should provide a welcoming entrance and include pedestrian site amenities. Parking areas should be well defined and heavily landscaped.

RECREATION & OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION



Appropriate Structures

Single Family	
Multiple Unit Single Family	
Rowhouse	
Multiplex	
Mixed Use	
Office / Retail	
Industrial	
Civic / Institutional	X

Intent / Uses

The Recreation and Open Space Preservation classification includes areas of significant natural features of the Village, such as wetlands and/or woodlands, public and private recreational facilities, and preserved open space. Appropriate uses for this category include parks and conservation areas and other uses that do not require permanent construction of buildings or other structures.

Site Design

Parks and recreation facilities should be maintained, upgraded, and expanded in accordance with the Village’s Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Existing pedestrian and cyclist trails should be maintained and additional non-motorized pathways and associated amenities (i.e. bicycle racks, wayfinding signage, lighting, etc.) should be installed as planned.

High-quality architecture that complements the natural environment is encouraged for all public facilities (i.e. small-scale buildings such as restrooms, gazebos, boardwalks, etc.). New structures should be constructed and designed to complement the rural character of the district and encouraged to meet LEED standards and should not impact view sheds. All building footprints should respect existing floodplains, wetlands, and wooded areas. Additionally, buildings should be well lit, highly visible, and provide public, ADA compliant amenities.

Associated parking areas should be provided for public facilities that are designed to minimize stormwater runoff. Low-impact development techniques (pervious pavement, bioswales, etc.) should be utilized as to not adversely impact the surrounding quality of the wetlands / woodlands and water features.

07

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The Vicksburg Master Plan and all of its goals, objectives, and strategies recommend a future vision for the Village. This vision is to build upon the Village's existing assets and make the most of opportunities that can attract new development and residents to the community. Ultimately, the Vicksburg Master Plan strives to create an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable community where people want to live, work, and play. The strategies and activities described in this chapter are the tools for putting the Plan's recommendations into practice.

The implementation program should be reviewed often and be considered in daily decision making of the Village. Successful implementation of this Plan will be the result of daily actions taken by elected and appointed officials, Village staff, the Downtown Development Authority, public agencies, private citizens, and other organizations.

PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since the 2015 Master Plan, the Village of Vicksburg has initiated several of the projects identified in the previous Plan's implementation section. Progress has been made in the following areas:

- Developed and installed uniform park signage;
- Redesigned and enhanced Oswalt Park;
- Install public art in key downtown locations;
- Improvements and updates to community gateways;
- Improvements in connections and pathway linkages to the City of Portage;
- Development and promotion of community events, including the Farmers' Market;
- Increase in transparency and greater communication between the Village and residents.

Village staff continues to make significant progress on implementing projects identified within the 2015 Master Plan and the 2023 Strategic Plan.

ACTION PLAN CATEGORIES

The matrices on the following pages summarize the recommended actions and strategies for the Village of Vicksburg. These recommended actions are not exhaustive, but should be used as a guiding document to promote a high quality of life for the Village of Vicksburg residents and stakeholders.

The matrices are organized by the following four themes:

[1] Planning & Zoning

Evaluation of the Village's Zoning Ordinance and amendments to Village regulations as necessary to implement the recommendations of this Plan. Continuous evaluation of the recommendations of this Plan must occur at regular intervals to ensure that the overall vision for the future development of the Village remains relevant.

[2] Civic Improvements

Improvements such as parks, public spaces, and utility systems fall into this category. Civic improvements are generally funded through public funds and grants and are tangible "bricks and mortar" projects.

[3] Transportation & Circulation Improvements

Improvements to the Village's motorized and non-motorized circulation system fall into this category.

[4] Economic Development

This category includes the economic and physical development of the Village. These improvements include a wide range of activities from physical development activity to promotion and marketing, and may be completed by the Downtown Development Authority, other public or private entities, or some combination thereof.

Each matrix presents a detailed summary of all the recommended implementation projects, their priority and time frame, the responsible parties for initiating and completing the projects, and available funding resources.

ACTION PLAN KEY

Priority	
A	Most Important
B	Very Important
C	Important

Time frame	
1	Within One Year
2	1 - 3 Years
3	3+ Years
Ongoing	As Available / Continual

Responsibility	
BRA	Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
BT	Brady Township
DDA	Downtown Development Authority
HS	Historical Society
IMC	Inter-Municipality Cooperation
KC	Kalamazoo County
LDFA	Local Development Finance Authority
PC	Planning Commission
PO	Property Owners
PR	Parks and Recreation Committee
SD	Vicksburg Community School District
ST	Schoolcraft Township
VA	Village Administration / Management
VC	Village Council

Funding		
P	Public	Includes public funds from the Village general operating budget, Kalamazoo County, and State funding. Public funds may also include local government bonds.
TIF	DDA / TIFA	Includes funds from tax increment financing provided by the authorized body.
O	Private / Other	Includes funds from private sources, such as grant monies, foundations, corporations, or personal property owners.

PLANNING & ZONING

Project	Priority	Time frame	Responsibility			Funding
			Village	other govt'	private	
Create a new zoning district that implements the vision for the Enterprise Redevelopment future land use category.	A	1	PC / VC			P
Promote residential development to meet housing needs for the community by expanding permitted housing types within the Village.	A	1	PC / VC	KC		O
Promote the re-use of existing commercial sites to foster growth within the Village.	A	1	VA / PC			O
Create a new zoning district that implements the vision for the Mixed-Use future land use category.	A	1	PC / VC			P
Develop design standards for Mixed-Use and Neighborhood Commercial districts in the Zoning Ordinance .	A	1	PC / VC			P
Develop additional landscaping and screening standards for the Industrial districts to protect adjacent residential areas.	A	1	PC / VC			P
Streamline the various Industrial districts (I-1, I-2, I-3) use classifications and locations on the Zoning Map.	A	1	PC / VC			P
Revise the C-2 zoning ordinance district to be fully consistent with the future land use vision for the Downtown Core district.	A	1	PC / VC			P, TIF
Revise the zoning ordinance to require additional landscaping, green stormwater, and drainage practices in and around parking lots.	B	2	PC / VC			P
Develop and adopt a complete streets policy.	B	2	PC / VC			P
Enhance the existing parking ordinance to provide flexibility within the Village to reduce the amount of impervious surface required.	B	2	PC / VC			P
Implement the architectural design standards for the DDA district.	B	ongoing	PC / VC		PO	TIF
Conduct an analysis of a short-term rental ordinance/ policy.	B	3	PC			P
Apply for a local historic designation of the Downtown Core district.	C	2	DDA		PO	TIF
Continue to develop the Village of Vicksburg website.	C	ongoing	VA			P, O
Develop promotional material on the benefits of green building standards.	C	3	VA			P, O
Review the Master Plan every five years.	C	3	PC / VC			P
Review the Parks and Recreation Plan every five years.	C	3	PC / VC	PR		P

CIVIC IMPROVEMENTS

Project	Priority	Time frame	Responsibility			Funding
			Village	other govt'	private	
Develop the Vicksburg Recreation Area (see 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Plan for details).	A	1	VC / VA	PR		P, O
Develop Sunset Lake (see 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Plan for details).	A	1	VA / VA	PR		P, O
Maintain and update the Capital Improvements Plan every six years.	A	ongoing	PC / VC			P
Develop Veteran's Park (see 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Plan for details).	B	1	VC / VA	PR		P, O
Collaborate with MDOT to develop directional signage to the Village at the Sprinkle Road and I-94 interchange.	B	2	VC / VA			P
Improve the water quality of Sunset Lake, rivers, and ponds throughout the Village.	B	ongoing	VC	PR / IMC		P, TIF, O
Develop the Historic Village (see 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Plan for details).	B	ongoing	VC / VA	PR		P, O
Collaborate with neighboring communities to preserve the environmental quality of Sunset Lake.	B	2	VC	PR / IMC		P, O
Develop Clark Park (see 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Plan for details).	B	3	VC / VA	PR		P, O
Develop a fire alert program for the downtown.	B	3	VC / VA			P, TIF
Develop Angels Crossing Golf Club (see 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Plan for details).	B	3		PR	PO	O
Continue to maintain the grounds of the Historic Village.	C	ongoing	VA	HS		P, O
Develop the Community Pavilion (see 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Plan for details).	C	2	VC / VA	PR		P, O
Develop a home maintenance and improvement program.	C	3	VA		PO	P, TIF, O
Develop Lee Park (see 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Plan for details).	C	3	VC / VA	PR		P, O

TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS

Project	Priority	Time frame	Responsibility			Funding
			Village	other govt'	private	
Construct non-motorized pathways, consistent with the non-motorized concept plan.	A	1	VC	PR	PO	G, TIF
Construct bicycle lanes / sharrows on streets, consistent with the non-motorized concept plan.	A	1	VC			G, TIF
Improve wayfinding and signage for pedestrians and cyclists, especially linking the Vicksburg Village Trail to key points of interest in the Village.	A	ongoing	VC / VA			G, TIF
Construct a pedestrian bridge over Sunset Lake to connect Mill Street to N. Main Street.	A	3	VC		PO	G, O
Improve and replace roadways as necessary; target streets according to the Capital Improvements Plan.	A	ongoing	VC / VA			G, O
Construct new sidewalks where needed throughout the Village.	B	ongoing	VC / VA		PO	G, O
Maintain and improve the existing sidewalk infrastructure.	B	ongoing	VC / VA			G, O
Install additional bicycle racks throughout the Village.	B	1	VA		PO	G, TIF, O
Construct a road connection between the north and south portions of Richardson Street during the next major construction phase to the Vicksburg Public Schools complex.	C	ongoing	VC / VA	SD	PO	G, O

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Project	Priority	Time frame				Funding
			Village	other govt'	private	
Develop and implement a business plan for Angels Crossing Golf Club (including expansion, as detailed in the 2015-2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan).	A	1	VA/VC		PO	P, O
Implement the DDA Parking Plan.	A	2	PC/DDA		PO	P, TIF, O
Continue to promote community activities and events.	A	ongoing	VA/VC		PO	P, TIF, O
Develop a business recruitment strategy for the Downtown Core district.	A	ongoing	VA/VC			TIF
Expand the investment potential of the DDA District	A	ongoing	VA/DDA			P, O
Develop and implement a marketing plan to promote the expansion of the existing business park.	A	ongoing	VA/VC			P, O
Expand and advertise the downtown facade improvement program in order to increase participation.	B	1	VA/DDA		PO	P, TIF, O
Develop and implement a unified wayfinding signage program for the DDA District.	B	1	VA/DDA		PO	TIF, O
Identify blighted structures that cannot be rehabilitated and program them for demolition.	B	3	VA		PO	P, O
Apply to be a Michigan Main Street Community.	C	1	VA		PO	TIF
Install streetlight banners to advertise local businesses / events.	C	ongoing	VA/DDA		PO	TIF, O

PUBLIC INFORMATION & EDUCATION

To effectively implement the Master Plan, the Planning Commission and the Village Council must educate the citizens of the community on the goals, objectives, and strategies, and the action plan. The spirit of the Master Plan must be communicated, especially in regard to how and why development / projects will occur and are necessary. A well informed and involved citizenry can then offer support and assistance in working towards the community they desire to have in the future.

The following information outlines examples of programs that can be undertaken to help inform the public about important land use goals and implementation techniques:

- A condensed version of the future land use plan, highlighting the goals of the Plan.
- Informational brochures on various topics important to the Village.
- Yearly informational meetings to discuss the strategic goals for the following year.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

The Village of Vicksburg already takes advantage of some of the of the economic development tools available to the community (i.e., having a Downtown Development Authority). However, to implement the recommendations of this Plan, other tools and techniques may need to be sought. The following is a summary of bodies that can use tax increment financing and other funding resources to generate funds for economic development activities.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY (PUBLIC ACT 280 OF 2005)

The Corridor Improvement Authority Act allows local governments to create one or more Corridor Improvement Authorities (CIA) to address established, deteriorating commercial corridors located outside their downtown areas. The primary benefit of this tool is to provide local governments with the option of using TIF for improvements in the district(s), and to undertake a wide range of activities to promote economic development and redevelopment in commercial areas.

In order to be eligible to create a CIA, the development area must have a minimum size of 5 acres, consist of at least 50% commercial property, and be zoned to allow mixed-uses, including “high-density” residential use. A municipality must also expedite the local permitting and inspection process in the development area and promote walkable non-motorized interconnections throughout the development area.

Since the Village already has a DDA that encompasses the majority of existing and planned commercial areas, this tool would likely not be useful for those areas. However, it may be a tool that is useful in redeveloping the E. Highways Street Corridor, given the redevelopment opportunities at the old paper mill site.

COMMERCIAL REHABILITATION ACT (PUBLIC ACT 210 OF 2005)

The Commercial Rehabilitation Act enables local units of government to create one or more rehabilitation districts in which rehabilitated commercial property may receive property tax reductions for one to 10 years from the municipality (excluding personal property and the land upon which the rehabilitated facility is located). These tax reductions or abatements could be used to encourage redevelopment in the Downtown Core; however, they do reduce the amount of tax revenues collected by the Village.

GRANT PROGRAMS

The following State and Federal grant programs may be useful for implementing the recommendations of this Plan:

MSHDA HOUSING PROGRAMS

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority has a wide range of programs designed to assist households in finding and affording quality housing. By partnering with MSHDA, Vicksburg can use these programs to incentivize the development of new housing, especially in the Downtown Core.

MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND

Administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Trust Fund money is available on an annual basis for parks and recreation improvements. In order to be eligible for Trust Fund money, a community must have an approved Parks and Recreation Plan.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Safe Routes to School is a Federal program administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation. Funding is available for sidewalk construction and other pedestrian improvements.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG)

The Community Development Block Grant program is an annual allocation of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to local governments for a wide range of community development activities, including housing rehabilitation, public and neighborhood improvements and economic development activities which primarily benefit low and moderate income persons.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)

TAP is a competitive grant program that funds projects such as non-motorized paths, streetscapes, and historic preservation of transportation facilities that enhance a community's intermodal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. These investments support place-based economic development by offering transportation choices, promoting walkability, and improving the quality of life. The program is available through the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and uses Federal Transportation Funds designated by Congress for these types of activities.

OTHER FINANCING TOOLS

Besides the general fund and the aforementioned economic development financing programs and mechanisms, the following sources of revenue are available to the Village:

SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS

Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefited by specific public improvements, such as paving and drainage improvements, to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the benefits afforded to the property affected.

SHARED CREDIT RATING PROGRAM - MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL BOND AUTHORITY (MMBA)

This program created under Act 227 of 1985 offers municipalities the opportunity to take advantage of the State's improved credit rating. Because the MMBA is authorized to issue bonds to make loans to Michigan

municipalities through the purchase of municipal obligations, the Authority allows municipalities to borrow funds for their capital and operating needs without going to the expense or trouble of entering the bond market on their own. Many small communities are at a disadvantage when issuing debt in the bond market because they frequently have no bond ratings and potential investors know little about their finances or economy. In addition, some communities tend to borrow infrequently, in small amounts. Because such debt issues are not particularly attractive to the financial markets, borrowing costs for such communities can be high.

The Authority sells tax exempt bonds in the national municipal bond market. Proceeds from the sale are used to make loans to eligible Michigan communities by purchasing their bonds. In essence, the MMBA “bundles” smaller local debt issues into a larger, more attractive bond issue and then offers it to the national market. By consolidating numerous local bond issues, local units will save on printing costs, rating agency fees, and credit enhancements. As participating communities make principal and interest payments to the Authority to repay their debt, the Authority uses these payments to repay the Authority’s bond.

DEDICATED MILLAGE

Special millages can be used to generate revenue for a specific purpose.

HUD SECTION 202/8

This is a Federally sponsored program which provides mortgage financing and rent subsidies for the construction and maintenance of elderly housing. Only non profit, private organizations (such as churches, unions, fraternal and other non profit organizations) are eligible sponsors, but local governments usually cooperate in the assembly of land, applications, public improvements and supportive actions. Such projects are tax-exempt, but the State rebates an equivalent amount to local tax jurisdictions.

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT (PUBLIC ACT 169 OF 1970)

The creation of a local historic district is intended to safeguard a community’s historic resources. Vicksburg is fortunate to have numerous historic resources many of which have been preserved and promoted through the historical society. But historic buildings can be lost or have their value compromised by materials added later such as aluminum siding in the residential areas and new facades in the commercial district. By creating local historic districts, financial assistance may be available to property owners that would encourage them to bring their buildings up to standard so that they can be part of the local tradition.

The process of creating local historic districts is administered by State Historic Preservation Office and usually takes 6-12 months to complete. To summarize, it is a multi-step process that begins with authorization by the Village to conduct a study of a potential district, through the survey, analysis and report, to a public hearing, final report, and culminates in the preparation and adoption of a historic district ordinance.

ZONING PLAN

A zoning plan is required by the Michigan planning and zoning enabling acts. Section 33(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended, requires that the master plan prepared under that act shall serve as the basis for the community's zoning plan. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006, as amended, requires a zoning plan to be prepared as the basis for the zoning ordinance. The zoning plan must be based on an inventory of conditions pertinent to zoning in the municipality and the purposes for which zoning may be adopted (as described in Section 201 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act). The zoning plan identifies the zoning districts and their purposes, as well as the basic standards proposed to control the height, area, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises in the Village. These matters are regulated by the specific provisions in the zoning ordinance.

The zoning plan is a key implementation tool to achieve the vision of the Master Plan. In order to realize that vision, the Village must ensure that ordinances and regulations permit the type and style of development recommended by the Master Plan.

This section outlines the zoning plan for the Village. The zoning districts in the Village are described and their relationship to the Master Plan discussed along with recommended changes to the Zoning Ordinance to integrate new land use designations.

Table 12. Vicksburg Zoning Plan

Future Land Use Designation	Corresponding Zoning District
Village Residential	R-2, Residential, Single-Family R-2A, Residential, Single-Family
Contemporary Residential	R-1, Residential, Single-Family R-2, Residential, Single-Family R-3, Residential, Single and Two-Family PRD, Planned Residential Development
Multifamily Residential	R-3, Residential, Single and Two-Family R-4, Residential, Multiple-Family
Downtown Core	<i>New zoning district needed</i>
Neighborhood Commercial	C-1, Local Commercial
Mixed-Use	<i>New zoning district needed</i>
Public / Quasi Public	R-1, Residential, Single-Family CP, Conservation-Preservation
Industrial	I-1, Industrial Restricted I-2, Industrial Service I-3, Industrial Manufacturing
Enterprise Redevelopment	<i>New zoning district needed</i>
Recreation and Open Space Preservation	AG-1, Agricultural-Preservation CP, Conservation-Preservation

DISTRICTS & DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

There are 15 zoning districts in the Village, each of which is described in the Zoning Ordinance. There, uses permitted in each district are provided. The Zoning Map is also a part of the Zoning Ordinance and illustrates the distribution of these districts throughout the Village.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE MASTER PLAN

This Master Plan establishes the vision, goals, objectives, and policies for growth and development in Vicksburg for approximately the next twenty years. It includes a specific strategy for managing growth and change in land uses and infrastructure over this period, and, as required by statute, will be periodically reviewed and updated at least once each five years. This section, along with the rest of the Master Plan, is intended to generally guide future changes to the Vicksburg Zoning Ordinance.

The table above is a list of proposed land use designations and their corresponding zoning district. For each designation, recommendations for character, form, and uses are provided earlier in this Plan (Chapter 6).

